



**O'HARE NOISE
COMPATIBILITY
COMMISSION**

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FAA to Re-evaluate 3 Schools for Aircraft Noise O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission Applauds Decision

Des Plaines, Ill., April 28, 2010—The O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) announced today that the Federal Aviation Administration has agreed to re-evaluate eligibility of three schools to receive federal funds for sound insulation to reduce aircraft noise disturbances within classrooms.

ONCC previously approved Elk Grove High School in Elk Grove Village, Ridgewood High School in Norridge, and Carpenter Elementary School in Park Ridge as eligible for sound insulation in 2004, but the schools were notified by the FAA in 2009 that they did not qualify under current sound insulation criteria.

At the invitation of ONCC, Catherine Lang, FAA Acting Associate Administrator for Airports, toured the three schools with congressional, school, airport and ONCC officials April 23. She indicated that funding will be reinstated if the schools meet an 8-hour Equivalent Sound Level (Leq) test result of 45 or higher. The 45 Leq is the minimum noise threshold the FAA established for school sound insulation eligibility.

The Chicago Department of Aviation will coordinate re-testing this summer. Pending test results, the schools could begin work on sound insulation as soon as summer 2011.

"We know O'Hare benefits our region, but we also recognize the challenges we face living near one of the world's busiest airports. The foundation of this commission is to work cooperatively with all our stakeholders—including the City of Chicago, Aviation Commissioner Rosemarie Andolino and her staff, and the FAA—to solve aircraft noise problems," said Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene J. Mulder, chairperson for ONCC, an inter-governmental agency dedicated to aircraft noise reduction in the O'Hare International Airport region.

"Special thanks needs to go to U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt for their willingness to see that these noise issues are addressed," Mulder said.

"O'Hare airport is a critical transportation link for Chicago and the entire Midwest region of our country, and we should make sure that it can continue to bring business into our state without adversely affecting our schools," said Sen. Richard Durbin (D., Ill.).

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"I want to thank Transportation Secretary LaHood, FAA Administrator Babbitt, the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission, and Representatives Jan Schakowsky (D., Ill.) and Peter Roskam (R., Ill.) for coming together to address a common goal of creating a better learning environment in our schools," Durbin said.

"The education of my youngest constituents is of the utmost importance to me," said Schakowsky who toured Carpenter Elementary School and Ridgewood High School with FAA Associate Administrator Lang. "The schools were tested and recognized as needing sound insulation. To reverse course on commitments made would be extremely detrimental," Schakowsky said.

"The City of Chicago wants to thank the FAA for its consideration of these three schools in the O'Hare community," said Commissioner Andolino.

"ONCC appreciates Associate Administrator Lang's efforts to personally review each school's file and for her on-site visit to experience the challenges aircraft noise creates for educators and students," said ONCC Executive Director Brendan McLaughlin.

"ONCC has consistently supported sound insulation for the three schools since 2004. We always believed that every school on the eligibility list eventually would be protected from aircraft noise. We are hopeful that the day is very near," said ONCC Vice-Chairperson Raymond Kuper.

During the school tour, School Dist. 234 Supt. Robert Lupo used a map to illustrate locations of schools surrounding Ridgewood High School that received FAA-backed sound insulation.

At Elk Grove High School, School Dist. 214 President William Dussling and Dist. 214 Supt. Dr. David Schuler joined staff and students to stress the negative impacts aircraft noise has on education for all students, but especially those students with special needs.

"Today flights come over the school every few minutes," said Susan Douglass, a third grade teacher at Carpenter School. "When the weather gets warm, you have no choice but to open the windows. Aircraft noise and interruptions are a real challenge for the teachers."

ONCC, composed of 45 communities and school districts, is nationally recognized as a leading community-based organization that strives to reduce the impact of aircraft noise through residential and school sound insulation programs and to reduce aircraft noise, whenever possible, at its source. For more information, call 773-686-3198 or visit www.oharenoise.org.

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ONCC member communities: Arlington Heights, Bartlett, Bellwood, Bensenville, Chicago, Des Plaines, Elmwood Park, Franklin Park, Harwood Heights, Hoffman Estates, Itasca, Maywood, Melrose Park, Mount Prospect, Niles, Norridge, Northlake, Oak Park, Palatine, Park Ridge, River Forest, River Grove, Rolling Meadows, Rosemont, Schaumburg, Schiller Park, Stone Park, Wood Dale and Cook County. ONCC member school districts: 59; 63; 64; 80; 81; 84; 84.5; 85.5; 86; 87; 88; 89; 214; 234; 299; and 401.