



NEWS RELEASE

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Twin Rivers Launches Aggressive Plan for HVAC Installation

SACRAMENTO—Twin Rivers Unified School District today unveiled an aggressive plan for installing heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) units in two schools—Grant Union High School and Harmon Johnson Elementary. The new five-month effort is being launched as a campaign called ***Feel the Difference: Creating a New Climate in Our Classrooms.***

“We understand the community’s frustration in the past with delays in getting this important project off the ground,” said TRUSD Superintendent Dr. Steven Martinez. “We now have the administrative team working in close collaboration so that every phase of this installation will hit its marks and stay on schedule. We are making a commitment to our community, parents, staff and students today and it’s one we are determined to keep. When schools open at the end of summer break, our students, staff, and parents will be able to feel the difference.”

The massive installation project is being coordinated by a District HVAC Task Force chaired by Dr. Martinez. The team is comprised of the two school principals and representatives from facilities, maintenance, contracts, business, human resources, and communications. The group is meeting twice a month to monitor progress, share details, and identify potential delays that can be averted.

Interest in bidding on the project has been strong since the first announcement went out on March 25. Approximately 20 local, regional, and statewide contractors have expressed interest to date.

“We are confident that we will have many highly qualified companies to choose from,” said Bill McGuire, TRUSD’s new Deputy Superintendent. “This could be a great job creator for the local community.” The bidding window closes on April 15 and a selection will be presented to the Board of Trustees on April 23.

While classes are still in session, non-intrusive work is scheduled to commence on May 5 at Grant and on May 15 at Harmon Johnson Elementary School. This will include inspecting the units that have been in storage and doing site preparation such as trenching, laying pipe, electrical work, and preparing the foundations for installing 71 HVAC units (37 at Grant and 34 at Johnson).

Both schools are more than six decades old and the district has been working hard to maintain the aging HVAC units over the years. These new units are replacing worn out units that could no longer be repaired, in some cases because parts are no longer available.

The impact of the national recession on state funding for education also took its toll on this project. The district was able to acquire the HVAC units using one funding source, but has not had adequate maintenance funding to cover the installation costs until now. The total cost of the installation is pegged at \$7.6 million, with \$4.2 million allocated to Grant High and \$3.4 million to Johnson Elementary. The District is using deferred maintenance funds to cover the cost of the installation.

This HVAC project is part of an overall upgrading process being implemented by the district. The two schools will also be repainted during the summer months. In addition, the facilities staff is finalizing a plan for renovations and repairs at most of the schools across the district this summer. That plan will be unveiled next month.

“Maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment in our schools is a high priority for Twin Rivers. We know that the climate in the classroom can have a real impact on the peak performance of both teachers and students,” said Martinez. “The only sweat we should see on our students is when they’re working hard to ace a test or complete a homework assignment, not because they’re in a classroom where the air conditioning doesn’t work. This is an important step in changing the overall climate in our schools.”

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