

**For Immediate Release:**

## **Court's Supplemental EIR Order For Van de Kamps Means LACCD Board May Face An Angry Northeast Public Participation Process**

(Los Angeles, September 12, 2011) A Los Angeles Superior Court judge made final today her tentative decision last Thursday finding that the Los Angeles Community College District willfully and knowingly violated California's premiere environmental laws in handing half of the Northeast Campus at the historic Van de Kamps Bakery to a charter high school without new environmental review. In fact, Judge Ann I. Jones revised her initial decision to order that the LACCD will be required to complete a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the changed uses at the campus if it wants to allow the Alliance for College-Ready Public Schools to continue use of what is supposed to be a community college satellite campus of Los Angeles City College.

"We were amazed that during oral argument, the LACCD's private attorney from San Bernardino, Jennifer Guenther, persisted in making laughably incorrect arguments in some kind of desperate effort to change the Judge's decision," said Van de Kamps Coalition leader, Laura Gutierrez. "When Ms. Guenther testily said she wanted to make her argument 'for the court of appeals,' Judge Jones said, 'OK, just don't insult my intelligence anymore.'"

"I cannot imagine how much money the LACCD Board has paid these high-priced private lawyers to bill the taxpayers while endlessly riding trains back and forth from San Bernardino to defend this indefensible case. We had emails of fired Facilities Director Larry Eisenberg saying he would not comply with the law that Judge Jones cited in her decision as decisive, and the Board of Trustees still sent in the goons in expensive suits to beat up on the community merely for asking them to comply with the law," observed Miki Jackson, another Coalition leader.

The Court has ordered the parties to meet and try to prepare an agreed order to bring the District into compliance with environmental laws. Daniel Wright, a Northeast Los Angeles attorney who represented the Coalition, emphasized that amicable settlement of the case would spare the Board a likely contentious environmental review process.

"The sense I get from people in Northeast Los Angeles is that they have been terribly disrespected by the LACCD. They are expected to pay, on average, real estate tax to the LACCD of \$123 per year for the next 40 years (\$5,000 per home) and in exchange a long-promised community college campus is denied to them while the Board fulfills its promises elsewhere around the City. People are livid at the Board and the anger will boil over during the environmental review process if the Board persists in the charade that they just cannot scare up the funds to open the Northeast Campus," Wright observed.

Jackson agreed. "At the last Board meeting, new Board member Scott Svonkin tried to strike out an \$18,000 car allowance for an LACCD executive compensation package, saying that the District ought to just pay mileage. How many people from Northeast Los

Angeles are shelling out taxes for LACCD executives to get \$18,000 car allowance on top of their already exorbitant salaries? Put enough of those \$18,000 car allowances of the Central Office together and LACCD could cover all of the annual operating expenses of the Northeast Satellite Campus.” Jackson said.

“The morning I left my 84 year-old mother at home to go watch the trial, she stopped me and said: ‘I’m going to say a prayer for you and your attorney.’ I said, ‘Ma, it’s going to take more than a prayer, it will take a miracle.’ And my mother said, ‘Then I’m going to pray for the judge too.’ Gutierrez said with a smile, “It’s time for the Board be contrite and make this situation right. Otherwise, I going to ask mom to pray for their removal from office.”

For more information:

Miki Jackson (323) 855-0764

To download a copy of the Court’s decision:  
[www.vandekamps.org](http://www.vandekamps.org)