

AUGUST 3, 2021

Christopher Arend,  
Board President  
Board of Trustees  
Paso Robles Joint  
Unified School District  
Paso Robles, CA  
93446

VIA: E-mail



**RE: 2021 ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES SELECTION**

**Dear President Arend and the PRJUSD Board of Education:**

We wanted to take this opportunity to address concerns raised by the PRUSD Board of Education, at last month's meeting, about PBK-WLC and our relationship with SIM-PBK. Let me first say that, as stewards for the District and its parents and students of the community, we understand the Board's concerns and appreciate your due diligence in the selection of architectural firms that you feel are best suited for the District.

PBK-WLC is committed to partnering and serving the District, no matter the size and type of project. In response to concerns and questions raised by the Board and District, we offer the following:

**1. Relationship between SIM-PBK and PBK-WLC**

The two firms are separate entities with separate financial accounting, staff and management. We both share the "PBK" name because we are in the family of PBK companies yet operate independent of each other with our own staffing, leadership and approach.

**2. Where is work being done?**

The lead office for Paso Robles projects will be our San Luis Obispo office which is one of seven PBK-WLC offices in California. As the leader of SLO operations, I have 35 years of DSA school experience to lead the our team. Our Sacramento office partners and supports the SLO office and I split time between the two locations, along with other staff members who do the same. The highly experienced DSA school staff in SLO, as well as Sacramento have no staff members, principals, or partners from the SIM-PBK office. Darren Sylvia is our day-to-day SLO office leader to manage staff, while being a resource on education and construction of schools. Darren's vast experience is a tremendous asset for staff and clients, and we have attached his bio/resume for your information.

**3. Issues with DSA documents and approvals.**

PBK-WLC started in California 45 years ago and we have been working with DSA from day one. Our staff assigned to your projects are all California centric with a combined 100 years plus of DSA experience, working with all offices. I have been doing DSA projects for 35 years and the last State Architect was a partner with me in a firm I formally worked for. As such, we know what DSA wants and what DSA Los Angeles expects. We have developed relationships with them and dedicate ourselves to providing detailed and complete documentation. We also know its critical to work with your DSA inspector of record and the field engineer collaboratively and respectfully during construction to make them part of the solution and not the problem.

**4. Personal attention and responsiveness**

PBK-WLC is built on personal client service and responding to our client's needs. Our team will go above and beyond what is required and will listen to what Paso Robles needs. They are your projects, not ours, and we are your tool to execute your vision and meet your goals and budgets. We are always available to answer questions or meet you on site and provide the attention you deserve by being on site within 30 minutes.

**5. Documentation and coordination**

The success of a project starts with understanding your program needs and budgets to translate those into construction documents. PBK-WLC employs our own unique approach called "the system" in developing

construction documents totally separate from SIM-PBK. Using our building information modeling and a rigorous quality control process, coordination and completeness of documents is stressed and our change orders reduced. Mentoring of staff with our internal Arch 360 program provides continuous education and training.

**6. Responsiveness during construction and minimizing change orders**

Our projects in construction are always given priority because prompt responses to RFI's, potential change orders and DSA CCD's is critical to avoid delays and costs. We work collaboratively with the contractor, inspector, DSA and the District during construction to solve potential issues quickly with minimal cost impacts. We include our specifications teams and construction administration team in design and documentation phase and they are critical in assisting the team during construction. If an issue arises, we will do what is needed to be on-site promptly, develop responses and interface with the contractor, inspector and DSA.

**7. Completing SIM-PBK projects in progress**

We have completed SIM-PBK projects in the past at the request of our client. Due to our relationship through PBK's family of companies, we can easily step in and continue any current SIM-PBK projects to completion, which will minimize delays, and A/E fees while providing a fresh highly qualified local team in the transition.

It is our hope that this summary addresses questions and concerns. If there are any additional questions, we are happy to respond to them and will be at the August 10<sup>th</sup> Board meeting prepared to respond or comment further. In conclusion, PBK-WLC is not SIM-PBK, and establishing our own relationship with PRUSD is important to us and our place in serving this region. We encourage you to talk with San Luis Coastal USD and tour their projects. We encourage you to talk with our other clients on who we are and how we operate to clearly understand that we are our own firm.

We appreciate this opportunity and stand ready to serve PRUSD on any future projects.

Sincerely,



**Gary Gery**, AIA, NCARB Partner

[Gary.gery@pbk-wlc.com](mailto:Gary.gery@pbk-wlc.com)

Attachment

**BIOGRAPHY / RESUME OF:****DARREN SYLVIA, PBK-WLC SAN LUIS OBISPO  
SENIOR LEADER AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE**

As a Superintendent of a small rural school district near Bass Lake, California, I managed all modernization, new construction, and charter school and CTE grant construction projects for our school district. Over the last six years in my small rural district, I managed our school projects with very tight and limited budgets. Using delivery methods of design-bid-build, lease/leaseback, CUPCCA, and government code 4217 for energy savings, as well as value engineering, we squeezed every penny available for construction while maintaining the purpose, scope and aesthetic perspective of our desired school designs.

We accomplished a multitude of projects resulting in the finishing of a new classroom, building a stadium, stadium/field lighting, parking lot, weight room, softball field and seating, snack bar, and restrooms on the Minarets High School Campus. Construction of a new K-8 elementary school was under budget at \$27.9 million, and a \$4.5 million solar energy parking structures was also installed. We were also able to add an Independent Study/Home School/Adult school campus within the Charter school campus using adult education and charter school funds. Our final addition was a modernization of our agriculture facility by using 1d grant, ag incentive grant and CTE funding. My experience in school construction has allowed me to work in tandem and collaboratively with CDE, OPSC DSA and DSA inspectors of record.

As a graduate of Cal Poly SLO, I have returned to the Central Coast after retiring this past school year. I have owned a home in Nipomo the last five years and now reside here permanently. I understand the central coast's unique community and educational needs as I have spent almost twenty years in the north coast (Monterey Peninsula USD) area. My role to manage the SLO PBK-WLC office is to provide senior leadership and oversight for our staff to understand the unique nature of educational needs and design, navigating our team and districts through educational agencies, funding, title 5 and CDE policies. I will support Paso Robles USD as a team member who understands your perspective and the entire school construction process by providing an additional educational perspective, attending construction meetings, and supporting your team's workflow. My goal is to minimize change orders and cost overruns while collaborating with the district, and contractor.

**Resume of Experience**

- Over 35 years of California K-12 school experience as a visionary leader understanding the Project Owner's challenges
- Recent Relevant Experience:
  - Chawanakee USD Superintendent
  - Director of Student Support Services, Merced Union High School District
  - Madera USD, Chief Academic Officer
  - Salinas Union High School district, Everett Alvarez High School Principal
- Project Accomplishments:
  - New Construction \$28 million K-8 Elementary
  - New Construction (Phase 2) \$3.5 million stadium, classroom, Ag Facility, Adulty Education/CTE facility.
  - New Solar \$4.5 million shade Parking Structures

- Construction of \$12 million Swim Complex
- Construction of \$14 million Stadium Project (EAHS)
- Construction of \$8.5 million Muisic/Weight Room/Ancillary Gym (EAHS)
- Construction of \$2.5 million Agriculture Center (EAHS)
- \$2.5 million modernization project of Martin Luther King, Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
- Current:
  - Resident of Nipomo, CA
  - Senior Leader/Educational Resource, PBK-WLC