

## **Communication from Public**

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**Comments for Public Posting:** Please see attached letter on behalf of the Sierra Club



Angeles Chapter  
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Los Angeles, CA 90010-1513

To the honorable Councilmember Joe Busciano, Mayor Eric Garcetti and the Los Angeles City Council,

We are writing today to express our concern for the situation at Jordan High school in the Watts neighborhood. According to the Board of Education and the local community, the adjacent Atlas metals facility poses an environmental risk to the students and we are supporting their call for the City of LA to fix the problem.

Jordan High School is located on South Alameda St, adjacent to the Atlas Iron and Metal Company. A simple fence separates the school and the scrap metal operation. When it rains, toxic seepage comes under the fence and onto the ball fields. Throughout the day, metal is moved between piles in loud crunches that sound like frequent car crashes. A fine particulate matter coats the exposed surfaces in the school area, and presumably enters the lungs of the students and teachers. Soil on the school property has been found to be contaminated. Twice this year, 3 inch long projectiles of metal have hit the school building, damaging the concrete but luckily not hitting any people. The water, soil, noise and air pollution, combined with the dangers of explosions and projectiles, make this an unacceptable situation.

The Sierra Club fights for clean and healthy communities for all people. Our city and our country were built on a system of racism which has forced Black and Brown communities to bear the costs of dirty industry. As the region's largest and oldest environmental organization, we are focusing more and more on the structural racism that results in environmental injustice in our region. The students of Jordan High School deserve a safe learning environment, and we call on you as city leaders to join us in working to dismantle the unjust systems that result in industrial facilities operating with impunity next to children.

At this time, we don't know if Jordan High School is the only Los Angeles school in such immediate danger from heavy industry. We believe that the situation at Jordan High School is serious enough to warrant immediate action from the City of LA. We also believe that a district wide survey should be made to see what other schools might suffer from unjust local conditions. We are calling for your leadership in this situation.

The Sierra Club understands that there are budget implications for environmental cleanup efforts, and we know that funding is part of every civic conversation. The Sierra Club supports defunding the police for many reasons, including so money currently spent on policing can instead be spent on social services like cleaning up pollution. In this case, budgets should not be an obstacle to justice.

The year 2020 has challenged all of us to rise to a new level of leadership as we navigate a strange and changing world. These are the moments when clarity and courage can make a bit

impact. We hope you will lead the City of LA to do the right thing for Jordan High School and any schools in a similar situation.

Thank you for your consideration,

Morgan Goodwin  
Senior Director, Sierra Club Angeles Chapter

Yvonne Martinez Watson  
Environmental Justice Committee Chair, Sierra Club Angeles Chapter