FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR THE PORTER RANCH RELOCATION

Q. Why are the schools being relocated?

A. A natural gas leak was discovered in October in a well that Southern California Gas operates in Aliso Canyon. An increasing number of health complaints, as well as teacher and student absences, was causing a significant disruption in instructional programs at Castlebay Lane Charter and Porter Ranch Community School (PRCS). There was also growing concern about the long-term health effects, since SoCal Gas has estimated it could take until spring to repair the leak. Therefore, District officials decided it was in the best interest of students and staff to temporarily relocate the schools.

Q. What is the relocation plan for Castlebay and PRCS?

A. All Castlebay Lane students will be relocated to Sunny Brae Elementary School, and all PRCS students will be relocated to Northridge Middle School. By occupying available space on campus and in portable classrooms, students will be able to remain with their classmates, and they will have the same teachers as at their home school. Each school’s administrative and support staff will also make the move. The relocation will be in effect for the duration of the 2015-16 school year. We anticipate that Castlebay Lane and PRCS will reopen in Fall 2016.

Q. When will classes start?

A. Second semester officially starts on January 11, but this will be a pupil-free day for Castlebay Lane and PRCS students. We want to allow our teachers time to set up and organize their classrooms. Classes for our students will begin on January 12 in their new location.

Q. Will we be on the same bell schedule as we were at our home school?

A. We are staggering the bell schedules with those of the receiving schools in order to minimize traffic congestion during drop-off and pick-up times, and maximize instructional and structured play time. Castlebay will be in session from 8:30 a.m.-2:53 p.m. The school day for PRCS will be 8:25 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Q. Will there be early-morning and after-school care?

A. There will be before- and after-school supervision at the two home schools, as well as the two receiving schools. The North Valley YMCA will be offering its morning and after-school program at Sunny Brae and Northridge Middle School.

Q. I have a child in elementary school and another in middle school. How will this affect them?

A. If your children go to PRCS, both will relocate to Northridge Middle School. If you are a Castlebay parent, your elementary student will relocate to Sunny Brae. Middle schoolers who attend a school other than PRCS will not be affected.

Q. Is anything special being done for kindergartners and TK students?

A. For the convenience of our youngest students, we have installed restrooms inside each of the relocated kinder classrooms.

Q. Can we opt out of the relocation and remain at our home school?

A. Opting out is not an alternative, as we are relocating the entire instructional program for both Castlebay Lane and PRCS.

Q. Can we visit the new school before deciding to relocate our children?

A. District crews have been working over the winter break to upgrade the facilities and move the furniture and equipment. They are still hard at work, and we don’t want to get in their way. We plan to offer tours once the job nears completion.

Q. If I am unhappy with the relocation, may I transfer my child to a different school?

A. Requests of this kind will be handled on a case-by-case basis and should be discussed with your child’s principal.

Q. If I transfer my children to a different school rather than relocating, can they return to their home school in Porter Ranch next year?

A. Students who live within the attendance boundaries of Castlebay and Porter Ranch, or have been admitted through the lottery, have the option of enrolling or returning to their home school.

Q. Some children changed schools when their family relocated their home. Can they now re-enroll in their Porter Ranch school and go to the temporary campus?

A. Yes, these students have the option of returning.

Q. Will SoCal Gas pay to move our family closer to the relocated schools?

A. This is a request that should be discussed directly with the company.
Q. Will independent study continue to be an option?

A. Yes, independent study will remain an option on an individual basis through the District’s City of Angels program.

Q. How will the relocation affect the School Site Council, PTA and other committees?

A. There will be no change in the duties or activities of these groups or of parent volunteers. They will continue to operate as they did at their home school.

Q. What is happening to the desks, books, materials and equipment at our home school? What about our computers and library materials? Will we have to share with teachers and students at the new locations?

A. The District has moved furniture, books, instructional materials, classroom computers and other equipment from Castlebay and PRCS to the temporary locations. This includes musical instruments and other materials needed for specialized programs. Additional computer carts will be provided so students have access to technology, and each classroom will also be equipped with a projector and other technology for the teacher’s use.

Q. How will science be taught at the temporary sites?

A. Instructional materials will be relocated from the home schools.

Q. What about physical education, and the English-learner and dual-language programs? How will special-education programs be affected?

A. The District is working to ensure the continuity of instructional services and learning opportunities for students. For instance, PE will be held as usual; services for English-learners will continue; and the dual-language program at PRCS will remain intact. Special-education students will receive the same services as before, and resource teachers will have their own classroom to support their students.

Q. Will the relocation affect assessments, including gifted testing and the state’s SBAC computerized assessments?

A. These tests will continue as scheduled, and students will have access to technology for the state assessments.

Q. Will the relocation affect culmination?

A. No. Culmination will not be affected.

Q. How far are these new campuses from our home school?

A. Sunny Brae is approximately 8 miles from Castlebay Lane, and Northridge Middle School is 7 miles from PRCS. The average drive time is 15-20 minutes.
Q. Will the District provide transportation to the new school sites?

A. The District will provide free daily bus transportation, each way, from Castlebay Lane and PRCS to their temporary locations. Parents were asked to complete a transportation request form in order to secure their child a seat. Buses will depart Castlebay at 7:50 a.m. and arrive back at the campus at 3:45 p.m. Buses will depart PRCS at 7:15 a.m. and arrive back at 3:40 p.m. To accommodate after-school activities, a late bus will depart Sunny Brae and Northridge at 4:30 p.m., and arrive at the home school at 5 p.m. While faculty parking will be available at both of the receiving schools, teachers may ride the bus with students.

Q. May I continue to drive my child to and from school?

A. Yes. While the District is offering transportation, it is not required. The valet zone for Castlebay students has been established along Sunny Brae Avenue. PRCS students may be dropped off at designated sites along Schoenborn Street or Zelzah Avenue.

Q. Who do I call if I have concerns about safety or security?

A. You may call the School Police Dispatch Center, which operates 24 hours a day. The number is 213-625-6631.

Q. Once the gas leak is repaired, how can I know it will be safe for my child to return to school?

A. The District has been – and will continue to be – in contact with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and a variety of regulatory agencies that are monitoring the natural gas leak. We will not allow students and staff to return to Castlebay Lane or PRCS until we are assured it is safe.