

**ADDRESS TO THE DISTRICT ASSEMBLY ON MISSION
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DISTRICT OF SAN FRANCISCO**

**Saint Mary's College of California
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I appreciate the opportunity to speak before the Assembly.

Brother David mentioned in his speech last night that he entered the Brothers with a desire to serve young people through education, but was “really unaware of the journey that lay ahead.”

I suspect that many, if not most of us here today, embarked in years past on our individual journeys without fully understanding that the different paths we would take in our careers and in our personal lives would eventually bring us together at the invitation of the Brothers to plan for the future of such a worthy endeavor—the Lasallian educational mission.

Before I came to work for the Brothers, I had worked for one of California's largest utility companies. My work centered on technical issues, engineering practice, and construction project management.

I concluded my 17 years for the utility with management responsibility for overseeing the construction of a two million square foot building project. I was very proud of the project, and learned a lot from it professionally and still draw from that experience. But, as I reflect back, it was a project that was empty in terms of purpose and attached to a mission that was profit driven.

I came to work for the Brothers in 1988 while they were still producing wines. In fact, when I first started, my office was at the winery while the Institute was located on the campus at Saint Mary's College. I soon learned that the winery was not the Brothers' main focus, but that they were teachers, committed to the human and Christian education of the young.

Within a year or so, the Brothers sold the winery. My job was at the District level, with responsibility for the management of all of the District's physical plants, construction supervision, and review of maintenance.

I continued on the path to greater involvement in the Lasallian Mission. I didn't know it at the time, but I was starting out on a personally fulfilling journey that immersed me in the Brothers' educational work – not as a teacher, but working in a collaborative way with the Brothers and their lay colleagues in the schools, and on the boards of trustees, to maintain the schools' physical infrastructures and in developing new campus facilities and master plans.

One of my first responsibilities was to supervise the District's asset protection program through which the District provided the secondary schools with between \$100,000 to \$200,000 and technical assistance each summer to carry out major

maintenance projects that had been deferred over the years. The District continued this support program for major maintenance projects until about 1997, at which time the District shifted its funding of this program to new works that were less financially independent than the older, established schools.

Under the Consulting Agreement between De La Salle Institute and the school corporations operating within the LEC structure, the District's Engineering Department continues to provide technical services related to the preservation of the schools' physical plants and the design and construction of new buildings.

The maintenance, design, and construction process in the LEC schools and in the other schools associated with the Brothers through different agreements, such as Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory, Justin-Siena High School, and De Marillac Middle School, are led today by the Presidents or Principals. There is a growing trend for them to involve a broader representation of their school communities in the design of new campus facilities — faculty, staff, students, administrators, trustees, benefactors, alumni, and often, even neighbors living near the school. This process of focusing on listening from a “bottom-up” perspective has resulted in new facilities that better reflect the feelings and needs of the ultimate users — the faculty, staff and students. I am honored to participate in this process.

The Engineering Department strives to support the schools' leadership in this process by listening carefully to all points of view, by helping to identify the real needs and issues, and by sharing our experience and wisdom gained from schools with similar projects. Our role is primarily that of consultant. Over the years, we have developed a network of various design, engineering, and construction experts. In the end, the trustees and the schools' administrative leadership ultimately make the financial, design, and construction decisions. We provide help in setting timetables, in the schools' dealings with the planning and building departments, in helping the school administration deal with design professionals, and in assisting them in the negotiation process, contract administration and, especially with change orders.

Many of the school buildings in the District — a good number of older buildings constructed from the late 1920s through the 1950s, a larger number built in the 1960s, a few built in the 1970s and 1980s — are reaching the point where upgrades and changes are required to implement new academic programs, exciting teaching technologies, and changes in teaching styles. Since 1995, we have experienced a surge in construction activity, especially in the last two years — with about \$40,000,000 in construction completed or in progress.

The funding for these projects has been raised through major capital campaigns at every school. These campaigns require a tremendous amount of time and energy from Trustees, Presidents, Principals and their development staff — not just to acquire funding, but also to put into place sound stewardship policies and practices. The major donors of today are much more sophisticated and expect prudent cost-effective handling of their donated funds.

I would like to show you some examples of the great variety that exists in the design and construction of new campus facilities.

(Powerpoint presentation followed.)

As you can see, there is great variety with respect to the design, look, and feel of campus facilities built in the last few years. At one time, the District did develop standard building designs that were incorporated at different locations within the District.

People often remind me that architectural plans with roof designs and heating systems that might be appropriate for a California school *just don't work* in Oregon.

Each school has its own personality, its unique set of needs, and various funding sources. What really is satisfying to me from a District perspective is the extent to which the criteria for the design and construction of new facilities are mission driven and relate directly to the needs of faculty, staff, and students.

School administrators and boards of trustees often call on us to help them sort out real differences that exist within the school community about building priorities and features, cost estimates, relationships between architects and contractors, and negotiations with city planning officials. Building trust through candid communication among the major players — board, school administration, faculty and staff, development office, governing agencies, the architect, and the contractor, is key to developing and executing a successful project.

In the last decade, we in the District Engineering Department have worked very hard to serve the needs of our Lasallian colleagues in the schools. I believe that by working together we have jointly contributed a great deal to the Lasallian mission.

(Powerpoint presentation followed.)

Currently we are helping in the development of a master plan for De La Salle North Catholic, in Portland. This photo was taken a couple of weeks ago during a workshop attended by Brothers, the school's administration, faculty, parents, and students. Of great interest was the students' noted concern for security on their campus.

We are starting the process to upgrade a new master plan for De La Salle High School, Concord, and are developing the program requirements for a new campus to be established in Tucson, Arizona.

Developing a campus master plan and getting one approved by the appropriate city or county planning agency is the essential first step in bringing to life the educational vision developed by the school and marshalling the needed financial support to complete the project.

In conclusion, I feel the major challenge for each school is to examine its current approved master plan and use permits to ensure they reflect long-range goals for their campus. The process to make changes and obtain approval through the governing agencies will never be as easy as it is today – as zonings become more restrictive and neighbors become more vocal.

I commend the schools for their forward thinking and their efforts in maintaining and improving their facilities in support of the Lasallian mission.

Thank you.