



**Office of the Inspector General  
Los Angeles Unified School District**

**Performance Audit of  
Access Compliance**

**OA 23-1391**

**May 10, 2023**



**Los Angeles Unified School District**  
**Office of the Inspector General**

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May 10, 2023

Mr. Greg Garcia, Director  
Project Execution, Facilities Services Division  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
333 S. Beaudry Ave., 19<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

**RE: Access Compliance Audit**

Dear Mr. Garcia:

This is our Performance Audit report of Access Compliance.

The objective of the audit was to determine whether the projects performed under the Rapid Access Program complied with District policy and were completed in a timely manner.

We appreciate your continued support of our services.

Sincerely,

***Austin Onwualu***

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Austin E. Onwualu, CPA, CIG  
Deputy Inspector General, Audits

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Sue Stengel, Esq.  
Inspector General

c: Mark Hovatter, Chief Facilities Executive

Attachment

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We conducted an audit of the Los Angeles Unified School District's (District) Access Compliance. The objective of the audit was to determine whether (i) the Facilities Rapid Access Program<sup>1</sup> (RAP) projects were within the specifications of the District's policies and procedures and the Board of Education report and (ii) the RAP projects were completed in a timely manner.

The scope for this audit was all RAP projects from July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2022. The OIG performed this audit because the office's risk assessment process for the last three fiscal years had identified access compliance as a high-risk area. In addition, the risk assessment for FY 2023 revealed that this area had not been reviewed in the last five years.

District policy imbedded in Reference Guide 066902, *Procedures to Request Barrier Removal for Program Accessibility, for Students and Other Individuals with Disabilities* (Reference Guide 066902),<sup>2</sup> informs schools of changes in the procedures for requesting barrier removal to program accessibility for qualified students with disabilities and provides a process for District employees to follow when responding to a concern related to a barrier to program access involving other qualified individuals with disabilities who visit schools and other District facilities.

The Board of Education Report (Number 143-11/12) relates to the "Amendment to the Facilities Services Division Strategic Execution Plan to Update the Americans with Disabilities Act Modified Consent Decree On-Demand Accessibility Program."<sup>3</sup>

Our audit determined that the Access Compliance Unit (ACU) needed to update its policies and procedures and implement additional controls to ensure proper tracking and timely completion of RAP projects. We noted several projects that were not within the specifications of the District's reference guides and some that took an extended time to complete.

As part of our audit, we visited selected schools with RAP projects and interviewed school principals. We also obtained relevant information about RAP projects and an understanding of the RAP process. In addition, we gathered and analyzed the RAP project details to assess the timeliness. The audit scope was from 2017 to 2022, and there were 123 RAP projects within our scope. See the chart below for the total number of requests for each year. A steep decline in requests was noted from 2020 through 2022 due to COVID-19, which caused schools to close.

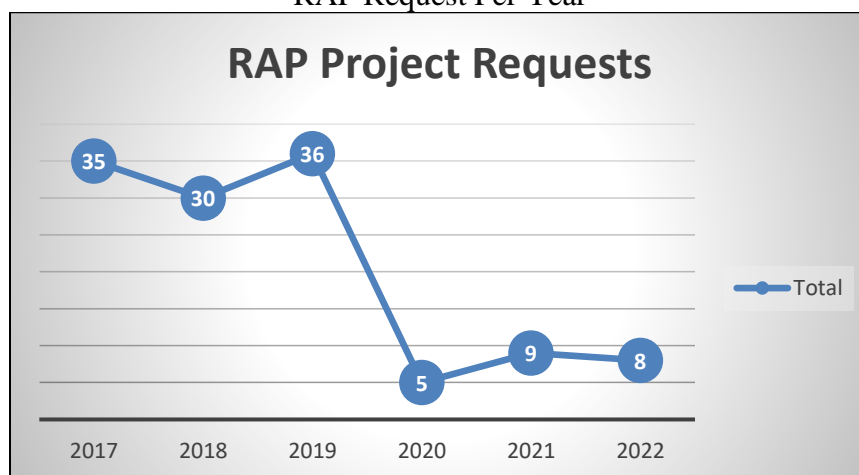
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<sup>1</sup> The Rapid Access Program was designed to address minor facility modifications to provide access to students with disabilities. The program is appropriate for requests that require minor and rapid construction or modifications.

<sup>2</sup> LAUSD Reference Guide - 066902, *Procedures to Request Barrier Removal for Program Accessibility, for Students and Other Individuals with Disabilities*, March 11, 2019, issued by the Office of the General Counsel, p 1. <<https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/domain/109/uploads%20holding%20place/2018-19%20uploads%20holding%20place/REF-066902%20Procedures%20to%20Request%20Barrier%20Removal%20March%2011%202019.pdf>>.

<sup>3</sup> LAUSD's Board of Education Report Number 143-11/12, *Amendment to the Facilities Services Division Strategic Execution Plan to Update the Americans with Disabilities Act Modified Consent Decree On-Demand Accessibility Program: Institute the Rapid Access Program and Cancel Projects*, February 14, 2012, p 1.

Chart 1  
RAP Request Per Year



We reviewed District policies, assessed the program’s internal controls, and provided the ACU with four recommendations to enhance the efficiency and operational effectiveness of RAP projects. The Results of Audit section provides the details of our findings and recommendations.

## INTRODUCTION

The Access Compliance Unit (ACU) is within the Facilities Project Execution Branch of the Facilities Services Division. The unit was established in response to the Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree,<sup>4</sup> which required the District’s Board of Education to comply with all special education laws and regulations. The ACU works with various units within the Facilities Services Division.

The ACU assists in the various phases of the lifecycle of repair and modernization projects and manages the Rapid Access Program (RAP). The RAP is intended to implement minor facility modifications to provide access to students with disabilities. The RAP is appropriate for requests that require minor and rapid construction or modifications. If the request is not for minor construction or modifications, the construction could qualify as a Critical Barrier Removal (CBR) project. CBR requests are typically for complex modifications, which require a design and a longer construction time.

District policy and state and federal law require District programs and activities to be accessible to all students, employees, and other individuals with disabilities. Accessibility barriers can exist at a school, a business office, or other District location or might exist as a communication method or forum. Allowing for accessibility provides individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in District programs and activities. In addition, the RAP and other barrier removal projects require that an “operational solution” be implemented to ensure the individual seeking the changes has immediate accessibility while a permanent solution is being implemented.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree, 2003, <<https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/system/files/file-attachments/CS%20-%202003%20Modified%20Consent%20Decree.pdf>>.

<sup>5</sup> LAUSD Reference Guide - 066902, *Procedures to Request Barrier Removal for Program Accessibility, for Students and Other Individuals with Disabilities*, March 11, 2019, issued by the Office of the General Counsel, pp 2 – 4.

The LAUSD Reference Guide - 066902 states that the following types of rapid and minor projects may be implemented as RAP projects.

- Purchase and install a temporary ramp.
- Alteration of door jamb or threshold.
- Install accessible door hardware.
- Install grab bars (restroom).
- Install adaptive equipment (e.g., toilet seat, lift, or support station).
- Minor physical adjustments to provide wheelchair access or turn radius (depending on alterations required).
- Install electrical outlet.
- Purchase and deliver a temporary wheelchair lift for a stage (without stage modification).
- Remove and replace a toilet, urinal, or sink to an accessible height.
- Purchase high/low changing table.”<sup>6</sup>

Any required project not listed above would be considered under the CBR program. Examples of CBR projects include:

- Remodeling a restroom or Nurse’s office to accommodate changing tables.
- Concrete ramps.
- Inclined lifts.
- Installation of specialized or customized equipment or fixtures with long lead times.
- Remove/replace water fountains with hi-lo accessible fountains.
- Fabricate and install handrails for stairways.<sup>7</sup>

When there is a need regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the school administrator fills out the DSE (Division of Special Education) ADA Program Accessibility Request Form (RAP Request Form), a Google Document that gets routed to the ACU. The unit is part of the Facilities Services Division and can easily coordinate with other units and departments that assist with the project request. The ACU has technical knowledge of the ADA requirements and the various phases of a construction lifecycle. The ACU tracks RAP and CBR projects in an Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet includes information such as school, scope, request date, site visit date, estimated/actual completion date, and any comments for the project.

The audit team visited selected schools to verify that RAP projects were completed and to interview school principals about the program. The principals stated that requesting a RAP was complicated and cumbersome. Many principals were unaware of the RAP and how to submit a request. According to the ACU, the Division of Special Education and the Office of ADA Compliance were responsible for the RAP outreach to principals. Through our discussions with principals, we noted that many of them used the Principal’s Portal to find training, forms, and other operational information.

We visited the Division of Special Education website and accessed the Employees section of the

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp 2 – 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp 4 – 5.

website. We entered our credentials and found links to various forms. We were able to locate a link that led to the RAP Request Form but did not find the reference guide that detailed the purpose of RAP and how to submit a request. If an individual were unfamiliar with RAP, it would be exceedingly difficult to identify which form to complete unless directed to it.

We also visited the Office of ADA Compliance website and accessed the ADA Compliance Toolkit for Employees. Employees were asked to enter their credentials to obtain access to the site. We found a link to the RAP Request Form but did not find information on what the program was intended to do.

The principal's portal has various content for principals, such as emergency drill information, certifications, schedules, and information on District operations. Principals use the portal daily to find resources to assist them with various tasks throughout the year. For example, if the reference guide were available in the principal's portal, the principals could easily access the RAP information when an accessibility request was presented.

The ACU uses the Consolidated OnLine Information Nexus (COLIN) to track projects. COLIN is a web-based interface that consolidates project information and allows management to analyze data and create advanced reports. The interface stores all facilities projects, including new and existing projects. The system can provide information on bond staffing, budgeting, funding, project status, and spending. COLIN allows data integration from various systems, such as SAP<sup>8</sup> and Primavera.<sup>9</sup> The information in COLIN includes timesheets, fund strategy, program and project requirements, SAP accounting data, PIC change orders, Facilities Contract Invoice Unit invoices, and other data. Project managers, program and department managers, and analysts can obtain organized data that can easily be analyzed and created into reports.<sup>10</sup>

In September 2022, LAUSD suffered a cyberattack, compromising much of the data throughout the District. Although COLIN was inaccessible and some of the data maintained by the ACU outside of the system was lost or inaccessible, the audit team was able to obtain information and documentation to meet the audit objectives and complete the audit.

## **RESULTS OF AUDIT**

Our audit determined that some Facilities RAP projects were not within the District's reference guide's specifications, and some were not completed on time. Facilities Service Division should update its policies and procedures and implement additional controls to ensure timely ADA compliance and assist in promoting awareness of the RAP.

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<sup>8</sup> System Analysis Program Development (SAP) is a software used to manage business processes and facilitate effective data processing and flow of information within an organization.

<sup>9</sup> Oracle Primavera Contract Management (also known as Expedition) is a web-based multi-project contract, cost, and document management control system.

<sup>10</sup> COLIN, Frequently Asked Questions, Accessed February 24, 2023, <<https://colin.lausd.net/colin/jsp/help/faq.jsp>>.

**Objective: To determine whether the Facilities RAP projects were within the specifications of the District’s reference guide.**

**Incorrect Classification**

Some projects were incorrectly classified as RAP or CBR.

The Board of Education Report No. 143-11/12 states, “All projects will include minor installments and adjustments to facilities to ensure a barrier-free learning environment as required by the ADA. RAP projects will not include significant facilities improvements which typically require Division of the State Architect approval as they do not meet the intent of the program to rapidly provide minor renovations where necessary to provide access for individual students.”<sup>11</sup>

According to Reference Guide 066902, any required project not listed under RAP would be considered under the CBR program. CBR projects typically require an in-depth design and a longer construction duration. Like RAP projects, CBR projects are considered a high priority.

The audit team reviewed the RAP Status Report, which details all the requested projects for RAP and CBR. We noted that two requests reviewed were incorrectly classified. For example, one project consisted of remodeling the nurse’s office to accommodate a changing table, which was classified as RAP but should have been classified as CBR.

**Table 1  
List of Projects - Incorrect Classification**

School	Project Scope	RAP or CBR	Qualifies as RAP	Notes
Figueroa ES	Add a sloped walkway at the exit and correct the existing ramp and fence.	RAP	No	The installation of a concrete ramp did not meet RAP requirements.
Rio Vista ES	Barrier removal in Nurse's office.	RAP	No	Remodel of the Nurse's office included tearing down a wall and covering a window. The scope of the project did not meet RAP requirements.

The ACU stated that the condition occurred because the projects were initially requested as RAP. The ACU visited the sites and assessed how the projects should be classified. During the site visit, the staff performed the following:

- Reviewed the site that has been requested to be modified.
- Assessed if the request is feasible and complies with safety standards.
- Considered alternative solutions to the accessibility barrier.

Due to the multiple requests the ACU received, the staff did not always update the RAP Status Report to reflect the change in project type classification.

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<sup>11</sup> LAUSD’s Board of Education Report Number 143-11/12, *Amendment to the Facilities Services Division Strategic Execution Plan to Update the Americans with Disabilities Act Modified Consent Decree On-Demand Accessibility Program: Institute the Rapid Access Program and Cancel Projects*, February 14, 2012, p 1.



As a result, the RAP Status Report included inaccurate project types, and decisions may have been made based on incorrect information. It can be challenging to monitor and manage the RAP projects if the details are not complete and accurate. If the project type is not updated, the incorrect information could be relayed to the principals expecting to have the requested project completed rapidly.

### ***Recommendation 1***

We recommend that the Facilities Project Manager II consistently update the RAP Status Report to avoid any issues with monitoring and decision-making. The report should reflect the correct classification of the project type; therefore, the report should be updated after every school visit is completed to ensure the correct classification has been selected for the project.

### **Facilities Services Division Response:**

The Facilities Services Division (“Division”) agreed with the recommendation and indicated that it implemented it on April 18, 2023. The division also highlighted that of the 123 RAP projects completed, only two were misclassified.

**Objective: To determine whether The RAP projects were completed in a timely manner.**

### **RAP Timeliness**

District policies and procedures did not have a clear completion timeline for RAP projects.

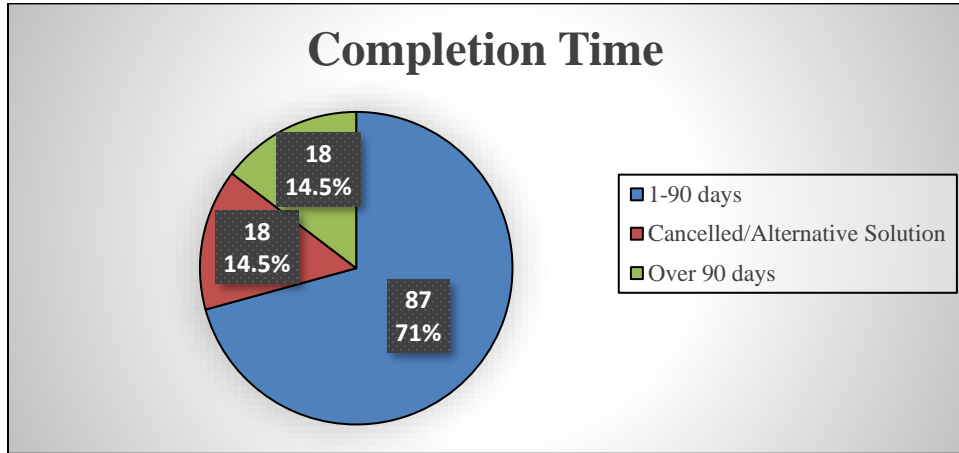
According to Reference Guide 066902, “A RAP request is appropriate for school requests that may require minor and rapid construction or construction-related modifications.”<sup>12</sup> Modifications under the RAP are intended to be simple and quick fixes. Per the ACU internal goals, RAP projects should be completed within 90 days.

District policies and procedures did not have a clear timeline for the number of days it should take to complete a RAP project. The completion of RAP projects ranged from five to 212 days. We noted that 18 (14.5%) of 123 projects were completed over 90 days, as shown in Chart 2 below.

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<sup>12</sup> LAUSD Reference Guide - 066902, *Procedures to Request Barrier Removal for Program Accessibility, for Students and Other Individuals with Disabilities*, March 11, 2019, issued by the Office of the General Counsel, p 4.

Chart 2  
Project Completion Time



The ACU disclosed that the projects did not meet the internal 90-day goal because of various project delays. The ACU stated that some delays were caused by the following:

- Products purchased for projects did not pass inspections.
- Ramps did not meet specific clearance requirements for existing electrical boxes.
- Staffing issues such as lack of time for the architect to prepare drawings for the installation of ramps and the installers relying on incorrect layouts.
- Construction delays and equipment delivery delays.
- The team needed to re-work projects.

The ACU staff stated that this condition also occurred because it is difficult to establish a fixed number of days to complete a RAP project because of the various types of projects being completed and their level of complexity. The reference guide states that various projects qualify as RAP and that the completion time can vary for each one.

As a result, some RAP projects were not completed within a “rapid” timeframe. When projects were not completed on time, the principal needed to assess whether the interim solution could continue for a longer period. In addition, there was an increased risk of additional stress to the student with an unmet need and their family. For example, a principal noted that the project took too long in one instance that by the time it was completed, the student the request was intended for was no longer enrolled at the school. The parents felt that the student was not accommodated at the school and enrolled them in another school that provided the accessibility the student needed.

When projects take longer than the proposed timeline, it may lead the parents, students, or community members to believe that their inaccessibility to a District facility is not a priority for the school and the District itself.

### ***Recommendation 2***

We recommend that the Facilities Project Execution Branch management create a formal policy and establish a timeline for the RAP projects.

**Facilities Services Division Response:**

The Facilities Services Division agreed with the intention of the recommendation. They noted that according to Reference Guide (REF-066902), Facilities, Special Education, and school staff are required to implement an operational solution that provides Program Access for the interim period until the barrier is removed.

As of April 18, 2023, facilities will continue to use REF-066902 and actively monitor RAP projects using metrics. The ACU’s goal is to complete RAP projects as soon as possible.

***Recommendation 3***

We recommend that the ACU follow up with significant delays related to budget approvals, Maintenance and Operations project cost estimates, Maintenance and Operations staff arrangement, construction delays, or equipment delivery delays.

ACU staff should also communicate the existence of significant delays to the principals and, if necessary, provide alternative solutions to the accessibility barrier.

**Facilities Services Division Response:**

The Facilities Services Division agreed with the recommendation. The Division noted that the ACU staff members work with principals from the outset of the projects to give the school staff reasonable expectations for completion dates and to ensure that an interim measure for program access is in place wherever possible. The Division stated that there are only a few instances where interim Program Access is not achieved. Once an interim measure has been implemented, then program accessibility is achieved.

The Project Execution team will continue to manage the RAP projects as their top priority and endeavor to keep the school staff updated on the progress of the permanent solutions. The implementation of the action plan was completed on April 18, 2023.

**Timing of Site Visits After Request is Submitted**

Some site visits by the ACU took place more than three days after the submission of the RAP Request Form.

According to the ACU and the Excel spreadsheet where RAP projects are tracked, a site must be visited within three days of receiving a request. Per Reference Guide 066902, RAP projects are intended to be minor modifications that can be completed quickly.

During the review of the RAP Status Report, we noted that many of the site visits performed by the Access Compliance Unit were completed more than three days after the request was received. Twenty-nine (24%) out of 123 RAP projects did not have a site visit within the three days a request was submitted. Instead, the site visits were completed four to 31 days after the request was submitted, as listed in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**  
**List of Projects – Delayed Site Visits**

<b>School Name</b>	<b>Project Scope</b>	<b>Calendar Year Request Was Received</b>	<b>No. of days from RAP Request Date to Site Visit</b>
Plummer ES	Install metal ramp room 2	2017	4
Cantara ES	Install ramp	2018	4
Olive Vista MS	Install electrical outlet	2018	4
Caroldale ES	New Threshold Room 12	2020	4
Ford ES	Needs ramp - room 49	2020	4
Wilson HS	Remove urinals and install electrical outlet	2017	5
Pomelo ES	Install metal ramp room 19&20	2017	5
Fleming MS	Provide space for a lift in an accessible stall	2017	5
Humphreys ES	Add step-n-wash to the lower yard	2018	5
Hamasaki ES	TMP Ramp	2019	5
Mayall ES	Identify and construct a space for a hi-lo changing table.	2019	5
Widney HS	Remove three toilets and one sink, and fix a table. Provide two outlets	2019	7
Independence HS	Need ramp to the main office for parent	2022	7
Green Design at Diego Rivera LC	Provide and install an accessible lavatory sink	2017	8
Humphreys ES	2 Step N Wash near Room 23	2018	8
Van Nuys HS	Install two ramps, one in Room 523 and one at 519	2019	9
Chapman ES	Provide a replacement for a broken hi-lo changing table	2019	9
24th St ES	Provide changing room	2019	9
Stevenson MS	Renovate Restroom for Changing Table; P&I Electrical Outlet; Remove and Cap Toilet; P&I Compliant Toilet Stall at North Building Restroom	2017	10
Van Nuys HS	Ramps for two classrooms	2018	10
Widney HS	Provide three outlets for changing tables	2019	10
109th St ES	Provide TMP Ramp Room 36	2020	10
Fairfax HS	Install Stainless Sink from other location	2017	11
Evergreen CHS (at Sylmar HS)	Install two ramps	2019	11
Nava Prep	Install a grab bar in a restroom	2017	12
Limerick ES	Provide Ramp Bldg X1072M for classrooms 34 & 35	2019	15
Gage MS	Install Rifton Support Station	2018	18
Topeka ES	P&I Handrails at Existing Concrete Ramp. Relocate Pedestrian Gates; P&I Perimeter Fencing at Kindergarten	2017	19
Stevenson MS	Rifton station	2017	31

Also, we noted that ten projects were missing the site visit date, and 26 had site visit dates before the date in the RAP Request Form.

The ACU stated that the visits were not conducted within three days after receiving the request because the unit consisted of only two individuals who completed the site visits. The ACU handles all RAP and CBR requests; it can sometimes be challenging to manage all the projects and the other work assigned. All projects missing a site visit date were canceled, or an alternative solution was implemented. Some projects reflected a site visit date before the RAP Request Form date because the ACU initially received the request via email or phone. Principals did not complete the form until after the site visit date and after they were asked to do so.

The visits not being conducted within the three days led to project requests taking a long time to be reviewed and a delay in finding a solution to the access issues the schools might be encountering. Sometimes, it might be difficult for the principal to determine the safest interim solution to accommodate the student, employee, or community member while construction is underway. In addition, a delay in the initial phases of the project can prolong the completion timeline, which could result in a student or parent having to struggle to obtain access to a District facility.

#### ***Recommendation 4***

We recommend that Facilities Project Execution Branch management should:

1. Reallocate staff responsibilities to ensure they can meet the three-day deadline.
2. Consider the need to add staff to work on RAP and CBR projects.

#### **Facilities Services Division Response:**

The Facilities Services Division indicated that after an assessment of the three-day goal to conduct a site visit, the Project Execution group within the Facilities Division determined that this goal needed to be updated, given that it had learned that conducting a site visit is more successful when all parties visited the site together, including the architect, ramp installer, or the Owner Authorized Representative, and this can take more time to schedule. Therefore, the ACU has updated its internal goals to contact the RAP requestor within three days and will follow up with a site visit within 14 days if required. This goal was implemented on April 18, 2023.

#### ***Recommendation 5***

We recommend that the ACU should:

1. Update the RAP Status Report to include a column for the date the project was canceled and the description of the alternative solution to assist in the monitoring process.
2. Inform principals of the RAP and how to complete a RAP request form.

#### **Facilities Services Division Response:**

The Facilities Services Division agreed with the recommendation. It indicated that it included the description of the alternative solutions or canceled projects in the RAP Status Report note section on April 18, 2023. In addition, the Division clarified that although it is important that the RAP request form is completed, that action is taken even if a RAP request form has not been completed.

by the time the request is received. The Division also indicated that the Office of ADA Compliance and the Division of Special Education will send an Informative on the RAP Program, which will direct key staff to REF-066902.1, Procedures to Request Barrier Removal, BUL-046982.1 – Compliance with Title II of the ADA and conduct a refresher training through the District. The departments plan to send the Informative by August 2023 and conduct the training by August 2024.

## **Other Observations**

### **RAP Awareness**

Some school principals were unaware of the RAP or where to submit a request if they needed a RAP project implemented at their school.

According to the ACU, the Division of Special Education and the Office of ADA Compliance have informed principals about the RAP. However, the ACU recently conducted a presentation about the RAP program to the special education principals and realized that many were not aware of the RAP program. Reference Guide 066902 states, "The employee who is responsible for a site, facility, program or activity may be the school principal."<sup>13</sup>

We visited 24 schools to verify that the RAP projects were completed and noted that all RAP projects were completed with no exceptions. We also had discussions with the principals regarding the program and any areas of improvement. Based on our interviews, we discovered that 19 (79%) of the 24 school principals interviewed were not aware of the existence of the program. The principals who were aware of the program had previous experience with accessibility renovations at their former or current schools. Some principals stated that they had difficulty figuring out where to send their requests until they were directed to the ACU. They said that they would not have been aware of the program if it was not due to their previous experience. Many of the principals who did not have experience with accessibility renovations stated that they would typically contact Maintenance and Operations or the Division of Special Education for assistance.

The ACU stated that the Division of Special Education and the Office of ADA Compliance have taken on the task of informing principals on requesting a RAP project. However, 19 of the 24 principals interviewed stated they had not been provided with Reference Guide 066902 or the link to the RAP Request Form. Principals also noted that the reference guide and the RAP Request Form were not included in the yearly training or the Principal's Portal.

As a result of the above, some principals may not have been able to assist the students and employees with accessibility needs in a timely manner. Some principals submitted requests to various departments until they were directed to the ACU. At that point, much time had passed, defeating the program's purpose to rapidly implement modifications for the accessibility of the students, staff, and the community.

If the principals are not quickly directed to the correct unit, this will only increase the time students are waiting to obtain the accessibility they need and possibly hinder their learning

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p 3.

environment. It is crucial for the principals to be informed about the RAP to ensure that they can directly submit a request when they are made aware of an accessibility barrier. The District needs to prioritize the RAP to ensure that the students, parents, and community members accessibility is not at risk.

***Recommendation 6***

We recommend that the ACU coordinate with the Division of Special Education and the Office of ADA Compliance to have a principal outreach. The two departments can assist in integrating the reference guide and the RAP Request Form into the principals' yearly training and the Principal's Portal. By including information about the RAP in the yearly training, principals will be familiar with the program and be aware that the ACU was established to assist them with accessibility requests.

**Facilities Services Division Response:**

The Facilities Services Division indicated that the Office of ADA Compliance and the Division of Special Education will send an Informative on the RAP Program, which will direct key staff to REF-066902.1, Procedures to Request Barrier Removal, BUL-046982.1 – Compliance with Title II of the ADA and conduct a refresher training through the District. The departments plan to send the Informative by August 2023 and conduct the training by August 2024.

**AUDIT TEAM**

This audit was conducted by the Office of the Inspector General's Audit Unit Team:

Maria Thomas, Audit Manager  
Silas Awujo, Acting Audit Manager  
Victor Reyes, Senior Auditor  
Jacqueline Jerez, Senior Auditor

## **SCOPE AND OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the audit was to determine whether (i) the type of the Facilities RAP projects were within the specifications of the District's reference guide and (ii) the RAP projects are completed in a timely manner.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. The audit covered the period from 2017 to 2022.

## **METHODOLOGY**

To accomplish our audit objectives, we conducted field visits at 24 schools (four for each of the six local Districts) with RAP projects installed and verified their existence. In addition, we conducted interviews with key District personnel, reviewed District policies and procedures, verified the completion of the projects, and reviewed the RAP monitoring spreadsheet.

## **EVALUATION OF INTERNAL CONTROLS**

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we obtained an understanding of internal control that is significant within the context of the audit objectives. We assessed whether internal controls were properly designed and implemented. For those controls that were deemed significant, we obtained sufficient, appropriate evidence to support our assessment of the effectiveness of those controls.

We are required to report deficiencies in internal controls that are significant within the context of the audit objectives. A deficiency in internal controls exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct (i) impairments of effectiveness or efficiency of operations, (ii) misstatements in financial or performance information; or (iii) noncompliance with provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, or grant agreements on a timely basis. Based on our audit, we found deficiencies in internal controls; certain control activities, and processes that could be strengthened and improved, details of which are provided in this report's Results of Audit section.



Facilities Services Division - Verbatim Response



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Facilities Services Division

**DATE:** May 2, 2023  
**TO:** Austin Onwualu, Deputy Inspector General  
Office of the Inspector General  
**FROM:** Mark Hovatter, Chief Facilities Executive   
Facilities Service Division  
**SUBJECT: Audit Report of Access Compliance**

Please find below Facilities Services Division’s response to recommendations provided in the Office of the Inspector General’s Audit Report of the Access Compliance Unit.

**Objective:** To determine whether the Facilities RAP projects were within the specifications of the District’s reference guide.

**Observation No. 1: Incorrect Classification**

Some projects were incorrectly classified as RAP or CBR.

**Recommendation No. 1**

We recommend that the Facilities Project Manager II should consistently update the RAP Status Report to avoid any issues with monitoring and decision-making. The report should reflect the correct classification of the project type; therefore, the report should be updated after every school visit is completed to ensure the correct classification has been selected for the project.

**Facilities Response to Recommendation No. 1:**

- i. **Response:** Facilities concurs with the recommendation but would like to highlight that of 123 RAP projects completed only two were misclassified.
- ii. **Action Plan:** Facilities will review and update the RAP Status Report after every school visit is completed.
- iii. **Target date to implement Action Plan:** Recommendation implemented on 4/18/2023.

**Objective:** To determine whether The RAP projects were completed in a timely manner.

**Observation No. 2: RAP Timeliness**

District policies and procedures did not have a clear completion timeline for RAP projects.

**Recommendation No. 2**

We recommend that the Facilities Project Execution Branch management should create a formal policy and establish a timeline for the RAP projects.

**Facilities Response to Recommendation No. 2:**

- i. **Response:** Facilities agrees with the intent of the recommendation. It is important to note per Reference Guide (REF-066902); Facilities, Special Education and School staff are required to implement an operational solution that provides Program Access for the interim period until the barrier is removed.
- ii. **Action Plan:** Facilities will continue to use REF-066902 and actively monitor RAP projects using metrics. ACU's goal is to complete RAP projects as soon as possible.
- iii. **Target date to implement Action Plan:** Completed 4/18/2023.

**Recommendation No. 3**

We recommend that the ACU should follow up with significant delays, whether they are regarding budget approvals, Maintenance and Operations project cost estimates, Maintenance and Operations staff arrangement, construction delays, or equipment delivery delays.

ACU staff should also communicate the existence of significant delays to the principals and, if necessary, provide alternative solutions to the accessibility barrier.

**Facilities Response to Recommendation No. 3:**

- i. **Response:** Facilities concur with this recommendation. ACU staff members work with principals from the outset of the projects to give the school staff reasonable expectations for completion dates and to ensure that an interim measure for program access is in place wherever possible. There are very few instances where interim Program Access is not achieved. Once an interim measure has been implemented, then program accessibility is achieved.
- ii. **Action Plan:** Project Execution will continue to manage RAP projects as one of their top priorities and endeavor to keep the school staff updated on the progress of the permanent solutions.
- iii. **Target date to implement Action Plan:** Project Execution will continue to communicate changes of the estimated completion dates to principals. Action completed 4/18/2023.

### **Observation No. 3: Timing of Site Visits After Request is Submitted**

Some site visits by the ACU took place more than three days after the submission of the RAP Request Form.

### **Recommendation No. 4**

We recommend that the Facilities Project Execution Branch management should:

1. Reallocate staff responsibilities to ensure they can meet the three-day deadline.

#### **Facilities Response to Recommendation No. 4(1):**

- i. **Response:** During the early part of the program, ACU would send someone out the next day to understand the request which accomplished the three-day goal. However, ACU learned that the site visit is more successful when all parties, including the architect, ramp installer (if required), and the OAR attend. These visits may take longer to coordinate but are more effective and efficient in planning the permanent solution. It is important to mention that not all requests require a site visit. Some solutions can be discussed via phone or zoom; some requests do not qualify under the RAP. Ultimately, when Facilities is notified of a RAP request, they will contact the requestor within three days, but the site visit may take longer to schedule.
  - ii. **Action Plan:** ACU's goal will be to contact the RAP requestor within three days and follow up with a site visit within 14 days if one is required.
  - iii. **Target date to implement Action Plan:** Completed 4/18/2023.
2. Consider the need to add staff to work on RAP and CBR projects.

#### **Facilities Response to Recommendation No. 4(2):**

- i. **Response:** Facilities agrees and continues to evaluate and hire staff in ACU, Project Execution, and M&O that support the ADA program. However, it is important to note that there are numerous urgent requirements that Facilities manages daily. The positive aspect of the ADA program is Facilities has approximately 42 personnel dedicated to improving Program Access throughout the District and is spending hundreds of millions of dollars in capital improvement projects which should be ultimately reducing the number of RAPs long-term.
- ii. **Action Plan:** Facilities will continue to evaluate staffing requirements supporting the ADA programs to ensure staffing is adequate to meet the needs for the RAP program.
- iii. **Target date to implement Action Plan:** Completed 4/18/2023.

**Recommendation No. 5**

We recommend that the ACU should:

1. Update the RAP Status Report to include a column for the date the project was canceled and the description of the alternative solution to assist in the monitoring process.

**Facilities Response to Recommendation No. 5(1):**

- i. **Response:** Facilities agrees to include the description of the alternative solutions or canceled projects in the RAP Status Report note section.
- ii. **Action Plan:** See response above.
- iii. **Target date to implement Action Plan:** Completed 4/18/2023.

2. Inform principals of the RAP and how to complete a RAP request form.

**Facilities Response to Recommendation No. 5(2):**

- i. **Response:** Facilities agrees but does not wait for a formal RAP request to get started on a solution. When a request comes in from the field, whether from the principal, CPM, Board office or Local District representative or others, action is taken immediately.
- ii. **Action Plan:** The Office of ADA Compliance and Division of Special Education will send an Informative on the RAP Program that directs key staff to REF-066902.1, Procedures to Request Barrier Removal, BUL-046982.1 - Compliance with Title II of the ADA and conduct refresher training throughout the District.
- iii. **Target date to implement Action Plan:** The Office of ADA Compliance and Division of Special Ed will send an Informative by August 2023 and conduct training by August 2024.

**Observation No. 4: RAP Awareness**

Some school principals were unaware of the RAP or where to submit a request if they needed a RAP project implemented at their school.

**Recommendation No. 6**

We recommend that the ACU should coordinate with the Division of Special Education and the Office of ADA Compliance to have a principal outreach. The two departments can assist in integrating the reference guide and the RAP Request Form into the principals' yearly training and the Principal's Portal. By including information about the RAP in the yearly training, principals will be familiar with the program and be aware that the ACU was established to assist them with accessibility requests.



**Facilities Response to Recommendation No. 6:**

- i. **Response:** See response 5(2) above.
- ii. **Action Plan:** See response 5(2) above.
- iii. **Target date to implement Action Plan:** See response 5(2) above.

C: Jung Beum Kim  
Krisztina Tokes  
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Steve Boehm

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