



# Breaking Ground

*The OPSC/DSA Connection to California School Districts*

State of California • Department of General Services

A PUBLICATION OF THE DIVISION OF THE STATE ARCHITECT AND THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

SUMMER 2005

*a letter from*

**David Thorman and Luisa M. Park**



**M**uch has happened since our last issue of the *Breaking Ground* newsletter approximately two years ago. Luisa Park was reappointed as the Executive Officer of the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) in January 2005 and David Thorman was appointed as the State Architect of California in April 2005. We are pleased to participate in this sixth issue of the OPSC and the Division of the State Architect (DSA) joint publication. This newsletter is published twice a year, or as needed to address key issues, and previews the collaborative efforts between our offices within the Department of General Services. *Breaking Ground* provides school districts, architects, design professionals, and consultants with information relating to both the OPSC and DSA processes, policies, and our latest joint ventures in California's school construction projects.

This issue features a topic that is extremely important and vital to school districts when filing an application for State funding—*The DSA Approval Requirement*. The articles highlight the importance of obtaining DSA approval of the plans and specifications for your new construction or modernization project before signing the construction contract.

We look forward to providing you with a newsletter filled with substance and anticipate that you will find this newsletter a valuable resource. Previous issues of *Breaking Ground* can be found on the OPSC Website at [www.opsc.dgs.ca.gov/ResourceInformation](http://www.opsc.dgs.ca.gov/ResourceInformation). We welcome your input as we continue

to develop and fine-tune our joint newsletter to meet your needs. Contact *Breaking Ground* with your comments at [breaking.ground@dgs.ca.gov](mailto:breaking.ground@dgs.ca.gov).

For those of you who look forward to receiving the *OPSC Advisory Actions*, do not worry. You can still count on receiving these important updates on recent State Allocation Board actions.



**David Thorman**

State Architect, Division of the State Architect



**Luisa M. Park**

Executive Officer, Office of Public School Construction



# DSA Approval and Award of Construction Contract Dates

DAN LEVERNIER, DSA REGIONAL MANAGER

Section 17297 of the Education Code states that "...before letting any contract for any construction or alteration of any school building, the written approval of the plans, as to the safety of design and construction, by the Department of General Services, shall be first had and obtained." Also, Section 17307 indicates that "No contract for the construction or alteration of any school building...is valid, and no public money shall be paid for any work done under a contract ...unless the approval thereof in writing has first been had and obtained from the Department of General Services."

The responsibility for providing the above plan approval has been delegated to the DSA by the Department of General Services. Section 4-318 of Part 1, Title 24 states "DSA shall issue to the school district a letter approving the application for the project upon receipt of the stamped file copies of the approved plans and specifications. This letter shall constitute the 'written approval of the plans, as to safety of design and construction'

required by Sections 17297 and 81134, Education Code, before letting any contract..." Also, this section requires that prints of the stamped plans and specifications be submitted to DSA within 14 days of the date the plans and specifications are stamped by DSA.

Therefore, the official DSA plan approval date is the date of the DSA approval letter which is issued when a copy of the stamped plans and specifications is received by DSA. The plan approval date is not the date that the plans were stamped. Beginning October 1, 2005, only the date of the DSA approval letter will be considered valid approval.

A copy of the stamped plans and specifications should be submitted to DSA as soon as possible after they are stamped so an approval letter can be issued. In accordance with the above, no construction contract should be awarded until the approval letter has been issued by DSA. ●

GENERAL SERVICES  
Sacramento Office

DISTRICT  
HOUSE BLDG

Stamped by the Division of the State  
Inspections has been filed on 8/22/05.

and construction" required before letting  
drawings and specifications. The date of

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contract information, including the

(California Electrical Code), 4  
it is the responsibility of the professional

itions specific to this project:

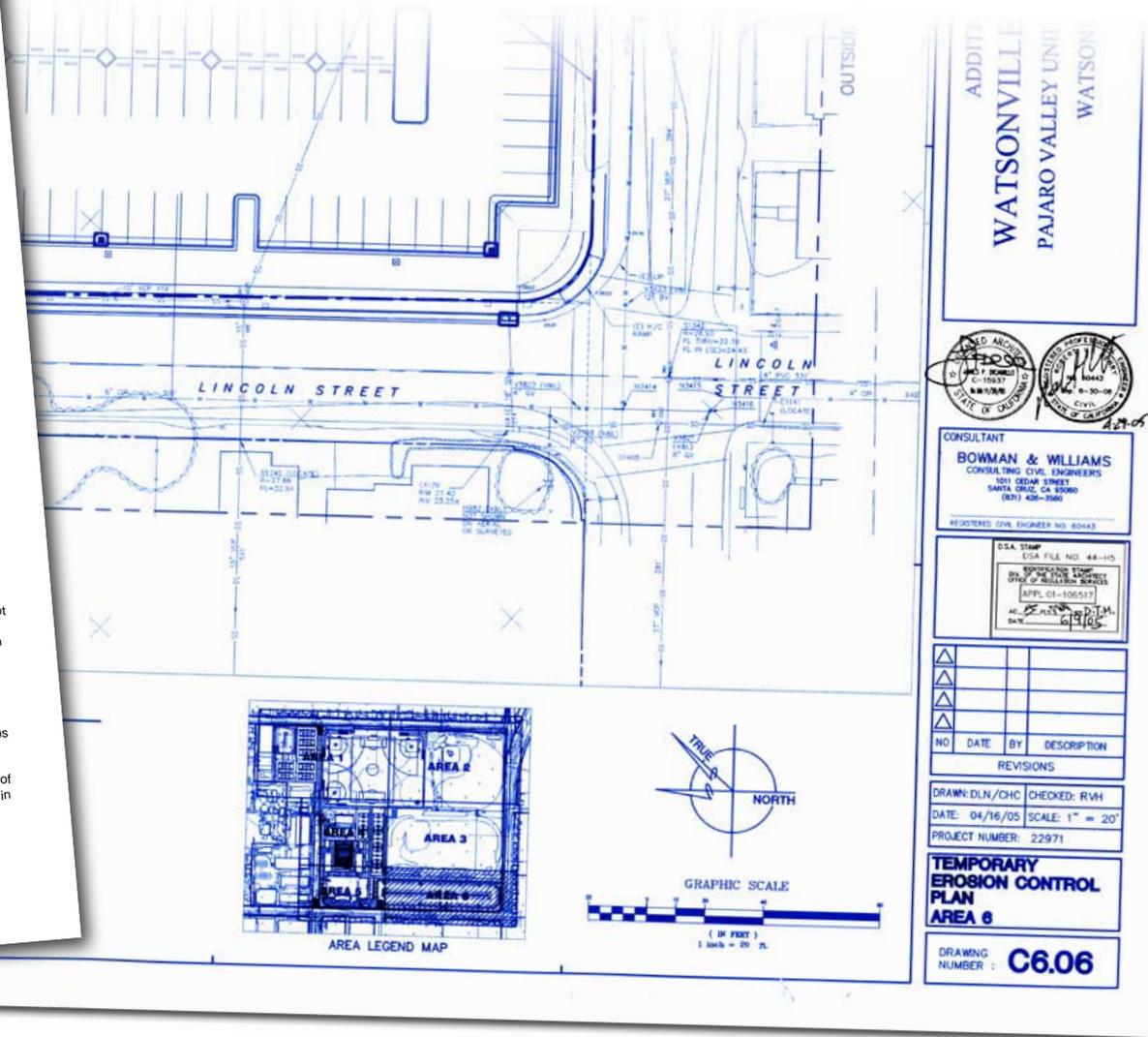
ifications will meet minimum required  
structural, and fire and life safety.

necessary to assure long service have not  
minimum required standards for structural,  
dioration in the building in order to maintain

ed under the provisions of Sections  
placement of a fire damaged building to be  
sly approved by this office. The drawings  
conform to the drawings and specifications

nd building standards in effect at the time of  
regulations, or building standards currently in

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