

**For Immediate Release**  
May 3, 2021

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# **CAMPUS FOR ALL-GIRLS SCHOOL BELIEVED TO BE FIRST IN U.S. CONSTRUCTED ENTIRELY OF RECYCLED SHIPPING CONTAINERS**

*The school, which received unanimous approval from the L.A. City Planning Commission, would become the permanent campus for the S.F. Valley's first and only public all-girls school.*

**Panorama City, CA**—The permanent campus for Girls Athletic Leadership Academy Los Angeles (GALS LA)—whose design was unanimously approved by the L.A. City Planning Commission in March—is believed to be the first school in country that would be constructed entirely of recycled shipping containers. While there are schools in the country that have used shipping containers to expand their facilities, there's scant evidence of entire schools in the U.S. that are built out of shipping containers. There are schools built out of shipping containers in other countries, however.

The entire project will use 72 40-foot shipping containers. A two-story building that will house 16 classrooms will be approximately 21,360 square feet. The facility will also include a 1,960-square-foot multipurpose room and a 2,560-square-foot office, conference space and teachers' lounge. The campus will also feature multiple spaces for outdoor athletics and movement, including a running track and sports field, and a large covered outdoor eating pavilion. There will also be an on-site pick-up and drop-off area, as well as 41 parking spaces, designed to limit traffic impacts on the neighborhood.

“It was important to us to build our permanent campus on the same values we've built our school, with a facility that makes as minimal an impact as possible on the environment, limits the construction noise and pollution on our neighbors and also brings a great benefit to the community with an innovative, high-performing school,” said Carrie Wagner.

The environmentally responsible project demonstrates an innovative and sustainable approach to school design and construction. It uses repurposed single-use shipping containers with net zero energy usage. The bulk of the construction occurs off-site and in half the time of traditional school building construction. The building will be fabricated locally in an L.A. manufacturing facility and the prefabricated modules are delivered to the construction site to be assembled in weeks, substantially limiting construction noise and pollution.

The school would be one of the first to meet the expanded guidelines of L.A. City's [Healthy Buildings, Healthy Places](#) Design Guide, which was launched this year by the city's planning department to encourage projects that bring together sustainable, community-centered design, physical and emotional health and equity—particularly in communities of color.

“This school is not just for the 330 girls, most of whom come from families of color, that we serve. It’s a building that has a role in the broader community, so it was designed to positively affect the way people live and play a role in making the overall community healthier,” Project Manager Kathy Dominguez said. “As a school, GALS shares the vision the city has put forward to build healthier cities and as schools are one of the pillars of strong communities, we wanted to make sure the school ticked all the boxes to bring a space that would promote health and equity to Van Nuys’s residents.”

The school has tremendous support in the community where it will be built, with more than 333 residents who live within a half mile of the site signing a petition to bring the school to their neighborhood. The L.A. City Planning Commission also expressed enthusiastic support for building a school at the Van Nuys location (14203 W. Valerio St.), unanimously approving the project on March 11. They lauded the thoughtfulness of the design that minimized traffic and noise impacts on the neighborhood as well as the community benefit of bringing in a high-quality public school option. Enrollment at the school will not exceed 330 students and 100 of the spots are intended for girls in the immediate neighborhood.

GALS LA’s college prep program has a demonstrated track record of success, outperforming neighborhood schools in math and English Language Arts with a model that focuses on rigorous academics, social emotional learning and athletics. The state-of-the-art campus would allow the middle school, which serves 96 percent girls of color and 88 percent from low-income families, to have its own standalone campus for the first time in its five-year history. The school also does not have any plans to grow and will be capped at 330 students.

GALS is designed around the science that a single-gender environment can realize powerful outcomes for adolescent girls. Research shows that the performance of minority students in single-gender schools is stronger on all tests on average and nearly one academic year above that of their peers in a co-ed setting. Further research reveals that all-girls school settings help provide students with a comfort level that helps them develop greater self-confidence and broader interests, especially as they approach adolescence.

*[The Girls Athletic Leadership School Los Angeles \(GALS LA\)](#)—the first and only all-girls public school in the San Fernando Valley—is committed to preparing a generation of female leaders who lead not just from their brilliant minds but also their hearts. Through the integration of a health and wellness curriculum addressing the physical, emotional, and psychosocial needs of female adolescent development, GALS LA balances the goal of building strong minds and bodies with the opportunity for students to garner the skillset to emerge as leaders of their own lives. The Girls Athletic Leadership School Los Angeles envisions a world where all young women, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to access the skills, knowledge, and self-determination to succeed in secondary school, college, in their communities and the world.*