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Binti Harvey: (213) 241-4575; (213) 215-7204 mobile # 0607- 179

LAUSD CUTS THE RIBBON ON FRANK DEL OLMO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

(Los Angeles) - Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Superintendent Roy Romer and LAUSD Board Member Mónica García joined with students, parents and community members to cut the ribbon on Frank del Olmo Elementary School, formerly known as Belmont New Elementary School #6.

The school, named for the late famed journalist Frank del Olmo, expands the network of elementary education facilities in one of the most densely-populated areas of Los Angeles, ending long bus rides for students in the Koreatown area. "It is with great pride and much enthusiasm that we name this beautiful new school after the great Frank del Olmo," said Board Member García. "Like its namesake, this school will continue to inspire and empower the children and families of this great city and develop the next generation of leaders and community advocates."

"Frank del Olmo Elementary School brings the academic environment these students need to succeed to their own neighborhood," said Superintendent Roy Romer. "The positive impact will extend to other nearby elementary schools, as we move towards a two-semester calendar for all students."

On October 17, 2006 the LAUSD Board of Education officially approved the naming of Belmont New Elementary #6 for Frank del Olmo, the late L.A. Times newsman celebrated for his award-winning work in journalism and contributions to the Latino community. Del Olmo was the first Latino to be promoted to the Times' top tier of editors. He was a co-founder of the California Chicano News Media Association, and played a key role in establishing the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

"My late husband Frank understood both the role of education and the power of the written word to improve people's lives," said Magdalena Beltran-del Olmo, vice president at The California Wellness Foundation. "Our family is touched by the school community's embrace of our beloved Frank and the historic role he played at the Los Angeles Times. We believe that the children attending Frank del Olmo Elementary School will be nurtured by his legacy to grow up realizing they too can harness their drive and intelligence to achieve good in our society, just the way Frank did with his mighty pen."

Frank del Olmo Elementary opened in August, providing 975 seats to students in grades K - 5, and long-awaited relief from overcrowding at nearby Cahuenga Elementary and Commonwealth Elementary. Along with 39 classrooms dedicated to a rigorous curriculum, its facilities include: a maximized playground area, a library, a multi-purpose room, sheltered lunch area, administration offices and underground parking.

"The completion of this school allowed the LAUSD to end bussing for hundreds of students in this neighborhood, improving the quality of their education and expanding the opportunities for parental involvement in their academic lives," said Guy Mehula, Chief Facilities Executive. "This is what this construction program is all about." The school site was formerly occupied by the Korea Times, and prior still served as the studio where Godzilla was filmed. To memorialize the site's movie-making history, the Godzilla Society dedicated a plaque to the school.

The LAUSD opened 13 new schools this year, eliminating involuntary bussing for elementary school students and returning 31 schools to a 180-day, full-year calendar. Frank del Olmo Elementary is part of the LAUSD's \$19.3 billion school construction program to build more than 150 schools by 2012. The program is designed to provide a neighborhood school on a traditional calendar for every student, eliminate involuntary bussing and create small learning communities in every high school. By the end of 2006, the LAUSD will have opened 65 new schools, completed 44 additions, and opened 22 Early Education Centers. # # #