U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Office of the Associate Administrator
for Airports

800 Independence Ave., SW.
Washington, DC 20591

NOV 06 2009

Dear

Mr. Rick Day has asked me to respond to your September 22 letter regarding the matter of providing Federal financial assistance for school soundproofing. Your letter expressed concerns about Carpenter School located in Park Ridge and the O'Hare School Sound Insulation Program. The Federal Aviation Administration has partnered with the city of Chicago and the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) to provide Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding for many years. Over a period of more than 15 years, we have been pleased and proud to be able to provide more than $275 million in AIP and passenger facility charge funds for school sound insulation around Chicago O'Hare International Airport.

You asked FAA to take a closer look at the eligibility for sound insulation at Carpenter School. As requested, we have reviewed the situation and confirmed that this school is not eligible for sound insulation based on the O'Hare Modernization Program Full Build-Out Noise Contour. Carpenter School is at a day/night sound level (DNL) of 54.2 decibels (dB).

We do not usually consider mitigation below DNL 65 dB for AIP funding. The AIP continues to see strong national competition for noise mitigation projects within the federally defined area of adversely affected DNL 65 dB and greater.

FAA's noise program recognizes locally established standards of noncompatibility below DNL 65 dB. In February 2005, ONCC, with the support of the city of Chicago, passed a resolution that supports the use of the DNL 60 dB noise contour as a locally established standard of noncompatibility.

The rules governing this determination are simple and uniform throughout the Nation. As I am sure you can appreciate, in the interest of fairness to other communities in Illinois and throughout the Nation, FAA cannot waive eligibility or longstanding policies.

The city has committed to conduct new noise testing and prepare updated noise maps, after the O'Hare Modernization Program is completed, that reflect the then-current conditions. The FAA will be prepared to work with the city and the ONCC to evaluate the eligibility for any schools that would be potentially eligible at that time.

I appreciate you contacting FAA about this important issue. If we can help you further, please continue to work through Mr. Jim Keefer, Manager of our Chicago Airports District Office, at (847) 294-7336.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:
Catherine M. Lang

Catherine M. Lang
Acting Associate Administrator
for Airports