

**EERI School Seismic Initiative**  
**Best Practice Sharing Webinar #2**  
Thursday, 6/12/14

Audio Presentation Summary Notes:

**Arrietta Chakos; City of Berkeley School Retrofit Program**

- Parent experiences from local 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake prompted this effort to improve the seismic safety of Berkeley Schools
  - Formed group of parents worried about safety (include EERI engineer & other parent advocates)
  - Advisory/Oversight Group formed with parents and advocates for Preliminary Assessments of all Berkeley schools (within ~6 months of earthquake)
    - 9 out of 16 schools did not meet requirements at the time
  - EERI members offered pro-bono support and testified to school board and city council on this topic
  - Temporary schools with ~ 18 months of earthquake
  - Introduced legislation to necessitate seismic school upgrades and support by State Bond funds
- Road Blocks
  - Pushback from Sacramento State Allocation Board (funding agency for bonds)
  - Lack of understanding
  - Not wanting to put more money into school safety
- From 1992 – 2010 City of Berkeley has passed 8-9 local tax bond measures (~\$1/2 billion + \$100s millions of state match, etc.) for public safety upgrades and improvements for disaster readiness (earthquake and fire)
  - Every school building in Berkeley has been retrofitted or rebuilt
  - All fire stations rebuilt or retrofitted
  - EOC retrofit
  - City hall retrofit
  - Public safety building retrofit
- **KEY LESSONS:**
  - 1. Leveraged professional expertise of Bay Area for help**
    - a. Came to policy makers with credible material & technical expertise/calls for action
  - 2. Developed an active and engaged group of advocates in community**
    - a. Attended *every* school board meeting for 18 months with constant visibility and calls for action to keep message alive
  - 3. Had very responsive elected officials**
    - a. Able to get help and engagement from officials: Mayor, local Board of Education, State assembly members, Congressmen
    - b. This engagement made additional funds available from state and federal government
  - 4. Engaged whole community through political process**
    - a. Took and passed numerous bonds to voters (note that CA requires 2/3 majority vote on all tax measures)