



LAUSD Marks Ambassador School Groundbreaking

Local officials last week took a step they've been talking about for decades, when the Los Angeles Unified School District held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new complex at the former site of the Ambassador Hotel. On Monday, Nov. 20, figures including retired Superintendent Roy Romer and LAUSD Board Member Mónica Garcia gathered to celebrate the commencement of the project, officially known as Central Los Angeles Learning Center No. 1. "This is a tremendous victory for the children and families of this community who have waited for years for a neighborhood school," Garcia said. The complex will serve more than 4,000 students, from kindergarten through high school, with multiple campus areas and small learning communities, according to officials. The campus will feature a new public park honoring Robert F. Kennedy, who was assassinated in the hotel's pantry in 1968. At the urging of historians and preservationists, elements of the old building - such as the Cocoanut Grove nightclub and the coffee shop designed by Paul R. Williams - will be integrated into the new complex. Since LAUSD first entertained the notion of converting the Ambassador into a school, some decried the loss of the historic site, though many in the neighborhood have called for new educational facilities, citing overcrowding and the need for busing students. Max Kennedy, who attended the Nov. 20 ceremony, called the creation of a new school there a "living, achieving memorial to my father." The project will cost \$309 million.