

# THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

## Tustin city, school district postpone trial to April

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A court date has been changed for the Tustin Unified School District and city of Tustin lawsuits over construction at two schools.

A trial had been set to begin Nov. 14, but on Tuesday the trial was pushed back to April 16, the city stated.

Attorneys for the school district requested the postponement due to a death in the family of one of the district's attorneys. The continuance was approved by Orange County Superior Court Judge John Gastelum and scheduled for April 16.

During the hearing, Gastelum offered to preside over a settlement meeting between the two parties, said Tustin Unified attorney Matthew J. Fletcher.

"I told the judge my client would readily accept his involvement in trying to settle the case," Fletcher said.

Attorneys for the city will be speaking to City Council members about that option during the next closed session meeting, said city spokeswoman Lisa Woolery.

The school district sued the city in February 2010, claiming that the city delayed construction at Heritage School, a planned elementary school, and improvements to Tustin High School, by requiring grading plans and asking the district to pay fees it previously did not have to pay.

In response, the city filed a counter lawsuit in March requesting a judge stop construction workers from grading on both school sites.

The school district has since completed construction on both sites. A new quad at Tustin High School opened to students in fall 2010 and the science center opened for use in fall 2011. A grand opening ceremony was held at the school on Nov. 2.

The Heritage School on the former Tustin Marine base was scheduled to open this fall. The school district did not have enough elementary school children in the area to open the campus, officials stated, so the 10-acre site is temporarily home to Hillview and Sycamore schools and two district departments.

The city sued the school district in August over the relocation plan, alleging the district should have gotten city approval before making the change. The school district refuted the accusations and states that the city does not have authority over the campus.

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