

October 15, 2007

## PROGRESS REPORT #1

# Kindergarten Student Enrollment/Placement Policy

Superintendent Dailey and Student Affairs Officer Dave Dierking have been conducting a series of elementary school neighborhood meetings to gather parent input on how to prioritize kindergarten enrollment when schools are over capacity, and whether or not siblings should have priority in the process. Two sessions have been held so far; one for Bay Farm and Earhart parents on October 8, and one for Haight and Washington parents on October 10. Additional meetings have been scheduled at Otis School on October 15, Franklin School on October 16, and Ruby Bridges School on October 17, all at 6:30 p.m. Below is a summary of the major points raised at these first two sessions and received in email comments to [issuesandoptions@alameda.k12.ca.us](mailto:issuesandoptions@alameda.k12.ca.us).

### Summary of comments and issues:

- Concern was expressed about difficult logistics of having students in different schools if no sibling preference is given.
- Concern was expressed about difficulty of being involved in more than one school, if parents were to have students at different schools—impact on parental involvement.
- The option for a random drawing does not currently give priority to siblings. The suggestion was made to exclude siblings from the drawing process and give them automatic entry with the first sibling.
- When considering giving priority to siblings, there is also a need to consider the needs of single-child families and parents with children who are not yet in the school system.
- Many parents place a very high value on neighborhood schools and the opportunity for neighbor children to walk to school together.
- Some parents feel that a random drawing does not treat children equally, and that 'first come, first served' gives parents an equal shot.
- Some parents feel that a random drawing is fair because 'first come, first served' generates too much anxiety and fear, particularly for first time parents.
- Concern was expressed about adding more children to an already limited site at Edison Elementary School.

### Summary of suggestions:

- Add portables or temporary structures to accommodate extra students when needed.
- Consider staggered schedules to accommodate more students.
- Maximize current use of space to generate additional classroom space.
- Create a 'buffer zone' between two or more neighboring elementary schools. When one school is at capacity, students living in the buffer zone would attend the neighboring school based on space available.

### Clarifications:

- There is no proposal for redrawing boundaries currently on the table. Options for addressing elementary and secondary facility capacity, as well as consistent quality of secondary education programs, will be developed in the Superintendent's Pathway to Excellence and Equity planning process.
- The random drawing proposal is not a district wide drawing but a school-based drawing for seats available when that school is over capacity.