

SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY MEETING REGARDING POTENTIAL SCHOOL CLOSURES

Date: April, 13, 2009, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Location: Thomas Jefferson Elementary School
Panel Facilitator: Mary Hardin Young, Associate Superintendent
Additional Attendees: SCUSD Board Members: Dr. Jerry Houseman, Donald Terry



Questions:

- **Is the middle school proposal for Thomas Jefferson still on the table?**
Not at this time. There needs to be further study, district-wide, of our middle schools and K-8s knowing that all of our middle schools are currently under enrolled except Sutter.
- **Stimulus money for SCUSD is 23 million dollars, why can't you keep this school open?**
Stimulus money is one-time money and has spending limitations because a portion is intended for Title I and a portion is intended for Special Education. Half will be received in May and half in October. We don't know exact amount or when we can use until state informs us.
- **When blending campuses – is it just assumed that Thomas Jefferson is to be closed because of smaller enrollment?**
Blending is proposed to maximize school utilization capacity and reduce operation costs resulting in a savings to the District.
- **How would bussing work? What about kids who walk? Some children walk from the end of Bicentennial. Will transportation be provided?**
We will do further review of student transportation needs and work to provide options to ensure safety for students if schools are blended. Transportation options are being considered to ensure safe student access to their new school.
- **Can we contract out services to save money?**
Services that can be contracted out are limited mainly because of collective bargaining agreements with employees.
- **What will happen with school resources?**
School resources such as Title I will follow students.
- **What will happen to the teachers?**
Teachers will follow the students.
- **Will there be options for Open Enrollment?**
Yes, if the decision is made to close Thomas Jefferson there will be a special Open Enrollment for the students impacted.
- **Have you considered alternatives other than closing the schools?**
Yes, over 100 million dollars have been cut over the last seven (7) years. Cuts have been made as far away from the classroom as possible. For next year, we have cut \$1.9 million in central office staff and eliminated unnecessary contracts for \$1.4 million. Other recommendations to raise class size reduction have been made which would save \$4.4 million a year.
- **We don't want this building to be torn down, but would like it to be used.**
Yes, we will not leave the site vacant, and hope to create new revenue through leases and partnerships.

- **What about others, such as students who are on permits?**
Students on permit must renew annually or they become a permanently enrolled student at their current school.
- **What will happen to this school's soccer fields? Who will maintain them? Community Center perhaps? Please no dog park!**
The site will be maintained and targeted to provide community services or meet the needs of the community.
- **Will 25:1 ever go back to 20:1?**
That is possible if the decision to raise CSR is made.
- **Will there be an increase of classroom aides?**
There could be if site councils make those recommendations.
- **If this school closes, how much input does the community have on what to do with the facility?**
We will seek input from the community to meet its needs. Additional meetings would be held to develop a transition plan for the school.
- **Thomas Jefferson has a high ratio of students with autism. What are we going to do with those children?**
Teachers will move with the students and services for special needs students will be maintained.
- **Can Thomas Jefferson teachers have first priority to open Hubert Bancroft positions?**
Thomas Jefferson teachers will have the option to follow Thomas Jefferson students.
- **How will the City and SCUSD address the traffic pattern/congestions at Bancroft dismissal and arrival?**
Review and discussions will be conducted to prevent and solve traffic problems at Bancroft.
- **What about the START program? What is going to happen with us and our staff?**
We are recommending as many programs as possible that are beneficial to students at Thomas Jefferson to be replicated or moved to the new site.
- **Where is the additional staff for Bancroft going to come from? Are the Jefferson staff going to move there or is there a seniority system with the other closing schools?**
Thomas Jefferson staff will follow Thomas Jefferson students.
- **Can the community use the Jefferson facility outside grounds for Little League soccer, baseball, etc?**
Yes, that is still an option for joint use.
- **Are we closing the school or are we merging with Bancroft School?**
The recommendation is to blend Thomas Jefferson and Hubert Bancroft and utilize the Thomas Jefferson facility for another community use that could generate revenue.
- **The existing preschool students at Jefferson will not have a home?**
There is the possibility to expand the program at Thomas Jefferson.
- **What about the Special Education (intermediate) students? Will the intermediate Special Ed students follow the other students to Bancroft?**
Special Education is looking at options for classes across the district, not just schools recommended for closure.

- **Is there going to be an enrollment process that I have to go through as a parent if I decide to take my kids to Caleb Greenwood instead of Bancroft School?**
Yes, there will be a special Open Enrollment this spring.
- **With permits at Bancroft School, will these kids get bumped out to house the Jefferson students?**
No. They would be calculated into our data that was analyzed to determine the recommendation.
- **Are siblings able to go to Bancroft too?**
Siblings currently attending schools together will be sustained.
- **Is there enough room to have Jefferson and Bancroft students at Bancroft?**
Yes. In doing so, it would maximize the use of Bancroft and save costs of keeping a small school open.
- **Are English Learners going to be given special individual attention without the Title 1 funding at Bancroft?**
Funding and support will follow students.
- **What is the process for administrative staffing, knowing that all principals got a March 15th pink slip?**
Staff displaced due to closure will have options for other assignments.
- **Safety is an issue especially if the Bicentennial students have to walk to Bancroft School. It will not be safe to do so. Can we get transportation to assist us?**
This will be reviewed and recommended as an option.
- **What is going to happen to the instructional assistants?**
If School Site Council recommendations for the Single Plan for Student Achievement include instructional aides, they will follow students.
- **District promises have not always come to be such as building a College Glen middle school. What would be the guarantee that vacant schools would not be sold?**
Currently, the market does not warrant selling district property and we know that patterns of growth could change in the future.
- **Would Bancroft become a Title I school?**
Funds would follow students.
- **If students transferred would kindergarten go to portables?**
Not sure portables would be necessary if the two (2) schools were blended based on our analysis.
- **There is a homeless issue in the community; will there be security to monitor the site?**
This site will not be “shuttered”. We are working with community agencies to bring in programs which would be an asset to the community.
- **When will parents know about kids going to Bancroft?**
The Board of Education is expected to make a decision on April 16, 2009. Information will be shared immediately after.
- **Have you considered a fee-based preschool program?**
Yes, this has been considered as a viable option for site use.
- **Would you consider renting out rooms to Head Start?**
Yes, this is a viable option.

- **With laying off speech therapist, nurses, psychologist etc., how will they manage all the students?**

There will be greater demands with fewer resources. The economic crisis will impact our services to students.

- **If the school closes and kids are transferred to Hubert Bancroft how do we enroll students?**

Transition planning meetings will be held to assist parents.

- **Does the district really care about students? Consider child/parents to uproot children – more kids – bigger school.**

Absolutely. Recommendations to close schools are a last resort. We have made severe cuts over the past seven (7) years but have not adjusted our facility use to match our enrollment which has dropped by 10,000 students in 10 years.

- **What about middle school students? Can we make sure that middle school kids are provided with a neighborhood school?**

Further study regarding K-8's and middle schools is planned.

COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS:

- **Huge Concern – Kindergarten 25:1 -- if raised number of students per class, there will be a burden on teachers working hard to achieve benchmarks.**
- **Want Superintendent Miller to know that parents did not ask for the school to be closed. Parents (majority) do not want Thomas Jefferson to close.**
- **There is a double standard – proposing to close Thomas Jefferson, a high achieving school and keeping open small high schools with low achieving students.**
- **My daughter loves this school. Consider that it is a good school, very diverse and parents are happy.**
- **Concerned about students and teachers and about how to pay for transportation.**
- **Parents want school to remain open in spite of rumor / maintaining property / more support for ELL students / preschool / parent participation / nurse time increase.**
- **I am excited about partnership opportunities if this decision is made.**
- **Do not put something in community that will not meet the community's needs.**
- **As a teacher at Thomas Jefferson I want a decision from the Board. We are tired of being in limbo as a small school. I think it is exciting to think of what could be combined and built from the blending of two (2) schools. If we work together it can be exciting.**
- **Expand – Keep START and 4th R at Bancroft – transfer START, 4th R and teaching staff from Thomas Jefferson to Bancroft.**
- **Please consider having schools that provide programs for students and families needs such as 4th R and preschool.**
- **Would like to see more occupational therapists in the district.**
- **Consider having a full time nurse.**

Community Meeting Notes

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- **Teachers at Jefferson are awesome and we would like our students to be taught by Jefferson teachers.**
- **Would like to see consistency in staffing. Thomas Jefferson's K/1 split has had four (4) teachers this year. No more splits.**
- **With students who are Gate/Special Education mixed, like my kid. I need to know who the teacher and the principal will be.**