

CYPRESS SCHOOL DISTRICT
Cypress, California 90630

MASTER FACILITIES PLAN SUB-COMMITTEE
August 12, 2009
3:30 p.m.
Board Room

A meeting regarding the Master Facilities Plan Committee convened at 3:00 p.m., August 12, 2009. Persons in attendance are listed below:

Facilitator:	June Liu, Director, Recreation & Parks, Cypress Lynne Merrick, Consultant
City Representative:	John Di Mario, Director Community Development, La Palma
Principal Representatives:	Jeannette Lohrman Denine Kelly
District Employees:	Julie Gautreau, Teacher, Landell Jennifer Olsen, Teacher, Luther Laurie Sooter, ACT President, Teacher, Morris
Parent Representatives:	Allison Ferrier, Cawthon Parent Kim Masukawa, Landell Parent Janie Longo, Luther Parent Ana Martinez, Swain Parent

Ms. Liu called the meeting to order and welcomed the audience. She introduced herself, noting that she has worked for the City of Cypress since 1986, in a number of different capacities, including the City Manager's office for ten years. In addition, she does not live in the District or have children in Cypress schools, and therefore believes she can bring neutrality to aid in the process. These are difficult and emotional issues, but the decisions we make need to be able to stand the test of time and be made in the best interest of the District and the students and community we serve. She went around the room allowing each committee member to be introduced. Principal Kelly said that the Superintendent had asked her to let the committee know that Donna Wittenberg, CSEA President, Transportation Coordinator, and committee representative, would be unable to attend today. If any questions arise related to transportation, the answers will be brought back to the group at the next meeting.

Ms. Masukawa indicated she had a time constraint and needed to leave at 4:30 p.m. Ms. Liu said she would strive to complete the first two items on the agenda in a timely manner so that everyone could participate in the third agenda item related to the provision of scenarios to analyze for future discussion.

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Ms. Liu indicated that the reason this group was faced with making some tough recommendations is because the Cypress School District is facing financial responsibilities and enrollment decline that could lead to operational inefficiencies.

The committee members were reminded that we are operating in an advisory capacity only, and that the larger committee and ultimately the Board of Trustees may accept our recommendation as submitted, send it back for further consideration, modify it, or reject it. We should not get caught up in ownership of our recommendation. She stated that as facilitator, she would provide an environment to allow each committee member to participate fully without worrying about any idea being rejected or ridiculed. Ms. Liu then led the committee through the process of developing guidelines and criteria to serve as a foundation for our decisions. Guidelines for meetings include:

1. Agree to keep emotions intact and focus on facts for decision-making
2. Remember that decisions will impact the District for years to come
3. Use data that is made available to all and assure that all data used is accurate and relevant
4. Recognize differences in group dynamics and representation
5. Avoid pre-evaluation of ideas or input

Criteria for consideration in determining recommendation for boundaries include:

1. The “ideal” size of a school’s attendance will be 650 students, but the group recognizes disparity will occur in the first few years and, thus, a range may be appropriate with a minimum of 550 and maximum of 750
2. Strive for class sizes to be within current District standards, but recognize constraints involved; ideal is to have at least three classes at each grade level, based on current class size
3. Consider school of residence vs. school of attendance, recognizing that the use of SAZ (student attendance zone) and residency data is quantifiable in projections for the future and that there is a need to look at the creation of new boundaries to make equivalent attendance zones, which is a focus of the committee
4. Facility condition is not a factor, as Measure M will address these issues
5. Transportation/travel is an issue, and the committee will be mindful of the distance a child would travel in a bus, with current transportation policy calling for bussing K-3 students living a mile or more away from school and 4-6 students one and a half miles or more; concerns about Pacific/Electric right of way (railroad tracks) without access for students to cross were also raised
6. School programs will be considered, including –
 - Title I and Proposition 49 -- with boundary changes, this money will remain with the District, moving with children, which could dilute its effectiveness
 - Special Education (not severely handicapped), Occupational Therapy, and Preppy K numbers can be moved to any site
 - Year Round calendar is an issue – mandate vs. choice

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Ms. Liu indicated she heard some members discussing test scores in earlier meetings of the group and inquired if anyone felt strongly about using these as criteria. She went on to praise Cypress School District's scores in comparison to the school district she resides in, for the lowest score in Cypress was higher than the overall average in her school district. No suggestions were made by committee members to use test scores as a guideline.

Mr. Di Mario made a comment concerning potential transportation of Luther children and felt that it would be inappropriate to bus them past an open school in order to attend a different school.

Ms. Liu asked for additional comments or questions from the committee. Kim Masukawa said that Landell parents want to convert Landell to a school of choice like Weaver School in the Los Alamitos Unified School District. That school has no set attendance area but takes students from throughout the district who want to transfer and enroll there. Committee members asked how requests for enrollment are handled, and Kim said that siblings of current students have first priority, with district students next and out-of-district requests last. Julie Gautreau said that to do this the committee needs to consider student numbers both for school of attendance and school of residence.

Denine Kelly noted that the attendance maps show that, although Landell does attract students from other areas of the District, the majority of the students who attend Landell live near the school. Ms. Merrick stated that a school of choice might be created by saying for every child who opts out of the year-round school of choice schedule in that attendance area, a space is created for a child to choose that option from another attendance area.

At 4:45 p.m. the meeting was turned over to Lynne Merrick. Lynne asked if the members had any ideas for new scenarios that had not been previously presented. No one offered any new ideas. Committee members then looked at the boundary scenarios provided by Ms. Merrick at the last meeting, and several questions were raised, which Ms. Merrick will review and, if necessary, correct for the next meeting. Current enrollment projection for 2009/10 is 3,985, down 92 students from last year. It is not fiscally feasible to operate a school with attendance below 500 students. Committee members noted that SAZ areas 805, 806, and 807 are all students currently bussed to Swain, and area 906 is currently bussed to Vessels. Ms. Merrick told committee members that we would have a demographic expert attend the next meeting, with the ability to move boundaries around for us using a special computer program. She led the committee in a discussion of the various scenarios provided, to make a conceptual decision on two or three that look the best, in order to narrow our focus so that the demographics expert can begin his work.

Mrs. Kelly told the committee that she has been approached by both parents and employees, who have asked why we would close a school in the City of Cypress and leave a school not in our city open.

Committee members reached consensus to narrow the scenarios to three that were previously presented, using the following samples:

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Sample D Close King or Luther and Cawthon or Landell
Sample E Close Swain and Landell
Sample F Close Luther and Swain

Ms. Merrick will have those brought back for further examination and “tweaking” with the demographics expert at the next meeting. In addition, Lynne distributed blank boundary maps and asked the members to design **any new** scenarios on their own, which they would like the committee to consider.

The next subcommittee meeting will be Wednesday, September 9, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. in the Board room. The main Master Facilities Plan Committee will meet again on September 30, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. in the Education Center.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

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