



Building Schools for the Future – Exemplary Educational Programs and Facilities for Our Children

Reconfiguration

October 2007

Background:

To responsibly plan for the future of the District, in the fall 2005 the Board of Education commissioned a demographic study of the Community to project future enrollment. Concurrently, the District conducted an overall assessment of its facilities and campuses. Data indicated that although the District's enrollment had been relatively flat for many years, enrollment was projected to grow significantly: 15.7% by 2011 and 18% by 2014.

After considerable study and many public meetings, it was agreed that:

- Hillview School, a seven-time State Distinguished School and a National Blue Ribbon Awarded School, should be maintained as a central middle school for the District on its current site. (An exhaustive search concluded that no other property was available within the District to accommodate a middle school)
- The development and passage of a Bond measure would address aging buildings, replace a large number of inadequate portable classrooms and improve multi-purpose facilities.
- The elementary school campuses could not accommodate the growing enrollment with the current school boundaries.
- To maintain its commitment to small class sizes, the District must provide necessary permanent facilities to meet standards.

In June of 2006 the Community passed Measure U, a \$91 million facilities bond, with over 70% support. Following the Bond, the District began an aggressive planning process that included Board adoption of the District Elementary Reconfiguration Plan.

Reconfiguration Plan:

The Plan for the Reconfiguration of elementary schools needed to address the following challenges:

- Reduce the enrollment of Oak Knoll and Laurel Schools because the size of their campuses could not provide for an overall elementary experience for children based on the growing enrollment numbers.
- Increase the enrollment of Encinal School, the largest campus in the District.
- Ensure maximum effectiveness of the Facility Bond.
- Create a separate identity for intermediate grade levels within new "state-of-the-art" facilities.
- Reduce the number of classes per grade at each school to ensure a greater sense of identity for each child and each family.

Reconfiguration Considerations & Decision:

The Board studied various options for reconfiguring the elementary schools. The criteria for the final decision were:

- What configuration best meets the needs of the educational program and students?
- What configuration best uses existing campuses factoring in size and existing facilities?

- What configuration best builds strong school communities and cultures?
- What configuration minimizes impacts on families and communities?
- What configuration is most effective for construction and operations?
- What configuration provides the greatest flexibility for the future?

The District’s O’Connor Campus, currently leased to the German-American School was considered as an additional elementary school site option. After a thorough evaluation which included an estimate of development costs, a calculation of the loss of operational income, and the challenges of access and location, the Board designated the campus a potential elementary school site in the event that future enrollment exceeds projections.

The Laurel School campus, currently serving grades K – 2 was evaluated as a K – 5 site. The Board concluded that the small size of the campus (6.1 acres) and its inability to support a separate and additional multipurpose facility for the 4 – 5 grades were major constraints.

Using the enrollment projections for the next 10 years in conjunction with specific educational, logistical, operational and financial objectives, on October 25, 2006 the Board of Education voted to reconfigure the elementary schools as follows:

Primary Grades (K – 3):	Laurel, Encinal and Oak Knoll
Intermediate Grades (4 & 5):	Encinal and Oak Knoll

This Reconfiguration Plan projected the following enrollments and grade levels for the schools:

School Site	Grades	Enrollment
Laurel School	K-3	400
Encinal School	K-5	680-690
Oak Knoll School	K-5	700-710

Timeline for Reconfiguration:

The timeline for Reconfiguration has been developed to ensure that facilities are adequately prepared for changes in enrollment and grade levels and that disruption to current families is minimized. The following is a phased-in approach to achieving our Reconfiguration goals:

School Year:	Action:
2008 – 2009	Encinal School adds Kindergarten Program - Grades K, 3, 4 & 5
2009 – 2010	Encinal School continues K Program and adds 1st Grade Program - Grades K, 1, 3, 4 & 5
2010 Forward	Laurel School adds 3rd Grade Program - Grades K – 3 Encinal School continues K and 1st Grade Programs and adds 2nd Grade Program - Grades K – 5

Implementing Reconfiguration: Adjustment of School Boundaries:

To ensure that the distribution of students by projected enrollment and grade level is achieved in accordance with the Reconfiguration Plan, school boundaries must be re-drawn. A Task Force of Board Members and School Administrators has been created to study the issues, propose new school boundaries and to develop a decision making process that provides the School Community opportunities for input.