

Phase II

Elementary Facilities Task Force

Tuesday, September 11, 2007

Guiteras Elementary School

MINUTES

Present: Karen Lynch, Chair

Diana Campbell

David Dugan

Paul Silva

Dr. Edward Mara, Superintendent

Jane Correia, Director of Administration and Finance

Melina Thies, Assistant Superintendent

The meeting of the Phase II Elementary Facilities Task Force was called to order by Chairperson Karen Lynch at 6:35 p.m.

Handouts containing up-to-date elementary school enrollments and also a worksheet containing projected enrollment numbers, combining Byfield and Reynolds students were distributed to those in attendance.

Chairperson Lynch discussed that one of the charges of this committee is to explore the number of seats needed and to then decide whether to go forward with a Phase II bond referendum.

Dr. Mara discussed that projected enrollment figures are moving forward and that, by contract, the maximum number of students in a classroom is twenty-four (24). Currently, Rockwell and Guiteras are at maximum capacity.

Paul Silva asked what will happen when Colt Andrews opens up. Will the 363 students from Byfield and Reynolds schools be transferred to the new Colt Andrews school?

To this question, Dr. Mara presented a scenario to the members of the committee. He stated that if the enrollment figures remained as they are today at both Reynolds and Byfield and those students transferred to the new Colt Andrews building there would be little room for anything else at the Colt Andrews site. Dr. Mara then discussed a scenario in which the Arts Magnet program could remain at the Reynolds building, as is; and the Byfield students would move to Colt Andrews to filling two tracts. A third tract would be comprised of students from the overflow of Rockwell and Guiteras schools. The existing Byfield building could then possibly be used as part of the Arts Magnet program, making the program a 'campus' type program using Reynolds and Byfield schools.

However, Jane Correia Director of Administration and Finance, reminded those in attendance to consider the cost factor, especially if another tract of teachers is needed. She stated the 2008-2009 District

budget is presently marked for a cut of one-quarter percent.

Assistant Superintendent Melinda Thies reminded the committee members that current State regulations regarding new school construction are very stringent. Evidence is expected to be shown that the district is maxed out in terms of all space available.

A key question posed for the committee is -- How to accomplish keeping the Arts Magnet Program and a neighborhood school?

All members of the committee agreed that they want to see the Arts Magnet Program continue. Parents feel the same; and parents' concerns are not whether the program remains at Reynolds or is relocated to another building—just that the program continue. All members agreed that the success of the Arts Magnet program has been beneficial to those students participating and beneficial to the district as a whole.

All members agreed that various scenarios and strategies should be contemplated and brought forth at the next meeting for greater, in depth discussions. Of these various scenarios, the top three would be chosen and brought to the School Committee in open session. It was agreed that the best scenario for the Phase II project is the one that would satisfy the most people and be the most fiscally responsible.

A date for the next meeting will be decided next week; and all committee members will be notified via email of the date, time and location of this next meeting.

Adjournment

Paul Silva motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m.; this motion was seconded by Karen Lynch.