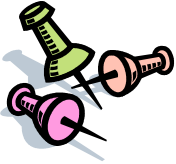


Sandpiper Enrollment Resolution: Questions & Answers



What is the Sandpiper over-enrollment situation now?

- Sandpiper has 522 students now attending, with 50 students enrolled in other District schools.
- The school's maximum capacity is 530 students
- An additional 400 students are expected to reside in Redwood Shores by the year 2009-2010. This figure is based on birthrate information and 1997-2004 over-enrollment trends.

Why did the School Board decide to build a new school in Redwood Shores?

- The Board wanted to provide Redwood Shores the opportunity to raise the funds needed to build a new school because it has the largest population of children in any one elementary school with only one neighborhood school.
- By the year 2009-2010, Redwood Shores will have 50% of the elementary school population but only 20% of the capacity (Sandpiper).
- The Board believes this option is in keeping with the District's mission statement and strategic plan, both of which include maintaining small community schools.
- Small community schools encourage parent/community involvement and provide an optimal learning environment.

What is the operating cost for a school?

- It costs approximately \$350,000 for the facility (fixed overhead), the principal and school secretary, and the maintenance personnel and supplies.

Will Measure G money or School-Force money be used to operate the new school?

- If a site for the new school is located, a Proposition 39 School Facilities Improvement Bond Measure will be placed on the ballot for Redwood Shores as early as November 2005. This bond money would be used to construct the new school.
- Measure G money can be used to provide the programs of a new school, just as it is available to be used for those purposes at other District schools.
- School-Force funds are used at the discretion of the School Board. These funds typically supplement the costs of providing full-time school library services, 4th and 5th grade instrumental music, elementary science, and ongoing technology programs and support.

Why is the bond being put before only Redwood Shores/Belmont Shores voters?

- Short answer: if Belmont voters were asked to vote on this, they probably would defeat it, for the simple reason that they don't gain anything from the measure. Also, it should be remembered that Belmont schools (built exclusively with Belmont taxes) housed Shores students for many years, which is one of the major benefits of being part of a district where we have resources to share with each other. And we shouldn't forget that the 1997 bond measure that financed the second phase of Sandpiper was passed in all Belmont precincts, but didn't pass in Redwood Shores.

How will the operating costs of six schools be covered if the new school is built?

- The current budget projection will maintain programs in all District schools as they are today.
- Property tax revenues are expected to grow at a higher percentage than District expenses.
- It is projected that California budget reform will place public education as a higher priority.

- Expenses associated with the 400 additional students will have to be born anyway, regardless of what facility is used.
- There may not be a need for another parcel tax initiative in 10 years. However, if there is a need, a “renewal” is easier to pass than a “new” tax.

Why didn't the School Board simply redraw the boundaries in Redwood Shores and have half the students attend Nesbit?

- The existing students and their siblings do not fit at Sandpiper; 50 students currently attend other District schools.
- Redrawing the boundaries does not address the fact that Redwood Shores will have 900 elementary school students by the year 2009-2010. Sandpiper and Nesbit *combined* could not accommodate that number of students, as well as the students who currently reside in the Nesbit attendance boundaries.
- It is a priority of the District to provide small community schools. Redwood Shores needs two schools to accommodate the number of students projected for that community.

Some of the other District schools have under-utilized capacity. How can the District justify building a new school when there is space at the existing schools?

- The District is looking at the possibility of renting out space in the other schools for preschool purposes.
- Current budget projections strongly suggest that the District could afford the costs of operating a new school.
- The Board believes in maintaining small neighborhood schools.

How will the population growth in Redwood Shores affect Ralston?

- Ralston has a maximum capacity of 1100 students.
- Enrollment numbers indicate that there will not be a facility capacity issue. While Redwood Shores' student population is expected to grow, Belmont's student population is expected to remain static or increase slightly.
- A larger student population ensures that the middle school's electives program will have a wide variety of electives for students.

Until a site is located and the new school built, all Redwood Shores kindergartners and (eventually) 1st graders will attend Nesbit. How will the large kindergarten and 1st grade population at Nesbit affect parent participation and the sense of community at the school?

- The District will help Nesbit and Sandpiper build “transitional” ties to each school, and to build collaboration among parents to enhance instructional programs at both school sites.
- The primary goal for District is to provide the best programs and resources for *all* of its schools and children.

What is the district doing about improving student achievement at Nesbit?

- One criterion in hiring district administrators was to hire people that have implemented successful models built around similar issues and demographics that exist at Nesbit.
- The district is committed to working with the principal, teachers, and parents at Nesbit to address the student achievement issues and develop a plan.
- The principal is working with the Nesbit Leadership Team to develop a school improvement plan. Once the plan is adopted, the Board will commit the required resources.

Considering all the negative public reaction, why did the Board even consider boundary changes at all?

- As a State agency, the District is required to seek Department of Education approval for school sites and meet a host of other compliance issues or lose all its State funds. Boundary changes are the most common way for districts to shift population to match capacity, and the State will always demand that this option be examined before approving a new school site. Our Board can now tell the State that this alternative had been thoroughly examined.