

## Oakland's Changing Demographics: OUSD's Hard Decisions

3/3/11 Table Discussion Notes

### As Oakland moves towards a Full Service Community District:

- What comes first? Full-service community schools (the coordinated services) or quality schools (high performing students), or do these go hand-in-hand?
- Will the services of full service community schools be neighborhood-based or school-based? (probably neighborhood based due to budget constraints and needs assessments)
- It's difficult to hold a conversation about facilities without discussing the quality of the schools (both programs and buildings).
- We need an agreed upon philosophy/criteria about how we serve our students (variety of programs and services, dedication to quality, neighborhood vs. choice)

### The issue of choice:

- What are families/communities choosing – a school's program or location?
- What is the future of choice and the Options Process? Should or can we move away from this model to better utilize space? Or is that inequitable?
- Which schools and communities are "leaking" the most students?
- What are the reasons that parents send their kids to the schools they attend?
  - Proximity to a parent's job
  - Proximity to their homes
  - Quality of the school
  - Proximity to the schools where other family members attend
  - Based on recommendations from friends/family/Greatschools.org
  - Does this vary by socio-economic status? By race?
- The assumption is that people want quality – and are willing to travel for good schools (the parents who are able to and are aware of "Options")
- Some regions in Oakland effect where kids go to school (i.e. Madison Middle School is predominantly kids from Sobrante Park and Brookfield because it is so far removed from other middle schools/ the rest of Oakland.

### Capacity/use the space:

- Partnerships with charters and private schools
- OUSD would have to change its model
- Community use (various) – office, local groups, education centers
- Are classrooms the only way to deliver instruction?
  - Using unit of classroom is "old school" thinking
- What about target space per student?
- Is there an optimal radius?
- Schools are generally not at capacity – yet some rooms are overcrowded
- What schools are under capacity/over capacity?
- Current capacity meets high historical requirements
- How to use unutilized capacity
  - Could be used for inter-governmental needs, e.g. county which rents?

- City redevelopment agency has real estate department to manage real estate transactions.

### **Neighborhood clusters:**

- How do you ensure diversity? Avoid segregation and concentrating poverty/ inequities? “Neighborhood clustering could be considered classist and racist.”
- How do you ensure quality teaching with clusters?
- How do you fix the surrounding communities?
- Need a better definition of “clusters”
- Should we have the Options Process or neighborhood clusters? Should families and kids have choices to go to school anywhere? Or choices within a cluster?
- Clustering could help improve neighborhoods, and neighborhood accountability/ involvement
- Clustering supports full service community schools concept (i.e. Health clinics)
- Clustering is a secondary problem to the quality of middle and high schools
- Need to consider gang violence/territory in clustering
- Who makes decisions on assets in a cluster? Is the community/ governance zone/ committee involved?

### **Concerns about the maps:**

- Would be useful to have a comparison for kids not attending public schools
- Maps are difficult to read (legend, density, etc)
- More scaffolded explanation of using maps needed
- How does the “line map” impact the discussion of closing some schools?
- How accurate is all of this data? Reliability is key in decision making.
- MK Think gives data to OUSD. But where did this data/these maps come from?
- We want to see a map with charters. Or possibly other with local districts info included
- Maps should be generated with annual data over a 5 year period
- Data is useful for guidance, but not for planning and decision making with qualitative, human, and social interests (i.e. low enrollment at Fremont High due to gang violence and lack of safety getting to-from school; thus to get those students to other schools we need to keep in mind the social issues, not just the numbers)
- Data by classroom would be interesting; the number of classes per grade per school by year overtime
- Concerned with finance language to describe public school assets.
- Not showing long-term capacity needs

### **Feeder Patterns:**

- Some draw from everywhere (Brewer, Montana); some, like Madison, don’t.
- Brewer – quality + consistent leadership
- Montera – facilities + safety
- Why don’t kids from Franklin go to Brewer?
- Certain kids will move anywhere.

- How much of the movement is based on knowledge?
- School choices often exist w/o knowledge/opportunity/ability.
- High performing schools will get filled. Maybe room in Middle schools?
- Same parents applying to all high performing schools.
- Only at HS are students getting choices.
- Econ Question: What is the long term economic impact if more kids go to private schools?
- Each neighborhood – transportation/distance
- Impact on attendance if kids are traveling long distance.
- Tony wants quality schools in every neighborhood + individualized services. Would need all the data, support to push out all resources.
- Quality schools in every neighborhood = winning strategy.
- Really hard, adaptive work, to un-attach families from a school, and to something new that they can't see.
- People bond more to smaller schools, even if they're dissatisfied with neighborhood pride.
- Trying to define neighborhoods – get parent to think of their neighborhood in a bigger way.
- Struggle to “replicate” schools.

#### **Miscellaneous Questions:**

- Where is the population growth or decline headed?
- How do different models impact decisions? (K-5 & 6-8 versus K-8)
- How will the line map be used?
- Per pupil funding has dropped each year in the recent past - how is this taken into account?
- Where do students from outside a neighborhood go when more people attend schools in their neighborhood?
- How does this plan reflect Oakland's desire to have a city planned around smart transportation?
- How do student-to-teacher ratios relate to MK Think's capacity data?
- How are specific needs taken into account (i.e. SPED, alternative learning)?
- Is there any research on how capacity impacts students? (i.e. their learning? their well-being?)
- Some schools are magnets and some are “not attractive.” How does this reality impact choices to stay or go? How does moving a school impact magnet schools? (especially for schools that are academically better?)
- Positive impacts from moving to better site, even if the move is a significant distance – example: Lighthouse Community Charter School (moved from downtown to new site on Hegenberger) Distance is not a problem when it comes to quality.
- What did feeder patterns look like before the Options Process?
- Do kids actually live in the neighborhoods where they are attending school? (How many use a relative's address to get into an OUSD school?)
- Redevelopment decision based on policy or ...?

- We need reliable information on academic achievement of schools before making big and long term decisions.
- What is the value of the data shown?
- What is the value of schools? Right size? Neighborhood?
- Need to consider other space usage required by community services.
- Assets need to be compared to service strategy.
- Why not have k-8 model if the capacity is available?
- Best to have high quality options.
- Need to define the requirements or get requirements (population, school size, etc.) and then define how the assets are used. The data presented showed what the assets were but not the requirements/values.
- Have schools been closed recently?
- Small elementary are operating, other assets (soccer field) under-enrolled
- Access/amenities → what drives a family? Program, school quality, or access?
- Not enough capacity for the students
- How can schools (Castlemont/Fremont) serve those communities FSCS.
- Services at Skyline wouldn't serve those who need it.
- Big #, small circle = big community need – students are so close, school provides a service.
- K-8 could be a possibility – needs to be considered in portfolio (for example Aspire Golden Gate is busting at the seams)
- Grade level distribution would make sense if all Oakland kids stayed for middle/high.