

## City of Foster City

### ESTERO MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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April 22, 2009

Cathy Rincon, President  
Board of Trustees  
San Mateo-Foster City School District  
1170 Chess Drive  
Foster City, CA 94404

Dear Ms. Rincon:

This letter is written in response to the San Mateo – Foster City School District's (District) request that the City of Foster City (City) indicate whether or not it would be interested in pursuing negotiations for the acquisition of City-owned land by the District for a fourth elementary school site. The City Council has been thoroughly briefed by Council Members Pam Frisella and Linda Koelling and by City staff on the discussions which occurred at the March 27, 2009 meeting between the City and District Subcommittees.

Let me begin by reiterating that the City Council continues to be deeply concerned about Foster City's school capacity issues. As demonstrated by the City Council's formation of a school subcommittee and assignment of staff time and resources, the City is committed to working closely and collaboratively with you in your effort to identify and study options with the goal of finding a timely and workable solution.

It is the Council's understanding that at this time you have rejected, as viable solutions, five (5) of the six (6) long-term options you presented to focus groups earlier this year. These options included:

- Option A - Increase K-3 class size from 20 to 30
- Option B - Implement AM/PM Kindergarten sessions and increase class size in K to 30
- Option C – Build a 4<sup>th</sup> school in Foster City (*selected option*)
- Option D - Implement a multi-track year round calendar
- Option E – Assign students to a school in San Mateo by adjusting boundaries
- Option F - Attract Foster City students to Magnet Schools by providing transportation

It is our further understanding that the only option currently under consideration by the Board is the construction of a fourth school on City-owned land in Foster City. The decision to pursue this as the only viable option has been authorized despite the fact that you conducted no cost/benefit analysis of the above-referenced alternative options prior to rejecting them. More importantly, it is our understanding that you have identified acquisition of City land and construction of a new school as the preferred option despite

the fact that there is currently no funding for land acquisition or construction of a fourth elementary school.

That being said, the City Council believes it is imperative at this time that the District also explore options for using existing District school sites in Foster City rather than only pursuing further negotiations for acquisition of City land. Without this analysis, it is impossible to determine what is really feasible. The City Council urges the District to fully explore and analyze these options, before continuing negotiations to acquire City property worth millions of dollars and currently serving other important public purposes.

Therefore, in order to proceed with continued discussions, the City asks the District to undertake a comprehensive cost/benefit analysis of other options presented to the focus groups. The City also requests that you examine additional options proposed by the City for use of the existing school sites in Foster City.

Attached is a list of options for which the City requests that further study be undertaken. Additionally the attachment includes the kinds of analysis and information that the City believes is essential to be developed. From the City's perspective, this analysis and information is required for both the District and City decision-makers so that we can make a reasonable and thoughtful decision that the Foster City community will fully understand and support. The City Council believes that the Foster City community and taxpayers expect its public officials to make decisions based on careful and thorough analysis of all options. Prior to reaching those decisions, public input is required from all stakeholders, so that the City Council and the District Board select the option that best meets the needs and interests of those we have been elected to represent.

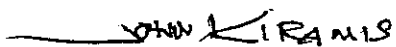
Because of the important nature of these decisions, we have authorized City staff to work with your staff as necessary to assist with the development of conceptual site plans and estimated costs for reconfiguring the District's four existing school campuses in ways that could help address projected school enrollments. We believe this will result in a better mutual understanding of the pros and cons of all alternatives, not just from the District's perspective but from a community-wide perspective. This approach represents a shared and creative problem-solving effort to achieve a successful outcome. As a part of this collaborative effort, the City asks that the District be open to discussion of operational changes that could perhaps be part of a multi-pronged solution.

It is the City's strong belief that we should be proactively engaging the entire community by regularly advising them of the status of discussions between the City and the District. To that end, the City will be establishing a School Capacity page on its website with regularly updated links to all City and District public information and documents regarding this issue. The City will also establish and advertise a free e-mail subscription list for interested members of the public to sign up to receive regular e-mail updates about this important issue.

In closing, please be advised that the City Council has designated Council Member Art Kiesel and Council Member Koelling to represent the City Council in discussions with the subcommittee of District Trustees going forward. They will be active participants in this process and will be invited to attend all meetings. The City staff role will be to help them get the information and analysis they need to participate effectively in policy level discussions with you and colleagues on the City Council and to make recommendations to the City Council.

The City Council looks forward to working with the District Board to develop a truly collaborative effort that thoughtfully and carefully considers all options in arriving at a solution that meets the District's needs and is in the best interest of the entire Foster City community and its taxpayers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JOHN KIRAMIS". The signature is written in a cursive style with some capitalization.

John Kiramis  
Mayor

Attachment

Copies – City Council; City Manager James C. Hardy  
Board of Trustees; Superintendent Penderly Clark

# FOSTER CITY SCHOOL CAPACITY STUDY

## Cost/Benefit Analysis of Options

### Long-Term Options to Be Studied

#### Presented to Focus Groups

- Option A - Increase K-3 class size from 20 to 30
- Option B - Implement AM/PM Kindergarten sessions and increase class size in K to 30
- Option D - Implement a multi-track year round calendar
- Option F - Attract Foster City students to Magnet Schools by providing transportation

#### Added by City

- Bowditch Middle School Site – Construct one new multi-story middle school and one new multi-story elementary school on the existing Bowditch Middle School site.
- Foster City School Site – Construct two multi-story elementary schools on the existing Foster City School site.
- Audubon School Site – Construct one multi-story elementary school on the existing Audubon School site.
- Brewer Island School Site – Construct one multi-story elementary school on the existing Brewer Island School site.

### Analysis Needed for Decision-Making

For each option, provide a cost/benefit evaluation that includes a detailed review of the following:

- Cost estimate (one-time and on-going)
- Sources of funding (one-time and on-going if different)
- Enrollment capacity added (# of classrooms and # of students)
- Percentage of projected enrollment accommodated
- Operational impacts and issues
  - Short-term (during renovation or construction, initial implementation, etc.)
  - Long-term (on-going)
- Short-term and long-term impacts to all stakeholders
  - Students, parents, faculty and staff
  - Adjacent properties owners
  - Other community members
- Other long-term benefits
- Other long-term problems/concerns
- Estimated timeframe necessary to implement (time to plan or design, renovate or construct and/or otherwise begin and complete implementation)

Please cite the source of all information (e.g., architects, contractors, cost estimating firms, recent and similar elementary school construction in the Bay Area, etc.)

**Additional Background Information Needed for Decision-Making**

1. Chart with the following information for each school in the San Mateo – Foster City School District:
  - a. Complete list of each school by name
  - b. Acreage for each school site
  - c. Number of students attending each school
  - d. Most current Academic Performance Index (API) for each school
  
2. Chart showing school capacity (# of classrooms) and students (# of students) for the four school sites in Foster City for each school year from 2008-2009 through 2013-2014
  - a. Divide classrooms at each site into 3 categories:
    - i. Permanent Building (original building)
    - ii. Permanent Portable (has a poured foundation; intended to remain on site)
    - iii. Temporary Portable (has no poured foundation; intended to be removed at some point)
  - b. Students assigned to each category of classroom
  - c. Provide a site plan showing current and proposed classrooms by category
  
3. Number of students assumed for each phase of the proposed Pilgrim-Triton Development and the methodology used to determine these numbers. (These numbers are to be added to the enrollment projections.)
  
4. Information on the geographic distribution of students in Foster City by neighborhood, if available.