

Brice

MALCOLM X SCHOOL MEASURE A SITE COMMITTEE SOTF REPORT -- 2/8/93

A. Site Committee Co-Chairs: Cheryl Chinn, Principal, 644-6313; Liz Brown (parent), 841-4861, 2321 Oregon Street, 94705; Parents: Dottie Wiggins, 658- 2137; Cynthia Tara Wood, 654-4593; Belinda Richards, 849-9392; Anita Thomson, 525-3792; Leo Davis, 841-2114; Pat Smith, 644-1425; Sandy Dickinson, 548-3918; Don Sherman, 548-1280; Jacquin Melvaine, 420-0876; M. Turner, 655-8186; Larry Donnaker, 658-2848; Rosemary Richie, 848-0099. Staff: Jane Barrett, Angela Archie, Cathy L. a, Willis Carraway, Nora Gosey. Students: Greer Wiggins, Iris DeSario, Paco Flores.

B. Proposed grade configuration: 4-6.

C. Proposed school size: 6-7 classes per grade level (501-550 students, enough to maintain current administrative and support staff); 21 standard classrooms; 1 SDC room; 1 library; an additional total of 12 full-size and 6 small-size special purpose rooms (computers, art, speech therapy, etc.).

D. Desegregation by zones, similar to those currently in effect with more careful control of inter- and intra-district transfers.

E. PLEASE REFER TO PREVIOUS SITE REPORT SUBMITTED IN JANUARY TO SOTE. Malcolm X has a tradition of educational excellence for each student while working to broaden and strengthen each child's potential. The school's mission is to meet the educational needs of our diverse school community, striving to provide all students with a solid educational foundation that will allow them to develop the skills and acquire the knowledge necessary to excel in an increasingly complex and demanding society. The school has established good communication and coordination among our staff members, thus ensuring a deep commitment to the planned program. The Parent-Staff School Site Council and the PTA actively participate in the planning and evaluation process.

In addition, we have several broad based programs that encourage development in performing arts, drama, music and language development. All students participate in these programs, both as a part of classroom curriculum or as optional "pull-outs" during the school day. These programs are integrated with other aspects of the curriculum.

Through a state grant from Project Healthy Start, Malcolm X hopes to be providing community based services (such as health screening, health education, adult education relating to parenting issues, etc.) on a collaborative basis that will be housed on the school site. These will supplement current programs such as Break the Cycle, Partners in Education, etc.

F. The site committee was not formed (or encouraged to be formed) until early December, 1992. We have held 4 meetings and have also discussed the issues at 2 PTA meetings.

G Other topics of interest: 1) A district-wide change of grade configuration will be chaotic. The process of determining and implementing assignments of students to schools, physically re-locating classrooms and supplies, and the breaking up and re-establishing of staff teams who have worked together for years, will entail a tremendous amount of time, energy, resources and funds. The outcome of these disruptions will not in any significant way address the weaknesses and short-comings that exist in our schools. In fact, quite the opposite may ensue. Since the Measure A bond cannot provide the funds to bring this about, those funds must necessarily come from other sources. School funding state-wide and district-wide is disastrously low. Any money spent should instead go directly towards improving programs and schools, raising teacher's salaries, reducing class size, etc.

2) We are not confident that any form of "choice" model can assure adherence to the integration guidelines. To convert from a 4-6 to a K-5 School, Malcolm X would have to undergo a major change in teaching and support staff, curriculum, and evolve an entire new school vision and persona. This conversion is far more difficult than the one of extending a K-3 through 5th grade. What has made Malcolm X the excellent school that is right now is the dedication and work of a closely knit instructional and administrative team and their close ties to the community and parent groups. It will be difficult if not impossible to entice enough white parents to choose to send their children to Malcolm X, especially for the early grades, especially without a strong sense of what that school will be like. Many people feel that Malcolm X School cannot thrive under that set-up. This is especially troublesome when the Administration has already raised the possibility of closing 1 or 2 schools as a means of finding the necessary funds to reduce class size. (See Oakland Tribune article of February 5, 1993.)

3) The process by which this evaluation has taken place has been haphazard, rushed, severely limited in outreach and range of participation and discriminatory. By forming separate committees at each site, the Administration has encouraged people to study the issues in an isolated and individualistic fashion rather than to consider the system as a whole. This process should have first been discussed on a community-wide basis. The issues are incredibly complex and intertwined. However, we have noticed that most parents whose children have already "weathered" the transition to the 4-6 schools favor retaining the existing grade-configurations.

A copy and preliminary tally of a school-wide survey is attached.