

Sunnyvale I.S.D.

Facilities Planning Committee

PROPOSED VISION AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

October 2010

FACILITIES PLANNING COMMITTEE

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Templeton Demographics

Town of Sunnyvale

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Table of Contents

	<u>Page #</u>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
BACKGROUND	5
DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS	6 - 7
DISTRICT FACILITY VISION	8 - 10
IMMEDIATE ACTIONS	11 - 12
FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY	13
RECOMMENDATIONS	14

Executive Summary

The Facilities Planning Committee (“FPC”) was formed in order to develop a long range plan for Sunnyvale ISD. The committee discussed a wide range of possible district needs within the next 10 years. The vision in this report focuses on all aspects of ways to enhance each student’s academic career and the success of making them a college ready student upon graduation. The recommendations of this committee will be made based first on what is needed academically then what is fiscally sound at the time. The FPC commits to always accommodating classroom needs before non-classroom facilities. Numerous options were considered during the many discussions and the remaining two options were determined to be the only viable solutions for the immediate need for physical accommodations needed to keep up with the continuous growth experienced.

Background

January 2004

In response to two unsuccessful bond elections and the need for a comprehensive growth plan for Sunnyvale ISD, a 12 member committee was established by the School Board in 2003. Their recommendations, presented to the Sunnyvale ISD School, included:

- Building a middle school facility for grades 5-8 with capacity of 400 students.
- Expanding K-8 capacity when attendance exceeds 700.
- Calling a Special Bond election to start the process to build a separate high school when attendance in grades 5-8 is equal to 400 students.

February-March 2006

The Sunnyvale ISD Strategic Planning Committee (“SPC”) convened to further develop strategic planning efforts. This resulted in a report titled “Community Strategic Planning Findings and Conclusions” presented in February 2007. The recommendations included:

- Calling a Special Bond election to build a separate high school to be completed by 2009-2010 school year.
- If the bond was approved, begin a Sunnyvale High School in 2007-2008 with students meeting in the Sunnyvale Middle School facility until a high school facility was completed.

These recommendations were approved by the voters of Sunnyvale and the 9th grade class began with the 2007-2008 school year. The first graduating class for Sunnyvale ISD will be in the 2010-2011 school year.

September 2009

In order to address continuing district growth and the need to maintain facilities that meet the district vision, the Facilities Planning Committee (“FPC”) was formed and began meeting to review the facility needs of the school district with the goal of defining a long-term facility recommendation. The committee engaged in discussions with consultants with knowledge and experience in school district management and operations, population demographics and projections, architecture, construction, town operations and planning and school district debt financing.

This document contains the findings and recommendations of the FPC.

The vision and mission of Sunnyvale ISD, documented in the 2006 Sunnyvale ISD Strategic Plan, were the guiding principles for our findings:

Vision: Sunnyvale ISD, in partnership with the community, is a stable, safe and caring “hometown” learning environment that focuses on the changing needs of our students and achieves educational excellence.

Mission: The mission of Sunnyvale ISD is to provide the highest quality education by creating life-long learners through comprehensive academic, athletic, cultural and extracurricular opportunities for the children of our community.

District Demographics

In 2005 the Sunnyvale Board of Trustees commissioned independent consulting firm Planware Systems LLC to conduct a demographic study of the Town of Sunnyvale. The results of this study provided Sunnyvale ISD with a more accurate understanding of how short and long term growth patterns will impact the District. The 2005 study concluded that growth would remain strong in the next 10 years with an annual projected growth in the range of 9-12% in student population.

The Planware study has proven to be accurate as the 2005 demographic projections are in line with Sunnyvale ISD actual growth and student enrollment over the last 5 years. More specifically and as referenced in the table below, actual Sunnyvale ISD enrollment has met the high-end range of the projections as demonstrated in the table below:

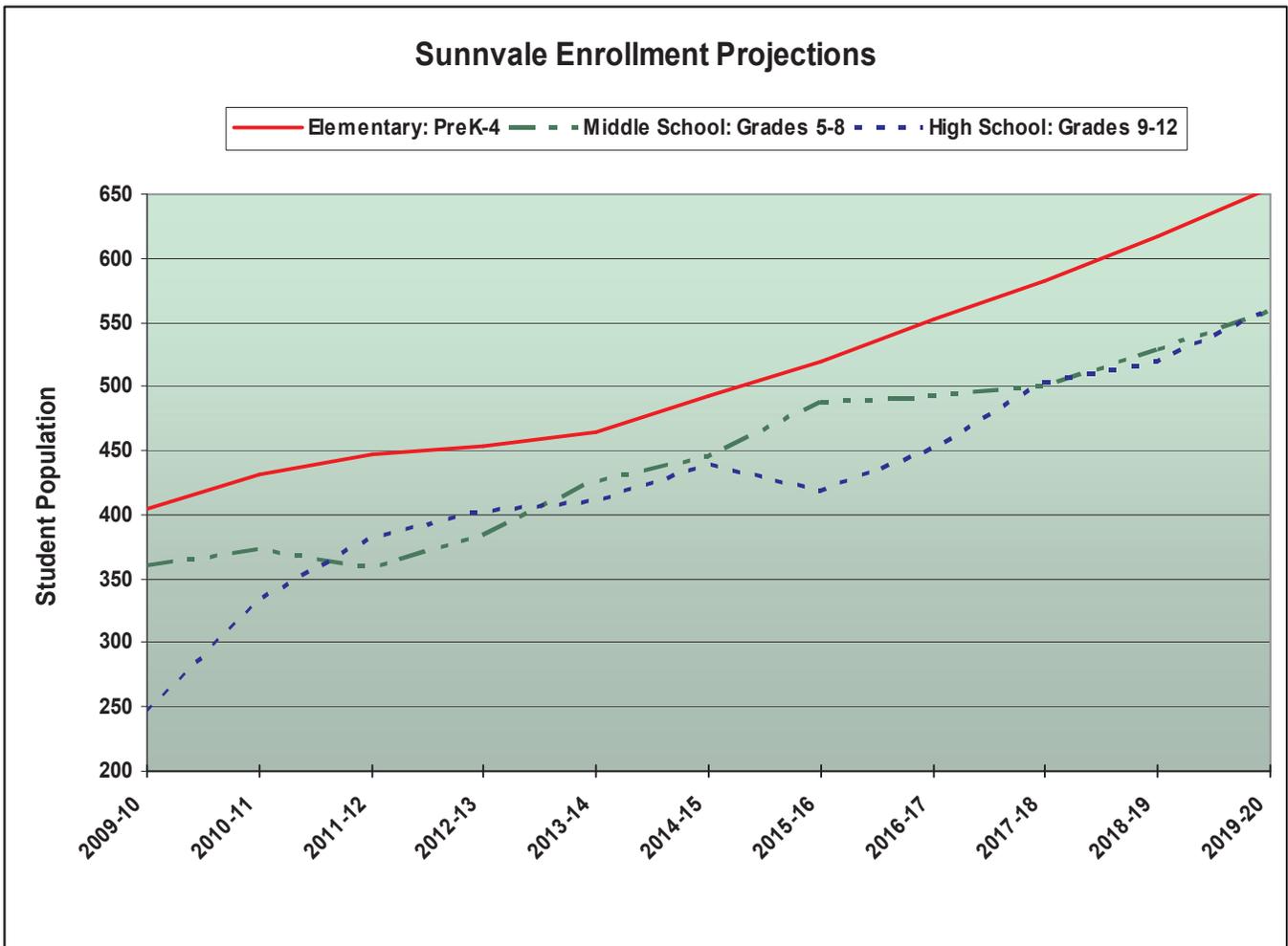
<u>Annual Growth</u>	<u>2005 Planware Projections</u>	<u>Actual SISD Enrollment</u>
2006 – 2010	9-12%	12.1%*
<i>*Excludes 338 High School and 22 Pre-Kindergarten students</i>		
<u>District Totals</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2010</u>
Kindergarten – 8 th Grade	533	793
Pre-Kindergarten – 12 th Grade	533	1145

The FPC commissioned Templeton Demographics in January 2010 to conduct an updated demographic study. This updated study concluded that the total number of students in the district should double over the next 10 years. Moderate growth is expected over the next few years giving way to stronger growth patterns as housing starts increase. See table below for key details of the study:

<u>2010 Templeton Projections</u>	
Annual Growth: 2011 – 2020	5.2%
Total # SISD Students in 2020	1771

District Demographics (continued)

As part of the FPC evaluation of student growth population and the projections thereof, it was equally important to understand the current SISD facilities and respective student capacities. In 2005, a new Middle School Campus came online and provided capacity for 400 students. In 2009, a new High School Campus was opened providing capacity for 550 students. Both the Middle School and High School campus designs allow for further expansion as necessary. The current Elementary School Campus provides capacity for approximately 450 students. Based on current enrollment numbers and the Templeton projections for future years, the graph below demonstrates the trends of student population for Sunnyvale ISD.



District Facility Vision

Classroom Facilities:

The FPC analyzed when each facility would reach capacity for educating students and then reviewed options for providing additional space. This technique of modeling building capacities was applied uniformly across each facility scenario in order to reach conclusions about facilities.

The assumptions used in this modeling technique included:

- Projections from the demographers report represent the most reliable data on population growth.
- The number of students is based on the projected number of students at the end of any given school year versus the beginning of the school year.
- Projections for construction phasing and cost estimates by WRA and Gallagher Construction represent the most reliable data on construction.
- The maximum timeframe for projections is 10 years.
- A minimum of 15 months is required between passing a bond and completing construction on a given facility.

Elementary School (Grades: PreK-4)

Elementary enrollment (PreK-4) currently reports 432 students in 2010-2011, compared to a core building capacity of 450 students as identified by WRA. With efforts to accommodate excess student capacity, a detached portable building (4 classrooms) was installed in 2003 and most recently for the 2010-11 school year, an additional detached portable building (2 classrooms) was added to the campus. Currently, a total of two (2) portable buildings supply the campus with six (6) temporary classrooms that are fully utilized.

With projected levels of growth, enrollment at the Elementary school is expected to exceed 450 students beginning in the 2012–2013 school year – resulting in a need for additional space.

Construction of a new 700 student elementary would provide space for growth through 2019-2020 given projected enrollment numbers of 654 students in grade PreK–4.

This is considered the most immediate need for SISD.

Middle School (Grades: 5-8)

The middle school will approach capacity of 450 students in the 2014–2015 school year with 446 students. Capacity will be exceeded in the following year when student enrollment is expected to be 488 for grades 5–8, as supported by the PlanWare and Templeton Demographic studies in concert with actual enrollment data from SISD.

Expansion of the middle school should be considered before the 2015–2016 school year. As designed in the original plans, this expansion could be accomplished by adding classrooms to the south side of the existing middle school.

High School (Grades: 9-12)

The current high school capacity is 550 students. Current space will accommodate projected growth until capacity is reached in 2019–2020 when 560 students are projected for grades 9–12, as supported by the PlanWare and Templeton Demographic studies in concert with actual enrollment data from SISD.

Expansion of the high school should be considered before the 2019–2020 school year. As designed in the original plans, this expansion could be accomplished by adding classrooms to the east side of the core building.

Primary School

Children in the primary grades (PreK-4) should be moved to the new elementary school in 2012-2013.

When elementary (PreK-4) capacity is approached in 2019–2020, with a projected enrollment of 654 students, a 4th campus should be considered. Class assignments could be altered for the four campuses as follows:

- PreK-2 - Primary school
- Grades 3-5 - Elementary school
- Grades 6-8 - Middle school
- Grades 9-12 - High school

Should the student population grow faster or more than anticipated, the current elementary school could be utilized as a primary school.

Extracurricular Facilities:

In order to reduce the subjectivity of the need and timing for extracurricular facilities, the FPC used two key questions in developing a plan for extracurricular facilities:

1. How does the specific item enhance the district's ability to meet the long term mission of providing the "highest quality education by creating life-long learners through comprehensive academic, athletic, cultural and extracurricular opportunities for the children of our community"?
2. How does Sunnyvale athletic, cultural, and extracurricular facilities compare to those of comparable school districts?

Fine Arts Facility

As the district grows and the number of students in the fine arts program increase, construction of an events center (auditorium) should be a consideration. This Fine Arts Facility could be used to host drama, choir, band, and special school events. Additionally, this Fine Arts Facility could be utilized for community purposes and other events proposed by the Town of Sunnyvale.

This Fine Arts Facility should be a joint consideration with the Town of Sunnyvale to help with construction funding and improve overall utilization.

Athletic Facilities

District Stadium - Increase seating, public facilities and press box as the district and the Town of Sunnyvale grows. Consideration of updating to artificial turf with increased usage by multiple athletic teams as well as fine arts groups such as the marching band.

Baseball/Softball Complex –Increase seating, public facilities along with construction of a shared press box & expanded concession area to be utilized by both baseball and softball.

Indoor Workout Facility – Consideration of an indoor workout facility to be used by all outdoor activities (i.e. cheer, band, football, baseball, softball, soccer, track and field and other).

Tennis Complex - 4 additional tennis courts shall be considered.

Support Facilities:

Administrative Offices

The best usage of the existing elementary school would be to re-purpose the building for administration offices, board room for school board meetings, storage, etc.

In all cases, the original elementary school building should be preserved as a 'historical site' for SISD and the Town of Sunnyvale. Also, consideration should be given to a partnership with the Town of Sunnyvale in utilizing space for a possible public library as a temporary location, distance learning labs, continuing education center, community center and potential need for a future primary campus.

Maintenance and Transportation Facility

A new district maintenance and transportation facility should be considered to handle increased number of vehicles (i.e. buses, district vehicles, other), workload, storage, etc.

Immediate Actions

As evaluated by the FPC, the elementary school campus continues to trend near its core (as determined by WRA) student capacity of 450 students. Currently, the campus incorporates two (2) portable buildings supplying a total of six (6) additional classrooms. These classrooms are “detached” from the core building and fully-utilized. Based on recent and projected student population trends, it is anticipated that additional portable buildings will be added for the next school year. Overall, it was determined that the addition of portable buildings (classrooms) to the elementary campus is not a viable solution for continued student population growth at the elementary level.

Furthermore, two scenarios were considered by the FPC to address the most pressing district facility need - elementary school space:

- Option 1 - Construct a new elementary school campus
- Option 2 – Expansion of the elementary school campus

Option 1: Construct a new elementary school campus

Consider construction of a new elementary school to support PreK – 4th grade with a 700 student capacity. As recommended by WRA, the gross construction area for 700 students is approximately 80,000 SF.

When analyzed with the model assumptions, the following scenario results:

Pros:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best fit for strategic vision of school district.• Aligned with the CSPC 2004 and 2006 facility plans to construct a new elementary school in 2011-2012.• Solves the immediate need for additional classrooms as well as long term projected growth in Sunnyvale ISD.• Addresses the possibility of a dramatic increase in the student population due to pending litigation with the Town of Sunnyvale (Dews vs. the Town of Sunnyvale) or other such unknown growth contributors.• Allows Sunnyvale ISD to keep the low student/teacher ratio.• The bond package would “fit” under the state property tax cap.• Current interest rates for a bond offering are at historic lows.
Cons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimal increases in tax rate to citizens of Sunnyvale.• Possible increase in operational costs primarily for utilities and insurance.• Major construction in close proximity of school day activities.

Option 2: Expansion of the elementary school campus

As determined by WRA, the elementary school campus is nearing its student core capacity of 450 students based on actual enrollment numbers. As a result, portable buildings are necessary to accommodate student population growth. Areas such as; physical classroom size, restroom facilities, cafeteria accommodations, the library and others are overburdened by the student population growth. Based on evaluation reports from Gallagher Construction and WRA, classroom expansion is possible; however, this will not improve core capacity limitations. Further, additional construction costs would be elevated in efforts to increase current core facilities due to the existing structural (architectural & engineering) framework of the building.

When analyzed with the model assumptions, the following scenario results:

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|--------------|---|
| Pros: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides continued use of the existing elementary school for instruction purposes.• Enables a short-term response to demographic changes.• Lower initial cost and short time between specification and occupancy. |
| Cons: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Major construction to the campus and surrounding areas during the school year.• Physical size of existing elementary classrooms is smaller than that of the standards established for new facilities, thus promoting an overcrowded learning environment.• Additional classroom expansion may not fully address core building capacity concerns.• Does not solve for the need to increase the size of cafeteria, library and restrooms.• Does not address the possibility of a dramatic increase in the student population due to pending litigation with the Town of Sunnyvale (Dews vs. the Town of Sunnyvale) or other such unknown growth contributors. |

Financial Feasibility

The school district has maintained a positive financial position as evidenced by three recent reports and acknowledgments.

- 1) The Texas Education Agency rated Sunnyvale ISD as a district with superior achievement on the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas. The District had a perfect score on the rating for the 2008 – 2009 school year.
- 2) Standard & Poor’s improved the District’s bond rating from A to AA- stating “Despite the district’s transition to a K-12 district, Sunnyvale Impendent School District’s financial performance and position have been consistently strong. Officials have made a concerted effort to maintain high reserves to minimize the financial constraints faced by other Texas property wealthy school districts.”
- 3) The school district was recently recognized by the State Comptroller’s Office as a high performing school district with efficient operation costs.

When the bond was passed to build the high school in the spring of 2007, the Interest & Sinking rate (I & S) used for debt service was 37.6 cents. Appraised value growth has allowed the school to reduce the I & S rate to a current rate of 32.8 cents for the 2010 tax year.

- The Appraised Value for the District has increased from \$522 million in the 2006 tax year to \$792 million in the 2010 tax year. That increase represents a 10.3% average appraised value growth for the 5 tax years.
- Should the Appraised Value for the District average a 5.8% growth rate over the next 5 years, as projected by First Southwest Co, it would create funding capacity to build an elementary campus of 80,000 square feet.
- Operation cost to the district would be minimal using Option 1. Additional personnel would not be required because all current Elementary personnel would move to the new building. Added operation costs would be focused on utilities and insurance.

The following are actual and proposed tax rates and tax impacts for 2004 through 2012. These figures are based on the average home taxable value in Sunnyvale with a \$220,000 value. Monthly change is expressed in relation to the previous tax year. Rates for 2011 – 2012 are anticipated should a bond issue pass.

School Year	M & O Tax Rate	I & S Tax Rate	Total Taxes	Monthly Change
2004 – 05	1.446	0	\$ 3,181.20	NA
2005 – 06	1.446	.220	\$ 3,664.98	\$ 40.32
2006 – 07	1.322	.197	\$ 3,342.02	- \$ 26.91
2007 – 08	1.004	.376	\$ 3,036.00	- \$ 25.50
2008 – 09	1.024	.346	\$ 3,014.00	- \$ 1.83
2009 – 10	1.023	.337	\$ 2,992.00	- \$ 1.83
2010 – 11	1.023	.328	\$ 2,972.20	- \$ 1.65
2011 – 12	1.023	.420	\$ 3,174.60	\$ 16.87

Recommendation:

While the FPC identified the full range of district facility needs as outlined in the report, the committee concluded with confidence that the best fiscal and academic plan to construct a new elementary school campus with capacity to support a minimum of 700 students. As a result of this recommendation, the SISD Board of Trustees should immediately consider initiating the process of a bond referendum.

As discussed herein, Sunnyvale ISD has the capacity and resources to proceed immediately with plans to build a new elementary school campus (Option #1) in order to accommodate the current student population as well as projected growth in Sunnyvale.

If the SISD Board of Trustees and District Administration concur with the FPC recommendation, the following efforts should be considered:

- Enlist community support before bond referendum plans are finalized. The success of the students in Sunnyvale ISD is highly dependent on the support and involvement of parents, educators, the school board and the community as a whole. All entities should have a voice in discerning what is best for the Sunnyvale ISD -- bond packages must reflect the views of the community.
- Town hall meetings should be held prior to the SISD Board of Trustees announcing a decision regarding any bond referendum. For the new elementary school bond election, the meeting should be scheduled for November, 2010.
- The District website should be updated to inform Sunnyvale citizens of the actions involved with any bond referendum.
- Sunnyvale school and community organizations should be enlisted to educate and facilitate voter registration throughout the community.