

9th October 2007

Ardella Dailey, Superintendent, Alameda Unified School District
David Forbes, President, Alameda Board of Education
Janet Gibson, Vice President
Tracy Lynn Jensen, Trustee
Mike McMahon, Trustee
Bill Schaff, Trustee

Dear Superintendent Dailey and Members of the Board:

When the AUSD proposed changing Kindergarten enrollment policy in August 2007 to include a lottery, members of the Edison School neighborhood shared their concerns with you. Many parents fear that increasing numbers of families in the Edison area mean greater chances that their children may not be able to attend their nearby neighborhood school. Concerned residents feel that the District should better establish expected enrollment and address capacity issues at oversubscribed schools before any changes are made to the enrollment policy.

In an effort to help establish demand, members of the Edison School Neighborhood Network (ESNN) conducted a door-to-door survey of 796 residences in the Edison area in September 2007, to sample the number of kindergarten students expected to enroll in 2008-2012. From the 647 responses, representing an 81% participation rate, and about one-third of all residences in the area, we were able to establish with confidence that:

- Many more families with young children have moved into the Edison area than the District's Demographic Report of March 2007 had accounted for in projecting Kindergarten enrollment. Our results show that of families surveyed that moved into the area in the past few years, more than 67% had children under the age of 5, increasing to more than 80% in the last two years.
- For every new Kindergartener with a sibling currently enrolled at Edison, there could be an equal number of new Kindergarteners, without older siblings, who expect to attend.

Based on these results, we strongly urge the District and Board of Education to:

- Establish and make public the number of students with siblings already at Edison who are expected to attend in 2008-2012. This number should be analyzed in combination with the ESNN survey results to better understand capacity issues before proceeding with any proposed changes to Kindergarten Enrollment Policy.
- Reach out to all residents in the area, including families of children not yet in kindergarten, both to share plans as well as to solicit information. With that data, enrollment projections can be established based on actual numbers of children, rather than birth-rate projections, and capacity plans adjusted accordingly.

We have attached the survey results, and a map showing the streets surveyed, for your review.

Sincerely,

Members of the Edison School Neighborhood Network