

February 27, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

During their meeting on February 26, members of the Round Rock ISD Board of Trustees discussed possible options and considerations to better alleviate the overcrowding Cactus Ranch Elementary has experienced over the last several years, and which is projected to continue increasing if no changes are made. The current enrollment at CRE is 1,256 and projected enrollment for 2009-2010 if no changes are made could reach more than 1,400. The school was built to accommodate 900 students.

RRISD staff presented 9 alternatives for the board to consider and determine which would be appropriate for further research. Deputy Superintendent Toni Garcia, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education Beverly Helfinstein, and Director of Elementary Education Carla Amacher presented the options to the board which included:

- Relocate 5<sup>th</sup> Grade to Walsh Middle School for one school year
- Hold Half-day Kindergarten at CRE
- Keep all students at CRE
- Move Mayfield Ranch neighborhood and Stone Oak neighborhood to Sommer Elementary or Teravista Elementary
- Move Mayfield Ranch neighborhood to Sommer Elementary and Stone Oak neighborhood to Teravista Elementary
- Move Mayfield Ranch neighborhood to Sommer Elementary
- Move Mayfield Ranch neighborhood to Teravista Elementary
- Move Stone Oak neighborhood to Sommer Elementary
- Move Stone Oak neighborhood to Teravista Elementary

The Board of Trustees weighed in on each option and directed staff to remove the options of: Holding a Half-Day Kindergarten, Keeping all current students at the school and allowing enrollment to reach more than 1,400 students, Moving Mayfield Ranch neighborhood and Stone Oak neighborhood to Sommer Elementary or Teravista Elementary, Moving Mayfield Ranch neighborhood to Teravista Elementary, and Moving Stone Oak neighborhood to Teravista Elementary.

Individual members of the board felt the half-day kindergarten program would not provide a good enough foundation for those students when they progress to other grade levels, and also that allowing the school enrollment to reach more than 1,400 students would not provide the best possible education to students and test the limits of the building. Although bussing students down FM 1431 is not an ideal situation, members of the board recognize the move may be necessary to balance student enrollment and one option still under consideration would require bussing students down FM 1431 and across IH 35.

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The following options will be explored more by staff and the Citizen's Boundary Committee and will be presented to the public for input before going back to the Board of Trustees for a decision:

- A. **Relocate 5<sup>th</sup> Grade to Walsh Middle School** – will keep all fifth graders together at a cluster of portables at Walsh MS and will decrease the projected CRE enrollment for 2009-2010 to 1,193.
- B. **Move Mayfield Ranch neighborhood to Sommer Elementary and Stone Oak neighborhood to Teravista Elementary** – will balance the enrollment of students between CRE at 823 students, Sommer Elementary at 980 students and Teravista Elementary at 984 students.
- C. **Move Mayfield Ranch neighborhood to Sommer Elementary** – will increase Sommer Elementary enrollment to 980 and decrease Cactus Ranch Elementary to 1,174 without having to bus students across IH 35.
- D. **Move Stone Oak neighborhood to Sommer Elementary** - will increase Sommer Elementary enrollment to 1,105 and decrease Cactus Ranch Elementary to 1,049 without having to bus students across IH 35.

The Administrative Hearing scheduled for March 5 at 7 p.m. in the Cactus Ranch Elementary (2901 GoldenOak Circle, Round Rock) cafeteria will now become an official Boundary Hearing presided over by the RRISD Citizen's Boundary Committee. The Citizen's Boundary Committee will solicit input regarding the four proposals which the board would like to pursue and made a recommendation to the board in April. Public input is also welcomed at the March 2009 regular board meeting where the board will discuss feedback from this hearing.

I understand the anxiety parents feel when it comes to school changes. I remember my own anxiety when my sons were changing schools due to grades and boundary changes, but as with any growing district, we have to be able to adapt to population surges which sometimes require moving students to a different campus. We believe children are resilient and adapt well to change. The district has excellent teams in place at each campus to help students and families with transitions and every employee is committed to welcoming students to a campus.

I know there has been a lot of tension between neighborhoods but I ask everyone to remember that **all** your children are the district's top priority and I ask that you be kind to each other as we work to find a solution. Our board has a difficult decision which will inevitably not satisfy everyone but if we work together we can ensure every child succeeds.

Sincerely,



Jesús H. Chávez, Ph.D.  
Superintendent