

High School Task Force (HSTF)

At the Board of Education meeting on December 18, 2007, the members of the High School Task Force (HSTF) presented their findings and recommendations to the Board members. The HSTF had unanimously agreed upon the recommendations after six months of research, presentations, surveys, discussions and site visits.

High School Task Force Key Recommendations

- a. The District should increase the capacity of Gunn and Palo Alto High Schools to accommodate 2,300 students each.
- b. The District should spend money, time and attention on developing small, intimate, personalized learning options for students.
- c. The District should create flexible learning spaces that lend themselves to diverse curricular and instructional systems.
- d. The District should maximize the use of all current alternative educational programs, expand or establish our own as needed.

Board of Education Direction and Next Steps

The School Board directed staff to follow up on the recommendations of the HSTF in five key areas:

- a. The findings of the HSTF should be shared with the managers of the building program and bond election process. Facility needs for student learning and program development identified by the HSTF should be shared with the high school communities, with specific details to be determined at individual sites. The intent is to help guide staff in building appropriate facilities to accommodate student growth for 2,300 students while maintaining intimate and personalized learning options.
- b. The findings and recommendations of the HSTF should be shared with and help to inform the Strategic Planning process, slated to begin Spring 2008. Members of the HSTF were encouraged to join the Strategic Planning process and share their thoughts and expertise.
- c. The findings and recommendations of the HSTF should be shared with and help guide the WASC process, beginning Spring 2008, on both high school campuses. Members of the HSTF were encouraged to join the WASC process on their respective campuses.
- d. Spring 2008 staff will bring back to the Board of Education a proposed revision of the District School Size Policy, allowing the high schools to potentially grow to 2,300 students over the next ten years.
- e. The District will do a comprehensive review of its student support and alternative programs. The review should include the capacity and effectiveness of the current programs as well as projected needs as enrollment increases. Examination of potential program expansion or development needs to occur. With the high schools currently involved in both a WASC Self Study and a Strategic Planning process, the start of the examination should take place Fall 2008.