

2155 North Valley Street  
Berkeley, California 94702

January 25, 1993

Dr. Nancy Spaeth  
Associate Superintendent-Instruction  
2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way  
Berkeley, California 94704

Dear Dr. Spaeth:

Enclosed is a copy of the West Berkeley Cragmont Site Committee's recommendations which will be presented to the superintendent's task force on Tuesday, January 26.

A word of explanation as to the origin and credentials of the West Berkeley Cragmont Site Committee. In late December/early January, a group of west Berkeley Cragmont parents and parents-to-be as well as other concerned neighbors became aware of and disturbed by our lack of representation on the Cragmont Site Committee. At the January 14 meeting of the site committee, at which Jim Masters was present, it was decided by the committee that (a) anyone who attended site committee meetings was, ipso facto, a member of the site committee, and (b) since clearly there was a wide division between the views of northeast Berkeley residents and west Berkeley residents, it would be best to split into two committees and submit two independent reports. Jim Masters made it clear that a single, unanimous report was not a necessity.

Therefore, a group of us met on Saturday, January 23, and agreed to the following points.

Yours truly,

  
Joanna Graham

Encl.

cc: SOTF

Dr. Beverly Smith-Miller

**CRAGMONT SCHOOL SITE COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY**

**A. SITE COMMITTEE SPOKESPERSONS:**

- Victor Kley - 649-8401
- Lloyd Lee - 987-9740 (w); 524-8603 (h)

**B. PROPOSED GRADE CONFIGURATION: Pre-Kindergarten through 5, contingent on adoption of a controlled choice desegregation method, see section D, below.**

**C. PROPOSED SCHOOL SIZE:**

- 300 to 330 K through 5 students
- Up to 25 Pre-K children
- Up to 10 special day students

**D. DESEGREGATION METHOD:**

- Controlled choice within one of two large zones, with strict adherence to the District's maximum percentages for racial groupings.
- Current students to be permitted to re-enroll.
- Preferences to be given to siblings of then current students (and those equivalent to siblings) and to children in the immediate vicinity of the school, but without overriding desegregation limits.
- School choices to be assisted by District staffed and funded community out-reach and education activities and by a central clearinghouse for processing school choice requests.
- Adoption of a flexible, multi-mode transportation system to (a) reduce student transport time and expense and (b) permit parents/guardians to respond to student emergencies and to participate in school functions.
- No method to be proposed to the Board without extensive additional public discussion and comment.

**E. SPECIAL FEATURES OR THEMES:**

Cragmont would accentuate a language arts and skills curriculum, with added emphasis on structured parental involvement in both classrooms and school operations and on incorporating community resources into the program.

**F. NUMBER OF MEETINGS OF SITE COMMITTEE:**

Approximately eleven.

West Berkeley Cragmont Site Committee Recommendations  
January 25, 1993

Below summarizes the recommendations of the West Berkeley Cragmont Site Committee on 1. rebuilding Cragmont, 2. desegregation's role in building, rebuilding or refurbishing Berkeley's public schools, and 3) class configuration.

### 1. Rebuilding Cragmont

It was the unanimous recommendation of the West Berkeley Cragmont Site Committee that Cragmont School should not be rebuilt at the present location for these reasons:

- Safety. Whether or not the upcoming soils report says the site can be built on, the area is too close to fault traces and slide areas.
- No money is available to rebuild. Committee strongly opposes the rumored use of Measure A money to rebuild Cragmont. West Berkeley residents campaigned very hard for Measure A so Columbus could be rebuilt, not so Cragmont could be rebuilt.
- Berkeley has enough classrooms, including space for flexible areas (according to BUSD statistics) without rebuilding Cragmont.
- There already is a school in the neighborhood (Oxford).
- Need is for more classrooms in the areas of Berkeley with the highest density of children (west and south Berkeley)\*.
- Unbalanced busing. This year, for example, only 13 kindergartners out of 84 come from the school neighborhood (statistics from the Cragmont parents' directory). If a new school site is needed it should be built where the need for it is greatest to reduce busing and busing costs.

### Alternative site

Franklin School site is currently used as a transition site. It can and should be converted to a permanent school site in whatever grade configuration is needed after the transition period is over.

If the need ever arises for a new primary school in Berkeley, it should be built in west or south Berkeley on currently owned BUSD property (e.g. West Campus), by purchasing new property, or by expanding an existing school site.

### 2. Desegregation

The committee feels that the decision to build, rebuild or refurbish school sites should be based on facilitating desegregation. It does not make sense to rebuild a school in an area with relatively few primary school-aged children (who happen to be mostly white) and then bus the majority of the children from the flatland areas of the city to achieve desegregation and fill seats. This approach is expensive in busing costs and puts the major burden of desegregation on people of color.

### 3. Class Configuration

The committee had many opinions on which way to reconfigure the schools or whether to modify the existing plan. No consensus was reached. The primary unifying factor in everyone's opinion was that the quality of education be excellent for all children, that schools not be perceived as desirable or undesirable, and that resources be *equitably* divided among all schools.

\*all statistics mentioned in our report are from SOTF or BUSD materials unless otherwise noted.

The West Berkeley Cragmont Site Committee can be reached by calling:

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