

April 14, 2021

Dear SOMSD Community,

We are sending this communication to provide updates regarding the District's Intentional Integration Initiative (III) that will begin in September 2021, with the incoming Kindergarten class.

For background, in the 2018-2019 school year, the Board voted for the design of each elementary school to eventually take on a K-5 grade span. This was very important as it gave direction to our architects as they began the work of bringing our Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) to fruition. While our integration plan is linked to our construction, in our February 2020 Town Hall event, we shared that it is not fully dependent on our construction, therefore, due to the innate spontaneity of construction, a decision was made in April 2020 to untether our Intentional Integration Initiative (III) from our construction efforts. The District's Intentional Integration plan was Board approved in June 2020 and addressed the usage of an algorithm to be applied to the Kindergarteners who will be joining our District in September of 2021, with a plan to monitor this pilot and adjust if necessary (as future classes enter our District).

An important update that was also previously discussed and recently emphasized was that Marshall and Jefferson cannot become independent K-5 spaces until the construction of those buildings is completed (an update regarding LRFP is shared below). Therefore, the schools will continue to function as a K - 2 and a 3 - 5 school respectively. In addition, the classrooms in our District that currently house our kindergartners will remain the same for next year (unless there is a significant change in the enrollment expected).

As also shared in June, the District will be utilizing a modified Berkeley Approach for our Integration methodology, which includes the development of an algorithm that creates micro-neighborhoods and utilizes key variables:

- Parental education level;
- Parental income;
- Race;
- Sibling Preference; and,
- Proximity

The District is working with Alves Group to develop the algorithm and an update will be shared during the April 19th Board meeting. **Families of incoming Kindergarteners will receive their child(ren)'s school placement letters by the end of June.**

We have developed an updated SOMSD III microsite to provide updates, information, and FAQs for parents/guardians. Click here to view the website: <http://bit.ly/SOMSDIII>

Long-Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) Updates:

We shared an update on the Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) with the community in our March 15 District newsletter [story link: <http://bit.ly/3c1KwaS>]. Six elementary school construction plans were submitted to the state for approval, and we received approvals for four locations; among them were Clinton, Jefferson, Seth Boyden, and Tuscan elementary schools.

- March 11, construction bids were advertised for Clinton and Jefferson elementary schools; and March 25 bids were advertised for Seth Boyden and Tuscan elementary schools
- Bid proposals received for Clinton, Jefferson, Seth Boyden, and Tuscan are expected to be open in late April to early May.
- Bids will be reviewed with the goal of awarding construction contracts by the end of May
- Construction will begin at Clinton, Jefferson, Seth Boyden, and Tuscan during the summer

Construction plans for Marshall, South Mountain Elementary and Annex are still awaiting approval from the state. Awaiting approval for construction plans for the remaining schools does not affect our Intentional Integration Initiative plan. We are still moving forward with the integration of our incoming Kindergarten class for Fall 2021.

We are proud to bring this Integration Initiative which has been years in the making to fruition. We thank the many stakeholders who have been a part of this process and thank our community for their patience and support as the District seeks to create a more equitable, diverse, and balanced educational environment for our students that will impact generations to come.

As shared earlier in this letter, we will address the SOMSD III during the April 19th Board meeting to provide updates regarding the III algorithm and timeline.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ronald G. Taylor, Superintendent of Schools