

## Board Approves Consolidation Committee Members

**Alameda, California – June 27** – At its public meeting on June 26, the Board of Education approved 15 members for the Committee to Consider High School Consolidation.

The committee, which is being convened at the request of the Board of Education, will analyze the viability, desirability, and effects of combining Alameda High School and Encinal High School into one comprehensive high school.

The district received more than 50 applications for the committee. The superintendent recommended that 15 of those applicants be on the committee. The appointees, who represent a wide range of personal and professional backgrounds, include students, staff, families, and community members, and come from the West End, East End, and Bay Farm Island.

- Mia Bonta
- Richard Bunker
- Kelly Hartlaub Gregor
- Dorothy Jones
- Chuck Kapelke
- Cameron Furuichi-Fong
- Marva Lyons
- Cheryl Lua
- Liza Gabato Morse
- Sofía Orduña
- Ron Parodi
- Melanie Shannon
- Kathy Lamb-Tansey
- Bill Withrow
- Cindy Zecher

In response to public comments from students and several of the nominated adult applicants, the Board directed staff to add four more students to the committee (bringing the total to six) in order to more fully capture student perspectives. Applications for the committee will be sent to students in August. The Board also asked that the committee members discuss and plan ways of developing a student subcommittee to engage more students from district high schools so that even more student voices are included in the process.

### Meeting Logistics

The committee will meet an estimated seven to eight times this fall to review data about a wide range of factors related to a potential merger of the schools, including:

demographic projections; traffic, transportation, and parking concerns; and how a merger would affect course offerings, staffing, special education, student mental health, and opportunities in athletics, the arts, and school leadership.

All meetings will be widely advertised, open to the public, and held at Island High School. The committee's work will culminate in a report laying out several possible scenarios for a potential new configuration of schools to be presented next February. The committee will not, however, be making a specific recommendation on whether the schools should be consolidated or not.

## **Background**

The idea of merging the two schools has been raised several times in previous decades. This spring, community members, athletic directors, and teachers asked for a new review of the concept for two reasons. First, it could allow AUSD to provide a more comprehensive high school education to all AUSD students (because one school could provide more course offerings more equitably to more students). Second, the money saved by combining the schools could go towards improving AUSD employee salaries, which despite recent raises have long been less than the county average.

"I'd like to thank everyone who applied and also stress that we had to select committee members from a pool of very qualified applicants," says Superintendent Sean McPhetridge. "That's never easy. But I feel confident that the members we selected will bring a balance of expertise, opinions, and personal perspectives."

"I look forward to the committee working in the fall with students, families, and staff to envision and imagine what would be desired and what would be required if Alameda were to pursue a consolidated comprehensive high school," he says. "Public input is crucial to a decision as significant as this, and I know that the Board and staff are grateful for the active interest in participation we are seeing in stakeholders, especially students, already."