ALAMEDA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Excellence & Equity For All Students

Kirsten Vital, Superintendent
2060 Challenger Drive
Alameda, CA 94501
Phone 510.337.7060
Fax 510.522.6926

April 21, 2014

Dear community,

Over the last few months, you've received a number of communications from the District Office about the Facilities Master Plan and the potential for putting a bond on the ballot this November. This project — the end goal of which is to provide safer, more comfortable, and up-to-date facilities for our students and staff — is now at a critical stage, so I wanted to let you know of our progress and encourage you to continue to get involved.

Where we are now

Staff from Quattrocchi Kwok Architects (QKA) have now assessed and held nearly 60 school site meetings to learn a) what each school's crucial facilities needs are; and b) what changes the teachers, administrators, parents, guardians, and community members would like to see. Those conversations have covered a wide range of very important physical and educational issues — including security, technology, classroom sizes, playing fields, performance spaces, science and technology resources, pedestrian safety, Historic Alameda High School, energy efficiency, and the critical need for updated heating, electricity, and other mechanical infrastructures in our aging facilities. I deeply appreciate the time, commitment, and insights of the community members who attended the meetings. (If you couldn't attend, you can see the notes from each meeting on our Facilities Master Plan page.)

Based on what they had seen and heard, the architects then drafted site plans for each school and showed them to school site community members to get feedback. (Those draft site plans are also available on our Facilities Master Plan page.) Because this is a 10 to 15 year plan to modernize and renovate our facilities, the architects also helped the school site communities rank the improvements needed by order of importance (i.e., what needs to be fixed or renovated right away and what can be worked on at a later date).

Next steps

After nearly 60 school site meetings, the architects will now hold a series of *community-wide* meetings starting tonight (see details below). The first two meetings will be nearly identical: The architects will talk about what they discovered during both their formal assessments of the facilities and the school site meetings. They also will present the draft plans for every site in the district, as well as take feedback on those plans. At the third meeting, the architects will present plans that incorporate the feedback received at the first two meetings.

All three meetings are open to the entire community. And each meeting will include opportunities for you to comment on the site plans, as well as the district's most pressing priorities. The three meetings will be held:

4/21 Alameda High School cafeteria, 7 pm – 9 pm

4/24 Encinal High School/Jr. Jets Room 605, 7 pm – 9 pm

4/30 Lum Elementary School MPR, 7 pm – 9 pm

Final Steps

The final step of the Facilities Master Plan will be the creation of the implementation plan that will provide a list of projects for the entire district. As described in a Community Bulletin sent out in February, projects will be categorized as "Critical Facility Needs," "Educational Program Needs," and "Future Facility Needs." The architects will provide some recommendations on the prioritization, but the Board of Education will create the final plan.

(For more details on how projects will be prioritized and implemented, as well as a schedule of upcoming Board of Education meetings, please see the PowerPoint slide show attached to this agenda item on the Facilities Master Plan, which was presented at the March 25, 2014 Board of Education meeting.)

At the same time, district staff — along with our financial advisor, bond counsel, and Board of Education — will be working on the structure and language of a potential bond for the November ballot. That structure and language is scheduled to be presented as information to the Board of Education at its June 10 public meeting and potentially voted on at its June 24 public meeting.

I realize that this whole process can seem complicated and technical. But I want to stress how very important this plan is. The Facilities Master Plan will detail the improvements needed in the buildings that our students and employees inhabit on a daily basis, buildings that currently lack modern heating systems, up-to-date technology, even sufficient classroom space. As the bricks and mortar of our school district, these facilities are also community resources, places where a wide range of groups hold meetings and put on performances. Hearing from you, our community members, about how these buildings should be improved to better serve the community's needs is of crucial importance. Please do consider coming to the upcoming meetings to voice your opinions. You can also send emails to the district via the school site pages that are part of our Facilities Master Plan website.

Please also feel free to send me an email personally about the Facilities Master Plan (kvital@alameda.k12.ca.us). And of course I am always happy to hear from you about other district matters, as well.

Sincerely,



Kirsten M. Vital
Superintendent