

Do plans deseg address the issues?

Last fall a school boycott was threatened by the Black United Front and the School Board responded with short-term and long-term policies for resolution of the problems indicated by the Black United Front.

On January 30th, the School Board adopted for the purpose of public discussion two plans, out of which is expected to come the Board's final response.

Concern has been expressed in the community over how well the Board's plans respond to their own long-term policy.

1. The development of a comprehensive plan on all aspects of the desegregation/integration program. This plan will reflect the Board's affirmative duty to maintain individual school populations of not more than 50 per cent minority students. This plan should be completed no later than January 31, 1980.

Response: The Board no longer calls its plan "Comprehensive". Plan I provides minor boundary changes that will lower minority percentages at Sabin, relieve overpopulation at King and Humboldt, allow voluntary transfer of Black children out and white children in, and assigns upper grade children to middle schools. It's desegregative character will depend on the volunteerism of whites and although all Black children can remain in neighborhood schools, the plan will depend on heavy recruiting of Blacks to other schools.

Plan II reorganizes the Lincoln Cluster schools but adds little to desegregation. King and Humboldt children would be assigned to west side schools in a mandatory one-way pattern. This plan does not address the equity issue -- unfair burden on Black children.

2. The involvement of a wide cross-section of the community -- Black, white and other minorities -- including the Black United Front, the Community Coalition for School Integration, and parents who would be affected, in the considerations and planning, although the primary function of the development of the comprehensive plan will remain with the Board and its staff.

As pointed out by Steve Buel, there has been no input in the plan by the Black United Front or other Black organizations, and the Board has had no formal contact with the BUF since the adoption of the long-term policy. The period from today until February 25th will feature public forums and other public meetings to allow citizens to express concerns.

3. The establishment of primary grades, K-5, at all Albina schools, which are not converted to middle schools or for other appropriate standard assignments for students at each grade level.

Primary grades have been established at Humboldt and Eliot. Plans provide that Humboldt will go through the 5th grade and Eliot through the 4th.

4. The completion of planning for and implementing of at least one integrated middle school, and perhaps two, in the Albina community.

A middle school will be established at Adams high School. For the Black United Front, "in the community" meant in the Boise, Eliot, King, Humboldt, Sabin, Irvington, Vernon, Woodlawn neighborhoods. The Board and some others consider Adams to be "in the community".

A second middle school will be established at the old Monroe building, which is to be a magnet school to attract students from throughout the district.

The development of a process by which parents, members of community organizations, including the Black United Front, and civic leaders can be involved in the selection of staff to work in schools that are part of the desegregation/integration process.

This policy has not been addressed.

6. The purposeful allocation of funds so that major concentrations of local, state and federal monies designated for purposes related to integration/disadvantaged services will occur in any cluster furthering the desegregation/integration effort.

ESAA desegregation funds are allocated for 20 schools next year. This policy addressed the need to concentrate money in a few receiving schools so there would be enough for significant programs. This was tied to reduction of scattering of children. The plans do not specifically address scattering of children or money.

7. The direction by the Board that the Superintendent create a more extensive course of instruction for teachers and administrators in the subject areas of Black history and culture, along with instruction in the history and culture of other ethnic minorities and the problems created by social class. Teachers assigned to clusters in the desegregation/integration program will complete such instruction before the beginning of the 1980-81 school year.

A teacher training component has been designed, dealing with school desegregation, the concept of ethnic minority, Afro-American education, culture, social status and current problems; the desegregated school; cultural pluralism in education. Fifty staff members are currently enrolled in the course at Portland State University and they are expected to teach the course.

Training will be provided on a voluntary basis, but principals may ask teachers to enroll.

The current course does not address specifically in any detail the history and culture of Blacks and other minorities as was requested by the BUF.

8. The development within the comprehensive plan, of programs and curriculum directed at enhancing the self-worth and cultural identity of Black students.

The administration has presented plans for improving the Albina primary schools. These include: Children will receive intensive instruction in oral language, listening, reading, handwriting, spelling, composition, and computation. Children's progress will be systematically evaluated, parents and children will use "learning contracts", teachers will use individualized teaching plans.

"Staff excellence will be insured by recruitment and continuing staff development." Aides and various support personnel will be added. Parent involvement will be a strong component. "Extended homes" will provide after-school study and tutoring.

Various middle school programs have been offered including a magnet middle school that would have entrance requirements, with enriched educational opportunities for advanced students, a visual and performing arts school, a fundamental school.

One middle school option is the Academy Middle School organized into three levels representing high, middle and low achievement. A school of 600 with 200 at each level is envisioned. "It is possible to provide common experiences across achievement levels if socialization among groups is desirable." Students would be placed in a "track" through achievement

testing, supported by diagnostic tests and other psychological measurements as needed. "Students would be allowed to challenge their placement and to attempt higher achievement level classes but would have to demonstrate a continuing level of proficiency to remain there.

8. The immediate instruction of the Superintendent to recommend to the Board the employment of a director of personnel who has, as a skill and interest, the production of minority hiring gains, and who will increase the District's applicant pool of qualified minority teachers and other staff. The District is prepared to hire special recruiters if necessary.

No Personnel Director has been hired.

The District will forthwith develop plans to seek modification in HEW's position concerning certificated minority staff distribution.

The district has notified HEW that it will no longer adhere to the Singleton Rule and is prepared to legally challenge the rule. The district was put under the Singleton rule, which regulates the assignment of minority teachers to schools with a majority of non-white students, after the district was found guilty of discrimination in teacher assignment.



Eddie Robinson protests Alameda/Sabin boundary changes citing the burden of desegregation still remains on Blacks. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Pacific Power Citizen of the Week



John Craig is one who quietly contributes to programs for senior citizens and children. One of his lesser known contributions was to provide meat for the monthly luncheon meeting of Albina area senior citizens for the period of a year, while releasing staff members to help prepare and serve the food. An added surprise was Mother's Day corsages.

Among his youth interests are Little League and Jefferson High School.

Craig is the owner of Complete Gardening Service, established in 1972. The company does landscape installation, sprinkler installation, maintenance, indoor foliage and building remodeling.

A native of Washington, D.C., Craig studied his profession in Maryland. After moving to Oregon he attended Mt. Hood Community College to familiarize himself with local conditions.

He is a member of the National Landscape Association, the American and Oregon Landscape Associations; the American Nurserymen's Association and the Oregon Nurserymen's Association; the International Association of Arboriculture; the Northwest Minority Contractors Association and the Senior Adult Service Center Advisory Board.

A resident of Portland, Craig has four boys, ages 20 to 13.

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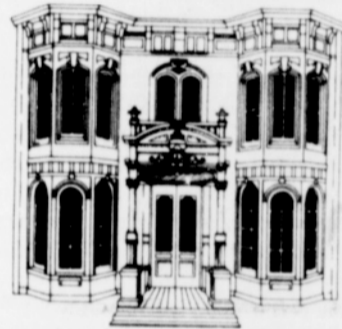


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NOTICE

The Black United Front will present its education plan to the community on February 7th, 7:00 at King Neighborhood Facility.

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If you have a problem that is not covered in this list, please call and ask whether we can help. Chances are, we can. If not, we can recommend someone else for you to call. One way or the other, we want to see you get the kind of professional legal counsel you're entitled to.

The best time to call us, or any attorney, is before you are embroiled in a legal problem. This is called preventative law and it makes a lot of sense.

Regardless, when you call us we will arrange for an initial consultation at your convenience. Cost: \$20. We probably can't solve anything in this meeting, but it is a chance for you to explain your particular problem and for us to give you some idea of what it'll take to reach a solution. If you want us to proceed, we'll give you an estimate of the fees you should plan on. In writing.

