

**FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION**

BC NO: 05 - 1
(Board Office Use Only)

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| CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - <i>(Check a Box)</i> | Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> | No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Date: |
| From the Office of the Superintendent | | | |
| To the Members of Board of Education | | | |
| Prepared by: Karin Temple, Assistant Superintendent, Operational <i>(Signature Required)</i> | | | Phone Number: 457-3134 |
| Regarding: Rutherford B. Gaston Sr. Middle School Construction Agreement – September 26, 2012 Board Agenda | | | |
| <p>The purpose of this board communication is to provide additional information to the Board regarding item B-11 on the September 26, 2012 Board agenda, adoption of Resolution 12-01 authorizing the lease-leaseback agreements for construction of the Gaston Middle School buildings. This is the culmination of several years of planning and preparation including significant community input.</p> <p>Gaston Middle School will be constructed at 1100 Church Avenue and will open to 7th and 8th graders for the school year starting in August 2014. Southwest Fresno has been without a neighborhood middle school since Irwin Junior High closed in 1978; students are assigned and transported to four middle schools in other parts of the district. The new school site encompasses the former site of Carver, the former Carver Park (flood basin) area north of Carver, and former commercial property along Church. Gaston is designed to accommodate 1,000 students and will provide the full array of academic courses and extra-curricular activities offered at other Fresno Unified middle schools. Addams, Columbia, Lincoln, King and Kirk elementary schools will feed into Gaston and students will go on to Edison High.</p> <p>Below is a timeline of significant actions related to development of Gaston Middle School:</p> <p><u>April 2009</u>: Board approval of the district’s Facilities Master Plan identified the need for a neighborhood middle school in southwest Fresno as essential to the Master Plan’s objective of establishing clear and predictable feeder progression in all regions of the district.</p> <p><u>July 2009</u>: A site selection study for the middle school was initiated. Eleven potential sites within the Edison High attendance area were evaluated for suitability for a middle school and conformance to California Department of Education standards.</p> <p><u>February 2010</u>: The Board considered a large, one-owner, agricultural property at California and West as the site for the middle school. However, concerns were expressed about the site’s proximity to nearby industrial uses and the potential for odor or other conditions not conducive to the teaching and learning environment. To provide an opportunity for additional community input, the Board conducted a special meeting at Edison High and received comments about the community’s desire for the new school’s site and program.</p> | | | |

May 2010: The Board approved the Church/King location as the preferred site for the middle school. This was a highly desirable single parcel site with optimal configuration and a willing owner across the street from the eventual Carver Expanded site. Although Church/King is just outside the district's boundaries, within the West Fresno Elementary School District, there was hope that the West Fresno Elementary School District would be willing to work with Fresno Unified for construction of a middle school at the site. However, an agreement was not achieved and another site had to be identified.

August 2010: The Board approved the Carver Expanded site as the preferred site for the new middle school.

November 2011: The California Department of Education approved the site, and the Board approved the Environmental Impact Report, Resolution of Necessity, and Carver Expanded as the final site. These approvals triggered property acquisition and relocation of residents and property owners. The relocation process was conducted with the utmost of sensitivity to meet the individual needs of each family and property owner. Also during this period there was significant coordination/collaboration with the City of Fresno and the Metropolitan Flood Control District related to infrastructure and relocating the flood control basin. In the twelve months prior to the November 2011 approvals, staff met with the Board five times in Closed Session to discuss real estate negotiations and request approvals using developer fee revenue for property acquisition and relocation costs.

April 2012: Board approval of the name Rutherford B. Gaston Sr. Middle School.

May 2012: The Board approved the first phase of construction – preparation of the site including construction of the new flood control basin.

September 2012: Recommended Board approval of construction agreement for the school buildings and play fields.

The recommended construction agreement, at the guaranteed maximum price of \$36,702,876, is competitive as compared to the square footage cost for other recent school projects in Fresno Unified and other districts. Gaston's per-square-foot cost is lower than middle schools built in neighboring districts in 2007 and 2008, and is in the mid-range of new construction projects in Fresno Unified over the past five years. The competitive price is particularly significant given that several factors make the Gaston Middle School project more challenging than other projects: the urban high-density site with 43 developed parcels, the need for two-story steel frame construction, and the requirement to replace/relocate a flood control basin.

If you have questions or would like further information, please call Karin Temple at 457-3134.

Approved by:
Michael E. Hanson, Superintendent



Date:

9/21/12