



March 12, 2024 5:00 p.m.
District Advisory Committee
for School Capacity Analysis
Board of Trustees Board Room

MEETING MINUTES

Voting Members

Katie Andersen, Committee Member
Emily Cravens, Chairperson
John Harms, Committee Member
Paul Jansen, Committee Member
Crystal Kochendorfer, Committee Member
Adam Rinderle, Committee Member
Linda Shepard, Co-Chairperson

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Linda Shepard called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present:

Katie Andersen, Committee Member
Emily Cravens, Chairperson (*Arrived during Discussion/Information*)
John Harms, Committee Member
Paul Jansen, Committee Member
Crystal Kochendorfer, Committee Member
Adam Rinderle, Committee Member
Linda Shepard, Co-Chairperson

Absent:

None

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion made by: John Harms

Motion seconded by: Adam Rinderle

5. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

6. Approval of Minutes – January 23, 2024

Motion made by: Katie Andersen

Motion seconded by: Crystal Kochendorfer

Motion carried 6 – 0 to approve the January 23, 2024, meeting minutes.

Katie Andersen - yes

John Harms - yes

Paul Jansen - yes

Crystal Kochendorfer - yes

Adam Rinderle - yes

Linda Shepard - yes

7. Discussion/Information

a. Review CDE Best Practices and Criteria

- i. Linda Shepard asked what the per-student operating cost at each facility
- ii. Linda Shepard would like to know the educational program at each site
 1. Handout provided under item b. iii
- iii. Restructuring grade configuration to balance current enrollment
 1. Linda would like to know the current class size broken down by grade
 2. Clark Hampton stated the class size when COVID-19 funding for class-size reduction is no longer available
 - a. MS is 32.5-1
 - b. ES 1-3 is 30-1
 - c. ES 4-5 is 31.5-1
- iv. Crystal Kochendorfer requested feeder patterns
 1. Handout provided under item b. ii

b. Review January 23, 2024, Committee Requested Handouts

- i. Criteria Rankings
 1. Rob Murray clarified the “Capacities” handout is based on the total number of students as the school sites are currently configured
 2. Paul Jansen requested the capacity of each site’s permanent facility and the percentage of utilization
 3. Linda Shepard requested to see a breakdown (digital for next meeting) of statistics for each site that can be filtered
 4. Katie Andersen inquired about the Current vs. Projected Utilization of Del Obispo ES
 5. John Forney stated that he will clarify the portable count at Del Obispo ES
 6. John Forney stated that the condition scores are based off a Facility Condition Assessment from 2017 that is on the Facilities website for reference
 - a. Harold Ambuehl would change to a condition score of A with the recent site upgrades
 - b. Palisades would change to a higher condition score than a D with site upgrades since the report was released
 - c. This report captured permanent capacity and the portables

- ii. Feeders
 - a. Paul Jansen requested the updated school boundaries map with the school names listed
 - b. Linda Shepard requested to see enrollment by feeder schools moving into a middle school (on a 11x17) (or provide the list of feeder patterns)
 - c. Crystal Kochendorfer would like to see: Current enrollment, projected enrollment, capacity, portable figures on one sheet if possible
- iii. School Signature Programs
 - a. John Forney stated a representative from Ed Services can attend the next scheduled meeting on April 15, 2024, to speak on behalf of the Special Programs
 - b. Identified K-8 Schools
 - a. Arroyo Vista
 - b. Carl Hankey
 - c. Esencia
 - d. Las Flores
 - e. Vista Del Mar
- iv. Elementary School Capacity Utilization (Current)
- v. Elementary School Capacity Utilization (Projected 2030-31)

8. Discussion of Proposed Next Committee Meeting Topics and Timeline

- a. April 15, 2024, Board Room 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm
- b. May 13, 2024, Board Room 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

9. Comments from Committee Members

- a. Crystal Kochendorfer requested to not decide on a short list tonight but would like to remove schools from consideration so that the Committee can further analyze the remaining sites.
- b. Paul Jansen requested the number of combo classes per site.
- c. Crystal Kochendorfer would like to know if the immersion programs can expand to other sites. Bring supporting information to the next meeting
- d. Katie Andersen asked if IB is a popular program at the Elementary level
- e. Linda Shepard requested a report on the projected enrollment and utilization, grouped by middle school
- f. Paul Jansen recommended to the Committee to remove sites over 600 projected enrollment) Everyone in agreement
Motion made by: Paul Jansen
Motion seconded by: Linda Shepard
- g. Adam Rinderle requested a Google Drive link with the ability to filter the data (special programs with acronyms identified, facility information, portables)

10. **Adjournment**

Motion made by: Paul Jansen

Motion seconded by: John Harms

Katie Andersen - yes

Emily Cravens - yes

John Harms - yes

Paul Jansen - yes

Crystal Kochendorfer - yes

Adam Rinderle - yes

Linda Shepard - yes

Motion carried 7 – 0 to adjourn the meeting.

Linda Shepard adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.



John Forney
Chief Facilities Officer



Amy Strange
Facilities & Construction Specialist



**District Advisory Committee
for School Capacity Analysis
Committee Meeting
Agenda**

Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

This meeting will take place in-person, with the location listed at the bottom of the agenda. Members of the public will have the opportunity to address the District Advisory Committee.

Expected Participants

- Clark Hampton, Deputy Superintendent, Business & Support Services
- John Forney, Chief Facilities Officer
- Amy Strange, Facilities and Construction Specialist
- Rob Murray, Director of Demographics, King Consulting
- Katie Andersen, Committee Member
- Emily Cravens, Chairperson
- John Harms, Committee Member
- Paul Jansen, Committee Member
- Crystal Kochendorfer, Committee Member
- Adam Rinderle, Committee Member
- Linda Shepard, Co-Chairperson

Agenda

1. **Call to Order** _____ p.m.
2. **Roll Call (Establishment of a Quorum);** ____ Present; ____ Absent
3. **Pledge of Allegiance**
4. **Adoption of Agenda**

Motion by _____ Seconded by _____

5. **Public Comments**

At this time, members of the public may address the District Advisory Committee regarding any items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the District Advisory Committee. Comments will be limited to no more than 3 minutes per person and 20 minutes for all comments. Please fill out a Speaker Card and turn it in if you wish to address the Committee.

6. **Approval of Minutes – January 23, 2024**

Motion by _____ Seconded by _____

7. Discussion/Information

- a. Review CDE Best Practices and Criteria
- b. Review January 23, 2024, Committee Requested Handouts
 - i. Criteria Rankings
 - ii. Feeders
 - iii. School Signature Programs
 - iv. Elementary School Capacity Utilization (Current)
 - v. Elementary School Capacity Utilization (Projected 2030-31)
- c. Develop Initial Short List

8. Discussion of Proposed Next Committee Meeting Topics and Timeline

- a. April 15, 2024, Meeting Topic:
 - i. Finalize Recommendations for Superintendent for review

9. Comments from Committee Members

10. Adjournment _____ p.m.

Motion by _____ Seconded by _____

**THE NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE IS
TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 2024, AT 5:00 P.M.**

**AT THE CAPISTRANO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE BOARD ROOM
33122 VALLE ROAD, SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO, CALIFORNIA 92675**

For information regarding Capistrano Unified School District, please visit our website:
www.capousd.org



January 23, 2024 5:00 p.m.
District Advisory Committee
for School Capacity Analysis
Board of Trustees Board Room

MEETING MINUTES

Voting Members

Katie Andersen, Committee Member
Emily Cravens, Chairperson
John Harms, Committee Member
Paul Jansen, Committee Member
Crystal Kochendorfer, Committee Member
Adam Rinderle, Committee Member
Linda Shepard, Co-Chairperson

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

John Forney called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present:

Katie Andersen, Committee Member
Emily Cravens, Chairperson
Paul Jansen, Committee Member
Crystal Kochendorfer, Committee Member
Linda Shepard, Co-Chairperson

Absent:

John Harms, Committee Member
Adam Rinderle, Committee Member

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion made by: Crystal Kochendorfer

Motion seconded by: Katie Andersen

5. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

6. Approval of Minutes – January 12, 2023

Motion made by: Katie Andersen

Motion seconded by: Crystal Kochendorfer

Katie Andersen – yes
Emily Cravens – yes
Paul Jansen – yes
Crystal Kochendorfer – yes
Linda Shepard – yes

Motion carried 5 – 0 to approve the January 12, 2023, meeting minutes.

7. Introductions

John Forney thanked the Committee for their attendance and introduced King Consulting, Incorporated.

8. Selection of a Committee Chairperson and Co-Chairperson

a. Selection of Committee Chairperson Emily Cravens

Motion by Crystal Kochendorfer Seconded by Katie Andersen

b. Selection of Committee Co-Chairperson Linda Shepard

Motion by Paul Jansen Seconded by Crystal Kochendorfer

Katie Andersen – yes
Emily Cravens – yes
Paul Jansen – yes
Crystal Kochendorfer – yes
Linda Shepard – yes

Motion carried 5 – 0 to select Emily Cravens as Chairperson and Linda Shepard as Co-Chairperson.

9. Discussion/Information

a. John Forney, Chief Facilities Officer, recognized Jamie King-Iseman and Rob Murray, consultants with King Consulting, Inc., to present an informational PowerPoint presentation that contained current data for:

- i. Historical Background Data and Enrollment Projections
- ii. School Enrollment
- iii. School Capacity

- b. Paul Jansen requested the “Current Capacity Utilization by Site”, slide 23, in the form of a map.
- c. Linda Shepard requested to see the impact of student enrollment related to the apartment/townhome developments in the Irvine and Santa Ana School District.
- d. Linda Shepard requested to see the school feeder information.
- e. Linda Shepard requested the District to provide the special programs that are offered at each elementary school.

- f. Paul Jansen requested the anticipated operational savings and capital avoidance for closing a school and what the funds would be used for.
 - i. Clark Hampton clarified that anticipated operation savings would be \$500k-\$600k and the savings would be applied to the District budget.

10. Discussion of Proposed Next Committee Meeting Topics and Timeline

- a. The Committee discussed future meeting dates and it was noted that King Consulting would not be available on February 13, 2024.
- b. District staff will reach out to the Committee members with the revised meeting dates.

11. Comments from Committee Members

There were no additional comments from the Committee members.

12. Adjournment

Motion made by: Katie Andersen

Motion seconded by: Linda Shepard

Katie Andersen – yes

Emily Cravens – yes

Paul Jansen – yes

Crystal Kochendorfer – yes

Linda Shepard – yes

Motion carried 5 – 0 to adjourn the meeting.

John Forney adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

John Forney
Chief Facilities Officer

Amy Strange
Facilities & Construction Specialist



Home / Learning Support / School Facilities / School Facility Design

Closing a School Best Practices Guide

Introduction

The decision to close a school is anguishing. It profoundly affects parents, neighborhoods, communities, district personnel, and, of course, students. It affects relationships, routines, and cherished territorialities. In short, it alters not only district operations but also lives.

A decision not to close a school, however, amidst circumstances of declining enrollment and economic necessity, can be imprudent. And while the immediate effects of closing a school may be painful, the long-term effects can be beneficial to everyone.

Indeed, the process of closing a school is difficult, but if done correctly, it becomes less difficult. This "Closing a School Best Practices Guide" (CASBPG) will hopefully make the process easier.

The CASBPG is divided into five chapters:

1. Gathering facts
2. Deciding which school to close
3. Making the decision
4. Making the transition
5. Disposing of surplus property

Chapter 1: Gathering facts

Gather the facts. The decision to close a school must be based upon hard, empirical evidence that leads to a broadly supported, incontrovertible conclusion—the district cannot afford to keep a particular school(s) open without cuts elsewhere (budget, staffing, etc.). This conclusion must be program-based upon such factors as projections of declining enrollment, critical district financial circumstances, facility conditions, educational program quality, costs of unnecessarily keeping underutilized facilities open, feasible options to closing a school, anticipated fiscal relief from school closure, and possibility, property disposition (see Chapter 5 for information on property disposition).

Form a committee to gather the facts. It is a legislative intent, but not a mandate, for a district to have and use a District Advisory Committee (DAC) "before decisions are made about school closure" (*Education Code* Section 17387). But whether an intent or a mandate, the advice is good. The job of the superintendent and board members is to evaluate facts, not gather them. And the process of gathering the facts must be as credible, transparent and non-political as possible. So, at the very least, the DAC, often referred to as 7-11 Committee (due to legislative requirements of at

least 7 but no more than 11 members) should be involved in the fact-finding necessary for an informal recommendation about school closure. *Education Code* Section 17389 suggests who should be represented on this committee.

An essential role of the DAC is to consider the district's Facility Master Plan and how a potential school closure could affect, or reinforce, that plan. It may be necessary to revise that plan based upon the fact-finding conclusions.

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Better still, the DAC should be expanded to include a cross-section of community members who have an interest in and may be affected by school closures. The Oak Grove School District in Santa Clara County called this expanded school-closure committee "The School Consolidation Task Force." Members of the following groups were considered for inclusion in this task force:

- Business community
- Professional groups
- Labor organizations
- Municipal governments
- Teachers and administrators
- Religious organizations
- Recreational elements
- Collective bargaining groups
- Student representatives
- Public agencies
- Environmental planners
- Civic organizations
- Land owners/brokers
- Parents
- Parent groups
- Service organizations
- Demographers

Keep in mind that the DAC should have a balanced, cross-section of members, but a committee of too many members may be cumbersome and not efficient. In any case, it is important that this expanded school-closure committee be perceived as objective and independent from suspected school board or other political agendas. So it is best to have a membership mostly of volunteers (although a paid chairperson or facilitator is useful), making sure, though, that they are responsible citizens. The superintendent and school board members should not be included on the DAC or the expanded, school-closure committee. The Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools recommends the expanded, school-closure committee's leadership to be an outside consultant, or an administrator from the district's central office. The committee itself can also elect one of its members to be the leader. The DAC leader can be appointed by a board member; however, this is least desirable.

DAC meetings are subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act. See *Government Code* Section 54952.3.

Decide what facts to gather. Members of the board of education should charge the expanded, school-closure committee with making a recommendation about school closures after it has completed specific inquiries and tasks. The scope of these tasks is broad and includes:

- determining enrollment projections and their impact on surplus space;
- inventorying the capacity and conditions of existing facilities;
- determining per-student operating cost at each facility;
- considering uniqueness of the educational program at each site;
- evaluating specific schools considered for closure (see Chapter 2);
- identifying specific new environmental/safety concerns for each site;
- determining cost-savings projected for each school considered for closure;
- identifying housing/transportation options for displaced students;
- considering cost benefits of varying property disposition/use options;
- recommending transition strategies;
- making specific recommendations about specific school sites to the board, and
- assessing the impact of school closure on district's insurance coverage.

Consider options. During the fact-finding process, the expanded, school-closure committee should consider alternatives to closing schools. Creating additional need for classrooms or eliminating unnecessary classrooms can affect decisions about school closure. Some of the alternatives as listed below do not involve real cost savings if this is the focus of reasons for school closure:

- expand class-size reduction to create a need for more classrooms;
- dispose of excess portables or leased facilities;
- close surplus classrooms;
- restructure grade configurations to balance school enrollment;
- reorganize attendance boundaries;
- use surplus classrooms for other district functions;
- enter into joint-use/joint occupancy agreements;
- convert to community day school use;
- convert to a small high school;
- lease for use as charter school (Proposition 39);
- shift to full-day kindergarten;
- initiate universal pre-school program; and
- consult with National Trust for Historic Preservation.

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Chapter 2: Deciding which school(s) to close

Decide schools to be considered for closure. Of course, there are many factors to weigh when selecting schools for possible closure. The most obvious criterion, a school with declining enrollment, is not necessarily the best. Consider other factors, too:

- *The condition of a school facility* - a modernized school, one in good repair, and/or one that has technological capacity or other educationally innovative features may be the best school facility in the district, in spite of its declining enrollment. It may be better to close an at-capacity but physically mediocre school;
- *The operating cost of a school* - operating costs may vary from school to school. Some schools use energy more efficiently, some schools need less maintenance, and some schools have minimal transportation costs. Factor these operating costs into decisions about which school to close;
- *The capacity of a school to accommodate excess students* - displaced students must be housed elsewhere in the district, so choosing a school site that has unused classrooms or the capacity to add portables, without encroaching on playground/playfield space, is critical. Another important consideration is the ability of the school's essential, core facilities --- library, multipurpose room, cafeteria, gymnasium, toilets --- to accommodate additional students. While there may be room on a school site to add portable classrooms, there may be no room for all those students to use, say, the lunchroom at the same time. The administration building, also, must be considered since it may have to accommodate expanded services and personnel;
- *Special program facilities* - special programs, such as providing services for special education students, require special facilities. Closing a school that may have a large capital investment in these special facilities may not be cost effective if those specialized facilities need to be rebuilt elsewhere;
- *Environmental factors* - a school's surroundings may have changed since it was first opened. Zoning may have been relaxed to allow nearby, undesirable businesses to move in (i.e., liquor stores, adult bookstores, air-polluting manufacturers, industries that produce or store toxic chemicals), or there might be new environmental hazards (i. e., pipelines, high voltage power lines, fuel storage tanks, airport runway extensions, etc.) that now compromise the safety of the students at a school. the schools chosen to remain open must be safe schools.
- *Ethnic balance* - closing a school and redistributing its students should change as little as possible the ethnic balance in schools throughout the district. Closing some schools will more adversely affect ethnic distribution than others;
- *Transportation* - part of the decision to close a school should be based upon what transportation costs will be saved, and what new transportation costs will be incurred, once a school is closed and its students redistributed. Insuring that there can be safe walking routes for the displaced students to the new school reduces transportation costs and provides a healthy addition to the school day. It is also important to consider the adequacy of existing drop-off/pick-up and bus loading areas at the schools designated to receive additional students;
- *Neighborhoods* - having a neighborhood school is a part of every parent's sense of well being (not to mention the savings associated with transportation costs). The availability of nearby schools to the ones chosen for closure can lessen the impact of displacement and loss of connection to the new school;

- *Education program* - educational programs are generally mobile; programs and staff can move from site to site. But there can be site-related high achievement schools based upon innovative facility design, a particularly fortuitous dynamic among staff, and just the right mixture of students. Often these high achievement schools are unique and perhaps may be hard to reconstruct elsewhere. On the other hand, there can be historically low-performing schools. Such sites may be good candidates for closure providing an opportunity for re-distributing the students and staff;
- *Aesthetics* - often the presence of an attractive, well-designed, well-kept school can be a source of student and neighborhood pride, an asset to the community, as well as an educational asset. Of course, decisions about school closure are much more complex than just considerations of "appearance," but the physical aspect is important and should not be overlooked in the process of consideration;
- *Value* - if maximizing revenue from the sale or lease of surplus schools is integral to decisions regarding which school to close, then, of course, a property appraisal and assessment of the interests in and proposed uses for the property are vital. The appraisal and assessment must state that it complies with Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices as promulgated by the Appraisal Standards Board of the Appraisal Foundation. The expected value realized from a closed school should be measured not just in revenue but also in community enhancement (see Chapter 5 for limitations of how revenue from the sale or lease of property can be used).

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Chapter 3: Making the decision

Make the decision. Based upon the expanded school-closure committee's analysis and conclusion, the superintendent will make a recommendation to the school board. At this stage, the recommendation may have become modified based upon input from the superintendent's cabinet or other district staff.

Once the recommendation has been presented to the board, the superintendent should conduct public hearings. This should be done as soon as possible. In addition to an open school board meeting, each potential site that may be affected. Those considered for closure, as well as those designated to receive a particularly heavy increase in enrollment as the result of school closures, should be the site for a series of public hearings.

Ideally, members of the community will have been included in the expanded school-closure committee so there will have been some communication and input from and to the community. Nevertheless, these meetings, especially for school closures, will be emotional, especially if they are perceived by parents that the meetings are a formality and not genuine attempts at meaningful communication. At the very least, the district should be represented by the superintendent and an assistant, a school board member from the area which includes the school to be affected, the site principal, and a member of the expanded school-closure committee. Other invited guests might include a representative from the PTA, media personnel, school site council members, and

community dignitaries. Consider using a moderator to effectively manage time and control statements from the audience. Firm time lines for comments should be set and enforced. A district representative, perhaps a facilitator or someone from the expanded, school-closure committee, should be designated as the district liaison for all future school -closure communication. This shields, but only partially, rancor from being directed in subsequent weeks at district personnel and/or board members.

Representatives from the district should be candid about the facts behind the consideration for school closure. Graphically illustrate such data as declining enrollment figures, site-specific operating costs, and overall district financial difficulties. Talk about what is at stake: specific programs, reduced class sizes, instructional material reductions, even district financial solvency and academic performance. Demonstrate how academic standards can be maintained (or improved), special programs (e.g., special education, after school, GATE, etc.) continued, and new transportation needs accommodated. Explicitly show how school closure is a solution, or part of the solution, to a serious problem.

Also, be prepared to discuss proposed uses for the closed schools (see Chapter 5 for information on property disposition). While parents will be keenly involved in discussions about closing "their" school, the school's neighbors, whether parents or not, will express great concern about proposed uses of "their" closed school. At this point in the process, the district may not know what the planned use for the closed school may be, but this is a good opportunity to hear about community concerns. These concerns typically are explicit statements about what they do not want the school property used for. This is also a good opportunity to assure neighbors that any future use of the school property will be subject to public review and comment and would have to be compatible with local zoning regulations and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

After the public meetings, the board should consider, as an action item, a board resolution based upon the superintendent's recommendation to close a specific school. The superintendent's recommendation will have been based upon the expanded school-closure committee's findings, which may or may not have been modified after the public hearings.

Follow legal provisions. Neither the *California Education Code* nor the *California Government Code* requires a district to take specific steps when closing a school. There are, however, some codes and regulations that obliquely apply. These codes are listed below: (Codes and procedures for disposing of property are discussed in Chapter 5.)

- *Education Code* Section 17387 specifies the Legislature's intent that there be community involvement "before decisions are made about school closure or the use of surplus space..." While this Section specifies a legislative "intent," not a mandate, its application is common sense and should be an integral part of school-closure decisions (see "Form a Committee" above for recommended membership and responsibilities).
- *Education Code* Section 17388 mandates that the governing board appoint a District Advisory Committee (DAC) (often referred to as the "7/11 Committee") to advise the governing board in the development of district-wide policies governing the use of disposition of surplus property.

Even though the DAC's responsibilities are specific to decisions after a school has been closed, those decisions should be made in concert with decisions about which schools, if any, to close. To restrict the DAC to post facto responsibilities is to neglect an integral component in the difficult decisions of school closure. DAC meetings are subject to the Brown Act and must be open to the public.

- *Education Code* Section 17389 defines the required composition of the DAC.
- *Government Code* sections 65560 et seq. and 65912 et seq. stipulate that land designated as an open-space zone be preserved for park and recreation purposes. Schools being considered for closure located on land zoned (or rezoned) as "open space" will have a limited market value compared, say, to land zoned as "residential" or "commercial."
- The *California Code of Regulations*, Title 5, sections 90-101 define a district's responsibility to avoid racial segregation among its schools. Decisions about school closure and subsequent student placement should not exacerbate racial isolation.
- The CEQA would consider the decision to close a school a "project," but typically a project eligible for a "statutory exemption," (*Public Resources Code*, Section 21080.18) allowing the district to file a "Notice of Exemption" if the only physical changes involved are categorically exempt. However, if a receptor school site---that is, the school which will accommodate those students displaced by the school closure---has an increase in original student capacity by more than 25 percent or the addition of ten or more classrooms, whichever is less, then a more formal CEQA analysis may have to be initiated. There may be other potential for environmental affects that may need to be analyzed, (e.g., changing traffic patterns, need for parking, etc.). Also, CEQA may apply to the subsequent sale or lease of a closed school. Because the CEQA process is specialized, it is best to consult with counsel on a case-by-case basis.
- To ensure that the school being closed does not continue to appear as open in the California Department of Education's (CDE) County-District-School (CDS) database, notify the CDS administration of the closure. The district's CDS coordinator should use the [OPUS-CDS application](#) for school closures. This closure notification will prevent the CDE from providing communications, testing materials, or funding to the closed school.

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Chapter 4: Making the Transition

Obviously, once the decision to close a school is made, complicated transitions begin. But communication begins first. In fact, the district should be prepared right after the board's decision to announce to parents, staff, and the community that the decision to close a school has been made.

Many districts suggest that the first group to be notified that a school has been planned for closure should be that school's staff. While this is a good idea, it is important to understand the likelihood of quick staff-to-parent networks of communication. And because it is better for parents to find out from the district office rather than from information leaked by sources elsewhere, intensive district-to-

parent communication should begin at about the same time as the school staff meetings. Of course, decisions to close a school should not be announced to parents without the ability to specify what their replacement school will be.

The methods of district-to-parent communication include press releases, newsletters, Web sites, and community meetings. Each announcement should include a summary of the process and reasons leading to the school closure decision, the transition time line, and district contact information. Communication by any means should occur often.

The most important method of communication, however, is a direct mailing to each affected household, identifying the replacement school and reiterating important time lines, projected transportation arrangements, and who the district contact will be. The direct mailing should also request a reply, verifying that the information has been received and understood. Parents can be given a choice of response methods: returning a form that has been included in the mailing, responding to a specified e-mail address, or phoning the district's school closure contact person. In turn, the district should keep a log to record who has replied. Eventually, those parents who haven't responded need to be phoned. This way the district can be assured that every parent has been informed.

School staff meetings should be on site and as reassuring as possible. Again, reasons for the decision to close the school should be presented and then the staff transition plan introduced. Any staff transition plan should begin with opportunities to request new placement sites. However, collective bargaining agreements (defining first-preference criteria) and district decisions about staff balance (this can be a factor of enrollment or the desire to create a certain teacher dynamic at a school) may preclude everyone's getting a first choice.

At the school staff meetings, staff should be encouraged to schedule visits to the schools where they may be placed. This will give staff the opportunity to start putting roots down in a new environment and to learn about any specialized program for which they may require training.

Another important step is forming a district transition team. This team should monitor the progress of student and staff assignments to the replacement sites, oversee textbook and instructional material allocation, insure that facilities are adequate (both in number and condition) to accommodate additional students at the new sites, and move or store furniture or equipment as needed for the transition.

The district transition team should also complete an inventory of the essential facilities at the sites designated to receive additional students. Toilets, multipurpose rooms and lunch rooms, playground space and apparatus, parking lots, and gymnasiums are typically built to accommodate a specific planned enrollment. Once that base enrollment is surpassed and open space converted into classroom space, those essential facilities may become inadequate. Adding toilets, scheduling multiple lunch periods, rewriting physical education curricula, redrawing playground areas, and reconfiguring parent drop-off and bus loading areas may be some of the needs associated with moving additional students onto existing campuses.

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Chapter 5: Disposing of school property

A vacant school site and empty buildings are district liabilities. They still require upkeep, maintenance, security, and insurance coverage (in fact, empty buildings may raise insurance costs). Unless the district foresees reopening the schools in the near future or is willing to financially support a vacant-school liability, closed schools should be leased, re-used, or sold outright.

Keep in mind that leasing a school, as opposed to selling it, allows a school district to retain it as a resource in case enrollment increases, as it often does, and facilities are needed again.

But there are statutes governing to what purposes the proceeds from the sale or lease of the property can be used and to whom district property must first be offered. In fact, the California *Education Code* has numerous relevant sections as listed below.

The district must appoint a DAC (the "7/11 Committee" discussed above) to advise the governing board in the use or disposition of school buildings and vacant sites not needed for school purposes (see *Education Code* Section 17388). As stated above, it is best if this committee is involved at the very beginning of discussions about school closure, but it is a legal mandate that the committee be formed and consulted about the use of school property once closure decisions have been made.

The district must also keep in mind that the proceeds from the sale or lease of surplus property generally have restricted uses. *Education Code Section 17462* is important in this regard. It begins by stating that the proceeds from the sale of district property must be used for capital outlay purposes or maintenance of district property, and that the proceeds from the lease with an option to purchase district property may be deposited in a restricted fund used for routine repair of district facilities. This language excludes the ability to use funds for general fund purposes, but it does not mention how proceeds from the lease without an option to purchase can be used.

But *Education Code Section 17462* goes on to say that these funds may be deposited into the general fund if the governing board and the State Allocation Board determine that the district has "no anticipated need for additional sites or building construction for the next ten years," and has "no major deferred maintenance requirements." For a district to give up state assistance for new construction, modernization, and deferred maintenance money for ten years usually serves as a deterrent from requesting these property disposition proceeds to be transferred to the general fund.

There are exceptions to the restricted use of funds described above. *Education Code Section 17463* creates special circumstances for districts with enrollments of fewer than 10,001. And *Education Code Section 17463.6* creates an exception for the Santee School District, the Valley Center-Pauma Unified School District, and the Capistrano Unified School District, allowing them to divert part of the proceeds from the sale of disposed property to the general fund.

In addition to limitations being placed on how the proceeds from the sale or lease of surplus property can be used, there are requirements specifying to whom the property must first be offered. These restrictions are complicated. Many can be waived by the State Board of Education, but the items listed below cannot: (These apply to property disposed through outright sale or through lease with an option to purchase)

- Land must first be made available for use for low-income housing and for park and recreation purposes (*Education Code* Section 17459);
- Land must be made available to specified park and recreation departments (*Education Code* Section 17464[a]).

Other pertinent *Education Code* sections that prescribe the manner in which property can be disposed are summarized here. These sections can be waived by action of the State Board of Education:

- Land must be offered in writing to the Director of General Services, Regents of the University of California, Trustees of the California State University, the county and city, any public housing authority; by public notice to various public agencies and non-profit charitable institutions. A time line to reply to the public notice is specified as 60 days after the final public notice. (*Education Code* Section 17464[b]);
- The board must by a 2/3 vote adopt a resolution to lease or sell specific pieces of property, must specify a minimum price, and must fix a time at which sealed proposals will be received and considered (*Education Code* Section 17466);
- The board at an open meeting shall accept the highest sealed bid (*Education Code* Section 17472);
- The board shall accept oral bids at an open meeting and shall accept the highest bid (if the highest bid is oral, then it must exceed the price or rental terms by at least 5 percent) (*Education Code* Section 17473).

It is important to consider seeking waivers to those sections above that may prevent the district from choosing the most desirable new owner or lessee of its surplus property. The obligation a district has to its community is sometimes more important than realizing the highest price from district property. It is essential that a district first confer with legal counsel prior to initiating the sale or lease of property.

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Conclusion

Hopefully, this "Closing a School Best Practices Guide" will guide and aid you and your district through an arduous, difficult task. A sample time line is included (Attachment A) to assist you. This time line should be modified to suit your districts unique needs. For additional information or if you have questions, contact your School Facilities and Transportation Services Division [Field Representative](#).

Attachment A - Suggested School Closure Time Line (XLS)

Questions: School Facilities and Transportation Services Division | 916-322-2470

Last Reviewed: Wednesday, January 11, 2023

Current Enrollment



School	2023-24 Enrollment
Marblehead	218
Ambuehl	312
Del Obispo	315
Hidden Hills	317
Carl Hankey	318
Tijeras Creek	318
Kinoshita	322
Las Flores	322
Clarence Lobo	330
Palisades	336
R.H. Dana	384
George White	390
Laguna Niguel	397
Wood Canyon	411
Philip Reilly	418
Wagon Wheel	447
Viejo	451
Marian Bergeson	486
Castille	497
Concordia	501
Canyon Vista	508
Arroyo Vista	518
Moulton	530
John S. Malcom	551
Bathgate	579
Oak Grove	584
Truman Benedict	590
Ladera Ranch	612
Chaparral	661
San Juan	673
Don Juan Avila	675
Vista Del Mar	727
Las Palmas	748
Oso Grande	887
Esencia	904

Projected Enrollment

(2030-31)



School	Projected Enrollment (2030-31)
Marblehead	179
Del Obispo	220
Kinoshita	292
Las Flores	299
Hidden Hills	308
Ambuehl	314
Tijeras Creek	323
Palisades	348
Carl Hankey	364
Clarence Lobo	365
Wood Canyon	373
R.H. Dana	381
George White	410
Laguna Niguel	430
Philip Reilly	450
Viejo	450
Wagon Wheel	479
Canyon Vista	488
Moulton	505
Concordia	520
Oak Grove	520
Marian Bergeson	520
Castille	529
Don Juan Avila	534
John S. Malcom	545
Truman Benedict	552
Arroyo Vista	611
Bathgate	615
San Juan	639
Rienda	691
Esencia	691
Vista Del Mar	699
Ladera Ranch	729
Las Palmas	749
Chaparral	757
Oso Grande	964

Capacities



School	Capacity
Clarence Lobo	485
Tijeras Creek	485
Ambuehl	516
Carl Hankey	516
Laguna Niguel	546
Marblehead	546
Canyon Vista	576
Castille	576
Del Obispo	576
R.H. Dana	607
Hidden Hills	607
Wagon Wheel	607
Arroyo Vista	620
Viejo	640
Las Flores	680
Marian Bergeson	698
John S. Malcom	728
Philip Reilly	728
George White	728
Las Palmas	736
Don Juan Avila	758
Bathgate	758
Oak Grove	758
Truman Benedict	788
Moulton	788
Palisades	788
Kinoshita	805
San Juan	815
Concordia	819
Ladera Ranch	819
Wood Canyon	819
Chaparral	849
Vista Del Mar	940
Esencia	1,075
Rienda	1,100
Oso Grande	1,122

Current Utilization



School	Current Utilization (%)
Marblehead	40%
Kinoshita	40%
Palisades	43%
Las Flores	47%
Wood Canyon	50%
Hidden Hills	52%
George White	54%
Del Obispo	55%
Philip Reilly	57%
Ambuehl	60%
Concordia	61%
Carl Hankey	62%
R.H. Dana	63%
Tijeras Creek	66%
Moulton	67%
Clarence Lobo	68%
Marian Bergeson	70%
Viejo	70%
Laguna Niguel	73%
Wagon Wheel	74%
Ladera Ranch	75%
Truman Benedict	75%
John S. Malcom	76%
Bathgate	76%
Oak Grove	77%
Vista Del Mar	77%
Chaparral	78%
Oso Grande	79%
San Juan	83%
Arroyo Vista	84%
Esencia	84%
Castille	86%
Canyon Vista	88%
Don Juan Avila	89%
Las Palmas	102%

Projected Utilization



School	Projected Utilization (%)
Marblehead	33%
Kinoshita	36%
Del Obispo	38%
Las Flores	44%
Palisades	44%
Wood Canyon	46%
Hidden Hills	51%
George White	56%
Ambuehl	61%
Philip Reilly	62%
R.H. Dana	63%
Concordia	63%
Moulton	64%
Esencia	64%
Tijeras Creek	67%
Oak Grove	69%
Truman Benedict	70%
Viejo	70%
Don Juan Avila	70%
Carl Hankey	71%
Vista Del Mar	74%
Marian Bergeson	74%
John S. Malcom	75%
Clarence Lobo	75%
San Juan	78%
Laguna Niguel	79%
Wagon Wheel	79%
Bathgate	81%
Canyon Vista	85%
Oso Grande	86%
Ladera Ranch	89%
Chaparral	89%
Castille	92%
Arroyo Vista	99%
Las Palmas	102%

Portables



School	Number of Portables
Arroyo Vista	0
Canyon Vista	0
Laguna Niguel	0
Marblehead	0
Tijeras Creek	0
Ladera Ranch	2
Marian Bergeson	4
Las Flores	4
Wood Canyon	4
Ambuehl	5
Philip Reilly	5
Don Juan Avila	6
Hidden Hills	6
Wagon Wheel	6
George White	6
Bathgate	7
Concordia	7
Truman Benedict	8
Castille	8
Chaparral	8
Moulton	8
Oso Grande	8
Viejo	8
Vista Del Mar	8
Clarence Lobo	9
John S. Malcom	9
Palisades	9
R.H. Dana	10
Kinoshita	11
Oak Grove	12
Del Obispo	13
Carl Hankey	14
Esencia	15
San Juan	16
Las Palmas	27
Rienda	TBD

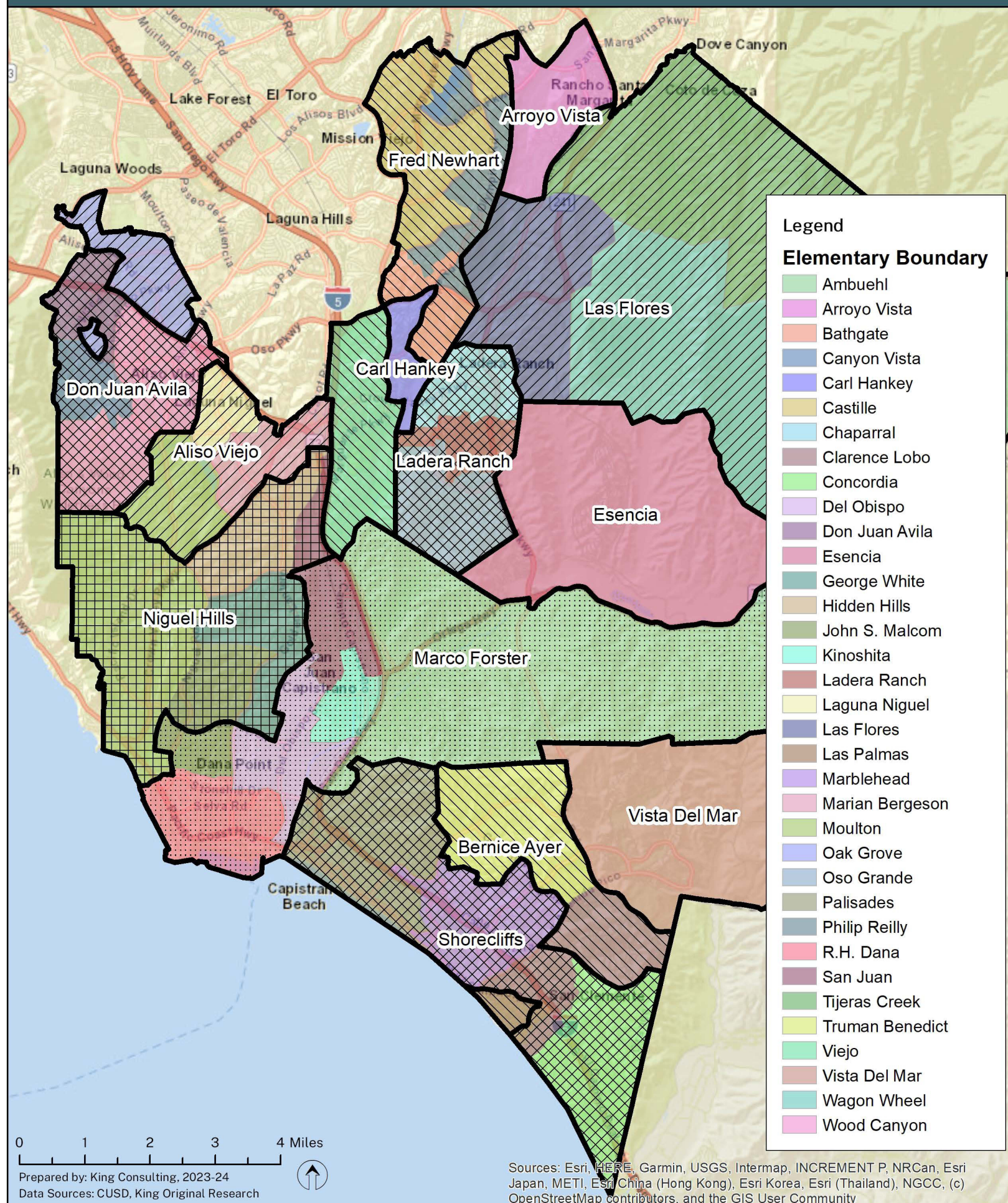
Condition Scores



School	FCI	Condition Score
Tijeras Creek	0.031	A
R.H. Dana ENF	0.048	A
Canyon Vista	0.066	B
Las Flores	0.071	B
Vista del Mar	0.071	B
Viejo	0.080	B
Ladera Ranch	0.084	B
Laguna Niguel	0.089	B
George White	0.094	B
Don Juan Avila	0.095	B
Chaparral	0.096	B
Clarence Lobo	0.096	B
Bathgate	0.097	B
Kinoshita	0.097	B
Oso Grande	0.100	B
Castille	0.104	B
Marian Bergeson	0.104	B
Del Obispo	0.108	B
San Juan	0.110	B
Philip Reilly	0.112	C
Oak Grove	0.113	C
John S. Malcom	0.115	C
Moulton	0.117	C
Hidden Hills	0.119	C
Truman Benedict	0.120	C
Wood Canyon	0.122	C
Las Palmas	0.124	C
Concordia	0.144	C
Wagon Wheel	0.164	C
Marblehead	0.182	C
R.H. Dana	0.225	C
Harold Ambuehl	0.272	C
Palisades	0.314	D

Elementary and Middle School Boundaries

Capistrano Unified School District



Elementary School Signature Programs

School	Curriculum/Language	Instruction	Special Ed Programs	Activities	After School
Ambuehl			STARS		
Arroyo Vista K-8			TBIC (K-5)		
Bathgate		Thinking Maps Environmental studies through butterfly garden	STARS	Motivational Mondays Grade level concerts and performances Student Council 5th Grade Science Camp Walkthrough California Walkthrough American Revolution Active participation in MV's Character Counts program CCI puppy on campus STAR girls	YMCA, ELOP, Saddleback College Classes, Kids' Factory
Marian Bergeson	Mandarin Immersion				YMCA, Saddleback College classes
Canyon Vista			SEALS		YMCA, Saddleback College classes
Carl Hankey K-8	International Baccalaureate (Primary Years Program)			HAWKS- Hankey Action Wonder Kids Squad- 4th and 5th grade community service group	YMCA, Saddleback College classes
Castille	OG: K-2		SAC	Kindness Campaign Performances: TK = Winter & Spring Concert Kinder = Barnyard Moosical 1st = Music performance 2nd = Winter music & spring Patriotic songs 3rd = History of OC 4th = Gold Dust or Bust	For 4th & 5th: Math Olympiads & Future Scientist and Engineers of America (FSEA) Marathon Club (K-5)

Elementary School Signature Programs

School	Curriculum/Language	Instruction	Special Ed Programs	Activities	After School
Chaparral			STARS		YMCA, Saddleback College classes, EL Newcomer Support classes
Clarence Lobo			STARS & SEALS		YMCA, Saddleback College Classes, PIQE parent program (Spanish)
Concordia				Kindness Crew, ICan Lab, Makerspace, Robotics club	YMCA, Saddleback College Classes
Del Obispo			STARS	Code Campus	
Early Childhood Center			SAC & STEPS & SEALS		
Esencia K-8					
Don Juan Avila					YMCA, Saddleback College classes, EL Newcomer Support classes
George White			SEALS		
Hidden Hills			SAC		YMCA, Saddleback College, Intervention classes *Before school STEAM class
Kinoshita	AVID Elementary and BrainBuilders Engineering K-5	AVID - WICOR and Brain Builders Instruction NGSS Engineering Instruction K-5			
Ladera Ranch			SAC		
Laguna Niguel			SAC	Lunch Bunch	YMCA Saddleback College Classes

Elementary School Signature Programs

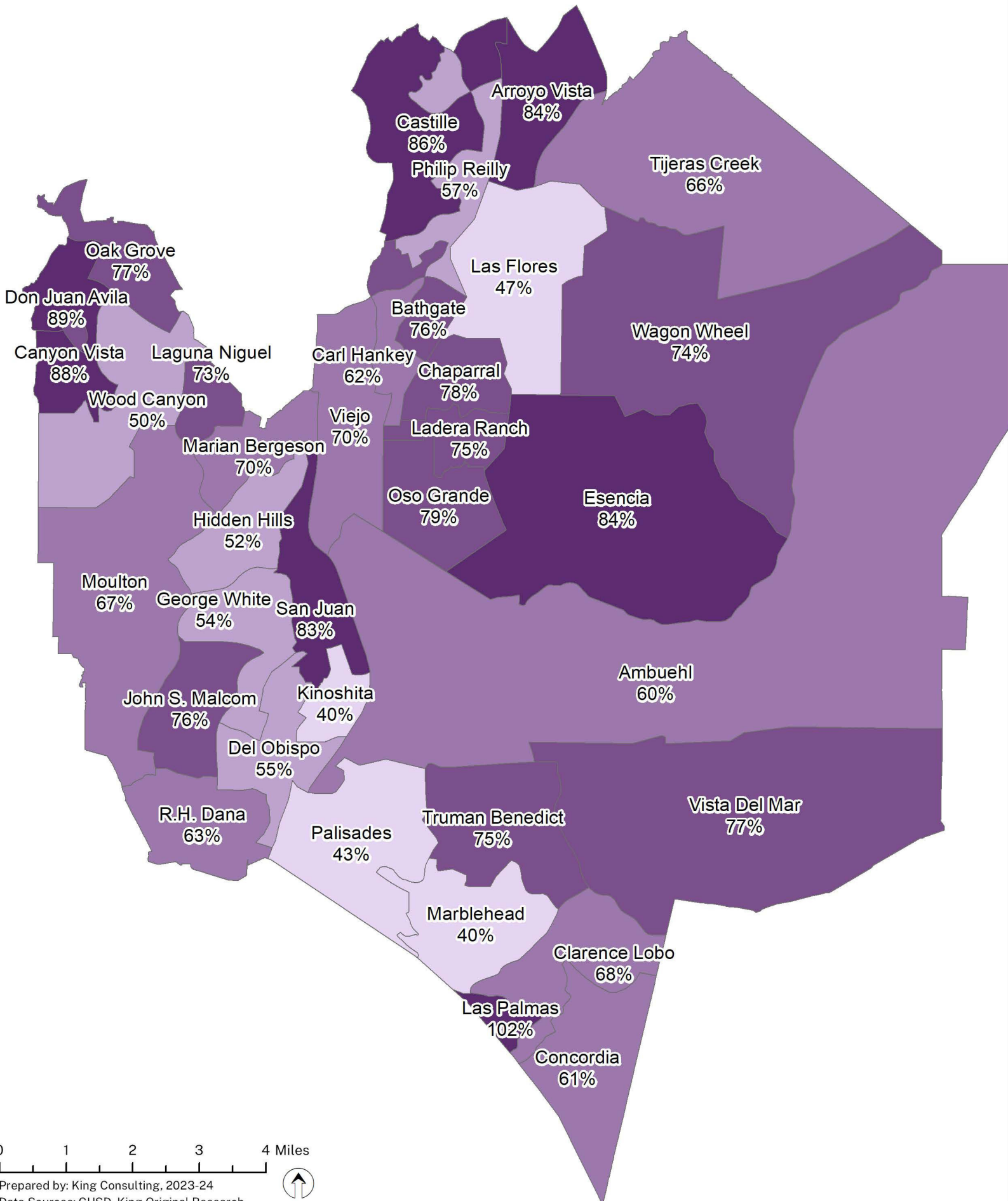
School	Curriculum/Language	Instruction	Special Ed Programs	Activities	After School
Las Flores K-8			TBIC (6-8) & Language Builders	PAL	
Las Palmas	Spanish Immersion				
John S. Malcom			STARS & Language Builders		YMCA ELOP Homework Support, Saddleback College Classes
Marblehead		Environmental Studies, Garden	STARS & Language Builders	Lunchtime Clubs (Art, Science, Book, Board Games, Comic Book, Lego, Garden), PAL, Green Team	Spanish
Moulton		Environmental Studies, Garden	PK SAC & K-5 SAC	4th & 5th Grade Moulton Broadcasting Company Lunchtime Activities: Parent Watch Hawk Program	YMCA Saddleback College Classes
Oak Grove			Home Base		YMCA Saddleback College
Oso Grande				OGES 4/5th gr. Ambassadors, grade level performances (outside of music)	YMCA, Saddleback College classes, Robotics, Math Olympiad
Palisades			SAC		
Phillip Reilly	Pyramid of Success (Wooden)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thinking Maps ● CGI ● Accountable Talk 	STARS & STEPS		YMCA, Kids Factory and Saddleback College After-school programs
R.H. Dana	Spanish Immersion 50-50 program	Marine biology focus with international ecological studies	STEPS		
San Juan	Spanish Immersion				

Elementary School Signature Programs

School	Curriculum/Language	Instruction	Special Ed Programs	Activities	After School
Tijeras creek		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thinking Maps ● CGI ● Accountable Talk 			YMCA, ELOP, Saddleback College
Truman Benedict		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thinking Maps ● CGI ● Accountable Talk 	TBIC	PBIS, BPT (PAL)	YMCA, ELOP, GAP, Saddleback College
Viejo	Spanish Immersion		Language Builders		
Vista Del Mar K-8	AVID				
Wagon Wheel			SEALS		
Wood Canyon			STARS	PBIS	YMCA, , ELOP, Saddleback College

Elementary School Capacity Utilization (Current)

Capistrano Unified School District



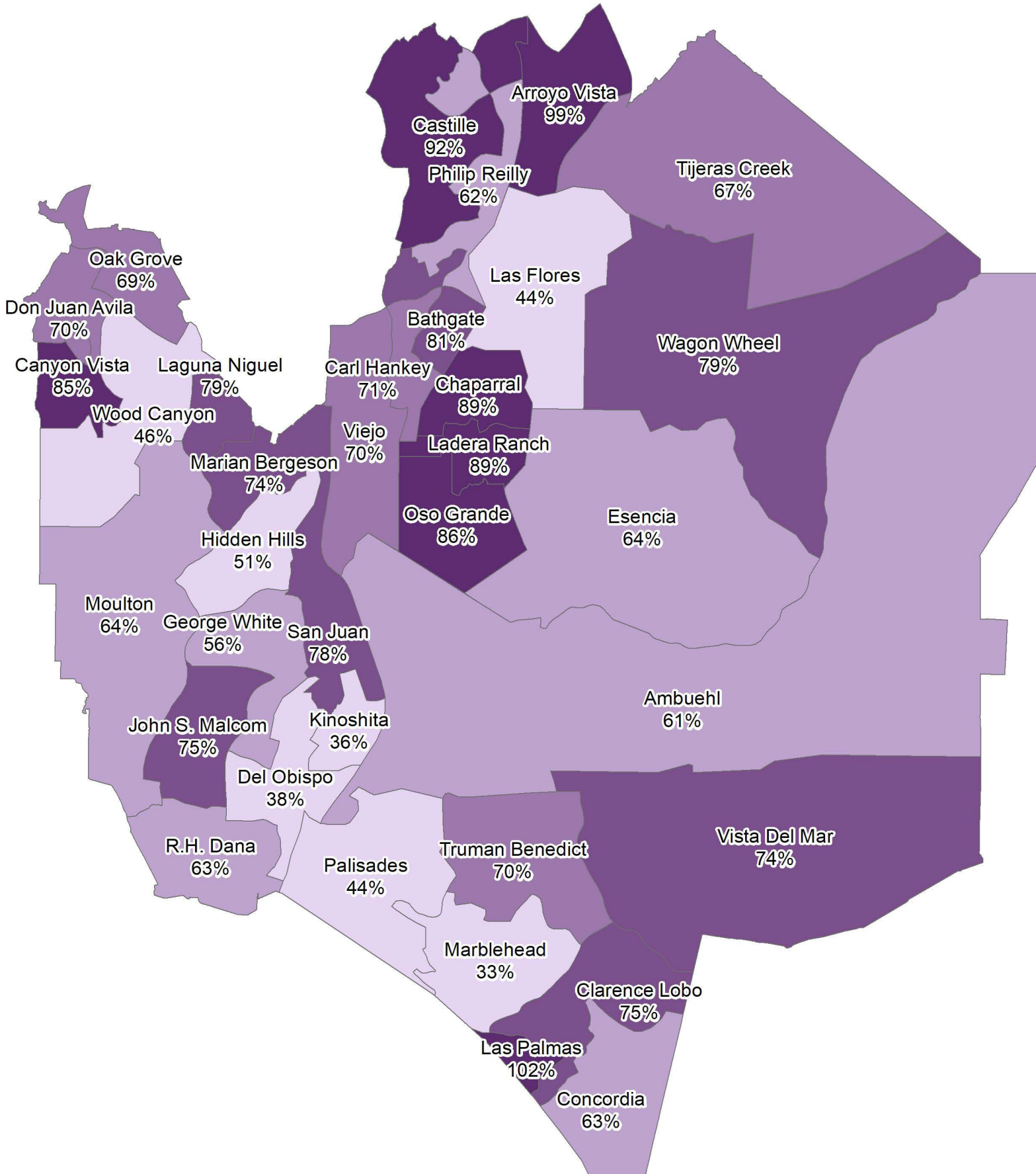
0 1 2 3 4 Miles

Prepared by: King Consulting, 2023-24
Data Sources: CUSD, King Original Research



Elementary School Capacity Utilization (Projected 2030-31)

Capistrano Unified School District



0 1 2 3 4 Miles

Prepared by: King Consulting, 2023-24
Data Sources: CUSD, King Original Research

