

From: [Camille Townsend](#)
To: [Kevin Skelly](#)
Subject: Re: An Idea...
Date: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 2:02:05 PM

Brilliant idea on many levels... IDs academic rigor and skills for even our youngest students, highlights community and specifically, parental excitement and commitment to this education model (just look at the numbers) and could bring diversity of students and additional rigor and parental energy to the Barron site.

Neat. So pleased our growth is being utilized as an educational opportunity. Kudos!

Camille
Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 6, 2012, at 1:28 PM, "Kevin Skelly" <kskelly@pausd.org> wrote:

Hi Folks:

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I would love to hear your thoughts. Perhaps you can call or sit down with me in the next few days.

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Kevin

Kevin Skelly, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Palo Alto Unified School District
(650) 329-3737

<image001.jpg>

From: [Kevin Skelly](#)
To: [Melissa Caswell](#)
Subject: RE: An Idea....
Date: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 3:16:00 PM

Invasion of Privacy
- Personnel matter

Fair enough. Good thoughts. I do want this discussed in the Barron Park community.

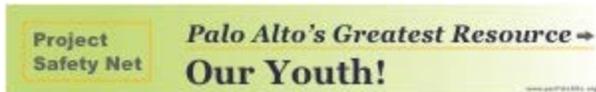
In terms of SI as one strand, I see it as different in that there is SI at Escondido.

Magdalena is also interested in strengthening science, which should have strong appeal for all. A choice program does have challenges and we should, if we go forward, be fully cognizant of these. It might be too fast to move here for next year.

[REDACTED]

Kevin

Kevin Skelly, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Palo Alto Unified School District
(650) 329-3737



From: Melissa Caswell
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 2:39 PM
To: Kevin Skelly
Subject: RE: An Idea....

Kevin,

I will be candid.

I like the idea of opening SI in BP to help give the school a more stable base of active volunteer parents and resources. However, I worry that it will be challenging for one strand of this program to live alone. Especially when two strands of that program are at a different school.

I hear again and again how it is really helpful for teachers at the same grade level to work together to plan curriculum, activities, projects and field trips. And because of the immersion requirement, the SI work is different than what the teachers do in a regular English speaking classroom.

A regular complaint of the Connections teachers at JLS is that they do not have peers who are teaching in the same manner, at same grade level, to bounce ideas off of. I have also heard this as a challenge for teachers of SI at Jordan.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I think it is really important that parents are given a "safe" environment to discuss both the pros and the con of this idea. Several parents have told me that they are scared to go public with their complaints or to talk to Magdalena, because they do not want their children to be impacted by repercussions of their discussions. (there is a history of retribution at BP pre-Magdalena that many have heard about).

Melissa

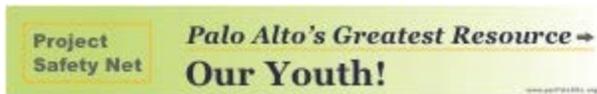
From: Kevin Skelly
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 1:51 PM
To: Melissa Caswell
Subject: RE: An Idea....

Probably not. I like the Escondido model with neighborhood and choice.

So ok with moving to more exploration?

Kevin

Kevin Skelly, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Palo Alto Unified School District
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From: Melissa Caswell
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 1:51 PM
To: Kevin Skelly
Subject: RE: An Idea....

Hi Kevin,

If this was successful, what would your next steps be? Would you consider making this whole campus SI?

Melissa

From: Kevin Skelly
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 1:28 PM
To: board
Subject: An Idea....

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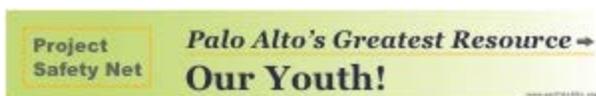
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From: [Barbara Klausner](#)
To: [Kevin Skelly](#)
Subject: Re: An Idea...
Date: Friday, March 09, 2012 5:42:22 PM

Okay. All of my commentary is meant to be helpful as you/we move forward.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 9, 2012, at 8:40 AM, "Kevin Skelly" <kskelly@pausd.org> wrote:

Thanks. See some thoughts below.

Kevin Skelly, Ph.D.

Superintendent

Palo Alto Unified School District

(650) 329-3737

<image001.jpg>

From: Barbara Klausner
Sent: Thursday, March 08, 2012 11:45 PM
To: Kevin Skelly
Subject: Re: An Idea....

Hi Kevin,

Sorry for the truncated earlier email. Here is the LONG version of my thinking:

Fascinating idea. I think there are long term and big picture implications to flesh out before pushing this boat into the stream to see where the current will take it. I see no great drawback to raising the possibility with staff and possibly PTA/Site Council leadership at Barron Park, but I see somewhat unpredictable ripples and cross-currents possibly arising from going straight to the folks who did not win the SI lottery this year and planning for a kindergarten SI class at BP for August 2012.

We have had some discussions with key PTA/Site Council leadership. If we were to do this, we would have to open it up to everyone again. I am interested in getting some input but I think the likelihood for next year is remote. We have enough capacity without this. There are varying degrees of enthusiasm from board members.

Starting from even before our March 2011 study session on enrollment and facilities last year, the board has been working publicly with you to try to identify the key values, assumptions and decision points for how we manage future enrollment (which we assume means enrollment growth). I think we've done some excellent work in this very tough area, trying to clearly articulate and begin to balance the many, varied factors – bond v. operating costs; neighborhood and choice programs; traffic; school and class size; flexibility with extra classrooms; those pesky growth projections and future housing construction in our different clusters; matching residents to classrooms; peer streaming; and more. My operating assumption has been that we, as a leadership team, are trying to formulate a long-term vision that guides our short-term decisions. Clearly, we don't agree on everything (e.g., Duveneck), but we need to soldier on to come to some common understandings so that our decisions make sense – to us, to our community, for our current and future students.

In this context, the idea of implementing one strand of SI at BP in the fall of 2012 is interesting, but it has not been vetted within any kind of long-range vision. That bothers me as a policy-maker and it raises questions about my credibility as a decision-maker for the district. Can it really be that one community member can raise an idea and the next thing we know we are asking SI lottery losers if they would like to be part of a new SI strand at BP, to start in five months without this possibility having been discussed by the board at any of our multiple study sessions and public discussions about enrollment and facilities?

Good point that I hadn't heard from other board members, but one we should pay attention to, clearly.

Given that we have not vetted this idea, I can only begin to identify some of the issues that come into play:

- “No cost” solution? If we start a singleton strand of SI at BP, then we will need to hire a new dual immersion teacher for BP, since we won't be able to draw on any of the SI teachers already tenured and on staff at Escondido, or any of the non-bilingual BP teachers. If we move forward to create a full strand at BP, we will need to hire six new teachers at BP. That's about \$600,000 in ongoing annual operating costs (teacher compensation) that may or may not be necessary if those same students can be incorporated into their neighborhood classrooms.

existing staff at Barron Park could teach this. If we grow or have any retirements we will have to hire some anyway.

- Maximizing full classroom capacity? We have seen the extra challenge that language immersion programs present as we try to maximize classroom capacity. Attrition from the programs cannot be as easily filled in, and it is not as easy to find ways to utilize the extra expanded classroom capacity that comes into play in 4th and 5th grades, since students cannot just seamlessly enter a language immersion program at that time.

SI attrition is low, but exists. The placement of any students causes problems.

- Teacher quality? We just had some difficult conversations about the challenge of finding language immersion teachers who truly meet our PAUSD teaching standards for tenure. Are we ready to expand the scope of this challenge?

Yes.

- Expansion of choice programs? We have not had any discussion about whether this is an optimal strategy. If so, which programs should get first priority? How does this affect our priorities for maintaining space for neighborhood kids? Have we articulated a guiding principle for how and when to move choice programs, given that they are not geographically anchored?

Yes.

- Cluster growth projections? What assumptions about future cluster growth are guiding this possible option? Are we acting on the belief that BP will not need these classrooms for future growth? Are we thinking that we may want to move some of Escondido's SI strands to BP when the new Stanford housing units come on line? How does this complicate or simplify the current mismatch between some of our attendance area resident numbers and our classroom numbers (e.g., Palo Verde, Addison)?

Yes.

- Traffic? The one thing I have learned is that traffic is an issue at every single one of our schools, and that choice programs that draw from across the district exacerbate the traffic issues. Have we thought through the consequences of adding a choice strand to BP, where there is limited access and parking?

Yes.

- Satisfaction of the Current BP Community? When the new principal started at BP, some of us worried about the possible continuation of the tension between the needs of the EL, Spanish-speaking children of parents who have never attended a US college and those of the non-Hispanic, highly educated community. Have we done a good job of checking the pulse of the current BP community? Have we thought

through the consequences – whether beneficial or detrimental – to the community?

Ok.

Long and detailed as this list is, it is far from comprehensive. Thus, so long as your exploration stays relatively in-house until we as a leadership team have an opportunity to vet it as part of a long-term vision, then I have no objection to your desire to “EXPLORE” the possibilities. Once, however, it goes beyond current stakeholders (e.g., district staff, BP current community) and creates expectations and a sense of anticipation from a group like the current SI lottery losers, then I am extremely uncomfortable with the idea of exploration.

Your concerns are at a far end of the board comments I have received but they are extremely helpful as the process ones, in particular, will get us in trouble. See weekly for next steps.

Barbara

On 3/7/12 7:29 AM, "Kevin Skelly" <kskelly@pausd.org> wrote:

Others?

Connected by DROID on Verizon Wireless

-----Original message-----

From: Barbara Klausner <bklausner@pausd.org>

To: Kevin Skelly <kskelly@pausd.org>

Sent: Wed, Mar 7, 2012 07:20:06 GMT+00:00

Subject: Re: An Idea....

Fine with exploring. Love new ideas. But how about checking with others

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 6, 2012, at 1:28 PM, "Kevin Skelly" <kskelly@pausd.org> wrote:

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> Kevin Skelly, Ph.D.

>

> Superintendent

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> Palo Alto Unified School District

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> <image001.jpg>

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From: [Dana Tom](#)
To: [Kevin Skelly](#)
Subject: RE: An Idea....
Date: Wednesday, March 07, 2012 10:57:57 AM

Kevin, my initial reaction is favorable. It seems worth exploring. Some secondary effects are worth considering since they could wind up as unintended consequences. Having an alternate location for some of the program is different than just expanding it at Escondido. If it's offered at Barron Park, there may be some who were accepted into SI that would prefer that school, most likely due to it being closer for them. There also might be additional folks interested in applying for SI at Barron Park that didn't apply for Escondido. My mental model for choice programs is that parents have two interacting types of preferences that they weigh against each other. They have a level of interest in the choice program and a level of tolerance for the distance they'll take their children to that program. For some, their interest in SI will make it their choice regardless of distance, but there's many that will only do it if it's reasonably close. A new location changes that calculation. If some Escondido SI folks go to Barron Park, that would open up some Escondido slots. It seems that the students who got into the Escondido SI should get first crack at BP and then there would another random selection for remaining openings at both schools. Ideally, there's a way for folks entering that random selection to express a preference for which school.

Dana Tom
Trustee, Palo Alto Unified School District

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Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 1:28 PM
To: board
Subject: An Idea....

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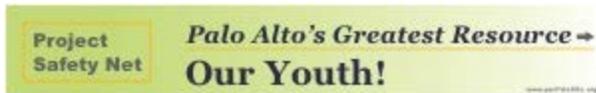
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Kevin

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Superintendent
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(650) 329-3737



From: [Barb Mitchell](#)
To: [Kevin Skelly](#)
Subject: Re: An Idea...
Date: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 1:54:37 PM

Kevin, I fully support growing SI to match parent interest where we have capacity, and your exploration of a strand at BP – especially if Magdalena is excited about it.

Thanks for your energy!

B

On Mar 6, 2012, at 1:28 PM, Kevin Skelly wrote:

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