

To: San José Unified Board of Education
From: Schools of Tomorrow Implementation Committee
Date: March 10, 2026
Re: Recommendation on How to Implement the Schools of Tomorrow Advisory Committee's Recommendation for the Ideal Elementary School

Dear Trustees,

As a committee representing employee groups, parents, guardians, and staff within the San José Unified community, we were charged with developing a recommendation for the Board of Education on how to implement the Schools of Tomorrow Advisory Committee's (STAC) recommendation for the ideal elementary school. The committee met eight times between December 16, 2025 and March 10, 2026.

The committee recognizes the valid and important concerns that come with any decision on school consolidations, re-drawing attendance boundaries, and/or relocating special programs. The committee also recognizes the opportunities and possibilities that can be created for students through this process. The committee understood the weight of our charge and evaluated the potential options through a student-centered lens.

The committee anchored the analysis and evaluation of potential options to implement the STAC's recommendation in the Board-of-Education-approved criteria. The committee first discussed and approved 41 metrics across the 11 criteria to provide a quantitative way to evaluate different options' alignment with each criterion in the short term and in the future.

The committee then prioritized the Board-of-Education-approved criteria into first order, second order, and third order categories. The prioritized criteria are listed below by category and the numbered criteria within each grouping are listed in alphabetical order.

First Order Criteria

- 4) facility capacity and utilization
- 7) the balance of pupil demographics and whether there might be disproportionate impacts on particular demographic groups
- 1) the recommendation of the Schools of Tomorrow Advisory Committee regarding the ideal elementary school consistent with state-mandated and negotiated staffing ratios, existing job descriptions, and San José Unified's commitment to fiscal responsibility
- 8) transportation needs of pupils

Second Order Criteria

- 10) enrollment and attendance patterns (including feeder school attendance patterns)
- 5) impacts on special programs such as bilingual programs and/or Special Day Classes
- 11) potential transitions and processes for affected pupils and families
- 2) the condition of school facilities

Third Order Criteria

- 9) aesthetics and impact on the surrounding community
- 6) environmental factors including but not limited to traffic and proximity to freeway access
- 3) financial impacts

The committee evaluated 12 different options to implement the STAC’s recommendation that included school consolidations, re-drawing attendance boundaries, and/or relocating special programs using the prioritized criteria and approved metrics. Each of the options was developed to maximize the percentage of students in schools consistent with the STAC’s identified elementary school ideal while optimizing primarily for the prioritized first-order criteria and secondarily for the prioritized second-order criteria.

The committee analyzed the scores on the approved metrics for each option. The committee discussed the options using the prioritized criteria, the scores on the approved metrics, and other relevant considerations including the current elementary school context in San José Unified. The committee evaluated the benefits of each option relative to the status quo and to each other, the challenges and trade-offs associated with the options, the implementation and transition process, and the public commitments made by San José Unified for all options. The full analysis, discussion, and evaluation of the options is available in the committee meeting recordings.

Core Recommendation

The Schools of Tomorrow Implementation Committee believes all students deserve the best educational experience possible. Based on the analysis, discussion, and evaluation of the options, the committee recommends the following school consolidations and special program relocations to implement the STAC’s recommendation for the ideal elementary school.

Closing	Where students currently enrolled at closing school go in 2026-2027
Empire Gardens Elementary	all to Anne Darling Elementary
Lowell Elementary	SDC preschool to Grant Elementary, all others to Washington Elementary
Gardner Elementary	all to Horace Mann Elementary
Canoas Elementary	all to Ernesto Galarza Elementary
Terrell Elementary	students in SDC to Reed Elementary, all others to Rachel Carson Elementary
Moving	Where students are relocated in 2026-2027
Hammer Montessori at Galarza Elementary	Gardner Elementary

The committee recommends re-drawing the attendance boundaries as detailed in the map available through the [school locator](#).

Additional Considerations

The committee recommends that the Board of Education consider the following during the next steps in the Schools of Tomorrow process:

- That, if the Board of Education takes action on the committee’s recommendation, the school consolidations, attendance boundary changes, and/or the relocation of special programs are implemented for the 2026-2027 school year.
- Direct staff to make every effort to provide students who have to change to schools and live farther than 1.5 miles away from their new school a San-José-Unified-provided transportation option for their entire elementary school career provided they attend their newly assigned school and continue to live more than 1.5 miles away from their newly assigned school.
- Consistent with San José Unified’s communication throughout this process, the Board of Education establish a committee consistent with California Education Code sections 17387-17391 to evaluate potential uses of empty school buildings for community benefit and commit to not considering the sale of the property for ten years, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Direct staff to review the parking available at receiving schools and determine, if necessary, the feasibility of expanding parking options or identifying alternative parking options to sufficiently accommodate school-site and itinerant staff.
- Direct staff to review the facility pick-up and drop-off areas at each school receiving students and identify enhancements, if needed, that can be made.
- Direct staff to support schools in creating a transition committee at each receiving school with the purpose to support the transition and integration of students and families and the culture and climate at the school. This may be incorporated into existing committees at the school or established as a separate committee.
- Direct staff to provide parent/guardian education sessions at Washington Elementary and Horace Mann Elementary on the Academic Language Acquisition and Two-Way Bilingual Immersion programs, respectively.
- Direct staff to collaborate with schools receiving Special Day Class Programs and the staff that support the programs to provide a similar level of facilities in the current classrooms and identify enhancements, if needed.
- Direct staff to meet and confer with its labor unions regarding potential ways to increase alignment with the Schools-of-Tomorrow-Advisory-Committee-identified ideal staff.
- Direct staff to provide best practices to site administrators and staff at receiving schools for welcoming and integrating new students including the conditions for success for bilingual programs.
- Direct staff to provide tailored transition support for students in Special Day Class programs and their families who have to transition to a new campus. This support should include a single point person other than the student’s case manager for each family that can answer questions about the transition and coordinate support for the student and family during the transition and the development of district and site plans for the support of students in Special Day Class programs tailored to their individual needs.
- Direct staff to collaborate with schools receiving TK programs to provide a similar level of facilities in the current classrooms and identify enhancements, if needed.
- Direct staff to develop guidance for school sites on which grade levels are more compatible for combination classes based on California Common Core Standards alignment and curricular program needs.
- Direct staff to conduct a review of data for students who change schools including, but not limited to, school attendance, relevant behavior data, utilization of San-José-Unified-

provided transportation (where applicable), utilization of Expanded Learning Opportunities Program, and relevant academic performance data after the implementation year and two subsequent school years.

- Direct staff to collaborate with AFSCME 101 on the maintenance of the buildings and grounds of campuses that are no longer operating after the 2025-2026 school year.
- Review the enrollment at elementary schools after the 2028-2029 school year and the alignment with the ideal number of classes per grade level in a public meeting, publish the results to the community, and determine what, if any, action to take.
- Create a Board Policy to institutionalize the practice of formally reviewing elementary school enrollment and attendance boundaries at least once every seven to ten years with the goal of maintaining ideal school sizes over time while limiting the frequency of considering school consolidations and attendance boundary changes.
- Commission a review of San José Unified’s magnet programs, in the context of the Voluntary Integration Plan and in collaboration with the Voluntary Integration Plan Committee, with the purpose of answering the following questions:
 - Should magnet schools be enrolled to achieve, to the extent possible, three classes per grade level in grades TK-5?
 - Should magnet schools enroll TK students?
 - Should San José Unified create any additional magnet elementary or K-8 schools?
 - Should San José Unified eliminate any magnet elementary or K-8 programs?
 - Should there be any changes to the student assignment system for magnet schools outlined in the Voluntary Integration Plan?
 - Would the goals of the Voluntary Integration Plan and/or the needs of an individual magnet program be better served by relocating any existing magnet programs to a different location?
- Direct staff to do a review of San José Unified’s Two-Way Bilingual Immersion (TWBI) programs, in the context of Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 6142.2, with the purpose of answering the following questions:
 - Should San José Unified add, eliminate, or merge any existing TWBI programs?
 - Are there any schools that currently do not host a TWBI program that may be particularly suited to do so?
- Evaluate the necessity and feasibility of conducting a secondary school portfolio review to ensure middle and high school facilities and programs are aligned with current and projected enrollment trends to provide the best possible educational experience.

The committee thanks the Board of Education for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Schools of Tomorrow Implementation Committee
San José Unified School District