

**UNIQUE SCHOOL PROPOSAL FOR
SANIBEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
EXPANSION THROUGH 8TH GRADE**



Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
PROBLEM	4
SOLUTION	4
WHY NOW?	4
SURVEYS	5
REVIEW OF CURRENT LITERATURE	6
MIDDLE SCHOOL BACKGROUND: AN AWKWARD TIME	6
SIZE: SMALLER IS BETTER	7
DOES GRADE STRUCTURE MATTER?	8
SITE VISITS	9
SITE VISITS SUPPORT RESEARCH: K-8 STRUCTURE EXCELS	10
TESTIMONIALS	11
SCHOOL CHOICE	11
CURRICULUM	12
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES	13
THE ARTS	13
SPORTS/RECREATION	14
QUALITATIVE REVIEW OF DISTRICT-WIDE IMPLICATIONS OF EXPANSION	14
SYSTEM OF EVALUATION	16
TIMELINE	17
APPENDIX A	17
SURVEY, INFORMATION LETTER, STATISTICAL REVIEW OF SURVEY RESULTS AND COMMENTS.	17
<i>SURVEY</i>	17
<i>INFORMATION SHEET ACCOMPANYING SURVEY (ALSO PUBLISHED IN ALL ISLAND PAPERS):</i>	19
<i>RESPONSE AND VOLUNTEER RATES - CHARTS</i>	22
<i>INTEREST AND SUPPORT - CHARTS</i>	23
<i>COMMUNITY COMMENTS</i>	24
<i>ELEMENTARY COMMENTS</i>	24
<i>PRE-SCHOOL COMMENTS</i>	26
PTA INFORMATION	27
<i>BOARD OF DIRECTORS, PTA</i>	27
<i>DATES OF PTA MEETINGS WHERE K-8 EXPANSION WAS DISCUSSED:</i>	27
FACULTY MEETINGS INVOLVING DISCUSSION OF K-8 EXPANSION.	27
<i>DATES OF FACULTY MEETINGS</i>	27
COMMUNITY FORUMS:	28
<i>DATES OF COMMUNITY FORUMS</i>	28

<i>Lee County School Board Forum</i>	29
SAC INFORMATION.....	31
<i>SAC CHAIR AND SUB-COMMITTEE</i>	31
<i>SAC SUB-COMMITTEE FOR UNIQUE SCHOOL PROPOSAL</i>	31
<i>DATES OF SAC MEETINGS</i>	31
<i>SAC MEETING MINUTES/AGENDAS</i>	33
SANIBEL CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE K-8 EXPANSION.....	48
<i>SCHOOL CHOICE RESOLUTION</i>	48
<i>EXPANSION RESOLUTION</i>	49
NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF THE K-8 EXPANSION.....	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
APPENDIX B	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
AREA MAPS.....	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
<i>SANIBEL ISLAND</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
<i>LOCATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
<i>LOCATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND LEE COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL</i> Error!	Error!
<i>Bookmark not defined.</i>	
SCHOOL INFORMATION	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
<i>SCHOOL BROCHURE</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
<i>SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT FOR SANIBEL</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
<i>FLORIDA SCHOOL INDICATORS REPORT FOR LEE COUNTY</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
WEBSITE	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
<i>http://www.cyberstreet.com/sanibelk8</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
MISC. TABLE AND CHARTS	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
<i>TRAFFIC ON CAUSEWAY HISTORY</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS DESCRIBING SCHOOL AND ISLAND ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN	
.....	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
APPENDIX C	51
ENDNOTES	52
APPENDIX D	53
BROCHURES	53
<i>PLANTATION KEY SCHOOL</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
<i>KEY LARGO SCHOOL</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>

PROBLEM

The unique geographic nature of Sanibel, Captiva, and North Captiva creates onerous transportation problems for children of middle school age. In addition, these barrier islands attract a sevenfold increase in population (from roughly 5,000 year-round residents to an estimated 35,000 residents in season), and an accompanying burden on all transportation routes. The attached map (Appendix B) shows how these three islands lay end to end in a chain-like fashion. A three-mile causeway that connects to this chain at the Southeastern-most point provides the only mainland access. An active drawbridge frequently interrupts transportation on this causeway. *Roundtrip transportation to the nearest middle schools (there are no on-island middle school options) routinely takes three hours, and can take much longer from North Captiva. This long commute causes a variety of problems: parents and students are precluded from active involvement in school activities, children are drained by hours wasted on the bus each day, traffic over the already congested causeway is increased, and concerns for traffic safety are heightened.*

SOLUTION

Barrier island citizens are convinced now is the time to expand Sanibel Elementary School to include grades K-8.

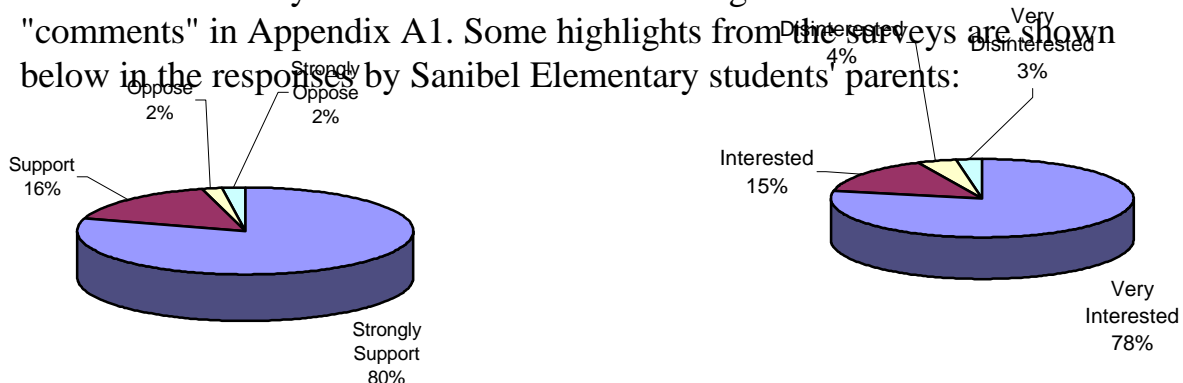
WHY NOW?

- First, the commitment is there, as evidenced by overwhelming (over 95%) positive feedback from surveyed Sanibel Elementary parents, randomly selected community households, and Pre-K households. The Sanibel City Council has also unanimously approved a resolution supporting school expansion.
- Second, Sanibel Elementary school has been approved for renovation funding, which presents a timely opportunity to dovetail an expansion on the ample acreage already owned by the Lee County School Board at the elementary school site.

- Third, the "School Choice" program initiated in 1998 has increased an already difficult commute for many island kids, as our unique geographic location has precluded us from any middle school preference group.
- Fourth, the rapid rate of residential development along the Summerlin corridor and all of South Fort Myers will continue to increase traffic congestion on the main arterials between Sanibel and the mainland schools. This growth will put additional strain on the South Zone of the Lee County School District, increasing the competition for the available seats of the mainland schools currently closest to the barrier islands.
- Finally, there is evidence that the number of younger children on the islands is gradually increasing: 1) A continued increase in the number enrolled in the three island preschools, with a roughly one-third annual increase as measured from the academic year beginning in 1996. 2) Sanibel Elementary enrollment has steadily increased over the last 15 years, from 151 students in the school year beginning in 1983, up to 232 in 1990, and, finally, 273 pupils during the 1998 school year.

SURVEYS

Surveys were sent to three distinct populations of island residents: 1) every household containing children who attend Sanibel Elementary; 2) households containing Pre-K children; and 3) a random mailing of 300 property owners. An information sheet (see Appendix A) accompanied all surveys. The surveys asked whether the family/individual supported the expansion of Sanibel Elementary to include grades K-8, as well as families' levels of interest in sending their child(ren) to the proposed school. Families were also asked to list their children's ages and schools, and whether there was a willingness to volunteer in the new school. Of 226 Sanibel Elementary families, 191 responded (85%). Of those responding, 96% supported or strongly supported the expansion. When weighted on a per child basis, the response rates and positive percentages increase marginally. These overwhelmingly positive levels of support were repeated in the Pre-K and random community results as well. More thorough results are available with "comments" in Appendix A1. Some highlights from the surveys are shown below in the responses by Sanibel Elementary students' parents:



Statistically, this level of support clearly leaves no room for doubt. The community as a whole feels it is time for Sanibel Elementary to include grades K-8.

REVIEW OF CURRENT LITERATURE

Relevant research focuses on three areas. First, it is important to understand how middle schools came about, and some influential articles including *This We Believe* and *Turning Point* are relevant. The characteristics of a middle school must be understood to ensure that the unique needs of the children attending middle school will be met in a K-8 structure. Second, the expanded elementary school would not be a very large school, so research related to school size is relevant. Finally, studies that directly address grade configuration (which grades a school has in it) as applicable to grades K-8 are reviewed.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BACKGROUND: AN AWKWARD TIME

In the 1960's, middle schools were introduced in the grade configuration of 5-8 or 6-8 as an alternative to the junior high school model of 7 - 9th grades (National Middle School Association, 1995). *This We Believe* was rewritten in 1995 to describe the characteristics of successful middle schools. These included focusing on teachers and staff, addressing the needs of youth, the high expectations of students, family and community partnerships, and positive school climate. To achieve success, this study concluded, middle schools must have the following: an "exploratory" curriculum that is varied, a flexible structure, non-traditional assessment tools that promote learning instead of testing, and a focus on health, safety, guidance, and support.

Middle school students are going through physical and emotional changes that cause some observers to consider this a difficult time. It is particularly important that teachers and staff be aware of the unique characteristics of this age group. With understanding and knowledgeable adults around them, these children can flourish. Since these teachers and administrators can be found at

middle schools all around the county, we would expect to be able to meet these special needs on Sanibel as well.

Considering the criteria of varied curriculum and non-standard performance measures, our islands offer an environment that invites non-traditional learning. Sanibel Elementary boasts many programs like this: the **Junior Naturalist** program, in conjunction with the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge, offers students valuable environmental experience. The student-run **live specimen booth** at the Shell Fair is the culmination of weeks of preparation in the area of sea life. The ultimate endorsement of these kids' knowledge is their ability to address groups of adult guests to educate them. The **Infinity** program invites professionals to Sanibel to discuss their career choices and share their experiences with both Sanibel Elementary and other Lee County 5th graders. **Sharon's Art in the Courtyard** brings local artists in to discuss and share their talents and perspectives. **The Little Red Schoolhouse** program teaches all kindergartners how to swim a length of our 25-yard pool. Other programs include **yearbook, TV/video labs, Accelerated Reader Program, Science Fair, and Choir**. Sanibel Elementary students take **field trips** to dramatic performances on- and off-island, and visit many natural habitats in their own backyards. These creative programs keep children interested in learning, and the research and discussion like that in *This We Believe* indicate that adolescents especially benefit from this kind of education.

SIZE: SMALLER IS BETTER

Sanibel's environment and community and the educational needs of middle school students seemed suited for one another. However, there is another factor that would pave the way for success for the expanded school: its size. Small schools have higher student achievement, higher attendance rates, higher student participation in activities, and fewer behavioral problems (Cotton, 1996). By all accounts, they are more successful than their larger counterparts. There is a natural fit between a small school and the "ideal" middle school. One author (Reck, 1990) discusses how small schools inevitably use collaborative learning to take advantage of the broad range of knowledge and experience in its students; she writes, "In small schools,

collaborative learning can provide a way to capitalize both on students' variety and on their cooperative spirit." Students' variety is the one defining characteristic of middle schoolers, and this author states that small schools have a unique opportunity to take advantage of that internal variety. The articles that address the relationship between success in school and class size all seem to point to an inverse relationship: as class size goes down, performance by many different measures goes up, and vice versa.

Smaller schools work. One author (Meier, 1996) offers seven reasons for the success of small schools: governance, respect, simplicity, safety, parental involvement, accountability, and belonging. Sanibel Elementary can claim some degree of success in its area. It is made up of 270 students currently, making it the second smallest school in the County. Using standard comparison data from the Florida School Indicators Report put forth by the Florida Department of Education, Sanibel Elementary ranks below the county average for incidents of crime and violence and number of suspensions. It rates higher than county averages for promotion rate, percentage of fourth graders scoring 3 or higher on Florida Writes, and above median scores on NRT Grade 4 in reading and math. Therefore, not only does the research say this size school should work, these measurements indicate that it works very well.

DOES GRADE STRUCTURE MATTER?

Sanibel Elementary School's success is due to more than just its size; it is the right combination of many forces. Parents can be counted on to reinforce school policy and efforts, the PTA membership and activities are strong, community volunteers logged over 3,000 hours at the school this year, and the staff and teachers are an exciting, excited bunch. There is confidence that the expansion to include middle schoolers in this mix would result in an extension of that positive environment. Research on K-8 structure supports this as well. Private schools have been using this structure for years to great success, and rural areas still maintain (or are trying to maintain) this grade configuration as well. A study by Vincent Paredes (1990) looked at students who attended sixth grade at an elementary school versus a middle school. The researchers found that while these students' performance on the Iowa Basics was better in sixth grade for those in an elementary school setting, it was worse in the

seventh grade. By eighth grade, there was no difference between those sixth graders who had attended an elementary school and those attending a middle school. While this is not compelling evidence for a K-8 structure, it does not support the theory of a middle school as advantageous either.

A later study (Wihry, Coladarci, and Meadow, 1992) compared the performance of eighth graders in differing types of elementary schools and concluded that a K-8 environment was the most favorable to achievement. This study on grade configuration brought up a recurring topic and one that offers an analogy for Sanibel, Captiva, and North Captiva Islands. While some of Lee County is fairly urban, an argument can be made that the same restrictions that rural areas face are at work on our barrier islands. We are isolated, we are fairly low density, so we do not command attention because of our numbers, we are problematic because of our remoteness, and we are vital, close-knit communities very much centered around our schools and other community organizations. Alan DeYoung et al discusses the negative impact that breaking kids out into middle schools has on the community, taking a centralized entity from the community and disbursing its citizens. Not only does the community suffer, the children's education suffers because parents are removed from school involvement by sheer distance. A 1992 study by Patricia Schmuck discusses how "small town schools provide a natural connection to their community. The community and schools can work together to solve problems with youth and to allow students to become more involved in the community." This is a very succinct statement of what has happened on Sanibel with the existing elementary school, and what would be a natural consequence of the expansion as well.

SITE VISITS

Site visits were made on Thursday, 6/4, by a SAC team consisting of Alex Cook, parent and SAC Chair; Barbara Von Harten, Sanibel Elementary School Principal; Jan Manzella, 1st grade teacher; and Leslie Cook, parent. Two schools were chosen for visits: Key Largo School and Plantation Key School. Both schools have a variety of attributes which make them interesting studies for our proposed expansion: both are isolated island communities, both have a K-8 grade structure, both have dynamic principals

who have served for over ten years at their respective positions. In addition, each school has gone through renovation and grade additions during its principal's tenure. Perhaps most illuminating, **both schools are the recipients of numerous awards for educational excellence.** As Sanibel Elementary either has or aspires to many of these attributes, we were very interested in learning from these relatively comparable schools. Appendix D contains information relating to the particulars of the two schools visited.

SITE VISITS SUPPORT RESEARCH: K-8 STRUCTURE EXCELS

Our first and most important impression was how successful both these schools were based on a variety of criteria. The United States Department of Education in 1997 named Key Largo School (KLS) A National School of Excellence. This **Blue Ribbon School of Excellence** award is only given after rigorous review by a panel of educational experts, and is a lifetime achievement award. Plantation Key School (PKS) was named a **Florida State Merit School**, and both schools have received numerous **Golden School Volunteer Awards** for high rates of parent involvement. It's clear that both these schools do an excellent job of educating their students with a K-8 grade structure. (It should be noted that Sanibel Elementary is also a **National Blue Ribbon School**, as well as winner of numerous **Golden School Volunteer Awards**.) The reasons for these Key schools' successes were not surprising. As concluded in the research, schools that serve specific or isolated areas do well due to their ability to create a sense of community as opposed to bureaucracy. This environment allows faculty to provide a feeling of nurturing or belonging that seems so important for all students, but especially for adolescents. Both principals stressed their schools' supportive environment. Additionally, though PKS has about half the number of students (670) as KLS, they both emphasized small class and school size. Though both have one head administrator and strong inter-grade (mentoring) programs, their facilities provide a logistical separation between elementary and middle school grades. This distancing is subtle, as all buildings at both schools are connected by hallways or contiguous walls (with shared cafeterias, libraries, computer facilities, and/or administrative offices), but it is great enough to allow the younger grades a sense of security and the older grades a sense of uniqueness and maturity.

TESTIMONIALS

As you would imagine, stakeholders at both PKS and KLS were enthusiastic about the K-8 structure. Frankie St. James, KLS principal, confided, "I love it, and the teachers love it." Ten years ago, when the 7th and 8th grades were added to the original K-6 school, Ms. St. James said, "Kids first said, 'When can we make a Key Largo High School?' They feel nurtured, and they would like to stay here throughout K-12." One PKS parent enthused, "It's been a great experience. I love it! I can commit more of my volunteer time because the school is close." Jeff Bowman, an exceptional education teacher at KLS, mentioned he had taught at a K-8 school in Alabama as well, "We had about 300 kids, and it worked great." When a 5th grade student at PKS was asked how she felt about graduating to the 6th grade she gushed, "And I'm glad I don't have to change schools." Though trying to remain objective, those visiting found it hard to ignore the enthusiasm of both teachers and students at these two schools. The only areas of concern we were able to uncover were infrequent verbal conflict between disparate grades on the bus, the need for versatile furniture, and special design considerations for lockers and bathrooms.

SCHOOL CHOICE

Currently, Sanibel Elementary is exempt from School Choice as a result of the isolated nature of its location. We would expect the proposed K-8 school be treated the same way, assuming approval by the plaintiff. This would mean barrier island children would, with few exceptions, attend grades K-8 at the Sanibel School. Those children who have chosen (and been accepted) to magnet programs would be allowed to attend those programs with off-island transportation provided by Lee County. Historically, the number of elementary children following this path has been extremely small (currently two). Off-island children with parents who work on-island would have the same avenues they currently have. Financially, the continuation of current Sanibel policy is extremely beneficial. No longer would island middle school kids be bused all over the South Zone (with the exception of the magnet

students), and the policy would continue to preclude busing mainland kids on-island (the same logistical transportation barriers affect flow both ways).

CURRICULUM

The core of the Middle School curriculum at the proposed Sanibel School will be rigorous, advanced level, academic classes. Enhancement will come via distance learning opportunities using satellite, audio/video, and/or Internet technology, much of which will be state-of-the-art due to the concurrent nature of the renovation and new construction projects. Electives in Art, Music, Physical Education, and Foreign Language will also be available. Further enrichment would come in three areas: first, there will be an emphasis on environmental studies, not only as a goal in and of themselves, but also as a vehicle to enhance learning in other areas. Second, the school will continue to access the world-class resources in the arts available on the islands. Third, the opportunities for continued student involvement in after-school athletic/recreational activities on-island are tremendous.

The following table illustrates the anticipated core curriculum assuming two classes of 22.5 students each, for each of the phase-in years.

CERTIFICATION	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
	6th Grade	6th & 7th Grade	6th - 8th Grade
LANGUAGE ARTS	1	1	1
SOCIAL STUDIES		1	1
MATH	1	1	1
SCIENCE		1	1
ART	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff
MUSIC	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff
PE/HEALTH	Existing staff	Existing staff	Existing staff
TECHNOLOGY			1
FOREIGN LANGUAGE			1
TOTALS	2 classes of 22.5 each	4 classes of 22.5 each	6 classes of 22.5 each

1999-2000: The two teachers will each have a group of children for 1/2 of the day. One teacher will teach Language Arts and Social Studies, the other Math

and Science. The students will have Art, Music, and Physical Education electives. The schedule will be similar to the 5th grade schedule.

2000-2001: The addition of two more teachers will allow specialization in the content areas. Each 6th & 7th grader will rotate teachers for English, Social Studies, Math, and Science. Electives in Art, Music, and Physical Education will be available.

2001-2002: The final two teachers hired will be certified in foreign language, and a vocational teacher will teach advanced computer classes. In addition, Art, Music, and Physical Education electives will be available at different times throughout the year.

We anticipate strengthening the existing relationships that Sanibel Elementary School has with the island environmental and arts groups. An alliance with these groups and their tremendous assets can only serve to further enhance the educational experiences of our community's children.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

The proposed school is literally surrounded by many well-known institutions dedicated to the preservation of our sensitive marine environment and the accompanying education that this process demands. Hands-on practical learning experiences would be provided through collaboration with the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge, the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, the Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum, and Care & Rehabilitation of Wildlife (**CROW**).

THE ARTS

Barrier Island Group for the Arts (BIG Arts) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the enhancement of the cultural environment of the islands. This group has already extended the use of their facilities (auditorium, gallery, art classrooms) and other resources to the elementary school, and we anticipate their continued involvement in enriching students' exposure to the fine arts and music. In addition, the islands' main theater groups, the Pirate Playhouse

and the Old Schoolhouse Theater, could provide students with opportunities to experience the dramatic performing arts.

SPORTS/RECREATION

The proposed school expansion site currently is home for the Sanibel Elementary School and a variety of athletic infrastructure including: a 25-yard, six-lane swimming pool; a recreational facility that includes a collegiate-sized basketball court with four goals; a cardiovascular and weight-training room; several aerobics/games/arts and crafts/reading rooms; an outdoor half-court basketball goal; an extensive and recently renovated jungle gym/playground area (Kids' Play); and men's and women's locker rooms. The City of Sanibel manages most of these facilities with land ownership retained by the Lee County School District. The city offers use of these facilities, as well as the contiguous tennis courts and athletic fields, through a variety of low and no-fee youth recreational programs, including competitive soccer, basketball, baseball/softball, and swimming. Tennis and golf programs are also available. Bike paths snake throughout the island for the inclined cyclist. The community also offers inexpensive youth marine programs including sailing and kayaking. Competitive and recreational sports are a fact for children on Sanibel and would continue to be enhanced for the children of the expanded grades (6-8).

QUALITATIVE REVIEW OF DISTRICT-WIDE IMPLICATIONS OF EXPANSION

The policy implications of Sanibel Elementary expanding are negligible. The expansion would be reviewed under the new "Unique Program" process and would not ask for any unusual considerations. It could, however, offer a glimpse into structural variations for the future. There is strong evidence that a Sanibel K-8 could be an academic flagship.

While School Choice has broadened the options for some students, it has not changed them for the kids who live on Sanibel, Captiva, and North Captiva. This next school year is likely to prove that there is only one middle school that is not greater than a one-hour bus ride away for island kids: Cypress

Lake. It is becoming apparent that this school cannot accommodate the students from all over the zone who want to attend. Allowing this K-8 expansion would offer the county a way to get children to a school within their own transportation guidelines without having to displace other students from Cypress. Therefore, legally, while the desegregation plaintiff supports the County's School Choice program, they may be sympathetic to the plight of kids having to ride a bus up to four hours per day to attend school. They may also recognize that in this particular case, by implementing School Choice on these isolated islands, the county is often in an awkward position of not being able to stay within their own transportation guidelines. As stated earlier, we would hope for a continuation of our exempt status as an expanded K-8 school as a result of our geographic isolation.

The financial implications of expanding the Sanibel School on Lee County will be minor. There seems to be a unique opportunity presenting itself right now. Sanibel Elementary is scheduled for major renovations in the upcoming years. This effort could allow for capital improvements, both renovation and expansion, to take place at one time, resulting in major cost savings over a renovation and subsequent expansion. And if Sanibel is not expanded, the growth will have to be absorbed somewhere. The incremental cost of expansion to the upcoming renovation project will be minimal compared to the alternative of a new school or expanding a school that has no other renovation needs.

Transportation is the other major cost savings area. Estimates of the cost of transportation, since School Choice was implemented, are in the area of three times past expenditures. Only some of this will be offset by federal dollars. Sanibel, Captiva, and North Captiva, again because of their location out in the middle of the bay, are a particular drain on these resources. While figures are not available for the next school year, the plan is currently to bus some kids to Bonita Springs Middle, some to Cypress Middle, and some to Dunbar Middle, all at a phenomenal cost. The transit times are staggering as well. Eliminating the need to have a route to and from these barrier islands and these three schools seems like a wise fiscal policy. And these cost savings will be achieved year after year.

The administrative effects are minimal for the district. There would be a minor administrative staff increase (assistant principal, half-time guidance counselor, bookkeeper, and half-time curriculum technology specialist) required to help run the expansion grades. Additionally, all new middle schools are allocated two teachers above and beyond the standard per unit allocation, and we would expect to receive these teachers as well. A new, stand-alone school would require a greater level of staffing regardless of school population.

The implications to the district are very positive. As stated before, allowing for expansion will relieve some of the burden from the existing middle schools on the mainland. There is no increase in cost per student since these kids must be enrolled somewhere, whether the money goes to Sanibel or to another middle school. Financially, the reduction in transit costs is real. Additionally, joining the renovation and expansion projects simultaneously has to be cost effective. And, the County has in Sanibel a community ready to embrace the structure of a K-8 school.

SYSTEM OF EVALUATION

Any system used to evaluate the relative success of the proposed K-8 school would need to measure both academic and behavioral performance.

Annually, the Lee County School District, in conjunction with the State of Florida, grades Sanibel Elementary in the *School Accountability Report* (see Appendix B). The three areas of evaluation are as follows:

- **Student Achievement**, which includes standardized test scores in reading, writing, and mathematics
- **School Indicators**, which includes suspension, absenteeism, and promotion rates
- **School Characteristics**, which evaluates economic and/or mobility characteristics of the school's students and faculty. We would expect this "vital signs" report to continue to be used as a tool to help assess the relative success of the proposed K-8 school.

Our expectations would be to continue the tradition of outperforming the median scores in the academic areas, while maintaining low rates of absenteeism and suspensions. Mobility rates for the staff and the student body would also be monitored as potential areas for concern. Summarily, the stakeholders would accept, in the proposed K-8 school, nothing short of the academic and behavioral excellence the existing elementary school has consistently displayed.

TIMELINE

Our proposal would include a phase-in period for the first three years (year one would add sixth grade in the fall of 1999, year two adds seventh grade, and year three would see us fully-operational with the addition of eighth grade). Capital improvements, as proposed, could start as early as the summer of 1999, necessitating portables for parts of the phase-in period. Hopefully, construction and renovation would be completed by August of 2000, allowing us to comply with the Florida Department of Education and Lee County's efforts to eliminate portables and their accompanying concerns.

APPENDIX A

Survey, information letter, statistical review of survey results and comments.

SURVEY

Name _____

PROPOSED SANIBEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXPANSION THROUGH 8TH GRADE

The following survey is intended to measure the level of community support for the proposed expansion of Sanibel Elementary to include grades 6 through 8th. After reading the attached information sheet, please fill out this one-page form and return to your preschool by May 7, 1998. If you have any questions about this survey or its purpose, please contact Alex Cook, 395-1883, ACOOK66932@ol.com; or Susie Holly at 472-4042, sholly@olsusa.com.

1. Would you support expansion of our award-winning Sanibel Elementary School to include education through the 8th grade? Please check one:
strongly support____ support____ oppose____ strongly oppose____

2. Would you be interested in sending your child to an expanded K-8 Sanibel public school? Please check one.
very interested____ interested disinterested____ very disinterested____

Why or why not?

3. Please list the ages and current schools of your children:

AGE	SCHOOL
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Would you be willing to volunteer your time to aid in the process of achieving an expanded school curriculum and a broader island educational experience?
yes____ no____

COMMENTS: *Please use separate page if appropriate.*

Your Name: _____ Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____

INFORMATION SHEET ACCOMPANYING SURVEY (ALSO PUBLISHED IN ALL ISLAND PAPERS):

Sanibel residents have an unusual opportunity right now to define our commitment to the children of our future. If you have been following island news lately, you may have noticed a groundswell of enthusiasm and support for expanding our award-winning elementary school to include grades K through 8. In fact, Lee County School officials are not only open to this idea but are currently helping us to create a unique public school that will reflect our unique island values and experience.

The members of the Sanibel School Foundation and Sanibel School Advisory Council will be sending out a survey in the next week to assess community and parental support for this endeavor. This is the first step required by the school district in its process for designing and implementing unique schools or programs. The following is a brief discussion of the issues that might be associated with school expansion:

- What will it cost? There are no additional financial costs to Sanibel/Captiva residents for this school improvement, as capital, administrative and basic education costs are borne by the Lee County Board of Education. In other words, we will reap more of the benefits of paying our taxes every year.
- What will island children and their parents gain by school expansion? Perhaps the single greatest advantage to island parents and children will be school proximity. No longer will we be forced to commute between 2 to 5 hours every day to obtain an education for our 6th through 8th graders. This translates into more parental involvement in the school and more time for the children to pursue their academic and extracurricular passions such as sports, music, art etc.
- How will this affect the community? A K through 8 school on Sanibel will give us more opportunity to enrich our children's lives with the wealth of human and environmental resources we have on this island. Also, it is likely to attract younger families to island living and prevent the exodus of families that occurs after children reach the 5th grade. Finally, it will lessen causeway traffic, as our children will remain here for their education through 8th grade.

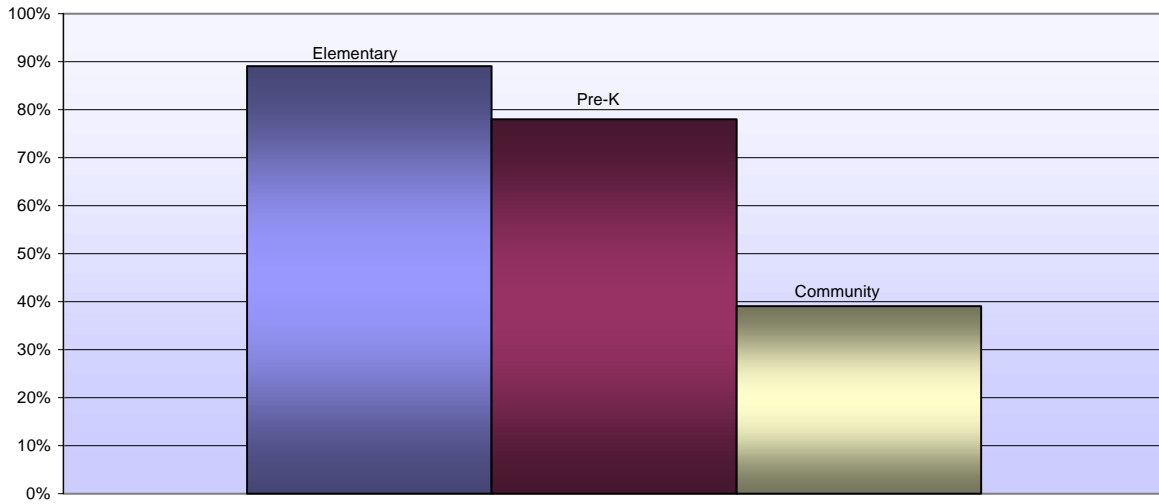
- How will this affect the school? School size will increase by no more than half of what its current population is. For example, if we have 250 students currently, we can probably expect to have no more than 375 five years from now by adding three grades. That's still small enough to retain the strong communal feeling enjoyed by our students today. Children will continue to grow up together in a small, secure environment where a student might meet her Kindergarten teacher again in the 6th grade for Spanish class. Teachers would likely have to specialize in more than one subject and would certainly have to be able to continue to challenge our exceptional students in all areas. Faculty hiring will have to be even more selective. The parents and faculty of Sanibel Elementary will not tolerate any reduction in academic standards and will expect continued high achievement scores for the extended grades. Finally, the older children will have dedicated facilities of their own but will still have the opportunity to interact with the younger ones through mentoring programs.
- What will the curriculum entail for grades 6 through 8? It will, of course, include everything required by Lee County and Florida school officials. After that, we will have some flexibility in designing programs to suit our particular student population's needs. As has been the case all along, Lee County school officials, parents, faculty and school advisors will continue to work in a democratic fashion to ensure that every child's needs are met to the greatest extent possible.
- What do we expect of the community? The Sanibel School Foundation, School Advisory Council, PTA and faculty expect continued strong emotional and financial support of the school through fundraising and active participation. If you have a talent or expertise, we may call on you to share it!
- What options will children have if they choose not to attend our K-8 school? They will, of course, continue to have several private school options. Qualified students could enroll in the school district's various magnet-school programs, as they do now. If students prefer to attend another Lee County public school and expect to have transportation provided for them to that school, they must give a compelling reason for doing so. In other words, they must provide evidence that the Sanibel school could not meet their particular needs.

- When will this come about? If we can demonstrate a basic level of support from parents and within the community, we are realistically looking at the 1999/2000 school year. The expansion would most likely be phased in, with the addition of 6th grade the first year, seventh grade the second year, and 8th grade the third year. Lee County's unique school application requires an 85% survey response rate from Sanibel Elementary parents with 80% of those responding positively. So, if you receive a survey, please fill it out!

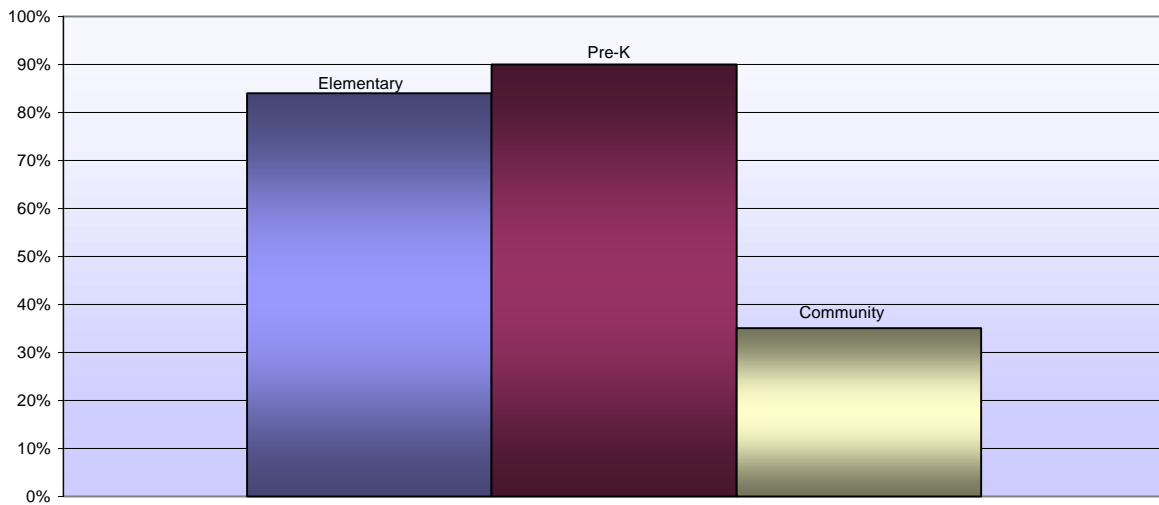
To conclude, those of us involved in this expansion process believe the benefits far outweigh the concerns. If the Sanibel community and parents show a sufficient level of support for the idea, we can proceed with Lee County school officials in making it a reality that all of us will be proud of.

RESPONSE AND VOLUNTEER RATES - CHARTS

Reponse Rate

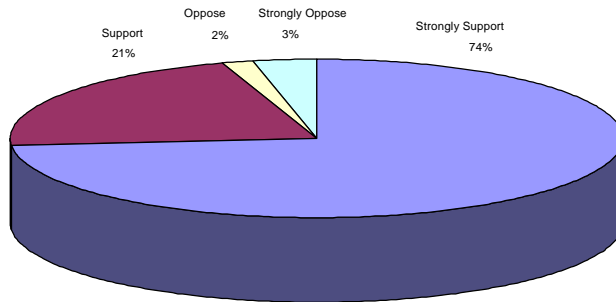


Volunteer Rate

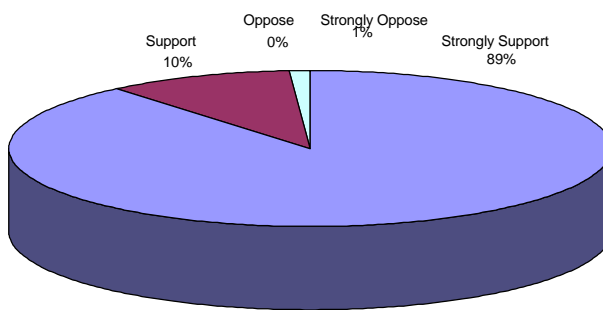


INTEREST AND SUPPORT - CHARTS

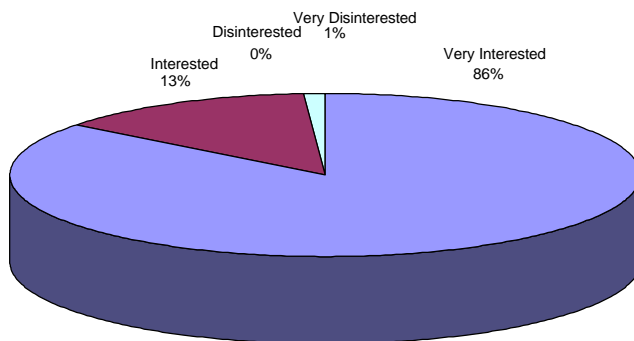
Community Support



Pre-school Support Weighted per Student



Pre-school Interest Weighted per Student



COMMUNITY COMMENTS

"THIS IS A POSITIVE MOVE FOR OUR COMMUNITY..."

"WE STRONGLY FEEL THAT GIVEN THE PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT, ALL THE 'RIGHT STUFF' IS IN PLACE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL. WE CAN DO IT; WE SHOULD DO IT."

"GREAT IDEA"

"I THINK THIS IS AN EXCELLENT WAY TO GO. LET'S START THINKING OF OUR CHILDREN."

"WHY NOT THRU GRADE 9?"

"STRONGLY SUPPORT SCHOOL ON SANIBEL. WE HAVE COME OF AGE - TREAT US [THE] SAME."

"...WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO VOLUNTEER OUR TIME IN WHATEVER WAY WE ARE NEEDED."

"THIS IS, NO DOUBT, THE BEST POSSIBLE THING FOR THE CHILDREN OF SANIBEL!!"

"A THREAT EXISTS IF EXPANSION MADE TO K-8. WE DON'T NEED A MAGNET SCHOOL ON ISLAND."

ELEMENTARY COMMENTS

"I HAD TWO GIRLS GO THROUGH ELEMENTARY AND HOW I PRAYED AT THAT TIME IT [SCHOOL EXPANSION] WOULD HAPPEN, BUT NOW I HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE. WE ALL HOPE."

"WE ARE DEFINITELY INTERESTED IN EXPLORING THIS OPPORTUNITY. WE HAVE CONCERNS BUT FEEL IF THE COMMUNITY IS SUPPORTIVE, WE CAN WORK OUT PROBLEMS THAT ARISE."

"I BELIEVE THE EXPANSION WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE CITY OF SANIBEL'S VISION STATEMENT, WHICH IS A PART OF THE STATE-MANDATED SANIBEL PLAN, IN THAT IT WOULD PROMOTE DIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY BY ALLOWING FAMILIES TO REMAIN ON THE ISLAND FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION."

"WE FEEL ...CHILDREN SHOULD NOT HAVE TO GO TO A SCHOOL THAT IS LOCATED 20 MILES FROM THEIR HOME."

"WE FEEL THAT THIS PROPOSED SANIBEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXPANSION THROUGH 8TH GRADE WOULD BE EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL TO SANIBEL STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES."

"I THINK THE EXPANSION OF THE SANIBEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO THE 8TH GRADE IS A WONDERFUL IDEA. I ONLY WISH THAT WHEN I ATTENDED THE SCHOOL DURING THE 70'S THAT WE HAD THAT OPPORTUNITY AS WELL."

"THIS WOULD ALLOW TREMENDOUS SAVINGS OF VALUABLE TIME FOR BOTH STUDENT AND PARENT TO BE USED IN A MORE PRODUCTIVE & ENRICHING WAY."

"THANK GOODNESS THIS ISSUE IS BEING ADDRESSED."

"IT'S A SAFE, FAMILY-TYPE ENVIRONMENT AND WE FEEL THE EDUCATION OUR CHILDREN HAVE RECEIVED HERE [IS] EQUIVALENT TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS. WHEN OUR 14 YEAR OLD WAS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL SHE DID NOT GET HOME UNTIL 5 [PM] - DURING SEASON AS LATE AS 6:30 [PM]!"

"MY TWELVE YEAR [OLD] SON... ATTENDED CLMS THIS YEAR AND HAD A VERY HARD TRANSITION, HE REACTED BADLY TO THE CHANGE, AND NOW IS IN ALC. THIS SHOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED."

"ONE OF THE REASONS WE REMAIN ON SANIBEL IS THE QUALITY EDUCATION..."

"I THINK THE STABILITY OF STAYING IN THE SAME SCHOOL THROUGH OUT THOSE TOUGH PRE-ADOLESCENCE YEARS WOULD BE NOTHING OTHER THAN BENEFICIAL FOR MY DAUGHTERS."

"IF THIS EXPANSION DOES NOT HAPPEN, I WILL MOST LIKELY OPT FOR A PRIVATE SCHOOL. THIS MEANS A LOT TO OUR WHOLE FAMILY."

"WE FEEL BY 6TH GRADE OUR CHILDREN NEED A TASTE FOR THE 'REAL WORLD'..."

"...I FEEL THIS IS A MATTER OF PARENTS LOOKING PAST THE NEEDS OF THE CHILD FOR MORE CONVENIENCE (SIC)."

"THE SCHOOL IS DILAPIDATED AND HASN'T RECEIVED THE DISTRICT'S ATTENTION IT DESERVES. THIS WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE CASE WITH K - 8 UNTIL WE GET BETTER REPRESENTATION."

PRE-SCHOOL COMMENTS

"THE OUTCOME OF THIS ISSUE WILL STRONGLY AFFECT OUR DECISION TO REMAIN SANIBEL RESIDENTS..."

"NO COMMUTE, BETTER COMMUNITY, MORE CONTROL AND INVOLVEMENT."

"WE BELIEVE THAT THE LESS TIME WASTED ON COMMUTING, AND THE MORE TIME SPENT ON LEARNING, THE BETTER FOR OUR CHILDREN!"

"I HAVE LEFT FOR WORK MANY MANY TIMES AND SEEN TEN YEAR OLDS WAITING IN THE DARK FOR THE SCHOOL BUS! MANY SANIBEL CHILDREN ARE RIDING THE BUS 2 1/2 HOURS ONE WAY FOR A TOTAL OF A STAGGERING 5 HOURS PER DAY. THESE CHILDREN ARE BEING SET UP FOR FAILURE! WHEN CHILDREN ARE UP AT 5, GONE BY 6, AND NOT HOME UNTIL 5 OR SO, THERE IS LITTLE TIME FOR THE NECESSITIES OF CHILDHOOD....TOO MANY

PEOPLE ARE FORCED TO MOVE ELSEWHERE BECAUSE THIS IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE CHOICE FOR THEIR CHILDREN."

"I WENT TO A SMALL TOWN SCHOOL THAT WAS 1 - 8. IT WAS GREAT! WHEN IN THE UPPER GRADES, WE HAD A CHANCE TO BE TEACHERS' HELPERS WITH THE LOWER GRADES. IT WAS A VERY GOOD EXPERIENCE FOR ALL."

PTA Information

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, PTA

- Brenda Harrity, President
- Susan Holly, Vice-President
- Heather Corbin, Treasurer
- Joan Black, Secretary

DATES OF PTA MEETINGS WHERE K-8 EXPANSION WAS DISCUSSED:

- ***March 30, 1998***
Evening PTA program with Pat Riley as featured speaker as well as many Lee County staff members. Discussed was School Choice and K-8 expansion possibility.
- ***May 5, 1998***
Leslie Cook presented K-8 expansion concept and progress to PTA.
- ***June 2, 1998***
Proposals were distributed and presentation made by Alex Cook, luncheon at PTA President's home.

FACULTY MEETINGS INVOLVING DISCUSSION OF K-8 EXPANSION.

DATES OF FACULTY MEETINGS

- ***April 1, 1998***
General discussion about the possibility of expansion and implications to current staff and teachers.
- ***June 9, 1998***

Detailed discussion of proposal by faculty and staff of Sanibel Elementary. Faculty and staff consensogram was conducted with 8% opposition rate and 92% supportive.

COMMUNITY FORUMS:

DATES OF COMMUNITY FORUMS

- ***March 24, 1998***

Meet the Candidates Night sponsored by Citizens for Quality Education at the Sanibel Community Center. Katherine Boren was the current Board Member presented and Pat Riley was in attendance as an observer. Questions were raised to the panel and, after the forum, to the Board members individually to determine the best path for pursuing expansion to include grades 6-8.

Lee County School Board Forum

Tuesday, March 24, 1998 Sanibel Community Association

Come to this meeting to show Sanibel's need for a middle school. Discuss with current Board members and those up for election the issues that drive our community.

- *We have a Blue Ribbon Elementary School, due in great part to the involvement of all the parents of kids attending. Working parents cannot be involved in the child's education if the school is 60 miles away.*
- *Our geographic location puts our students at a disadvantage no matter where they attend middle school because of the distance they must travel just to get to the mainland. Lots of kids have been in a car or on a bus for forty-five minutes just to get off the island.*
- *The new "School Choice" program has taken the choice out of the equation for one quarter of our kids. These kids did not get assigned to the schools of their choice, and some kids are expected to ride a bus 2 hours each way to school. This program in and of itself deserves a forum, as it has negatively impacted families who are just following the guidelines the system has set forward.*
- *Sanibel is not a drain on County resources by any means. The school has not seen significant remodeling for quite some time and many improvements that have been made are the result of efforts of citizen groups, parents, and the City of Sanibel.*
- *Some families put their kids in private schools in grade five in order to guarantee a place in the program for sixth grade. This reduces the number of kids attending Sanibel Elementary for that grade and can force combined classes.*
- *Many families move off Sanibel, particularly if they have more than one child, because they cannot work out the logistics of their own work schedules and their kids' school and after-school activities.*

- *Some kids who are talented, gifted or athletically inclined are not allowed to participate in organized activities at these remote Lee County Schools because they are so far away. What has traditionally been a tight knit group of kids is broken apart and kids spend time on buses and in car pools instead of in student government or on the soccer team.*
- *While there is an ongoing myth that Sanibel is home only to the rich folks in Lee County, plenty of us are working parents, struggling and sacrificing to remain on the island. We cannot afford to put our kids in private schools, and we cannot afford to quit our jobs to allow our kids to have a well-rounded educational experience.*

The School Board needs to hear these concerns and those that you have as well. There is a willingness of the Board to listen to the parents and hear why we so firmly support the concept of the elementary school continuing through 8th grade.

Please plan on attending the meeting Tuesday night. If you are unable to attend, or even if you come, please write the School Board members and tell them to support the continuation of educational opportunities through 8th grade on Sanibel.

The School District of Lee County, 2055 Central Avenue, Fort Myers, FL 33901

Dr. Doug Santini, District 1	337-4774	Katherine Boren, District 4	337-0771 (SANIBEL)
Lanny Moore, District 2	337-5554	Bill Gross, District 5	337-3366
Patricia Moore, District 3	337-7177		

For comments on School Choice, the new system of assigning kids to area schools, write to:

Robert Durham, Director, School Choice 2266 2nd Street, Gwynne Institute Building, Fort Myers, FL 33901 941-337-8247

- **April 29, 1998**
Children's Education Center of the Island. Leslie Cook discussed K-8 expansion at parent meeting.
- **May 8, 1998**
Jacque Owens discussed expansion possibility with parents at Rabbit Road Center for Children, parent meeting.

SAC INFORMATION

SAC CHAIR AND SUB-COMMITTEE

Chair, 1998 - 1999 Alex Cook

SAC SUB-COMMITTEE FOR UNIQUE SCHOOL PROPOSAL

Alex Cook, Chair

Jacque Owens, Community Representative

Susan Holly, Parent Member

Jan Manzella, Teacher

Barbara Von Harten, Principal

DATES OF SAC MEETINGS

- **February 18, 1998**
Keith Owens, SAC Member, brought up the possibility of a K-8 school on the island and discussion followed about the large number of parents asking the same question.
- **March 18, 1998**
Alex Cook addressed the SAC Meeting regarding the possibility of expansion of the school to include K-8. Charter schools and magnet schools were discussed, and a conseconsogram indicated 80 - 100% support for the concept. Tasks were assigned to determine support from School Board candidates, City Hall, PTA, Chamber of Commerce and teachers and staff of Sanibel Elementary.
- **April 22, 1998**
Alex Cook updated the progress on the expansion project. Lee County administrators were there to address the draft survey and answer

questions and concerns. Pros and cons of a middle school were discussed by parents, teachers, SAC members, principals from area middle schools, and Lee County staff members. It was decided to send the survey out.

- **May 20, 1998**

Leslie Cook reported support rate for expansion was running in the 95% range.

- **June 3, 1998**

Alex Cook presented the proposal to SAC members. Discussed were curriculum issues, research showing the positive effects the school might have, and the positive response of the parents and the community at large.

SAC MEETING MINUTES/AGENDAS

Minutes of SAC meeting Feb. 18, 1998

Members Present: Georgia Brown, Stephanie Bilske, Barbara VonHarten, Jean Gavin, Jan Manzefia, Jaye Boswell, Keith Owens, Jay Richter, Shawn Kilgore

The meeting was called to order by Barbara VonHarten who was substituting for Chairperson, Patty Herrick.

Minutes were read and a change was made in the date on the last meeting.

Minutes were then accepted.

Barbara distributed the School Progress Report for Sanibel Elementary School. Discussion followed about Florida Writes and how our 4th grade students had been prepared for the test.

School Improvement Plan update: The school board accepted our plan. We are working hard on our goals...improving writing scores. A R ,and keyboarding program for Grade 2. Carl Melamet spoke briefly about the new keyboarding program (Typing To Learn).

Science Fair update: It was very successful...a good learning experience for the children. When the students were asked what their preference would be about the format of the Science Fair, they preferred to work on their projects at school as opposed to home.

P.T.A. update: Barbara spoke of the success of Infinity. Suggestions were made to increase the length of the time for each activity ... perhaps a look at a more flexible schedule.

Climate Survey: A twenty item survey will be sent to families randomly and will be returned to the District. We will be notified of the results. There was discussion as to whether we should have an additional Climate Survey. It was decided that we would wait until we saw the questions of the District survey and decide if we want to ask additional ones.

Sanibel Elementary School Brochure: Jaye Boswell spoke on this topic. She feels that we can come up with a "dynamite" brochure. Should there be a sub-committee ? Target date ? Jaye will contact Jane Klasing to set up a time for a committee.

New Business: Keith Owens asked about the possibility of a Middle School on the Island. Many parents have asked about this recently. Is a Charter School a possibility? Would the District be interested in considering a Middle School along with our upcoming renovation? The meeting ended with a lot of questions.

Respectfully submitted:

Jan Manzella

SAC MINUTES 3/18/98

SAC Chair Patty Herrick called the Sanibel SAC Meeting to order at 2:15 on Wednesday, March 18th. Members present were: Principal Von Hatten, Maureen Nodruff, Jaye Boswell, Jan Manzella, Jean Gavin, Ted Tyson, Jane Klasing, Brenda Harrity, Illona Wolanin, Jay Richter, Keith Owens, Cheryl Darbyshire (for Georgia Brown). Guest Present: Alex Cook

Minutes from the February meeting were approved as submitted.

Alex Cook was a guest speaker addressing the possibility of forming a charter school for the middle school level on Sanibel. Mr. Cook noted that the Lee County School Board funds students at approximately \$3,000.00 per student. Mr. Cook stressed the need for interested parents and community members to band together. The school might even be formed as a magnet school with concentration on environmental studies. Mrs. Von Harten responded by suggesting SAC members discuss ideas with their constituent groups so we can reconvene to check on consensus. SAC members present supported the concept of K-8 school and wanted to pursue it further. A consensogram activity resulted in the following: all 80-100% in support of the concept. It was suggested that candidates running for the School Board be surveyed as to their stand on developing a K - 8 school. Alex Cook will talk with Sanibel City Council. Jane Klasing - Chamber. Brenda Harrity - PTA. Barbara Von Harten -Teachers. We will set up next steps to be followed at April SAC meeting.

Dress Code: SAC discussed over-sized shoelaces and over-sized pants. The Cypress Lake Middle School Dress Code was reviewed, as well as dress codes from other Lee County elementary schools.

Additions approved to Sanibel Dress Code:

Shoes shall be worn at all times and safely, securely tied. (Inappropriately) over-sized clothes will not be worn.

We'll try to implement the dress code additions now. We will encourage students to begin to abide by dress codes, as it will be formally put into effect next school year. Information will be included in Monday Reporter, stressing safety, and then in next year's handbook.

Honor Roll/Handwriting - A parent has requested that N and U effort grades in Handwriting only not be a disqualification for the A/B Honor Roll. SAC agreed to table further discussion until next month's meeting.

Writing Goals: Mrs. Von Harten shared the Writing Curriculum goals the faculty has developed this year and is beginning to implement. This was a School Improvement Plan initiative.

PTA UPDATE

Brenda Harrity reported that the Sea Horse Festival was very successful this year. 1225 tickets were sold for the raffle of the Princess Di Beanie Baby. Approximately \$20,000.00 was raised.

Climate Survey: The School District will select questions to conduct a survey of a random sampling of parents. (Sample questions were distributed.) SAC consensus was that the proposed survey be sent out as per county policy, with no additional survey necessary at this time.

School Brochure: Jaye Boswell

We are very excited about this brochure. Design and format are coming along. hope to get printing sponsors soon.

New Business: Alex Cook suggested forming a new family "welcome wagon". Brenda Harrity responded that a "newcomer" tea had been held soon after school began in the fall.

Next SAC meeting will be Wednesday, April 22, 1998 in the Media Center at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Nodruff Secretary, SAC

SAC MINUTES 4/22/98

Chair Patty Herrick called Sanibel Elementary SAC Meeting to order on Wednesday, April 22nd at 2:00 p.m. Members present were: Patty Herrick, Principal Barbara Von Harten, Maureen Harrigan, Jean Gavin, Jaye Boswell, Jan Manzella, Shawn Kilgore, Kathleen Faraone, Georgia Brown, Jane Klasing, Ted Tyson, Brenda Harrity, Illona Wolanin, Keith Owens, Maureen Nodruff..

Guests present were Alex Cook, parent, as well as a number of other interested parties.

Guests present from County Office were: Cheryl Knaff, Betsy Russell, Doug Whittaker, Jeanne Folaros, Don Campbell, and Jane Kuckel.

Minutes of the March 18th SAC meeting were accepted as submitted.

Mr. Keith Owens addressed the group to give an update on school choice. He cited statistics. Here are some highlights from the discussion that followed. Parents seemed to have opinion that proximity preference would be honored. Some felt that they should have been informed earlier of the scarcity of openings in their 1st choice of middle school. Parents came away with the impression that the 1st batch would get 1st choice.

Review City of Sanibel Resolution/i98 - physical isolation cited as unique situation.

55-90 minutes maximum transportation time has been set by School Board.

Mrs. Folaros, Principal, Cypress Lake Middle addressed the fact that his was the

1st time Lee County has gone through this process.

Ms. Russell that reported across the district 90% of Middle School students got 1st preference.

Don Campbell recognized Sanibel has some unique circumstances involved in school choice process.

Don Campbell reported that the bus route to Bonita Middle School is within realistic timeframe - he made car trip himself. He encouraged any parent who feels bussing is prohibitive to file a hardship application. Apply for waiver

based on distance from school. Bus routes are not firmly established at this time. Waivers will not be reviewed until bus routes are established. At this point individual cases on Cypress Middle School eligibility pool are being looked at. 58 students are presently in CLMS eligibility pool and 78 are in pool (some are duplications) for CLMS magnet. At present, they're looking at individual students. Batch 2 applications are due before May 1. Need written stipulation filed with attorneys and submitted to court. Check out reverse proximity ruling.

Mrs. Von Harten presented consensogram of teachers on Sanibel becoming K-6 or K-8 school.

Alex Cook updated group on K-8 school research. At present group wants to survey island residents on their commitment to a K-8 school. Mr. Cook presented a proposed expansion survey. A copy may go home w/each student. Then 300-500 other surveys will be sent out to other island residents.

Dr. Kuckel suggested group brainstorm advantages and disadvantages. Perhaps could be used in survey cover letter.

Issues?

Mandatory or choice? Would off island 7th and 8th graders have to return?
Use of distance learning. Non-traditional curriculum options?

Foundation to provide supplemental dollars.

Special needs students?

Preparation for high school? (social/emotional/academic)

ADVANTAGES

1. Remain on island
2. Parent involvement
3. Proximity
4. Community involvement limited
5. Opportunity to develop unique electives due to community resources
6. Same teacher for specific subjects every year.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Not cost effective time wise
2. Certification of teachers
3. Limited teacher diversity
4. Array of exploratory classes is limited
5. Limited - Sports
Arts

7. Expand Art Music

- Next steps: Conduct survey. An application process is being developed for schools-->unique schools program. Wednesday, April 30th is due date for final draft to be reviewed.
- Consensus was reached by SAC to conduct a survey, and include information that K- 8 school was not a possibility for next school year.

PTA update Brenda Harrity - \$1500 has been given by City for Kidsplay. Week of May 4TM is National Appreciation week. PTA will be providing an appreciation breakfasts for teachers in June.

Florida School Recognition- grant for \$50,000 can be applied for. 30 essay questions will need to be answered. SAC members might meet to get together to complete application. We are researching sources for providing subs for several teachers to meet with Dr. Albert.

Consensus was reached on using the remaining SAC funds to provide substitute teachers to write this grant.

Annelie Rigsby is one community resource who might be helpful.

Inservice Request - Consensus was reached on funding a teacher to attend inservice on classroom managed assessment. \$50 would be allocated for substitute for this teacher. Teacher will be required to return to school and share information with other teachers.

Kathleen Faraone - revisited Honor Roll/Handwriting issue as criteria for inclusion on Honor Roll. Teachers will return to next SAC meeting with reasons for including Handwriting effort grade for Honor Roll inclusion.

Next SAC meeting will be held Wednesday, May 20, 1998, at 2:15 p.m. in the Sanibel Media Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Nodruff Secretary, SAC

SAC MINUTES Wednesday, May 20th at 2:15 Media Center

Sanibel SAC Meeting was called to order by Chair, Patty Herrick, on Wednesday, May 20th at 2:15 in the Media Center.

Members present were: Barbara Von Harten, Jaye Boswell, Student Shawn Kilgore, Georgia Brown, Student Stephanie Bilske, Chair Patty Herrick, Jan Manzella, Maureen Nodruff, Ted Tyson, Keith Owens, Jay Richter, Brenda Harrity, Jane Klasing, Jean Gavin, Kathleen Faraone.

Guests attending were: Connie Mumm, C.J. Kamosa, Julie Wappes, Leslie Cook.

Principal, Barbara Von Harten revisited handwriting issue.

The PTA has reviewed the several proposals concerning effort and achievement on handwriting grades effecting inclusion/exclusion on Honor Roll.

Ted Tyson suggested that an option might be to have individual cases brought before SAC.

Georgia Brown brought up issue of child's privacy as being a potential problem.

Ted stressed need for documentation.

Keith Owens suggested allowing child to spend extra time, perhaps during recess time, practicing handwriting skills.

George Brown stressed needs for notification and documentation. Children need to be held accountable for getting notification and returning it signed by

parent.

Barbara Von Harten reminded group of need for reaching consensus.

Brenda Harrity voiced PTA parents' concern that a child not be denied Honor Roll on basis of effort grade.

> Consensus was reached by SAC that Proposal II be accepted which was:

Proposal

"A" HONOR ROLL - a child must have "A" on all subjects, and he/she must have "S" for effort on all subjects, including handwriting.

"A/B" HONOR ROLL - A child must have all A's and B's in all subjects, and he/she must have an "S" for effort on all subjects, including handwriting.

Carl Melamet shared Test Results.

Florida Writes - The Florida Writing Assessment. This reflects that fact that we went significantly above state average and accomplished over School Improvement Objective on Writing. It was suggested that students might want to submit entries in the Hemingway Contest.

CTBS scores for this year were above both national and district averages at grades 3 and 4.

Sue Siler expressed enthusiasm for AR program. Book circulation in the Media Center has increased 4X.

Barbara Von Harten reported that Sanibel Public Library is hoping to set up for the AR program.

Sue Siler stated her need for scheduled help in the Media Center next year. Her request will be put in the Monday Reporter.

Leslie Cook reported survey testing community support for establishing K-8 school on the island - support rate at about 96%.

PTA update was done by Brenda Harrity.

PTA will spend PTA monies on the following:

1. 10 new computers for classrooms.
2. AR sets and software.
3. Air filters for portables.
4. \$300.00/teaching unit for materials

Brenda will try to find out how much of the cost of brochures will be borne by the county.

Head Lice issue - PTA discussed some parental notification needs to be sent out -published in Monday Reporter when head lice becomes a problem on the campus. Director of Health Services provided information on the subject. Student confidentiality must be observed. Policy would be included in next year's parent handbook. SAC reached consensus on the policy, which is:

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION OF HEAD LICE

Parents will be notified in the Weekly Reporter when head lice have been found in either (a) More than two children within the same class, or (b) More than five children within the school within a one week period.

Notification may also be sent home if the health assistant, principal, and PTA president feel that it is in the best interest of the school.

Notification will also be sent to the three local preschools, as a courtesy.

Jaye Boswell presented proposed brochure her committee has been working on, -Fabulous!

Chair, Patty Herrick, presented roster of SAC nominations.

Chair proposed that business and community members be nominated at meeting on June 3rd in Media Center at 2:15 p.m.

Changes made to SAC By-Laws:

Article IV.

SAC shall consist of no more than 23 people.
Two reps from business and two community members.

Article V.

Classified personnel appointed by classified personnel. Fifth grade reps nominated by their peers.

Consensus was reached on a suggestion by Jane Klasing that 52, grade reps make presentation to 4th grade setting up responsibilities of SAC student. 4th graders nominate peers and 4th grade teachers select from suggested roster.

Article VI. Rules shall be made by consensus decisions.

New Business

Angel Flight - Ted Tyson requested that SAC and PTA help spread the word. Ted is looking for 5 people from business groups, churches to act as contact person to actively search out those in need. Telephone 472-8394.

Upcoming SAC meeting will be Wednesday, June 3rd, at 2:15 p.m. for new SAC members.

Meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

School Advisory Council Agenda
June 3, 1998

Welcome and Introductions	Patty Herrick	5 minutes
Proposal for selecting Parent Representatives	Barbara Von Harten	5 minutes
Proposal for selecting Business and Community Members and the selection of the 1998-99 Members	Patty Herrick	10 minutes
Nomination of 1998-99 SAC Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer	SAC	10 minutes
Determination of SAC meeting days and times for 1998-99	SAC	10 minutes
Facilitative Leadership June 1998	Barbara Von Harten	5 minutes
SIP Training August 1998	Barbara Von Harten	5 minutes
K-8 Subcommittee	Alex Cook	10 minutes

Travel expenses to visit K-8 schools	Barbara Von Harten	5 minutes
Schedule date and time for SAC meeting in Aug./Sept. 1998	SAC	3 minutes
EMG Presentation New Business	Otis Davis SAC	45 minutes 5 minutes

SANIBEL CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE K-8 EXPANSION.

SCHOOL CHOICE RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION URGING THE LEE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD TO CONSIDER REASONABLE MODIFICATIONS OF THE SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM TO ACCOMMODATE THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WHO RESIDE ON SANIBEL; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Sanibel Island is physically isolated from the rest of Lee County; and

WHEREAS, this physical isolation has been recognized by the Lee County School Board in that K-5th graders are not transported onto or off of Sanibel Island; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sanibel has always maintained a cooperative relationship with the County and the School Board on matters relating to education; and

WHEREAS, extracurricular activities and parental involvement, both crucial components of a child's educational success, are impaired when a child's school is in a distant region of the County; and

WHEREAS, the families who live on Sanibel bring a balance and vitality to the community that is sorely missed when they begin to move off the island in an effort to be a part of their child's education; and

WHEREAS, School Choice has taken the choice out of educational opportunities of 1/3 of our middle school children by not allowing them to attend their school of choice; and

WHEREAS, the Lee County School Board has set a guideline of 55-85 minutes as a maximum transportation time; and

WHEREAS Cypress Middle School is the only school that meets the transportation time limit criteria;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Sanibel, Lee County, Florida:

Section 1. The City Council requests the Lee County School Board to consider reasonable modifications of the School Choice program to accommodate the special circumstances of children and families who reside in Sanibel.

Section 2. The City Council would also like to invite the Lee County School Board to schedule a meeting in Sanibel, and would further offer the use of City Council chambers (McKenzie Hall) as a location for a meeting.

Section 3. Effective date.

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

DULY PASSED AND ENACTED by the Council of the City of Sanibel, Lee County, Florida, this second day of April, 1998.

EXPANSION RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE EFFORT OF THE SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH THE SANIBEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AS A KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 8TH GRADE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the Sanibel City Council is concerned for the welfare, well-being and quality of education of Sanibel's children; and

WHEREAS, the Sanibel Elementary School is to be renovated in the near future and has the requisite space available for expansion; and

WHEREAS, the resident elementary school population, and the population of school-age children of persons living or employed within the city limits is such that a kindergarten through 8th grade school will be well-attended and diverse; and

WHEREAS, there is an after-school recreation program available to provide the diverse student population with social and cultural interaction in a safe, supervised setting, helping avert the phenomenon of "latch key kids"; and

WHEREAS, a careful, comprehensive survey of elementary school parents (with an 87% response rate) has found that 96% support such an expansion; and

WHEREAS, a similar survey of the community at large has revealed an identical (96%) level of support; and

WHEREAS, Sanibel and Captiva are outlying areas, physically separated from the rest of Lee County by long distances and often congested roads, school proximity would virtually eliminate a 2-5 hour daily commute for our 6th through 8th graders. That would afford more time for the children to pursue their academic and extracurricular passions such as sports, music, and art, and would also greatly increase parental involvement in their schooling; and

WHEREAS, a K-8 school on Sanibel will give us more opportunity to enrich our children's lives with the wealth of human and environmental resources we have on this island; and

WHEREAS, a K-8 school would attract younger families to island living and prevent the exodus of families that occurs after children reach the 6th grade, helping promote diversity, as called for in the Sanibel Vision Statement;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Sanibel, Lee County, Florida:

Section 1. The City Council hereby strongly encourages and endorses the efforts of the School Advisory Committee of the Sanibel Elementary School to achieve the goal of expanding the Sanibel Elementary School into a kindergarten through 8th grade school; and

Section 2. The City Council further declares the hope and wish of this Council that the Sanibel K-8 School, when established, will provide a strong environmental education focus to use to best advantage the numerous public and private environmental resources available on this officially-proclaimed "sanctuary island," and thereby take the lead in promoting environmental studies in Lee County elementary schools.

Section 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

DULY PASSED AND ENACTED by the Council of the City of Sanibel, Lee County, Florida, this 2nd day of June, 1998.

Newspaper Coverage follows...

APPENDIX C

ENDNOTES

Cotton, Kathleen. (1996). *Affective and Social Benefits of Small-Scale Schooling*. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. (ED401 088).

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Meier, Deborah W. (1996). The big benefits of smallness. *Educational Leadership* 54(1). 12-15.

National Middle School Association. (1995). *This We Believe: Developmentally Responsive Middle Level Schools. A Position Paper*. Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association.

Paredes, Vincent. (1990). *Sixth Graders in Elementary and Middle Schools: A Longitudinal Study*. Austin Independent School District, Texas Office of Research and Evaluation. (ED323 268).

Reck, Carleen. (1990). *Successful Instructional Practices for Small Schools*; (ED326 352).

National Association of Secondary School Principals. (1993). *Achieving Excellence through the Middle Level Curriculum*. Reston, Virginia: National Association of Secondary School Principals. (ED356 561).

Schmuck, Patricia; *The Lessons of School Restructuring: The Advantage of Being a Small School District*; (ED355 074.)

Wihry, D., Coladarci, T. & Meadow, C. (1992). Grade span and eighth-grade academic achievement: Evidence from a predominantly rural state. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 8(2). 58-70.

APPENDIX D

BROCHURES

School brochures follow...