



Thursday, January 3, 2008

For immediate release

Citizens Naming Committee sets meeting schedule; Recommendations go to Board on February 18

The Citizens Naming Committee (CNC), charged with making recommendations for the name of the new elementary school, will hold the first of its five meetings on Tuesday, January 8 at 5:00 p.m. at Wright Middle School.

The committee, appointed by the Board of Education, will meet on four subsequent Tuesday evenings (see meeting schedule below) to whittle down the 87 suggested names for the new school -- currently under construction on the far West side (801 Redan Dr.) The CNC must recommend a minimum of four names which meet the naming criteria established by Board policy and provide reasons. At least two of the recommended names shall be of a prominent national or local figure.

The recommendations will go to the Board of Education on February 18. Per the policy, the Board will hold a public hearing on a subsequent date, and must wait at least 14 days after the hearing before voting to select a name.

The 13 citizens on the committee are: Nikki Baumblatt, LaVonne LaFave Bennett, Tom Brien, Salvadore Carranza, Cindy Crane, Enrique Gandara, Aiesha Golden, Mary Gulbrandsen, Karen Helle, Peng Her, Kris Koval, David Mollenhoff and Angie Thomas. The Board also appointed Mollenhoff as chair.

The committee meetings are open to the public. Minutes of the meetings and related documents will be available on the "New Elementary School" portion of the MMSD website (www.mmsd.org).

Of the 87 suggested names, 63 are persons, 10 are places, and 14 are ideas or concepts. To be eligible, the Board policy requires that a person must be "prominent" at either a local or national level and deceased, a place name must be "locally significant," and an idea or concept must be "broadly respected." "I expect the committee to develop additional criteria," said Mollenhoff.

Citizens had a 30-day period that ended December 3 during which they could make comments on the proposed names. Including these comments and the documents submitted with the name nominations,

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the CNC is reviewing more than 500 pages of documentation.

The committee will also review past and current MMSD school names and research on the proposed names.

In June, the Board voted to rename the elementary school after originally selecting Vang Pao, who was indicted by federal authorities earlier that month.

The school is currently under construction and will open to students on the first scheduled day of classes in September.

For more information, contact: Ken Syke, 663-1903, or Joe Quick, 663-1902.

Citizens Naming Committee Meeting Schedule

Starting times, after the first meeting, are subject to change.

Tuesday	January 8	5:00 p.m.	Wright Middle School LMC
Tuesday	January 15	5:00 p.m.	Wright Middle School LMC
Tuesday	January 22	5:00 p.m.	Wright Middle School LMC
Tuesday	January 29	5:00 p.m.	Wright Middle School LMC
Tuesday	February 5	5:00 p.m.	Wright Middle School LMC

Wright Middle School is located at 1717 Fish Hatchery Rd.