

# Ravenswood City School District

2160 EUCLID AVENUE PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA 94303 TELEPHONE (415) 323-9411

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

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June 27, 1973

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STUDENT SERVICES

STATEMENT OF ELIZABETH JOHNSON AND GERALD Z. MARER  
UPON COMPLETION OF THEIR TERM OF OFFICE  
AS MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD,  
RAVENSWOOD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The District is not providing the best possible education for our children, and much more must be done. Following is a list of the major areas of our concern; our suggestions for improvement in these areas is a matter of record, but we again list these areas in hopes that the parents, staff and citizens in the Ravenswood Community will give their consideration and suggestions in these and other areas in an attempt to provide the best quality education in the Ravenswood City School District.

The major areas of concern are:

1. The educational priority of the District must be to provide the best quality education for our children; the District must move away from policies of politics, power, and economics; the District must reverse the flow from our District of parents and their children and top quality staff members; the District must adopt educational priorities that will make this a desirable area for parents to move into with their children, and for top quality teachers and staff to want to work. The power politics, particularly of the past months, which caused the loss to Ravenswood of an outstanding man as its Superintendent, has caused irreparable harm to the District, and everything possible must be done to reorder the District's policies and priorities so that people of quality, especially minority people, will come to our District.
2. Clear objectives must be set and carried out in our educational process, particularly in the areas of reading and math, where the District continues to make little or no progress. Educational jargon must be replaced with viable educational theory and practice, with focus on performance by staff and achievement by our children.
3. Careful study must be given to the use of time and manpower of our teachers and staff and volunteer parents, again with focus on their performance, and achievement by our students.

4. The concepts of "community control" and "community-family" must be clearly defined and evaluated to insure that the entire "community" is involved and has a say in the affairs of our District, rather than just a few people, and to insure that the concepts are not given a higher priority than the successful education of our children. Expressions of opinion and dissent must be encouraged and tolerated, not deterred or suppressed.

5. The District needs to establish a well-defined, workable, and accurate system of evaluation of all programs and all staff, that focuses on productivity and what is being accomplished for the children. The District needs to have its administrators and staff trained in the establishment and implementation of a system of evaluation of District programs and staff, and which is an unbiased and accurate system.

6. The major areas that need the establishment and implementation of an improved and accurate evaluation system, and an evaluation, are:

(a) The performance of the school board; Superintendent; administrators (both certificated and classified), teachers (improved implementation of the Stull Bill), and classified employees. Evaluations should be periodic in some respects and on-going in other respects. Remedial assistance should be provided by the District to all personnel throughout the school year to improve their performance.

(b) The Wednesday Unit-Planning-Time must be evaluated, in conjunction with an evaluation on the total number of days students are not in school because of meetings, conferences, and holidays, with a focus on the performance of staff and achievement of the students.

(c) The curriculum must be continually evaluated, with emphasis now on the 4th through 8th grades, and with particular emphasis on the Junior High School curriculum, which is lacking in substance and achievement. The 4th through 8th grade committee must be augmented and given improved support by the administration in hopes that plans for improvement can be implemented by 1974-75.

(d) The Student Services Department must be evaluated, both in terms of program and staff. The program needs improvement both in the quality of services provided children and in the number of students provided service. The District should even consider initiating litigation against the State or other agencies in an attempt to improve its program and the number of children serviced.

(e) The Teacher Corp. project.

(f) The Right to Read program.

(g) The Drug Abuse Curriculum.

(h) The Principal Assistants (classified employees acting in lieu of certificated vice-principals) must be evaluated, particularly in consideration of the need to give our teachers administrative experience.

(i) The bi-lingual and bi-cultural program.

(j) The ESEA Title I and Follow Through programs must be evaluated, in light of the stated objectives of those programs, and the achievement test scores.

(k) The policies and procedures involved in hiring certificated and classified employees must be evaluated to insure that we have a system of fair and open competition for employment; and a fair and unbiased system of interviewing and hiring applicants for employment with our District.

An evaluation system should include an on-going evaluation of all programs throughout the year and a remedial system for improvement of the programs during the school year. Too often an entire school year passes before areas of need are identified and corrected.

7. The official policy guide (OPG) must continue to be studied and revised, with emphasis on coordinating the policies. A policy for conducting school board meetings should be adopted.

8. The Staff Assistance Team Report should be further considered for implementation.

9. The Dumbarton Bridge proposal must be given continued consideration by the District, and the District should participate in all governmental agency meetings on the proposal.

10. Classroom-to-home communication should be improved by periodic written reports to parents about the happenings in the child's classroom and about how the home can supplement the classroom activities.

11. Report cards should be revised and improved to more accurately reflect each child's needs, achievement, and progress.

12. Notices to the public should be given wide distribution about all District programs, particularly programs which involve employment or remuneration to members of the community by the District, to insure equal opportunity and equal involvement for every citizen.

13. The District should initiate long range planning with regard to possible reductions in financial support, particularly with regard to ESEA Title I and Follow Through programs.

14. The Business-Finance procedures need improvement:

(a) A "Red Flag" procedure should be established by which the Director of Finance, the Superintendent, and the School Board will be alerted when any budget category is near to being completely spent, to prevent over expenditures without prior administrative or board approval.

(b) Monthly financial reports should be continued on both income and expenditures in regard to the General Fund, Childrens' Center and Food Service Program.

(c) Every monthly report should contain a projected reserve at the end of the current school year, including an estimate of anticipated reduced income and increased expenditures.

(d) Every monthly report should contain a column of projected encumbrances, (such as insurance premiums, fixed charges), so that each monthly report gives an accurate picture of the financial status of the District projected to the end of the current year.

15. School Board procedures:

(a) Rules of procedure should be adopted for school board meetings.

(b) Agendas for school board meetings must accurately reflect the topics under consideration; normal procedures should continue to require an item appearing as a study item on one agenda before action is taken on that item at a subsequent meeting, in order to insure adequate notice to and time for consideration by, the public and staff.

(c) Reasonably detailed minutes should continue to be prepared and sent to all interested persons; this is a public institution and all matters should be disclosed to the public and be subject to review by the public.

(d) Evaluation should be given to the question of what should be the proper role of the school board with regard to the matter of administrative appointments and reassignments at the end of each school year; if the school board is to participate, appropriate and fair procedures should be instituted.

(e) The role, function and performance of the school board should be regularly evaluated by parents and staff, and such evaluation should take place at regular times each year.

(f) A Master Agenda for each school year should continue to be prepared and published by the school board and adherence to it should be maintained, in the absence of compelling reasons to the contrary.

16. The public and staff must remain alert to insure that school board members and administrators have no conflict of interest with private organizations that compete with our District for financial support from private or governmental agencies, and have no conflict of interest with private organizations with respect to employment by our school district of persons affiliated with those private organizations.

17. The public and staff must remain alert and guard against the closing of any school district facility and the transfer of district facilities to private organizations by way of gift or by way of favored treatment. Future needs of this District and the public in general should require the maintaining of district facilities indefinitely. The public and staff must guard against any claimed dilemma such as "close a facility because it is too expensive to operate or increase taxes to pay for the operation of the facility, if it is kept open". There are no facts at present or foreseeable which would substantiate such a claimed dilemma. This is a public service school district and a great many needs of the public can be served by our school facilities, even if the enrollment were to drop substantially, and the district must continue to operate as a public service organization, not as a private organization.

We complete our term of office with thanks to the public and staff for the opportunity to be of service to the community; we complete our term of office with great sadness over losing Dr. John L. Cleveland, as our new Superintendent; we complete our term of office with sincere wishes for success and progress of the Ravenswood City School District.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON

GERALD Z. MARER