

Berkeley School Report--No. 11

DESEGREGATION '68



*Published by the
Berkeley Unified School District
1414 Walnut Street
Berkeley, California*

MARCH, 1968

Produced by the office of
Research and Publications
Cover photographs by Marianne Hurlbut
Layout by Kate Hearst

INTRODUCTION

On January 16 the Berkeley Board of Education voted its unanimous approval of a motion "that the K-3, 4-6 organizational plan for desegregated schools as presented to the Board of Education by the administration on January 2, 1968, be adopted for implementation in September, 1968."

With this vote, an era ended in Berkeley's educational history and a new one began.

For more than 10 years Berkeley citizens and educators have been actively concerned with de facto segregation in the city's schools. As early as 1958 this problem came under Board and public study as citizens and educators alike worked to end the educational inequities caused by racially imbalanced schools.

In September, 1964, this concern resulted in the desegregation of the city's secondary schools. Under the Ramsey Plan, Garfield and Willard became two-year junior high schools serving all seventh and eighth-graders and Burbank Junior High School, until that time 76 per cent Negro, became the all-ninth-grade West Campus of Berkeley High School.

Then, at the request of concerned citizens and teachers, in the Spring of 1967 the Board voted to end elementary segregation. Their vote was followed by a request that citizens and school staff members suggest plans to be used in desegregating the schools. The school district administration was directed to analyze these plans and, later, to present their findings for Board consideration.

In carrying out the Board's instructions, the administration appointed a Staff Task Group that met during the summer of 1967 and distilled these efforts into five desegregation plans. These plans, in turn, were studied by the administration, by school faculties and by interested groups and individuals in the community.

During the last week in September, the Superintendent's Staff Advisory Council on integration — composed of a wide range of teachers and other staff members and including representatives of the teacher organizations — met in extended sessions to examine these plans and the reactions of citizens and staff members to them. The Council members, after giving serious consideration to the matter, voted unanimously to recommend the K-3, 4-6 plan. Their report was presented to the Board of Education on October 3 before a large audience in the Community Theater.

The rest of the Fall of 1967 was spent in intensive discussion of this issue throughout the community. Numerous meetings were held, ranging from small living-room gatherings to large public sessions, and many educational and civic groups studied the plan and prepared their comments for the Board.

In the meantime, the Board had asked the administration to prepare an Addendum to the October report that would amplify the proposals it contained and present further refinements as suggested by the staff members and community groups.

This was done and a 51-page Addendum was presented to the Board on January 2, 1968. The major change it contained was a realignment of the four attendance zones suggested for the K-3, 4-6 plan in the October 3 report. Among other benefits, this change brought better socio-economic balance to the zones.

With this material at its disposal and 10 years of study and concern behind them, the Board members met January 16 in the Berkeley Community Theater before a crowd of 1,200 persons and voted unanimously to adopt the K-3, 4-6 plan as modified by the Addendum.

It must be emphasized here that the Board's decision to desegregate the elementary schools was made in the Spring of 1967. The January 16 vote concerned the organizational plan to be used to accomplish desegregation. Because of this the school district has had almost a year to work on the educational plan to be used after September, as well as training programs for teachers and orientation programs for students. What has been done in these areas and what remains to be done will be the subject of future publications. In this Berkeley School Report, our primary concern will be the K-3, 4-6 plan and what it means to Berkeley's children.



Columbus

THE ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN

Under the K-3, 4-6 plan, some of our elementary schools will be used by pupils in grades kindergarten through 3 and others will be used by pupils in grades 4 through 6. The city will be divided into four expanded attendance zones with each zone containing one 4-6 school and several K-3 schools.

ZONE A
(See map, Page 3)
Cragmont Primary (K-3)
Thousand Oaks (K-3)
Jefferson (K-3)
Franklin (4-6)
(Franklin Kindergarten-Primary will be used for pre-school programs.)

ZONE C
(See map, Page 5)
Hillside and Hillside K-P (K-3)
Washington (K-3)
Whittier (K-3)
Longfellow (4-6)

ZONE B
(See map, Page 4)
Oxford (K-3)
Cragmont (K-3)
Columbus (4-6)

ZONE D
(See map, Page 6)
John Muir (K-3)
Emerson (K-3)
Le Conte (K-3)
Lincoln (4-6)



Cragmont

As an example of how this will work, let's take a youngster who lives in the 400 block on Vassar Avenue and is now in the second grade at Cragmont Primary. In September, he will go into the third grade, still at Cragmont Primary. When he is ready for fourth grade, however, he will transfer to Franklin where he will attend school with all the fourth-graders in Zone A. Or, to turn it around, let us talk about a child who lives in the 1200 block on Eighth Street and is now in the second grade at Franklin. When school opens in September, he will go into the third grade at Cragmont Primary. Then, a year later, when he is ready for the fourth grade, he will return to Franklin along with all the fourth-graders in Zone A.



Cragmont K-P

Approximately 3400 children will require bus service under this plan, less than half of the 9,000 elementary school students in the district. The figure is this low because, even though all the elementary schools in the district are included in the plan, many students will still be able to walk to school.

(Bus service will be made available to children in grades kindergarten through 3 who live more than three-fourths of a mile from school and to children in grades 4 to 6 who live more than a mile from school. Further details are contained in the Transportation section of this Report.)

The Berkeley school population, according to the 1967 school racial census, is 50 per cent Caucasian, 41 per cent Negro and 9 per cent Oriental and other groups. The K-3, 4-6 plan gives each elementary school, and each zone, a Negro enrollment within the range of approximately 35 to 45 per cent.

The changes brought about by the K-3, 4-6 plan, major as they are, will require relatively few changes in school staff and school buildings. Some new classrooms will be required and some modification of existing buildings will be made. The plan is also based on the district's present staff. The placement of teachers will be changed, of course, but the size of the teaching staff will remain essentially the same.

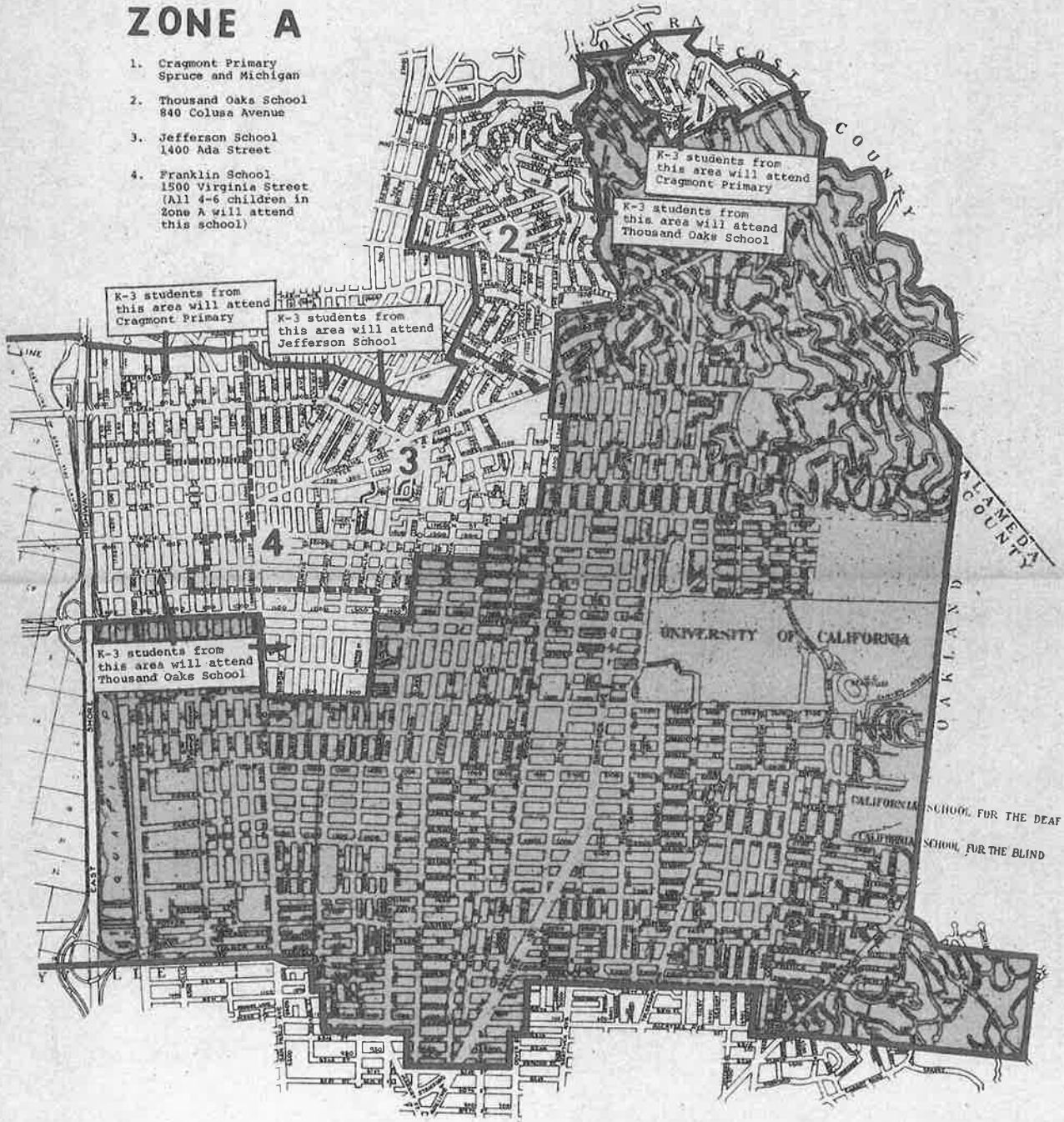
And, of equal importance, this plan is a reasonably equitable one in terms of transportation. Under it, no child will be bused across town for more than four of his elementary school years. Furthermore, the transportation will be in both directions. Virtually every city that has integrated its elementary schools has done so by closing Negro schools and dispersing the youngsters to outlying Caucasian schools. This is not Berkeley's way. In Berkeley the "burden" — and the challenge — of transportation will be shared by all.



Emerson

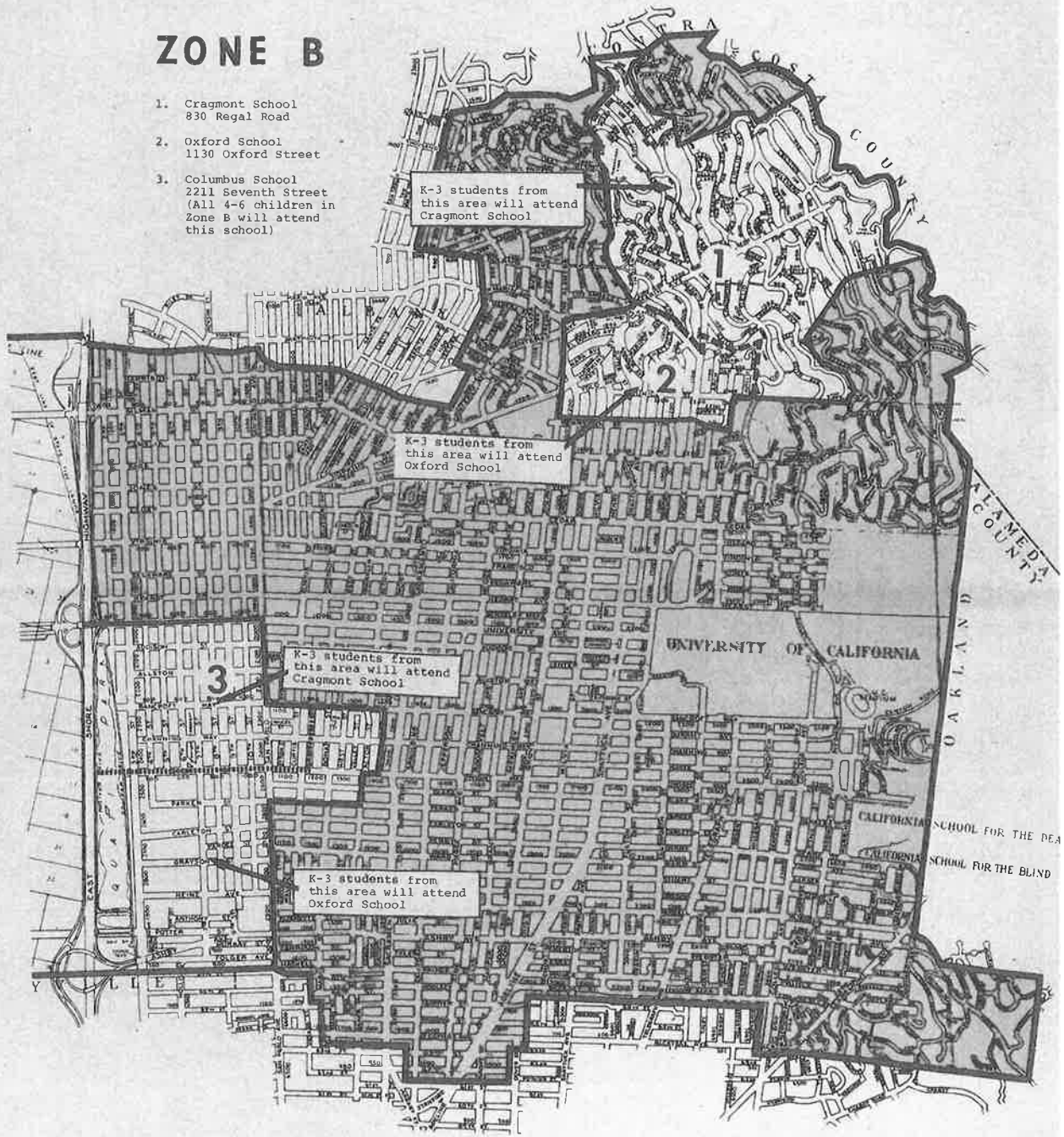
March, 1968

1. Cragmont Primary
Spruce and Michigan
2. Thousand Oaks School
840 Colusa Avenue
3. Jefferson School
1400 Ada Street
4. Franklin School
1500 Virginia Street
(All 4-6 children in
Zone A will attend
this school)



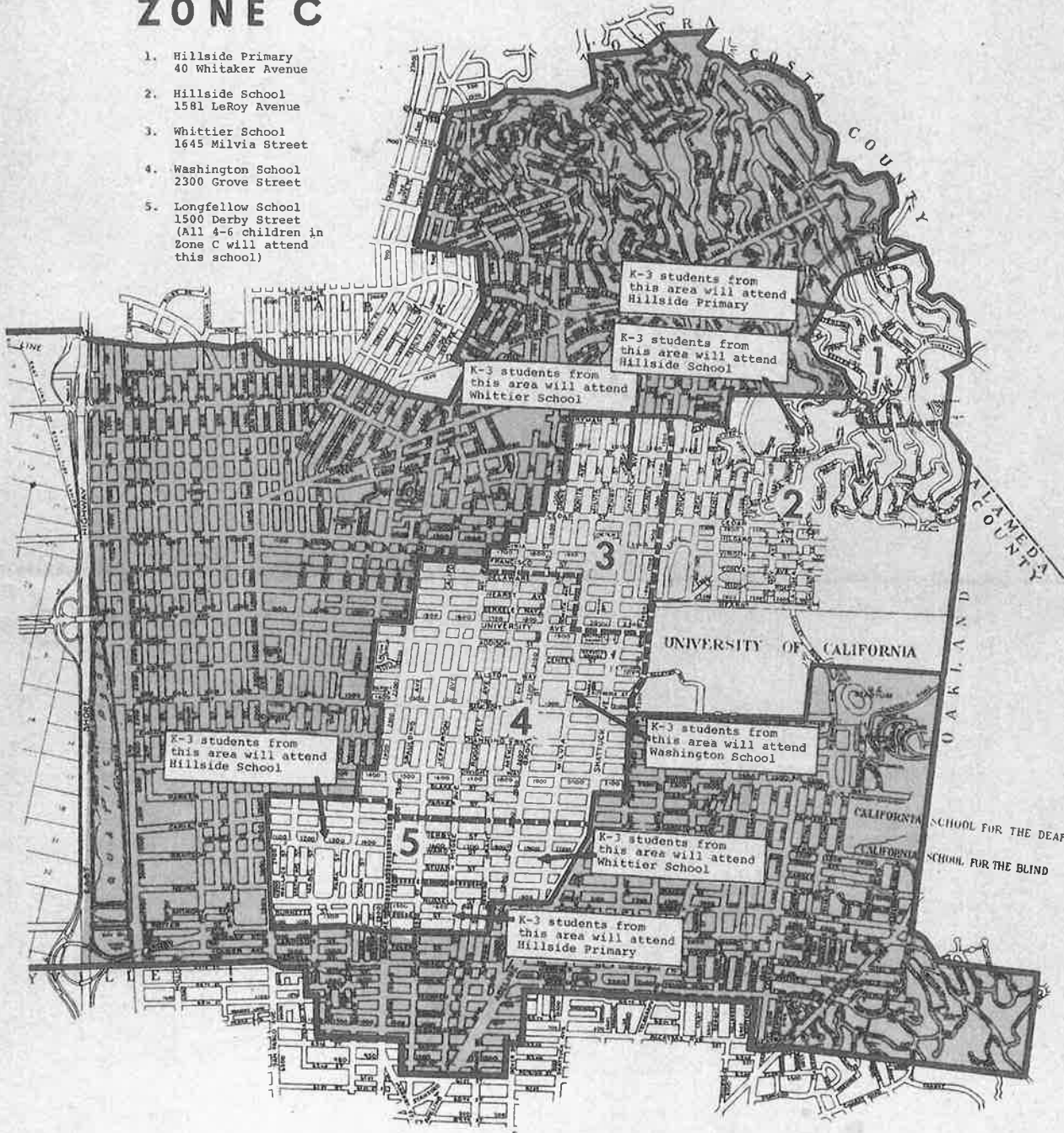
ZONE B

1. Cragmont School
830 Regal Road
2. Oxford School
1130 Oxford Street
3. Columbus School
2211 Seventh Street
(All 4-6 children in
Zone B will attend
this school)

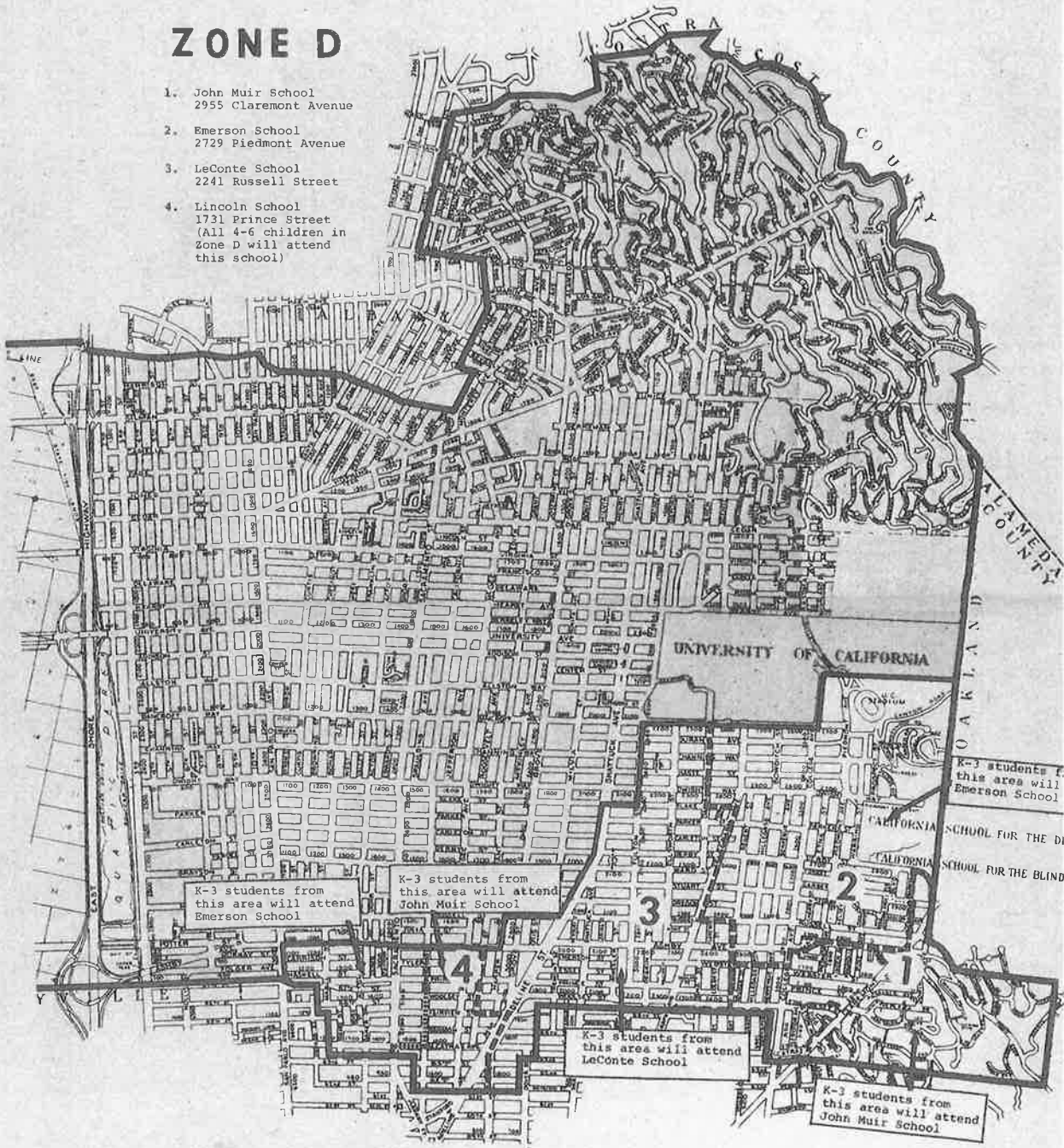


ZONE C

1. Hillside Primary
40 Whitaker Avenue
2. Hillside School
1581 LeRoy Avenue
3. Whittier School
1645 Milvia Street
4. Washington School
2300 Grove Street
5. Longfellow School
1500 Derby Street
(All 4-6 children in
Zone C will attend
this school)



1. John Muir School
2955 Claremont Avenue
2. Emerson School
2729 Piedmont Avenue
3. LeConte School
2241 Russell Street
4. Lincoln School
1731 Prince Street
(All 4-6 children in
Zone D will attend
this school)



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

"Quality education is excellent education in an integrated environment, as I have said over and over again. We cannot fully have one without the other. We cannot achieve education in a democracy with one race set apart from the other. Each race and each group contributes to the education of all, and it is with the education of all of our children that we are concerned."

These words of Superintendent of Schools Neil V. Sullivan are another statement of the often-stated position that desegregation is an essential part of quality education and not a separate, competing program.

We have concrete evidence of this fact right here in Berkeley. In 1966, in order to reduce class size in the South and West Berkeley schools, the district began to bus 230 children from these schools to eight other schools, six of which are predominantly Caucasian. The evaluation of this transfer program shows an increase in the academic achievement of the bused pupils. It also shows that the pupils in the receiving schools continued at their prior academic rate with no drop in achievement.

Parents, teachers and pupils were surveyed to determine their reaction to this miniature busing program and all groups reported that the bused pupils were harmoniously incorporated into their new schools. Parents responded favorably to the addition of the transferred pupils, and teachers reported that the transferred children were well received and that the youngsters got along together very well.



Franklin

The educational program that will be used in the schools in September is now (and has been for almost a year) the object of intense effort on the part of school district administrators, specialists and the teaching staff. Although work is still in progress at this time, much is already known. For instance:

- The district's goal is to maintain the current pupil-teacher ratio of approximately 26 to 1 as a district average. Classes in the primary grades will average approximately 24 pupils. Classes in the intermediate grades (4-6) will average approximately 28 pupils.

- The district's present program for students with outstanding talents and abilities is more extensive than the one the State supports financially. This will continue to be the case. Academic performance, creative abilities and test scores — not just test scores alone — will be considered in evaluating each child for possible inclusion in the high potential program.

- Pupils will be grouped heterogeneously — by academic performance, race and sex — to avoid segregation among classrooms. Heterogeneous grouping in elementary classrooms is generally the current practice in Berkeley and will not be changed after desegregation. Formation of groups within the classroom will be flexible and small-group, individualized instruction will be the goal.

- At the present time a Learning Laboratory and a Help Center are planned for each of the four 4-6 schools. The Learning Laboratory would be located in a separate room equipped with special materials and staffed by a teacher-specialist. Her job would be to help children pursue individual projects. A child interested in making a detailed study of a particular subject would go to the Learning Laboratory. The teacher there would guide him in his activities, assist him in choosing materials and encourage him to experiment. She would also help him evaluate the results when his project was completed.

The Help Centers would serve children under stress whose behavior would interrupt the learning process. The Center would be a place where a child could work out his problems, not where he would be punished. Helping him in the process would be a teacher, the Center's central figure, who would continue his instruction and who would be assisted by a parent-aide or a work-study college student. Coordination would be provided by a school district guidance worker. The ultimate responsibility for the child, however, would be retained by the classroom teacher, who would confer with the Center staff as soon as possible after a child was referred there. With this type of specialized assistance, many problems could be resolved within a matter of hours.



Hillside

March, 1968

In September, in Berkeley's desegregated elementary schools, the goal will be excellence in education — just as it is today. And this excellence will be enhanced by the desegregation plan itself. It must be remembered that the K-3, 4-6 plan was adopted by the Board of Education not simply because it provided the most efficient method of desegregating the elementary schools, but because it provided educational advantages not offered by other plans. For example:

- By reducing the number of grades in each school, the number of children at each grade level is increased. This means that specialized personnel can be put to better use, as can specialized equipment.

- The formation of 4-6 schools allows for easier transition to junior high school. Because there will be only four schools feeding into the two junior high schools, closer staff cooperation between each 4-6 school and its junior high will be possible.

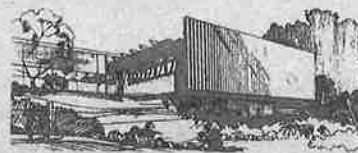
- Class size will be more nearly equalized throughout the city due to the presence of more students of the same grade level in each school.

- Specialized facilities such as library book collections can be geared to specific grade levels.

- A greater variety will be allowed in the grouping and scheduling of children. With more teachers of the same grade level in a given school, more stress can be placed on the needs of individual pupils.

- The formation of each of the zones will provide a natural common interest among adults in the zone and can be a spur to communication among parents of different backgrounds.

- The movement of teachers to match the new grade groupings will allow for greater racial integration of the respective school staffs. It is important, for educational reasons, that all our youngsters be taught by teachers with a wide variety of racial backgrounds.



Hillside K-P

TRANSPORTATION

Approximately 3400 children, beyond walking distance of the schools they will attend in September, will be transported by bus. Kindergarten through grade 3 pupils will be transferred from South and West Berkeley schools to middle and East Berkeley schools. Children in grades 4 through 6 will be bused from middle and East Berkeley to the four schools in South and West Berkeley.

District transportation will be provided for regular pupils in grades kindergarten through 3 who must walk more than three-fourths of a mile to school by the most direct public thoroughfare, and for regular pupils in grades 4 through 6 who must walk more than one mile by the most direct public thoroughfare.



Jefferson

Traffic safety patrol provisions for the younger children who will walk to school are now being studied by school district and city staff members, members of the Board of Education and the Berkeley City Council. School representatives are also working with several city departments, including police and traffic engineers, to establish safe bus routes and bus stops and to insure pupil safety on the way to and from school.



John Muir

An orientation program for elementary school students is now underway to familiarize them with the changes they will find in September. Parents and children will be informed in writing and at school and parent meetings just where and when each child is to catch the bus and just when he will leave school and arrive at his home bus stop. Provision will also be made for children who wish to participate in after-school activities.

Bus schedules will be thoroughly publicized, as will the new elementary school hours, when that schedule is announced.

Mechanical efficiency of the buses will, of course, be maintained and all school bus drivers will meet the rigid State requirements set for this position.



Le Conte



Longfellow

FINANCE

The desegregation program, by itself, will not bring a tax election in 1968. When Proposition G was passed in June, 1966, school district spokesmen stated that the funds provided by Proposition G would suffice for three years. That is still the case, desegregation or no desegregation. Projections made during 1966 also showed that after three years additional funds would be needed and this, too, is still the case, desegregation or no desegregation.

However, these additional funds do not necessarily have to come from a tax increase. There are possibilities of an increase in the State of California's aid to the district, and there is also hope for increased Federal support for education.

In dealing with the costs of desegregation, no absolutely firm figures can be given at this time. However, the district's fiscal experts have spent months working out estimates, and these can be used to give a good general picture of what is entailed.



Lincoln

Original estimates, made last Fall, set the over-all cost of desegregating the schools during the program's first year — the 1968-69 fiscal year — at \$518,138. These estimates indicate that this figure will decline to \$302,460 for the 1969-70 fiscal year and to \$287,806 for the 1970-71 fiscal year. Included in these totals is the expense anticipated for transportation, Learning Laboratories, Help Centers, classrooms, equipment relocation and a variety of other items. Since the 1968-69 school budget is expected to be approximately \$19,371,616, the cost of desegregation will amount to approximately 2.67 per cent of the total cost of operating the schools during that year.

Transportation

On March 5, the Board of Education awarded a contract for bus service to Community Enterprises, Inc. Based on the available information concerning the number of students to be transported, it is estimated that the net cost to the school district (that is, total cost less reimbursement from the State of California) will be about \$110,000 for the 1968-69 fiscal year. The cost of transportation represents less than one-fourth of the total cost of the first year of the integration program. In succeeding years the cost of transportation will remain substantially the same.

Help Centers and Learning Laboratories

Present plans now call for a Help Center and a Learning Laboratory at each of the four 4-6 schools. (Details on these facilities are given in the Education section of this Report.) The estimated expense for these facilities is \$124,000 for the 1968-69 fiscal year; \$127,900 for the 1969-70 fiscal year, and \$131,695 for the 1970-71 fiscal year.

Classrooms

As mentioned in the Organizational Plan section of this Report, the district will need some additional classrooms. The majority of these needed classrooms will have to be purchased. As this Report went to press, exact figures on the cost involved were not available.

Building Renovation

There is also the expense of modifying existing buildings to meet State standards for school buildings used by children enrolled in grades kindergarten through 2. Since discussions with the State Fire Marshall concerning these modifications are now underway it is not possible to establish the exact cost at this time. However, this would be a single year's expenditure.

Relocation of Equipment

The K-3, 4-6 plan requires the relocation of some classroom furniture, equipment and materials. Present estimates set the cost of this service at about \$14,000. This, too, would be a one-time-only expense.

Crossing Guards

As this Berkeley School Report goes to press, the crossing guard situation has not yet been resolved. Under the K-3, 4-6 plan, the older children will not be able to act as crossing guards at the K-3 schools. However, the Junior Traffic Patrol will continue at the 4-6 schools. Since traffic safety plans are now under discussion for the K-3 schools, no definite cost projection is possible at this time, although estimates place the cost at about \$90,000 per year.



Oxford

EVALUATION

The purpose of desegregation is to provide quality education for all our students. To measure the progress in meeting this goal, an evaluation program will be established. Results of this assessment will be used as a means of assuring the effectiveness of the integration program. The appraisal will begin after the plan has had a chance to operate for sufficient time to allow a true representation of the effects, and it will be broad enough to include attitudes as well as academic achievement.

The district is currently attempting to obtain funds to allow for a full-scale evaluation program and is planning to use the resources of the University of California.



Thousand Oaks

CONCLUSION

The solution to the problem of segregation is not a simple one, but the citizens of Berkeley do not shy away from difficult problems. We have in this city the people, the resources and the will to match this challenge. We also have tremendous community involvement in public education and this is the foundation on which past educational successes have been built and on which the future rests.

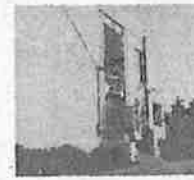
As we proceed with the preparations for the opening of our desegregated schools in September, we will continue to inform the entire Berkeley public of what is being done, step by step, as the months pass. This Berkeley School Report No. 11 has summarized one aspect of the desegregation picture. A sister publication, Berkeley School Report No. 12, covering other aspects of the program, will be mailed to you within the next few months. Other publications are being sent home from school with the children, zone meetings are being held, and we are providing the press, radio and television with all the facts available.

Despite these efforts to inform you, there may still be questions left unanswered in your mind or there may be comments you wish to make. If this is the case, we urge you to write directly to Dr. Neil V. Sullivan, Superintendent of Schools, 1414 Walnut Street, Berkeley 94709. Every effort will be made to provide a prompt answer. Parents are also urged to write or meet with their child's Principal if they have questions on that level.

If communication is to be successful, it must run both ways. If the Berkeley community and the Berkeley schools can continue to talk to each other about desegregation as they have about other educational matters, our children will be the beneficiaries.



Washington



Whittier

March, 1968