



Santa Fe Community School

A Proposed Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) School

Quick Links

- I. [The Santa Fe Community History](#)
- II. [Why the SFCS? A School Desert for Many Local Families](#)
- III. [Community Engagement](#)
- IV. [Our Vision, Values, and Profile of a SFCS Graduate](#)
- V. [Community School Model](#)
- VI. [Contact](#)

Santa Fe History & Demographics

Community History

The Santa Fe community has a rich social and political history, and has been home to generations of people from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Following the Native Americans of the Ohlone Tribe, inhabitants of the Santa Fe area have included communities of Danes, Swedes, Italians, Chinese, Japanese and African Americans. Italians thrived in large numbers in North Oakland from the 1890s to 1960s, when most of the existing houses in the neighborhood were first built. Demographics began to shift in the late 1950's and early 1960's, when neighborhoods were splintered by the installation of the Grove-Shafter Freeway and the introduction of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system (BART) tracks.

A great majority of Oakland’s early African American populations migrated from the South during World War II. In the late 1950’s, many transplants opened businesses along Market Street in North Oakland. That strip has been nicknamed “Black Wall Street” where lawyers, doctors, real estate brokers, pharmacists, dentists, and others catered to Black residents and others city-wide. During the 1960’s, the Black Panther Party was formed in the Santa Fe and Longfellow neighborhoods in response to ongoing police brutality. They later expanded to form chapters in East Oakland and beyond. The Panthers are well known for having established the Free Breakfast Program in elementary schools, offering free medical services, operating a community school, and much more. Built in 1951, Santa Fe Elementary was one of the first schools to house the breakfast program, which has now expanded throughout the United States.



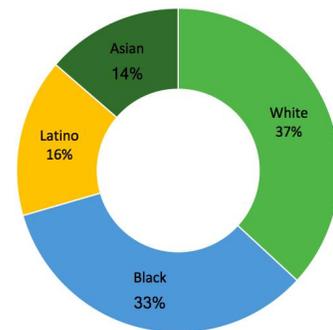
[Photo of Charles Bursey, Courtesy of San Francisco Bay View Newspaper]

Community Demographics

Like the city of Oakland as a whole, the neighbors in the Santa Fe, Golden Gate, and Longfellow neighborhoods represent a diverse community: racially, culturally, and socioeconomically. According to the American Community Survey from 2015, households in these neighborhoods identify their race/ethnicity as: White (37%), Black (33%), Latino (16%) and Asian (14%).

Although the community serves families from a variety of income levels, the majority of neighbors have household incomes lower than the average (median) for the rest of Oakland. In 2015, the median household income in the neighborhood was \$46,858, which is lower than the median for the city of Oakland (\$57,459) and Alameda County (\$93,600).

Racial Composition of Santa Fe Community (2015)



Responding to Gentrification

Today, like much of Oakland, Santa Fe and its surrounding neighborhoods are experiencing rapid changes presenting a number of complex challenges. In 2000, 83% of area residents were people of Color; by 2013 this number had fallen to 72%, and in 2015 it was down to 63%. The Santa Fe (and nearby communities) have been experiencing economic gentrification as well. The three local community associations in Santa Fe, Golden Gate, and Longfellow, are facing these challenges by focusing on community-based projects that work to honor our neighborhood's history, increase quality of life for all, not just some, and attempt to build bridges between the diverse populations, cultures, and age groups. The reestablishment of a local public community school is one such project.

Why the SFCS? A School Desert for Many Local Families

There are not enough high-quality local school options for local families.

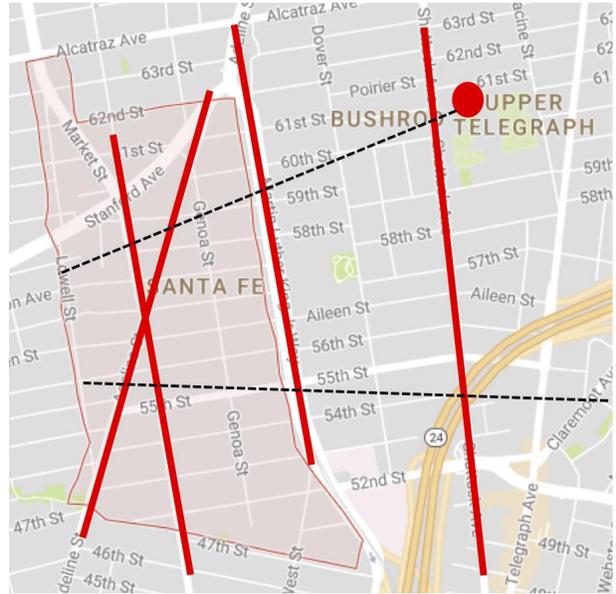
There are not enough high-quality schools in the Santa Fe community to meet the needs of local families. Two OUSD schools are within a mile from Santa Fe (Sankofa and Emerson), but have struggled to produce high-quality outcomes for all students. A third school (Peralta) is slightly farther away, but is the most sought-after Elementary school in Oakland and can't serve more than a few Santa Fe families. Local charter schools either don't prioritize local families or have enough seats for all local children. Consequently, many local families have opted to send their kids to schools outside of OUSD (private and parochial schools and schools in other districts) or outside of our neighborhood.

Santa Fe children and families face unsafe routes to school.

Families in OUSD's West region (which includes the Santa Fe area) have to travel, on average, 2 miles to get to their assigned elementary school, a much greater distance than families travel in the Central and Northwest regions. This poses a number of issues for local students. First, they spend more time traveling (whether walking, biking or taking public transportation) than peers in wealthier neighborhoods, missing out on time they could be engaged in more productive activities.

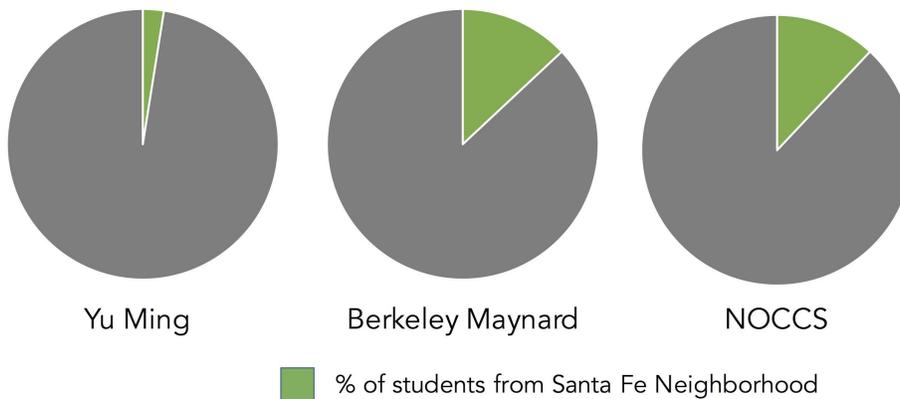
Second, the longer commutes create additional safety risks for these children. A child in the West region who walks to / from school would walk on average 288 more miles over the course of the year than a child in the Northwest region, creating significantly more opportunity for something dangerous to occur.

One major factor why families from the former Santa Fe catchment are not opting to enroll their children in either Sankofa or Emerson is the often dangerous routes that are required to access those schools (see map at right). Students living in the Golden Gate and Santa Fe districts who now attend Sankofa Academy must cross over, in some cases, three major traffic arterials (San Pablo Avenue, Stanford Avenue, and Martin Luther King Jr. Way) to arrive at school. Students living in the Longfellow district who now attend Emerson Elementary must trek under the 24 Freeway and across Telegraph Avenue, which is also a congested traffic arterial.



There are an insufficient number of seats available at local charter schools.

There are four charter schools currently operating in the area, but only two have some weighted neighborhood preference in their enrollment lotteries and those are for a very limited number of available seats.



[SOURCE: Oakland Unified School District Strategic Regional Analysis]

The Yu Ming charter school is just over 1 mile from the Santa Fe campus, but only 4% live within the broader Santa Fe catchment. The North Oakland Community Charter School is 0.5 miles from Santa Fe, and although nearly 50% of its students are from local areas, it can not accommodate all local kids. Berkley Maynard Academy is approximately 1 mile away from Santa Fe; only 56% of its students live in Oakland, and fewer than 30% students are from the surrounding neighborhood.

Many families have left Oakland schools altogether

There are also local Oakland students from these areas who attend Emeryville schools. Emeryville targets certain neighborhoods with flyers about their schools, and makes it easy to for Oakland families to get interdistrict transfers. Exact numbers of how many Oakland families attend Emeryville schools are not currently available.

The data provided by both the SRA and Live/Go reports only include students who enrolled in an OUSD district or charter school. It does not reflect the growing number of families who are enrolled in private schools or who have opted to attend schools in nearby cities like Berkeley and Emeryville.

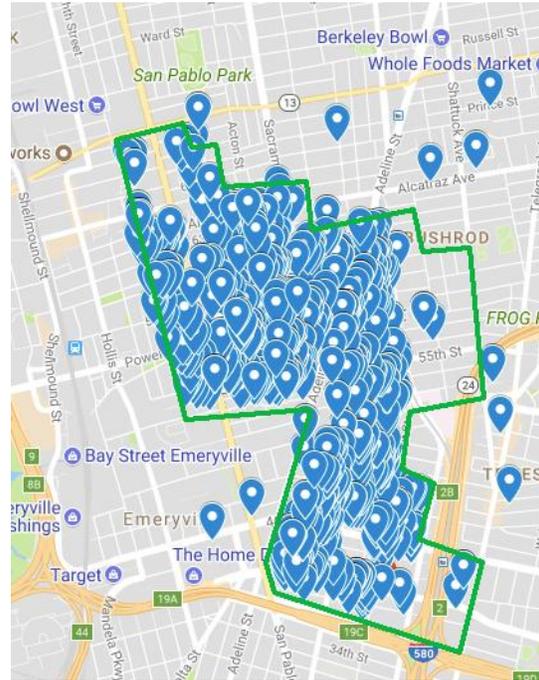
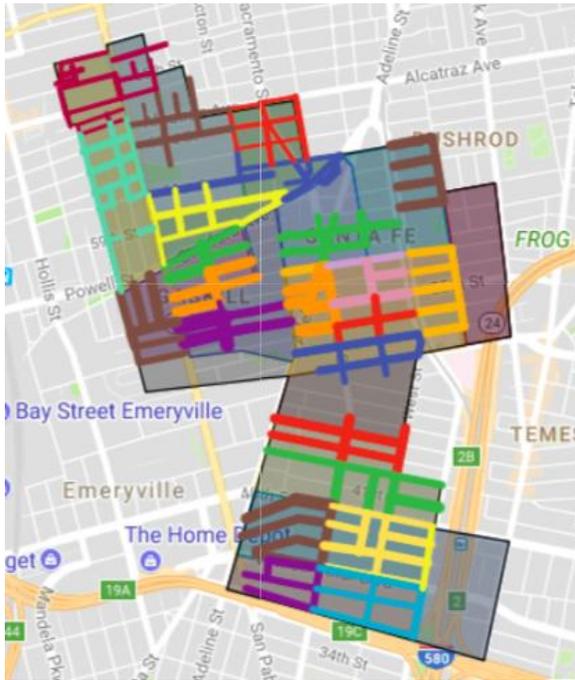
Community Engagement



Starting in 2013, members of the Santa Fe Education Committee took to the streets to speak with community members, canvassing the entire attendance zone and asking people to sign [pledge forms](#) of support. Over 1,200 people so far have been represented in the pledge drive!

We also created a detailed [survey](#) to learn from neighbors about their preferences for the characteristics and programs of a Santa Fe school; to date nearly 150 people have completed our survey. We've also hosted community forums and brainstorming sessions, conducted multiple [one-on-one conversations](#), organized playdates, and more.

The two maps below illustrate our committee’s geographic engagement. The map on the left shows the block-by-block strategy that our volunteers used to collect Pledge Forms, and the map on the right documents the location all of the different households that we connected with.



[Santa Fe Community Forum, 2013]

Education Committee, Advisory Board, and Design Team

The Santa Fe Education Committee has led the community engagement process over the past five years, and is composed of volunteers from the neighborhood. In 2013 an Advisory Board was formed to begin developing the school's model and support our education committee in community outreach activities. We are currently in the process of establishing a formal Design Team that will be responsible for the design and key decisions related to the SFCS education and culture programs as well as school operations. In September 2017, the Santa Fe Education Committee selected Jonathan Osler to support our work as the School Design Leader. Jonathan has an extensive background as an educator, school and organizational leader, and parent organizer. He is also an OUSD parent.

Our Vision, Values, and Profile of a SFCS Graduate

Our Vision

The Santa Fe Community School serves a diverse student body from our neighborhood and surrounding communities. Through expeditionary and project-based learning, we cultivate opportunities both in and outside of our classrooms, for students to develop knowledge of themselves, to learn about and honor each other's stories, and to act on behalf of the collective good.



[Brainstorm Board from Community Visioning Session]

Our Community Values

1. We value **ourselves** and are empowered to make changes in our lives and communities.
2. We value our **community** and the people and resources in it.
3. We value the **diversity** of our students, families, and staff, and honor their perspectives and experiences.

Our Graduate Profile

Students at the Santa Fe Community School:

- **Ask** complex and critical questions;
- **Acquire** information related to their questions, and demonstrate persistence and creativity in this process;
- **Answer** questions and communicate their ideas in clear and diverse ways;
- **Apply** their knowledge and skills and **Act** in service of the common good;
- **Analyze** and reflect on their experiences, their learning, their actions, and their feelings, in order to grow as people.

The Santa Fe Community School Model

The Four Knowledges

The Panthers believed that a key purpose of school is to teach young people “knowledge of self”, a value we share and are drawing from in our school design process.

During their time at SFCS, students will be guided on a journey to cultivate knowledge of: 1) self, 2) family / history / culture, 3) community, and 4) others /peers. Our concept of *knowledge* is not only about acquiring information, it is far more holistic. At the SFCS, we will help our students develop knowledge and skills, aligned with their emerging values, to cultivate dispositions in our young people so they will be empowered to take individual and collective action for the good of their communities.

Type of "Knowledge"	Sample guiding questions	Will help students develop...
Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do I like about myself? ● What am I good at? ● What do I care about? ● What makes me happy? ● What is hard for me? 	A sense of agency, motivation, self-love, confidence, etc.
Family, History, Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where is my family from? ● How did they get there? ● Where were they before that? ● What stories are important to our family? ● What is our culture? 	Pride in culture. Motivation for the future. Deepened interest in learning...
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who lives near me? ● What is the history of my neighborhood? ● What is in my neighborhood? ● What are the strengths of and resources in my community? ● Why is my community important to me? ● What are the issues affecting the health and wellbeing of people in my community? ● How can I help my community? 	Pride in community. Empathy. Analysis of problems as rooted in systems, not people. Interest in helping others. Sense of responsibility.
Others / Peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who are the other people in my class? ● In my school? ● What are their stories? ● What is important to them? ● Why should I care about them? ● How can we work together? 	Empathy. A spirit of collectivism. Trust. Vulnerability.

Education Program

Though still in development, the SFCS curriculum, assessments, and education program will be centered around Expeditionary Learning and Project-Based Learning models, as well as the concept of [Deeper Learning](#).

Our community is our classroom; the boundaries between home and school will be fluid. Our hyper-local Expeditionary Learning model will exist in partnership with Community Docents: parents, activists, muralists, journalists, small business owners. Each day students will attend virtual field-trips through augmented reality. Each week, they will connect through video conferencing to interact with kids in other cities. Each month, students of all ages will journey from school to engage in projects with the people and resources in our neighborhood and city: the Phat Beats garden and farm stand, Black elders at the nearby Senior Center, the Port of Oakland, Ohlone 'shellmound' sites, community gallery spaces.

Technology will empower students to document and share what they've learned, for example by launching a digital news service and creating augmented reality experiences that will serve as virtual field trips for others.

School Culture

We will develop practices, rituals, activities and systems to ensure that the culture of our school is one where all children, staff, and families feel a strong sense of belonging. Our culture will be inclusive, culturally familiar, and anti-oppressive by design.

Aligned with our graduate profile and school vision, our community will identify developmental milestones that we will use to commemorate accomplishments and growth of our students. At each milestone, students will receive a patch or badge through a special ceremony, which will be sewn onto a vest or sash that they will carry with them as they age. When they complete the SFCS, this sash will be a literal and symbolic representation of the journey they've been on as a student at our school.



We will give students patches (modeled after these Girl Scout patches) aligned with our school values and graduate profile

Our school culture will be cultivated around the principles and practices associated with restorative justice in order to foster a climate that is safe and community-centered. Restorative

justice takes incidents that might otherwise result in punishment and finds opportunities for students to recognize the impact of their behavior, understand their obligation to take responsibility for their actions, and take steps towards making things right. Through this process, students learn how to manage their relationships with adults and peers and become better equipped to understand how their behavior impacts others. This encourages accountability, improves school safety, and helps students to develop skills so the school community can succeed.

Contact

If you would like to learn more, please visit our website: www.bringbackourschool.org

Or contact us directly:

Megan Low, Education Committee Chair: megan@santafecan.org

Jonathan Osler, School Design Leader: jonathan.osler@gmail.com



[Photo from a Santa Fe family playdate, 2014]