

## **Elementary And Secondary Parameters For Developing Thematic Schools And/Or Schools Of Choice**

The Governing Board acknowledges that all students shall have the opportunity to receive quality instruction which shall enhance their individual educational achievement. The Board is committed to the proposition that education is most effective in a diverse, integrated setting. In district, diversity is broadly defined to include gender, racial or ethnic background, socioeconomic circumstances, unique language needs or abilities, and exceptional or special education needs.

The Board recognizes the need for extensive training and planning in order to implement and evaluate a quality instructional program that ensures equity and educational opportunity for students throughout the district. The Board also recognizes that the implementation of thematic schools and/or schools of choice has the potential to cultivate opportunities for students to explore specific areas of study and interest. The development of thematic schools and/or schools of choice can maximize the district's efforts to:

1. Promote learning environments with diverse students populations to reduce or prevent racial, linguistic, and socio-economic segregation and isolation and thus, foster racial and cultural understanding.
2. Design unique educational programs that will also enhance academic choices for students and parents/guardians, and/or
3. Facilitate the district's ability to accommodate growth in the student population.
4. Provide for the development and utilization by teachers of the most effective methods and strategies for educating urban youth.

The Board acknowledges the need for, and encourages the development of thematic schools and/or schools of choice. Proposals for thematic schools and/or schools of choice will embrace the concept of quality, equity and diversity.

Therefore, a thematic school and/or school of choice shall be defined as:

A school or a school-within-a-school, with a specialized course of study, organizational structure, or design approved by the Board; developed for the purpose of meeting the needs of the district in one or more of the areas specified above (see 1-4); and characterized by provisions for student accessibility (i.e. transportation, location, and equal access for all students).

It is the intent of the Board to locate thematic schools and/or schools of choice throughout the district in order to facilitate equal opportunity in learning environments with diverse student populations. This policy does not imply the same program for all students. Programs shall be based on students' needs, abilities, and future goals.

adopted: June 23, 1994 Fresno, California

revised: April 16, 1998