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May 15, 1985

TO: Dr. Newman Walker and Members of the Cabinet
FROM: Jim Mathiott
SUBJECT: Plans in Development for a Life Science Center at Ohlone School

Ever since we moved to this campus, there has been interest expressed by parents, teachers, and students about developing the bare land on the site behind the Library Pod. Recently I talked with Dr. Van about some plans that are being developed by a parent-staff-student committee for that land, and he will bring to Cabinet further information, along with a request for some fencing and installation of water pipes. The purpose of this memo is to give you and the members of the Cabinet some preliminary background information concerning this project. I'll be happy to talk with any members of the Cabinet in greater detail about the project and show you our developing plans.

This past year, our school community adopted a goal in the area of science, which called for the development of plans for a Life Lab. Staff members attended State-sponsored conferences, twenty-one parents and teachers visited the Life Lab demonstration site in Santa Cruz, and a parent-staff-student committee has been formed whose purpose is to pace the development of this project, which has become known informally as "The Ohlone Farm."

Three teachers are submitting a request for funds through the Classroom Teacher Instructional Improvement Program, which would include curriculum development as well as the initial start for classroom gardens. As we envision this project, once the basic "infrastructure" is in place (perimeter fencing and water lines), the balance of the project will be paid for by a combination of SIP, PTA, and instructional supply funds. The potential for learning from such a project is eloquently detailed in the CTIIP application being submitted by Bill Overton, Jana Littlefield, and Rick Ehrhorn.

You and members of the Cabinet are invited to look at the site and go over the plan in further detail. We have contacted neighbors, so that they would be informed as to what was being undertaken, and have gotten preliminary approval from the Fire Department to be sure that there would be adequate passage around the area for their equipment.

Dr. Van will be presenting to Cabinet more detailed information. Please let me know if I can answer questions.