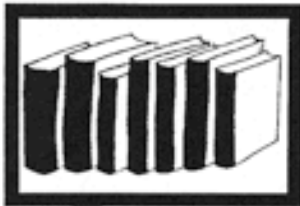


# FREMONT OPEN PLAN



Literature Based



Interest Based Studies



Cross Aging



Mini Courses



Peace Assembly



Co-operative Groups



Parent Participation

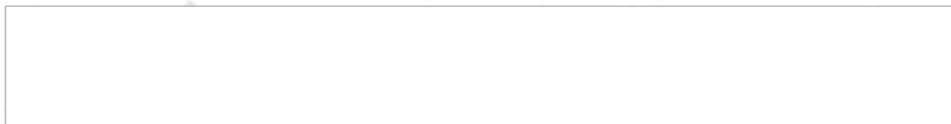


Partnership



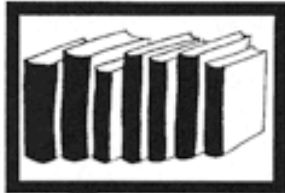
Non-Graded

## A Handbook for Open Plan Families



(Inside front cover)

# FREMONT OPEN PLAN



Literature Based



Interest Based Studies



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Parent Participation



Partnership



Non-Graded

1220 W. Orangeburg Avenue  
Modesto, CA 95350  
(209) 576-4679  
[www.fremont-openplan.com](http://www.fremont-openplan.com)

By  
Parent Handbook Committee  
Spring 1977 First Printing  
Revised 1983, 1984, 1990, 1998, 2009

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## WELCOME

Welcome to Fremont Open Plan. As families, you are one of our school's most valuable resources. Your participation and support are of the utmost importance, appreciated by teachers, children, administrators and fellow parents. Your presence in the classroom will provide the teacher with valuable help in giving individual and small group assistance. In whatever way that you choose to participate, whether in the classroom or through indirect service to the school, you can be sure that your contribution is not only vital and essential, but also highly valued.

This handbook will apprise you of the philosophy of Open Plan, and specific techniques you can use to help children learn. You will also need to be aware of special situations and of health and safety regulations that are enforced here in our school. It will also acquaint you with the role of the Open Plan parent. If you have questions or specific problems, your teaching staff is available and willing to provide supportive assistance.

Our unique program cannot be realized without a monetary contribution from each family. At present, the required amount is \$100 per child. Our budget relies upon your fulfillment of this commitment.

The participation rule of thumb since 1976 has been one hour per week per child.

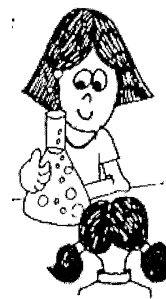
**Thank you for your contributions, past and future!**

## OPEN PLAN MISSION STATEMENT

At Open Plan we are committed to Open Education. This alternative approach to education emphasizes active parent involvement and acceptance that no two children are alike.

We pledge to:

1. Promote student responsibility for self, community and the world around us;
2. Provide opportunities that develop academic skills, interests, and talents, according to each student's strengths and needs; and
3. Keep Open Plan an exciting place for children that supports who they are and encourages who they are becoming.



## ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM

Modesto City Schools' Fremont Open Plan is a public alternative program. The school operates an open enrollment policy for interested families throughout the district and when openings are available, to surrounding districts. Classrooms are filled to

capacity and a waiting list is maintained for potential students. For more information see "Enrollment Procedures" in Part C of this handbook.

"Open Education" is an alternative approach to education with more emphasis on student responsibility for self, active parent involvement, and acceptance that no two children are alike.

As part of the public school system, the program is guided by district policies, procedures, and goals. Students are expected to meet all Modesto City Schools (MCS) standards in basic skill areas before progressing to the next level. For detailed information concerning student learning expectations, see your child's teacher, or check out the district's home page. Although Open Plan is guided by district policies, procedures, goals, and testing program, we have many aspects which are unique.

You can find more information in the parent education library list at the end of this handbook. Many of the books listed are available in the Fremont library.

Letter grades are not used to evaluate student performance. Instead, Open Plan utilizes a combination of conferences, teacher prepared and teacher-plus-student prepared evaluations, and district reporting forms for progress information. These tools provide the most effective and meaningful form of measure and assessment.

## **OPEN PLAN HISTORY**

Modesto City Schools' Open Plan program started in the Fall of 1976 with four teachers and 99 students at Fremont School, 1220 West Orangeburg Avenue. This alternative program was established as a school-within-a-school for any family within the district who wanted their child(ren) to attend. The program was and is maintained under the same funding resources, academic standards, conduct code and legal criteria as other schools in the district.

Fremont Open Plan has expanded multiple times. A fifth teacher and class was added in 1977. Two teachers and two classes were added in 1979. When class size reduction became a district policy in 1997, the primary department expanded from two classes to three. Finally, a second (afternoon) Kindergarten class was added in 2008.

Today, Fremont Open Plan maintains about 200 enrolled students and nine teachers. Fremont Open Plan and Fremont Neighborhood join in many student activities such as Chorus, Orchestra, Band, Student Council, Traffic Patrol, Resource, Reading Buddies, and Speech.



Throughout the years, the school, as many others, has seen difficult times as well as its glorious ones. We strive to live and grow from our disappointments and accomplishments as a committed team of students, teachers, parents, administrators, secretaries, custodians, and other support groups to offer quality educational experience to our community of children.

## OPEN PLAN PHILOSOPHY

### 1. Respect For Individual Development

Educators have a chance to identify placement needs and progress in the area of basic skills and to match child, methodology and materials on an individualized basis. Children progress at their own rate of learning.

### 2. Peaceful Environment

There is a climate of caring with accent on nurturing relationships and mutuality of support between student and staff, student and student, parent and student, and parent and staff.



### 3. Cross Age Partnering

There is flexible grouping of students ranging from one student to many; again, the objective is to meet many student needs in a variety of ways.

### 4. Academic Choice

Students are involved in selecting their own areas of learning and they have responsibility for their own school progress.

### 5. Parent Participation

Active parent involvement is emphasized. Parents participate in the school's program as volunteers and resource people. Parents become partners with teaching staff to provide the best possible educational opportunities.

### 6. Whole Child Educational Process

Children will have opportunities to develop social skills which reflect responsibility for their own actions in the world and an awareness that they belong to a wider community.

### 7. Experience Based Learning

Provides contact and experience with resource people and places. Hobbies, vocations, opportunities and interests are shared by many in order to give students

contact and a vision of the world beyond the classroom walls. Open Plan is enriched with many opportunities for meaningful learning.

## **ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT CHILDREN'S LEARNING**

The following assumptions guide the Open Plan staff as we strive to provide children with a supportive classroom environment in which they will succeed.

### **MOTIVATION**

**Assumption 1 - Children are innately curious and will explore without adult intervention.**

Children have the capacity not only to initiate exploration for themselves, but also to sustain such activity over a long period of time.

**Assumption 2 - Exploratory behavior is self-perpetuating.**

Explorations carried on in any consecutive direction can always be turned into a self-rewarding, self-extending, self-multiplying process.

**Assumption 3 - Children will allow themselves to take risks and take on new learning when they are encouraged and supported.**

An essential aspect of Open Plan is that as students are learning, emphasis is placed upon celebrating successes to encourage growth.

**Assumption 4 - Confidence in self is closely related to capacity for learning and for making important choices affecting one's learning.**

The child's own satisfaction in having really mastered something, whether it be riding a bicycle or telling the time, is important. Confidence in the power to learn is vital to long term success.

**Assumption 5 - Active exploration in a rich environment, offering a wide array of manipulative materials, facilitates children's learning.**

You don't teach children to think; you give them something to think about.

**Assumption 6 - Guided discovery is not distinguished from work as the predominant mode of learning in early childhood.**

Children's learning, like motivation, does not occur in a vacuum. Children play with something or someone; they do not just play. Exploratory behavior is of little consequence unless there is something to explore.

**Assumption 7 - Children have both the competence and the right to make significant decisions concerning their own learning.**

## Motivation

To make good choices, children need to have experience with making decisions for themselves, acting on their own initiative, and reflecting on the outcomes of their decisions.

**Assumption 8 - Children will be likely to learn if they are given considerable choice in the selection of the materials that they wish to work with, and in the choice of questions that they wish to pursue with respect to those materials.**

Academic choice supports children's intrinsic motivation to learn, allows them to observe and learn from others' good ideas, and addresses a range of skill levels.

**Assumption 9 - Given the opportunity, children will choose to engage in activities which will be of high interest to them.**

**Assumption 10 - If a child is fully involved in and having fun with an activity, learning is taking place.**

## SOCIAL LEARNING

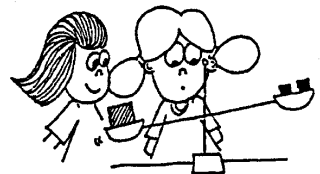
**Assumption 11 - When two or more children are interested in exploring the same problem or the same material, they will often choose to collaborate in some way.**

**Assumption 12 - When a child learns something which is important to him, he will wish to share it with others.**

## INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

**Assumption 13 - Concept formation proceeds very slowly in order to facilitate a complete depth of understanding.**

Much learning involves what often looks to an adult like mere play or mindless repetition. A teacher can quicken learning and direct it along more methodical lines by providing suitable experiences and discussion, but children need time and often learn most efficiently on their own.



**Assumption 14 - Children learn and develop intellectually at their own rate and in their own style.**

There is an individual pattern of growth for all living things. Although children think and reason in different ways, they all pass through certain stages depending on their chronological and mental ages, and their experiences. Children are encouraged to develop being mindful of their individual learning modes and strengths.

**Assumption 15 - Intellectual growth and development can take place through a sequence of meaningful experiences.**

This process begins with concrete experiences, developing into abstract ideas, followed by abstractions. The frequency of concrete experiences will diminish as students are able to comprehend more abstract concepts. One of its most important conclusions (i.e., of Piaget's research) is that the great majority of primary school children can only learn efficiently from concrete situations, as lived or described. From these situations, children acquire concepts in every area of the curriculum.

**Assumption 16 - Verbal abstractions should follow direct experience with objects and ideas, not precede them or substitute for them, in order to develop critical or divergent thinkers.**

Children should participate in authentic learning experiences which allow for multiple ways to demonstrate understanding. Children are able to express themselves in various ways not just limited to verbal. Verbal explanation, in advance of understanding based on experience may be an obstacle to learning and children's knowledge of the right words may conceal from the teachers their lack of understanding.

## EVALUATION

**Assumption 17 - The preferred source of verification for a child's solution to a problem comes through the materials that the child is working with.**

The only satisfaction, and reinforcement that counts importantly is that which accrues from discovery, from finding structure and order in our own individual and unique experience.

**Assumption 18 - Errors are necessarily a part of learning; they are to be expected and even desired, for they contain information that is essential for further learning.**

Children who are honestly working on new problems will, like the rest of us, make errors. Errors are important not because they are "wrong" but because they represent a child's current theory of how something works. Concept development requires opportunities for extended investigations that allow a child gradually to revise his/her theory. Active learning requires a climate in which it is possible to benefit from mistakes and not one in which they must be hidden in order to avoid ridicule. A person who takes few chances will make few mistakes, but also few discoveries.

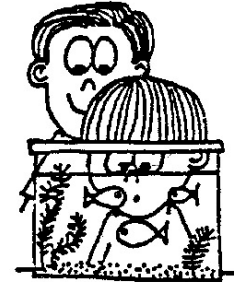
**Assumption 19 - Those qualities of a child's learning which can be carefully measured are not necessarily the most important.**

There are, arising from an informal approach, qualities which are very

difficult to test and define: qualities of initiative, independence, and social skills.

**Assumption 20 - Objective measures of performance may have a negative effect on learning. Students are encouraged to reflect upon their own learning as a method of self-evaluation.**

External incentives such as marks or stars, and other rewards and punishments, influence children's learning mainly by evoking or representing parents' or teachers' approval. The children who most need the incentive of good marks are least likely to gain them.



**Assumption 21 - Evidence of learning is best assessed intuitively by direct observation.**

## Evaluation

Very important things such as a more relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, a sense of fun in relation to learning, and a greater willingness on the part of children to become involved with learning situations and to stay with them could all be easily recognized without the application of sophisticated testing.

**Assumption 22 - The best method of evaluating the effect of the school experience on children is to observe them over a long period of time.**

Effective evaluation takes a long time. The only real way to evaluate the effectiveness of the open program is to find out how students perform after they have completed their schooling.

**Assumption 23 - The best measure of children's learning growth would be multiple measures of their work.**

In play, children not only eagerly practice skills, gain knowledge, and learn to organize their emotions, but also show us most clearly what their real problems are. We recognize that standardized tests are only one way to measure a child's academic progress. Open Plan provides frequent opportunities for both long and short term project based learning.

## KNOWLEDGE

**Assumption 24 - The quality of being is more important than the quality of knowing: Knowledge is a means of education, not its end. The final test of an education is what a person is, not what one knows.**

The particular key which opens a new door for a particular child is not predictable. Therefore, our curriculum is not at all to be cut into separate disciplines, fenced off by frontiers of technique and history.

**Assumption 25 - Knowledge is a function of one's personal integration of experience and therefore does not fall neatly into separate categories or "disciplines".**

The particular key which opens a new door for a particular child is not predictable. Therefore, our curriculum is not at all to be cut into separate disciplines, fenced off by frontiers of technique and history.

**Assumption 26 - The structure of knowledge is personal and idiosyncratic, and a function of the synthesis of each individual's experience with the world.**

The question comes up whether to teach the structure, or to present children with situations where they are active and create the structure themselves. The goal in education is not to increase the amount of knowledge, but to create the possibilities for children to invent and discover. When we teach too fast, we keep children from inventing and discovering on their own. Teaching means creating situations where structures can be discovered; it does not mean transmitting structures which may be assimilated at nothing other than a verbal level.

**Assumption 27 - There is no minimum body of knowledge which is essential for everyone to know.**

**Assumption 28 - It is possible, even likely, that an individual may learn and possess knowledge of a phenomenon and yet be unable to display it publicly. Knowledge resides with the knower, not in its public expression.**

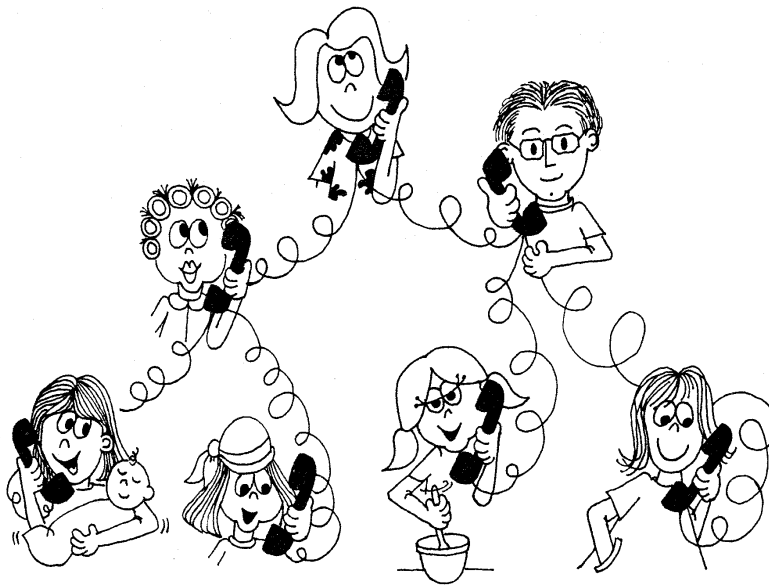
Education must reconcile the two modes of thought; the thought which pertains to the public domain and the thought which is personal, private.

Adapted from Open Education In The American School by Roland S. Barth, (Agathon Press, Inc., New York 1972).

**Knowledge**

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## **PARTICIPATION**

By enrolling your child(ren) in Fremont Open Plan, you have made a commitment. We rely on parents to be involved in their child(ren)'s education. This includes time and financial commitments. Your participation is essential to providing the quality curriculum-enhancing activities that have been our tradition since 1976.

Here at Open Plan, you have the opportunity to work in the classroom, come to know the staff members, develop friendships with parents and children, and do volunteer work outside of the classroom. There are many instructional and non-instructional jobs at our school. The positive attitudes and participation of families make Open Plan a wonderful educational and emotional experience for all children. Some of the various volunteer opportunities include:

### **Classroom**

- Small group work
- Individual tutoring
- Other instruction
- Correcting papers
- Decorating rooms
- Photography
- Driving or guiding a small group on field trips
- Coordinating Scholastic book orders
- Preparing parent communication ("Tuesday") folders
- Keeping records current
- Carpentry projects
- Preparing materials
- Playing an instrument or singing
- Creating bulletin boards
- Housekeeping

### **School-wide**

- Assist in special programs, for example, Fall Walk; Peace Assembly;
- Assist/lead mini Courses; Play/Musical; Genre Days.
- Serve on Fremont School's Site Council.
- Assist in the office.

### **Parent Advisory Group (Parent Advisory Group)**

- Fulfill fund drive financial commitment.
- Attend meetings.
- Serve on and/or lead Committees.
- Serve as a Parent Advisory Group officer.
- Participate in Open Forums.
- Attend Parent Education Nights.



## CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERING GUIDELINES

As volunteers and resource people in partnership with the teaching staff, we strive to provide the best possible educational opportunities for our children. It is your responsibility to remember the following each time you volunteer:

As a volunteer, you must be aware of the right of privacy that each child has. Your confidentiality is expected and appreciated. If you encounter difficulties or have concerns, express them to the classroom teacher or principal.

Reliability is a prime quality in parent volunteers. You are a vital part of your child's positive educational instruction environment. Teachers design and plan meaningful classroom activities with parent volunteers in mind. When you are unable to fulfill your classroom participation commitment, please call the school office and leave a message or contact the teacher(s) directly by cell phone or email. If you have major changes in your schedule, please discuss them in advance with the teacher(s) with whom you work so that you can work out a participation schedule that is best for all of you.

As role models for children, good communication between adults is essential. Because teachers' approaches and techniques vary, be sure you ask for clarification when you are unsure about assignments and volunteer activities. If you feel that you don't understand the material well enough to help the students, don't hesitate to share your concerns with the teacher. Your child's teacher will understand and find another area in which you can help.

Remember, also, that there is an appropriate time and place to seek out guidance from the teacher with whom you are working. Seek him/her out for discussion during a brief break or transition time rather than during intensive instruction periods.

Please turn off or set on silent mode your cell phone or Pager prior to entering the classroom. Speaking in a cell phone inside the classroom during instructional time can be very distracting and is disrespectful of the children's learning environment.

### **How Children Learn**

- By actively doing, instead of passive observance.
- By asking questions and searching for answers.
- Using all their senses when possible.
- Through sorting and combining objects.
- By building confidence in themselves.

- By talking and interacting.
- Through discovery.
- By experimenting.
- With repeated experiences.
- At their own individual rates.
- By teaching and demonstrating to peers or adults.

### **How You Can Help Children Learn**

- Interact with them in a positive and encouraging way.
- Give them as much time as they need to understand a new idea.
- Ask them open ended questions which may lead to the discovery of answers, instead of telling them directly. Avoid questions that lead to simple yes/no replies.
- Allow them to manipulate materials to discover their characteristics, such as which materials are attracted by a magnet.
- Provide them with sufficient wait time to allow the child to think and process information. Many times children provide answers that are more interesting and creative than how an adult would reply.
- Encourage each child to work at her/his full potential and personal best.
- Encourage them to observe and learn about objects and their environment, using their five senses.
- Encourage them to try new methods of doing things even though you already know an easier way.
- Allow them sort and combine according to their own ideas, such as shape or size rather than color.
- Encourage creativity by avoiding the use of adult-made models and conventional paradigms when doing art activities.
- Celebrate each child's small gains in understanding versus highlighting errors'.
- Allow children to make mistakes; mistakes teach us the most.

### **Individual and Small Group Instruction**

You may be asked to help a child or a small group of children who need some individual attention. Children need this kind of help most often in reading, writing and math, but it could be in any subject. The following guidelines may help you when you are working with students.

- Establish relationships with children by talking first for a minute about themselves.
- Engage the students in a dialogue about the task ahead and any previous work that led up to it.
- Be sure you know each child's name. Offer each child a chance to participate, not just the ones who volunteer to give answers.
- Develop an unhurried attitude. Enjoy the group and they will enjoy you.

- Allow each child to grow in independence by letting him/her do as much as possible without your help or suggestions.
- Occasionally, you may wonder about the extent of your authority with children in the classroom. You should expect cooperation from the students with whom you are working. If a student is not cooperating, be sure to inform the teacher and/or ask the teacher for help in redirecting the child's behavior.

### **Communicating With Children**

- Use a tone of voice which will encourage children and make them feel confident.
- Keep your voice as low as possible. The children will speak louder as your voice gets louder.
- Avoid comparing children and their work. Praise student work by saying, "Tell me what you like about your drawing," or "You must feel very proud of what you've accomplished."
- Give children a choice only when you intend to abide by that choice. "It's silent reading time. You can either sit on the floor or at a table."
- Instruct the children so that they know that you expect them to comply. Give sufficient warnings and time. "Joey, in five minutes you'll need to stop painting and put your apron away, wash your hands, and come sit on the rug."
- State directions in a positive form. "Use the blocks for building", rather than, "Don't throw the blocks."
- Be sure that a child understands what you're saying. We sometimes use words that children do not know. Ask, "Does what I'm saying make sense?", or "Explain to me in your words what I just said."
- Use positive reinforcement since it encourages acceptable or appropriate behavior.
- When a child does the "right" thing, a smile, or a compliment can go a long way. Don't wait until the child behaves negatively to respond.
- When behavior is inappropriate, focus on the act and not the child in expressing your disappointment. Rather than saying, "I told you to clean up that mess before recess! Say, "It is time for clean up. What can you do to help?"



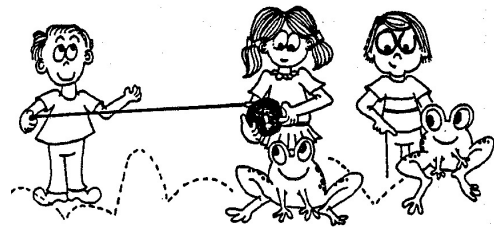
### **Communication Styles To Avoid**

- Labeling. Whether labels are based on ability or behavior, they are not helpful to children. For example, grade levels should not be emphasized, and children should not be called any names, such as "Troublemaker" or "Smart."

- Stereotyping. Avoid statements or behavior that compare children's abilities based on stereotypes. For instance, "Boys are good in math and girls excel in reading."
- If you come across stereotyping in a story that you are sharing with children, point it out and talk about it with them.
- Conditioning. Conditional responses teach children that your respect for them is based solely on behavior and production. "You've finished nine Pages in your math workbook, Rebecca. You're such a good girl." Instead, say "You've finished. You must feel good about that." Unconditional acceptance, affection and respect for the child should be present at all times.

### FIELD TRIP VOLUNTEERING GUIDELINES

Modesto City Schools Conduct Code applies to everyone in attendance on field trips, and as in all situations, we depend on parents to be excellent role models, using appropriate behavior and taking joy in shared experiences with our Open Plan community. When you volunteer to supervise a group of students during a field trip you must be prompt and prepared. As a volunteer, you must follow all specific instructions and know where your students are at all times. If an emergency arises and you are not able to attend, please find a replacement and inform your child's teacher as soon as possible.



When a bus is used for field trip transportation, adult seating will be very limited and most parent volunteers must provide their own transportation. Some field trips will be planned using parent volunteer transportation only. For these trips, parents must complete a district insurance form (in the office), and provide a well maintained and fueled vehicle. Parking is often minimal and we strongly encourage car pooling. Parent volunteers should always be prepared to pay their own entrance fee, as there are times when budget constraints may not provide enough funds for all adults.

Field trips are often a time when cross age partners are teamed up as an important learning experience. On any field trip, it is always important to remain close enough to supervise and guide, while allowing for student autonomy, independence and discovery.

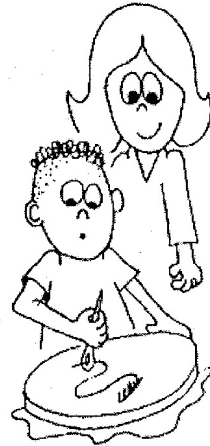
Many of Fremont Open Plan field trip destinations are within our greater community. On these community field trips, entire Fremont Open Plan families are encouraged to participate. Most parents along with extended family members must provide their own transportation. Ask your child's teacher if you are uncertain if extended family members are allowed to attend a field trip.

**Community Field Trips** such as Fall Walk and Play Day

For some field trips, parents and parents and more parents are invited. We love everyone coming! Bring your families, babies, strollers and snacks.

We will take a few parents on the bus, but not everyone. Others are encouraged to carpool

We do ask that you step back, enjoy your child and your cross age partner from a few steps behind, giving them a little space to grow into independence.



**General Field Trips** such as the San Jose Discovery Museum and Asilomar at Monterey

Only a few parents will come on the bus, all parents will pay their own entrance fee, and be in charge of a small group as usual. Too many parents distract from the child growing into autonomy and stepping into leadership.

If it is a field trip in cars, the parents will fill out insurance forms in the office, have their cars in a well maintained condition, and pay for their own gas. Making a contribution to the parent driving your child would be appreciated if possible.

Siblings and other family member are not allowed.

As in all situations, we depend on parents to be an excellent role model for the students, using appropriate language and manners, showing joy in being with our Open Plan family. Modesto City Schools Conduct Code also applies to all of us attending. Appropriate clothing is required. Gum, candy, cigarettes or alcohol are not permitted.

**Let's go have fun!!**

**SNACK**

It is important that children be provided with nutritionally sound snacks that will nourish their brain cells until lunchtime. A child's attention span and his/her motivation to learn are directly related to his/her physical well-being.

Please send a healthy snack to school with your child. Open Plan discourages carbonated beverages, candy, and any highly processed foods. Consider healthy snacks for any celebration as well, such as Peace Assembly and birthdays.

## MINI COURSES

Open Plan has been conducting Mini Courses since its inception. Mini Courses are classroom and community enrichment opportunities which utilize parent talent and community resources to make this a valuable day of learning.

Students select their own Mini Courses. This enables them to work in a diverse group, interacting with students, teachers, parents, extended family members and friends.

We are proud to offer Mini Courses at least once during the school year. They foster a sense of community and belonging in our program. Watch for notices home about this exciting day and set aside your time to volunteer to teach your favorite craft, drive on a field trip, or assist another instructor.

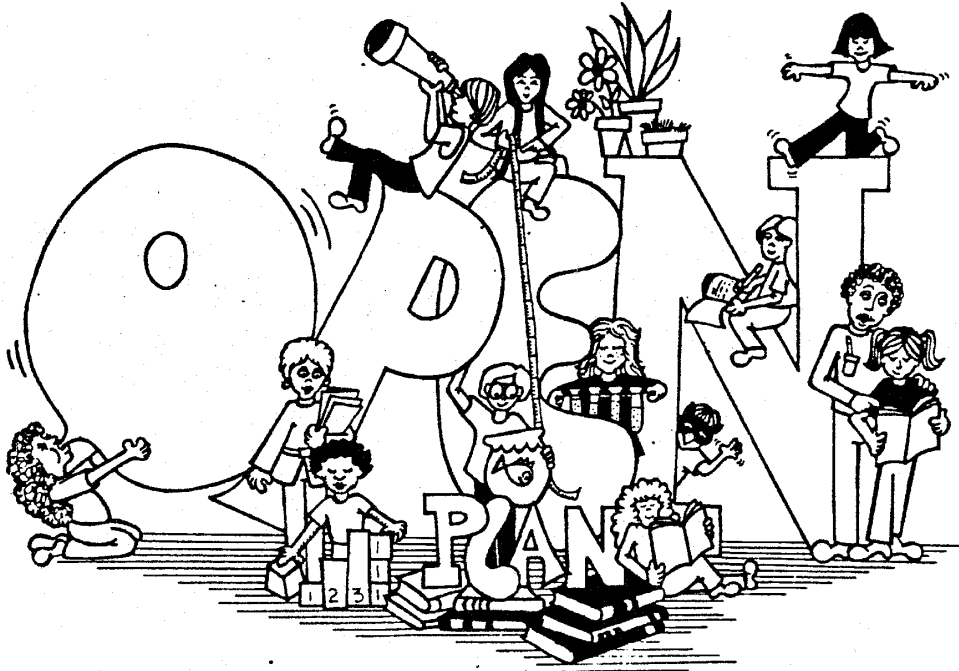


## PARENT ADVISORY GROUP

Fremont Open Plan maintains a strong, interested parent community who have organized themselves into the Parent Advisory Group (PAG). Parent Advisory Group is primarily responsible for Fremont Open Plan's support system. The many programs, volunteers, materials, field trips, and a host of other educational opportunities, are directly and indirectly supported by Parent Advisory Group through its many active committees. Your active participation is vital to the success of Open Plan. Parent Advisory Group governing by-laws are developed and maintained by the Parent Advisory Group together with Open Plan staff.

## PART C - COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FAMILIES AND SCHOOL

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## SCHOOL OFFICE

The John C. Fremont Elementary office phone number is 576-4679

Always contact the school office **first** when:

- You are visiting campus as a volunteer to sign in and receive a visitor's badge.
- You are picking up your child early.
- You are unable to participate in the classroom as scheduled.
- Your child is absent due to illness.
- Your child needs to be called from class for appointments.
- You need an independent study contract when your child will be absent due to a family outing for a minimum of 5 days.

## ARRANGING A CONFERENCE

A parent may need to discuss the program, have questions answered concerning classroom procedures, or discuss his/her child's progress. Follow these guidelines:

- Make an appointment with your child's teacher by sending a note to school with your child, emailing your child's teacher, or calling the school office.
- Plan on meeting before school or after school. This insures quality time for parent-teacher team communication or questions, concerns, evaluation, and possible solutions or goal setting.
- In order to keep the focus on the needs of the child, the conference time must be seen as a parent-teacher team effort. In most cases, involvement of the child in the parent-teacher conference is beneficial.
- A follow-up parent-teacher-principal conference may occur in some situations, providing that the parent-teacher team has first met.
- Conferences are confidential and child centered. The purpose of the team effort is to focus on the child's academic, social, emotional, and physical development.

## ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

approved 1989 revised 1995, 1997

### Notification

To be sure the public is well advised of enrollment registration, the school office assures the following:

- Notices for posting shall be given to all Modesto City Schools each year during December, as mandated by state code.



- Information Packets distributed at the beginning of each school year.
- Notices shall be given to preschools in the Modesto area prior to registration and in sufficient numbers to allow one per each child.
- Timely and adequate notice shall appear in the Modesto Bee.
- The Fremont school marquee shall provide notice of registration.
- Current Open Plan families will receive three separate notices regarding sibling registration deadlines.

## **Fremont Open Plan Student Siblings**

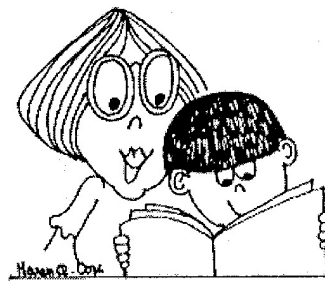
Fremont Open Plan is dedicated to building a community of families. Enrollment priority is given to siblings to keep families intact and to foster the full participation of parents in the school program. For that reason, the following policies are established:

- Siblings are defined as the brother or sister of any student who is currently enrolled at Fremont Open Plan.
- Circumstances that do not meet the traditional definition of sibling may be reviewed on a case by case basis by the principal, the Parent Advisory Group Executive Committee and the petitioning family.

## **Enrollment Priorities**

Enrollment is subject to the order established by the sibling and lottery waiting lists, available space in each department, and the following priorities:

- 1st Priority - Students enrolled in Fremont Open Plan.
- 2nd Priority - Siblings.
- 3rd Priority - In District and Out of District Working in District. Other Modesto City Schools district residents and children with parents working within the district.
- 4th Priority - Out of District. Residents of other school districts.



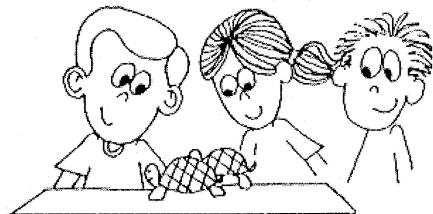
## **Sibling Registration**

- To enroll incoming Kindergarten siblings of currently enrolled students, families must follow the guidelines and meet the deadlines.
- Primary, Middle and Upper Department siblings may be added to department waiting lists at any time during the year.

- Parents of Fremont Open Plan graduates shall take responsibility for contacting the school office regarding procedures and deadlines for enrolling siblings.
- The entire month of January will be available for sibling registration. Sibling names will be maintained on a separate priority list.
- Sibling registration deadlines will be strictly followed.

## Kindergarten Registration

- Families signify interest in attending Fremont Open Plan by filling out a waiting list form at the school office and signing up for an orientation tour any time during the month of January.
- The application date or lottery number, whichever applies, is considered the permanent date/number for the purpose of determining status on the appropriate list i.e.: Sibling, In District, Out of District Working in District, or Out of District.
- The date an offer of classroom placement is declined then becomes the new application date.
- Parents are given a choice of at least three dates when registering for a tour. Additional tours will be added as the number of interested families dictates.
- Attendance at a complete orientation tour is mandatory. Tours are led by teams of trained parent volunteers and kept to a collaboratively agreed upon script to ensure quality and consistency. Tours include time with the Principal and a staff representative, as well as direct classroom observation. Tours are three hours in duration.
- Tours are designed for parents and guardians; children are not allowed to attend.
- Prospective parents are required to attend the February Parent Advisory Group meeting so as to understand the function and operation of the Parent Advisory Group and be involved in an in depth discussion of Open Plan philosophy with staff and tour committee members.
- Lottery numbers are assigned to interested Kindergarten families upon completion of the tour and February Parent Advisory Group meeting attendance.
- A lottery drawing to fill the number of open Kindergarten slots and establish a waiting list will be held during the month of February, no more than one week after the February Parent Advisory Group meeting. Only the names of children eligible for enrollment in Kindergarten in the fall of the same year may be placed on the waiting list.



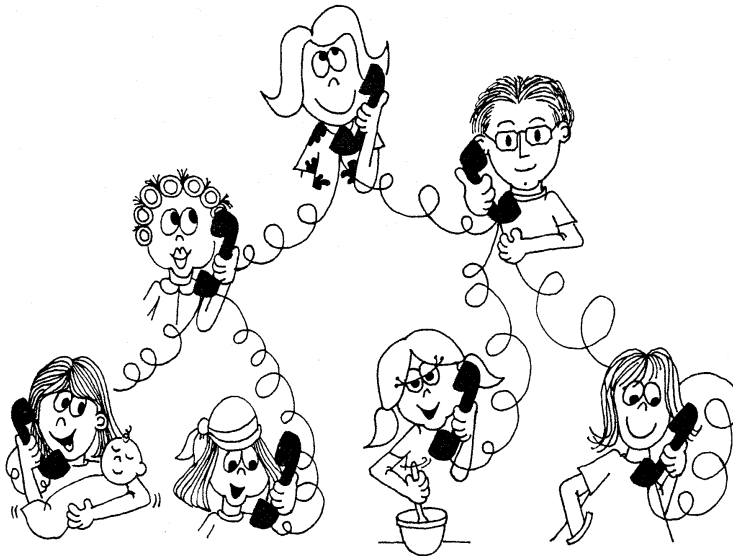
## Primary, Middle And Upper Department Registration

- Families signify interest in attending Open Plan by filling out the waiting list form at the school office.
- The application date or lottery number, whichever applies, is considered the permanent date/number for the purpose of determining status the appropriate list i.e.: Sibling, In District, Out of District Working in District, or Out of District.
- The date an offer of classroom placement is declined then becomes the new application date.
- Attendance at a complete orientation tour is mandatory and must take place prior to acceptance of classroom placement. A minimum of one tour date is scheduled each fall for those who register after each year's winter tour dates. Additional tours are scheduled as the number of waiting families dictates.
- Tours are led by teams of trained parent volunteers and kept to a collaboratively agreed upon script to ensure quality and consistency. Tours will include time with the Principal and a staff representative, as well as direct classroom observation. Tours are three hours in duration.
- Tours are designed for parents and guardians; children are not allowed to attend.
- Prospective parents are required to attend the February Parent Advisory Group meeting so as to understand the function and operation of the Parent Advisory Group and be involved in an in depth discussion of Open Plan philosophy with staff and tour committee members.
- Waiting families are moved to the appropriate department list as necessary each fall and interest in remaining on the waiting list is verified at that time as well.
- Classroom placement is made in the best interest of the student using a combination of staff, student, and parent collaboration,



**PART D - APPENDIX**

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# FREMONT OPEN PLAN PARENT ADVISORY GROUP BY LAWS

Approved 1977 Revised 1988, 1993, 1996, 2008, 2009

## Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be:

The Fremont Open Plan (FOP) Parent Advisory Group (PAG).

## Article II - Purpose and Objectives

The purpose and objectives of Parent Advisory Group shall be:

- a. To participate in the identification and support of pupil needs and support of those needs.
- b. To assist in enlisting the support and services of parents, staff and students for Fremont Open Plan.
- c. To advise the school district, principal and staff on the policies and operation of Fremont Open Plan and on the allocation budget of resources available for it.
- d. To assure that the membership has input into the decision-making process of Fremont Open Plan policies.
- e. To identify and assist in securing available community resources for the school.
- f. To serve as a communications link between the school and community and to encourage community support for the school.
- g. To work with staff and students in developing new programs.
- h. To encourage cultural and ethnic pluralism in the school community's program.
- i. To evaluate major Parent Advisory Group's expenditures and perform an advisory role in major program decisions, staffing and housing of Fremont Open Plan.

## Article III - Membership

### Section 1. General Membership

General membership in the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) shall be open to:

- a. Any person who is the parent, legal guardian, or other adult responsible for a child attending Fremont Open Plan, the Open Plan teachers and principal.

### Section 2. Voting Members

The following persons shall be eligible to vote at any duly called Parent Advisory Group (PAG) Meetings:

- a. The Open Plan principal;
- b. Any teacher regularly employed full time in Fremont Open Plan; and
- c. Any general member who has attended at least one Parent Advisory Group (PAG) meeting of the previous three meetings.

### Section 3. Limit on Membership

No person may hold more than one class of membership for the purpose of voting on matters before the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) meetings.

## **Article IV - Meetings of Members**

### **Section 1. Place**

Meetings shall be scheduled at: John C. Fremont School, 1220 West Orangeburg Avenue, Modesto, CA 95350.

### **Sections 2. Regular Meetings**

a. The regular meeting dates will be set for the following school year in June by the newly elected officers of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG), at a time that will permit the largest number of members to attend, subject to change. The meetings of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) will be open to all General Members, the school principal and teachers.

### **Section 3. Open Forums**

a. An open forum is a meeting of the General Membership of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) for the purpose of gathering and sharing of information and opinions, or for special purposes. No formal voting may take place at an Open Forum.

b. An Open Forum may be called by:

1. The Advisory Group chair.

2. Upon written request by any general member or group of general members to the Chair. If the Chair fails to call a meeting within two weeks, then upon a petition of 25% of the General Membership, an Open Forum shall take place within two weeks.

c. At least one Open Forum shall be held each school year.

### **Section 4. Notice of Meetings**

The schedule of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) meetings shall be published in the first edition of the Open Plan newsletter, The Link, and shall be prominently posted on the school.

### **Section 5. Quorum**

a. A quorum shall be necessary for the transaction of business. A quorum shall consist of at least nine (9) voting members, including at least two (2) officers.

b. A majority vote of those voting members present shall be required to pass motions.

### **Section 6. Voting by Members for Officers**

a. General members, as defined in Article III, Section 1, may exercise a vote for the election of officers.

b. There shall be no proxy voting.

c. The election of officers shall be by secret ballot.

d. The tabulation of votes for the election of officers shall be under the supervision of three general members, not candidates for office, appointed by the Chair.

## **Article V - Officers and their Duties**

### **Section 1. Names and Titles**

The officers shall consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. These officers shall be elected by the General Membership and shall constitute the Executive Committee. In addition, the Head Teacher, and Principal may attend Executive Committee meetings as school staff representatives.

### **Section 2. Qualifications**

Any General Member, except teachers and the principal, who has held that membership for one full semester is eligible to hold office.

### **Section 3. Duties of Officers**

#### **a. Duties of the Chair**

1. The Chair shall be the chief executive officer of this organization and shall, subject to the control of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) have general supervision, direction, and control of the affairs of this organization.
2. Presides over all meeting of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG), both General and Executive, and shall be responsible for setting the agenda.
3. Represents the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) as its official spokesperson, or designate a substitute for specific occasions at his/her discretion, and report any such official contact to the Parent Advisory Group (PAG).
4. Shall be ex-officio a member of all committees except the Election Committee.

#### **b. Duties of the Vice-Chair**

1. Assists the Chair in all his/her duties, and act as Chair during any period of absence or disability of the Chair.
2. Together with the Chair, coordinates the work of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) members and committees.

#### **c. Duties of the Treasurer**

1. Makes a written financial report at each regular meeting.
2. Maintains current and accurate accounts and business records including accounts of assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements, losses, and surplus, and writes checks and receives donations.
3. Makes available for inspection at reasonable times by the Executive Committee and general members in good standing, the books and accounts of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG).
4. Chairs Parent Advisory Group (PAG) Fund Drive.
5. Keeps reports for Ad Hoc Fund Raising Committees such as T-Shirt, and Chevy's night.
6. Receives detailed records of all Open Plan expenditures
7. Oversees In-House auditing and all paperwork necessary to maintain Parent Advisory Group's (PAG) Non Profit Tax Status.

**d. Duties Secretary**

1. Takes the minutes of all regular, Executive and special meetings.
2. Maintains the official minute book and keeps a record of minutes, financial reports, correspondence, and an attendance roster.
3. Makes the minute book available to the Open Plan community upon request.
4. Maintains care of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) By-Laws and coordinate their distribution to and inspection by the general members.
5. Maintains an up to date voting roster and have it available at each regular meeting of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG).

**Section 4. Terms of Office**

- a. The term of office for all officers shall be one year. No officer shall be eligible to serve for more than two consecutive terms in the same office. Officers shall assume their duties at the May Parent Advisory Group (PAG).
- b. A person who has served as an officer for more than five months of a full term shall be deemed to have served a full term in such office.

**Section 5. Election of Officers**

- a. The Election Committee shall meet in February each year at the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) meeting.
- b. A letter will be sent to all families to seek of nominations for elected officers of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) within seven (7) days of the meeting in February. Two weeks will be allowed for return of all nominations.
- c. Upon receipt of nominations, the Election Committee shall verify with the nominees their candidacy before presenting a list of nominees to the school.
- d. At the March meeting, the candidates shall be presented and additional nominations will be accepted from the floor. At the close of this meeting, nominations shall be closed. If, at this time, there is only one candidate for each office, the Election Committee shall declare that the election process is completed, and that the candidates are now the newly elected officers. The Election Committee shall send out a notice within seven days, one per parent, principal and teacher, announcing the results of the election process.
- e. At no time shall any candidate for office on the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) participate in the management of elections.
- f. If there is more than one nominee for one office, one ballot per parent, teacher and principal will then be sent within seven (7) days of the March meeting. The following information shall be included on the ballot:
  1. Names of the candidates
  2. Brackets opposite each name for mark (x) and instructions.
  3. A statement from each candidate
  4. The closing date for the return of the ballots.



- g. A return envelope shall be included, addressed to the school with "Attn: Election Committee" written on the outside. A period of two weeks from the date of receipt shall be allowed for the return of ballots.
- h. All ballots must be sealed to be valid and will be referred to the Election Committee as they arrive. All ballots must be received by the closing date in order to be counted.
- i. Upon the closing date, the Election Committee shall gather all ballots, count them, and notify the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) of the results. In case of a tie, a run-off election between contenders only, shall be held. A ten (10) day deadline from the receipt of the run-off ballots shall be allowed for return of these ballots.
- j. Election of an officer shall require a majority vote of the ballots cast.
- k. The election procedure for officers of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) shall be completed by April 15. April shall be the transition period for the newly elected officers, during which the current and newly elected officers shall meet jointly at least once. The leadership transition shall take place at the May meeting where the outgoing officers shall introduce the newly elected officers.

#### **Section 6. Meeting of Officers**

- a. The Executive Committee shall meet in May of the year elected, and at least monthly during the school year.
- b. Any officer may call for an Executive Committee meeting by notifying the Chair.

#### **Section 7. Quorum**

Three (3) officers of the Executive Committee shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for conducting the routine business of this organization.

#### **Section 8. Removal of Officers**

The failure by any officer to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the Executive Committee or Advisory Group, or other good cause shall be grounds for removal from office by the Parent Advisory Group (PAG).

#### **Section 9. Resignation of Officers**

Any officer may resign from office by written resignation to the Parent Advisory Group (PAG).

#### **Section 10. Special Election to Fill Vacancies**

- a. When an office is vacant, a special election shall be called for the next meeting of the Parent Advisory Group (PAG) to fill that office. Nominations to fill the office shall be made at the meeting.
- b. Only general members in attendance may vote in the special election.
- c. The new officer shall be elected by a majority vote.
- d. Newly elected officers shall serve the remaining term of the vacant position.

## **Article VI - Disbursements**

### **Section 1. Checks**

Funds of this organization shall be maintained in commercial and/or savings accounts in established financial institutions in Stanislaus County. Checks on such funds shall be signed by the Treasurer and either the Head Teacher of Open Plan or the Chairperson.

## **Article VII - Standing Committees**

### **Section 1. Committees**

This organization shall have the following standing committees, formulated from the General Membership:

- a. Executive Committee
- b. Social Committee
- c. Sunshine Committee
- d. New Parent Orientation / Tour Committee
- e. Parent Participation
- f. Arts, including Spring Production and Enrichment
- g. Public Relations
- h. Finance
- i. Link Editor
- j. Web

This organization shall have the following Ad Hoc committees with others added as needed, formulated from the General Membership:

- a. Mini-Courses
- b. Directory
- c. Building
- d. Elections Committee
- e. Fund Raising

### **Section 2. Executive Committee**

a. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Executive Committee shall make recommendations to the Parent Advisory Group, shall be responsible for the routine business of this organization and shall carry out such other duties as may be delegated to it by the Parent Advisory Group.

b. The Executive Committee may authorize the payment of the organizations bills, not to exceed \$200 per expenditure. Such payments shall be reported to the Executive Committee at the next Parent Advisory Group meeting.

### **Section 3. Election Committee**

The election committee shall consist of three General Members as set forth in Article IV, Section 6, who shall supervise the election of officers.

### **Section 4. Function of Other Committees**

Other committees shall serve to gather information and perform tasks assigned by the Parent Advisory Group and shall act subject to the control, direction, and approval of the Parent Advisory Group.

### **Section 5. Committee Chair**

The Chair of each committee shall be selected by the members of that committee. The committee may elect a new Chair at any time. The Chair shall be responsible for:

- a. The effective operation of the committee.
- b. Keeping a record of committee meetings, submitting written reports to the Parent Advisory Group, and acting as the representative of the committee.

### **Section 6. Committee Proposals**

Notice of committee proposals or reports recommending action to the Parent Advisory Group shall be submitted to the Parent Advisory Group Chair for placement on the agenda at least seven (7) days before the Parent Advisory Group meeting.

## **Article VIII - Amendment of By Laws**

### **Section 1. Proposed Amendments**

These by-laws may be amended by written proposal from the general membership. A proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Parent Advisory Group at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which a vote would take place. Notice of the proposed amendment shall be given to the general membership at least 10 days prior to the Parent Advisory Group meeting at which the proposed amendment is to be voted upon.

### **Section 2. Voting**

These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the general members in attendance at the duly held Parent Advisory Group meeting set forth in Section 1.

## **Article IX - Parliamentary Procedure**

### **Section 1. Manual of Parliamentary Procedure**

The meetings of the Parent Advisory Group shall be governed by and conducted according to the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

## PARENT LIBRARY LIST

The following books and resources are available to borrow from the Fremont school library and/or may be available at the Stanislaus County Free Library.

### Open Plan Philosophy

Title	Author
<i>Democracy and Education</i>	John Dewey
<i>Discipline Without Stress, Punishments, or Rewards: How Teachers and Parents Promote Responsibility and Learning</i>	Marvin L. Marshall
<i>Educating for a Culture of Peace</i>	Edited by Riane Eisler, Ron Miller
<i>Open Education and The American School</i> (This title is out of print)	Roland S. Barth
<i>Testing Is Not Teaching: What Should Count in Education</i>	Donald H. Graves
<i>The Schools Our Children Deserve: Moving Beyond Traditional Classrooms and "Tougher Standards"</i>	Alfie Kohn

### Child Development

Title	Author
<i>The Hurried Child - 25th Anniversary Edition</i>	David Elkin
<i>The Power of Reading, Second Edition: Insights From the Research</i>	Stephen D. Krashen
<i>Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14</i>	Chip Wood and William Crain

### Parenting

Title	Author
<i>Choice Words: How Our Language Affects Children's Learning</i>	Peter H. Johnston
<i>The Five Love Languages of Children</i>	Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell
<i>Hey! Listen to This: Stories to Read Aloud</i>	Jim Trelease
<i>How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk</i>	Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

*New York Times Parents' Guide to the Best Books for  
Children*

*Parent Talk: How to Talk to Your Children in Language that  
Builds Self-Esteem and Encourages Responsibility*

*Positive Discipline*

*The Price of Privilege*

*Raising Lifelong Learners: A Parent's Guide*

*Raising Your Spirited Child*

*Stress and the Healthy Family*

*Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community*

Eden Ross Lipson

Chick Moorman

Jane Nelson

Madeline Levine

Lucy Calkins with

Lydia Bellino

Mary Sheedy

Kurcina

Delores Curran

Alfie Kohn

### **Classroom Resources for Teachers**

#### **Title**

*Creating a Caring Classroom (Grades K-6)*

*Learning Through Academic Choice (Strategies for Teachers  
Series)*

*Mathematics Their Way*

*The Morning Meeting Book (Strategies for Teachers, 1)*

*Parents & Teachers Working Together (Strategies for  
Teachers Series)*

*The Power of Our Words: Teacher Language that Helps  
Children Learn*

#### **Author**

Nancy Lett

Paula Denton

Mary

Baratta-Lorton

Roxann Kriete and

Lynn Bechte

Carol Davis and

Alice Yan

Paula Denton

## FREMONT OPEN PLAN PARENT PARTICIPATION COMMITMENT

The Fremont Open Plan (Fremont Open Plan) Parent Advisory Group (Parent Advisory Group) Executive Committee would like to welcome you to our learning community. We look forward to each new year of learning and growing together.

We look forward to each new year of learning and growing together.

As an alternative educational program within the Modesto City Schools District, Fremont Open Plan relies on parent involvement. Your participation is essential so that the many learning activities that have enhanced the Fremont Open Plan curriculum for over 20 years can be provided to all of our students.

When making the choice to enroll, you also agree to donate an annual contribution of \$100 per child, which helps to support the many unique learning opportunities your child(ren) will experience each year.

The money you pledge together with your direct involvement creates an extension to what Fremont Open Plan can provide above and beyond the traditional school experience.

Please use the form below and submit your fund drive contribution. Envelopes may be mailed to Fremont Open Plan-Parent Advisory Group 1220 W. Orangeburg Ave, Modesto 95350 or hand delivered to either the school office or your child's teacher. If you have questions regarding any details of your fund drive commitment, please contact the Parent Advisory Group treasurer, or any executive committee member. You may contact Parent Advisory Group executive committee members through the Fremont Open Plan website at [www.fremontopenplan.com](http://www.fremontopenplan.com).

Thank you,

Parent Advisory Group Executive Committee

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### Fremont Open Plan Parent Advisory Group Fund Drive Commitment Form

Child(ren's) Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

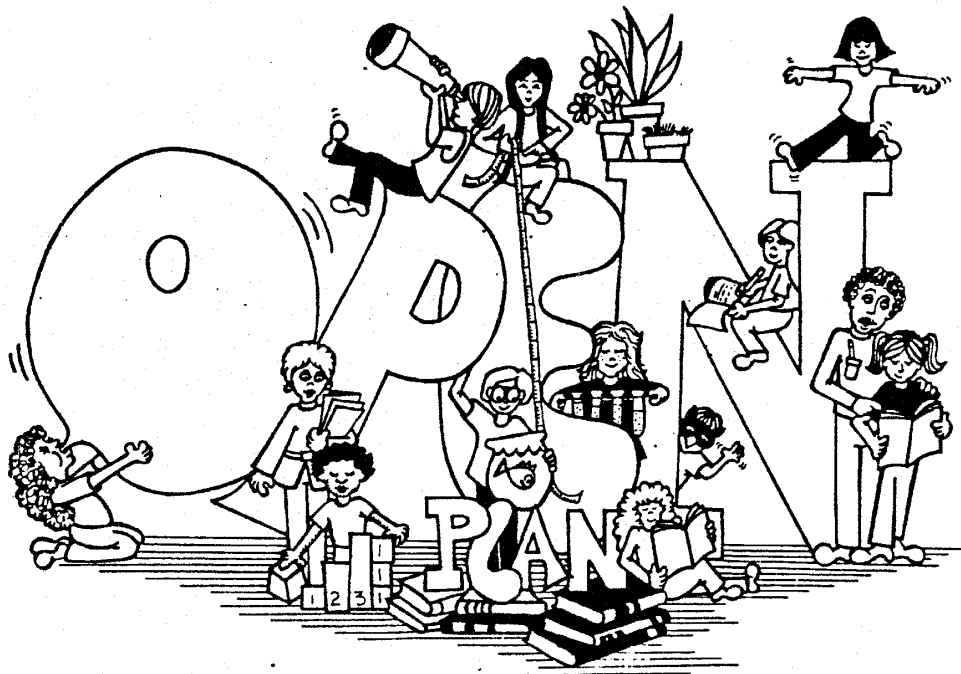
Parent(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

- I am enclosing 100% of the fund drive contribution of \$100.
- I would like to make \_\_\_\_\_ number of payments of \$\_\_\_\_\_ throughout the year. I am enclosing my first payment.
- I will pay in full on the following date: \_\_\_\_\_.
- I would like to make \_\_\_\_\_ number of payments of \$\_\_\_\_\_ throughout the year. However, I am not enclosing a payment at this time. I plan to pay the first installment on \_\_\_\_\_.

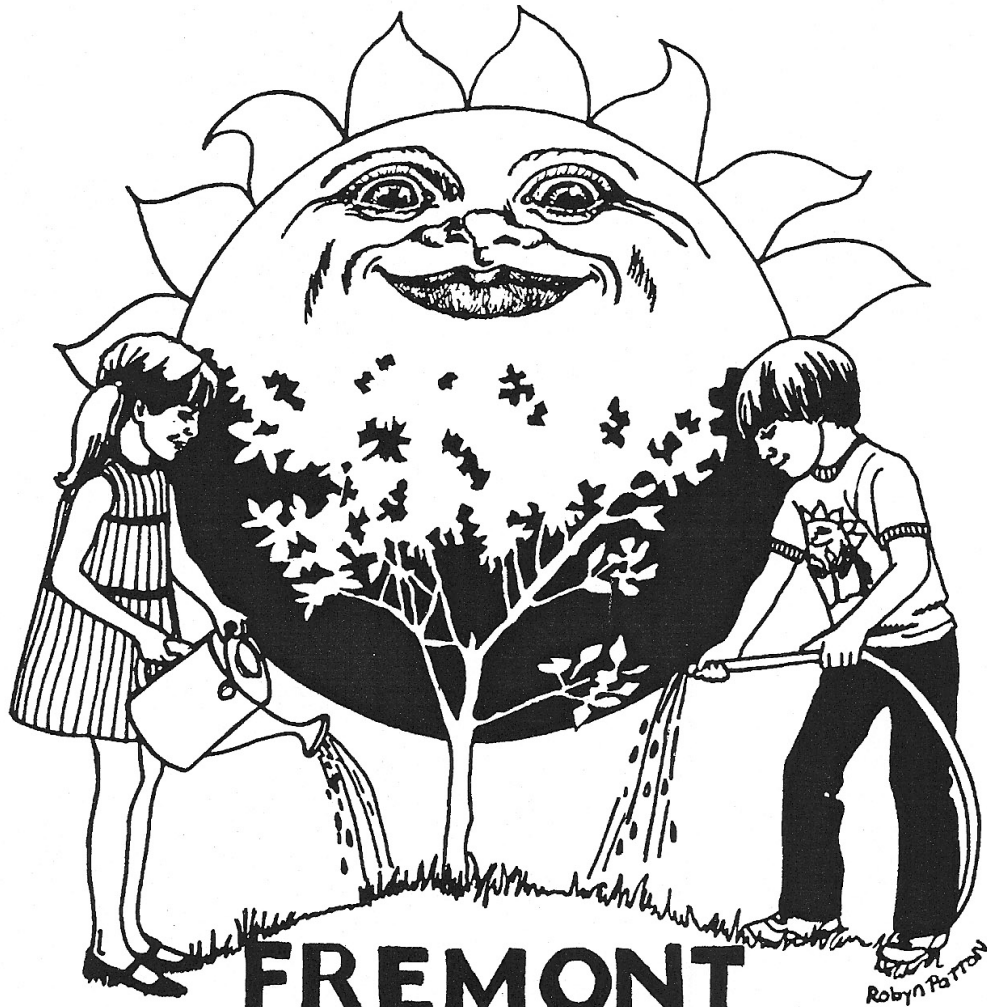
**Total fund drive contribution enclosed \$\_\_\_\_\_**

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(Inside back cover)







**FREMONT**  
**OPEN PLAN**  
**HANDBOOK**

*Original Handbook Cover • 1977*