San Francisco Unified School District
San Francisco, California

Superintendent’s Proposal

312-9Sp3 In Support of Renaming the Francisco Middle School Gymnasium to the Thomas J. Kim Gymnasium

WHEREAS: Thomas J. Kim, prior to attending Yuba Junior College, worked and studied in China where he brought his athletic skills to local Chinese in Canton and Shanghai. He played football against the United States Marine Corps 4th Regiment in Shanghai and participated in the China National Games (National Olympics). Thomas Kim received his B.A. and teaching credential from San Francisco State College (now SFSU) in 1943 where he also competed in baseball, basketball, and football; and

WHEREAS: His student teaching assignments included the Commodore Stockton Elementary School (now Gordon J. Lau Elementary School), Francisco Junior High School and Galileo High School and coached baseball at Mission High School; and

WHEREAS: His first teaching assignment was at James Denman Junior High School after which he was reassigned to Francisco Junior High School. He would teach at Francisco from 1943 until his retirement in 1974. Thomas Kim was one of the first Chinese American teachers to go directly into the secondary education level with the San Francisco Unified School District (others transferred in from the elementary level); and

WHEREAS: He served in several capacities: physical education instructor, head of the P.E. Department, class counselor, and coach of the baseball, basketball, track and soccer teams and initiated the first tennis program at a San Francisco Junior High School. He used his bilingual abilities for teaching ESL classes to immigrant students from China. Although, he held an administrative credential, he chose to teach and coach; and

WHEREAS: While outside of the classroom, Thomas J. Kim was actively involved in the life of the Chinese community where he would serve on weekends and summers as an organizer of intramural and cross-city playground events and competition. From 1940 to 1974, he worked as a Recreation and Park Director (part time) at the Jackson Playground, Jean Parker and Commodore Stockton schoolyards, Chinese Playground, Chinese Recreation Center and the Commodore Stockton night gymnasiu; and
WHEREAS: His philosophy of sound fundamentals and good sportsmanship contributed to character building and pride in teamwork. His teams, often small in stature, were noted for their discipline and quickness, resulting in many City championships. Countless young men under his tutelage went on to excel in high school and college competition and he would remain in touch with them by attending their college competition; and

WHEREAS: Coaches and teachers from neighboring schools respected Thomas J. Kim for his dedication as a coach and role model and often sought him out for counsel. Most importantly, he served as a bridge between the school and the community. He brought the school into the community and community into the school. His three sons went on to become public school teachers and carry on the legacy of their father.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Education supports the renaming of the Francisco Middle School Gymnasium to the Thomas J. Kim Gymnasium and that a plaque donated by family, colleagues, former students, and friends, so stating, shall be installed.

12/9/03
3/9/04

Please Note:
- Referred to the Buildings, Grounds, & Services Committee by order of the Chair on 12/9/03
- Taken up by the Buildings, Grounds, & Services Committee on 2/26/04. Forwarded to the Board of Education with a positive recommendation from Committee.