

Le Conte School Name Change
Suggestions for Carrying the Learning Forward
May 23, 2018

Arcoiris

- Our TK program has its own contained yard and grounds for two classrooms. If we could name the TK grounds and yard "Arcoiris", the Spanish word for rainbow, it would offer a symbolic bridge to Spanish language enrichment for TK students, who might not be continuing in this school in Kindergarten. One of the TK classes is not a Spanish immersion class. So, this could give the families of this class a greater identity within this site's TK program itself and a connection with the larger school community which is Spanish speaking, as well as English. A rainbow is a symbol of inclusion, and a symbol which young children recognize and love to draw in any language!
- This does not have to be an official BUSD school name. I would suggest it is a name we use like a symbol for TK's, kind of like Panda is our mascot.
- I think that the TK/K playground should be named arcoris, since they seemed to really like this name. I also think it would be a good idea to have the TK/K kids work together to paint a rainbow on the playground as an art project.
- Dedicate the TK playground with a rainbow.
- Paint a giant rainbow mural on the outside auditorium wall that overlooks the Kinder yard.

denise brown

- officially name our school's auditorium after denise brown, with her name visible above the stage. Currently there is a picture of her over the door but it isn't "official".
- To honor community remembrance and love of denise brown and her time at the school, it would be very appropriate to officially name the auditorium after her and with signage on the exterior of the building, over the entrance to the auditorium.
- If there is a community member who would like to spearhead a project to produce one of her plays once a year to keep her legacy alive, perhaps the PTA could be amenable to that. Maybe it could even be a fundraiser for the school.
- I support naming the school auditorium in a more obvious way (perhaps lettering on the outside of the building) after denise brown.
- It might also be worth exploring cleaning up/revitalizing the stage and perhaps exploring working with outside contractors (if there is no one internal) to launch a new afterschool theatre program in her honor, as none is currently running.
- Similar to Ruth Acty, I believe that denise brown's name should be officially the name of the Auditorium. Teachers should work to keep her name alive by teaching about denise and her values, and put those to practice. I believe her favorite color was purple, so maybe have purple curtains, or a purple accent wall. Or a mural of her wearing purple.
- Another idea I had to honor denise brown is to one day have BHS's AHA renamed denise brown Arts and Humanities Academy, since she helped get that SLC started.

Dolores Huerta

- We already have the Chavez-Huerta Commemoration in our district and the community to honor her name and legacy. [In fact it was through this commemoration that many people learned about Sylvia Mendez, so keep it up!]
- Assign a book that everyone reads in a certain grade, across the district

Mary Tape

- The Tapes were neighbors to our school. A mini field trip and walking tour (just down the block), maybe with someone from the Berkeley Historical society, and coupled with a slide show or video presentation to teach about local history at the start of the 20th Century and this Chinese-American family, specifically, with its beginnings in San Francisco after the Gold Rush could be ongoing supplemental education for 4th or 5th grade classes.
- Particularly if Sylvia Mendez is chosen, the Tape story should be regularly taught in our school as a way of demonstrating a local connection to the same struggle that Sylvia and her family were a part of. Perhaps the school kids could walk to the house and look at it.
- A plaque telling the Tape story on the school grounds acknowledging the contributions of Mary Tape and her family to desegregation, and the connection of the younger children going to our school would also be appropriate and could help tell the story.
- I think all students should learn about Mary Tape, perhaps in conjunction with Sylvia Mendez's name. She is local and lived down the street from LeConte. Are there other places at LeConte that we can name after her?
- Perhaps the public playground area could be Tape-Mendez Park?
- Tape-Mendez: This should be an opportunity for all student to learn about these two stories.
- Publish the books about Mary Tape and Ruth Acty that were written by Gabby Reyes and Estella Sisneros - turn them into real books that can be put in all Berkeley Public School libraries
- The historical arc of the Tape and Mendez court cases for equal education and the resulting decisions which paved the way for ending school segregation is a significant educational piece. Perhaps this is material better suited for middle school or high school studies?
- The Tape family story could also be taught as part of this education, with the intersections both with the Mendez story and our school being highlighted.
- Mary Tape was an early telegraph operator, as well as an advocate for her child. Maybe the school office could be the Mary Tape welcome area.

Ohlone

- Work with tribal representatives and school board members to improve curriculum and engagement opportunities for learning about native history and presence.
- Name the garden Ohlone

- Name a new school after the name the tribe chooses. Whenever California or American history is taught, have a special lesson(s) about the Ohlone. Have guest speakers on a yearly basis, come to classrooms and assemblies across the district.
- Create a committee similar to the naming advisory committee, which has the purpose of exploring connections and curriculum with the Ohlone. Include district staff, educators and those creating curriculum, but also neighbors and historians. The goal is to brainstorm all the different ways Ohlone could be invited into and incorporated into the district ethos long term. That brainstorming should take place with several Ohlone participating and in the room. The Ohlone story is not just a history lesson, but learning what's happening now and/or with other indigenous populations throughout North America.

Ruth Acty

- Propose this as a top contender for another BUSD school's renaming process.
- Since Ruth Acty began her teaching at Longfellow, naming Longfellow's library for her could be a way to ensure that she and her legacy is honored and visible. Of course, this would have to be in partnership with Library Services to provide reference material, display and signage. It would give rise to the history of Longfellow school itself and how it has changed over time.
- Name the LeConte Library after her. [It might be already named for Barbara Penny-James?]
- At Ruth Acty's Memorial, it was suggested that the Longfellow Auditorium be named for her because of her contributions, as well as her work in theatre arts. Revisit this?
- Incorporate teaching in all the schools on her story in schools throughout the district. This could be done as part of Black History month and/or on the date that was designated previously as "Ruth Acty Day". (October???)
- Name a Teaching Fellowship, in her name
- The school can pick a day during the school year dedicated to her, this day would allow for all students present and future to keep her name and legacy alive.
- Publish the books about Mary Tape and Ruth Acty that were written by Gabby Reyes and Estella Sisneros - turn them into real books that can be put in all Berkeley Public School libraries

Sylvia Mendez

- Have Ms. Mendez come to renaming celebration and speak. We should think about having representatives from the Tape family come to the celebration as well, and Denise Brown's family, and even Le Conte's family. Make this inclusive and about our history and connections.
- Have class sets of *Sylvia and Aki* for one grade level, 3rd or 4th, would be a great way to teach more about the school name and tie into a historical fiction unit. This would provide

more setting and background to the Sylvia Mendez story and teach about this intersection between two minority groups during World War II.

- Since Sylvia Mendez and her brother do advocacy for education equality, it would be wonderful if they could come to present their work and meet students.
- Consider a unit that the entire school does each year on the school's name, using the same materials at grade-appropriate levels telling the Mendez story that we used during this educational process. Perhaps the fall would be an appropriate time to do this, or during Latin American Heritage month.
- If the school is named after Sylvia Mendez, I think the school needs to make sure that she is included in the curriculum. Perhaps, this can be done district-wide so all of our students learn about her. Until this process happened, I had never heard her name or story.
- Encourage teachers and librarian to develop an appropriate curriculum
- One assembly per year that includes class presentations

Le Conte (former name)

- A plaque near the main office where we can recognize that the school was formerly named Le Conte Elementary, and have a positive bio about him. Maybe his family member can help with that?
- Plaque with several sentences about the school's prior name and what he represented in history. Press release about all the efforts and renaming, to statewide media. Historical photos taken at a plaque reveal event.