



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: December 21, 2020
FROM: Denise Juneau, Superintendent
LEAD STAFF: Jeff Clark, Denny International Middle School Principal, jclark@seattleschools.org;
Aida Fraser-Hammer, Chief Sealth International High School Principal, aifraserhamm@seattleschools.org;
Fred Podesta, Chief Operations Officer, fhpodesta@seattleschools.org

For Introduction: March 24, 2021

For Action: April 7, 2021

1. TITLE

Approval to rename the Southwest Athletic Complex (SWAC) to the Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex

2. PURPOSE

This Board Action Report proposes the name of the Southwest Athletic Complex (SWAC) be changed to the Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board authorize the change of the name of the Southwest Athletic Complex (SWAC) to the Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Background

Nino Cantu skillfully served the community as a groundskeeper at the Southwest Athletic Complex (SWAC) and the campuses of Denny and Sealth for 18 years. From 2000-2018, Cantu made many amazing things possible at SWAC as the head groundskeeper and lead staff member for events at the stadium. Community events supported by Cantu were a wide array of highly popular activities, including:

- Countless Seattle Public Schools and Parks athletic events
- The Special Olympics
- High school graduation ceremonies for Chief Sealth and West Seattle
- The All-City Band Summer Band Jam
- East African community-run soccer games
- The Firefighters Games

In addition to head groundskeeper, Cantu joyfully described himself as an artist, with the grounds at SWAC, Denny, and Sealth as his canvas. It seemed as if he knew everyone by name and story. It was his positive attitude that made him a mentor to many students and

gardeners from around the city, a friend to all people, and a leader within the community. Tragically, Cantu passed away on Oct. 12, 2018.

Denny Lunchroom Manager Doree Fazio-Young eloquently described Cantu in this way, “He treated the staff, teachers, principals, and students of Seattle Public Schools and every community group he partnered with as if it was their personal stadium, like it belonged to them.”

b. Alternatives

Do not rename the SWAC and miss out on an opportunity to recognize a revered member of the community that served the district for nearly two decades.

c. Research

Outreach was done at Denny International Middle School in the form of a proposal shared at the Parent, Teacher, Student Association (PTSA) meeting, discussion with English, Spanish, and Somali families at another PTSA meeting, a proposal shared at an all-staff meeting, and an anonymous staff poll. Outreach also took place at Chief Sealth International High School through a proposal shared with school families via School Messenger and an opportunity for families to comment on the proposal at a virtual meeting with the principal.

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

The total cost for the new signage for the name change will be approximately \$4,000, which includes the sign and an installation fee. This cost will be covered by Capital.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

Outreach efforts were made with the Denny International Middle School community and with Chief Sealth International High School community. The proposal received incredibly strong and enthusiastic support.

Support from the Denny International Middle School community:

- The proposal shared at the Denny International Middle School PTSA Board meeting on Oct. 21, 2020. All PTSA officers were supportive.
- The proposal shared in English, Spanish, and Somali at the Denny International Middle School PTSA meeting on Oct. 27, 2020. More than 50 families and staff attended the meeting. Many enthusiastically supportive comments were shared. Everyone in attendance supported the idea.
- The proposal was shared at the Denny International Middle School all-staff meeting on Nov. 18, 2020. Once again, it received very strong support. To further seek staff feedback and support, an anonymous staff survey was sent asking staff if they supported the proposal. Eighty-seven staff members have indicated their support so far.

Support from the Chief Sealth International High School community:

- The proposal to rename the athletic complex to the Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex was raised during the 2019-2020 school year and was later discussed at a staff meeting on Sept. 28, 2020. On both occasions, the idea received full support. The formal proposal was shared with staff via email on Nov. 14, 2020, in which they were invited to share feedback, comments, and/or concerns. The following are some of the comments received from staff about the proposal:
 - “I think this is such a nice gesture.”
 - “Nino deserves this and should be memorialized. My support as a staff member of the Denny/Sealth pathway since 1992 is behind renaming SWAC after Nino. I can’t imagine anyone who knew him not supporting it.”
 - “Nino was also the dad of one of our amazing special education students, who I worked with in my early years here at Sealth. This is a great idea.”
 - “That would be so amazing, and I support it 100%!!!!”
- The written proposal was shared with the Chief Sealth families via School Messenger on Nov. 15, 2020. Parents also were invited to comment on it at the Principal’s Virtual Café on Nov. 19, 2020. The following is comment from a parent and community volunteer: “I heartily support honoring Nino by naming the SWAC after him. I was lucky to have worked with Nino for a few years while working. I was helping run the snack stand. Nino was always great to work with. Cheerful, enthusiastic and always willing to help. He remains greatly missed.”

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

This proposal is aligned with Board Policy 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity (parts E and H):

“E. Welcoming School Environments — The district shall ensure that each school creates a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects and supports the diversity of the School District’s student population, their families, and communities.

H. Recognizing Diversity — Consistent with state regulations and District policy and within budgetary considerations, the district shall provide materials and assessments that reflect the diversity of students and staff, and which are geared towards the understanding and appreciation of culture, class, language, ethnicity and other differences that contribute to the uniqueness of each student and staff member.”

School Policy 0030 was reviewed in the context of this proposal, and it is believed that renaming the SWAC The Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex is consistent with the racial equity goals of SPS. By honoring Cantu, a local African American/Latinx person, who advocated for students, families, and communities of color, the district will promote educational and racial equality in the school and the community.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

The students of Denny, Chief Sealth, and all schools in the Southwest region will see how the district celebrates and honors the great contributions of individuals within our community who constantly strive to make the lives of others more equitable and society more just.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)

Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)

Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy

Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract

Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter

Board Policy No. 6970 and Board Procedure 6970BP, Naming of School District Buildings, provides the Board shall approve this item

Other: _____

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

This action aligns with Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity (parts E and H), as it is designed to ensure a welcoming school environment and recognize diversity.

Per Board Policy No. 6970, Naming of School District Buildings, Board approval is required for all decisions to change the name of a building or a portion of a building.

This action is consistent with the procedural requirements set forth in the related Board Procedure, No. 6970BP.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was discussed at the Operations Committee meeting on March 11, 2021. The committee reviewed the motion and recommended it for approval.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the name of the Southwest Athletic Complex (SWAC) will change to the Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex.

April 2021: Community meetings will be held to co-design the roll-out process. Multilingual announcements will be shared throughout our community.

May – June 2021: The new sign will be created and installed.

Fall of 2021: A community celebration of the new name will be held at halftime of a Chief Sealth home football game.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Email of support from Superintendent Denise Juneau (for reference)
- The Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex Proposal (for reference)

Clark, Jeff

From: Juneau, Denise M
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 8:11 PM
To: Kokx, Sherri K
Cc: Clark, Jeff; Mirabueno, Sara; Wilson-Jones, Ellie S; Podesta, Fred H; Carter, Christopher E; Fraser-Hammer, Aida
Subject: Re: Name Change Request, The Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex

This is great news!
Thank you Principals Clark and Fraser-Hammer!
Denise

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 7, 2020, at 3:10 PM, Kokx, Sherri K <skkokx@seattleschools.org> wrote:

Sara,

Will you please support Principal Clark and Principal Fraser-Hammer in writing a BAR and moving it through OPS committee and to the Board.

Thanks,
<image001.png>
Sherri Kokx (she/her/hers)
Chief of Staff
Superintendent's Office
skkokx@seattleschools.org
T: 206.252.0634
C: 206.909.8712
2445 3rd Ave S. Seattle, WA 98134

From: Clark, Jeff <jclark@seattleschools.org>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 10:28 AM
To: Juneau, Denise M <Denise.Juneau@seattleschools.org>
Cc: Podesta, Fred H <fhpodesta@seattleschools.org>; Kokx, Sherri K <skkokx@seattleschools.org>; Carter, Christopher E

<cecarter@seattleschools.org>; Fraser-Hammer, Aida <aifraserhamm@seattleschools.org>

Subject: Name Change Request, The Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex

Good Morning Superintendent Juneau,

It is with great enthusiasm that we submit to you the attached request to re-name the Southwest Athletic Complex (SWAC) the Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex!

It is an immense honor to submit this request to you on behalf of the entire Denny/Sealth community of scholars, families, staff, and other community members!

We would be honored to speak with you more about this or present this at any upcoming School Board meeting.

As we have conducted outreach and gathered input on our proposal, we have received incredibly strong and enthusiastic support.

Specifically, our outreach and the corresponding support has included:

Strong support from the Denny International Middle School community:

- *Proposal shared at the Denny International Middle School PTSA Board meeting on Oct. 21: All of our PTSA officers were supportive*
- *Proposal shared in English, Spanish, and Somali at the Denny International Middle School PTSA meeting on Oct. 27: Over 50 families and staff were at the meeting. Many enthusiastically supportive comments were shared. Everyone in attendance supported the idea.*
- *Proposal was shared at the Denny International Middle School All-Staff meeting on Nov. 18: Once again, very strong support shared. To further seek staff feedback and support, an anonymous staff survey was sent asking staff if they supported the proposal—87 staff members have indicated their support so far!*

Strong support from the Chief Sealth Intenrtional High School community:

The proposal to rename the field to the Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex was raised during the 2019-2020 school year and was later discussed at a staff meeting on 9/28/2020. On both occasions, the idea received full support. The formal proposal was shared with staff via email on 11/14/2020 and they were invited to share feedback, comments and/or concerns. Following are some of the comments received from staff about the proposal:

"I think this is such a nice gesture 😊"

"Nino deserves this and should be memorialized. My support as a staff member of the Denny/Sealth pathway since 1992 is behind renaming SWAC after Nino. I can't imagine anyone who knew him not supporting it."

"Nino was also the dad of one of our amazing special education students who I worked with in my early years here at Sealth. This is a great idea."

"That would be so amazing and I support it 100%!!!!"

The written proposal was shared with the Chief Sealth families via SchoolMessenger on 11/15/2020. Parents were also invited to comment on it at the Principal's Virtual Café on 11/19/2020. Below is a comment from a parent and community volunteer.

"I heartily support honoring Nino by naming the SWAC after him. I was lucky to have worked with Nino for a few years while working I was helping run the snack stand. Nino was always great to work with. Cheerful, enthusiastic and always willing to help. He remains greatly missed."

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to support this request. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted by,

Jeff Clark and Aida Fraser-Hammer

Jeff Clark, Principal
Denny International Middle School
Go Dolphins!

Proposal: Change the name of the Southwest Athletic Complex (SWAC) to The Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex

Presented by Jeff Clark, Denny International Middle School Principal, and Aida Fraser-Hammer, Chief Sealth International High School Principal, on behalf of countless Seattle Public Schools students, staff, and families and many community members

Summary:

Mr. Nino Cantu skillfully served our community as a groundskeeper at the Southwest Athletic Complex (SWAC) and the campuses of Denny and Sealth for eighteen years. From 2000 – 2018, he made many amazing things possible at SWAC as the Head Groundskeeper and Lead staff member for events at our stadium. Community events supported by Mr. Cantu were a wide array of highly popular activities, including:

- Countless SPS and Parks Athletic Events
- The Special Olympics
- High School Graduation Ceremonies for Chief Sealth and West Seattle High Schools
- The All-City Band Summer Band Jam
- East African community-run soccer games
- The Firefighters Games
- And many, many more

In addition, as our Head Groundskeeper, Mr. Cantu joyfully described himself as an artist, with the grounds at SWAC, Denny, and Sealth as his canvas. It seemed as if he knew everyone by name and story. It was his positive attitude that made him a mentor to many students and gardeners from around the city, a friend to all people, and a leader within our community. Tragically, Mr. Cantu passed away on October 12, 2018.

Denny Lunchroom manager, Ms. Doree Fazio-Young, eloquently described Mr. Cantu in this way, “He treated the staff, teachers, principals, and students of Seattle Public Schools and every community group he partnered with as if it was their personal stadium, like it belonged to them.”

Please join our community in supporting the re-naming of our stadium as The Nino Cantu Southwest Athletic Complex!

