

**I-70 East Preferred Alternative Collaborative Team  
Interviews Survey of Swansea Elementary School Parents and Staff  
Summary  
May 18, 19 and 24, 2011**

**Introduction**

The I-70 East Preferred Alternative Collaborative Team (PACT) and a couple of attendees at the public meetings requested more targeted input from the Swansea neighborhood on whether the current alignment should shift north or south. The Keystone Center's PACT facilitators worked with the school principal of the Swansea Elementary School to identify several end-of-school events where parents would be gathering and could be interviewed. The principal also provided input on the interview questions and Spanish translation.

Interviews were conducted thirty minutes prior to and after school gatherings on May 18, 19 and 24, 2011. Interviews were conducted in Spanish and English.

**Questions and Answers**

**Live or work in the neighborhood?**

All those interviewed lived and/or worked in the neighborhood - North Swansea, South Swansea and Elyria. A few worked at the school.

**How far away from the school?**

Most of those interviewed lived 1-6 blocks, several lived 7-10 blocks away and only a few lived miles away (these were teachers)

**Have you heard about the project?**

Half of those interviewed had heard of the I-70 East project.

**Which shift would you prefer?**

Double the respondents preferred the south shift while some favored the north and a few felt it was a difficult choice or wanted neither.

For those who stated a preference for south, the majority said the school was in a good location now and wanted to keep it there, while some wanted to remove the odor from Purina. Also mentioned: fewer homes removed and the north is an extra struggle.

For those who preferred north, many said a new school is good as long as it is not near the track or new highway, that the school has been there a long time. Others mentioned that Purina has a lot of jobs, it moves it further from their house and the truck stop and motel are not desirable businesses.

A couple of those interviewed felt it was a difficult or hard decision because they want a new school that is close/walkable, but they didn't know where it could go.

A couple wanted neither the north nor south shifts.

**How would a north or south shift affect you?**

Many of those interviewed mentioned the north shift would have an effect on them. Mostly they mentioned the effect of the school moving further away – harder on children, more expensive to drive and not preferred. Several mentioned the big effort it would take to move the school and questioned where the children would go to school while the new one was being built. Several mentioned that the north shift would affect their homes directly and for a few it would affect where they work.

A few said that the south shift would affect them, their homes by moving closer or by acquiring their home. One said the effect would be less contamination from Purina.

Some other comments made:

- Would affect transportation to take kids to school.
- Neither would affect them because it is beneficial to traffic.
- They are going to take properties whatever.
- Prefer to stay the way it is.

### **How do you get your children to school?**

Most of those interviewed walk to school, many walk or drive, and a few ride the bus.

### **How far is too far to walk?**

Many said no more than 1-6 blocks, a few said no further than it is right now, and a couple said 1-2 miles.

### **How would you prefer your child get to school?**

Most who answered the question said they would prefer the bus, while many said walk.

### **Do you shop or work in any businesses in the neighborhood?**

Most mentioned Burger King, as well as shops on Washington, El Tepetate, the panaderia, meat market, Cricket and the beauty parlor, Wendy's, market, bakery, the shops at Josephine, Stop and shop, ice cream place, NWSS, the small stores.

### **What businesses or community buildings do you consider essential?**

Those community building mentioned most often include the recreation center and parks, and Our Lady of Grace Church. Others mentioned include: Gas station by Pilot, motel, stores, family resource center/Cross Coalition, school. Others said the small local businesses are important, also the offices that are close to the school that assist people, El Tepetate, libraries, butcher, Stop n Shop north side, and National Western Stock Show. One person said it is all important.

### **Any additional advice?**

- More effect with north shift and school. Tepetate should stay, though.
- Keep school where it is.
- Keep school where it is.
- Keep the school.
- Don't move the school.
- Keep school in community.
- Don't move, keep the school. Move Purina.
- Too much movement for the kids living in Swansea.

- Do not move school too far.
- School needs upgrade away from train tracks and highway. Health and safety for children, and in the future, is important. Need to be away from tornado siren. Neighborhood has a lot of impacts and need an upgrade for Swansea Rec Center.
- Should have been done a long time ago, it is too small.
- Most kids from south of highway go to Swansea, so move to Bruce Randolph wouldn't be too bad. Make the highway more presentable to save community property values for owners. Highway should not be close to a school. Prefer the realignment.
- Good for the children having a new school; families losing homes is not good.
- Big preference to not make ANY changes. Expansion will only make more traffic.
- People are affected by the change and the best thing would be to not change anything.
- Please keep it the way it is.
- The expansion already has too many lanes.
- Close-knit neighborhood; generations went to school here. Purina has been a good neighbor, work with kids.
- South would affect fewer small businesses.
- They're going to take it, so take it.
- The opinion of the community should be taken into consideration, and the parents' opinions are more important than mine.
- Families should be relocated and sell their homes successfully for a fair price.
- Hurry up and build.