

# YMCA looking to expand its reach

■ Organization in talks with school districts in Eden Area to find a host site for a youth sports

By Aaron Morrison

STAFF WRITER

There are only five YMCA sites operating child care services in the Hayward and Castro Valley Eden Area community, and a planned gradual expansion of YMCA programs has been slowed because of a hiccup in plans to acquire funding that would deepen services in the area.

But these communities need not be immediately concerned.

The YMCA is in talks with school districts in the Eden Area to find a host site for a youth sports program that it will introduce in the fall.

The new program, which aims to take a more "holistic" approach to childhood health and well-being, is why Diane Mann, a member of the YMCA of the East

Please see **YMCA**, Local 2



**KIDS IN THE YMCA DAY CAMP** enjoy morning activities Friday at Marshall Elementary just before attending a swimming field trip in Castro Valley.

AARON MORRISON — Staff

## YMCA looks to expand service reach

► **YMCA**, from Local 1

Bay Board of Directors, remains optimistic about where the organization is in its Mission Enhancement Project for the Eden Area community.

In the plan, proceeds from the sale of YMCA property in Hayward, referred to as the Palisade property, would be used to enhance current programs and to create new ones.

"I think we are positioned to move ahead. We just haven't found the right buyer yet," Mann said of the property on Palisade Street in Hayward, which is about five acres in size.

Some time ago, the property was taken off the market because the land would not support a low-income housing facility, for which, according to Mann, the land was designated.

The halt in the sale will not affect the sports program, Mann said.

Almost a year ago, the enhancement project was introduced to the community, with a goal of positioning the YMCA as

a leading youth and family development organization in the Eden Area, which includes the Hayward-Castro Valley area.

Debra Black and her 9-year-old daughter, Morgan, live in Hayward. Debra says she wishes there were more program offerings in the neighborhood.

Her daughter attends the YMCA summer day camp at Marshall Elementary in Castro Valley, which doubles as a child care service in the late afternoons.

"It's a good program with good activities," Black said. "My daughter used to be a latchkey kid through the Hayward school district program, and she was less active there."

The youth sports program will target younger children ages 4 to 11, Mann said. And on the weekends, the program will operate from a site within the Hayward or Castro Valley school district.

The YMCA hopes to pin down a site for the sports program by the middle of September.

The program will operate using small program fees on a sliding scale, Mann said. The organization also offers program scholarships to help lower-income families.

The organization now provides a health and nutrition program in its early learning center in the county building on Amador Street in Hayward, which educates preschool-aged children on proper nutrition.

A grant from Kaiser Permanente last year allowed the expansion of this program to additional sites.

Existing programs in the Eden Area community have survived because of membership revenue from the Oakland and Richmond gym facilities.

"We've been working on this expansion for a year and a half," Mann said. "It's still in its early stages and remains a priority."

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