

To: Members of the Del Mar Union School District 7/11 Committee

Date: October 21, 2009

RE: Opposition to Potential Closure of Del Mar Hills School

I am unable to attend tonight's meeting but wanted to send my comments by e-mail.

I am a neighborhood resident and my children previously attended Del Mar Hills. I am aware of the unique education program that is offered at this District school and would be greatly saddened to see Del Mar Hills close. I believe it would create a substantial loss for students, our community, and for the District at large.

Many of the programs now implemented across the District were first established at Del Mar Hills through support of the exceptional teachers and the parent community of this school. JiJi, the innovative math program that our children loved, is an excellent example. This program was identified by the Del Mar Hills staff and funded by the parents (without financial support from the District). JiJi has improved math proficiency, raised national test scores, and provided the District a new curriculum option for all of its students. This is just one of many examples of the partnering by staff and community. The integrated curriculum encouraging science, art, music, and technology has provided a unique model of success that has been the basis for similar integrated learning programs throughout the District. In each of these areas, (art, music, science and technology) you will find countless other examples of the outstanding learning structure that has been created and has allowed Del Mar Hills to achieve the Blue Ribbon School status it so well deserves.

The fact that Del Mar Hills has raised the most money per capita to support ESC teachers reflects the unique partnership between the community and this school. The willingness of the parent community to integrate new programs into the curriculum and support the integrated learning structure is evidence of the confidence they have for the exceptional teaching staff. Their financial contributions and, as importantly, their volunteer support in the classroom, demonstrates that they will do whatever it takes to work in partnership for the best interest of our children. I was highly involved in fundraising for ESC teachers when my children attended Del Mar Hills and support the continued efforts of the parent group in this regard. *The students of today are the leaders of tomorrow so providing them the best chance for success should always be foremost in our concerns as a District.*

I would hope that this committee would strongly value the intangible assets that Del Mar Hills provides when considering the financial concerns created by the state of the economy and recent budget cuts in public school funding. While it is clear this committee does not have an easy task, it is equally clear that closing Del Mar Hills would result not only in the loss of a neighborhood school, but in the loss of a great community partnership that affords so many benefits to this District.

Thank you for your time and continued consideration.

Regards,  
Jana Stoudemire  
Neighborhood Resident and Parent of Former Students