

**7/11 DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PURSUANT TO EDUCATION CODE SECTION 17387**



Regular Meeting
Wednesday, November 4, 2009
5:30 p.m.

Del Mar Hills School
14085 Mango Drive, Del Mar, CA 92014

Call to Order – *Time: 5:34 p.m.*

Flag Salute: Led by Shirley Bales

Present: Members Jennifer Emberger, Wayne Harris, Janet Handzel, Susan Paul, Cinda Peck, Bob Shopes, Randy Wheaton, and administrative assistant Shirley Bales were present.

Also in attendance: Amy Caterina, Kelli Politoske, Nichole Holliday, Tom Sohn, Katherine Sohn, Estele dellanos, Audry Levine, Cathy Ingrassia, Heidi Niehart, Sean Harkson, Sara McMenamin, Jonathon Garvey, Donna Pare, Wendi Santino-Ramseyer, Molly Schneider, Jeanette Nichols, Darlene Klugherz, Lea Gottlieb, Nan Aposhian, Juli Oh, Rosanne Rennie Holliday, Vicki Hutchison, Marybeth Norgren, Sara Wingate, Kaarin Musgrave, Joanna Roddis, Deborah Muns-Park, Yair Aizenman, Ed Rodriguez, Sonia Nayak, Elizabeth Prag.

Approval of the Agenda

Amendments: Agenda Item 5, the date was corrected to October 28, 2009. Agenda Items 9 and 10 merged into Agenda Item 9--Presentation and discussion of proposals A-I. Agenda Item 10 was stricken.

Public Comments will be interspersed throughout the agenda, prior to presentations, between agenda items 4 and 5, and at the end of the agenda. Chair Shopes stated that speakers will be limited to 3 minutes each per topic.

Upon motion by Randy Wheaton, seconded by Jennifer Emberger, the Committee unanimously approved Agenda as amended.

Approval of the Minutes – Meeting of October 21, 2009

Upon motion by Wayne Harris, seconded by Randy Wheaton, the Minutes of October 21, 2009, as amended, were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Amy Caterina, Del Mar Hills parent, presented a Save Our Schools Community summary with over 400 comments to the 7/11 DAC. The Save Our Schools Committee wishes to unite the

district, put kids first, and save all schools from closure on behalf of parents, teachers, administrators, and community members. These comments will be posted on their website: www.saveourdelmarschools.org.

Beth Westberg, Del Mar Hills parent, proposed a joint effort between Administration and the Board of Trustees to take school closure off the table, as school closure will not generate enough savings. She questions the district values and judgments in approving new Director of Human Resources, and believes that other more significant cuts should be taken before irrevocable cuts to high performing, award winning schools.

Estelle Dellanos, Del Mar Hills parent, stated that Ed Code applies to surplus school space, but is not a process to be used in a fiscal crisis. Ed Code Section 17390, states a DAC shall review projected school enrollment and other data, establish a priority list of surplus space and real property, prioritize these recommendations and circulate throughout the community, make a final determination on limits of tolerance on space usage to forward to the district governing body.

Jeff Harasha, Del Mar Hills parent, stated that he does not want Del Mar Hills or any other school to close. He recommended the DAC analyze pedestrian safety for children crossing Del Mar Heights Road, and to include in any proposal to close a school or split grades money for stop lights or crossing bridges, as nothing is more important than child safety.

Old and New Business, Presentations

Direction from the DMUSD Board of Trustees given October 28, 2009

The Board of Trustees, at their regular meeting of October 28, 2009, discussed District Office space. The Board directed the 7/11 DAC to use the range of 15,000 to 25,000 square feet when looking at District Office space.

Heidi Niehart, Ashley Falls parent, presented a letter put forth to the community and signed by approximately 100 community members. With District Office space of 15,000-25,000 square feet, that requires chopping up or closing a school. She recommended that at least one proposal from the 7-11 DAC to the Board of Trustees be to purchase or build a separate building to house District Offices.

Facilitator Position

Member Janet Handzel addressed the facilitator position and read from Chapter 1 of Closing Schools Best Practice Guide which states that committee members should be responsible community members, that the Superintendent or Board of Trustees members should not be on the committee, and the Committee itself may elect a chair.

Presentation and discussion of site operational costs -- Dena Whittington, DMUSD Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

Dena Whittington, DMUSD Assistant Superintendent of Business Services distributed site operational costs to the 7-11 DAC, based on expense budgets per site in the current school year.

All numbers were from unrestricted general funds, restricted funds such as special ed and cafeteria were not included.

Member Handzel asked for these costs to be broken down into percentages. Assistant Superintendent Whittington will prepare percentages and get those figures out to committee members.

Chair Shopes stated that the DAC needs fixed costs at a school totally broken out: operational cost per site; predicted estimates for 09-10, 08-09; actual expenses for 08-09; a variance table; and he is also looking for 12 months of utility bills. Chair Shopes has a May 2008 budget workshop document and is looking for equivalent version for this year.

Member Harris stated the committee should get through the numbers they have then ask for further information as needed.

Process of gaining consensus on draft proposals

Chair Shopes stated that the committee has nine proposals to discuss at this meeting. Each member will spend approximately 5 minutes to present each proposal. After the proposal is presented, committee members will discuss the pros and cons of each proposal.

Of the nine proposals, there are:

- 3 closures
- 4 reconfigurations
- 2 to build new building on surplus property

Member Handzel handed out a summary spreadsheet of proposals with categories.

Presentation and discussion of draft proposals

Proposal A, presented by Member Wheaton, proposed moving District Offices to Torrey Hills using the Southwest corner of the property. Move Maintenance operations to Del Mar Hills. Technology would remain at Del Mar Hills, moving in one more portable next to the current technology portables. This proposal would reconfigure Del Mar Hills for K-2 students, 3-6 students to Del Mar Heights, keeping all schools up and running. Afterschool childcare would remain at Ashley Falls, Preschool and Employee Childcare would move to Del Mar Hills.

This proposal would install a modular building at Torrey Hills for District offices, plus cover any necessary upgrades for Preschool/employee childcare program. Member Wheaton advocates an open bay metal building for Maintenance Operations.

The starting cost for a modular structure is \$65 per square foot; a new building is between \$250/300 per square foot; and modernization costs are between \$125-\$150 per square foot. The longevity of a modular office building is 15-25 years (although less for a classroom).

Members asked about access to the District Office building. Member Wheaton looked at the Torrey Hills parking lot and counted off additional parking spots, considered adequate parking,

and would section off a portion of the campus, which could be separate without accessing the rest of the school campus. The rest of the campus is not at this time fenced off, but District Offices could be within a fenced area. Torrey Hills has the most land in the district with 14 acres, so there is a lot of space. Looking at southwest area, there is an ability to screen off from the surrounding neighborhood. Torrey was built for future expansions, with utility lines already run out to that area.

Proposal B, presented by Member Harris, proposed closing Del Mar Hills, moving District Offices, Preschool plus Maintenance Operations to Del Mar Hills, with an estimated cost savings of \$394,000. All students west of I-5 would stay enrolled west of I-5, with the exception of SDC students attending Del Mar Heights would move to Ashley Falls.

Some weaknesses of this proposal are Del Mar Heights will be at or near capacity and traffic congestion will increase in the Del Mar Heights neighborhood.

Proposal C, presented by Member Harris, proposed keeping all schools open, preschool at Sycamore Ridge, District Offices at Del Mar Hills, Maintenance operations at Torrey Hills, Technology to Ashley Falls, Childcare Administration at Ashley Falls.

With 14 acres at Torrey Hills, Maintenance operations would separate from the school building on the southwest corner of the campus. Del Mar Hills would be limited to 14 sections for District Offices to fit. Capital improvement money from sale of Shores property could not be used to lease space for new District Offices. Lease money would come from the General fund and negatively impact school finances. Closing a school saves money from the DMUSD General Fund.

For future refinement, with preschool already at Sycamore Ridge, it is convenient to have employee childcare there in the short run, although Sycamore Ridge is projected for substantial future growth so preschool may have to move in the long-run.

Proposal D, presented by Member Shopes proposes to reconfigure Del Mar Hills and Del Mar Heights, K-3 to Del Mar Heights, 4-6 to Del Mar Hills, Preschool ECC to Sycamore Ridge, Technology to Ashley Falls, Maintenance operations to Torrey Hills (or purchase property in Sorrento Valley).

This proposal aggregates students by reconfiguring Del Mar Hills and Heights, keeps students together, keeps boundaries the same, split between 2 sites. Savings are close to \$250,000.

Proposal E, presented by Member Shopes proposes to keep all schools open, Maintenance operations at Del Mar Hills, Childcare Administration at Torrey Hills, ECC/preschool at Sycamore Ridge, District Offices at Ashley Falls. This is a revision to a proposal Members Emberger and Shopes came up with 2-3 months ago.

To allocate the district needs across the district, Ashley Falls has the most classrooms available and the District Office has the most need for space.

Additionally, this proposal recommends an investment of \$4M in capital funds in renewable energy projects that will yield an immediate rebate of \$1M and could add up to \$20M in lower operating costs and rebates over the next 25 years.

Weaknesses of this proposal are with growth in future, this proposal would fill Sycamore Ridge and Ashley Falls if no reboundary is done in 5-10 years. Preschool may have to move in 8-10 years if growth occurs.

Information from energy professionals indicated that there was no alternative energy cost savings in DMUSD. DMUSD spends over \$500K annually in electrical costs. There is a high potential of solar panels for cost savings. DMUSD can produce more electricity than used and SDGE has to buy back that excess electricity. Member Shopes stated this may not be within the purview of 7/11 DAC, and he is not certain if capital outlay money can be used for that energy investment.

Proposal F, presented by Member Shopes proposes to locate District Offices at Carmel Del Mar, relocate Carmel Del Mar's moderate to severe SDC to Ashley Falls, includes a boundary change for areas 15C and 15D from Carmel Del Mar to Ashley Falls, moving 65 students.

DAC Members questioned student safety, and Member Shopes proposed moving portables toward the North side of the campus, with the Northwest area of the school cordoned off for District Offices (where 2nd and 1st grade are now) down below the driveway for 12 rooms with separate access and gates. It was noted that Carmel Del Mar is maxed out on portables and moving portables may not be possible due to access needed for fire trucks, emergency vehicles etc.

Member Handzel stated she does not like moving any SDC, not so much the cost but for those students to undergo a change is such a big concern, as those are the most impacted students. Member Shopes agreed that a professional opinion was needed on any move of SDC students.

Upon motion by Cinda Peck to extend the meeting to 9:30 p.m., seconded by Wayne Harris, it was unanimously approved to extend meeting time to 9:30 p.m.

Proposal G presented by Member Shopes is similar proposal A, to build a new 15,000-25,000 s.ft. building at Torrey Hills for District Offices, move Preschool/ECC to Sycamore Ridge.

Member Wheaton asked if there is enough room for District Offices and Maintenance Operations at Torrey Hills. It would infringe upon Southwest corner plus the adjacent North corner. (The Southwest corner is estimated at 9,000 s.ft.) Architect Frisco White prepared a one story and a two story version of dimensionality. Encroaching upon the North corner would take away blacktop from students. This proposal could also place maintenance operations away from a school site. The least amount of open space taken away from kids is a good thing.

Member Harris asked Member Paul about space at Torrey Hills. At lunchtime all students are together on the playground, which would mean more kids in a smaller space. Although Torrey Hills with 14 acres has the most space, the design of Torrey Hills has classroom pods spaced out over a larger footprint. This year, the Kindergarten area is extremely limited with five Kindergarten classes.

Proposal H, presented by Member Emberger, proposes to close Ashley Falls, disperse students to Sycamore Ridge and Carmel Del Mar (possibly also Sage Canyon), relocate District Offices, employee childcare, and special need preschool to Ashley Falls. Move Maintenance operations to Del Mar Hills.

Member Emberger originally prepared this proposal based upon the reasons DMUSD has a 7/11 DAC, which are budget issues, excess capacity, and a concurrent need for district offices. She culled through information in the binder looking at enrollment and projections (which are not perfect particularly the further out), and determined Ashley Falls has the greatest amount of excess capacity; 44% of excess space in DMUSD is between Ashley Falls and Sycamore Ridge. A steep decline in enrollment occurred at Ashley Falls upon opening Sycamore Ridge. At this time, Sycamore Ridge is essentially underutilized.

Member Emberger wanted to highlight fact that excess space lies East of I-5. West of I-5 is stable and slightly increasing. When preparing her original proposal, she was not aware of Mello Roos complications. Potential closure of Ashley Falls has excess space to reasonably absorb District Offices, Preschool, and Maintenance operations.

With Joint Use issues, Ashley Falls may not work for Maintenance operations, and this refined proposal moves maintenance to Del Mar Hills.

One of the weaknesses in closing Ashley Falls, those students would be relocated to Sycamore Ridge and Carmel Del Mar, putting those schools at capacity.

Member Harris stated that clearly Ashley Falls has excess space, but when Sycamore Ridge builds out those kids have no place to go. This year there are 432 students at Ashley Falls, with 408 projected at Ashley Falls for 2010. Ashley Falls still has joint use issues with District Office parking and usage. Member Harris has walked the grounds with the principal regarding the ability to fence the area for security, and Joint Powers Authority has turned the principal down for a fence.

Member Emberger stated that in 2014, according to Decision Insight, DMUSD is projected to be at 89% capacity. The DAC will present proposals (Close School A, Close School B, do not close any schools) to the Board of Trustees and they will make the decisions. Member Emberger urged the committee to include a proposal to not close a school at all.

Proposal I, presented by Member Handzel, proposes to consolidate Del Mar Hills and Heights. Member Handzel's proposal fits into her earlier proposal.

Consolidate Del Mar Hills and Heights at Del Mar Heights by September 2010. Reuse Del Mar Hills for District Offices and Maintenance operations. Move Preschool & ECC to Sycamore Ridge. Move Heights SDC to Ashley Falls. Technology does not have to move. Change boundaries for areas 16G, J, and K to Carmel Del Mar. There is a safety issue for those kids who cross I-5 everyday, and may not have parents available to pick up and drop off. The Boys and Girls club will stay at Del Mar Hills. This proposal eliminates any Joint Use issues and

addresses growth at eastern end of district. Does not have use of a modular building for maintenance.

Member Handzel stated that closing a school is the way to realize the fiscal return for the district. Technology does not have to move.

Upon motion by Bob Shopes, seconded by Wayne Harris, to extend the meeting to 9:45 p.m., the committee unanimously approved extending the meeting to 9:45 p.m.

Public Comment

Martha Cox, community member and retired DMUSD employee, stated that not one option she can see has placement of District Offices anywhere but a school site, specifically purchase of a commercial property to provide a revenue stream for district, although making such a proposal may fly in the face of Board direction.

Removal of proposal(s) from consideration

Schedule public hearings and/or regular meetings

Upon motion by Bob Shopes to table Agenda Items 11 and 12 to the next meeting, seconded by Jennifer Emberger, the committee unanimously approved tabling Agenda Items 11 and 12 to the next meeting.

Public Comment

Darlene Kluherz, on behalf of Heidi Neihart—spoke on behalf of Wendy Ramseyer, attorney and Ashley Falls parent, reiterated that district's legal counsel stood before this committee and said DMUSD could not close a Mello Roos school, and reminded the DAC that joint use parking is only 30 minutes before school and 30 minutes after school. Please take Ashley Falls off the table for closure.

Elizabeth Prag, Del Mar Hills parent, stated she does not want Del Mar Hills to close, while she understands the cost savings, but 600 students is not an easy fit at Del Mar Heights, traffic not easy. The committee has not determined Del Mar Hills might be better school to remain open. 90% capacity does not leave much wiggle room if demographics are wrong.

Beth Westsburg, Del Mar Hills parent, stated that based upon her observations she believes cost savings have dropped to under \$200K. The District has never said it would lease a property, and the imaginary preschool income may not be. The forecast is only for a \$200,000 deficit. If taxes go up, we will have a surplus. She would rather lose ESC than close a school, Option G is the best.

Donna Pare, Del Mar Hills parent, has listened to the talk about moving students around, displacement of students and impact on families, and realizes economics are a problem. As a real estate investor for 31 years, if anyone has money right now to buy or build a commercial property that would be the most cost effective solution with no displacement at all. DMUSD

will make the most money of all options with a commercial property, which will also allow for future growth.

Holly McClurg, Ass't Supt., Instructional Services, spoke that any proposal to divide the District Office would damage its functions. It is imperative the DAC consider the following: First a united District Office provides a single point of contact to public. Second, to have fences erected to address safety issues, parking issues and visitors to the District. Third, a disaster response and crisis center is required to have an offsite command center. Fourth, Human Resources, Business Services, Instructional Services, Special Ed interact continuously every day, share records, and need access to each other.

Public Communication

None

Adjournment

Move to adjourn by Bob Shopes, seconded by Janet Handzel, the committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:57 p.m.

Adjournment – *Time: 9:57 p.m.*