

Hi, I am Beth Westburg, 1439 Oribia Road

First, I would like to say thank you to all of you for volunteering to be on this committee. But, I have to say I feel sorry for you because you are responsible for making one of the most important decisions that a district makes and, to date, you have been given incorrect, inaccurate, incomplete, and/or misleading information. Or worse, space requirements that have not been approved by the school board. How can the community respect your decision when the data used is bad? I will focus on the Preschool issue.

I attend most district board meetings and I can only remember one time hearing about the preschool concept. It was a comment by Sharon McClain saying she thought the district could open up a preschool and make a profit. The board responded that they were interested in seeing a proposal. And, to date, and I may be wrong, I have seen no proposal. So, I ask why have you been tasked with finding space for a large preschool program that has not even been discussed by the board or community. It appears that the preschool is a major factor in determining options regarding closing a school and we think it should be taken off the table immediately as a space requirement with the exception of the mandated preschool which requires much less space.

1. Where is the detailed business plan? Is it the prevue of this committee to indirectly set policy regarding the district's preschool dream? No business or institution would ever dedicate space to an enterprise without a solid business plan and/or discussion or in this case, where is the school board's approval of this preschool plan and space allocation?
2. Can the district spend taxpayers money on facilities that are for the benefit of students they are not legally responsible to accommodate?
3. Will the community support a preschool? What if it lost money? Can the district afford the risk?

I think we can agree that this committee's primary responsibility is to provide the best facilities to all k-6 students and special Ed preschoolers within our boundaries. The district's responsibility is to the district students. Why are we building or remodeling facilities for students that the district is not required to accommodate and why are we willing to sacrifice existing district children by putting them in portables and overcrowded schools. Why should non-district preschoolers enjoy newer and better facilities than students at CDM, Hills and Heights?

Morally and ethically, it is wrong for the district to make a profit on the back of any child. While, I agree it would be nice to earn extra money, I remind you that school districts are not in the business of making money; they are in the business of educating children. School districts must provide equitable facilities to all students. Again, it is not right to downgrade any child's facility in order to make a profit.

In closing I question the district's moral, ethical and legal responsibilities to existing district students in intentionally harming school communities, neighborhoods, and let's not forget, the children, to create space for a non-mandated district preschool. I ask that you find a home for the existing preschool only. It is not right to close any school to accommodate an ill-conceived whim to offer services to non-district children. Profit or not! Please put the district's and our children first.

Thank you for listening and considering my questions. I look forward to hearing the answers later in the meeting.