

November 18, 2009

Dear 7-11 Committee,

I am deeply troubled by the unresolved facilities issue that is at the root of several equity problems and the solution to some of the district's financial distress. I believe the district and board have an obligation to represent and serve all students in the district, on both sides of the freeway. And, I am thankful for your thorough and careful consideration on this matter.

As the committee nears its December deadline, **it is incumbent upon you to do what is in the best interest of every student in Del Mar** and not placate a small and vocal group who are vigilantly protecting their school at the expense of students across the district. The only responsible solution is to close a school.

One consequence of protracted inaction is that parents are being asked to contribute more to DMSEF in order to keep the programs that compelled us to buy homes in the district. These are challenging times for the economy, but we were asked to fundraise for programs that could be funded by closing an under capacity facility. All students are now short changed by the \$700,000 ESC reduction while the parents are paying more for less.

The idea of further increasing class sizes for everyone is again sacrificing learning around the community to preserve two half full schools in close proximity. One published report suggests that each student at Del Mar Hills annually costs \$1,000 more than their peers at Sage Canyon! The \$300,000 personnel and operations cost savings must be distributed equitably so that class sizes can be preserved.

As an educator, the proposal to reduce valuable planning time for all teachers to protect a small percent of the district's enrollment is unfair to all students. I know first hand that to maximize learning, teachers need time to plan effective lessons and collaborate to improve instruction. We are proud of the API's made possible by personnel who donate time and money to go above and beyond for our kids; to strip away planning is short sighted and resources are available by combining students to achieve optimal facility capacity.

As the father of a third grader who was placed in a combination class to save the district money last year, I also object to the elimination of aides to support multi-grade classrooms. It is impossible to teach two sets of standards effectively or rigorously with one teacher. I consented to a combination classroom for my daughter largely because of a direct appeal from the principal who promised additional support and smaller class size. Combinations are a cost savings measure in and of themselves - these students should not be asked to further compromise their education while one teacher juggles two grade levels.

Additional fundraising, larger classes, reducing planning, and eliminating combo class aides should be last resorts. **To maximize resources for everyone, the only option is to combine student populations and centralize the district staff in the vacated site.**

Respectfully submitted,  
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