

## **DEL MAR UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Date:** February 10, 2010

**To:** Board of Trustees

**From:** Sharon L. McClain Ed.D.  
Superintendent

**Re:** 7/11 District Advisory Committee Final Report  
Recommendations

### **BACKGROUND**

The placement of the District Office has been characterized as an issue between the District and the schools in the District. This is not the case. This is an issue about the best interests of all students in the Del Mar Union School District now and in the future. Whatever decision is made by the Board, that decision will impact all students.

It is also important to understand that in any decision-making process, “no decision” is an option. However, I believe that making no decision at this time simply guarantees that at a future date, a more severe set of circumstances will be presented for a decision to be made.

On March 25, 2009, the Board of Trustees approved the formation of a 7/11 District Advisory Committee to consider the space requirements for a district office, Maintenance and Operations (M&O), and space for a preschool that would incorporate the special needs preschool, employee childcare and perhaps an expanded public preschool.

The 7/11 DAC held 19 regular meetings from May 2009 through January 2010 including two to visit DMUSD properties. Additionally, the 7/11 DAC held three special public hearings in December 2009. The 7/11 DAC Final Report was approved on January 11, 2010 and presented to the Board of Trustees on January 13, 2010.

The 7/11 DAC reviewed current space usage and located 40,000 square feet of total excess space in the DMUSD, but no one school site had greater than 10,000 square feet of excess space. A 15,000 – 25,000 square feet district office and 10 (or 14) rooms for a preschool could be accommodated either by closure of a school or by utilizing existing sites with some rearrangement. A 5,000 sq. ft. building for Maintenance and Operations is in excess of the 15,000 to 25,000 square feet district office needs.

With this background in mind, I respectfully submit the following recommendation.

**RECOMMENDATION: CLOSE NO SCHOOL. PURCHASE A PROPERTY FOR DISTRICT OFFICE AND MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS. LOCATE DISTRICT PRESCHOOL/ CHILDCARE AT SYCAMORE RIDGE SCHOOL.**

1. The current real estate market provides a prudent opportunity to invest in property.
2. Once a property is identified and tenant improvements are complete, funds in excess of the available \$8.3m in the Special Reserve for Capital Outlay may be used for future childcare facilities. This would make available up to \$1.7m in reserves in the Enterprise Fund for transfer to the General Fund where they can be used for operating expenses and budget deficit reduction. Excess funds could also be used to relocate the employee preschool.
3. The purchase of property responds to the concerns of school communities regarding school reconfiguration or closure.
4. Acquisition of a facility dedicated to district services would accommodate most, if not all, of the District's current departments in one location.
5. The resolution of where to locate district office facilities will allow district staff to focus more fully on the students' instructional program.
6. A facility dedicated to district office services will provide a focal point for school support services and community needs.
7. The District Preschool/Childcare program will relocate to a school site.
8. If a facility cannot be found to co-locate District Office functions with Maintenance and Operations, a separate property should be secure for Maintenance and Operations services

This recommendation was previously submitted to the Board on January 20, 2010.

If a suitable property cannot be purchased, the District must then place District Office services in a temporary location.

**RECOMMENDED TEMPORARY CO-LOCATION OPTION:**

Co-locate the District Office at Del Mar Hills Academy. Locate Maintenance and Operations on a leased or purchased property within the District's boundaries or as close as possible. Locate the District Preschool at Sycamore Ridge.

Note: This temporary plan does not provide adequate space for the long-term effectiveness of District Office functions.

The recommendation requires the following actions:

- (1) Reconfigure space within Del Mar Hills Academy to temporarily accommodate District Office personnel.

*The facilities for District Office use will be located on the west side of the campus with a separate entrance*

*This will allow for adequate space for the District Office staff to temporarily*

- a. *function together as a single point of contact for the public,*
- b. *provide communication and coordination of services, and*
- c. *provide one location of central office staff for incident command in case of an emergency.*

*The MUR (Multi Use Room) will continue to be used as a Board meeting room.*

- (2) Locate Maintenance & Operations on a leased or purchased site within or near district boundaries.
- (3) Locate Employee and Community Childcare/Preschool at Sycamore Ridge.

*The Employee and Community Child Care and Preschool program can be co-located on the Sycamore Ridge School site with the Special Needs Preschool Program. This will create a rich program of integration for the special needs and typical child preschool programs.*

**RECOMMENDED TEMPORARY LEASE OPTION: LEASE SUITABLE OFFICE SPACE AND CONTINUE TO INVESTIGATE PROPERTY FOR SALE.**

1. To minimize moving costs and disruption of District services, the District has placed a formal request on the Agenda of the Del Mar City Council on February 22, 2010 to discuss mutually advantageous terms of remaining on the current property.
2. Lease of property on a short-term basis would allow the District to further investigate suitable property for purchase as a long-term investment. However, this may result in an increased purchase price at a later date as the economy improves.
3. Our current understanding is that lease payments are required to be expended from the General Fund, reducing resources available for instructional programs.
4. Additional moving costs will be incurred to move District Office staff more than once.
5. The Special Reserve for Capital Outlay funding would be expended for tenant improvements that the District Office would be able to utilize only temporarily.
6. The District earns interest on the Special Reserve for Capital Outlay at the San Diego County Treasury Pool rate. If the funding were invested in real property, the District could continue to experience a return on the investment.