

# SYCAMORE RIDGE PTA

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Dear Sycamore Ridge Families,

I am writing to give you an update on the district's Open House where the proposals for the "option" areas and Child Development Center (CDC) and special needs preschool (SPED) were presented. There were several option areas proposed in which students in an impacted school's boundary would have the option to attend a school that is not impacted. The option area proposal is posted on the district website at: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/blue-turtle/dmusd/documents/2012/12130.pdf>

There has been some confusion over the option areas, so I wanted to attempt to clarify a few aspects. The option area would affect new students coming to Sycamore Ridge, not current students. Siblings of current students would have priority getting into Sycamore should our school be full.

The CDC/SPED program currently occupies the entire "F" wing of our school. These rooms were designed for Kindergarten students with bathrooms in the classrooms, tile floors, space for painting, etc. Sycamore Ridge allowed usage of the "F" wing as we felt it was the right thing to do on a temporary basis. Our Principal and our incredible teachers and staff have made it "work" in order to keep things running smoothly and provide minimal negative repercussions to our students. However, Sycamore is continuing to grow and we no longer can give up an entire wing of our school to a supplementary program. Currently every single classroom is being used at our school. A few of our classes were enrolled over the class size cap this year. As we continue to grow, we will need the additional classroom space that the CDC/SPED is using. Additionally, with the programs here, there has been an increase in traffic, safety issues due to the number of people in and out of our campus, and a severe lack of parking due to 40 additional CDC/SPED staff. We do not have any street parking in front of our school due to the bike lane and only 80 spots in our lot, so parents are frustrated with the situation and many have cut down on their volunteering due to this frustration.

The proposal presented at Monday night's Open House has not been posted on the district website, but a parent received a copy from the district office. We have posted the proposal on the PTA website. The proposal used the "F" wing design as the "ideal" model for the CDC/SPED program which led to the cost comparison for our site being significantly less than other sites. The "CONS" under the Sycamore Ridge slide did not list some of the negative effects that were listed on other school's slides like "loss of green space" or "community roads don't support additional growth". Since we are currently making the situation "work", I believe the CONS were overlooked. The costs listed for Sycamore did not include an upgrade to the classrooms that are currently used by our Kindergarten students to provide them with a classroom equivalent to the ones they gave up in the F wing nor did they include the cost of portable classrooms for our K-6 students to insure space for all students within our boundary if the CDC/SPED stays on our campus.

By setting up the "F" wing scenario as the ideal, the proposal made the CDC/SPED program the highest priority. The needs of a supplementary program would take precedence over the needs of our

K-6 children. If the CDC/SPED program is moved from Sycamore, we would have space for all K-6 children within our boundary for many years. There would not be a need for portable classrooms which would take up space on our uppergrade field nor would there be a need for the district to create an “option” area or designate Ashley Falls as an overflow site if our school is full. This is particularly relevant since there are currently 17 empty classrooms at Ashley Falls. It does not seem logical for Sycamore Ridge to become impacted and need portables to accommodate our students when Ashley Falls has empty space that could be used for the CDC/SPED program.

Our school’s purpose is to provide a quality (and I believe top notch) education to Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> grade students. We cannot continue to house a supplementary program at our school at the expense of the education of our students. Additionally, the neighborhoods within our school’s boundary paid and are continuing to pay Mello Roos for the building of our elementary schools. I do not have the specifics on how the Mello Roos is written for each development, but am working to obtain this information. However, I question whether Mello Roos funds can be used to fund any additional construction on our campus due to the housing of a supplemental program.

I encourage you to attend the February 29<sup>th</sup> DMUSD Board meeting at 5:45pm at Del Mar Hills to voice your concerns to the Board. I also encourage you to write to our Superintendent and our Board members: [jpeabody@dmusd.org](mailto:jpeabody@dmusd.org), [kgibson@dmusd.org](mailto:kgibson@dmusd.org), [drafner@dmusd.org](mailto:drafner@dmusd.org), [dperkins@dmusd.org](mailto:dperkins@dmusd.org), [crodriguez@dmusd.org](mailto:crodriguez@dmusd.org), and [swooden@dmusd.org](mailto:swooden@dmusd.org) . You must email ALL of the Board members for them to read and respond to your message. Lastly I encourage you to attend the “Coffee with the Principal” on Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:10am in the staff lounge. Mrs. Morris and I will be available to answer questions regarding this issue.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like more information.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Maia

Sycamore Ridge PTA President

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