

Minutes for Public Meeting
NEW SHORES SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 9, 2008

7:30 PM - 9:30PM

LOCATION:

Conference Rooms: Pine and Oak
San Mateo County Office of Education
101 Twin Dolphin Drive, Redwood City, CA

Meeting convened at 6:40 PM.

A. ROLL CALL – Darby Limkakeng, Acting Secretary

Representing Advisory Committee: Joe Foust, Pete Hughes, Bonnie Wolfe, Doug Crisman, Lawrence Pon, Darby Limkakeng, Michelle Atno-Hall, Heather Irwin (quorum was achieved at 7:45pm)

Representing Belmont-Redwood Shores School District: Nellie Hungerford, Assistant Superintendent; Joe DiGeronimo, Consultant; Jeni Benelli, Board of Trustees

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Minutes of July 10, 2008: Minutes were approved as presented.

C. MEMBER REPORT/COMMENTS

- Bond Oversight Committee approved \$9.2MM of expenditures on September 8, 2008.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Carol Wong (Newport Circle) – Head of RSOA. Please ensure color palate blends in with rest of RWS as opposed to the landscape. She has received several negative comments about the color scheme of new library.
- Vanessa To (Landmark Lane) – Concerned about impact of new school on RWS unity. Asked for split grade configuration as opposed to drawing boundary lines.
- Unknown – School updates not readily available to the community. Does not want discord surrounding one school being better than the other in RWS.
- Ms. Gupta (Sun Blossom Lane) - Concerns about the acoustics and internal design. Requests that Special Needs rooms be set up in advance.
- Sue (Gossamer) – Easier to have all or at least two kids at the same school. Concerned about neighborhood unity, chance that one school is perceived less than the other, shrinking funding base, businesses now asked to support two schools, PTA Leadership(south side volunteers outnumber north side 2:1) Asked that split grade configuration be considered.
- Emily Peterson (Water Lily Lane) – In favor of split configuration for sake of neighborhood unity. Does each school need its own PTA—can they work together?
- Andrew Yeung (Gossamer Cove) – Concerns about community unity. Should use Tiburon (Reed Unified) as example: they have one unified PTA for the entire community (four schools).
- Jackie (Seastorm) – Supports split grade configuration. Asked about possibility of 6-8 and questions of how big the school will be.

- The committee then unanimously approved a motion to add another public comment session after the Committee Discussion session.

E. UPDATE OF MEASURE U: Chuck Velschow, Co-Chair of Parcel Tax Committee

- There will be a parcel tax on the November Ballot.
- It will raise approximately \$900K/year.
- Requires 66 2/3% in favor to pass.
- No opposition when filed.
- Fundraising goal for the Parcel Tax of \$105K, \$20K raised so far.

F. DISTRICT REPORT – Nellie Hungerford, Asst. Superintendent, Bus. Services & Operations

- Eric Schrader will be vacating his board seat. Need to fill his spot from October, 2008 thru December, 2009. Encouraged RWS residents to apply. Applications available at the District Office.
- Board selected Meehleis Modular as the modular builder for the new school. Came very close to original design.
- Good financial timing for putting out bids. Bid alternatives may be used for one Kindergarten, Learning Center and the Library.
- Trying to get architectural review of our plans moved to Sacramento where the queue is smaller and the architects are located.
- Max Keech gave an update: Equipment has been moved in for grading. Start moving dirt this week. Will begin at the levee and move to the school pad. Hope to complete school pad and levee by December 2008. Infrastructure work will begin next year. Has finalized all financing and equity for the project. Sent out mailers to 1000 households within 600 feet of the site and provided leaflets to all adjoining the site containing guidelines and phone numbers.
- Budget Update: Imperative that parcel tax passes to maintain enrichment programs. We are in financial crisis. Added five teachers last year, this year added ten. Special Ed costs are up \$1.5MM (30 new 3 yr old special needs children added). District has grown over 300 students in three years. Since we are basic aid district, there is no increase in funding. \$1.1MM carryover in unrestricted funds. Running approx a \$200K deficit for the year. Teachers are asking for 3% increase (1%=\$177K)

G. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION – Doug Crisman, Committee Chair

- Contracted with same firm who did demographic study to rework numbers and outline where students reside to help with new school configuration. Models are being created of different configuration scenarios.
- 2008-2009 RWS students by grade: 664 total in K-5. Does not include approx 10 RWS students at other district schools.
 - ❖ K (120)
 - ❖ 1 (120)
 - ❖ 2 (100)
 - ❖ 3 (120)
 - ❖ 4 (106)
 - ❖ 5 (98)
 - ❖ 6-8 (290—approx 10 classrooms)
- 8-9 classrooms scheduled to be available in August 2009 (2-3 Kindergarten rooms plus 6 additional classrooms)

- Additional 6 classrooms plus science and music rooms scheduled to be completed by December 2009
- Committee discussed Pros and Cons of various configuration options.
- K-5 Configuration was discussed first

Pros

- Siblings at one school
- Continuity
- Traffic Patterns
- Alleviates issues of working parents

Cons

- Redistricting issues if population shifts
- Neighborhood Unity
- Divisiveness/Competition
- Differences in Parent Involvement
- New school could be perceived as having less facilities
- Difficulty drawing boundaries due to HOA placement

- Split Grade Configuration was discussed next

Pros

- Keep community as one
- More efficient teacher assignments
- Easier to combine PTA's
- Easier to accommodate demographic bulges
- Better for initial fundraising efforts
- More equitable volunteer support
- Easier to ramp up

Cons

- Difficulty meeting certain requirements for certain grade levels
- Lack of appropriate facilities
- Families have children at multiple schools
- Potential traffic pattern issue
- Different model from rest of district
- May be forced to do double sessions if there are too many Kindergarten students
- Communication problems between teachers between grade levels

- Nellie suggested a phased approach whereby all 4th and 5th graders remain at Sandpiper in 2009/2010 and only K-3 is brought over in the beginning
- K-6 was discussed last

Pros

- Transportation for 6th graders
- Builds stronger community

Cons

- Inequity in electives offerings
- School designed in K-5 layout
- Lacks athletic and music facilities of Ralston

H. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Carol Castro (Seabrook Ct) - When thinking about K facilities—remember there are already Kindergarten students in non-K classrooms at Nesbit. Don't let facilities be a factor. Look into AM/PM Kindergarten. Community of teachers working together at each grade level is highly beneficial. Hard to get new school off the ground if it is a small school with all grade levels.

Let current students finish their experience at Sandpiper/consider phased approach. Don't see any reason not to send 6th graders to Ralston. Should focus on current problems.

- Unknown (Seabrook) – Pay attention to community unity. Consider one principal for two sites.
- Unknown (Rockport Drive) – Concerned about constant switching of schools. Likes phasing idea—letting kids finish where they started.
- Unknown – Moved kid from Sandpiper to Notre Dame due to concerns about exposing her to huge Ralston school at grade 6.
- Brian Dougherty (Osprey Drive) – Likes two K-5 schools. Teachers can talk to each other even if at different schools. More kids will be within walking distance to school.
- Vanessa To (Landmark Lane) – Likes K-6 idea but may put kids at a disadvantage relative to rest of district.
- Peter To (Landmark Lane) – Asked if each school had to have separate test scores. District employee stated it depends on how the CDS code is filed and how the schools are set up (possibility of viewing as one school with two campuses).
- Thomas Worthmont (Belmont Shores) – Likes having 2 separate K-5 schools due to possible drop off/traffic issues around having kids at different schools.

I. NEW BUSINESS

- Next meetings
 - October 23, 2008 6:30 PM
 - November 13, 2008 6:30 PM
 - December 2, 2008 7:00 PM
- Suggestion was made to try and hold next meeting at the new RWS Library.
- Discussion around possibility of having RWS- wide meeting to gain public input on configuration issue.

I. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM. Next meeting is scheduled for October 23 (County Office of Education, Oak Conference Room)