

Elementary School Utilization Advisory Committee (Seven/Eleven Committee)
January 24, 2005
Serna Community Room
5:30 - 7:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

1.0 Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review

Linda Whitney, facilitator, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. She referred to the flip charts she had posted on the wall listing the Interests, Criteria, Purpose, Roles and Responsibilities of the Committee.

All Committee members, except Velma Sykes, were present and introduced themselves.

Committee member, Annette Deglow shared documents with the committee, which included an idea for joint use and letters from the Thomas Jefferson School Neighborhood PTA. Ms. Whitney read the letter, which asks that the Board look at better utilization of schools instead of looking to closing schools, which are essential to every neighborhood.

An outline of recommendations made by Ursula Rufalo, committee member was distributed.

2.0 Review of the Minutes

Minutes of the January 17, 2006 meeting were approved as posted on the SCUSD website.

3.0 Review of Information/Reports

At the January 17th meeting, members requested several pieces of information. This information was reviewed and discussed by the committee members. The information consisted of cost-savings ideas from previous district-wide budget committees, recommendations as presented to the SCUSD Board on April 28, 2005, Distinguished School Criteria and a list of the eligible schools, charts outlining the total middle school population from each elementary school, the percent of the elementary school that feeds to a middle school, and the percent of a middle school that feeds to each high school, Third School Month Enrollment and Attendance Report, list of construction projects in need of a location, list of reasons for the variations from school to school regarding utility costs, middle school research report, K-8 research report, maps of Marion Anderson Elementary School attendance area and surrounding schools, chart depicting the room usage, programs and bus information for each of our small schools, various correspondence from the public, and a current School and Administrative Offices

Directory.

Mr. Overstreet, City Director of Parks and Recreation, distributed a document entitled “Acreage Service Level Analysis” showing Neighborhood/Community Serving Acres and Community Planning Areas.

4.0 District Budget Information

Guest presenter, Patty Hagemeyer, Chief Business Services Officer, shared insights regarding the Governor’s K-12 education proposals for 2006-07 and its potential impact on our District. She noted that the declining enrollment crisis we are experiencing is not unique to our District, and that even with the Governor’s proposed full funding of the 2006-07 statutory COLA, our \$7.4 million in reductions will not be mitigated much. The Budget Advisory Committee, comprised of about 50 people, is looking into revenue enhancement possibilities and will make recommendations to the Board in March and April. The committee is also exploring ways to increase the average daily attendance.

Ms. Hagemeyer noted that information in response to our questions regarding middle school costs is not yet available because of difficulties posed by the high number of variables for the middle schools. She is also working on the small high school data requested. K-8 school costs are higher than a K-6 school because of the increase in staff costs for 7th and 8th grades, extra-duty coaching stipends, and utility variance, etc.

Ms. Hagemeyer outlined that while the State reimbursement of mandated costs has been reinstated for 2006-07, as part of the state’s budget proposal, our mandated costs are significantly higher than what the state reimburses.

Ms. Hagemeyer outlined that the Board may have to consider cutting some of the larger items that the Board has avoided in the past years. This may include such things as K-3 and or 9th grade Class Size Reduction Program, assistant principals, librarians, counselors, etc. The K-3 Class Size Reduction Program is not fully funded and costs about 1.2 million a grade level. This has been something that the Board has not wanted to cut even though other districts have already opted out of the program and raised the class size up for these grade levels.

Ms. Hagemeyer outlined the importance of giving the Board some options to consider so that the board perhaps can avoid cutting or reducing some of the programs that will impact the entire district’s instructional program.

Discussion followed that focused on the reality of another program or school going into a closed school, which may save millions in construction costs. There is the need to find locations for schools not only small high schools, but also the Special Education Therapeutic Center, which will generate revenue and placing it at a closed site will save on construction costs.

Discussion also focused on the fact that declining enrollment is the reason we are looking into the possibility of school closures. As enrollment/attendance erodes at a school, staffing, services, program cuts are made which erode the quality of the education at that site. Those students may be better served by attending another nearby school. Quality of education is a factor to consider.

Committee members continued to explore the K-8 school configuration.

It was discussed that closing a school to save \$350,000 dollars may not be worth it, but if closing a school saved millions in other ways then it might be considered. A question was asked about previous committees' discussions of specific schools. Marion Anderson was then discussed as it is bussing about 90% of its students due to the school being located in a commercial area. A sub committee of last year's district-wide budget committee studied Alice Birney and Bear Flag due to the fact that many students especially at Bear Flag already attend other schools in close proximity of Bear Flag and that both Alice Birney and Bear Flag are small schools.

Ms. Miller outlined that the recommendations from this committee would go forward on February 2, 2006 for information, Feb. 9 for conference and Feb 23 for possible action. Public hearings would occur after Feb. 2. There will be four Board meetings in February for regular business and discussion of the district's facility needs.

5.0 Next Steps and Meeting Closure

Meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. Our next meeting will be January 31, 2006 from 5:30 - 7:30 PM at Serna Center Community Room. Members of the public are welcome.