



Community Input Team

Team Consensus

May 19th, 2014

Over the course of four meetings during the months of April and May 2014, the Community Input Team developed consensus on several items. We have described how our team came together, what we learned, and what we agreed to report from our efforts.

How We Came Together

The District invited members of the community to serve on the Community Input Team, and approximately 45 residents, parents, employees, students, and business people volunteered. We held four Monday evening meetings, on April 28, May 5, 12, and 19. Collectively, we dedicated approximately 400 hours to learning about the District's facilities needs, the options for addressing them, and in developing consensus.

Our efforts were supported by District staff and consultants (please see list attached).

We divided our working time into meetings of the whole team, and meeting as subgroups comprising the following topics:

- Accessibility, Safety and Security
- Accountability and Finance
- Facilities, Fields, Outdoor Areas & Sustainability
- Student Learning/College & Career Readiness
- Technology

Tours of the District's school sites were made available to Committee members at all of the District's school campuses.

At each meeting, attendees studied the issues, shared varied opinions, and came back to the whole team to report out priorities and future considerations.

What We Learned

Each of our meetings had a main area of focus. Our first meeting addressed:

Understanding of Team Purpose and Function, Sub-Team Selection, and Introduction to Facilities

We learned that the District currently serves 7,400 students and expects enrollment to grow. The District's operations include:

- Seven elementary schools (five K-8 schools, one Transitional Kindergarten-8 school, and one Transitional Kindergarten-5 school),
- a comprehensive high school
- an alternative high school
- an independent study program
- an adult education program
- a District office
- a maintenance / corporate yard

At least one additional elementary school is planned for the future to accommodate growth.

Team members learned about the District's Capital Investment Program, which is a multi-year facilities planning effort. We learned that the needs assessment portion of the Capital Investment Program has already identified significant basic facilities needs with a cost of more than \$210 million.

Our second meeting addressed:

Understanding of Operational vs. Capital Funding, How Bonds and Taxes Work, and What Might be Affordable

We learned that the District will have revenues of approximately \$69 million to spend on basic operations this year. We learned that during the economic downturn the District kept class sizes constant and did not lay off teachers as other District's did. We also learned that 67% of the revenues come from the State and that approximately 80 percent of revenue is spent on teachers and

other staff. We learned that the District has invested in two solar and energy conservation projects that are paid for from energy savings.

We learned that the District's operating budget is insufficient to address facilities needs and that other sources are needed.

We reviewed the two previous successful bond measures, Measure R in 1999 and Measure Q in 2004. We learned that the District's tax base could support a \$75 million bond measure for a tax rate of \$60, the limit on projected taxes for a 55 percent voter approval bond measure.

Our third meeting addressed:

Understanding Public Information Research

We learned about a public opinion survey taken in February 2014. We learned about the scientific methodology behind the survey and the key findings.

We learned that by a 3.2 to 1 margin, voters feel favorably that the District is providing a quality education. We learned that more than 50 percent of voters think schools need additional funds. We learned that with a public information campaign and a tax rate of \$39 per \$100,000 of assessed property value (not market value) a bond measure could pass. This would equate to a \$49.8 million bond measure, which could generate \$47.7 million for projects.

What we agreed to report from our efforts

- Accountability starts at the top and resources should be expended in that area in terms of creating a work environment conducive to success, which then reverberates throughout the District and fosters stability.
- Student, parent, resident, and business community involvement in both District and community decision-making is an important element of the process.
- The School District and the City should have a collaborative relationship.
- The School District and the Los Rios Community College District should have a collaborative relationship, e.g. a performing arts center at River City High School.
- The Community Input Team's thinking was generally in alignment with the results of the Public Opinion Survey.

- The Team learned a great deal about school facilities and funding, and realizes that the general public doesn't have detailed information. A public information process is important to illuminate the needs and opportunities for the larger community, as well as to create a foundation for accountability.
- There should be a study of our network infrastructure and its findings should be considered for inclusion in the project list for the bond.
- There should be more information of the type reviewed by the Community Input Team available and appropriately promoted on a modernized District's web site.
- Quarterly reporting to the community should include projects earmarked for each site, project status, funds expended, and remaining budget. The purpose for this is to provide transparency and accountability.
- Our students and staff deserve the best possible physical environment and alignment with District mission and strategic plan: one that is welcoming, safe, accessible, and provides technology resources to support and improve student learning giving specific attention to how the environment contributes to student learning.
 - Prioritization of facilities projects should reflect the following considerations:
 - Basic Standards: "Safe, Warm and Dry"
 - ✓ Safety, Security and Health
 - ✓ Accessibility
 - ✓ Code compliance
 - Educational Standards: "Equitable and Visionary"
 - ✓ Technology infrastructure that supports and improves the Instructional Program, Security and Communication
 - ✓ Career Technical / Vocational Education Facilities
 - Investment Standards: "Value"
 - ✓ Facilities that will be fully utilized
 - ✓ Return on investment for each bond project should be identified and positive

- ✓ Each project should be fiscally feasible and funds to complete the project should be identified and available before work begins
 - ✓ Increasing Community and Student Pride
- The District has significant facility needs and a bond will be required to address these needs. The Team recommends a bond measure as one facilities funding source. We do not expect a bond measure of \$49 million to be sufficient to address the District's needs. We recommend an aggressive pursuit of resources for facilities.
 - We view this as a first step on a long journey that over the long term will need to reflect a prioritization process that embraces equity, safety, and student achievement. The primary focus should be basic infrastructure needed for safe and effective school operations.

WUSD Staff and Consultants

- Lynette Campbell, Director, Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Learning
- Stacie Frerichs, Government Financial Strategies, Financial Services Consultant
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- Kim Harrison, Coordinator, Instructional Technology
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- Tom McNinch, Director, Information Technology
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