

SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY MEETING REGARDING POTENTIAL SCHOOL CLOSURES

Date: April, 13, 2009, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Location: Mark Hopkins Elementary School
Panel Facilitator: Philip Moore, Associate Superintendent
Additional Attendees: SCUSD Board Members: Roy Grimes, Diana Rodriguez, Ellyn Bell,
Gustavo Arroyo
SCTA: Linda Tuttle



Questions:

- **There are 104 students in the START program here, what would happen to this program and the students who attend? These kids are at START until 6 PM. If this program is moved to Sloat or Bidwell, would there be transportation for them?**
There are after school programs at Sloat (ASES) and Bidwell (CORE), which operate until 6 PM. There is a possibility START could move to these 2 schools. We would also consider keeping START at Mark Hopkins. Student could be transported back to Hopkins after school and participate in activities which would make it easier for parents to pick their up their children.
- **Why did Mark Hopkins appear on the list of school closures just 3 weeks ago?**
It was November 8, 2008 when we received information as to the magnitude of the education budget deficit. At that time we began a study of all SCUSD schools which utilized 30 criteria. All schools were considered based upon the analysis of the criteria. After further study of South area schools in the last few weeks Mark Hopkins was recommended for closure. We collected ideas from a number of community meetings and recommended school closures at the Board of Education meeting on April 2, 2009.
- **What about our kids?**
We will re-evaluate the busing proposal.
- **What will happen to Mark Hopkins if it is closed? Have you taken into consideration crime would increase?**
We have been and will continue to work with organizations which would bring programs to Hopkins, benefiting the community. Some considerations would be partnership development with the city and county of Sacramento to provide a variety of community services such as health clinics, recreation programs, elder recreation programs, adult education and training programs etc.
- **What about the Stimulus Package money?**
This is “one-time” money. We are uncertain when we will specifically receive these funds. The stimulus funds will be used to support specific programs such as Title 1, Special Education and facilities. These are one time funds and we can not use them for staffing or services that require on-going funding after we receive these funds.
- **How can John Bidwell accommodate 200 more students?**
Sloat and Bidwell can enroll approximately 500 students. Some teachers and other staff will move with the students to their new schools as determined by needs.
- **Have you considered the psychological damage to the kids?**
We will work with parents and the community to make this as smooth a transition as possible. We will provide one on one transition support for students and parents. Our Parent Advisors will call each parent and schedule a meeting to discuss transition questions or needs. Principals of the receiving schools will host parent meetings and facilitate activities to create a warm and welcoming school environment so students and family feel supported and welcomed and part of the new school family.
- **I would like more information about the budget? What about class size?**
John Sloat receives Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) funds. John Sloat receives an additional \$500 per student and would remain at a 20:1 student to teacher ratio for K – 3 grades. The Board of Education is considering a recommendation to increase class size 25 to 1 for K through third grade as a budget strategy to



reduce costs. Therefore, Bidwell and many other non - QEIA schools in our district could increase to 25:1 (K-3) under new State guidelines to provide school districts flexibility to address their budget deficit.

- **Are my children guaranteed a spot at the same school?**

In the vast majority of cases yes. We would do all we can to ensure we keep families together. There may be specific situations where a grade level may be at capacity and we would have to bus a student who has a sibling in the school to another school. We currently have this practice within our District schools but we do all we can to avoid this scenario. In the event of closure, we will offer Open Enrollment to Hopkins students to attend other schools that have grade level space.

- **How much do we save by closing Mark Hopkins?**

\$497,000 is projected to be saved.

- **Will you bus kids to a school I choose?**

We will provide transportation to K to 3 students and we are considering transportation options for students in grades 4 through 6. Additionally, we will have walking attendants.

- **Why not close a school in an area where parents have more means to provide transportation and other support for their children?**

We have proposed closing schools in four other communities; College Greens, Pocket, and South Land Park areas as well as Hopkins school in the Meadowview area.

- **Hopkins has the support of community agencies which support the Hmong community. What will happen to these programs?**

We will continue to work with these organizations as well as community organizations which would add value to the Mark Hopkins community. We will continue specific partnership program that are established and are confident that our principals at the receiving schools will support these partnerships.

- **How much better is the student achievement at Sloat and Bidwell?**

All three schools have excellent principals, teachers, staff other and programs. Although Mark Hopkins has improved academically there are other schools in the area that are higher performing and considering the tough decisions about recommended school closures we want to ensure our students go to schools that have improved academic achievement.

- **There must be something which can save Hopkins. You saved money by converting it from a year-round-education school.** About \$500,000 was saved by converting our year-round schools to traditional last year, and this savings went towards keeping us fiscally viable this year.

Comments:

- The Mark Hopkins staff is wonderful and care for out students. I am concerned for that my kids are very emotional about the prospect of changing schools and do not want to go to another school.
- It is very difficult for me to get my children to another school.
- Spare our kids... Hopkins teachers are excellent and so is the principal, Mrs. Reed.
- START benefits my kids.
- My kids come here for the quality programs.
- My kids are “newcomers” to this country and Hopkins provides great service, the teachers are excellent.
- All of my kids have attended Hopkins and have done well. It will be difficult for students to adjust to the change.
- We need our kids to be in school in our community.
- We cannot get our kids to Sloat or Bidwell safely.
- Please keep Hopkins open, it is in our neighborhood.



Community Meeting Notes

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- Hopkins is a family which needs to stay together.
- Children should not be in the middle of this battle.
- My kids don't want to go to another school and are afraid to walk. We love this school.
- Hopkins is considered an asset to this community and closure would destroy hope for many people.
- We have monthly Hmong parent meetings at Hopkins.
- Hmong student achievement has risen consistently at Hopkins.