

SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHOOLS TASK FORCE
MEETING NOTES #6 - at College View Elementary
July 26, 2023

1. Superintendent Dr. Conroy welcomed everyone, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and shared appreciation for giving up a summer evening. Dr. Farley, Facilitator, led quick introductions around the table.
2. Dr. Farley shared that the task force will be keeping the same protocols being used, i.e., one person talking at a time, keeping emotions in check, etc.
3. Tour of College View - Elaine Burney, former Principal, shared what College View was like before modernization - a maze - impossible to navigate your way through - a frustrating safety issue. Now has hallways with inspiring college murals that lead great conversations with children. Teacher Lisa Banuelos also shared her experience teaching at the school before modernization - very "janky." So glad to be showing and sharing their beautiful house.

All gave Dale a high five and a shout out for a great job setting up and making these meetings possible for the public to view. Thank you, Dale!

Post tour observations/comments

- Joined the Measure R committee during a middle school modernization and was impressed. First time on an elementary modernization and loved the natural lighting and the college murals - shows looking forward. It's beautiful - the floors, you don't have to speak loudly in the halls.
- Is there a space for the entire student body indoors. The room where the meeting was held has a capacity of 229, but usually split primary and upper grades for assemblies. If the assembly is for all, they hold it outside.
- It's redone, it's gorgeous, it's also part of the community.
Question: With new fences and policy, how will that affect the community using the schools
Answer: after school hours, there are two entrances/gates open for after hour use in the evening and on the weekends.
- Home backs up to College View and very pro fences. Child went to College View

in Kinder to 5th grade. Before the fences went up, their student was not allowed to walk home because there is an open park. So fences are great and there are no issues.

- Flexible furniture - easy for teachers to do collaborative learning and building those skills that students need to have working with each other and in groups.
- Brick work - original brick - no replacement of original brick. We closed some door spaces at Westmont and had to replace some of that brickwork. Brings up a good point about the space at College View. Not new construction, we had to use existing space and that somewhat limits you. Each school site is different and has limitations based on buildings, student numbers, and programs. The size of the PDC/MPR doubled - half was previously used for training and teacher development and the other half was an office. This room is a beautiful space. Original MPR didn't fit more than 3 classrooms, sunken, and low ceilings...really strange.
 - District should be really proud of this project because we know what these old 1950/60 campuses looked like.

4. Modernization Timeline Measure R

Keith Farrow - Handout (Measure R Historical Timeline) (4 pages)

https://www.ovsd.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=10936&dataid=15254&FileName=Historical%20Timeline%20for%20Measure%20R_7-14-2023.pdf

Recognizing Jim Choate, Executive Director, Facilities and Transportation. Jim has been here since the beginning and is a large part of Measure R and its success, along with Dr. Conroy who helped get the bond passed.

Dr. Conroy came in 2015 as the Deputy Superintendent and immediately asked what were the facilities needs? He tasked Jim Choate to assess all 23 school sites, to figure out what was the true need. Jim came back with the \$500 million need. In March, with Board approval, we put together a Facilities Master Plan and that Plan indicated the same thing that Jim said, there was \$500 million worth of need.

Stakeholder engagement began with DLR Architects developing the Facilities Master Plan. Next, the Board wanted to go out for a bond and approved the stakeholder engagement process in July 2016, which included consultants and the community to find

out what the community would approve based on \$100 thousand of assessed property value. At that time, it was just below \$30 per \$100 thousand, and that really played a key part in keeping that at a low rate. The more money you ask for from the community via a bond, the more that assessed value goes up. At that time, \$30 or below would be favorable; the community was surveyed and included in those discussions.

The Board agreed to take action and approved the resolution to place a general obligation bond measure on the November 2016 General Election. The District was able to pass a voter initiative with the 55% needed approval and passed a \$169 million general obligation bond. People are going to ask why \$169M if there is \$500M needed? It was to keep the property tax bill reasonable.

Question: If the need was \$500M and you only asked for \$169M, then what was the plan? You're never going to succeed because you don't have the full funds.

Answer: it was more of an optimistic view and this District dates back to the late 1800s. A very old school district that never passed a bond. There was a previous bond initiative in 2012 and it failed for \$198M, so more than \$169M would not have been successful in this community.

The Demographers and experts working on the bond knew what the taxpayers would not approve and did not want to initiate a bond that wasn't going to pass. If it were higher than \$169, it would have not passed. It just barely passed at 58%.

February 2017 - special study session to go over the plan and goals. Initial plan was to modernize two school sites each year with Sun View and Pleasant View chosen to be the Interim Site at that time. Another part of the plan was to plan for the scope of work, mission statement, and goals for the projects. The original plan was for all schools to see some sort of modernization, and the Board and staff reviewed the project priority grouping options.

In April 2017, the planning and budgeting happened for Sun and Pleasant as interim sites to safely modernize schools while students were not on campus. The first series was sold for \$45 million and received in our County Treasury account, which does accrue interest. The District formed a Citizens' Oversight Committee that meets and

reviews every expenditure. Currently the amount of interest earned is over \$3 million and that can go back into our projects.

Why Westmont and College? At that time it was planned for Measure R to modernize all sites except for Hope, Oak, Lake, and Harbour. Hope, Oak, and Lake had received some modernization due to the asbestos crisis. Also, Harbour View just needed some upgrades at the time.

Question: What funded the Hope, Oak, and Lake modernizations?

Answer: 2 things - 1) state matching funds because of the emergency situation dealing with the asbestos crisis, the State allowed us to pull some of our “future” matching funds. 2) We also had to do a series of loans called Certificates of Participation (COPs) to fund the matching portion of those funds. To this day, we are still paying on those loans until 2030. This information was provided in previous updates.

That started the discussion on which schools first. At the time, there was a need for preschools and where to house those programs. Also at that time, the District had schools with specialized programs, i.e., Circle View had GATE, Village View had the medically fragile program; Golden View had the farm. When the District looked at the size of the campuses and which could accommodate preschools, Westmont and College View were chosen for the preschool programs.

Assumptions - different back then than they are now. At the 5/10/23 meeting - page 5 - takes us back to OVSD enrollment history. In 2016/2017, Circle enrollment was at 692 - almost bursting at the seams. Could they house a preschool program? No. Look at College View and at the time it was 438, a very different scenario than right now. Looking at Village View, same situation. So the comparison between then and now - the assumptions are way different.

Question: When looking at the enrollment numbers for the past 20 years, it wasn't foreseen that we would have declining enrollment?

Answer: The District didn't foresee COVID and people moving out of CA at a rapid rate. Enrollment was barely tapering off and then COVID took it to a whole new level. We saw 250 students per year on average over a 10 year period pre-COVID, and with

COVID it was 300. No demographer could have foreseen COVID or the number of people moving out of California.

Looking at what facilities already existed - Hope View was too far south and both Hope and Circle were impacted. College didn't really have any specialized programs and Westmont was a good choice because of the facilities already set up. Sun View had less than 300 students, practically across the street from Westmont. Looking at the interim site being at Sun, it made sense to move Westmont to Sun, modernize Westmont, and then move Sun and Westmont students back together to Westmont as Westmont, taking the Sun View kids with them.

Question: Being a teacher in the district and noticing most of our schools are all off of Edwards - all in one central area - in future - possibility to bus students to the outlier properties? So many schools in one area.

Answer: If you looked at the older maps, there were more schools than we have now; there were so many schools - almost one in every tract.

Question: Building on that conversation, can the district afford transportation? Transporting the kids to the outlier schools?

Answer: That will always be something the Board will talk about and figure out what the needs are. Our Transportation Plan looks at lower grade students and unduplicated students, making sure they are considered first. If there is ever room and requests and a need that's where the Transportation Department will weigh in on that.

Board made decisions initially to modernize two schools at a time, but found that there would be a cash flow issue to that. Because if we were to build that many schools together, we'd have to sell our bonds that much sooner. The Board chose to only modernize one school per year and only use the one interim site, Sun View.

August 2018 - Sun View interim site completed and allowed Westmont to move in during 2019-20 school year.

Further recap:

- Bond allowed a fencing project - encapsulated all 14 school sites.
- 2019-20 College View and Oak View gymnasium completed. Transaction that happened with the open trash dump across the street from Oak View. A legal settlement with Rainbow provided funds to the school district for the Gym at Oak View, but was not enough for the project and the balance was supported by Measure R funds.
- Feb 2020 - \$42 million second series sold - now halfway through the bond series
- Interim site started adding the middle school locker rooms
- 2020-21 - Marine View modernized
- Vista View followed in 2021-22

Started seeing cost escalations - completely changed our view on how modernization looked. Originally anticipated to touch every school site possible. Planned and budgeted that way by our architect.

In a normal recession, what a school district wants to see is that - contractors want to keep people working - bids are at cost and see a much lower threshold and huge savings - would have liked to have seen that - wasn't planned for - saw the exact opposite - COVID restricted the supply chains and drove the costs up. Jim Choate recently provided a construction update for the Board that provided a square foot cost that increased by just less than 100% per square foot. Vista View, Star View, and Mesa View projects have been double the cost of the Westmont project. Simple deduction says that it took some away from the other projects. Doing the math, that could have easily been three more schools.

Question: We already had changed from two to one school, and seeing the cost escalation, that would have been a good time to say "Hey, we have to hold off now." Let's stop and find better ways to use the money at this time.

Answer: We did go through that process at that time. The team did slow down and did some value engineering. The costs were much more than originally planned and budgeted for. We re-budgeted and started taking things out of the projects that would save millions of dollars per project, but the costs were escalating so much that there was only so much we could take out of the project, before it became something less than

what was promised to the voters. Although the District cut things, we still tried to keep within the scope of the projects.

Question: What would it have looked like if we would have paused on the construction? How long is the bond good? Are we thinking about going out for another bond? Was it an option to keep the money in the bank and just pause until COVID costs dropped again?

Answer: I don't believe the Board has an appetite to go out immediately for another bond. It is a stress on the community and property tax bills. We could have paused - but we'll always have inflation. Example of generations..."built my house myself for \$ and now it's worth \$\$\$\$." Look back in history and in this community people bought homes for \$25-30K - costs will keep escalating year after year.

Jim Choate: Also, there are hidden costs - We go through a competitive selection process that takes time and money. We negotiate for contracts and then come up with designs with a whole lot of hidden costs; for example, we've put around 20 buildings on the Sun View site that are rentals. If we stop for 2-3 years we are just throwing money out the window. Not to mention you lose the cohesion you have with the construction team, you have the same players around the table that develop the uni-mind sort of - knowing exactly the shared history. If we stop the program, those professional services go elsewhere. You'd lose money trying to assemble a new team. We determined that the cost offsets each other. Drawings are already in place and there are timelines associated with these drawings and if you stop that, there are costs involved to re-initiate the process.

Task Force Member Joy Hogate: Also, If we did pause, we would see the continued problems in our schools. Walking around here at College View and looking at the hardscape - so anxious when Mesa View is done that we won't have to worry about tripping. The kids complain, it's a safety issue when they fall on the asphalt, they are actually falling on gravel. The air conditioning was a major factor this year as she spent most of her day teaching out of the teachers lounge when the room was 94 degrees in September with 36 students. She lost electricity, which affected the Viewsonic Board and all electrical on the wall, probably at least once a month; and then if plugging something else in, her neighbor lost power. We're looking at schools, if we waited, continuing to decline physically. Our facilities staff can't fix it, not because of a lack of

effort, but because they can't get the parts. Rumor or not - heard that we had to look on ebay for parts for A/C units that were so old. The decline caused putting bandaids everywhere.

Task Force Member: Main goal for Measure R was established to modernize schools, so pausing is not an option. Measure R oversight committee - certain component triggers in place when realized we were over budget - further elaborate - built with contingency and when we were going to exceed those contingencies? How handled to evaluate, negotiate - re-bidding, have other supports, very challenging to switch gears to put a new train on the track. No one disagrees with that. Just want to understand the circumstances.

Keith Farrow: A great example is we just went through the bidding process for Mesa View and typically we get close to 100 bidders. Contractors sharpen the pencil because they know we pay them on time, which is a big point. In this last process, for Mesa View, we struggled with two categories and are now going back out to re-bid. We do send back, if needed, to re-bid along with value engineering. One bid category, we only had one bidder that had close to a million dollar difference than what was planned or expected, so we pulled that one for re-bid. The other one had some mistakes from contractors in the bids and we pulled that one (HVAC) and are also going back out for re-bid. We also start looking at the components and expectations to see what we can remove for value engineering. Look to see if it doesn't cause too much disruption to the project.

Same Task Force Member: I recall at one of the Board meetings, the Board was discussing the need to rewire Spring View for \$350K (not million). If you recall our discussion on Mesa View, Spring View could not go without this. That's great, but wanted to highlight the discussion that will halt the modernization after Mesa View. Can we take the remaining \$40M, (member chimed in - like \$8M - there won't be a whole lot left after Mesa View.)

Dr. Conroy: The Board did have conversations about the direction we were going, to make sure we were utilizing all the resources we can. Understand why to start planning further, if the Board makes a decision based on the outcome of this Task Force, if the Board makes a decision to change course and do something, or don't want to make a

commitment. The Board is very aware of the financial resources. They are aware of the increasing costs involved and wanted to make sure that whatever projects may be next, that we can come in with a much more comprehensive plan utilizing what remaining funds from Measure R, funds that the Board may have reserved in the General Fund for Facilities, looking at other options for current funds and if they can be used for Facilities. Also, be able to put together a better perspective of looking at what our future needs are. So, yes the Board discussed...they had an initial conversation and will most likely resurface when the next set of bids come in. When you go out to re-bid, the intent is that the contractors sharpen their pencil. Realize sometimes the second time around, they spend a little bit more time looking at the project and the bids may come in higher. So, there is a little bit of a calculated risk that we will get lower bids coming in and we might get more bidders and we might have higher costs. Mesa has come in a little bit lower than last project, but we never know about the marketplace. As Keith mentioned, you come out of the great recession and contractors were making bids and taking losses just to cover payroll. You come out of that and talk about the economy starting to improve. Post COVID we're hoping that we can come in lower.

Continuing:

- Page 3 - cost escalations and District road map
- Hitting the middle schools would touch every student
- August 2021 - Marine View was modernized
- Due to cash flow, Star View was determined to be quite a bit less than Village. Chosen because of cost escalations.
- Next cycle was Marine, Vista, and Star.
- Locker Room Lease Agreement - portables to house the middle school students for locker rooms. Need to get the middle schools through the Interim Site.
- Highlights the District's fiscal prudence. First two schools...brought on facilities as an as needed basis.

Question: Any consideration to put Mesa at Spring?

Answer: We did talk about it and determined it wasn't fiscally prudent to add portable classrooms to accommodate 1,000 kids, which would have been needed because of the current capacity.

Citizens' Oversight Committee

Ending on the last page - 3rd series sold for \$55 million. Sold 4th and final series for \$27 million. Funds in the bank. Should be some funds left over for the Board to talk about at a later date.

5. Student Transfer Information - Dr. Hoefer

- Understanding Interdistrict release - There are 3 reasons that we allow release of students for interdistrict transfer: Some Districts are more lenient, but we have 3 common reasons
 - First, for either transfers in or out, is child care, which is defined as family members working in or outside the District or having different hours - parent will have figured out we offer child care programs well into the evening (our program closes at 6:00pm)
 - Second is parent employment - numbers - those requesting to come into and out of - FV, WSD, HBC, GG local districts. See other Districts dta information - grouped together because they are random. Farthest away is Riverside. Oftentimes associated with parents who work somewhere else. Some years we'll have students, some we don't.
 - Third - continuous enrollment - when a student moves into or out of the District. This allows the student to finish the school year.
 - A fourth reason is Programs. To be clear we have 150 requests for Child Care, 96 requests for employment, and 27 for programs.

Ten (10) years of summary - in general it's consistent, almost the same amount of transfers come in as go out. Still a fair amount of transfers that go out. Parents forget - inter districts are submitted every single year - varies from year to year.

Parent right to enroll - State recognizes in particular that parents want to be close to their student in case something happens. We have students who commute a far distance. You work here, children are an hour away and child trips and breaks an arm - that's a significant problem. Parents can submit a letter on company letterhead, bring in a paystub, and an employer letter. For child care they have to do a bit more than that, but

paperwork for all of the above reasons. Child care provider and reason why. It's pretty easy to enroll in a District where you are employed and if you can prove, you are pretty much guaranteed enrollment. Legislation was passed about 20 years ago.

6. District Marketing

Dr. Farley: Additional points: District marketing next time - Another meeting on August 16th - to go over some of the other items. After or at the August 16th meeting, we'll start to talk about how to wrap this up.

Question: Can we tour other modernized school sites? The four on the chopping block? Which ones do you perceive to be on the chopping block? The ones that were being discussed for school closure.

Answer: Yes, we can set up tours of the other sites.

Next meetings: August 16 and 30th