

April 13, 2021

Nancy Magee, County Superintendent of Schools
County Committee on School District Organization

Via FedEx

San Mateo County Office of Education
101 Twin Dolphin Drive
Redwood City, CA 94065

Re: Petition for Transfer of Territory

Dear Superintendent Magee and County Committee on School District
Organization:

Chief Petitioners Matthew and Maressa Voss submit the enclosed
Petition for Transfer of Territory. I represent Chief Petitioners in this
matter, and we respectfully request that you include me in all notifications
and communications related to the enclosed petition. I can be reached at
hgibson@nmgovlaw.com or 415-389-6800, and correspondence should be
sent to:

Nielsen Merksamer
Attn: Hilary Gibson
2350 Kerner Blvd., Suite 250
San Rafael, CA 94901

We look forward to working with you on this matter.

Sincerely,



Hilary Gibson

HJG/pas
Enclosures

PETITION FOR TRANSFER OF TERRITORY

To the Superintendent of Schools of San Mateo County:

The undersigned, the owners of territory that is “uninhabited” as defined by *Education Code* Section 35517, now within the boundaries of the La Honda Pescadero Unified School District, San Mateo County, petition that the boundaries of the La Honda Pescadero Unified School District be changed to eliminate from it the territory hereinafter described. The undersigned persons petition that the territory be transferred to and included within the Portola Valley School District and Sequoia Union High School District of San Mateo County. Although the territory is, as a matter of law, “uninhabited” pursuant to applicable provisions of the *Education Code*, the undersigned also constitute 25 percent of the registered electors residing in the territory proposed to be transferred. (See Education Code Section 35700(a) & (c) and Education Code § 35517.)

The property to be transferred is described as follows:

The property to be transferred is limited to a single parcel, APN 078-130-170 (the “Property”). The parcel is improved with a single-family home, the address of which is 18400 Skyline Boulevard, Woodside, CA 94062. The Property is located on the west side of Skyline Boulevard, north of Old La Honda Road.

The undersigned request the changes in the respective boundaries of the school districts for the following reasons:

The primary reason for the request is that, due to the Property’s location, the Property shares a substantial community identity with the Portola Valley School District and Sequoia Union High School District, rather than the La Honda Pescadero Unified School District. Chief Petitioners have two young children, and are committed to ensuring that they are able to attend public school with their friends and neighbors in the community. Unfortunately, Petitioners are one of only a few homes that are cut off from the school district of which the rest of their neighborhood is a part. The residence located across Skyline Blvd. from the Property is in the Portola Valley School District and Sequoia Union High School District, as are most of the other residences in the neighborhood. In fact, as far as Chief Petitioners can tell from the available school district boundary maps, their Property is one of *only four homes* along and directly off of the approximately 7 mile stretch of Skyline Boulevard that runs through the Portola Valley School District and Sequoia Union High School District that is located outside the boundaries of these districts. Skyline Boulevard is the main thoroughfare through this community, and it makes no logical sense—and flies in the face of the principle of considering community identity when determining school district boundaries—to put families living on the same street in different school districts. Similarly, all of the nearby clusters of homes located immediately off Skyline Boulevard are also located in the Portola Valley School District and Sequoia Union High School District. As such, Chief Petitioners have become acquainted with many neighbors who have school aged children attending school in the Portola Valley School District. Conversely, Chief Petitioners have not been able to locate a single family in their immediate vicinity whose

children attend school in the La Honda Pescadero Unified School District, despite their best efforts to do so. Chief Petitioners are therefore seeking a territory transfer so that their children are able to participate in the shared community identity created by attending the same schools as their neighbors—not just the schooling itself, but community building activities such as carpooling to and from school, socializing with classmates, and participating in shared afterschool activities with neighbors who are within walking and biking distance.

This separation from their immediate neighbors leads not only to lack of community identity, but also work and family-related logistical difficulties that are unique to Chief Petitioners. Although La Honda Elementary School is located relatively near the Property, Pescadero Middle/High School is a 40+ minute drive South, down the mountain to Pescadero. Like most residents of the neighborhood where the Property is located, Chief Petitioners both commute north/east for their jobs. Chief Petitioner Maressa Voss is a perfusionist (a healthcare professional who operates a cardiopulmonary bypass machine) at the VA Hospital in Palo Alto, where she has worked for the past nine years. The ongoing crisis with COVID-19 has unfortunately increased the need for her services, as the perfusionist is the only position able to take over when ventilation is insufficient to sustain a patient who is severely ill with COVID-19. She is one of only two people regularly available to perform this life saving function at the VA hospital, and is on call approximately 50% of the time most weeks.

Chief Petitioners' oldest child is entering kindergarten. In case of a work emergency that conflicts with their child's school or extracurricular schedule, there is no one in Chief Petitioners' immediate community (as far as Chief Petitioners have been able to locate) who attends school in the La Honda Pescadero Unified School District and upon whom Chief Petitioners can rely as back-up for transportation; surrounding neighbors instead attend school in the Portola Valley School District and Sequoia Union High School District. Unless Chief Petitioners are able to transfer districts, they will be unable to rely on their community for the type of support neighbors typically provide, such as giving kids a ride home to or from school or soccer practice on occasions where parents may be stuck at work.

In addition, Ms. Voss's employment requires her to be a reasonable distance from the VA hospital at all times while she is on-call. The elementary school in Portola Valley is closer to her work than La Honda Pescadero Elementary, and is on the way to work for both Chief Petitioners, rather than in the opposite direction. However, the particular requirements of Ms. Voss' job—combined with the fact that there are no neighbors with which Chief Petitioners could carpool to and from school—makes the distance to Pescadero Middle/High School not just inconvenient, but prohibitive for Chief Petitioners to attempt to navigate. This effectively leaves Chief Petitioners without access to public education once their children reach middle and high school age.

The lack of community identity with the La Honda Pescadero Unified School District is created by both distance and topography. The largest commercial center in the La Honda Pescadero Unified School District is the Town of Pescadero. Pescadero is a coastal community and is a 40+ minute drive from the Property, and therefore not part of the day-to-day community fabric for Chief Petitioners and their neighbors. Instead, given the Property's location in the Santa Cruz mountains, community activities in this area center around Skylonda (~3 minutes away), downtown Woodside (~15 minutes away), and Portola Valley Town Center (~15 minutes away) as the nearest commercial centers and places for the community to gather. These are the communities where Petitioners do their grocery shopping, go to the hardware store, and take



their kids to play at the playground. Petitioners get their mail at the Skywood Trading Post and eat at Alice's Restaurant in Skylonda, which serves as a community gathering place in what is otherwise a relatively remote area. Furthermore, the residential development in Chief Petitioners' immediate vicinity is all located due north on Skyline Boulevard toward these communities; to the south, the Property is generally surrounded by open space and agricultural uses.

Whether you look at where people in Chief Petitioners' community do their grocery shopping, get their mail, eat, work, or play, all aspects of community in this particular area of the Santa Cruz mountains are unquestionably shared with families who attend school in the Portola Valley School District and Sequoia Union High School District. As such, Chief Petitioners are seeking to transfer their Property to the school district with which the Property shares a substantial community identity, and ensure that their family has meaningful access to public education throughout the course of their children's primary and secondary education.

The Chief Petitioners for the purpose of receiving notices and so forth are:

<i>Name (print or type)</i>	<i>Address</i>
1. Matthew George Voss _____	18400 Skyline Blvd., Woodside, CA 94062
2. Maressa Mack Voss _____	18400 Skyline Blvd., Woodside, CA 94062

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: THIS PETITION MAY BE CIRCULATED BY A PAID SIGNATURE GATHERER OR A VOLUNTEER. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK.

	Name	Residence address	For office use only
1	Sign 	No. & Street 18400 SKYLINE BLVD	
	Print MATTHEW GEORGE VOSS	City WOODSIDE	Zip Code 94062
2	Sign 	No. & Street 18400 Skyline Blvd	
	Print Maressa Mack Voss	City Woodside	Zip Code 94062

DECLARATION OF PETITION CIRCULATOR

I, Maressa Mack Voss, am 18 years of age or older.
(print name)

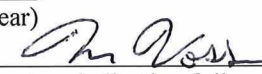
My residence address is 18400 Skyline Blvd Woodside, CA 94062
(address, city, state, zip)

I circulated this section of the petition and witnessed each of the appended signatures being

written. Each signature on this petition is, to the best of my information and belief, the genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be. All signatures on this document were

obtained between the dates of 4/5/2021 and 4/6/2021. I certify
(month, day, year) (month, day, year)

that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on 4/6/2021
(month, day, year)

at 18400 Skyline Blvd Woodside, CA. Signature of Circulator 
(place of signing) (complete signature indicating full name of circulator)