

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SAN DIEGO COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

Minutes of the Special Meeting April 29, 2014 – 6:00 p.m.
Alpine Elementary School Auditorium
1850 Alpine Boulevard
Alpine, CA 91901

I. OPENING PROVISIONS

- A. Call to Order and Roll Call – 6:00 P.M.

Members Present: Anderson, Hartley, Jones, Neylon, Robinson
Secretary: Ward
Recording Secretary: Bowers

- B. Pledge Of Allegiance To The Flag

- C. Approval of Agenda

MSC (Anderson/Robinson) to approve the agenda. The motion passed by unanimous vote (5-0).

- D. Review of Guidelines for Public Hearing

President Hartley welcomed the audience and reviewed the guidelines to be followed during the Public Hearing and the order of speakers.

- E. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Public speaker cards and comment cards were collected at this time and throughout the meeting.

II. CONVENE THE MEETING OF THE COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

- A. OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING on the Petition for the Unification of the Alpine Union School District and that Portion of the Grossmont Union High School District

Chairwoman Hartley opened the public hearing. San Diego County Office of Education's Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, Lora Duzyk, provided introductory remarks. Ms. Duzyk explained that if Alpine becomes a unified school district, it would no longer be part of the Grossmont Union High School District and would be required to serve Alpine students in kindergarten through grade 12. On October 23, 2013, a petition was submitted to the County Superintendent of Schools to reorganize territory within the Grossmont Union High School District to create the Alpine Unified School District. The Registrar of Voters certified the sufficiency of the signatures on the petition, and the petition was reviewed and determined to be sufficient and signed as required by law. Ms. Duzyk then explained the unification process. Within 60 days of the transmittal of a petition for unification, the County Committee is required to hold public hearings in the affected districts. This is the first of two scheduled public hearings. The second public hearing will be held at 6:00 p.m. on May 7th at the East County Regional Education Center, located within the Grossmont Union High School District. No action will be taken by the County Committee at either of the public hearings. At a meeting to be held within 120 days of the first public hearing, the County Committee is required to make a recommendation to the State Board of Education on the approval or disapproval of the petition. The 120th day is August 27, 2014. It is expected that the

County Committee will make its recommendation at a regular County Board meeting scheduled for August 13, 2014. The County Committee does not have the authority to make a final decision as to whether the Alpine Union School District should become a unified district—the voters would make that determination; the role of the County Committee is to make a recommendation to the State Board of Education. Specifically, the County Committee must make the determinations required by Education Code section 35707, as to: (1) Whether the unification would adversely affect the school district organization of the county; and (2) Whether the unification substantially meets nine criteria that are specified in Education Code section 35753. The nine criteria are:

1. The reorganized districts will be adequate in terms of number of pupils enrolled.
2. The districts are each organized on the basis of a substantial community identity.
3. The proposal will result in an equitable division of property and facilities of the original district.
4. The reorganization of the districts will preserve each affected district's ability to educate students in an integrated environment and will not promote racial or ethnic discrimination or segregation.
5. Any increase in costs to the state as a result of the proposed reorganization will be insignificant and otherwise incidental to the reorganization.
6. The proposed reorganization will continue to promote sound education performance and will not significantly disrupt the educational programs in the districts affected by the proposed reorganization.
7. Any increase in school facilities costs as a result of the proposed reorganization will be insignificant and otherwise incidental to the reorganization.
8. The proposed reorganization is primarily designed for purposes other than to significantly increase property values.
9. The proposed reorganization will continue to promote sound fiscal management and not cause a substantial negative effect on the fiscal status of the proposed district or any existing district affected by the proposed reorganization.

The County Committee must make determinations as to whether each of the nine criteria is substantially met. An independent contractor will conduct an in-depth study, on behalf of the County Committee, to evaluate the proposal on the basis of each of the nine criteria. School Services of California has been selected to conduct this study. Ms. Duzyk introduced Robert Miyashiro, Vice President of School Services; and Brianna Garcia, Director, Management Consulting Services, for School Services.

The findings and recommendations of the County Committee will be transmitted to the California Department of Education and the State Board of Education. The County Committee is not required to take any action after this point. The California Department of Education will review the materials submitted by the County Committee and will conduct its own analysis of the unification. The timeline for the analysis by the CDE and other, subsequent activities that may be required by the State Board depends on those agencies. (2 – 2-1/2 years is estimated at this time.)

The State Board will consider the same nine criteria as the County Committee considers when it reviews the proposal. For the State Board to approve the unification, it must determine that all of these conditions are “substantially met.” If the proposal is not approved, the process will end. If the proposal is approved, the State Board has the authority to amend any of the elements in the proposal. If the proposal is approved, the County Superintendent will be directed to present the question of unification to the voters. The State Board will determine the area of election (Alpine Union School District or the entire Grossmont Union High School District). If the unification is approved by the majority of the voters, the election results and background information are submitted to the County Board of Supervisors for their action. The Board of Supervisors is the agency that has the authority to make the order that creates the unified district. The effective date of the unification would be July 1 of the calendar year following the year in which the Board of Supervisors takes action.

B. Spokespersons for the Chief Petitioners

Spokespersons in support of the petition included Dr. Albert Haven (Chief Petitioner), Sal Casamassima (President of the Alpine High School Citizens Committee), and Chris Loarie (Alpine resident and business owner.)

C. Spokespersons for the Alpine Union School District

Alpine Union School District Board President, Eric Wray, and Tom Pellegrino, Superintendent of the Alpine Union School District, spoke in support of the petition.

D. Spokespersons for the Grossmont Union High School District

Spokespersons opposing the petition included Superintendent Ralf Swenson, Deputy Superintendent Business Services, Scott Patterson, and Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services, Theresa Kemper.

E. Spokesperson(s) for Any Other Affected School District

None.

F. Public Comment – Individual Speakers Called from Cards

Twenty-six public speakers including teachers, parents, grandparents, students, and members of the Alpine Community Planning Group, GUHSD Boundary Committee, GUHSD Design and Curriculum Committee, Alpine Parents Coalition, Alpine Education Foundation, Alpine business Networking Association, Alpine PTA, Alpine Youth Sports Association, Alpine Library Friends, The Petition Experience, and Alpine Kiwanis spoke in support of the unification. Speakers included Diana Tompkins, Travis Lyon, Doug Dean, Jennifer Doucet, Megan Werland, Bill Weaver, George Barnett, Chris Newcomb, Greg Fox, Dar Newcomb, Bev Keller, Chuck Taylor, Todd Nielson, Richard Hoverstock, Christine Connell, Neville Connell, Lisa Campbell, Colin Campbell, Sharon Haven, Alexis Yankopoulos, Betty Jenson, Renee Conrad, George Landt, Ryan Holmes, Art Armagost and GUHSD Board Member Priscilla Schreiber. Additionally, cards with written comments to be considered (15 support/2 oppose) were received from Megan Werland, Delia Cooley, Sandra Kebert, Vicki Pool, Douglas Fortin, Jennifer Fortin, Debbie Gibson, Juliet Guffy, Wendy Heesch, Kellie Peel, Cyndy Walker, Stacy Starr-Williams, Scott Yaussi, Katherine Kehder, Beverly Keller, Alex Yankopoulos, and George Barnett.

G. Questions from County Committee Members

Members' questions centered on the grand jury report, bond issues, property tax issues, diversity of students, and the financial information presented by both the Chief Petitioner and the Grossmont Union High School District. The Committee would like more clarification on the financials at the next public hearing, as both sides are telling a different story.

H. Close the Public Hearing

There being no further comment, Chairwoman Hartley closed the public hearing.

III. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.