

GLENDALE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

October 15, 2013

DISCUSSION REPORT NO. 1

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Richard M. Sheehan, Superintendent

SUBMITTED BY: Eva Rae Lueck, Chief Business and Financial Officer

SUBJECT: **La Canada/Flintridge City Resolution on Re-Drawing of La Canada Unified School District Boundaries – Sagebrush Area**

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In May 2013, a group of citizens in the Sagebrush area requested the City of La Canada to support and endorse the realignment of the western areas of the City of La Canada into the La Canada Unified School District's jurisdiction. Subsequently, La Canada City Council adopted a resolution on June 3, 2013 in support of the territory transfer of the Sagebrush area into the La Canada Unified School District boundaries. In accordance with Education Code Section 4000 et seq., this would commence the process for initiating consideration by the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization of the transfer of the territory.

Background

In November 1991, a group of residents living in the eastern portion of the City of La Canada Flintridge filed a petition with the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization (LACCSDO) requesting the transfer of their area from the Glendale School District to La Canada School District.

In May 1992, the County Committee voted to approve the petition to transfer territory. Subsequently, the District filed an appeal with the State Board of Education challenging the County Committee's decision. After public hearings, the State Board approved the District's appeal to keep the Sagebrush area in its territory.

Following this ruling, appeals were filed by the Sagebrush Committee which were unsuccessful.

District staff has been in contact with the Los Angeles County Office of Education and District's legal counsel to review this and the prior attempts that were made to force a transfer of the territory to La Canada. The following are important factors to consider:

General Concern

- For generations, the families living in the Sagebrush area have been a part of the Glendale Unified family and attended our schools.

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- Currently, there are approx. 400 students from the Sagebrush area that attends Mountain Ave. Elementary School, Rosemont Middle School, and Crescenta Valley High School. To remove these students from all three sites would have a tremendous impact on the staffing viability of the schools.

### Annual State Funding

- The District's State funding is based on the student population; if we were to lose 400 students, it would result in a reduction of \$2.6 million in our funding next year. That annual impact would then increase each year as State funding is increased; by 2018-19, it is projected to grow to \$3.6 million.

### Assessed Valuation

- There is also a concern with the District's general obligation bond debt that has been issued for Measure K and Measure S. If Sagebrush residents (who voted in support of these bonds) are no longer a part of the repayment, it will increase the burden on the other homeowners.
- The assessed valuation in the Sagebrush area is approx. \$500 million or 1.8% of the valuation in the GUSD area. This reduction in assessed valuation would impact not only the repayment of bonds already issued, but also would impact the District's ability to meet its current timeline for the issuance of the remainder of the Measure S bonds.

### 2013-14 Inter-District Permits (Misinformation)

Inter-District Permits based on parent employment are often call Allen Bill transfers. Parents have called GUSD and informed us that La Canada USD has told them that they did not need releases from GUSD because of the Allen Bill. This is incorrect. These permit requests are subject to the same rules as all Inter-District Permits and the parent(s) must properly apply and receive a special release permit from the district (GUSD) that the student(s) are departing from.

In addition, The GUSD Office of Student Supports Services was informed by a parent that LCUSD said the kindergarten students did not need a release. Again, this is incorrect. Education Code Section 46600 (a) (1) states:

*“The Governing Boards of two or more school districts may enter into an agreement, for a term not to exceed five*

*School years, for the inter-district attendance of pupils who are residents of the districts. The agreement may provide for the admission to a district other than the district of residence of a pupil who requests a permit to attend a school district that is a party to the agreement and that maintains schools and classes in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to which the pupil requests admission. The supervisor of attendance of the district of residence shall issue an individual permit verifying the district's approval, pursuant to policies of the governing board and terms of the agreement for the transfer. A permit shall be valid upon concurring endorsement by the designee of The Governing Board of the district of proposed attendance. The stipulation of the terms and conditions under which the permit may be revoked is the responsibility of the district of attendance.”*

Students and their families who wish to request such an Inter-District Permit, need to properly go through the process of applying for such permits from the district. It is important to note that the granting of Inter-District Permits are NOT an automatic or on an at-will basis. The proper paperwork and the procedures must be filed and followed for the student to be able to attend LCUSD or the district of their request.

There are currently 7 permits approved for GUSD Sagebrush students to attend LCUSD. Our concern is that students are now being advised by LCUSD to not go through the legally required process.

#### District Options

Both Districts have been in discussion to explore a viable short and long-term solution. Through this process, a number of options were discussed and considered.

One option is a phase-in period of the territory transfer that would allow residents of Sagebrush a choice to attend either GUSD or LCUSD.

Another option is for GUSD to go through the legislative process in the hopes of securing a favorable ruling. If this is the case, things will remain “status quo” for GUSD and the residents of Sagebrush. If not, GUSD will pursue and exhaust the appeal process much similar to the efforts invested in 1992 to overturn the ruling. In the event that GUSD’s appeal is unsuccessful, the impact of the territory transfer will be immediate for both Districts.

In Conclusion

While we understand the desire of the La Canada School District to increase their funding by increasing their student population, and the desire of the City and the La Canada School District to have the same border...we are concerned with the impact on our families in the Sagebrush area and the impact on GUSD as a whole.

District staff is adopting a positive approach to address the various issues/requests, and it is our hope that we can find a solution that is acceptable and positive for all involved.