

QUESTIONS/ ANSWERS
FROM COMMUNITY FORUM –
SAGEBRUSH AT MOUNTAIN AVENUE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

August 26, 2014

***Questions were copied as written, some were slightly edited as shown by brackets for comprehension purposes only

GENERAL:

1. Please tell us exactly what you disagree with in the 9-30-13 School Services of California Report?

Limiting the number of students in the analysis to only those attending Mountain Avenue and Rosemont Middle School, the per-student cost analysis, and the lack of ongoing impact analysis in the School Services Report.

- Since all students would shift to LCUSD by the end of the phase in period the report should have addressed the on-going financial impact of GUSD losing approximately 370 students. The report only reflects the impact of 209 students that were attending Mountain Avenue Elementary, Rosemont Middle School and only incrementally during the phase- in period.
- GUSD does not agree with the \$1,751 net loss per student. Based on LCFF (Local Control Funding Formula) revenues alone the loss per student would be \$7,200 and increase each year. Due to the students being spread over 14 grade levels and phased-in the ability to reduce staffing and other support costs will be minimal.
- GUSD needs to view the loss in its totality, which would be approx. 370 students @ \$7,200 or \$2.6 million (this would increase as State funding increases). This does not include other State and Federal revenues. IF the District was able to reduce staffing there would be a partial offset to this revenue loss.

2. Why did you stop issuing joint FAQ's with LCUSD?

GUSD decided to update the FAQs to reflect the current GUSD School Board discussions. Since the FAQs were not reflective of discussions with LCUSD , it was not appropriate to ask them to be joint communications.

3. What are your "open" issues with LCUSD on the transfer?

There is currently no agreement on any of the major items such as: the ownership of the park area, mitigation of the various fiscal impacts on GUSD, or repayment of Measure K and Measure S bonds.

4. GUSD Supt said districts did impact report, but "we disagreed" with findings, why waste time and money if you can just throw out results you don't like. Seems like an empty exercise - like taking a vote of Sagebrush parents, what was the purpose of that vote?

We approved transfer by huge majority, so from GUSD puts brakes on the transfer Why?

There was a survey, to gather information it was not a vote. The purpose of the survey was to gather information for the Board of Education to consider in their decision making process. They will now consider the interest of those who responded to the survey in conjunction with the interests of others in our community and the impacts on the District as a whole.

5. I thought this issue was settled twice before why is it up again?

GUSD is responding to a resolution that was passed by both the City of La Canada and LCUSD. This discussion is in response to the unilateral action by La Canada to transfer students and property to LCUSD.

6. When can the community access the report that was commissioned by both districts on the impacts to GUSD, if not, why not?

The School Services of California report is currently available in the Business Services Office.

7. Can you please be more specific on the “new information” that was provided and caused the vote for the territory transfer to be postponed?

The District was advised that this item was not on a critical timeline due to the various agencies that would need to implement changes should a territory transfer be approved. The earliest that it could be implemented is 2016. If there is a unilateral action taken by La Canada to implement the territory transfer, it would potentially result in litigation (as it did previously). GUSD’s legal counsel communications cannot be shared at this time.

8. Why didn’t GUSD post the results of the survey (Sagebrush) transfer 90% in favor of the transfer on its website?

The survey results were posted to the website, but cycled off the web due to the section where they were posted. The District will re-post the survey to the Sagebrush section of the website.

9. Is there a plan to survey the affected La Crescenta neighborhoods of Mtn. Ave., Rosemont, CV?
If no, why not?

It has been determined a survey is not needed at this time.

10. Will the County Committee consider actual enrollment numbers or the demographic student numbers in evaluating fiscal impact under criteria 9?

It is unclear what the county committee will utilize in their decision making process. The District will be utilizing current enrollment and past enrollment data pertaining to that area.

11. What is the role of Scott Tracy in the negotiations of the transfer (after he was not a Board member)?

Initially Scott Tracy was involved as a LCUSD Board Member. After the election he came to one more meeting as a liaison to the new Board President.

12. How would a territory transfer benefit GUSD students?

GUSD is not aware of any curriculum benefit to the students. GUSD has a wide variety of excellent programs in languages, career tech, technology, and the sciences.

13. STEM or STEAM school means Mtn. will become a magnet? Can it remain a neighborhood school with this designation?

No, it does not mean Mountain Avenue would become a magnet school. However, the school's focus would be in the area of STEM or STEAM. It would remain a neighborhood school. Please keep in mind all neighborhood schools are subject to inter/intra districts permits to fill any open spots.

14. Is it true that under GUSD's proposed "open enrollment/permissive boundaries" Sagebrush residents would not have the right to vote in LCUSD elections?

That is correct.

15. Will Mountain Ave always (Guaranteed) to remain as a GUSD public school and never sold to create a private school?

While it is not possible to "guarantee" the future. It would be extremely detrimental to GUSD to make such a sale, this could never occur without a great deal of discussion

16. Why should developer fees include park fee for Glendale Parks when we live in La Canada?

Developer's fees do not include park fees. GUSD has never collected park fees.

17. The updated FAQ states that GUSD would be "willing" to "work with" the community to ensure its future as a neighborhood school. What progress has GUSD made in this regard to maintain Mountain Ave as a neighborhood school?

The Superintendent has stated on multiple occasions that should we agree to a territory transfer we would take a year to develop a plan/program for Mountain Avenue school that meets the needs of the students and the community while maintaining a neighborhood school. Please keep in mind all neighborhood schools are subject to inter/intra districts permits to fill any open spots.

18. Has GUSD polled Monte Vista area homes to determine how many would be interested, and willing, to send their children to Mtn. Ave under the permissive boundary option?

What other options is GUSD considering and how are these options consistent with maintaining a "neighborhood school" ?

No, GUSD has not polled Monte Vista area homes. Options to maintain a neighborhood school were addressed at the June 17, 2014 School Board meeting. That report is available on the Sagebrush section of the GUSD website. Some Monte Vista parents expressed an interest during the Dual Immersion discussion.

19. Is Mountain Ave in jeopardy of closing if GUSD loses in an adversarial process with Sagebrush?

No.

20. The Community is unclear if GUSD has gone on record as preferring a negotiated transfer agreement. Does GUSD have any objection to going on record on this issue?

The GUSD School Board is in the process of determining what is in the best interest for the District as it faces this unilateral action. At this point in time, the decision related to a negotiated transfer agreement has not been made.

21. Without a negotiated agreement, if Sagebrush is successful in its position for a territory transfer, is it true that all 353 GUSD's student would automatically be transferred from GUSD to LCUSD? Would this happen mid-year at the start of the next school year?

It is our understanding this would occur at the beginning of the school year following the territory transfer decision by the County Commission.

22. Will local neighborhood kids have priority enrollment in STEM STEAM or Animation?

Yes.

23. Do you anticipate any psychological distress among the student population that may experience the loss of a close-friend and/or classmate as a result of the proposed transfer?

Students and their families can choose to remain close friends with any students who transfer or move away. However, we believe that young students are able to readily adapt and make new friends each school year.

24. Would the proposed student mobility (ie. Migration to LCUSD) cause educational harm to the transferring and/or non-transferring student population.

Should a transfer occur, GUSD would be maintaining its instructional programs. Students leaving GUSD would not have the large array of programs available to them at LCUSD. (refer to question 12)

25. What is the annual number over the last 6 years of Allen Bill students that annually transfer to LCUSD from GUSD?

Over the last 6 years 106 students have been released from GUSD to LCUSD. These new releases to LCUSD are on a yearly basis and renewals are not required. The following chart indicates the number of new releases granted for the last 6 years.

09-10	42 students
10-11	6 students
11-12	15 students
12-13	3 students
13-14	22 students
14-15	18 students

26. Given that Wendy Sinnette announced publicly last week that LCUSD is at capacity, is it fair to assume, that if an Agreement is reached with LCUSD for a phase-in that there would be a reduction of Allen Bill students leaving GUSD, and if so, what is that projected number? Won't that number offset any loss of revenue by departing Sagebrush students?

In the various discussions it has been stated that current transfer students would not be impacted. If LCUSD denied more transfers in the future than it does now, it would offset the impact of the departing Sagebrush students.

PROPERTY RELATED:

27. Will we have a contract in writing to make sure the park stays in perpetuity?

The GUSD School Board has stated that the ownership of the property is not negotiable and will remain with GUSD in any negotiated agreement. However, if the County Commission unilaterally imposes the transfer GUSD believes the ownership of the property would transfer to LCUSD. This would be without our consent.

28. Is it true that without an agreement in place, there is a serious risk that GUSD can lose in an adversarial process at LA County Committee as it did in 1992? If so, GUSD would lose the park, all ADA money and possibly all of the bond money?

These are the issues for which the Board of Education is receiving legal counsel. It is our current understanding that we would lose the park, and all of the ADA money. However, we believe the City of La Canada would be required to make the future bond payments for bonds currently issued under Measure K or Measure S.

29. If accurate that the “territory” to be transferred is defined by the petitioners to the County Committee and could include the park/lot, is it true that the park/lot would normally go to LCUSD if we do not come to an agreement and GUSD loses in the adversarial county process?

Yes.

30. Park & Bridge are “off the table” in a negotiated settlement, what would happen to them if GUSD loses in court?

It is GUSD’s understanding that ownership would shift to LCUSD unless the County Committee or a judge determined it should stay with GUSD

31. Updated FAQ stated that GUSD Board has determined that retention of the Pickens Canyon drop-off area is a priority: 1. Does this include the entire park and drop-off areas? 2. Does this mean that this entire property is off the table and is no longer part of the negotiations? 3. If the transfer/sale of the property has not been pulled from the negotiations, why not?

1. Yes. 2. Yes. 3. Yes, it has.

32. Why is the property even being considered in any territory transfer as the negative traffic and school emergency/safety issues arising from such a proposed transfer are extensive?

The current territory transfer regulations automatically shift the ownership of the property.

ENROLLMENT RELATED:

33. Mountain Ave has a Washington DC trip program for 6th grade, a lot of people want to come to Mtn. in 6th grade, this would not be good for Mtn. with only so many 6th graders. Will there be any restrictions on permissive plan so not only 6th graders would get in when permissive plan happens?

These programmatic issues will be considered if a phase-in plan were to be developed.

34. Is GUSD planning on claiming that the territory transfer will involve 350-400 students in the LCF area based on the demographic survey done?

If so, will you disclose that this is simply the estimated number of student age children and that the number of children currently enrolled in GUSD and for which GUSD is getting ADA payments is far less?

The District is utilizing the 350-400 students in their discussions because that is the number of students currently residing in Sagebrush that attend GUSD.

35. What is the number of student, by grade level, who are currently enrolled at Mountain, Rosemont and CVHS on an Inter-District transfer permit? Is there a waiting list, and if so what is the number of students currently waiting to be admitted to Mountain, Rosemont & CVHS?

The following chart depicts the number of students on Inter-District permits at Mountain, Rosemont and CVHS by grade level. There is currently no waiting list for those three schools.

Students on Inter-District Permit for 2014-15		
Most students on permit at Rosemont and CV are District employees' children		
School	Grade	# Of Students Attending GUSD from Another District
Mountain Avenue Elementary School	K	1
	1	1
Total Mountain Ave		2
Rosemont Middle School	7	5
	8	9
Total Rosemont		14
Crescenta Valley High School	9	4
	10	8
	11	4
	12	9
Total CVHS		25
Total ALL GRADES		41

*At any point in time enrollment may vary based upon movement of students and families.

36. Would not releasing the Sagebrush kids relieve the issue of split classes, which many Mtn. Ave. parents do not like?

No.

37. If a territory transfer occurs, would that provide an opportunity and benefit to other GUSD students who would want to transfer to Mountain, Rosemont or CVHS?

This would not have a significant impact as the District currently allows intra-district transfers between GUSD school sites.

38. Of the 353 students located in the Sagebrush area, how many are not yet school age (i.e. babies under 5) and how many are attending private schools?

All 353 (most recent enrollment numbers shows 354 refer to question #44) students are currently attending GUSD schools.

*At any point in time enrollment may vary based upon movement of students and families.

39. Son is a 6th grade student at Mtn. Ave. this process has put him in limbo and made it hard as parents to prepare for Middle School. How do you suggest we handle this uncertainty as GUSD puts the brakes on the plan? Should he start at Rosemont and then be pulled out later if transfer goes through? Doesn't seem fair

We believe that if a transfer does not go through a student at Mountain will in fact attend Rosemont. The District also believes that if the transfer does go through your family will have the option of applying for permits and staying with his current cohort.

However, we recommend that you remind your child that he will have the opportunity to remain friends with any of his former classmates regardless of where the students go for middle school, high school or college.

40. What area from Monte Vista will be included in the permissive attendance boundaries and when will this take effect? Has it already?

I have heard 2 situations regarding STEAM. 1st is that only 1 mile radius of homes would be allowed into Mtn. Ave. and the rest of the school have just as much chance as anyone in the district to get in. 2nd is depending on the type of STEAM the radius would only be ½ mile - which would you choose?

There is no timeline on implementation. This was just an option discussed. The decision related to STEAM as it relates to implementation should it move forward, will be based on conversations with the staff and community.

41. If GUSD offered open enrollment in fall of 2013, [when was the] form provided? Please explain how many students would have been able to move to LCUSD?

There wasn't an offer of open enrollment. If GUSD were to offer open enrollment all students would be able to participate unless specified differently in the agreement with LCUSD.

42. How will enrollment at Mountain Ave be impacted by any future enrollment spikes at Monte Vista? Isn't the transfer necessary to accommodate such spikes?

The District is prepared to address any spikes in enrollment at Monte Vista. The Mountain Avenue open boundary was only an option to consider.

43. Of the 400 projected number of students in the Sagebrush area how many are in Special Programs such as Special Ed that would not transfer?

As a ballpark number, we believe that approximately 10% of students in any general population require special needs support. Therefore, in a population of 400 approximately 40 students requiring special education services would be the responsibility of their District of residence. Districts may choose to keep a student on an inter district permit, but we cannot predict which students would transfer to their District of residence.

44. Because of inconsistency of enrollment numbers can GUSD please provide the public with breakdown by grade of exact headcount from Sagebrush currently attending GUSD schools in 2014/15 and which schools they are attending?

Yes this is currently posted on the GUSD website, please refer to the Sagebrush section of the GUSD webpage.

Students Attending GUSD Schools Who Live in La Canada

Schools	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Mountain Ave Elementary	159	153	150	141	143	161	151
Other Elementary Schools	36	25	28	23	25	20	25
Rosemont Middle School	91	77	53	61	55	46	49
Other Middle Schools	3	4	4	2	2	2	0
Crescenta Valley High School	119	128	148	137	131	125	112
Other High Schools	6	9	10	11	11	9	7
Other Programs (Preschool, FACTS, College View, etc)	13	10	10	11	13	9	10
Totals	427	406	403	386	380	372	354

*At any point in time enrollment may vary based upon movement of students and families.

45. Is it accurate that the projected attendance at Monte Vista Elementary expected to grow to nearly 800 students? If so when? Will the “permissible attendance areas” concept mitigate this growth?

Based on current projections, if we restrict enrollment to 4 kindergarten classes enrollment is anticipated to peak at 740 students in 2016-17 and then estimated to decrease to 693 students in 2020-21. If we allow enrollment to increase to 5 kindergarten classes, projections for enrollment would be 803 in 2016-17 and continue to rise to 840 in 2020-21.

A permissible attendance area would allow students and parents more opportunities and would also mitigate the enrollment impact on the site.

46. Is the 353 number stated in the most recent FAQ and in the 8/26 presentation a representation of all (TK-12) students living in Sagebrush and NOT the number of Actual Students attending GUSD schools, if so why is that number relevant in assessing current fiscal impact to GUSD?

The 353 (most recent enrollment numbers shows 354 refer to question #44) students are actually enrolled and attending GUSD schools. This makes it relevant as it relates to State funding.

*At any point in time enrollment may vary based upon movement of students and families.

47. Is the 400 number that Dr. Sheehan referenced in the 8/26 meeting at Mountain Avenue the projected total school age children (TK-12) living in Sagebrush in 2020 or 2021? If so, assuming historical trends (% of school age children from Sagebrush attending GUSD) what is the reasonable projected number of Students attending GUSD from Sagebrush in 2020 or 2021, assuming there is no implemented transfer or phase in?

No. There are several enrollment numbers being utilized in our discussions. This is due to the various programs and how different data requests are processed and the timing of the request. In general the number of students from the Sagebrush area has varied from a high of 427 in 2008-09, to the current level of 353 (most recent enrollment numbers shows 354 refer to question #44). GUSD is assuming a range of 350-400 students will continue to reside in the Sagebrush area. This is not based on a projection this is based on historical data.

FINANCE RELATED:

48. Since 2013 what internal (staff) and external (experts, attorneys, etc.) costs have been incurred by GUSD in regard to this issue?

It is not possible to accurately calculate the cost incurred by GUSD for internal staffing time related to this topic. However, the external costs that have been paid through our July billing cycle are approximately \$74,000. This includes the Sagebrush survey, School Services of California's fiscal analysis and legal services.

49. Since GUSD retained legal counsel in June 2013, how much \$\$ has been spent on this effort to fight Unite LCF and where did these funds come from?

As referenced in the question above, the cost for professional services is approximately \$74,000 and they have been paid from the Unrestricted General Fund.

50. Is there a limited budget GUSD has to spend to continue to investigate the territory transfer?

GUSD has not established a specific budget for this purpose; it is something we continue to monitor.

51. What are the anticipated expenses if GUSD reaches an agreement with LCUSD within the next few months?

The expenses would involve legal counsel to develop the agreement, and represent the district through the LA County process in addition to any legal challenges that might occur. Further internal staffing time would be required; the costs of these items are not quantifiable at this time.

52. What are the anticipated expenses if GUSD elects to take an adversarial position against the Citizens of Sagebrush?

The expenses would involve legal counsel to assist in the District's defense and District staffing time. These items are not quantifiable at this time.

53. In its discussions & negotiations with LCUSD, does GUSD intend to rely on the GUSD "net revenue loss" of \$1,751 per ADA as determined in the Sept 30, 2013 analysis by School Services of California? If not, why not, since SSC is the recognized authority in such analysis and determinations?

No. The revenue loss per student is approximately \$7,200. The District does not anticipate being able to reduce staffing significantly, due to the number of students that will be leaving, the multiple grade levels and the school sites that are impacted.

54. Are the resources causing the information to be fluid? How do we rectify our information?

We are unsure what this question is asking.

55. If transfer goes through, how does GUSD plan to make up the loss of funds?

This is an item of great concern and continues to be part of the ongoing discussions.

56. What will be the effect of loss of funds?

The District anticipates that if all 350-400 students shift to LCUSD this will result in an ongoing loss in revenue of \$2.4 to \$3 million per year.

57. How much State funding and tax revenue will GUSD forego each year should the transfer occur?

The District anticipates that if all 350-400 students shift to LCUSD this will result in an ongoing loss in revenue of \$2.4 to \$3 million per year. The property tax revenue related to the general obligation bonds, Measure K and S (series A) of the Sagebrush area is \$6.8 million.

58. How much did GUSD spend in legal fees last time?

We have tried to research this question and are unable to provide an answer. The records from that period of time are not available and the legal firm that was utilized at the time is no longer in existence.

59. Assuming GUSD has taken the Oceanview lot off the table then no “property” of any kind would be transferred under the interpretation in the CA Education Code. Would this jeopardize LCUSD’s offer to pay \$4.45 million of property tax payments over 13 years to GUSD?

No.

60. Total enrollment from Sagebrush at Mountain Ave in 2013/14 GUSD has represented that number as 151 (more recently 161), yet based on my review of the Mountain Ave. Bear Pages (school directory) I count exactly 112 students with a 91011 zip code. Because of this discrepancy, can you provide a detailed breakdown by grade which has been audited by the Mountain Ave. Principal?

The reason for the discrepancy in numbers is that not every family gives permission for their information to be listed. Please see question 42 above for enrollment numbers.

61. Is it true that a decrease in gross revenue from ADA loss of departing Sagebrush Students, will affect the total revenue of GUSD and not necessarily have a direct impact to Mountain Avenue, Rosemont, or CV budgets because it is highly likely that any vacated seats will be filled with other students since those schools are highly desired?

As has been our practice in the past we allocate funds to the schools based on their enrollment. It is unclear at this time whether the vacated seats will be filled.

62. Is it true that the \$2.5m number is not the projected total annual gross revenue loss by GUSD during the years 2016-2021 in either a phase-in or immediate transfer of all Sagebrush students attending GUSD in 2014/15? If so, can you provide your projected loss of gross revenue to the district, for either scenario for the respective years?

The \$2.5 - \$3 million is based on 350-400 students transferring their enrollment to LCUSD. While the phase in mitigates the financial impact during those years, the true ongoing impact after phase in will be \$2.5 - \$3 million plus any increased funding that might be allocated from the State on a per student basis.

63. Knowing that the “Park/drop-off area” is off the table, if later there is a demand from LCUSD to transfer the park under “unfriendly” terms in an “unfriendly takeover” is GUSD aware that State rules regarding a property transfer between Districts require a CEQA Study, which should include a traffic study?

At this point in time it does not appear a CEQA Study would be required.

COMMENTS:

This meeting is entirely disappointing, you didn't assess the feelings of Mountain Ave. families, There should have been discussion and a Q & A. It feels that Mountain Ave. is not the priority. If the district should fight against this, then do so. If not, let them go! What is the best interest of Mountain Ave.

Please don't let happen to this issue that happed 20 years ago. The school should be a safe haven the students, not a hostile zone!

Is Glendale providing transfer to LCUSD or to other districts now? Concerned at 3 pm everyday very dangerous students cross Ocean View from Mtn. Ave. drop off area – need a better safe dismissal. Too difficult.

Even though you promise not to bring a dual emersion program to the school and you promise a STEM program how do you keep it a neighborhood school. Bringing in a program that is attached to students outside the immediate community is what we are concerned about not the actual program. We cannot facilitate the influx of traffic. You cannot replace the ADA with permissive boundaries. You should not give Sagebrush area to anyone.