

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
SCOTTSDALE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 48**

March 4, 2008

A Regular Meeting of the Governing Board of the Scottsdale Unified School District, #48, Maricopa County, was called to order at 5:34 PM, at the Arcadia High School Auditorium, 4703 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix, Arizona. President Beckvar called upon Dr. Eric Meyer to lead the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Members in attendance were Karen Beckvar, President; Dr. Eric Meyer, Clerk; Molly Holzer; Jennifer Petersen; and Dieter Schaefer. Superintendent John M. Baracy was also present. A quorum was present. Ms. Beckvar welcomed approximately 250 visitors.

Ms. Beckvar, on behalf of the Board, welcomed all the visitors to the meeting. Ms. Beckvar stated that the Board had asked Administration to develop a long term solution to issues facing the District. Dr. Baracy has responded to the Board's request to address the issue of the high school students from McDowell Mountain Ranch. Initially, it was thought that the growth in that area would be sufficient to support the building of a sixth high school. Currently, that growth has not taken place; therefore, a solution must be found to bring those students to a closer school. The other issue was looking at the District's facility utilization. The District has a lot of empty seats throughout the District; this affects everyone. The Board, therefore, asked Dr. Baracy to look at ways the District could use its facilities more efficiently and effectively and continue to maintain quality programs of instruction for its students. The presentation at this meeting is the beginning of this process; there have been no decisions made; the Board has not even had the chance to discuss the issue; there will be no school closures announced at this meeting. The Board wants to look for any type of solution to use facilities more efficiently and effectively. A series of community meetings have also been scheduled. Those meetings are opportunities for the public to present more solutions. The Board will listen to all suggestions.

Welcome Visitors

Before asking for approval of the Agenda, Ms. Beckvar noted that Administration had requested that Action Item VIII. A. Approval of Expansion of Phased Retirement Program (Smartschoolsplus) be tabled until March 18, 2008.

Amendment to Agenda

Mr. Schaefer moved to approve the Agenda as amended. Mrs. Holzer seconded the motion.

Motion #75
Approval of Agenda as Amended

The motion was approved with a vote of 5 – 0.

Superintendent's Comments

Dr. Baracy stated he would hold his comments for his presentation on Facilities.

Superintendent's Comments

Public Comment

Barbara Perleberg spoke in opposition to closing Pima Elementary School.

Public Comment

Ken Wood spoke in opposition to closing Pima Elementary School. Mr. Wood suggested establishing a Granite Reef Corridor Educational Alliance. This Alliance would promote collaboration between all the schools in the Corridor with a common goal of increasing District enrollment utilizing unique magnet programs.

Jeff Cunningham spoke in opposition to closing Pima Elementary School.

George Ash spoke in opposition to closing Pima Elementary School.

Judy Civiello spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools.

Dan Short spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and the effect that would have on the Comprehensive Gifted Program at Zuni.

Melissa Shapiro spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools, relocating Cheyenne to the Aztec site and building a gym for Cheyenne at the Aztec site.

Kris Picard spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and the effect that would have on Special Education students at Aztec.

Linda McNelly spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools.

Kristy Davenport and Natalie Fredricks spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and the resulting size of Zuni.

Allison Reager spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools.

Patty Defeyter spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools.

Jill Schadt spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools.

Allyson Mitzel spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools. Ms. Mitzel suggested other options for consideration: moving Cheyenne K-5 students to Zuni's campus; Cheyenne's 6-8 students would fit into Copper Ridge Middle School's campus; realize \$9 million on the sale of Cheyenne's campus to go into a reserve fund to benefit all SUSD schools; realize \$950,000 per year operational cost savings to benefit all SUSD schools when Cheyenne is closed. Other long-term options would be changing the school calendar to start after Labor Day and ending in June; change grade configuration to K-6 elementary, 7-9 middle school, 10-12 high school;

Erin Strickstein spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and gave criticism regarding the process thus far.

David Bruner spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools.

Dorothy Blaire spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and relocating Cheyenne to Aztec's campus.

Colette Jobin and Julia spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and relocating Cheyenne to Aztec's campus.

Leigh M. Hague spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and relocating Cheyenne to Aztec's campus.

Mark C. Thomas spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and relocating Cheyenne to Aztec's campus.

Public Comment
Continued

Sanjeev Aggarwaz spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and the effect that would have on the Comprehensive Gifted Program at Zuni.

Public Comment
Continued

Darlene Peterson spoke in opposition to closing Pima Elementary School.

Angelica Rodriguez spoke in opposition to closing Pima Elementary School.

Frances John spoke in opposition to combining Zuni and Aztec Elementary Schools and disrupting the Gifted Program at Desert Canyon.

Michelle Ausdemore spoke in opposition to relocating the Self-Contained Gifted Program from Zuni to Cherokee Elementary School.

Michelle Le-Nguyen spoke in opposition to relocating the Self-Contained Gifted Program from Zuni to Cherokee Elementary School.

Bruce Schenkel spoke in opposition to closing Pima Elementary School.

Michael Blaire, in regard to cost-savings, asked why the Board was proposing closing schools instead of cutting salaries and administration.

Lisa Sipes spoke in opposition to relocating the Self-Contained Gifted Program from Zuni to Cherokee Elementary School.

Mauri Collins spoke about Cheyenne and stated that Cheyenne parents did not want to “pit one school against the other” and for the Board to find another viable option for moving more students into Desert Mountain High School.

Norman Bizon stated that the Board should work with parents to sustain the standard of excellence in education in Scottsdale.

Kelly VanderHauven asked if any Board Members had children currently in SUSD.

A letter from Paul and Cora Messinger was also handed to the Board. The letter stated opposition to closing Pima and Aztec Elementary Schools.

Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda

- VII. A. Acceptance of Gifts - \$36,944.53
- VII. B. Accounts Payable Vouchers – 2/1/08-2/15/08
- VII. C. Payroll Vouchers – 12/27/07-2/7/08
- VII. D. Personnel Action Items – 1/29/08-2/15/08
- VII. E. Approval of Minutes of February 12, 2008 Special Board Meeting
- VII. F. Approval of Minutes of February 12, 2008 Regular Board Meeting
- VII. G. Auxiliary Operations Statement for January 31, 2008
- VII. H. Student Activities Statement for January 31, 2008
- VII. I. Tax Credit Statement for January 31, 2008
- VII. J. Approval to Increase Prior Board Authorization for Food Distribution
- VII. K. Approval to Increase Prior Board Authorization for IFB #8017, Lock Hardware and Locksmith Services
- VII. L. Approve the Purchase of an Activity Bus through Mohave Educational Services Cooperative
- VII. M. Approve the Purchase of Instructional Aids & Supplies through GPPCS

Consent Agenda Continued

- VII. N. Approve the Purchase of Library, Reading, Professional, Book Sets, Non Print Materials through GPPCS
- VII. O. Award of IFB #8196, Vitamin and Electrolyte Enhanced Water
- VII. P. Award of IFB #8199, Occupational Therapy Service
- VII. Q. Award of IFB #8203, Security Guard Services
- VII. R. Award of IFB #8205, Doors, Frames and Accessories
- VII. S. Award of IFB #8206, Sprinkler Parts, Calsense Systems
- VII. T. Award of RFP #8198, Emission Reduction System
- VII. U. Ratification of Procurement Item Approved by Superintendent or Designee with Prior Board Authorization
- VII. V. Renewal of Contracts
- VII. W. Additional Architectural/Engineering Services for Chaparral Bond Project

Mrs. Petersen moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Holzer seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with a vote of 5 – 0.

Action Item

Action Item VIII. A. Approval of Expansion of Phased Retirement Program (Smartschoolsplus) was tabled to the March 18, 2008 Regular Board Meeting.

Information/Discussion Items

Dr. Baracy presented Information/Discussion Item IX. A. Report on Options from Superintendent’s Blue Ribbon Advisory Council (BRAC). Dr. Baracy began his presentation by first stating that the Board has asked him to do one of the most difficult assignments that a school leader could be asked to do and that it is his most difficult task in 37 years in school leadership. He clearly understands the issues and the passion that these tough and courageous conversations elicit.

Dr. Baracy responded to a few comments made earlier that he felt needed to be corrected. First, the comment that Bond issue funds were not spent properly. The facility that this meeting was being held at, Arcadia High School, is a facility that was built through a \$217 million Bond issue that SUSD tax payers passed in 2004 to renovate every SUSD high school. Those projects are not only on-budget, but are under-budget, on time, or even scheduled to be completed before time. Secondly, the comment that the M&O renewal Override that voters passed in November 2007 was not properly spent. That Override was a renewal of existing funds and those funds have been designated and spent properly. Thirdly, there was some discussion tonight regarding class sizes. First and foremost, SUSD classes will not exceed what the current Scottsdale Education Association (SEA) Agreement on class sizes states. Class sizes are delineated and with the passage of the K-3 Override, SUSD has very low class sizes in grades K-3.

Dr. Baracy continued, stating that he looks forward to a process that has only just begun. He looks forward to working with his staff and others as they bring forth additional options to help solve this very difficult task. Dr. Baracy introduced Mr. Steve Capobres, the facilitator for BRAC, to explain the current process and how it began. Mr. Capobres reviewed the purpose and role of the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council (BRAC). BRAC has been in existence for three years and was created to provide an on-going venue to bring together all stakeholders within the District to communicate and provide a forum to exchange information, to understand what was

Consent Agenda Continued

Motion #76

Approval of Consent Agenda

Action Item

Smartschoolsplus
Tabled to 3/18/08

Information/Discussion

Report on Options from Superintendent’s Blue Ribbon Advisory Council (BRAC)

BRAC Facilitator, Steve Capobres

happening in the District and to offer advice to the Superintendent on pressing issues. Topics that have been discussed include teacher quality and community partnerships. Over the last six months, since October 2007, the Council has been dealing with the issue of the concept of neighborhood schools. All meetings have been open and receptive to any new members who wished to contribute. When Dr. Baracy gave the Council this challenge, he asked them to investigate such questions as:

- What are the needs of the customer?
- What do parents believe are neighborhood schools and how would they define it?
- What do families look for when they are deciding what school their child should attend?
- Is there a need to restructure the current school configurations?
- What is the right balance between offering quality programs versus location?

Questions for BRAC to Answer

In developing their options, BRAC broke up into smaller groups. The groups reviewed tremendous amounts of information. They looked at past, present and future enrollment trends; at school feeder patterns; at why families are leaving the District; at the competition; and also at the last report done in the District in 2001, the TCP Report. Dr. Baracy was very clear that everything was on the table. The Council was free to brainstorm and offer any opinions. Mr. Capobres asked each group to take a hard look at the options from these standpoints:

- What would be the educational impact?
- What would be the impact on building utilization?
- What would be the disruption to the community?
- What were safety and transportation issues?
- What were transition costs issues?
- What are the needs of the customer and are those needs being addressed?

Standpoints for BRAC to Consider

Mr. Capobres stated that moving forward, they are not done but are actually just beginning. BRAC will continue to meet over the next two months and will be analyzing all input from the all Community Forums. When those Forums have been completed, they will offer their advice to Dr. Baracy on final options before he meets with the Board in May.

Dr. Baracy continued, sharing information that has become a significant factor in the situation the District is now facing. Valley home sales are at a sixteen-year low, with as many foreclosures as there are new home starts. The State of Arizona is facing a \$1.2 billion deficit for the fiscal year ending June 2008, with a \$1.7 billion deficit for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2008. Other school districts throughout the state are also struggling with the same issues facing SUSD. In preparing SUSD's M&O budget for fiscal year 2008-2009, approximately \$6.3 million has been cut, including the elimination of some administrators. This was done to balance the budget and to save all programs.

Dr. Baracy stated that the Board charged him with finding a solution to the McDowell Mountain Ranch (MMR) situation of high school students traveling long distances to attend their "home school," Saguro High School, thereby passing two other SUSD high schools. In addition, the children in the Zuni and Aztec attendance areas attend Desert Canyon Middle School, along with the MMR students. When they complete eighth grade, the Zuni and Aztec children go on to Desert Mountain High School,

while the MMR children attend Saguaro High School. This is the only split-attendance pattern in the District. BRAC began reviewing data to solve this problem; this eventually led to further discussions regarding neighborhood schools. The options that will be presented are the results of those discussions. As BRAC continued meeting, they followed some Guiding Principles:

Guiding Principles

- Provide what’s good for kids
- Eliminate “split” schools complex feeder patterns
- Demonstrate concern for family impact
- Maintain fiscal responsibility
- Utilize short term/transitional solutions
- Raise educational excellence
- Enhance programs within the Saguaro Complex
- Should not accept the “status quo”
- Do not eliminate Open Enrollment

Of the nine options that evolved from the BRAC meetings, four options were chosen for presentation to the Governing Board. Dr. Baracy noted that all options are available on the District’s Website.

Options on SUSD Website

1. Cheyenne to Aztec site; Consolidate Aztec with Zuni at Zuni site; sell Cheyenne - to be implemented for the 2009-2010 school year
2. All Desert Canyon Freshmen to Desert Mountain High School Beginning August 2008
3. High School at Copper Ridge – a Future Option to be revisited in five to six years
4. Balancing Granite Reef Corridor and Program Enhancements in Saguaro and Coronado Complexes – to be implemented for the 2009-2010 school year (Relocate Math & Science Academy at Saguaro HS in August 2008; Consolidate Pima between Navajo and Hohokam with revised boundaries and feeder pattern)

Options

After reviewing the details of the options presented, Dr. Baracy outlined the next steps in the process. Beginning March 17th to April 30th, there will be Public Forums at each one of the high school complexes. At those Public Forums, additional input will be sought from the community. On May 6th, a report on the community input from the Public Forums will be presented to the Governing Board at the regular scheduled Board Meeting. At the May 6th meeting, the Board will discuss the information presented and might give further directions to Administration. In the Fall of 2008, Dr. David Peterson is planning on presenting an action plan to address the physical renovations of the remaining elementary and middle schools for the Board’s review. Dr. Baracy reiterated that in spite of what the many emails he has received state, this is not a “done deal.” That could not be further from the truth; this is the beginning of the discussions. Also, at some point in time, when or if the Governing Board decides to go further with the options regarding consolidation, the District must follow the language of A.R.S. §15-341(A)(36), calling for a formal process that must be followed to notify the community and to discuss the pros and cons of any possible closure of a facility. Dr. Baracy concluded, asking the Board for their thoughts and discussion.

Next Steps

Ms. Beckvar asked the Board Members for their overall opinions.

Discussion – Overall Opinions

Mrs. Petersen thanked Dr. Baracy and the Blue Ribbon Council for their hard work and

Mrs. Petersen

stated that this was something the Board had asked them to do. Personally, Mrs. Petersen stated that she looked forward to the community input. There are many options presented that are not her favorite. While she would typically favor saving money on bricks and mortar as opposed to programs, there are a lot of “tweaks” to be done. The unfortunate part is that the way the process is, once the information was public; it was tried in the court of public opinion before the Board even saw the information.

Mr. Schaefer also thanked the Blue Ribbon Council and the Administration for their hard work and also the parents for coming to this meeting. In his opinion, the primary reason for the evening’s discussion and debate is because receiving funding for education from the State has become increasingly more difficult and will continue to be such. It is with support from the community that SUSD has been as successful as it has. However, SUSD has come to a juncture where current and future financial constraints have become more imminent and threaten to endanger the programs it currently provides to students. The Board is walking a fine line; on one hand the Board has to and wants to be fiscally responsible; on the other hand it doesn’t want to negatively impact the quality of education. Mr. Schaefer’s focal point and guiding principles are that the District needs to maximize the amount of money it can spend on classroom instruction; that neighborhood schools are preserved as much as possible; that reasonable classroom sizes are ensured and maintained; and that student busing is kept to a minimum.

Mr. Schaefer

Mrs. Holzer also thanked all the parents for attending the meeting and also thanked the Administration and BRAC for their hard work. Mrs. Holzer stated that this meeting is the first time the Board has been presented these options and that her mind is open concerning the options. This is a starting point. Mrs. Holzer stated that she would like to see a more comprehensive facility plan, to include facilities that are not listed on the current submitted plan, such as the Education Center, the Warehouse, Building Services, and the Apache site. There are other opportunities that she would like to see presented. Mrs. Holzer stated that she does not support selling any facilities at this time. Also, she disagrees with Dr. Baracy; she feels that Desert Mountain High School is overcrowded and at this time cannot take any more students. Mrs. Holzer also does not support a second International Baccalaureate (IB) program, a very expensive program to run. Rather, to stay competitive with other valley districts, she would like to see the program expanded to the elementary and middle schools to feed the current program.

Mrs. Holzer

Dr. Meyer also thanked the Blue Ribbon Council and Dr. Baracy for their work in preparing the evening’s presentation. Also, he thanked the parents present at the meeting. Dr. Meyer reviewed the events that led to necessitating this presentation. The District is faced with cutting \$6 million from its M&O Budget. There are no extra dollars available; Arizona State Legislature does not fund education adequately; we are 49th out of 50 states in funding. In the 1980’s, Arizona was 25th out of 50 states in per pupil funding. Next year, Arizona school districts will potentially face \$10 million in cuts. The elimination of Excess Utilities funding is a disaster waiting to happen. Board Members, teachers and parents have been lobbying Legislators to continue this funding. Further, unless the District is efficiently managed, it will lose programs. The State doesn’t do well in funding such programs as the Gifted Program. The Board agrees with the parents; they want all children to have music, arts, PE, and gifted programs; but every year it is faced with potentially cutting those programs. The Board would also like to give its teachers raises equal to the cost-of-living, but the 2% received from the Legislature does not cover such an expense. The reason the Board

Dr. Meyer

asked to look at these issues was to see if it could find dollars to be used for programs and classrooms to benefit all students in the District. Dr. Meyer also responded to a recurring suggestion in the emails he received; a number of people stated that their property tax had just been increased, and asked why the District didn't have money to fund its schools. Dr. Meyer stated that SUSD gets the same amount of per-pupil funding as every other district in the State. What happens on an individual's property tax bill has no reflection on how districts are funded. As a school board, they do not decide how much money is given to the District; they are just given the allotted funds and have to decide how to do the best for all SUSD students.

Ms. Beckvar reiterated for those who moved here from out-of-state, the fact that other states fund education considerably better than Arizona. Other states also fund differently; local tax payers have more control over the amount of money that goes into local schools. Arizona has a Revenue Control Limit that limits the amount of money you are allowed to spend on students. Districts are allowed to override that limit in two ways. SUSD has done both of those ways to put additional money in its schools: the M&O Override and the K-3 Override. Those monies go into the classroom. The other initiative allowed, which SUSD has also done, is bonding. SUSD did a bond to renovate its existing high schools and a Capital Override. There can be no shift of those bond funds into the classroom other than in terms of capital expenditures. The District is very limited by the State in terms of what it can do. Approximately 90% of the District's budget is comprised of salary and benefits. The only way to save big money would be by removing people from your district, which means your class size increases or your program offerings decrease, or you don't compensate employees with much money. Ms. Beckvar asked everyone to attend the Community Forums because one of the questions that will be asked will be what are your priorities for spending whatever money is available. The Board is very open to options; there is no hidden agenda, or process behind the scenes. The original intent was for the information to be given in a public meeting so that the public could hear the Board's discussion. It was always the intent to have Community Forums to receive community input before any decision would be made.

Ms. Beckvar

Ms. Beckvar asked each Board Member for their input on each of the options presented.

Discussion on Options

Option #1 - Cheyenne to Aztec site; Consolidate Aztec with Zuni at Zuni site; sell Cheyenne - to be implemented for the 2009-2010 school year.

Option #1 – Cheyenne to Aztec; Consolidate Aztec with Zuni; sell Cheyenne

Ms. Beckvar reviewed the genesis of the Cheyenne campus. The Cheyenne site was originally intended to be replaced. At the time of inception, very enthusiastic parents asked the Board for this program. They were told by the Board at that time that they could try the program out and placed it on a campus that was intended to be replaced. It should be kept in mind that the Cheyenne campus has always been substandard.

Mrs. Petersen stated that she is not certain about moving Cheyenne to Aztec. Cheyenne's program is very popular and growing; would Aztec be the best location for it. It would be 948 students fitting into a 900 capacity facility. Dr. Baracy responded that Dr. Peterson, one of the best facility experts in the State, has looked at the site and feels it could accommodate Cheyenne's population. Mrs. Petersen also had concerns regarding the combination of Aztec and Zuni at Zuni. Dr. Baracy responded that he would have the facilities department provide the Board with data supporting that combination for 2009-2010 if that was an option the Board decided to go further with. Assuming that both populations would fit, Mrs. Petersen was concerned that the

Mrs. Petersen

District would lose some of the uniqueness of the programs, such as the multi-age program. Dr. Baracy responded that it was his understanding that approximately one-third of the students at Aztec were in the multi-age program. Analysis has shown that the program could be easily integrated in with Zuni. Mrs. Petersen stated that she was not at all interested in moving the Self-Contained Gifted Program to Cherokee. She would like to see a traffic study done at Zuni and would like the growth study for that area double-checked.

Mr. Schaefer agrees with Mrs. Holzer; he is totally opposed to selling Cheyenne, particularly in this real estate market. The current real estate situation is such that it is so uncertain. Mr. Schaefer, in the event the District does combine some schools, is also opposed to selling those properties. He feels the District should look at leasing options. Regarding the capacity for Aztec and Zuni, Mr. Schaefer's own analysis shows that the District would be over-capacity at both sites. Additionally, in looking at Cheyenne, it appears to be a successful school, based on the enrollment. Mr. Schaefer suggests opening a second Cheyenne, but at this time, he does not know where. He does believe that the District needs to be very careful when looking at selling or combining schools. More work needs to be done on this option.

Mr. Schaefer

Mrs. Holzer stated that she had given her thoughts on this option in her opening statements. In regard to Cheyenne, she supports the campus and feels that there will be growth in that area. She would hate to contemplate losing that site.

Mrs. Holzer

Dr. Meyer asked Mrs. Holzer what are the desires of the Cheyenne parents, would they like to move or stay where they are? Mrs. Holzer responded that she could not speak for the Cheyenne parents; but it appears to her, and what they have been promised, is a facility on that particular campus. Most of the students live within a two mile radius. Mrs. Holzer feels that it is very difficult to move a successful program. Dr. Meyer replied that there are 1000 empty seats in the District. It will be a challenge to pass a bond for facilities if we do not show the voters that the District is using its facilities adequately. Dr. Meyer asked Mrs. Holzer if it is her opinion to leave Cheyenne where it is and to try and get funding to rebuild a new facility on the current site. Mrs. Holzer responded that, yes, that is what she would like to see at some point. Continuing, Dr. Meyer stated that there were a couple of potential proposals that he would like further study on. If the Board considered relocating Cheyenne to another site, could it be relocated to Desert Canyon Middle School, where there is a gym; therefore the District did not have to rely on selling property to fund a new gymnasium? Also, if Aztec and/or Zuni were reconfigured as a K-8, would that free up enough space to allow the Cheyenne program to run at Desert Canyon Middle School? Dr. Baracy responded that Administration would do further study on that proposal and bring it back to the Board in May. Dr. Baracy clarified the proposal; Cheyenne would be relocated to Desert Canyon Middle School and Zuni and Aztec would be reconfigured as K-8 schools. Ms. Beckvar added that Desert Canyon Elementary would also become a K-8. Dr. Meyer stated that this gives the District another option; however, the community might say no to that as well. Also, Mr. Schaefer had stated that he wanted to protect programs; Dr. Meyer stated there is a limited amount of funds; the Board has to decide how to spend those funds. If the District spends those funds running facilities, then it cannot spend them on programs. If facilities are kept open, the result will be larger class sizes. The community has to tell the Board if they would rather have additional children in the classroom without as many programs. The community has to choose; the District cannot have both.

Dr. Meyer

Ms. Beckvar stated that she had already asked Administration to research the proposal

Ms. Beckvar

to reconfigure Zuni and Aztec as K-8 and move Cheyenne to Desert Canyon Middle School. Desert Canyon Elementary School would also become a K-8 school. She felt that would solve some of the issues plus keep everyone of the programs intact as a program, not necessarily at the same location. Moving forward, Ms. Beckvar stated that the issue of sales of property needed to be kept separate from the decision of whether or not the District consolidates schools. Also, she felt the District needed to look at whether it makes sense to renovate schools in the areas where there is a lot of extra capacity.

Option #2 – MMR Freshman Students to Desert Mountain HS (DMHS) – August 2008.

Mrs. Petersen asked exactly how many freshman students this involved. Dr. Baracy responded that there are already a large number of MMR students open-enrolled at DMHS and that additionally, there would be 80 new students. Further, in the future, if open-enrollment was managed, Administration believes the number of students at DMHS would remain fairly constant with what they currently are. Mrs. Petersen asked what this proposal would do to class sizes. Dr. Baracy stated that, as stated in his presentation earlier, class sizes are dictated by the agreement with the Scottsdale Education Association (SEA); they would not go above current standards. Mrs. Petersen stated that if open enrollment could be managed and cut off, she would support this option. Ms. Beckvar asked if this would change the open-enrollment policy. Dr. Baracy responded that, no, the policy would remain “once you’re in, you’re in.” This would not affect those students who were already open-enrolled at DMHS; those numbers have been considered in the projections that have been done.

Mr. Schaefer stated that he would also support this option. He believes the District owes it to the parents in that community to move ahead with this option as quickly as it can.

Mrs. Holzer stated that she differs from her other Board Members. She knows the numbers and feels comfortable saying that she feels DMHS will be over-crowded when the current fifth and seventh graders reach ninth grade. Mrs. Holzer would be open to the possibility of closing open-enrollment except for MMR students. She does feel the students will fit eventually, but not in the Fall of 2008. Dr. Baracy asked Mrs. Holzer if she stated to close open-enrollment except for MMR students, as that is what this option proposes. Mrs. Holzer responded that the proposal is to reassign them and provide transportation so that all MMR students would be going to DMHS this fall. Dr. Baracy responded that the only difference with Mrs. Holzer’s proposal is she suggests to not provide them with transportation. Mrs. Holzer responded that Administration needed to give Saguaro an opportunity to have a program of some kind as this option would be removing a large portion of its enrollment without any warning. Dr. Baracy responded that this option is what Mrs. Holzer is suggesting, except for transportation. MMR students still have the opportunity to choose to go to other high schools, and they do. There are over 100 students from MMR that attend Chaparral right now. In essence, as he understands it, that is what this option is. Mrs. Holzer responded that right now there is a large population from MMR attending Chaparral because they were sent up to Copper Ridge Middle School and those students wanted to stay with their friends. This Board moved them back to Desert Canyon Middle School. Once that population matriculates through, the District won’t have that large portion of students attending Chaparral, especially once the transportation issue is removed. Dr. Baracy responded that Administration would be happy to look at that data and report back. Ms. Beckvar clarified: Mrs. Holzer is concerned about the over-

Option #2-MMR
Freshman Students to
DMHS

Mrs. Petersen

Mr. Schaefer

Mrs. Holzer

crowding in the short-term, but in the long term, would support this option. Mrs. Holzer stated that the MMR children will fit at DMHS in five years. Dr. Baracy responded that the Administration will have those conversations and, further, will graph-out the numbers and give the Board whatever information it needs to make the proper decision.

Dr. Meyer stated that MMR parents have asked not to have their children drive 18 miles south on the 101 Freeway to Saguaro High School. This is not an optimal solution, but it is the best solution available. Dr. Meyer is supportive of this issue if the school's enrollment numbers are managed.

Ms. Beckvar stated that she would like to see other options. Projections show that DMHS gets close to maximum capacity and that means eliminating open-enrollment which brings down financing. Ms. Beckvar asked if options have been looked at making DMHS at 10-12 school and have the ninth grade attend Middle School. That would be another way to keep enrollment down and still keep the feeder pattern basically the same. Dr. Baracy asked if this option would have the ninth graders at Mountainside Middle School (MSMS). Ms. Beckvar responded that there are a few things that could be looked at; having a ninth grade center at MSMS as it shares the same campus. There could be a large high school with houses of ninth graders as a transition into a bigger high school. Another option would be changing both the middle schools and high school grade levels in order to have adequate space. She does, however, favor having MMR students attend DMHS. Dr. Baracy responded that Administration would bring back some other types of reconfigurations in May. Dr. Meyer added that if there was some sort of "bubble" as Mrs. Holzer stated, this could be a back-up option that could be used to deal with that on a short-term basis.

Option #3 – Sixth High School at Copper Ridge

Ms. Beckvar stated that they would skip this option for the time being as it is not projected for quite some time in the future.

Option #4 – Granite Reef Corridor

Mrs. Petersen stated that the emails received caught her attention. She is really concerned with closing Pima, an Excelling school. She would like to look at this option one more time to see if there is some other option. Mrs. Petersen stated that she agrees with Mrs. Holzer; she also wants to do something at Saguaro but is not convinced a second IB program is something that is even relevant to discuss at this point. She does feel that moving the Math and Science Academy to Saguaro is a great location and great idea. Perhaps in lieu of an IB program at Mohave MS, a math and science program would work at Mohave. She would also like to re-look at an IB program at MSMS, which is a little more logical pattern.

Mr. Schaefer agrees with Mrs. Petersen. Based on the number of emails and comments this evening, he is also hesitant about this option. He is also very hesitant to touch any of the elementary schools in that entire redeveloping area. Another consideration is in the current real estate market, people are going to start buying properties again and this is a very attractive corridor. He would like to look at this option in another year from now. Also, he would like to emphasize to the principals in that corridor to develop creative ideas and programs, such as pre-school, preK, before and after school care, to attract students to those schools. Being aggressive in those areas could mitigate some of the enrollment deficiencies in that corridor. Dr. Meyer responded that there are existing preK programs in the schools in that area that generate only approximately \$60,000, not anywhere close to the potential \$6-\$10 million that must be cut from the

Dr. Meyer

Ms. Beckvar

Option #3 – Sixth High School at Copper Ridge

Option #4 – Granite Reef Corridor

Mrs. Petersen

Mr. Schaefer

budget this year. Other programs that Mr. Schaefer suggested will cost money and the Board must decide how they would be funded. Mr. Schaefer responded that he could see Dr. Meyer’s point and could agree with it to a certain extent. But, in order to make money, you have to spend money. You will reap the benefits in the future. That is what Mr. Schaefer believes the Board should look at. Dr. Meyer responded that he is in agreement with Mr. Schaefer about all of the programs the Board would like to have in its schools as well as all the reductions in class size; however, the District does not receive adequate funding.

Mrs. Holzer stated she is in agreement with Mrs. Petersen. She is hesitant to take apart a program that is doing well. However, to Dr. Meyer’s point, the District does have an overhead. She would like to see other options. She is not sure that even if the District offered programs at every one of the Granite Reef Corridor schools, there would be enough students to participate.

Mrs. Holzer

Dr. Meyer, regarding Hohokam as a traditional school for next year, asked what the Hohokam community felt about that type of school. Cathy Rivera, Executive Director of Elementary Education, responded that the community would be favorable to that option. Chad Caudle, principal of Hohokam, also responded that the site council and community would be very supportive; however, the program should not look like Cheyenne as Hohokam has a different population. Dr. Meyer asked when this program would be implemented. Mr. Caudle responded he thought the right action would be to wait a year and appropriately plan the transition. Dr. Meyer stated that in looking at the Corridor, Pueblo also has low facility utilization. The new Spanish Immersion Program has been located there. Dr. Meyer asked if that has improved enrollment and where are the students coming from; is there potential there to reduce our costs and keep the other Corridor schools open? Mrs. Rivera responded that Pueblo, with only first grade in the Spanish Immersion Program, has added 30 additional students to the school. Several are from out-of-district. They are already above their quota for kindergarten and second grade. In time, it is anticipated that the program will grow by 100 students every year.

Dr. Meyer

Ms. Beckvar stated that she did not like the option of closing the only Excelling Title I school. She feels that further study should be made in this area; there is opportunity to bring more magnet programs to the Granite Reef Corridor. Ms. Beckvar would like more information and would like to look at other opportunities for that Corridor. Dr. Baracy stated that he is hearing mixed messages from the Board and asked if they would like Administration to look at program enhancement rather than any type of consolidation. Ms. Beckvar responded that program enhancement is one possibility; another would be something different for seventh and eighth grade students in that feeder area. Also, there seems to be quite an interest in K-8 programs. The Board needs to make sure that they understand there are things that are possible and impossible, based on the numbers. Mrs. Holzer commented that she would like to see other options as well. However, there is a demand for K-8, but there are a lot of challenges with that, specifically with sports.

Ms. Beckvar

Ms. Beckvar asked Dr. Baracy if he still needed more guidance. Dr. Baracy responded that what he understood from the Board’s discussion was:

Dr. Baracy - Recap

- Not to do any type of consolidation of any of the four schools in the Granite Reef Corridor
- Look at some type of reconfiguration of the schools in regards to either programs or a K-8 setting. If the District did go to a K-8 configuration for the

schools, look at what type of impact that would have for a gymnasium or lack of a gymnasium

- Look at possibly Mohave or the lack of Mohave

Dr. Baracy stated that he did not hear an interest from the Board to consolidate any of the four schools to three. Dr. Meyer responded. In his opinion, next year the District could face decreased enrollment in all of those schools again; that is what has happened historically. To take that off the table right now is a mistake. If Excess Utilities is not funded by the State, the District will be looking for cuts all over the District next year. Ms. Beckvar responded that she is not suggesting the option be taken off the table; she feels there ought to be other options presented and have a lot of options for the community to look at and then ask them what would be their preference.

Mrs. Petersen stated that she just wanted to clarify an earlier statement she made. Mrs. Petersen stated that she said she was not in favor of closing Pima because it was an Excelling School; but she did say that she asked Dr. Baracy to go back to the drawing board and look at other options in that Corridor.

Mrs. Petersen -
Clarification

Dr. Baracy stated that he did not hear from the Board to close another school. What he thought he heard was to look at program enhancements and/or reconfigurations of the current Corridor schools. Dr. Baracy asked “is it the general feeling of the Board wanting us to look at a suggested closing or consolidation of another school?” Mrs. Petersen responded that the impression she got was that the Board wanted to look at a couple of more options. Dr. Baracy stated that he needed direction from the Board if they wanted him to consolidate another school or do they want him to look at program enhancements and upgrading programs along the Corridor and giving it some time? Ms. Beckvar stated that one of the things that were discussed is really a consolidation because you are talking instead of consolidating two elementary schools; you are talking about consolidating a middle school back into elementary schools. This gives you similar savings because you are operating with one less school. That is one of the options that are out there that does involve another type of consolidation. Dr. Baracy responded that it is his understanding that the Board wants him to look at some type of configuration of K-8s and the consolidation of Mohave into its feeder schools.

Mr. Schaefer commented that his primary focus at this time is program enhancement. Right now the market is down and we do not know where it is going. Any movement that is made right now is probably going to be a big mistake. We should be focusing on program enhancement; but by the same token, the District cannot afford to have schools that are under-utilized. He would be in favor of setting parameters such as in a year from now, if a school’s enrollment is down or will be at the same level, we need to close the school. Parameters need to be established so that the community will know what is critical.

Mr. Schaefer

Mrs. Holzer commented that perhaps in the Community Forums, we would educate the public on how many students need to be enrolled in elementary and middle schools to run in the black. Also, Mrs. Holzer would like the specifics on the Education Center. It is not centrally located for most of the parents in the District. It would be an ideal facility to lease to a law firm, or a non-competitive organization. She would like to see the square footage and what the lease rates would be for the Ed Center and to possibly move the Ed Center to a more centrally located District facility. Dr. Baracy responded that he would have Dr. Peterson look at the numbers. Mrs. Holzer would also like to look at relocating the Sierra Vista program and better utilize the space. Mrs. Holzer

Mrs. Holzer

stated that she knows this is very difficult but she is trying to look at the overhead and positive cash flow.

Dr. Meyer stated that, in his opinion, the Board has to decide whether they have the will to potentially close a program anywhere in the District. The Board asked the Administration and the Blue Ribbon Council to come back with recommendations. The District is spending a lot of time and resources on this issue. If the Board says it is not going to look at closing Pima, but next week they will look at closing Hohokam for example, we will have all the Hohokam parents saying the same things. The bottom line is that parents like their schools. Nationally, 90% of parents like their schools, even if it is a failing school. That is not going to change. If we are not going to close a school in the Granite Reef Corridor, let's look at program enhancements and move forward from here. The Board is putting Dr. Baracy and the Administration in an awkward position. Mrs. Petersen asked Dr. Meyer, in general terms, if he was advocating to close a school or not to close a school. Dr. Meyer responded that he thinks that the Board needs to pick something that they are potentially going to close and go out to the community and hear what they have to say. The Board needs to decide if it would truly consider closing a school and if so, it needs to go to the community, give them the plan and get feedback from the community. The District's Administrative resources are incredibly limited and the Board has given them all kinds of goals; getting to 33 Excelling Schools is a lot work. Ms. Beckvar added "if we have the will to make a hard decision if that looks like the best option." Mrs. Petersen agreed and stated that of course, she does not want to close a school, but she does believe that Corridor has one school too many. Mrs. Petersen stated that her problem was that Pima is the Excelling School and she did not want to close an Excelling School. Ms. Beckvar stated that it is going to be extremely important at the Community Forums to find out and assess what the priorities are. Mrs. Holzer responded that she agreed with Ms. Beckvar and commented that maybe the Board should take the whole plan out and let the community comment on the whole issue. The community input will help the Board decide in which direction it should go. Dr. Baracy stated that he would like to present these options to the community, get their input, and come back to the Board in May. He did not hear from the Board, generally speaking, that this is a decision that will be made in the next month or two. The Board wants more information and wants to hear more from the community. Dr. Baracy stated that the Board can give him direction in May or June after receiving community input. Also, Dr. Baracy stated that Administration is going forward with program enhancements. That is basically what has been told to the community, that no decision will be made until the community has had the opportunity to give its input.

Dr. Meyer

Ms. Beckvar thanked Dr. Baracy and Administration, stating that the Board knows they put a lot of time and effort into this. The Board appreciates having this courageous conversation.

Governing Board Reports

There were no Governing Board Reports.

Governing Board
Reports

Dates of Upcoming Board Meetings and District Events

Tuesday, March 18, 2008 – 5:30 PM – Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, March 20, 2008 – 6:00 PM – Community Forum at Chaparral HS
Monday, April 7, 2008 – 6:00 PM – Community Forum at DMHS
Monday, April 14, 2008 – 6:00 PM – Community Forum at Coronado HS
Tuesday, April 15, 2008 – 5:30 PM – Regular Board Meeting
Monday, April 21, 2008 – 6:00 PM – Community Forum at Saguaro HS

Dates of Upcoming
Board Meetings and
District Events

Tuesday, April 22, 2008 – 6:00 PM – Community Forum at Arcadia HS
At 9:35 PM, Mrs. Petersen moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Meyer seconded the motion.

Motion #77
Adjournment

The motion was approved with a vote of 5 – 0.

Dated this 4th day of March 2008.

The Governing Board of the Scottsdale Unified School District #48

Karen Beckvar, President

Eric Meyer, Clerk

Molly Holzer

Jennifer Petersen

Dieter Schaefer