

**Arcadia Complex Community Forum**  
**April 22, 2008**  
**Community Discussion Groups**

- Explore possibility of closing all schools that are under-enrolled and decreasing, i.e. Cherokee, Sequoya, Desert Canyon, Supai.
  - Make the hard decisions – make them now.
  - Programs are paramount.
  - Board needs to articulate goals and values.
  - Have roaming administrative (principals) staff at schools.
  - Take a global view. Decisions should take into account all 26,000 students.
  - Schools cannot be open enrolled to exceed maximum program capacity. District must build trust with community by keeping this promise.
  - Lease/rent facilities on evenings and weekends to generate funds.
  - Close Copper Ridge MS.
  - Make more administrative cuts.
  - Establish standards for staffing schools (support staff and administration).
  - Do the right thing for all SUSD students.
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All schools in Coronado Complex convert to K-8.

Supai is phased-out over two years

1. No student displacement

Supai is used as a holding school for the rebuilding of Pima, Hohokam, Tonalea, and Yavapai as K-8.

SUSD evaluates revenue-generating options and/or consolidation options for any unused facilities.

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2. Move the Math/Science Academy to Saguaro.
  3. K-8 for Coronado Complex.
  4. Better marketing for open enrollment.
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1. Energy efficient: solar panels (credit for summer and tax savings).
2. Lighting – energy star bulbs: Mesa school
3. Have utility company do energy audit and provide recommendations for conservation.
4. Future alternative fuel for school vehicles (buses). Combining. Develop plan to pick up children for more than one school so buses are running at capacity. Stagger schedules.
5. K-8 vs. middle school.
6. E-education: 4 day school week or create enrollment ops.

**Arcadia Complex Community Forum**  
**April 22, 2008**  
**Public Comments**

**What do you value most about Scottsdale schools?**

Community; excellent education.

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Its ability to attract, develop and retain high quality teachers.

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Small size classrooms – not overcrowded; neighborhood schools

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Pima is the center of our community. It is a Title I school with over 50% free or reduced lunches. That has a 9 out of 10 rating on GreatSchools.com. The staff and programs at Pima are exceptional.

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With so many people who move here from far away, the Scottsdale school system is like a replacement for family. We not only bring our children for excellent guidance and teaching, but also we, as parents, receive support, advice, and guidance ourselves from the teachers, principal, and other staff members.

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Neighborhood schools; focus on education; support arts and sports; library funding

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Neighborhood schools; programs available and supported

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Academic programs and quality of staff; specialty academic programs (i.e. IB)

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The history, connection to the community, accessibility for students; proximity for neighborhood gatherings; excellent teachers and staff; students that initially enroll stay through 6<sup>th</sup> grade (most).

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That our children can walk to our school and that it is very culturally and ethnically diverse. That we are truly a community school.

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Parental involvement; neighborhood participation; kids living in close proximity to their friends, not spread all over our huge metropolitan area.

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Community and academics

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Self-contained gifted program. This program allows students who meet requirements to stay in the public school system. Otherwise, charter or private schools would draw these students. Scottsdale should take advantage of promoting this program to draw more eligible students. I hope this program will continue as it is the reason we are here for middle school. I liked the middle school self-contained gifted program much better than the Paradise Valley Schools middle school program.

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Small classes

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High standards or expectations; traditional style education (at Pima)

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I did value all the special programs, i.e. self-contained gifted program. As my child approached the grade/program, however, the program was cut off due to lack of students. I specifically chose Pima for my child because of that program. If SUSD doesn't make changes to the district, especially South Scottsdale, I will take both my children to another district!!!

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That we have the choice to open enroll our kids in the great school of our choice. Prefer an excelling school with good programs. The great teaching staff and school Board that listens.

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- Commitment to excellence in performance, programs, staff, students
  - Community-oriented schools – very community/parent-oriented
  - Choice → LOVE K→8
  - Voice – appreciate that the district/Board/school staff allow parents and the community a voice to be considered
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Community feel of neighborhood schools (ANLC, Tavan, and Arcadia). I appreciate the high standards that are set for students and value these expectations.

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Pima!

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The community's commitment to the students. As an Arcadia parent, I value our neighborhood schools and the incredible support of the parents. Closing Arcadia would be a huge mistake.

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That we do have a neighborhood school. Do not close Arcadia. Keep as a high school.

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1. Teachers
  2. Education
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I value the high standards that SUSD sets for its students. I believe this is the best district in the state. Let's continue to set the bar high. I also value our neighborhood school (Hopi) and the community it encompasses.

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I can't speak to Scottsdale schools in general – my 4 kids are thriving in a local Catholic school – but we are looking forward to enrolling them in Arcadia HS.

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1. Teachers
  2. Community
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Community working together; academics

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It [the District] is one of the best because it has the arts and sports programs, and also the Gifted support programs, which is a big help and a huge benefit for their [students'] preparation for facing their life.

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I value the teaching that the school provides for the students, and all of the attention that is given to the community.

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What I value most is the teaching and the attention that the schools give to our students.

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- That the school is close to our house.
  - They support the kids enough so that they learn more.
  - They pay enough attention to the kids.
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**What recommendation(s) do you suggest?**

Move the IB program from DCMS to Saguaro to open seats for MMR students and fill seats at Saguaro. IB program becomes more centrally-located in the district.

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Tough decisions need to be made. Every dollar spent on an empty seat affects the dollars spent on full seats. The longer we wait to make the tough financial decisions, the more likely we will lose the quality programs our district has.

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Move IB to Saguaro to make room at Desert Mountain.  
Adjust the enrollment for Saguaro and Chaparral.  
K-8 for Coronado Complex.  
Close Copper Ridge.

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Seriously consider K-8 transitions. Educate the parents in those elementary/middle school complexes about the benefits of K-8. My nieces and nephew went to Pima. It used to be K-8!

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Eliminate fall break! Remove one week from August start.

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Investigate alternative uses for portions of existing facilities – senior community groups or Scottsdale city government.

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- You need to close or combine some schools that have large openings.
  - Close Copper Ridge MS and send them to Desert Canyon MS. You could lease Copper Ridge if you want.
  - Combine Aztec and Zuni.
  - Move the district offices to a campus that has the room. And make that Arcadia to house the over-population at Arcadia.
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K-8 for Pima. The data for housing and condo is stale for the Pima area. Home prices have fallen from 325K to 250K and condos are not selling. Since loans are much harder to get, the condos will have to start renting. Likewise, rents on homes owned as investments will drop to compete in this renter's market. A new 5-year projection for the Pima area should be done. This should support the latest ASU study (2004) that the Pima area will need more K-8 schools in the next 5-15 years.

The rising cost of gas makes busing kids much more expensive and this cost will continue to increase. The price of gas also makes areas like Pima more attractive to home buyers than Queen Creek and other distant developments.

If Pima were closed, the economic impact on South Scottsdale and Old Town Scottsdale would be very negative. Since the City of Scottsdale is engaged in a South Scottsdale revitalization project, they should be interested in keeping Pima open.

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As a divorced mom with three boys, Dr. Powell at Laguna was a strong influence and role model for all of my sons. My suggestion would be to remember back only 5 or 6 years ago when my older children were in middle school and we were having forums exactly like this to discuss building new schools and what are we going to do with all these kids?!

Well, all things cycle and if, in a very few years when those kids who were busting the seams of our schools have families, where will their children go? Selling Cheyenne is not the answer – rent it out for a few years if we have to – but once the old folks (like me) are able to sell their homes and move into their condos, we will need schools for the young families who will move in.

Luckily, we didn't jump to building new schools a few years ago and, hopefully, we would be wise enough to plan ahead and think ahead and not sell off the schools we do have.

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If we had equity in our schools, there would not be a problem with closing one school over another. Please bring equity to all our schools and complexes.

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Agree with recommendation regarding Aztec, Zuni, and Cheyenne → Aztec campus, then sell Cheyenne land.

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?? But decisions need to be made sooner rather than later. Please make the hard decisions now!

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1. Develop a decision-making rubric so that there is a philosophical basis for decisions and so the decisions are made rationally and not based on the loudest minority voices.
  2. Put academic programs first, facilities second.
  3. Facilities closure saves the most money – should be at top of the list.
  4. Fiscally responsible to close schools that have a lot of empty seats.
  5. Market schools and programs more effectively.
  6. Take a global view when making decisions.
  7. Do not close Sierra Vista.
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Longer school hours in colder months. I hate fall break – always have. We ought to start later to save money on utilities. How about a rotating or student council/man-power to do janitorial, like 150 years ago.

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- Allow parents (inform them) to give towards school needs, i.e. paper reams, pencils.
  - Don't like the K-8 idea.
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Do not close a school that has the potential to draw more students based on today's enrollment. More and more families are moving into the neighborhood. The city is growing and bringing in industry and workforce is buying old s well as new homes. In the city and Arcadia up north and outer communities.

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K-8. It makes intuitive sense on many levels and I am please to hear the data supports K-8 benefits.

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I would like the Science & Math Academy to move to a more central location to the district. Personally, either Arcadia or Saguaro could be closed for me, but Chaparral could also be considered.

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Move the IB program to Saguaro, making more room for the high school up north.

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Would love K-8 option in South Scottsdale. I think it's better for education.

Please market all school schools. Advertise the ones who have before and after care.

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K-8, K-8, K-8, K-8. Make Pima a traditional school (and more elementary schools) to get in more students. Pima is very close to a traditional as we have already adapted traditional programs. We have to come up with something other and close good elementary schools as we will see more families leave the area.

Southern Scottsdale is now known for the shopping, nightlife "place to be," but families will have no draw if you take away excelling schools. I've met people that request yard signs off the ProtectPima.com site that don't have kids yet in the system but they did research and bought their starter homes in South Scottsdale so the kids in their future can attend Pima.

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Regarding excess utilities – the questions are: Why are we operating all schools during the hottest part of the year? Aren't energy costs greater in August then say, September? Has this been studied? Would there be a savings if we started school later?

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Keep the neighborhood schools intact!

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Marketing the schools, i.e. look into the value of e-education and how it could help improve enrollment and possibly alleviate a day of "going" to school (to save energy use).

Make sure the buses are hauling a full bus of children.

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Moving the district offices and staff to one of the under-enrolled campuses and then lease or sell current buildings.

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1. Revisit K-8 schools.
  2. Move district offices to one of the schools and lease out the offices and make money.
  3. Re-work the open enrollment system.
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Close open enrollment at Arcadia. Move out-of-district students to schools that have open seats. Re-evaluate out-of-district student placement every year. Do not automatically take siblings. **DO NOT** overcrowd Arcadia!

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Get legislature to allow billboards at each school and the school can sub-lease the billboard to clear-channel, CBS, etc. for + \$5,000/month each.

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I recommend that the board strives to maintain neighborhood schools. We are fortunate to live in an area that we can walk and bike to our neighborhood school. The Arcadia Complex is fortunate enough to be at full or nearly full capacity. Let's look at options that wouldn't disrupt what is working.

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Convert elementary schools to be K-8 schools (Kiva!) to keep families like mine in local public schools!

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Move the district offices to Coronado or Saguaro and lease or sell the district offices.

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Move the IB program to Saguaro. This will move some of the over enrollment from Desert Mountain to Saguaro as well as make the IB program more centrally located.

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Short-term:

1. For those not on free lunch suggest a minimum cash contribution of \$100 per student per semester – should net \$4m.

Long-term:

2. Get legislature to increase funding – try every year until it passes.
  3. Get corporate sponsorship for each school, i.e. Wells Fargo for Arcadia signage. Charge \$250K per school.
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It seems that the middle school loses a lot of students to private schools. I suggest that you increase the discipline and improve academics to keep the families in Scottsdale schools. The schools that are at (or above) capacity are that way because of the programs. If Cheyenne has a waiting list, move it to a larger school so you do not have to turn away students.

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It is such a drastic moment to close school. Therefore, parent, the teaching personnel, and the administration ought to be conscious of doing all that we can, united, to save our school and give it all of our support.

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I, as a member of the Hispanic community, suggest that you give us information or that you provide us with the telephone numbers of the legislators who we have to communicate with so that they know we are willing to support them. I need to know who to direct my communication to.

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That you give us more information; whether it is written or via the television since many of the parents don't really understand how they could help.

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- To economically help the school to help with the expenses.
  - To send our kids to school with their food.
  - To help with the school materials.
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7. Combining holidays with breaks to shorten school year – late school start. Stagger start of school day, 7:30 vs. 8:00 AM.
  8. **MARKETING PLAN** to improve enrollment. Science/Tech/Robotics programs.
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- Pima – K-8
  - Hohokam – Pre-K-8, traditional
  - Tonalea – K-8
  - Yavapai – K-8
  - Close Supai. Above schools feed into Coronado.
  - Explore niche schools.
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- Don't close elementary schools.
  - K-8 options would be more viable.
    - A k-8 configuration provides a true community, neighborhood school. It keeps students with the same friends, familiar teaching staff and very involved community. Students show higher levels of achievement in math and reading, better scores, and higher GPAs. Higher attendance rates, display better self-esteem, leadership, and attitudes towards school!! Avoid potentially difficult transitions during adolescence. Zero student displacement.
  - Work together and take care of our “unfunded utilities” issue.
  - K-8 can work well for parents that may be concerned with having 8<sup>th</sup> graders on campus with younger students as we can stagger start times, lunch times, etc. Our 6<sup>th</sup> graders already work well with our 1<sup>st</sup> graders as “reading buddies.” And these are our little ones from day one going on to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We will have accountability for them. Let's keep them just a few more years.
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- Closing schools only helps in the short term. What happened when enrollment is back up and schools are overcrowded?
  - Follow what WORKS
    - ANLC is K-8 with a waiting list
    - Cheyenne is K-8 with a waiting list
  - Causing such disruption in our district makes us look weak and unstable. Who wants to open enroll their kids in a volatile school/district?
  - We need LONG TERM SOLUTIONS to meet our LONG TERM GOALS!
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- Aztec and Zuni become K-8 to fill seats.
- Laguna and Anasazi become K-6.
- Cheyenne stays at its campus on Via Linda and eventually floats on a joint bond with other schools to slowing rebuild their campus.

- Mountainside turns 7, 8, 9 with 9<sup>th</sup> grade taking advantage of some programs and facilities at DMHS.
  - DMHS becomes 10, 11, 12 – makes room for MMR children.
  - Expand traditional program at Copper Ridge by adding 9-12.
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- All elementary school in Desert Mountain Complex become K-6.
  - Desert Canyon becomes 7 and 8 (junior high).
  - All 9<sup>th</sup> graders attend Mountainside with some 9<sup>th</sup> grade programs at DMHS.
  - DMHS becomes predominantly 10-12, with some 9<sup>th</sup> grade programs. This makes room for MMR students.
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- Look for community/parent financial support (make it easier to rent out) during summer.
  - Look at which buildings need most attention.
  - Keep any boundaries so that students can still walk to school (which schools would be most affected).
  - Consider schools that best support newly built (Supai) as essential to its future.
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What are the long term goals of the District?

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- Enrollment at Tonalea stays consistent from K students to 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - Tonalea's location is a community resource for city, church, BSA, GSA, and numerous other organizations.
  - Tonalea teachers are excellent and it shows through their retainment and our grades.
  - K-8 is possible IF Tonalea builds up. Coupled with school hours ↑ during colder months. This will consolidate Supai, saving bus \$, driver \$, and utility building costs.
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- Revisit school calendar to extend hours during colder months.
  - Adjust daily school hours during colder months.
  - End school year earlier. Eliminate fall break. Start later...maybe Sept?
  - Look at changing boundaries to increase attendance, decrease transportation costs.
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- Copper Ridge
    - 7-12 traditional school
  - Copper Ridge K-5 students to Zuni and Aztec
  - MMR high school students to new Copper Ridge
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- K-8 for ENTIRE Coronado Complex!
  - Explore alternate energy options.
  - Go green when renovating to help the environment and to get tax breaks.
  - Rent out unused facilities during summer, i.e. alternative summer programs.
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#### Why converting K-8?

- K-8 configuration provides a real school-community-neighborhood.
  - K-8 schools kept the students with the same known peers and teachers, and participating community.
  - K-8 schools have less discipline problems than high school problems.
  - K-8 students show higher success levels in Math and Reading, better grades in standardized tests and higher grades' average.
  - K-8 students display a higher attendance rate, a better self-esteem, leadership and learning attitude.
  - K-8 students have more opportunities of playing in team sport games.
  - K-8 students experience fewer transitions potentially difficult during the adolescence.
  - Return to K-8 model will have zero students' movements.
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