

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent

RECOMMENDATIONS OF PROPOSITION MM SHERMAN AREA ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL AND ZAMORANO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

September 23, 2003

Introductory Statement

Proposition MM provides for a new elementary school to be built in the Sherman Elementary School community to relieve overcrowding. Based on a review of current and projected enrollment in the San Diego Unified School District, District staff has determined that a new elementary school in the Sherman Elementary School area is not required. This review then determined that Zamorano Elementary School should be split into two smaller, independent schools. One school will be Zamorano and the other will be named later.

Background

On November 3, 1998, San Diego voters approved Proposition MM, which authorized the sale of up to \$1.51 billion in general obligation bonds to repair, renovate, upgrade and expand existing schools; and to acquire property and construct 13 new elementary schools, including two undesignated elementary schools. The purpose of the new schools is to relieve overcrowding in elementary schools and address growth. The construction of new high school facilities was to allow a K-5 configuration at a majority of the elementary schools and a 6-8 configuration at a majority of the middle schools.

As noted in the August 5, 2003 Board report on the Memorial area middle school, District staff has reviewed past, current, and projected enrollment patterns. The review of the enrollment figures confirmed two key findings:

1. The District's elementary school enrollments are lower than forecasted when Proposition MM was developed.
2. The District is currently forecasted to have rising secondary enrollment through 2008 – 2009.

An additional finding from the enrollment figure review involves Sherman Elementary School. The Sherman Elementary School neighborhood is designated in Proposition MM to receive a new school to relieve overcrowding. Based on the enrollment figure review, the current and future enrollment trends through approximately 2010 do not support the need for an additional elementary school in the area. Therefore, it is recommended that a Sherman reliever school not be built and that the allocated resources be used elsewhere to relieve overcrowding. In the longer term, the District will continue to work with the Center City Development Corporation

(CCDC) and the community on the potential longer term requirement for an elementary school in the area.

The existing Sherman Elementary School has sufficient capacity to house the current and projected enrollments and is due to receive some facilities upgrades under Proposition MM. Aside from a new library, no new construction is scheduled at Sherman under Proposition MM. Sherman has a large number of portables, which take up a large portion of the school campus, leaving little room for play space and parking. It is recommended that a substantial reconstruction of the existing campus, including replacement of portables and the one-story permanent classroom building with two story permanent construction be completed at Sherman Elementary School. Funding for this substantial reconstruction would be provided through a combination of the Proposition MM upgrade funding and other funding sources.

As previously discussed, the decline in projected elementary school enrollment is expected to allow the District to approach its elementary school enrollment and grade configuration targets sooner than expected. A list of large elementary schools that will remain after Proposition MM is provided as a part of Attachment A. A review of each of these elementary schools has determined that they are instructionally appropriate for the number of students to be served, with the exception of Zamorano. Zamorano is projected to have the largest enrollment of all elementary schools after the completion of Proposition MM with over 1,200 students. Zamorano also has a sizeable land base (approximately 13.5 acres). Based on this, it is recommended that Zamorano be divided into two smaller, independent schools. Proposition MM will fund the Zamorano project. One school will be named Zamarano and one will be named later. Existing facilities on the campus will be used to the extent feasible.

The Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC) voted on July 25, 2003 to support the staff recommendation to not build the Sherman area elementary school, to use those resources to relieve overcrowding elsewhere, and to limit the Proposition MM funding spent on Sherman Elementary School to the upgrades it was to originally receive under Prop MM. The ICOC voted on September 16, 2003 to support the staff recommendation to divide Zamorano into two smaller, independent schools.

Instructional Implications

Proposition MM was designed to improve classroom health, safety and instruction in every neighborhood school by various methods including the building of new schools. Based on the projected enrollments, not building the Sherman reliever school is consistent with these objectives. Dividing Zamorano Elementary School into two smaller, independent schools would help the District achieve these objectives.

Facilities Implications

Not building the Sherman reliever school and splitting Zamorano would be consistent with the objectives of Proposition MM. The project would serve to provide enrollment relief where required and would also assist the District in achieving the standards contained in the Long-Range Facilities Master Plan (LRFMP).

Budget Implications

Funding requirements and sources will be developed as a part of the planning process and brought back to the Board at a future date. It is anticipated that a combination of Prop MM funding and other funding will be used for the Sherman Elementary School project, and Prop MM funding will be used for the Zamorano project.

Public Support and Engagement Implications

The Sherman project has been discussed at several meetings of the Southeastern San Diego Planning Committee, including their latest meeting on September 8, 2003. A meeting was held with the Sherman Heights Revitalization Team on August 27, 2003 and future meetings are planned. Public engagement on the Zamorano project will begin once this action is approved by the board.

Policy Implications

This report is consistent with board policies E-2050, E-2100, E-2250, E-2300, E-2350, E-2400, E-2500 and E-4000. No revision of administrative procedure is required.

Recommendations

The superintendent recommends:

1. That the Sherman area elementary school not be built and that the allocated resources be used elsewhere to relieve overcrowding.
2. That a substantial reconstruction of the Sherman Elementary School campus be performed, ***with the funding to be provided through a combination of the Proposition MM upgrade funding and other funding sources***. Prop MM funding for this shall be limited to the amount originally allocated for Prop MM upgrades.
3. That Zamorano Elementary School be divided into two smaller, independent schools.

Report prepared by Louis M. Smith, Chief Operating Officer, Facilities Management; Joe Wolf, Director, Instructional Facilities Planning Department; Jim Bray, Civil/Environmental Engineering Coordinator, Facilities Management.