

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF SCHOOL SITE SUPPORT
Facilities Management

RECOMMENDATION FOR
PROPOSITION MM EIGHTH AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

May 25, 2004

Introductory Statement

At the September 23, 2003, Board of Education meeting, the Board approved a staff recommendation to not build a new elementary school in the Sherman area and directed staff to determine how to allocate resources elsewhere to relieve overcrowding. This school was then designated as the Eighth Area Elementary School. Since then, staff has reviewed current and projected enrollment across the district and determined that enrollment projections do not support the need for an additional new elementary school, middle school or high school to accommodate forecasted growth beyond those already being built under Proposition MM. Therefore, staff recommends that the Eighth Area Elementary School not be built and that the original program budget be placed in a reserve account to be allocated toward future priority needs within the Proposition MM program, such as the new Memorial Area Middle School, etc. The funds would be allocated upon recommendation of staff and the Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee and approval by the Board of Education.

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 enrollment growth. The construction of high school facilities is to allow a K-5 grade configuration at a majority of the elementary schools and a 6-8 grade configuration at a majority of the middle schools.

Under Proposition MM, the Sherman area was originally designated to receive a reliever elementary school. At the September 23, 2003, Board of Education meeting, the Board approved a staff recommendation to not build a new elementary school in the Sherman area and directed staff to determine how to allocate resources elsewhere to relieve overcrowding. This school was then designated as the Eighth Area Elementary School.

Since then, staff has reviewed current and projected enrollment across the district. This review took into consideration splitting Zamarano Elementary, a large elementary school, into two schools, but this proposal was not supported by the school or community, and the facilities/size of Zamarano Elementary were determined to be educationally appropriate. The review also took into consideration the addition of the new Memorial Area Middle School as approved by the

RECOMMENDATION FOR PROPOSITION MM
EIGHTH AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Page 2

Board on August 5, 2003, and Scripps Ranch Area Middle School as approved by the Board on April 9, 2002, both of which address middle school enrollment growth.

Most recently, on April 27, 2004, the Board approved the complete demolition and rebuilding of the existing Sherman Elementary, which is in the community that was to originally receive the Eighth Area Elementary School.

In summary, enrollment projections do not support the need for an additional new elementary school, middle school or high school to accommodate forecasted growth beyond those already being built under Proposition MM.

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 enrollment projections, not building the Eighth Area Elementary School and reserving the funding for future priority needs within Proposition MM is consistent with these objectives.

Facilities Implications

Enrollment projections do not support the need for an additional new elementary school, middle school or high school to accommodate forecasted growth beyond those already being built under Proposition MM.

Budget Implications

Approximately \$30 million was originally budgeted to the Eighth Area Elementary School. These funds will be placed in a reserve account for future priority needs within the Proposition MM program, such as the new Memorial Area Middle School, etc. The reserve account will be allocated only after a deliberative and thorough process by staff and Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee to recommend future priority needs to the Board of Education for approval.

Public Support and Engagement Implications

Staff engaged the Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee as representatives of taxpayers of San Diego to assess and recommend the best course of action. The Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee views this recommendation as the most responsible use of Proposition MM funds.

Further, not building the Eighth Area Elementary School supports the preservation of affordable housing, a critical public issue supported by the community at large.

RECOMMENDATION FOR PROPOSITION MM

EIGHTH AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Page 3

Articles regarding the possible elimination of the Eighth Area Elementary School have appeared in the *San Diego Union-Tribune* on September 24, 2003; December 7, 2003; and March 26, 2004. Once Board approval is obtained, staff will conduct additional outreach to inform the community of the decision.

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 that the Board of Education approve:

1. That the Eighth Area Elementary School not be built.
2. That the original program budget of approximately \$30 million be placed in a reserve account to be allocated toward future priority needs within the Proposition MM program upon recommendation of staff and the Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee and approval by the Board of Education.

Report prepared by Robert F. Kiesling, Director, Acquisition and Asset Management, Facilities Management; Mary Hopper, Chief Academic Officer, Office of Instructional Support; Joe Wolf, Director, Instructional Facilities Planning Department; Jim Bray, Civil/Environmental Engineering Coordinator, Facilities Management.