

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent

Proposal to Name the Mason/Hage Area Elementary School

September 14, 2004

Introductory Statement

Requests have been received by the School Names Committee to name a new elementary school. The new elementary school, funded by Proposition MM, is currently referred to as the Mason/Hage Area Elementary School.

Background

Pursuant to District Administrative Procedure No. 3300, the School Names Committee is charged with reviewing requests by school communities and individuals regarding the naming of schools and facilities in the district. During the school year 2003-2004, the committee convened two meetings – Wednesday, October 15, 2003, and Wednesday, February 25, 2004. At the October 15, 2003, meeting, the School Names Committee was presented with only two name suggestions for the Mason/Hage site. After much discussion, the committee unanimously decided that the district should solicit the community again for additional names by expanding outreach in the Mira Mesa and Scripps Ranch areas. At the meeting on February 25, 2004, the committee once again reviewed name suggestions for the Mason/Hage site. (See attached for the School Names Committee Roster, Attachment 1.)

A. Mason/Hage Area Elementary School

The following organizations/individuals were contacted regarding the naming of the Mason/Hage Area Elementary School: On August 26, 2003, a news release/article was submitted and printed in the *Scripps Ranch/Mira Mesa Sentinel* and to all Mira Mesa schools requesting name suggestions from the community, students, staff and parents. A letter was also mailed to Mr. Ted Brengel, Chair of the Mira Mesa Community Planning Group to request name suggestions. Included with the letter was a copy of the current list of district-approved names. (See Attachment 2.) Mr. Brengel was also asked to place information on the Mira Mesa Council/Planning Group website.

Superintendent Alan D. Bersin, all Board of Education members and the board policy analyst received copies of the letter. The community was given one month to provide input.

To encourage more input from the community, a second expanded community outreach effort was implemented. A second news release/article was submitted to the *Scripps Ranch/Mira Mesa Sentinel* and to the Mira Mesa and Scripps Ranch High school newsletters. In addition, an e-mail was sent to principals of Mira Mesa schools. The message encouraged teaching staffs,

Associated Student Body (ASB) advisors or other staff to use this as a research project in a classroom, in a civics/history class or with the ASB.

In addition, the Community Relations Director met with the ASB presidents at a monthly ASB Council meeting facilitated by Leonard Thompson, Pupil Advocate from the Race/Human Relations Department, to discuss the concept of leadership and how their leadership might inspire and influence the naming of a new school in Mira Mesa.

At the February 25, 2004, School Names Committee meeting, a total of 21 nominations from schools and the community were reviewed. The School Names Committee unanimously recommends the Mason/Hage Elementary School located at the southwest corner of Parkdale Avenue and Flanders Drive adjacent to Maddox Park be named **Jonas Salk Elementary School**. This recommendation was proposed by a science teacher at Thurgood Marshall Middle School.

An e-mail was received from Darrell Salk, M.D. and Trustee of the Jonas Salk Trust, on Friday, June 25, 2004, stating that he and his two brothers Peter Salk and Jonathon Salk “would be honored to have the new San Diego public school that is being built in Mira Mesa named after our father, Jonas Salk.”

“It is relevant and even part of wisdom to ask not only are we being good citizens of the world today, but are we being good ancestors.” Jonas Salk (1914-1995)

Jonas Salk is one of the most venerated medical scientists of the century. Although he is best known as the developer of the first successful vaccine against poliomyelitis, he has also made other contributions in the fields of medicine, biology, philosophy, architecture and the history of medicine. His contributions include:

- establishing that noninfectious vaccines could protect against viral diseases;
- proposing a novel “therapeutic vaccine” approach to control AIDS;
- establishing the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in 1960 in La Jolla, through the generosity of the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation and the citizens of San Diego, and establishing it as one of the preeminent biological research centers in the world today;
- setting the stage for the development of psychoneuroimmunology (PNI), an emerging research area in medicine that studies how the body works and interacts with itself and its environment to produce states of health and disease;
- publishing books and essays about human life and the nature of evolution;
- collaborating with architect Louis Kahn and establishing a new direction in American architecture; and
- authoring numerous scientific and philosophical writings that have now been archived into one of the largest collections of a contemporary scientist. The collection also includes correspondences, historical, administrative documents, as well as photographs, books, magazines and newspaper articles.

The selection of Jonas Salk was the first choice of the Schools Names Committee due to Dr. Salk's San Diego connection, but also because of his national and worldwide recognition for saving generations of children from polio. (April 2005 will be the Fiftieth Anniversary of the announcement that the injectable killed poliovirus vaccine developed by Jonas Salk and his colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh was "safe, effective and potent.")

The Community Relations Director received a letter from Darrell Salk, dated August 16, 2004, on behalf of The Jonas Salk Trust. The letter outlines the legal use of the Salk name and the "nonexclusive, limited license to the San Diego City Schools Board of Education for the one-time non commercial use of the name Jonas Salk in the name of the new Mason/Hage Elementary School in Mira Mesa . . . This limitation, of course, does not relate to fair use of the name of Jonas Salk as a historical figure, including descriptions concerning the naming of the school. In any announcements or publications regarding the naming of the new school, please credit The Family of Jonas Salk and the Jonas Salk Trust." The letter closes "On behalf of my brothers and the other members of our family, I want to thank you for honoring our father in this way. He felt strongly that hopes for the future of mankind rested within the children of today."

The letter was reviewed by district counsel on August 16, 2004, and was signed off by Jose Gonzales.

At this time, there are 13 schools within the United States named after Jonas Salk. Two schools are in California – Jonas E. Salk Elementary in Anaheim and Jonas Salk Alternative Middle School in Sacramento.

The site for the new Mason/Hage Area Elementary School was unanimously approved by the Board of Education on September 23, 2003. Construction will begin in Spring 2005, and the school is scheduled to open by Fall 2006.

Instructional Implications

There are no instructional implications.

Facilities Implications

Architectural plans for the schools may be incorporated or be influenced by the persons for whom they have been named.

Budget Implications

There are no budget implications. Signage at the new school will be incorporated into the school construction budget, funded by Proposition MM.

Public Support and Engagement Implications

The proposed name for the Mason/Hage Area Elementary School is supported by the various communities they represent.

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Policy Implications

This board report complies with existing Board Policy Nos. E-5000 and K-2000 and District Administrative Procedure 3300 – Naming of Schools and School Facilities.

Recommendation

The Superintendent recommends the Board of Education approve the recommendation of the School Names Committee and name the Mason/Hage Area Elementary School – Jonas Salk Elementary School.

Prepared by Janet D. Delaney, Director, Community Relations