

In 1980, the Mt. Diablo Unified School District went through the process of closing seven schools. This was a very difficult process for the community and school district. Unfortunately, we find ourselves in a similar situation today.

Three factors caused the Board to have to make this difficult decision:

1. First, enrollment has declined by over 2500 students in the past nine years. This means that many of our sites are running below 80% capacity without class size reduction and will run slightly over 80% capacity even when class size reduction is re-instituted;
2. Second, the enrollment trend data that the School Closure Committee analyzed indicates birth trends in our area will continue to decline for the next several years. Therefore, the District's enrollment projections continue to decline and we anticipate a loss of 1800 students over the next ten years; and
3. Third, the State budget crisis requires difficult cuts to educational and co-curricular programs that support academic and social growth. The cuts also require a significant reduction in the number of teachers, support staff, and administrators available to serve our children and families. Small neighborhood schools are valuable, but they are more expensive to operate. Currently, all our elementary schools have a principal, office manager, secretary, and a day custodian regardless of whether they serve 385 students or 850 students. Therefore, the cost of the non-teacher positions at small schools is much higher.

The data provided the School Closure Committee is posted on the district website at <http://www.mdusd.org/Community/Pages/scac.aspx>. It is a wealth of data and information that the School Closure Committee analyzed prior to developing its recommendations. We are committed to working hard to ensure that we minimize any negative impacts of school closures.

Over the past month, the Board has received and contemplated a considerable amount of information concerning the school closure process. They have also received a great deal of input from parents and community members through public comment and e-mails.

The purpose of this Board item is to allow the Board the opportunity to:

1. Discuss whether an option should be considered that has not already been discussed. Though the Board wishes to honor the work of the committee, it is the Board's responsibility to ensure that every option has been analyzed to minimize the impact to our students while achieving the \$1.5M in expense reductions. If a viable new option is recommended, the Board will not take a formal vote to enact the new option. Instead, the Board would vote to give staff direction to analyze the new option to ensure that it is implementable and would meet the \$1.5M targeted reduction. It would then be brought back to the Board as a future agenda item for the Board to receive information from staff, hear from the public, and potentially vote on;
2. Determine whether there is any consensus on removing any of the current options or schools under consideration. The current options are:
 - Close Wren, Silverwood, and Glenbrook
 - Close Holbrook, Silverwood, and Glenbrook
 - Close Monte Gardens, Sequoia Elementary, and Sequoia Middle School

- Close either (Holbrook or Wren) and Glenbrook, consolidate two necessary small high schools Crossroads and TLC/Nueva Vista on either the Holbrook or Wren campus, and create a program for students currently in non-public school placements at Glenbrook that would save the district funding.
3. Determine whether there is consensus to move forward with an existing recommendation.

As a matter of process, the Board may choose to first begin its dialogue prior to public comment so that the public has an opportunity to understand where Board members are in their thought process around school closures. The Board would then hear public comment prior to continuing their dialogue and providing direction to staff.