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San Diego Urban League, Inc.

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PRESENTED TO: SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOL BOARD
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A review of Superintendent Tom Goodman's "Report on the Study of Possible School Facilities for the School of Creative and Performing Arts" reveals the extent of the Superintendents intent to implement integration programs which satisfy first and foremost the districts needs, while the needs of minority students in those racially isolated schools are assigned a status of less importance. Exhaustive efforts have been taken to show why the School of Creative and Performing Arts can not be moved to the minority community. Could it be that the large number of white students who are said to be on the waiting list for admission to this luxurious program would refuse to maintain interest should the program be assigned to a school that is now minority racially isolated? Has this been on the minds of district administrators as they have carefully charted a course for integrating minority isolated schools? We suggest that it has. And unfortunately the conclusions have come out all wrong. There is no semblance of equity and fairness in many of the decisions that are being reached now by district staff.

One over-riding conclusion that is apparent in this report, and is visible in other district documents and staff conversation is that magnet programs designed for integration purposes will be converted to total school concept. While

questions have been raised in the past regarding the development of an eleitist attitude among magnet school participants it seems that moving to a total school concept is an expensive way of resolving the issue. If staff were to try real hard they could make the school within a school concept work. When resident and non-resident students can participate in all regular activities of the school, including assemblies, play ground and lunch this would promote real school integration. In the Superintendent's analysis of alternatives for housing the School of Creative and Performing Arts Program it is suggested that the program could be left at Roosevelt except for the fact, "the magnet program needs, on a fulltime basis, facilities for drama, choral music, instrumental music, dance, arts and crafts..."and a lot more. When one considers that these same students must take regular academic courses we wonder about the full time occupancy of all these facilities. It should be noted too, that transfer of 9th grade students from Roosevelt to San Diego High was not included in this analysis. This inconsistency is further evidence of inadequate planning, except where district needs are concerned.

If the district were to maintain the magnet school concept of a school within a school it is clear to us that either O'Farrell or Memorial would be adequate with some alterations, to house SCPA. O'Farrell Junior High could keep it's Fundamental Program and the very successful Academy Awareness Program. The Academy Awareness Program, though it is not included as a component in the integration plan, is a highly integrated activity, perhaps more so than many of those programs that are referred to as integrated. The school within a school concept would promote success in all program and at all levels providing staff commit themselves to making them successful. The attitudenal factor usually begins at the top. In looking for models for establishing good attitudes we suggest you look closer at O'Farrell Junior

High. As the Urban League's representative who works with the O'Farrell administration, staff and student body in the Academy Awareness Program, we assure you there are no undesirable attitudes to be found. District administrators should take note.

In conclusion, the notion that a recommendation on the School of Creative and Performing Arts hinge on results of parent surveys being conducted at Memorial, O'Farrell and Roosevelt Junior High Schools is the epitome of hypocrisy. This elected board of policy makers must stand up now and assume its responsibilities.

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