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May 2, 1980

Chief William B. Kolender
Chairman
Integration Task Force
220 W. Broadway
San Diego

Dear Chief Kolender,

The School of Creative and Performing Arts parent association, the Booster Club, would like to request the Integration Task Force to make further recommendations about the size and scope of this magnet program for 1980-81. While we realize that a decision assigning the school to a total site has been delayed by the Board of Education until next year, the exact configuration of the school for 1980-81 is being considered by the district administration for recommendation to the Board of Education. We believe the Task Force's perception of the need for this program at the secondary level next year should play a part in that decision as well as in the Judge's review of it.

It is also critical to direct the school board to begin specific plans for locating the school in 1981-82 and to urge them to start the process this spring.

It is our understanding that Judge Welsh's 1977 order expressed the "essential" need for a variety of programs, including specifically "educational park" type programs, that is, total site magnets, as one part of the overall integration plan. It is apparent that while district programs include a number of elementary level programs and schools, there have been fewer successful, well-attended secondary programs. It is in this framework that we believe that an educationally sound program at the School for Creative and Performing Arts at least through the tenth grade with the largest possible number of students is vitally needed by the district in 1980-81.

The issue at hand is if a total site is not provided for 1980-81 how many students can be added to the SCPA program at the Roosevelt site next year, at what grade levels and including what courses at the site. There is general agreement that four bungalows can be added to the Roosevelt site in line with current bungalows and that some additional spaces from those now in use by Roosevelt can be assigned to SCPA. However, a critical need for counseling space, a teacher workroom, division of math and reading laboratories and space for learning disability and speech teachers plus a desire by the Roosevelt staff for a second, non-smoking teachers' lounge, limits the net gain in students to be added to the SCPA student body to approximately 60 students. This would be a number barely sufficient to admit a new fourth grade class. However, the current ninth grade has only 33 students and there is also general agreement that this number is not sufficient without over-staffing to provide the needed variety of math, foreign language, science and social science classes required for a tenth grade curriculum (e.g. at tenth grade some students need Basic Algebra 1-2, Algebra 1-2, Consumer Math, Basic Algebra 3-4, Geometry 1-2 and Advanced Math 5-6; these courses can be taken by some students from grades 8, 9 and ultimately 11 and 12.) Faced with this problem the district proposed to the staff and advisory committee that tenth grade be eliminated in 1980-81 and that those students already enrolled attend other schools.

Students affected and their parents responded that they had entered the program in September on the advertised assertion that the district plan, approved by Judge Welsh, called for expansion of the school through the twelfth

grade in 1980-81. Discussion of this issue between the Booster Club and administrative staff resulted in a revision of the proposal so that the tenth graders could continue at the school adding thirty students to their grade by admitting only thirty fourth graders. The total to be added to the school was not increased despite our specific request to do so and suggestions for methods of doing this.

We remain concerned that only sixty students each at ninth and tenth grades (the two high school credit grade levels) leaves insufficient flexibility in programming, in providing the needed courses in math and levels of foreign language and in populating the intermediate to advanced levels of the arts courses for which the students have come to the school. These courses must attract sufficient secondary pupils for the courses to be offered.

Another critical issue is the continued assignment of four classes per period to the Casa del Prado in Balboa Park. The school has reassigned its instructional aides to the park to protect the children from a series of indecent exposure incidents which have occurred because of the need to use public restrooms as changing facilities for the dance program. Additionally, negotiations with the park and recreation department for sharing space (assigning the same rooms on a daily basis, use of the school's telephone, etc.) have continued to be highly unsatisfactory. However, there is also an educational problem. The school program has been based on a seven period day because secondary students especially need enough elective period beyond courses required for college entrance to make use of the arts program. Yet, students taking drama and dance consume thirty to forty minutes of the ninety minute double period assigned for these courses in being bused to the park. Hence the children are really taking only six classes plus one additional class in busing. At the intermediate to advanced levels of dance, the remaining fifty minute period is inadequate to provide proper warming up of the muscles through the introductory exercises to enable injury-free advanced exercises, particularly in the ballet program.

To lessen the loss of class time, use of mini-buses which could drop the children directly at the Casa del Prado building has been proposed to the district. The availability of the number of buses required daily and the costs of retaining full-time drivers are being studied. However, there has been no definite commitment to this proposal.

A better alternative would be to move those classes back to the Roosevelt site.

At a meeting with district administrators April 14, the Booster Club proposed three alternatives to achieve the dual goal of increasing the sizes of the ninth and tenth grades and returning the park classes to the basic site. Two of these proposals involved moving the ninth grade of Roosevelt for next year only either to San Diego High School or to Wilson Junior High. We analyzed ethnic balance effects, availability of space (some bungalows would be needed at San Diego High; none at Wilson) and the reassignment of teachers and master schedules involved. These two alternatives were not forwarded to top administrators in the district.

The third alternative is to add six additional bungalows to the site (a total of ten new units) placed parallel to the row of East/West bungalows which line Upas Street. We expect additional rooms to be available now used by Roosevelt and the district concurs. A needed science facility, for example, could be accommodated in a science room currently being used for special education.

The reason district administrators have given as a deterrent to the placement of the proposed additional bungalows is loss of PE field. A study of the PE field at its current configuration shows three baseball diamonds with poles placed for three soccer fields. It would appear that the impacted baseball backstop could be moved forward successfully and the soccer fields could be realigned. In addition to this field, the Roosevelt site has eight tennis/basketball courts, ten handball courts, a gymnastics unit and an additional large field with a track and one baseball diamond. An adaptive PE facility is used two periods a day. The master schedule for Roosevelt shows four classes of PE each of the first four class hours, three in period five and five in period six. It would appear that the PE teaching stations described above should be adequate for that number of classes. None of the space is used by SCPA, which is currently unable to offer PE and requires secondary students to commit themselves to independent study PE.

While the district has not specifically responded to the two proposals for moving the ninth grade or to the proposal for adding six bungalows, the phrase has been used, "there might not be enough bungalows available." We stand ready to assist the district in reviewing bungalow assignments throughout the district to see if 1980-81 enrollments continue to justify their allocation.

One other concern that may be in the district's thinking is that three dance floors in the Casa del Prado have been repaired by replacement with a substantial contribution from district funds. To provide dance floors in bungalows at the Roosevelt location would be a second expense. However, this expense is anticipated wherever the school is finally sited and could be met in a one-time-only fashion either by purchasing movable floors or by putting them in bungalows which themselves could be moved to the ultimate location.

We believe it is crucial to maintain the momentum of success at SCPA by demonstrating that the district can devise a workable, academically sound program at the secondary level. For students on the waiting list and in the school the district's commitment to making the greatest possible number of places available to secondary students next fall is at stake.

We believe that this program is important to the district because the SCPA students have developed an extraordinarily high level of integration in a relatively short time. The arts content, a highly supportive staff and the total school program have surely contributed to that success. We see the successful development of this program as a prototype for replication within very few years. While this one magnet program will not solve the isolation of all 23 schools, along with the variety of other magnet schools and the VEEP program, it does offer an attractive, integrated alternative to students from those schools. It is an alternative in which more majority students than minority students are being bused. And we believe that if it is allowed a sufficient number of students at each grade level, it will be an academically sound choice.

The school board may be considering this issue in the near future. Judge Welsh will need to review their proposal. The questions remain: should expansion of this program be continued next year? If so, what is the largest number of

students who can reasonably be accommodated? Can the program continue viably with loss of one period a day to internal transportation? Should the programs now being taught in the park be united with the rest of the school?

We solicit your earliest consideration and advice.

Very truly yours,

Carol D Torres

Carol D. Torres
President
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May 5, 1980

TO: San Diego School District Educators

FROM: Vahac Mardirosian/Parents for a Better Education-C.I.E.N.

SUBJECT: Educational Advancement

Quality education is a concept that varies in definition from community to community depending on the perceived needs and general socioeconomic and cultural circumstances. In the poverty community, the desire of parents is to have their children receive the basic academic skills that will enable them to get a job and be both productive and creative members of society. They want their children to receive sufficient schooling to be employable and in some cases, to pursue further careers in higher education.

Other communities have different priorities. Some hold the schools primarily accountable for the academic excellence which will guarantee their children admission to prestigious universities. Some may expect the schools to stress education that will prepare their children to be sensitive to the needs of others in a multicultural society. The San Diego Community is comprised of various groups with varied needs of equal value which must be met.

Other components that must be incorporated in a plan and subsequently implemented simultaneously with an instructional continuum are the following:

1. The adoption of a set of goals, objectives and time tables which would be applied to all schools (grades 3, 6, 8, and 11) which are below the 50th percentile.

2. The adoption of an administrative plan that fully utilizes the managerial capacities of the staff by placing the most competent personnel in the schools demonstrating the greatest need. This is especially critical during the implementation stages of the program.

3. The adoption of an "in-service program" to provide specific assistance to teachers for effectively implementing the reading programs. The in-service program should address fundamental skill areas such as:

    a) perceived need of teacher

    b) teaching methodologies and techniques

    c) diagnostic and prescriptive assessment of childrens' needs

    d) classroom management

    e) parent communication

4. The adoption of a district supported "Parent Education Programs" at all schools. Parents should be trained to help both child and teacher in implementing the program in the home environment. The District should provide the additional materials (e.g. textbooks and home-learning kits) that parents will require. This parent support component would focus on the following areas:

    a) child growth and development

    b) home management to accommodate child's study needs

    c) home reinforcement techniques

    d) teacher/school communication

    e) parent involvement in school activities

5. The adoption of a "Community/School Support Network" encouraging local businesses and services to actively provide assistance in educating its youth. This assistance would include such things as:

    a) donated materials for reading centers

    b) quiet study rooms or youth centers with paid tutors on weekends or after school

    c) recruitment of well-known personalities and media to publicize the importance and enjoyment of reading and other academic subjects.