



R O S S V A L L E Y S C H O O L D I S T R I C T
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Message from the Superintendent
September 29, 2009

Facilities, Bond and Communications

The challenges of the past two years have been an opportunity for Ross Valley to pull together as a District to prioritize what we consider to be core programs for our students. With budget cuts from the state, and a steady increase in enrollment for the past four years, the RVSD has used every available classroom space in the district. This has meant the loss of music rooms at Manor, Brookside Upper and Wade Thomas. Day care is held in the multi-purpose room at Brookside Lower. Our elementary facilities are over full.

As each large kindergarten class comes in, replacing a smaller graduating 8th grade class, the need for classrooms at the elementary and middle school grows. A Facilities Advisory Committee met last year to plan how to address the arrival of so many new students. After considering many different configurations, the committee recommended that the district open a new K-5 campus and expand the capacity of White Hill to accommodate 800 students. They also recommended that the small learning community feel be maintained at the middle school, so students have a core family of teachers and students whom they interact with every day.

Facilities expansion is an exciting proposition, and one filled with challenges. Which site would be best for a K-5 site? What would the expanded middle school look like to accommodate more students but keep the small school feel? How will the new K-5 site impact the community?

What steps have we taken to address facilities needs?

We are addressing these and other questions this year. The district has hired a Traffic consultation to study the impact of opening Deer Park, Red Hill or possibly Marin Town and Country Club as a new K-5 site. The District is working with a master architect Kam Lee of Marshall / Lee Inc. to create preliminary designs for a K-5 school. The Board will need to determine which site will be selected. Kam Lee will also conceptualize expansion of space at White Hill and replacement of the hex-plex buildings, the modular buildings that are rapidly coming to the end of their life expectancy.

We will conduct a survey to gather input from our community about a bond to support construction and/or a parcel tax to help offset the economic shortfall from the state. The Board approved Godbe and Associates Survey Research Firm to help the district design the survey.

We now need a **Communications Committee** to provide outreach to the Ross Valley community, to provide the information they need, the opportunities for discussion and the opportunity to express opinions.

Communicator Experts Needed

We are looking for volunteers to serve on the Communications Committee for Facilities, Bond and possible Parcel Tax. Professional communications experiences such as grant writers, advertising, public relations, marketing, journalism or strategic planning are preferred.

The Committee will work with the superintendent on initial communication. As time goes on, the Communications Committee will work with other entities associated with a Bond or Parcel Tax.

The committee will meet beginning in October through the Bond or Parcel Tax election, tentatively targeted for June, 2010.

We need and welcome your input as we address the finance and facilities issues.
If you are interested, please email bsumnick@rossvalleyschools.org.

Highlights from the Board Meeting of
Thursday, September 24, 2009

- ⇒ The Brown Act topics of discussion included topics for closed session, committee participation by newly elected but not yet sworn in trustees and posting Board meetings in which new trustees will be present.
- ⇒ 15 new teachers and 9 newly tenured teachers were introduced to the Board of Trustees.
- ⇒ A survey will be conducted by Godbe and Associates Research Firm to assess the community interest in a bond or a parcel tax.
- ⇒ The Board approved hiring a master architect to develop building concepts for the unused school sites for possible use as a K-5 site, develop a timeline, and approximate costs for construction at Deer Park, or Red hill or Marin Town & Country in addition to needed improvements and expansion at White Hill.

*You can view the entire board packet and view all the topics the board will be addressing at
<http://rvsd.csbaagendaonline.net>*

***If you have any questions, please contact the Superintendent's Office.
Thank you for your continued support of the District.***