

**Town Hall Meeting Notes**  
**Wade Thomas**  
**2/8**

**Questions re: Slides**

- 1. Do we think this is a short-term or long-term enrollment issue?**
- 2. What percentage of households in our District don't have kids... if it's really as high as 80%, our enrollment could get even bigger if these folks move away... do we know how many of these people have once had children in the district?**
- 3. If we have more students, the District will get more funding, right? How is that projected?**
- 4. Regarding the circle chart, how do you know things won't change regarding where the kids are?**
- 5. How many students go from San Anselmo to Fairfax to go to school?**
- 6. Are there any students coming from the Town of Ross?**
- 7. If it's true that the District is spending more money than it's bringing in, how would you pay the staff at a new school?**
- 8. Can the new sites be up and running when needed? How long will they take to build?**
- 9. Why have the cost estimates for Red Hill and Deer Park gone down since the Town Hall meetings last week?**
- 10. How many board members are here tonight? How will they know how we feel if they aren't in attendance?**
- 11. Don't we have potentially two crises... the long-term issue and also the need for upgrading and overcrowding happening now? Will you be ranking what needs to be done immediately?**
- 12. How long have these discussions been going on regarding increasing enrollment and the need for more classrooms?**
- 13. Is the board meeting on Thursday night at Shaw Drive?**
- 14. If we move fifth graders to White Hill, will that take care of the overcrowding at our elementary schools?**
- 15. Have you heard about any issues that Kent or Hall had when making the move to include fifth graders in middle school?**
- 16. If you move the fifth grade to White Hill and it costs less, would the bond still be the maximum of \$41 million?**

17. Will you go out for full capacity for bond no matter what the choice?
18. If you did get the \$41 million and didn't need it all, could you spread it around to other campuses?
19. I'm struggling with the costs of a new school on the breakout sheet... for instance \$1.8 million for the library...where do these estimates come from? Should we be looking at what's been done or what can be done for less?
20. Will you be educating parents on how the 5/6 and 7/8 at White Hill will work before the bond... is it a junior high model... or a middle school model... will we get more information?
21. Going back to the deadline of March 12<sup>th</sup> to submit bond language, how specific will the language be? Opening a new site vs. expanding existing site or moving fifth grade to White Hill...
22. With respect to Deer Park site and putting fifth graders at White Hill, have you considered selling existing properties to pay for the new construction needed?
23. Can you get a more viable estimate for top options before going out for a bond?
24. When you add up the estimated numbers for a new K-5 and middle school, it's over the \$48 million, right? What happens if we get into the construction, and can't do it for that amount or we don't have money for other schools?
25. If other districts are facing school closures (Novato), what happens if we open a new school and we can't pay the necessary operating costs?
26. Can we change from being a revenue-limit district?
27. If White Hill housed grades 5 and 6, we wouldn't need to open a new K-5... right?
28. What is going to happen in August at Wade Thomas? How will we handle the amount of kids we'll have next year?
29. Is Drake prepared for all this enrollment growth?

### **Community Input**

*(Please note: These comments are our best effort to capture the speaker's message and are not a direct quotation.)*

1. Want to right some misconceptions about who the kids are at the Children's Center... of the children coming to District in 2010-2011, 14 of the 30 children live in San Anselmo and Fairfax; in the afterschool program of K-4, 50 out of 70 live in San Anselmo and Fairfax; you need a leader... District needs to put energy into finding a leader that will stay for five years at least
2. IJ article states that Novato district is considering closing school; mentions San Rafael and Ross Valley as similarly funded districts (revenue-limit); large acreage of White Hill was purchased to hold elementary and middle school; good to look at 5/6 and 7/8 option and have dollars for upgrades at existing properties

3. Member of Facilities Committee – Heidi and Chris ran unopposed; Sharon and Rick ran; Conn Hickey was the only one who was appointed and he was previously elected and served; my main concern is around the finances; previously was pushing board to go forward with Deer Park, but looked at finances again... 5/6 and 7/8 configuration at White Hill makes more sense; option of new K-5 and expanding White Hill would be tight and nothing left for existing schools; big negative – you would have over 1,000 kids at White Hill, but density would be about same as K-4 for Wade Thomas and Brookside; small learning communities are for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> and sixth graders aren't getting that... might be better if fifth grade joined campus; concerned about passing bond with Deer Park as site
4. Parent at Brookside – active in budget and music committee; does seem like Deer Park was a good solution... but when I saw the reaction from the Deer Park committee, I went to the neighborhood and saw the issues; so started looking at the 5-8 White Hill option; maybe would have some curriculum benefits for the kids, but will be a much bigger campus; concerned about the third option of building out our existing campuses; overcrowding already; would be disastrous to our program to get even more crowded; White Hill 5-8 seems like a good compromise; we can't afford to pay for portables out of our general fund, so we need to pass a bond
5. Teacher at Wade Thomas – want to thank our community for caring so much about our kids and their education; our kids are the community of the future; I have 28 kids in my class and it's going well, but it's a lot of kids; keep in mind not to increase size of classrooms too much because it takes away from the education of the kids
6. This is a huge issue and urgency about March deadline; would hope there was some deliberate thinking rather than just moving toward a deadline
7. Facilities committee recommended not pursuing Marin Town and Country last June and Board did pursue this option until about three weeks ago
8. Wade Thomas parent – lots of difficult decisions and all of them have some negatives, but thanks for reminding us of why we're here; facts seem relatively clear that we're out of space now; the enrollment trend is here to stay for foreseeable future... how are we going to sell this to the 8 out of 10 households that we need to vote for this bond... they may or may not have the same interests that we do... we should continue to talk about solutions, make sure numbers are right, we don't spend money we don't have to, we don't displace kids we don't have to...
9. Two of the longest-running members on the school board showed commitment for rewriting the policy that states once a student is in our district, they are always in our district; Fairfax mayor strongly encouraged school board to look at Marin Town and County site
10. Cost to build Wade Thomas multi-purpose room... roughly \$2 million; cost for classroom is about \$500,000; most of our population base are not parents but are voters
11. Parent at Wade Thomas – encourage the board to make tough geography decisions in writing of bond

### **Comment Cards**

*(These are direct quotes from comment card distributed at the Town Hall meetings)*

1. My friend has a fifth grader at Hall Middle School. While I admit that initially, I was glad this wasn't "my school," my friend's daughter is doing fine and is "segregated" from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. In looking at all of the choices, I feel that moving the fifth graders to White Hill with the expansion of that site is the best choice. The two existing old school sites, Deer Park and Red Hill, have huge logistical problems. Wade Thomas is not able to take more children, so just "packing" the classrooms isn't viable, nor do we want to increase our classroom size. I am not familiar with the Brookside campuses  
(NM)
2. I have two 4 ½ year old boys (twins). Thank you for presenting this information at so many meetings. Based on what I heard tonight, leaning toward expanding White Hill to contain grade 5, so it's 5-6 and 7-8. Do not support increasing the student to teacher ratio beyond 20/1 and 25/1.  
(LB)
3. I have twin girls entering Wade Thomas (K) for the 2010-2011 school year. I'm curious why the 6/7/8 graders travel to Fairfax from San Anselmo – has the District looked at keeping K-8 kids that live in Fairfax at Manor and White Hill and the K-8 kids that live in San Anselmo attend Wade Thomas and Brookside?  
(SL)
4. Two tier solution: first, expand, upgrade existing schools and multi/cafeteria rooms since aftercare uses current multi; second, make K-6 schools instead of K-4/5-6/7-8 configuration; third, make lower and upper Brookside 2 separate schools, K-6 or K-5  
(TD)
5. I am in favor of moving fifth graders to White Hill. This seems more cost effective. Also this would lessen the traffic impact at the elementary schools. Make Brookside two K-5 campuses.
6. Due to understandable resistance from the communities of Fairfax (for the Deer Park site) and San Anselmo/Red Hill (traffic and safety concerns), a bond may have a better chance of passing if we move all fifth graders to White Hill.  
(KC)
7. I am in favor of adding fifth grade to White Hill. It is the most cost-effective option and doesn't require re-districting. Brookside moves to two K-4 campuses. Win, win!  
(MW)

**Website Comment (2/8/10)**

*(These are direct quotes from Website Comments we receive.)*

**Comment:**

We are strongly opposed to the plan to expand Deer Park School. The traffic and noise impacts would irreparably harm the tranquility of this neighborhood for residents and the many users of the trails behind the site. Expansion and modernization of existing school sites is a far better use of limited taxpayer money.

