

PROPOSED REORGANIZATION OF THE HART UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA

The Boards of Trustees of the Newhall, Saugus Union, and Sulphur Springs Union School Districts recommend State Board approval of the proposed reorganization plan for the following reasons:

1. Three times--1960, 1965, and 1967-- the citizens in the area have rejected a single unified district plan. Although the population of the area doubled in the seven years between the first and third election, the percentage of "no" votes remained almost constant.

The Boards of Trustees of three of the five districts believe that the citizens of the area deserve an opportunity to consider an alternative to the single district unification plan.

2. Three distinct population centers can be identified in the area. For the most part, the proposed plan would form districts centered in each of these population areas. Each proposed district has significant growth potential.

Population projections of the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission, the Pacific Telephone Company, and the Southern California Gas Company indicate a total population for the area of approximately 135,000 in 1980 including a student population of approximately 50,000 and a total population of 235,000 by 1990 with a student population of approximately 85,000. Conservatively, it can be predicted that each of the three proposed districts will have a population of approximately 15,000 pupils within 10 years.

The proposed reorganization plan will create three districts with pupil populations of 5,000 or more at the time of unification. Each district will grow to an optimum size within a relatively short period of time while retaining a sense of community identity. And finally, problems that are inherent in a single unified district encompassing over 350 square miles with a student population in excess of 50,000 will be avoided.

3. The proposed reorganization plan offers the community the opportunity to form three unified school districts at an optimum time. Each would be large enough on formation to meet legal requirements, on one hand, while the density of area-wide population is small enough to accomplish the reorganization with a great deal more facility than would be possible if a similar effort was attempted several years from now.

The population and geography of each of the proposed districts will offer maximum opportunity for:

- . Community, staff, and pupil participation in instructional decision making,
- . Communication among all segments of the school community,

- . A wide range of educational programs and opportunities with a relatively small bureaucratic structure,
 - . Articulation between each program level,
 - . Maximum efficiency and use of personnel, plants and facilities,
 - . Greater responsiveness to community needs
 - . A high degree of program visibility and subsequent accountability.
4. A \$3.50 area-wide tax made possible by AB 2247 provides a financial base that will assure each of the three proposed districts adequate local tax support. The development of a reorganization plan supported by three of five school districts that crosses existing elementary school boundaries, that provides financial equity through special legislation and makes possible the resolution of several boundary problems of long duration is an indication of the broad level of community support that we believe is required for a successful school district reorganization.

Castaic Union School District

31700 North Lake Hughes Canyon Road -- Castaic, California

October 5, 1971

Arguments against the proposed reorganization of the Hart High School District into three Unified Districts.

First -- Absolutely no benefits accrue to the pupils of the Castaic School District through this proposed Unification.

The following negative results will occur to the Castaic School District:

- a. The present small class loads will be eliminated.
- b. The many special services will be lessened -- or removed -- (Cafeteria, School Nurse, and similar allied services).
- c. Local taxes will be considerably increased.
- d. Direct local control will be diluted -- if not virtually eliminated in the case of Castaic.

The proposal is not in the best interests of the area on a long range projection.

The best program -- in line with the criteria knowledge -- established by Dr. Drayton Nuttall for the State of California would be as follows:

- a. The entire area should be a single Unified School District for the next five or six years.
- b. At that time (pupil population being the criteria) the single Unified School District should become two Unified School Districts.
- c. Subsequently -- again on pupil population -- the two Unified Districts should then be re-divided into a total of four Unified School Districts.

This is the only plan which can honestly be called "Master Planning".

The present "Gerrymandering" of the existing five Districts into three is not legitimate "Master Planning". It is an attempt to meet certain present State criteria in the establishment of Unified School Districts.

For these reasons we must oppose this particular proposal.

Castaic School District Board of Trustees

RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
OF THE WM. S. HART UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

RESOLUTION NO. 70/71 - 1

Resolution Regarding the Status of the Unification Study Proposal

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Wm. S. Hart Union High School District of Los Angeles County does hereby declare that it is NOT IN AGREEMENT with the proposed three-District unification proposal.

The Wm. S. Hart Union High School District is for unification for the purpose of improving education but that this unification should be as equitable as possible; one district whose boundaries would be coterminous with that of the high school district. A distribution of taxpayers' money would correspondently be the most equitable means of accomplishing that type of district. A one-district organization would generate a student population of around 15,000 and would not be more than 35,000 as shown by studies, by the year 1990. These figures show that they are of the optimum size for a unified school district and numbers less than the 15,000 would not produce the most efficient or best educational program.

For these reasons we believe that it would be best for the people of our school district community, to remain in separate districts as we are now until such time as a one-district proposal can again be submitted to the people.

ADOPTED THIS 14th day of Sept. 1970

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE WM. S. HART
UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Edward A. ...
Daniel B. Held
Stanley A. ...
... ..
Elida Agajanian

SUPPORTIVE ARGUMENTS FOR A UNIFICATION
PLAN THAT INCLUDES AN AREA-WIDE TAX

Two distinct trends in school district organization support the proposal to divide the Hart Union High School District into three unified districts and to finance the newly constituted districts to a large extent with an area-wide tax.

The first of these is an increasing interest in creating or maintaining small or moderate sized administrative units. Efforts to equalize support for educational programs regardless of geographic residence of pupils is the second.

The initial attempts of the Legislature to encourage consolidation of school districts required unification along high school district boundaries. For several years considerable interest was expressed in the Legislature in requiring even larger unified districts. In subsequent years, however, there has been an inexorable movement in the direction of support for the formation of smaller unified school districts. Legislation now permits breaking up high school districts into several unified districts. The past Legislative session provided further evidence to support the strength of this trend. AB 833 allows the State Board of Education to approve splitting a high school district into two or more unified districts when prescribed criteria cannot be applied literally and an exceptional situation exists. Senate Bill 242, subsequently vetoed by the Governor, would have divided the Los Angeles City Unified District into twelve administrative units, each with their own local board.

There is an increasing concern about making government more responsive to the people by providing communities ready access to decision making bodies. The potential and predicted population growth within the boundaries of the Hart Union High School District, the size -- 356 square miles, and the existence of several clearly definable population centers are arguments strongly favoring the division of the District.

Efforts to equalize the ability of local school districts in California to finance education are well known and widely accepted. Current methods of distributing state support are based on equalization formulas.

Numerous attempts have been made to write legislation that would further equalize educational support through a State-wide property tax. Equalization taxes are currently mandated in areas that have defeated unification proposals. This is now the case in the Hart Area. In fact, for all intents and purposes, two-thirds of all support for elementary and secondary education in the total area at the present time is supported in a manner analagous to what would occur if the proposed legislation were enacted.

Over the next several years it is highly likely that wealth patterns currently identified will shift. Growth in population in the area may very well be uneven placing severe strains on each of the proposed districts at different times over the years. An area-wide tax, in addition to equalizing educational opportunity for all the pupils, will aid in long range educational planning making it more highly probable that resources will be wisely used for the benefit of all.