August 23, 2010

Ms. Angie M. Cardoza, Foreperson
2009-2010 Civil Grand Jury of Santa Clara County
Superior Court Building
191 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95113


Dear Ms. Cardoza,

I received a copy of the final report "Achieving School District Efficiency Through Consolidation." In accordance to CPC Section 933.05(a), I write to respond to the findings of the report relating to the Berryessa Union School District. The District appreciates the recommendation to consolidate the Berryessa Union and Orchard School Districts. Intuitively, such a merger makes sense in trying to maximize the benefit of every public dollar spent on education for our students. However, there are also serious concerns that would need to be overcome in order to make such a merger work in the current fiscal and educational environment.

There are many variables in any merger that may have a negative impact on the students and community of the Berryessa Union School District, both academically and fiscally. Our district would need to study the mechanics of a merger and make sure that any concerns are adequately explored and addressed. That being said, Berryessa Union School District is willing to begin discussions with the Orchard School District Board of Trustees about consolidation and how some of the negative aspects of that action might be mitigated if consolidation is deemed feasible by both districts.

The Berryessa Union School District will not entertain consolidation unilaterally, but if initiated by the Orchard School District and/or the Santa Clara County Committee on School District Organization will cooperate fully with them in considering such an action.

Sincerely,

David Cohen
President
Board of Trustees