



Serving the communities of Mountain View, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills

MOUNTAIN VIEW-LOS ALTOS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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SUPERINTENDENT

Barry R. Groves, Ed.D.

September 15, 2010

Honorable Jamie Jacobs-May, Presiding Judge
Santa Clara County Superior Court
191 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95113

FILED

OCT 04 2010

DAVID H. YAMASAKI
Chief Executive Officer/Clerk,
Superior Court of CA County of Santa Clara
BY D. ALDYCKI

Dear Members of the Grand Jury:

Please find the Mountain View Los Altos High School District responses to the Grand Jury's Final Report, Achieving School District Efficiency Through Consolidation.

Response to Finding 1

The Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District disagrees with Finding 1, that "Education and financial benefits can be achieved by consolidation and unification of identified districts." In some circumstances for some school districts, this may be the case. The research on the size of school districts' effect on student learning is, at best, inconclusive. However, in our situation, we believe that neither increased learning for students nor financial savings for school districts would be the outcome of a unification.

Response to Finding 1d

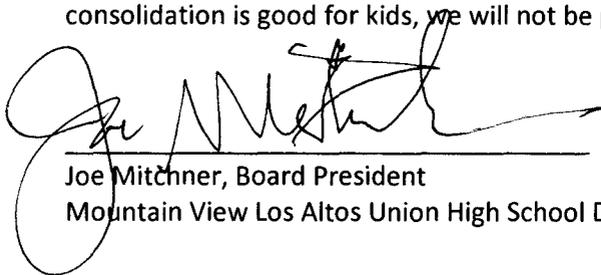
Finding 1d states that "The Boards of Trustees should unify Los Altos School District and Mountain View Whisman Schools District with the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District."

The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, for the following reasons.

- Financial. The Grand Jury findings project a savings of seven percent. We disagree that this level of savings would be achieved. As all three districts are basic aid school districts, this consolidation would not garner any net increase in state funding. As the new district is required to institute uniform salary schedules, likely to be at the level of the highest paying district, the increased costs would far outweigh any potential savings achieved through economies of scale.
Community Support. All three districts receive a great deal of community support from donations and at the ballot box. This type of local support may be lost in a larger more impersonal school district.
Local Control. All three school districts have strong bonds between their communities/parents and the school district. We believe that the effectiveness of the districts would be weakened with less direct communication between community members and district and school leaders, which is a hallmark of our well-functioning systems.

- **Summary.** We believe that consolidation of school districts is a matter for the local communities and the local school boards to determine. There is little sound evidence or research to support the notion that larger school districts provide a better education to their students than smaller districts. The reasons posited by the Grand Jury for supporting consolidating our district with two others are not entirely valid when weighted against the facts.

In conclusion, we believe that a decision to consolidate school districts is a matter for each school board and community to initiate and determine. Given the scant research and evidence that school consolidation is good for kids, we will not be pursuing school district consolidation at this time.



Joe Mitchner, Board President
Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District

9/24/2010

Date