

PUBLIC HEARING

LAKE COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

JUNE 24, 2015

Lucerne Elementary School

MINUTES

I CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Lake County Committee on School District Organization was called to order at 5:00 p.m. at the Lucerne Elementary School, Lucerne, CA by Board President Patricia Hicks. Board Members Browning, Cooper, Lyon and Ryder were present. Also present were Brock Falkenberg, Superintendent of Schools, and LCOE staff members Janice Bailey and Annie Gall.

II The **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was led by Board President Hicks. Following the Pledge, the Board Members introduced themselves to the audience.

III APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Mr. Ryder, seconded by Mrs. Lyon to approve Agenda of the Public Hearing of the Committee on School District Organization of June 24, 2015.

Aye Browning; Aye Cooper; Aye Hicks; Aye Lyon; Aye Ryder - Motion Carried 5-0

IV THE UNIFICATION PROCESS

Lake County Superintendent of Schools, Brock Falkenberg, reported that Resolutions requesting that the County Committee on School District Organization consider unification have been received from Upper Lake Union Elementary District (on June 5, 2015) and Upper Lake Union High School District (on June 11, 2015), along with a Resolution from Lucerne Elementary School District requesting exclusion from the unification process. Once the District Resolutions were received and a determination made that they were signed as required by law, the resolutions were forwarded to the County Committee on June 17, 2015. The County Committee had 60 days to hold Public Hearings. Notification of the June 24, 2015 Public Hearings were posted on Friday, June 12, 2015 at 17 local schools and businesses, as well as online postings on Facebook and the LCOE website. Mr. Falkenberg thanked Lake County News for publishing the meeting notices and feature articles.

Notification of the unification process was sent to the Local Agency Formation Committee (LAFCO) on June 18, 2015; and it was determined at the June 17, 2015 meeting of the Committee on School District Organization that unification does not constitute a "project" under CEQA guidelines.

Mr. Falkenberg then reviewed the ten criteria that must be considered in the unification process: enrollment; community identity; equitable division of property and facilities; the unification will not promote racial or ethnic discrimination or segregation; no additional cost to the state/taxpayers; sound educational performance; insignificant facilities costs; property values; sound fiscal management; and any other criteria by regulation, such as bonded indebtedness.

Mr. Falkenberg commended the local School Boards and district staffs for their transparency and focus on students as they discussed the possibilities of unification. The County Committee will use the work outlined in the districts' *Feasibility Study* as a basis for their review; and will verify any technical aspects of the report. Mr. Falkenberg noted that the initial report reflected the collaborative spirit of the Upper Lake community.

The County Committee on School District Organization will meet on Wednesday, August 19. If the proposal for unification is approved by the Committee at that time, it will be forwarded to the State Board of Education by September 1, 2015 to be included on their November agenda. Although each of the Upper Lake districts has included language in their Resolutions to waive the election process, it is ultimately up to the State Board of Education to approve/disapprove waiver requests.

V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Mr. Falkenberg shared that the Lucerne Elementary District is supportive of the Upper Lake districts' efforts, but has voted in favor of a *Thompson Resolution* allowing them to opt out of the unification process at this time. He stated that both Upper Lake districts were supportive of Lucerne's decision. Mrs. Hicks stated that it is important for the potential new Upper Lake District to keep in academic touch with Lucerne so their students remain on a par with the Upper Lake students.

Diane Johnson, principal at Upper Lake Middle School, stated that although unification would allow the pooling of district resources, it was really about student success. Mr. Pat Iaccino, superintendent/principal of Upper Lake Union High, thanked both of the Upper Lake boards for their efforts, and noted the support from parents in both districts.

VI PUBLIC INPUT

Speaking in favor of the unification process were Ron Raetz, Upper Lake Elementary board member and former Upper Lake High board member, John Tomkins. Mr. Tomkins expressed his concern that Lucerne had not joined the unification efforts.

Mr. Falkenberg read a letter from Upper Lake resident Walt Christensen, who expressed his concern over moving forward with unification without knowing the total costs involved. Mrs. Hicks indicated that any loss of funding to the county should not be considered at all during this process.

V SUMMATION/CLOSING STATEMENTS

Mrs. Hicks thanked everyone for their efforts and their input.

VI ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Browning and seconded by Mrs. Lyon.

Aye Browning; Aye Cooper; Aye Hicks; Aye Lyon; Aye Ryder - Motion Carried 5-0

The Lake County Committee on School District Organization adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Submitted by,

BROCK FALKENBERG

Secretary to the Lake County Committee on School District Organization