

Dear Advisory Committee Members,

Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend today's meeting due to a conflict with a SOCUSD Board Work Session.

I have been trying to keep on top of the happenings at the advisory meetings I've missed and wanted to share my thoughts with you despite my absence.

I agree with Jack Keegan's assessment that there are efficiencies to be found in consolidation, beyond the elimination of duplicated positions. I'm attaching the FY17 Auditor General Reports that were just released on March 1. (I don't know if the group has looked at them yet, but several of you may have accessed them independently.) According to the reports, both districts have areas that are considered "high" expenditures that should be targeted for analysis and potential efficiencies (regardless of whether consolidation happens). There appear to be other areas as well, however, that could also be examined.

I had an interesting takeaway from the AG Reports related to student achievement: Amongst Mingus's achievement peer group (there are only 3 union high school districts in towns or rural areas with less than 20% poverty in peer group 10), Mingus is at the top in terms of achievement. However, looking at peer group 4 for unified school districts in towns or rural areas with less than 21% poverty, there are 4 districts (including Chino Valley) that show higher student achievement than Mingus. One might expect the student achievement at MUHSD to be at least the same as its feeder districts, COCSD and CJSD, but it is actually lower in most, if not all, areas. Of course this is just one source of data, and there is no empirical evidence that unifying would increase student achievement, but I do believe there is enough data to consider the possibility and support further investigation. (The peer group comparisons are located on pages 41-47 of the FY17 AG Report, also attached.)

There is good news from our legislature (believe it or not) in that both the House and Senate have passed Senate Bill 1082, which requires full-day kindergarten (and would presumably restore full-day funding, as opposed to the half-day funding currently received for kindergarten students). It is just waiting for the Governor's signature.

As always, I appreciate the opportunity to be part of the process. I am sorry that I am not able to attend in person; I will be there in spirit.

*Deana DeWitt*

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*We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.*

~Franklin D. Roosevelt