

## The Alpine High School Update For December 2009

By Bill Weaver, AHSCC Chairman

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On Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Grossmont Union High School District (GUHSD) Design Team met at Granite Hills High School to continue the discussion and planning that is necessary to this phase of preparation to build our future new Alpine high school. Victoria Bergsagel, the Seattle, WA Based, Consultant from "Architects of Achievement", facilitated the meeting. It is important that our community understand that countless numbers of hours are being spent by many folks on this project. Some are doing this as a requirement of their duties as employees of the GUHSD. Some are doing this as a means for the giving of their time and expertise, as a volunteer, to better our community.

Even in individual disagreement, this team is composed of dedicated people that have commonality; all sharing the same mission and vision. The common ground shared by both the paid design team members, and the unpaid volunteers is their unbridled passion to better our high school district, and our communities, and make our joint and collective legacy, "Unparalleled high school education opportunities for all teenagers that reside in the Grossmont Union High School District." This is a team of passionate and caring people.

The team members in attendance at this meeting were;

- 1] Mike Lewis, GUHSD Assistant Superintendent
- 2] Georgette Torres, Granite Hills High School (GHHS) Principal
- 3] Jake Gaeir, GHHS Vice Principal
- 4] Dena Johnson, GUHSD Facility Planner
- 5] Cindy Douglas, GUHSD Director of Instruction & Professional Development
- 6] Tim McCarthy, Granite Hills HS Teacher
- 7] Kevin Fleming, Architect – IBI Group
- 8] Barbara Helton, Architect – IBI Group
- 9] Russell Watson, Architect – Sprotte/Watson
- 10] Victoria Bergsagel, Consultant – Architects of Achievement
- 11] Megan Werland, AHSCC Curriculum Sub-Committee Chair; Steele Canyon HS Teacher
- 12] Delia Cooley, AHSCC Curriculum Sub-Committee Co-Chair; Grossmont HS Sp. Ed. Teacher
- 13] Al Haven, AHSCC Vice Chair
- 14] Sal Casamassima, AHSCC Vice Chair
- 15] Shawn Doblado, AHSCC Member - General Contractor & Builder of School Facilities
- 16] Bill Weaver, AHSCC Chairman

We had a very good meeting consisting of two major items of business. The first major item was to report on and summarize the GUHSD Design Team Members' findings and impressions gained from the teams recent Seattle, WA area schools' scouting trip. We also reflected on the merits of updating the previously derived Alpine High School (AHS) Guiding Principles (1.1) document.

The second and final item of business was facilitated by GUHSD's Cindy Douglas, with her presentation of the Draft GUHSD-AHS Proposal document. This presentation was the first formal introduction of the GUHSD's proposal for the 12<sup>th</sup> new high school's instructional plan. This proposal is important to deciding how the physical school facilities must be designed and laid out by the new high school's planners and architects.

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There will be upcoming (dates not yet determined) AHSCC Sub-Committee meetings at which community members may hear about and discuss these two documents, and to further discuss the varying member opinions in regard to these documents and what they convey. There were a couple of points of contention that arose in the aftermath and discussion period that followed the meeting's two presentations. These points begin a basis for reaching compromise and consensus.

There are many details not yet worked out logistically. We must not divide our Alpine community over these open details, we must come together and openly discuss the many complicated issues needing to be resolved. We must unite ourselves through a collective decision process. The GUHSD is hoping for us to agree to accommodate their need for a "wait and see" period of time, an upcoming few months in 2010 that will allow them to resolve these open issues.

There are many different stakeholders that have very differing interests as this process goes forward. Certainly compromise is going to be necessary to satisfy the needs for the best interests of all our children. Compromise on the part of the GUHSD, as well as local constituents. This however does not preclude the AHSCC from taking a stance defending what is best for our own areas local kids. We should be defenders of the "spirit and intention of both Prop H and Prop U", as envisioned when we voters supported passage of these two ballot measures.

The issues to be decided are complicated. We are in the midst of an unprecedented fiscal crisis engineered by our representatives in Washington DC, as well as by State of California officials. Education funding shortfalls are being forced on our school districts to help balance State shortfalls, State of California school construction matching funds not forthcoming is a reality being contemplated. Also, a complicated, conflicting, and confusing Prop U ballot language, regarding the Alpine/Blossom Valley 12<sup>th</sup> high school is a fact we have to deal with, Ongoing is the Lazy A site acquisition process and its associated negotiations. There are details involving the many agencies having jurisdiction, that can delay the many aspects of completing a project that is of this large of a scale and scope.

Not to be forgotten for those of us living in Alpine, and sending our kids down the hill to overcrowded high schools, are the unsafe winding roads and the hours that our kids travel. These preclude many before and after school involvements in education programs and athletics. This is why we must maintain our goal of the new Alpine area high school being built, and press for the most and best, based on what is practical and realistically possible.

We must hold fast to our desire to truly provide our kids with a 21st century state-of-the-art, student centric education. Our new high school must be embedded and equipped with information technology, with school facilities that provide flexibility. Distance learning capability and technologies must be provided throughout the GUHS District, that will prepare our students for academic and career success that will follow them for many years into the future, and prepare the next generation likewise. For more information and to review the GUHSD "Proposal For Alpine High School", and the Guiding Principles 1.1 document go on-line.

Keep checking the GUHSD website ([www.guhsd.net](http://www.guhsd.net)) and the Alpine High School Citizens Committee Website ([www.ahsc.com](http://www.ahsc.com)) for updates and details. Dates of future meetings of the AHSCC are posted as scheduled. The next regular monthly meeting of the AHSCC is Monday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. Check in at the AHSCC website for the time and location. Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for a Prosperous New Year to you all!