

Sent: Sunday, July 24, 2016 11:58 PM

Subject: Vote against H-15 and I-32

Hello Board Trustees,

SDUSD has a PR and fiscal perfect storm brewing with the joint occupancy project at the district's Scripps Mesa property, and only you can stop this from destroying the reputation of the district.

The Facts:

You have a charter school that is respected by the community that wants to stay at the Scripps Mesa property but is being forced to relocate (at a cost of \$17-20 million, see below).

You have a community that has been largely ignored, that almost universally objects to the developer's proposal for a huge apartment complex on school land, and that will fight—both legally and through the media—to stop the proposed project. (Legal fees for the district to defend the project are unknown but would come out of money meant to educate students.)

And perhaps most significantly, you have a project that will not generate revenue, but that will not only lose money, but will create problems for the district now and long into the future.

This is simple math. Agenda item H-15 is a recommendation to spend a minimum of \$17-\$20 million plus interest—what is that, \$30 million in today's dollars?—of taxpayer money in Prop Z bond funds to purchase land and modular classrooms to provide a campus for Innovations Academy, a school that is happy to stay in the modular classrooms where it is located now. (In addition, agenda item I-32 is to increase expenditures for CEQA services by \$530K in Prop Z funds--plus interest--with an unspecified amount allocated toward this joint occupancy project.)

The sole purpose for these expenditures totaling \$30 million or more of taxpayers' money is to make way for a joint-occupancy project of an apartment complex that has been projected to generate \$38 million over the course of 66 years—what's that, maybe \$20 million in today's dollars?—without even figuring in the cost of operations of the district's portion of the property.

There is no evidence to suggest that the Charter School Facilities Committee was made aware of these facts when they made their recommendation for the expenditure of Prop Z funds to relocate Innovations Academy, just as you have not been given this information in conjunction with the recommendation to spend Prop Z funds for this purpose.

What started as a joint-occupancy concept as a way for the district to generate revenue from unused district property has morphed into an apartment complex project that would eject students and tear down a neighborhood school, would be funded by \$30 million of taxpayers' money, would "cost" more than the district will recoup on the project, and would take Prop Z funds away from critical school infrastructure and renovation projects promised in the bond measure. If you don't trust these back of the napkin calculations, at least direct the district to hire an actuarial accounting expert to do the math (taking into consideration interest on bonds, the depreciation of the developer's annual ground lease rental payments over the course of 66 years, etc.) before you consider voting.

What district staff has claimed in the past to try to convince you to vote for moving forward on this project:

Claim: The district will get a 4000 SF STEAM lab in a few years. Reality: If the district wants a STEAM lab, it can outfit the existing auditorium space at the Scripps Mesa property as a STEAM lab right now.

Claim: The community will get a garden. Reality: Innovations Academy already has a garden on site. And neither the developer nor the community (including Sustainable Scripps Ranch, a subcommittee of the Scripps Ranch Civic Association) is currently willing to provide the infrastructure--including the water--for a community garden, so the current reality is that it would be nothing more than a patch of dirt.

Claim: The district will own an apartment complex, and the developer will pay the cost to build it. Reality: In 66 years, the district will inherit a mammoth rehabilitation or tear-down project that will cost millions. Ask anyone who owns a 66-year old piece of property how much maintenance is costing them. Plus there is no incentive for the developer to do more than minimal maintenance as their lease nears the end of its term.

Claim: This will create low income housing for San Diego. Reality: Only 22 units will be low income and allow the developer to apply for waivers to the community building plan in density, setback, height, etc. The rest of the units will likely be luxury rate rental properties unaffordable for most San Diegians. ([Monarch's other apartment complex in Scripps Ranch](#) currently charges \$1900-\$2077/mo for a one-bedroom apartment.)

Claim: The buildings at the Scripps Mesa site were meant to be temporary and not a permanent school. Reality: Almost all of the schools in the Scripps Ranch Cluster (with the exception of the current EB Scripps Elementary School site and Marshall Middle School, which is approximately 25 students shy of full capacity) are overcrowded and house approximately half of their students in 15-30+ year old "temporary" trailer classrooms located on their playgrounds and parking lots. The additional children who would live in the proposed 264 unit apartment complex would only add to this overcrowding.

There is nothing in the district's motto, Vision 2020, or Prop Z about providing housing or for using school bond money to pay to make way for the development of an apartment complex. If you vote to approve this use for Prop Z funds, you will not only saddle taxpayers with a massive, unnecessary expense, but you will doom all future school bond measures to fail.

What taxpayer will vote for a school bond when they have seen millions of their hard-earned money used to eject students off school property to tear down an existing school and build an apartment complex in its place? This project would be used to lobby against school bond measures and as evidence of school district mishandling of funding for decades.

I urge you to reject these proposed uses for Prop Z funding and return the district's focus on the needs of students and their education.