

**TUSD’s Responses to Mendoza Plaintiffs’ August 11, 2014 Comments on the Draft Comprehensive Boundary Plan and Desegregation Impact Analysis**

Below are the District’s responses to the Mendoza’s Comments:

*Tucson Unified School District (“District” or “TUSD”) provided the plaintiffs and Special Master the draft comprehensive boundary plan (“CBP”) and desegregation impact analysis (“DIA”) on July 31 and August 1, 2014, respectively. Under the operative timeline provided by the District on June 19, 2014, the CBP was provided 6 days and the DIA 7 days late. In its August 1 email, the District stated it had no objections to adjusting the timeline to extend the period for comment by the plaintiffs and Special Master to August 11, 2014 to account for its late responses. On August 4, 2014, Mendoza Plaintiffs agreed to provide their comments to the CBP and DIA by August 11, 2014. These comments supplement Mendoza Plaintiffs’ previous comments on the options, which are not repeated here. This submission primarily addresses the DIA, which Mendoza Plaintiffs have not previously seen.*

**Mendoza Comment #1: Option A: Voluntary Transportation from Racially Concentrated Schools to Howell and Sewell**

*Mendoza Plaintiffs have expressed support of this option but reiterate that under this option, Latino elementary school children bear the burden of transportation in order to attend better performing schools. Additionally, they stress the importance of providing additional support to under-achieving racially concentrated schools that are “sending schools” under this option. Mendoza Plaintiffs note that the DIA indicates that each “sending school would decrease in enrollment by about 14 students.” However, from Mendoza Plaintiffs’ reading of the data, it appears that 5 of the 7 “sending schools” would decrease enrollment by 13 students and that the average number of students that would be sent by each school is 13.*

**TUSD Response to #1:**

The Mendoza Plaintiffs’ concerns are appreciated. District’s recommendations include support for the students being transported and for the sending schools.

**Mendoza Comment #2: Option B: Add a Dual Language Program to Manzo**

*The DIA states that Manzo is already at capacity and that this option requires “reconfiguration of programs at the school or a reduction in the number of general open enrollment students.” The District previously indicated that the principal of Manzo said reconfiguration under this option would be relatively easy. Moreover, this option would complement Option A by using the additional capacity that will be created through implementation of Option A. Mendoza Plaintiffs*

*request that this information be included in the DIA so that the Governing Board can make a more informed decision on this option.*

**TUSD Response to #2:**

The information provided by the Mendoza Plaintiffs will be presented to the Board as the following revision to the DIA:

...It should be noted that this option adds enrollment to a school that already is operating at capacity. Reconfiguration of programs at the school, which the principal has indicated is feasible, coupled with the enrollment reductions from Option A will allow the school to accept the additional students.

**Mendoza Comment #3: Option C: Roskrudge K-8 Shared Attendance Area with Mansfield**

*As stated in their July 14, 2014 statement regarding boundary plan options, Mendoza Plaintiffs do not feel this option meaningfully impacts integration because it would only affect 21 students by transferring them from one racially-concentrated school to another.*

**TUSD Response to #3:**

Noted

**Mendoza Comment #4: Option D: Re-open Fort Lowell/Townsend and Move Dodge Program**

*Mendoza Plaintiffs believe this option allows for more children to attend an integrated school that has received a high letter grade for academics. However, they emphasize the importance of careful preparation so that the quality of instruction is not compromised by the geographic move and increased enrollment involved in this option. Mendoza Plaintiffs appreciate that the CBP includes the Boundary Committee's recommendation to this effect.*

**TUSD Response to #4:**

If this option is approved, the District's implementation program will include the Boundary Committee's and Mendoza Plaintiffs' recommendations regarding the importance of maintaining the quality of instruction evident in the school.

## **Mendoza Comment #5: Option E: Santa Rita and Cholla High Schools as Early Middle Colleges**

*The CBP indicates that Option E will include “2 additional buses” “if bell time is not changed.” The DIA describes the assumption that Rincon and Sahuaro students will move to Cholla, and Sahuaro and Palo Verde students will move to Santa Rita under the option. Mendoza Plaintiffs request clarification on whether the additional buses contemplated in the option will be provided to these students. Mendoza Plaintiffs do not understand what is meant by bell time or why a change in bell time would require that transportation be provided. They thus also request that this information be provided so that Mendoza Plaintiffs can better assess this option as presented in the CBP.*

*Additionally, Mendoza Plaintiffs understood that the transportation to support this option was addressed separately in what was identified by the District as Option F. Accordingly, in their July 14, 2014 statement regarding boundary plan options, Mendoza Plaintiffs expressed that the transportation to support the option should be “integral to this option” by being “included within this option.” They reiterate now that the transportation described as part of Option F should be included within this option.*

*Mendoza Plaintiffs emphasize that to be equitable and support integration, the option of a new program at Santa Rita must be coupled with a complementary (but different) program at Cholla. To be effective, the programs at Cholla must be well thought through and well-developed so as to attract students from across town, just as the programs at Santa Rita must be carefully thought through and well-developed.*

### **TUSD Response to #5:**

The point on bell times is: If bell times are changed no additional busses would needed because the overall need for busses at the high school level would be reduced. However, with the current bell times two additional busses are needed. The District recognizes and agrees with the concern of the Plaintiffs that the programs at Cholla and Santa Rita are likely to compete for students and attract students from their surrounding area versus from other areas that might better integrate the schools. Thus the transportation in Option F is an integral part of the success of Option E. However, as the options were presented and addressed separately the DIAs are provided separately as well to match the options.

## **Mendoza Comment #6: Option F: Transportation Options serving Santa Rita, Palo Verde, Cholla and Pueblo High Schools**

*This option must be developed so that the transport hub with busses departing eastward is easily accessible to low-income students at Cholla and Pueblo, who are likely to be unable to travel long distances for pick up and drop off. Mendoza Plaintiffs appreciate the inclusion of the Boundary Committee’s recommendation that location of transportation hubs consider access for low income families, safe bike parking, and alignment with city bus stops.*

*Mendoza Plaintiffs also note that they do not believe the information on the complete list of options, attached as appendix E to the CBP, provide sufficient information for the Governing Board to understand what each option means. For all but one of those options, only a single map illustrating contemplated changes is provided.*

**TUSD Response to #6:**

The District recognizes that the hub locations need to be further refined. Your points are appreciated and a survey as recommended by the District should help to address the effectiveness and equity of hub locations.

**General**

The information on all the option listed in Appendix E is on the FTP site listed in the CBP appendices.