

November 16, 2017

To: Governing Board

From: Willis Hawley, Special Master

Re: High School Relocations

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on a proposal to move UHS to the Catalina campus and Catalina and Rincon to the campus now shared by Rincon and UHS.

Based on the evidence shared with the plaintiffs and the me, I come to the following conclusions:

1. This will have no effect on the quality of UHS or on the educational opportunities of its students.
2. The number of students on the new UHS campus will grow and this new cadre of students will be disproportionately white thereby reducing its ethnic diversity.
3. A significant number of students who are now enrolled at Rincon in order to take advantage of the UHS curriculum and the highly effective teachers at UHS will leave the district. Those students will be disproportionately middle-class and white.
4. The loss of students from Rincon will undermine the overall quality of the education available to Rincon students who do not leave the district.
5. There are several issues that need to be addressed if Catalina students who are English language learners and in need of special education and refugee services are not to be disadvantaged by the merger.
6. Catalina is a school in need of interventions to improve the overall quality of the school. The effectiveness of such interventions is likely to be greater, at least in the short run, if the Catalina staff and students do not have to compete for the attention and resources in a newly merged school that will have its own adjustment problems.

Whenever schools are closed or significantly reorganized this leads families to rethink their commitment to those schools. This has difficult to predict implications for enrollment. Those families who choose to move their students to other districts or charters are likely to be students who achieve above the district average.

It would seem that TUSD is making significant progress in implementing the ambitious goals of the USP. This work makes substantial demands on heavily committed leadership and resources.