



## **FUTURE HIGH SCHOOL IN DUBLIN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **Q1. Why is this process taking so long?**

**A.** The Board of Trustees also wishes we could move this process more swiftly. If only it were as simply as buying a home or renting a house. But there are a multitude of factors - financial, legal, environmental, and many more - that need to be worked through to come to the best decision for our district. The Board and staff have spent thousands of hours on this complex process, from gathering information about potential sites (i.e. assessments of architectural and feasibility issues to technical analysis, schedule assessment and cost estimations), to negotiations with property owners. We are happy to say we can see the finish line. Here is a link to the complete timeline for a future high school in Dublin.

<http://dublinusd.org/cms/lib5/CA01001424/Centricity/Domain/1/Second%20HS%20Chron.pdf>

### **Q2: Why won't the Board of Trustees discuss the site options in public?**

**A:** The Board of Trustees and the District value transparency and we know it is important to our community as well. Property discussions must take place in closed session meetings in order to protect the district's ability to negotiate the best deal on behalf of the taxpayers. If we were to discuss the options in detail in public, sellers have the opportunity to drive up the cost of property, thus leaving the district less money to devote to the design and construction. In addition, many sellers require confidentiality through the negotiation process.

### **Q3. Why did the Board make an offer on a property before taking community input on the options (i.e. Community Forum)?**

**A.** In more than one public meeting, the Board examined the property options, and these public meetings provided opportunity for input. Trustees have also responded to community members via email, phone and personal meetings.

#### **Q4. Will this be a “comprehensive” high school campus?**

**A.** Yes. The District will build a campus that will house a comprehensive program and rigorous portfolio of course offerings for students. It will look different than Dublin High School because of the size of properties that are available. Students at the future HS campus will be afford a broad-range of extra-curricular activities including athletics, performing arts, clubs and more. And graduation requirements will be the same as they are at Dublin High School.

High-achieving high schools come in all sizes and configurations. We are confident the property we seek to purchase can be designed to meet the standards of outstanding education today and into the future.

#### **Q5. Did the Board specifically direct Staff to locate smaller properties that could accommodate a smaller number of students?**

**A.** No. The Board asked the Facilities Staff and our Real Estate Consultant to seek out ALL suitable and available properties of all sizes in Dublin that could potentially work as a high school site. Through the process of elimination – due to a variety of critical factors, including infrastructure requirements, zoning, topography and environmental factors, timing and other significant limitations – sites were removed, leaving us with the five we are currently still examining.

#### **Q6. Why aren't you buying part of the Chen property, which is of significant acreage and could accommodate a more traditional high school footprint?**

**A.** The Chen property was originally investigated by our real property advisor, and eliminated as a potential high school site in June 2016 by the Board because of timeline and budget constraints. Based on recent outreach from a developer interested in purchasing this property, and inquiries from the community, district staff and our real property consultant have again thoroughly examined the Chen property for its viability as a potential high school site. As part of this follow-up assessment, it has been confirmed that the Chen property is still not viable as a high school site at this time for the following reasons:

- Topography considerations, including significant, unresolved grade issues for the extension of Dublin Blvd. and final pad elevation for a school site that may impact the amount of useable area, and could have a significant impact on costs for the District to develop. In addition, the District would likely need to re-engineer significant portions of the site from the filling in of the valleys as proposed by the developer.
- A lack of infrastructure to the property that could significantly inflate costs and extend timelines, including the extension of Dublin Blvd. The District would also be responsible for construction of the access road from Dublin Blvd. to the site area, up a hill.
- The land is currently designated as Open Space, which would require the Dublin City General Plan to be amended before any construction could take place. The County has also designated the

area a “Sensitive Viewshed” and would also be required to amend its General Plan prior to any development.

- There are environmental issues related to wetlands and other potential jurisdictional issues located on and off the proposed site, which will require a lengthy and expensive process to mitigate involving the Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, Fish and Wildlife and the State and Bay Area Regional Water Quality Control Boards, among others. These issues will impact the construction costs and timeline of the Dublin Blvd. extension and any development on this property. We have also been informed there are endangered species in the area which will require extensive mitigation and monitoring, involving additional costs to the District.
- The fact that a significant portion of the proposed property is within Flight Safety Zone 6, as determined by the Livermore Airport Land Use Plan. This designation specifically prohibits K-12 school sites located within this zone. There is no guarantee a waiver would be granted for use of this site by Caltrans and the California Department of Education, and a strong likelihood that it would not. The remaining land that falls outside of Safety Zone 6 is still subject to the issues raised above regarding time and money to resolve.

The District has an immediate need to identify a site and develop a future high school to meet our current growth needs. The Chen site presents a significant cost to acquire the land by the District, along with unknown costs coupled with a potentially lengthy timeline related to identifying and resolving the physical, environmental, legal and political issues before the District could start to develop this land.

**Q7. Why aren't you buying the DiManto properties, which when combined, provides 50 acres?**

A. While the Board has not officially eliminated the DiManto properties, they will come at a high cost to our district. Should the properties be acquired using Eminent domain (the involuntary taking of private property by a public agency for a public purpose), the district would be obligated to pay the highest value for the property. Impact on surrounding properties would also increase the acquisition costs. There could also be potential zoning issues with the City of Dublin. The District is committed to purchasing land at a price that still provides adequate resources for design and construction.

**Q8. What process will be put in place to talk about programs at the future high school?**

A. The Board and District staff are looking forward to robust community discussions and input sessions. We will ask our community to contribute their ideas to build innovative, creative academic programs that maximize opportunities for collaboration, embrace technological changes in education and offer our students what they deserve, the very best educational options.

**Q9. When will the community be informed about a Board decision?**

A. Our community will hear directly from the District when a decision is made. When the Board has officially secured a site for the future high school, the community will be informed by our Public Information Officer via press release, email and social media vehicles, our standard points of communications. District communications may not be as fast as someone typing into a Facebook post, because as a public agency, we have time constraints associated with vetting accurate information we release to our community.

**Q10. During the Facilities Master Plan process that began in the fall of 2015 and ended in the spring of 2016, the District accepted a plan that indicated the construction of a high school that could house 2,500 students in phased construction. Why is the district not following that plan?**

A. The Facilities Master Plan process was a high-level planning and visioning process, a best-case scenario to meet all of the district's possible facilities needs without any constraints. In reality, the district is facing considerable constraints (site options, budget, timeline and a lack of state funding) as it manages growth issues and those constraints are dictating the scope of the future high school project. The FMP thinking has been appropriately refined with this additional data.

**Q11. Will the future high school be able to fit all of the students coming from the east-side feeder schools?**

A. Not likely. The sites that are under consideration, coupled with the amount of money the district has to spend on the land/construction of a new high school means not all students from east-side feeder schools will fit in the future facility. Some east-side students will still attend Dublin High School. Future enrollment policies will be part of our next-steps conversations once the site is secured.

**Q12. If the district is seeking an east-side high school, why is the Murray/Nielsen combination still on the list of potential properties?**

A. Murray and Nielsen are the only two sites owned by the District. They have been kept on the list by the Board of Trustees as a "fallback" option, should other property options fail to be realized. We view the Murray/Nielsen option as a "safety net", but not one that the Board views as an optimal choice.

**Q13. The District had been making decisions for many years based on demographic data that ultimately significantly underestimated the number of students coming into the district. How do we know that your decision on the future high school is based on solid demographic information now?**

A. The District contracted the services of a new demographer in 2016. Davis Demographics has worked closely with other local districts including Pleasanton and San Ramon. Davis Demographics has provided us updates of demographic numbers at regular intervals and their projects are consistent with our actual enrollment. We are confident in the information they are providing. Planning for high school and all district capacities includes flexibility. Demographics are used for planning, but are not predictors of the future.

**Q14. Didn't we remodel Dublin High School to fit all students in Dublin on to one campus? Why do we now need to build another?**

A. Dublin High School was rebuilt over the past decade to be a state-of-the-art learning facility for Dublin students that support a rigorous curriculum and programs, as well as increased capacity. The capacity of the site was never the sole reason for the extensive remodel of the DHS campus. A constant review of students' educational needs and the facilities that support those needs is critical, as is adjustment, when appropriate.

**Q15. There has been recent discussion in the community about the viability of Fallon Sports Park as a high school site. Is the district pursuing this option?**

A. No. The District had substantive discussions with the City about the viability of Fallon Sports Park in spring 2016. It was included in a presentation during a joint Board of Trustees/City Council meeting on April 27, 2016. At that time, the District's Real Estate Consultant indicated there were substantial constraints on FSP as a viable option for a HS site, including the fact that the City was already proceeding with development on the next phase of the project, the potential expense of replicating park land that could be lost to a school site, as well as significant topographical challenges on the site. Ultimately, because of these factors, Fallon Sports Park was not listed among the 10 sites that were presented to the Board last summer.