

THE ROLLING STONES

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First Vice-President's Message

By Thomas Wall

Your input is required by the Board of Directors to determine what course of action your HOA should take, if any, regarding one of the biggest issues facing our tract.

The most well-known accomplishment your homeowner's association performed in the last ten years was to become involved in the movement to have the residents of the tract have the option of attending the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District (PVPUSD). Many present and former members of your HOA worked long hours to make this option viable.

Because the option exists to attend the Palos Verdes Schools, the value of the homes in our tract has skyrocketed and even if there is a downturn in home prices elsewhere in Los Angeles County, many experts predict your home values will probably remain fairly stable.

However, because of educational politics, the law that allows the option to attend PVPUSD did not move us out of the Los Angeles Unified School District boundaries. We are still part of LAUSD. We just have the option of attending either LAUSD schools or PVPUSD schools. Under this arrangement regardless of which option one picks, we all pay taxes to LAUSD and only can vote for LAUSD Board Members and not PVPUSD members.

There are approximately one thousand students from the Eastview area who have elected to attend the Palos Verdes school district and a small number who have chosen to attend LAUSD. Many residents of our tract have voiced concern that while they are happy their students can attend the Palos Verdes schools, they are unhappy that they have no voice in how the schools are run or operated. Many residents of Palos Verdes are also upset that while residents of Eastview can attend Palos Verdes schools, they pay no taxes to the school district.

The RPV City Council recently directed its city attorney to prepare legislation to change the existing law to remove the option and have all residents of Eastview become part of the Palos Verdes Unified School District. Dodson Middle School and Crestwood Street Elementary School would remain part of LAUSD, but residents of our tract would not be able to attend these schools.

On February 23, 2006 the PVPUSD Board of Education reviewed the proposed legislation. The *Palos Verdes Peninsula News* reported on February 27, 2006 that

Palos Verdes school district Superintendent Dr. Ira Toibin told the Board that the proposal was "ludicrous" and if it passes there would be a very expensive lawsuit against the district filed by LAUSD. Superintendent Toibin was also concerned that if the legislation passed, the Palos Verdes school district would be required to repay LAUSD for the bond indebtedness involved in the transfer.

To add further fuel to the fire, some residents of Eastview are concerned that because of the political muscle LAUSD has in the State Legislature, that the law will be changed by LAUSD to eliminate the option to attend PVPUSD. Superintendent Toibin stated the basis for this concern "is absolutely untrue".

There is no question that some of our residents would prefer to attend LAUSD schools. They are closer to where they live, many of the schools provide excellent educational opportunities to the students, and they have a history with the schools. Why should the students be forced to attend a school, which they do not want to attend? The opinions of these residents should be considered.

There are also excellent reasons that all students in the tract should attend only schools in the Palos Verdes school district and be able to vote for members of the school district where their children attend. The residents of PV would also like our residents to pay their fair share of taxes to the schools they attend. Passage of the option legislation may help break down the walls that exist between the Eastview residents and other residents of RPV.

However, Superintendent Tobin's concerns also appear to have some validity. LAUSD has the reputation of fighting very hard to support their position. It would be hard to believe LAUSD would merely concede the option without a strong fight.

So that leaves your HOA Board in a quandary. Should we take a position on the option issue or leave it to each individual resident? And if we do take a position, what should that position be?

Your Board has often asked for your input in difficult decisions and, frankly, your response has been weak. I ask you to voice your opinions to the Board by either attending the Board meetings or contacting the Board members. Your input is important.