

Response to Inquiries NVUSD 7-11 Committee



This document provides the 7-11 Committee and the community information as requested through public meetings and direct communication. NVUSD has prioritized this information based on the committee's role and scope and the verified information we have available at this time. The district will continue to update this document as further information is requested and the committee work unfolds.

Fiscal/Enrollment Questions

Is there a minimum average number of students that constitute a fiscally sustainable school?

The ability for a unified school district to continue to operate a small school is based on many factors, including the overall financial health of the school district. Very small school districts, such as districts that run just one school in a rural area have the ability to run a fairly small fiscally sustainable school as they have the ability to offer wages that reflect the economic landscape of the area. Unified school districts do not have this flexibility as employee wages and benefits are generally much higher than in small rural districts. In addition, small schools as a program model cannot be implemented equitably across a district of our size and it would not be fiscally sustainable.

Where does the District's funding come from? What is the total and per student annual ADA funding received? Do other funds supplement ADA (LCFF, LCAP, etc.)?

Information can be found on the following California Department of Education Website:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/lc/lcffoverview.asp>

What happened to precipitate the current fiscal challenge?

The biggest driver of the current fiscal challenge is the sharp decrease in enrollment over the last five years. Responding to a decrease in enrollment after decades of increasing enrollment by making the necessary cuts in a timely manner has been

particularly difficult for NVUSD. As a result, we need to make cuts in a very compressed timeline.

Why are the expenses increasing so much this year?

The three main drivers of increasing expenses are the rising costs of special education, exacerbated by the state not increasing funding at the same level. Also, salaries and the soaring costs of the pension program (CalSTRS.)

Can you detail more specifically what caused the last year cut of \$7,000,000?

The cuts were precipitated by enrollment decline, skyrocketing pensions and state funding that does not keep pace with expenditures. See more details outlined in our [Second Interim Budget Report](#).

What was the County’s reference to “right sizing the District Office?”

With the aid of both certificated and classified staff, the District Office provides centralized services to all NVUSD schools. Due to economies of scale, large school districts with increasing enrollment are able to provide greater support to schools than smaller districts or districts with decreasing enrollment. The County Office’s letter refers to the need for NVUSD to continue to reduce the number of employees and services in response to our declining enrollment.

How is the Yountville principal’s compensation allocated based on her job responsibilities? How much is she on campus?

The principal estimated that other duties take her off campus by about 25% of the time and 25% of her time on campus is devoted to the homeless/foster liaison position. Since her office is on the Yountville campus, she can be called on for an emergency on campus so that a teacher will not be pulled from their classroom. Reducing the principal salary charge by 25% will not significantly affect the overall operating cost of the school.

Why are some of the schools declining in attendance?

There are many factors that contribute to declining enrollments. Some of these factors include decreasing birth rates in the area and expensive housing in relation to the local job market. Please refer to the meeting documents located on the [7-11 Committee](#) section of our website.

Because budget deficits seem to be growing into the future, and even the closing of two schools won’t fully solve this challenge, will there be further cuts and/or closures in the future?

Unless there is a change in the declining enrollment trends in NVUSD or a very significant change to the funding formula for California Schools, NVUSD will need to continue to make cuts into the foreseeable future. The exact nature of these cuts in the

future school years will continue to be modified as we receive the most recent funding and enrollment data.

Is the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 budget, already accounting for the school closures?

Our adopted 2019-2020 budget, which includes current year and these two out years, assumes that the financial equivalent of two schools would be closed. If they are not closed, other equivalent cuts will need to be made.

How is the District looking to redesign their educational services delivery model to make it more efficient and cost-effective so that they are not going to be once more faced with the unenviable need to close further schools?

As long as enrollment continues to decline at a rapid rate and there isn't a substantial increase to ongoing funding for public schools, additional closures of small schools may need to occur into the future.

What else is being done/considered to close the \$7.2 million budget deficit as the closure of the two schools will not meet this challenge?

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What is the “overhead” cost allocation to each of the schools for administrative and other operations that are global in nature?

There is not a standard or accepted calculation of overhead costs that can be assigned for administrative and other costs. The School Account Code Structure in California doesn't provide schools with the ability to break down or calculate these costs.

Have we looked at the costs associated with displacing students and moving to larger elementary schools?

NVUSD anticipates that the cost of providing transportation to resident students that live in the boundaries for the schools that may be closed will be minimal. Larger schools have the ability to provide greater services at economies of scale than small schools.

Will the district really save the projected \$1,000,000 by closing two schools as it appears this has not been the case with other school districts?

We cannot infer based on other districts. The district anticipates that we will save a very substantial amount of money by closing two schools and stands by its estimate. Calculation of the exact amount is a very complex process.

Are other sustainable budget cuts being considered beyond school closures?

We are implementing all recommended budget cuts outlined in the [letter](#) from the Napa County Office of Education.

What is the business plan of NVUSD with declining enrollment?

We need to cut expenses and increase revenues in the following areas, many of which have already gone into effect:

- Food Services labor cost
- Transportation efficiencies
- Closing small Schools
- Facility use fees
- Fair charges to charter schools
- 7thPeriod at American Canyon High School
- Maximizing class size staffing for secondary to the contract limits
- Right sizing district office staffing to correspond to declining enrollment
- Implement a plan to attract interdistrict transfers to help combat declining enrollment trends

Regarding the 4/15/2019 letter from County Office of Education – was it unsolicited or did NVUSD seek the analysis/info?

California AB 1200 requires ever County Office of Education to issue letters concerning the state of district finances at the time of the first and second Interim financial report submittal.

With respect to the four (4) schools, who are the attendees and where are they coming from? How many are neighborhood kids and those that are not, where are they coming from?

See [Small School Presentation](#)

How is Open Enrollment going to be handled in the future?

It is too early to tell what, if any, changes will be made to our current Open Enrollment Policy. For more information review our [current policy](#). The district will be centralizing its enrollment procedures in the next year in order to ensure effective implementation of our overall enrollment strategy.

What will happen if you close schools and have not appropriately adjusted the process for Open Enrollment?

The process will be adjusted based on Ed Code and Board Policy. It will also be reviewed with our attorney to ensure that we follow the law and best practices.

Will school boundaries be redrawn and will this be done before Open Enrollment?

If schools are closed, boundaries will need to be redrawn just for the schools that are closed. Since the majority of the students that attend these schools do not live in the attendance boundaries, most families will not be affected. Students that do not live in the boundaries, will return to their home school and will have the ability to participate in the open enrollment process.

Are Charter Schools showing a similar decline in enrollment?

Enrollment in our charter schools are not showing the same decline. However, River Charter recently voted to become a district school. Additionally, when dependent charter schools pay the true cost for district resources, it is much more difficult for them to offer cost prohibitive programs or maintain smaller class size than non charter schools.

When will River Schools students be included in our enrollment numbers and projections?

Projected enrollment from River Charter was included in our adopted 2019-2020 Budget.

How do we bill/recoup costs of services provided to the Charter Schools?

NVUSD has utilized a Certified Public Accountant to better calculate and charge charter schools their fair share for district costs.

What is happening with Napa Valley Language Academy?

Any increase in enrollment due to the closing of a charter is temporary. While this would increase revenues, it would also correspondingly increase costs. The cost of running the new district school including the cost of employees would then be the responsibility of the district. As long as the overall enrollment trend shows declining enrollment, NVUSD will need to continue to make significant budget cuts despite charter schools becoming district schools.

Do we have data on students who do not attend their neighborhood school and of those who do not - what percentage of them attend a charter?

See [Small School Presentation](#)

What is the district doing to recruit new students to mitigate the loss of schools?

NVUSD board policy allows us to accept students from other districts through our Inter District transfer process. Families make decisions to enroll in other districts based on numerous factors, including the quality of our educational programming. While NVUSD

is making substantial cuts, we are also working diligently to improve our educational programs for all schools. We feel that this work will help mitigate the loss of students as well as we continue to actively market the district to potential families.

Was last year's decline at Mt. George an anomaly?

While Mt. George enrollment has been fairly stable, it has declined in enrollment since 2014-2015. For 2019-2020, preliminary data indicates that the decline in enrollment has accelerated.

Are the Regional Housing Numbers going to add housing and students to influence the current analysis?

See [Small School Presentation](#)

Are there discrepancies in terms of enrollment projections?

See [Small School Presentation](#)

Are the two new affordable housing projects bringing new students to the Yountville Elementary School? And could this be true for Napa as well?

The anticipated enrollment decline is much greater than all known and predicted enrollment from future development. We have met with the City of Napa regarding the Napa Pipe project. Based on the discussion, this development will not impact the overall decline in enrollment.

Did the Yountville cost figures net out income from the daycare?

The daycare operation is a separate enterprise and its finances do not affect district's general fund. The daycare space is included in the total square footage for the campus.

Have there been budget cuts to Adult Education or other miscellaneous programs/services? If so, what have these been and how much do they account for?

There have not been any cuts to Adult Education, it is separately funded.

In the event a school facility is closed - what happens to the teachers? Is everything - district wide - put up for bidding on a seniority basis (realizing that there are perturbations based on specialty certifications and such) such that ultimately, somewhere, those with less seniority are let go?

Teachers will follow the children. If the same amount of students stay in the school district, we would not anticipate any teachers losing their jobs due to school closures. If the enrollment district wide declines sharply, then seniority would be enacted only after accounting for retirements and non re-elect teachers leaving the district.

How is the process handled with non-certificated personnel when a facility is closed?

Seniority would be used in most instances. If a non-certified staff member at a certain school site has 25 years of experience, she/he has rights at another site, in most instances. This could result in another employee being 'bumped'.

Are there provisions for shared positions for administrators? Could principal positions, for example, be apportioned among more than one elementary school, or are there contractual or state regulations governing this?

This practice could be implemented. However, it has been several years since the district has had a principal overseeing two school sites in NVUSD. Usually, the person is principal for a particular site and then has other 'district' responsibilities. Splitting a principal is not a long term solution.

Would appreciate any appraisals you have for the four schools under consideration, as well as the Stonebridge campus.

This information will be provided when the committee makes recommendations on which schools to close.

Looking at the projected \$5.6MM deficit in two years, what is the current thinking regarding funding it? For example, if one or more of the four campuses under consideration is sold, can that money be applied directly to “the bottom line” for everyday District operations?

State law mandates that the sale of surplus property dollars are restricted to facility improvements and repairs.

Demographic Questions

How many elementary age children reside within each school’s boundary?

We only have certified data on elementary children by boundary that are enrolled in NVUSD.

Has the demographer factored in the effect of the Governor’s recent Executive Order regarding placement of housing on underutilized state property and other state level housing mandates? For example, the Yountville Veterans Home has been officially identified as such a site and conversations are ongoing re putting workforce housing there.

Until there are housing projects proposed in detail, no such determination can be made.

7-11 Process Questions

What are the specific duties of the Committee and their role in this process?

Scope - Determine school closures and advise the Board of Education

Roles - Digest the facts, ask questions, discuss findings and arrive at a formal recommendation to be presented to the Board of Education.

Will the Committee have enough time to truly evaluate all options, including the potential for delaying any closure decisions for at least one (1) year?

It is imperative that substantial budget cuts be put in place before the budget planning process starts in December.

Can the Committee be provided the data regarding the success of these small schools to include as part of their decision-making as opposed to simply financial imperatives?

This will be included in the 7-11 committee presentation on Tuesday, September 3rd.

From a process standpoint, does the Committee's recommendation go to the Board, even if Staff does not agree with it? Can the Board receive recommendations from sources other than the Committee?

Yes, the committee can bring forth any recommendations they wish to the board.

Operations Questions

How are hard costs allocated to the various schools,(e.g, maintenance?)

Generally, costs are determined by square footage.

Why is the room capacity different for the Mt. George and Yountville classrooms?

Yountville was able to have several classrooms used for other purposes because of lower enrollment than Mt. George. Therefore, for projections we used 7 classrooms at Yountville, while at Mt. George we used 11 classrooms to determine the potential capacity. A more detailed capacity analysis will be provided at the Tuesday, September 3rd 7-11 Committee meeting.