



# PLACER COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Gayle Garbolino-Mojica, County Superintendent of Schools

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## PLACER COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

### APPROVED MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

May 14, 2007

Ophir Elementary School District  
1373 Lozanos Rd.  
Newcastle, CA 95658

#### 1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Glenn Vineyard, Chairperson, Placer County Committee on School District Organization (“County Committee” or “Committee”) called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. at Ophir Elementary School, 1373 Lozanos Rd., Newcastle, 95658.

#### ROLL CALL BY SECRETARY TO COUNTY COMMITTEE

Mel Hamel, Area 1; Tracy Pittman, Area 1; Glenn Vineyard, Area 2; Maureen Ward, Area 3; Fionna Tuttle, Area 3; Lorene Euerle, Area 4; Reve' Taylor, Area 4; Evelyn O'Connell, Area 5; James Chambers, Representative at Large; Gayle Garbolino-Mojica, Secretary to County Committee. A quorum was established with nine (9) members present.

#### ABSENT

Jeff Nicolaysen, Area 2; Norma Taylor, Area 5

#### 2.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Glenn Vineyard.

#### 3.0 AUDIENCE TO VISITORS

Mr. Glenn Vineyard extended public comment time to members of the audience for items that were not on the agenda. No public comment was made.

#### 4.0 PUBLIC HEARING – JOINT PETITION TO ANNEX THE OPHIR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT TO THE LOOMIS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Glenn Vineyard opened the public hearing regarding the petition to transfer territory from the Ophir Elementary School District (“Ophir”) to the Loomis Union School District (“Loomis”). He discussed the purpose, format, and procedures of the hearing and asked if a spokesperson would be addressing the Committee on behalf of the opponents or proponents. No spokesperson was identified.

##### 4.1 SUMMARY OF PETITION

Ms. Gayle Garbolino-Mojica summarized the petition proposing to annex Ophir in its entirety to Loomis. On 6/5/06 the County Committee granted a petition to transfer territories from the Western Placer Unified School District (“Western

Placer”) to Ophir and Loomis. Those transfers, which become effective 7/1/07, provide a continuous border between Ophir and Loomis and make possible the potential reorganization of these two districts. The petitioners advocate that merging the districts will provide a higher level of service to the students who currently attend Ophir Elementary School and realize the efficiencies and savings that will result from the economies of scale of the reorganized district. If approved, Ophir students will be in the Del Oro High School attendance boundary instead of Placer High. Employees of Ophir will become employees of Loomis except for those designated as management and confidential. The employment of certificated and classified personnel will be governed by the collective bargaining agreements between those entities and Loomis. The governing board of the reorganized district will still have five members and five trustee areas. The territory that currently comprises Ophir will be combined into Trustee Area 1, Citrus Colony. The governing board will initially be composed of only members of the existing Loomis Board. An election for Trustee Area 1 will take place in 2008 (when the term of the current trustee expires). No division of property will occur with the reorganization. All real and personal property of the current districts will become the property of Loomis. The current bonded indebtedness of Loomis will not be extended to the property owners of Ophir.

#### **4.2 REVIEW OF REORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS REGARDING STATUTORY CONDITIONS**

Ms. Gayle Garbolino-Mojica indicated that the petition was submitted to the Placer County Office of Education (“PCOE”) on 3/20/07 and was approved by the majority of the Loomis and Ophir school boards. Following verification by the County Superintendent, the petition was transmitted to the County Committee and the State Board of Education. Following receipt of the joint petition, the County Committee scheduled these two meetings and public hearings within 60 days. The notice of the meetings and availability of the petition and other information was published ten days before the meeting (May 3, Loomis News and May 4, Auburn Journal). A 30-day notice of issuance of a Negative Declaration on this reorganization project was published on May 11, 2007. The purpose of the meeting tonight is to take public comment on the joint petition. The County Committee will be asked to meet again to take action on the joint petition and on the Negative Declaration. Only if both are approved by the County Committee will an election be called for the voters in the two districts to decide whether to accept or reject the reorganization proposal.

#### **4.3 PRESENTATION BY PETITIONERS**

**4.3.1** Ophir Superintendent Rob Reynolds addressed the Committee. Referencing a projected slideshow presentation, Superintendent Reynolds discussed the challenges facing Ophir and the benefits of merging with the Loomis District.

**4.3.2** Loomis Superintendent Paul Johnson addressed the Committee. Referencing a projected slideshow presentation, Superintendent Johnson

addressed questions that have been raised in the community with concern to the proposed reorganization.

Superintendent Johnson introduced Mr. Jim Foster, Loomis Board President, who discussed his experience as a board member at the time of the merger process of Loomis and Penryn. Mr. Foster indicated that the process and concerns raised at the time of the Penryn merger were similar to the concerns that are being raised with the current petition. He said that as a result of the Loomis and Penryn merger the district is thriving on numerous accounts.

#### **4.4 PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Ms. Claudine Matulich, 1240 Boothill Lane, Newcastle, 95658, spoke in support of the petition. Ms. Matulich has been a member of the Ophir Board for more than eight years. She indicated that Ophir has been struggling with declining enrollment for seven years and the decline is expected to continue. The District will be forced to release teachers, combine classes, and eliminate programs if the petition is denied which, in her opinion, will further decrease enrollment. Ms. Matulich asked the Committee to move forward with a decision without delay.
- Ms. Sandra Wise, 6735 Wise Rd., Auburn, 95603, spoke in support of the petition. Ms. Wise has been the Business Manager of Ophir for 22 years. Ms. Wise said that it is her job to provide budget data to the Ophir Board so they can make sound financial decisions. The District has lost 42 students since the 2000-2001 school year which amounts to \$185,432. She said that all of the small school districts in Placer County are in declining status. Ms. Wise urged the Committee to move forward with the petition to merge the districts without delay.
- Superintendent Kathleen Daugherty, Newcastle Elementary School District, said she is not speaking against the petition currently before the Committee but she is speaking for the petition by the Newcastle Boundary Change Committee's that was denied by the County Committee and is currently at the State Department on appeal. She said that the appeal affects more 200 families. Ms. Daugherty asked the Committee to delay a decision on this petition to give the appeal time to go through its process.
- Mr. John Chappell, 680 Betterley Lane, Auburn, CA 95603, spoke in support of the petition. He is an Ophir resident and for the past nine years he has been a member of the Ophir School Board. He indicated that it is in the best interest of the students to approve the petition.
- Mr. Mark Rideout, 10465 Dutchmans Mine Rd., Auburn, 95603, indicated that his position on the petition is undecided. Mr. Rideout distributed a memo to the Committee members requesting that the Committee defer taking action on the petition and indicated that there remains to be many unanswered questions in reference to the effects of the petition. The memo lists merger alternatives. He also distributed email correspondence between he and Ms. Gabriela Michanie.

- Ms. Mary Stockwell, 6989 Chili Hill Rd., Newcastle, 95658, spoke against the petition. She indicated that the Ophir community is concerned about declining enrollment and the financial impact on the school. She said that Ophir did not discuss the merger with the families of the district until after all options were eliminated. According to Ms. Stockwell, there are many people who are not in support of the petition. She asked the Committee to not support the merger going on the November ballot.
- Ms. Brandee Ambrosia, 8776 Chili Hill Rd., Newcastle, 95658, spoke against the petition. She was originally in favor of the merger but has since changed her position. She indicated that many unanswered questions remain and there does not seem to be any real attempt to answer them. Ms. Ambrosia raised a question about the legality of Ophir meetings (with concern to Brown Act adherence for posting agendas) that have taken place where the merger has been discussed.
- Mr. Paul Montgomery (audience member) inquired about the cost of the election and who pays for it. Ms. Reve' Taylor addressed the question indicating that the districts involved share in the cost of the election.
- Ms. Stephanie Jensen (audience member) inquired about the process to be taken by those who are only now being made aware of the petition; there is a desire for them to express their views to the Committee. Ms. Garbolino-Mojica informed Ms. Jensen that she was welcome to address the Committee about the reorganization at the present time. Ms. Jensen thanked Ms. Garbolino-Mojica and made no further comment.

**5.0 CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING AND ADJOURN THE MEETING**

Ms. Reve' Taylor made a motion to close the public hearing regarding the petition to transfer territory from Ophir to Loomis. Ms. Lorene Euerle seconded the motion; motion carried with a 9-0 vote in favor of closing the public hearing. The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

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County Committee Chair or Designee

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County Superintendent or Designee

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Date

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Date