



Yuba River Charter School

CHARTER COUNCIL Minutes

**Meeting of March 18, 2011
3:15pm YRCS Bldg. 2**

Yuba River Charter School is a community focused on the development of our children. The primary responsibility for the governance of the affairs of the school falls upon the Charter Council, composed of teachers, staff, parents and community member(s). Regular meetings of the Charter Council are held the second Wednesday of each month. The Charter Council invites input from all constituencies of the school. For more information regarding the functioning of the Charter Council, see the Charter Council By Laws and applicable policies.

1. Call to Order - 3:20 PM

CC Present: Doris Rainville (DR), Leila Barber (LB), Dan Martinez (DM) 3:30 PM, Torrie Mudd (TM), Robert Wallis (RW), Mariana Nielsen (MN)

CC Absent: Newman Peery (NP)

Guests: Caleb Buckley (CB), Susan Egan (SE)

2. Public Comment -- EXTENDED until 3:55

This is an opportunity for members of the public to address the council on non-agendized items. Note the council cannot discuss or take action on non-agendized items at this meeting, but such items may be agendized for a later council meeting for discussion and/or action. Agendized items may either be addressed at this time or when the items come up for discussion and/or action. All comments are to be pertinent to the business of the board as determined by the chair. Furthermore, comments which reflect adversely upon personal character or motives are out of order as are those which reflect racial, religious, economic or political views. Such statements are grounds for summary termination of the privilege of address.

Public Comment was extended to include sentiments from the community regarding a possible move to the Nevada City Elementary (NCE) campus this summer. Written comments were also submitted. See attached for a details.

3. Closed Session - 3:55 PM

The Council invited in: Guests: Caleb Buckley (CB), Susan Egan (SE), Steve Monical (SM): DM 1st, TM 2nd - Passed unanimously

The Council met in closed session to discuss:

- a. the lease negotiations with Nevada City School District (NCSD) to rent NCE for a term of three years to begin July 1, 2011.
- b. the negotiations with Bitney Springs LLC to renew our current lease.

4. Open Session - Action 4:55 PM

Shall the council authorize Caleb Buckley to sign a lease agreement with NCSD under the terms outlined in the "letter of intent?"

The council amended the resolution to: "Shall the council authorize Caleb Buckley to respond to NCSD that we're looking favorably on their counter offer, but need more information to finalize our decision." LB 1st, DM 2nd - Passed unanimously

5. Next Meeting Scheduled for Friday March 25, 3:15 PM to consider this decision again with more information.

6. Call to Adjourn - 5:07 PM

Comments Received During the Meeting**Savannah**

Just found out yesterday.
Just bought a house to be near the school.
Parking will be a really big issue.
Festivals may be lacking, the energy of being in the trees will be missed.
Not as natural, not as beautiful
How much will the move cost?
Sending a prayer that the current landlord will change his mind.
I love this place. This land. It is supportive of the kids.
It is possible to divide up the ages. Will this be possible at new school? Getting the younger kids mixed in with the older ones is frightening. They start learning about things that they are not ready for.

Carrie

Faculty perspective.
Pleasantly surprised!
Felt like a real school. Good classrooms. New energy. Alive.
Especially since we don't have our new school yet. This would keep the energy going while we finish that project.

Casey (representing 2 parents)

Live in Penn Valley and this is a really big change. Doubles the commute for Penn Valley families.
Short notice.
Wishes for a more democratic process.
News says that NCE is an expensive school to run.
Hopes we the current landlord will reconsider.
Understands that money may be an overriding issue.

Chelsea

Same concerns.
Hard to get there, bought a house nearby this school.
Festivals, my big part at this school: How will they work?
Can we be really "Waldorf" at this site with all the asphalt and chain link fence?
Concerned that non-Waldorf families will be joining only due to proximity.
Parking is a huge issue. How can we pick up our children when we have a sleeping one in the car?
Is the landlord willing to negotiate now?

Joe

Wants to acknowledge the group for finding this alternative.
Member of the Ed Foundation, and they hear a lot about Sacramento politics and it is down and dirty this year.
It is really good that we consider options and be proactive about this.

Current school site is good, but the new one is also.
The bottom line is financial, so he strongly supports.
We can make any place home.
It is important to have the money for faculty and specialty programs.

James

Member of the Ed Foundation and very invested in the viability of this school.
Appreciates Joe's statements.
Empathizes with those families that are close to current facility whose lives will change.
But it is essential to look at viability of school, considering lack of state funding.
This is a temporary situation.
The cost of the move has been included in the calculations and still we could save over ¼ million dollars over 3 years.
Community and faculty comes first.
Trees are great, but secondary.
Firmly supports and has heard from former board members who also strongly support the move.
Fortuitous opportunity in these tough economic times.
He has been on site committee for years and knows about HVAC issues. New facility may have concerns, but current facility at least as bad or worse.
Regrets deeply the personal inconveniences for those whose travel will be affected.

Stacy

Main concern: Short notice for notification that this was being considered.
May not know the majority/minority of opinions because the fast notice and "done deals" way that information is presented.
Need time to discuss and digest pros and cons.
Is the landlord willing to deal?
Moving is NOT easy and then we may have to move again in a few years. What if we need to move yet again into another temporary site if the new site is delayed?
If it all comes down to money, then maybe we have to, but the state budget is not set yet.
There is no playyard, no football field, no place to run and play.
Convenience is not a big deal for our families.
"Save money on gas" rationale is hard to judge this as don't know exactly how many families are coming from how far and with what type of car and with what carpool arrangements.
Consider the money AND the upheaval to the children.
This place is special and it should be seriously considered.
Families still don't know this is even going on.

There may be issues at our current site, but we are resilient and we can fix them.

Would the landlord be willing to instead of reducing rent, donating to the Ed Foundation so he can get a tax write off?

Melissa

If this is all about the money, can we negotiate more with the current landlord?

Saw the new space and is excited about it.

It would be fun to walk to school, but loves being out here.

Knows how serious the issues are with the current landlord, and it would be great to have a new situation.

Could we get a better lease with better bargaining power?

Leans towards staying.

Nikai

Poll of first grade families pretty unanimously was supportive of whatever is best for the school.

It is hard: We are attached to this school. It is like home.

Timing is tough.

Though it is inconvenient for some, for some it will be better.

Wherever we are, we can make any place magical.

As to the festivals: There has been low morale lately. This could bring new energy. With the new place, we could increase morale.

Shannon

Personally, live in Nevada City, excited about the idea of moving closer.

Also knows NCE campus and it is magical and we could create a lovely school there.

It comes down to financial: Can we pay the faculty and save specialty programs that are the heart of our school?

Morale piece is important, too. Keep the heart active.

Kristin

Come to believe that it is a blessing that we have this option.

Not clear why there was such short notice to receive

notification about the big decision being made, but has faith that we are coming to the best decision.

Marguerite

Family has received many blessings at this site.

It would be a shame if due to finances this changes our future.

We need to continue our quality of education, including our specialty teachers.

Now we have 2 campuses and both look good. This is a much better position to be in than having to close a school.

New impulse: If we go to a new campus, we need a new impulse and she was excited by the new space.

Although it is more beautiful at current site, it is warmer at the new site.

Teva

She was a parent at NCE for 3 years and every day it was warm and friendly with lots of parent participation. It was a home/family experience.

That school can hold that space and we can create that feeling anywhere.

It is a great place.

Suzanne

Was upset about move when she first heard about it.

She also bought a house to be near school.

But the tour got her really excited.

We can all fit.

It feels inclusive.

If we can keep our programs intact, this is very important.

Comments Received via email

From: Jilan

hey third grade friends-

You may have heard through the YRCS grapevine that there is consideration of the school moving to downtown NC to the old NCElementary site. Apparently the Charter Council is voting on this tomorrow. i plan to go to this meeting and would love to know how people in our class feel about this...all i know is this:

- 1)Our school will save 1/4 mill\$ in the rent and this saved money could go toward faculty salary and specialty classes that were going to get cut and/or already have been cut.
- 2)The upper grades will have proper heating in the winter months
- 3) The majority of the school would have a shorter drive/less gas expenditure/more chances of popping in and helping out at school.

please let me know how you feel and how this would affect your family.

with care,

jilan

From: katrina

Hi there --

I cannot be there today at the afternoon meeting (Aidan came down w/ the major headache/fever thing), but just wanted to write a letter sharing Gary and my **support for YRCS moving to NCE**. I also have heard from other parents who fully support the move who said they do not plan to come today b/c they think this afternoon is more of a window for those with concerns to share and be heard. I suspect you all already know there are many of us out there who support this move, but just in case it feels skewed this afternoon with many voices of concern, here is a summary of why we support this move.

Why the Reedy-Schneider's support a YRCS move to NCE:

(I) The community. YRCS is an education that truly touches the soul and essence of our being and the heart-full presence of our school is a true blessing. YRCS's activities at Victorian Christmas in Nevada City was simply beautiful and felt by many in the larger community . Our presence at the NCE site will allow for very important connections with:

- o Nevada City: YRCS bringing such heart and presence to downtown Nevada City can truly provide a wonderful gift to the community at a rather crazy time in history. Whether others outside the YRCS community will be allowed to attend or not -- our festivals, concerts, and daily rituals will be felt. This is such a key time for our community to have such a gift. If we have the opportunity to do a garden - we can work with as well as tap into existing funding sources to be a part of a community garden project (something Nevada City really needs) and even the Farmers Market. We can utilize Nevada Theater for larger events and concerts and help support that facility as well.
- o The larger environmental community: Our proximity to APPLE, SYRCL, American Rivers, Friends of Deer Creek will also allow for some really nice collaborations. The ease for these environmental professionals to engage with our students will be a tremendous resource. Students will be able to also offer support to these no profits as part of student or class projects.

- o Other: Classes can walk the library for research projects and go directly to historic sites in town for California history studies.

(II). Travel efficiency. I do not have the numbers on this one -- but many students will be able to walk to school (something very few can do now), other commutes are much shorter, and quite importantly -- many parents can piggy back drop offs with other errands more effectively (since they are coming to a town center vs. out in rural area). Also many parents can drop in more easily in the middle of day to participate in the class. Parents can attend a Yoga class, go to the gym, or hang in a cafe in between pick up times.

(III). Cost savings. I love the idea of our money helping the NC school district (especially if they get to keep teachers employed) instead of a not so cooperative landlord. I also really appreciate the economic savings for YRCS through rent reduction.

(IV). Local Beauty. I hear there are many concerned with losing the beauty of our current campus. We lived for 2 years half a block from NCE. I know there is a lot of asphalt at NCE and it doesn't feel as natural as our current campus. And it really is a stunning place. The trees in the fall are incredible. The view of Banner Mountain quite gorgeous. There are SO many songbirds. The walks around the neighborhoods super sweet -- especially along the historic boardwalk that goes up Main St. When we lived in town, NCE students went for class walks in town and it really was super dear - for the students and community.

There are also many nearby nature trails including:

- **** The Tribute Trail** (along Deer Creek) will be completed this spring, and another big loop completed next spring. In the end there will be a 9 mile loop in and around Nevada City
- Trail along a fork of Deer Creek starting at the Stonehouse goes through the woods to Pioneer Park
- Trail by the firehouse to the Nev County library and a sweet pond area and open field beyond the library
- The Pioneer trail heads out of town by the Foundry up to Old Downeyville and is very gorgeous
- The Land Trust is completing a trail system by Hirschman's pond that is quite incredible.

(V). In-line with early Steiner/Waldorf origins One of the many who has studied Steiner/Waldorf can share more, but it is my understanding that early Waldorf schools were placed in city environments (First Waldorf school built 1919 within the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory! First USA Waldorf in New York City.)

Good luck today. We understand the challenge this move poses for many parents and really extend our sympathy. I understand that we greatly benefit living only 2 miles from NCE as well as having our daughter already in school at Forest Charter (half a block from NCE).

Most sincerely -
Katrina Schneider

From: Thea

By sheer coincidence, I was walking by the school with a friend and our daughters when Mr Martinez popped out the front door and offered us a tour. The teachers and admin were looking things over.

The classrooms are huge. There is an auditorium with a small kitchen (for 3rd grade lessons) attached. The playground is also asphalt and limited. There is a separate small grassy yard for kindergarten. I have same concerns about parking and wonder what the parents of NCE did?

It does seem doable to me, with some adjustments. I am interested to

hear the teacher's perspective.

Thea

From: Rachel

Dear Jilan,

Thank you for taking the "survey". today was the first time I heard about it.

If indeed we will save so much money (how much does the move cost?) and we can for example have a eurythmic teacher at school and enhance our children's education - I am for it.

I do not know the new site, one thing about the current site that it is SOOO beautiful and natural with lots of nature and walk possibilities. I will be very very sorry to loose it.

I wonder how much further it will be for us Oregon housers.

I will not be able to attend - I have class tomorrow, but I am very grateful you are taking our input to bring to the board.

Another question is - since we have another site will the current owner come down with the price significantly?

Moving is a big expense and effort.

love,
Rachel

From Cindy

I found some details in the recent school newsletter and wanted to pass this on. (Avail on the school website at <http://yubariverschool.org/>)

Excerpt from Pg 1: In the middle of March, the school turns a page on the current school year and gets a glimpse of next school year. In regards to our facility, we currently have three projects going. Our lease on Bitney Springs expires and we have been negotiating an extension. Nevada City School District has shown interest in negotiating the possible lease of NCE downtown. Our building committee has also kicked off the environmental reports necessary for the new construction site. Regarding our school budget, the state has asked us to prepare a budget with a worst case \$100,000 budget cut for next year. That would bring our state funding down to 2004 levels, when we did not have Building 2, specialty programs, and base salaries were \$28,000 for teachers. The finance committee: Susan Egan, Dan Martinez, Doris Dunning, and I have been charged with presenting options for cuts. As I speak with school families, many relate stories of having dramatic drops in their own household budgets. For the time being, this is the reality we all live in together.

Excerpt from pg 4: Next school year we will again be facing a state

budget cut of approximately \$350 per student or approximately \$100,000.

Hope the above is helpful to you.

I'll summarize everyone's comments and pass them to Tori Mudd and/or Susan Egan later this eve. So if you want to weigh in you are welcome to email or call me with your thoughts.

As I understand it, the Charter Council meeting where this will be discussed and maybe even voted on, is tomorrow, Fri. I'm sorry I don't know what time. After school, maybe??

Best,

Cindy

From: jen

Sadie's family is all for it! and not just because pj lives across the street :) it's a great building, designed as a school, works as a school.

jen

From: Chelsea

I have so many questions!
The drive for me would not be so great . But that's minor compared to the amount of money being saved.

From: Anna

Hi All,

I love the idea of more money for teachers and programs and less money for rent. We will make a beautiful home no matter where we are. It is not the site that makes our school so special. I would NOT miss the long trip down Bitney Springs Rd. It would also make it much easier to drop in for an hour or two in the middle of the day to volunteer. On a less positive note, I worry about the lack of parking.

Just some thoughts, Anna

From: Sally

The Gardners feel great about this potential move, Jilan. It would really help in lots of ways.

We're just sayin'...

Sally BG and Gary

From: sarah

Hi Jilan,

I am in favor of the move for the reasons you have listed below.

Sarah

From: Logan

We all must remain flexible at these incredible times. Although I love many aspects of where the school is located, we want the best for YRCS. Saving money on rent, that can go towards giving the faculty a living wage, is important. I hope that a good carpool can develop for us out here on the ridge

From: heather

Hi J- I think it would be great- I don't know much about the facility but the savings makes it a no brainer for the interim.

H ☺

From: becky

I don't know where the NC Elementary site is, and I am just wondering if it has a play ground. Do you like the site??

I love the site we're at. Any chance of negotiating a lower rent if it means we will stay??

Thanks.
Becky

From: mark

I also like that it will be supporting Nevada City as a community since many locals want to keep it as a school and not have it go towards something else (like a proposed court house expansion). So count me as a YES vote. Mark (Milo's)

From: Carrie

I would be so eternally grateful to have the school at NCE. The drive out and back everyday is so very long and I feel like the kids spend half their day in the car. Having the school in Nevada City would be a dream come true and the money savings could be used for so much including investment in the land/permanent site the school has in mind.

Please let me know what you think I can do to help. Should I come to the charter council meeting tomorrow to express my support?

Thanks for everything

Carrie

From: gary

Katrina and I are 100% in support of the NCE for 3 yrs plan. Thanks for communicating the economic and social benefits. Your #3 below has many aspects to it, as you apparently understand, and I am sure that these outweigh any awkwardness of moving or the concrete setting.

YRCS needs to make the responsible decision here fiscally and from the standpoint of being kind and considerate for the earth.

Please let us know what we can do to help.

Gary

From: Gary

Jilan,
I think so many early Waldorf schools were in cities because that's where intellectual discussions took place and led to novel approaches in education. Also, it was an explicit goal of early schools to bridge social classes.

Although I have read Steiner bio, I do not have much of his literature. Here are some facts (all on wikipedia) that may be relevant:

1. First waldorf school (1919) was built within the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory, as setting both industrial and urban. It was wildly successful, growing to 1000 students in k-12 within 6 years.
2. First waldorf school in the USA (1928) was in New York City.
3. First public waldorf school (1991) was the Urban Waldorf Elementary School of Milwaukee, an inner-city school.

Clearly there is precedent for the most influential and successful of Waldorf schools to be based within cities.

Thanks for your leadership here (Mariana too) in representing the benefits of such a move, and the strong desire for it from many of us parents.

Gary

From: Jilan Glorfield <jilanglorfield@hotmail.com>

i have to say, in addition to thinking of walking spaces, does anyone have any good literature from steiner himself?; werent so many of the original steiner schools in villages? werent many of his beliefs based on community? our kids, so many of them, LIVE IN NATURE for goodness sake! why cant the few walks they take per week (how many walks does each class actually take in a week anyway) be in the wonderful community-based village in which they live? just my 2 cents...

From: 85filter

As Jen said I am all for the NCE school being a great temporary home for YRCS. Sadie and friends have spent quite a bit of time developing at NCE. We used to use the grassy lawn and outdoor stage for improv and watch the seasons turn in the raised bed gardens, walnut and plum trees. Annika's dad Ed and I once imagined how we could transform the large swath of cement playground into a more Waldorf inspired natural playground. I'd be the first to help make that happen. It wouldn't take much effort or resources to enchant NCE. It already has a lot of character. Oh, and the savings in time and gas and carbon guilt for most families would be great Tremendous for me. And lastly, the positive psychological impact on this neighborhood and downtown in general with many kids and families again filling the streets of Nevada City could be momentous.

From: shannon

Ed and I LOVE the idea of the school moving to NCE for all the reasons already said -- but primarily so that more of the school's money goes towards the teachers and programs! Thank you, Caleb, for your email outlining all of that. And, like PJ said, we will be there to help rip up concrete (if we are allowed to do that!), plant gardens, paint classrooms, whatever. Sounds like fun!

Love,
Shannon

From Caleb, Director
Dear 1st Grade Families,

I hope people are not hearing about the move just through the grapevine but through all the communications from the school as well. We had an article in the Union on Saturday, we mentioned it in the newsletter on Thursday, I sent a note home with every child today and did a phone call (which was muffled, sorry). The details of the negotiations are not public information yet but I intend to recommend the move to a special meeting of the council at 3:15pm tomorrow, Friday in bldg. 2. Please do come and express your opinions so the council has an accurate reflection of community sentiment. I would hate for families to miss this opportunity to be heard so I will present any written letters parents wish to e-mail or drop off at school. The deliberations will be in closed session.

So here is my pitch, and feel free to forward to friends in other classes:

(Reid got a chance to walk through all of the rooms today with Mrs. Barber today and they both liked it very much).

YRCS is facing a \$100,000 budget cut next year which would be the equivalent of laying off every specialty teacher and assistant and cutting everyone's salary by 6%. We will save enough money through a cheaper lease that we will not have to make any budget cuts next year and will have enough money in the first year to pay for the move. All of our programs can be accommodated at NCE. It is 25,000 sq. feet which is 2,000 sq. feet larger than our current site and it has a beautiful multipurpose room with a stage that can hold 300 students. All of the faculty toured the building today and were very impressed.

It's good for Nevada City. Instead of sending our lease money to an investor in the Bay Area, we will be sending our money to Nevada City School District who in turn will have enough to save three teaching jobs next year. We currently have 85 families that live in Nevada City and an estimated 40 students are within walking distance to NCE. On Mapquest from Penn Valley and Yuba County the travel distance is about the same with better gas mileage on highway miles. Since we have three different release times, it will be easier for families to pick up a young child and do errands or get a cup of tea in town before returning for an older sibling, helping our local economy and saving money on aftercare.

NCE was built in 1938 and has high ceilings and lots of direct sun light with classrooms averaging 850 sq. feet. The neighborhood supports our presence and has reached out to us to keep NCE a school. I know families will miss the trees and the acreage and we hope to have that feeling again in a number of years when we build our own school. For now, NCE is the best place to house our kids for the next three years and unifies us under one roof. I hope the council will support the move and we can get busy painting second grade!

Thanks and hope to hear from you tomorrow.
Caleb

[Buckley, Reid's Dad and YRCS Director]

From: katrina

Oh -- and one more thing
gary said there's funding for a trail all along deer creek that has gone through
he can tell you details

From: katrina Hey you Nevada City locals --

There are a lot of parents concerned that YRCS at NCE will mean no more "real" nature walks for kids. True? What are the closest trails/walking that a class could do??

Those who have ideas of good walks from NCE -- I was told a list could really help for tomorrow's meeting

The ones i know of are:

- up to firehouse and trail to the library and the sweet pond just beyond the library (also a big plus - kids can walk to the library)
- out Old downeyville rd via pioneer trail (by miners foundry)
- down to the old stonehouse there is a trail along the creek and thru the woods that comes out right at pioneer park - where there are many trails
- the trail that is going in to Hirshman's pond would be amazing. I know it is a bit of a trek up to the trailhead tho' (which is near the big granite boulder on cement hill rd)

trails for kindergartners tho'?

-- to deer creek is the primary one i can think of

Those of you in town - any others you can think of??

I also recall when i lived in town that classes from NCE would go for walks each week -- they had this great route and came up broad st and it was really very sweet. They all learned the fun history of the old homes and gold mining, etc.

Please forward to me if so

Thanks
Katrina

From: Angela

Thank you, everyone, for making this issue part of our e-mail group discussion.

Over the years I've been fortunate to visit many Waldorf schools. I've seen endless variations:

- * makeshift kindergartens in church basements
- * a charter school in temporary buildings in a parking lot
- * a site that consisted of small, cold cottages of low build quality
- * a dingy, cavernous former urban Catholic school complex only slightly made over

and much more.

For YCRS to have an opportunity to move to a site that was built as a school from the outset seems like a rare opportunity.

I also am aware of the many challenges that the current site poses, however lovely the acreage is--notably, the extraordinary expense, the maintenance problems.

Beyond the sheer practical concerns, it's worth asking, What makes Waldorf "Waldorf"? As one person noted, it can be community. It is this and, in my view, the teachers, the programs, the students, all working in concert via a common vision. A school is people, fundamentally. YCRS is healthy because of its people, and in moving to the NCE campus, the school can certainly retain the people who make it special and at the same time remove the frankly *unhealthy* and untenable economic situation its current site creates.

All best,
Angela, Reid's mom

From: Cindy

Dear Susan and Torrie,
I'm sending you a very brief summary of comments I received from 2nd grade parents yesterday regarding the possible move to NCE. It's by no means a complete sample but I think it may be representative of people's feelings. Thank you for considering them in today's meeting.

Number of people who commented 9

In favor 6

Against (0 -1)

--

Makes good sense to me. (1)

I just moved to live close to the school (1)

Leave it up to the teachers (2)

This could be a good way to get the rent reduced at our current location (2)

Let's be mindful about this (2)

Some discussion about nature and environment

I hope this is helpful. Thank you for all you do for this school and our children!

Sincerely,
Cindy

From: Mariana

Thanks to all for comments! Please make sure to copy me (or reply to the group) as I'm gathering community voice as a Charter Council member.

Also, feel free to write or call with questions about this. I know it is sudden and not many details have been provided so far. There are several driving forces, but the sum of it is the very large savings in rent we could get which would save our budget and our programs for the next few years right when the state is planning to reduce A LOT more. Virtually all California school districts are facing layoffs next year (I think I read 19,000 teachers statewide). Also, the tension with our current landlord grows by the day, and the situation is becoming extremely challenging. It will feel much better to pay rent to another struggling school district vs. a person from the Bay Area who has not shown any care or concern for us over the years other than when is he getting his check. There are many more pluses, and there are a lot of challenges to work through. If the current landlord was willing to work with us at all, we probably would not even be considering this. As it stands, we can help Nevada City, NC school district, and save ourselves much, much money.

There is always a chance that more information will come out at tomorrow's meeting. I'll keep you posted.

: -)
Mariana

From Mariana:

I spoke by phone with several families that expressed concerns over the move.

The biggest sentiment was shock at the suddenness of the information and the short time between the idea and the decision with no real time for community communication and problem solving.

Practical concerns:

- losing our beautiful, isolated natural setting and the close at hand nature trails

- losing our connection with the beautiful site after so many years of love and care there. We will miss it!
- the potential for families to want to join our school only because of location, without any concern for dedication to the Waldorf methods; a potential influx of kids who won't fit in well with the school's mission
- longer drives for some families, less beautiful and peaceful drives for many families
- parking, traffic, safety, can't leave sleeping babies in the car, and other "urban setting" concerns
- the potential of this solution stretching on for more than 3 years as California's budget problems don't seem to be easing any time soon, and the potential for loss of energy and enthusiasm for building our new school as it is transferred to improving the new rental.

After sharing some details about the motivation for the move, most families that had serious concerns seemed to soften and understand the need, even if they still disagreed. Many expressed hope that the new site potential could encourage our current landlord to be more flexible in terms of rent, or that there would be other ways our resilient and flexible community could improve upon our current campus.

Virtually everyone seems to remain very eager for our new site [i.e. our custom site on Rough and Ready] and wants to keep that momentum going.

Sincerely,
Mariana Nielsen

From: Alan

Hi All,

My two cents are these.....

The morning and afternoon drives from Rough and Ready will definitely be a lot more of a "schlep" (we've had it kind of easy here), and I will certainly miss our blissful and transcendent little Bitney Springs campus so much - what a fine and perfectly magical place for an elementary school. But the economics of moving are compelling and huge and seem to provide significant immediate benefits and even more benefits over the following few years. Hard not to consider that.

Eva, Janet and I used to live just across the street from NCE and we spent a fair amount of time on the playground there on weekends. We sometimes peered through the front doors into the hallway and I came to the opinion that NCE is just about the sweetest most classic little Norman Rockwell school I've ever seen. Not the same kind of charm as our present digs but definitely lots of a charm and conducive to a great atmosphere for our kids.

Put me down as a "Shucks, but OK" vote.

Regards to you all,
Alan

From: pam

Doug and I drove around the site this morning and were impressed. It has a lot more play yard space than we thought. Basketball hoops and everything. AND the auditorium - no more sitting out in the rain trying to watch performances! From our own personal standpoint, it will save us a whole hour of driving each day and tons of gas. I know it will mean further driving for some, but carpooling is what we've done all these years and is very do-able, and we always felt it was worth it being able to go to this school. Not only will many families save on gas, but saving people's jobs and important programs - that's huge in my opinion. That's my two cents.

From Carolyn

My oldest two went there, and I student taught there. Lots of play area and the children loved it. Walking distance to downtown and Pioneer Park. Re. parking it is no more difficult than YRCS is now, just walking over city sidewalks rather than through forest on a trail. I wonder how many gallons of gas will be saved by this move-- parents will save lots of money I'm betting. C.

From Dayna

How is the outside space? Having a boy in the 4th grade who loves to run and play football and basketball and looks forward to all the nature hikes he is not happy with the possibility of being on asphalt behind a chain linked fence. Everytime we drive past Mt. Saint Mary's school he comments on how he can't believe that is their play yard. This new site may be where he spends his last few years at Yuba River and he is not happy along with many other's. How's the parking? I guess we won't be walking our kids into class anymore. I think we should take our offer to the landload and tell him we want to pay \$100,000 dollars less a year and we expect him to fix our top 5 complaints and see what he says. I am not for moving if we can make a deal and stay at our current site.

My thoughts,
Dayna

From Nikiya

Dear First Grade Families,

You may have heard through the YRCS grapevine that there is consideration of the school

moving to downtown NC to the old NCElementary site. Apparently the Charter Council is voting on this tomorrow. i plan to go to this meeting and would love to know how people in our class feel about this...all we know is this:

- 1)Our school will save 1/4 mill\$ in the rent and this saved money could go toward faculty salary and specialty classes that were going to get cut and/or already have been cut.
 - 2)The upper grades will have proper heating in the winter months
 - 3) The majority of the school would have a shorter drive/less gas expenditure/more chances of popping in and helping out at school.
- and, ps, our current lease ends in june, our nce lease would be 3 years and then we'd move into new permanent school.....

please let me know how you feel and how this would affect your family. email is fine.

with care,
nikiya
