



# INLET VIEW ORCAS

January 6, 2019

Starr Marsett, President  
Deena Mitchell, Vice President  
Elisa Snelling, Treasurer  
Alisha Hilde, Clerk  
Mark Foster, Board Member  
Dave Donley, Board Member  
Andy Holleman, Board Member

Inlet View Elementary Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members were disappointed to learn that planning funds for improvements to our school were removed from the school district bond proposal for 2019 during a special board meeting on November 26, 2018. Members and school staff had been consistently coming to the meetings to testify only to have the agenda item delayed. While there may have been legally adequate public notice, we were unaware that official action had been taken until we were preparing to attend the scheduled December 3 meeting and realized it was not on the agenda.

While the PTA understands that construction funding may not be available for a few years, it is imperative to stop “kicking the can down the road” and start the planning process to ensure that we are ready when construction money becomes available.

The School Board and public were recently made aware that there is approximately \$12 million of existing bond money available that could be spent on high need projects, including mitigating earthquake damage. If, as it was noted at the same meeting, the earthquake repairs do not use the full balance available, we ask that the board consider using some of the remaining funds to start the planning process to modernize, repair, and make needed safety improvements to Inlet View Elementary.

If there are not funds available now, we request that planning funds be included in the 2020 bond proposal.

There has been much discussion about the scope of the project - from a major renewal/renovation (which was proposed in the 2015 Six-year CIP and has been successful in other older schools) to a new, expanded building (as proposed in the district's most recent Six-year CIP). To be clear, the PTA would welcome any project that makes the necessary improvements to our current school in its current location and relies on the facilities experts at the school district to recommend the best plan. However, this discussion underscores why approving **planning** funds quickly is so important.

To recap for the record some testimony you've already received supporting the need for improvements at Inlet View Elementary (IVE):

- IVE was next on the schedule for major renovation/renewal and included in the Six-year CIP for the 2016 bond, however the board halted the bond projects so that school population, capacity, and consolidation could be researched.
- Research showed that it would cost more to close IVE than to keep it open; also that IVE should not only remain open, it should be replaced with new, expanded facilities.
- IVE is one of the oldest schools in the district and the only one that has never had a significant renewal.
- IVE has safety deficiencies including lack of sprinklers and no line of sight between the front office and entry.
- Rodents.
- More than 550 work orders last year for repairs.
- The "temporary" out-buildings have been in place for more than 15 years.
- IVE is one of the only elementary schools in the district that does not have a separate cafeteria and gym, which limits the ability to have before/after school programs and additional sports for its students.
- IVE is not under capacity or over crowded, but it is fully utilized. The current population is 144% of capacity and all available space is used.
- IVE is a popular school that is supported by our community. Our traditional neighborhood school is the choice of many parents who request zone exemptions to bring their children here. This includes parents who attended IVE seeking a similar experience for their children and also families who moved from our neighborhood but found that their new school didn't meet their child's needs as well as IVE. Our previous and current Principals have chosen to respond to both these families' and our neighborhood families' needs by allowing in enough students to minimize mixed grade classes and maximize use of the facility.

Each time planning and improvement funds are delayed, it causes uncertainty for our community. The PTA is repeatedly contacted by neighborhood parents of preschool children wondering if they need to apply for the lottery due to rumors and speculation that IVE might be closing. District staff have consistently told the PTA that IVE is a priority - committing planning funds now will support these statements and provide needed assurance to families in our neighborhood that would prefer to attend their local school.

Inlet View has been getting by and maximizing efficiency for more than 60 years. With some planning and investment, it can keep doing that for 60 more.

Thank you for your continued attention to this matter and service to our community.