Synopsis and Factual Investigation*
of the
Measure 'S' Informational Meeting
May 25, 2016

http://hermosabeach.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=6&clip_id=4167

Attendees: HBCSD Superintendent: Pat Escalante
HBCSD Board President: Mary Campbell
Board member: Patti Ackerman
Board member: Maggie Bove-La Monica
Board member: Monique Eshan

NOTE: Pat Escalante does not have a Doctor of Education degree, nor did she have any superintendent experience. School board members Jack Burns, Patti Ackerman, Lisa Claypool, Carleen Beste and Ray Waters voted to hire Pat Escalante with a less than sterling resume in April 2012. Please also see Pat Escalante complete Discussion and Facts.

NOTE: This presentation was streamed live, videotaped and downloaded to the district's website under Measures S videos.

Part I: Student enrollment and operating expenses break-even point with the increased square footage of planned District facilities

1. **FACTUAL INACCURACY?:** (00:03:48) Slide: Current Operating Scenario. Utility cost/ Operating expenses shown on the slide are $765,000.

   COMPETING INFORMATION: At the Joint City Council/District meeting of May 31st at the 01:09:48 mark, School Board president Mary Campbell states that Operating Costs are 13% of General Fund Expenditures or $1,617,295.

2. **FACTUAL INACCURACY?:** Slide: Current Operation Scenario. Annual maintenance [at North School] paid by HBCSD $15,000/year. *"The school district is responsible for $15,000 in maintenance".*

   COMPETING INFORMATION: Pat Escalante and school board members claim that HBCSD pays $15,000/year in North School utilities and maintenance. According to an early copy of the lease agreement for Seasprites preschool, Seasprites was responsible for paying all utilities, maintenance and gardening costs at North School. Please see Seasprites lease agreement Article 4 Utilities and Article 5 Maintenance, Alterations and Repairs. (TL-Seasprite, Children's Journey lease) Seasprites changed their name to Children's Journey. Did the utilities and maintenance agreement change with the renamed Children's Journey's lease? Or is this claim, like so many statements the district has made untrue? It is unlikely that HBCSD suddenly decided to start paying North School utilities for Childrens' Journey who were, in fact, the same owners as the former Seasprites.

   Please see: https://www.mapquest.com/us/california/childrens-journey-learning-center-10879441
   "Soon to be renamed Children's Journey Learning Center, Seasprites is a preschool and infant/toddler day care center. The 2.2 acre site has an enrollment of 200 students. The director of Seasprites is Elaine Wikramatilk. A discount of 5 percent is offered to siblings of currently enrolled students."

Please also see Item #17 below: MISLEADING INFORMATION: (01:05:32) Pat Escalante: *"It is* [North School] *set up as a school from 1987, that's remained as 1987, with $15,000 year put into it to maintain it."*

CORRECT INFORMATION: The statement that HBCSD puts $15,000 year into maintaining North School is not verified by district documents. Monthly Purchase Orders over $500 show that in 2013 approximately $4K was spent to maintain North School. In 2012 and 2014 no funds were expended to maintain North School. In 2015 approximately $11K was spent to maintain North School. Please see information on North School maintenance expenditures. (TL-NS Maint costs)

3. **FACTUAL INACCURACY?:** (00:04:41) Slide: Future Operating Scenario. Total square footage of facilities (w/o modular facilities) shown on the slide is 111,784 sf. *"And then in the future when you add the square footage that is North School, is a, gives you, and you take away the modular space and then there's also some cost adjustments, um, essentially you don't pay for the modular space anymore,.."*

   OUR TAKEAWAY: The total square footage of the three HBCSD schools w/o modular classrooms was reported to be 111,784 sf. The average maintenance cost per sq foot was $7.94. Current Operating Scenario slide states total maintenance cost of $887,565 for three schools (Including the old North School which is reported to be 18,000 square feet in this meeting; this information does *not* use the projected larger rebuilt North School square footage) without temporary modular classrooms.

   NOTE: According to district documents, the new North School was to be 32,900 square feet. (TL-2015 NS proposed size) The current North School was reported by the district to be only 18,000 square feet. How much more maintenance cost would result from a rebuilt North School being doubled in size?

4. **WHAT?:** (00:05:00) *..."essentially you don't pay for the modular space anymore, um, that's about $15,000/year for 10 of them, and then you don't pay for utilities at North School* [$15,000/year], *but then you also lose about $230,000/year of revenue, but when you compute it altogether and you look at maintenance as a cost per square footage, it's really about, believe it or not, a whole new school is about $320,000 additional annual operating cost."*

   COMPETING INFORMATION: The old North School square footage is reported as 18,000 square feet and the maintenance/operating costs is $7.94 per square foot: 18,000 sq ft X 7.94/sq ft = $142,920. $142,920 should be the current North School operating costs. (The supposedly $142,920 operating costs for North School has not been verified by district documents.) The same slide states that the maintenance and operating costs at North School are currently only $15,000/year.

   COMPETING INFORMATION: According to the Seasprites/Children's Journey lease agreement, HBCSD does NOT pay North School maintenance costs; the lessee pays for maintenance, operating costs and gardening costs at North School. However, HBCSD would gain a savings of $15,600/year from the lease of 10 temporary modular classrooms that would no longer be necessary, but also lose $230,000/year lease income at North School. **Therefore, HBCSD would have a net loss of approximately $215,000/year in income if North School is used to replace the 10 portable temporary modular classrooms at Valley and View schools.**

   NOTE: HBCSD evicted Children's Journey from North School in August 2017. From August 2017 to August 2022 HBCSD has *lost approximately* $1,150,000.00 in lease income that was traditionally used to offset district expenses.

NOTE: Each of the ten portable temporary classrooms would hold approximately 24 students. 10 X 24 students = 240 students. Since 2014, HBCSD enrollment had declined by 270 students – therefore there is no more need for the ten portable temporary classrooms. Without using North School for HBCSD students, the district can still save $15,600/year on the lease of ten portable classrooms. Unfortunately, since reopening North School, HBCSD has also foregone $230,000/year in lease income by not renting out the campus.

NOTE: Apparently, Children's Journey (aka Seasprites) was well used by many Hermosa Beach families for afterschool care and baby/toddler care.

NOTE: At June 2022 Hermosa school population was 1,176 students. HBCSD also enrolled 63 students from other school districts using interdistrict permits to increase total district enrollment to 1,239 students. (DI-5 HBCSD Enrollment Rpts 2008-2022) Those additional 63 students create additional traffic and pollution by requiring more car trips in and out of Hermosa Beach two times a day to pick up and drop off the interdistrict students. Poaching students from other school districts also acts to negatively reduce the total funding those districts receive.

5. **WHAT?:** (00:05:00) HBCSD pays $15,600/year to lease 10 temporary modular classrooms?

CORRECT AMOUNT: HBCSD spent at least $1 million to purchase and install nine temporary modular classrooms between Valley and View schools from 2012-2016. (JM-10a HBCSD Temp Facilities Cost) **According to this presentation, HBCSD also pays $15,600/year to lease those same modular classrooms.** ($15,600/year from 2014 to 2021 = $109,200.) The nine temporary classrooms did *NOTHING* to reduce crowding at Valley or View schools. HBCSD has always been able to use North School as is (grandfathered-in campus) or the Pier Avenue Community Center (provisions of Article 4 of the MOU attached to Exhibit G) to house students. **Renovating either North School or the Pier Avenue School Community Center for students would have made lasting improvements to community assets versus throwing taxpayer money away on the cost of *temporary* modular classrooms that do nothing to reduce overcrowding on Valley and View campuses.**

6. **FACTUAL INACCURACY:** (00:09:55) Pat Escalante: *"... if you take that $320,000 a year cost* [future operating cost] *and divide it by $7,500 which is what we get per pupil, we would need to enroll **forty three students. That's where we would be able to become cost neutral** if that alone was the only thing we did. So we feel very, very confident that, that will not be an issue."*

COMPETING INFORMATION: According to this presentation the total amount HBCSD gets per student is $7,500. The $7,500 from each student also goes toward paying for teachers, books, supplies, administration, etc.; not just to pay for operating costs. Therefore, it makes no sense for Pat Escalante to state that HBCSD could allocate the entire $7,500/student for 43 students against the operating cost for North School to break even.

According to Mary Campbell's presentation at the May 31, 2016 joint city and school district meeting, HBCSD operating cost are 13% of revenues. Therefore only 13% of $7,500 could be allocated toward North School's operating costs. Thirteen percent of $7,500 is $975. Pat Escalante states that the operating costs for another campus would be $320,000. $320,000 divided by $975 = 328 students. **HBCSD would need to enroll 328 *MORE* students in order to pay for another campus operating expenses, *NOT* 43 students**. At the same time, HBCSD would lose approximately $215,000/year in lease income by not leasing out North School

NOTE: From September 2016 to June 2022, HBCSD enrollment has *declined* from 1,378 students to 1,239 students.

NOTE: HBCSD also greatly expanded the student capacity at View School. As of 2022, HBCSD has approximately 729 seats of additional or UNUSED/underused student capacity or about 30 unused or underused classrooms.

NOTE: Taxpayers paid $29 million to demolish and rebuild North School and $30 million to expand View School. The $59 million dollars spent by HBCSD will cost taxpayers approximately $98 million dollars including interest over 40 years. There is no indication that enrollment will increase in the future. (HBCSD 2019 enrollment projections)

Part II: Presentation by Superintendent, Pat Escalante of the Historical Resources Assessment Report of North School Campus prepared by Daly & Associates:

NOTE: Throughout this section it is clear that Pat Escalante is trying to minimize or completely discredit the contributions made by renowned architect, Samuel Lunden in the reconstruction of North School because the District wishes to demolish the historically significant buildings there.

7. **MISINFORMATION:** (00:30:44) Pat Escalante: *"And so in 1934 the rebuilding of North was from Marshall, Smith and Powell architects."*

   CORRECT INFORMATION: According to the Department of State Architects (DSA) application 382, the reconstruction of North School in 1934, was the work of Samuel E. Lunden. (TL-1934Jun31 DSA A-382 NS) Samuel E. Lunden was a very important and well-known architect in Southern California. He was educated at Cal Tech and MIT. He designed both the Los Angeles [Pacific Coast] Stock Exchange [1929] and the USC Doheny Library [1933] among many other notable buildings. He was president of the American Institute of Architecture in 1965. He lived in Manhattan Beach in 1934 and was instrumental in bringing the newly planned highway (Pacific Coast Highway) close to the beach cities.[1] (TL-Samuel Lunden architect)

   NOTE: Apparently, Superintendent Pat Escalante had gone into the HBCSD archives to view district historical information prior to the North School historic assessment by Pam Daly and prior to this meeting. She should have been well aware that Samuel Lunden's name was on all the blueprints for the main North School building, not Marshall, Smith and Powell.

8. **MISINFORMATION:** (00:32:19) Pat Escalante: *"There was no architectural work done in terms of design from Samuel Lunden at North School."*

   CORRECT INFORMATION: Samuel Lunden submitted 6 sheets of architectural drawings (TL-1934 Six pages blueprints for NS) and 61 pages of specification (TL-1934 Lunden's 61 pages of specs for NS) for the reconstruction of the four classroom main building at North School, DSA application 382.[2] On page D-14 of his specifications under the heading Miscellaneous, Samuel Lunden specifies the placement and size of the lettering over the North School front and personally oversees the creating of the decorative inset into the front of the building.[3] The look of the reconstructed building is substantially different from the look of the pre-reconstructed North School. (TL-1924 Original NS photo)

9. **MISINFORMATION/MISSTATEMENT:** (00:33:00) Pat Escalante: *"The earthquake occurred and Richard King's focus was on the building to get funds from the State of California through an application called the School Building Act…"*

   CORRECT INFORMATION: The School Building Act refers to Chapter 59 of the Education Code in 1933 which is more commonly known as the **Field Act**.[4] The Field Act was passed one month after the March 10, 1933 Long Beach Earthquake and required all public schools to be built to stringent earthquake safe structural specifications. The Field Act (aka School Building Act) was NOT an application to get funds from the State of California. (TL-1933Apr10 Field Act), (TL-1934 Green Bill for A-382 NS), (1934-Jun31 DSA A-382 NS)

10. **MISINFORMATION:** (00:33:30) Pat Escalante: *"And then these classrooms were built by, um, David, Marsh and Powell. The other two properties: the kindergarten building and the classroom building were built by another architect."*

    CORRECT INFORMATION: DSA application 382, dated 1934 for reconstruction of the main building (four classrooms) at North School shows the architect was Samuel D. Lunden. DSA Building Application #2698, dated 1938 for a kindergarten building and DSA Application #2820, dated 1939 for additional classrooms at North School shows the architects were Marsh, Smith and Powell.[5]

    NOTE: Correct information on the architects for the three oldest buildings at North School could have been easily obtained by one phone call or email to the Division of State Architects. There is no excuse for this misinformation.

11. **FABRICATION:** (00:35:03) Pat Escalante: *"I have heard,* (from whom?) *and I don't know, but that, that Samuel Lunden was the original architect for the Pier Avenue School when it was built in 1911 and that was the reason why the district brought him back to rehabilitate Pier Avenue School, um, after the earthquake."*

    CORRECT INFORMATION: Samuel Lunden was born in 1897, he would have been 13 years old in 1911. Richard D. King was the original architect for both the original Pier Avenue School building built in 1911 and the original school building at North School that was built in 1924. Both Richard D. Kings buildings were designed in the Classic Revival style and both were destroyed by the 1933 Long Beach earthquake.

    COMPETING INFORMATION: It is believed that the reason Samuel Lunden was chosen to reconstruct North School, South School and Pier Avenue School after the 1933 earthquake was because he lived in Manhattan Beach and had just finished building the USC Doheny Memorial Library. The Doheny Family owned a summer house (2408 The Strand) just blocks from North School. It is believed that Carrie Estelle Doheny had personally asked Samuel Lunden to rebuild and redesign Hermosa's schools after the earthquake.

12. **DISTORTION?** 00:36:00: Pat Escalante: *"Um, I would say that I also read in the minutes that, good job by the parents who built out some of the classrooms. Um, I don't know if they pulled permits, but, um those were the days when you could do those kinds of things."*

    CORRECT INFORMATION: With the passage of the Field Act on April 11, 1933 it became a felony to build public school buildings that do not confirm to Field Act specifications. The adoption of Field Act standards in 1933 also required Districts use structural engineers when designing schools and created

the Division of State Architects (DSA) to oversee the process. After April 1933 it would have been a felony for HBCSD to allow parents to "build out classrooms" without DSA oversight.

13. **DALY & ASSOCIATES (For HBCSD) OPINION:** (00:38:46) Pat Escalante: ..."[per Daly & Associates, Historical Assessment, May 2016] *in summation the main building of the North School 1924 to 1935, the 1939 classroom, kindergarten and classroom building and the 1958 kindergarten classroom buildings do not appear to meet the criteria for being determined significant resources individually or collectively on a Statewide or National level and therefore ineligible for listing in the National Register or California Register; do not qualify as historic properties or historical resources."*

    COMPETING INFORMATION: Debi Howell-Ardilla is the senior architectural historian with SWCA Environmental Consultants and vice-chair of the Cultural Heritage Commission in South Pasadena. She has a bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and Masters of Historic Preservation from USC. Ms. Howell-Ardilla was the project manager on a 350 page survey of Los Angeles Unified School District entitled Los Angeles Unified School District, Historical Resources Survey Report, June 2014. In an email dated May 31, 2016, Ms. Howell-Ardilla states:

    "In my opinion and based on the dozens of schools I've surveyed throughout SoCal, North Elementary appears eligible for the City of Hermosa Beach Register under local Criteria A (It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political aesthetic, engineering or architectural history.) [Criteria] C (It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction.), [Criteria] D (It is representative of the notable work of a builder, designer or architect; in this case architects Samuel E. Lunden and Marsh, Smith and Powell.). In terms of the California Register, it appears eligible under Criteria 1 as a highly representative example of 1930's school as well as Criteria 3, as an outstanding example of a WPA-era Art Deco institutional building." "School design is an area of specialty for me."

Part III: Question and answer information for HBCSD Bond Measure S regarding District Facilities led by Superintendent Pat Escalante with assistance from School Board President Mary Campbell:

14. **Question from an audience member:** (01:04:37) "Can you give some highlights as to what the Ed Code is and why North School specifically does not meet Ed Code?

    FALSIFICATION: (01:04:37) Pat Escalante: *"The very first thing that comes into my head and is the most critical is there is no ADA access. So if your disabled you can't get in that campus unless you come in, um, even if you come in the back way, they can only access one, in one of the buildings, so that's critically important component."*

    CORRECT INFORMATION: North School has ADA access to each building it also has three handicap parking spaces and one handicap accessible toilet. It is illegal for North School NOT to be ADA accessible. According to the 2014 Facilities Master Plan all District schools require additional ADA upgrades. The need for additional ADA upgrades is not a reason to tear down the entire campus for $29M. (TL-NS ADA)

15. **MISINFORMATION/DISTRORTION:** (01:04:40) Pat Escalante: *"Um, the other is that the, um, the um, the building has been modified. So whenever there is any modification to an original structure, the State has to come out to do an investigation, and they have to, um, the district is responsible for bringing it up to code."*

COMPETING INFORMATION: North School is grandfathered-in as a public school. Grandfathered-in means that it is considered code compliant as is. The CDE does not require that school districts bring all existing schools up to relatively new (1993) Title 5 standards. Title 5 standards only apply to new construction.

COMPETING INFORMATION: The Division of State Architects oversees the **structural** safety for all public school building projects over $42,218.00.* The Field Act passed in April 1933 made it a felony to build public schools without the approval of the Division of State Architects and without the use of licensed architects and structural engineers. North School was reconstructed in 1934 by renowned architect Sameul Lunden to stringent Field Act specifications. (TL-1934Jul27 NS Field Act approval). All building modifications at North School have been overseen by the Division of State Architects. (TL-1934-2001 DSA F19-45 list)

* **NOTE:** The threshold for DSA review of public school *structural* projects increased from $42,218 to $100,000 in 2016. The threshold for DSA review of public school *nonstructural* projects also was increased from $168,187 to $225,000 in 2016. (TL-2016Jun27 New DSA project thresholds), (TL-DSA IRA-22)

HBCSD could have made up to $225,000 in non-structural improvements and $100,000 in structural changes at North School without using an architect and engineer before triggering a DSA review period. The elimination of the DSA review period would allow the district to use North School immediately for students rather than wait for a months-long review period.

NOTE: The HBCSD had approximately $2 million in reserves (savings) over and above the CDE 3% requirement for district savings. HBCSD also spent approximately $1.14 million dollars on short term portable classrooms from 2013 to 2016. Therefore, HBCSD had a total of approximately $3M that could have been spent renovating North School or the Community Center for district use *before* passing a $59M bond to demolish and rebuild North School for $29M.

The expenditure of some of the district reserves on either North School or the Community Center could have immediately eliminated the overcrowding problems at Valley and View Schools. Any expenditure to improve either North School or the Community would be a lasting improvement on a community asset versus "throwing away" $1.14M on temporary overcrowding solutions. Did school board members withholding $2 million of district funds from being spent on student needs and facility improvements act to pressure the community and panic parents into voting for a $59M bond?

16. **MISINFORMATION:** (01:05:32) Pat Escalante: *"There's not a cafeteria, there's not a library, there's not a, um, it's not set up as a functioning school."*

CORRECT INFORMATION: There is a kitchen with a serving bay and tray return at North School. There is an indoor eating area adjacent to the kitchen. Please see the floor plan of North School and photos of the kitchen. (TL-NS floor plan), (TL-NS kitchen)

The absence of a formal library would not prevent the district from using North School as is for students. The District's other school for K through 3rd students, View School, did not have a dedicated library building either. Any existing room at North School can be set up as a library or a separate library can be built.

17. **MISLEADING INFORMATION:** (01:05:32) Pat Escalante – HBCSD Superintendent 2012-2020: *"It is set up as a school from 1987, that's remained as 1987, with $15,000 year put into it to maintain it."*

    COMPETING INFORMATION: There is no problem with a school set up as a school from 1987. Plenty of schools in California were built before 1987. How is this an issue? It is very likely that North School would just be used temporarily as all indications were that HBCSD enrollment was in decline from it's high in 2014.

    CORRECT INFORMATION: The statement that HBCSD puts $15,000 year into maintaining North School is not verified by district documents. Monthly Purchase Orders over $500 show that in 2013 approximately $4K was spent to maintain North School. In 2012 and 2014 no funds were expended to maintain North School. In 2015 approximately $11K was spent to maintain North School. Please see information on North School maintenance expenditures. (TL-NS Maint costs)

18. **INCORRECT INFORMATION:** (01:05:47) Pat Escalante: *"And so, um, you cannot put students back into that school. Um, pub...* [public school students].

    MISSTATEMENT: (01:05:49) Mary Campbell: *"... public school students. You can put children there in a private, private business."*

    (01:05:50) Pat Escalante: *"Yes. Thank you. Thank you for reinforcing that..."*

    CORRECT INFORMATION: North School is grandfathered-in as a public school. It has always been used as a school even if it is leased out to a private business. Therefore, North School is still CDE code compliant and can indeed be used as-is for students.

    Both Hermosa View School AND Robinson School in Manhattan Beach were leased out to private school organizations before they were renovated in early 1990 and early 2000s, respectively, for students.

    NOTE: School board members Pattie Ackerman, Mary Campbell, Maggie Bove-LaMonica and Monique Ehsan (former member of the Facilities Planning and Advisory Committee) all stood by as Superintendent Pat Escalante gave misinformation to the community. None of the school board members corrected her statements. Had school board members even verified the district's facility facts before they put a $59 million dollar bond on the ballot in June 2016?

*The investigation of this meeting was not completed due to time constraints.

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[1] Oral history transcript from Personal service to the client, 1987: Samuel Lunden interviewed by Maggie Valentine, UCLA Oral History Program pp 105 – 107 and 173 -175. See attachment.

[2] See attached copies of blueprints for the four classroom main building at North School.
[3] See attachment.
[4] Field Act: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Field Act See attachment.
[5] CA Department of State Architects Building Applications #2698 and #2820. See attached copies.