



# The Alpine High School Citizens Committee

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## Union-Tribune Editorial Response

**Date:** February 23, 2009

**Re:** February 21, 2009 editorial... *Where to build an East County high school?*

**To:** San Diego Union-Tribune Editorial Board

The Alpine High School Citizens Committee (AHSCC) applauds the February 21, 2009 editorial (*Where to build an East County high school?*) for setting forth a succinct assessment of the three sites for a new high school in the Alpine/Blossom Valley area. While the AHSCC has taken a neutral position on which site should be selected, we completely agree with the UT that our community has “waited much too long for a school of their own” and that the District now needs to move forward to select a site and satisfy the mandate for a new school as set forth in Proposition U. We also agree that the EIR process for all three sites fails to recognize the substantial environmental and safety benefits for our local high school students and their parents who would no longer have to make 30-40 mile round trip commutes to Granite Hills or Steele Canyon high schools. This is one huge carbon footprint East County can do without.

AHSCC has but one quibble with the editorial. In addressing the questionable EIR issue of a school sports stadium creating “noise and light” impacts, it states that you doubt an 800 student school “could field a proper football team, let alone have designs on a ‘stadium’.” Please keep in mind that the 800 student size school referred to in the ballot text of Prop U was inserted based upon an erroneous demographic study that looked only at the number of students attending Grossmont high schools who live in the 91901 area code. This study overlooked the many students who live in other Alpine area zip code locations such as Harbison Canyon and omitted *all* of Blossom Valley, despite the fact that Prop U specifically refers to an *Alpine/Blossom Valley* area school.

Around 750 students attend Alpine’s three grade middle school which means there are roughly 1000 Alpine students in the four high school grades. Additionally, we estimate at least 400 students from Los Coches Creek middle school, just 3 miles away in Blossom Valley, would also attend. In fact, Los Coches Creek MS is literally just a few hundred feet from Chocolate Summit, one of the three high school sites! The new school would therefore need to house at least 1200 - 1400 local students on day one, plus many kids from Pine Valley and other back country locales who would love to attend our school.

AHSCC has pointed out this absurd underestimation of our school size to the District staff and Superintendent Collins and made it very clear that installing portable facilities at a brand new school, to accommodate all students, is not an acceptable option. We need and deserve a properly sized school for the Alpine and Blossom Valley area and when we get one we will indeed field a “proper football team”.

Sal Casamassima,

Alpine