



Petitions for District

1 message

Laurie Pirini <lauriepirini@gmail.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Thu, Jun 27, 2019 at 5:58 PM

Good evening Brad, Alissa, Brooks & Megan:

Thank you for your time and service.

Please consider the following:

Yes, to Miller Creek Elementary School District

- a) Supported by our Mayor, Gary Phillips (Page 45 in the petition scan)
- b) All 3 schools funnel to MCMS -- bringing unity of all our children

I'll quote Norm Levin from the IJ -

"If the purpose of this re-branding is to begin the community healing process, the new name should be readily identifiable and embraceable, as well as inclusive, local, lasting and inspirational," he said in the written testimony. "Miller Creek" does that more than any other name brought before the committee.

"Miller Creek doesn't 'honor' James Miller," Levin wrote. "It honors and reflects our local watershed, our history, our pride in our middle school and mostly, the community. It is us."

I respectfully ask you to please vote no on the 3 other names Creekside, Laurel Creek and Kenne. They do not represent our history, our area and if needs an explanation of spelling and pronunciation, probably not a great fit for elementary aged children.

If you decide you're not fond of any of the above, please do not feel pressured to choose.

Remember, there is a reason Palo Alto's process was 12 - 18months. They had town hall meetings (involved the community), plus committees, etc. They have a tried and true process.

Even our naming committee (on ND) was trying to defend their choices with the fact they had too little time to do this. Please do not rush this.

<https://www.pausd.org/committees/renaming-schools-advisory-committee-rsac>

As always I appreciate your time and service to our children and our community.

Wish you well,
Laurie Pirini



Miller Creek

1 message

Kurt Rossetti <kurtrossetti@gmail.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 10:04 AM

I support Miller Creek as the new name. It is the only viable option still on the table. It was even supported by the Change the Name movement previously...

-Kurt Rossetti
(parent of two current Vallecito students)



In Support of Miller Creek Elementary School District

1 message

Ken Drisdell <k.drisdell@gmail.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 10:39 AM

Dear Sirs:

I fully support the new name for the Dixie School District to be:

Miller Creek Elementary School District

Rationale:

- the names "Laurel Creek" and "Creek Side" are basically the same rationale of the wholesome gifts a generic creek can bring to children - - BUT **neither give a sense of place** - these names could fit a school district in any county in California, and many around the country.

- Kenne shows respect to heritage, but is awkward as it is not obvious how to even pronounce it. As well, it does not give a sense of place unless you are told its history. Even then, it is respecting the heritage of a region, but NOT A PLACE.

- MILLER CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT provides the positives of both Laurel Creek and Creekside, BUT ADDS A SENSE OF PLACE - of where it is on the map and that it actually flows near the schools it serves. Instead of a generic creek that gives vitality to children, why not stand up and honor the NAME of that creek!

Thank you for your consideration!

Ken Drisdell,
6 Mt. McKinley Rd, San Rafael, CA

My two boys went to Dixie and Terra Linda.



Community petition

1 message

Julie Rhinard <jrhinard2@hotmail.com>

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 1:04 PM

To: "millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org" <millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Hello,

I am writing to express my dismay at another name being brought up in a petition to change the name of the school district.

It is entirely inappropriate for the Board to even consider another district name at this point in the process. Whoever suggested the name Miller Creek Elementary School District has submitted the name way, way too late in this whole process.

This name should not even be considered and will be too confusing when talking about the middle school and the district.

Respectfully,

Julie Rhinard
Parent of current Dixie School students



Miller Creek should be the new name for Dixie

1 message

Golbus, Aaron (PRT) <aaron.golbus@sfport.com>

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 2:16 PM

To: "millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org" <millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Miller Creek should be the new name for Dixie School District.

Thank you,

Aaron Golbus



Dixie District name change

1 message

Christy Webster <cfweb@comcast.net>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 3:27 PM

I am in favor of the district name being changed to Miller Creek School District.

-Christy Webster

Sent from my iPhone



Miller Creek

1 message

Judy <paperdolljw@yahoo.com>

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 3:44 PM

To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Since Miller was a confederate and the one who named the School District Dixie, it seems very ironic that people would want to include his name in the new name for the district. Won't those same people who wanted to change the Dixie name be a offended by the name Miller? Seems very odd. But changing the Dixie name is also very strange.

Sent from my iPhone



like the name but is Miller Creek Middle school included?

1 message

Maia McGehee <maia@econ101.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 3:45 PM

If so, change the name to Miller Creek School District, as Elementary includes a middle school

We live on 19 Maple Hill Drive

Maia and Paul Gusciora

--
-

Maia McGehee, Principal



Hermes
ECONOMETRICS

1615 Hill Road, Suite 21
Novato, California 94947
415.454.4184 | 800.488.1781

Principal address: 1615 Hill Rd, Suite 21, Novato, CA 94947. Phone: (415) 454-4184. www.econ101.com
www.econ101.com

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School District Name

1 message

Blair Ogden <mbogden33@yahoo.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 3:56 PM

Miller Creek is the predominant water flow through the valley. I've lived here for over 40 years and have never heard any discriminatory or threatening remarks in relation to the name.

It certainly fits our locale and seems ideal.

I vote for it_____MB Ogden



Name Change

1 message

SPacificMrmd <SPacificMrmd@aol.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 4:26 PM

Please add my name in support of Miller Creek School District as the future name for the Dixie School District.

Anne-Marie Paras

(Mother of two children who attended all their school years within the district: Dixie Elementary School, Miller Creek Middle School and Terra Linda High School).

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S7, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone



THIS IS THE BEST NAME

1 message

Judi Schellenberg <judi@lucasvalley.net>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 7:43 PM

We feel this best represents our school district. The other three names have no meaning, especially the last one which NO ONE CAN PRONOUNCE!

We feel you will have the best overall district support from everyone: grandparents, parents, alumni, and students.

We urge you to go with this name.

Bob and Judi Schellenberg
1212 Idylberry Road
San Rafael, CA 94903



NAME THAT SCHOOL DISTRICT

1 message

larry m. rich <lmrdkr@gmail.com>

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 8:57 PM

To: "millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org" <millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Miller Creek is the only name that makes sense. It would be a smooth transition because people are familiar with it and there is a Miller Creek running through the district. The other three names make no sense to us and we've lived within the district for over 50 years.

Larry and Diane Rich



Renaming Dixie School

1 message

Marjorie Hoversten <hoverstn@lvha.net>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Jun 28, 2019 at 9:53 PM

I prefer this over the three names proposed by the committee. It is specific to and meaningful for our community.

Marjorie Hoversten
77 Mt. Rainier Drive

Sent from my iPad



The best new name for the school district

1 message

Carol Sheerin <ladycarols@sbcglobal.net>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Sat, Jun 29, 2019 at 12:13 AM

Miller Creek Elementary School District

The 3 names submitted by the Committee have no connection whatsoever to our community. Miller Creek Elementary School District takes in our neighborhoods and a local geographical feature.

I personally think the committee let us down by not following its own criteria and not selecting choices that actually reflect our unique neighborhoods and community. Their selections were all 'generic' and could be used most anywhere in the state or most of the US.

If this name was dismissed because of the link to Miller's name, then the committee members opposing it should probably make their next campaign 'the changing of the name of Miller Creek and Miller Creek Road' before moving on to 'the changing of the names of Washington State and Washington DC because George Washington owned slaves!'

The Marin IJ article said it best:

Levin said he was not looking at that historic reference, but rather the fact that **the district is within the Miller Creek watershed and that three of four district schools are touched by Miller Creek.**

"If the purpose of this re-branding is to begin the community healing process, **the new name should be readily identifiable and embraceable, as well as inclusive, local, lasting and inspirational,**" he said in the written testimony. **"Miller Creek' does that more than any other name brought before the committee.**

"Miller Creek doesn't 'honor' James Miller," Levin wrote. "It honors and reflects our local watershed, our history, our pride in our middle school and mostly, the community. It is us."

Carol Sheerin, resident of Dixie School District for 51 years and parent of two former Dixie School District students

483 Cedar Hill Drive
San Rafael CA 94903
415-479-1418



Comment on community petition (Miller Creek Elementary)

1 message

Mark Brady <mark@baybrady.org>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Sat, Jun 29, 2019 at 10:19 AM

This is the obvious choice.
Please select this name and move on.

Mark Brady



Yes!

1 message

Theresa Brady <theresa@baybrady.org>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Sat, Jun 29, 2019 at 10:40 AM

Miller Creek Elementary School District is the obvious choice! It most clearly represents our entire community because all our children ultimately matriculate to Miller Creek Middle School.

Thank you,
Theresa Brady

In support of Miller Creek

1 message

Norm Levin <norm@naturalportraits.co>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Sat, Jun 29, 2019 at 3:37 PM

Dear Dixie School District Trustee

I had the privilege to be selected as one of the eleven members of the Naming Advisory Committee. I volunteered my time as I felt that my 30 years in marketing communications could lend a touch of professionalism to this emotionally charged process. I also strongly felt that the community needed to find a path towards healing after the contentious conflicts that arouse these past many months. Having lived in Terra Linda for 28 years and putting three daughters through Vallecito and Miller Creek, I further believed my voice would be considered.

To some extent that was true. In others, not as much as I had hoped. To be clear, the committee tackled a most difficult task, reviewing, rating and culling a list of 89 unique names submitted by the community, down to the final three before you: Creekside, Laurel Creek and Kenne. We knew and acknowledged from the beginning that no name would make everyone happy; and that any name we recommended would likely upset someone. To that end, we were omniscient.

When the semifinal list of seven names was announced to the community, there was a response that ranged from "Not very inspiring" to "Are you kidding?" Some the names were indeed worthy of mockery, others simply too generic. Some generated altogether new controversies. Our ranking process, one that I devised, to score each vetted name on a 1-5 scale on how well it met each of your four criteria (Local, Lasting, Inclusive and Inspiring). Each member's scores were tallied to come up with a total score that reflected our cumulative judgement. As the committee was fairly selected to be a reasonable cross representation of the community, the final result was a group decision. Those seven names were then opened up to the petition process where the public could come in to "vote" for their favorites. Alas, none seemed to capture the imagination of our community, as evidenced by the relatively sparse turnout on the two days designated for community members to review and sign the petitions. The most approved was "Creekside" with some 70 signatures.

Concurrently two individuals took it upon themselves to create their own petitions for a name that did not make our recommended short list: Miller Creek. Within a few days, the petition authors gathered 150 names, and 50 more have since been easily obtained. When those petitions were presented at our last committee meeting, we discussed (again) why Miller Creek should or should not be on our recommended list. While eight members felt it should not for reasons having to do with some of the alleged indiscretions of James Miller himself, three of us disagreed at the time. I contend that the name Miller Creek isn't about him, it's about the geographic waterway that connects three of our four schools and the long-standing name of our flagship middle school. More on that later.

As I said, my opinion on a new name or *brand* for the district is informed by my professional experience in the field. Here's how I personally evaluated each of the three final names before you. Keep in mind, too, that there will be a *graphic design element* and representation of whichever name you settle on.

- **Creekside**: Not particularly local to Marin, as a quick internet search revealed Creekside is the name of elementary and middle schools in Stockton, Castro Valley, and San Jose. Strangely, it was also registered as a name by the Marin County Board of Education from 1980-1989 with an address on 1405 Lucas Valley Road, although there's no buildings there. It is also widely used as a school name in Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, New York, North Carolina, South Dakota. I'm sure there's many more. It's truly one of the most *generic* place names in the country. There are uncounted commercial operations with that name, including Creekside apartments in Larkspur. Does the ubiquitousness of this name add or detract from its ability to *inspire*?

- **Laurel Creek**: Truth be told, I submitted this one (as a dare!) Partly I was looking for a more localized creek name and one that was descriptive of the dominant tree that grows along its banks. Plus it's my oldest daughters name! How it survived many committee votes to the final three baffles me. I think the committee simply couldn't find enough fault with it. That's not really a good enough reason to rebrand the district using it.

- **Kenne**: Truly the oddest choice of the group a it doesn't really meet any of the four criteria in my opinion, mainly because no one knows what it means or even *how to pronounce it*. As a brand for our school district, it has little resonance. At first I thought of Kenny the other builder who constructed even more homes than Eichler. I own one of those traditional tract homes in Terra Linda. Its

proponents wanted to make a nod to the Miwok as it means "one" in that extinct language. Still, *one what?* The district represents a plethora of races and ethnicities, three distinct neighborhoods, and two separated valleys. A name that few can grasp doesn't make a strong brand, let alone become lasting. I can visualize even five years from now staff members having to spell and pronounce the name to callers. Teachers will have to do the same when handing out their business cards. The only other common usage of Kenne is a style of cheese made by Cowgirl Creamery in Pt. Reyes Station. Yes, cheese. Pretty inspirational, right? This one should never have gotten on the tracks. Surely, there are better ways to remember and honor our land's former residents.

The main reason for a new name was to supplant Dixie. Obviously "Mary Dixie" was rejected by the committee. If the purpose of this rebranding is to begin the community healing process, the new name should be readily identifiable and embraceable, as well as inclusive, local, lasting and inspirational. "Miller Creek" does that more than any other name brought before the committee. And it's clearly the most popular name as seen by the results of the dot charts at the school events and number of petition signees. More are being collected now. Miller Creek doesn't further "honor" James Miller. It honors and reflects our local watershed, our history, our pride in our middle school and mostly the community. It is us.

The Miller Creek's Educational Significance

Here's some more validation for Miller Creek that provides more affirmation. The following information was found on four websites: The Marin Watershed Program, Historical Ecology of Miller Creek, and Miller Creek Watershed Stewards, and Save Marinwood-Lucas Valley.

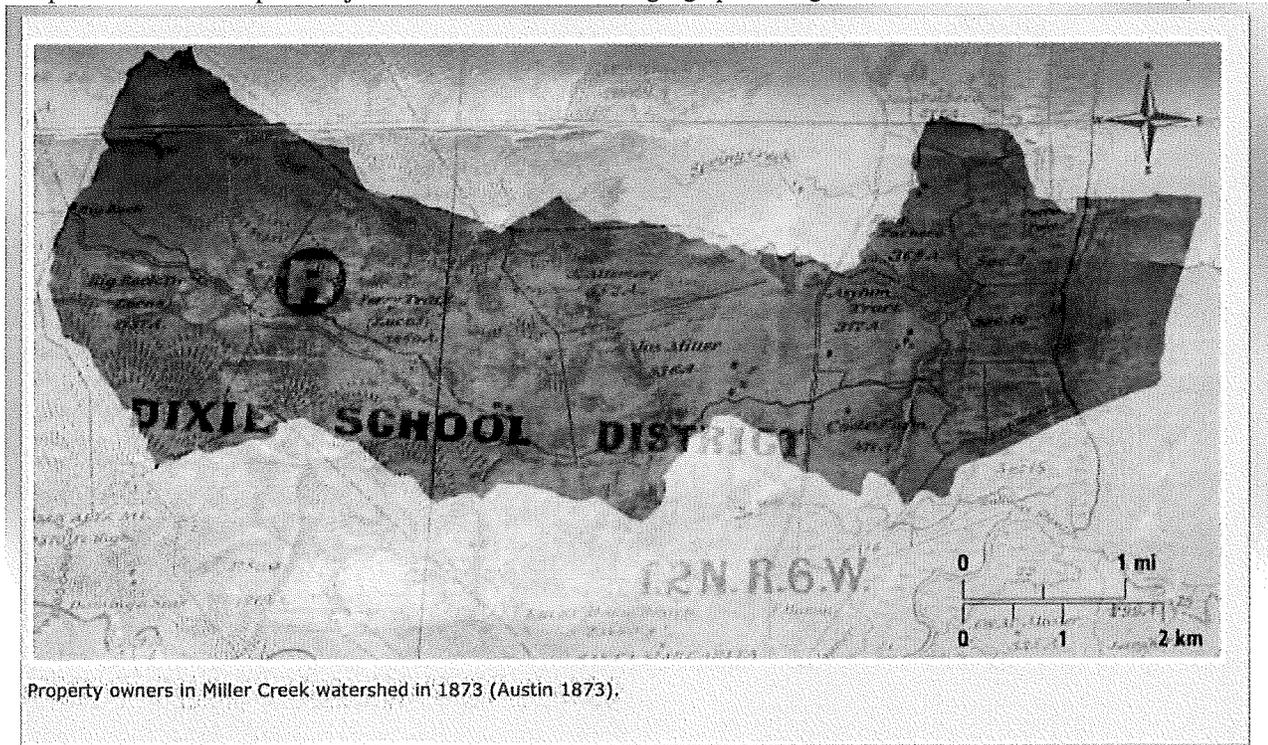
The last site is of particular importance to the rebranding as it documents how a 2nd grade teacher, Debra DiBenedetto, at Dixie Elementary School has applied grant money from the Miller Creek Watershed Stewards and local wildlife and conservation groups to conduct creek restoration and the Dixie Outdoor Classroom. I urge you to reacquire yourselves with this program and see if it can be extended to all the schools in the district. Of course, the new name would be most apt and inspirational: Miller Creek Outdoor Classroom.



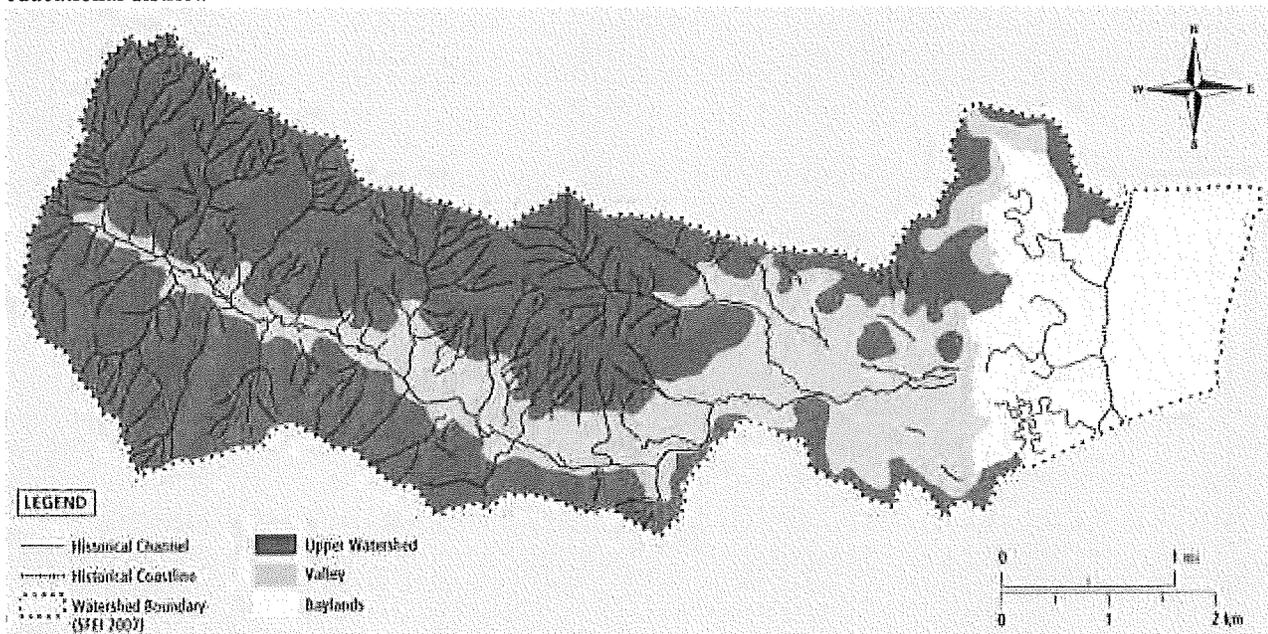
Anecdotally, I recall that when my daughters attended the middle school, different teachers would take their class outside for a more vivid teaching experience. Mr. Arigi, the well-liked science teacher would point out the various creatures that made Miller Creek their home. This was in addition to those critters found themselves for a time in terrariums in his classrooms. The art teacher used the creek for nature drawing lessons. Another teacher (I believe) it was Ms. Holland, a Teacher of the Year winner, sought to encourage her students to listen to the sounds of the creek, while peacefully sitting on its banks in meditation. They wrote essays on their experiences. Indeed, the creek has been and will continue to be a much valued extension of the education of our students. Lessons that they will always remember and cherish.

Historical and Geographic Connections

Miller Creek is *lasting*. The Miller Creek Watershed and Dixie School District have geographically overlapped in the district's inception. This 1873 map shows just how intertwined the two geographic designations are and have been over the years.



Another map on the Miller Creek Watershed site illustrates the hundreds of tributaries that feed into the creek. It isn't a stretch to visualize these tributaries as a metaphor for the paths students in the area take to one of the three schools that reside within the watershed. Each year as these small rivulets merge into larger brooks and streams, they eventually find their way out to the San Pablo Bay and ultimately the Pacific Ocean. Each school year our young students grow, become educated and eventually find their way into the world. Miller Creek Watershed's unique geography and hydrology makes for an appropriate metaphor for the purpose of our educational district.



Let's take that one step further. Miller Creek is mainly a seasonal waterway with most of its flow running from Fall to late Spring. Now that just happens to coincide with the school year. *Local* and *inspirational*, I suggest.

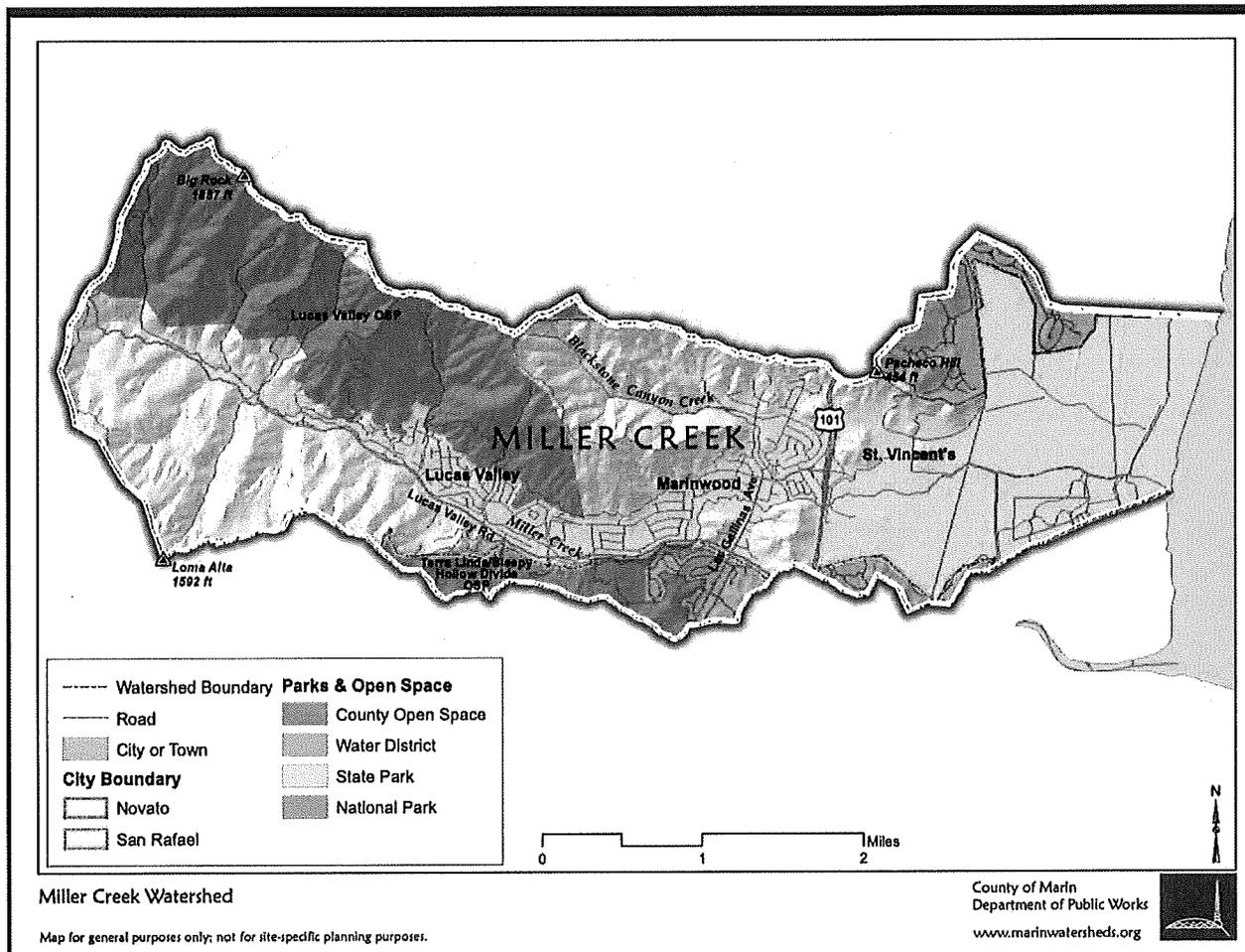
Miller Creek is Inclusive

The Miller Creek Watershed encompasses lands of the County Open Space, Water District, State and National Parks, as well as the small sliced of the Cities of San Rafael and Novato. As a multi-jurisdictional entity the watershed is most *inclusive* of many constituencies.

Of course you well know that our three elementary schools, Vallecito, Mary Silveira and Dixie each matriculate their 5th grade students mostly to Miller Creek Middle School. It is the only institution of its kind that includes all the major neighborhoods.

A new name that includes our highly regarded and much beloved middle school further identifies and bonds the community with its public educational institutions. Much more than any generic substitute, Miller Creek, name enhances the *inclusiveness* of the district.

As the district will seek *to raise money* from bonds and parcel taxes over the coming years, and the popular CanDo campaign will call upon donations from the community to fund vital science, art, music and sports programs, there can be no higher purpose, nor value, of a name the the community will *wholeheartedly support*. Miller Creek School District is the *only* name that can do that.



Animal and Plant Life of the Miller Creek Watershed (link)

The Miller Creek Watershed is a natural history resource for our community and schools. It supports a number of special-status plants, animals and birds: San Pablo song sparrow, California black rail, saltmarsh harvest mouse, and endangered California clapper rail. It is also home to seven fish species (6 native and 1 introduced). Native species include California roach, steelhead, threepine stickleback, staghorn sculpin, prickly sculpin, and riffle sculpin. Common carp have also been introduced. Historically, the watershed supported native Sacramento sucker.

Heron and egret nesting colonies have been monitored by Audubon Canyon Ranch since the early 1990s. There are active nest colonies on shrub-covered islands at Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District plant at the east end of Smith Ranch Road. Black-crowned night-heron, snowy egret, and great egret have been observed nesting on the island.

The lower marsh habitats represent some of the largest remaining tidally-influenced habitats in the bay region and support abundant waterfowl populations

I thank you for considering Miller Creek as an additional name outside the Naming Advisory Committee's providence. It is indeed Local, Lasting, Inclusive and Inspirational.

Norm

Norm Levin
252 Devon Dr.
San Rafael, CA 94903
415-250-3189
norm@naturalportraits.co
www.naturalportraitsandevents.com



Yes for...

1 message

Jody Morales <jodymorales@lucasvalley.net>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Sun, Jun 30, 2019 at 6:50 PM

MILLER CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT

Jody Morales
71 Mt Tallac Court
San Rafael



Petition.

1 message

debra taube <debra.taube14@gmail.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Mon, Jul 1, 2019 at 7:48 AM

I DO NOT support MillerCreek. It refers to James Miller who named the district Dixie in the first place. In addition to Dixie being a racist name with a strong connection to the Confederacy, there is historical evidence that Miller, like many other wealthy land owners in California at that time, enslaved Indigenous people. Further, this name subverts the Board's process and therefore DOES NOT represent the community's wishes.

Thank you!

Debra Taube

885 Appleberry Dr. SR

Parent of a graduate of the district



Miller Creek School District

1 message

Diane Hiland <dianehiland1@gmail.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Mon, Jul 1, 2019 at 1:58 PM

Bravo to the Dixie Community for submitting this additional petition as it is the ONLY name that makes sense for the District (besides the original name Dixie School District).

This name fits the bill for all of the criteria...it is lasting, inspiring, and historically & geographically accurate as ALL of the elementary schools in the District feed into Miller Creek Middle School.

Miller Creek is a name that all can be proud of going forward! This name is a win-win for all parties and will help to finally heal the community at large. The people have spoken and this is a name that both sides of the debate can agree upon!

Thank you!



Vote for Miller Creek

1 message

MilesLamar <milesLamar@aol.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Mon, Jul 1, 2019 at 4:01 PM

To the Dixie School Board,
Please accept my vote for the Dixie district to be renamed the Miller Creek Elementary School District. Hopefully the funds will not be taken from our Dixie schools budget.
Thank you,
Marla, Dave and Ryan Myles



The name should reflect something local and distinguishing - "Miller Creek"

1 message

Paul Brunell <paulbrunell@comcast.net>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Mon, Jul 1, 2019 at 4:12 PM

While I never supported changing the name, nor do I agree with the money spent and lost in that process, that ship has obviously sailed at this point.

The name is changing, so let's get behind and support a name that has over 200 community signatures — far more than any of the other three committee names.

Let's get behind a name that has the support of people on both sides of the Dixie debate.

Let's get behind a name that has a local and distinguishing meaning, not something so generic as creekside or laurel creek.

Let's get behind a name that we can all spell, pronounce, and know what it means, unlike "kenne".

Let's get behind a name that could lead down a road of healing for the district and the community.

Let's get behind a name that represents the geography of where the old school house sits.

We appreciate the committee's time and effort, but there just doesn't seem to be enthusiasm behind what was produced. At it was an "advisory" committee anyway, with no legal binding. Choosing Miller Creek doesn't represent a failure of the "process" or any disrespect for it — in fact out of the committee process came a community driven name and isn't that what democracy is all about?

I am concerned that those who pushed for the name change now also want to seize control over what gets picked. Haven't we had enough intimidation, and "control over the narrative" from folks outside the district? It's really time the new Board as comprised in 2019 stand up FOR the community and give us back control over our schools. It's really time for you all to get back to business, put this to bed, and for the schools to retain at least something special and unique to the area — MILLER CREEK. You gave them what they wanted, a change of name. How about the new name be representative of your constituents - MILLER CREEK.

Paul Brunell
Dixie resident since 1996.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bruce Anderson** <bruce@home2150.com>

Date: Mon, Jul 1, 2019 at 10:50 AM

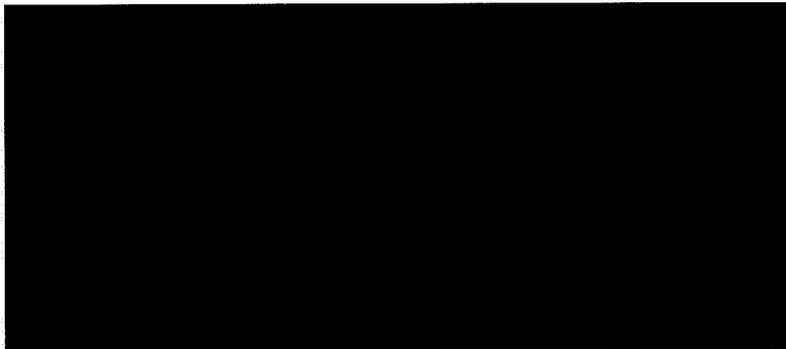
Subject: No to Miller Creek

To: <millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Please don't choose Miller Creek as the new name of our school district. We have Miller Creek, Miller Creek School and Miller Creek Road. That is enough things named after the James Miller family. We don't need to name an entire school district after his family.

Perhaps the biggest reason not to name the district "Miller Creek" is that the creek is only located in the north portion of the district and does not share any geography with the south portion of the district. The same objection to naming the district Terra Linda as unrepresentative of the entire district should apply here. The self serving argument that all students end up at Miller Creek Middle School as justification is weak. It wasn't too long ago that Valcito was a middle school and half the district students ended their k-8 education there. The growth projected for the area around Northgate may require the district to reopen Vallecito as a middle school again.

It is without question that James Miller named our school district "Dixie" in 1863 as a nod to the south. Years prior to that in 1842 he named his second born son Martin Van Buren Miller. Martin Van Buren had just lost his bid for re-election to President. Martin Van Buren (our eighth president) at that time (years later he became an outspoken advocate to abolish slavery) had just completed Andrew Jackson's Indian removal program by enforcing what has come to be called the Trail of Tears and the second Seminole war. [Trail of Tears | Facts, Map, & Significance](#) James Miller saw Indians forced marched through Missouri while he lived there and decided that the person most responsible, first as Vice President then as President, would be a name for his son.



Map
would
not copy
(print)

Trail of Tears | Facts, Map, & Significance

Trail of Tears: Overview of the Trail of Tears, the forced relocation in the 1830s of Native Americans from the ...

James Miller soon decided through correspondence with a man described as his uncle (Timothy Murphy) that he and his family should move west. He did so arriving at Sutter's Fort in 1844. He then brought his family to a creek near Mission San Rafael where Timothy Murphy (Don Timateo) was The protector of the Indians.

According to the book "Chief Marin" by Betty Goethe the land had been most recently occupied by the Aguasto people of the Miwok. What they called the creek is lost. Timothy Murphy gave the over 600 acres to his relative (or new friend that came from the same Irish county) and then recorded the first land grab deed in Marin County.

The Indian population in Marin had been decimated by disease and raids by the time the Millers arrived. The remaining few Indians were at Olompali and Nicasio reservations. Prone to drinking, these indians were often in need of wages and worked for the local ranchers as servants and farm workers to pay off debts. Some were auctioned by local sheriffs as indentured servants. The Millers made use of this inexpensive labor to build his ranches. When gold was discovered he and a few other local ranchers drove their cattle to the Placers to slaughter and sell meat to the arriving miners. The drive required "*vaqueros*" to do the herding. *Vaqueros* were almost entirely Indian in those years.

Once he made his way back to Marin, James Miller was a wealthy man. But soon his benefactor died leaving James Miller as executor of a vast estate in Marin and Sonoma counties. Timothy Murphey never married so the chief recipient of his estates was his nephew John Lucas. Timothy Murphy also left a conditional will designating land for an orphanage if a facility was built in a certain timeframe. James Miller worked to have St Vincent's built in time to honor the request.

In 1850 The Miller family was

JAS. MILLER 37 M farmer Canada

Mary 36 F Canada

William 14 M Canada

Catherine 12 F Canada

Mary 10 F Canada

Martin Van Buren 8 M Missouri

Ellen 6 F Independent Rock Plains Rocky Mountains

Teresa S.5 F San Rafael, Ca

Julia Anna 3 F San Rafael, Ca

Jane Frances DeC. 1 F San Rafael, Ca

James Miller sponsored the building of the first school in San Rafael at 4th and A streets in 1849. He also gave money and labor to help build St. Vincent's School at the bequest of Timothy Murphy. He became Marin County Superintendent of Education in 1859. As his last act as Superintendent, he formed the Dixie School District in 1863.

By this time James Miller had two more children:

Bernard Thomas - born ca 1855 in Marin Co., Ca.

Josephine L. - born ca 1858; married Joseph Kirk September 1, 1888 (Some have pointed to this marriage as proof that James Miller did not have southern sympathies. But note the marriage was 23 years after the civil war and there were only Union soldiers in California)

The district thrived from its beginning. Hiring a full time live in teacher, expanding a library all with a maximum of 10 students during its early life. Eleven years later in 1874, the state legislature passed a law specifically taking funds from the district after it had been discovered that the district was being paid to educate the boys at St Vincents but had no expenditures for such.

The Dixie School District Fund.

The children in St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum have always been counted as among the census children of the Dixie School District, entitled to draw school money from the county fund. This has given that district school money for about 150 children, while the school itself is one of the smallest in the county. The result was a large sum of money lying idle in the fund. To utilize this money, a bill was passed by the last Legislature to set apart enough of this money to run the school ten months in the year, and apportion the remainder of the fund among the other districts of the county. Under this law, Mr. Saunders has distributed something over \$3,000, as below. Here is the text of the law:

The People of the State of California represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1—The School Superintendent of Marin County shall immediately after this Act takes effect and on the first Monday in March, each and every year thereafter, make a fair estimate of the amount of money required for the purpose of maintaining a Public School, including the costs of repairs and other necessary expenses in the School District known as Dixie School District in said County for ten months thence next ensuing. He shall deduct said sum when ascertained from the total amount of school moneys to the credit of said Dixie District in the County treasury. He shall thereupon distribute the surplus thus ascertained among the other School Districts in the same manner as other school moneys are distributed.

SEC. 2—Immediately after making such distribution, he shall notify the County Treasurer thereof, and of the deduction made from said Dixie District, and the County Treasurer shall make the proper entries accordingly in his books.

The Miller family did take in Indian children as evidence by the 1870 census. Here Rosa Cooper is five.

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------|----|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | | Edward - Henry | 12 | M | W | |
| 2 | | Robert - Rosa | 5 | F | W | |
| 3 | | Martha - Betty | 30 | F | W | Dorrest - Servant |

In the 1880 census Rosa Cooper is again listed now at age 14 and a servant.

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----------------|-----|----|----------|---|----|
| 576 | 409 | Miller James | W M | 67 | | | |
| | | — Mary | W F | 65 | wife | / | KE |
| | | — Ellen | W F | 28 | Daughter | / | KE |
| | | — Fannie | W F | 22 | Daughter | / | KE |
| | | — Tessie | W F | 20 | Daughter | / | KE |
| | | — Bernard | W M | 28 | Son | / | KE |
| | | — Lucie L. | W F | 17 | Daughter | / | KE |
| | | Cooper Rosa | W F | 14 | Servant | / | KE |
| | | Furlong John | W F | 22 | Servant | / | KE |
| | | Timothy Anthony | W M | 28 | Servant | / | KE |

It was common practice by the settlers to take in Indian children and keep them as "servants" or "Farm Laborers" until a certain age. In fact the first session of the California State Legislature made it a law:

"The **Act for the Government and Protection of Indians** (Chapter 133, Cal. Stats., April 22, 1850) was enacted by the first session of the California State Legislature.¹³

Act for the Government and Protection of Indians

The act "facilitated removing California Indians from their traditional lands, separating at least a generation ...

| Name | Age | Sex | Race | Occupation | Real Est. | Personal | Birthplace | Father F. | Mother F. | Birth Mo. | Marriage | Attended | Charact. |
|---|-----|--------|------|--------------|-----------|----------|------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| William - James | 57 | Male | W | Farmer | 100,000 | 10,000 | England | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| Marion - James | 55 | Female | W | Wife | | | England | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| William - James | 25 | Male | W | At home | | | Waltham | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| James - James | 21 | Male | W | At home | | | Waltham | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| James - James | 18 | Male | W | | | | Waltham | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| William - James | 12 | Male | W | | | | Waltham | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| William - James | 23 | Male | W | Black Indian | | | England | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| William - James | 27 | Male | W | Farmer | | | England | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| No. of dwellings, <u>2</u> No. of white females, <u>1</u> No. of males, foreign born, <u>28</u> " " families, <u>2</u> " " colored males, <u>1</u> " " females, " " <u>2</u> " " white males, <u>34</u> " " females, <u>1</u> " " blind, <u>0</u> | | | | | 175,000 | 13,175 | | No. of insane, <u>0</u> | 39 | 39 | | | 26 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|----|------|---|--|--|---------|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | Richard - James | 12 | Male | W | | | Waltham | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| 2 | William - James | 5 | Male | W | | | Waltham | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| 3 | William - James | 27 | Male | W | | | England | 1 | 1 | | | | |

In the 1880 census Rosa Cooper is again listed now at age 14 and a servant.

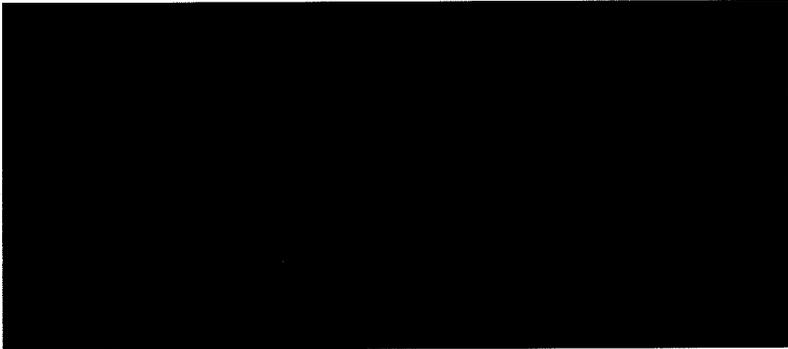
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|----|------|---|--|--|--|---------|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| Richard - James | 12 | Male | W | | | | Waltham | 1 | 1 | | | | |
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It was common practice by the settlers to take in Indian children and keep them as "servants" or "Farm Laborers" until a certain age. In fact the first session of the California State Legislature made it a law:

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Act for the Government and Protection of Indians

The act "facilitated removing California Indians from their traditional lands, separating at least a generation ..."



Would
not
copy
(print)

California State Legislature

The Democratic Party currently holds supermajorities in both houses of the California State Legislature. The Ass...

The act "facilitated removing California Indians from their traditional lands, separating at least a generation of children and adults from their families, languages, and cultures (1850 to 1865). This California law provided for "apprenticing" or indenturing Indian children and adults to Whites, and also punished "vagrant" Indians by "hiring" them out to the highest bidder at a public auction if the Indian could not provide sufficient bond or bail."² It was amended in 1860.² Although the California legislature repealed parts of the statute after the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution abolished involuntary servitude,² it was not repealed in its entirety until 1937."

This information is provided as a counterpoint to the call for "Miller Creek" as the name to our district. The Miller family were original pioneers and settlers in Marin. They most likely lived and survived as most of the settlers did at that time. They took advantage of the resources available to them including existing laws that allowed them to exploit the native and/or orphan population. They have a creek, a school and a road named for their family. That is enough preservation of the settlers spirit of 1840 to 1880.

Miller Creek does not meet the criteria laid out by the board. While it is personal opinion, the name is not inspirational. Since it only covers a portion of the district the name is not inclusive and does not fully meet criteria 2 - geographical area or geographical features ...

So. once again, please choose a name other than Miller Creek.

Respectfully submitted by

Bruce Anderson
Resident and parent of an eighth grader at Miller Creek Middle School

 ReplyForward



Miller Creek Elementary School name

1 message

nancyspell@yahoo.com <nancyspell@yahoo.com>

Mon, Jul 1, 2019 at 8:57 PM

To: "millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org" <millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Hello,

I'm writing to encourage your selecting "Miller Creek Elementary School District" as the new name to replace Dixie. Given that Miller Creek Middle School is the anchor to tie in all of the elementary feeder schools, it makes perfect sense to not invent a new name, but keep things simple and consistent and clear. There's been so much unnecessary drama in our community over this name change...can we just let the dust settle and embrace what's already working?

Thank you,
Nancy Spellman
Terra Linda
Proud mom of two teens who have loved this school district!



resubmitting for your consideration

1 message

Patti Bender <pattibender@ymail.com>

Tue, Jul 2, 2019 at 12:01 PM

To: "millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org" <millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Good morning-
I hope you are all enjoying the beginning of summer break.

I am reaching out as I have become aware of a ground swell in our community with support from people on both sides of the naming issue. From what I have seen and read, after 10 months of our community being at odds, we are finally coming together on agreeing on a name that both sides can get behind, Miller Creek Elementary School District.

While this is not a name that the naming advisory committee is putting forth, I urge you to consider it when you receive the multiple petitions supporting it. It is just my opinion, but I believe that it's the only name that will bring our community together. People on both sides are up in arms on the names that are being presented. I appreciate the time the naming committee has given to the process, but they are merely an "advisory" group and you are the ones ultimately making the decision.

I have attached the minutes from the 2/12 meeting where this name was initially presented. As you will see Trustee Glickman expressed support of this name and the unity it could provide and voted to support it.

PLEASE hear our community this time and end the acrimony.

Regards,
Patti

P.S. But as goes without saying, please do not support ANY name change if there is not 100% private funding to support the entire transition.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dixie School District

February 12, 2019 5:30PM

Miller Creek Middle School

2255 Las Gallinas Ave.

San Rafael, CA 94903

Open Session 5:30

Attendance

Trustees:

Brad Honsberger

Alissa Chacko

Marnie Glickman

Megan Hutchinson

Brooks Nguyen

Administrators:

Dr. Jason Yamashiro-Superintendent

Tracy Smith-Asst. Superintendent

Tanya Michel-Chief Business Officer

1. Call Meeting to Order

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Dixie School District was called to order by Mr. Honsberger at 5:30 p.m. at Miller Creek Middle School. A quorum was present

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance/Patriotic Salute

The board said the pledge of allegiance.

1.3 Approval of the Open Session Agenda

Motion: Ms. Nguyen

Second: Ms. Glickman

Vote: unanimously to approve of the open session agenda (Honsberger, Chacko, Glickman, Hutchinson, Nguyen)

1.4 Public Comment on Items in the Open Session Agenda

None

2. Approval of Consent Agenda

On consent agenda:

- Approval of Minutes 1.15-19
- Certification by the Board of Monthly Payroll Order and Bills
- Consideration of Consolidated Application and Reporting System (CARS)
- Consideration of Approval of a Contract Between Dixie School District and Greystone for Project Management Services
- Low Performing Student Block Grant
- Approval of Hazardous Materials Inspection Proposal
- Approval of Inspector of Record Proposal for Miller Creek
- Resolution Regarding the Possible Adoption of a Prequalification Process for Lease-Leaseback Project-Miller Creek

Motion: Ms. Nguyen

Second: Ms. Hutchinson

Vote: Unanimously to approve of the consent agenda items (Honsberger, Chacko, Glickman, Hutchinson, Nguyen)

3. Announcement and Special Items

3.1 Superintendent's Report: Dr. Yamashiro said that he visited classrooms where he saw a lot of emphasis on reading and writing. He worked with the 3rd grade team on a writer's workshop.

3.2 Update Regarding Estimated Costs of Name Change

Ms. Michel shares a Power Point presentation (attached to meeting's agenda) regarding estimated costs of changing the name of the school district. Ms. Chacko asks that the district staff research the cost of school name changes as well as district name changes. She mentions a school in Berkeley and Napa as suggestions. Ms. Nguyen asks for a further break down of legal costs in the next name change report. She asks that the District's lawyers draw up a quote for the costs of document changes and legal fees. Ms. Chacko says she would like a list of all the District's properties and a line by line list of the costs associated with the name change. Ms. Michel states that many of the districts she researched had minor changes to their names IE adding the word "Unified".

3.3 Public Hearing to Consider 13 petitions Proposing District Name Change – Board Discussion and Action

Mr. Honsberger provides guidelines for the Public Hearing. He asks that the discussion process be thoughtful and inclusive. He says that people will have a 2 minute limit to their comments

and institutes a 3 hour time limit for public comment. He reminds people that the board has received a great deal of public comment electronically. Mr. Honsberger also reminds people not to shout at speakers, clap or cheer. He asks that people please be respectful.

Speaker #1 asks that the board take a step back and get a cross section of opinion from the community. He says the board should not feel forced to make a decision based on pressure.

#2 Speaker says that the community should be allowed to vote on the issue

#3 Speaker asks board to vote for the name change

#4 Speaker asks that community be allowed to vote for name change not the board.

#5 Speaker asks for advisory ballot. She says that people need the privacy of the voting booth.

#6 Speaker opposes the name change because it forgets history we may learn from

#7 Speaker has a positive association with name Dixie.

#8 Speaker says that the board should make a decision. Changing the name of the district won't change history of the district.

#9 Speaker says that a small group of mostly non-residents think they know what is best. He says that he doesn't like being called a racist and believes everyone in the community is welcomed with open arms.

#10 Speaker says she believes the book White Fragility should be required reading for everyone. Says she is in favor of the name change.

#11 Speaker says she thinks Dixie is not a racist district but should have a name that reflects that.

#12 Speaker says she doesn't like the set-up of the public hearing. She is in favor of a name change.

#13 Speaker says she always wondered why the school district had a racist name. Is in favor of a name change

#14 Speaker says the name is a reminder of ethnic and religious hatred. Is in favor of a name change.

#15 Speaker says the board should stick with a 2020 vote.

#16 Speaker is in favor of a name change

#17 Speaker is named Dixie and doesn't like that people are calling her name racist. She has been Dixie since before the civil war. She says she is Miwok and Miller Creek is built on her people's land.

#18 Speaker says a small group of activists seems to think that his small every educated liberal community is not smart enough to make its own decisions. Believes the board should let the community vote.

#19 Speaker says the people should be allowed to vote on what the name Dixie means to them

#20 Speaker says Dixie represents a wonderful education. Not in favor of a name change

#21 Speaker says she would like the board to go back to serving its correct purpose which is to serve the children. She is in favor of the ballot and thinks the board should reconsider the GATE program.

#22 Speaker thinks changing the name would not change the quality of education Dixie provides. Is in favor of a name change.

#23 Speaker believes the board should vote down the names and engage the community.

#24 Speaker is in favor of the name change

#25 Speaker believes the board should serve the community with a consensus 5:0 vote.

#26 Speaker believes the board should research how other schools/districts have navigated name changes and engage the community.

#27 Speaker says that we inherited the name but without changing it, we own it. In favor of a name change.

#28 Says that if we maintain the name Dixie we have to teach the language of the Miwok Tribe. Says that putting off the vote until 2020 isn't a good idea.

#29 Speaker says that the board should change the name because elections have a way of not turning out the way you hope.

#30 Speaker supports a name change because the name deeply hurts African Americans.

#31 Speaker enjoyed the community engagement event the previous week. Says there should be a healthy dialog and listening to the minority vote. Says a vote would not be inclusive or diverse.

#32 Speaker says the board should do the right thing because everyone is watching.

#33 Speaker says they board should change the name.

#34 Speaker says a name change is symbolic and it should be changed.

#35 Speaker says the name Dixie invites hate into the inner circle. It teaches kids that it is ok to be racist. However, with the word Dixie gone, we can have a district free of hate.

#36 Speaker says that Dixie is a geographic term. They have lived in the district several years and the idea that Dixie is a racist name never came up. He says the community should be allowed to vote on the issue.

#37 Speaker asks the board to honor the 4:1 commitment they made in December. Says that it should be on next year's ballot because we live in a democracy.

#38 Speaker says the constitution gives us the right to vote. Believes we should be allowed to vote.

#39 Speaker says that the community voted when they voted the board in place. Now it's time for the board to decide as elected representatives. In favor of the name change.

#40 Speaker says that even a small child is capable of figuring this out. Is in favor of the name change.

#41 Speaker says tomorrow the papers will show people what the board decided. It will show them what we are made of. In favor of a name change.

#42 Speaker asked the board if any of them ran on the platform of a name change.

#42 Speaker asks that people forgive the south and let the district keep its name.

#43 Speaker says the board has had several chances to change the name. Asks that they vote to choose Live Oak Valley as the new name.

#44 Speaker says the district no longer aligns with their beliefs. In favor of a name change.

#45 Speaker says when you know better you do better. In favor of a name change,

#46 Speaker says they believe people can evolve through dialogue. The more educated she became the more her opinion changed. She says there needs to be a name change but there also needs to be a lot of talking.

7:30 Board Adjourns for a break

7:40 Meeting resumes

#47 Speaker asks that the board honor its decision to send this to a vote.

#48 Speaker says that changing the name is the only way to eliminate controversy.

#49 Speaker says she is the wife of a former Trustee and they have kicked the issue down the road a few times. Says she doesn't believe we can't excuse keeping the name.

#50 Speaker suggests naming the district after a former educator.

#51 Speaker suggests we assign the district a number rather than a name so no one will be offended.

#52 Speaker says she believes things will get worse if the vote is pushed to 2020.

#53 Speaker says San Rafael is mostly white because of housing policy. She says that African Americans don't move here because they don't feel welcome here. She urges the Board to change the name.

#54 Speaker says she is upset that the issue is being debated at all. In favor of a name change.

#55 Speaker thanks the Board. He says that he sees unity in the room and finds it incredible that people are allowed to do this.

#56 Speaker says her experience is that the community is welcoming to all races and religions. She never felt the community was in any way unified with the south. Is not in favor of a name change.

#57 Speaker says he is in favor of a name change

#58 Speaker says someone explained why the name offends them and now they understand. In favor of the name change.

#59 Speaker says he is worried about making a decision that demonizes people in the South.

#60 Speaker says that although the community has 14,000 voters not all have school aged children in the district. Not in favor of a name change.

#61 Speaker is not in favor of the name change.

#62 Speaker is in favor of a name change.

#63 Speaker says this is a movement. In favor of name change.

#64 Speaker is in favor of a name change

#65 Speaker is a parent of two in the district. She came to listen.

#66 Speaker says they are not in favor of a name change.

#67 Speaker says no learning institution should be named Dixie. She asks that the Board not use process as an excuse. She says that she is in favor of a name change.

#68 Speaker is in favor of a name change. Says it is important to model kindness.

#69 Speaker says changing the name will be a small move in the right direction. District also needs more teachers of color.

#70 Speaker says she is in favor of changing the name because it will help those who are feeling hurt and excluded by the name.

#71 Speaker disagrees the name change has divided a peaceful community. She says that there has always been racism in the community. She says that the country was built on stolen land with stolen labor. We need to change the name.

#72 Speaker says that white privilege keeps us from being offended. She says that white people don't need to know why it's offensive just that it is offensive. She asks the board to change the name.

#73 Speaker says she is in favor of a name change. She expressed concern that the costs will rise over time making the name change more expensive if we wait.

#74 Speaker is in favor of a name change

#75 Speaker says we need to correct the harm we've done and change the name.

#76 Speaker says the origin of the name isn't important. The fact that people are offended is. Is in favor of a name change.

#77 Speaker says she hopes her new baby goes to school with a new name.

All speakers had the opportunity to share their thoughts. Mr. Honsberger moves the Board into the Board discussion phase. Mr. Honsberger says that whatever happens tonight isn't going to make everyone happy. He adds that the Board respects everyone's opinions and hopes everyone can move forward as a community. Mr. Honsberger explains the process the Board will use to discuss and vote on petitions. He asks Attorney Manuel Martinez to confirm or add to his explanation. Mr. Martinez adds that it is entirely up to the board how they wish to consider the petitions. He did recommend that the Board act (vote) on all of the petitions before adjourning the meeting.

Ms. Nguyen suggests the board start by reviewing the name research memo that Dr. Yamashiro had generated at the Board's request. Dr. Yamashiro reviews the name research memo with the board. Ms. Glickman asks Mr. Martinez whether it's legal or not to choose a name that is already being used by another district. Mr. Martinez says that attempting to change our name to a name that is identical to other district would be rejected. Ms. Glickman then asks if a name that is very similar would be rejected. Mr. Martinez says he thinks that would be rejected.

Ms. Nguyen asks about adopting a place holder name. Mr. Martinez responds that the district has a name. There is no place holder. Mr. Martinez goes on to point out that the board could vote on a name tonight and a new name in the future. But this would add to the time-line, cost and potentially expose the district to liability. Mr. Honsberger says that the petitions are what the Board has at hand. He says he understands their job tonight is to vote on the petitions that have been presented.

Ms. Glickman Motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to *Live Oak Elementary School District*

Ms. Nguyen seconds

Vote

Aye: 0

No: 4 (Nguyen, Glickman, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Abstain: 1 (Chacko)

Mr. Honsberger says that he finds the Board has been thrust into this process because of Ed Code. He has heard a lot of comments from the community about trying to understand each other. He asks that the board group the petitions together for a vote rather than voting one by one.

Ms. Chacko says that she wants to say a few things about how the issue of a name change was brought to the board. The entire process was skipped. She adds that the district has spent over \$36,000 since August and the Board has been able to do very little of its usual necessary work. The community heard about this on the news. Sharing of Board emails and outside politician involvement has created a large amount of distrust. I think if we move forward with a name change it only encourages discord. The petitions are not statistically significant. Ms. Chacko says she is in favor of a poll and adds that she doesn't approve of the process set before the Board.

Ms. Nguyen says that the Board has not had the opportunity to talk about this issue. This is an emotional issue and they need more time.

Ms. Glickman says that Ms. Ruby Wilson feels the name has been hurting her for 47 years. She adds that the issue was brought to the board in 1997 and this has been going on for 22 years.

Ms. Chacko says she has heard comments that people would like to have input into the name of the district.

Ms. Hutchinson says she supports a name change. She adds that she believes the community needs a place in the process.

Ms. Nguyen asks how we move forward to discuss a process.

Dr. Yamashiro says that is has to be agendized.

Ms. Glickman says she is interested in judging petitions on merit rather than talking about process.

Ms. Chacko says that she has 13 petitions with no reasons why one name is better than another. If we get down to 4 how will we pick?

Ms. Glickman says she thinks they are all qualified to pick and picking a name is how they will choose a name.

Ms. Glickman says this is about ethics and morality.

Mr. Honsberger asks what is wrong with taking a breather and getting more feedback.

Ms. Glickman says the board has received hundreds of emails on the issue. Taking a step back disregards the voices of African Americans.

Mr. Honsberger says that as a community they haven't discussed the matter.

Ms. Nguyen says she supports a name change. But she thinks there needs to be a better process to engage stakeholders.

Ms. Glickman says this is our opportunity to decide. We have other things we need to do think about like diversity training and policy changes. To say no based on process, I think there will be consequences. Our school board meetings will get longer.

Ms. Chacko says she doesn't feel like she is going to give in to those types of threats. She states that she thinks it is very important for the community to be involved.

Mr. Honsberger says the board has good input but needs more. He'd like to engage more community involvement.

Ms. Glickman says there will be nonviolent civil disobedience. By voting no you are picking Dixie. Dixie is a synonym of the confederacy.

Ms. Hutchinson says she agrees with Marnie. She likes the idea of a place holder but it is not legally advisable. She says that she agrees this is harmful but she adds that there are other people that haven't been involved in the process who may want to be.

Ms. Glickman says there have been lots of people involved in the process and this is not going away. She adds that in this room there is a petition with 15 signatures and she believes more petitions could be filed tomorrow.

Ms. Hutchinson says she agrees in theory but she has trouble with the process.

Mr. Honsberger says the board can agendaize a process for the next board meeting.

Mr. Honsberger motions to group the remaining names together and vote no with the plan to talk about the process at the next board meeting.

Ms. Hutchinson says she likes the idea of talking about process but she doesn't like the idea of waiting another month. She adds that she is not against voting on each petition.

Ms. Nguyen says agrees that time is of the essence and they need a short time line. She goes on to say that she is ok with voting on each name or voting as a group.

Ms. Chacko seconds Mr. Honsberger's motion to vote on the petitions as a group.

Ms. Glickman says she thinks each petition warrants a vote.

Mr. Honsberger asked if community input gravitated toward one name could they come back?

Mr. Martinez says in theory yes.

Mr. Honsberger asks if the Board wants to vote on the petitions individually.

Ms. Glickman moves the Board vote on each petition individually

Ms. Nguyen seconds

The Board votes 5:0 to vote on each petition individually.

(Nguyen, Glickman, Chacko, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Ms. Nguyen motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Oak Valley Elementary***

Ms. Glickman seconds

Vote

Aye: 0

No: 5

(Nguyen, Glickman, Chacko, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Ms. Glickman motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Miwok Elementary School District***

Ms. Nguyen seconds

Vote

Aye: 0

No: 5

(Nguyen, Glickman, Chacko, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Ms. Nguyen motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Skywalker Elementary School District***

Ms. Hutchinson seconds

Vote

Aye: 0

No: 5

(Nguyen, Glickman, Chacko, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Mr. Honsberger motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Miwok Hills Elementary School District***

Ms. Hutchinson seconds

Vote

Aye: 0

No: 5

Miwok Hills Elementary School District

(Nguyen, Glickman, Chacko, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Mr. Honsberger motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***John Muir Elementary School District***.

Ms. Nguyen seconds

Vote

Aye: 0

No: 5

(Nguyen, Glickman, Chacko, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Ms. Nguyen motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Mary Dixie Elementary School District***

Mr. Honsberger seconds

Vote

Aye: 0

No: 5

(Nguyen, Glickman, Chacko, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Ms. Nguyen motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Miller Creek Elementary School District***

Ms Honsberger seconds

Ms. Hutchinson notes that there were many emails saying they liked the name Miller Creek. And all three schools feed into Miller Creek.

Ms. Glickman adds that the Mayor wanted this name as did Sue Holland.

Ms. Hutchinson adds that James Miller is the person who named the district in the first place.

Ms. Glickman says that Miller Creek is one of the names she was open to. Miller Creek is unifying. She says that everyone would be proud of Miller Creek.

Ms. Hutchinson says there is a lot of concern about how the school was named. What if there is concern in the future?

Ms. Glickman says she likes Terra Linda and Live Oak Valley but in the interest of flexibility.

Ms. Chacko says she doesn't like the name.

Vote on ***Miller Creek Elementary School District***

Aye: 1 (Glickman)

No: 4

(Nguyen, Chacko, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Ms. Chacko motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Lucas Valley Elementary School District***

Ms. Nguyen seconds

Vote

Aye: 0

No: 5

(Nguyen, Glickman, Chacko, Hutchinson, Honsberger)

Ms. Nguyen motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Terra Linda Elementary School District***

Ms. Chacko seconds

Vote

Aye: 1 (Ms. Glickman)

No: 3 (Ms. Nguyen, Mr. Honsberger, Ms. Chacko)

Abstain: 1 Hutchinson

Mr. Honsberger motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Terrawood Valley Elementary School District***

Ms Chacko seconds

Vote

Aye: 1 (Ms. Glickman)

No: 4 (Ms. Nguyen, Mr. Honsberger, Ms. Chacko, Ms. Hutchinson)

Mr. Honsberger motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Big Rock Elementary School District***

Ms Nguyen seconds

Vote

Aye: 2 (Ms. Glickman, Ms. Hutchinson)

No: 3 (Ms. Nguyen, Mr. Honsberger, Ms. Chacko)

Mr. Honsberger motions to vote on the petition to change the District name to ***Live Oak Elementary School District***

Ms Chacko seconds

Vote

Aye: 2 (Ms. Glickman, Ms. Hutchinson)

No: 3 (Ms. Nguyen, Mr. Honsberger, Ms. Chacko)

Board took a recess at 10:35

Board reconvened at 10:55. Ms. Glickman was absent

4. Communications

4.1 Public Comment on Items not Specified on the Agenda

Speaker #1 Said that he had met with Mr. Honsberger and each on the board he offered to help create a process. He went on to say that he is happy to help create a process.

Speaker #2 said that there is a fence falling down. He'd be happy to show the board where it is. Thanked the board for their time.

Speaker #3 quoted Rush

5. Organizational Matters

5.1 Community Activities

Ski week is next week. There is a Can Do auction February 14th.

5.2 Reports by Board Members on Meetings Attended

Ms. Hutchinson: JLAC

Mr. Honsberger:

Noel Schumway Memorial

Damon Connolly

Workshop Agenda

Manuel Martinez

SR Chamber -

Ed Committee

Agenda Meeting

Board Workshop

John Gamblin

Mary Rosenthal

San Rafael Chamber

Terra Linda HOA

JLAC Sacramento

IWeek - Miller Creek

Dixie Terra Linda Little League

Miller Creek Basketball

Courageous Conversation

Miller Creek Basketball

Old Dixie Schoolhouse

MCSBA

Megan

Agenda Meeting

Coordinating Council
Miller Creek Basketball
Chamber Ed Committee
Alissa
Miller Creek HSC
DTA

Ms. Nguyen: Two day seminar on health and wellness, JLAC Sacramento

5.3 Identify Items for Future Agenda

-Agendize discussion for developing a process to address name change. Board agrees on date of February 28 @ 6:00pm.

Shining a light on recent "research" the Naming Committee relied upon in rejecting "Miller Creek" for Board Consideration

1 message

Jason Lewis <jason@jasonknowsmarin.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Tue, Jul 2, 2019 at 1:08 PM

All info about James Miller beyond his generous donation of land for the purpose of public education is off the subject when it comes to our present day use and common understanding of the name "Miller Creek." The name "Miller Creek" for our District doesn't honor James Miller. Rather, it is a celebration of our present day flagship middle school (into which every elementary school in the District matriculates) and the gorgeous natural water way beside it.

Nevertheless, a few residents are objecting to the name Miller Creek Elementary School District based on presumed information regarding James Miller. Printed below is a copy of an email sent to me by one resident. Somehow the Naming Committee came into possession of these same accusations during their final meeting. They referred to these accusations as new "research" but provided no corresponding source material or verifiable facts. 'Based in part on these accusations they chose to eliminate "Miller Creek" as a contender for Board consideration with one member going so far as to say the name Miller "hurts people." Here is the letter I received:

"A question - when James Miller stopped overnight at a creek and camped in 1844. What was it called before he claimed it as his family's from the native Americans living around it? We have no record of that name because James Miller's uncle, Timothy Murphy (Don Timitao) took it as the protector of Indians and gave it to his nephew as the first recorded land grab in Marin.

Another question remains - in 1849 when James Miller and 'other ranchers' drove 100 head of cattle to the 'Placers' who were the braceros that went with them? One answer looms - the native Americans displaced by the settlers taking their land.

There is also this - when James Miller started Dixie school district, the district received funds for all white students in the district which included the 170 boys at St Vincent's. Until sued by the county three years later the district was set up to educate 10 children while being paid for 180 children.

While I have not seen the records yet, I have been told that there are records of sales of native American's by James Miller to other ranchers in Napa and Sonoma.

Miller's ranch along the creek thrived while the property just west of his also along the creek became the county poor farm. Native Americans would gather there seeking employment to pay off their debts (indentured servitude). The closest employer was the Miller ranch.

The white washed history of James Miller would not stand up to scrutiny."

In an effort to understand the basis of these accusations I interviewed two individuals who could perhaps provide some historical information on James Miller: **Marci Miller, Programs Director at the Marin History Museum** and **Marilyn Miller Pinnow, a direct descendent of James Miller.**

Marcie Miller performs lectures and gives walking tours to the public through the Marin History Museum on subjects like Smith Ranch Road, Timothy Murphy, and the Mt. Olivet Cemetery. She says James Miller is a major focus of her lectures on "Smith Ranch Road" as well as several other tours.

Ms. Miller reviewed the text of the email above and said "The James Miller/Timothy Murphy connection he states is mistaken. I believe James was older than Timothy, couldn't be his Uncle, and they didn't know each other until they met here in San Rafael... I would tell the School Board that research disputes the claims and until [the person making these claims] can show his proof the claims should be considered a misguided confusion of facts."

I also spoke directly with **Marilyn Pinnow**, a direct descendant (Great Great Granddaughter) of James Miller. She reviewed each claim and I quoted her responses below:

ACCUSATION REGARDING "LAND GRAB": "Mr Miller and his wife Mary and four children did not just 'happen upon' a creek in northern Marin, and claim it and the land for themselves. They arrived at the Mission San Raphael Archangel, originally a Jesuit mission, established by the extended followers of Fr Junipero Serra.

Don Timateo Murphy was NOT related to my Great Great Grandfather, (as is claimed by the email). The two men didn't know each other until they met at the Mission San Rafael around early 1845 (not 1844 as stated by (the email author.) Timateo Murphy had the blessing of the Catholic Church to grant land to whomever he wished. My Great Great Grandfather James Martin Miller did not steal land from the Native Americans or anyone else. He was given permission to own it from the people at that time who were authorized to disperse it. Accusing my Great Great Grandfather of doing something morally wrong to the Miwok people is assigning guilt to an innocent man.

It's not significant that my Grandfather received the first land grant in Marin. Reed and Richardson down in Mill Valley were also granted land by, most likely, Murphy.

The fact that my Great Great Grandfather was possibly standing in line before anyone else on the first day that anyone in the history of the county could register doesn't make him the 'first land grabber.' He may have been an early riser that day. It's really unfair to suggest anything nefarious."

ACCUSATION MILLER'S RANCH HANDS WERE DISPLACED MIWOKS: "The author claims there's a 'looming question' about who the ranch hands were when my Great Great Grandfather drove cattle to the Placers. The fact is, no one knows. There are NO records. But the accusations made about the race of these ranch hands are very presumptuous. They could have just as likely been Spaniards or Mexicans for all we know. Nevertheless, the larger point is that the author is accusing my Great Great Grandfather of using 'displaced' Native Americans as though (Miller) had anything to do with displacing them. He simply did not. The Spanish and Mexican Catholic missionaries took the Native American land long before James Martin Miller ever moved to what is now Marin."

ACCUSATION OF LAWSUIT: "I don't know anything about the accusation regarding my Great Great Grandfather and a lawsuit pertaining to St. Vincent's and the Dixie School District."

ACCUSATION MILLER SOLD NATIVE PEOPLE TO OTHER RANCHERS: "The egregious remark that my Great Great Grandfather sold human beings to other ranchers in the Marin/Sonoma area is completely baseless. Any accusations about my Grandfather having similar cultural ideas about slavery to people in the Southern States is outrageous. I'm aware of no records whatsoever to support this claim. The Irish people were kicked around and were the underdogs themselves. To suggest that they came to California and became abusers of African Americans, Native Americans, or people of any other race is simply absurd and wrong. The Millers and the Murphys came to California to practice their Catholic religion and find peace among the Spanish Catholics who were accepting of their faith. They started universities. They were good people who wanted to make the world a better place for themselves, their families, and their fellow man."

ACCUSATION THAT MILLER TOOK ADVANTAGE OF PEOPLE LIVING ON AN ADJACENT 'POOR FARM': "I know nothing about this claim...Just because a farm is adjacent to another does not implicate any property owner is responsible for his or her neighbor's poverty. Proximity does not necessarily create or even suggest responsibility."

As an aside, a Google search reveals this article: <https://patch.com/california/sanrafael/history-poor-farm-took-in-marins-homeless>. The article states "In 1880, Marin County's Board of Supervisors voted to establish a county farm to house and care for the ill and indigent elderly. They purchased the land, 94,118 acres, from John Lucas for \$5716.46 and appointed Dr. A.W. Taliaferro visiting physician." There is no mention of James Miller in this article at all.



Miller Creek. Leaving behind labels like WAD and CTN and moving forward together as Miller Creek Elementary School District

1 message

Jason Lewis <jason@jasonknowsmarin.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Tue, Jul 2, 2019 at 2:13 PM

Dear Members of the Board,

On the evening of Tuesday's 6/25 Board Meeting, the total number of signatures on our grassroots petition in favor of "Miller Creek Elementary School District" reached 200. I'm told the Mayor signed it only minutes before the meeting began.

During the Board meeting, the Naming Committee was rightly applauded for their hard work and volunteerism. They bravely stepped up to accomplish an impossible task. They devoted many hours of their time to help heal the community and they deserve our thanks. That's why it was extremely awkward to speak negatively about the fruits of their labors. During the "Public Comment" segment I thanked the Committee but, in the interest of full disclosure to the Board, I explained there appears to be a major disconnect between the Naming Committee's process of reaching 3 names and the desires of the mainstream community.

My statement was based in part on what I learned while attending the Naming Committee's last public meeting on Monday, June 17. It was also informed by personally speaking directly with many of the 200 community members who signed our "Miller Creek" petition.

Several weeks ago I presented the Naming Committee with 150 signatures in support of the name "Miller Creek Elementary School District." The signatures were provided by people on BOTH SIDES of the Dixie issue. I asked the Naming Committee to please consider submitting "Miller Creek" along with its 3 final names for Board consideration.

The Committee deliberated and unfortunately rejected our request. But I learned some interesting things in the process:

- 1) **"MILLER CREEK" WAS CLEARLY POPULAR AMONG THE COMMUNITY:** The Naming Committee revealed they discarded "Miller Creek" at a prior meeting even though they received substantial and widespread feedback from the community in favor of it. One committee member who personally reached out to members of the community revealed to her fellow committee members that most people she spoke with told her they preferred "Miller Creek" to any of her committee's 7 names.
- 2) **NEW RESEARCH FROM UNIDENTIFIED SOURCE:** During the meeting, one member of the Committee presented the results of "new research" suggesting James Miller was a bad person and/or corrupt businessman. They said he accepted stolen Native American property, took advantage of Native American indentured servants, sold Native Americans to other

ranchers, and was sued for fraud related to his school. The Committee member cited no specific sources nor distributed any written evidence in support of these accusations.

It was a very short trial. The other Naming Committee members appeared visibly shaken by these revelations. Quite quickly, the majority deemed "Miller Creek" inappropriate for Board consideration because James Miller named the schoolhouse "Dixie" and allegedly was guilty of the above accusations via new "research."

In advocating to deny "Miller Creek" from Board consideration one member told committee members the name Miller "hurts people." Another member said that while "Miller Creek" may be a popular name within the community today, many will eventually turn against it once the new "research" is publicly disseminated.

Coincidentally, a few days earlier an extremely prominent member of the "Change The Name" group emailed me a list of almost identical accusations against James Miller. He claimed his accusations were "facts" that he had "personally" researched. He provided me with no sources or support material. The exact text of his letter was:

"A question - when James Miller stopped overnight at a creek and camped in 1844. What was it called before he claimed it as his family's from the native Americans living around it? We have no record of that name Because James Miller's uncle, Timothy Murphy (Don Timitao) took it as the protector of Indians and gave it to his nephew as the first recorded land grab in Marin.

Another question remains - in 1849 when James Miller and "other ranchers" drove 100 head of cattle to the "Placers" who were the braceros that went with them? One answer looms - the native Americans displaced by the settlers taking their land.

There is also this - when James Miller started Dixie school district, the district received funds for all white students in the district which included the 170 boys at St Vincent's. Until sued by the county three years later the district was set up to educate 10 children while being paid for 180 children.

While I have not seen the records yet, I have been told that there are records of sales of native American's by James Miller to other ranchers in Napa and Sonoma.

Miller's ranch along the creek thrived while the property just west of his also along the creek became the county poor farm. Native Americans would gather there seeking employment to pay off their debts(indentured servitude). The closest employer was the Miller ranch.

The white washed history of James Miller would not stand up to scrutiny. Why change a racist name for a controversial person?"

All of this raises a few questions: Did the Naming Committee member receive a copy of this “research” from the same person that I did? If so, did the Committee member who presented these accusations to the committee verify any of them? Did anyone consult with a credible historian to independently substantiate *any* of these newly discovered “facts”?

The author of the above email finished his letter with the following: “The white washed history of James Miller would not stand up to scrutiny.”

That statement made me curious. Yesterday I decided to consult with **Marcie Miller**, the **Programs Director at the Marin History Museum** and **Marilyn Pinnow**, a **direct descendant of James Miller**. I have emailed you a separate email concerning my findings. **In short, they both considered the majority of the above accusations either inaccurate or unsupported.** Someone other than the author of the email above recalls finding a reference to money Mr. Miller was forced to return to the County or State for children that were being educated at the orphanage instead of at his school house. Unfortunately, this researcher has been unable to relocate the source of this info before the Board’s 7/3/19 deadline. She will forward it once found.

3) LOW SUPPORT FOR COMMITTEE’S SEVEN NAMES: Very few members of our community responded to the Naming Committee’s outreach. Despite receiving repeated emails from all the elementary Principals and the Superintendent, my understanding is that less than 80 people from our community of 14,000 people signed any one petition in favor of the final 7 names. I personally witnessed a woman sign a petition for “Creekside” who said she wished she could have instead supported “Miller Creek,” a name she much preferred.

By contrast, the grassroots petition for “Miller Creek” quickly gathered 200 signatures from both sides of the Dixie debate with almost no outreach beyond NextDoor. We performed a little door knocking, set up a signing station in Marinwood, and passed around a petition at a swim meet. All petitioners for “Miller Creek” discovered the same thing: people on BOTH SIDES of the Dixie debate were GRATEFUL and RELIEVED to be able to express their support for “Miller Creek.” Many said they didn’t bother attending the Naming Committee’s two day petition event because none of the 7 names were fitting for our District. They expressed disappointment, annoyance, and confusion over how names like “Quail Song” and “Kenne” were finalists while a more mainstream and already-tested name like “Miller Creek” was ignored.

4) MAJOR SEGMENT OF THE COMMUNITY LEFT OUT OF THE PROCESS? It is unclear how community members with NO children in the district were approached for name suggestions or to hear their preferences. I informed the Committee that many older residents reported to us that they didn’t know what was going on and were baffled “Miller Creek” wasn’t an option.

5) STRONG DISAGREEMENT AMONG THE NAMING COMMITTEE ITSELF RE: MILLER CREEK: The Committee member who submitted the name “Laurel Creek” revealed he was only partially serious about that name and doesn’t think it should be in the final 3. He told the committee that because there are laurel trees and a creek in our area he simply

combined those ideas. Plus, his daughter is named "Laurel." He says "Laurel Creek" was mostly a joke. He argued in favor of "Miller Creek" but was ignored.

(Try to imagine the plaque explaining the name "Laurel Creek" for generations to follow: "The Board chose to name our school district Laurel Creek because they agreed the name Miller Creek — the name of its flagship middle school -- was potentially hurtful. Plus, there was once at least one child named Laurel who attended school in the District and her father was on the Naming Committee. And let's not forget there are laurel trees and a creek in the area." Doesn't seem quite as meaningful or specific to our district as Miller Creek.)

After the final Naming Committee meeting was over, I learned of the existence of an **INTERNAL LETTER** dated June 12, written by one Naming Committee member to the others. To my knowledge a written copy of this letter was neither distributed or read aloud during any public meeting. I've been advised a copy has been sent to each Board member individually.

As a refresher, the letter included these statements:

- "After days of greater community action and extensive thought I need to make sure I go on the record voicing to this committee my firm belief that removing the name Miller Creek School District from our short list is not in our best interest at this time..."
- "The schools hosted naming parties and though 'votes' weren't cast in an official capacity the visual support in dot formation showed us in fact the name was encouraged and embraced by students, families, and educators..."
- "If the name was James Miller School District or just Miller School District I could honor the pause and perhaps even the removal from the short list of submissions due to controversy. But the name Miller Creek is not in fact a submission glorifying one man. The name Miller Creek is geographically unique to our area, inspired by way of the educational history of the school Miller Creek and magnificence of the namesake creek itself, already proved as long lasting, and inclusive by all means."
- "Please consider that a petition for this name is widely circulated and heavily supported in our area currently. It would be in our best interest to also have this name also come from our committee."

On Tuesday night, immediately after I made my comments to the Board someone opposed to "Miller Creek" got up to speak. He said that choosing "Miller Creek" as a name for the District "romanticizes" the 1800's and the "dark period" in history during which James Miller named the school house "Dixie."

I appreciate this speaker's sentiment because I believe he wants to help create a better world. He seems to view any connection with the Confederate South, no matter how extenuated, as morally disqualifying. While the passion behind his concerns is admirable, I disagree with the way he is framing our community's common and modern day understanding of the name "Miller Creek."

"Miller Creek" does not honor "James Miller The Person" in any way other than acknowledging the historical reality that 150 years ago -- when people were still settling the Old West with horses and wagons -- a rancher with the last name Miller donated his property to his community for the purpose of Education. Everything beyond initiating our community's long history of Quality Public Education is off the subject.

Our district's land was donated for the purpose of children to LEARN, to improve themselves as thinkers and as people, to hopefully lead a successful life and improve the world. That's what EDUCATION is all about. That's what our District is all about. Creekside, Laurel Creek, and Kenne are certainly pleasant and inoffensive names. But they're also generic, fabricated, and/or obscure. While forfeiting our identity they cannot and will never convey the true nature of our District, its beauty, and its historical commitment to education.

In the MODERN world (not a century and a half ago) but the ACTUAL present-day world in which we all work, play, and volunteer together, we all support our cherished middle school named "Miller Creek. Every elementary school in our district, whether it is in Terra Linda, Marinwood, or anywhere in between, matriculates into Miller Creek Middle School. That's the definition of Unity.

Miller Creek is also one of the most beautiful natural waterways in San Rafael. Students who attend "Miller Creek" study the creek as part of their Science classes, write about it in their English classes, and are inspired by it in their Art classes. It is a tranquil place to commune with nature.

All of this is so obvious it almost doesn't need to be said. But some, even with the best intentions, are now twisting in moral knots over the name "Miller Creek" as though it is in any way equal to the cultural or national negative perception of the word "Dixie." It isn't. Just in the same way that our nation doesn't twist in moral knots over the word "Washington."

George Washington owned slaves for something like 56 years. He is the father of our country. I attended the University in Washington in Seattle. I did NOT attend a racist school. Miller Creek is NOT a racist middle school. Miller Creek is NOT a racist creek.

While I appreciate the spirit behind erasing any and all connection between our District and the Confederacy, there's a point at which "doing the right thing" oversteps logic and reason. Overcompensating for "Dixie" by sullyng the name of our middle school, creek, and watershed is taking things way too far. "Miller Creek" is NOT a name or place of which anyone should be ashamed.

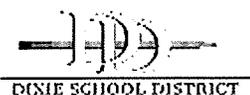
As Marnie Glickman boldly stated at a Board Meeting on February 12 when she voted for "Miller Creek" to be the name of our School District, "It is unifying. It is a name we can all be proud of."

Ms. Glickman was 100% right. And when over 200 people on both sides of the Dixie fight can come together and agree on anything, especially a name for our District, that's saying something extremely significant.

Thank you in advance for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason Lewis



The new name should be Miller Creek District

1 message

Jessica Freilich <jessicaf227@gmail.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Tue, Jul 2, 2019 at 8:38 PM

I am writing to express my support for the Miller Creek name. Miller Creek is a prominent geographic/natural landmark in the community. A major street in the community is named after Miller Creek. Our middle school, named after Miller Creek is the school that all Dixie District students attend. However, the best reason for selecting Miller Creek is that a much, much larger segment of the community supports the name (49 pages of petition signatures) than the other names. Even better, Miller Creek enjoys "bipartisan" supporters from people who were on both sides of the debate about the name change.

As for "respecting the process" of the advisory committee, excuse me but my cynical side is laughing at this bad joke. The only "process" that made any sense was the Board's original proposal let Dixie residents vote on whether the name should be changed in the first place. Unfortunately, the Board and particularly it's new members, lacked the backbone to stick to that commitment. And respect??? Hah!!!! There was NEVER any respect shown to district residents at any point in this travesty.

If the name must change, it should change to Miller Creek School District.

Sent from my iPhone
Jessica Freilich
(415) 847-3798



Miller Creek

1 message

Laraine Cunha <laraine@cunha.us>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Tue, Jul 2, 2019 at 10:30 PM

Dixie School District Board of Trustees,

I am writing to urge you to choose Miller Creek Elementary School District as the new name of our district. In looking at the criteria which the board set, Miller Creek is the one name that actually meets all four requirements.

The other choices all seem to need an explanation as to how they came about. Creekside is nice but quite generic and commonplace as a name for the district. Laurel Creek has no connection to our area. And Kenne requires quite a bit of explanation and stretching to justify it as well as inevitable misspelling and mispronunciation. Miller Creek is the name of our middle school where all of our elementary students will attend. It is the name of the creek that runs through two of our communities and has been used as a teaching tool for generations of district students.

The possibility of renaming our district Miller Creek has already brought together members of the community in a positive way because it is Local, Lasting, Inclusive, Inspirational.

Thank you for your consideration and all of your hard work!
Laraine Cunha



Miller Creek. Leaving behind labels like WAD and CTN and moving forward together as Miller Creek Elementary School District

1 message

Jason Lewis <jason@jasonknowsmarin.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Wed, Jul 3, 2019 at 8:26 AM

Please confirm receipt of this email. Thank you!

Dear Members of the Board,

On the evening of Tuesday's 6/25 Board Meeting, the total number of signatures on our grassroots petition in favor of "Miller Creek Elementary School District" reached 200. I'm told the Mayor signed it only minutes before the meeting began.

During the Board meeting, the Naming Committee was rightly applauded for their hard work and volunteerism. They bravely stepped up to accomplish an impossible task. They devoted many hours of their time to help heal the community and they deserve our thanks. That's why it was extremely awkward to speak negatively about the fruits of their labors. During the "Public Comment" segment I thanked the Committee but, in the interest of full disclosure to the Board, I explained there appears to be a major disconnect between the Naming Committee's process of reaching 3 names and the desires of the mainstream community.

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4) MAJOR SEGMENT OF THE COMMUNITY LEFT OUT OF THE PROCESS? It is unclear how community members with NO children in the district were approached for name suggestions or to hear their preferences. I informed the Committee that many older residents reported to us that they didn't know what was going on and were baffled "Miller Creek" wasn't an option.

5) STRONG DISAGREEMENT AMONG THE NAMING COMMITTEE ITSELF RE: MILLER CREEK: The Committee member who submitted the name "Laurel Creek" revealed

he was only partially serious about that name and doesn't think it should be in the final 3. He told the committee that because there are laurel trees and a creek in our area he simply combined those ideas. Plus, his daughter is named "Laurel." He says "Laurel Creek" was mostly a joke. He argued in favor of "Miller Creek" but was ignored.

(Try to imagine the plaque explaining the name "Laurel Creek" for generations to follow: "The Board chose to name our school district Laurel Creek because they agreed the name Miller Creek — the name of its flagship middle school -- was potentially hurtful. Plus, there was once at least one child named Laurel who attended school in the District and her father was on the Naming Committee. And let's not forget there are laurel trees and a creek in the area." Doesn't seem quite as meaningful or specific to our district as Miller Creek.)

After the final Naming Committee meeting was over, I learned of the existence of an **INTERNAL LETTER** dated June 12, written by one Naming Committee member to the others. To my knowledge a written copy of this letter was neither distributed or read aloud during any public meeting. I've been advised a copy has been sent to each Board member individually.

As a refresher, the letter included these statements:

- "After days of greater community action and extensive thought I need to make sure I go on the record voicing to this committee my firm belief that removing the name Miller Creek School District from our short list is not in our best interest at this time..."
- "The schools hosted naming parties and though 'votes' weren't cast in an official capacity the visual support in dot formation showed us in fact the name was encouraged and embraced by students, families, and educators..."
- "If the name was James Miller School District or just Miller School District I could honor the pause and perhaps even the removal from the short list of submissions due to controversy. But the name Miller Creek is not in fact a submission glorifying one man. The name Miller Creek is geographically unique to our area, inspired by way of the educational history of the school Miller Creek and magnificence of the namesake creek itself, already proved as long lasting, and inclusive by all means."
- "Please consider that a petition for this name is widely circulated and heavily supported in our area currently. It would be in our best interest to also have this name also come from our committee."

On Tuesday night, immediately after I made my comments to the Board someone opposed to "Miller Creek" got up to speak. He said that choosing "Miller Creek" as a name for the District "romanticizes" the 1800's and the "dark period" in history during which James Miller named the school house "Dixie."

I appreciate this speaker's sentiment because I believe he wants to help create a better world. He seems to view any connection with the Confederate South, no matter how extenuated, as morally disqualifying. While the passion behind his concerns is admirable, I disagree with the way he is framing our community's common and modern day understanding of the name "Miller Creek."

"Miller Creek" does not honor "James Miller The Person" in any way other than acknowledging the historical reality that 150 years ago -- when people were still settling the Old West with horses and wagons -- a rancher with the last name Miller donated his property to his community for the purpose of Education. Everything beyond initiating our community's long history of Quality Public Education is off the subject.

Our district's land was donated for the purpose of children to LEARN, to improve themselves as thinkers and as people, to hopefully lead a successful life and improve the world. That's what EDUCATION is all about. That's what our District is all about. Creekside, Laurel Creek, and Kenne are certainly pleasant and inoffensive names. But they're also generic, fabricated, and/or obscure. While forfeiting our identity they cannot and will never convey the true nature of our District, its beauty, and its historical commitment to education.

In the MODERN world (not a century and a half ago) but the ACTUAL present-day world in which we all work, play, and volunteer together, we all support our cherished middle school named "Miller Creek. Every elementary school in our district, whether it is in Terra Linda, Marinwood, or anywhere in between, matriculates into Miller Creek Middle School. That's the definition of Unity.

Miller Creek is also one of the most beautiful natural waterways in San Rafael. Students who attend "Miller Creek" study the creek as part of their Science classes, write about it in their English classes, and are inspired by it in their Art classes. It is a tranquil place to commune with nature.

All of this is so obvious it almost doesn't need to be said. But some, even with the best intentions, are now twisting in moral knots over the name "Miller Creek" as though it is in any way equal to the cultural or national negative perception of the word "Dixie." It isn't. Just in the same way that our nation doesn't twist in moral knots over the word "Washington."

George Washington owned slaves for something like 56 years. He is the father of our country. I attended the University in Washington in Seattle. I did NOT attend a racist school. Miller Creek is NOT a racist middle school. Miller Creek is NOT a racist creek.

While I appreciate the spirit behind erasing any and all connection between our District and the Confederacy, there's a point at which "doing the right thing" oversteps logic and reason. Overcompensating for "Dixie" by sullyng the name of our middle school, creek, and watershed is taking things way too far. "Miller Creek" is NOT a name or place of which anyone should be ashamed.

As Marnie Glickman boldly stated at a Board Meeting on February 12 when she voted for "Miller Creek" to be the name of our School District, "It is unifying. It is a name we can all be proud of."

Ms. Glickman was 100% right. And when over 200 people on both sides of the Dixie fight can come together and agree on anything, especially a name for our District, that's saying

something extremely significant.

Thank you in advance for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason Lewis



Name change

1 message

Jim Phalon <bevbucks@aol.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Wed, Jul 3, 2019 at 12:20 PM

This gets my vote for the re-name of Dixie. My second choice would be Creekside. I think these two names make the most sense and will be meaningful to future generations.

Thank you for your consideration,
Beverly S. Williams
27 Millstone Terrace



Please DO NOT name the school district after James Miller

1 message

Scott Clark <scottclark01@me.com>
To: millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org

Wed, Jul 3, 2019 at 2:16 PM

Dear Board of Trustees,

I have written you separately asking you to select one of the three names that the Advisory Committee has named through the process thoughtfully set out for resident input. The Advisory Committee has taken their charge seriously, and has come up with three good, viable names — each of which meets the criteria established for this process. Please follow your process, and help lead us into a bright new future.

Please DO NOT grant the petition that asks you to name the school district after James Miller. James Miller is the person who named the school district after the confederacy on a dare (according to the only documented historical record). Like many white landholders of his day, he dispossessed Native Americans of their land and pressed them into service. I fear that this petition is just a cynical attempt to retain some vestige of Dixie — and its legacy — in our school district. As I've said before in open hearing, the former name Dixie connects our school district to the legacy and history of American racism, slavery, segregation, and resistance to civil rights. Choosing this name will not move this community forward. It will continue to mire us in controversy over a name that seeks to cling to this nation's colonial and racist past.

Please stay the course — follow your process — and lead us into a bright new future with a name worthy of this school district by choosing one of the names proposed by the Advisory Committee you appointed.

Respectfully yours,
Rev. Scott Clark
731 Del Ganado Rd.



Dixie School District - Yes to Miller Creek and either Eichler or Lucas Valley Elementary

1 message

Rich Wenzel <rwenzel@gmail.com>

Wed, Jul 3, 2019 at 2:15 PM

To: dnacpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org, millercreekpetition@dixieschooldistrict.org, elementaryschoolname@dixieschooldistrict.org

Dear Board Trustees,

As I have said before, I would have been in favor of a name change if the process had been open and transparent, based on facts and truly engaged with the community. Since you voted to change the name, in spite of the significant failings of the process, and only to try and stop the ongoing financial damage and division caused by the tactics employed, we must now make the best of the situation that Marnie has forced upon our community.

More than anything else, the naming process is a branding exercise, and one that needs to establish a new identity for our community. That identity must represent us all and belong to us alone. We must love that identity.

The criteria you established were good.

The name should be: Inspirational, lasting, inclusive and local.

1. Deceased individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the community.
2. Geographical area or geographical features in which district is located.
3. Reflective of the values of our schools/community.

Unfortunately, the naming committee has failed to deliver a single petition with a name that meets these criteria. Even reviewing the broader list suggests the naming committee did not understand the criteria.

Dixie School District - naming committee short list and petitions

Creekside, Laurel Valley, Acorn Mountain, Walnut Oak, Quail Song, Laurel Creek, should all be struck off the list for failing on all criteria. There is nothing inspirational or lasting in any of these names. They are completely bland, meaningless and fail to differentiate our community and school district from thousands of others. They are not names that we can celebrate. If we had the funds to hire a branding consultant and they had the chance to truly poll the community, these names would never have made a shortlist. ***They appear to have only been chosen solely because we cannot fear them. NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!***

Josephine Leary could work, but nobody appears to know who she is and even google searches don't really answer the question clearly. She may be well regarded by some and may have had a role to play in school district history, but who is to say that she didn't harbor unpopular views of some kind that may come to light in the future. Too little is known and she just isn't compelling regardless. **NO!**

Joseph Eichler is potentially a very good choice, particularly given his outstanding contributions to the broader area (it shouldn't matter that he didn't design every house here). His name is known but not overused and he has a very good reputation, particularly as one of the first developers to actively ensure housing was accessible regardless of race or color. Thumbs up! **YES!**

Kenne cannot be pronounced and is meaningless to our community. It might make a few feel like they are at one with the universe, but many others will just remember the sordidness of the last 12 months because the tactics used were patently not about unity, but rather division. **NO!**

Miller Creek petition - YES!

This is the only current petition that meets the criteria. James Miller was a very significant and outstanding local figure, who built the area's first school house and made many other positive contributions. Miller Creek is a unique geographical feature named after him. Perhaps if the scaremongers can accept this it shows some respect for the good this man did for our school district. It may also be a chance to show that they truly want the community to heal and reconcile.

Other considerations should be:

Miwok - historical connection to the region, likely to be received well seeing as they believe the Dixie district was named after their ancestor anyway, and there is a Miwok burial ground under MCMS. Obviously potential issues with cultural appropriation, but this is a recognition, not an appropriation.

Dixie Elementary - Lucas Valley Elementary or Eichler Elementary - YES!

The elementary school (if the district obtains sufficient funding from MCF/Marnie) should be renamed Eichler (Best!) or Lucas Valley (Good) Elementary. They are already established brands for our community and fit perfectly.

This will likely be the most important decision a school board has to make in decades. Please honor to the criteria you established, show strength and leadership and consider making a decision for the betterment of us all.

Sincerely

Rich Wenzel

53 Mt Whitney Dr