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Dear Neighbors,

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CITY OF PASADENA

In case you did not receive the unsigned document bearing the seal of the Pasadena Unified School District, it states that the Board of Education has decided "...effective immediately, the [Field School] walkway will be closed at all times." Their disappointing decision comes after the Board spent more than \$600,000 to install a security fence and artificial turf, of which \$42,000 was spent for the specific purpose of keeping the walkway open for public use.

Despite the document's assertion that "PUSD has exhausted avenues to keep the gate open for public use while maintaining the safety of students and staff of Field Elementary," their decision to close the walkway comes just three months after the Board raised the issue of the potential for liability. For the previous 18 months of intermittent closures and re-openings, PUSD's only stated concern had been the security of the school students and staff. Furthermore, at a community meeting last April, PUSD officials promised that the walkway would be reopened and the gate would be removed when the fence was completed. That promise has now been broken.

In response to PUSD's concern for potential liability, the City of Pasadena offered to take over maintenance for the walkway and accept liability for any related claims. The Board of Education, however, wants complete indemnification, to include any ADA claims, presumably due to its design and construction. The City has declined to indemnify PUSD for infrastructure and property owned by PUSD.

What can we do now? After hearing from dozens of unhappy neighbors, school parents, and others who have used the walkway for decades, we are resolved to find a political and/or legal means to preserve our access to the walkway that we used without restriction for more than 70 years.

Many of you have shown your support by writing letters, signing petitions or attending meetings of the Board of Education and City Council. The City Council has listened and they want the walkway kept open.

Your continued support will be essential to that effort, but mailings are expensive and time-consuming. In order to keep you informed in a more cost-effective manner, we ask that you provide us with your email address, and we thank you.

Lower Hastings Ranch Residents for Safety

12/04/2023

Special Item 6

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