

# Daily Breeze Newspaper

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## District thinking small

Downsized San Pedro campus looks like a fair compromise.

Community opposition has stymied recent efforts to reduce overcrowding at San Pedro High School, but a proposal that won the Los Angeles school board's support this week looks like a workable compromise.

School board member Richard Vladovic was a key proponent of the plan for a downsized high school near Angels Gate Park. The campus would house the marine science magnet school now based at the San Pedro High campus. The plan is to put 810 students at the new campus - that's about 400 students fewer than under a previous plan.

LAUSD officials seem to have taken concerns of nearby residents to heart by proposing a campus that is more in tune with facilities in the area, including the Marine Mammal Care Center and the district's Point Fermin Outdoor Education Center. Officials propose busing students between San Pedro High and the proposed satellite campus to eliminate concerns about car traffic. In addition, a new road would help reroute some traffic away from residential areas.

There are other arguments for a smaller campus. For instance, enrollment in the Los Angeles Unified School District has declined by 50,000 over the past five years. So perhaps an 810-student campus would be big enough to address overpopulation concerns in the years to come.

It's also clear small campuses are better positioned to improve student achievement than traditional comprehensive high schools. According to EdSource, a nonpartisan, nonprofit educational

research group in Mountain View, larger high schools can hinder student achievement because many students "get lost in the shuffle, with no adult paying specific attention to their academic needs, much less any personal problems that may prevent school success."

A smaller campus, however, should be better able to give students the personal attention they need. Ideally, a smaller teaching staff would be able to work more as a team on integrated learning approaches.

Vladovic emphasized the smaller-campus approach to learning when he ran for school board. It's good to see that he is following through on it, and that district officials are at least responding to community concerns as they move forward.

This week's school board vote is certainly not the last word on this project, but we're encouraged that things seem to be moving in a positive direction.