

**Mira Mesa Cluster Schools
Changes Occurring to Schools in Fall 2015
Information Sheet**

Q. What are the changes being made by the district for the 2015-16 school year? Which schools will be impacted?

A.

1. Attendance boundaries will change for Hickman, Mason, Sandburg, and Walker elementary schools in order to create an attendance boundary for the new Salk Elementary School.
2. Ericson, Mason, and Walker elementary schools will convert from year-round to traditional calendar.
3. The optional area between Mira Mesa and Scripps Ranch high schools, which encompasses the Hage elementary boundary, will be phased out. Mira Mesa High School will be considered the neighborhood school.

All schools in the Mira Mesa cluster, with the exception of Mira Mesa High, will be **directly** impacted by these changes.

Q. Why are the changes taking place?

- A. Salk Elementary is currently under construction and scheduled to open as a K-5 school in September 2015. The opening of Salk requires establishing attendance boundaries for the new school, as well as adjusting the attendance boundaries of other elementary schools in the cluster. The integration of the new school offers the opportunity to reinforce a smooth K-12 articulation across the cluster.

As detailed in the Board Report, district staff attended a total of three monthly Mira Mesa Cluster Council meetings (February 24, March 24, and April 28, 2014) in order to present, discuss, and receive community feedback on various boundary change scenarios and the other topics up for discussion. Based on input from all represented stakeholder groups, the proposed changes were presented and approved by the Board of Education on May 27, 2014.

Q. When will the changes take effect?

- A. September 2015 for the 2015-16 school year.

Q. When were these changes approved by the Board of Education?

- A. May 27, 2014. Item G-3: Comprehensive Plan for Integrating Opening of Salk Elementary into Mira Mesa Cluster in September 2015 (Evans/Foster).

Q. How can I find out what the new attendance boundaries are and which school my child will attend?

- A. The district has created an interactive attendance boundary map that will allow individuals to type in their home address to determine which school their child will attend. The map is located on the district's Instructional Facilities Planning web page, which can be found by going to:

<http://www.sandi.net/Page/68731>.

Q. What if I would prefer my child stay at the school at which they currently attend?

A. Students entering their last year at the school (students who will be in fifth grade in 2015-16 school year) can remain, along with their concurrently enrolled siblings; all other students must apply through School Choice application at www.sandi.net/apply. Applications can be submitted between Nov. 1, 2014 and Feb. 15, 2015. Enrollment will be on a space available basis.

Q. How does the district decide on new school boundaries or change a school's existing school boundaries?

A. Several things are considered when creating and/or adjusting school boundaries. As much as possible, the district tries to: adhere to natural and man-made geographic barriers, such as canyons, rivers, freeways and major streets; efficiently balance the number of resident students with capacity available at each school; minimize the amount of change caused by redrawing boundaries; and minimize the distance students must travel to reach their resident school.

Q. How were these new boundaries established?

A. The district reviewed current boundaries, analyzed enrollment data and presented several scenarios to the Mira Mesa Cluster Council on three separate occasions in Spring of 2014. Consensus was reached and the current boundaries were presented to the Board of Education for approval. A detailed outline of this process is available on the district website at www.sandi.net/boe (Go to Meeting Information> Board Docs>Enter Public Site>Meetings>May 27, 2014>View Agenda) in the item entitled: May 27, 2014. Item G-3: Comprehensive Plan for Integrating Opening of Salk Elementary into Mira Mesa Cluster in September 2015 (Evans/Foster).

Q. Why was the optional area for students residing in the Hage boundary eliminated?

A. The Mira Mesa Cluster Council requested this optional area be eliminated because at present, residents of Hage Elementary School progress to Wangenheim Middle School, but as they move to 9th grade, tracking their option to either Mira Mesa or Scripps Ranch high schools is problematic and makes scheduling at either school more complex. The Council wanted all Mira Mesa elementary schools to have a clear articulation path through Mira Mesa middle schools, then to Mira Mesa High School.

Q. How will the phase out of this optional area be handled? What does this mean for students who live in the boundary area?

A. The Board voted to end the optional area between Mira Mesa High and Scripps Ranch High at its May 27, 2014 meeting. Moving forward, Mira Mesa High will be considered the neighborhood school. The process for phasing out the optional area will be communicated to district families residing in the area over the next several months.

Q. Why are Ericson, Mason, and Walker elementary schools transitioning to a traditional calendar school?

A. Ericson, Mason, Walker will convert to traditional calendars in order to reduce the number of students that choose to other schools due to calendar conflicts. Eliminating this conflict will, in turn, facilitate higher attendance at neighborhood schools, balance enrollment and align the cluster schools at all levels. Changes to school calendars would occur in the 2015-16 school year.

Q. What steps will be taken to transition Ericson, Mason, and Walker to a traditional calendar?

A. Ongoing communication will occur throughout the year to families. The 2015-16 school year calendar is anticipated to be released later this fall following board approval. Families who wish to continue attending a year-round school may also apply for the 2015-16 school year through the School Choice application, open Nov. 1, 2014 – Feb. 15, 2015. For more information, visit www.sandi.net/apply or call 619-725-5672.

Q. Is the move to convert Ericson, Mason and Walker to traditional calendars part of the district's move to convert all year-rounds to traditional schedules?

A. The conversion of these three schools is part of the Mira Mesa cluster's community based master planning effort, which looked at alignment amongst all schools in the cluster. The recommendation to move Ericson, Mason and Walker to a traditional calendar was brought forward by the cluster community and approved through board action. Discussions to move all schools to a common calendar are ongoing.

Q. What are the benefits of being on a common calendar?

- A. A single calendar:
- Helps families with students at various grade levels. Currently, some families have students in both traditional and year-round schools, which pose challenges for childcare, vacation, and other scheduling issues because students are not on break at the same time.
 - A single calendar also serves families who rely on older siblings to look after younger children.
 - A single district-wide calendar will better accommodate students who transfer from one site to another without the experience of lost instructional days because of a mismatch of calendar.
 - Summer school for middle and elementary students can be offered closer to the end of the traditional calendar year's last day versus more than a month later. This will make it easier for families to make summer plans.
 - Middle school students currently at year-round schools will be able to fully participate in sports, Summer Bridge Programs and matriculation activities that are offered at their feeder high school.
 - Similarly, the traditional calendar enables full student participation in summer camps and activities offered during the summer break, allowing for authentic experiences outside of the classroom.
 - Families who would like their children to be on the same calendar across grade levels (elementary, middle and high school) will no longer need to apply to another school.

Q. How will teachers be assigned to accommodate these changes?

A. The teachers' contract defines this type of organizational change as a "School Grade-Span Organizational Change" in which one or more grade levels are added to or deleted from a school without changing the basic educational philosophy. The district will follow all procedures outlined in the teachers' contract to ensure minimal impact on teachers, students and school sites.

Q. What other options are available for students in the affected areas?

A. Students may apply to attend a school other than their neighborhood school via the School Choice application available at www.sandi.net/apply. The application period is from November 1 – February 15 for each upcoming school year.