

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Mr. Lewis Vanderzyl
President
Mrs. Gayle Cloud
Vice President
Mrs. Maxine Frost
Clerk
Mrs. Kathy Allavie
Dr. Charles Beaty

Riverside Unified School District

6050 INDUSTRIAL AVENUE
RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92504
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT
BUSINESS SERVICES AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS
(951) 352-6729
FAX: (951) 352-5517

SUSAN J. RAINEY, ED.D.
District Superintendent

March 2, 2006

Riverside Public Utilities
City of Riverside
3900 Main Street
Riverside, California 92522

Attn: David Wright, Director
Riverside Public Utilities

Members, Riverside Public Utilities Commission

Re: Public Hearing on Proposed Water Rate Increase
March 2, 2006

Dear Dave and Commission Members:

The Riverside Unified School District (District) is in receipt of a Notice regarding proposed water rate increases to be imposed by the City of Riverside (City). The District desires to provide written comments relative to the City's proposed action.

1. The District is one of the City's largest water customers. The District's schools serve over 43,000 students in kindergarten and grades 1 through 12. In addition, more than 12,000 adults enroll in Adult Education classes. The District is one of the region's largest employers, employing approximately 5,200 full and part-time employees.
2. Based on current consumption levels, the proposed rate increase of roughly 20% per year for each of the next three years would amount to a rough increase of \$225,000 over this period of time. Furthermore, the District is currently constructing or in design on two additional elementary schools that will open in this timeframe and would be served by the City.

3. School district funding is out of the control of the local district and is governed almost entirely by the State of California. The State allocates an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) to the District to cover increased costs of operations. The average COLA over the past several years has been around 3% per year.
4. The District is not able to pass on these increased costs to our "customers" but must absorb them into our operation. A dramatic increase of 20% per year in one component of our utility consumption will require budget reductions in other areas.
5. In the recent past, the City has imposed a water rate increase that included a conservation assessment. In discussions with the City, this conservation assessment was to be used in part to assist some the City's largest water costumers. To date, the City has conducted and reported one water audit at North High School and either conducted or has pending water audits at two elementary schools. However, no funding has been provided to affect a water conservation program at any of our schools.
6. The District respectfully requests that the City develop an alternative plan to address the water delivery infrastructure needs of the community. Additionally, the District respectfully requests that the City consider a separate rate pricing structure for educational institutions.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Michael H. Fine
Deputy Superintendent
Business Services and Governmental Relations