

March 16, 2010

Members of ACCS and SBE;

In September 2009 nine teachers, one demoted principal, one parent, and one community member surprised the communities of Piru and the Rancho Sespe Housing Development and the great majority of the staff of Piru Elementary when they presented a conversion petition to the Fillmore Unified School District. Though the petitioners may have the legal right to file their flawed petition to convert Piru Elementary School to Piru Charter School, they have not recognized the spirit of the law to give the community control of its educational institutions. Piru is a small rural community whose nearest neighbor is Fillmore 8 miles away. Its only school is Piru Elementary. The petitioners seek to take over this school without the participation or consent of the community. They claim that the community will be given a choice with the opening of Piru Charter School. But the truth is that the choice they are offering the community after closing its only school is to bus their students to another community eight miles away. When one petitioner said to a community member, "We did this for you," the community member responded, "We didn't ask you to do it and you didn't ask us if we wanted you to take over our school." This summarizes the voice of the community. Parents were not given the opportunity to participate in the writing of the conversion charter or the opportunity to review it before it was filed. Since the Piru Charter School Petition has been filed the community and parents have taken a strong stand against the Petition. Not only has both the Fillmore Unified School District School Board and the Ventura County Board of Education rejected the petition for its flaws with a total of 10 votes against and 0 votes for the petition, the parents and community has rejected this charter with petitions of its own. In the "No Charter" petition, included in this packet, parents have signed to indicate their opposition to the Piru Charter School Petition. Their signatures represent approximately two-hundred of the 350 students currently attending Piru Elementary. Without the support of these parents Piru Charter School is unlikely to be successful. The ACCS should hear the voices of the parents and of the community and recommend to deny the Piru Charter School petition to the SBE for its flaws and lack of community support that are certain to lead to Piru Charter School's failure.

#### Supporters of Piru Elementary School

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