	Case 4:74-cv-00090-DCB Document 1614	Filed 06/06/14 Page 1 of 13				
1 2 3 4	RUSING LOPEZ & LIZARDI, P.L.L.C. 6363 North Swan Road, Suite 151 Tucson, Arizona 85718 Telephone: (520) 792-4800 Facsimile: (520)529-4262 J. William Brammer, Jr. (State Bar No. 002079)					
5 6 7	wbrammer@rllaz.com Michael J. Rusing (State Bar No. 006617) mrusing@rllaz.com Patricia V. Waterkotte (State Bar No. 029231) pvictory@rllaz.com <i>Attorneys for Tucson Unified School District No.</i>	One, et al.				
8	IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT					
9	FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA					
10 11	Roy and Josie Fisher, et al.,	CV 74-90 TUC DCB (Lead Case)				
12	Plaintiffs v.	OBJECTION TO REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION ON				
13	United States of America,	BOUNDARY REVIEW PROCESS (ECF 1601)				
14 15	Plaintiff-Intervenor,	Oral Argument Requested				
13 16 17	v. Anita Lohr, et al., Defendants,	CV 74-204 TUC DCB (Consolidated Case)				
18	and					
19	Sidney L. Sutton, et al.,					
20	Defendants-Intervenors,					
21	Maria Mendoza, et al.					
22 23	Plaintiffs,					
23	United States of America,					
25	Plaintiff-Intervenor,					
26	V. Tusson Unified School District No. One. at al.					
27	Tucson Unified School District No. One, et al. Defendants.					
28						

I. **INTRODUCTION**

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Tucson Unified School District, No. 1 ("TUSD") objects to the Special Master's Report and Recommendation ("R&R") regarding the Boundary Review Process ("BRP").¹ This objection is made on the grounds that the BRP complies with the letter and spirit of the Unitary Status Plan ("USP") and the Constitution and, accordingly, should not be disturbed.² This objection is supported by the Declaration of J. William Brammer, Jr. and Bryant Nodine and the materials attached thereto.

8 The Special Master's R&R, brought at the request of the Fisher Plaintiffs, addresses 9 four issues: (1) whether the BRP, which already requires and has a racially-diverse 10 boundary review committee ("BRC"), should have mandated racial quotas even though the 11 USP does not require it and no Plaintiff has requested it; (2) whether TUSD is allowed to 12 consider criteria in addition to the criteria in the USP when reviewing potential boundary 13 changes; (3) whether the websites, update meetings, thousands of pages of materials and 14 data, and the participation of six of Plaintiffs' representatives on the BRC enables the Fisher 15 Plaintiffs to participate meaningfully in the BRP; and (4) whether the BRP must be revised 16 due to the Fisher Plaintiffs' disagreement with TUSD's Special Master-endorsed policy 17 allowing students previously affected by school closure to remain in their new school if a 18 boundary change would result in their assignment to a third school. Neither the Mendoza 19 Plaintiffs nor the Department of Justice ("DOJ") share the Fisher Plaintiffs' objections, nor 20 have they requested an R&R on these or any other BRP-related matter. See ECF 1601. 21

²³ ¹ This objection is permitted by the Appointment Order (ECF 1350) and Fed. R. Civ. P. 53 which each permit objections to a Special Master's report and recommendation within 30 24 days and 21 days of the report and recommendation (respectively). The Court subsequently truncated objection period significantly by reducing the objection period to 7 days from 25 service of the R&R (see ECF 1529 at 9) and accordingly, this objection is filed in 26 accordance with ECF 1529.

As described in the Declaration of TUSD's Acting Director of Planning and Student 27 Assignment, Bryant Nodine, ("Decl. Nodine") filed concurrently herewith, the BRP is well under way. The Boundary Review Committee held its first meeting on March 26, 2014. 28

1

II. STANDARD OF REVIEW OF OBJECTIONS TO THE BRP R&R

2 This Court must conduct a *de novo* review of TUSD's objections to the Special 3 Master's BRP R&R. See Fed. R. Civ. P. 53(f)(3) and (f)(4). In a de novo review, TUSD's 4 BRP must be upheld if it "conforms to the consent decree entered into by the parties and . . . 5 is compatible with the Constitution of the United States". United States v. South Bend 6 Community School Corp., 511 F. Supp. 1352, 1360 (N.D. Ind. 1981). See also Fisher 7 Plaintiffs' Objection, ECF 1601 at 47 ("School policies must yield to the Constitution 8 [only] where they stand to impede or otherwise limit the implementation of the USP"); BRP 9 R&R at p. 7 (the Court should "allow local policy to stand when it believes the local policy 10 is in the interest of the students involved and facilitates the implementation of the USP over 11 time").

12 Neither the Special Master nor any Plaintiff has suggested that TUSD's BRP is 13 unconstitutional. The de novo review therefore must focus on whether the BRP conforms to 14 the USP. The USP requires no specific BRP. Instead, the USP requires that TUSD "review 15 its current attendance boundaries and feeder patterns and, as appropriate, amend such 16 boundaries and patterns and/or provide for the pairing and/or clustering of schools to 17 promote integration of the affected schools." See ECF 1450 at 9, USP § II.D.3. The USP 18 further requires that, in drawing attendance boundaries, TUSD consider six criteria: (i) 19 current and projected enrollment; (ii) capacity; (iii) compactness of the attendance area; (iv) 20physical barriers; (v) demographics (i.e., race, ethnicity, growth projections, socioeconomic 21 status); and (vi) effects on school integration. See ECF 1450 at 9, USP § II.D.2. Finally, in 22 applying these criteria, the USP requires TUSD to propose and evaluate various scenarios 23 with, at minimum, the Plaintiffs and the Special Master, in an effort to increase the 24 integration of its schools. Id.

To the extent the BRP includes policies or criteria beyond what the USP expressly requires, and that a Plaintiff alleges may obstruct the USP, the Court must review this policy/criteria to determine if it "would inescapably operate to obstruct the remedies granted by the District Court". *See North Carolina State Bd. Of Ed. v. Swann*, 402 U.S. 43,

1 45 (1971). See also United States v. Scotland Neck City Bd. of Education, 407 U.S. 484, 2 491 (1972) (racially-motivated state law creating new school district as refuge for white 3 students unconstitutional as it would "impede and defeat" desegregation plan or preclude 4 meaningful desegregation). Indeed, it is inappropriate to summarily invalidate a school 5 policy which is not a "flat" or "absolute" impediment to the USP's goals. See Brown v. 6 Califano, 455 F. Supp. 837, 841 (D.D.C. 1978) (Upholding statute limiting means available 7 to federal government to check racial discrimination in federally-supported schools 8 because, "contrary to the situation presented in *Swann*, the [challenged] statutes . . . do not 9 qualify as 'flat' or 'absolute prohibitions' against [necessary desegregation efforts])".

10 A final touchstone in a *de novo* review is this Court's recognition that, where there is 11 no USP or Constitutional violation, "its discretion is limited pursuant to Fisher v. Tucson 12 Unified School District, 652 F.3d1131 (9th Cir. 2011) and the USP. The Court is not here to 13 act as a 'super school board' and is mindful of its role; the Court does not intend to micro-14 manage programmatic decisions by the District and will defer to reasonable proposals by 15 the District") (citations omitted). See ECF 1477. See also Anderson v. Canton Mun. 16 Separate School District, 232 F.3d 450, 454 (5th. Cir. 2000) (courts must be "cognizant of 17 the deference that must be accorded to school boards in their decisions"); Morgan v. 18 McDonough, 689 F.2d 265, 276 (1st Cir. 1982) ("courts must narrowly tailor their remedial 19 orders to the unconstitutional conditions which gave rise to the need for court intervention" 20and "in so doing, courts should defer whenever possible to the reasonable proposals of the 21 local officials charged with administering the school system"); United States v. South Bend 22 Community School Corp., 511 F.Supp. 1352 (N.D. Ind. 1981) ("This Court is not here to act 23 as a super school board nor is it here to decide what the best or most desirable plan of 24 desegregation may be. Rather, this Court's duty is only to determine whether the plan 25 submitted conforms to the consent decree entered into by the parties and whether it is 26 compatible with the Constitution of the United States"); Richmond Welfare Rights Org. v. 27 Snodgrass, 525 F.2d 197, 207 (9th Cir. 1975) ("Except as last-resort refuges for the 28protection of constitutional rights, courts should not attempt to function as super school

1 boards").

2

3

4

11

III. THE SPECIAL MASTER'S REQUEST TO IMPOSE RACE FORMULAS ON THE BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE SHOULD BE REJECTED A. The BRC's Membership Complies With The USP

5 The BRC was developed by TUSD to solicit fresh ideas on how to amend TUSD 6 boundaries to promote integration. See Decl. Nodine \P 4. It is a racially-diverse group 7 comprised of 5 African American members, 12 Latino members, 8 White members, 1 Asian 8 and 4 Native Americans. Id. ¶ 7. Although the USP neither requires nor mentions a 9 Boundary Committee, the BRC's raison d'être is to implement the USP's goals. It is no 10 surprise, therefore, that the DOJ has no concerns about or objection to the BRC or its composition. See Declaration of J. William Brammer, Jr. ("Decl. Brammer") ¶ 4, Ex. 3; 12 4/15/14 Email from DOJ ("The United States has no express concerns here because the 13 committee is racially diverse and the precise racial composition of this Committee has not 14 been prescribed nor is governed by the USP."). Accordingly, the BRC clearly complies 15 with the USP and helps facilitate its implementation.

B. The Existing BRP Requires The BRC To Be Racially Diverse

17 The BRP requires that BRC members "represent a reasonable mix of the diversity 18 and ethnicity of the affected communities". See ECF 1601 at 25. And, as the DOJ 19 approvingly has noted, the BRC is in fact "racially diverse." See Decl. Brammer ¶ 4, Ex. 3; 204/15/14. Email from DOJ. Although TUSD cannot completely control the racial and ethnic 21 makeup of the BRC, as it is comprised of volunteer applicants, TUSD actively recruited 22 racially-diverse committee members. See Decl. Nodine ¶ 6. TUSD also included four 23 representatives of the Fisher Plaintiffs' class and two representatives of the Mendoza 24 Plaintiffs' class on the BRC. See Id. Plaintiffs' appointed representatives alone compromise 25 20% of the BRC.

26

C. No Plaintiff Requested an R&R on BRC Membership

27 The USP and this Court's Process Order require that any R&R be made upon a 28 Plaintiff's request for judicial review and include an explanation of the disagreement

1 between the parties along with the Special Master's recommendation for resolution. See 2 USP I.D.I, ECF 1510 at 8, lines 4-12, 1529 at 7-10. However, the BRP R&R includes no 3 Plaintiff complaint or request regarding the composition of the BRC. Indeed, the DOJ 4 expressly stated it has no opposition to its composition. See Decl. Brammer ¶ 4, Ex. 3, 5 4/15/14, Email from DOJ. Accordingly, the Special Master's R&R on the BRC's 6 composition is authorized by neither the USP nor the Process Order (ECF 1510) and should 7 be denied on this basis alone.

8

9

11

D. The BRP R&R Contradicts The Special Master's Prior

Recommendation To TUSD that Race Formulas Should Not be Used

10 The Special Master's R&R requests that the Court mandate a race-based formula for the BRC's membership. See ECF 1601 at 3 ("the District plan should be amended to 12 require that the boundary committee should be comprised of between 15-25 members³ whose racial composition generally reflects the racial composition of the population living in TUSD."). The Special Master also proposes to restrict the ability of TUSD employees (including teachers) to participate on the BRC. See ECF 1601 at 3-4 ("Employees of the District should not comprise more than a third of Committee members").

17 These recommendations, which are not based on any USP mandate or on any request 18 by a Plaintiff for judicial review, also should be rejected because they are contrary to the 19 recommendations the Special Master provided to TUSD before filing the R&R. On April 2015, 2014, the Special Master recommended to TUSD that it should not reserve a certain 21 number of spots on the BRC by race. See Decl. Brammer ¶ 3, Ex. 2, 4/15/14, 2:10 p.m., 22 Email from Special Master ("I don't believe there should be racial spots on the 23 committee....") The Special Master further advised TUSD that although "race matters", he 24 would oppose the use of any specific formulas or guidelines based upon race. See Decl. 25

²⁷ The current boundary review committee has 30 members. No explanation is provided for why the Special Master now suggests reducing the number of committee members, nor is 28 TUSD aware of any request made by the Plaintiffs to do so.

1 Brammer ¶ 5, Ex. 4, 4/15/14, 1:38 p.m. Email from Special Master ("I would oppose 2 specific formulas or guidelines but race matters").

IV. **TUSD'S USE OF ADDITIONAL CRITERIA TO EVALUATE BOUNDARIES CONFORMS TO THE USP**

3

4

5

7

8

9

10

11

The BRP Incorporates All of the USP Criteria А.

6 The BRP includes verbatim all of the USP criteria relating to proposed boundary changes. See ECF 1601 at 10 and 23. The USP criteria first were presented to the BRC at their March 21, 2014 orientation meeting with a slide show presentation available in both electronic and hard copy to all BRC members (and the public). See Decl. Nodine ¶ 8, Ex. 2A. The USP criteria were presented again to the BRC at all subsequent meetings. See, e.g., Decl. Nodine ¶ 8, Exs 3C, 4A & 6-B1.⁴ The "Frequently Asked Questions" resource available to BRC members also states that proposed boundary changes will be reviewed using USP criteria. See http://tusd1.org/contents/distinfo/boundaryreview/faq.asp. See Id. Additionally, the forms BRC members utilize to analyze boundary options include all USP criteria. See, e.g., Decl. Nodine ¶ 8, Ex. 6-A2.

B. Additional Criteria In The BRP Do Not Impede Or Limit The **Implementation Of The USP**

18 The board-adopted policy ("JC-R") referred to in the BRP also incorporates the USP 19 criteria. See ECF 1601 at 23. In addition to the six USP criteria, the JC-R also includes the 20following five additional criteria: targeted operating capacities, student transportation, 21 feeder patterns, recent boundary changes affecting the area, and fiscal impacts. See ECF 23 22 at 70 (criteria b & g-j). The Special Master concedes that the USP does not prohibit the 23 District from considering additional criteria so long as they do not "undermine decisions 24 based on the criteria in the USP." See ECF 1601 at 8.

25 The additional criteria in the BRP reflect important and appropriate policy 26 considerations (including facilitating compliance with other areas of the USP). Neither the

All of the slide show presentations made to the BRC also are available publically on 28 TUSD's website: http://tusd1.org/contents/distinfo/boundaryreview/index.asp.

1 Plaintiffs nor the Special Master has suggested which of the additional criteria, if any, 2 violates the Constitution, in any way impedes or defeats implementation of the USP, or 3 otherwise precludes meaningful desegregation, nor is there any reason for such a concern. 4 Cf. Swann, 402 U.S. 43; Scotland Neck City Bd. of Education, 407 U.S. 484 (school policy 5 should not be disturbed where it does not inescapably operate to obstruct the remedies 6 granted by the District Court). Indeed, the Special Master expressly supports the use of the 7 additional criterion relating to not moving any student twice previously moved because of 8 prior school closures in a new boundary change. See ECF 1601.

9 The BRP incorporates all USP-required criteria relating to proposed boundary 10 changes. More generally, the BRP presents a comprehensive and workable framework to 11 facilitate USP implementation. There is no reason to interfere with or obstruct TUSD's 12 ability to account for important nonracial educational, logistical and financial criteria in 13 addition to those identified in the USP. See United States v. Unified Sch. Dist. No. 500, 974 14 F. Supp. 1367, 1384 (D. Kan. 1997)("the Constitution does not require that all neutral, 15 nonracial, educational, geographical, and political considerations -- which so vitally affect 16 the nature and quality of public school systems -- give way to overzealous pursuit of the 17 single goal of desegregation").

18 The Special Master's suggested course of action – that the parties confer (resulting in 19 additional attorneys' fees and costs for plaintiffs' counsel at the expense of the District) or 20 that he be commissioned to revise the BRP's language – is both unnecessary and 21 inappropriate. The BRP as written conforms perfectly to the letter and spirit of the USP. 22 Furthermore, the scope of the Special Master's authority and expertise does not include 23 interfering with nonracial policy criteria that neither obstruct the goals of the USP nor are 24 mandated by it. The Special Master has no legal authority to act as a "super school board" 25 by imposing on TUSD his policy preferences on nonracial matters when TUSD is 26 complying with all aspects of the USP. See, e.g., Anderson v. Canton Mun. Separate School 27 District, 232 F.3d 450, 454 (5th. Cir. 2000)

28

Rusing Lopez & Lizardi, P.L.L.C. 6363 North Swan Road, Suite 151 Tucson, Arizona 85718 Telephone: (520) 792-4800 1 2

V.

TUSD HAS PROVIDED TIMELY INFORMATION ON BOUNDARY REVIEW TO THE FISHER PLAINTIFFS

3 The Special Master's R&R refers to the Fisher Plaintiffs' contention "that their 4 ability to contribute to the development of a boundary plan is impeded by the district's 5 incomplete or delayed provision of information needed to play an informed role in the 6 process." See ECF 1601 at 6. It is unclear from the R&R whether the Special Master 7 agrees with this contention (and, if so, why and to what extent). In any event, the Fisher 8 Plaintiffs' contention of incomplete or delayed information is bewildering in light of the 9 mountain of information provided to their representatives and counsel, the significant extent 10 of TUSD's responses to their requests, and the close communication with and participation 11 by the Fisher Plaintiffs (and all Plaintiffs and the Special Master) in this process.

For example, TUSD created a BRC website, available to BRC members (including the four Fisher Plaintiffs' class members), that is updated timely and periodically with information, including agendas, slide show presentations, data and minutes of the meetings. *See* Decl. Nodine ¶ 9, Exs. 1-14.

16 TUSD also created a BRP website available to Plaintiffs' counsel and the Special 17 Master that also is updated periodically with information, including all materials provided 18 to the BRC at the BRC meetings See Decl. Nodine ¶ 10, Exs. 15, 17-18, 20-23) as well as 19 all materials provided during TUSD's meetings with the Plaintiffs' counsel and Special 20Master to keep them updated and answer questions on the boundary review process (*Id.*, 21 Exs. 16 & 19). The Fisher Plaintiffs also had "real time" updates on the boundary review 22 process at each of the seven BRC meetings, by virtue of their four class representatives 23 attending them.⁵

TUSD also arranged several meetings between TUSD, Plaintiffs' counsel, and the Special Master to provide updates and address any specific comments or questions regarding the BRP. *See* Decl. Nodine ¶ 10. These meetings lasted for several hours each

²⁸ $\begin{bmatrix} 5 & \text{The Fisher Plaintiffs class representatives attended BRC meetings on March 26, April 2, 9, 16, and 30, and May 14 and 28.$ *See* $Decl. Nodine <math>\P$ 8.

1 and occurred on March 28, 2014, April 16, 2014 and May 20, 2014. See Id. In addition, on 2 April 23, 2014, TUSD provided the Fisher Plaintiffs with responses addressing nearly thirty 3 comments they had made.⁶ See Decl. Brammer ¶ 6, Ex. 5, 4/23/14 Responses to Fisher 4 Plaintiffs' Request for Information. TUSD also responded to requests for information and 5 comments directly from the Fisher Plaintiffs' representatives in their capacity as BRC 6 members. See Decl. Nodine ¶ 11. In sum, TUSD unquestionably has provided the Fisher 7 Plaintiffs with extensive information on an ongoing basis and unprecedented access to the 8 entire BRP process.

VI. TUSD'S POLICY THAT STUDENTS PREVIOULSY AFFECTED BY SCHOOL CLOSURES SHOULD NOT BE REQUIRED TO MOVE AGAIN CONFORMS TO THE USP

The Special Master agrees that TUSD should be able to consider additional nonracial criteria in addition to those in the USP. *See* ECF 1601 at 8. The scope and content of these additional criteria is not within the Special Master's jurisdiction unless they in some way obstruct or undermine the USP. Nonetheless, the Special Master also agrees that the additional criterion considering previous school closures is appropriate and should not be disturbed. *See* ECF 1601 at 9 ("This Court should not change the district's boundary plan insofar as it allows students previously affected by school closure to remain in their new school if a boundary change would result in their assignment to a third school").

The Fisher Plaintiffs nevertheless attempt to attack this reasonable policy
consideration by seizing upon this Court's previous citation to *North Carolina State Bd. Of Ed. v. Swann*, 402 U.S. 43, 46 (1971). Plaintiffs' reliance on *Swann* is misplaced. The
Supreme Court in *Swann* struck down a patently discriminatory anti-busing state law

24

9

10

11

 $[\]begin{bmatrix} 25 \\ 26 \end{bmatrix}$ ⁶ The BRP R&R's inclusion of the Fisher Plaintiffs' comments/objections without attaching TUSD's responses is a violation of this Court's prior orders requiring inclusion of all

submissions made to the Special Master with respect to the items at issue. This also creates a procedurally unfair and one-sided presentation in the BRP R&R of the issues at hand. *See*

²⁸ ECF 1529 ("The Special Master's report shall include as attachments all submissions made to him by the Parties with respect to the item(s) in issue.")

because it would "inescapably operate to obstruct the remedies granted by the District
Court...." 402 U.S. at 45. *Swann* affirms that a state legislature may not impede or
otherwise limit implementation of a court-ordered desegregation plan. But there is no
suggestion that any TUSD policy or action relating to the BRP obstructs the USP and/or
meaningful desegregation in any way. As discussed above, the BRP conforms to the USP
and facilitates its implementation in every respect.

The Special Master agrees that TUSD's desire to protect students from a third school
transfer was motivated by the best interests of all TUSD students and the District as a
whole. *See* ECF 1601 at 7 (Special Master recommends that the Court uphold the District's
policy barring transfer to a third school where "it is in the best interest of the students
involved and facilitates the implementation of the USP over time."). The Fisher Plaintiffs
have not charged TUSD with any improper motive to obstruct or undermine the USP and
no such motive exists.

VII. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, TUSD respectfully requests that the Special Master's R&R
on the BRP be denied in part and granted in part, as outlined above.

DATED this 6th day of June, 2014.

RUSING LOPEZ & LIZARDI, P.L.L.C.

s/ J. William Brammer, Jr. J. William Brammer, Jr. Michael J. Rusing Patricia V. Waterkotte Attorneys for Tucson Unified School District No. One, et al.

14

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

Rusing Lopez & Lizardi, P.L.L.C. 6363 North Swan Road, Suite 151 Tucson, Arizona 85718

	Case 4:74-cv-00090-DCB	Document 1614	Filed 06/06/14	Page 13 of 13
Rusing Lopez & Lizardi, P.L.L.C. 6363 North Swan Road, Suite 151 7ucson, Arizona 85718 7 Telephone: (520) 792-4800 11 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12	Case 4:74-cv-00090-DCB COPY of the foregoing served this 6th day of June, 2014 to: WILLIS D. HAWLEY Special Master 2138 Tawes Building College of Education University of Maryland College Park, MD 20742 (301) 405-3592 wdh@umd.edu s/ Jason Linaman		Filed 06/06/14	Page 13 of 13
17 18 19				
20				
21				
22 23				
23				
25				
26				
27				
28				
20		12		