Objects to Kaiser's Plans to Eliminate Pediatric Unit in New San Leandro Hospital

Editor:

 Although originally presented as a full service medical center, Kaiser Permanente has made the decision to exclude the Inpatient Pediatric Unit from the original plan for the hospital.

 What this means for the pediatric Kaiser members in San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Castro Valley, Hayward, Union City, Newark, and Fremont is that if hospitalization is required, the children will need to be transferred to the Oakland or Santa Clara Medical Centers dependent on bed availability.

 Children and their families deserve to receive inpatient care within their communities. The Kaiser Hayward Inpatient Unit has provided excellent care and service for hospitalized children for many decades. Dedicated and experienced doctors and registered nurses are highly trained in the specialty of pediatrics and have the skills needed to provide for acute care diagnoses.

 The Kaiser Hayward Inpatient Unit cares for children 1 to 2 days of age up to 18 years of age. Currently, some Kaiser Hospitals that do not have Inpatient Pediatric Units are admitting children over 13 years of age to adult units.

 Adults units are not designed to meet the special needs of children. The Hayward Inpatient Pediatric Unit serves more than 1,000 hospitalized children and their families per year.

 Why is Kaiser planning to eliminate the Pediatric Unit when the Hayward Medical Center moves to San Leandro?

 Kaiser can certainly afford to provide this service as originally promised to the residents of San Leandro. After all, Kaiser made $1.9 billion dollars in profits last year, and could afford to give the CEO a one million dollar raise, bringing his annual salary to $8.9 million!

 Your children deserve to receive inpatient care within your community. The members and residents need to let Kaiser know that they will not accept any less. (www.SavePediatrics.org).

—**Kristine Richter** RN, *San Leandro*

Family Income's Importance in School Test Scores

Editor:

 Rob Banks' letter *("Castro Valley Student-Costs are Lower, But Test Scores Beat San Leandro's," Letters, Aug. 30)* doesn't take into account all the variables that affect test scores.

 It has been shown that test scores are not just a measure of costs per student. One fact that is rarely brought out is that the only constant in city school test scores is the average family income. The higher scores almost always are in cities with higher average incomes per capita. Castro Valley's average income is $25,000 more than San Leandro's.

 Educators are trying to close this gap, but it is not easy. There are numerous factors involved in testing results. There are no simple answers.

—**Paul Moura**, *San Leandro*

Stop Blaming Under-Performing Schools for Low Test Scores

Editor:

 As the parent of an 11th grader at SLHS, an adult educator, and a student of early childhood development, I have to object to Mr. Banks's letter *(see above)*
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 Many factors affect test scores. A substantial amount of research correlates low test scores with poverty. Castro Valley is a wealthier community than San Leandro (family income is $31,000 a year higher, according to Wikipedia). In fact, I would argue that most children in our public schools come from poor or lower middle-class families.

 Obviously, many poor and lower middle-class families do not have access to the means which enhance their children's education. These children usually do not have private tutors, private sports or music lessons, and travel opportunities. They often do not have homes full of books, a quiet place to study, and most importantly caregivers (parents, relatives, nannies) who have the time or ability to give them the tools they need to succeed in school.

 A Stanford University study followed several poor and wealthy families for years and discovered that children from wealthy families started kindergarten knowing tens of thousands more words than children from poor families. How can a gap like that be closed? Also, it's no secret that many San Leandro families of means send their children to private schools or have moved to Castro Valley, Pleasanton, or other wealthier Bay Area communities because of test scores.

 San Leandro also has a high number of English language learners. I have often imagined what would happen to my daughter if we moved, say, to Russia. And take that one more step: I had a 6th grade education in my native language. Her Russian STAR Test scores would be abysmal! Our English language learners are judged by the same tests as the native speakers.

 In my opinion, we should pass the parcel tax. Our struggling families need all the help they can get. Let's get away from blaming "under-performing schools" as the reason for low test scores. Let's look carefully at other factors too.

—**Lisa Camp**, *San Leandro*

Would Parcel Tax Go to Help Pay Christine Lim's Pension?

Editor:

According to the Aug. 31 Daily Review, the former superintendent of the San Leandro School District, Christine Lim, who was terminated by the school board in 2010, is now receiving an annual pension of $244,329. The article states that her pension is larger than her salary while she was an employee of the District.

No wonder the District needs a parcel tax to pay for overly generous retirement pensions! The parcel tax is for "general operating expenses," which includes salaries and pension contributions.

—**George Tucker**, *San Leandro*

We Can Reduce Crime by Improving Education

Editor:

 As the education level increases, the crime rate decreases. According to the U. S. Census Bureau, 90% of violent crimes are committed by persons with 12 years of education or less.

 We can reduce crime and increase safety by ensuring that our population is well educated above the high school level. Or we can continue to pour money into cops and prisons and an endless circle of tax increases to pay for it all.

 The San Leandro Times plans to profile candidates for the City Council. I will be looking for the candidate who will get to the root of our problems like poverty and a lack of quality education.

 Crime will not be solved by adding more cops but it can be solved by ensuring that all of our population is well educated and has an equal opportunity to realize their full potential.

—**Elie Parker**, *San Leandro*