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## **SEQUOIA HEALTHCARE DISTRICT SUPPLEMENTS GRANT PROGRAM, COASTSIDE STUDY WINDING DOWN**

REDWOOD CITY — Sequoia Healthcare District directors Wednesday night augmented their 2009 grants program with emergency funding for a half-time elementary school nurse position in the San Carlos School District and for a San Carlos recreation program that serves 25 autistic, Down's syndrome and children with other developmental disabilities.

The additions represent slight expansion in the district's \$8 million per year community healthcare funding budget but represent significant assistance for the school district and the San Carlos Parks and Recreation programs.

San Carlos schools Superintendent Craig Baker said the recent discovery that it would cost \$570,000 more than projected to serve the district's special education students this year — plus the expectation of a \$1 million budget cut next fiscal year — would require cutting the half-time nurse position that provides care to 3,000 K-8 students on six school campuses.

Sequoia Healthcare District directors funded the \$43,500 needed to keep the school nurse this year. In the current year's district Caring Community Grants Program Sequoia Healthcare has funded one school nurse in the Sequoia High School District and the Redwood City School District.

In the other matter, the City of San Carlos weekday Special Needs After School Program experienced an immediate loss of funding from the state's Golden Gate Regional Center as a result of the California's revenue shortfall problem.

The Sequoia Healthcare District board agreed to replace the \$25,000 in lost state revenue.

District board President Don Horsley and Director Kim Griffin also reported that it appears that a study of San Mateo County Coastside healthcare needs is likely to conclude that there is insufficient funding, support or need for a coastside medical clinic to replace the former Coastside Family Medical Clinic. The clinic closed abruptly last April, provoking a crisis that now is making its way through bankruptcy proceedings.

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The district joined with the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and Sequoia Hospital to fund a \$20,000 study of coastside healthcare needs in the wake of the closure.

President Horsley reported that it appears a new private medical practice, the Purisima Medical Center, which opened after and in response to the Coastside Medical Center's closing, has helped alleviate the primary care problem.

Purisima doctors have pledged to accept a certain amount of uninsured and charity care cases that were of immediate concern to healthcare providers.

Directors Wednesday night also renewed their commitment to the Sequoia Hospital Foundation by agreeing to set aside \$2.5 million in matching funds for charitable fundraising by the foundation.

The foundation is supporting Sequoia Hospital's multi-year capital program to bring advanced mammography and medical imaging technology to the hospital.

Foundation spokeswoman JoAnn Kemist said the hospital and its non-profit foundation are preparing to serve a segment of the district's female population that will grow exponentially in coming years. These are women in their mid-life years who no longer need the services of the hospital's state-of-the-art birth center or specialty services or who are not typical candidates because of age for care such as cardiovascular surgery.

Sequoia Healthcare District has assisted foundation fundraising efforts for several years, most recently with a two-year, \$2 million matching grant that the foundation fulfilled through private philanthropy in nine months.

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