

School district might hold year-round school

United Press International
EL PASO — Officials of the rural school district of Socorro — confronted with an exploding population, already high taxes and a small tax base — are studying a plan to switch to a 12-month school year, officials said Monday.

Under the plan, students and teachers would go to school for the same number of school days as they do now. But instead of everyone attending school from late August to the end of May,

the school year would be divided into eight six-week units year-round, and every student and teacher would attend six of the units.

School buildings would be used all year, but no more than about three-quarters of the students would be in the buildings at the same time, said Bill Sybert, superintendent of the Socorro Independent School District, who added the plan would save 25 percent in construction costs.

Oswald Glaze, president of

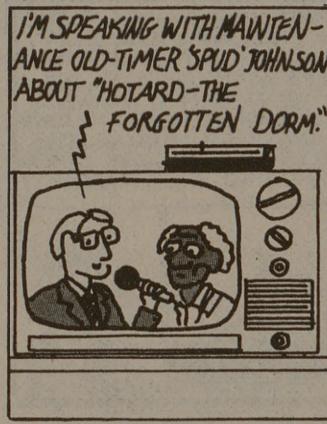
the school board in Socorro, a small community east of El Paso, said the district could delay building a new school for four or five years if the plan is implemented.

Both Glaze and Sybert are anticipating opposition from parents, administrators and teachers.

Sybert said the community is not going to be happy with any choice made in the future to grapple with the district's population explosion. The district now has 6,700 students, and it is projected to grow to about 9,000 by the 1986-87 school year, he said.

R.I.

by Paul Dirmeyer



Texan, Mexican planners trying to solve problems

United Press International
JUAREZ, Mexico — Cities along the U.S.-Mexico border are joined by common growth but separated by different sys-

tems of law, an international planner said Monday at the opening of a four-day regional planning conference.

Nestor Valencia of El Paso opened the border planning conference on a pessimistic note, detailing failed attempts at bi-national planning.

Planners from El Paso, southwestern border states and northern Mexico are attending the conference, which is expected to address border ecological problems.

"There have been numerous treaties and agreements signed," Valencia said. "The im-

acts have been short-lived and sporadic."

Valencia said border cities such as El Paso and Juarez have achieved best results from informal cooperation in solving mutual problems. International law divides the two communities, he said.

The city planner called for creation of a permanent commission similar to the U.S.-Mexico International Boundary and Water Commission.

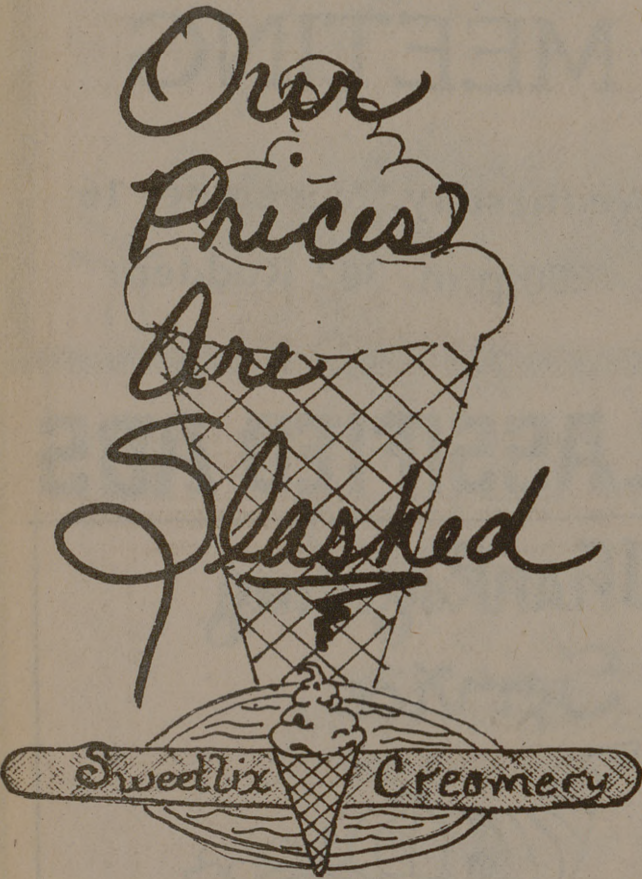
Valencia said the new commission would devise public policies to help both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border and work

on common problems such as water pollution, water resource and border crossings.

Border crossings alone are expected to increase from 8 million per year to 130 million per year by 2000, Valencia said. "If the situation at the international bridges is intolerable now we can imagine what it will be like in the future."

A Mexican representative scheduled to discuss international treaties for housing an urban development at Tuesday's morning session of the conference.

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Supreme Court sidesteps silent prayer controversy

United Press International
WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court, sidestepping the school prayer issue in a New Mexico case, refused Monday to consider whether states violate religious freedom by requiring a daily moment of silence in classrooms.

The justices, without comment, let stand a ruling striking down New Mexico's "One Mi-

minute of Silence" statute that allows school prayer. A lower court has decided that the law violated the Constitution's bar against entangling state and religion.

Other challenges to such laws are likely to reach the Supreme Court in the future, however, and the court may decide to review one of them. As many as 20 states, including New Jersey,

Connecticut, Maryland and Virginia, have laws allowing a daily moment of silence as a way to avoid the Supreme Court prohibition against prayer in public schools.

One appeal may come from New Jersey, where a similar law was ruled unconstitutional Oct. 24. Tennessee's law also failed a lower court test, but a similar law passed muster in Massachusetts.

The high court's action came the same day parents of Alabama students arranged to renew their plea in the Supreme Court to allow their children to pray in school.

A U.S. district judge's ruling upholding Alabama's school prayer law has been overturned by a federal appeals court.

In other actions Monday, nine justices, before recess until Nov. 28:

- Dodged a decision on whether the government may deny financial aid to a college in this case the University of Miami — because its traditional relationship with an all-male honor society injected sex discrimination into the school's academic program.
- Refused to reinstate \$200,000 in child-rearing expenses to a Virginia woman who conceived the child after sterilization failed. The case was brought by Sandra Hartke, who was represented by her father, former Indiana Sen. Vance Hartke.
- Agreed to hear an appeal by Maryland's Coppin State College, which was sued by two employees for racial bias in firing. U.S. appeals court said the state's six-month limit was too short a time for such cases to be brought.
- Refused to hear an appeal from a Baton Rouge, La., resident, George Hayes, who challenged a \$15 traffic ticket all the way to the high court.

With the court again avoiding school prayer controversies, efforts are continuing in Congress to approve a constitutional amendment to permit classroom prayer. President Reagan has endorsed a version to allow audible prayer; another version would allow silent prayer or meditation.

In 1981, New Mexico's legislature passed its minute of silence statute that allows local school boards to "authorize a period of silence not to exceed one minute at the beginning of the school day (to) be used for contemplation, meditation or prayer."

Jerry Duffy, whose son was student in the Las Cruces school district, challenged the practice and won a ruling by U.S. District Judge Juan Burciaga, who said: "It is clear that the pre-eminent purpose was to establish a devotional exercise in the classrooms of New Mexico public schools."

The 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals refused to review the ruling. When the school board voted unanimously not to appeal, a New Mexico resident asked the Supreme Court to step in.

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Yearbook Associates, located at 1700 S. Kyle behind Culpepper Plaza, will be taking pictures Nov. 11 and Nov. 14-18 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information call 693-6756 or 845-2681.

Yearbook Associates will also be taking Junior and Senior pictures at their office Nov. 28-Dec. 2 and at the Pavilion Dec. 5-9. No more pictures will be taken after Dec. 9.