

HUMBOLDT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
310 East Fourth Street
WINNEMUCCA, NEVADA 89445

A special meeting of the Humboldt County Board of School Trustees was held November 16, 2010 at 6:04 p.m. in the Orovada Community Hall.

Board members present were: President-Shelly Noble, Clerk-Kris Stewart, John Seeliger, Ann Miller, John Hill, Boyd Betteridge, and Andrew Hillyer.

Others in attendance were: Superintendent Mike Bumgartner, Asst. Superintendent Dave Jensen, Junior Huttman, Ray Parks, Jonathan Gibson, Leah Rookstool, Kim Forney, Marlene Fetic, Jeannie Mertens, Debbie Giordano, Jess and Sarah Frey, Will and Katie Delong, Mary Lynn Hill, Donna Hill, Deena Moddrell, Frankie Peterson, Jaimi Wilkinson, Matt and Leah Mori, Cheryl Mitchell, Larry and Heidi Renteria, Delia Nuffer, Mona Abel, Carolyn Dufurrena, Rob Lindsay, Mike Montero, Leonard Montero, Janet Johnson, Jean Williams, Mary Heather Gula-Humboldt Sun, Joyce Sheen-Silver Pinion Journal, other interested persons and Secretary Paula Wright.

President Noble opened the meeting.

Discussion Only - Work Session of the Humboldt County School District Board of Trustees to Discuss and Gather Community Input Regarding the Creation of a Strategic Plan for Humboldt County Rural Schools and the Educational Needs of Humboldt County Rural Students

Mr. Bumgartner thanked everyone for coming. The District and Board of Trustees have identified two trends that could greatly impact rural student education: continued declining enrollment and budget reductions state-wide and within Humboldt County School District. The Board felt that input from rural communities was critical in formulating a Rural School Strategic Plan.

Dr. Jensen provided background data on 1) past enrollment figures, 2) revenue reductions for the period 2008-2010, 3) operational costs vs revenue (rural schools 2010-11), and 4) per pupil expenditures. He also explained how schools are funded in Nevada using the "Nevada Plan".

The audience was asked to focus on three questions as they broke into groups for a collaborative "brainstorm" session. 1) What ideas do you have that will enable the HCSD to provide a meaningful education for rural students given declining enrollment and shrinking resources? 2) Are there alternative means of educating students that could reduce costs and yet better meet the needs of rural students? 3) What are your thoughts about the possible restructuring, consolidation or closing of the school in your community?

Below are the ideas, suggestions and concerns from the "brainstorming" session as they pertain to each question asked.

What ideas do you have that will enable the HCSD to provide a meaningful education for rural students given declining enrollment and shrinking resources?

- Bus Winnemucca school students to rural areas
- The use of vans or suburbans vs buses
- The use of smaller buses over larger buses
- Parents will volunteer to transport students to and from school

- School supplies provided by the PTO/PTA
- 4-day school week in Winnemucca
- Salary freeze
- Cut unnecessary administration
- Reduce classified staff
- Role and responsibility of rural principal-possible reduction in structure
- Reduce salaries across the board
- Reduce administrative salaries
- 20% pay reduction for administration
- 10% pay reduction for certified/classified staff
- Other administrative cost savings
- Parent volunteers in place of aides
- Contract support services
- Review current collective bargaining agreements
- Cut art, music
- Use rural teachers to teach art, music, PE
- Use community members to teach art, music, PE on a more permanent basis
- Hold back on some programs
- Pay-to-play (how much does it generate compared to the total cost of the programs?)
- Extracurricular activities (who pays?)
- Cut sports funding across the board
- Cut Freshman sports
- Cost comparison of Freshman sports with cost of rural schools
- Community supported sports rather than school supported
- In-town parents transport athletes
- Cut food service, go to meals-ready-to-eat (MRE's)
- Reduce food service support staff in town and use volunteers
- Newly created jobs should be the first to be cut
- Sub-contract janitorial services
- Volunteers to provide janitorial services
- Close high school campus
- Charge high school students to park in town
- Maintenance efficiency-better scheduling of work days for maintenance
- Better efficiency in scheduling picture taking day
- Ensure students attend the school they are zoned for
- Hold teachers accountable
- Use community to help with extra programs
- Evaluate upgrading of technology in schools

Are there alternative means of educating students that could reduce costs and yet better meet the needs of rural students?

- Increase the use of the A+ program
- Charter school-partial funding (expand internet based options)
- Internet based school (one teacher + the internet)
- Educate 9-12th grade students locally
- I-Pad/I-Touch learning (consideration must be taken for ESL students)

- Ensure course offerings
- Find a way to offer higher education options
- Offer more Ag in schools

What are your thoughts about the possible restructuring, consolidation or closing of the school in your community?

- Centralized school (magnet school)
- Centralized school focusing on Vo-Ag
- Consolidate in-town schools
- No school closures

Questions/Concerns:

- Are future students (numbers) being considered? Use the Census.
- Quality education, importance of social interaction
- Consideration of current student count over “count day” numbers-should be addressed with the state department
- What programs have been cut in town?
- Will the DSA funding be reduced if there is less school property to maintain?
- Unintended consequences when rural schools are closed: 1) property values depreciate 2) inability for farms and ranches to hire
- Look at other rural areas-How do they educate students?
- Achievement-rural vs in-town
- Rural school education is a heritage, it is a unique experience
- The rural student/teacher ratio is ideal
- Rural schools are the heart of the community
- If schools are consolidated, will some students not attend?
- If schools are consolidated there is concern regarding winter road conditions, longer bus rides and the liability to the District
- How is PASS and JOIN funded?
- Business changes
- Keep the image of a stable school system

Public Comment

1. Katie DeLong thanked the Board for having the meeting to allow all rural communities to come together to discuss issues. Mrs. DeLong feels that, in their presentation, the District was comparing the highest student enrollment figure to the current enrollment figures and then coming up with a percentage of reduction rate in the rurals; which is not an accurate figure. She felt it needs to be based on an average. She felt the data was skewed in the way presented.
2. Jean Williams suggested that schools communicate better with the community as to things they may need for the school. Community members would be willing to purchase supplies and senior citizens would be willing to come into the schools to read to students. She also suggested lobbying the state to get additional funding for the influx of students (Ruby Pipeline) who have enrolled since “count day”. Mrs. Williams said “Once schools are closed, will they just sit there and become an eye sore?” She also asked if the Board would consider leaving the school open until enrollment increases, for example, the young population who are not of school age yet.

3. Janet Johnson said she spoke to the county treasurer and was told that the taxes paid by the rural communities do not leave Humboldt County. Mrs. Johnson said that \$3,064,809 gets paid monthly to the school board and the DSA comes from the state. She also said that on the tax roll, the 27 cents per hundred is separate from the \$3+ million collected and that the 27 cents per hundred amount does go to the state.

Dr. Jensen stated that the District receives 75 cents per \$100 assessed valuation and that is based on the DSA formula. It does go to the county, but ultimately is re-funneled back to the District through the DSA formula determined in Carson City. The District does not receive the funds directly; it offsets the \$6,091 as the 2/3rd's of the local revenues generated. For every \$1 million of assessed valuation for Net Proceeds of Mines, the DSA is reduced by approximately \$1.05.

Mrs. Johnson noted that the rural areas pay a huge portion of the 2/3rd's tax that is collected. She said that the Denio area pays 2.59% of the total taxes collected for the county, but only receives .56% of the school budget and yet the District wants to cut Denio completely. "It should be considered that you don't look at just the numbers, you look at the percentage of what is being paid." Mrs. Johnson stated that the District should look at the overall school. "It costs the same amount to run the school; the same faculty, the same bus driver, the janitor, the same aide." "The numbers fluctuate, so it should be an average vs the current year." "It skews it to make it look bad."

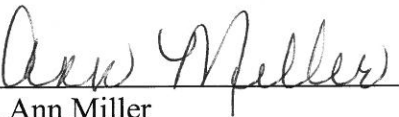
Mrs. Johnson invited the Board members and administration to visit each community and see, not just the school, but how the community lives.

No other comments were provided.

The next rural school meeting will be held January 18th, 2011 at the Orovada Community Hall at 6 p.m.

Adjourned 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by Secretary, Paula Wright


Clerk, Ann Miller