

Measures I and H Fail: Is it Time for Educators to Join the Real World?

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For decades public education has asked the property owner for more money and the public has given that additional funding without hesitation. It is for the children after all. No one has questioned the constantly moving parade of reasons exactly why public education seems to have gotten so incredibly expensive. Not many have bothered to ask the question, just what are we getting for all the money?

As with anything, times appear to have changed, at least in Del Norte County. The Del Norte Unified School District (DNUSD) asked, and local voters said NO! The College of the Redwoods asked, and local voters said NO, as well.

Why the change in attitude from the 2008 ask by the school district which produced a 57% YES for a \$25 million general obligation bond? While there are likely as many reasons as there are voters in 2024 elections, most folks I've encountered are tired of paying enormous sums, close to \$80 million for this school year, for the abysmal results produced by the DNUSD. Long overdue...about time!

For the school district to ask for an additional \$59 million and the college \$120 million was a proverbial "bridge too far". What was the need for so much attention to physical structures when failure to educate doesn't make an appearance? When was the school district going to recognize its incompetence and stop making excuses for dismal student testing performance? Never?

Following the 2008 bond debacle, people had begun to recognize paying increasing amounts of money for a particular product becomes progressively worse is not going to improve the product. Something has to change and change in a significant fashion it did... The school district exposed for its failure to educate has become will not be rewarded with incompetent student performance and more money until it does something breath-takingly simple: Improve educational performance.

DNUSD and Administration were advised the community, faced with inflation and loss of spending power for the past several years, reached its limit. The voters could no longer bear the cost of an out-of-touch education community which lives in a completely different world than most in Del Norte County and has failed to produce what they are paid to accomplish: EDUCATE!

For many in Del Norte County the time has come to stop the bleeding and demand better performance from the DNUSD before another dollar of the taxpayers' rapidly shrinking income vanishes all together. The school district product has been defective for decades. Time for all the distractions to evaporate and the task of preparing our youth to become functional adults, not simply indoctrinated victims becoming the next generation of young adults to enter into the ranks of those dependent on the County's Department of Health and Human Services.

A school district report to the Board of Supervisors revealed that nearly 60% of the County's population was functionally illiterate.

Shocking!

A later report by DHHS exposed nearly 60% of the County's population is dependent on its services.

Unacceptable!

How can the school district blithely ignore such damning information and without a whit of recognition that the DNUSD is a problem for this community? More money isn't a fix for the school district. Time to take the blinders off, join the rest of us out here in the real world and do what you are being paid to do:

EDUCATE!

The failure of Measures H and I should be a wake-up call for those employed by the school district to climb down from your self-appointed perches and join the rest of us in the real world. You have been judged and have found to be lacking... Get to work.