

NEVADA JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

REASON FOR INVESTIGATION

The Nevada Joint Union High School District (NJUHSD) has created a Facility Improvement Plan that addresses the needs, both immediate and future, of Nevada Union, Bear River, and Sierra Foothill High Schools. Since this document states that part of the funding be provided by a school bond election in March 2002, the Grand Jury investigated the need for the proposed improvements.

PROCEDURE FOLLOWED

The Grand Jury toured Nevada Union High School, Bear River High School, and Sierra Foothill High School. The County Superintendent of Schools, Superintendent of NJUHSD, and district employees were interviewed. Sources of funding were reviewed.

FINDINGS

1. Nevada Union High School's original buildings were built between 1960-1968. Sierra Foothill High School was built in 1939 and Bear River High School was built in 1985-1986.
2. Nevada Union and Sierra Foothill High Schools are not compliant with the current Americans with Disabilities Act. Some of the items that need addressing are bathrooms and gymnasium locker rooms at Nevada Union and Sierra Foothill High Schools. Additionally, Sierra Foothill High School needs an elevator to make the second floor accessible.
3. Nevada Union High School has encapsulated asbestos components on campus, such as the original tile in some hallways, the cafeteria flooring, and the pipe wrapping in the boiler room.
4. The 33-year-old Ali Gymnasium at Nevada Union is used for community activities, interleague games, and physical education classes. One section of the original floor has damage due to moisture. The entire floor has been sanded repeatedly. Six hundred square feet of the floor has been patched several times. The bleachers, original to the gym, have required repairs on numerous occasions. Maintenance personnel informed the Grand Jury that the flooring and bleachers need to be replaced.
5. The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are inadequate to support demand from five of the ten classroom wings at Nevada Union High School. Both gymnasium locker rooms also need HVAC retrofitting.

6. Using the State Office of Public School Construction formula, capacity of the permanent facilities at Nevada Union High School is 2025 students. Current enrollment is 2681. The current capacity at Bear River High School is 810 students, with an enrollment of 1143.
7. In addition to student usage, approximately 42 community groups also use the facilities at the high schools in Nevada Joint Union High School District.
8. Bear River does not have an auditorium or an aquatic facility.
9. Sources of funding available to Nevada Joint Union High School District have not proved adequate to keep up with the needed improvements.

CONCLUSIONS

1. There is overcrowding at Nevada Union and Bear River High Schools.
2. To support their complete educational program, Bear River requires an auditorium and an aquatic facility comparable to those at Nevada Union.
3. There is a potential hazard due to encapsulated asbestos at Nevada Union High School.
4. Nevada Union and Sierra Foothill High Schools are not compliant with the current Americans with Disabilities Act.
5. Nevada Union High School's original buildings are in need of major renovations and retrofits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Considering the magnitude of capital improvements needed, NJUHSD should identify and actively pursue all funding options.
2. Nevada Union and Sierra Foothill High Schools should be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
3. Removal of asbestos at Nevada Union High School should be addressed as soon as financially possible.
4. There is a need to implement the proposed improvements cited in the Facility Improvement Plan.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

None