

EARLE JAMIESON HIGH SCHOOL

REASON FOR THE INVESTIGATION

The Nevada County Grand Jury received a citizen's complaint about the operation of Earle Jamieson High School (EJHS). The concerns were the recidivism rate of students returning to EJHS and Juvenile Hall after being relocated to home or alternative schools, the interaction between male and female students, and the absence of a formal procedure to move EJHS students back to their original schools to complete their high school education in a timely manner.

PROCEDURE FOLLOWED

The Grand Jury interviewed Fred Metz, EJHS Administrator; Dr Joseph Boeckx, Nevada Joint Union High School District (NJUHSD) Superintendent; Dr Terry McAteer County Superintendent of Schools; Earle Conway, Director of Alternative Education; Linda Campbell, Sierra Foothill High School (SFHS) Administrator; Marilyn Keeble, Nevada Union High School (NUHS) Principal; Dianne Chenoweth, Director Nevada County Mental Health Department; and John Wardell, Chief Probation Officer.

The Grand Jury toured the campuses of EJHS and SFHS, studied: Nevada County School Crime reports, Resolution No. 98142 (authority to hire probation officer) of the Board of Supervisors dated April 8, 1998, the Nevada County ADA (attendance) and Drop Out Rate records, and the 1998/1999 Grand Jury Recommendations.

FINDINGS

1. Earle Jamieson High School and Sierra Foothill High School are under the jurisdiction of NJUHSD.
2. The return rate for students returning to EJHS and Juvenile Hall for the 1998/1999 school year was 16% (6 of 36). Of the 6 returning, 2 of those returning to EJHS were by the students' own request, 3 were transferred back to EJHS as a result of contract violations, and 1 was returned to Juvenile Hall.
3. Because of two unfilled vacancies, EJHS has a staff of only three, including the administrator, with an average daily attendance of 36 students. Physical Education classes are combined male/female.
4. The truancy rate at EJHS for the 1998/1999 school year was 40%. The 1998/1999 Grand Jury recommended that the district implement a contract with the County Probation Department to enforce attendance at EJHS. The district agreed with the Grand jury and said a full time probation officer would be in place at the beginning of the 1999/2000 school year.

5. The probation officer was not hired until March 2000. This position is funded by the Nevada County Mental Health Department and is located at EJHS.
6. The 1998/1999 Grand Jury recommended a later dismissal time at EJHS than the current 1:15 PM, in order to provide additional classes such as vocational and life skills training. No change has been made to date.
7. A screening committee decides on placement of students failing at NUHS or Bear River High School (BRHS). Students expelled or placed on probation are automatically sent to EJHS.
8. A second screening committee, comprised of education and probation authorities exists for placement of students leaving Juvenile Hall.
9. Few students return to their original school because they have fallen too far behind their class academically. These students are most often placed at alternative schools.
10. In December 1999, EJHS was temporarily moved from the Bennett Street location to a new location on the SFHS campus in former Adult Education Buildings. Staff size and dismissal times are unchanged. Current student population is 37, 70% boys, 30% girls.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Locating the newly hired probation officer at EJHS , the smallest school with the highest truancy rate, should give EJHS maximum benefit.
2. The delay in hiring the new probation officer resulted from an apparent lack of follow up on the part of NJUHSD, the County Mental Health Department and the Probation Department.
3. The early dismissal time (1:15PM) releases the students into the community unsupervised, providing added exposure to drug and other behavioral problems.
4. As a result of the current staffing level at EJHS, student activities are either under supervised or out of view of the staff resulting in allegations of male/female misconduct.
5. The high rate of truancy at EJHS hampers the ability of students to "catch up" academically with their original school class.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The temporary re-location of Earle Jamieson High School at the Sierra Foothill High School campus location should become permanent.
2. Supervision for all campus activities should be increased.
3. Physical Education classes for boys and girls should be separate.
4. This Grand Jury agrees with the 1998/1999 Grand Jury that the school day should be lengthened. Adding vocational education and life skills classes will reduce the amount of time the students spend unsupervised in the community.
5. The dedication of EJHS Administrator Fred Metz should be commended. He and other administrators in the Alternative Education Program, as well as the program itself, should continue to receive the full support of the NJUHSD, the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools, and the community.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Nevada County Joint Union High School Board, Due September 30, 2000
Nevada County Joint Union High School Superintendent, Due August 30, 2000
Nevada County Board of Education, Due September 30, 2000
Nevada County Superintendent of Schools, Due August 30, 2000
Nevada County Mental Health Department, Due September 30, 2000
Nevada County Probation Department, Due September 30, 2000

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NEVADA COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Terence K. McAteer

July 15, 2000

Hon. Carl F. Bryan II, Presiding Judge, Nevada County Superior Court
David Janison, Foreman, 1999-2000 Grand Jury
Eric Rood Administration Center
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

Dear Judge Bryan and Foreman Janison:

I write to you in my capacity as County Superintendent of Schools in response to the Grand Jury report regarding Earle Jamieson (EJ) High School. As you are aware, county school funds flow through my office, and in turn, for many years we have contracted with Nevada Joint Union High School District to staff and manage Earle Jamieson. It was felt then and now that NJUHSD would be better able to serve high school youth at all ability levels and academic situations than could the County Office of Education.

With that said, I believe the Grand Jury report to be accurate. In fact, I agree with each of your findings. Regarding your recommendations, I am not in the position to implement them, as NJUHSD is the contractor. I can assure you that I will discuss your recommendations in short order with NJUHSD Superintendent Boeckx.

Recommendations and responses:

1. The temporary re-location of Earle Jamieson High School to the Sierra Foothill High School campus location should become permanent.
My understanding is that the move is a permanent one.
2. Supervision for all campus activities should be increased.
In keeping with a balanced budget, I would certainly agree.
3. Physical Education classes for boys and girls should be separate.
I believe this recommendation needs further analysis. At my 3R Community Day School, our P.E. classes are co-ed and we find positives and negatives with such a system. The number of girls, the style of the physical education being delivered, and the demeanor of the boy/girl interaction is important. I believe you can structure P.E. to be properly delivered in either mode, depending on the aforementioned variables.

4. This Grand Jury agrees with the 1998/1999 Grand Jury that the school day should be lengthened. Adding vocational education and life skills classes will reduce the amount of time the students spend unsupervised in the community.

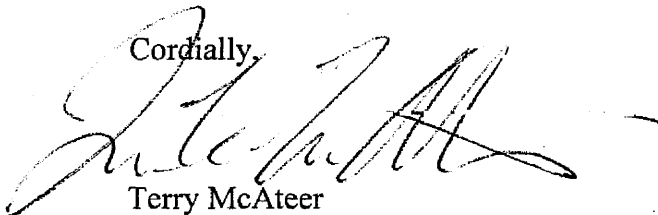
I agree. Having converted the 3R School from a Community School (4 hours) to a Community Day School (6 hours) has improved the quality and quantity of our instruction. I believe the same will hold true at E.J.

5. The dedication of EJHS Administrator Fred Metz should be commended. He and other administrators in the Alternative Education Program, as well as the program itself, should continue to receive the support of the NJUHSD, the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools, and the community.

I agree. Fred and his staff are stars!

Thanks to the members of the Grand Jury for their volunteer service to this county.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Terry McAteer', written in black ink.

Terry McAteer

TKM/af

NEVADA COUNTY
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

rec'd
SEP 26 2000

Dr. Terence K. McAteer

Date: September 18, 2000

To: The Honorable Carl F. Bryan II
Presiding Judge of the Nevada County Superior Court
David Janison, Foreman, 1999-2000 Grand Jury
County of Nevada
Nevada City, CA. 95959

From: John V. "Jack" Meeks, President
Nevada County Governing Board of Education

Re.: 1999-2000 Civil Grand Jury Final Report Recommendations -
The Nevada County Governing Board of Education response to the Grand
Jury recommendations regarding Earle Jamieson High School

Dear Judge Bryan and Foreman Janison:


Recommendations and responses to the findings of Earle Jamieson High School are as follows:

1. Permanent location of Earle Jamieson High School (EJHS) at Sierra Foothill campus (SFHS): Agree. Classrooms and offices are permanently located with full facilities, EJHS is adjacent to Sierra Foothill High School but separated by fence; EJHS and SFHS starting, ending and class times are arranged to ensure that their students do not interact.
2. Supervision for all campus activities should be increased: Agree. During all 240 minutes of class periods, five supervisors are available. They are EJHS administrator/teacher Fred Metz, on-site probation officer Carol Gillette, counselor Jan Stires, teacher Mike McLaughlin and teacher Brian Sanford.
3. Separate Physical Education classes for boys and girls: Agree in principle. Supervised weight room, jazzercise, softball, aerobics and rope climbing are available three periods a day; students tend to choose gender-appropriate activity.
4. Lengthened school day: Disagree unless following caveat can be implemented. Fred Metz states that more than five core classes are not cost/benefit effective, nor an educational advance; comprehensive high school students limited to 5 units x 6 classes=30 credits whereas EJHS students all take 5 x 5=25 credits and have option to take more and keep up with graduation credit requirements. All school time is work time, supervised and structured. Grass Valley Police Department reports no negative effect of 1:15 p.m. dismissal on students' free time. EJHS students are not allowed to visit other schools. 250 minutes/day of concentrated school reinforces regularity of

attendance. The Nevada County Governing Board of Education recommends that the NJUHSD contact the Regional Occupation Program (ROP). ROP can feasibly offer two additional hours of instruction on site. They can offer one class such as print shop that will introduce students to the ethics of business management or similar programs.

5. Dedication of Fred Metz and staff: Agree. Mr. Metz states his approach is educational not social; all his students have substance abuse problems, most will go to other alternative schools with more electives or leave the NJUHSD. Task completion rather than social adjustment keeps his rapport with his students.

Cordially,



John V. "Jack" Meeks

Cc: County of Nevada Civil Grand Jury
Mr. Boeckx, Superintendent of NJUHSD
Fred Metz, Earle Jamieson High School Administrator
Nevada County Governing Board of Education



NEVADA COUNTY

PROBATION DEPARTMENT

JOHN M. WARDELL
Chief Probation Officer

Second Floor Courthouse, 201 Church St., Suite 10
Nevada City, California 95959-2504
(916) 265-1200
Fax: (916) 265-1556

September 25, 2000

Honorable Carl F. Bryan II
Presiding Judge
Nevada County Superior Court
201 Church Street
Nevada City, CA 95959

Dear Judge Bryan:

The following is in response to the Civil Grand Jury finale report dealing with Earle Jamieson High School.

Pursuant to Section 933(c).

- (1) The respondent agrees with the finding.
- (2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the findings, in which case the respondent shall specify the portion of the findings that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefor

Section 933.05(b) For the purpose of subdivision (b) of Section 933, as to each grand jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:

- (1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.
- (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation.
- (3) The recommendation requires further analyses, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. The timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.
- (4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefor.

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FINDINGS

1. This Respondent agrees with this finding.
2. This Respondent agrees with this finding.
3. This Respondent agrees with this finding.
4. This Respondent agrees with this finding.
5. This Respondent agrees with this finding.
6. This Respondent agrees with this finding.
7. This Respondent disagrees with a portion of this finding. Further clarification is necessary. Students placed on probation are not automatically sent to EJHS. Although it is true many students on probation may end up at EJHS each student is assessed on an individual basis.
8. This Respondent agrees with this finding.
9. This Respondent agrees with this finding.
10. This Respondent agrees with this finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Pursuant to Section 933(c) of the California Penal Code, this Respondent agrees with the findings of the Grand Jury. Pursuant to Section 933.05(b), the Respondent does not believe further response is warranted, as such recommendations are not under the Probation Department's direct control.

Sincerely,



John M. Wardell
Chief Probation Officer

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NEVADA JOINT UNION
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

JOSEPH K. BOECKX, SUPERINTENDENT

OCT 9 - 2000

September 29, 2000

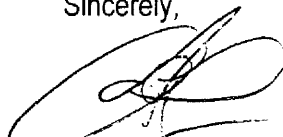
Honorable Carl Bryan III
Presiding Judge of the Nevada County Courts
Nevada County Courthouse
Nevada City, CA. 95959

RE: 1999-2000 Grand Jury Finding and Recommendations

Dear Judge Bryan:

In accordance with sections 933.05 (a) and 933.05 (b) of the California Penal Code please find the response to the 1999-2000 Grand Jury findings and recommendations from the Governing Board of the Nevada Joint Union High School District. If you have questions about any of our responses I will be happy to provide additional clarification.

Sincerely,



Charles Compton
Board President

FINDINGS

1. **Earle Jamieson High School and Sierra Foothill High School are under the jurisdiction of the NJUHSD.**

The district agrees with the finding.

2. **The return rate for students returning to EJHS and Juvenile Hall for the 1998-99 school year was 16% (6 of 36). Of the 6 returning, 2 of those returning to EJHS were by the students' own request, 3 were transferred back to EJHS as a result of contract violations, and 1 was returned to Juvenile Hall.**

The district agrees with the finding in that it accepts the statistics, although it could not verify such statistics.

3. **Because of two unfilled vacancies, EJHS has a staff of only three, including the administrator, with an average daily attendance of 36 students. Physical Education classes are combined male/female.**

The district agrees with the finding.

4. **The truancy rate at EJHS for the 98/99 school year was 40%. The 98/99 Grand Jury recommended that the district implement a contract with the County Probation Department to enforce attendance at EJHS. The district agreed with the Grand Jury and said a full-time probation officer would be in place at the beginning of the 1999/2000 school year.**

The district disagrees with this finding. While the actual attendance at Earle Jamieson High School may be close to the stated number, only a small percentage of those absences were a result of "truancy."

5. **The probation officer was not hired until March 2000. This position is funded by the Nevada County Mental Health Department and is located at EJHS.**

The district agrees with the finding.

6. **The 1998/1999 Grand Jury recommended a later dismissal time at EJHS than the current 1:15 p.m., in order to provide additional classes such as vocational and life skills training. No change has been made to date.**

The district agrees with the finding.