

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR Measure B

Our local high schools are in dire need of capital repairs as their aging infrastructure requires upgrading to assist in preparing our youth for the 21st century workplace. The State of California provides our schools with no funding for capital improvements.

Fifty-six year old Nevada Union High School requires new water, gas, sewer and utility lines along with new roofing, painting and accessibility upgrades. Likewise, vocational/technical educational programs need new equipment and upgraded facilities to insure job readiness skills.

Thirty year old Bear River High School needs new heating and air conditioning systems, new roofing, revamped kitchen facilities and classroom upgrades.

Seventy-seven year old Silver Springs High School needs new heating and air conditioning systems, and handicap accessibility issues addressed.

All campuses would be retrofitted with computer network infrastructure to complement our one-to-one computer initiative, insuring all youth are technologically prepared for the modern workplace. Lighting will be retrofitted at all campuses and solar installed where feasible. Finally, modern security systems and fire systems will be installed to insure greater campus security.

We are turning to you for your support to help maintain our high quality of education in Nevada County. None of the bond funds can be used for administrative salaries. A citizen oversight committee will be appointed to insure that all of the funds are directed toward infrastructure projects.

Nevada County citizens have always taken pride in our outstanding competitive and top-ranked public educational system. We need to continue that excellence. Therefore, we urge you to join the scores of civic, business, parent and retired residents in voting Yes on B. Supporting our schools helps maintain high property values but, most importantly, supporting our local youth is the right thing to do. We ask you to please vote Yes on B.

Primary Argument in Favor of Measure B

Signed:

Lisa Swarthout
Mike Bratton
Dan Castles
Richard Baker
Richard S. Werntz

Author:

Terence K. McAteer

Argument against Measure B

The proposed bond measure of \$47,000,000.00 should be rejected for three basic reasons:

- All of the School Accountability Report Cards (SARC) for the last three years state that facilities are in good condition;
- A continuing trend of declining enrollment;
- The likelihood that a large percentage of the facilities improved by bond funding will be abandoned before the end of their useful life.

(www.bearriver.njuhsd.com/njuhsd.com SARC reports)

In 2000, high school enrollment in all schools was 4,604; in 2015 it had declined to 3,003 or a loss of 35% from peak enrollment. From 2005 through 2015, intermediate school enrollment in the schools that feed the future enrollment of the high schools declined from 8,369 to 4,894 or a loss of 42% from peak enrollment. All indications point to a continuation and possible acceleration of this trend. It is evident that the effect of this trend will require the closure of a high school campus in the near future. (www.bearriver.njuhsd.com/njuhsd.com SARC & www.kidsdata.org)

The High School Board has already spent \$54,000.00 on consultant fees to lobby the public into supporting this bond proposal. If it is approved by the voters, there will be additional fees of \$220,000.00 to issue the bonds, for a total of \$274,000.00 in costs to promote and administer this program.

The District is proposing to increase the capacity of the high schools despite the fact that enrollment trends indicate that facilities should be reduced. The closure of a major high school campus is inevitable and will probably take place within the next five to ten years. If this bond is passed and millions of dollars of additional facilities are added, then the financial loss to taxpayers will be that much greater when one of the campuses is forced to close.

Citizens for Better Schools

Primary Argument Against Measure B

Signed:

Nancy C. Garcia
Janice R. Collins
Donald Ferreira
Penny Lucas
Wade Freedle

Author:

Wade Freedle

Rebuttal to Argument Against Measure B

Despite declining enrollment over the past decade, Nevada County enrollment has leveled off. In fact, elementary schools are seeing growth. Therefore, Bear River High School will continue to serve the southern part of the county; Nevada Union High School, the northern part; and Silver Springs will remain our alternative high school. There are absolutely no plans to close any of these three schools, period.

Recently, I was forced to close the Nevada Union campus twice due to gas leaks from its aged 60-year-old infrastructure. We are frequently closing Nevada Union bathrooms due to sewer system breakdowns. Bear River's cafeteria has no air conditioning while many classrooms are suffering from leaky roofs. Sacramento provides no funding for any of these improvements which is why we are seeking passage of Measure B.

You may find our specific Facilities Improvement Plan at: www.njuhsd.com

Measure B, while fixing infrastructure, will also provide needed improvements to our technology systems and vocational education programs so that our students have the needed equipment and skills to be productive citizens.

While the "Citizens for Better Schools Committee" has never met with me nor have I heard of the organization prior to their aforementioned statement, I want to reach out to them and any member of this community who would like a facilities tour of our schools. Please call me directly at 273-3351 x212.

It is our fiscal responsibility to provide sound educational facilities to insure the safety of our students.

Rebuttal to Argument Against Measure B

Signed:

Dr. Louise B Johnson

Author:

Terence K. McAteer

Rebuttal to argument in favor of Measure B

A significant aspect of any argument against Measure B is the continuing downward enrollment trend. According to the 2016-17 NJUHS District budget, page 12, it concludes that "..., the declining enrollment trend is expected to continue." This enrollment trend leads to the conclusion that only one high school campus will be needed. "The multi-year projections are based on assumptions provided by School Services of California, the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools and the District's enrollment projections ..." that expect 2,352 total high school students by 2019-2020 (NJUHSD Budget Page 160). This is well within the capacity of Nevada Union High School (2,500 students). Source: www.njuhsd.com

Facing these circumstances it is interesting to imagine what the District's motive might be in proposing to spend \$47,000,000.00 of your money on facilities that will just be constructed at about the time one of the campuses may have to be closed, but the bonds will require 30 years of payments. We believe that the District is planning to use the bond funds to support operating costs when enrollment falls to a level that is not supported by state funding. The taxpayers would then be put in the unenviable position of paying additional taxes for underutilized facilities, in essence, paying twice (once on the regular tax roll and again on the \$47,000,000.00 bond).

The fiscally responsible approach to Measure B is a resounding "no" vote.

Citizens for Better Schools

Rebuttal to Argument In Favor Of Measure B

Signed:

Claudia Taylor
Don Ferreira
Eddie Garcia
Wade Freedle

Author:

Wade Freedle