

Drug testing puts DCSD students on the sidelines

By Kathryn Reed

ZEPHYR COVE – When it comes to testing positive for drugs, students in Douglas County School District are about average.



Students in grades 9-12 participating in athletics and other extracurricular activities were subjected to random drug testing for the first time in 2009-10. The results of those tests were presented to the school board last week.

At Whittell High School 5.4 percent of the 186 tests came back positive. With 80 percent of the student body being available to be tested, many had to give multiple urine samples. The nine positive tests are not necessarily nine different students.

No seniors tested positive. Two juniors, three sophomores and four freshmen had positive tests. The two students who refused to take the test are categorized as positive.

At Douglas High, 2.3 percent of the 478 tests given came out positive. The two ninth-grade classes at the middle schools in the Carson Valley had a total of two positive tests for a 2.2 percent ratio.

The national average is 2.3 percent for grades 9-12.

Refusing to take the test resulted in not being able to participate in the sport or activity of choice. A positive test also meant being removed from the sport. Drug counseling through Tahoe Youth & Family Services was also mandatory.

Jeff Evans, dean of students at Douglas High, said, “What

isn't in this is how many kids can use this as an out at a party." Meaning instead of being teased for saying no to drugs by their peers, others will understand they want clean a test to keep being able to play so there won't be bulling or ridicule.

The tests cost the district \$23,500 last school year. Funding is in the current budget as well.