

Opinion: Recognizing the efforts to upgrade STHS

Publisher's note: *The following letter was sent to Lake Tahoe Unified School District Superintendent Jim Tarwater and is published with permission.*

Dear Dr. Tarwater:

My wife and I were among the many proud people you addressed at the grand opening of the Tahoe Arts & Design Academy.

We've lived here over 10 years, have one grandchild presently attending high school and another who soon will be. And though I earn my living as a writer and creative professional, words and ideas to express what you have created do not come easily.

I'm aware of the numerous board, staff and team members that worked together to make this dream become a reality. And I'm aware of the thicket of governmental issues you all had to wade through to keep this project on course, on time and on budget.

But at the end of the day, you were the driving force behind it. You were the agent of change. And you are the one who, to your eternal credit, re-opened the Meyers Elementary School and did so in record time. That was when I first became aware of your propensity toward pragmatic and your focus on creating positive change.

What South Tahoe High is now offering is an opportunity of immeasurable proportions.

It's an enlightened portal to the real world. A portal capable of opening minds, inspiring lives and getting students excited about learning. And it's all encased in a stimulating environment positively charged with possibilities.

For those interested in the creative arts, the new theater and its ancillary elements are nothing short of amazing. As someone who has spent endless hours, days and weeks in film production and post-production around the country and the world, I'm thrilled to have this creative learning center in our backyard.

At a time when our local economy is so difficult, with homes being foreclosed and jobs becoming scarcer, it was wonderful to be in a setting that was so upbeat, and hopeful.

We now have a campus that offers our kids the very best and challenges them to take it and make the most of themselves. Whichever direction they want to head, it's all here and it's state of the art. I only hope they realize what a valuable asset they have before them.

Thanks again for all that you and your team did. You have created far more than a series of structures. You have created a mind opening, life changing opportunity for our kids and an exciting new reason to be proud to call South Lake Tahoe home.

Sincerely,

James Barr, South Lake Tahoe