

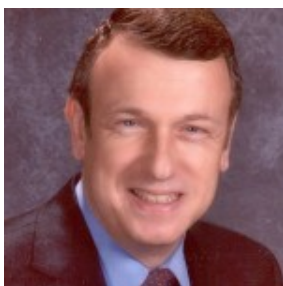
# Opinion: TTUSD budget issues linger despite Prop. 30 passing

By Rob Leri

Thanks to everyone who spread the word about how critical the vote was for us on Tuesday. I am pleased with the passage of Proposition 30. This provides a restoration of approximately \$1.6 million in ongoing funding for Tahoe Truckee Unified School District.

While this is a significant gain for us, we are still deficit spending and using reserves, so we will continue to need some reductions in expenditures in order to balance our budget.

Although early winter storms hampered some of the meetings, I truly appreciate all of you who came to show support and interest in implementing our new vision for the school district and to share your thoughts and ideas. It will take ongoing collaboration among parents, teachers, and district staff to make this vision a reality for our scholars. We are checking on dates to schedule another evening Coffee and Conversation meeting in Truckee later this month.



Rob Leri

There was a lot of speculation about the two snow days in early October – why they were called and the outlook for the

rest of the school year. The early nature of these storms and the heavy amount of snow in a short time presented some unique challenges. If we'd had these same conditions later in the year, it's possible that one of the snow days would not have been called. In the future, we will start posting a brief description on the TTUSD website about the reason a snow day is called.

On Oct. 18, the entire district participated in the Great American Shakeout to practice what to do should an earthquake hit during school hours. This was a great opportunity for staff and students to discuss emergency preparedness in general and to hone safe space practices and inform students of the best way to seek further help, when needed. Furthering our emergency preparedness efforts, the district recently purchased a new radio system. The new system serves every facility in the district and now meets FCC narrowband requirements so that communication is now clearer and more immediate should an emergency arise.

TTUSD's energy saving and greening efforts continue to earn recognition from other districts and the industry. Since Anna Klovstad, C.E.M./project manager for TTUSD, introduced an energy saving plan for the district in 2008, TTUSD has saved more than \$1 million. Students, faculty, and parents have embraced the effort and contributed to the district's success. Most recently TTUSD was recognized by Western Area Power Administration, a division of the U.S. Department of Energy, with a top headline story on their October Energy Services Bulletin.

We continue to celebrate our status as an All-America City and recognize our local early childhood educators, elementary school teachers, parents, and community organizations who work toward the goal of all students reading at grade level by 3rd grade. Third-grade reading is key to long-term student achievement because third grade is when the focus on reading changes from learning to read to reading to learn. If students

aren't able to read instructional materials across the curriculum, their chance for success throughout school diminishes.

A great way for you to help your child advance his or her reading skills is by helping build their vocabulary. Help your child practice words that they don't know that they come across when reading. Provide a simple definition for your child, then use it in another example and encourage your child to come up with their own example. Finally, try to keep new words active by using them within your house. The more words a reader knows, the more they are able to comprehend what they are reading or listening to.

Please don't forget to continue reading with your child over the holidays and school breaks. Thanks for making reading an integral part of your child's life.

*Rob Leri is superintendent of Tahoe Truckee Unified School District.*