

# DUIs don't keep Meyers out of education

By Kathryn Reed

Jeremy Meyers, the disgraced ex-superintendent of El Dorado County Office of Education, was hired this week to work even closer with children.

The Black Oak Mine Unified School District board in Georgetown on July 6 voted 4-0 (Darcy Knight was absent) to hire Meyers on a 90-day contract to be principal of Golden Sierra Junior Senior High School. This is a 7-12 school.



Jeremy Meyers

In May, Meyers was sentenced to 110 days in jail after being arrested on driving under the influence charges twice in five months in 2015. Both were misdemeanors. He pleaded no contest to the first offense and guilty to the second.

For the first offense he was sentenced to five days on home arrest. The second driving under the influence charge came with the jail time, four years of formal probation and having to install an alcohol device in his vehicle.

However, the only time Meyers actually spent in jail was when he was initially arrested the second time. Still, he has served his sentence. The brief time in jail counted toward time served, the bulk was alternative sentencing. The two main

forms of alternative sentences are community service and being confined to one's home with a monitor. *Lake Tahoe News* was not able to ascertain Meyers' specific sentence or how he was able to fulfill the 110 days when the sentence was rendered May 25 – just 44 days ago.

The county board was not able to fire him because the superintendent is an elected position. Meyers told the board the only way he would leave is if they paid him through June 30, 2016. He was gone in November with two checks – \$114,821.55 was essentially his salary, with another \$10,930 for the value of his medical, dental and life insurance for that same time period.

In hiring Meyers, the Black Oak Mine board overlooked the fact that both of his arrests came in the middle of workdays, with his blood alcohol level more than twice the legal limit.

Meyers has never issued a public apology for his behavior.

“That is shocking, but not surprising as poorly as that school board runs their district,” Mike Patterson, California Teachers Association board member, said of the hiring. Patterson represents certificated personnel on the state board.

“I was at one of the their school board meetings last year. The current board has done such a horrible job. They pretty much forced the automotive and construction teacher to resign,” Patterson told *Lake Tahoe News*. “A lot of other teachers have resigned and found other jobs where they are more valued and more fairly compensated.”

Meyers can take this job because his convictions were not felonies and he never lost his credential.

“Normally when there is an issue with a credentialed person it is the school district or county school board that notifies the California credentials department,” Patterson said. “Being

that he was the county superintendent, I'm sure no one at the county office notified the state there was an issue, which in and of itself should be an issue."

Black Oak Mine is struggling to keep people at all positions. This has to do with why Meyers has a short-term contract. Enrollment has also been declining as parents seek better opportunities for their children, including schools with more advanced placement classes.

Since mid-April Superintendent Robert Williams has been out on stress leave, with no indication of if or when he'll return. Elizabeth Haines, who formerly worked for the district, has been brought in to be the substitute superintendent.

Brian Spears lasted one year as principal of Golden Sierra Junior Senior High School. That is why there was a vacancy Meyers could fill.

The board, though, has voted to ultimately consolidate the superintendent and principal positions into one job. That can't happen as long as the current superintendent is on the payroll. But it might mean Meyers would have the opportunity to extend his contract.