

Rescue Union School District  
**Superintendent's  
Parent Newsletter**

December 2015



## Keeping Parents Informed about Rescue Union School District



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#### ***Superintendent's Message to Parents and Guardians:***

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, and the dedicated staff of the Rescue Union School District, we would like to wish all of our families a very safe and happy holiday season!

At this time of year, I provide some updates to our parents about many of the exciting things going on in Rescue Union and re-invite parents to become involved in your child's classroom, school and in your school district. Please take a few moments to read this information and please contact us if you have questions or comments.

I am very proud to report that Rescue Union continues to distinguish itself, not only in El Dorado County, but across the region. We are making important strides forward, in academics, which is of course our highest priority, and in many other significant areas that are described in this newsletter. In the end, our goal is to focus our efforts on positively touching the lives of every student and family by making sure that all students are being fully prepared for success in high school, career and college. We have begun this year by implementing our very successful Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) classes, as well as offering Spanish classes to all students at our middle schools. We now have a vastly increased support system for technology for students and classroom teachers at all grade levels with the addition of our technology teachers.

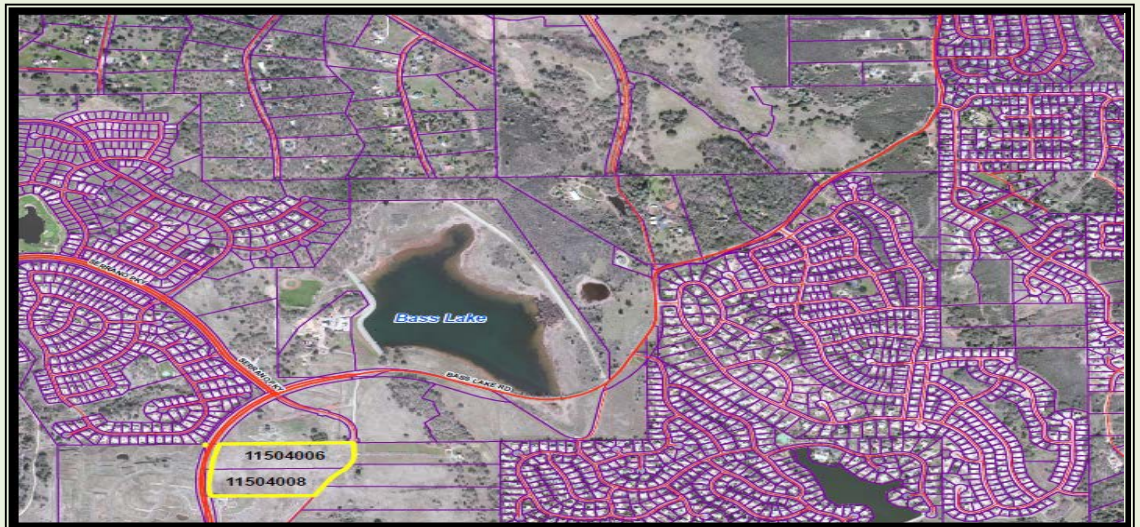
Rescue Union is a leader in providing high quality staff development for our teachers. We are working in conjunction with the El Dorado County Office of Education in the selection and implementation of the new English Language Arts/English Language Development materials. Recently the district was recognized for implementing advanced student safety measures utilizing the latest technology. We have completed an energy retrofit project that not only is cost efficient but provides LED lighting in every classroom to improve the learning environment. With completion of the purchase of the Sienna Ridge property and the development of a District Facilities Master Plan, we are focusing on modernizing our oldest campuses to provide state of the art classrooms and labs for our students. We continue to improve and embellish our technology and communication capacities, making amazing advances in a very short period of time.

## **RESCUE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT PRESS RELEASES**

Rescue Union School District has completed the acquisition of 21+ acres of land for the future Sienna Ridge School for \$1.625 million.



In September, the Rescue Union School District Board of Trustees agreed to purchase two parcels of land on Sienna Ridge Road near the corner of Bass Lake Road and Serrano Parkway. The two parcels total just over 21 acres and could potentially adjoin to the Serrano J5 Public Park proposed by Parker Development and the El Dorado Hills Community Services District. "When Parker Development and the El Dorado Hills Community Services District amended their plans for Village J Lot H and the Serrano J5 Public Park site, Rescue USD began exploring other options for a school site," said Rescue Union School District Superintendent David Swart. "The Sienna Ridge Properties were available for purchase and provided a rare opportunity to purchase vacant land for school site in the Bass Lake area with exceptional accessibility."



Although the District has not determined the type of school that will be eventually built at Sienna Ridge, the District is considering the potential of a K-8 school with an enrollment of 800 students.

With the close of escrow, the District will now embark on the planning and design of the future school. Funding for the purchase was provided by the El Dorado School Financing Authority Community Facilities District No. 1, which currently holds more than \$6 million in funds designated for site acquisition and school construction in the Upper Serrano and Bass Lake area for the Rescue Union School District.

With the purchase of the new school site, the District will reevaluate its current plans for the Bass Lake Property, which the District had purchased in February. According to Superintendent David Swart, "We believe the Bass Lake Property is a valuable community asset. Rescue Union will continue to work cooperatively with all involved entities to ensure that this unique area is preserved for use by future generations of El Dorado Hills residents."



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RETROFIT PROJECT

Rescue Union School District is proud to announce the completion of its Energy Efficiency and Lighting Retrofit Project. The District partnered with NORESKO, a national leader in energy efficiency and energy infrastructure solutions, and has completed and implemented nearly \$3 million in energy improvements to all seven schools in the Rescue Union School District. The comprehensive lighting and controls project was completed in October of 2015. In addition, with over \$788,000 of funding support from Proposition 39, the California Clean Energy Jobs Act, the district will realize even greater savings.

The District's investment of \$2.2 million for the project will generate savings of \$3.6 million in future energy costs over the life of the equipment and will improve learning environments for the District's seven K-8 schools serving 3,700 students. The retrofits make Rescue Union School District one of the first in California to upgrade lighting to LED technology throughout its facilities. Moreover, this upgrade exceeds the requirements of the state's 2013 Title 24 standards, which set energy efficiency regulations for buildings.

"By committing to these kinds of sizable, deep retrofits, Rescue Union is taking the commitment to energy efficiency to the next level, which benefits students, teachers and staff," said Rob Reading, account executive, NORESKO. "These improvements position the school system for classroom improvements, reduced maintenance requirements and long-term cost savings."

The California Clean Energy Jobs Act, also known as Proposition 39, made up to \$550 million available annually until 2018 for appropriation by the legislature for eligible projects to improve energy efficiency and expand clean energy generation in schools.

The Rescue Union School District's commitment to environmental and fiscal stewardship through energy efficiency predates the passage of Proposition 39. School leaders recognized that the combination of Proposition 39 funds and the district's available resources could enable more robust and comprehensive improvements within the District and that NORESKO could help the school system expedite results.

Specific benefits from the project, in addition to building retrofits, include standardization across interior and exterior lighting equipment, long-term reductions to operating budgets for more predictable planning, upgrades and consistency across building controls systems for improved efficiency, and replacement of selected heating, ventilating and air-conditioning components that are failing or unreliable.

"Proposition 39 is a catalyst for California's school leaders to move energy-efficiency improvements even higher on the priority list," said David Swart, Superintendent of the Rescue Union School District. "NORESKO facilitated our delivery of a five-year energy expenditure plan for the District to the California Energy Commission and by embracing these upgrades, the District will receive ongoing energy savings and helped create more jobs in our community in the spirit of Proposition 39."

Based on the five-year plan submitted, the savings from the project are expected to be nearly five times the total Proposition 39 allocation.

## STUDENT SAFETY

Safety and security of students is of paramount importance to the Rescue Union School District. Recently the district was recognized for the state of the art security tools that have been implemented to provide improved communication and the ability to account for students and staff in a real emergency situation. We also have a number of policies, procedures, protocols and tools in place as shown below:

- Safety plans, procedures and protocols are carefully reviewed and updated annually.
- Emergency drills are scheduled multiple times throughout the school year.
- District officials regularly collaborate with local police and emergency services personnel on procedures and protocols.

The district also participates in:

- WeTip, an anonymous tip line, is available to all community members at <http://www.rescueusd.org/Resources/District-Resources/Anonymous-Tip-Line/index.html>.

Ongoing, up-to-date communication to parents will be a top priority in an emergency and will utilize our ParentLink notification system and the RUSD home page at [www.rescueusd.org](http://www.rescueusd.org)





## **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION UPDATE:**

*By Dave Scroggins, Director of Curriculum and Instruction*

Wow, what a busy and productive year it has been so far! The teachers, instructional assistants, and principals have all been working incredibly hard to ensure that the children of the Rescue Union School District are provided with the very best care and instruction.

### **Technology Integration**

This year, we are thrilled to have hired three teachers on special assignment, who not only provide instruction in the area of technology to students, but also assist teachers in integrating technology into their classrooms. Across the district, teachers have been using new applications and devices in remarkably creative ways to engage students and allow them to demonstrate their understanding in ways that are most meaningful to them.

### **Professional Development**

Additionally, our teachers and instructional assistants have been involved in a wide range of professional development and educational trainings on topics including the newly released English Language Arts Framework, the Next Generation Science Standards, best practices for mathematics instruction, Google Apps for Education, Socratic Seminar workshops, and much, much more! It is inspiring to see the level of professionalism and growth exhibited by our staff, and I believe that our students are greatly benefiting from the new and innovative strategies that are brought back into their classrooms.

### **Curriculum and Programs**

This year, we have added many new programs and courses, especially at our middle schools. We now offer Spanish as a foreign language elective to sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. We've also added a robust computer science elective, where students are engaged in real world applications of technology. In fact, many of our students recently participated in the global "Hour of Code" and some students now serve as technology specialists, assisting their teachers with innovative and exciting technical applications! Project Lead the Way is also going strong, and students are involved in a range of activities including Auto CAD designs, medical detective work, and aerospace engineering.

The high levels to which our students are performing cannot be ignored! The children who attend our schools are some of the hardest working, most thoughtful, and academically dedicated students in the state. This is no doubt a testament to the care and support they receive at home, and when combined with the exemplary instruction they receive in the classroom, it's no wonder that Rescue Union School District's standardized test scores are tops in El Dorado County!



**DATES**

**TO**

**REMEMBER**

Winter Break	December 21-31
Staff Development Day	January 4 (students do not attend)
Special Board Meeting	January 5
Regular Board Meeting	January 12
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	January 18

Please check your individual school website or the District website [www.rescueusd.org](http://www.rescueusd.org) for scheduled activities, start and dismissal times, as well as the 2015-2016 school calendar.

*Respectfully,*

*David Swart*