

*Since 1899: A Tradition of Quality Education*

# Building an Education Tradition in Shasta County

*Insights to the History of the Shasta Union High School District as seen through the eyes of the Superintendents*



by  
Michael Moynahan

Cover,Content and SUHSD Logo designed by Nancy L. Williams (ret. SUHSD 5/2008)

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*Redding in the Late 1800's*

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*“Real generosity toward the future lies in giving all to the present.”*

— Albert Camus



*1908 Girls' Basketball Team*

# Acknowledgements

When I began this project in July of 2006, I had no idea the amount of research and time it would entail before it was completed. However, the real eye-opener for me was the energy and passion that would be generated by the people who helped me to complete this work. To these people, I owe much. They became the glue that put this project in place during the times of dead ends; creative problem-solving and a game plan that would be altered many times over again to meet the objective of telling a story--a story that needed to be told about an incredible school district and the students and a staff that would continue to serve the needs of its students in a constantly changing and dynamic world over the span of 110 years. To all of you...thank you!

This project began when I applied for “The Project Teacher” assignment, which was negotiated by the Shasta Secondary Employees Association (SSEA) in the early 2000s. As a former lead negotiator for the SSEA, I was originally thinking of a booklet outlining the negotiations procedures put in place within the District over the course of many years. However, Michael Stuart and Associate Superintendent Randy Brix, thought differently. They knew that my long-time association with the district and my love of history was a nice combination and recommended that I undertake the history of the SUHSD as my project. What do you say to your bosses under those circumstances? So here I am three years later, thanking them, among others.

It would be unthinkable to begin my statements of gratitude with anyone other than Masette Ford, Executive Assistant to both Michael Stuart and now Jim Cloney. When first seeking advise about how to ascertain information necessary for this project she told me that

the Board Minutes would be a good place to start since they were accurate and accessible.... so we thought. After hunting for these documents in basements, attics, warehouses and long-hidden boxes within the confines of the district buildings, we brushed off the cobwebs, literally, and put together the missing links for the first time in many years. Since that time, Janet Peterson has scanned all Board Minutes and they are now available on-line for the world to see. Mike Vincelli has courageously helped me to understand the system that brings them to my computer on a daily basis for research at home....a great improvement from carrying around the vast piles of documents. Mike is also responsible for making me “computer-savvy,” a feat deemed impossible for those who know my computer skills.

When I first began, I spent countless hours researching information at the Record Searchlight and learning how to extrapolate information from the microfiche and its machine in the back room. Diane Evans was the one with the patience and know-how to continue to serve my needs during this process.

George B. Burke, the author of the first history of the SUHSD met with me and encouraged me to put in the time and effort that the district deserved. He served as a teacher and Vice-Principal at Central Valley (1955-1977) for many years putting the document, “The Shasta Union High School District--A Changing Institution, 1899-1968” in place for people like me who were interested in the early facts and history of our district. He was 93 years old when I interviewed him in 2006 and to this day is still going strong.

During this entire process I was determined to make this story a personal one. I interviewed numerous people who were either recommended to me by people in the know or people I have known in my 42 years as both a teacher and student of the Shasta Union High School District . These people had a story to tell and I wanted to bring their expertise and passion into this paper with the same excitement they generated in our interviews. I personally could not have done that without the insights and recollections of former Superintendents Richard Haake, Michael Stuart, Donald Demsher and current Superintendent Jim Cloney. Former principals were extremely helpful with their first-hand knowledge of issues that only they could share. These include the late Charles Denny, principal of Enterprise High School (1955-1973), the late John Riley, principal of Central Valley High School (1965-1985) and Jack Schreder, principal of Nova High School (1967-1974).

Aside from the numerous people who are quoted in this paper, many went above and beyond in keeping me informed and updated throughout this project. Without their return calls and encouragement this paper would still be in progress. They are the late Al Weissberg, Donald Moore, Bill Fitzgerald (whose paper on Enterprise High School was very informative), Tom Carroll, Margaret Kennedy, Bob Johnson, John Olsen, Bob Eaton, Ross Hamilton, Pam Lilienthal and Don Woolford.

A paper of this magnitude, which includes so many facts and raw data, must constantly be interpreted and updated for accuracy. This could not have been done without the vigilance and energy provided by former Chief Business Official (CBO) Gary Poertner and especially the present CBO, Art Schmitt. He has been beyond patient and extremely helpful with the many details it took to put all of the statistics in a practical, regimented and accurate order. Thank you to you both.

It takes an awful lot of time and organizational skill to properly put the finished product together in a professional manner. That is where I leave and others come in to this picture. Victoria Rendes and Alan Spivey were the editors who worked hard to make me look good throughout these past three years. That is not a task to

be taken lightly. They have been diligent, resourceful and are remarkably still my friends...I think. Thank you to you both!

The finishing touches to any good research paper come down to layout, indexing and of course, the printing and binding. Geri Kay Ehlers, long-time English teacher in the SUHSD took on the indexing with confidence and genuine enthusiasm. For that I am very thankful. Rosemary Bianchin took the product we sent to her and wrapped it up very nicely, adding the finishing touches needed to make it ready to present. Thank you, Rosemary.

The layout is the process of designing, formatting and arranging the text, pictures and graphic elements in a manner that makes the final product readable and attractive and this needed to be done by a professional. That's where my good friend and retired SUHSD employee, Nancy Williams comes into the fold. She is incredibly creative, artistic and of course, very patient. Her skills as an artist made this project not only look good but also professional. This project could not have been done without her diligence and always encouraging words and insights. Thank you so much, Nancy.

Of course, there are two other people I must thank in order to properly put this project to bed; my wife, Joanne and my daughter, Kelsey. The many nights that I thought I was tired because I had finished my own homework for my classes and, those weekends that I thought I wanted to watch the San Francisco 49er games, would only be a memory if you had not encouraged me to "get with it and work on your project." Your persistence, loyalty and your love will not be a memory....they are there at all times for me and I want to thank you for that.

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*“Perseverance and spirit  
have done wonders in all  
ages.”*

— George Washington



*Senior “Sneak Day” Caught on Film, Early 1900’s.*

# Introduction

**Education is the first known foundation** of modern civilization and its effects are forever far-reaching in all aspects of life. Using references such as George Burke’s report on “The Shasta Union High School: 1899-1968” has helped me to establish a base for understanding the importance of education and the young mind and its effects on society in an “assessment geared” era. As a former graduate and teacher for 42 years in this district I have gained insights into the application and processes that have made this district a distinctive leader in education. However, as a researcher and writer I have had the opportunity to truly comprehend the amount of people, energy, foresight, and time that it takes to not only create an outstanding educational institution but the incredible dedication, diligence, leadership, community support and indelible planning it takes to maintain that pinnacle, and in this case, for over 100 years.

My goal has been to report a brief chronology of the Shasta Union High School District and its significant effects on the immediate surrounding area which it serves. Additionally, it has been the intention of this writer to collect, interpret and publish a collective culture that has been a moving force in the north state over a formidable period of time.

The real authors of this report deserve the greatest accolades: the students and personnel, both young and old, who shared their stories, their gentle criticisms and their pride in being part of such a wonderful and renowned school district. There is no single voice, but their collective chorus is enthralling.

The stories and facts you will read in this report have been edited and reprinted with the permission of its characters. I have attempted to verify and crosscheck all of the factual



information, but in some cases the impressions and memories are over a half-century old and information can sometimes be misconstrued and deceiving.

I am deeply grateful to all who have written, spoken, and given their insights and feelings for this report. For those I have missed, I am sorry because those stories, too, are reflective of our institution in the many families, businesses and institutions that have been served by the Shasta Union High School District over the last century.

This report is not the last word, it is only a contemporary compilation of a job well done by a district that has certainly left its mark on the institution of education in the California north state.

History in the Making

# A Tradition Begins



*Early Student/Teacher Outing*

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*“Education is not the  
filling of a bucket, but the  
lighting of a fire.”*

— W.B. Yeats



*Early Graduating Class of  
Shasta County High School*

## A Brief History of the Shasta Union High School District

Henry Ford was mass producing automobiles; the Titanic was gone forever, the “great war” was overtaking the globe like a huge black cloud, women were gaining their constitutional right to vote, and Charles Lindbergh had gone where no single person had gone before. While the worst depression in modern history was unveiling itself, World War II was being considered by many as “the Armageddon” and the nuclear bomb made us realize that we are all vulnerable. The conquest of discrimination was turning a blind eye to color during the Civil Rights Movement, John F. Kennedy was taken leaving a mournful nation, man spoke to all humanity for the first time from our moon and gave mankind hope for the idea of world-wide peace. The Olympic Games from Munich, Germany introduced the world to modern terrorism while the computer raised the known technological bar to unlimited heights throughout the world. The Soviet Union brought communism to its knees, and the destruction of New York’s Twin Towers left its indelible mark on the world. During this same time period the Shasta Union High School District was celebrating over 100 years of distinctive and provocative service in public education that would forever put its stamp on a progressive north state community.

Very few educators were associated with Shasta County High School when it was established in 1899. This school was housed in a single building, rented from Judge Aaron "Billy Goat" Bell, with 4 classrooms, serving 75 students with 3 teachers. Who would have suspected that 109 years later the Shasta Union High School District (SUHSD) would house well over 5,000 students, have over 500 employees and encompass 3 comprehensive high schools, 3 continuation high schools and 2 charter schools as well as access to a College

Connection Program housed at the local community college, Shasta College? Few would have imagined that the annual salary for teachers (men, \$627.50/women, \$526.95) would have grown by approximately 10,000% to an average salary of between \$50,000 to \$60,000 during that same time period.

After utilizing Judge Bell's house for four years to provide instruction, the crowded conditions made it



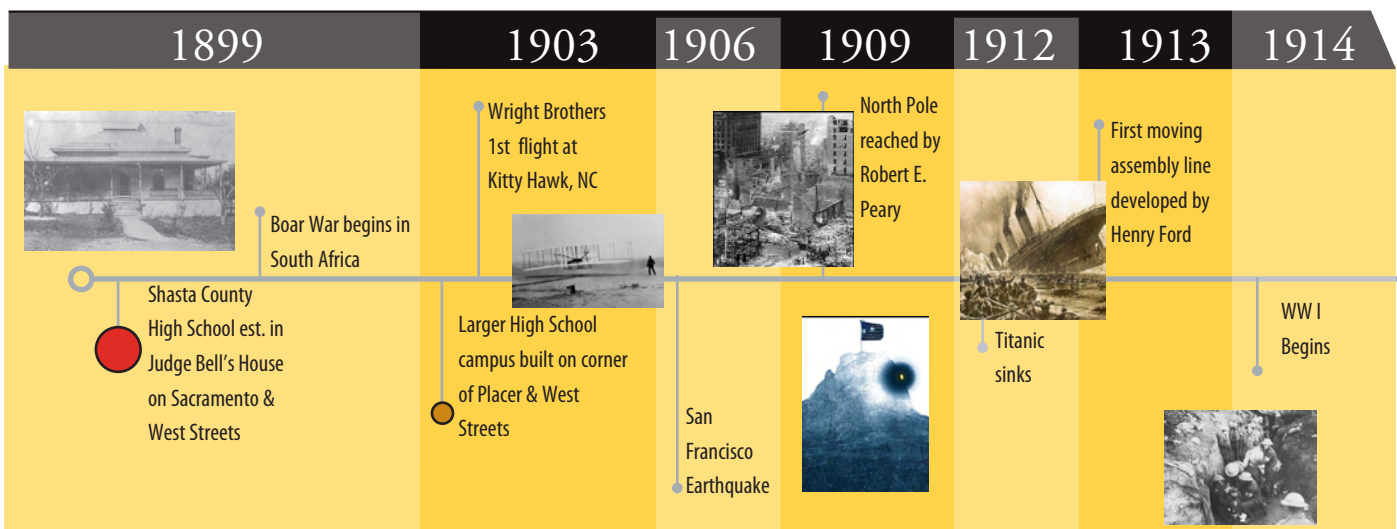
*Judge Bell's House - First High School*

necessary to issue bonds for the construction of a new building. The property was acquired from Judge Bell and the building was completed in 1903 at a cost of \$40,000 (Burke 4). The first academic graduating class graduated nine students in 1903; this same year the new building was constructed at Placer and West Streets (Sanders 3). These students graduated with a wide range of curriculum from basic to college preparatory; classes included from Latin and advanced mathematics to a vocational major focusing

on bookkeeping and shorthand. In comparison, the

SUHSD built its most recent high school, Foothill, in 1999, for an estimated cost of \$25 million. During the 2006/2007 year, the district budget was over \$50 million and graduated 1,300 students with classes ranging from basic, college prep, with honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes in most curriculum areas. Regional Occupational Programs (ROP), focusing on on-the-job work training, classes for the handicapped and impaired as well as computer on-line classes for high school and college credit are also offered. The first athletic teams were developed in the 1899/1900 school year consisting of men's football, girl's basketball and men's baseball. These teams were small and even though Shasta lost its first athletic contest, a football game to Chico 12 to 0, in the words of Mr. Orr Chenoweth, a member of the first graduating class, "what we lacked in size, we made up for in enthusiasm" (Sanders 4). Today, in the SUHSD, there are ten sports for boys and nine for girls with a cumulative participation level of over 1,500 athletes per year, earning league and section championships with the opportunity to compete at the state level in many of these sports.

Changes in our district have occurred, oftentimes dramatically, but always with great vision and a sense of how to best serve the students. In 1910, under 28% of the 1906 freshman class graduated with a 4 year



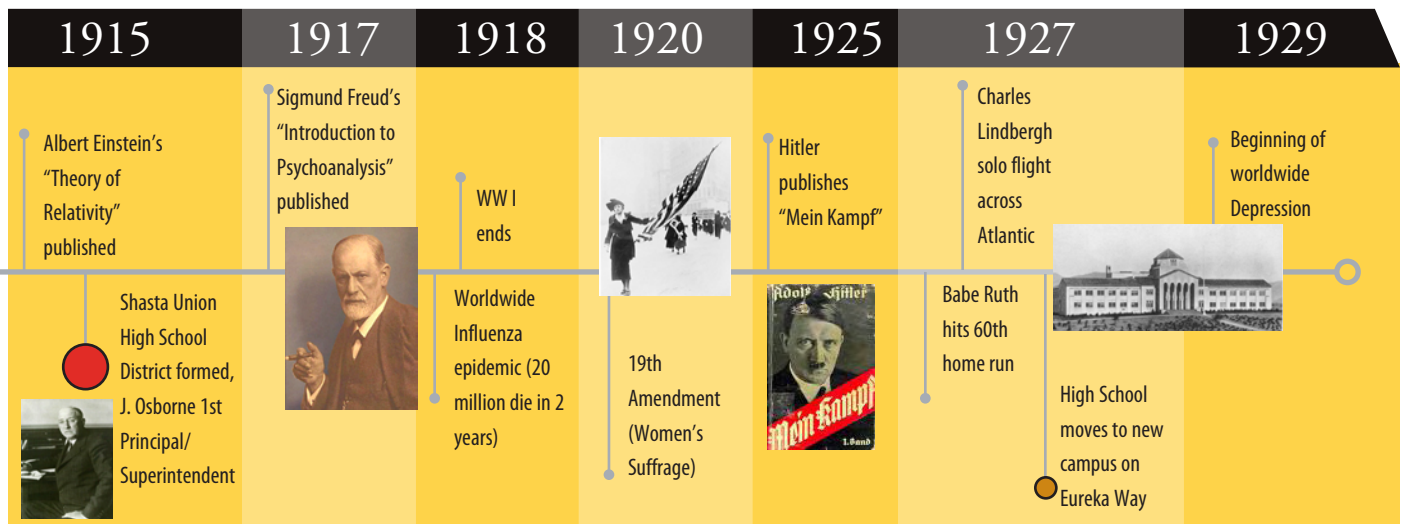
degree, compared to a graduation rate of 89.7% in 2006. At that time only 10% of grammar school students went to high school in California (Stuart). However, the definition of a high school education has changed dramatically over the last 109 years, and this brief report will focus on this district's humble beginnings and its far-reaching and timeless quest for "education at its best", focusing, primarily on the last 53 years (1965-2008).

When the first Shasta County School was built in Old Shasta in 1853, its purpose was to educate the growing young population in Shasta County. The first school was semi-private and enrolled 40 students. The state contributed \$1000 toward its operating costs of which \$390 went to pay the teacher's salary. The first public school opened in Old Shasta in 1853 and by 1858 there were ten school districts in Shasta County and they generally offered curriculum up to the eighth grade (Burke 1). If you wished to advance to the secondary level of education you either had to move to the more populated area of Sacramento or to the northern town of Yreka which housed the Seven Sisters of St. Joseph's Academy, the first secondary school in this area, established in 1871. Many young ladies from Shasta County attended this academy. Among them was Mae Helene Bacon Boggs. The young ladies were taught music, art, social graces, as well as the usual school curriculum (Sanders 1). Also, during this time, according to retired Shasta County Superior Court Judge and historian Richard B. Eaton, "teaching was not considered a bona fide profession and teaching positions were generally auctioned off. The classrooms had poor lighting and ventilation and infectious diseases were rampant." This alone, gave little incentive to the citizens of Shasta County, to develop the school system into a growing and alluring enterprise.



Old Shasta School House

Nonetheless, by 1890 the population of Shasta County had grown to about 20,000 people and it was obvious that a secondary school would soon be necessary. After many meetings, much controversy and a great deal of planning, the "Shasta County High School" was established and opened in September of 1899 as the first secondary school in the area (Redding-100 Years).



This first high school was located at the former residence of Judge Bell, in the new county seat of Redding, at Sacramento and West Streets. The site was remodeled for the cost of \$345. The school started with 3 teachers and approximately 70 students ranging in ages from 15-26 years of age from throughout the county (Burke 1). Many students attended from as far away as Anderson, Cottonwood, Millville and Montgomery Creek and were



*Shasta County School*

forced to live in Redding because at that time to go from Montgomery Creek to Redding was a two-day round trip with a good team and a light buggy (Sanders 2). Its first principal, U.G. Durfee (one of the original teachers) along with teachers James Ferguson and J.L. Sanderson, administered this school from its inception as it grew substantially in staff and enrollment until the construction of the new high school in 1903. The first edition of the school newspaper, the “Purple and White,” appeared in 1900 and for several years was issued once a month only to be discontinued in 1903. When it was adopted again in 1909 it was done with the name of the “Shasta Daisy” because it was original, and it was reflective of the beauty of Shasta County. In












1911 it was published at the end of each term and then from 1915 it became an annual publication until the present time reflecting the culture and spirit of Shasta High School (Sanders 10).

On August 8, 1915, a county-wide election was held and the Shasta Union High School District came into being. Its first Board of trustees, Elizabeth McKean, Alice Tracie, Florence Gill, Judge Harry Donnelly and Henrietta Merrill met on September 25, 1915, and its first principal, Major James O. Osborne was hired (Burke 6). He oversaw 9 teachers and a student body of 214 pupils during the 1915-16 school year.



*James O. Osborne*

Superintendent Osborne would oversee the district (1911-1934) through some of the most monumental and difficult times for our

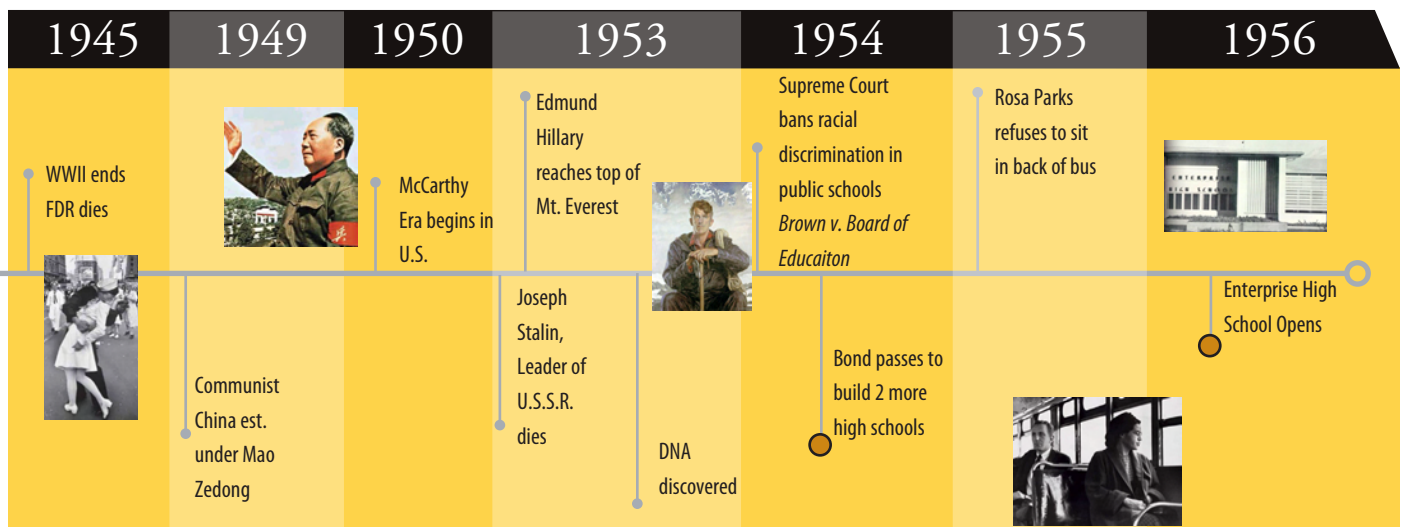
1933	1934	1937	1938	1939	1941	1942
 Franklin D. Roosevelt inaugurated  Prohibition ends	 Principal/Superintendent J.O. Osborne dies  Jackson Price appointed	 Amelia Earhart lost in Pacific on worldwide flight	 Hitler invades Austria	 World War II begins  Jackson Price becomes Superintendent	 1st school buses purchased  Japan attacks Pearl Harbor	 Former high school on Placer & West burns

nation. Foremost, one of the largest influenza epidemics in history would end up closing the district schools for 6 weeks. Also during this same time, the security of our children was at stake while “The Great War” (World War I) took place. His tenure would also lead us through the excruciatingly difficult period of the Great Depression.

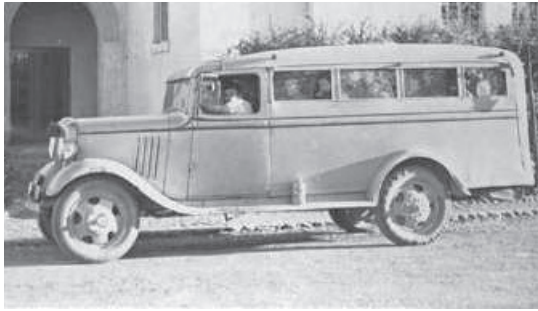
During these trying times, local and state governments were enacting a more and more rigorous compulsory education, and expanded the role of the school through athletics, transportation and food services for all students. By 1918 it was compulsory by State Law for high schools to teach “Physical Culture.” In the Shasta County High School gymnasium facilities for both boys and girls had previously been set up on a limited scale. At this time the second floor of the manual training building was taken over as a gymnasium (Burke 7). As the need for more services grew, so did the student population of the district. By 1926, the facility at Placer and West Streets, built for 200 pupils, was now housing over 400 students. Community efforts led to the passing of public bonds for the construction of a \$375,000 plant in March of 1926 at a site located “out of town” on Eureka Way. A total of 36 acres were purchased and the Shasta Union High School District was officially dedicated under the auspices of the Grand Lodge of Masons of California and its cornerstone was laid at the southwest corner of the main building. A parade consisting of the Shasta High School band was followed by the high school cadets, escorting the Knights Templar in full uniform, Boy Scouts, American Legion and representatives of all of the fraternal and civic societies of the city. J.D. Osborne, and other speakers, addressed the audience of over 2,000, and the building was dedicated to Liberty, Truth and Toleration, which is still denoted in a plaque at the front door of the school today.



*New Campus in the "Country".*



Popular common belief at this time led leaders in education to the conclusion that with more young people being schooled, a more stable and educated society would result, obviously benefiting the community as



*Early Bus*

a whole. After the new school was built, issues of transportation were addressed by both the state and the SUHSD, to make sure that all students had the ability to attend schools on a regular basis. Efforts, at this time, were made by the school Board to contract with individuals to provide transportation for students in outlying areas of the district. But it wasn't until 1939 that the first two buses were purchased at a total cost of \$10,000. The district's commitments to athletics and new facilities for upgrading the new school were also addressed during these difficult times leading

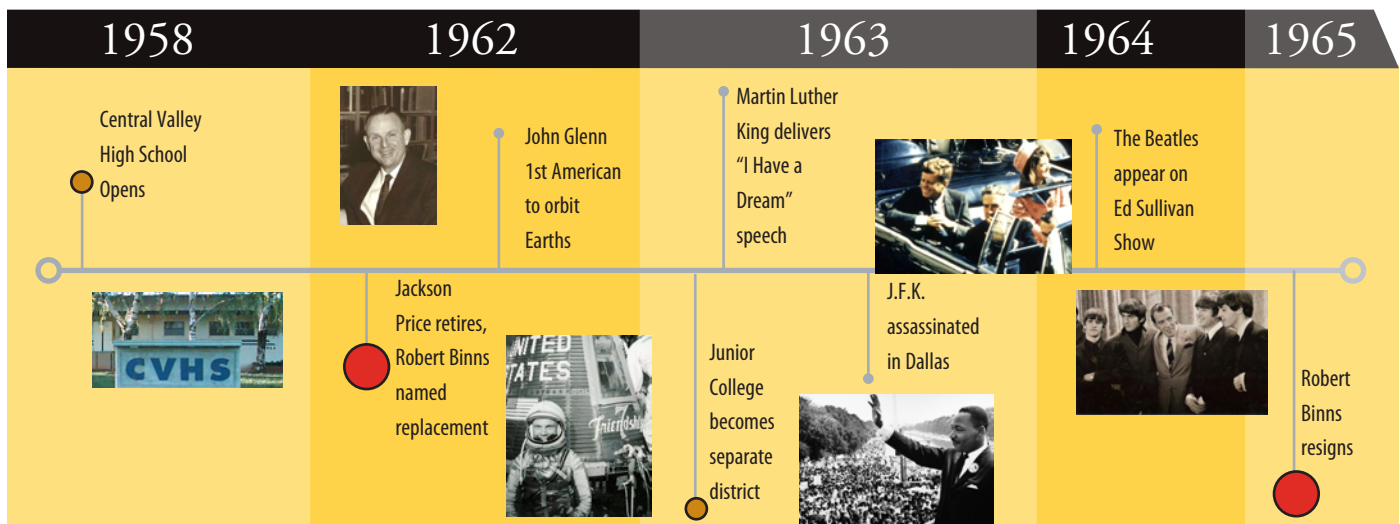
up to the 1930's depression era. The agricultural and business industries were very unstable and thus made it difficult to maintain consistency.

In February of 1934, after the death of Mr. Osborne, Mr. Jackson Price was appointed principal and, in 1939, to the superintendent's position as well. The first teacher's salary schedule was enacted during the same year, which ranged from \$1,700 per year for beginning teachers to a maximum of \$2,750 for experienced teachers.

From the beginning of the twentieth century until mid-century, Shasta County and Redding in particular, had experienced a slow, but steady growth through World War I, the Great Depression and World War II. The main exception to this trend was the large but temporary population influx to Redding and Central Valley triggered by the building of Shasta Dam and other components of the massive Central Valley Project. It wasn't until after World War II, however, that the Redding area's more stable population increased significantly due to the lumber industry, recreation and the re-emergence of agriculture. This trend alerted those involved in providing secondary education to the greater Redding area that the only high school, Shasta, would soon exceed its student enrollment capacity (Fitzgerald 1).



*Jackson Price*





“Prior to 1950, voters of the area provided funds for the building of the new Shasta Junior College on land adjacent to Shasta High School. Funds were also made available to add classroom space and other facilities to Shasta High, which, other than some minor modifications, had not increased its capacity too much since opening its doors in 1927. These new additions brought the capacity of the school up to 1,200 students in grades nine through twelve(Fitzgerald 1).”

As superintendent of the SUHS and Junior College district, it was the vision and determination of Jackson Price as well as a dedicated committee of interested citizens that the community should build a new high school in the growing Enterprise area as well as a junior high in Central Valley (Fitzgerald 1). According to Al Rose (1960-1990), a long-time teacher and outstanding athletic director at Central Valley High School, “this area 7 miles south of Redding was in dire need of a school of its own in order to serve a growing and vital constituency in Shasta County that was developed as a community during the building of Shasta Dam.” According to Charles Denny, the first principal of Enterprise High School (1955-1972), “the Enterprise area housed an enthusiastic and prideful community that was rural in nature but was approaching a suburban and even urban future.” The only other alternative they saw was, to again further expand Shasta High School, so it could meet the projected demand of 1,700 students for the fall of 1954.

It was concluded that a school Board election was to be held on September 29, 1953, in order to raise the necessary funds needed to build these two schools. The bond passed overwhelmingly and plans were immediately underway to build the schools for the 1954/55 school year. Mr. Charles Denny and Mr. Richard Haake, both vice-principals at Shasta High School, would take over as principals at Enterprise and Central Valley, respectively. The bid for Enterprise was

\$948,713 by M & K Construction of San Francisco, and the school opened its doors in January of 1955 with an enrollment of 550 freshman and sophomores. The bid for Central Valley was \$637,280 and was made by Riverman and Sons Co. of Portland, Oregon, and the school opened in the fall of 1955 with an enrollment of 257 students. The facility, originally planned as a junior high, opened instead as a high school amidst great pressure from the Central Valley community to have its own high school. A year later, in November of 1956, the electorate authorized

a bond issue of \$3,000,000 for the expansion of both Enterprise and Central Valley High Schools, some improvements at Shasta High School, and for a new cafeteria at the junior college. Enterprise graduated its first class in 1957 and presented diplomas to 148 students while two years later, in June 1959, Central Valley graduated its first class handing out 109 diplomas.

As issues of accreditation and unification studies came and went within the newly enlarged district, Mr. Price announced his retirement in March 1962. Mr. Robert P. Binns was appointed as his successor ending 28 years of dedicated and successful service to the district.

In 1963, the junior college became a separate junior college district, and a bond election passed which allowed for additional facilities to be added to all three high schools making way for greater enrollment in the



*Enterprise High School*



*Robert P. Binns*

SUHSD. During this time the state and federal governments provided opportunities for funding in the areas of vocational education, youth corps and anti-poverty programs as well as Title I monies which allowed schools to support the education of the educationally handicapped.

In April of 1965 Superintendent Binns resigned in order to take a job in Salinas, California and Mr. Richard Haake was appointed to succeed him. Thus begins the Haake Epoch.

Modern Era Architects of Education

# The Superintendents

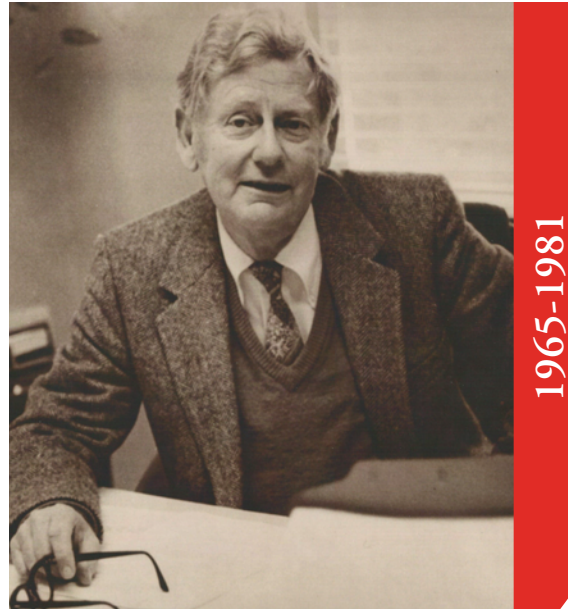




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*“There is a brilliant  
child locked inside every  
student.”*

— Marva Collins



## The Richard Haake Epoch

# Chapter 1

The first years of Richard Haake’s 32 years in the Shasta Union High School District (SUHSD) were spent as a teacher and school newspaper advisor (The Volcano) at Shasta High School starting in the 1947/48 school year. After having received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of California at Berkeley, he never realized he would serve as a business teacher and Vice-Principal at Shasta High School (1945-1956), before serving 9 years (1956-1965) as the principal of the new Central Valley High School. He then became the District superintendent for the remaining 16 years (1965-1981) of his full-time tenure in this North State educational community (Haake).

Upon inheriting the position from Superintendent Robert Binns (1962-1965), on June 22 of 1965, Richard Haake, at a salary of \$18,000 (SUHSD Board, 1 June 1965), immediately began to oversee some major construction projects within the district to accommodate a growing student population. The public bond election held in September of 1963 allowed the SUHSD to utilize \$1,188,000 to build a girl’s activity room and remodel Shasta High School at a cost of almost \$400,000. A classroom wing, a teacher’s room and an industrial arts facility were to be added at Enterprise High School at costs exceeding \$200,000. At Central Valley High School, additional classroom wings, a physical education activity room and remodeling of the counseling center, attendance and nurse facilities were completed at a cost of \$352,660 (SUHSD Board, 10 June 1965). Most of this work was done during the 1964/65 school year while Haake was beginning his tenure as the new superintendent.

The close of the 1964/65 school year saw the establishment of a “continuation school program” which drew students from each of the high schools. The purpose of this program was to offer students, not yet eighteen years of age, who were not achieving in school and who were potential “dropouts” an opportunity to continue their education in a less structured environment. This action led the school Board to develop a separate continuation school, later called Pioneer High School, to house and educate these students with the ability to develop “alternative” class schedules that would facilitate both their education and individual needs. This action by the SUHSD Board brought to fruition one of the mandates of the recently passed Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 passed by the United States Congress. Its main purpose was: 1) to analyze education opportunities and to assure that every child can develop to his inherent mental



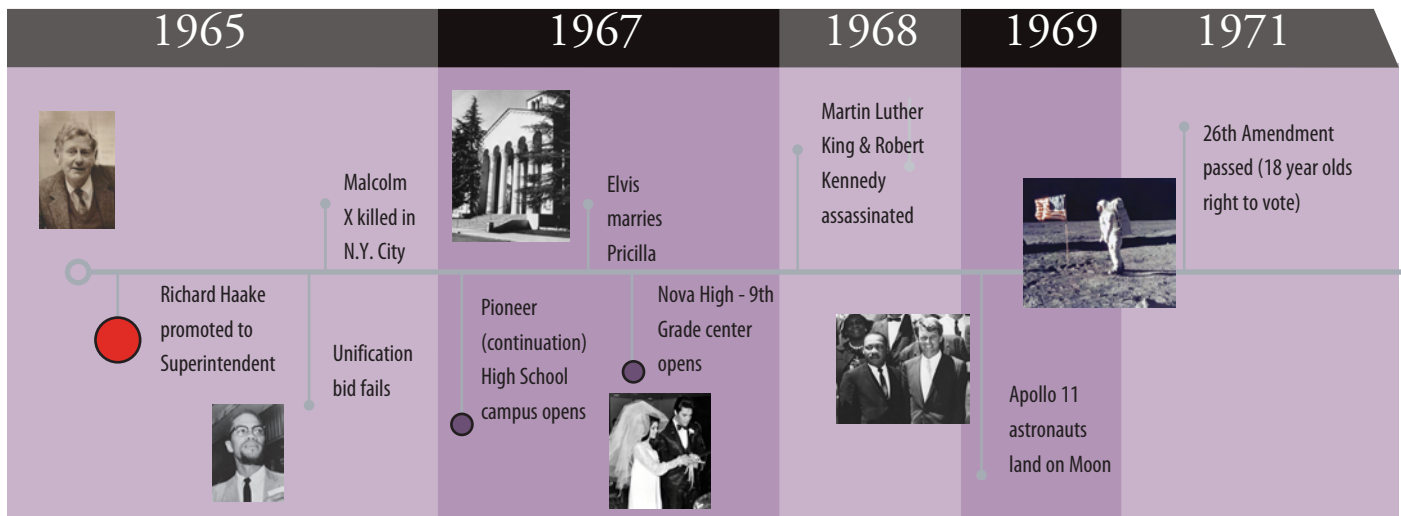
*Pioneer High School*

capacity. Most emphasis will be placed on meeting needs of educationally deprived children from low-income families; however, many benefits will accrue directly to all aspects of education for all children and youths, and; 2) to change educational institutions and educational practices. National concern over methodology curriculum and state policies restricting new and more extensive approaches to a better education for all the people had prompted increased Federal and State Aid for education. Congress appropriated over one billion dollars for the 1965/66 fiscal year to aid local and state

educational agencies in improving education (“The No Child”).

Through the ESEA Act and the Federal entitlements of Titles I, II, and III, much money was now available in public school education which was to be used to broaden the base for equal education for all. The SUHSD would eventually apply for and receive funding to support Vocational Education, Indian Education and students qualifying as Educationally Handicapped or Mentally Gifted. Title III money was applied for, through state entitlements, by the SUHSD which would help create “necessary” small high schools which would act as “supplemental educational centers and would serve as a model for regular school programs not available in elementary and secondary schools (“The No Child”).

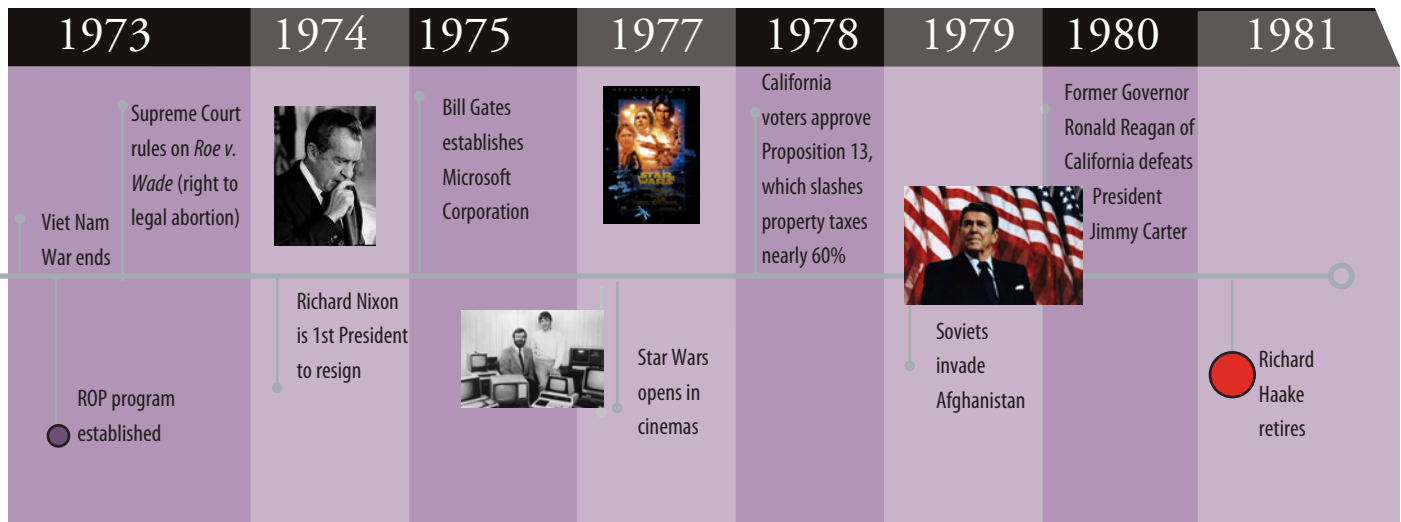
Potential high school “drop-outs” now had an opportunity to continue their education on a limited basis. With the help and encouragement of the Shasta County Schools Office and especially the superintendent



of County Schools, Ray Darby, the school opened in the fall of 1967 at the Shasta College auto shop with Mr. Kirk Zumalt as the principal. “With a staff,” according to Richard Burns (Pioneer H.S.1970-1976), “consisting of an educational atmosphere that was characterized by honesty, human values, clear academic goals, flexibility and the resolution that students would be paid for work accomplished...it was not a dumping ground for drop-outs.” Also, according to Rich Kellar (Pioneer H.S.,1972-1999), “we created a family where most of these kids had none.” Thus, Pioneer High School, named for its pioneering spirit, would become a model for other north state continuation schools in the years to come.

One of the most pressing issues facing Superintendent Haake and the Board of trustees during the early years of his administration was the need for more funding in a growing Redding area that was adding tremendous growth to the student enrollment in the Shasta Union High School District. As principal at Central Valley High School in the 1961/62 year Haake was part of a district that supported 2,959 students. But, in 1966 as its superintendent, he was overseeing 3,835 students (a growth of 876 students/29.6%) with a projected growth of almost 7% for the upcoming school year (SUHSD Board, 1 Mar. 1966). Therefore, Haake and the Board needed to become fiscally creative in order to help finance this growth in an organized, coordinated and educationally efficient manner. Along with facing the district’s needs for increased funding were issues of progressive local and statewide changes which needed to be addressed.

With the recent passage of the ESEA and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 came an onslaught of laws meant to make a difference in our political, economic, and educational climate nation-wide. The ESEA funding for continuation schools, such as Pioneer, was being made available but most of these funds were limited in scope and designated for specific purposes. The nation and its lawmakers were addressing important changes during this period exhorting equal and civil rights for all and were adamant about addressing improved educational opportunities involving students of color, gender and the educationally and physically impaired. Anticipating these changes, the SUHSD leadership team was actively pursuing a proactive position in order to prepare for the foreseeable educational alterations as well as the district’s needs for the future. Some of the immediate issues heading the district’s list of concerns, besides the increase in student population, were: 1) the loss of Shasta College as a partner since its inception in 1948. Its bond was passed by the local taxpayers in 1963 and the college would move its facilities to acreage east of Redding on Highway 299 starting in the fall of 1967. With the move came the loss of \$185,000 paid by Shasta College in order to use the buildings owned by the SUHSD; 2) increased expenditures needed to modify and move into previous college buildings for high



school purposes; 3) increased labor costs (a 5% increase in salary and increased medical costs was negotiated in order to retain and attract teachers/staff) scheduled to be instated on July 1, 1966; 4) increased costs necessary to provide a quality program of instruction for all students; and, 5) the need for major maintenance of district buildings and grounds (SUHSD Board, 10 June 1965).

In order to procure additional funding, Mr. Haake and the Board received a great deal of input and support from the community to unify the SUHSD with the elementary schools within the boundaries of the district. The Board considered the unification “not only timely, but it will insure the educational opportunities for the students residing in the area.” A unification election was planned for December 14, 1965, and with it came a great deal of controversy surrounding issues of curriculum, student-based learning as well as funding and communication within a larger school district. The unification election failed by a vote of 2,729-yes and 3,475-no, with only about 25% of the voters going to the polls. Superintendent. Haake described himself as “very disappointed” with the outcome of the election and said, “district officials are going to start resolving the (financial) problems that face us.” This was an even greater defeat than it was in February of this same year with a smaller percent of voters voting 2,956-no and 2,416-yes. Raymond V. Darby, the Shasta County school superintendent, said he felt “the voters were unhappy because the government is trying to force the issue.” With the voice of the public voting against unification, (SUHSD Unification, A1). Haake and the Board were in a quagmire as to what to do next.

The trustees called for an “Override Tax Election” on June 7, 1966 which would raise the school tax to \$1.47 per \$100 of assessed value of property for 4 years. This was an increase of \$.85 over the present \$.65 per \$100 the taxpayers were presently paying (SUHSD Board, 1 Mar. 1966). The measure failed not only in June, but when presented to the public again in November of the same year, it failed again. As a consequence it became necessary to reduce expenditures in the district. Sports were curtailed, a reduction of supplies and services was implemented and larger class sizes became a reality. Because of the number of possible teacher reductions, the Board felt the timing for another override election might in fact be more prudent at this time. Another election was called for in March of 1967 with an emphasis on information to the general population. If this override election failed, 23 teachers would be laid off, the 3 high schools would have double sessions, class periods would be reduced and the district would have to cut back on transportation. However, emphasis was put on the fact that if it passed the district could hire more teachers, improve educational programs, increase the school day to the normal seven periods and increase the class period time back to 55 minutes, eliminate double sessions, and use the Shasta College building as a fourth school. Funds were desperately needed for capital improvement at the individual schools.

After the third override election in nine months the measure was narrowly approved by a vote of 5,071-yes and 4,631-no (SUHSD Board, 4 Mar. 1967).

The timing of this election gave Haake and the Board a vote of confidence as well as the funding needed. It created some breathing room to make adjustments for a growing student population as well as securing a vacated Shasta College building in the upcoming fall. The district took possession of the old college facilities and relocated



*Former Shasta College Becomes New Shasta High School*



Shasta High School on these premises. Mr. Ed Duggan replaced Mr. Arthur Timmer, who had resigned, as principal of Shasta High School, and the school would relocate in time for the fall of 1967.

Once the issue of funding was temporarily resolved, the problem of overcrowding was addressed with the Board. An advisory committee was formed in March of 1967 in order to study the best use of the former Shasta College and Shasta High School facilities. Five possible plans were delivered to the Board:

1. a 12th grade center be developed;
2. a large school be developed (a school within a school);
3. a vocational center for all of the district's students;
4. a ninth grade center with freshmen from all 3 school sites be developed, and;
5. establish a fourth 9-12 high school within the district

After much research the Board chose to develop a ninth grade center enrolling all freshmen from the 3 district schools at the previous Shasta High School site on Eureka Way. The only major concern from the committee was that it would “be a disruption of loyalties.” However, the Board and committee as a whole felt that it would: 1) make for a better transition for the freshmen going to their senior high schools; 2) alleviate overpopulation problems at the 3 high school sites, and; 3) it would negate some of the rivalry problems that were becoming a big problem within the district (SUHSD Board, 4 Apr. 1967). According to Don Demsher, the new vice principal at the ninth grade center, “the rivalry between Shasta, Central Valley and Enterprise high schools was not healthy.”

The Board adopted the name Nova High School at the suggestion of its new principal, Dr. Jack Schreder, because the name “Nova” was latin for “a new star of unusual brilliance which gradually fades to its original intensity” and Latin would be one of the new subjects taught at the ninth grade center. Haake, Schreder and the Board were determined to make this unique school a success and possibly a role-model for other school districts going through similar problems and transition phases. In May of 1967 the Board released a “Reduction of Enrollment in Schools Policy” which outlined the procedures for staffing Nova as well as reducing staffs at the 3 other high schools. First and foremost was an emphasis on volunteering for the positions available. Teachers and staff saw the ninth grade center as an opportunity to further their own educational experience within the district and to apply for positions that would favor their overall skills in the classroom as opposed to being assigned in the future to a less collaborative situation. Many were enticed by a more open approach to curriculum development, in which Mr. Haake and the Board gave their full support. Encouraging, as well, was the fact that the new principal, Dr. Schreder, according to Bill Asnicar (Nova, 1967-1991), “was hired with the knowledge that he was willing to try new ideas and had an innovative style that would generate student enthusiasm.”



*"New" Nova Ninth Grade Facility*

With the opening of Nova just days away Dr. Schreder commented, “we have a solid staff and a rich curriculum that could make this a great education center.” He felt the geological and cultural differences would mold the students on an educational and social basis and would equip them with the tools necessary to succeed

in senior high school. Encouraged as well, were the eighth graders from the area's 26 elementary school who would be entering Nova during its opening year. Carol (Krueger) Marks (Shasta '71), a student from St. Joseph's School, in a recollection of her anticipation to entering Nova said, "I was nervous about entering a school with so many students but I was excited, as well, knowing that I would be with all my friends from St. Josephs for one more year." So, on the first day of school, Nova High opened its doors to 1,078 enthusiastic students who would break ground in a district already known for its innovation and open-mindedness in education. Dr. Schreder would later say, "I was the right guy at the right time with the right staff." This statement would come to be prophetic in the annals of the history of the SUHSD and especially Nova High School.

Nova precipitated many changes in the district but, from an administrative standpoint, none as far-reaching as the new funding model for athletics. Freshman sports had traditionally been supported by varsity athletics. In addition, it had been the practice in the District not to charge admission to freshmen contests. Up to this time, each high school operated its athletic program under its Student Body Account, at each school, with the principal and athletic director supervising the athletic budget. The district would pay for athletic supplies, the repair and replacement of equipment, transportation and supervision of athletic contests. But, now a District Athletic Fund was to be established with a committee composed of the principals and athletic directors from all four schools that would meet to review the budget requests and prepare the District athletic budget. This operational change would provide a common base for all athletic expenditures and would be overseen by the district office. This type of creative funding made Nova less expensive to operate than the regular high schools and helped all sites to be funded equally and consistently.

With the ninth grade center focusing only on freshmen, curriculum was brought to a new level within the district. Teachers and staff were expected to broaden choices in curriculum as well as offer advanced learning and employ teaching skills that were difficult to develop earlier. For example, not only would Spanish and French be offered but German and Latin as well. Even though an Honors English program was offered at Shasta High School by Paul Hughes in the early 1960's, a strong effort was made by the new Shasta High School principal, Ed Duggan, to develop an Advanced Placement (AP) program that could translate to college



*Nova Ag Class*

credits if the class and test were passed within the high school regimen. Roger Longnecker became the first Central Valley graduate (CVHS '60) hired in the SUHSD and was asked to begin such a program. It became a reality in the fall of 1968 with an AP U.S. History class at Shasta High School. According to Longnecker, "that class combined with an Honors English class taught by Dick Dickenson led the way for other AP classes at Shasta as well as at Enterprise and Central Valley High Schools in the near future."

These programs are prominent today and have served as a model for other North State schools.

Just a little more than two years after taking the helm in the SUHSD, Richard Haake, with great vision and dedication, modified and remodeled the district to include: a continuation school for "drop-outs", adding a unique ninth grade center to the district (now accommodating five schools instead of three), making adjustments after the community college left the district, moving the oldest high school in the district to a new

location, adding an Advanced Placement program to a remodeled curriculum (district-wide) and, passing a major tax override that increased the district budget by about 30% and used the funds to remodel and add to existing facilities that would support a total of 4038 students in the district, the largest total in its history. The 1967/68 school year was a historic milestone for the SUHSD.

Construction of new facilities and the remodeling of old buildings and classrooms became a labor of love for the School Board and Mr. Haake over the next six years. Because of unsafe conditions at the Nova gym and in its building, a special tax rate of ten cents was levied in 1968 and reconstruction and upgrades began immediately. In July of 1968 the County Schools Department was given permission to move a portable classroom to the Shasta High School campus at the Mary Street entrance in order to have special classes for pregnant minors. The program was operated by the County Superintendent of Schools office at no cost to the SUHSD. In May of 1969 five relocatable classrooms were purchased for use at Pioneer, Shasta and Enterprise High Schools. In October of 1969 Kirk Zumwalt, principal of Pioneer High School passed away and Robert Russell, the vice-principal at Enterprise, was named to take his place. The policy of free and reduced cafeteria meals for needy students was adopted in 1969 and in June of 1970 the Board of Trustees called for an override election to continue to add to and remodel structures and facilities in the SUHSD. The election request to increase the maximum tax rate from \$.85 to \$1.82 of assessed valuation was passed on September 15 and would serve the needs of the district through the 1975/76 school year.



*New Nova Shop Building*

On May 4 of 1971, the Board discussed the issue of public school finance as outlined in Senate Bill 801 which reflected the highly controversial *Serrano v. Priest* court case filed in California in 1968. Simply stated, this case was one of the first lawsuits to challenge the U.S. tradition of locally funding public schools. The central argument was that such a system resulted in wealth-based disparities in funding among school districts. This court case coincided with the fact that California had dropped from sixth to twenty-fourth in rank among the states nationally in expenditures per pupil which put California \$40 annually below the national average (\$799/ADA). To complicate matters, state support of education in California had dropped from 47.5% in 1953-54 to 35.2% in 1970-71 and local taxpayers support of education had increased from 48.5% in 1953-54 to 59.8% in 1970-71. According to Haake, “ranking thirtieth nationally makes it obvious that many school districts in California have reached a financial crisis that threatens the survival of public education and in order to maintain their solvency school districts throughout the state have been forced to eliminate or reduce important educational programs, increase class size or reduce the number of teachers and other necessary personnel. The effect of these issues could cause a deterioration of education to the extent that the children they serve will not meet the minimum needs necessary to prepare them for a useful and responsible life (SUHSD Board, 11 June 1971).”

During the Board meeting, Superintendent Haake pointed out that the purpose of this measure was to take the available resources of the state and divide them equally among the districts so that there would be an equal and quality education for all youngsters in California. Trustee Pierce pointed out that the bill would help ten times as many districts as it would hurt. However, Trustee Carr felt that “the bill would just be fragmented support; the District will still have to go back to the voters to pick up the difference in override elections.” Trustee Nutley, who had attended a meeting recently which covered the background of the measure, felt the measure would be a great improvement and was in favor of the bill as it stood. Trustee Balma stated that “while all trustees would agree that the bill isn’t perfect it is an attempt to improve State school support” and felt that the Board should take affirmative action by supporting it. The vote was four to one in favor of supporting Senate Bill 801.

In 1972, with the Serrano settlement looming, the legislature established revenue limits for California public schools by passing Senate Bill 90. These revenue limits placed a ceiling on the amount of tax money each district could receive per pupil. The 1972-73 general purpose spending level became the base amount in determining each district’s annual revenue limit. This was the beginning of the shift from local to state control of school finance. As predicted, the California Supreme Court ruled on the *Serrano v. Priest* case in 1976 finding that the existing system of financing schools was unconstitutional because it violated the equal protection clause of the Constitution of the State of California. (“California’s”).

The court ruled that “wealth-related disparities in per pupil expenditures for general purposes should be equalized and that by 1980 the difference in revenue limits per pupil should be less than \$100 (“California’s”).” Assembly Bill 65 (1977) created an annual inflation adjustment based on a sliding scale in order to equalize revenue limits among districts over time. Higher inflation increases went to districts with low revenue limits and lower inflation adjustments for high revenue limit districts. This was called “power equalization.” Just nine months after AB 65, Proposition 13 was voted in as a constitutional amendment by the voters of California. This amendment limited property tax rates to 1% of a property’s assessed value with increased assessed value capped at 2% a year and it mandated that any changes in this amendment, or any other special purpose taxes, must be approved by two-thirds of local voters. The provisions of Proposition 13 wiped out 60% of local property tax revenues and therefore invalidated much of AB 65’s financing reform, including power equalization.

With Assembly Bill 8 (1979) as a response to Proposition 13, the Legislature ultimately established a formula for dividing property taxes among cities, counties and school districts. The legislature retained the revenue limit concept and replaced most of the lost property tax dollars with money from the state budget. This shielded schools from some of the measure’s effects, but in the process, according to Gary Poertner, SUHSD Business Manager (1976-1991), “the state also effectively took control of school district funding and with it had more input and accountability into what was taught into the classroom.” According to Art Schmitt, SUHSD Chief Business Official (2003-present), “it not only transferred power to the state but to the political lobbyists, special interest groups and especially the large school districts, such as Los Angeles, that could dictate what was being taught in the classroom, as well.” Proposition 13 ended up being just one of many voter initiatives in California aimed at directing funds to schools and also limiting the budget discretion of state lawmakers, particularly as it related to education as we shall see in future chapters.

In 1972, as the Legislature was redefining its funding base, it passed the Stull Bill which required all teachers to set up goals for each course offering and its implementation procedures. It also required that these procedures be established for evaluation of results and evaluation of personnel. In June of 1972 the Board of Trustees adopted a policy that put the requirements of the Stull Bill into effect. This bill would have an eventual “domino effect” leading to greater accountability of the public school system that would reach into the 21st century (Edman).

Again, the effects of the Civil Rights era were far reaching in American society at this time and aside from the issues of “black and white” there was no issue more discerning than those involving gender. Legislation, at the federal level, led by social protests, was determined to deal with sex discrimination in all areas in which federal monies had an influential stronghold, and no area was more entrenched than public



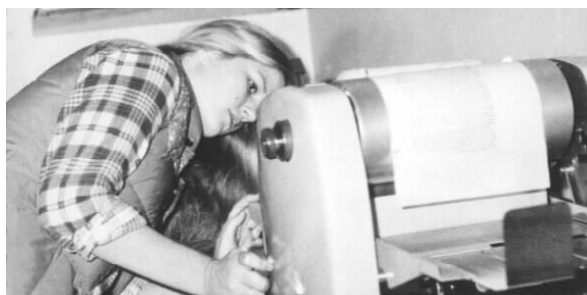
*Shasta Cheerleaders*

education. Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act “prohibited discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin and sex” but it excluded educational institutions in their educational activities (Carpenter). Title VI of the Civil Rights Act “prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion and national origin in federally assisted programs” but did not cover sex discrimination. Thus, students were not protected against sex discrimination. The 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution assures all persons “equal protection of the laws” but at that time, no case concerning discrimination against women in education had ever been decided in favor of women by the Supreme Court. In 1972 Congress passed the Educational Amendments. One section of this law, Title IX, prohibits discrimination against girls and women in federally funded education, including in athletic programs. Title IX passed with little controversy in 1972 but soon after the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and high school administrators complained that boys sports would suffer if girls sports had to be funded equally. Regulations about how to implement the law were not released until until two years later, and these regulations did not go into effect until July 1975 (“Empowering”).

The Shasta Union High School District Board of Trustees was approached by the Citizens for Equal Opportunities in Girl’s Athletics in May of 1975 regarding their request that the district offer a “quality” program in girls sports comparable to boy’s sports. Speakers Mr. Clar Appledoorn and Ms. Pamela Burkholder were particularly interested in establishing an interscholastic program for girls at all levels of competition for the 1975-76 school year. Budgeting concerns as well as legal issues were discussed at length over the summer and a plan was developed by the Board that allowed girls athletics to be included, effectively funded, and continually implemented over the next few years. The 1976-77 district budget would reflect an increase from \$15,520 to \$19,462 in girl’s athletics as well as a decrease from \$56,715 to \$51,803 for boy’ athletics.

In December of that same year, the Board adopted the Affirmative Action Program and the accompanying Equal Employment Opportunity Laws. The adoption of these laws ensures that the recruitment, assignment, promotion, retention, compensation and training of staff is appropriate for improving and maintaining employment representation of racial and ethnic minorities, females and other protected group candidates (SUHSD Board, 4 Jan. 1977).

In October of 1973 there was a proposal for a Regional Occupational Program which would initially involve the SUHSD, Anderson and the Fall River School Districts but would later include the Trinity Union High School District as well. The SUHSD had already started a Work Experience Program in 1963 with Donald Demsher, Social Studies teacher at Central Valley High School, as its first director. This program grew to involve 173 students by 1967. This program accepted the provisions of Senate Bill 90 which would provide full financial support to get a county operated program in place. Participation by the district was established in May of 1974 and Mr. John Olsen, a business teacher at Central Valley High School, was hired as a half-time coordinator by the district and half-time director by the county. By October of that same year, this program had 900 students enrolled and would eventually encompass not only the Shasta-Trinity Regional Occupational Program but be a North State leader as one of the 74 Regional Occupational Centers and Programs(ROCP) throughout the state of California. Its mission was to promote and support ROCP's in providing exemplary career education, career development and workforce preparation that would contribute to student academic and career success and to the economic development in all of California ("ROCP Facts").



*ROP Student*

These ROP, Vocational Education and Work Experience programs would grow and emerge as some of the flagship programs of the Shasta Union High School District over the next 35 years. As the first director/coordinator of this program in the SUHSD John Olsen (1974-1986) would oversee its development in the following areas: 1) articulation with the schools, especially with the business departments; 2) instructional curriculum based upon competencies to be achieved by students; 3) certificates of proficiency for vocational skills mastered; 4) articulation with Shasta College and the Adult vocational courses, and; 5) coordination with the business industry community by providing a pool of highly trained and productive individuals (ROCP Facts). As this program grew and expanded over the years and other progressive program coordinators took over, the district never wavered in its commitment to maintain and sustain its position in the district. As a matter of fact the SUHSD continued to support vocational education as the state cut back on diversity and electives in the 1990's, to the point of making practical and vocational arts a required area for all of its graduates. Bob Johnson, the ROP director from 1986-2006 said "throughout the years, leadership of the Shasta Union High School District has continually realized the importance and made a conscious commitment to support quality vocational education opportunities for all of its students."

This commitment to diversity in education by the SUHSD has been equally evident by its development and maintenance of the School Farm Program for students that have had an interest in agriculture and farming. When the district purchased the 26 acres of property in 1948 from Jerry Hemstead off Eastside Road the intention was to use it to continue developing the SUHSD farm program that had been active in the district for many years. However, Shasta College used it primarily to develop their agricultural program until they moved to their present location on Stillwater in the fall of 1967. It was at that time that Donald Wolford (1966-2000) was hired by the district as an agricultural teacher at both Enterprise and Nova High Schools. He and Virgil Morford began using the farm as a teaching station for field trips for interested students, for whom its use would become more delineated as a district Ag program. With Wolford's interest and insights into the farm's

development he applied for and received monies from the state through the Vocational Educational Act (VEA) to purchase a tractor and other farming equipment for further development of the property.

In 1974, money was received from the state to upgrade the buildings at the farm which would eventually aid in classroom education for all district students. Over the years many people used this facility as a teaching station but it wasn't until 1973 that Hank Eaton would live in the house on the property as a teacher in the district and be a caretaker for the farm. Then, in 1974, Ross Hamilton (1974-2008) was hired to develop the farm and use the buildings as classrooms for interested agriculture students to further their skills in ranching and farming. As an Agriculture Mechanics/Equipment Operations major at Chico State, Ross stated that he had "only Enterprise High School students in the fall of '74 that were housed for classes in the old barn without windows or desks"; they started construction on a new building that same year. Superintendent Haake and the Board of Trustees were determined to see the program succeed and therefore funded the operation, originally, but it had to make money in order to survive and perpetuate any growth in the program (Hamilton).

In later years, more property was added by renting 29 acres near the county hospital, at a rental cost of \$400/year plus irrigation costs, which gave the district a total of 55 acres for production capabilities. This program has not only survived throughout the years but has made a profit every year, including the 2007/2008 school year. This school farm has traditionally been funded, partially through state funding with enrollment and matching funds grants and Perkins Grant funding. However, the majority of its funding has been through the efforts of its students and instructors and particularly, Donald Wolford, who was the catalyst in maintaining the farm's direction and focus in ways that would serve the needs of the student (Johnson). He applied for and received many grants that would continue to help fund and maintain the program as a formidable force in the face of needed diversity and assessments demanded by the public in maintaining a healthy and efficient education system. Biology and Fine Arts requirements were given to students who participated in the farm's activities over an extended period of time which continued to keep the program in the foreground of changing state and district graduation requirements. Ron Gravatt was hired as the head maintenance man at the farm in the 1990s and as an overseer gave the farm the plant stability and protection it needed to be operational and productive on a year-round basis (Wolford). Over the years the school farm's self-sustainability has come from the planting, maintenance, harvesting and selling of flowers, tomatoes, corn, pumpkins and especially hay. The single primary source of income however, came from the breeding, raising and selling of livestock, especially hogs (Hamilton).



*District Farm*

In 2007/2008, with funding through a state grant from the California Community College Advanced Transportation Technology and Energy Initiative, the students and instructors planted 3 acres with canola, a special type of rapeseed related to mustard. Processed canola oil can be used as biodiesel. "Its a big experiment," Hamilton said. If the canola grows the students will harvest the seeds in late May or early June and convert them into biodiesel to be used in the farms trucks and tractors. The farm is the first one in the North State to grow the crop and is doing so on non-irrigated fields (Rogers, "Counting" B1). Again, this



*High School Farm Brand*

is another major step to remain self-sustainable and “if this experiment is successful the students will graduate trained to enter the field of alternative fuels,” according to Susan Clark, assistant project director with Shasta College’s Small Business Development Center.

The growth and successes of both the ROP and the school farm programs in the SUHSD and their effects on the projected student growth were documented many times over the years as evidenced by the minutes from the January 20, 1976 Board meeting. It stated that “without the Shasta County Regional Occupational Program and the newly constructed school farm classroom and shop building, the District probably would not have been able to meet its student housing needs without additional relocatable buildings, double sessions, leased facilities or a new building program.” During this period the district was growing and facing new challenges but was tackling these issues with solid leadership and vision.

As with all successful school districts, leadership, camaraderie and dedication to common goals make up the glue that holds the critical elements and values of its culture together. But, as in any successful and longstanding organization, change is facilitated with minimal interference or turmoil. As was the case when both John Caton (1965-1973) and Kelly Pierce (1961-1973), longtime Board members, left the Board of trustees and were replaced by Richard Baxter and Ken Robertson. In 1974 Dr. Jack Schreder, principal of Nova High School, was elected Shasta County Superintendent of Schools. He was replaced by Donald Demsher who would eventually become the SUHSD Superintendent in 1991. In 1975 both Rudy Balma (1959-1975) and Laurence Carr (1962-1975) would end their long tenures as Board members as well, being replaced by Gene Toten and Roger Cowling. In 1976, Business Manager Henry Koenig (1967-1976) would resign and would be replaced by Gary Poertner at the district office (Burke 1977).

Superintendent Haake was very instrumental in helping to bring in new leadership to the district as well as in maintaining the status quo and the professionalism of the district’s educational climate.

During this same period of time, the California State Legislature set up a procedure whereby each county was to establish a County School Attendance Review Board. The purpose of this Board was to review recalcitrant cases of truancy and unacceptable behavior among students (Burke 1977). When other efforts on the part of individual school staffs had failed and all apparent means had been exhausted then the case was to be brought before the County Review Board where another attempt would be made to solve the problem. The Shasta Union High School Board endorsed this program in January of 1975 and appointed the District Superintendent to be their representative to the Attendance Board.

At this time the State Legislature also determined that students could be considered graduated from high school before completing the twelfth grade by passing a proficiency examination. The first such test was scheduled in 1976 and on a statewide basis 45% of those taking the test passed. In the SUHSD, during the same year, 55% of those taking the test (25 students) passed. Tests were to be given four times a year (Burke 1977).

Matters involving working conditions and compensation for public employees have always been a difficult issue in California and no where was it more acute than in the area of public education. In 1935



Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act), which guaranteed the right of private employees to form and join unions to bargain collectively. The vast majority of states, including California, extended this right to public employees including teachers at public school districts (Teachers). In 1964 the Winton Act was passed in California which was the first time teachers' representatives could legally bargain with the school district's administration on salary and working conditions. However, the Winton Act was not a true collective bargaining bill. The legal language allowed teachers to "meet and confer." There were no provisions for arbitration; the administration had the last word. Nevertheless, the Winton Act was the beginning that would lead to a true collective bargaining bill-the Rodda Act in 1969 (Schermerhorn). The Rodda Act (Senate Bill 160) was intended to improve employer-employee relations and personnel management in California public schools and community colleges. This law provides for: 1) the creation of an Educational Employment Relations Board; 2) exclusive recognition of a single employee union representing both teachers and classified staff; 3) good faith negotiations, including support of the act's impasse procedures; 4) the arbitration of grievances; 5) the explicit definition of mandatory subjects of negotiations, consultative areas for teachers and reserved rights of management; and 6) recognition of mediation by both sides (Hinman).

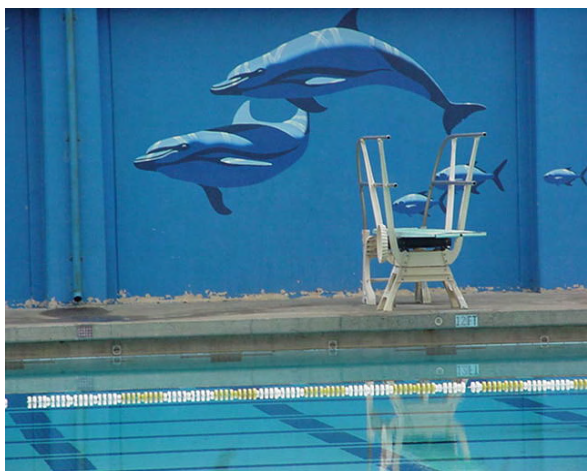


*1970s Era Aerial View of Nova High School*

The SUHSD, as well as the other school districts in California, were left to implement the representative unions for their employees in a manner best suited for the culture and climate of the district. The district implemented the Certificated Employee Council (CEC) of elected representatives, from the certificated staff, that would serve the needs of its constituents over the first few years after the passing of the Rodda Act. It wasn't until June 1, 1976 that the Board received the results of the vote from the membership of the certificated staff of the district. The results had the Shasta Secondary Teachers Association (SSTA), associated with the CTA/NEA, with 192 votes and the Shasta Federation of Teachers (SFT), associated with the AFL/CIO, with 50 votes (SUHSD Board, 7 June 1976). At the September 7 Board meeting the district "recognized SSTA/CTA/NEA as the exclusive agent to represent the certificated employee unit for negotiating wages, hours and terms and conditions of employment." This action was the first to legitimately represent employees under the legal ramifications set under the Rodda Act. According to its critics, the Rodda Act would officially set in motion an adversarial venue of parties who needed to be collaborative if they were to work successfully on the behalf of the students they represented. The California School Employees Association (CSEA), the classified support staff representing bus drivers, custodians, food service workers, secretarial and clerical workers as well as para-educators would later be represented, as well. The Educational Support Professional Association(ESP) would later be formed representing the secretarial and clerical staff only. The nature of negotiations would take on a new and more complex look that would be much more time consuming but more representative of the educational staff.

Throughout most of the 1977-78 school year the issue of family/sex education in the classroom dominated many Board meetings. The Concerned Parents and Citizens Group stressed that the subject matter taught in senior American Problem's classes and at Pioneer High School should be examined and scrutinized by the Board of trustees. After many months of research and reflection the Family Life Education Ad Hoc Committee reported to the Board that : 1) sex education in the SUHSD should be taught by trained teachers as part of the social science curriculum; 2) family life and sex education should be a course requirement; 3) the social science department should select and purchase materials; 4) the course should be taught at Nova High School; 5) the curriculum should include human reproduction and sexually transmitted diseases, and; 6) the Board of trustees should be involved in developing criteria as recommended by the Ad Hoc committee (SUHSD Board, 22 Jan. 1978).

Also very representative of most Board agendas during this time were the effects of the aforementioned Proposition 13 which was having a major impact on public schools and their finances. The SUHSD, as well as all school districts in California, were struggling to make ends meet while trying to maintain stability with an approximate 2% cut (\$1,559 to \$1,411 revenue base per student) from incoming state revenues. Because of creative financing on the part of business manager, Gary Poertner and Superintendent Haake, the Board was



*Enterprise Swimming Pool*

able to cut up to 25% in supplies, school site expenditures, athletics, some personnel and still retain the integrity of the educational culture of the district. The school years of 1978/79, 1979/80 and 1980/81 saw deficit spending as well as a student enrollment drop (approximately 100 students) but were able to maintain minimal deficit spending while still giving personnel substantial pay increases and increased medical coverage over a four year period (1977-1981) and still end up with budget surplus.

At the October 7, 1980 Board meeting Superintendent Haake announced his retirement after 32 years of serving the Shasta Union High School District as a teacher, counselor, vice-principal, principal and its superintendent for 16 of those years. In the last year and a half of serving the district he was also able to provide a program for improving the reading and math skills of ninth grade students, initiate the Indian Education Act, establish the Indochina Children Assistance Program and establish the Special Program for the Disadvantaged all through Title I federal funds provided by the ESEA. He also oversaw the increase of state assessment and SAT scores of the district's students, which ranked high, compared to the state and national averages. Because of these assessments as well as the overall successes within the infrastructure of the district each of the high schools were given "full accreditation" by the visiting accreditation teams during this time. Mr. Haake was instrumental in procuring the funding necessary to renovate the Nova High School auditorium at a cost of \$86,996 as well as working with the City of Redding and the Enterprise Business and Professional Association in providing Enterprise High School with a swimming pool and tennis courts which were completed soon after his retirement. Communication within the district and throughout the community had never been better as Mr. Haake took great pride in holding weekly cabinet meetings with the principals and upper level district personnel as well as meeting regularly with the local media.

Mr. Haake was revered by his staff and students not only for his years of service and dedication to the many projects and district accomplishments during his tenure, but because he truly believed in the inspirational spirit of public education and that all children have the ability to become life-long learners and can be successful in whatever endeavor they choose in life. Don Moore, a teacher, counselor and head negotiator for the SSTA for many years in the SUHSD said it best when he stated that “Mr. Haake was the best superintendent I have ever been around and he really cared for his students and teachers.” And, at the March 17, 1981 Board meeting at which Mr. Haake was being honored, Pam Hughes, English teacher at Central Valley High School stated, in reference to Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar, “Tonight I stand and say to all the world, this is a man, and I shall miss you.”

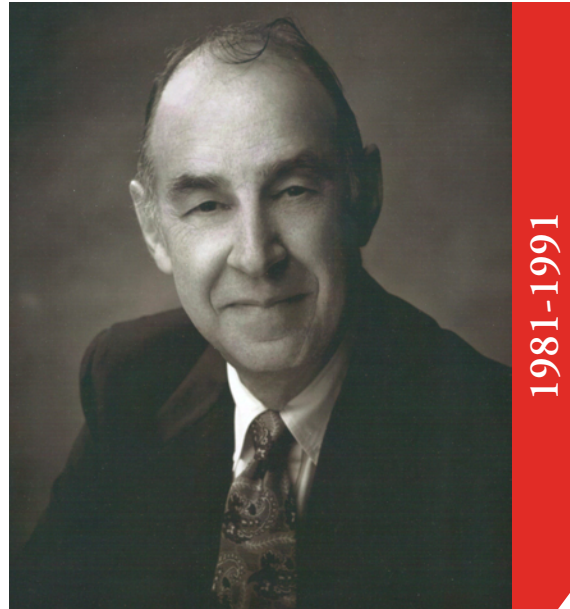
Mr. Haake, when interviewed for this project in 2008, modestly stated, “I’d been associated with the Shasta Union High School District for 32 years and superintendent for the last 16. I thought it was time to retire. During my last year I had brought all of the district’s policies up to date and things were running very well. I felt that the Shasta Union High School District was a truly fine educational system and it was time for me to let someone else carry on the tradition of excellence.” A magnanimous statement from a truly great man and gifted leader, who effectively guided the district from a 2.6 million dollar budget, overseeing 3,835 students in 1965, to a budget of over 11 million dollars and a student population of 5,094 students, during his 16 year tenure. Excellent, indeed!



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*“What sculpture is to a  
block of marble, education  
is to the soul.”*

— Joseph Addison



1981-1991

## The Time of Joseph Appel

# Chapter 2

**Dr. Joseph Appel, 48, was hired in January** to assume the position as the Shasta Union High School District’s new superintendent beginning April 1, 1981. He was hired from the Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District where he served as the deputy superintendent for three years after having been in education as a teacher and administrator since 1957. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Bowling Green University, a Master’s Degree from the University of Arizona, and received his Doctorate from the University of California, Los Angeles. He also did some post-doctoral work at Stanford University (Meier 4).

Upon arriving in Redding on Friday, January 30, he met with the five high school principals and the Board and stated that he was impressed with the district and the people of the county. “I think the district has a balanced educational program,” Appel said. He was interested in maintaining that balance and in finding new ways of assessing the programs in the schools. In addition to results of standardized testing, Appel said that he wanted to look at how many students went on to college, how well they performed there and to assess the Work Experience programs in the high schools.

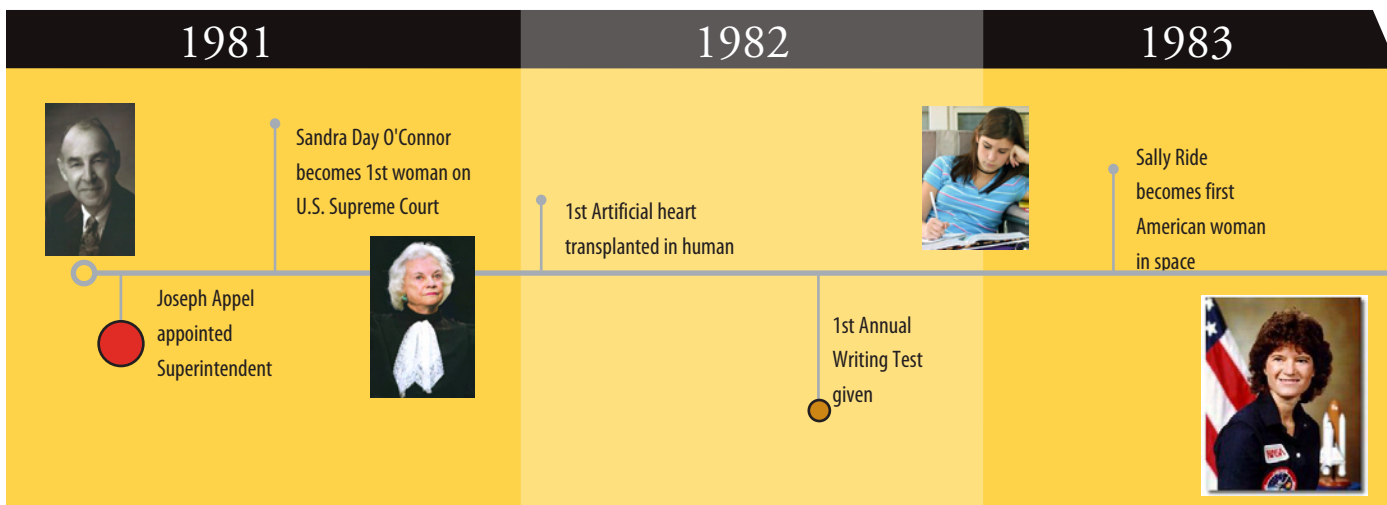
As superintendent, Appel made it clear to the Board that he would face strong challenges in developing a budget for the district, particularly since state financing for schools was uncertain since Proposition 13 had been passed, and was now in effect throughout the state. However, he said that he had a strong background in budgeting and added, “I feel that I can be of help in that area.”

Dr. Appel made it clear that he was also looking forward to working with the two employee groups of the district, teachers and non-teaching workers, which were already involved in negotiations with the Board of Trustees. “I have a strong feeling about a team effort,” he said and added that he wanted to work with parents, teachers, principals and all community members to maintain the district’s high standards (Meier 4). “There is no question in my mind that the top priority in a school district is the educational program,” Appel said. Appel also stated that he “views his job as one of identifying common bonds between the schools and the community and bringing people together to build a strong high school district.”

Starting with Dr. Appel’s first Board meeting on April 7, 1981, he made it abundantly clear that the district had a well-balanced educational program, but that financing in the district and the state would offer some strong challenges in the near future. Despite these challenges his goals would include implementing numerous changes in his top priority—the educational program.

During the May 5 Board meeting, John Riley, the principal at Central Valley High School, reported that the just completed accreditation report would be very favorable; the school was in compliance with all Special Education requirements and had won honors in tennis, jazz and art during the current year. Clifford Hepburn, principal of Enterprise High School, was excited about the new swimming pool and tennis courts and support from the City of Redding. The school had received top awards in drama, steno and sports this year, two graduating students from EHS had appointments to West Point and the Air Force Academy and the school received an energy conservation award by P.G.&E. Donald Demsher, principal of Nova High School, noted that a community meeting called by the school brought 180 parents together for input on school affairs and the response from the audience was very positive with some excellent interaction. He noted numerous sports and departments that were excelling as well. Ed Duggan, principal at Shasta High School, expressed pleasure that the Gifted and Talented Advance Placement program had been expanded to include art, French, German and Spanish. He also spent considerable time reviewing the energy saving measures implemented at Shasta High School. Bob Russell, principal of Pioneer High School, was very positive about the fact that attendance was up for the year and that not one senior failed the proficiency test for graduation. He was also happy about the fact that Pioneer produced eight publications of its school newspaper this year, an all-time first (SUHSD Board, 5 May 1981).

Statements were made by two of the principals alluding to the recent attention being given at both the state and district levels concerning the need for schools to focus on a “back to basics” curriculum. These

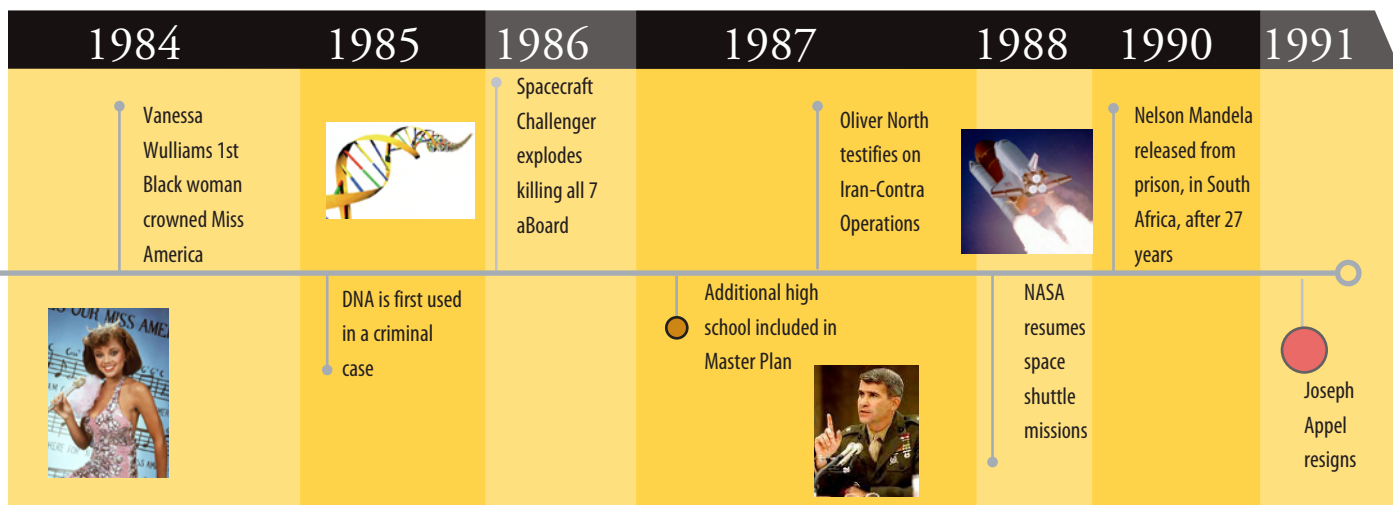


statements were qualified as a need to “satisfy upgraded requirements for the California state college and university systems” in terms of upgrading proficiency in writing, reading and math. According to referenced statistics published in a February edition of the Record Searchlight, which quoted the California Superintendent of Public Instruction Wilson Riles, “there is growing evidence of a serious deterioration of quality education in California public high schools.”

Dr. Appel’s arrival as our new superintendent coincided with a growing state-wide movement to: 1) change how financing of public monies were supplied and utilized through state government spending, and 2) make public schools more accountable to student and public needs. Gary Poertner, the assistant superintendent and business manager during Dr. Appel’s tenure, said “prior to 1975, California was ranked eighteenth in public school financing but 20 years later was ranked 41st.” Asked why this occurred, he said simply, “it was the cumulative effects of Proposition 13 passed in 1978 and Proposition 4 (Gann initiative) in 1979, both having a major effect in the way public education was financed. The state was having to add more money from its budget to education and therefore wanted more input and control in the classroom and demanded more accountability, as well.”

While the goal of Proposition 13 in 1978 was to cut local property taxes, this still left taxpayers vulnerable to increases of other types of taxes and the initiative did not limit the state and local spending or other revenue growth. Paul Gann, the co-sponsor of Proposition 13 and other spending-limit advocates, drafted Proposition 4 in 1979 which, if passed, would use the 1978-79 expenditure level as a base for state spending (Martin). It would be adjusted annually for population growth and inflation but would essentially put a cap on the amount of money the state could spend on its annual budget through public state taxes. The Gann initiative, creating Article XIII B in the California State Constitution, passed with nearly 75% of the vote in November of 1979.

The effects of both Proposition 13 in 1978 and Proposition 4 in 1979 would eventually take a toll on state spending and would have overwhelming effects on education, which would be felt by all school districts by the early 1980s. In the minutes of the September 7, 1982 meeting the Board of Trustees noted the Superintendent reported that “overall enrollments were 137 less than projected for the district.” The projection of declining enrollment is generally the first sign that a school district needs to make adjustments to the school budget to allow it to operate in a fiscally solvent fashion. At this time the Board and Superintendent recommended forming a committee that would have input from members of the community through



scheduled public meetings. These meetings would be covered by the media and have recorded minutes from formal discussions with parents, boosters clubs, students, teachers and classified associations. The task of this committee was to approve, reject or modify administrative recommendations or develop new recommendations (Report). These meetings were widely publicized and attended primarily during the months of December, 1982 and January of 1983.

At the Jan. 31, 1983 Board meeting, the trustees were presented with a “Report of the Superintendent to the Board of Trustees Regarding District Study Committee Recommendations.” The results of this report were comprehensive yet somewhat pejorative in nature since it included some major changes that would have been met with some overwhelmingly negative responses from the public. Some of these recommendations included: 1) eliminating freshman sports, cross country, swimming, golf, wrestling and tennis and limiting numbers of athletes for other sports while charging a \$25 fee/sport/athlete to compete as well as increasing ticket prices for admission to athletic contests; 2) eliminating selected advanced vocational courses as well as guitar instruction at all schools while increasing class sizes in driver education, typing and physical education; 3) eliminating numerous programs and services which included a district nurse, district psychologist, some class aides as well as cutting back on some counseling services at each of the schools. Also submitted was a list of alternative funding sources which included forming a non-profit, tax exempt corporation district-wide; pursuing an active grant-writing program; orchestrating a campaign to gather community support for legislation for school funding; forming an ongoing committee to evaluate curriculum; expand the volunteer program and initiate season ticket sales for sports (Report).

At the February 15, 1983 Board meeting this recommendation was unanimously adopted by the trustees and would be put into action immediately. One of the provisions of this report, however, was that adjustments could be made by the Board if future developments in the district made this action unnecessary. The possible savings over the course of the next school year (1983-84) could be as much as \$1.4 million dollars. The plan was put into action and as the Record Searchlight reported on March 2, 1983, “twenty-two teachers and other credentialed employees of the Shasta Union High School District were sent preliminary layoff notices. Trustees had approved a resolution that eliminated 11.2 teaching and certified jobs. Officials were hoping to reduce the upcoming year’s budget by \$449,700.”

As monumental as the financial challenges were to public education at this time, the other state-wide movement of bringing accountability into the classroom was equally as troubling. During the 1980s the National Science Foundation discovered that, in spite of aggressive calls for education reform and accountability, U.S. educators, analysts and policy makers lacked sufficient credible data to judge what to reform and who to hold accountable for what. At this time, calls for education reform were being pressed by various state and local stakeholders and greater emphasis was being placed on improving the quality of information about the performance of the overall system of education: each district, each school, each program, and each teacher. In California, following the enactment of SB 13, the omnibus reform law of 1983, Michael Kirst of Stanford University and James Guthrie of California, Berkeley, started the Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) Project with the intention of providing policy makers with a “nonpartisan, objective, independent body” of information on education (Kennedy). According to Kirst, he wanted to provide the public with solid evidence that reforms were not only being implemented but that they were improving the quality of education, as well.



Dr. Appel, like many educators at this time, had been influenced by this type of thinking, as well as revisiting many educational documents, such as, *“Why Johnny Can’t Read And What You Can Do About It.”* His promise when he was hired in 1981 was to “make the educational program a top priority.” Within the first year of his tenure he immediately reviewed the new graduation requirements emphasizing reading, writing and mathematics and visited with principals, department chairs and students to evaluate their outcomes and effectiveness. He asked the department chairs to meet with their corresponding department members and review their curriculum and to make written recommendations on what upgrades were needed to develop, further, the proficiency skills necessary for the graduation requirements in the SUHSD. Over the course of the 1981-82 school year, at each Board meeting, department chairs from the district schools gave a thorough review of objectives, recommendations and projected outcomes that would meet those objectives.

As a follow-up to these curriculum upgrades, the first annual writing test was scheduled to be given to all students in the SUHSD on May 18, 1982. This test would be used as a barometer for measuring and improving writing skills district-wide.

In follow-up Board meetings throughout the fall of 1982, test scores from the previous year were reported and were very positive. The results from the California Assessment Programs Survey of Basic Skills showed that as in the past three years the SUHSD scores exceeded state scores in reading, written expression, mathematics and spelling. The overall results for 1981-82 showed a very positive trend for the SUHSD (SUHSD Board, 5 Oct. 1982).

As the district was adopting its plan for cuts and layoffs for the 1983-84 school year, a meeting was set up at Nova High School’s library on March 15, 1983 for all interested public to attend and discuss with the



*ROP Student and Teacher*

Superintendent and other school personnel, any matters that dealt with district programs, financial matters, enrollment and school curriculum. During that well attended meeting it was made clear that the district had undertaken reforms to upgrade the quality of its programs by tripling enrollments in English and Mathematics, and by upgrading skills of teachers through workshops and school in-services. The district also talked about improving evaluation procedures to better identify strengths and weaknesses of teachers, coordinating programs with the R.O.P., community colleges and articulating programs with our elementary districts to better prepare students in critical academic areas in order to

coordinate our offerings and effect cost savings (SUHSD Board, 15 Mar. 1983).

In a continued effort to initiate and offer more advanced and honors classes in the SUHSD, Roger Longnecker, as the Advanced Placement (AP) Coordinator for the district, reviewed some of the background for developing the proposed policy in defining honors and AP classes. The University system was establishing its uniform practice for giving bonus points in AP and Honors classes that would, in turn, give those students passing those classes and the subsequent test an advantage in the application process. These courses must be

in the areas of history, advanced mathematics, English, laboratory sciences and foreign language beginning with students graduating from high school in June of 1984 (SUHSD Board, 3 May 1983). Dr. Appel saw this as an opportunity for the district and pursued this option with the Board for the upcoming school year with offerings in AP Government in the fall.

During the August 16, 1983, Board meeting it was reported by the Superintendent that enrollment for the upcoming school year was being predicted to be the same as the previous school year at 4,893 students. Enrollment projections for the next three years showed increases based on enrollments from the feeder schools to the district. This trend, along with new monies provided by SB 813 funding (this bill addressed issues of school finance, instructional programs, student discipline and employee provisions) from the recently passed state budget as well as a withholding of \$96,000 from the district for deferred maintenance, gave the projected balance some breathing room. Gary Poertner projected expenditures for the 1983-84 school year to be \$12,205,943 with total revenues projected to be \$12,547,147 which left the district with an operating surplus of \$341,204. This information along with the fact that fund-raising committees had been very active over the previous few months, especially for some of the minor sports, left the Board members feeling that the some of the planned cuts could be reinstated and the district could enter the new school year maintaining a provisional status quo (SUHSD Board, 4 August 1983).

Seemingly having dodged the proverbial bullet at this point, Dr. Appel and the Board could now function somewhat normally, towards developing its academic goals for the students of the SUHSD. The following is a listing of some of the programs, changes and achievements that occurred over the next few years under Dr. Appel's tenure:

- ◆ Public meetings with the Graduation Requirements Committee compared the existing SUHSD graduation requirements with the SB 813 requirements and national recommendations. This led to new graduation requirements in the SUHSD along with district-wide subject matter testing.
- ◆ District encouragement and advertising for an increase in students to participate in and to score higher on both the SAT and ACT tests. This brought forth 45% more students taking these exams with scores that exceeded state and national averages over three years.
- ◆ SB 813 monies were used to develop sophomore counseling at each of the high schools which was used to 1) motivate students toward career goals/education and; 2) meet with parents for guidance and clarification of goals dealing with issues of graduation requirements, financial aid, and district vocational education programs.
- ◆ The district applied for and received AB 551 money that was used for staff development in dealing with student needs through improved instruction, human development, communication and curriculum, and educational skills needed by the students who had not achieved proficiency in reading and writing.
- ◆ The district applied for and received Title IV/Indian Education Assistance Act money which provides for reducing the number of Indian student drop-outs, improves student attendance and provides liaison communications between teachers, administrators, students and parents.

- ◆ The district applied for and received funding to sponsor the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Program which is responsible for the serving the special needs of those students with exceptional talents.
- ◆ Development of a “Writing Across The Curriculum” Program which focused on evaluation of writing skills in all subject areas.
- ◆ The development of the Academic Partnership Program in which articulation between community colleges, the university system, and the SUHSD schools would take place.
- ◆ The Adopt-a-Student Program for students at risk.
- ◆ District compliance with the School Performance Report (SPR) for California Schools, which shows accountability in all school districts throughout the state. The SPR uses course enrollments and test scores from each district to compare them with schools of similar populations as to how they correlate to statewide targets.
- ◆ A \$1.7 million grant was awarded from the Leroy Green Reconstruction Funds for renovations at Nova High School.
- ◆ California Assessment Program (CAP) scores for the district exceeded state/county increases for 1984-85.
- ◆ Computer classes were developed and taught at all of the district high schools.
- ◆ Central Valley and Enterprise High Schools named main gyms for long-time coaches and teachers, Al Rose and Joe Manatowa, respectively.
- ◆ Sober Graduation events were scheduled at each of the comprehensive high schools so that safety and recognition could be modeled by schools and the parents.
- ◆ Health care, vision care, and salary increases were negotiated in a prudent and timely manner so that the district served as a model for other North State districts.
- ◆ Mentor Teacher Program was developed involving 83 teachers in the training by January of 1986.
- ◆ Budget restoration from 1983-84 cuts were completed by February 1986.
- ◆ Upgraded athletic facilities at each of the high schools.



*Nova Classroom Renovation*

- ◆ A “Drug Free Schools Program” was initiated at all schools in the district with an emphasis on making all students knowledgeable about the dangers of drug abuse, developing personal responsibility and encouraging healthy lifestyle choices. The district fostered cooperation between the students, parents, law enforcement agencies, public health departments and the business community which brought forth “Just Say No,” “Friday Night Live”, “SADD”, and other peer education programs.
- ◆ A complete replacement and remodeling of the Shasta High School library, counseling office, entrance, administration and attendance areas occurred due to the arson-caused fire in 1987.
- ◆ A new SUHSD Extra-Curricular Code and Discipline Code Handbook was adopted.
- ◆ A record number of 139 students enrolled in vocational/non-vocational student placement categories and concurrently took related SUHSD classes which were tied to their career objectives. This was led by Bob Johnson, the Work Experience Coordinator, who commented at the May 16, 1988, Board meeting, “It’s more than a job, its an education.”
- ◆ Title I funds were applied for and received for math and reading labs at Pioneer high school.
- ◆ The “Student At Risk” (STAR) program was developed in the district to identify problems and establish a plan of action for “at-risk students” to increase their success in school.
- ◆ A district-wide soccer program was initiated, and lighting at Enterprise, Nova and Thompson fields for both soccer and football.
- ◆ “College Night” was initiated to facilitate students needs and qualifications toward attending college after graduation.
- ◆ As recommended by the state, Site Councils were developed at all high schools in order to facilitate parent, teacher, student and community members’ input on issues of budget development, curriculum, instructional strategies and improvement in areas of student services at each site.
- ◆ State funds were applied for and received, to reduce class sizes in ninth grade English classes within the district to 20 to 1.
- ◆ The initiation of the Senior Project at Enterprise High School was aimed at encouraging students to be creative, demonstrate leadership, responsibility and accountability, in order to encourage lifelong learning and encourage students to step out of their comfort zone. This project would be assessed both as a written paper as and as a presentation before a Board.



*Soccer Comes to the District*

- ◆ Pioneer High School developed a modified school year calendar which consisted of six, six week units which would meet the academic needs of its students on a year-round basis.
- ◆ The district planned to move the district office to the downtown mall with updated facilities and computers at a financial savings to the district.
- ◆ These achievements moved the district forward during very difficult financial times but three major issues unfolded over the late 1980s and early 1990s that would come to define the future of the SUHSD: 1) The anticipated growth of student enrollment in the SUHSD made planning for a new high school imminent in the eyes of the Board and the local community; 2) Nova High School would be eliminated in order to temporarily house the new high school, and; 3) Central Valley high school would pursue leaving the SUHSD in order to unify with the K-8 schools in Central Valley.

As early as August of 1983 the Board was made aware of the fact that enrollment projections based upon increasing student population in the elementary schools would increase in the SUHSD as early as the 1984-85 school year with increases predicted after that into the 1990s. During the February 19, 1985, Board meeting it was recommended by Resolution 6716 that the SUHSD: 1) Maintain Nova High School as a ninth grade center for the immediate future; 2) Develop a public relations program to improve the understanding of Nova High School; and 3) Begin a plan for the purchase of land for a future high school site—submitted to the District by the Growth Committee. This goal was updated frequently. At the January 5, 1987, Board meeting, Dr. Appel told the Board that “the present enrollment, which was at 5,196 and at full capacity, would have a gradual loss of 300 students over the next three years, but then a dramatic increase to 6,300 students by the year 1994.” Dr. Appel continued that “since the state accepts three year projections as criteria for establishing a new school it takes, however, at least five years to plan for a new school.” The Board asked for a committee to be formed in order to study the possibilities of a new school and information that the Board could use in its evaluation of this matter.

At the June 15 Board meeting, a “Proposed Master Plan for a New High School and Reorganization of the Shasta Union High School District” was proposed. This plan’s objective was to build a fourth high school and to reorganize the district into four 9-12 high schools. A two phase plan was recommended: 1) Beginning in 1989-1990, reorganize the district into three 9-12 high schools: Central Valley, Enterprise and Shasta/Nova (as one school). Those students who will be attending the proposed fourth new high school will attend Shasta/Nova during the interim period. Move selected ROP classes and District office to the new Shasta/Nova complex; 2) In 1991-1992 begin phase-in the fourth new high school with incoming freshmen and grade 9 attending new high school so the school will be accommodating both grades 9 and 10. Complete phase-in in 1992-1993 and in 1993-1994. In 1994-1995, all four 9-12 should be operational. In the school year 1994-1995, Enterprise should have 1,430 students, Central Valley 1,100 students, Shasta/Nova 2,304 students, Pioneer 230 students and the new school 1,150 students for a district total of 6,214 students. This could only be done, however, with renovations and upgrades at both Enterprise and Central Valley High Schools of approximately \$870,000 each (SUHSD Board, 15 June 1987). The only significant alternative to this plan was to develop year-round schools throughout the district. The Proposed Master Plan was adopted by the Board after numerous public meetings and hearings at the September 8, 1987, Board meeting.

Over the course of the next few months the Master Plan and its consequences were debated and publicized in a manner that generally occurs when status quo is changed, especially in a small city like Redding and when it involves our young people. The plan to close the unique freshman center had its critics as well as its supporters. “It’s a real positive step. That’s one of the best things to come out of this (reorganization proposal),” said Cathy Taylor, president of the Central Valley High School Boosters Club. Nova teachers, however, said the public shouldn’t be too quick to dismiss what the ninth-grade center has provided the students and community. “It has a bad rap, but kids get a better deal at an all-ninth grade school,” said Gil Spencer, a counselor at the school since its inception as a ninth-grade center. “They’re living in a fool’s paradise, those who bad-mouth (Nova),” said V.I. Wexner, who taught English at Nova for five years. “Because students are kept on the closed campus and don’t have the older students to act as a distraction, there is more focus on school work,” he said. Overall, however, the community response on the elimination of Nova had been largely positive, with most saying the ninth-grade center has outlived its usefulness (Scarborough, A1).

On the other hand, many people were very excited about the new high school that would serve the students in northeast Redding, Palo Cedro, Bella Vista and to the eastern borders of the district. A committee of students, parents, staff members and administrators narrowed a long list of names for the new school including East Valley, Palo Cedro High and Vista to become the Foothill High School Cougars starting, at Nova High School, on July 1, 1991. The school colors would be red and silver with black trim and would probably be built somewhere along Deschutes Road in Palo Cedro when state funds could be acquired in order to help finance the project (Winship, A1).

While this reorganization of the district was in its planning stages, the financial situation, both at the district and state levels, were being driven by two impacting forces. One, was the fact that the district had dropped its enrollment from 4,999 (1988-89) to 4,655 (1989-90), a loss of over 300 students, as predicted 2 years earlier. This, in itself, was responsible for a revenue limit loss from the state of \$636,202. This would force the SUHSD to borrow money from the Capital Facilities Fund, both in 1989-90 and 1990-91, to the tune of almost one million dollars, while dropping their reserve fund below the 3% level, recommended by the state.

Meanwhile, the effects of both Proposition 13 (1978) and the Gann Initiative (1979) had major effects on how education was now being funded in the state, as discussed earlier in this paper. With both revenues and accountability being targeted as instrumental in moving California’s educational funding up to the national average, the voters approved Proposition 98 in 1988. This also came about because eight years after Proposition 4 was passed (1987), California experienced a revenue flow of \$1.1 billion over the Gann limit and Governor Deukmejian wanted to spend \$400 million on schools and refund \$700 million to the taxpayers. However, the Legislature refused to pass a bill authorizing the education appropriation so the final resolution was to refund taxpayers all of the \$1.1 billion excess in form of personal income tax rebates (Martin 2). So, shortly after the 1987 rebates were issued, two initiatives were placed on future ballots to fine-tune the Gann limit. Proposition 98, which barely passed with 50.7% of the voters, established a minimum funding level for K-14 education each fiscal year. It guaranteed schools a percentage of General Fund revenues equal to the percentage of General Fund revenues appropriated for K-14 education in 1986-87, approximately 40% (School, 3). The accountability caveat with this proposition required schools to have a “School Accountability Report Card” which had a built-in assessment of three specified school conditions. This, most likely, is what carried

the vote in this hotly contested issue. Proposition 111 (1990) was later passed by the voters, as well, further amending the Gann limit by altering the calculation while granting schools 50% of excess revenues (Martin 6).

These potential windfalls were not cure-alls for the difficult financial issues facing the SUHSD or other school districts in California, for that matter. However, the windfall combined with the projected increase in student enrollment slated to occur in the 1990s gave Dr. Appel and the Board the ability to plan for its reorganization with a somewhat positive outlook. The reorganization plan, however, had a possible glitch in the making that was beginning to gain momentum even as early as 1986.

Even though Central Valley High School had been in the SUHSD as long as Enterprise, it was seen by many in the Central Valley area as being a “step-child” when it came to the development of facilities and recognition by district officials. At the November 17, 1986, Board meeting, members of the Shasta Dam Area Coordinating Council (SDACC) made a presentation requesting help and money from the council for upgraded sports facilities. Simultaneously, the group made a plea to the Board stating they wanted equal consideration from the SUHSD as they have given the other schools in the district. Helen Fisher, representing the council, stated that “the sports facilities at CVHS remains one of our major goals. Many of our residents and members are graduates of CVHS and are ready to work hard to achieve for their children what was promised to them more than 20 years ago. Ladies and gentlemen of the SUHSD Board, the situation is not of your making, nor that of the present administration. However, it is within your hands to bring an end to the inequities that have existed far too long at CVHS. Dr. Appel and Dr. Embertson have assured us that they would like to see first class facilities at CVHS. By combining your efforts with ours, we will make this happen. Our children deserve no less.”



*Central Valley High School*

John Strohmayer, teacher at CVHS spoke and said “these are not wishes of the short range—not an immediate dream but a plan of the committee to complete in an orderly manner to upgrade CVHS to the level of the other schools in the district.” Dr. Embertson, the principal of CVHS, then asked the Board for some direction in determining what resources were needed in planning for this entire project. At that time, Dr. Appel suggested the committee meet with the principal, business manager and the architect for further discussion on this matter (SUHSD Board, 17 Nov. 1986).

Over the next couple of years, numerous questions and issues were brought up focusing on other inequities between the schools, especially at many of the public reorganization meetings. At one Board meeting, trustee Alvord asked the Superintendent why AP classes were not being offered at CVHS. Dr. Appel responded with inquiries of his own and suggested informal meetings to be held addressing this as well as other issues involving CVHS (SUHSD Board, 4 Jan. 1988).

At a public follow-up meeting on April 20, 1988, in which the reorganization issue was being discussed, fears surfaced among the attendees that a “super-school” at the Shasta/Nova complex in the district would leave

fewer educational opportunities at the smaller Central Valley High. Central Valley's then-current enrollment of about 900 compared with nearly 1,500 at Enterprise and nearly 1,400 at Shasta had many committee members calling for parity among all of the four-year schools on the issue of programs offered. Also offered was the suggestion that boundaries be shifted and "expand Central Valley...we have students now going without." (Coit, A1).

Aggravating this inequity issue was the very publicized and controversial issue involving the dismissal and reassignment of Mr. Bob McMullen, the extremely popular vice principal at CVHS, to a teacher assignment at Shasta High School (SUHSD Board, 20 June 1988). This move prompted many students, teachers and community members to begin discussing alternative ways in which they could gain more control of their high school and its outcomes.

In October of 1989, the County Board requested a meeting with all of the county Superintendents to express their opinion on the unification issue. They stated that they did not favor the idea at that time because: 1) Unification was not the most critical need in Shasta County at this time, and; 2) All models of the proposed unification did not meet legal requirements (SUHSD Board, 10 Oct.1989).

This meeting was followed up with the January 1990 SUHSD Board meeting in which the trustees took the following position on the Central Valley unification:

"The Board of Trustees of the Shasta Union High School District believes that we have an outstanding district, and we believe that Central Valley High School should remain a part of our district." They went on to say that "we believe that our high school district offers both educational and financial advantages which will not be available in a unified district with one school. Central Valley needs our district and our district needs Central Valley High School. We ask the County Committee to disapprove the proposed unification into a single high school district."

At the February 27, 1990, Board meeting, a letter, sent to Robert Embertson, principal of Central Valley High School, from Bill Honig, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, was shared with the Board which stated, "The 1989 Performance Report for California Schools, Grade 12, shows that your school placed in the top five percent of all schools in California on the Individual Quality Indicator(s)."

In November, 1990 a petition for unification was sent to the state of California asking for the residents of the Central Valley area to vote on the unification issue. The petition was honored by the state and a vote on unification would come sometime in 1992, most likely in November.

At a special Board meeting on March 19, 1991, Dr. Joseph Appel announced to the Board his resignation and his intention of taking a position with the New Jersey School District in Allendale, New Jersey.

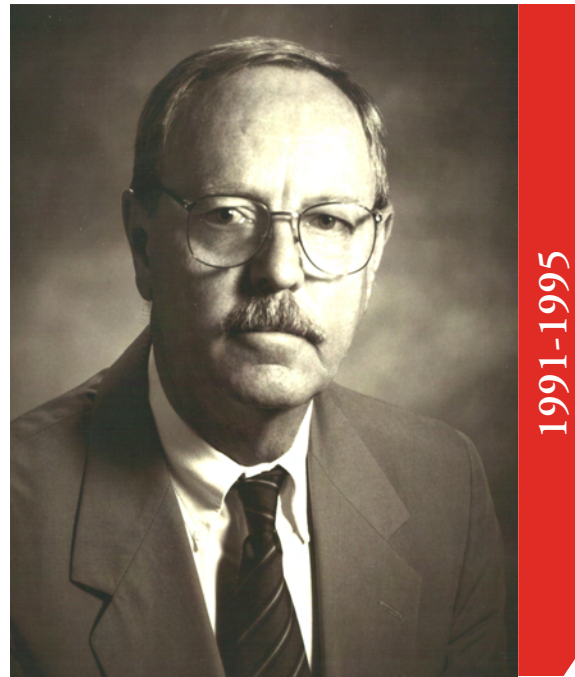
At his last Board meeting on April 23, 1991 the Board commended Dr. Appel for his outstanding leadership during his ten years as the Superintendent of the Shasta Union High School District. The Board made numerous comments and gave gracious accolades about the leadership Dr. Appel had shown on both the state and national levels while serving as our Superintendent. "Now, therefore, the Board of Trustees of the Shasta Union High School District hereby publicly acknowledges his outstanding, distinguished service to the District and to education and accepts his resignation with both gratitude and regret."



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*“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.”*

— Albert Einstein



1991-1995

## The Time of Donald Demsher

# Chapter 3

**“Donald Demsher was to be the right man** for the right job at the right time.” according to John McIntosh, teacher and vice-principal at CVHS (1985-1993). As an employee of the SUHSD since 1962, Demsher was familiar with the district’s issues, it’s employees and was a creative communicator who could solve problems. This was not only a consensus among the staff members who had worked with Don for almost 30 years but also of the Board of Trustees who made him the new superintendent starting May 6, 1991, when Dr. Joseph Appel left the district for a position in New Jersey.

At the April 9, 1991, Board meeting, Board President Terry Alvord stated, “We feel that Don’s records as an educational administrator and a city councilman provide the background and experience for the challenges our district will face in growth, expansion of facilities and district reorganization. Moreover, because of the mounting state deficit and its current and potential effect on our budget...we feel appointing Mr. Demsher for one year... will enable the district to maintain stability of direction and move ahead without delay with the many ongoing projects currently under way.”

As a former social studies teacher, work experience instructor, vice-principal and finally a principal at Nova and Central Valley high schools, Don had the insights and knowledge to lead the district through a difficult transition period that would see him through his reign as the SUHSD superintendent until he retired in 1995.

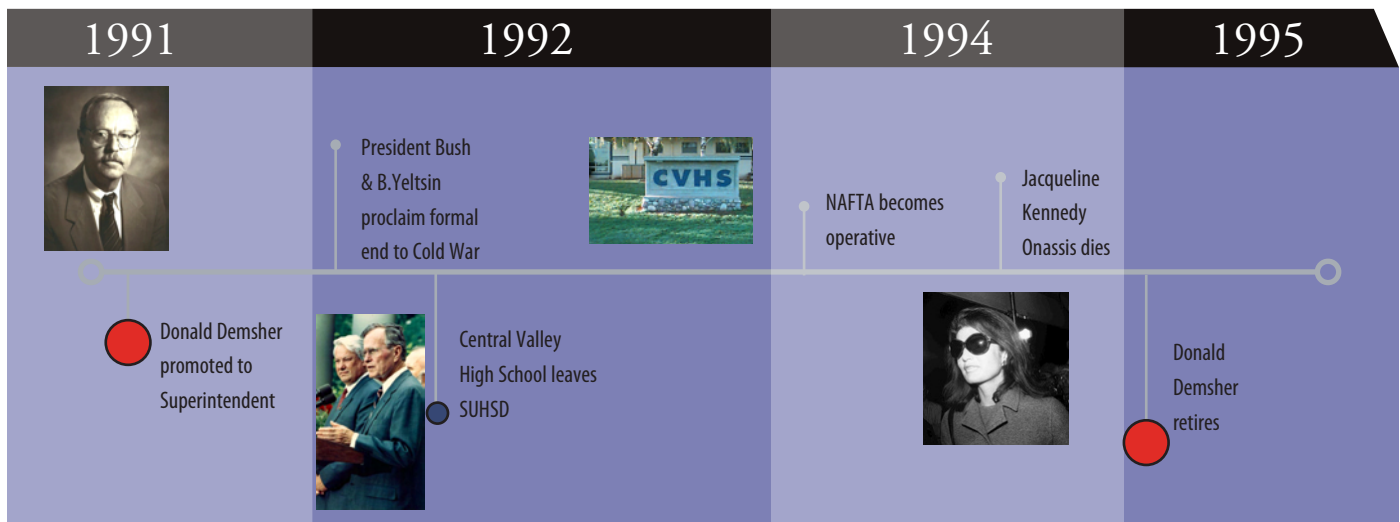
At the same Board meeting Mr. Demsher responded by saying, “I am pleased to accept the appointment of superintendent and I am honored that the Board has the confidence in me to meet the responsibilities and carry out the leadership role as the next superintendent of the Shasta Union High School District. The SUHSD like many districts in the state, is laboring under serious financial constraints—but at the same time, the expectations of the public we serve are high, indeed. Delivering a quality educational program, keeping morale high, communicating effectively, making sound decisions and exercising strong leadership in the educational family of the SUHSD and community are but a few of the areas that I commit to tonight. I look forward to this new responsibility and I am prepared to take on the challenge that certainly comes with it.”

The partnership formed at this meeting between the Board, Mr. Donald Demsher and the staff of the SUHSD was given some impetus and direction by the passing of Resolution 8488. This resolution, proposed formally by this Board, was being sent to the state legislature in opposition to the possible suspension of Proposition 98, passed just 3 years earlier, stipulating monetary support of public education. In essence, if passed, it would take the worlds largest school system, cutting \$2 billion in deep and devastating cuts to a system that was already seriously underfunded, jeopardizing educational reform and could have set education back as much as six years (SUHSD Board, 9 April 1991).

It was also stated by Mr. Poertner, during this meeting, that, “a lot of cooperation and work has been involved to eliminate the need for layoffs—which the Board wants to prevent. However, if these were normal times, we would be hiring 25 more teachers to take care of enrollment growth.”

Reorganization plans, with the elimination of one high school while planning for another; possible unification of one of its other contemporary high schools; remodeling of three of its high schools while planning for almost unparalleled enrollment growth; and now, a possible set-back in state funding that could effect staffing and educational programs for years to come. The state of California was looking at a possible multi-billion dollar deficit while planning for the 1991/92 fiscal year and many school districts throughout the state were trying to prepare for a worst-case scenario in planning for their upcoming school year, including the SUHSD. An inauspicious beginning for the new superintendent of the North State’s largest union high school district.....welcome, Mr. Don Demsher.

Amidst these difficult issues facing Demsher and the Board were the growing state and local issue of violence and gang activities in communities and schools and also the related issue of an increase in the use of



alcohol and drugs on campuses. In April of 1991 the Board authorized that a drug survey be administered to over 3,600 students in all 4 schools in the district, grades 9-12, so that baseline data could be obtained from students that would allow the district to develop more effective prevention programs and to monitor their subsequent progress in reducing student substance abuse. The district had been involved with the Comprehensive Alcohol and Drug Prevention Program (CADPP) which had funded many programs over the past year and which also funded this survey.

The results of this survey showed that while twenty-six percent of the students surveyed were listed as non-users it also showed that the vast majority of students were involved in drug and alcohol abuse. Eighty-nine percent of the students believed that there was some level of drug and alcohol abuse on their campus while ten percent felt that it was a large problem and eight percent felt that they had a personal problem with drug and or alcohol (SUHSD Board, 24 Sept. 1991).

The results of this survey along with concerned parents, community members and the educational staff prompted many people to speak out at Board meetings. At the November 27 Board meeting, Nancy Pernell, a trustee on the Redding Elementary School Board commenting on the number of fights and skirmishes involving known gang members within the district said, “We have lost confidence in the (school) administrator’s ability to adhere to existing policies and enforce school rules.”

Demsher and the Board responded by forming “A Safe Schools Task Force,” which included members of the Redding Police Department, Probation Department, Substance Abuse Counselors, school personnel from the SUHSD as well as representatives from elementary schools within the SUHSD, representatives from the County Office of Education (COE), the Asian community, trustees and other interested parties (SUHSD Board, 8 Oct. 1991). The group’s goal was to meet on a regular basis with the emphasis on solving student conflicts on school campuses and enforcing the rules that would help make the school safer and endorse a healthier atmosphere for all students.

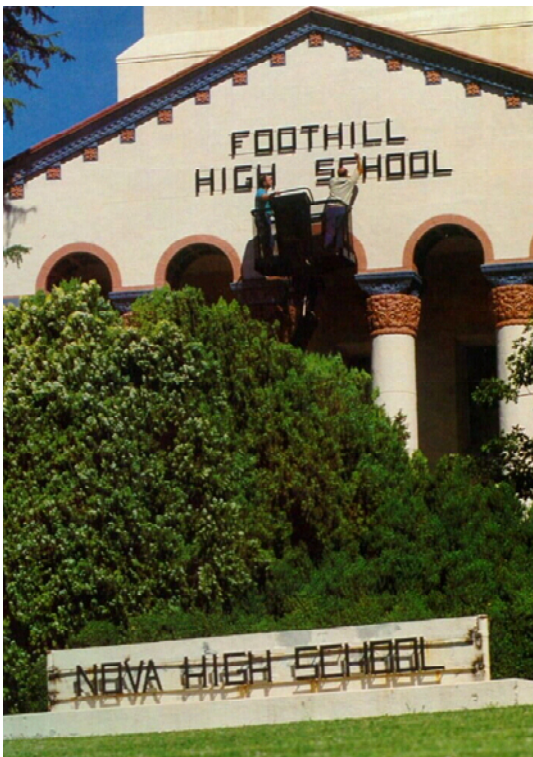
Changes that were made from both the committee and the Board over the next few years included: full-time security at each school site; hiring police officers from the Redding police department on a part-time basis to work with students and to help offset gang activity; training for counselors and administrators in order to help identify and deal with gang activity and drug-related problems; conflict management training for teachers and students at each site; Board policies that banned hats and other clothing that was considered gang-related and; application for numerous grants through the state and federal government that would fund and appropriate drug and alcohol awareness and intervention. These endeavors along with the development of parent/student organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) and the Chemical People generated positive responses from both the public and school personnel as these problems were addressed over the next few years with a great deal of success.

Governor Pete Wilson, in the annual “May Revise,” recommended to the state legislature that because of serious financial concerns at both the state and local levels, Proposition 98 be suspended. This, if adopted by the legislature during the summer, could by itself put the SUHSD in a very difficult situation. At the May 13 SUHSD Board meeting, business manager Gary Poertner presented to the public the required Second Interim Report (P2) report on the financial status of the district, stating that “primarily due to the decline of 283 ADA from June 1987 to June 1991 the District annual revenue limit receipts had decreased by \$987,000 per year. Even though substantial corresponding expenditure cuts had been made, ending balances decreased steadily

from \$1,343,108 in June 1988 to an estimated \$248,094 in June 1991. This loss of fund balance caused the cash flow problem.” Even with this information the Board gave a positive certification that the district would be able to meet its financial obligations at year end, noting however, that in order to meet requirements for June 30, 1991 it was necessary for the district to make a short term loan from the Capital Facilities Fund of \$450,000 in order to meet the 3% reserve the state recommends.

At this same meeting, the superintendent apprised trustees that the district needed to be seriously pursuing other means of financing the new high school. He stated, “we need to look towards passing a bond issue, year round school, Melo Roos funding—portables will address our needs for a while but in 1995 we are going to be in great difficulty if we don’t have a new school to move into. The picture looks very serious—especially when the state funding becomes more doubtful and there may be little chance of passing a state bond issue in June 1992. Priority for State funding requires year round schools.” Demsher suggested hiring a consultant who could give the district advise on direction and time lines in order to meet their goals. He also set up a public meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 22, 1991, in the Junction School Gymnasium in Palo Cedro in order to give information and receive feedback from the public on the financial situation of the district in relation to planning for Foothill High School. This information would be used in an in-depth Board/Management meeting in August that would address the aforementioned issues and possible solutions after the state released its 1992/1993 state budget (SUHSD Board, 13 May 1991).

After meeting with the public and management during the summer and obtaining information from the approved state budget, Mr. Poertner reported the district’s Final Budget for the 1991/1992 school year at its September 10 Board meeting. An overview of the General Fund showed that the budget was based on a 3/4% Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA) for the revenue limit and no COLA for other programs. Proposition 98 funding had been deficiated by 4.68%, which if fully funded, would have meant another \$873,000 for the district.



Special Education had been deficiated by 9% and the revenue limit had been calculated with an enrollment estimate of 5,407 which in order to meet the district projection meant that the CBEDS in October must still grow by 116 students. On the other hand, Mr. Poertner focused on the four highest budget priorities of the district that had been met to date: 1) the district had a 3.25% reserve which met the 3% required by the state 2) it had reversed the trend of deficit spending of the last three years 3) there was renewed participation in the state deferred maintenance program, and; 4) three new school buses were purchased with a five year lease (SUHSD Board, 10 Sept. 1991).

Mr. Poertner pointed out that the 1991/1992 budget “is a bare bones budget” with very little wiggle room for adjustments. The district was 24 teachers down from the previous year making major adjustments to its 25 to 1 ratio in the classroom; they had one less administrator than the previous year; office, custodial and maintenance supplies were 50% of normal; no funds had been allocated for wage increases or the increased costs of increased

*Foothill High School Takes Over Nova Campus*

medical and dental benefits above previously negotiated caps at an estimated cost of \$185,000. This along with the fact that the SUHSD was the 10th lowest funded high school district in the state of California gave the district \$106 per ADA less than the mean average in the state for 1989/1990 (SUHSD Board, 10 Sept. 1991).

This scenario was made more complicated by the fact that the CVHS unification vote passed in June meaning that the Gateway District would inherit the site on July 1, 1992. In addition, the district was committed to finishing the lighting for the school which might have meant \$50,000 more in expenses before the project was completed.

At the November 12 Board meeting, numerous teachers picketed in an attempt to get the district to honor its commitment to negotiate in good faith in dealing with its medical and dental benefits which had been negotiated prior, as well as negotiating an adjustment in salaries. The superintendent commented, “The state’s projected deficit was \$3.5 billion and the financial picture is not expected to improve.”



*District Teachers Picket*

The follow-up November Board meeting on the twenty-sixth, met with the news that the district was down 131 students from the projected enrollment, which would cause the district to lose \$617,000 in funding. Taking action at this point, the Board proposed and passed \$170,000 in further cuts from an already tight budget.

On another issue that could have had future financial overtones for the district, it was noted that the Board asked the superintendent to write a memo to the District Reorganization Committee, meeting in December, reinstating its earlier position of “favoring unification along boundaries congruent with the SUHSD.” While the Board agreed that unification congruent to the SUHSD boundaries had the potential of providing the best educational organization for our students, they wanted further unification issues to be put on hold until the Gateway Unified School District got underway. The issues involving the new Foothill campus which would provide housing for its growing population would also be put on hold. The comment about “further unification issues” was made in reference to the Enterprise Elementary School District’s inquiry to the SUHSD and the public about its unification with Enterprise High School, similar to the previous unification effort with Central Valley High School.

At the December 17 Board meeting, Jack Schreder and Associates gave a report on their Developer Fee Justification Study, which showed the relationship between residential, commercial and industrial growth and the need for construction and reconstruction of school facilities in the SUHSD. In summary, it showed that by the 1995/1996 school year the district would be operating at 158% capacity unless additional facilities were provided. The cost of the new Foothill High School was estimated between \$24 and \$26 million. It also showed that with the renovations at the existing schools combined with the building of the new school the total cost would require a \$50 million bond to be passed by the voters.

Illuminating the dire financial situation in the state, Gary Poertner said, “the financial situation is getting worse. It looked very similar last year. The difference is the state’s economy was in a healthier condition then.” It was also stated that tax collections statewide in October were 7 percent or \$3 billion behind projections.

Poertner went on to say that “he estimated the district would end the fiscal year, June 30, with \$39,000 cash reserves out of a \$24 million budget.” The Board ended the meeting by scheduling work-study sessions for January, to research and discuss: budget reductions for 1991/92 and 1992/93 school years, layoffs, staffing, class size, athletics and possible program eliminations for 1992/93.

At the January 14 Board meeting the Board announced that layoff notices would be sent out by March 15, the legal deadline defined by the state, and that the number sent out would be contingent upon the number of Central Valley High School teachers that decided to stay in the district as well as the number of teachers that would leave the district through retirement or by transfer.

Gary Poertner, business manager, announced his decision to leave the district by accepting another job. Dr. Elmer Clute was hired as an interim business manager for the district until June 30, 1992. Also mentioned by the Board was the possibility of eliminating “minor sports” in the district for 1991/92 as a possible way to save money.

At the February 11 Board meeting it was determined that cuts of \$35,982 needed to be made in the spring sports budget. Cuts consisted of eliminating a third track coach at each of the high schools, a limit in transportation costs would be implemented and clothing and equipment would not be replaced in order to make the necessary adjustments to the 1991/92 budget. Trustee Anderson stipulated that further cuts of \$861,000 needed to be made for the entire 1992/93 budget and that many programs were in jeopardy. At the next Board meeting, on February 25, recommendations were made by the Board that in order to maintain the full integrity of the athletic programs, funds could be raised through user fees, athletic fees and booster fund raisers.

Also, at this meeting, a list of criteria was presented, which would prioritize the layoffs of school personnel before layoff notices were sent out later in the month. On the twenty-fifth of February the Board stated that the district would carry over 79% of its current funding since Gateway would consume 21% of the agreed upon budget dollars when they became part of the Gateway district on July 1, 1992. Based on an estimated loss of ADA of 3-5%, the impact on the SUHSD could run as high as \$900,000 (SUHSD Board, 25 Feb. 1992).

A preliminary layoff list of certificated personnel, including 64 teachers and 11 administrators, was printed out, at the March 10 Board meeting, and the trustees asked the Shasta Secondary Education Association (SSEA) if they would agree to negotiate a 5.5% cut in wages for all 211 teachers to eliminate the need for layoffs. Approximately 86% of the budget consisted of employee’s wages and benefits and without cuts the district could accrue a \$1.4 million deficit beginning the 1992/93 school year, depending on what the state budget looked like in July, according to the district administration. Tim Whipple, president of SSEA, responded by saying that “he resented the superintendent bargaining the public before they have even gone to the bargaining table; teachers are not overpaid, in fact, they are below average for high schools of equal size.” The superintendent remarked that he realized that asking for a salary cut and laying off personnel was a drastic measure, but the situation in California was very bad and the SUHSD was not the only district laying people off and “I am very concerned about this; I can understand the emotions involved” (SUHSD Board, 10 Mar. 1992).

Prior to a special session of the SUHSD Board of trustees meeting on March 20 at 4:00 p.m., district students and parents, representing a group called “Students First,” addressed trustees regarding their concerns about laying off teachers, projected increased class sizes, district office move and furnishings, and possible

cuts in sports, music and drama programs. This was well-received by the Board as they presented the “Second Interim Report,” required by the state of California. In this report it was stated by Juliebelle Nadon, District Budget Analyst and Elmer Clute that even though the district started the 1991/92 fiscally sound, it was now clear that the pervasive National and State recession had taken its toll, along with deficit spending at all levels, on the health of education throughout the state. The SUHSD had been hit especially hard because of its loss of 184 ADA just during the 1991/92 school year to go along with the states inability to fully fund Proposition 98 as well as a loss in lottery funds due to the state’s inability to collect taxes during the recession. A revenue reduction of \$433,339 since the beginning of the 1991/92 school year gave the Board no choice but to make a qualified certification that the District would not be able to meet its financial obligations if certain financial events occurred (SUHSD Board, 20 Mar. 1992). This statement was a difficult one to make by Demsher and the Board, but most certainly set up the guidelines, criteria and inevitable timetable that would follow and most certainly set precedents for a district that had always prided itself in doing what was professionally the best for its students and staff.

Over the next few months, Demsher and the Board, were preparing for the “worst case scenario,” estimated by Mrs. Nadon, to be a shortfall of \$1,698,000 for the district going into the 1992/93 school year, depending on how the state budget turned out over the upcoming summer. With potential cutbacks to bus transportation, the school farm and with the decentralization of athletics accounting for \$198,000 of these cuts the majority of the money, \$1,500,000, came from laying off certificated non-classroom, certificated classroom and classified classroom personnel. When asked how it felt to be on the district’s layoff list for the 1992/93 school year, Mark Rendes (1985-present), science teacher at Enterprise high school, responded by saying, “I thought Yogi Berra had it right. Previously, I had been employed by the Fremont Union High School District during the Jarvis Gann era. I had seven years in the district when, in 1979, my principal came to me and said, ‘you have seven years of excellent service in our district. Unfortunately, you will need ten years of service to remain employed.’ I was in my seventh year with the SUHSD in 1992 when I received my layoff notice. I thought to myself, it feels like deja vu all over again. Yogi was smarter than the average Berra.”

As Central Valley High School was preparing to merge with the Gateway School District, the balance of transfer of payments was being negotiated to the tune of \$390,428.52, which the SUHSD would pay over the next 6 years making the split professionally and legally amicable.

Numerous students and especially staff members at CVHS, however, had only known the SUHSD as their parent district since its inception in 1955 and many employees were excited but remorseful about leaving the SUHSD after 36 years together. Bill Springhorn (1976-2010), a lifetime employee of CVHS as both a teacher and a coach, said of the separation, “The unification of the Gateway District was based on the perception of a few that CVHS was underfunded and ignored by the SUHSD. I think most teachers at CVHS would say that that was not the case, and that a special group of teachers was broken up and the best kept secret in Shasta County education was never the same after unification.” The brotherhood of that relationship might have ended but its strong personal and professional ties have continued to exist to this day, he implied.



*Central Valley High School*

The summer had been eventful with the advent of the ending of the school year budget on June 30 and the passage of the state budget in July. The state managed to cut less from the education budget than they had anticipated and they eliminated the attendance accounting changes for this year which would have cost most districts, including the SUHSD, a substantial amount of money in computer systems. These, plus an increase in ADA of 46 students; retirees that would not be replaced, causing class size averages in the district to go up; most Central Valley High School personnel staying with the host school, eliminated the need to cut many positions through layoffs. This gave Mark Rendes and many other teachers on the layoff list the opportunity to be recalled and start teaching on the first day of school in August.

Also helping to bring back many of the laid off employees were the numerous cutbacks to programs, much of the financing being supplemented by boosters clubs and through fund-raising; fees being charged in athletics along with increased ticket prices for games; major cutbacks in deferred maintenance and school sites budgets, and; a higher year end surplus than expected gave Demsher and the Board a little breathing room (SUHSD Board, 7 Sept. 1992). All of this despite the fact that Governor Pete Wilson, vetoed a \$1.9 billion bailout bill that would have helped all school districts with their financial problems (SUHSD Board, 8 Oct. 1992).

By December, the actual ADA for the district was 123 students higher than the previous year giving Demsher and the Board the opportunity to smile about a projected \$520,409 balance in the first Interim Report. Good news considering that the district paid Gateway school district 19.85% of its negotiated payback (SUHSD Board, 14 Dec. 1992).

Many of the employees were hired back over the summer and at the beginning of the school year the district had a chance to focus on education and the immediate need for planning a new campus as well as expanding and upgrading the existing school sites. At the October 27 Board meeting the new business manager, Tom Bruner (1992-1994), showed enrollment figures collected from feeder schools projecting 5,330 students for the 1995/96 school year; up 940 students from the present enrollment of 1992/93. Trustees then pointed out that the district should continue with the process of educating the public concerning facility needs; to modernize the present facilities and build the new school had an updated price tag of \$52,459,952. They continued to state that the public needed to be aware of the need for a public bond as well as the possibilities of double sessions and year round schools.

With continual planning and many public meetings discussing unification, bond issues and the need for expansion in the district the Board hired back many of its laid off employees and announced in May 1993 that Demsher and the Board had met their four primary goals for the 1992/93 school year: 1) public image of the district has improved; 2) the required 3% reserve level has been reached; 3) staff and service recognition had taken place on a regular basis, and; 4) the district had substantially moved into restructuring (SUHSD Board, 26 May 1993).

Demsher also apprised the Board at the May 27 meeting that the County committee voted to place unification on the June 1994 ballot if the Department of Education approved the necessary waivers pertaining to employee salary percentages and percentage increases in cost to the state. He said he “was investigating the likelihood of the state granting the waivers, but saw no community passion for the unification currently.”



Over the next few months it was reported to the Board that:

- ◆ Escrow closed on the Foothill High School property in Palo Cedro.
- ◆ The Enterprise Elementary School District had decided to proceed with its unification effort which would remove Enterprise High School from the SUHSD, financially impacting the district and seriously jeopardizing the new school plans; therefore the Board voted to aggressively oppose this action.
- ◆ Terry Wade, architect, presented an overview of the reduced-cost modifications for the new Foothill High School with a projected enrollment of 1344 students. He also pointed out that working drawings would be presented to the state in February 1994 and Phase I of construction must begin in April 1995 in order to maintain the schedule of a Fall 1996 school opening. The business manager pointed out that there was a \$4.8 million deficit between the cost of the first phase (\$21,676,380) and the availability of funds. He said that the options were obligation bonds or waiting for cash flow.
- ◆ The administration recommended a Spring 1995 general obligation bond election.
- ◆ In November 1993, Proposition 170 was defeated by the California voting public which would maintain the 2/3 voter approval to pass bond elections but also rescinds the \$1.00 per square foot on developer fees which impacted the SUHSD by \$210,000.
- ◆ Foothill Project Facilities were approved by the State.

The Foothill High School project was at a standstill until voter approval was given, with an anticipated Spring 1995 bond election, but the financial situation in the district was now stabilized and with 33 years in the district, the last 5 as the superintendent, Don Demsher announced his plans for retirement for late Fall of 1994 or early Spring of 1995. This would give the Board time to find a replacement and would allow Demsher to work with him before leaving.

During Demsher's tenure, most of the focus was on the issues of unification, financial stability and building a new high school in Palo Cedro, but to his credit and the district's benefit, Don's ability to listen, build for the future and to collaborate gave the district many new programs and endeavors that allowed the SUHSD to grow even during the difficult times. Some of these are the following:

- ◆ Development of the CASH Program integrating academic and vocational classes and connecting these to the business community and post high school programs.
- ◆ Enterprise High School became a "Distinguished School" for 1990/91 and Shasta High School for 1991/92.



*Enterprise High School Starship Cast*

- ◆ Entertained the Charter School philosophy and ideals which would eventually work its way into the SUHSD.
- ◆ Applied for and received state waiver funds for the “Second To None” program which sought to restructure schools in order to create powerful teaching and learning for all students in developing curriculum pathways leading to academic and vocational outcomes.
- ◆ Instituted an upgraded Technology Program, with Randy Brix, in the district that gave students and teachers more training and accountability with computers.
- ◆ Took on the Pregnant Minors Program from the County and placed it at Mary Street with its own housing.
- ◆ Developed and financed a new continuation program called Churn Creek High School through the State.
- ◆ Introduced and developed an Adult Education program financed through the state.
- ◆ Helped initiate and supported the College Connection Program through Shasta College. It allowed students the opportunity to take up to 11 college units/semester and finish high school requirements during their senior year (all 3 districts schools with 30 students participated during its initial year in 1994/95).
- ◆ Supported the development of “a school within a school” program at Enterprise (CAAMP) and Shasta (Humanities) High Schools.
- ◆ Supported a block schedule program at Foothill High School.
- ◆ Supported an Interactive Math Program at the sites which developed math, reading, writing and comprehension skills in selected math classes.
- ◆ Entertained the idea of “shared services”, including the superintendent’s position with the Redding Elementary Schools District.
- ◆ Applied for and received a \$42,575 grant from the State for “year round classes” at Pioneer High School.
- ◆ Helped create and support a “School To Work” transition program at Churn Creek High School.
- ◆ Aggressively promoted programs throughout the district that would offset gang activities and drug and alcohol problems throughout the district including a Conflict Management and Peer Assistance programs at all of the sites.



*Churn Creek High School*

- ◆ Helped develop and support a monthly Staff Recognition Award at Board meetings.

Demsher was hired by the Board in 1991 because of his familiarity with the staff and district as well as his open-mindedness and innovative approach to handling problems. These attributes were very obvious during his 4 year tenure and especially during the difficult financial crisis involving cutbacks and the staff layoffs. Before he left he said to the Board that he “leaves the district financially sound and relationships between management and employees on the mend.” Demsher admitted that his tenure as superintendent “has been very difficult.” Terry Alvord, Board President, stated that “this has been a strain for him the last year and a half. With Don’s leadership we were able to restructure the funding of various programs and get through the very tough layoff procedures” (Scarborough, 5 Aug. 1994).

As quoted by Demsher, the Second Interim Report in March 1995 showed that ADA was up by 152 students from the 1993/94 school year which in turn showed a projection of \$812,840 in reserves, the required 3% recommended by the State and \$245,000 more than predicted at the beginning of the year. This would also lead to the restoration of site budgets to their 1993/94 levels and with a 2.73% COLA the following year, raises for the entire staff. These results would have been difficult to predict a year earlier and was a nice going away gift from Demsher after four years as the SUHSD superintendent (SUHSD Board, 23 May 1995).

Demsher’s last Board meeting was extended until February 28, 1995, when the Board hired J.D. Leitaker, retired Anderson High School District superintendent, to be the interim superintendent, until the Board was able to finish advertising, screening, and hiring a new full-time SUHSD superintendent.

On May 9, 1995, the Board met and announced the hiring of Dr. Robert Slabey, 47, as the new SUHSD superintendent. He would start on May 23 with a starting salary of \$86,000.



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*“Education costs  
money, but then so does  
ignorance.”*

— Sir Claus Moser



## The Rob Slaby Period

# Chapter 4

**Dr. Robert Slaby** was hired after serving as the superintendent of the Middletown Unified School District for almost eight years (1987-1995). He earned his Bachelor of Sciences degree from the University of California, Berkeley in 1970 before going on to earn his M.A. in Education at Berkeley and then another M.A. in Biology at Occidental and finally completing his Doctorate at USC in 1979. He started teaching math and science at the high school level in 1970 before moving to the positions of vice-principal, principal and finally the superintendent's position in Middletown in 1987.

After competing against 30 other applicants for the SUHSD position, Board president, Terry Alvord described Slaby as “experienced in negotiations and technology in the school system with an awful lot of enthusiasm” (SUHSD Board, 10 May 1995).

Slaby's experience and enthusiasm were just what the Board was looking for especially considering that they needed someone who could find a way to finance a new high school for the fall of 1996. The Preliminary Operating Budget presented by the budget manager gave a positive outlook for entering the 1995/96 school year with the following information: 1) a positive ending balance of \$812,840 which exceeded the minimum 3% reserve; 2) a 15% increase over the 1994/95 school site budget for the 1995/96 school year; 3) an increase of 14 additional sections (2.2 FTE) added to the 1995/96 Master schedules; 4) ADA for the 1995/96 school year was projected to be over 200 more students (4,600) than the 1994/95 school year, showing a projected year end balance increase of \$167,881 for the end of the 1995/96 school year; 5) reduced rates from the Shasta Public Employees

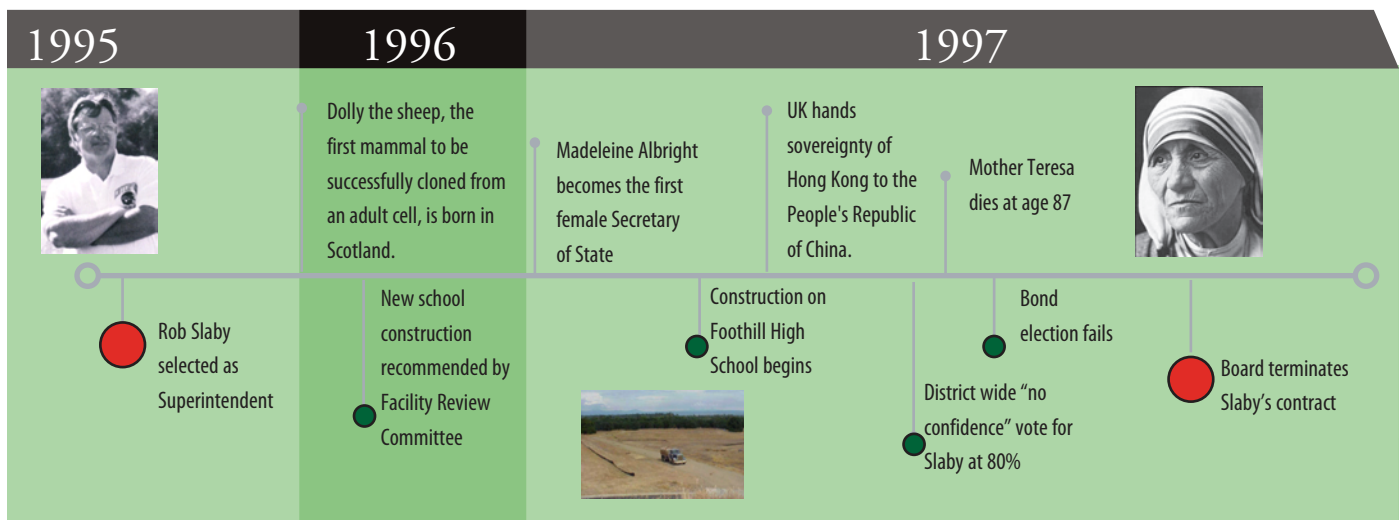
Trust for Health and Welfare coverages as well as lower rates from a commercial carrier for the district's Workers Compensation Insurance, secured significantly lower rates for the district and its employees, and; 6) the Governor has proposed a 2.73% COLA which, if passed by the legislature, would add to the Base Revenue Limit for the district (SUHSD Board, 30 May 1995).

The outlook for the district was very positive and allowed the Board and the new superintendent to focus on developing avenues through which to finance the new Foothill campus as well as to provide the existing facilities which would house a larger student base in the near future. This was obvious to the public and staff at the August Board meeting when Slaby presented his goals to the Board with a major focus on upgrading the present sites as well as building Foothill High School. This goal matched up well with two of the Board's five goals they set for themselves in June which stated that the Board wanted to: 1) identify, prioritize and measure the needs of the district's stakeholders and build support for district programs and facility improvement/expansion and; 2) establish a broad-based committee process for development and evaluation of educational programs and student housing issues.

These goals were shared by the students, faculty and parents of the Foothill community as well as the entire staff in the SUHSD. So, at the September 21 Board meeting, the trustees discussed strategic planning for a future bond measure that would not only fund the new Foothill High School in Palo Cedro, but also address critical facility deficiencies at the Shasta and Enterprise campuses. Trustee Plank noted that "if the State does not fund the match program, the bond will not pass." The administration also advised that if the District loses Enterprise High in a unification election, the tax base will be insufficient for for the necessary bond measure.

A major setback to the Enterprise unification effort took place in October when the County Superintendent of Schools reported that the petition was found to be insufficient when it fell short by 824 valid signatures to get on a ballot for a public vote. It was anticipated, however, that the unification proponents would attempt to gather the additional signatures and resubmit the petition at a later date (SUHSD Board, 24 Oct. 1995).

At a special session of the Board on January 17, 1996, timelines for a bond campaign were discussed. It was determined that a successful bond election would fund the building of Foothill High School in Palo Cedro, a performing Arts Center at Enterprise High School and the renovation of the Shasta High School gymnasium. It was also determined that the Steering Committee for the bond campaign would meet on January 31. Trustees



Grossman and Anderson would represent the Board at this meeting.

The Steering Committee created the Facility Review Committee in March to study and make determinations about needed rehabilitation and expansion of present site facilities and it was from that group's input that the Board advised at the August 13 Board meeting that a bond for \$72 million be put before the voters in the spring of 1997.



*Shasta High School Gym*

Also, during Slaby's first year as superintendent, great emphasis was put on developing technology in the district, both as a service to the staff and as an educational implementation geared toward curriculum. During the summer of 1995, Callaci Consulting Services was hired by the district to study, recommend and put into place technology that would give the district needed upgrades and that would make communication more efficient throughout the SUHSD. Over the course of the 1995/96 school year a district-wide telephone system, tele-video and video conferencing system, open computer networking system and a classroom tele-video Instructional Programming System were put into place.

During this time period, Enterprise High School replaced its former auto shop and developed four technology classrooms which housed computers and modules that would serve curricular needs at the school and would be in line with the district Technology Plan. Foothill High School, implemented the new communication based instructional plan for Spanish and it was implemented district-wide. According to Debbie King, Spanish teacher at Foothill, "it is a natural approach to language learning, teaching students as they would learn growing up with the language" (SUHSD Board, 10 Oct. 1995).

Both Foothill and Enterprise High Schools were awarded Technology Program awards by the California Career Education Association for being outstanding schools in technology in March of 1996 (SUHSD Board, 12 Mar. 1996).

These developments would lead the Board, at the April 9, 1996, Board meeting, to approve the Technology Plan developed by the district's Technology Committee to: 1) maintain an ongoing funding source for repair and maintenance of computers and technology; 2) establish a District Technology Coordinator to manage the program; 3) to install a district backbone wiring network to serve the growing needs for technology within the district, and; 4) develop a computer proficiency requirement for all graduates of the SUHSD.

The Board was encouraged to engage in this financially expensive endeavor because much of the money that was used for the development of these programs was funded by existing technical grants through the state and looked positive for future funding, as well. The other reason was because the Second Interim Report, filed by Business Manager, Ted Hood (1993-1998), in April, showed an anticipated 3.34% COLA funding from the state for 1996/97 with an increase in student ADA of 93 students for the district (SUHSD Board, 9 April 1996). Over the course of the next year, the district would commit \$986,000 to developing wide-area networking that would, hopefully, lead the SUHSD as a computer proficient school district into the twenty-first century.

Another source of unexpected income would come from the out-of-court settlement of *CTA v. Gould* (1992), the multi million-dollar dispute, over school funding. This dispute arose over whether California public schools had to pay back funds, provided to them under Proposition 98, that were later determined, by the state, to be “loans,” because of state revenue shortfalls in the early 1990s. On April 26, 1994, Superior Court Judge, James T. Ford, ruled that the “loans” were “unconstitutional, unenforceable and invalid” (State Funding). The schools, therefore, could not be required to pay them back. The ruling was a victory for Proposition 98 and the education community of California.

This increase in funding amount, required through the passage of Proposition 98, would raise the base for which schools are minimally funded and would kick in during the 1995/96 school year for all public schools. The district would have to bargain with the associations for this money, but in the SUHSD, it would lead to a funding increase for salaries as well as fund the “unfunded liability” of providing for retiree medical benefits. This would also “give the district some flexibility in negotiating future contracts; at least, that is what many of the SUHSD employees believed” (Fitchett).

The final fund balance on June 30, 1996, for the SUHSD was \$4,307,591.08 with a 3.5% reserve and the official COLA funding from the state would be 3.21% which gave the district its brightest outlook in years. Still, the prospect of funding for Foothill High School and renovations for the other existing sites was, now more than ever, its primary goal.

At the September 17, 1996, Board meeting, the Facility Review Committee gave its recommendation “to build a 9-12 ‘shell’ school (eight regular classrooms, four science labs, 16 portables, library and cafeteria/gym).” They felt that \$12 million would soon be available (combined funding from the State and matching funds from the District) to build the new school. They said that with no substantial delays the students could start attending as soon as the Fall of 1998. The Board took no action.

At the next Board meeting on October 15, Superintendent Slaby reported that the maximum bond issue would be \$45,000,000, which translated to approximately \$24 tax to the average household. He went on to report that bond money would be divided up among the district schools based on ADA. The Board clarified that the bond issue was far less than was needed to bring up the facilities to an acceptable standard but it was the most the voters would approve, based on their calculations. After some questions were asked by the audience, a vote of the Board was taken in which this action was unanimously approved.

The date set by the county for the bond election was March 4, 1997, on which, according to state law, two-thirds of the voters must approve or the bond election would fail. Action was also taken to hire Orrick, Herrington and Sutcliffe LLP. Their services would include setting forth a timetable, with required actions to be taken, that would coordinate with county election officials and meet the necessary legal requirements for the election.

Necessary preparations were made and the bond election was held on March 4, 1997. With all of the precincts reporting, the \$45 million Measure A bond could not muster the two-thirds majority needed to pass. The vote was 55.6 percent or 5,161 votes in favor of the bond to 44.4% or 4,120 rejecting it. According to the Shasta County Clerk, Ann Reed, voter turnout was about 17% for the SUHSD election (Munson, A1).

Superintendent Slaby responded to the results of the election by stating, “We will have to sit down with the priorities we have already established and go on from there.” The district planned to use about \$7 million in



developer fees, it did have, and money it planned to borrow, and combine it with the \$8 million promised from the state to get Foothill High School off the ground in Palo Cedro.

John Dunlap, campaign chairman of the Shasta Pro-bond Citizens for Better Schools organization, said that major repairs to the 3 comprehensive high school sites were still needed and it would take an aggressive campaign if and when a bond proposal went before the public again (Munson, A5).

Two weeks later at the March 17 Board meeting the Board discussed and approved its spring and summer goals: 1) continue the new high school construction; 2) continue rehabilitation and modernization of current schools with financial restraints; 3) continue to oppose the Enterprise unification; 4) continue to implement the District-wide technology plan; 5) hold an Academic Summit on April 9; 6) review graduation requirements; 7) continue the implementation of the District-wide academic assessment; and, 8) reconsider pursuing a second bond measure.

As a follow-up to the Board's goals that evening, Wayne Nadon, the construction consultant for the district, reported that the Phase 1 construction of Foothill High School, including the rough grading and widening of Deschutes Road, was expected to begin in May. The Board was assured that State funding approval would be received before the bid opening.

At the April 28 Board meeting, Slaby reviewed the plans and the designs of the new Foothill High School in Palo Cedro. When the Board requested public comments, numerous Foothill teachers voiced concerns about the limitations of the facilities and the prospect of future funding in order to complete the school. A number of parents spoke, as well, strongly urging the Board to move forward with the project. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to the project and to its goal of opening its doors in the Fall of 1998.



*Foothill High School at Eureka Way Campus*

It was reported at the May 13 Board meeting that even though there were six bids on Phase 1 of Foothill, none would be accepted at that time because of legal ramifications and that further bids would be requested over the next 16 days. Also at that meeting, Jim Schwerdt, SSEA President told the Board that the bargaining unit was frustrated trying to work with the District, and that future efforts would be focused in trying to recapture money in lost wages.

At a special session of the Board on June 9, Wayne Nadon announced that Tenney Construction was awarded a contract for the new Foothill High School, Phase 1, based on their low bid per specifications. Also at this meeting, representatives from the SSEA bargaining unit urged the Board to approve the Golden Handshake benefit for 1997 retirees, as they had done numerous times over the previous few months.

At the June 26 Board meeting, Wayne Nadon reported that after four bids were received for Phase 2 for Foothill High School, Gifford Construction was awarded the contract based on its lowest bid per specifications, contingent on State approval. The District was still waiting for official State approval for its Phase 1 bid award. The superintendent then reported that the next bond election should not be held in November 1997, but be postponed until a later date.

Also at this same meeting, Jim Schwerdt, SSEA President, asked the Board to reconsider their approval of the Golden Handshake for the 1997 certificated retirees that he claimed was offered by Slaby. He also encouraged Board members to visit schools in order to open lines of communication with its district staff.

The Board was well aware of the frustrations that were building amongst the employees of the SUHSD, as well as many parents in the community, and at the August 12 Board meeting the Board voted 4-0 to approve a contract with Public Image Associates to work with the District to improve internal and community relations. The cost for the contract would be \$12,000 for the 1997/98 school year.

Frustrations over athletic fees, that many felt were illegal, a failed bond issue and missed deadlines for planning and building the new high school, were beginning to attract negative comments and feedback from the public to the Board and the local media. A top-down leadership style as well as poor communication from Slaby to the employees of the SUHSD led to a “no confidence” vote by over 80% of the tenured teachers in the five-school district (Chamberlain, “Teachers” A1).

“I’m very, very disappointed,” said Lynn Peebles, a teacher at Enterprise High School. “Slaby is going to make this into a contract negotiations ploy and that’s baloney. The man at the top is the one who sets the whole mood, and the man at the top is tearing our whole district down. If he is around for two or three more years, he will ruin the district. His management style is dictatorial and autocratic and that doesn’t work.”

Jim Schwerdt said that he couldn’t recall teachers in the district ever taking a vote of no confidence before. “I don’t think the morale has been much lower than it is right now as far as the relationship between the membership and the district office,” he said.

Pam Hughes, a longtime teacher at Shasta High School, cited dwindling confidence in the Board and in the superintendent’s leadership, a lack of “humanity” in communication, unfair treatment of retiring teachers and the schools’ loss of community status and respect as major components of the no confidence vote (Chamberlain, “Teachers” A5). Even one of the SUHSD trustees, Aaron Grossman, mentioned publicly that he also had concerns about Slaby’s management style, and said the Board “is trying to get him (Slaby) to deal with this issue (Chamberlain, “Rancor” A1).”

With an overriding concern that this disruption could keep another bond issue from passing anytime in the near future, as well as fueling the already controversial unification movement, the “no confidence” vote was sent to the Board but not to the media with the hope that the trustees, at the upcoming meeting on August 26, would take action.

The Board took no action at the August 26 meeting which caused Jim Schwerdt to publicly state, “Diane Anderson told me and she told Lynn Peebles that the Board was against Slaby 3-2 and that was enough to take action.” He went on to say that the teachers were asked not to release their no-confidence-vote to the public unless they were dissatisfied with the results of Tuesday night’s special Board meeting. “She was well aware of the no confidence vote, and we were almost guaranteed that some action would be taken,” said Schwerdt.

At the next Board meeting on September 9, over 100 teachers, administrators, students and parents attended and many expressed frustration over the district’s leadership and the issue of student athletic fees. Kim Glover, the parent of an Enterprise High School student read a statement to the Board that set a confrontational tone for the rest of the evening. Glover questioned the Board’s alleged mishandling of sport’s

athletic fees, the defeat of a recent bond election, a \$12,000 annual fee paid to a public relations firm and alleged mistreatment of retiring teachers (Chamberlain, “Audience” A1).

As controversy continued to prevail over the next month about the dismissal of Slaby, the Board voted to keep him as the superintendent and allegedly extended his contract to June 30, 2001. Sounding confident after the the meeting, Slaby said he was not at all surprised at the decision. “I’ve gotten a satisfactory rating every year and I didn’t expect anything different this year,” he said (Ferguson, “Shasta” A1).

At the October 14 meeting, the Board discussed revisions to Board Policy 6145 (Extracurricular and Co-curricular activities) with regard to athletic donations. Language was adopted that allowed the acceptance of donations within the limits of the law, but clarified that a student does not have to make a donation in order to participate in sports.

During this same period of time, the issue of the upcoming November election for three SUHSD Board positions was gathering steam as the teacher’s union was involved with interviewing the candidates who had filed to run for the positions. The election on November 2 produced newcomers in all three slots, all endorsed by the teachers union: Barbara Cross (4,981), Susan Brix (4,081) and Gene Bui (2,860). Trustees James Plank and Sandra Tomlinson did not seek re-election but incumbent Aaron Grossman did run but was a non-qualifying fourth, as he received 2,732 votes. Grossman stated that the election reflected voters desire for change, “but doesn’t necessarily mean it’s for the best.” Cross, Brix and Bui joined the district’s two other Board members, Diane Anderson and Bill Johnson, whose terms would expire in 1999 (Cross).

Both Brix and Cross stated that their first course of business would be to look at Superintendent Robert Slaby’s employment contract and evaluation. “We need to review the superintendent’s contract, and alter it as we see fit. After all, we’re the ones who have to live with it,” Cross said (Greenberg, “Cross” A1).

The controversy about Slaby’s extended contract, and whether his satisfactory evaluation would allow him to continue until June 30, 2001, became a discussion point in the media over the next few weeks. The issue became a moot point when at a special session of the Board, held on December 17, 1997, it was decided by a vote of 4-1 to terminate Slaby’s contract and to put him on administrative leave. “The Board felt we had philosophical differences,” Board president Bill Johnson said. Mr. Slaby has a lot of good qualities but we wanted to go in a different direction.”

This is not a decision we made easily or lightly,” Barbara Cross said after the closed session. She rejected suggestions that she and other Board members acted on behalf of teachers who were unhappy with Slaby’s management style.

“People who imply we are beholden to any group do us a disservice and do the democratic process a disservice,” she said.

“Once you lose the confidence and the ability to lead, it’s very difficult to get that back again and I think that’s what happened here,” Jim Schwerdt said of Slaby.

It was announced by the Board that evening, that under Slaby’s contract, he would continue to be paid his \$91,139 annual salary for up to 18 months, to a maximum of about \$137,000. That amount would be reduced by any money Slaby earned in a new job (Green A1).

An editorial in the Record Searchlight, four days later, stated that a clean break with Superintendent Slaby was “something that needed to be done a while back, and its not surprising that the new Board had to do it.” It went on to say that terminating the superintendent’s contract might have been expensive, but having continued would have cost even more in demoralization and loss of talented personnel. “Regardless of his performance in other areas of his job, Slaby’s personal style, or lack thereof, had rendered him ineffective as an administrator. The majority of teachers, whom he was supposed to lead, lost confidence in the superintendent. Principals felt alienated and betrayed by Slaby in some matters. Parents of athletes were upset with his handling of the sports fee issue, and many, if not all, administrators were disgruntled with his autocratic style.” “For a person hired to manage people, alienating those who work for him is not a peripheral issue. It is a major failure in an essential task” (“SUHSD” A6).

The consensus of the Record Searchlight, including numerous letters to the editor, as well as comments to Board members themselves made it clear to the new Board that they must move in a new direction by hiring a superintendent who could inspire and motivate the people who worked for the district. This would take some time, as the Board advertised first for an interim superintendent before beginning the process of hiring a permanent superintendent that would take their place.

It also was quite evident that another bond issue could not come before the voters until the district’s Board and new superintendent displayed stability and leadership. Tom King, editor of the Record Searchlight, stated in an editorial on August 27, 1997, that he felt the school district, under Slaby, “waged a low-key, almost secretive campaign for the bond issue that failed miserably last year...I didn’t think the district did a very good job of explaining to the community, to the parents and to the press, why the bond issue was so important.”

At a December 28 special session of the Board, the trustees hired retired ROP director John Olsen to be the interim superintendent “commencing on December 29 and terminating upon the hire of a permanent superintendent, unless extended upon by mutual extent of both parties hereto.”

Trustees then directed the administration to advertise for a permanent superintendent immediately, with the intent to make a final selection by the first of February. The Board also directed that community input be solicited regarding desirable qualities of the new superintendent (SUHSD Board, 28 Dec. 1997).

At the January 13, 1998, Board meeting, Glen Kattenhorn, the principal of Foothill High School, reported to the Board on the status of construction of the new school. Construction was scheduled to begin the previous June, with the opening of school slated for the fall of 1998. However, construction did not actually begin until late August, due to delays in the bidding process, and progress had been somewhat impeded by the weather. He reported that the current expectation was revised to begin in the fall of 1999.

At a Special Session of the Board on February 17, the Board announced that Michael Stuart, principal of Enterprise High School, was appointed superintendent of the SUHSD, effective March 1, 1998, pending contract negotiations.

At the following meeting on February 24, John Olsen was commended for his invaluable service as interim superintendent and was asked to stay on until March 6 to help with the transition of the new superintendent.

In a rare situation for the SUHSD, a superintendent was released from his duties. However, Robert Slaby, during his short tenure, has since been credited for his accomplishments which included the following:

- ◆ A year-round school schedule for the continuation schools which became a model for other Northern California continuation schools.
- ◆ A district Technology Plan which initiated and implemented technology throughout the SUHSD with networking in all classrooms as well as a computer proficiency requirement for graduation.
- ◆ A School To Work Program set up to channel students into the workplace while completing core curriculum and graduation requirements.
- ◆ Random drug testing for athletes in order to maintain a “zero tolerance” attitude within the district.
- ◆ An agreement with the Redding Police Department to house uniformed officers at each of the 4 main sites.
- ◆ A one-time block grant from the state that enabled the district to purchase \$164,643 worth of textbooks.
- ◆ Applied for and received the Challenge Grant which provided teen pregnancy prevention in the district for 3 years with funding of \$600,000.
- ◆ Applied for and received a \$58,000 grant for the Phonics Based Reading Standards and Intervention program.
- ◆ Updated SUHSD graduation requirements.



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*“A teacher affects eternity;  
he can never tell where his  
influence stops.”*

— Henry B. Adams



1998-2008

## The Michael Stuart Era

# Chapter 5

**This was a difficult time** for the Shasta Union High School District. In a rare move, the superintendent was released; public trust and support were at a low point in the community; a new high school was behind schedule with limited funding in place; school sites were in poor shape and the facilities needed upgrading; district employees were disgruntled and unhappy; the district was deficit-spending and in jeopardy of dropping below the required 3% reserve minimum; and the district leadership was undergoing a major overhaul.

With this scenario unfolding, the SUHSD needed a leader who had vision, excellent people skills, was a problem-solver, would listen before speaking, someone who could create and maintain coalitions and who had the ability to bring out the very best from others as a team-player.

Enter, Michael Stuart...hopefully, on a white horse!

After graduating from Buchser High School in Santa Clara in 1963, Stuart went into the Army where he served for two years (1966-1968), including one in Viet Nam, serving as a squad leader and platoon sergeant. When he returned he attended West Valley Community College in Saratoga and graduated in 1973 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and a secondary teaching credential from Brigham Young University.

Stuart began his career in education in 1973 as a history teacher and coach in Santa Clara. He taught social studies and coached varsity football and basketball at Chester High

School from 1974 to 1989. He was hired as the assistant principal at Shasta High School from 1989 to 1992 and principal at Enterprise High School from 1992 to 1998. The SUHSD Board of Trustees hired him as the new superintendent starting March 2, 1998.

Michael Stuart, 52, was appointed with a unanimous vote by the Board. District Board vice chairwoman, Barbara Cross stated that Stuart “was one of the obvious choices from the beginning but we wanted to make sure he was the best.” His salary was set at \$85,000 for the upcoming year and was contracted to serve as the superintendent until June 30, 2001.

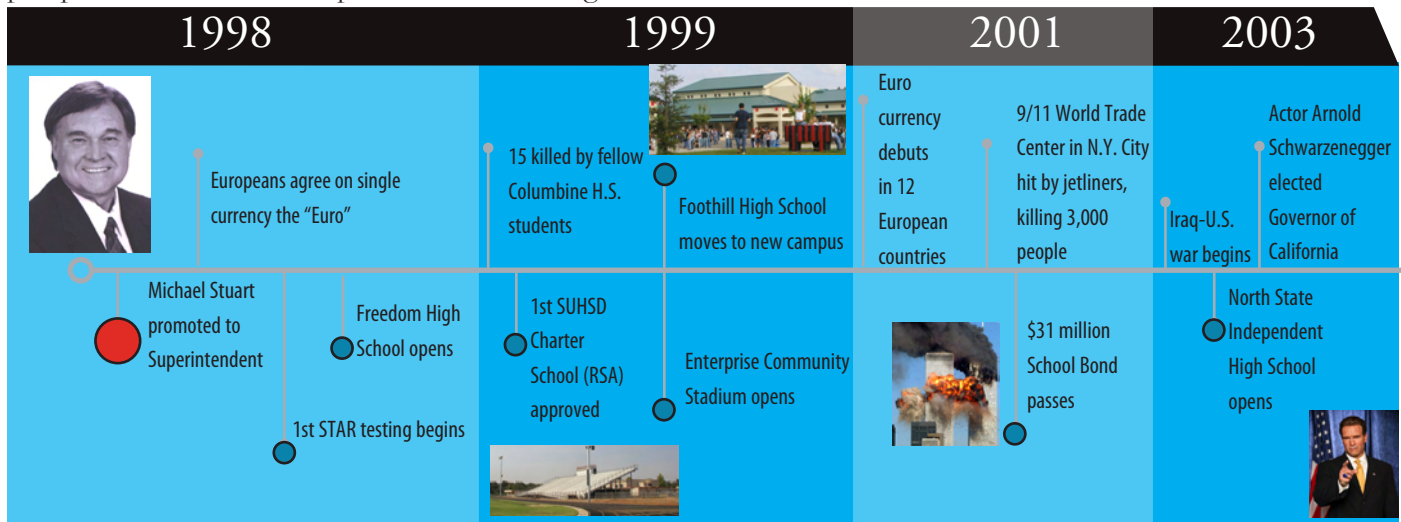
Stuart acknowledged having mixed feelings over leaving Enterprise High School by stating that “it’s bittersweet” because “we’ve put our heart and soul into this campus the past six years, but the opportunity to provide leadership for an entire district is exciting. It’s a great challenge and I can’t wait to get started.” (Schultz).

Challenges were most certainly waiting for the new superintendent as he stated on February 18 that he would “try to increase the credibility of the district office with teachers, students and parents.” He also made it clear that another priority was to complete Foothill High School’s Palo Cedro campus and find money for additional buildings to house a growing SUHSD student population.

On Stuart’s official first day as superintendent, March 2 he sent out a memo to all staff in which he stated that he always thought of himself “as a teacher first, just on loan to the administration side of education.” He went on to speak about the role of the District Office stating that “it should be a service and information center with the ultimate goal of providing the leadership and resources to enable the success of the teacher in the classroom. That interaction is the most important thing that happens in the District each day, and I will not forget it.” These words were taken literally by a staff that needed a boost to both a dwindling morale and a weak communication system, which they felt were insufficient.

At Stuart’s first Board meeting on March 11 he informed the trustees that he had been visiting staff and students throughout the district in order to become visible and acquainted with those whom he would serve.

Also at this meeting the Business Manager, Ted Hood, distributed information on the Second Interim Report to the Board. Board member, Sue Brix, stated that she could not certify the District’s financial position without time to review contents of the report. Trustee Barbara Cross concurred and the Board agreed to postpone action until the special Board meeting on March 18.





Stuart reported that Administration was seeking to increase the state funding level for the new Foothill High School project based upon revised data showing projected higher enrollment. If the state approved this request it would fund the badly-needed cafeteria complex and classrooms at the new site. Other sources of funding, such as developer fees and Certificates of Participation (COP) were being analyzed as alternative funding sources in case the state did not accept the revisions.

At his first Board meeting, the issues of communication, credibility, the budget and funding for the new high school were being addressed. These were concerns Stuart had previously targeted. It would become imperative that the new administration demonstrate the discipline, vision and support needed to utilize a creative and pro-active approach in solving the problems facing the district for both the immediate and foreseeable future.

At the special Board meeting on March 18 the Second Interim Report was discussed and approved by the Board as “being able to meet the District’s financial obligations” despite the fact that the District was projecting deficit spending of \$1,249,329 for the 1997/98 school year and the projected reserves for 1998/99 and 1999/2000 were both projected to be below the State’s recommended reserve balance of 3%. However, enrollment projections, if realized, could add up to 260 new students in the district, and make the district more financially solvent.

Stuart was looking for ways to not only make the district financially more efficient but also trying to find new ways of bringing new money into the district to keep students from transferring to other districts and to attract new students to the SUHSD, as well.

At the April 14 Board meeting updates on the new Foothill campus were given by project manager, Wayne Nadon. He recommended building a cafeteria with projected enrollment going up as well as hiring architects for the Enterprise and Shasta High Schools modernization projects. The Board concurred as Stuart stated that administration was investigating funding sources.

Stuart also recommended that the District hire James Cerreta, Consultant, to provide financial consulting services to the SUHSD beginning March 23. The Board agreed.

One week later at a special session, Randy Brix, assistant principal at Enterprise High School, reported on some possible cost-saving measures for the Board to consider. They included hiring campus security as



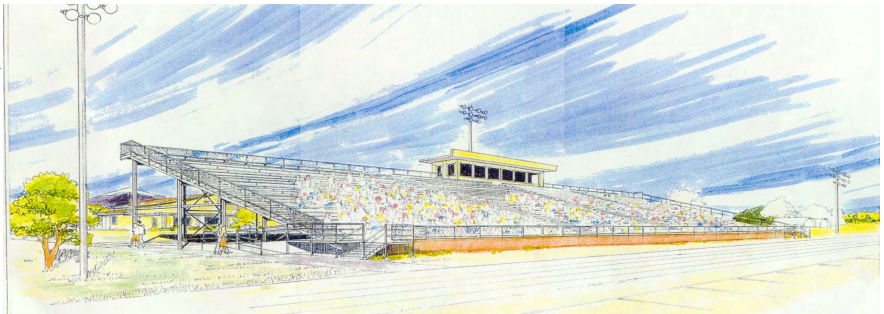
employees rather than contracting out with a security service; operating the cafeteria internally as opposed to contracting with a food services company, and; hiring someone as legal counsel for the District who was geographically closer to Redding. The Board discussed all of the options but decided that the cost-savings might only save money in the short-run as opposed to the long-run. They did, however, encourage the administration team to continue investigating money-saving plans.

Stuart presented the Board with a bond measure proposal and the Board asked for a survey to provide the information necessary to ascertain a possible plan and election date to help fund the new high school and the modernization of Enterprise and Shasta High Schools.

In May, three Board meetings were held at which the School To Work Academy (STWA) program was discussed. The program was implemented two years earlier on the basis that it would be self-sufficient. After lengthy discussions and testimony from both sides, the STWA would be dropped because of both declining enrollment in the program and because of lower State funding. The State, which was supposed to support the program (\$156,500), was dropped to \$99,540 due to state-wide financial shortfalls. The program was costing the General Fund an average of \$222,000 per year and the Board decided the money could better serve the rest of the District's 4,500 students, including the STWA students, when they were transferred back to their sites.

During this same time period, it was announced by Stuart that the District's drop-out rate had gone from 7.1 to 2.1% in the previous five years which not only spoke well of the District's commitment to its students but also increased the General Fund significantly with increased monies through a higher Average Daily Attendance (ADA).

During the May meetings, community educational supporter Jan Skipitis presented a summarized plan, which began when Stuart was the Enterprise principal, for a 3,000 seat Community Stadium Project to be located at Enterprise High School. The plan was approved by the Department of the State Architect. Labor donations would cut the project cost to approximately \$500,000 for materials and services. The superintendent advised the Board that the Redding Redevelopment Agency was supportive of the project and would allow the District to use \$90,000 of its conditional revenue from the Canby-Hilltop and Market Street Redevelopment Projects for the stadium.



*Proposed Enterprise High School Stadium*

Based on the District's contribution to the stadium the McConnell Foundation expressed an interest in donating the remaining funds needed to complete the project (SUHSD Board, 12 May 1998). This project was important to the district as an issue of equality. Shasta High School had always had its own stadium and with plans to eventually add a stadium to the new Foothill High School, Enterprise could now entertain its own games and graduations at its home site.

Also discussed at these same Board meetings was California's first state-wide testing. All of the State's schools, including the SUHSD, were taking the first California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests as authorized by Senate Bill (SB) 376 in October 1997. As required by statute the California State Board of Education designated a test for use in the STAR program. The Stanford Achievement Test Series, Ninth

Edition, Form T (Stanford 9) was designated as the STAR test in November 1997. The Stanford 9 is a multiple choice test that allows comparisons to be made to a national sample of students. School districts in California were required to test all students in grades 2-11, inclusive, between March 15, 1998 and May 25, 1998. Students in grades 9-11 were to be tested in reading, writing, mathematics, science and history/social science.

As money in California was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain, a greater demand for accountability and effectiveness in schools was created by proponents of education. When the results of the STAR tests for the SUHSD were released in August, the results were quite formidable. The results showed that 76.5% of SUHSD freshmen met grade level standards and scores were progressively higher for the 10-12 grades. SUHSD students performed higher than both county and state standards. As a follow-up, in preparation for future testing in the district, Stuart asked the Board for permission to pursue staff development for all core subjects in reviewing curriculum and content standards while analyzing course content. An emphasis would be placed on new Math curriculum and updating English curriculum to increase focus on reading comprehension and grammar (SUHSD Board, 11 Aug. 1998).

During his first summer, Stuart, his administrative staff and the Board focused on budget changes that would positively impact the district's ability to efficiently and effectively provide for students in the upcoming 1998/1999 school year. Some of the changes the Board considered or actually implemented were as follows:

- ◆ Proposed athletic drug-testing, district-wide.
- ◆ A new alternative high school for students with drug and alcohol related problems (Freedom High School) with a grant from the state.
- ◆ Moving the staff/administrative health insurance company from the Shasta Public Employees Trust to Central Valley Trust (CVT) for a savings of approximately \$250,000.
- ◆ Investigating the possibility of having a Bond Election in the spring of 1999.
- ◆ Hired James Cerreta as the new Business Manager (1998-2003) for the district.
- ◆ SUHSD administration pursued contracting with the Redding School District and its manager, Fred Shafer, to share food services management, which could save the district up to \$47,000/year.
- ◆ The McConnell Foundation donated \$150,000 for the Enterprise Community Stadium and the groundbreaking would take place on June 30, 1998.
- ◆ The District received word that the additional \$5-6 million needed to fund a cafeteria, administration building and additional classrooms for the new Foothill High School Project might be approved soon.
- ◆ The State passed and Governor Wilson signed into law the new budget which increased the actual student attendance days to 180 starting in the 1998/99 school year. The timing of this legislation allowed for a one-year waiver which the district applied for because the calendar had already been set. The budget also gave a 3.95% increase in COLA to school districts while funding many categorical programs; these were all unexpected increases.

- ◆ Stuart reported to the Board that class size reduction was a high priority and it looked like the District would have 53 additional sections in place for the upcoming year.
- ◆ Jim Cerreta reported that the SUHSD had applied for \$7 million in state funds but that money was contingent on the state passing a state bond (Prop 1A) in November's election. It was recommended that the Board wait for the results of the state bond election before deciding on a local bond election in the spring. The Board was still planning on opening the new Foothill High School in the fall of 1999.

As the new school year began, the District was beginning to reap the benefits of the enormous amount of work done and progress made over the summer months with, among other things, higher enrollment and smaller class sizes and, as reported by Jim Cerreta in the First Interim Report, later in the fall, the district had \$600,000 more in reserves than originally anticipated. The results of the state-wide election in November saw the passage of Prop 1A which would account for \$9.2 billion in new monies toward school remodeling throughout the state. According to Cerreta, this insured additional funding of at least 50% for Foothill High School as well as possibly 80% of the modernization money needed for Enterprise and Shasta High Schools and conceivably more if the district applied for and qualified for hardship funding (SUHSD Board, 10 Nov. 1998).

November's state-wide vote also saw the election of Gray Davis as the new Governor of California with his commitment to focus on public school accountability, multiple measures and class-size-reduction as vehicles for more money being available. At the November 10 Board meeting Stuart stated that the District was applying for ninth grade class size reduction funding and also asked the Board for permission to apply for "hardship funding" from the state for Foothill High School. On November 19, the Board approved the Resolution authorizing the District to apply for this funding for the new high school.

As the State's shift toward testing and accountability in public education was becoming more obvious and the public was becoming more aware and began scrutinizing in the budgetary affairs of the State, especially education, a change in communication strategy was more necessary than ever. Stuart called for the first of many town hall meetings which would solicit public input on future strategic planning in the SUHSD. The first meeting was called on November 24. This kind of pro-active communication would eventually lead to better interaction between the District, it's staff, parents, the community and the news media in a much needed positive light since it had been almost exactly one year since Superintendent Rob Slaby's contract was terminated and the District suffered through some difficult times in terms of publicity.

This shift in the public demand for more communication, accountability and testing actually had its roots in a nation-wide movement in the 1980s and 90s calling for better use of public tax dollars, particularly in the area of public education. Many states tried to pass what was commonly referred to as a "voucher system" in which the tax dollars used to educate a student could be transferred and used as tuition money at a private school of parent's choice. The first attempt at this effort, in California, came in the election of November 2, 1993, as Proposition 174, called The Parental Choice In Education Initiative. If passed, private and religious schools would have \$2600 of public money for every student choosing to attend their school. It failed, with 70% of the voters rejecting the proposition. Retitled as Proposition 38 in November of 2000, it would fail again by about the same margin.

Coincidentally, the year before, the State Legislature of California enacted the Charter Schools Act of 1992. This act allowed public schools to provide instruction in any grades, K-12, that is created or organized by a group of teachers, parents, community leaders or a community-based organization. Its intent was to establish and maintain schools that operated independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish the following; Improve pupil learning; Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving; Encourage the use of innovative and creative teaching methods; Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site; Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the type of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems (California).

Charter schools were not allowed to charge tuition, have a religious affiliation or have a selective student application process. Also, the teachers were to be credentialed, the school was required to have the same instructional minutes as regular public schools and they were expected to meet state-wide performance standards and conduct the same pupil assessments required of all public school students in California.

The schools were to be funded similarly to the regular public school system, using ADA as the revenue-base for determining yearly funding. Block grants could also be applied for as start-up money if the Charter schools qualified and funding was available. Private contributions were also a possible source of income, whether from business corporations or private donors.

Sponsors for charter schools, having oversight responsibilities, could be universities, state colleges, County Boards of Education (CBE), the State Board of Education (SBE), or one of the various school districts or schools within the area of the charter school. Charters could apply for available facilities at any school district and could only be turned down under strict regulations showing the application to be unsound. The charter school sponsor could then enter into a contract with the charter school and provide services such as financial, attendance monitoring, housing and educational efficacy with an agreement that would cover the costs for these services to the sponsoring agency.

As of 2008, California has added approximately 50 new charter schools each year and is leading the nation in charter school affiliations with 750 schools and a total of 276,000 students. This arrangement has helped diversify school districts, giving a competitive edge to those districts that offer a broader curriculum and good management with efficient and effective programs. The charter school movement also reduced the demand for vouchers throughout the state. Art Schmitt, CBO of the SUHSD (2003-present), stated “when schools, such as charters come into an area, their curriculum can often be new and different and thus attract competition from established schools in terms of programs and students. This can only be a healthy thing for kids seeking a quality educational experience.”



At the March 9, 1999 Board meeting, the SUHSD Board approved its first charter school by approving the application of the Redding School of the Arts. The school would serve students in grades K-8, with a focus on the arts, and would be permitted to utilize 7-8 classrooms at the old Foothill High School facility for the first year. The school was scheduled to open in the fall of 1999 with an expected initial enrollment of 120 students. The school would contract with the district for financial and other support services.

The SUHSD would continue to expand opportunities for student enrollment in charter school programs by sponsoring two more schools over the next five years; the Shasta Secondary Home School in 1999 and University Preparatory School in 2004. These schools would continue to draw students from throughout Shasta county as the SUHSD and charter schools would continue to have increasing enrollment. (Schmitt).



*Shasta Secondary Home School*

At the December 14, 1998 Board of Trustees meeting, the Board voted to put forth a bond election, tentatively scheduled for May 4, 1999, asking the public for a total of \$23,500,000. This bond was intended to complete the new Foothill High School, as well as modernize the Enterprise and Shasta High School sites with upgrades that would facilitate more classrooms for the expected class size reductions. However, this bond election would be postponed at the February 9, 1999, Board meeting when the administration advised that the application for hardship funding from the State could be

jeopardized with the passing of this bond. The results of its approval or denial would be known in either March or April and the bond election would be rescheduled after that.

As Stuart entered into his second year as the SUHSD superintendent, the District noted some very positive effects of the strategic planning and reorganization that had taken place over the last 12 months. Early reports of feeder school registration showed that 150-200 more students would be enrolled in the District than during the current year; the new Enterprise Community Stadium broke ground in April with an anticipated date for facility-use starting in the fall; the SUHSD Home School charter petition was approved by the Board with 120 students expected to enroll in the first three years starting in the fall of 1999. All revenue for this charter school would go to the District and it would be located in the old Foothill High School campus; the Board voted to implement ninth grade class-size-reduction in Math and English which had been approved earlier. The District expected to hire ten teachers in order to facilitate these State-approved and partially funded programs in the fall of 1999. The District was pro-active, with the knowledge that the state was experiencing a high school teacher shortage, when it sponsored its first Job Fair in March and anticipated hiring a total of 17 new teachers for the next school year. It was reported that 25% of all SUHSD students were involved in Music/Drama and 33% were involved in athletics during the 1998/1999 school year. The District hit the jackpot when it learned on April 27 that the application for \$9.7 million in hardship funds was approved by the State Allocation Board. This meant that the state would pick up a significant amount in order to finish Foothill High School's new campus in Palo Cedro, with a completion date set for the end of 2000. The District used developer fees and general fund money in order to eventually finish the project.

Things can look very positive in education during the good times, but foresight and effective planning, before the difficult times, is always a sign of good leadership. On April 20, 1999 the deadliest high school massacre in U.S. history took place at Columbine High School in Columbine, Colorado. Twelve students and one teacher were killed while three others were wounded in this national tragedy planned by two of its own high school students.

Issues of crime and violence in schools have become more prevalent, especially in the last couple of decades as drug and alcohol problems have escalated. In Stuart's first year he urged the Board to develop both a district-wide drug testing program as well as a district school for students with drug and alcohol related problems. The drug testing policy would be adopted by the Board at a later date but Freedom High School was opened in the fall of 1998/99. Also, in November of 1998 Stuart and the Board agreed to additional lighting and security cameras at each site due to increased vandalism. At the March 9 Board meeting, it was brought up and discussed that the SUHSD should invest in another police officer from the Redding Police Department for Pioneer and Shasta High Schools as well as one at Enterprise High School. It was also recommended that the new Foothill High School have an officer from the Shasta County Sheriff's Office be assigned, as well. This recommendation was approved at the May 11 meeting. The Board would continue to set up staff development days for all staff members, as well as associated memos throughout the district, to address the issues of school safety and security.

At this same meeting, the superintendent informed the Board about recent legislation that would impact the District as well as the rest of the state for years to come. The graduating classes of 2004 would have to pass an exit exam for graduation that would be based on the state standards which meant that each district would have to teach to these standards. Schools would be ranked on an Academic Performance Index (API), beginning with the 1999/2000 school year, this would be the base year. Sixty percent of the API would be based on the test scores and state ranking on these exit exams. The other 40% would be based on graduation rates, drop-out rates, school safety indicators and attendance rates. Evaluations of schools would then be based on year to year improvement. Accountability was entering a new stage not only at the state level but at the national level, as well. The impact of this strong movement would be felt through further legislation in the future.

As the summer approached, it became obvious that a number of program housing shifts would be implemented as Foothill High School was 90% complete and would be ready for partial occupation at the beginning of the 1999/2000 school year on August 19, 1999. At the old Foothill High School campus the Redding School of the Arts and the Regional Occupation Program would occupy about 16 rooms while the overflow students from Shasta High School (1940 expected for fall enrollment) would need about 14 classrooms (SUHSD Board, 8 June 1999). The Board, at the August Board meeting, instituted a ninth Grade Academy for students who had problems at the Jr. high school level. The ninth Grade academy would be housed at the same campus giving the facility a very new look for the 1999/2000 school year.

As money became more difficult to obtain through tighter state budgets and more categorical funding, Supt. Stuart sought to be more creative in his approach to acquiring new monies for the District. Marylee Boales, was hired by the SUHSD in 1997, for the position of Coordinator of Community Challenge, a grant focusing on reducing teen pregnancy. Her outstanding work with this project and her ability to write grants created the opportunity for her to be hired by the Board as the Grant/Writer Supervisor for the SUHSD in August 1999. The cost basis thinking was that Ms. Boales' salary would be offset or even covered by the number of grants generated by the Grants Office. During the nine years between August 1999 and August



*Freedom High School*

2008, the Grants Office generated \$9,042,629; a substantial return for a very small investment (Boales).

In addition to the obvious monetary benefits, some other positive impacts were noted as:

- ◆ Numerous District and partnership grants were awarded creating a college-going culture among students and parents in the SUHSD. As a contributing partner, the College OPTIONS program and the College Quest day, among other programs, were generated with over \$2 million in grants. At the state level, the SUHSD has become known as a leader in encouragement of the college experience for students and parents.
- ◆ The Positive Academic Support System (PASS) Academy, also known as the 9th Grade Academy, was developed in order to work with incoming ninth grade students who had academic or behavioral problems at the junior high school level. After a period of time they were to be transitioned into the regular high school with greater skills and the opportunity for greater success in the high school forum. This program would be funded at \$199,000 for three years under the grant.
- ◆ Federal funding for drug testing and a program to reduce alcohol abuse over a three year period.
- ◆ E-Tech Pathways program, piloted the concept of dual enrollment with students earning both, high school and college credit. The goal of this program was to give area students training and experience, preparing them for jobs in the area's burgeoning alternative energy industry. In April 2008, this program generated a \$275,000 grant for the SUHSD from the James Irvine Foundation, one of the largest foundations in the state of California and the first of its educational grants, in the north state. This grant also includes partners like Redding Electric Utility, the Anderson Union High School District and the Shasta-Trinity Regional Occupation Program. "It put the north state on the cutting edge of education and technology," stated Randy Brix, the SUHSD associate superintendent. As of June 2009 there were 79 students enrolled in the program (Rogers, "Shasta" A1).
- ◆ The Foundation for Students of the Shasta Union High School District, officially incorporated in the spring of 2008, applied for non-profit organization status, 501(c)(3). This status was granted by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in August of 2008 which would open up more avenues for alternative funding that could benefit the District through the foundation apparatus. As of June 2009, five teachers in the SUHSD have already received \$250 grants to be utilized utilized for classroom activities (Boales).



*Foothill High School*

As the 1999/2000 school year began, it was an exciting time for Foothill High School as the Cougars opened to their new campus and occupied all but eight of its classrooms which were still under construction. They would hold classes in the gym, the largest in the north state with a capacity of 1,800, and eat their lunches provided by the SUHSD food services program now located in the newly named Shasta Learning Center (SLC).

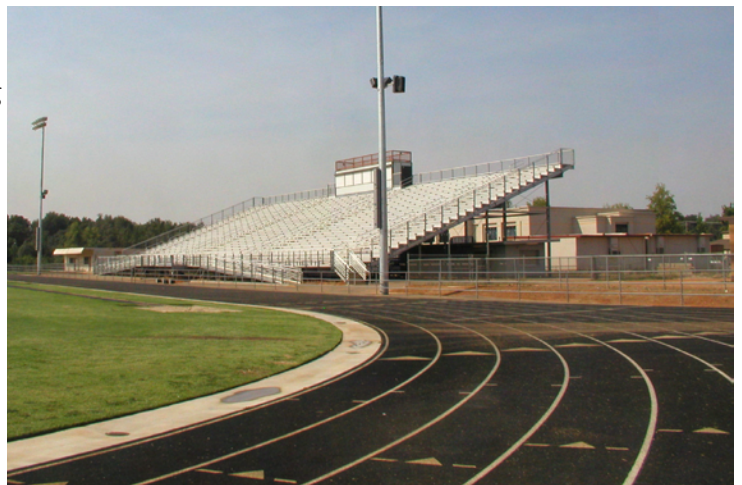


The cornerstone ceremony for the new school would be laid by the local Masons on September 30 with 150 dignitaries on hand for the occasion.

New district programs were in abundance. Digital High School Grants were being implemented at both Foothill and Enterprise High Schools; the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) and the Peer Assistance Review (PAR) programs were being developed in the district with state funds. The programs are geared toward having new teachers and experienced teachers work together with professional development, training and evaluation as major components of the program; Conflict Resolution programs were being developed at all comprehensive sites; a new Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Core (NJROTC) was being installed at Enterprise High School; a Zero Tolerance Policy towards drugs and alcohol was in place in the district, and; Senior Projects were being required for graduation at Enterprise High School with an emphasis on research, application and presentation by each senior.

Several other recently planned endeavors were coming to fruition during the 1999/2000 school year. These included the new charter schools, the Shasta Secondary Home School and Redding School of the Arts, as well as new programs such as the PASS Academy, a visual and performing arts center, the ROP, the developing Technology Department, the Food Services Department and eventually the new district office, all being located at the SLC with a daily attendance of 1,300 students ranging from grades K-12.

As the Enterprise Community Stadium was initiated, in October, with 4000 fans cheering for their team at the River Bowl, both schools were excited by the fact that the state had approved the Shasta/Enterprise Modernization plans and was now waiting for funding approval. This exuberance reached even greater heights among staff, community members and Board members when, in March of 2000, the modernization funding was approved by the state. Mike Stuart responded to this windfall by stating, “We’re excited, not just because we’re going to remodel these schools, but because we’re bringing in another \$14 million to the economy of Redding. We’re very proud of that.” The money would be used to replace “antiquated” heaters and swamp coolers, remodel and replace lockers, provide new paint jobs for both sites, inside and out, put in double-pane windows and fluorescent lights which would reduce energy bills and replace exterior doors and floor coverings. The money would be generated through the passage of Proposition 1A, passed by state voters in 1998, and “the work would begin this summer probably taking about two years to finish,” according to Stuart (Regan).



*Enterprise Community Stadium,*

Amid the changes and progress the District had been making over the past two years, a celebration of the principles, character and culture of the district took place on March 25, 2000, with a Centennial Celebration. This event was held in the Shasta Learning Center’s Auditorium and was attended by hundreds of staff and community members giving credibility to the longevity, success and the diversity of educational opportunity that had made the SUHSD a formidable institution over the past 100 years.

As the 1999/2000 was ending, the ever-present issue of accountability in the public education system was making its voice heard on many levels. At the June 13, 2000, Board meeting, Randy Brix provided a legislative overview and District Action Plan regarding the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) requirements. In this report he made it clear to the Board and the public that as a result of the Public School Accountability Act of 1999 there had been many changes throughout the State regarding public school accountability. The CAHSEE had been established to ensure that students graduating from high school have demonstrated grade level competency in reading, writing and math, consistent with the State's adopted academic standards. Every student in the 2004 graduating class, and beyond, must pass the CAHSEE in order to receive a diploma. Mr. Brix emphasized that "in order to ensure the success of the our students, staff development will be a high priority in our District, with the focus being on standards-based instruction, teaching strategies, assessment and ongoing collaboration."

As State funding remained healthy in California, legislators, voters and school districts were focusing more and more on maintaining public school infrastructure and supporting bonds that would make this possible. The SUHSD had already procured state and local funding for a new school and modernization of the other two sites. Moving the district office from the expensive downtown mall and utilizing the SLC was now an administrative and financial priority. As early as the beginning of the 2000/2001 school year, this issue manifested itself in public discussions and eventually in a vote by the Board, during the January 9, 2001, meeting, to move the district office and develop some remodeling plans for Shasta Learning Center.

This topic took a formal turn at the April 23 Board meeting when the trustees made upgrades to the Shasta Learning Center a major district priority. When they discussed the "possibility of placing a General Obligation Bond on the November 2001 or March 2002 ballot, there was a consensus that the District first needed to: 1) determine if there was a compelling need for the money that would be generated from passing a bond and, 2) conduct a public survey to determine support."

This endeavor was given positive impetus when at the June 12 Board meeting, CBO Jim Cerreta, reported that the district had received unfunded State approvals for two facility projects at the Shasta Learning Center. One was for roofing (approximately \$1,400,000) and the other for modernization (approximately \$1,800,000). The State had not released funds for the project because it was the end of the fiscal year and they were currently out of money and backlogged.

At the June 12 Board meeting, the trustees reviewed the public opinion questionnaire which was developed to determine if the public would support a needs assessment, including and possibly a renovation of the Shasta Learning Center. The survey would be completed by July 12 and would be utilized by the Board to determine whether or not to place a bond measure on the November 2001 ballot.

At the July 17, 2001, Board meeting, Superintendent Stuart reported on the results of the public survey which had been conducted between June 21-23 by The Center for Community Opinion. The survey consisted of 400 telephone interviews with registered voters within the Shasta Union High



*District Office Moves to 1927 School Site*

School District and reflected positive comments. Some comparisons were made between this survey and the survey taken in 1998, and it was determined that the positive responses from this survey were significantly greater than the support received for the previous bond measure.

After a lengthy discussion, “it was the consensus of the trustees that there were sufficient needs in the District which would support a bond measure.” The Board voted to pass a resolution ordering a thirty-one million dollar General Obligation Bond measure, to be placed on the November 6, 2001, ballot for school facilities projects, as discussed and identified in Appendix of the Resolution, and that the bond would need to be approved by 55% of the votes cast. In addition, the trustees authorized a tax rate of “\$27 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation.” The anticipated cost for conducting the bond campaign would be approximately \$70,000 and would be paid for solely through contributions from the business community, according to Stuart (SUHSD Board, 17 July 2009).

At the October 9, 2001, Board meeting, in anticipation of the upcoming bond election in November, Stuart read a statement from the 1925 SUHSD yearbook in which the Principal/ Superintendent J.O. Osborne addressed the need for a school bond, which subsequently passed and resulted in building the original Shasta High School, which has since become the Shasta Learning Center.



*Revamped David Marr Theater at SLC*

On the evening of November 6, a group of administrators crowded around a computer at Superintendent Stuart’s home waiting for results to update. When the first results were posted and showed the district leading, cheers erupted in the tiny room. Throughout the night, the margin kept growing and the cheers got louder. When the results from the final precincts came in, Stuart sat back and smiled. “We did it,” the crowd screamed (Williams A1).

For only the third time in a century (1927, 1950 and 2001), voters passed a bond in the 102 year-old Shasta Union High School District. Voters from Platina to Shingletown sent a message to the district: The \$31 million bond, Measure B, was a worthwhile investment. With the passage of Proposition 39, from the state election a year before, the two-third threshold needed for the passage of school bonds was reduced to the 55% needed in this election. With all 66 precincts reporting, 57.2% approved the bond with 42.8% voting against it.

“This feels pretty good. We thought we would win this and thought it would be fairly close, but we felt confident I think voters liked the accountability aspect of the proposition,” stated Stuart. Stuart said that an aggressive advertising campaign, coupled with a two-month phone bank campaign helped convince voters of the need for the bond. “The passage of this bond is something that will put the district in good shape for the next quarter century,” Stuart said. “This tells us that Redding values our schools.” (Williams A5)

With the money from this bond and the modernization money from the state received over the previous four years, the SUHSD would have over \$54 million dollars to forge ahead with plans to renovate, repair, and restore its aging schools and to remodel the SLC. This was to become a major milestone for the SUHSD and a centerpiece of the Stuart administration’s visions and goals during his tenure.

Over the next few months, bids were sent out for the modernization of each of the sites and in January 2002, Bruce Demallie was hired as the project manager for the Measure B and modernization projects. The Page and Turnball architectural firm, who were specialists in restoration of historic buildings, was hired in to make recommendations for the David Marr auditorium restoration. In February, district goals were set by the Board, stipulating how modernization and Measure B monies were to be spent and in April a timeline for the entire project was outlined starting in the summer of 2002 with a conclusion date set for July 2005.

At the April 16 Board meeting, Project Administrator Zane Schreder presented a list of timelines and descriptions for modernization projects that were scheduled for completion at all of the sites in the district, including Foothill and Pioneer High Schools. The money for these projects was not only from the Measure B and modernization funds but from Developer fees and Redevelopment funds that were available to the district,



*Enterprise High New Music Wing*

as well. And, in August, the McConnell Foundation was to contribute \$90,000 for the development of the Foothill High School stadium and field. The total amount of funds that would be available totaled more than \$60 million dollars and would make this undertaking the largest in the long history of the SUHSD.

The 2002/2003 school year began with great enthusiasm and some frustration with the modernization projects throughout the district. As plans and designs for the new and remodeled facilities were released to the public, the staff, students and parents could see that the enhanced sites were going to be visually perceived as models for other high schools in the north state. However, the construction work was time-consuming, tedious and could create obstacles in the daily regimen of both students and staff. Nevertheless, progress was being made and deadlines were being met and that alone kept the morale high within the district. Monica Cabral, a counselor at Enterprise High School, stated that “it was an exciting time for those of us that were both students and now employees of the Shasta Union High School District. I love this school and what it stands for but the new makeover makes me even more proud to be a part of the ongoing progress.” Stuart understood these hardships, and would state many times how he appreciated the excellent work by teachers and staff, despite the difficulties brought on by the construction work.

Financial responsibility, during this time, was especially important to the district, with a projected decreasing enrollment for the next school year, increased utility and liability rates, state funding issues and unexpected costs for the modernization projects. In March of 2003, Art Schmitt was hired as the new Chief Business Official (CBO) for the district, and would be expected to continue to lead a frugal approach to new expenditures and increasing costs within the district.

Negotiations with the SSEA, over salary and benefits, were meeting some financial roadblocks that leading to some issues with problem-solving that would eventually require intervention by mediation in the fall. However, both sides were able to temporarily reconnect when the district applied and qualified for some deferred maintenance grants. Also, both sides agreed to language that allowed the district to offer a retirement incentive that enabled some teachers to retire by the end of the school year. These efforts supported the superintendent’s plan to not have to implement lay-offs for the 2003/2004 school year.

A new alternative education program (North State Independence High School) was being proposed for the Fall of 2003 and would be housed at the Shasta Learning Center. This program would begin with Independent Study and PLATO offerings with Cal-Safe and Advanced Placement courses being added at a later date. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) addressing staffing of the school had been established between the District and SSEA, and Mr. Stuart noted that the Association had been extremely supportive. This program, being the first of its kind in the North State, would not only be a useful resource for the students of the SUHSD but could bring new students into the district which would help enhance the ADA (SUHSD Board, 8 April 2003).

Negotiations would continue to break down, however, when SSEA President Jim Schwerdt spoke at the June 10 Board meeting, calling for Impasse in the process which had been ongoing for almost 10 months.

The breakdown of communication broke down even further when, at the September 9, 2003, Board meeting, over 60 members of the certificated staff showed up and spoke on behalf of SSEA asking for a settlement with the District. In a speech given to the Board and the administration, teachers Ed Howland, Clay Erro and Ed Wilson asked for an end to the stalemate by stating, “We started this school year with increased class sizes, and for the first time in the history of the district, without a contract. On top of that we are seeing less of our paycheck than last year. This is a situation that is unacceptable to us. It SHOULD also be unacceptable to you.”

A mediator met with the SSEA and Management twice before a settlement was proposed which the Association’s membership voted down by a vote of 54.3% to 45.7% on October 6. Mr. Schwerdt stated that SSEA hoped to continue to negotiate in good faith to reach an agreement that would be beneficial to both the District and the Association (SUHSD Board, 7 Oct. 2003).



*NSIHS Students*

At the December 3 Board meeting, SSEA President Jim Schwerdt and SSEA Head Negotiator Mike Moynahan reported to the Board that after an eighteen month negotiation process, a vote was taken by the membership, that day, and that the latest negotiated agreement was approved by a vote of 73.6% to 26.4%. The contract covered the 2002/2003, 2003/2004 and 2004/2005 school years and officially ended the collective bargaining process for SSEA and ESP for that time period.

This was a difficult period for Stuart and the Board, as well as the staff and personnel that were affected. However, it would also set the tone for future endeavors that would have more positive overtones among the community and its supporters. The District and SUHSD staff would continue to work together with renewed strength and commitment, focusing on upcoming issues of mandated assessment and accountability, new programs and expanded opportunities for the students in the Shasta Union High School District.

During the fall of 2003, a new Charter school was proposed that would cause some controversy among the public and staff but would ultimately gain a tremendous following and eventual enrollment that would benefit the District and the community’s students, as well.

At the October 14, 2003, Board meeting, trustees were presented with a proposal from a planning team of four teachers (three from the SUHSD), to do a feasibility study on whether the community could support a new charter school. The school's focus would be on a small school (500 or less students) with students who might generally be overlooked in larger high schools or are in private schools. The Board gave its approval and asked for an update at future Board meetings.

At the November 18 Board meeting a follow-up report was given with input from the planning team on its public meetings that were held over the past month. The information was not only insightful but positive and productive and the Board was presented with a proposed charter and asked to sponsor the new school. Numerous questions were asked about graduation requirements, the role in which the SUHSD would play and the students and staff that would support this endeavor.

Art Schmitt responded by stating that the school had applied to the state for a \$250,000 start-up grant for operational costs until their ADA funding started. He also stated that SUHSD would charge the charter for support services and if the school grew the District could benefit from net increases in revenue.

The Board continued to receive updates on what was to become University Preparatory School (U-Prep) and would include students from grades 6-12. Emphasis of the program would be committed to university level preparation in fine arts, literature, languages, history, mathematics, science, and philosophy. Erin Stuart was hired as the principal, an advisory Board was put together and at the May 11, 2004, Board meeting, Mrs. Stuart stated that the school was on track to begin in the fall of 2004 with 241 applications for grades 6-9. Applications for positions were underway and it looked as though the SUHSD had adopted its third charter school; it would be located in the Shasta Learning Center.



With the passage of Propositions 57 and 58 during the March 2, 2004, election the voters gave support to balancing the state budget and borrowing the 15 billion dollars needed by the state to meet its financial obligations. This allowed school districts the financial breathing room they needed to maintain their obligations, as well. At the March 9 meeting Art Schmitt reported in his Second Interim Budget Report that SUHSD would be able to meet its financial obligations for the current fiscal year and the subsequent two years. Mr. Schmitt noted, however, that until the District can get beyond deficit spending, “we are treading water and not out of the woods yet...it will be nip and tuck as we go along.”

As finances continued to be an ongoing burden for the State and the school districts, accountability in the classroom also continued to play a very important role in the public eye, as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was gaining a foothold in academic outcomes. This act, having been passed by the United States Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush on Jan 8, 2002, was having an increased effect on how public educational schools (K-12) were performing across the country. This act reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act 1965 calling for bipartisan solutions based on accountability, choice and flexibility in Federal educational programs.

The NCLB Act was meant to enact the theories of standards-based educational reform, which were based on the belief that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals and could improve individual outcomes in education. The Act required states to develop assessments in basic skills to be given to all students

in all grades, if those states were to receive federal funding for schools. The Act did not assert a national achievement standard, but the standards were to be set by each individual state. However, any schools receiving Title I funding must show Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in test scores. Schools that failed to show AYP in their Academic Performance Index (API) would be on a list of “failing schools” published in the public newspaper and parents would be given the option to transfer to another school. If a school didn’t meet the AYP for the second year, there was a requirement to provide special tutoring for its economically disadvantaged students. In theory, schools that didn’t make API could be subject to restructuring or closure. (“No Child”).

Almost all states enrolled in this program, not only because federal funding was a significant part of the state’s educational budget, especially with Title I programs, but because this bill was overwhelmingly supported by the public, nation-wide. Although widely criticized for being underfunded, containing too much testing, having too much federal influence over educational policy, and the concern that brighter students were being ignored, the act became a centerpiece of 21st century educational policy in the United States.

Since the STAR tests, first given in the spring of 1998, were used in measuring the progress of California students, the SUHSD Board was constantly updated on the progress and results of its students. The results for the SUHSD students had always been excellent and consistence progress was being made on updating curriculum, ordering new textbooks to meet this curriculum and workshops were being held in order to keep teachers informed of effective classroom strategies. At the May 4, 2004, Board meeting, trustees voted unanimously to pass Resolution No. 04-123, the Fix The No Child Left Behind Act. This resolution stated that the SUHSD joins the California School Boards Association in urging Congress to review and address the necessary amendments to the No Child Left Behind Act so that schools can successfully implement the act. Specific issues involved funding as well as issues of non-compliance.

As the 2004/2005 school year got under way, progress was being made in numerous programs, as set forth as the Board goals during the previous year: U-Prep was beginning its first school year with 256 students enrolled; a leadership training program, the District Leadership Academy, was enhancing the ability to create and sustain leadership for staff members and was instituted with the idea of creating the opportunity to enroll in any of four modules (leadership/governance, curriculum and instruction, human resources and school finance); all teachers in the SUHSD were deemed “highly qualified” by the deadline, as in the provisions of NCLB; and; the SUHSD food services contracted with Grant Elementary School District for the 2004/2005 school year.

The modernization projects were going well and were hitting their deadlines. The science classrooms were completed and being utilized at Foothill High School and the stadium and bleachers were being used in their first home football games.

The lighting projects and bleachers were completed at Enterprise High School just in time for its 50th year anniversary and Shasta High School was honored as a Top 1,000 school nation-wide, by Time Magazine. The Board voted in May, 2005 to spend Measure B and redevelopment funds to put in artificial turf fields at all of



*Artificial Turf Field*

the sites, including SLC. The Board was pleased at the progress being made, as the local media was focusing positive attention on the projects, honors and celebrations which brought an out-pouring of community support.

The 2005/2006 school year saw the artificial turf being used for the first time at all of the high schools and the SUHSD extended its food services program to Gateway Unified School District beginning in December 2005 and extending to at least June 2007. This would generate income to the SUHSD which would be financially helpful since the Board directed Art Schmitt to cease deficit spending, beginning with the 2005/2006 school year.

In the spring of 2006, the long-awaited Foothill and Shasta gyms were completed and in full use. Also, in the spring, the district saw the resignation of Bob Hodge, who had been the associated superintendent of Human Resources for 6 years. Hodge was replaced by the principal of Foothill High School, Jim Cloney, who would become the superintendent of the SUHSD in 2008.

The end of the 2005/2006 school year was highlighted with North State Independence High School receiving a \$50,000 High Priority Schools Planning Grant, which is intended to assist schools in raising student achievement; the beginning of SLC Phase II remodeling; the District Athletic Handbook, developed in 1976, being updated; 93% of this year's graduates signing up for higher education for the next school year; implementation of a District Wellness Policy/Advisory Health Council that would serve the district's students; 45 coaches attending a "Pursuing Victory with Honor/Character Counts" workshop in order to re-energize and re-commit to district athletic programs, promote good sportsmanship and develop good character between students, coaches and parents, and; new computer technology services contracts with both Grant and Pacheco School Districts.

The 2006/2007 school year saw increased enrollment for the District and an optimistic outlook for the immediate future as all of the modernization projects were completed, including the second phase at SLC. When interviewed about the remodeled 1927 Mission Revival Style building on Eureka Way, which cost \$5 million and four years to complete, Stuart stated, "It's in better shape than 1927." Coincidentally, the original building, built as Shasta High School, was constructed at a cost of \$375,000 with the first of only three bonds ever passed in the SUHSD. The construction took 18 months, and housed 450 students, at a distance that many called "too far out of town." The building now houses the SUHSD district offices, two charter

schools (Redding School of the Arts) and North State Independence High School. The renovation, according to Stuart "has positioned the district, should it want to in 10 or 15 years, to create a fourth comprehensive high school for zero dollars." (Beauchamp)



*Remodeled Classroom at Shasta Learning Center*

At the October 10, 2006, Board meeting, Superintendent Stuart gave his State-of-the District Report to the trustees. He spoke to the District's outstanding facilities, finances, curriculum, assessments, staff, student post high school plans, transportation and extra-curricular programs. He



noted the strength of the District along with its strong financial state. He also identified future issues as declining enrollment and technology replacement costs. In terms of accountability, the District's API scores went up again, setting new records at each school.

One of the Board's goals for the 2006/2007 school year was to reduce the number of students sent to continuation education. This goal was set in order to raise the bar for all students as was intended by the NCLB Act. This implementation was underway by mid-year when the three comprehensive schools in the district improved their core programs and one at-risk counselor was added at each of the sites. In addition, the PLUS Program was adopted in order to serve students that were performing at low achievement levels. Additionally, contact with the parents would be improved with the addition of the AERIES computerized grade checks and automated phoning systems.



*RSA Students Perform*

As the 2007/2008 school year got underway, predictions by public education experts throughout the state cautioned that the state and nation could have economic repercussions from higher unemployment rates and less income at all levels. This was evidenced in the SUHSD when Art Schmitt, during the December 18, 2007, Board meeting, gave his 2007/2008 Interim Report stating that the district's multi-year projections indicated that education budgets might be cut and a reduction in the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) had been budgeted accordingly.

During the January 15, 2008, Board meeting, Stuart spoke to the Board about information he gained from a recent conference which discussed a possible upcoming budget crisis predicated on a weaker market compounded by mortgage loans. He mentioned that budget cuts were predicted for the 2008/2009 fiscal year and SUHSD could lose as much as \$3 million from the state.

Coincidentally, the SUHSD nurse, Cyndi Suter, talked about a possible "pandemic influenza" that was being predicted by medical experts, and that school districts needed to communicate and prepare for the possibility of such an event.

Meanwhile, the district released its mid-year P1 Attendance Report stating that the district was at 94% ADA, district-wide. This, of course, translated to not only to a highly productive district-wide educational system, but the conversion to general fund money showed a high correlation towards financial responsibility, as well.

At the February 4 Board meeting, Mike Stuart announced to the trustees that he would join his good friend and Associate Superintendent of Instructional Services Randy Brix, and retire in August of 2008.

The Board addressed the resignation of Superintendent Stuart at the February 12 meeting, with both regret and salutations. Trustee Pepple said that within the past ten years, Mr. Stuart had taken the district "from chaos to the best district north of Sacramento," and that it had been an honor to work with him for the past seven years.

Trustee Stupek said that she believed that the Board, staff and all students had benefited from Mr. Stuart's creativity, vision, inspiration and team-building skills. And as a result, the District was in a good place.

Mr. Stuart thanked the Board for their comments. He said he had enjoyed being superintendent and felt all of the Boards he had worked with had allowed him to take risks and be creative. He said that he appreciated the parents who work hard to make the school a better place for kids, and believed they had helped to make him successful. He concluded by saying that he was proud of the administrative team, and had tremendous confidence in the district.

The Board then accepted Mr. Stuart's retirement/resignation.

The Board would develop standards for hiring a replacement and would set a timeline that would include advertising, screening candidates, interviews and hiring over the next couple of months, since Stuart stated that he would officially leave his position during the summer months, after a new superintendent was hired.

At the April 19 Board meeting it was announced that Associate Superintendent of Human Resources Jim Cloney had unanimously been chosen as the next, and ninth superintendent in the long history of the Shasta Union High School District. The Board stated that Mr. Cloney had a proven record of accomplishments and respect throughout the District. He impressed the Board with his superior leadership skills, knowledge of the District, integrity, judgment and strong community connection; and, they had total confidence that Mr. Cloney would continue the District's strong tradition of excellence.

Mike Stuart would stay on as both superintendent and advisor to Mr. Cloney over the next few months in order to make the transition smooth and efficient for the district. As the 2007/2008 school year came to a close, it was obvious to the staff, students and community that the numerous programs and changes had been instituted during the ten years that Stuart was superintendent, came to fruition in a real and meaningful manner. Jim Cloney would now be able to visualize his dreams during his tenure, as the new superintendent, in ways that would continue to build the SUHSD as the leader in North State education.

The Mike Stuart era (1998-2008) set many milestones, many of which have already been mentioned in this report. However, his administration and staff have also been credited with the following:

- ◆ Helped develop "Interest-Based Bargaining" with the associations in order to facilitate communication and team-building with the district staff.
- ◆ Designated "class size reduction," both through negotiations and state funding, as a necessity in order to better facilitate learning in the classroom.
- ◆ Developed AP classes, throughout the district, in most curricular areas, resulting in at least 22% enrollment at each comprehensive site.
- ◆ Computer upgrades at all sites.
- ◆ Integration of Special Education students into regular classrooms, with oversight and management programs.
- ◆ Implementation of Security personnel and installation of security cameras at each site.

- ◆ Digital High School Grants were instituted at each comprehensive site with training for staff members.
- ◆ School to Career Grant initiated at Pioneer High School.
- ◆ Peer Assistance Review (PAR) program developed and negotiated into contract in order to assist teachers and staff.
- ◆ Expansion of Freedom High School for students with drug-related issues.
- ◆ Expanded articulation with SUHSD feeder schools by developing cooperating programs, workshops for staff and an eighth grade testing program (ACT/Explore Test) that would help develop a profile for each incoming freshman. This would be used by counselors to better serve students in choosing curriculum and setting goals.
- ◆ Developed Shasta Secondary Home School for students needing an alternative to the comprehensive public educational system.
- ◆ Sponsored Conflict Management Programs in order to allow students to become responsible for helping resolve conflicts at their sites.
- ◆ Sponsored Link Crew programs that transitioned new students into the high school forum.
- ◆ Collaborated with the College Connection program which allowed more SUHSD students to transition to Shasta College and take more college credits.
- ◆ Developed a new Library Plan that facilitated a link to local and nation-wide libraries.
- ◆ Sponsored a district-wide Reading Intervention Program that would help identify and resolve reading problems with students in the SUHSD.
- ◆ Supported the SUHSD School Farm and their Future Farmers of America (FFA) programs as they became a model for other programs in the state when they were selected a State Superior Chapter.
- ◆ Developed In-House Administrative intern positions at each comprehensive site, in order to train applicants to become administrators.
- ◆ Helped apply for and received a \$750,000 CAL-SAFE Grant that would help provide support services for enrolled pregnant/parenting students, including parenting skills, child care, and support with their academic achievement.



*WWII Veterans Memorial*

- ◆ Supported the ROP program, which would grow to include 635 students with 200 more students being served through the Work Experience Program.
- ◆ Moved the District Office from the downtown Redding mall to the Shasta Learning Center with a significant savings to the district.
- ◆ Set up a process allowing WW II veterans, who never received their high school diplomas, to receive an honorary diploma from the SUHSD.
- ◆ Developed a Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) at Enterprise High School.
- ◆ Set up a Secret Witness Program at each school in order to help solve crime problems in the district.
- ◆ Developed a new textbook ordering system that not only updated all district textbooks with state standards, but involved teachers and staff in the process.
- ◆ Sponsored a Beginning Teachers and Support and Assistance (BTSA) program that helped new teachers transition into the profession.
- ◆ Sponsored and helped develop three new charter schools in the SUHSD that would enhance the diversity and keep students in the district while bringing in new money to the general fund.
- ◆ Applied for and received a three year federal grant, from the Foreign Language Assistance Program, giving training for full immersion classes in Mandarin Chinese and Russian within the district.
- ◆ A restructuring of the Home and Hospital Program which made it not only more effective but less costly to the district.
- ◆ New baseball and softball facilities at Foothill and Enterprise High Schools.
- ◆ Applied for and received a James Irwin Foundation Renewable Energy Grant (only one of six districts in the state to receive this grant) worth \$275,000. This grant allowed SUHSD students to be enrolled in Shasta College while they are educated and trained in areas of renewable energy.



*U-Prep Production of Little Shop of Horrors*

Also, during his term as Superintendent, Stuart received numerous local and state-wide awards honoring him not only as an outstanding leader throughout the state, but as a supporter of numerous curricular and extra-curricular activities, especially music, art, and athletics.

True to his tradition of communicating to the district staff, Stuart released his last memorandum on July 21, 2008. In that written statement he said, “It has been such an honor to have served this school district as superintendent for the last ten years. We have accomplished a lot together and, as a result, our district is viewed

as one of the best in the state. When I remember where we were in 1998 the contrast between then and now, is striking. In every area – facilities, relationships, curriculum, community respect and budget – we have traveled a long and successful road together. It took a tremendous amount of work, risk-taking and some tough decisions



*SHS Production of Fiddler on the Roof*

on my part as well as your consistent, superior and professional commitment to get us where we are today. Currently, our students do not have to leave our SUHSD system to get the kind of education they want.”

He referred to the diversity of education in the district with newly remodeled comprehensive schools (SHS, EHS and FHS), serving the majority of students in the upgraded but traditional fashion, common throughout the state; Shasta Secondary charter, serving students desiring a home-school environment; North State

Independence and Pioneer High Schools and the PLUS programs, catering to the independent study and unit deficient students; University Prep charter, providing the small school experience; and, the College Connection program for students who want to get a jump on college and take their senior year at Shasta College. Stuart professed that the SUHSD could serve the needs of all students by maintaining a “one stop shop” that would keep the students and ADA in the district.

In that same memorandum, Stuart went on to say that “the bottom line in the district is in excellent shape (financially). I am very proud of the fact that in the extraordinarily tough financial times lately, we maintained our solid budget and did not have to lay off any teachers.” He added that he was also “extremely proud of that fact that our teachers are the best paid and have great medical benefits.” He referred to the district’s A+ credit rating, a strong reserve and spoke proudly to the fact that all classrooms had new books and materials for the upcoming year.

In an interview with CBO, Art Schmitt, on January 5, 2009, he stated “the facilities in the District are in very good shape.” This was attributed to the leadership of Mike Stuart and his administrative team that “all had private industry experience prior to entering the education field, a very unusual situation,” according to Schmitt. He stated that that same perspective resulted in the District selling \$1 million, annually, in services to school districts and charter schools in and around Shasta County, which was a huge boost to the general fund, each year, for the SUHSD.

Schmitt continued to say that these same leadership skills were key in the “passing of the \$31 million voter-approved general obligation bond, shortly after becoming superintendent. The District was able to convert that \$31 million into over \$70 million worth of construction and modernization projects by supplementing the bond proceeds with state funds, developer fee funds and redevelopment agency funds.”



*FHS Club Cougar*

Schmitt completed his analysis of Stuart's tenure by stating "Mike's management style allowed each member of the administrative team to do their job without interference. He created an office atmosphere built on trust and respect that made it fun to come work each day."

Mike Stuart, when interviewed for this report on August 8, 2008, said "honoring and maintaining the culture, history and integrity of the District was ultimately important for a superintendent." He said "in order to obtain that goal, one must develop a climate for the staff that will get them to go that extra mile while motivating them to do so. We

must remain dreamers, be optimistic, strategize outcomes built on core values, and then plan it. The only way for this to happen," he stated, "was to constantly create coalitions and then maintain them." He called this "the most difficult part of a superintendent's job. But, we must constantly strive to accomplish this goal for the most important reason of all.... our students."



*EHS Victorian Dinner Cast*

In concluding his message to his staff, Stuart spoke to the incoming leadership of Jim Cloney and his staff by saying he had great confidence in Cloney's abilities as well as the innovative and energetic district office team that he had assembled. "With our staff and leadership, it's clear that the future of this district is going to be great. I will love seeing the great things that happen down the road. Again, thanks to all of you for being such great people and educators. You have my respect, admiration and gratitude."

At the conclusion of this writer's interview with Stuart on August 5, I asked him, after looking back on his ten years as superintendent, if he thinks, in fact, that he did ride in on a white horse? His response was simple and to the point, "history will be the judge of that."



*“The secret in education lies  
in respecting the student.”*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson



2008-Present

## The Jim Cloney Commencement

# Chapter 6

**Jim Cloney became only the ninth superintendent** of the Shasta Union High School District. Cloney was one of the youngest (age 41) and maybe the only superintendent who had no classroom teaching experience prior to taking the position of superintendent. When hiring Cloney, the Board made a unanimous decision that his skills as a communicator, problem-solver and leader far outweighed the lack of that particular experience.

Cloney graduated from Eureka High School in 1985 before attending Humboldt State University, where he earned his B.A. and M.A. in psychology in 1989 and 1991. He was a counselor and school psychologist at Anderson Middle School for seven years (1991-1998) while earning his Tier 1 Administrative Credential from Simpson College in 1998. He then served as Anderson’s principal for one year (1998-1999) before coming to the SUHSD in 2000.

He was hired as an Assistant Principal at Foothill High School, serving for one year (2000-2001) before taking over as Principal at Foothill for the next five years (2001-2006). He was hired at the District Office in the capacity of Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, serving for two years before becoming the superintendent in June of 2008.

Cloney’s meteoric rise in education is rather unusual but, did not surprise those who had worked with him in any of his many capacities. Longtime Foothill counselor (1993-2009) Bob Eaton saw Jim come to Foothill as an assistant principal and then watched as he took over as superintendent of the SUHSD in July 2008. Eaton stated, “Jim always listened to other people before he spoke because he truly valued their opinions. He respected others

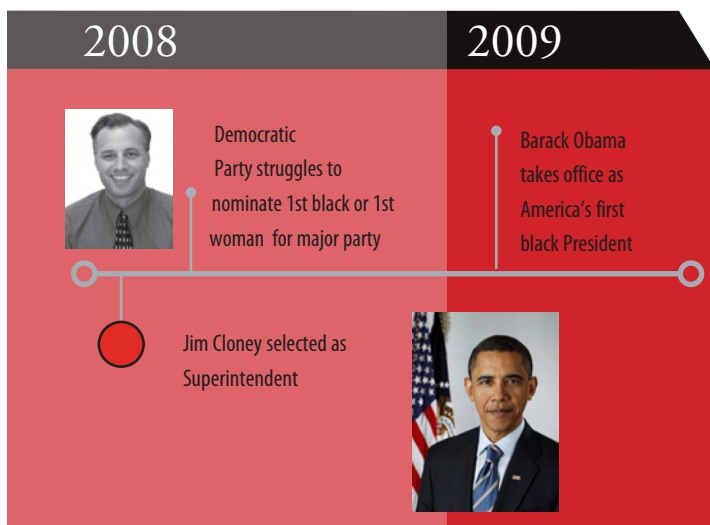
greatly and it showed in his professional demeanor and decision-making. Jim is firm, compassionate, a great problem-solver, has wonderful people skills, is a visionary who sees the big picture and is quite intelligent. It's obvious he was a psychology major because he makes use of those skills in a manner that enriches and empowers others around him- a necessary ingredient for anyone who wishes to be a leader in modern education.”

It was obvious to the Board and to those who had worked with Cloney that his becoming the superintendent so quickly was no accident. He was hailed by Stuart as an excellent replacement as he stated that with Jim Cloney as superintendent “the District is going to continue to be an exemplar for the educational community as this new generation of both administrators and teachers take their places as leaders in the district.”

With such posturing, Cloney did not want to disappoint his supporters, so upon taking his position he immediately stated, “The Shasta Union High School District has had an amazing tradition of success. As the new superintendent, I intend to build upon that tradition of success and help guide the District to even greater heights. Our staff is second to none and we will continue to provide a quality program that meets the needs of all students and prepares them well for life beyond high school. Whether it is in academics, arts activities or athletics, the Shasta Union High School District will continue to lead the way through effort and innovation.”

Cloney backed up this statement by conveying to the Board his immediate goals for the District: 1) Engage in strategic planning to help chart the course of the SUHSD for the next three years; 2) Prepare all students of the SUHSD to be productive citizens in the global economy, and; 3) Be on the cutting edge of educational advancements in the region, state and nation.

It was on May 28, 2008, at his second Board meeting, after being hired as the new superintendent, that Cloney spoke about his first goal involving strategic planning. He suggested that the Board brainstorm for general ideas that would relate to Board goals for the future. He also relayed his plans to conduct various strategic planning meetings in the fall of 2009 to work with administrators, staff members and parents regarding goal objectives. His plan also included transitioning the goal planning process to coincide with budget planning, as the District’s budget could then be developed around the current year goals. The Board discussed District needs and areas of emphasis and established criteria that could be used in the fall meetings.



Numerous school districts within the state of California, over the past several years, had been actively pursuing drug-testing for students in all extra-curricular activities, with varying levels of success in containing the use of drugs in schools. The issue took on more meaning when a Superior Court case in June of 2002 ruled that random drug testing of students involved in athletics and extra-curricular activities was constitutional. The ruling stated that if drug abuse was an issue within the State, all schools (as a whole) may be tested and it



would not be necessary for the districts to provide evidence as it was part of the custodial care for its students (SUHSD Board, 12 Dec. 2006).

During the Stuart administration, this issue had become an area of special interest during numerous Board meetings over the previous two years, especially with respect to the areas of music and drama productions. The discussions were often heated, with parents and support groups advocating for their programs to be free from the testing as it was viewed as an invasion of privacy and unnecessary. Parents often referred to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) challenge to overturn the ruling. Board members, adhering to the official court ruling and their concern for student safety, believed that random testing was a proactive deterrent for drug use and developed district policies that supported the testing within the confines of the law.

At the June 10, 2008, Board meeting it was announced that grant writer Marilee Boales and the District were successful in obtaining two grants, the School-Based Student Drug Testing and the Alcohol Abuse Reduction Grant. These grants would bring in \$1,000,067 to the District in supporting their efforts to fund various programs and provide family assistance in conjunction with the District's drug testing programs. At the following Board meeting on July 15, 2008, Cloney, in his first official meeting as the new superintendent, suggested that the Board revise the existing district policy on drug testing in order to be consistent with the guidelines of the grant in terms of "competitive representational activities." These terms stated that some student groups may not fall under "competitive" status if the group or activity in which they participate was not competing in any manner and would, therefore, not be included in the drug testing program. At this same time, Mrs. Boales was recognized for her efforts with an award from the Board, stating that she had brought over \$9 million into the SUHSD since she had been hired to write grants for the District.

As the new 2008/2009 school year approached, Cloney oversaw the planning of the Pioneer High School Modernization Project as well as an updated transportation plan that would hopefully see a retrofitting of older buses as well as the purchase of newer models that would keep the District in line with the State's regulations regarding air quality issues. These issues were overshadowed by the looming prospects of projected financial difficulties at the state level, which in turn would have a distinct effect on school districts throughout the state of California.

At the September 9 Board meeting, Cloney would report that enrollment continued to decline with approximately 200 fewer students in the District than last year at the same time. CBO, Art Schmitt would follow up by stating the State budget was not yet in place for the 2008/2009 school year and the State's September cash flow of \$800,000 would not be arriving, therefore the District would rely on its reserves to cover this temporary shortfall.

A follow-up on this report would come through at the October 14 Board meeting as Schmitt was informed by the State that school districts needed to anticipate mid-year cuts accounting for a State deficit of \$3 billion or more that would have an impact on education as well as all areas of state government spending. The principals were asked to remain conservative with any spending at the sites over the next few months.

Focusing on the positive in his District Quarterly Newsletter in October 2008 Cloney stated "the highlight of the 1st quarter was the release of the Academic Performance Index (API) scores. Enterprise, Foothill and Shasta all posted their highest scores ever on the overall API. Foothill broke the 800 barrier, Shasta

came within a few points of 800 and Enterprise showed tremendous growth to certainly be within striking distance of 800.” Also, the socio-economically disadvantaged students in the District not only improved, but also achieved the highest scores in the District’s history.

In this same newsletter, Cloney and Associate Superintendent Kyle Turner, focused on the strategic plan that was being developed through numerous public and private meetings over the past three months that would help chart the future of the SUHSD. This plan would allow the group to develop an instructional vision for the next 3 years and they expected to develop this plan for the Board’s perusal at the December meeting.

After months of meetings, discussions, and collaboration the Shasta Union High School District Strategic Plan was presented and adopted at the January, 13, 2009, Board meeting. According to Jim Cloney this plan was necessary and “important in order to bring various stakeholders (staff, students, parents, administration and the Board) together to develop a vision of where the District should be headed over the next three years.” He felt this process was highly successful and would act as a “road map” for improvement for the SUHSD. With the goals and priorities identified in this strategic plan, the team would continue to modify the plans as indicated to meet the needs of the District. The major components of this plan were as follows:

- ◆ Climate and Culture—this area assists in establishing a safe and healthy community that inspires involvement so that all students can reach their full potential.
- ◆ Educational Options—this criterion is to provide avenues that will enable all students to enter the community as contributing members of society.
- ◆ Student Achievement—this part of the plan will maximize the abilities of all students to achieve through intra-district collaboration and aligned instructional goals.
- ◆ Curriculum and Programs—this area supports programs that will help design an academic environment to maximizes student exposure through rigorous curriculum and development of a unified staff development plan for all schools and programs. This could include enrollment options through articulation with Shasta College.
- ◆ Facilities—this part of the plan provides updated technology for students and staff that would emphasize energy efficiency and a positive and safe environment at all schools.

In a follow-up interview with Cloney on August 13, 2009, he emphasized that this plan and his overall vision in for the District was “to not get so caught up in the test scores that seem to be so dominant in the current environment that we forget about all the other value driven issues we need to work on in the schools. Giving kids the soft skills necessary for success (work ethic, integrity, communication, dependability, etc.) are just as important as academic prowess. We all know academically



*District Server Room*

brilliant people who are not able to make it in the real world because they lack the skills necessary to succeed. I don't want our District to ever lose sight of that fact.”

The goals of this strategic plan, set up by this administration and the Board, would most likely be challenged over the course of the next three years by the driving force in providing the tools necessary to achieve this vision...money. As predicted during the Stuart administration, the financial health of the State was in jeopardy.

The impending crisis was made imminently clear to the Board when at the December 9, 2008, meeting CBO Art Schmitt stated that the administration had begun planning cutbacks in the District's budget for the next five to six years. He reviewed the proposed budget revision, addressing enrollment, revenue expenditures and audit adjustments. The proposed Budget Revision, based on the Governor's proposed \$2.5 billion in mid-year cuts to education, sets aside the estimated \$2 million cut from the SUHSD general fund and still maintains the required 3.5% Reserve for Economic Uncertainties.

As Mr. Schmitt revealed the 2008/09 First Interim Report, he stated that the Board could certify a positive report, as the multi-year projection showed that the District would have a positive ending cash and fund balance for the current year and the two subsequent years. The report was based on receiving no COLA for 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, and accounts for declining enrollment, but did not include additional budget cuts. If the State made unforeseen changes, the report would need to be revised accordingly.

At the January 13, 2009, Board meeting, Mr. Schmitt stated that the Governor's proposed ongoing cuts to education were “daunting and would result in cash-flow problems for many districts throughout the state.” He also stated that in order to save cash, the SUHSD administration has implemented a “spending freeze” throughout the District, with the exception of essential items. He said “it was not known at this time when the State budget would be adopted,” but in the interim the administration was preparing for the worst but hoping for the best. For the first time since the 1990s, the administration was preparing for possible lay-offs. Tom Roberts, SSEA President stated that the association “wanted to avoid lay-offs at all costs.”

At the February 3 Board meeting, Superintendent Cloney revised the SUHSD approximate budget shortfall to reflect the Governor's current proposal and the District's declining enrollment to be \$3.5 million. With this new estimate, Cloney presented the Board a list of proposed reductions that would help alleviate the possible dilemma. The Board discussed each of the proposed budget considerations in detail and confirmed the administrations recommendations for the majority of the items. The consensus was as follows: 1) avoid lay-offs; 2) maintain the NJROTC Program; 3) maintain supplemental counselor positions; 4) maintain School Resource Officer positions; 5) review class size each year. Both the Board and the administration agreed that the students remain the top priority.

Art Schmitt stated that he would incorporate the discussed reductions into the multi-year projection and next year's budget. He also said that the District would be required to go into deficit spending but would not go below the required 3.5% reserve mandated by the State. It was still a possibility that the District would have to lay-off staff because of the State's fiscal impact on the District along with declining enrollment.

The anticipated Second Interim Report was presented at the March 10 Board meeting with the State's finalized budget cuts in place. Schmitt reported that there was a major loss in revenue and categorical funding from the State, resulting in a loss to districts of \$900,000 million beyond what had been anticipated. It was

reported that in order to remain financially solvent the District would backfill expenses from the general fund but, with the freeze on spending, a large number of retirements and the possible use of special reserve funds, the District could keep from laying off any certificated personnel for the next year if the State made no further cuts. He reported that, presently, the multi-year projections were stable; however, with decreasing enrollment and revenue the District would need to “right size” in the not too distant future.

At this same meeting a short-term facilities project from the Strategic Plan was reviewed requesting the administration to provide estimated costs for the priority one (safety) items. Mr. Schmitt discussed the project costs and noted that this was a “wish list” with no established timeline for completion.

As the United States’ economic crisis continued to escalate, the nation-wide unemployment rate in June 2009 would rise to nearly 10%. Californians would continue to lose jobs at an alarming rate putting the unemployment rate at 11.6%, the highest since 1976. By June 2009, a federal survey would show a loss of 798,000 jobs in California since July 2008, a drop of 5.1% of the workforce in one year (Thanawala). This loss of jobs and consumer spending would have devastating effects on State income as well as the funding for most state sponsored programs, especially education.

At the May 12 Board meeting, Art Schmitt provided an update on the effects of the current budget crisis. He reported that the State’s fiscal condition continued to deteriorate with a \$21 billion deficit projected for 2009/2010. This would equate to an approximate \$2.8 million ongoing reduction to the SUHSD. The Governor would release a second May revision regarding the State’s budget on May 14. He stated that cash would remain “king” and would have to be managed even tighter over the next several months.

Superintendent Cloney spoke to the declining enrollment issue in the SUHSD, stating that the current registration information showed projected enrollment for 2009/2010 to be down approximately 85 students since the same time last year and the administration was projecting a continued decline in enrollment over the next few years. In a report to the Board, Dana Reginato, the Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, stated that since 2006/2007, the enrollment in the District had dropped 389 students or 6%.

The same report discussed the issue of “right-sizing,” as defined by Mr. Schmitt in the March meeting,

by adjusting the classified staff in the immediate future. It stated that the certificated staff had been reduced by 15 full-time employees (through retirement non-replacement) since 2006-2007 and through the offering of the Golden Handshake, the District was hoping to do the same with the classified staff. If this incentive for retirement were successful it would keep the District from having to lay-off any members of the classified staff at the present time.



*Shasta High School*

At the June 9 Board meeting, the state and District budget issues were addressed at length, reflecting the worldwide and national recession that was imposing its effects on all areas of life. It was noted by Superintendent Cloney that

the State’s budget continued to spiral and its effect on education changed almost daily. He suggested a special Board Study Session on July 28, 2009, to discuss the impending budget situation and the overall plan that the

District would have in being proactive to both the short-term and long-term problems that the financial crisis would bring its students and programs. This plan was consistent and reflective of the ongoing meetings that the State Legislature was having as they were investing time, energy, and research in trying to solve the worst financial crisis since the Depression of the 1930s.

Art Schmitt reported to the Board at the July 28 meeting that the problem throughout the State is so deep that the District can no longer continue to “do more with less.” He noted that when reviewing programs or services for elimination or reduction we cannot have any “sacred cows.” We are not in “normal” or “usual” times, he stated. “Keeping budget cuts away from the classroom is no longer possible due to the sheer amount of expenditures that need to be cut from the budget.”

In an interview with Superintendent Cloney, he responded to this unprecedented situation with the following comment, “The State’s fiscal crisis has caused the District to reconsider how it does business. The Board of Trustees has some very difficult decisions to make regarding which programs and services are at the heart of the District’s mission. Decisions made in the next few months may very well chart the course of the District for the next decade. The State budget is expected to take several years to recover, and money returning to school districts at the levels seen in the past may take several years beyond the State’s recovery. I am hopeful our strong relationship with our labor associations will help us weather this storm and emerge on the other side a viable and fiscally healthy organization ” (Cloney).



*Hornet Mural*

In a statement addressing this situation, Art Schmitt stated, “The District is expected to permanently lose \$3,600,000, beginning this year.” However, with a hint of optimism, he stated that the District would approach this problem with a sense of focus and resolve for the future. He said the plan was to continue to manage cash with the spending freeze extended into the 2009/2010 school year, look at staff vacancies to determine whether the position will be needed, continue to “right size” the district as well as encourage students to attend school on a daily basis. He finished by stating that “we would continue to rely on our collective creativity, resiliency and positive relationships. We are all in this together and together we will make it through these tough times” (District Quarterly).

Bob Eaton described Jim Cloney as “a great problem-solver” and as a “visionary who sees the big picture.” The Board also saw these qualities, and more, when they hired him, unanimously, in 2008. When he was hired as the SUHSD Superintendent, Cloney surrounded himself with people who would not only have qualities that would make this a unique team but, a team that would not panic in finding viable solutions to difficult problems.

As a member of his administrative team, Art Schmitt commented to this reporter “Jim has shown himself to be financially conservative and open to fiscal suggestions. He has the unenviable task of steering the District through the current financial meltdown while maintaining high employee morale, programs for students

and a balanced budget. Seasoned superintendents would struggle with this task, but Jim has demonstrated an ability to successfully tackle the problems straight on. Jim exhibits trust, confidence and respect within the entire staff and student population of the District (Schmitt).” These are very kind and supportive words from a man responsible for a \$50 million budget.

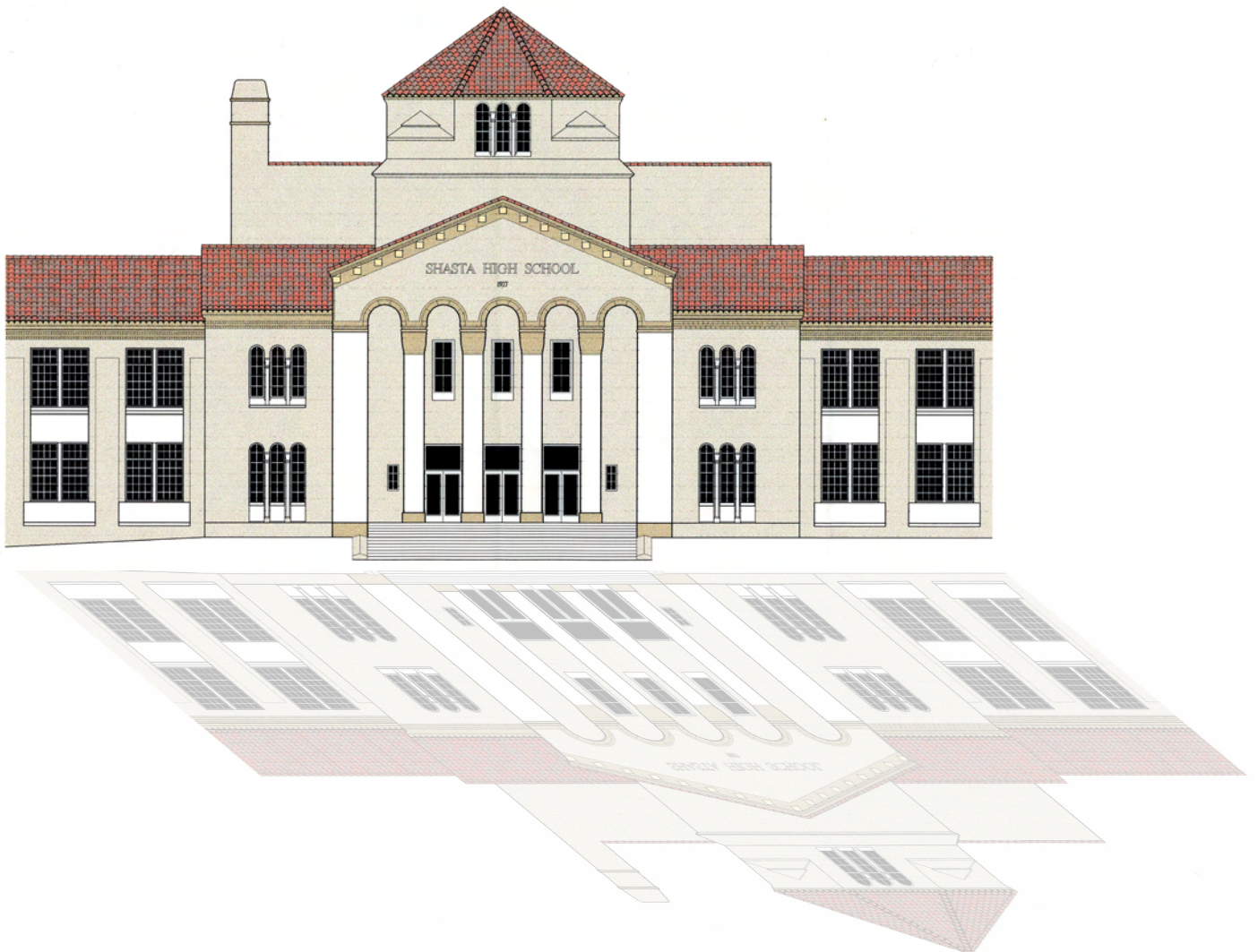
As the District continues to meet its challenges, Cloney and the present administration is making great strides in other areas as well. This is a short list of some of those endeavors not already mentioned:

- ◆ Swimming pool renovations were taking place at both Shasta and Enterprise High Schools and new softball bleachers at Foothill High School were being built, using developer fee money for the projects.
- ◆ Joint meetings with the Redding School District in order to consolidate services, with the goal of saving money for both districts.
- ◆ A new roof was being installed at Shasta’s administration and library buildings.
- ◆ A Sun Tracker 10 Solar Panel System was installed at Shasta High School which will be more efficient and less costly for the District in the future.
- ◆ Intra-district collaboration with the Social Science and English departments, working toward the “Power Standard” process is being focused on in all district schools. This will help prioritize standards within the departments which will increase alignment with a clear focus on critical learning goals.

At the end of his first year as the SUHSD superintendent, Jim Cloney stated “This year has been a learning experience for me and I wish to thank everyone for the hard work and dedication they have shown throughout the school year. I am proud every day that I come to work to be part of the SUHSD, and it is the people that make the District a great place to be. We are losing some fabulous people this year to retirement and the budget crisis seems to only get worse every day, but the people in this District have great resolve. I am confident we can come through this crisis maintaining the strong schools we have always had” (Cloney, “District Quarterly”).

This is most certainly a strong statement from a strong leader.

# Reflections



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*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*

— Margaret Mead



## Shining Stars

# Notable Graduates

The basic premise behind this chapter is to highlight some of the graduates from the Shasta Union High School District who have made significant contributions to society in one capacity or another. This is not a complete list nor is it a list that determines one type of contribution to be more important than another. This group of people is simply a sampling of the dramatic effect a relatively small school district from Northern California has had on the community from which it draws its clientele, as well as its impact on our nation and many parts of the world.

This list came about primarily through people who were interviewed for this project, and others who contacted me personally during the past three years or had a friend or family member who answered my ad in the Record Searchlight, advertising for our “famous people.”

**Angley, Brody (EHS/2004)** - Brody led the Enterprise basketball teams (2000-2004) to four NSCIF championships, as well as two state semi-final appearances in his four years in the position of starting guard. He received Cal-Hi All State honors his first three years in basketball and gained 4,650 yards as a running back in football, making him the all-time leading rusher in North Section history, at the conclusion of his senior year. He accepted a full-ride basketball scholarship to Santa Clara University in 2004





and went on to start for the Broncos for four years earning his BA degree in Economics, in the process. During this time he became one of the all-time leaders in assists for Santa Clara and was selected to the 1st Team All-WCC as a guard in 2007/08 averaging 11.5 points per game and 4.1 rebounds per game. Brody signed to play professional basketball in Europe in 2008/09 and played for the Lagano, Switzerland team in Division III. At this writing, Brody has signed to play in Poland for the 2009/2010 season.

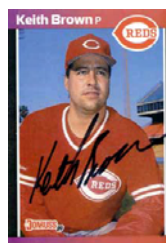
**Balma, John (SHS/1936)** - He served as the youngest city police chief in the United States when he was elected as the Redding Police Chief in 1941, at 23 years of age. Balma was later elected as the Shasta County Sheriff in 1946 and served until 1982. He was the longest serving tenured sheriff in California history, at the time of his retirement, and was the first college-trained police officer in Shasta County when he graduated from the Criminal Justice system at San Jose State. John Balma died on March 9, 2001.



**Bassham, James Alan (SHS/1940)** - John attended U.C. Berkeley where he earned his BA in Chemistry in 1945 and in 1949 completed his Ph.D., in Chemistry. His graduate studies focused on carbon reduction during photosynthesis which led him to continue his research at the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory in Livermore. As the Associate Director of the prestigious Bio-Organic Chemistry Group, he helped to discover the Calvin Cycle. He was the co-author of *The Path of Carbon in Photosynthesis* with Melvin Calvin, who received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1961.



**Brown, Keith (CVHS/1984)** - Keith attended California State University, Sacramento where he helped the baseball team win the Division II World Series. He played professional baseball for Sarasota, beginning in 1986, posting a 4-1 record and a 0.95 ERA. He later led Chattanooga with a 13-4 record and a 1.54 average. He signed with the Cincinnati Reds in 1988, beating the St. Louis Cardinals 4-1, while giving up just four hits and one run in seven innings of work. Brown played with the Reds until 1992 when the discovery of cancer kept him from making a comeback in baseball.



**Brubeck, Iola Whitlock (SHS/1940)** - Iola won numerous state-wide speech and essay contests and was the Valedictorian while attending Shasta High School. She attended College of the Pacific where she earned a BA with a major in Speech/Radio. She married Dave Brubeck in 1942 and after graduation moved to Los Angeles where she became a free-lance actress. As her husband's manager and publicist she wrote *The Real Ambassadors*, a musical, which was performed on-stage by Louis Armstrong. She later helped write and stage much of Dave Brubeck's music as he became known world-wide as a famous jazz performer. In 2000, she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of the Pacific and continues today to be active in the Brubeck Institute.



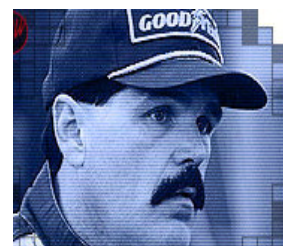
**Butcher, Sam (EHS/1956)** - In 1974, Sam created the now famous, "Precious Moments" drawings, which were later transformed into greeting cards, porcelain figures and vinyl dolls. The "Precious Moments" dolls have been sold world-wide. Butcher founded Precious Moments Inc. and the Samuel J. Butcher Foundation which provides for charitable causes world-wide, especially in the Philippines, where he resides today.



**Camuso, Samantha (FHS/2007)** - As a junior and senior at Foothill High School, Samantha earned 1st Team All-American honors in softball, batted at a .711 clip, which placed her third in the state of California. She graduated with the highest grade point average in her class. She accepted a full-ride scholarship to UCLA where she started in right field for the Bruins in 2007/2008, playing in all 60 games, while leading her team with a .366 batting average. She set the UCLA single game team record with 5 RBI batted in against Santa Clara, was selected to the All-Pac 10 team with the 4th best batting average in the conference and was a top 25 finalist for the USA Softball Player of the Year Award. At this writing, she is recovering from surgery, and will continue her career as a sophomore in the 2009/2010 season for the Bruins.



**Chase, Mike (SHS/1970)** - As a NASCAR driver, Chase held the record for all-time wins in a season and was the 1987 NASCAR Southwest Tour Champion. Chase was named NASCAR Winston West Series Rookie of the Year in 1990 and was also named Closed Wheel Driver of the Year in 1991. He raced in the inaugural NASCAR Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis Speedway in 1994 and drove for several teams in the NASCAR Winston Cup Series, including four races for A.J. Foyt Jr. Chase was also the 1994 NASCAR Winston West Champion.



**Cressey, Gary (SHS/1950)** - Recognized as one of the top auto racing announcers on the West Coast. Credits included: NASCAR Winston Cup at Sears Point, Washington State 500, NASCAR Winston West Series, Super-Truck Series, Northwest and Southwest Tours and, announcing televised auto racing for Sports Channel Northwest (a Fox affiliate network). He received the honor of Top NASCAR's Short Track "Promoter of the Year" and NASCAR "Team Player of the Year." Gary was also the first recipient of the City of Redding "Volunteer of the Year Award" in 1994 for his community service.



**Curl, Rod (CVHS/1961)** - Rod joined the Professional Golfer's Association in 1969 and played regularly through 1978. He was a top player and money winner during the 1970s beating Jack Nicholas to win the 1974 Colonial Golf Tournament. Shasta County proclaimed May 20, 1974 as Rod Curl Day. His career earnings exceeded \$675,000.



**Dangl, Jeff (EHS/1976)** - After graduating from Enterprise High School Jeff continued his academic career at Stanford University earning his Bachelor's degrees in Biology and Modern Literature, as well as a Master's degree in Biology, all in 1981. His doctoral work concerned structure-function relationships among chimeric monoclonal antibodies in the Genetics Department at the Stanford Medical School. He finished his PhD in 1986. In that same year, Jeff was awarded an NSF Plant Biology Fellowship to pursue post-doctoral research at the Max Planck Institute of Plant Breeding in Cologne, Germany, in the department of Professor Klaus Hahlbrock. In 1989, Jeff began his own research group at the Max Delbrück Laboratory, also in Cologne. In 1995, the Dangl Lab moved to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Dangl Lab has contributed significantly to the use of Arabidopsis genetics as a tool to analyze plant-pathogen interactions. Jeff is an elected member of the United States National Academy of Sciences (2007) and an elected foreign associate of the German Academy of Sciences (2003). Jeff has either published or peer-reviewed over 140 writings and is currently the John N. Couch Professor of Biology,

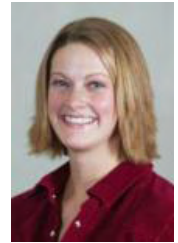


an Associate Director of the Carolina Center for Genome Sciences, and a member of the North Carolina Curriculum in Genetics.

**Dawes, Roger (SHS/1957)** - Roger was the sponsor and coach of the Redding Rebels women's fast-pitch softball team from 1977 through 1998. During this time the team earned 3 ASA Major National Championships (1993-1995) and were runner-ups in 1990 and 1992. Roger coached the USA National Team to a Gold Medal in the 1998 World Championships held in Australia. He amassed over 800 wins in twenty-plus years of competition with over 90 victories in International competition and a lifetime winning percentage in national competition at just over .800%.



**Eaton, Jennifer (FHS/2000)** - Jennifer accepted a scholarship to play softball at St. Mary's College in Moraga, California, and during her four seasons as a starter for the Gaels she set numerous records for pitching, many of which still stand at the time of this writing. After graduating with a BA and MA in Liberal Studies, she accepted an offer to play professional softball in the Spanish Professional Softball League for the Villa Descans team in Barcelona, Spain. Jennifer was awarded the Queens Trophy, the Most Valuable Player Award, for her conference in 2004, 2006 and 2007. Her team played in the European Championships in each of those years, placing 5th in 2007.



**Eaton, Richard B. (SHS/1930)** - Eaton attended Stanford University, graduating with a BA in Law in 1934, before attending Stanford Law School and acquiring his law degree in 1938. He served in World War I as a 1st Lieutenant earning three Battle Stars during his tenure. Upon returning to Redding, Eaton re-opened his law office in 1946 and was appointed United States Commissioner in 1948. In 1950, he was appointed as a Redding Justice of the Peace as well as the City Judge. On October 1, 1951 Eaton was appointed a Superior Court Judge by Governor Earl Warren and was re-elected four times. He retired as a judge after serving for 25 years at which time he took on the unofficial title as local historian and spoke to numerous organizations and schools over the next 27 years. Richard Eaton died at his home on West Street on July 29, 2003 at the age of 89.



**Franchetti, Michael (SHS-1960)** - Franchetti went to the University of California at San Francisco where he earned his law degree in 1967. During his career with the California state government, Michael served as Deputy Attorney General from 1969-1978. He was appointed the Chief Deputy Attorney General, when the previous office-holder George Deukmejian became Attorney General of California, in 1978. After serving for four years he was appointed by Governor-elect, George Deukmejian, to the position of California Finance Director. He held that position until 1984. Many people, during that time period, credit Michael Franchetti with pulling California out of the budget crisis during the early 1980s. Michael Franchetti died on February 14, 2007.



**Gibson, Greg (SHS/1972)** - Greg attended the University of Oregon on a wrestling scholarship and competed for four years for the Ducks. In 1975 and 1976, Greg placed 2nd in the NCAA Championships and was named an All-American both years. He went on to become the 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1985 Freestyle National Champion as well as the 1981, 1982 and



1985 Greco-Roman National Champion. He was the 1983 Free-Style and Greco- Roman Gold Medalist at the Military World Championships and was an 18-time Military Gold Medalist. At the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles he was the Silver Medalist in Greco-Roman Wrestling.

**Harper, Kristine (EHS/1970)** - After graduating as the Valedictorian at Enterprise High School Kristine received her AB in Mathematics at the University of California at Riverside in 1973. She received her MS in Meteorology and Oceanography from the Naval Postgraduate School in 1985 and later attained her PhD in History of Science from Oregon State University in 2003. She entered the navy in 1973 and for 21 years, and as a commissioned officer served as a meteorologist and oceanographer. During her service she was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal three times and was given the Meritorious Service Medal upon retirement. Since 2004, her post doctorate teaching career has allowed her to serve as an Assistant Professor at the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, MIT, Harvard University, Boston University, University of Utah and presently at Florida State University. During this time she has written numerous articles and books on meteorology including the highly acclaimed *Weather By The Numbers: A Genesis Of Modern Geneology* in 2008. This book tells the story of the transformation of meteorology from a “guessing science” into a sophisticated physics and mathematics-based and scientific discipline.



**Hawkins, Wayne (SHS/1955)** - After earning all Nor-Cal honors in football at Shasta High School, Wayne went on to the University of the Pacific where he was named All-Conference and “Lineman of the Year” his senior year. He was drafted by the Oakland Raiders where he played his entire career (1960-1971) as a starting guard. He played in five All-Star games and was named All-League three times and was considered one of the best blockers in the AFL. He played in Super Bowl II against the Green Bay Packers losing 33-14. He was named to the Raiders All-Time Team in 1985 by the Oakland Tribune and co-authored a book called, *Raiders-How offensive Can You Be?*, a 25 year history of the Oakland Raiders.



**Hill, Clair A. (SHS/1927)** - He attended Stanford University, earning his BS Degree in Civil Engineering in 1934. He formed Clair A. Hill and Associates and in 1971 merged with CH2M to become CH2M-Hill serving as the California manager until his retirement in 1976. He is credited with developing photogrammetry and the computerized solutions to problems in the area of water resource engineering and planning. It was his interest in water resources and agriculture that led to his proposing and developing the idea for the creation of the Whiskeytown Lake and Reservoir in Northern California and in 1968, Congress and the President renamed the dam the Clair A. Hill Whiskeytown Dam. He served on the Water Resources Commission in California for 45 years and was elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1992. Clair Hill died on April 11, 1998 at the age of 83.



**Howard, Paul (CVHS/1969)** - After graduation, Paul attended Brigham Young University on a football scholarship, playing for four years for the Cougars as an offensive guard. He was a 3rd round (54th overall) pick by the Denver Broncos and would go on to play for 13 seasons (1973-1986) as their starting guard on the offensive line for 187 games during his career.



**Kennedy, Kathleen (SHS/1971)** - After graduating from Shasta High School, Kennedy continued her education at San Diego State University where she graduated with a major in Telecommunications and Film. In her senior year she began working for a San Diego television station, KCST, taking on various jobs such as a camera operator, video editor, floor director and as a production coordinator. She produced a local talk show, *Your On*, before moving to Los Angeles and taking on her first film production job on the set of Steven Spielberg's film, *1941*. She went on to co-produce *Poltergeist* (1982) before she got her first full producer's credit on the box office smash, *E.T. Extra-Terrestrial* in 1982. Following her work on the Indiana Jones films she rose to become one of Hollywood's leading producers becoming the executive producer for the blockbusters *Jurassic Park* (1993) and *Schindler's List* (1993). She has been nominated for an Academy Award six times and as of this writing is the most successful film producer of all time, in terms of box office receipts, with totals at just over \$5 billion.



**Kowalewski, Michael (CVHS/1974)** - Mike obtained his BA at Amherst in 1978 and his PhD at Rutgers in 1986, both in American Literature. He was a professor of American Literature and Studies at Princeton (1986-1991) and in the English Departments of Carleton College, Northfield and the University of Minnesota from 1991 to 2009. He has written and published numerous works in the area of American Literature including, *Violence in Verbal Form in American Literature* (1993) and *Gold Rush: A Literary Exploration* (1997).



**Kutras, George (SHS/1947)** - George attended Chico State University (1947-1951) receiving his BA and an MA in History from Chico State College. He played basketball for Chico State for four years, playing on two Varsity Championship teams during that time. He became an instructor and also the Head Basketball coach at Shasta College in 1952/1953, coaching for nineteen years until 1970. He posted a lifetime record of 232 wins and 189 losses during that time while winning two conference championships. He was named "Coach of the Year" for the 1960/1961 season. In 1979, serving as Shasta College Vice-President of Instruction, George was appointed to the Golden Valley Conference Commission for Athletics and continued in that capacity even when he was promoted to the position of President of Shasta College in 1988. He continued as President until his retirement in 1993 after serving Shasta College for 41 years.



**Lewis, Gary (EHS/1968)** - Lewis left Enterprise High School and accepted a full-ride scholarship in Track and Field to the University of the Pacific in 1968. He transferred to Arizona State University where in 1973 he was a member of the NCAA All-American mile relay team that ran the third fastest time in the world. In 1972 he qualified for the U.S. Olympic Trials in the 120-yard high hurdles. After earning his BA and MA in Business from Arizona State, he started his teaching and coaching career at Shasta College in 1973 where he coached the men's and women's Cross Country and Track teams to forty-three Conference Championships from 1975 to 1995. Lewis became the Vice-President of Academic Affairs in 2004, and in June, 2006, became the Superintendent/President of Shasta College.



**Mangas, Mike (SHS/1973)** - Mike went to Fresno State and then Chico State University where he graduated with a BA in Journalism in 1977. Mike went to work as Bureau Chief for KRCR Chico Bureau, then as News Anchor for KSXO Radio Station in Chico before becoming a reporter for KCHO News station.

He then came back to Redding to serve as the KRCR Television Channel 7 Sports Director from 1978-2005. As the director, he covered community events with enthusiasm, dedication and unparalleled professionalism taking particular interest in North State sporting events and local athletes for over four different decades. Mangas has always taken great pride in fair and unbiased reporting and has been respected for his efforts. Mangas was a mentor to Rich Eisen, when he was with KRCR, who has since moved on to national sports news at ESPN. Mike is presently the News Anchor for KRCR and is a favorite among his viewers.



**McMullen, Bobby (CVHS/1981)** - After a stellar athletic career at Shasta High School, McMullen went to Weber State where he earned his BA in Political Science and competed as a skier for the Wildcats. He developed Type I Diabetes as a young man, eventually losing his sight and having two kidney/pancreas transplants. Undeterred from pursuing his love of competitive sports, he started skiing with a guide. Within a year he qualified for the U.S. Disabled Ski Team. He spent seven years as a member of the U.S. Team, was a two-time U.S. Disabled Overall Downhill Champion and earned his spot on the Nagano Paralympics Ski Team where he placed 5th in 1998. He later became a World Disabled Invitational Giant Slalom Medalist. He later pursued his childhood love of bike riding and since 2004 competes in twenty-five downhill, cross country and 8 and 12 hour mountain bike events each year. In 2006, he competed in the 3000-mile Race Across America, riding for Team Relay Life to promote awareness of organ donations. He has been featured in numerous national publications. The internationally awarded film, *The Way Bobby Sees It* (2008) was made about McMullen and he spends a great deal of his free time speaking nationally and even globally about his struggles and successes.



**Miller, Russ (EHS/1964)** - Russ attended Chico State University earning his BA in Business in 1969. After working in the business world for two years, Russ accepted a position with the federal government's Secret Service Department. A member of this department for 24 years (1971-1995), he spent twelve years in investigations and years years in protection. During this time Russ was involved with directing all personal protection activities for the President of the United States and worked with Presidents Ford, Carter, Reagan and George H.W. Bush. At the end of his career, he was a special agent in charge of the Secret Service Field Office in San Francisco before retiring in 1995. He would later become the Head of the Physical Security Department (2001-2007) at the Lawrence Livermore Security Laboratory before he officially retired in 2007.



**Mitchell, Stephen A. (EHS/1969)** - Stephan attended U.C. Berkeley where he earned his AB in Anthropology and Scandinavian Languages and Literatures in 1973. He went on to earn his PhD in that same field from the University of Minnesota in 1980. He accepted a position at Harvard University in 1980 where he is presently a Professor in Scandinavian and Folklore. Aside from teaching, his research addresses a wide variety of genres and periods of Nordic culture and literature, centering on popular traditions, mythology and legends in the late medieval and early and modern periods. He wrote the book, *Heroic Sagas and Ballads* (1991) as well as over 50 other publications during his career. Mitchell continues to teach at Harvard as well as at Harvard's Viking Studies Program in Denmark and Sweden. He also holds the position of Curator of the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature.



**Moty, Leonard (SHS/1972)** - Moty attended Notre Dame University where he received his BA in Business Management in 1976 and went on to the University of Southern California where he completed an MA In Business Administration. He was hired at the Redding Police Department in 1977 where he worked in numerous areas of police work before becoming the Chief of Police in December of 2002. Moty maintained that position until his retirement on October 4, 2008 when he was elected to serve as a Supervisor on the Shasta County Board of Supervisors, starting in January, 2009.



**O'Callaghan, Ryan (EHS/2002)** - Ryan attended U.C.Berkeley on a full-ride football scholarship and played for the Bears as an offensive tackle until his 2006 graduation and completion of his BA in Interdisciplinary Studies. As the best offensive or defensive lineman in the conference, he was awarded an All-Pac 10 1st Team Selection as well as the Morris Trophy Award in his senior year. He was selected by the Super Bowl Champion, New England Patriots, in the 5th round in 2006 and played for the Patriots until he was picked up by the Kansas City Chiefs in 2009 where he presently starts as their offensive tackle.



**Rapinoe, Megan (FHS/2004)** - Megan received a scholarship to play soccer at Portland State University where she set numerous school records. She was named "Soccer Times National Freshman of the Year" (2004) and in her sophomore year, she was "NSCAA First Team All-American" (2005). As a junior (2006) she became a member of the Women's National Team and in her senior year she was named "West Coast Player of the Year" (2008). In 2009, as a member of the U.S. National team, she scored the game-winning goal in the Algarve Cup against Norway in the semi-finals. She was drafted as the 2nd pick in the Women's Professional Soccer League by the Chicago Red Stars, where she presently competes.



**Serafin, Mario (SHS/1959)** - Serafin attended Chico State in 1959 where he excelled in football all four years. He was named All-Conference for three years while starting for the Wildcats at both offensive guard and linebacker. In 1969 he was selected for the "Team of the Century" Centennial Football Award at Chico State University, as both guard and middle linebacker. He was elected to the Chico State University Hall of Fame in 1988. Serafin was an instructor and coach at Shasta College (1969-1995) where as the Head Football Coach (1969-1976) his team won the conference title in 1972. As the Shasta College golf coach for 25 years his teams won seven conference titles, placed 4th in the State Championships in 1972 and won the state title in 1992. Serafin placed 3rd in the National Racquetball Doubles Championships in 1986 and was inducted into the Northern California Sports Association Hall of Fame in 2008.

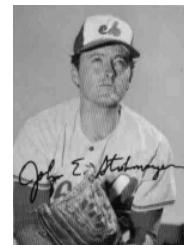


**Simpson, Roy (SHS/1911)** - After graduation from college, Roy would become a teacher and then an administrator in the public school system in California. He became the District Superintendent of the schools of Gilroy (1933-1937) and then moved on to the Santa Cruz School District, where he became its City Superintendent of Schools (1937-1939) before assuming the position of District Superintendent of the San Marino School District (1935-1945). Simpson was appointed by the Governor of California, Earl Warren, to take over the position of California's Superintendent of Public Education, when Walter F. Dexter passed away, in 1945. Simpson



would be re-elected three times (1950, 1954 and 1958) by the voters of California. Upon his retirement in 1962, Simpson had served in that position for seventeen years, which was longer than any person since the creation of the position by the State of California in 1851. The position is currently held by Jack O'Connell.

**Strohmayer, John (CVHS/1964)** - John attended the University of the Pacific on a baseball scholarship and excelled for the Tigers for four years. He was named to the All-West Coast Athletic team and was honored with the Amos Alonzo Stagg Award for the graduating athlete with the highest grade point average in 1968. He was drafted by the Montreal Expos in 1970 and in 1971 appeared in 27 games and posted a 7-5 win/loss record and was named "Player of the Month" for the Expos in July, 1971. He was picked up by the New York Mets in 1973 when they went on to win the National League Championship. After completing his Major League career, John returned to Central Valley where he was hired as a math teacher and coach. In 1989, his Varsity Boys team won the California State Basketball Championship, Division III. He went on to become Assistant Principal and then Principal at Central Valley High School before becoming the Gateway School District's Superintendent in 2002. He served as its Superintendent until his retirement in June, 2009.



**Theobald, George (EHS/1978)** - After high school, George pursued his love of skiing and from 1978-1982 was the Far West Freestyle Ski Champion. As a member of the 1982/83 United States World Cup ski team he was ranked 10th in the world in combined freestyle. In 1983 he co-starred in the movie, Hot Dog. From 1985-1990, George competed professionally as a mountain bike racer, placing 1st, 2nd and 3rd in numerous races, nationally. He was ranked 6th in the nation in 1988 and 10th in 1989. He rounded out his career when he finished 7th at the 1987 World Mountain Bike Championships.



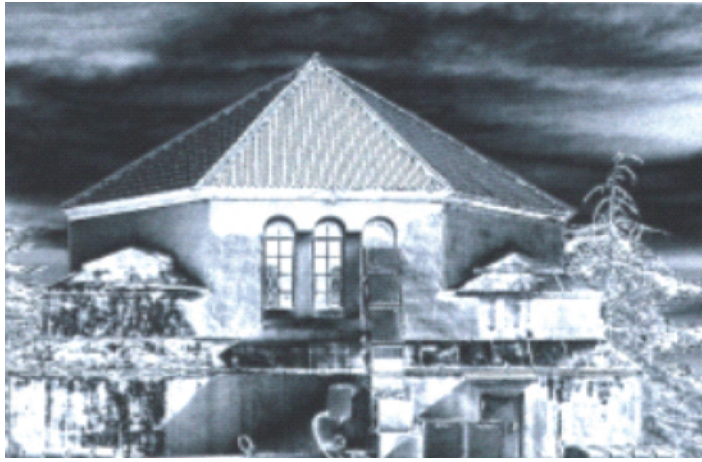
**Weissberg, Robert (CVHS/1962)** - Robert graduated from San Francisco State in 1966, completed his MA at UCLA in 1968 and received his PhD From New Mexico in 1995. He received two Fulbright Fellowships teaching around the world at numerous universities, including Erfurt University in Germany in 2002/2003. He was a professor at New Mexico State University teaching English Linguistics and Psychology from 1975 until 2005 when he retired. It was during this time that he published numerous articles and books including, *Connecting Speaking and Writing in Second Language Writing Instruction* in 2006. He continues to be on the Advisory Council at New Mexico State.



**Whalley, Judy Arrasmith (CVHS/1967)** - After graduating from the U.C. Davis Law School in 1976, Judy was appointed to the Department of Justice in Washington D.C. She served in the Anti-Trust Division from 1976-1981, where she worked on the AT&T breakup, in 1979-1980. She was made the Director of Operations at the Regional Office in Chicago (1982-1986) before assuming the position of Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Anti-Trust Division in Washington D.C. (1987-1991). She entered private practice from 1992-1995 before she became an adjunct professor for anti-trust law at Georgetown University (1995-2003).







1899 - 2009

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*“The important thing is  
not to stop questioning.”*

— Albert Einstein

SUHSD "Tower"

# Conclusion

While researching the history of the SUHSD, over the course of three years, it has become very evident, that the Shasta Union High School District is indeed unique, yet an extrapolation of our nation’s history.

The idea of public education has been around for a long time but has been a reality for the masses for a much shorter period. Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC) was one of the first known proponents of a public school system and believed it was the responsibility of government to educate its citizens. He felt it was most important that the virtues of strong leadership and good citizenship should be encouraged and included in the teaching.

In the United States, it was Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) who believed that education should be under the control of government, free of religious biases and available to all people irrespective of their status in society. Even though Boston’s Latin School became the first public school in the United States in 1635, it wasn't until the 1840s that public schooling started gaining the necessary support to move the educational arena to include all children and not just those of the wealthy. Reformers at this time, particularly Horace Mann in Massachusetts and Henry Bernard in Connecticut, argued for the case of a common school available to everyone based on the belief that this type of schooling could create good citizens, unite society, and prevent crime and poverty. As a result of their efforts, free public education at the elementary level was available for all American children by the end of the nineteenth century. By 1918 all states had passed laws requiring children to attend at least elementary school. And, from 1900 to 1996 the percentage of teenagers who graduated from high school increased from about six percent to eighty-five percent in the United States.

The achievement of this educational challenge miraculously coincided with the emergence of the United States as an economic, political and military world power. The educational system in America has always been led by the adoption and application of our basic rights: freedom, equality, and tolerance. These concepts were carefully laid out by our forefathers in the Declaration of Independence as well as the United States Constitution and have found a home that has nurtured these beliefs in our national public school system. However, this country has struggled with the responsibilities that come with the maintenance of these great ideals.

As an emerging economic force in the world late in the nineteenth century, it was obvious to corporate and government leaders in America that in order to compete with Europe and the rest of the world, the new middle class, created by the Industrial Revolution would have to be educated. Through necessity, discourse and compromise the United States therefore developed the largest and most widespread public school system in the world.

As this metamorphosis was occurring, it became obvious that if this country was going to continue to emerge as a world leader then all of its citizens should not only be allowed to participate but be encouraged to do so. As second-class citizens, in the most populated democracy in the world, both women and people of color had to be fully immersed in this process. Political obstacles such as the Dred Scott case of 1857 which disallowed citizenship to blacks and the *Plessey v. Ferguson* case in 1896 which upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation, eventually succumbed to the recognition that all people have equal rights in this country with the Supreme Court decision of 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education*. This case not only overturned both of these previous Supreme Court cases but put in motion the Civil Rights movement which would outlaw racial discrimination and would help lead a world-wide movement for equality before the law for all people in the free world. One of the most recent culminating effects of this movement has been the election of the United States' "first President of color" when the people elected Barack Obama in 2008.

The Civil Rights movement laid the groundwork for equality, freedom and tolerance in this country, but more importantly, the federal government finally endorsed these ideals. This unprecedented action would culminate with numerous Acts, issues usually reserved for the states, which included the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the National Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and the most recent No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. These federal legislative acts have shown the commitment of the American people toward needed change in our country, while at the same time delivering a strong statement in its continued support for our education system by asking this institution to implement these changes in our public classrooms. Our public school system has not only embraced these rights but has shown the world that a free society can and will be stronger when these concepts are valued and put into practice at a young age. Malcolm Forbes said it best when he stated, "education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one." And, Helen Keller, knowing the full experience of disenfranchisement and a full education in its own right stated, "the highest result of education is tolerance."

This country was built on a foundation of cultural and ethnic diversity from the very beginning, which has allowed us to see our social, economic, and political problems from different viewpoints. This perspective has given us the ability to solve problems with confidence and a continuing strength of character throughout our history. And, involving all peoples in this process has been one of our greatest accomplishments. Will

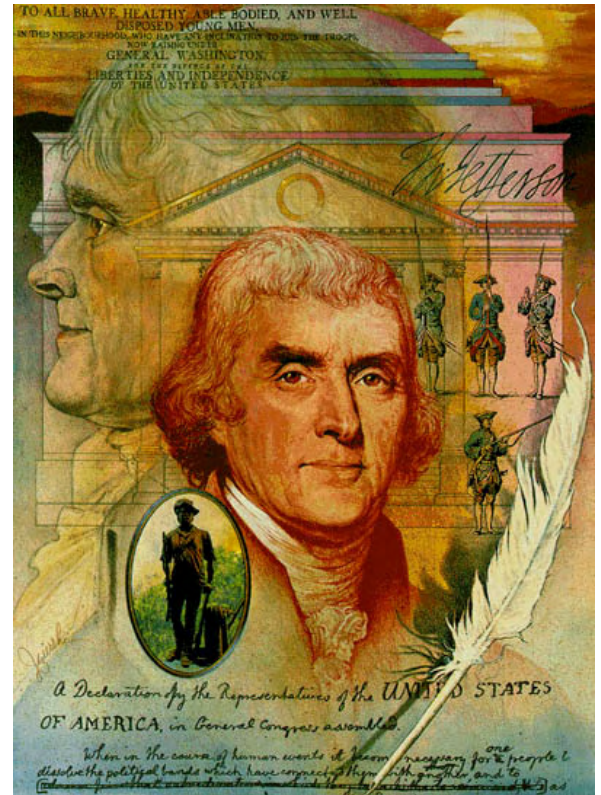
Durant once said, “education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance.” Utilizing that theory allows a great nation to flourish when challenged and to succeed when focusing on great purposes through the unification process.

From its humble beginning in 1899, the Shasta Union High School District has embraced the basic foundations of this great country in a manner that has served its students and community well. As a microcosm of these great American principles, the responsibility for putting these ideals into an educational forum has been the penultimate challenge for all public schools across this country. The SUHSD has not only met this challenge for 110 years but has invoked superior achievement during this time.

This paper has tried to outline our district’s achievements during this period amidst the challenging times that have been endured by this great country. Two World Wars, a major depression, civil strife, and a new technological world have challenged the culture of the government and people of this country. However, public education has responded in kind. We have proven to be a flexible, yet resilient country and much of that strength can be attributed to the vision, commitment to teamwork and the ability to problem-solve within the framework of our educational system.

The SUHSD began during the 1899/1900 school year with 70 students with an initial budget of less than \$10,000 and has grown to over 5,000 students with a \$50 million budget 110 years later. During this same time the SUHSD saw a 72% dropout rate go to a graduation rate of 89.7% in 2008, 20% over the national average. Numbers, however, don’t tell the real story that is reflective of the culture of this district over time. The successes have come from the students, staff, and community members who helped to tell the story in this manuscript. The people I have interviewed in all three of these capacities have been objective, forthright, compassionate and introspective about their roles in describing their experiences and insights for this document.

The overwhelming majority of the stories conveyed to this author have reflected upon the people, culture, and manner in which education was affected. Contributors have stated that this has been a district that cares about their students and community and has always found ways to develop a culture that has created a “team for life.” They genuinely feel that this team has imparted something greater than the sum of its parts... synergy, if you will, that has made a profound difference in their lives. They speak of an educational process that breathes, grows and nurtures its participants in a manner that encourages them to be life-long learners seeking opportunities at every turn, no matter whether its 1900 or 2009. Almost all of the people interviewed have made a reference to the fact that the focus of the education in the SUHSD has consistently concentrated on questioning ideas and being proactive rather than re-active when following through with a plan of action...a sure sign of good leadership in the modern and complex world in which we live.



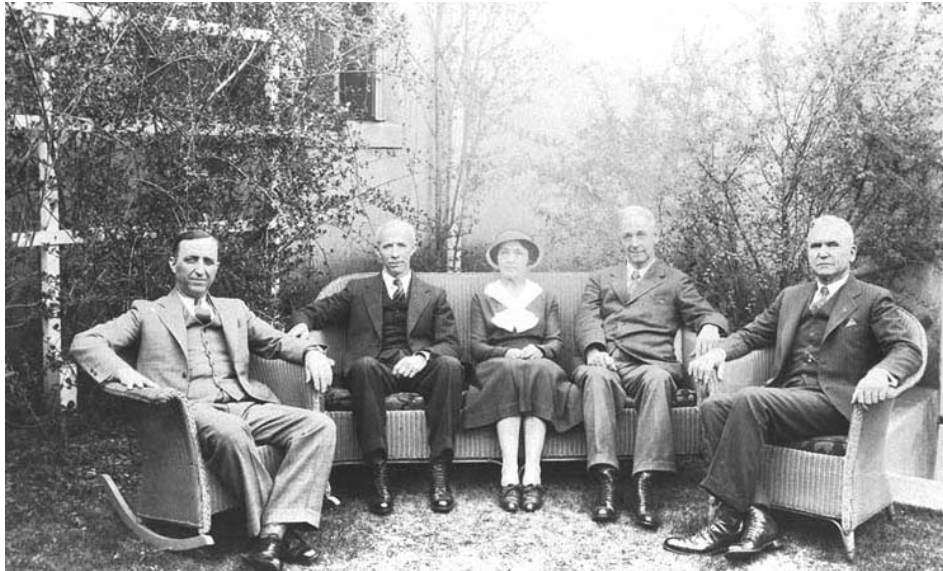
*Thomas Jefferson Collage*

These economic times are difficult but as in other difficult times in history the students of our district and our country will persevere knowing that they will be stronger for their efforts. Thomas Jefferson might have been thinking about the SUHSD when he stated, “we should educate and inform the whole mass of people...they are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty.”

Nelson Mandela, a world-renowned advocate of education stated, “education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” The SUHSD has helped arm its students with the most formidable weapon in the world today...a love of learning.

∞THE END∞

# Appendix



*Early Board Members*

# Principals/Superintendents

## Principals

F. G. Sanderson	1901 – 1903
U.G Durfee	1903 – 1905
Kate D. Brinkard	1903
Benjamin Nacomber	1905 – 1909
M.F. Reynolds	1909 – 1911
Will L. Potts	1911 – 1911 (Interim Principal)

## Superintendents

J.O. Osborne	1911 – 1934
Jackson Price	1934 – 1962
Robert P. Binns	1962 – 1965
Richard E. Haake	1965 – 1981
Joseph M. Appel	1981 – 1991
Donald Demscher	1991 – 1995
Robert Slaby	1995 – 1998.
Michael Stuart	1998 – 2008
James Cloney	2008 – Present

# Trustees of the Governing Board of the SUHSD

Henrietta Merrill	1915-1917	J.R. Vaughan	1958-1961
Alice Tracie	1915-1917	Rudy Balma	1959-1975
	&	Mrs. Felix Dashen	1961-1962
	1919-1920	Dr. Kelly Pierce	1961-1973
Elizabeth McKean	1915-1916	Mrs. Eleanor Mazzini	1962-1965
Florence Gill	1915-1917	William M. Beaty	1962-1969
Harry Donnelly	1915-1921	Laurence W. Carr	1962-1975
Frank Dobrowsky	1916-1919	John R. Caton	1965-1973
	&	Mary Lou Nutley	1969-1985
	1933-1941	Richard Baxter	1973-1979
Allen Etter	1917-1920	Ken Robertson	1973-1978
J.W. Gregg	1917-1920	Gene Toten	1975-1980
M. Dempse Lakc	1917-1919	Roger Cowling	1975-1989
Jessie Dunn	1919-1925	Harald Kluis	1979-1987
Mrs. E.A. Hersey	1920-1923	Hollie Lenroot	1979-1993
Laurence J. Kennedy	1920-1923	Glen Hawk	1979-1989
C.W. Leininger	1920-1943	Didine Ebersole	1985-1993
Eva P. Young	1921-1931	Terry Alvord	1987-1995
G.R. Milford	1923-1928	Jack Suter	1989-1992
W.L. Gay	1923-1931	Diana Anderson	1991- 2002
Sylvia Dean	1925-1937	James Plank	1992-1997
James D. Wright	1928-1933	Sandra Tomlinson	1993-1997
Harry E. Thompson	1931-1950	Aaron Grossman	1993-1997
J. Ray Hathaway	1931-1938	Bill Johnson	1995-2000
Wilbur Simons	1937-1951	Barbara Cross	1997-2001
Dallas L. Barrett	1938-1941	Susan Brix	1997-1999
M.W. Brazelton	1941-1944	Gene Bui	1997-2004
Dudley V. Saeltzer	1941-1959	Cassandra Ryan	1999-2005
Gilbert C. DeForest	1943-1952	Larry Lees	2000-2006
Matt Rumboltz	1944-1954	Constance Pepple	2001-present
E.C. Frisbie	1949-1957	Debra Stills	2002-2007
C.W. McClung	1951-1962	Charles Haase	2004-present
Russell Thompson	1952-1962	Bev Stupek	2005-present
Sidney H. Bowler	1954-1957	Kristen Schreder	2006-present
Dr. Eugene Padel	1957-1960	Jim Schwerdt	2007-present
Beatrice E. Tibbetts	1957-1958		



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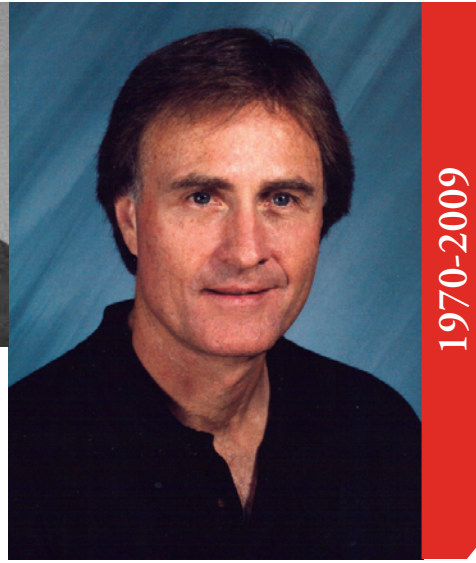
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*“The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.”*

—Sydney J. Harris



1964



1970-2009

Michael Moynahan

# About the Author

Michael Moynahan is a 1964 graduate of Enterprise High School. He graduated from Chico State University in 1969 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and minors in Biology and Physical Education. He received his teaching credential from Chico State in 1970 after student teaching at Enterprise High School in the fall of 1969. He was hired by the Shasta Union High School District in August of 1970, where he taught American Problems, Physical Education, American Government, Economics, World History and Biology at Enterprise High School. He served as Student Activities Director for five years and was head Track and Field Coach as well as Head Cross Country coach for nearly 20 years and later assisted in those sports for numerous years. He served as the official announcer for the Enterprise football and basketball games for over 25 years during his tenure. After teaching at Enterprise for 32 years, he accepted a teaching position at Shasta College in the College Connection Program from 2002 until 2009 at which time he retired from the Shasta Union High School District after serving its outstanding students for 39 years.

His wife, Joanne, a 1972 Shasta High School graduate and his daughter Kelsey, who will graduate from Enterprise in 2011, have been his guiding lights and constant supporters in his passionate pursuit of the research and the writing of this document which exemplifies the very best of what public education has to offer here in the North State.



