

apprehended the juveniles that

trash/junk clean up, vehicle abatement/removal, better

feel safer in our homes and in our work places.

# New school board doesn't get it

Dear Editor:

My body continues to take me to the Vista Unified School Board meetings, but my mind tells me these full-grown adults serving as Board Members would be better served to have the Student Board Members preside. One student member, Gunnar Counselman, is particularly impressive as he cuts through the rhetoric and seems to get to the essence of every hair brained idea, the adults dream up.

Over the past six months, this new board has decisively voted on such critical educational issues as where to hold the meetings, how to structure the meetings and who can share conversation. They have tackled academic classroom concerns such as, raising the bus fares, raising salaries, keeping in place board members' insurance benefits and one evening they discussed the date, time and place for a cabinet/Board of Trustee retreat.

Thank God for Oceanside School District test scores, or else Vista would be dead last. Recent articles and State publications have shown the scores in all North County School Districts as not impressive and the infamous CLAS test did not prove anything except a huge price ticket to the taxpayer. So, why at these school board meetings are they addressing everything from soup to nuts, instead of academic excellence and how to achieve it?

You missed it though, if you were not at the April 20 Board meeting. The VUSD Board continued the theme, "How to fire up people in three easy lessons." Lance Vollmer wants to change the Zero Tolerance Policy. He is sure we are "throwing kids away" by enforcing Zero Tolerance. He says "once we expel them, we have no more CONTROL over them." He concluded his

remarks by saying he wants a program put in place for the "recreational drug user." (you know, the ones who want a drag on a cigarette, an occasional beer and to smoke a little pot)

I fell off my chair at the meeting when Vollmer laughed over his definition of kids occasionally using drugs, so I missed Barbara Donovan agreeing with him. However, I did catch the jewel of the evening when Jenny Vervynck directed staff to research her idea, a Charter School for the expelled students (all 90 of them) and Lance's recreational drug users.

We the parents fear our children sitting in the classroom with the "recreational drug users." We fear these "student lawbreakers" selling drugs to our children, enticing our children to start on any drugs including cigarettes. We do not want our children sitting next to kids who are allowed to have a water bottle filled with vodka, and beer. We do not want weapons on campus, we do not want marijuana on campus, we do not want violence on campus. We do not want a Charter school or expelled students and "recreational drug users."

The LIBERALS are at it again, they have decided to save the student who isn't doing his job, rather than all the kids who are. What about the 22,900 students attending school daily, students trying to achieve in overcrowded classrooms, sharing testbooks, what are we saying to these kids? We reward the "wrongdoers." "Good students get the crumbs." The expelled lawbreakers will get a new Charter school with a low student-teacher ratio. Special funding will be available for a drug rehabilitation program. They will receive new books, new desks, and as Lance

stated, "a tree outside to do their thing under."

You ask yourself, what is this all about and the resounding answer is MONEY? The district does not receive the \$3,500 a year each student generates from the state from expelled students. That is the CONTROL they want, the MONEY. Never mind the fact, the expelled student goes through a rather lengthy review process. These students usually have poor attendance records, declining grade point averages, and poor attitudes. For those who criticize this is a one strike policy, let's talk! A student caught smoking behind the classroom for instance, is reprimanded once, twice, three times by the principal. Further discipline may be recommended through an administrative panel. That panel recommends further discipline to the Board of Education. The Board of Education has plenty of latitude for compassion. To date, no expulsions have resulted from smoking a cigarette for the first time.

VUSD has no facilities for another Charter school. They funded Guajome Park Academy on borrowed money with no collateral and no income to support the repayment to the district. This board is stripping the resources, by funding these special programs for select students. Student law breakers are under age law breakers. It is against the law for them to have cigarettes, beer, or pot. When will this board realize, they work for us, the parents and taxpayers? It is not their job to start another sociological program. We have tasked the Board of Education to provide educational services to students in classrooms that are safe. Zero Tolerance provides that atmosphere.

Join us and organize the "Committee to Restore Our Schools." Mary Bristol  
Oceanside

Traffic signal needed

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