

Novato High School Sports Boosters

Working to Complete the Novato High School Experience

February 11, 2009

Dear NHS Athletics Program Supporter,

Thank you for all of your emails and phone calls expressing interest in the current NUSD budget crisis and on what you can do to help. As you may know we dedicated the first part the last NHSSB Board Meeting to try and provide the facts and dispel any myths surrounding this issue. We will continue to do this the second Monday of each month @ 7 pm in the Library. For those of you who were unable to attend the last meeting here's a brief summary of what you missed:

“Reality #1: There will be cuts!”

The Novato Unified School District is faced with the **“reality”** of having to make cuts to next year's budget of from \$3.5 to \$5+ million dollars depending upon the what final State budget looks like. The problem is that no one knows for sure what the exact shortfall will be because of Sacramento's inability to finalize a State budget. Once those figures are known we will know more, but rest assured **“there will be cuts!”**

“Worst Case Scenario”

As many of you know the responsibility for covering the operational costs of the NHS Athletics Program has fallen largely on the shoulders of the parents. So far this year the athletes' families have raised more than \$160,000 towards this need! While this is significant the fact of the matter is that NUSD still picks up more than \$250,000 in costs for coaches, officials, and supervision at NHS alone. The bottom line is that the **“worst case scenario”** (if NUSD cuts all funding for athletics) is that we'll have to raise this additional sum if we are to maintain the program at its current level. I've attached a spreadsheet outlining these costs. It's important to know that the numbers in the spreadsheet are based upon the information that I've collected including many from the 2007-2008 school year. Because of this, the numbers are just an indication of what we may face as some costs have changed since then.

“Reality #2: Every student-athlete is of equal value!”

If you believe, as I do, that each and every student-athlete is of equal value and importance, then we must value their interests equally as well. That is to say that Volleyball isn't more important than Mountain Biking and vice versa. Because of this we must work together to insure that we are able to meet the needs of ALL of the student-athletes as we develop a plan to address this crisis. We cannot fall into the trap of focusing on just our student-athletes individual sport or the sports that benefit from having greater public interest. We must also be aware of the fact that while the sport that our child has chosen may have limited costs, some sports have considerably higher costs and if they fail we all fail.

“The proposed elimination of Athletics has absolutely nothing to do with sports. It's about our children and the quality of education in the classroom!”

Student-athletes whose families have the means to be able to provide them with alternative choices for their education will be fine. While these students are just as important as any other, it's the students whose families don't have these means that I worry about the most. This year alone there are 199 student-athletes who are at risk of failing at NHS! What will happen to these students when they lose the drive to maintain a passing grade that Athletics provides? How many will drop out, and what will that cost? First you have to consider the direct cost to NUSD in funding received for each student in attendance, which amounts to about \$7,500/each

given the current State budget estimates. It doesn't take much imagination to see that any cost savings to the district resulting from the elimination of athletics would be outweighed by lost revenue resulting from students that transfer or drop out. This loss alone could result in a significant decrease in the **"quality of education in the classroom"**.

"Reality #3: There will be an Athletics Program!"

I am confident that the leadership of our district is aware of, and for the most part agrees with, the above comments. Because of this I am certain that as long as California's fiscal crisis doesn't let us down any more ***"there will be an Athletics Program."*** It just may look a little different than it currently does.

"What's our next step?"

First of all don't panic! Together we can weather this storm, but it will take the efforts of all of us. I'll keep you posted as information develops. Until then please plan on participating in as many of the upcoming opportunities to help as possible. Here are just a few:

MEETINGS:

1. Attend at least one of the budget workshops conducted by the trustees on the following dates: March 4th 6pm San Marin Library, March 18th 6pm NHS Library, April 8th 6 pm NUSD Office.
2. There will be several organizational meetings scheduled to support the proposed increase in the local parcel tax.

NHSSB FUNDRAISERS:

1. Wednesday April 1st 7pm in the old gym "Recruiting Realities" seminar featuring nationally recognized speaker Jack Renkins. Tickets are \$10 per adult in advance and \$15 at the door. Students are FREE w/ paid adult (limit 2 per adult). Contact Gayle McCoy in the NHS Office for tickets.
2. Saturday April 25th Ford "Drive one 4 UR Schools" event at Novato Ford. This is much more fun than it sounds! The bottom line is that Ford will donate \$20 to the NHS team of your choice if you take a test drive this day. Last year we raised over \$4,000 and there was absolutely no sales hype or pressure. Contact Caitlin Edwards @ 898-4289 if you'd like to help or would like more information.
3. Saturday May 9th Marin Human Race. This is an incredible opportunity for your team to raise significant money and have a great time doing it. You'll need to contact Victor Piltch @ 893-1055 who has volunteered to help each teams fundraising organizer plan for this event. Victor has done this many years for the Cheer squad and it has resulted in significant financial support.
4. Memorial Day afternoon Monday May 25th NHSSB Golf Tournament & Dinner at Stone Tree Country Club. We still need several volunteers to help plan & organize this event. Contact Pat Destein at 883-7477 if you're interested in helping or need additional information.
5. Several NHS teams will be having additional fundraisers to benefit their groups. Be sure to support them as well.

Thank you again for your support and GO HORNETS!

Sincerely,
Dale Kline, President
NHS Sports Boosters