

## **INFLUX OF STUDENTS PROMPTS BOARD TO APPROVE EMERGENCY LEVY**

### **Laura Rumpler/Coeur d'Alene School District**

Coeur d'Alene, ID – An increase in the number of students this year compared with last fall has prompted the Coeur d'Alene School District Board of Trustees to approve a one-time emergency levy. Due to an increase of two hundred sixty-one students calculated through the average daily attendance of the first three days of school, the school district became eligible to authorize an emergency levy of \$1,202,413.

The school board voted 4-0 to approve the emergency levy, advising the superintendent that funds be directed to specific school necessities resulting from the influx of students. Trustee Eubanks was out of town and unavailable to participate in the meeting.

The average daily attendance (ADA) through the third day of school in 2014 was 10,317. This year, the ADA is up at 10,578 students attending school.

“More students have shown up to attend our public schools,” stated Trustee Tom Hearn. “I’ll keep beating the drum that we lack the adequate state funding to support our kids so we must rely on local funding and do what is necessary to meet the needs of our students.”

Superintendent Handelman shared with the school board a list of essentials directly related to providing support to our growing student population. The emergency levy dollars will go towards hiring additional teachers and overage assistants, purchasing curriculum materials, adding technology, purchasing furniture and possibly operating more school bus routes.

“We’ll be able to hang tight this year and can manage the overcrowding because of the six additional classrooms we brought online this year with the construction of our larger Winton Elementary School,” stated Superintendent Matt Handelman during today’s special board meeting. “We’ve already begun strategizing for how we will manage the continued growth we are expecting over the next several years.”

“Our students deserve the appropriate staffing and supports essential for their learning,” Chairwoman Christa Hazel said. “We all have discomfort over the intentional design of our state legislature and Idaho’s mechanism for school funding but we must continue to do what is right for our district which is local community funding for our local public schools to cover the basics strictly due to an increase in students.”

By state statute, school districts that see an increase over the previous year’s attendance can authorize an emergency levy without voter approval in order to meet the demands of a growing student population. The emergency levy rate may cost taxpayers 14.84 cents per \$1,000 of taxable property. For a taxable value of a \$200,000 home, the annual projected cost could be a one-year \$12.39 increase over last year’s emergency levy costs.

The growth of students is spread out across the district with a continued trend of stronger increases in population in the northern areas of the district. The emergency levy is based

on attendance. The district's current enrollment is 10,724.