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(Neb.)-Chadron Public Schools Invite Community To Upcoming Meetings

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 06/05/2012 04:17 PM

(CHADRON)-The Chadron Public Schools will be holding two meetings at the end of this month. The first will be held June 20th at 5:30 p.m. in the Chadron Public School Central Office Conference Room with guest speaker Jon Habben, the executive director of the National Registration Center for Study Abroad (NRCSA).

Dr. Caroline Winchester says the general purpose of the meeting is to discuss the current TEEOSA formula, or Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act, for state-aid distribution due to rising concerns that the current formula (also known as LB 988 from several years ago) may not be serving the needs of Nebraska school districts as they look to the future.

During years 2011-12 and 2012-13, LB 235, amending LB 988, has been in place, making changes to lower the total TEEOSA calculation in accordance with state level decisions to reduce the amount of money the state has been willing to place in TEEOSA. Prior to LB 235, the formula needs had already been reduced at least five times by a Temporary Aid Adjustment (originally intended for three years) to lower the cost of TEEOSA to the state. There are pressures to both improve the needs side of the formula, as well as cause the calculation to be sustainable and fully funded each year.

Add to that the fact that ag land valuations have been far outpacing all other types of property valuation in growth, which further drives state aid out of rural areas, as the equalization formula recognized increased rural resources. There are several issues included in the TEEOSA debate, making a review and possible revision timely.

Senator Greg Adams, who serves as the Education Committee Chair, has encouraged a state-wide dialogue to include the Greater Nebraska Schools Association (Class A and B) and Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association (a few Class B, Class C, and Class D). To prepare for this planned joint meeting of representatives from GNSA and NRCSA on July 23 and 24 in Grand Island, the district meetings will provide opportunity for input and discussion. Executive and Legislative Committee members will act as representatives at the Grand Island meeting. If those committee members cannot attend for both days in Grand Island, they can let me know and we will substitute for them. We want to have 20 NRCSA committee members at the Grand Island meeting for both days.

The Agenda will include five sections: a) introduction of why the meetings are being held and the process toward the 2013 Legislative Session, b) review of TEEOSA and LB 235, c) discussion of issues/concerns/suggestions, d) identifying points of highest concern to lowest concern, and e) discussion of non-TEEOSA issues/concerns/suggestions. Dr. Winchester estimates that the meetings will go no longer than three hours, but the discussions will determine that. Handouts will be available regarding each agenda item.

The second meeting will also take place in the Central office Conference Room on June 25th at 5:30 p.m. State Senate candidates Al Davis and John Ravenscroft will be the guest speakers of the evening. The school plans to have the distance learning system facilitate participation from schools along the Highway 20 corridor.Davis and Ravenscroft will be available to address questions and concerns regarding state aid and any other school-related issue.

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Dr. Winchester said a public hearing is also scheduled for September 17th from 6:00-9:00 p.m. in Gering, regarding early childhood and the TEEOSA. She says any participation and involvement in the event will be greatly appreciated.

All three meetings are the result of Chadron Public Schools' strategic planning and legislative committees and are open to the public.

--Submitted by Chadron Public Schools

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