



"Liberty is meaningless where the right to utter one's thoughts and opinions has ceased to exist" Frederick Douglas

Dixon School District's Obfuscated Oversight

By Mike Ceremello

DIXON, CA (DIV) - Once again the Dixon Unified School District is refusing to comply with the law which allowed them to obtain a \$30 million bond with a 55% voter consent. On the agenda for tonight's, Thursday February 7, 2019, Dixon Unified School Board meeting is the approval of the Bond Audit Report for Measure Q for Fiscal Year 2017-18. The Board of Trustees is asked to approve that Report.

This is the second time since the voters approved Measure Q, the \$30 million bond for the modernization of the old high school, Anderson Elementary, and other facilities that the Board will be approving and accepting the

audit report before the Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC) is given the opportunity to review the same.

The law requires that the "annual, independent financial and performance audits for the preceding fiscal year shall be submitted to the citizens' oversight committee at the same time they are submitted to the school district." The CBOC hasn't met since December 5, 2018 thus, they haven't received the audit report although the report is addressed also to the committee. How can the committee verify the auditor's findings if they haven't had the opportunity to review the audit report prior to its approval by the School Board?

The appropriate way

the audit report should be approved, and in other school districts the way it has been done, is the Bond Oversight Committees review the audit reports and make comments prior to the school board accepting the audit. Last year's audit report garnered extreme criticism for items left out of the compliance section, such as the late formation of the committee in violation of the law. The auditor was more than willing to amend the report but the school board refused to take action to that effect.

It should be noted that both John Calise, the Facilities Director, and Melissa Mercado, the Chief Business Official, have left the District. As Calise was the intermediary between the board and the committee and

was asked numerous times to rectify issues, the heat might have run them both out of the kitchen.

Whether it is obvious or just conspiracy theory, it seems the "Trustees" of the School District, now that they got your money, do not want any "oversight." The next time the School District comes for more of your money, it would be wise to remember how this public agency treats those who provide them with funding. While the Solano County Taxpayers Association believed and were convinced by the late school district trustee Joe DiPaola that "true" oversight would occur, they have stated they will only be fooled once and will oppose any new proposals given the actions which have occurred. ★