

**MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING, ROOM 112
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2016
9:00 A.M.**

Advance public notice of the Board of Commissioners meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, web site and emailed to the media on October 21, 2016.

Commissioners present: Roma Amundson, Chair; Todd Wiltgen, Vice-Chair; Larry Hudkins and Deb Schorr

Commissioner absent: Bill Avery

Others present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; David Derbin, Deputy County Attorney; Dan Nolte, County Clerk; Cori Beattie, Deputy County Clerk; and Kelly Lundgren, County Clerk's Office

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m., the pledge of allegiance was recited and the location of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was announced.

1) MINUTES: Approval of the minutes of the Board of Commissioners meeting held on Tuesday, October 18, 2016.

MOTION: Schorr moved and Wiltgen seconded approval of the minutes. Schorr, Wiltgen and Amundson voted yes. Avery and Hudkins were absent. Motion carried 3-0.

2) CLAIMS: Approval of all claims process through October 25, 2016.

MOTION: Schorr moved and Wiltgen seconded approval of the claims. Schorr, Wiltgen and Amundson voted yes. Avery and Hudkins were absent. Motion carried 3-0.

Hudkins entered the meeting at 9:08 a.m.

3) SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

A. Recognition of Phil Durst and family, Nestle Purina and Yankee Hill Veterinary Clinic for their support of the Sheriff's K-9 Program – Terry Wagner, County Sheriff and Brent Moore, K-9 Program Coordinator.

Sergeant Brent Moore, K-9 Program Coordinator, said the K-9 program is supported by private donations. He thanked the Durst family for a generous donation to purchase the most recent addition to the K-9 unit, Dodge; Drs. Hank Cerny and Mike Brown, Yankee Hill Veterinary Clinic, for providing 24/7 veterinarian care for the unit; and Lisa Laske, Nestle Purina, for the donation of dog food.

Sheriff Terry Wagner presented plaques to the donors in appreciation of their support to the K-9 Program.

The recipients all expressed their gratitude to the law enforcement team for their service to the community and stated it was an honor to be involved with the K-9 Unit.

Wagner introduced Deputy Sheriff Kory Lehr and Dodge, a Belgian Malinois, the newest member of the K-9 Unit.

4) PUBLIC HEARING:

- A. County Change of Zone No. 16026 from AG Agricultural District to AGR Agricultural Residential District on property generally located at South 60th Street and Wittstruck Road. (See correlating item 5A)**

The Chair opened the public hearing.

Mike Eckert, Civil Design Group, was administered the oath and appeared in support of the change of zone on behalf of BCLINC, LLC. He stated the eighty acre property lies within three jurisdictions: Lancaster County, the City of Lincoln and the Village of Roca. Eckert said the subdivision will be divided into twenty-three lots. He stated that the Roca Planning Commission and Village of Roca Board have both approved the Change of Zone and Preliminary Plat. The Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Commission has approved the Preliminary Plat as well and the Board of Commissioners will need to vote on the Change of Zone going from AG (Agricultural) to AGR (Agricultural Residential). Eckert stated the lots would be approximately 3.5 acres and all the roads will be built to County standards.

Tom Cajka, Planning Department, was administered the oath. He clarified the Factsheet states the change in zone is not in conformance with the comprehensive plan based on the land use plan. However because the majority of the development is within the Village of Roca's zoning jurisdiction and has received approval, the use of rural water and the fact the soil is not prime farm land allowed the Planning Commission to approve the change of zone.

No one appeared in opposition or in a neutral position.

The Chair closed the public hearing.

5) NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Resolution regarding County Change of Zone No. 16026 from AG Agricultural District to AGR Agricultural Residential District on property generally located at South 60th Street and Wittstruck Road. (R-16-0071)**

MOTION: Hudkins moved and Schorr seconded approval of the resolution. Schorr, Wiltgen, Hudkins and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

- B. Agreement with Great Plains Appraisal, Inc. for qualified professional appraisal services to assist the County Assessor's Office in performing the appraisal functions necessary to process the Tax Equalization and Review Commission (TERC) appeals for the 2016 tax year and any pending appeals from past tax years. Total compensation for services shall not exceed \$200,000. (C-16-0639)**

Hudkins asked what steps could be taken to decrease the number of appeals to the Tax Equalization and Review Commission (TERC).

Tom Kubert, Great Plains Appraisal, said there is progress being made with a decrease in the number TERC cases pending. He stated being proactive in obtaining the right information from the property owner has decreased the caseload and shortened the timeframe in resolving the appeals. Kubert noted TERC is combining all years for a parcel in one hearing, thus saving time and money.

MOTION: Schorr moved and Wiltgen seconded approval of the agreement. Wiltgen, Hudkins, Schorr and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

- C. Recommendation from the Purchasing Agent, County Engineer and County Weed Superintendent to award and execute a contract for cleaning services (for the County Engineering Office, Shop and Weed Control) to Rise n' Shine (Bid No. 16-228). The total estimated amount is \$9,900.00 (Note: Line 3 was misquoted. The correct price is \$125 per month instead of \$375 – see attached email.) (B-16-0228)**

Bob Walla, Purchasing Agent, clarified the vendor did not notice the square footage for the Weed Control office was considerably less which resulted in the decrease on Line 3.

MOTION: Wiltgen moved and Schorr seconded approval of the recommendation. Wiltgen, Schorr, Hudkins and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

- D. Agreement with Dr. Donald P. Belau to provide professional services to lead the enhancement of youth crisis response services in Lincoln and to develop a one-year plan. Term of the contract is from October 1, 2016, through June 30, 2017. The cost to County is not to exceed \$15,000. (C-16-0636)**

Sara Hoyle, Human Services Director, stated this agreement will provide a resource to the community which will reduce the number of police calls for juvenile behavioral health issues.

MOTION: Schorr moved and Hudkins seconded approval of the agreement. Schorr, Hudkins, Wiltgen and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

- E. Grant contract with Lincoln Public Schools in the amount of \$213,337 to provide funding for a Truancy Diversion Program and Restorative Justice Coordination at Northeast and Lincoln High Schools and Park Goodrich and Culler Middle Schools. Term of the contract is July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2017. (C-16-0637)**

Judge Reggie Ryder said the program is a "graduation initiative" and discussed the financial burden of truancy on a community. He stated there are very positive results with the collaborative effort between Juvenile Court and Lincoln Public Schools with the goal of graduation. Judge Ryder provided a copy of a power point presentation regarding the Truancy Diversion Program (Exhibit A).

Bruce Prender, Chief Deputy County Attorney, added the response from the youth involved in the program has been very favorable. He said the time spent in the schools and not in court has saved time and money.

MOTION: Wiltgen moved and Hudkins seconded approval of the grant contract. Hudkins, Wiltgen, Schorr and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

- F. Amendment to County Contract C-09-0137 with Legacy International, Inc., dba Legacy Inmate Communications for Inmate Phone Services. The amendment renews the contract from November 1, 2016 through July 22, 2017. (The County is reimbursed on a fee/commission basis.) (C-16-0633)**

MOTION: Hudkins moved and Wiltgen seconded approval of the amendment. Wiltgen, Schorr, Hudkins and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

- G. Amendment to County Contract C-14-0545 with Big Iron Auctions LLC for Online and On-Site Auctioneer Services (Bid No. 14-215). The amendment renews the contract from November 18, 2016 through November 17, 2017. (The County is reimbursed for items sold at the auctions.) (C-16-0634)**

MOTION: Wiltgen moved and Schorr seconded approval of the amendment. Wiltgen, Hudkins, Schorr and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

- H. Amendment to County Contract C-16-0111 with W.W. Grainger, Inc. using the NJPA RFP No. 091214 for facilities maintenance, repair and operating supplies. The amendment renews the contract from October 22, 2016 through October 21, 2017. The estimated cost to the County is not to exceed \$18,000. (C-16-0635)**

MOTION: Hudkins moved and Wiltgen seconded approval of the amendment. Schorr, Hudkins, Wiltgen and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

- I. Addendum to a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Homeland Security, County Contract No. C-10-0155, on behalf of Lancaster County General Assistance, for the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) program. The addendum renews the agreement through June 30, 2017 and verifies the County's anticipated collections for the new term. (C-16-0638)**

MOTION: Schorr moved and Hudkins seconded approval of the addendum. Schorr, Hudkins and Amundson voted yes. Wiltgen abstained. Avery was absent. Motion carried 3-0 with one abstention.

6) CONSENT ITEMS: These are routine business items that are expected to be adopted without dissent. Any individual item may be removed for special discussion and consideration by a Commissioner or by any member of the public without prior notice. Unless there is an exception, these items will be approved as one with a single vote of the Board of Commissioners. These items are approval of:

- A. Receive and place on the file the County Attorney's quarterly report for July to September, 2016.**

- B. Utility Permit No. 1475 allowing Alfred Benesch & Company to install and extend County Culvert W-208 on SW 42nd Street between W. Pella and W. Hallam Roads. There is no cost to the County. (C-16-0632)**

MOTION: Wiltgen moved and Hudkins seconded approval of the consent items. Schorr, Wiltgen, Hudkins and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

- 7) PUBLIC COMMENT:** Those wishing to speak on items relating to County business not on the agenda may do so at this time.

Gary Aldridge, 7112 South 45th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, appeared and commented on the cost of living adjustments recently approved by the Board of Commissioners in comparison to the national average and on United States service personnel recently killed in action in Afghanistan.

8) ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- A. The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners will hold a staff meeting on Thursday, October 27, 2016 at 8:30 a.m., in the Bill Luxford Studio (Room 113) of the County-City Building (555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln).**
- B. The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners will hold their next regular meeting on Tuesday, November 1, 2016 at 9:00 a.m., in the Room 112 of the County-City Building (555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln) with the Board of Equalization immediately following.**
- C. The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, November 1, 2016 at 9:00 a.m., in Room 112 of the County-City Building (555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln) regarding an amendment to Article 1, Section 6 of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Air Pollution Control Program Regulations and Standards to modify emission fees for regulated air pollutants.**
- D. The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, November 1, 2016 at 6:30 p.m., in Room 112 of the County-City Building (555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln) regarding the One and Six-Year Road and Bridge Improvement Program.**
- E. The County Commissioners can be reached at 402-441-7447 or commish@lancaster.ne.gov.**
- F. The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners meeting is broadcast live. It is rebroadcast on Tuesdays (1:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.), Wednesdays (12:00 a.m. midnight) and Saturdays (3:30 p.m.) on 5 City-TV, Cable Channel 5. In addition, the meeting may be viewed on the internet at lancaster.ne.gov under 5 City-TV, Video on Demand or 5 City-TV on YouTube.**

9) ADJOURNMENT

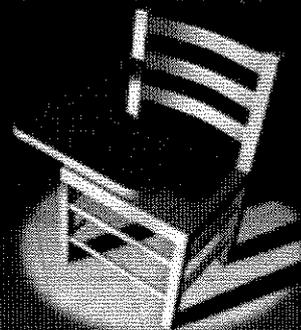
MOTION: Schorr moved and Hudkins seconded to adjourn the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners meeting at 9:51 a.m. Hudkins, Schorr, Wiltgen and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

Dan Nolte

Dan Nolte, County Clerk



Lancaster County Truancy Diversion Project



A Collaboration Between:

The Separate Juvenile Court of Lancaster County, Nebraska
and Lincoln Public Schools

Judge Reggie L. Ryder

rryder@lancaster.ne.gov

Why Does It
Even Matter?

TWO PRIMARY PURPOSES FOR REDUCING TRUANCY:

- 1) Have all youth attend and be engaged in school so they will have successful and productive lives.
- 2) To increase citizen safety, both in the short term, through having students in school rather than out in the community during school hours, and in the long term, through school engagement and achievement leading to later adult responsibility and productivity.

FINANCIAL COST OF TRUANCY

- Each year, over 1.2 million students drop out of high school in the United States.
 - That breaks down to over 3,287 students per day.
- For each drop out class, there is an estimated cost to the country of *\$337 billion* in lost income over the course of their lives.

FINANCIAL COST OF TRUANCY

- Over the course of his or her lifetime, a single high school dropout costs the nation approximately \$260,000 in lost earnings, taxes, and productivity.
- Nationally, **90%** of welfare recipients are high school dropouts.



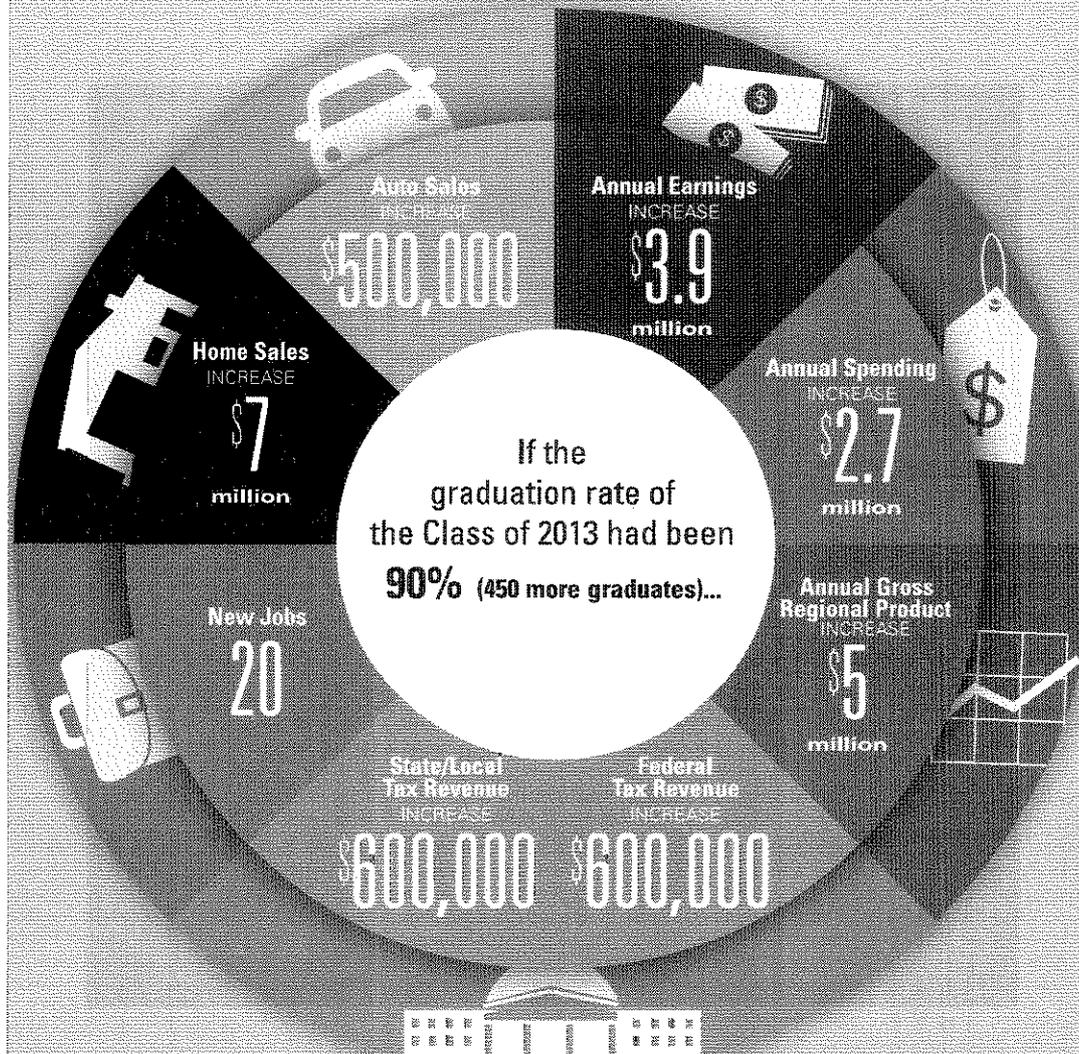
FINANCIAL COST OF TRUANCY

- Each student who graduates from high school will save states an average of \$13,706 in Medicaid and expenditures for uninsured care over the course of his or her lifetime.
- States could save more than \$17 billion if those young people earn their high school diploma instead of dropping out.

FINANCIAL COST OF TRUANCY

- Nebraska could save \$68.6 million in health care costs over the lifetime of *each class* of dropouts had they earned their diplomas.
- Nebraska's economy could see a combination of crime-related savings and additional revenue of about \$33 million each year if the *male high school graduation* rate increased by just 5%.

THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF Increasing the High School Graduation Rate for Public School Students in the Lincoln, NE metro area



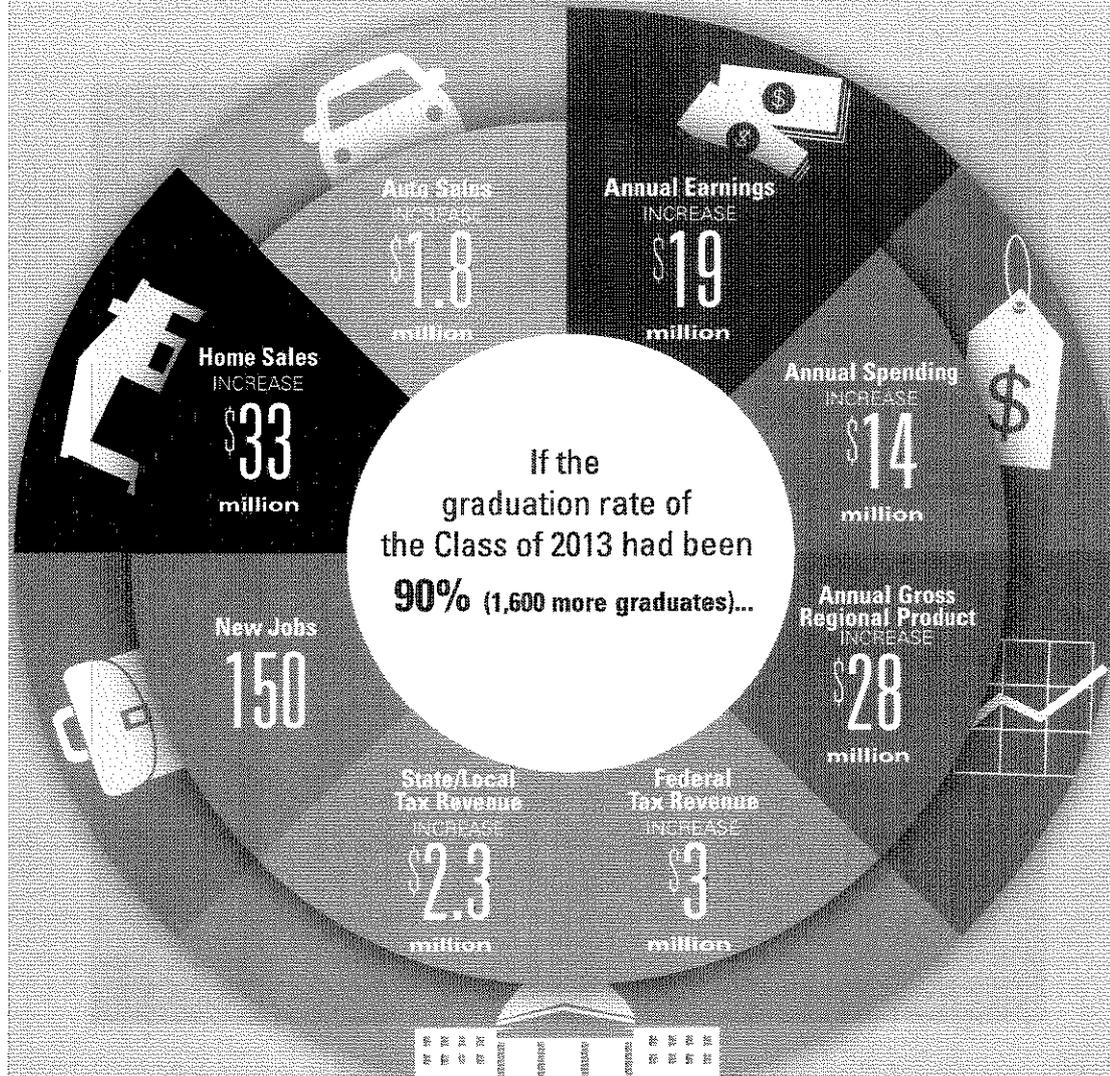
THE BEST ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE IS A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA.

The above projections were generated by the Alliance for Excellent Education using an economic model developed by Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. through the generous support of State Farm®. Graduation rates were provided by Editorial Projects in Education. This document builds on previous work by the Alliance analyzing the economics of more than 200 non-spatial statistical areas, all 50 states, and the District of Columbia to determine the economic benefits of improving high school graduation rates and sending additional graduates to college. For more information, visit economics.all120.org. © 2015, Alliance for Excellent Education. Visit aee.org to see findings from other regions, view technical notes, and learn about the solutions.



State Farm

THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF Increasing the High School Graduation Rate for Public School Students in the Omaha-Council Bluffs, NE metro area



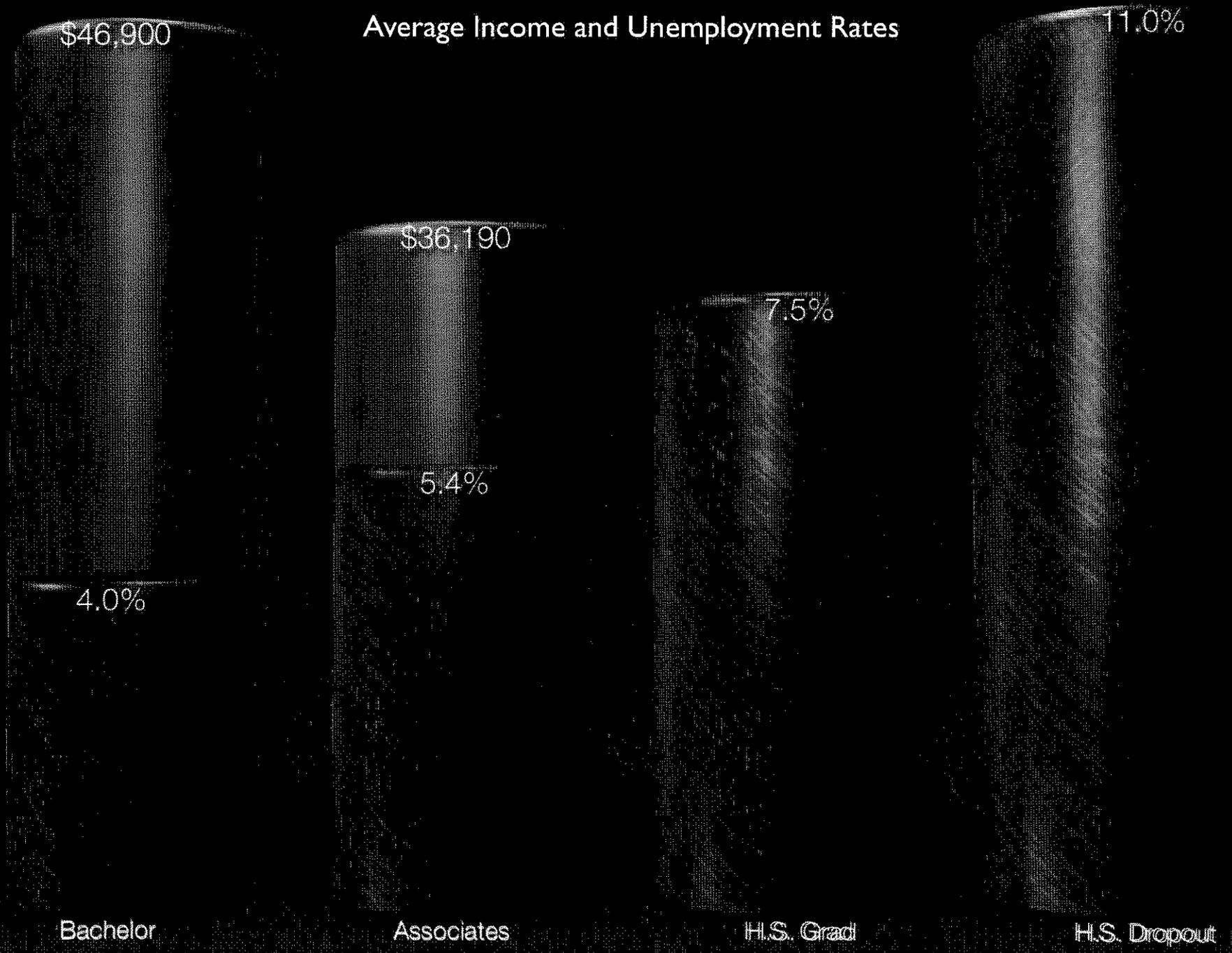
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State Farm®

Average Income and Unemployment Rates



Source: Current Population Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor
Source: National Center for Educational Statistics (2012)

SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

- “The school to prison pipeline—the metaphor encompassing the various issues in our education system that result in students leaving school and becoming involved in the criminal justice system—is one of our nation’s most formidable challenges.”

SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

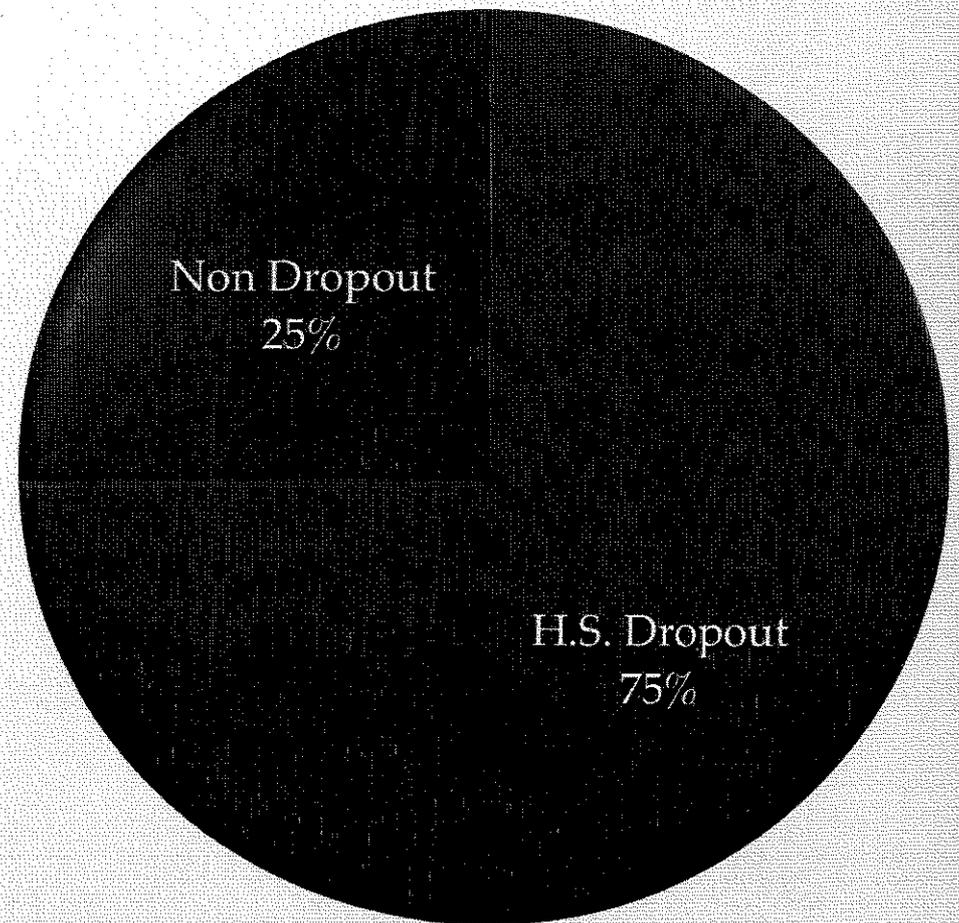
- The number 1 recommendation of the ABA School to Prison Pipeline Task Force:
 - Improve academic achievement and increase the likelihood that students will remain in school, graduate, and prepare to become positive, contributing members of our society

SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

- **75%** of America's prisoners are high school dropouts.

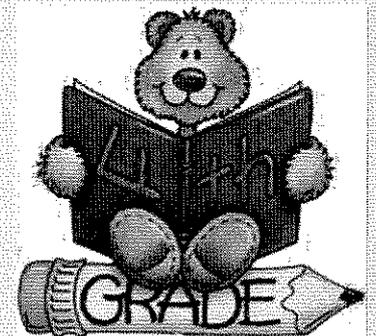
8X

More Likely to End up Incarcerated



FINANCIAL COST OF TRUANCY

- Over 70% of inmates in America's prisons cannot read above a fourth grade level.



FINANCIAL COST OF TRUANCY

Pennsylvania Example

COST SPENT PER YEAR/ PER PRISONER	TOTAL COST OF THE AVERAGE PRISON TERM
\$33,000	\$132,000

FINANCIAL COST OF TRUANCY

Pennsylvania Example

AVERAGE COST OF A PRIVATE
SCHOOL PER YEAR

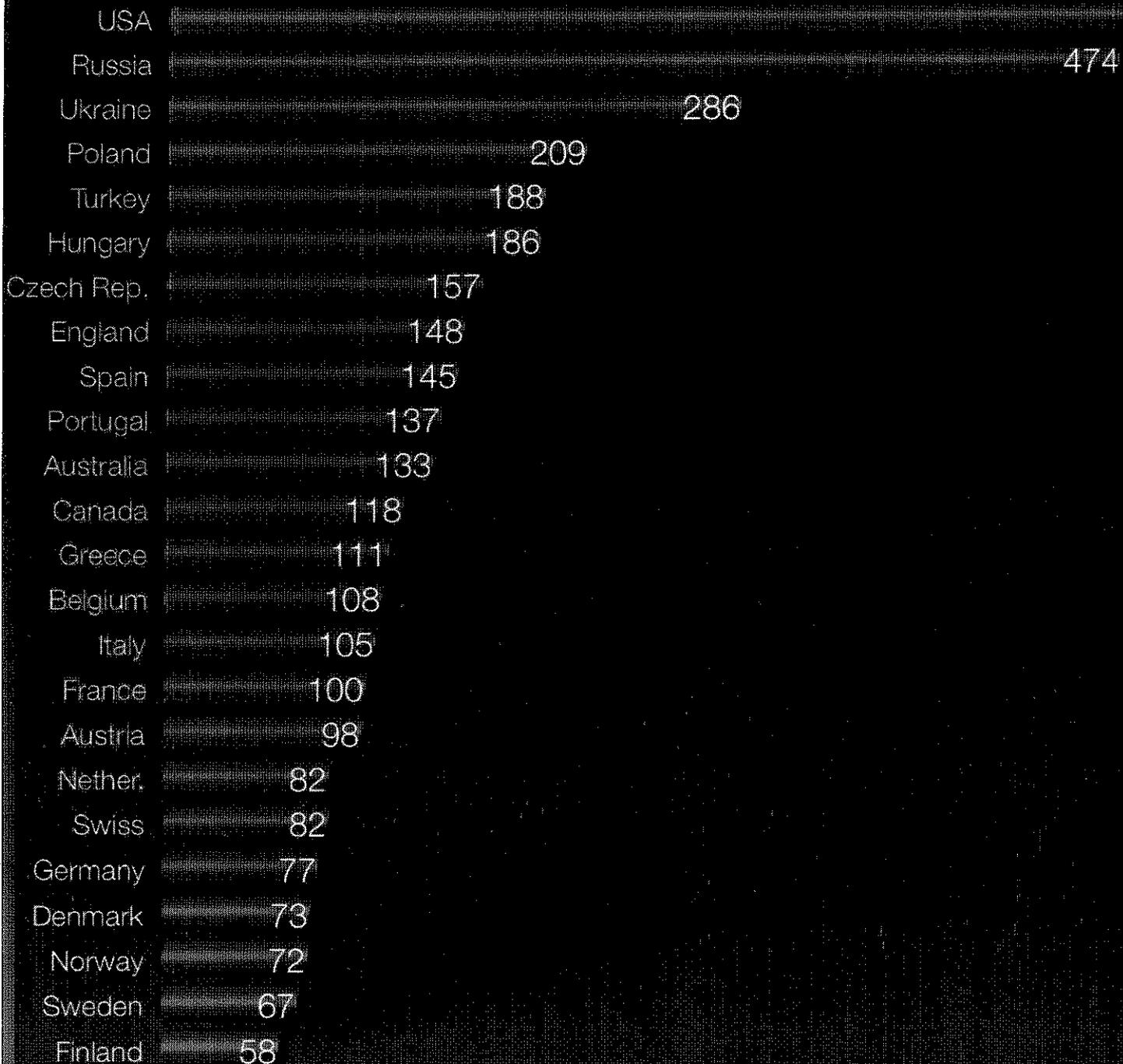
\$8,300

MONEY LEFT OVER FOR
COLLEGE IF SENT A PRISON
INMATE TO PRIVATE SCHOOL
FROM KINDERGARTEN
THROUGH 12TH GRADE

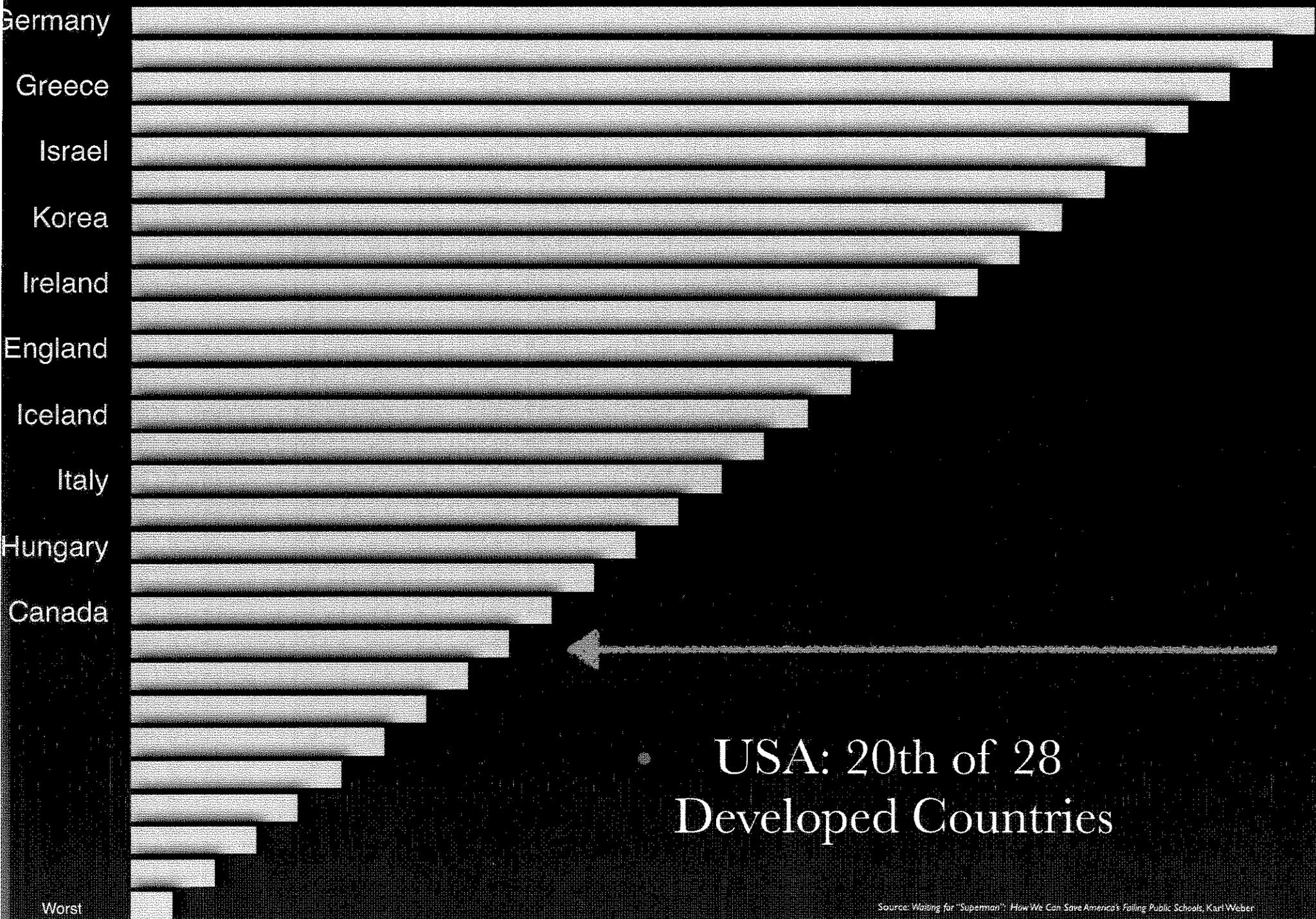
\$24,000

Incarceration Rate per 100,000: USA vs. The World

707



Graduation Rate: USA vs. The World



USA: 20th of 28
Developed Countries

Source: *Waiting for "Superman": How We Can Save America's Failing Public Schools*, Karl Weber

What Others Have Said

“The best predictor of whether a student will drop out of school is absenteeism. Those who miss large amounts of school not only fail to learn but also often leave school without a high school diploma.”

-Tom Osborne, *Beyond the Final Score: There's More to Life Than the Game*, Regal Books, 2009

“Although truancy’s financial burdens are considerable, its cost cannot be measured in dollars alone. For a growing number of youth, truancy may be a first step to a lifetime of unemployment, crime, and incarceration.”

-Dr. Shay Bilchik, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Administrator.

“Because truancy is a complex problem requiring a comprehensive response, educators, law enforcement agencies, courts, communities, and families all play a part in truancy prevention.”

The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

[P]reventing truancy may mean the difference between a lifetime of problems or a lifetime of accomplishments.”

-Eileen M. Garry, Truancy: First Step to a Lifetime of Problems, OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin, October 1996.



What We Do Now

- Truancy Petition filed by County Attorney.
- An attorney is automatically appointed in Lancaster County.
- Summons issued and first hearing held in 2-4 weeks.
- Rights and potential consequences are explained.
- The juvenile then admits or denies the truancy allegations. Continuances sometimes result at this point.
- If the allegations are not found to be true, the case ends.
- If the allegations are found to be true, set for disposition in 6 weeks, following probation investigation (more time needed if family FTA's).

What We Do Now

Court Options

- Place on probation with terms and conditions
- Allow to remain in the home
- Place outside of the home:
 - Foster home
 - Group Home
 - Relative
- Jurisdiction until 19. Practice in Lancaster County is 18.

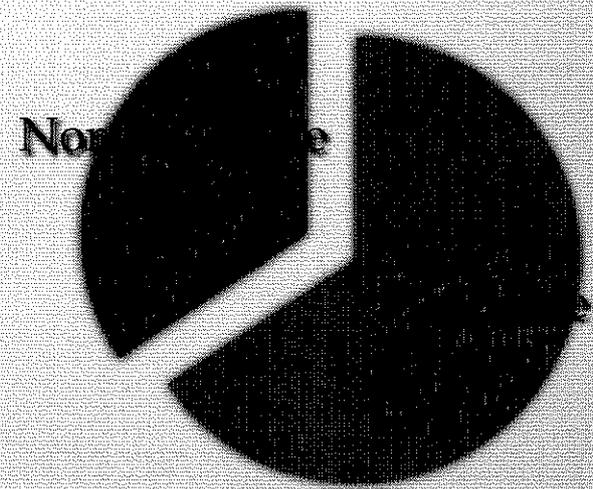
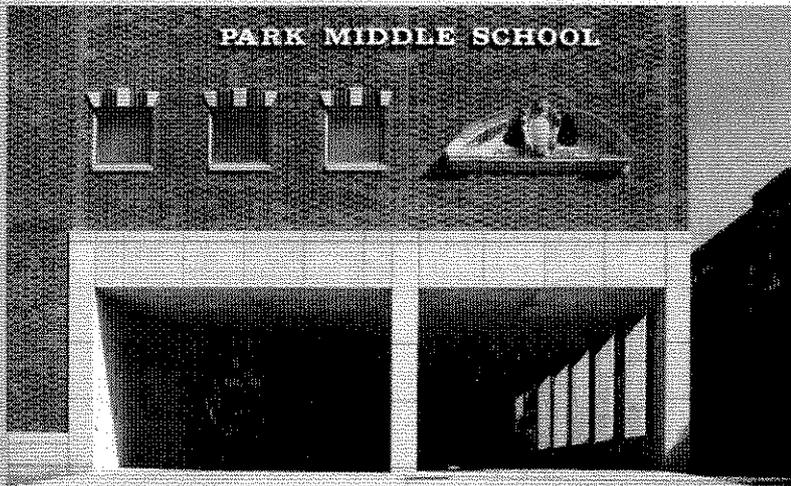
What We Do Now

Typical Conditions Ordered

- Attend school with no truancies or suspensions
- Cooperate with counseling services
- If absence due to illness, medical verification required
- No parental excused absences without probation permission
- Cooperate with tracker services
- Court costs
- One year or more is typical term

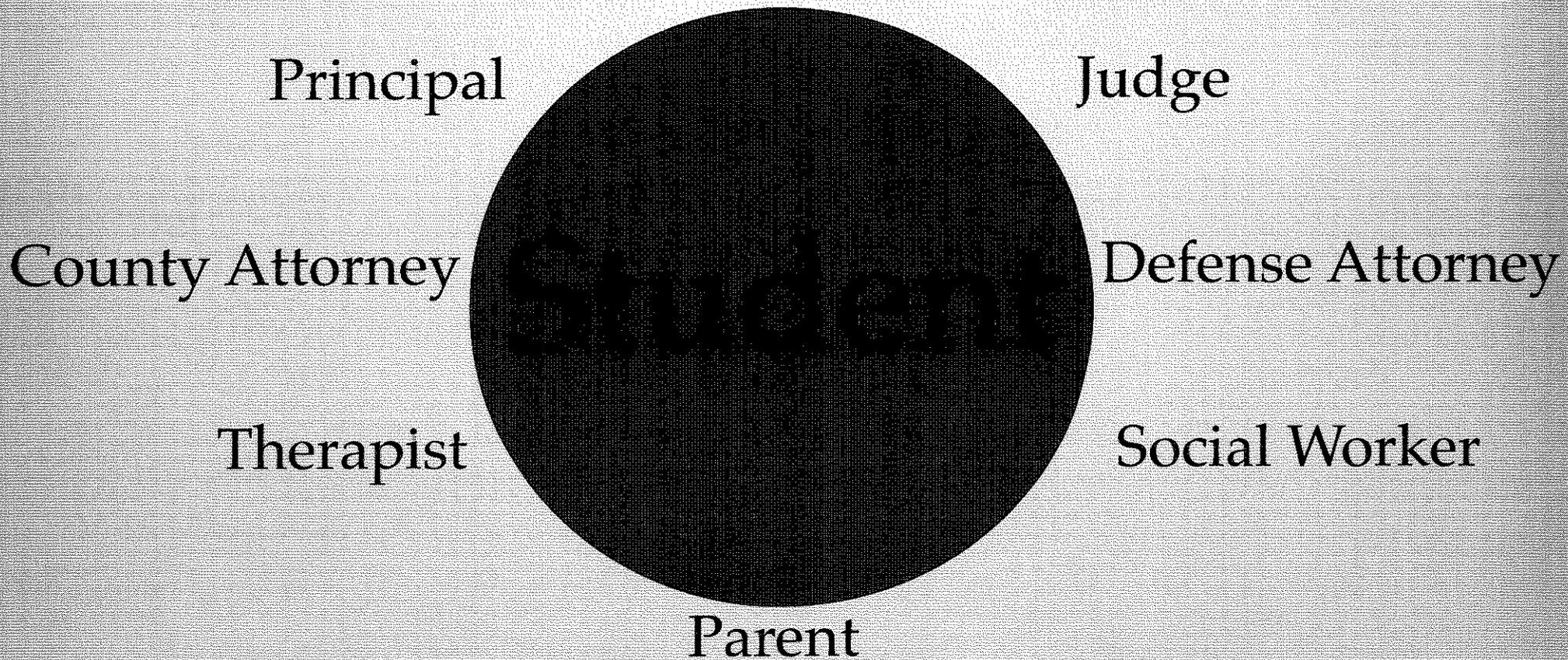
TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

- Pilot launched January, 2011 Feeder to Lincoln High
Lincoln High 2010
- Park Middle School



Expanded to Lincoln High 2013

TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT



“Because truancy is a complex problem requiring a comprehensive response, educators, law enforcement agencies, courts, communities, and families all play a part in truancy prevention.”

The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

- A collaborative effort between Juvenile Court and Lincoln Public Schools. The program was created for students and their families as an alternative to traditional court proceedings. The goals are to initially improve school attendance and grades, followed by consistent school attendance after completion of the program.
- The ultimate goal: high school graduation.

TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

- The Project is modeled after the Jefferson County Truancy Diversion Project in Louisville, Kentucky, which is now a national model.
- According to Kentucky Chief Justice John D. Minton, Jr., “the strength of the [program] is the collaboration by all participants toward the goal of reducing truancy.”

TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

- Students who choose to participate in this voluntary program have their truancy petition placed on hold for the duration of the program.
- Services begin the day of the first court hearing.

TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

- The social worker for the family is responsible for the implementation of services, which includes:
 - Therapy
 - Grade Checks
 - Attendance Checks
 - Implementation of incentives and sanctions
 - Developing attendance success plan

TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

- While in the program, the child and his or her parent(s) attend bi-weekly progress reviews, which are held at the school.
- During the progress review, the judge or the principal review the child's progress in the program from the prior review, with particular emphasis on the student's attendance and grades.

WHAT THE STUDENT CAN EXPECT:

- Supportive services to help with attendance and grades.

WHAT THE STUDENT CAN EXPECT:

- Rewards for good attendance and good grades.
- \$10 gift card for each two weeks of perfect attendance.

WHAT THE STUDENT CAN EXPECT:

- Upon successful completion, the petition is dismissed pre-adjudication and all court records are sealed.
- This typically occurs after only one semester of school.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM THE STUDENT:

- Significant improvement in attendance.
- Passing grades in all classes.
- Good behaviors at school and at home.
- Participation in individual and/or family therapy as needed.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM THE STUDENT:

- Attend truancy court every other Thursday at the school at 3:30 p.m. The order is based on attendance.
- Both the student and a parent must attend, unless excused by the team in advance.
- Will be excused if has passing grades, perfect attendance and is cooperating with therapy as directed for the two weeks leading up to each session of truancy court.

TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

Removal from program:

- Move to another school
- Failure to comply with services and progress satisfactorily through the program
- Family opts out

TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

Consequences of Removal:

- Adjudication hearing scheduled in Juvenile Court and proceed through the traditional process.

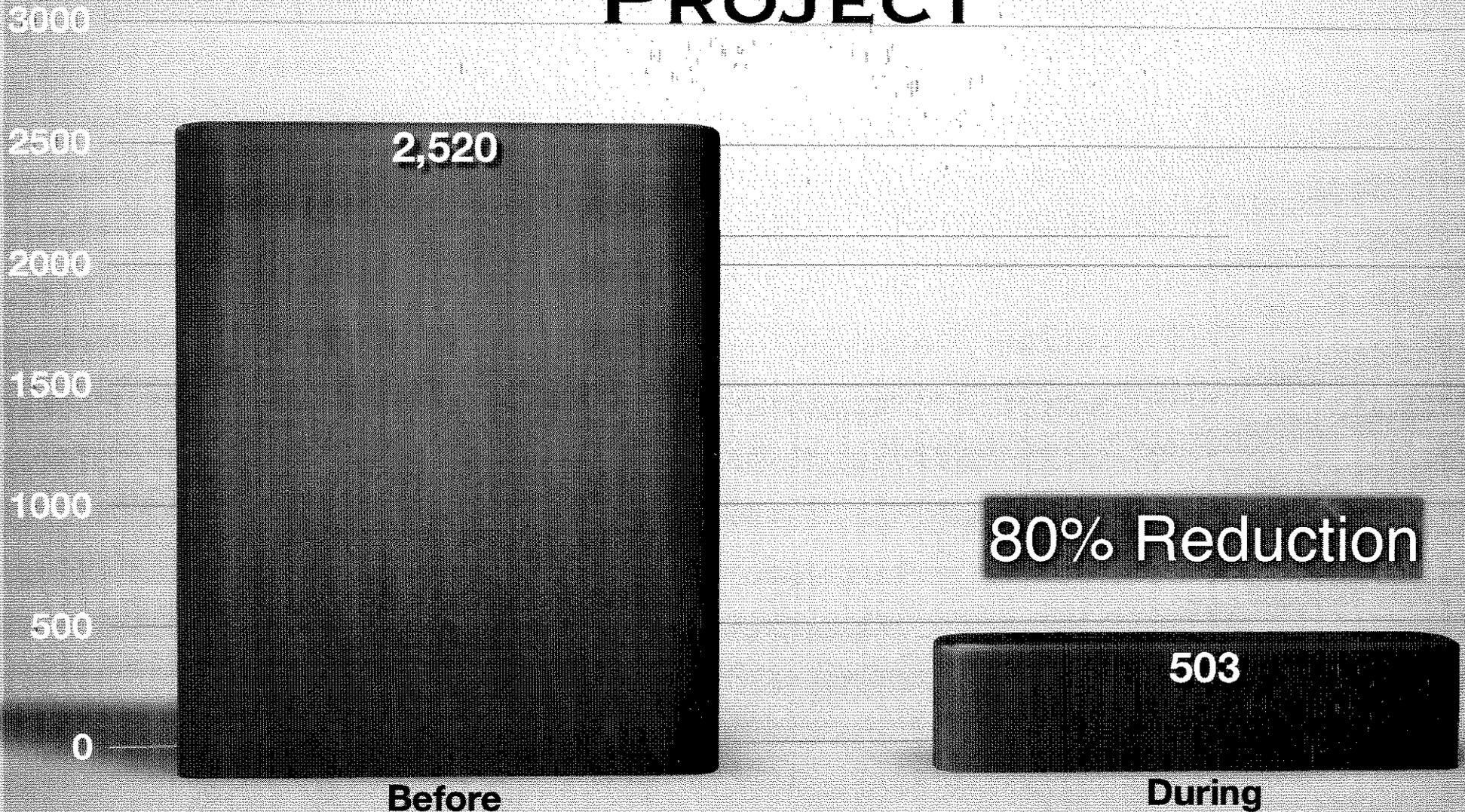
TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

Key Differences from Traditional Court Proceedings

- Starts sooner.
- Not adjudicated as having been habitually truant from school.
- Not placed on probation.
- Rewards for good attendance and grades.
- No out of home option.
- No court costs.
- Ends sooner.
- Records sealed sooner.

Results?

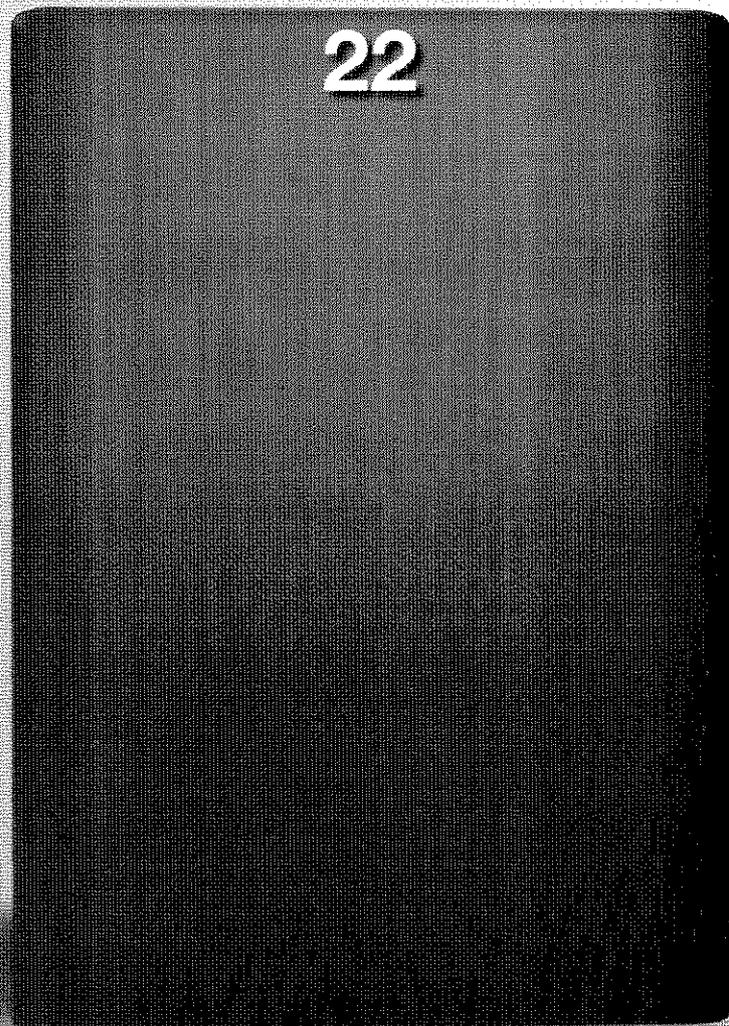
TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT



Results from the first class (2011)* — total period absences

*Park Middle School

TRUANCY DIVERSION STUDENTS



Spring 2011



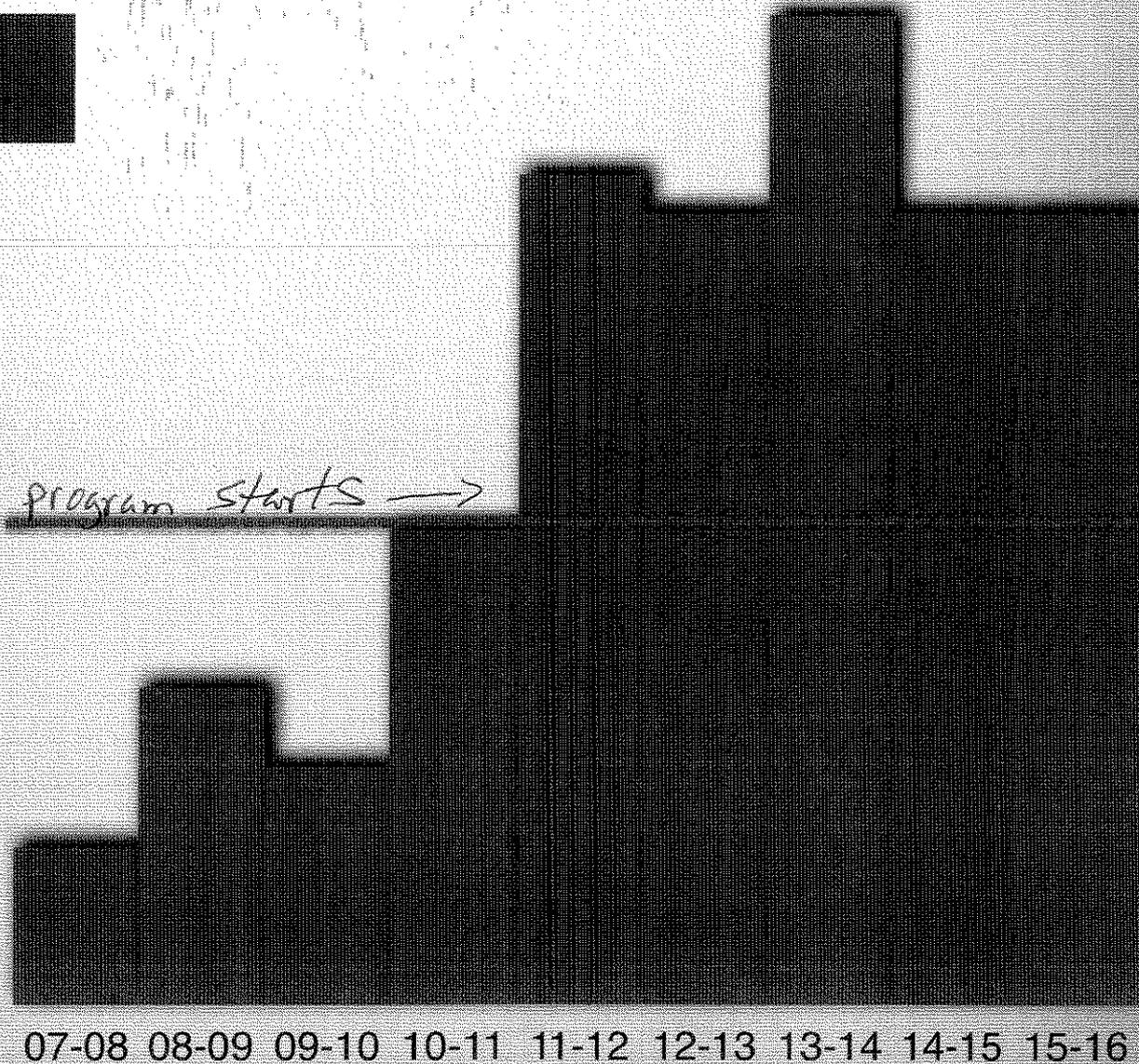
Fall 2016

Number of Students—2011 vs. 2016 (semester)

PARK DAILY ATTENDANCE RATE

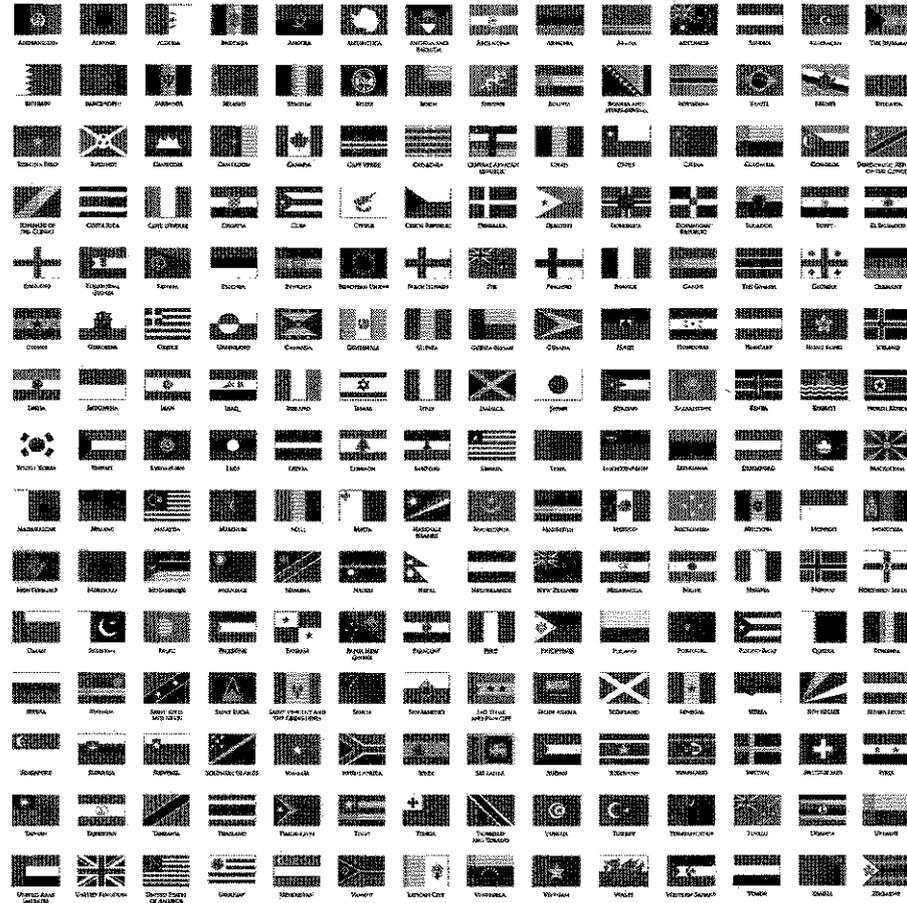
Year	%
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2015-2016	95.0
2014-2015	95.0
2013-2014	95.5
2012-2013	95.0
2011-2012	95.1
2010-2011	94.2
2009-2010	93.6
2008-2009	93.8
2007-2008	93.4



16 Countries

Iraq
 Egypt
 Thailand
 Burma/Myanmar
 Vietnam
 Guatemala
 Korea
 Mexico
 Honduras
 El Salvador
 Eritrea
 China
 Sudan
 Congo
 Bosnia
 USA (US Born)

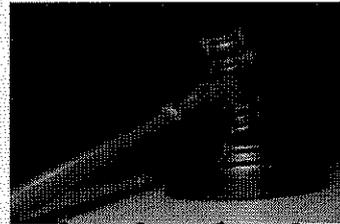


English
 Arabic
 Spanish
 Russian
 Vietnamese
 Chinese
 Korean
 French
 Kurdish
 Nuer
 Burmese
 Karen
 Karenni
 Chin-Zomi
 Tigrinya (Eritrea)

15 Languages

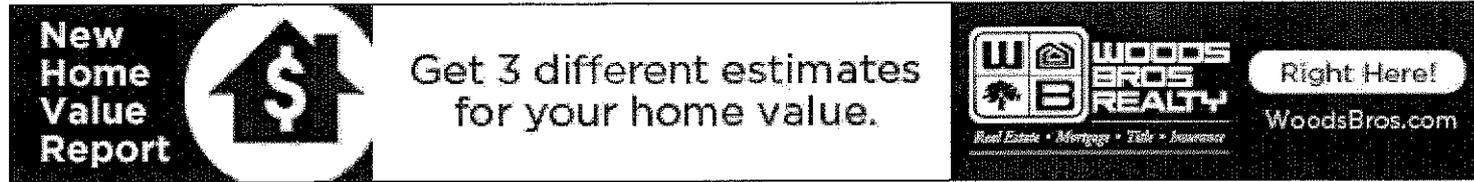
TRUANCY DIVERSION PROJECT

- Expanded to the following Lincoln schools:



North Star H.S. (2013) Goodrich M.S. (2013) Culler M.S. (2013) Northeast H.S. (2014)

Prosecutor led. No judge. No defense attorney. Similar otherwise.



New Home Value Report



Get 3 different estimates for your home value.



Right Here!
WoodsBros.com

Real Estate • Mortgage • Title • Insurance

http://journalstar.com/news/local/education/not-your-typical-dignitaries-in-the-city-s-pba-suite/article_e92273d2-7e0c-53b5-9f4e-60eeaacbdd19.html

FEATURED

Not your typical dignitaries in the city's PBA suite

MARGARET REIST Lincoln Journal Star Oct 12, 2016





The group in the city's arena suite watching the Timberwolves and the Nuggets spin their NBA magic Wednesday night were dignitaries of a different sort.

Not corporate bigwigs or state senators or city officials.

They were students who just a few days earlier had assumed they were in trouble when they got instructions to visit the principal's office at Lincoln High School.

Turns out they were flat-out wrong on that score.

Principal Mark Larson sent for them because they hadn't been in

trouble for some time, had instead been doing the hard work of being successful high school students: coming to school every day, getting to all their classes on time, keeping their grades up.

That was no small accomplishment for these 11, who not long ago had been struggling with things largely outside the classroom that kept them from getting to school and set them on a path littered with truancy and detention and Fs on their report cards.

All of them, at some point, decided to change, reached out for help and -- during this school year -- made significant strides to turn things around.

And their principal thought that was worth celebrating.

Elvira Sosa, a sophomore, and Araceli Ibarra, a junior, both found themselves in the school's truancy diversion program -- in which the Juvenile Court works with students to improve their attendance and avoid being referred to the county attorney.

Elvira failed two classes as a freshman and missed a lot of school. But her brother, who'd followed the same path, told her he saw why it was important to go to school -- and she listened.

"I had a different mindset," she said. "I wanted to do better."

Araceli did, too. The truancy program was a wake-up call. She felt bad, she said, that her parents had to take time off work to go to the program with her.

"I was just kind of in a hole," she said. "I didn't know what to do."

So she went to the diversion program and started going to school. She discovered she really likes her chemistry class, and she's passing that and all of her other classes, a 180-degree turnaround from last year.

Eduardo Pesina struggled with depression and stopped going to school his freshman year. School officials reached out, and he spent time at Boys Town, and now he's back at Lincoln High as a senior.

Eduardo is taking classes and going to summer school and taking a couple of online classes and -- as long as he continues to do well -- he will graduate in May.

It's hard, he said, but he's determined, and he wants to continue with college next year.

But first, he and his classmates will be going to Pinnacle Bank Arena for the NBA exhibition game on the city's dime.

The city has a suite it can use, lease or donate to a nonprofit. For the

NBA game, city officials donated the tickets to the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools.

The foundation contacted school district officials, who sent them to Lincoln High, and from there Principal Larson chose the 11 students who met him at the will-call ticket window Wednesday evening.

Lots of kids deserve recognition, he said, but these kids worked hard to overcome obstacles and make impressive strides.

"We chose kids who may not be perfect but work really, really hard and have shown great improvement," he said.

This will be Araceli's and Elvira's first trip to the arena, and they're both excited -- even though Araceli is a Celtics fan. Eduardo went to a graduation at the arena but never a basketball game.

The evening is a reward for what they've accomplished, Larson said, and he hopes it sends another message: Keep going.

"We hope it's motivation for (them) to continue to do as well as (they've) done this year."

Reach the writer at 402-473-7226 or mreist@journalstar.com.

MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF EQUALIZATION
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING, ROOM 112
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2016
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE LANCASTER COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Advance public notice of the Board of Equalization meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, web site and emailed to the media on October 21, 2016.

Commissioners present: Roma Amundson, Chair; Todd Wiltgen, Vice-Chair; Larry Hudkins and Deb Schorr

Commissioner absent: Bill Avery

Others present: Scott Gaines, Assessor/Register of Deeds Office; Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; David Derbin, Deputy County Attorney; Dan Nolte, County Clerk; Cori Beattie, Deputy County Clerk; and Kelly Lundgren, County Clerk's Office

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:51 a.m., and the location of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act was announced.

1) MINUTES: Approval of the minutes of the Board of Equalization meeting held on Tuesday, October 18, 2016.

MOTION: Hudkins moved and Schorr seconded approval of the minutes. Hudkins, Schorr, Wiltgen and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

2) ADDITIONS AND DEDUCTIONS TO THE TAX ASSESSMENT ROLLS: (See attached additions and deductions)

MOTION: Schorr moved and Hudkins seconded approval of the additions and deductions. Hudkins, Schorr, Wiltgen and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

3) PUBLIC HEARING:

A. Motor Vehicle Tax Exemption Applications (See correlating item 4)

**Good Neighbor Community Center
Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church
House of Prayer Christian Church
Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska, Inc.
Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital
Parkview Christian School**

The Chair opened the public hearing.

No one appeared to testify in support, opposition or in a neutral position.

The Chair closed the public hearing.

4) ACTION ON MOTOR VEHICLE TAX EXEMPTION APPLICATIONS:

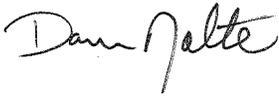
MOTION: Schorr moved and Wiltgen seconded approval of the motor vehicle exemptions. Schorr, Wiltgen, Hudkins and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.

5) PUBLIC COMMENT: Those wishing to speak on items relating to County Board of Equalization business not on the agenda may do so at this time.

No one appeared for public comment.

6) ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Schorr moved and Wiltgen seconded to adjourn the Lancaster County Board of Equalization meeting at 9:54 a.m. Wiltgen, Hudkins, Schorr and Amundson voted yes. Avery was absent. Motion carried 4-0.



Dan Nolte, County Clerk

