

NEVADA APPEAL



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“It’s (ESL) not about coddling. It’s about access.”

— CHRISTINE BUTSON, new ESL director



SHANNON LITZ/NEVADA APPEAL

Chris Butson, Carson City School District’s English-as-a-second-language administrator, talks about her new position.

School district creates position for ESL director

BY TERI VANCE

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After a Department of Justice audit recommended the Carson City School District do more to help English-language learners succeed, the district is creating a full-time director of the English as a second language program.

“One of our main goals is to start with the elementary level and follow them right through high school to offer as many resources as possible,” said Superintendent Richard Stokes. “We want to see them all walking across the stage with high school diplomas.”

Although the district has for years had an ESL director, it has always been shared with another position, like Laurel Terry, who has been serving in that capacity as well as the professional develop-

ment coordinator.

Under the reorganization, Terry will work full-time in professional development as well as working more with associate superintendent of instruction Susan Keema.

Chris Butson will leave her post as principal of Eagle Valley Middle School to take over as ESL director.

Butson, who began her career in 1992 as an ESL teacher at Empire Elementary School, is happy to lead the program.

“It’s something I advocated for years ago,” she said. “Now, it’s coming full circle.”

She went on to become a dean of students at Carson High School in 2001 and vice principal at



Richard Stokes

Empire in 2005 before taking over as principal of Eagle Valley in 2008.

She will bring her professional expertise to the job, as well as her personal experience. As a senior in high school, she spent a year in Mexico as a foreign-exchange student.

Although she had taken the language in school, she said, actually speaking Spanish turned out to be a “real challenge.”

She remembers asking her host family on her first day in the country where she could buy stamps.

“Everybody just looked at me,” she recounted. “That’s when I knew I was in trouble.”

She eventually mastered the language, but not without obstacles, like the teacher who kicked

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Board halts incentives to small businesses

BY SANDI HOOVER

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In a decisive move Thursday, the Carson City Redevelopment Authority called an immediate and indefinite moratorium on cash incentives to help small private redevelopment projects.

Office of Business Development Director Joe McCarthy said the move was necessary due to staff reductions in the OBD and the resulting difficulty of processing applications in a timely and fair manner.

In addition, he said, the city needs to save tax increment funds within the district to move ahead with its downtown corridor plan.



Joe McCarthy

McCarthy said that since the downtown redevelopment project area was established in 1986, investments have generated about \$60 million downtown and filled a lot of empty buildings.

In the early 2000s, another district was created on South Carson Street, he said, which resulted in several new auto dealerships, a movie theater, several projects by Johnny Ribeiro and a Kohl’s department store.

“Five years ago, we had aging used auto dealerships, and misplaced, degrading mobile home parks,” he said.

Carson City Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Ronni Hannaman called the authority’s decision “a very good thing,” adding that it offered a level playing field for Carson City businesses throughout town.

But one business owner, lawyer Jon Yapple, who bought the building north of The Basil on Carson Street in March, said the building has been “empty and blighted for several years.”

He told the authority that he was surprised to learn only Sunday of the planned resolution.

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