

July 15, 2015

Library Board of Trustees
c/o Arnie Maurins, Director
Washoe County Library Administration
P.O. Box 2151
Reno, Nevada 89505

RE: Duncan/Traner Library

The Friends of Duncan/Traner Library (a group of concerned citizens united in supporting the Duncan/Traner Library) is requesting your consideration to continue to support this community library and uphold the intent of the joint use agreement, donors, community members and neighborhood patrons. We further request that you consider fully the impact that will be made on children and families in this very low-income, high-crime neighborhood if you eliminate this public resource from their community.

The Duncan/Traner Library was founded by a community collaborative involving neighborhood residents, public service stakeholders, and businesses. Stakeholders worked with neighborhood residents to determine the need for, and establishment, of this Community Library.

The Library is located within the heart of Northeast Reno and the 89512 Zip Code.

- 51% or more of the residents earn below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- The median age of residents is 30.40 years (the age of raising families)
- 55% of residents identify as a racial or ethnic minority; 39% identify as Latino/Hispanic; 34% are Spanish speaking

Two reasons cited for the need to close this library was low usage and staffing issues. The library is currently only open 5 hours a week-Tuesday and Thursday between 3 and 5:30 pm. How can the library be utilized when it is open so little and not on a weekend? How long has it been since the residents were surveyed about the days and times that would be most convenient for them? Why is this neighborhood library closed on Saturday when families might have more free time to go?

Regarding staffing costs, the Duncan/Traner Library currently supports less than a 1 FTE position.

The mission of Washoe County Libraries is to connect people with information, ideas and experiences to support an enriched and engaged community one person at a time. In a neighborhood with such high crime and poverty, every possible resource should be brought to bear to educate those in this neighborhood and assist them with breaking the chains of intergenerational poverty. Any money put into this effort will pay huge dividends in the future for the county when fewer people are not on welfare, not utilizing the police and courts systems but are paying into taxes and contributing positively to society.

The Friends of Duncan/Traner Library, therefore, requests that the Library Board of Trustees consider the following remedies before attempting to close either library:

- Work with community residents and stakeholders to assess the best times for use and programming that will engage children and families to increase usage, and provide for consistent staffing.
- Work with community residents to determine funding necessary to keep the library open as determined by the assessment.
- Assign a liaison to the Friends of Duncan/Traner Libraries to keep stakeholders apprised of plans or decisions that will impact the sustainability of the library.
- Consider paying another entity to run the library (WCSD or NNLC)

With Governor Sandoval's push to raise our children's educational level's to meet the demands of a growing technical workforce, it would be short sighted to eliminate opportunities to engage children and expose them to the potential they have to learn and increase their chances for living wage jobs and breaking the cycle of poverty.

We would like to invite representatives or the Board of Trustees to meet with us to further discuss options and opportunities for community input and collaboration. We are hopeful that this valuable community asset will not be eliminated from this neighborhood.

Thank you.

The Friends of the Duncan/Traner Library

As we were examining the usage of the library we saw that every library but the Duncan/Traner library has a special event scheduled to be held there.

As a result the Friends of Duncan/Traner would like to host an open house at the library on August 8th from 11 to 3 to survey residents about library needs, the best times for having it open, and suggestions for programming to increase attendance.

We would appreciate the Boards consideration in allowing the Library to be opened on that Saturday between 11-3 to allow us to do this.

We will follow up with Mr. Maurin to discuss this further.