# Schools lack bandwidth for classroom technology

**By Lyndsey Layton, Washington Post**

When a student at Elliston Elementary in rural Montana logs onto her laptop for a remote lesson over the Internet, Tressa Graveley must ration the Web for the rest of her tiny school. The teacher tells other students to shut down their browsers and stop streaming video or there won't be enough bandwidth for the eighth-grader's lesson.

Elliston Elementary is on the wrong side of a new digital divide in this country. The school, decked out with laptops and whiteboards, hoped to harness the power of the Internet to break out of its isolation. But its connection is too slow to allow the 15 students and two teachers to fully use everything the digital world offers – videos, music, graphics, interactive programs.

But it's not just rural school systems that are cut off from the digital world. An estimated 72 percent of public schools – in the countryside, suburbs and cities – lack the broadband speeds necessary to fully access the Internet, according to Education Superhighway, a nonprofit organization that wants to improve digital access in schools.

"Wiring schools has brought the Internet to the principal's office or maybe a teacher's desk," said Evan Marwell, the chief executive of the group. "That's five million administrators and teachers. But we need to move this technology into the learning process, and that means 55 million students."

President Obama agrees, and proposed in June that all public schools receive high-speed broadband and wireless Internet service within five years. "In a country where we expect free

WiFi with our coffee, why shouldn't we have it in our schools?" Obama said when he announced the initiative at a school in North Carolina.

The plan, called ConnectED, calls for the Department of Education to train teachers in the best ways to use technology in classroom instruction, an area that many agree is weak.

**Read the whole story**

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# 2 charged with illegal bear killing

Two men have been accused of illegally killing a bear in El Dorado County.

Jason Wilkison, 43, of Grass Valley and Christoppher Nunley, 54, of North San Juan in April allegedly used bait to lure a bear to a house near Grizzly Flats where it was shot.

They face felony weapons charges and misdemeanor charge of unlawful possession and killing of a bear.

— *Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# States not waiting for feds

# to raise minimum wage

**By William Selway & Jim Efstathiou Jr., Bloomberg**

President Obama is pushing to raise the U.S. minimum wage higher than $7.25 an hour – the rate it’s been for four years.

Half of the U.S. population won’t have to wait: They live in places where the bottom rate is already higher than that.

Twenty-one states and Washington, D.C., have raised the lowest legal hourly wage above the rate set by Congress, with New Jersey voters joining the list last week and campaigns under way to do the same in at least five other states.

It marks a shift of power to state and local officials, who have seized control from a deadlocked Congress that’s under pressure not to raise costs from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and National Restaurant Association, whose members include Yum! Brands Inc., the operator of the Taco Bell and Kentucky Fried Chicken chains.

“It would be best if you could just raise the minimum wage in Congress and in one fell swoop lift the income of millions of low-paid workers,” said Dean Baker, the co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, a Washington-based group that tracks inequality and poverty issues. “But if that avenue is blocked – and it appears to be – it only makes sense for those looking to increase it to turn to the state and local level.”

The changes are pushing up costs for retailers, fast-food chains and other service-industry businesses that say higher wages cut into hiring, profits and expansion. Congress hasn’t passed an increase in the minimum wage – which was first set at 25 cents in 1938 – since 2007, when it approved an increase that brought the level to $7.25 an hour by 2009.

**Read the whole story**

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# College grads lack soft skills to get, keep a job

**By Martha C. White, Time**

It’s because college kids today can’t do math, one line of reasoning goes. Or they don’t know science. Or they’re clueless about technology, aside from their myriad social-media profiles.

These are all good theories, but the problem with the unemployability of these young adults goes way beyond a lack of STEM skills. As it turns out, they can’t even show up on time in a button-down shirt and organize a team project.

The technical term for navigating a workplace effectively might be soft skills, but employers are facing some hard facts: the entry-level candidates who are on tap to join the ranks of full-time work are clueless about the fundamentals of office life.

A survey by the Workforce Solutions Group at St. Louis Community College finds that more than 60 percent of employers say applicants lack “communication and interpersonal skills” — a jump of about 10 percentage points in just two years. A wide margin of managers also say today’s applicants can’t think critically and creatively, solve problems or write well.

Another employer survey, this one by staffing company Adecco, turns up similar results. The company says in a statement, “44 percent of respondents cited soft skills, such as communication, critical thinking, creativity and collaboration, as the area with the biggest gap.” Only half as many say a lack of technical skills is the pain point.

**Read the whole story**

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# S. Tahoe man accused of hit and run DUI in Mammoth

**By Mammoth Times**

A South Lake Tahoe man was arrested Sunday after leaving the scene of a car accident that same afternoon in Mammoth.

Officers found a full size pickup with fresh collision damage, two flat tires and a damaged road sign.

Mammoth Lakes police officers said Brian Bogdanoff, 32, of South Lake Tahoe, fled the scene of the accident. He was found at the U.S. Forest Service compound in Mammoth Lakes.

**Read the whole story**

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# International student numbers grow at U.S. colleges

**By Karen Farkas, Plain Dealer**

CLEVELAND, Ohio — The number of international students attending U.S. colleges continues to grow, and about a third are from China, according to a report issued this week.

In the 2012-13 school year, 235,597 of the 819,644 international students on U.S. campuses, or 28.7 percent, arrived from China, according to the annual Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange published by the Institute of International Education.

The number of students from China increased 21.4 percent from the previous year.

Following China, the top “places of origin” are India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Canada, the report said. That order has not changed for years. Those five account for about 60 percent of all international students.

However, Brazil and Iran are moving up in the standings, and each saw a more than 20 percent increase in students attending U.S. colleges.

There are now 40 percent more international students studying at U.S. colleges than a decade ago, and the rate of increase has risen steadily for the past three years, the report said.

**Read the whole story**

# Social media a growing concern when applying to college

**By Natasha Singer, New York Times**

At Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, admissions officers are still talking about the high school senior who attended a campus information session last year for prospective students. Throughout the presentation, she apparently posted disparaging comments on Twitter about her fellow attendees, repeatedly using a common expletive.

Perhaps she hadn’t realized that colleges keep track of their social media mentions.

“It was incredibly unusual and foolish of her to do that,” Scott A. Meiklejohn, Bowdoin’s dean of admissions and financial aid, told me last week. The college ultimately denied the student admission, he said, because her academic record wasn’t competitive. But had her credentials been better, those indiscreet posts could have scuttled her chances.

“We would have wondered about the judgment of someone who spends their time on their mobile phone and makes such awful remarks,” Meiklejohn said.

As certain high school seniors work meticulously this month to finish their early applications to colleges, some may not realize that comments they casually make online could negatively affect their prospects. In fact, new research from Kaplan Test Prep, the service owned by the Washington Post Company, suggests that online scrutiny of college hopefuls is growing.

Of 381 college admissions officers who answered a Kaplan telephone questionnaire this year, 31 percent said they had visited an applicant's Facebook or other personal social media page to learn more about them – a five-percentage-point increase from last year. More crucially for those trying to get into college, 30 percent of the admissions officers said they had discovered information online that had negatively affected an applicant's prospects.

**Read the whole story**

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# Intrawest files for $100 mil. IPO

In a desire to raise money, financially unstable ski resort operator Intrawest Resorts Holdings Inc. on Tuesday filed an initial public offering with the New York Stock Exchange.

The Denver-based company built the Village at Squaw Valley and owned it until January 2010. That was the year Intrawest started unloading property to remain solvent. (KSL, which owns Squaw Valley ski resort, bought the village.)

Intrawest built the Village at Squaw Valley. Photo/LTN file

In its filing with the New York Stock Exchange, Intrawest said it hopes to raise $100 million. Intrawest's parent company is private equity firm Fortress Investment Group LLC.

"The North American ski industry is highly fragmented, with approximately 753 ski areas in North America, of which fewer than 10 percent are owned by multi-resort operators who operate four or more ski resorts. The adventure travel industry is similarly fragmented," Intrawest said in its filing. "We intend to evaluate acquisition opportunities where the opportunity would provide a strategic fit within our existing portfolio of businesses. We believe that opportunistically acquiring additional mountain resorts that are proximate to our existing resorts will enable us to enhance product and operational synergies."

Intrawest owns Winter Park and Steamboat in Colorado, Mont Tremblant in Quebec, Stratton in Vermont and Snowshoe in West Virginia, as well as half of Blue Mountain in Ontario.

At one time it owned Whistler-Blackcomb in Canada, where the 2010 Olympics were staged. The company's precarious financial stability at the time nearly put the Games in jeopardy. Intrawest sold its last shares of Whistler in 2012.

*— Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# Missing teen found safe on

# West Slope

A 15-year-old Shingle Springs girl has been found safe after having been missing since the first of the month.

Juliet Riffey was located unharmed near Cameron Park on Monday. Someone called 911 to say they had seen her. Then authorities located her.

El Dorado County sheriff's detectives have ruled out any criminal involvement and are classifying this as a voluntary runaway situation.

*— Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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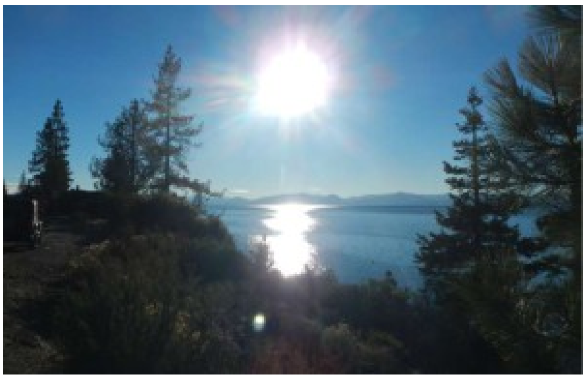
# Survey: Lake Tahoe homeowners remain frustrated and dissatisfied with TRPA



Tahoe Regional Planning Agency continues to be a sore subject with locals in the basin. Photo/LTN file

**By Steven Miller, Nevada Journal**

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency is winning national awards from government-planning professionals, but among homeowners in the five counties surrounding Lake Tahoe, it’s the least popular local government agency of all.

Seventy percent of homeowners in the Lake Tahoe Basin said TRPA would not take their concerns very seriously and 47 percent expressed much frustration with TRPA.

When poll respondents reporting minimal experience with the agency were excluded from the calculations, the negatives went up – to 72 percent and 55 percent, respectively.

In every case, TRPA’s negative numbers are significantly higher than those of other local government agencies in the basin and higher still when compared to the attitudes of homeowners just outside the basin.

Those are among many findings produced by two surveys of attitudes toward local governments of homeowners living in the counties surrounding Lake Tahoe.

The two automated telephone surveys – one inside the Tahoe basin and one in the same five counties but outside the basin – were conducted Sept. 17-19, contacting homeowners with land-line telephones.

The surveys, conducted for *Nevada Journal* by PMI International, have a margin of error, plus or minus, of 5 percent.

Homeowners were first asked to characterize the quantity of their experience with various governmental entities. Then they were asked to evaluate each entity in three different contexts.

While none of the governments scored especially well, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency regularly scored lowest.

The first evaluative question attempted to discover how seriously homeowners believe authorities within those agencies take citizen concerns.

"Hypothetically," respondents were asked, "let's say that you and a neighbor are concerned, because you believe a local government is going down the wrong path on an important issue. If you and your neighbor attend a public meeting of that government to ask it to reconsider, how seriously do you believe each of the following government entities would take your concerns?"

Of 172 responses from homeowners inside the basin, 70 percent said TRPA would not take such citizens' concerns very seriously. That was worse than county government, at 61 percent, and city government, at 57 percent.

Alternatively, 9 percent believed TRPA would take the citizen concerns "very seriously," while 7 percent said their county government would and 10 percent said their city government would.

Outside-the-basin homeowners were asked a parallel question, in which the term, "your local planning agency," replaced "the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency."

In that case, 57 percent said that the local planning agency would not take citizens' concerns very seriously, 53 percent said the same of their county government, and 51 percent judged their city government similarly.

The second evaluative question probed homeowner frustration with government. It asked: "To what degree have you found your experience with your local governments frustrating?"

Of homeowners with experience of the government agencies responding from inside the basin, 52 percent said that they experienced "much frustration" in dealing with TRPA. That was worse than their reported experience with county government, at 35 percent, and city government, at 46 percent.

Comparable outside-the-basin homeowners regularly reported less frustration. Regarding their local planning agency, 33 percent reported “much frustration,” while 29 percent characterized their county government that way, as did 28 percent for their city government.

The survey’s third evaluative question sought to identify the extent to which homeowners find dealing with any of these government entities simply futile.

Respondents were asked to rate “the degree of futility you’ve felt in dealing with each” of the governments by selecting among “not futile,” “somewhat futile” and “very futile.”

Here again, TRPA’s ratings were the most frequently negative – given a “very futile” classification by 57 percent of basin respondents with experience of the agency. In comparison, the percentage who saw county government in such terms was 32 percent, while city government came in at 37 percent.

Outside the basin – but within the same counties – only 37 percent of agency-experienced homeowners gave their local planning agencies the “very futile” ranking. County and city governments received that rating from 28 percent and 24 percent, respectively.

Given the tenor of basin homeowners’ answers to the survey, it may not be surprising that most of them perceive that they have less freedom than Americans who live elsewhere.

That question was introduced in each survey with the statement, “Many different government entities make and enforce rules in the Lake Tahoe Basin. It has been argued that a result of this is that homeowners within the basin end up with less real liberty, practically speaking, than Americans who live outside the basin.”

Basin homeowners, by a 59 to 41 percent majority, answered that “Basin residents end up with less liberty than Americans outside Tahoe basin.”

However, homeowners living in the same counties, but outside the basin, don’t see the problem. They see basin homeowners as having just as much freedom as everyone else.

Within the basin, the rate of participation by homeowners was significantly higher than the rate statistically normal for automated surveys. Of 2,745 individuals contacted live, 5.97 percent, or 164, completed all 16 questions.

Outside the basin, the rate of participation by homeowners was statistically normal, according to experts consulted by *Nevada Journal*. Of 7,492 individuals contacted live, a total of 256, or 3.42 percent, completed all 16 questions.

Findings did not appear to vary significantly, depending upon the amount of time that respondents had lived in their homes.

*Nevada Journal is a publication of the Nevada Policy Research Institute.*