



# Why those legal notices in the paper are so important



Nov 1, 2015 [Comments](#)

Castleford School District trustees want to change how school officials are required to publish legal notices of elections and budget hearings, according to a story by Idaho Education News.



Leaders of the southern Idaho school district would like the option to publish legal notices on their website instead of in a local newspaper, according to the report.

Superintendent Lyle Bayley and school board chairman Todd Wells told Idaho Education News that the change would benefit other districts, so they are seeking support from the Idaho School Boards Association. Castleford will present a resolution to ISBA members during their annual convention this month.



"The resolution came about to save costs," Bayley told Idaho Education News. "And a lot of people use electronic media to communicate any more."

If the name Lyle Bayley sounds familiar in these parts, he used to be the principal at Kuna High School a few years back. I worked pretty closely with him when he was in that capacity, and I have a lot of respect for him. He's a smart guy, and I'm happy he landed a superintendent job.

On this point, though, I disagree with him.

When Idaho Education News accessed Castleford's website recently, the site included links to district expenditures and teacher master agreements. But when those links were clicked, the website simply reloaded and did not display that information, according to Idaho Ed News, which added that Bayley said those things are supposed to be on there and the district would work on getting those up. Wells characterized the missing data as "an oversight" and "not intentional."

But isn't that part of the problem?

I believe Lyle to be a man of integrity, and I would never suggest he would intentionally try to hide something. Honest mistakes happen. But when you publish something in the paper, it doesn't suddenly disappear or fail to load. It's there. Even if you turn the page and go back to the previous page, it's still there.

But I want you to think about something else about this scenario. A newspaper brings you all of the legal notices you need to know about on that particular day. The newspaper contains all of the required city notices, school notices, county notices, cemetery district, foreclosures, name changes, all in one place.

If the school district puts notices on its website, how will you know to go check it? When will you go check it?

A legal notice could come out on a Monday, a Saturday, a Wednesday or not at all for several weeks. You never know.

So under this arrangement, you're simply going to have to get up every morning, go over to your computer, go to the school district's website, find the place where they post legal notices and see if there are any that day.

No? No legal notices today? Hmm. Maybe they just haven't posted them yet. Better check in another hour or two.

Still nothing? Well, I guess you can check tomorrow.

You might have to check every day for a few weeks, though, before you see a legal notice. Then, let's hope, if there is a legal notice posted, you'll be able to click on it and open it up — that is if the link isn't broken.



Let's not forget, as well, that online notices aren't really "free," as someone has to post and maintain those notices.

And what happens if they get deleted? Remember, if a legal notice disappeared and you didn't see it, how would you know it existed in the first place?

Now, if we let the school districts do that, we should let the cities and counties and library districts and foreclosure companies do it, too. And won't that be fun for you to go hunt down all those legal notices every day?

This push to save money by putting legal notices online doesn't really save money when you consider how much time and effort people would have to spend every day looking for legal notices.

The Idaho School Boards Association convention is Nov. 11 in Coeur d'Alene. If members endorse the resolution, the ISBA will lobby for it during the 2016 legislative session, according to Idaho Education News. In order for the change to go into effect, lawmakers would need to amend existing laws governing the publication of legal notices.

I urge all ISBA members and our local legislators to really think about what a dumb idea this really is.

\* Scott McIntosh is the editor of the Idaho Press-Tribune. Call 465-8110 or email [smcintosh@idahopress.com](mailto:smcintosh@idahopress.com).

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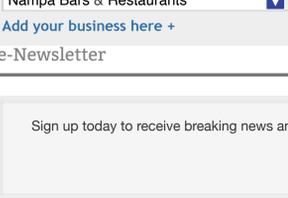
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**Sharon Fisher** · Principal Consultant at Gem State Community Development

That's great in theory, but it's not easy to find the one legal notice you might be interested in among the masses of them. At least if an agency posts it, you can follow just the agency. And there's tools you can use to follow the website.

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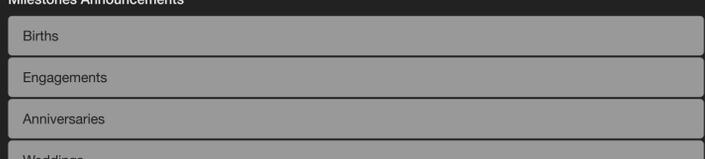
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