



# Humboldt County Sheriff's Office

826 Fourth Street, Eureka, CA 95501

**Date:** January 27, 2010

**From:** Brenda Godsey, PIO  
(707) 268-3645

**Subject:** Arson Investigation

**Case:** 201000637

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Humboldt County Arson Task Force is investigating a suspicious fire that caused extensive damage at South Bay Elementary School last night. At about 11:00 p.m. a Sheriff's Deputy was on patrol and saw smoke coming from the rear of the school. After notifying fire personnel, the deputy investigated and found two rooms filled with black smoke and a third room fully engulfed in flames. Crews from the Eureka Fire Department and the Humboldt Fire District responded to the location and extinguished the fire. Staff from the Humboldt County Arson Task Force (including personnel from the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office, the Humboldt Fire District, and Cal Fire) also responded to the school to begin an investigation into the cause and origin of the fire. Investigators were able to determine the fire had been set deliberately. Investigators are continuing to gather and evaluate evidence from the scene. Additionally, members of the Sheriff's Posse are using their tracking dogs to work with investigators to search the area surrounding the school for additional evidence. Fire personnel preliminarily estimate the damage at \$500,000. The school is closed today.

Anyone with information about this case should call the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office at (707) 445-7251.

GARY PHILP  
Sheriff

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