

STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 29, 2011
TO: City Council
FROM: Kelly Stachowicz, Deputy City Manager
SUBJECT: Resolution in Support of Measure A

Recommendation

Approve attached resolution.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact to approving the resolution.

Council Goal(s)

Community Strength and Effectiveness

Background and Analysis

The Davis Joint Unified School District is placing “Measure A” on a mail-in ballot. Measure A is a parcel tax for the District to provide education programs and services. The District has chosen to place this measure on the ballot to preserve existing programs for 2011-2012 in lieu of funding cuts and changes from the State. Maintaining the community’s outstanding education system is seen as a broad community priority and therefore an appropriate issue on which the City Council should provide input.

The City Council has an internal policy to place resolutions related to other jurisdictions on two Council meeting agendas, unless the Council determines there are time constraints or other reasons to include the resolution on one agenda only. As the ballots are scheduled to be mailed out on April 4 and the next Council meeting is not until April 5, staff recommends that Council approve the attached resolution at the March 29 Council meeting.

Attachments

1. Resolution
2. Measure A Fact Sheet

RESOLUTION NO. 11-XXX, SERIES 2011

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF MEASURE A,
A PARCEL TAX FOR THE DAVIS JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT TO
PROVIDE EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

WHEREAS, Measure A is a parcel tax on a mail-in ballot to preserve education programs and services throughout the Davis Joint Unified School District; and

WHEREAS, Measure A will cost \$200 per single family household and \$20 per multi-family unit, but will provide a voluntary exemption for those who are 65 or older; and

WHEREAS, DJUSD spends less on each child's education than either the national or the state average, and the economic recession has caused the state to reduce school funding over the last three years; and

WHEREAS, Measure A is needed to preserve services such as reduced class size, classes in core subjects such as science and history, foreign language classes, availability of elective course offerings, counseling services, and availability of school site safety and support staff; and

WHEREAS, fund-raising efforts and cuts over the past year have provided one-time fund savings but those savings will not extend beyond the 2010-2011 academic year; and

WHEREAS, Davis is a community that is defined by its commitment to our schools and our children, with Davis schools enhancing the quality of life for all residents; and

WHEREAS, the community showed its support for education through contributions to the Davis Schools Foundation and through past ballot measures for the Davis Joint Unified School District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the city of Davis supports Measure A, a parcel tax on a mail-in ballot to provide education programs and services throughout the Davis Joint Unified School District; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Davis encourages all residents of Davis to exercise their right to vote during the voting period, which will begin when ballots are mailed out on April 4 and conclude at 8:00 pm on May 3, 2011.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Davis this 29th day of March, 2011, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

Joseph F. Krovoza
Mayor

ATTEST:

Zoe S. Mirabile, CMC
City Clerk



Facts about Measure A

Between April 4 and May 3, voters in the Davis Joint Unified School District will be asked via a mail-in ballot to preserve classroom and educational programs by authorizing a District parcel tax. This measure, if approved, will assess homeowners \$200 per year and apartment owners \$20 per unit per year. The tax will last for two years. Measure A requires the approval of two-thirds of voters residing in the Davis Joint Unified School District who vote in this election.

State Funds Will Not Support Existing Classroom Programs Available to Davis Students

For years, DJUSD has had less to spend on each child's education than either the national or the state average. The economic downturn caused the state to reduce school funding over the last three years. The District responded by cutting millions in spending. The District is still left with a \$6 million budget shortfall from these reductions. In order to address this problem, the District must increase local funding (Measure A) or decrease spending (staff layoffs). DJUSD relies on extraordinary staff and parent support, efficient operations, and local taxes to meet student needs.

Davis: A Unique Tradition of Local Support

Davis has supported education through local parcel taxes since 1984. Prior measures in Davis have passed with 71% to 75% of the vote. This is a record shared with only a handful of districts in California.

Local Parcel Tax Money Supports Excellence in Davis Schools

Each school's API score summarizes academic success for its students, and all our schools are above the 800 score that signifies the statewide goal. Classroom programs that make Davis schools unique are at risk without a funding source. Davis schools benefit from the availability of teachers and staff to support the academic experience of all our students. Approval of the parcel tax will allow the District to:

- √ Preserve classes in core subjects such as science and history;
- √ Preserve reduced class sizes for K-6, secondary English and math;
- √ Preserve foreign language classes;
- √ Preserve availability of elective course offerings;
- √ Preserve counseling services and;
- √ Preserve availability of school site safety and support staff.

Measure A will preserve existing academic programs and maintain campus safety. These programs and services were rescued in the past year by community-wide fundraising led by the Davis Schools Foundation combined with employee salary agreements. These efforts provided one-time funds directly to Davis schools to avert deep program cuts and teacher & support staff layoffs for the 2010-11 academic year only. By contrast, Measure A would preserve school programs in the face of continued state funding cuts over the next two years. Without the funds that would be provided by Measure A, there will be both program and staff cuts next year.

A Senior Exemption Is Available

We welcome and appreciate the participation of our seniors, but we don't want to place a burden on seniors on a limited income. A full exemption is available upon application to anyone 65 or older. Download a form at www.djUSD.net/district/measa.

Oversight Committee

The current Parcel Tax Oversight Committee will provide fiscal oversight of all funds raised by this measure.

For more information, visit www.DJUSD.net and click on Hot Topics "Measure A" or www.DistrictDollars.org for detailed information on the DJUSD budget.

California campaign laws permit school districts to provide factual information about school funding ballot measures. District publications are not allowed to urge voters to vote either "yes" or "no" on any ballot measure.



Measure A: Your Questions Answered

What will Measure A cost me?

This measure, if approved, will assess homeowners \$200 per year and apartment owners \$20 per unit per year. The tax will last for two years.

I live in an apartment. Will I pay the tax?

If Measure A is approved, apartment owners will be assessed \$20 per unit per year.

What other school taxes am I currently paying and their cost?

Current parcel taxes assess homeowners \$320 per year and apartment owners \$150 per unit per year. Depending upon where you live in Davis, you may contribute to voter-approved bonds that were used to build school facilities.

When will I get my ballot?

Ballots will be mailed to all registered voters on April 4.

When do I have to mail it back?

Ballots must be returned by May 3 at 8 PM to count. You may return your ballot by mail to Yolo County Elections or to the drop box at the Davis Public Library (315 E 14th St.) by May 3 at 8 pm.

When is the deadline to register to vote?

You must be registered to vote by April 18.

Do I need to be an absentee voter to do this mail-ballot?

No, all registered voters will receive their ballot in the mail.

What happens if Measure A does not pass?

If two-thirds of voters do not authorize Measure A, the Davis school board will be forced to eliminate teaching positions, reduce the school day at junior high schools, and cut other core educational programs.

Does Measure A fund what Measures Q and W also fund?

No. These measures supplement state funding and help the Davis Joint Unified School District maintain lower class sizes, 7th period electives for students in grades 7-12 and support staff for students. In addition, Measure Q provides funds for reading and math specialists, school-based technology support, and classroom and library materials. Measure W provides funds for elementary science instruction, elementary music, school librarians, and athletics and co-curricular programs including drama, debate and journalism programs. Without any one of these measures, current educational programs and services would be reduced.

Does Measure A fund new programs?

Measure A does not create any new programs and prohibits use of funds for administrative costs.

Are all senior citizens automatically exempt from the tax?

We welcome and appreciate the participation of our seniors, but we don't want to place a burden on seniors on a limited income. A full exemption is available upon application to anyone 65 or older.

Download a form at www.djUSD.net/district/measa.

What about that state tax people are talking about?

The Governor's 2011-12 budget plan to fund schools at current levels requires successful passage of a State revenue measure in June. Without these taxes, State funding to schools will be reduced further, increasing the district's budget shortfall.

If Measure A is successful in May and state taxes are NOT extended

- * DJUSD can retain program for 2011-12
- * Additional budget cuts could be required for 2012-13

If Measure A and state taxes are NOT approved by voters

- * DJUSD must cut at least \$3 million from program for 2011-12
- * Additional budget cuts could be required for 2012-13

California campaign laws permit school districts to provide factual information about school funding ballot measures. School publications are not allowed to urge voters to vote either "yes" or "no" on any ballot measure.