

President's Update 2-11 to 2-15

Measure A

Here is the text of the speech that I made to the School Board on Tuesday:

Hello, I am Brian Friefeld, President of the Moorpark Educators Association. I represent the nearly 300 professional educators who work in MUSD. I am the guy who keeps trying to get the teachers paid more money. Although Measure A clearly states that no bond money will go to teacher's salaries, my Representative Council voted unanimously to endorse it. Moorpark's educators approved of the Bond because it will benefit the community and the children who attend their neighborhood schools.

America was not founded with a bias against all taxation. To the contrary, The Founders of this republic knew that taxes were a necessary and proper part of a healthy democracy. The Framers accepted taxes after they passed two crucial tests: first, they had to serve a public good. Second, the people who will be taxed had to have a say in the matter either directly or by way of a representative. Measure A passes both these tests. In fact, the entire process—the proposed local bond measure, this public debate, and the eventual vote and the beauty and the power of a thriving democracy in action.

My question to the opponents of Measure A and the opponents of public education in general is what is your alternative? Private companies owning and operating schools for profit that represents the interests of its shareholders and without any obligation to be transparent to its "customers"?

How do you envision MUSD paying for maintenance, renovations, and repairs without funding? The Governor's proposed 2020-21 budget projects \$1.5 billion dollars in new money for maintenance for the entire State—this money comes, wait for it, a State Bond! CA has almost 1000 school districts state-wide vying for this pie. In the unlikely scenario that Moorpark USD qualifies for this funding, State money will not come anywhere close to meeting the needs of our community.

There are only three ways to collectively fund public schools. CA utilizes two of them - property taxes and income taxes (extraction tax are the third). Moorpark is not immune to the larger economic and political forces that create an inequitable, unstable, and unreliable funding system. For the record, all of our surrounding districts have 3 concurrent bond measures funding their repairs and renovations.

Measure A is necessary and proper. It is democratic and it is transparent—it specifically earmarks spending 10-15 years into the future. It will help guarantee that our schools will continue to be the vibrant center of our community.

If you cannot rely on your "better angels," as Abraham Lincoln asked of us, then perhaps I can help you see the future: a cash starved local school district with aged facilities and neglected

civic centers. The irony of this alternative reality is that if you really want lower property taxes, then ignore this opportunity to invest in the well-being of your community and your public schools. The result will be lower property values.

The Founders also believed in civic virtue. They knew that at certain times a citizen will have to sacrifice his/her narrow self-interest and commit to the greater public good. In the case of Measure A, the greater public good is a continued rise in property values. More important, the public good is the best education possible for our children, both present and future.

Bargaining Update

MEA continues its 2019-20 negotiations season with a visit to Maureen Lane on Wednesday, the 19th. At this meeting, MEA will unveil its 2019-20 proposal. Your Executive Board Reps unanimously approved it, and Rep Council viewed at our February 6th meeting. Lisa McCarter will post it on our website directly after next Wednesday's bargaining session adjourns. MEA will also continue to work through contract language with the District's team. One Article worth mentioning that we will negotiate is XI: Leaves. We are going to attempt to clarify the contract language pertaining to teacher absences. Specifically, we want to simplify the distinction between absences due to *personal business* and *personal necessity*.

Elections

Beginning February 24th, we invite all active MEA members to vote for ALL MEA leadership positions. Your site representative should have emailed the required, pertinent information to you. Please let me know if you did not receive election information. Voting will take place between the 24th and the 28th. MEA's Elections Committee will count ballots on February 28th, with results distributed on Monday, March 2nd.

SPED

MUSD is in the same boat as all of our neighboring districts. We need more SPED teachers. Case and class sizes bulge like the Germans into France during WWII and workloads seem to increase daily. The District will begin to post for several positions this Spring. If you are aware of any talented educators with a SPED credential, tell them to get their application to the District.

Happy Valentine's Day and have a great weekend!

Brian