

November 7, 2017 - Measure A

LAGUNITAS SCHOOL DISTRICT MEASURE A

MEASURE A: Special Tax Assessment for Educational Programs. Shall the Lagunitas School District maintain vital educational programs including basic educational programs, enrichment and support services for students, by levying a \$535.00 assessment per assessor's parcel per year, with 6.5% yearly cost-of-living adjustment for 8 years, beginning July 1, 2018, exempting any single parcel used as a principal place of residence by any owner 65 years of age before February 1st of that year?

YES

NO

COUNTY COUNSEL'S IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS OF MEASURE A

LAGUNITAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT SPECIAL TAX ASSESSMENT

This Measure was placed on the ballot by the Board of Trustees of the Lagunitas School District.

If this measure is approved by a two-thirds vote, the Lagunitas Elementary School District will be authorized to levy a special tax of Five Hundred, Thirty-Five Dollars (\$535.00) per Assessor's parcel per year, with a 6.5% yearly cost-of-living adjustment for eight (8) years, beginning July 1, 2018. This measure specifies that proceeds of the tax are to be used for maintaining vital education programs currently threatened by cuts in state funding including maintaining District Programs, maintaining Support Services and maintaining Basic Instructional Materials.

An exemption is created for any parcel used as a principal place of residence by any owner aged Sixty-Five (65) years and older before February 1st, 2018, or February 1st of any succeeding assessment year.

Dated: August 17, 2017

s/BRIAN E. WASHINGTON
Marin County Counsel

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE A

Vote YES to Renew the Lagunitas School District Parcel Tax

The Lagunitas School District provides an outstanding education for students in the San Geronimo Valley. Our graduates excel in high school as measured by academic success and outstanding participation in extramural activities including sports, music, art and theater. Many go on to attend leading colleges and universities throughout the world. Our innovative programs serve as models for other schools across the nation.

California currently ranks 46th in state spending per student and the Lagunitas School District has historically been one of the lowest funded school districts in Marin County. For more than twenty years our community has responded to this funding shortage by supporting our local students through a yearly parcel tax. This measure is a renewal of that parcel tax and provides 18% of our total school budget.

Our District depends on this parcel tax, parent contributions and other local funds. This revenue specifically provides:

- five of our twelve classroom teachers
- school aides
- technology services and equipment
- our school counselor
- supplies for all three programs, art, music, PE and science

Valley voters have proudly supported local funding for these programs for more than 20 years. This measure is not a request for a new tax, but continues our commitment to these critical programs. Without that support our classes would increase from the current 22 students per classroom to as many as 35.

Strong schools like ours develop responsible citizens that keep our community vital, attract new families and enhance our property values. Your support is essential for the District to continue to provide quality education that the children of our Valley deserve.

If Measure A fails, local funding for these programs will end next June. Please Vote YES on Measure A.

s/STEPHEN J. REBSCHER
President, Trustee Lagunitas School District

s/JOHN A. CARROLL
Superintendent, Lagunitas School District

s/DAVE CORT
Executive Director, San Geronimo Valley Community Center

s/DENNIS J. RODONI
Supervisor, Marin County

s/ZOILA BERARDI
Resident

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE A

Rebuttal to Measure A – Lagunitas School Parcel Tax

Since When is 6.5% a “Cost of Living” Increase?

Measure A characterizes its 6.5% annual increases in the parcel tax as “cost of living”. The Consumer Price Index hasn’t been 6.5% since 1981. This parcel tax is growing 3 times as fast as our incomes! We’re being taxed out of our homes.

Why Does Lagunitas School District Need 6.5% more from us Every Year?

They don’t say.

What options have they considered to make do with a parcel tax that grows more slowly?

They don’t say.

What Happens if Measure A Doesn’t Pass?

The district will have sufficient time to explore strong, reasonable options in case the parcel tax fails on the first try. Most likely, the district will come back to voters with a more balanced proposal in spring 2018 that would garner broad support. The proponents’ threats of drastic teaching cuts are exaggerated.

Lagunitas School District: Find a Sensible Balance!

Our children do deserve a quality education. Homeowners and renters also deserve to stay in their homes. Lagunitas School District should go back to the drawing board: maximize other revenue sources; trim administrative and overhead expenses; and come up with a plan to live with annual parcel tax increases closer to 3%.

For a Solution that's Sustainable for Lagunitas, Vote NO on Measure A.

s/MIMI WILLARD

Coalition of Sensible Taxpayers

Together with Lagunitas School District Residents:

s/RITA M. McCLAIN

Forest Knolls

s/CINDY MIRACLE

Woodacre

s/MARY A. BRENNER

Woodacre

ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE A

The last time Lagunitas asked for a parcel tax they promised no more special taxes.

A 6 ½ percent yearly 'cost of living' increase is well above the 1.7 percent rate of inflation and will cause the initial \$535 tax on each parcel to grow to more than \$880 in 8 years. This is when average incomes are currently growing at less than 3%.

A lack of fiscal control should not be rewarded with endless tax dollars. Lagunitas has had a parcel tax increasing at 6 ½ percent annually for 16 years now which has multiplied into a huge cost of living increase. The parcel tax itself is ungainly and unfair and is large enough that renters are likely to see this roughly \$45 to \$75 a month added to their rents.

There are no specifics as to how this money is to be spent.

How much will be going to try to remedy past mistakes? How generous has the board been to previous administrators? How much will actually be spent in the classrooms and on teachers?

Lagunitas School District needs to sharpen its pencil and figure out how to live with escalators closer to 3 percent and bring back a new ballot measure that's sustainable for taxpayers -- not make it harder for people to stay in their homes.

With many homeowners facing difficult economic times, this is not the time to pile on more hardship.

Vote No on Measure A.

s/ALEX EASTON-BROWN

Lagunitas

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE A

The Argument Against Measure A is inaccurate, claiming the annual increase of 6.5% is unnecessary, use of funds is unspecified and our district is inefficient.

Three costs affect annual increases:

- Staff salaries follow a negotiated schedule that begins very low and rises as teachers add experience and college credits plus a yearly cost of living adjustment. Together, these salary components add 5-7% annually. Is this excessive? **Our teacher's salaries begin 17th out of 18 districts in Marin.**
- Healthcare costs increase yearly, the past decade average is 6.25% annually.
- Special Education services are mandated by law. District costs have doubled in five years.

Personnel costs are 88% of our school budget. With every cost of staff compensation increasing it is necessary to maintain the current 6.5% yearly increase to sustain our current level of education.

The district is very specific about how Parcel Tax funds are spent. **These funds will support 6 classroom teachers, counseling, technology services and supplies.**

The argument implies that the district is overly generous with administrative compensation. **No parcel tax funds are spent on administrative costs.** We share our superintendent to reduce cost and **our superintendent is the lowest paid in Marin County.** Our principal is shared between two campuses. The Argument Against Measure A asks, "How much will actually be spent in the classroom and on teachers?" That answer is simple: **99.5% of our parcel tax is directly spent on teachers or in the classroom!**

Lagunitas School District children deserve your vote on Measure A.

s/STEPHEN J. REBSCHER

Trustee, Lagunitas School District

s/JOHN CARROLL

Superintendent, Lagunitas School District

FULL TEXT OF MEASURE A

LAGUNITAS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Resolution # 2017- 13

RESOLUTION AND ORDER OF ELECTION IN THE MATTER OF A SPECIAL TAX ELECTION TO MAINTAIN AND EXPAND SCHOOL PROGRAMS

RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees ("Board") of the Lagunitas School District ("District"), a school district of the County of Marin, State of California, that:

WHEREAS, The Lagunitas elementary and middle schools offer student-centered programs with high levels of community and parent participation and guidance; and

WHEREAS, the District is committed to continuing to provide a, well-rounded education for our students that includes high-quality math, science, reading and writing programs, art and music; and

WHEREAS, for over 25 years our community has supported our schools with local funding, which is set to expire; and

WHEREAS, the District faces significant unfunded federal mandates that must be paid from the general fund; and

WHEREAS, without local parcel tax funding, approximately \$667,000 (18.16% of the District's annual revenue) would have to be cut from the District's budget; and

WHEREAS, this funding is currently used to retain highly qualified teachers, keep class sizes as small as possible and maintain library hours and staffing; and

WHEREAS, the District has proven itself to be a fiscally responsible steward of finances and bonds by achieving a A+ bond rating and reducing spending with substantial community input over the last three years; and

WHEREAS, by law, 100% of parcel tax funding remains under the local control of the District to benefit school programs and cannot be taken or redirected by the State or used for administrator salaries; and

WHEREAS, California Constitution, Article XIII A, section 4 and Government Code sections 50075 et seq. authorizes the District, upon approval of two thirds of the electorate, to levy qualified special taxes on property in the District for the purpose of providing quality educational programs in the District and other lawful purposes of the District; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Education Code and Elections Code such election may be completely or partially consolidated with any other election held on the same day and in the same territory or territory that is in part the same.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Governing Board of the Lagunitas School District resolves to conduct a special election on November 7, 2017, at which will be submitted to the qualified voters of the Lagunitas School District a measure to authorize a special tax for the purpose of continuing vital educational programs critical to the educational process in the schools of the district;

BE IT RESOLVED, FURTHERMORE, BY THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE LAGUNITAS SCHOOL DISTRICT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: Said election is hereby called to be held within the boundaries of the Lagunitas School District, at which elections shall be submitted to the qualified voters the following measure, to wit:

Shall the Lagunitas School District maintain vital educational programs currently threatened by cuts in state funding including basic educational programs, enrichment and support services for students by levying a \$535.00 assessment per assessor's per year, with a 6.5% yearly cost-of-living adjustment for 8 years, beginning July 1, 2018 exempting any parcel used as a principal place of residence by any owner 65 years of age before February 1st of that year?

The funds shall be used for:

District Programs: Maintain current staffing levels and class sizes, present education programs including science, physical education, art, music, environmental studies.

Support Services: Maintain current support services for students, including reading intervention, counseling and library.

Basic Instructional materials: Maintain adequate per student allowance and update classroom instructional materials to ensure adequate quantity and quality of instructional material.

Priorities for expenditures of funds the first and each successive year will be determined by the Governing Board with input from staff, parents and the community.

The special tax will be imposed in the amount of \$ 535.00 for each assessor's parcel, beginning July 1, 2018 with a yearly cost of living adjustment of 6.5% for 8 years. An exemption from the assessment will be made available to each individual in the district who will attain age 65 years prior to February 1 of the assessment year, who owns a beneficial interest in the parcel, who uses that parcel as his or her principal place of residence, and who applies to the District on or before February 1, 2018 or February 1 of any

succeeding assessment year. Any one application from a qualified applicant will provide an exemption for the parcel for the remaining term of the assessment so long as such applicant continues to use the parcel as his or her principal residence.

Section 2: The text of the measure as displayed on each individual ballot shall be abbreviated and shall read as follows:

LAGUNITAS SCHOOL DISTRICT SPECIAL TAX ASSESSMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	
Shall the Lagunitas School District maintain vital educational programs including basic educational programs, enrichment and support services for students, by levying a \$535.00 assessment per assessor's parcel per year, with 6.5% yearly cost-of-living adjustment for 8 years, beginning July 1, 2018, exempting any single parcel used as a principal place of residence by any owner 65 years of age before February 1st of that year?	
YES	NO

Section 3: Commencing on July 1, 2018, the special tax specified above, shall be collected and administered in the same manner as ad valorem property taxes are fixed and collected under provisions of the California Revenue and Taxation Code.

Section 4: The Superintendent of Schools of Marin County is hereby requested to call an election of the said "special tax" to be held on November 7, 2017. The County Clerk is hereby requested and authorized to: 1) set forth on all sample ballots relating to said election to be mailed to the qualified electors of the Lagunitas School District said measure; and 2) provide absent voter ballots for said "special Tax" election for use by qualified electors of the Lagunitas School District who are entitled thereto in the manner provided by law.

Section 5: If any section, sub-section, phrase or clause of this resolution is for any reason held to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this resolution. This governing board declares that it would have adopted this resolution and each section, sub-section, phrase or clause thereof irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, sub-sections, sentences, phrases or clauses be declared invalid.

Section 6: The Clerk of the Lagunitas School District Governing Board is hereby authorized and directed to certify to the due adoption of this resolution and to transmit a copy hereof so certified to the Superintendent of Schools of Marin County and to file a copy hereof so certified with the county Clerk of Marin County.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Lagunitas School District Board of Trustees at a meeting held on March 16, 2017 by the following vote:

AYES 5 (Steve Rebscher, Denise Bohman, Richard Sloan, Christopher Sabec, Meegan Ochs-Potter)

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

s/MEEGAN OCHS-POTTER
Clerk of the Board