

April, 2011

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[www.yesforourstudents.org](http://www.yesforourstudents.org)  
*This Newsletter Edition is devoted to Measure A.*

*One Davis Resident, Former California Superintendent of Public Education Delaine Eastin explains our upcoming "test" (p1)*

*Measure A described (p.2)*

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*The insert reprints March and April 2010 Newsletter interviews with School Board Trustees Gina Daleiden and Sheila Allen.*

*Sheila provides an update on the significance of passing Measure A (p. 3).*  
[www.yesforourstudents.org](http://www.yesforourstudents.org)

*The Davis Democratic Club is glad to support Measure A and help make a difference in this special election. We invite your membership (p. 4) if you wish to join us in making a difference.*

## What Grade Will We Earn in the Parcel Tax Election? Delaine Eastin, Davis Resident & former California Superintendent of Public Instruction



I live in Davis for a reason. It has great schools with great children, teachers, administrators, parents, staff. **However, all school districts have great children.** The problem is that not all communities understand what a vital role high quality schools play in creating a great community. I think this town gets it. We have a lower crime rate. When a recession hits, our homes retain a higher value than some surrounding communities. We have neighborhoods where people look out for each other. Much of this value added is because we have the best schools in a ten-county region.

**Now the community of Davis is facing a big test.** The Davis Joint Unified Board of Trustees has asked the community to invest an additional \$200 annually for each home and \$20 annually for each apartment for the next 2 years so that we can offset the cuts coming from the state of California. Called Measure A, this parcel tax is really a form of homeowner's

insurance, such that we ensure the quality of Davis schools despite the horrific cuts that most school districts across California have faced and are facing. There is a reason for everyone to get behind Measure A. It is patriotic. It is common sense. It is about leadership for a better tomorrow for every individual child as well as for the overall community.

With this parcel tax, we will be able to retain science and history in our curriculum. (Across California, in too many districts, science and history are only taught in the in the two grades for which there is a state test!) Passing the parcel tax, will allow us to retain counselors. (California is dead last in the number of counselors per student overall.) Measure A will allow us to have reduced class size in K-6 and in high school English and math. (California now has the largest class size in the U.S. overall.) This parcel tax also allows us to retain elective course offerings, including but not limited to foreign language.

As the author Neil Postman incisively observed, "Children are a message we send to a time we will never see." I got this far in life because my parents bought a smaller house that cost more because the schools of that community were better. That was a life-changing decision they made on my behalf.

They are no longer here to see this time in which we live. I think they would be proud of their whole generation coming out of depression and war dreaming of a better life for their children and acting on those dreams. I hope we can say the same, if not for our whole state and nation, at least for our community. In the meantime, seniors who are 65 or older are able to receive a full exemption from this tax.

The Davis Democrats have a noble tradition of being for education and for children. Please keep up that tradition. Let us earn an A by passing Measure A. This is not a community that should settle for basic education and a C grade, which in a global economy will morph into an F for failure very fast. Step up by investing in tomorrow. Democrats are optimistic but if your optimism is sagging, you should spend more time around children. They are our future.

In the meantime, we need your vote between April 4<sup>th</sup> and May 3<sup>rd</sup> on a mail-in ballot. This is a 2/3rds vote requirement, so we need twice as many folks to say "yes" as we have folks who say "no". Every vote matters. Please stand up and be counted for the little ones who are still learning to count.

*Ed. Note: In addition to your vote, call upon your friends and neighbors to support Measure A (see "Urgent" p.2) visit [www.yesforourstudents.org](http://www.yesforourstudents.org)*

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## Calendar of Events

**Tues., April 5, 7:00-8:00 pm IOOF Hall, Public Welcomed to an Informational Meeting with the Davis School Board to discuss Measure A** prior to the regular DDC Board business meeting commencing at 8:00 pm.

**Sun., May 1, 5:30-7:30. Congressman Mike Thompson's Annual Pasta Dinner. Veteran's Memorial Hall, Davis,** Wine tasting, silent auction, great pasta personally served by Congressman Mike Thompson providing a chance to say "thank you." Contact Maggie Burns 707-967-9202 or <burns.margaret99@gmail.com>

### "Measure A" Emergency Tax Levy: Basic Facts by Tim Fenton

To better understand the issues, the following facts about Measure A may be informative:

- An emergency tax levy of \$20 per dwelling unit for multi-dwelling housing properties and \$200 per parcel for all other housing properties.
- The tax levy is requested to fund essential school programs including core subjects, elective classes, reduced class sizes, counselors and school site safety.
- The tax levy will be for two years beginning with the 2011-2012 tax year.
- The tax levy would be on top of the existing \$320 per year per single-family home in existing parcel taxes that will continue through June 2012. Apartment dwellers pay \$150 per year on this existing tax levy.
- Senior citizens age 65+ may apply for exemption from all parcel taxes.
- The tax measure will be put to Davis voters in a special May 3 vote-by-mail election.
- Passage of the measure will require a two-thirds majority vote.

### **URGENT: Volunteers Needed – Measure A, a Different Kind of Election by Jay Ziegler**

The good news is that it will be very easy for voters to vote on Measure A. The bad news is that we've never had an all mail-in ballot before. Ballots will arrive in mailboxes on Monday, April 4. Our challenge will be to immediately inform voters to 1) find their ballot; 2) fill it out and 3) send it back in – Right Away!

In this campaign, there will be no substitute for reaching voters directly – over the phone - and making sure that they understand the importance of this election and then work to turn out the vote. We will be calling voters in March to alert them to the election and then stepping up the phone calling efforts to reach voters as soon as they get their ballots, so that they get their ballots turned in quickly. Research shows that if voters let a special election ballot sit around, they will be less likely to vote in the election.

To volunteer to participate in the critical phone banking efforts, please **contact Measure A Campaign Coordinator, Leslie Hunter email, [leslie\\_q\\_hunter@hotmail.com](mailto:leslie_q_hunter@hotmail.com) or phone 792-1264.** Thanks for helping keep Davis schools and our community great!

### **A simple opportunity to make a difference: Volunteer for Measure A**

by Bob Schelen, Chair YCDCC, and Arun Sen, President DDC

Ensuring that children have a quality education is a core Democratic principle. You will be pleased to know that the **YCDCC and the DDC Board each endorse Measure A. Since the outcome of this special election is likely to hinge on just a few votes, your help could make the crucial difference in passing Measure A.** This is indeed an opportunity for you to make a difference. Please contact your friends and neighbors urging them to vote Yes on A. Even better, join the coordinated campaign by contacting Leslie Hunter (phone number and email address are given directly above).

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(continued p.3)

**Yes for our Students!** by Sheila Allen

Watch your mailbox the week of April 4<sup>th</sup> for a chance to support the future of Davis. All registered voters in the Davis School District will receive a large white ballot asking a single question: Should each single family dwelling in Davis pay \$200 for 2 years to maintain current levels of programs for our students?

I realize these are difficult times and the school district, like many public and private institutions, have made difficult cuts already to programs and staff totally \$6 million. In order to maintain a balanced budget for next year even more cuts would be needed. These potential reductions will mean no 7<sup>th</sup> period classes for 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> graders at our junior highs (including classes such as music, foreign language, computers, industrial technology, AVID educational support), stuffing more children into our classrooms especially at those very important early grades, loss of secretarial time and dirtier classrooms as custodial hours are slashed. To me this is an outrage.

This board has placed a parcel tax on the ballot to be able to stop some of this incredible erosion of our already stressed school system. As a citizen I have stepped up to participate in phone banks, provide information to our PTAs and help in anyway possible. Does Davis still believe in educating our youth? I have a lot of faith in this community!

I was recently elected to a second term on the school board with a clear mission to keep the students' needs first. I am working very hard on solutions and I invite you to become involved too.

I have always loved Davis for its political passion. I share that approach which is why I have been willing to give of my time, time away from my own family, so that I could serve the public. I invite everyone in Davis to take a moment to pause and think of how great schools make Davis a great place to live. Educate yourselves on what the parcel tax will provide. Visit our website at [www.yesforourstudents.org](http://www.yesforourstudents.org) for information and volunteer to phone bank or donate. Complete your mail in ballot before the May 3<sup>rd</sup> deadline. Bring some local control back to Davis and I hope you will join me in voting **Yes on Measure A** for the kids-for our community.

**Rarely do we have such a simple opportunity to choose and vote: Yes on A** by Carl Schmid

We have all witnessed TV images of the terrible rancor in Wisconsin. Yet, Davis Schools have already suffered much deeper budget cuts without political turmoil. Exactly how has this happened? The answer is leadership.

As reported in March and April Newsletter interviews with Trustees Gina Daleiden and Sheila Allen (see insert), the Davis School board has successfully forged compromise among all stake holders, the community including parents, taxpayer and volunteers, teachers and administration while preserving the best possible schools yet enacting painful concessions from all, i.e., shared sacrifice. In her interview, Sheila outlined "salary concessions" and "furlough days" that the teachers and administration accepted. Again, the question becomes, exactly what is different between Davis and Wisconsin? As Gina said, "We have already cut everything to the bare bones. We do not have any programs which are unsuccessful or unnecessary." She then proclaimed "I am a Blue Devil and Proud of it" explaining the Board's determination to maintain quality education while cutting costs.

In these interviews, Sheila and Gina each explained that the Board always takes a collegial approach engaging the entire community to solve difficult problems. Davis is fortunate to enjoy such great leadership earning both our respect and support. Vote "Yes" on A.

**SPONSOR (\$100)**

*(cont'd. p.2)*

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