

**NOVATO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT MEASURE A**

**A MEASURE A: Novato Unified School District Protection of Quality Local Education Measure.**

To protect Novato schools from damaging state budget cuts, provide stable local funding that can't be taken away by the state and preserve quality education by minimizing further teacher and staff layoffs, keeping school libraries open, limiting class size increases, and maintaining competitive science, math and other programs, shall Novato Unified School District increase the existing school parcel tax by \$96 per parcel for 6 years, with a senior exemption, independent oversight and no money for administrator salaries?

YES

NO

**COUNTY COUNSEL'S IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS OF MEASURE A**

**NOVATO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT PARCEL TAX INCREASE TO PRESERVE QUALITY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND SERVICES**

If this Measure is approved by a two-thirds vote, the Novato Unified School District will be authorized to increase the existing school parcel tax to Two Hundred Fifty-One Dollars (\$251) per parcel for six (6) years beginning in fiscal year 2009-2010. The proceeds of the tax may be used only for the purposes set forth in the Measure and not for administrative salaries, and will be subject to oversight by an independent citizens' advisory committee appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Exemptions will be available for individuals who have attained the age of 65, as set forth in the Measure.

Dated: March 16, 2009

s/PATRICK K. FAULKNER  
County Counsel

**FULL TEXT OF MEASURE A  
NOVATO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION NO. 36-2008/2009 – EXHIBIT B  
Novato Unified School District Protection of Quality Local Education Measure**

To protect Novato schools from damaging state budget cuts, provide stable local funding that can't be taken away by the state and preserve quality education by minimizing further teacher and staff layoffs, keeping school libraries open, limiting class size increases, and maintaining competitive science, math and other programs, shall Novato Unified School District increase the existing \$155 per parcel school parcel tax by an additional \$96 per parcel for 6 years, with a senior exemption, independent oversight and no money for administrator salaries?

The purpose of the measure is to fund the following specific types of programs and services:

- Minimizing layoffs for qualified and experienced teachers and school employees
- Avoiding significant increases in class sizes in all grades
- Maintaining outstanding instructional programs that help students succeed, such as competitive science and math programs
- Maintain computers and classroom technology
- Keep school libraries open and staffed
- Protect programs and services that help students qualify for college and prepare students for good jobs
- Protect music, arts and athletics programs that provide a well-rounded education for Novato kids
- Keep school counselors

Amount and Basis of Tax.

The parcel tax shall be \$251 per Parcel of Taxable Real Property beginning in fiscal year 2009-2010 for a period of six years. This parcel tax replaces and extends the parcel tax currently in effect. The District shall provide the Marin County Tax Collector a report indicating the parcel number and amount of tax for each Parcel of Taxable Real Property. Two hundred fifty one dollars (\$251) per Parcel of Taxable Real Property is an increase of \$96 per Parcel of Taxable Real Property over the District's existing parcel tax.

“Parcel of Taxable Real Property” is defined as any unit of real property in the District that receives a separate tax bill for *ad valorem* property taxes from the County Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office. All property that is otherwise exempt from or upon which no *ad valorem* property taxes are levied in any year shall also be exempt from the special tax in such year.

Multiple parcels which are contiguous, under common ownership, and that constitute one economic unit, meaning that they have the same primary purpose as the principal parcel and are not separate and distinct properties that may be independently developed or sold, shall comprise a single Parcel of Taxable Real Property for purposes of the parcel tax.

An exemption may be granted on any parcel owned by one or more persons aged 65 years or older who occupies said parcel as a principal residence, upon application for exemption.

#### Claim/Exemption Procedures

With respect to all general property tax matters within its jurisdiction, the Marin County Tax Assessor or other appropriate County tax official shall make all final determinations of tax exemption or relief for any reason, and that decision shall be final and binding. With respect to matters specific to the levy of the special tax, including the Senior Citizen Exemption, the decisions of the District shall be final and binding. The procedures described herein, and any additional procedures established by the Board shall be the exclusive claims procedure for claimants seeking an exemption, refund, reduction, or re-computation of the special tax. Whether any particular claim is to be resolved by the District or by the County shall be determined by the District, in coordination with the County as necessary.

#### Appropriations Limit

Pursuant to California Constitution article XIII B and applicable laws, the appropriations limit for the District will be adjusted periodically by the aggregate sum collected by levy of this special tax.

#### Accountability Measures

The proceeds of the special tax shall be applied only to the specific purposes identified above. The proceeds of the special tax shall be deposited into a fund, which shall be kept separate and apart from other funds of the District. No later than January 1 of each year while the tax is in effect, the District shall prepare and file with the Board a report detailing the amount of funds collected and expended, and the status of any project authorized to be funded by this measure.

In addition, an advisory committee of citizens shall be appointed or designated by the Board of Trustees to ensure that the special tax proceeds are spent for their authorized purposes, and to report annually to the Board of Trustees and the public regarding the expenditure of such funds.

#### Severability

The Board hereby declares, and the voters by approving this measure concur, that every section and part of this measure has independent value, and the Board and the voters would have adopted each provision hereof regardless of every other provision hereof. Upon approval of this measure by the voters, should any part of the measure or taxing formula be found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid for any reason, all remaining parts of the measure or taxing formula hereof shall remain in full force and effect to the fullest extent allowed by law.

## **ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE A**

Due to the State budget crisis, Novato's schools are facing deep cuts. Measure A provides temporary funding to offset significant cuts in our classrooms.

Novato Unified School District will lose \$4 million this year, which is the equivalent of losing 61 teachers or 6.25% of the district's budget. Next year, the district will lose \$1.7 million, which equals 26 teachers.

Reductions come on top of deep cuts NUSD has already made, including eliminating 39 teachers, librarians, administrators, and staff this year. Every effort has been made to keep cuts away from classrooms.

Over 80% of NUSD's budget comes from the State. State budget fluctuations significantly impact our schools. Of the 19 school districts in Marin County, Novato receives the lowest level of funding per student.

Measure A temporarily increases the existing school parcel tax by \$8 per month to:

- Minimize layoffs of qualified and experienced teachers
- Avoid significant increases in class sizes
- Maintain science and math programs
- Maintain computers and classroom technology
- Keep school libraries open
- Protect programs that prepare students for college and good jobs
- Protect music, arts and athletics programs

Every penny will stay in Novato to prevent cuts to our schools. By law, Measure A funds cannot be taken away by the State and cannot be spent on administrator salaries.

An independent Citizens' Oversight Committee will oversee expenditures and ensure funds are spent as promised. A senior exemption is available to ensure Measure A isn't a burden to those on a fixed income.

The high quality of local schools creates a demand for homes in Novato. This helps prevent the dramatic decrease in property values in other communities. Maintaining good schools protects property values, which is more important now than ever.

Measure A won't prevent all the cuts in our local schools, but limits the impact of the most devastating cuts. Please vote Yes on A.

s/PATSY WHITE

Former President, Marin League of Women Voters/  
2008 Novato Citizen of the Year

s/HENRY HAUTAU

Realtor/Local Business Owner

s/MARY JANE BURKE

Marin County Superintendent of Schools

s/JERRY PETERS

Civic Leader/Parent

s/SUSAN MATHEWS

Executive Director, School Fuel, the Novato  
Foundation for Public Education

**NO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE A WAS SUBMITTED.**