

## Pacifica School District Seeks a Third Extra Property Tax

Routine patching and painting of buildings is usually paid from regular, ongoing revenues. But the Pacifica School District (PSD) expects taxpayers to pay extra for that. In fact, it's asking us to pay double the actual cost through wasteful borrowing, to be paid with a property tax increase for 30 years.

Measure O is \$114 million in borrowing (including huge interest costs, which the district doesn't mention). Most of what we'd pay are interest payments — wasted money that doesn't even go to schools.

Pacifica's meager commercial tax base means bond taxes fall mostly on residents. The average homeowner would be taxed hundreds of dollars a year more under Measure O, and thousands over the life of the bond. This is in addition to the existing facilities bond and parcel taxes paid to PSD.

PSD fails to budget ongoing revenues for such ongoing expenses. Instead, it spends virtually everything on employees and nothing on maintenance. When they bargain for compensation, who speaks for the facilities (which sit empty about half the year)? We've invested tens of millions in school facilities, but PSD skimps on maintaining them, assuming that we taxpayers will saddle ourselves with more debt and pay extra for basic maintenance. We shouldn't.

Pacificans already generously fund schools, but PSD is never satisfied. When we pass a new tax, it plans the next one. PSD now gets:

1. property taxes (increases yearly)
2. state apportionments (up 66% since 2012)
3. PSD facilities bond we're still paying for another decade
4. PSD parcel tax extended in 2016

Why doesn't PSD patch and repair from any of these existing revenues? Should taxpayers pay on multiple facilities bonds at the same time? Did PSD deplete revenues from the existing 30-year facilities bond in 20 years?

In 2016, California passed a \$9 billion school facilities bond. PSD didn't apply for any of the money. (But we still pay for that.) Maybe PSD figures it can count on gullible voters to always fall for the pitch: "Don't you want us to fix leaky roofs?"

Measure O is an "anything goes" blank check. PSD has no list of projects or bids, just a laundry list of general categories, which allows anything from parking lots to new furniture for administrators to housing for principals.

Even the amount of the bond is a crapshoot, chosen as an amount voters might approve rather than based on actual project costs.

PSD claims "every penny" will benefit schools. **How does \$59 million in interest payments to banks benefit schools?**

PSD cites its "independent" oversight committee, but it's hardly independent, being selected by and reporting to the district. And it has no authority anyway.

All these supplemental taxes make living here challenging for neighbors who already struggle to make ends meet. Taxes are passed through to renters. There are no exemptions for seniors or low-income residents under Measure O.

We're already paying on **five extra local property tax overrides** for education (see your tax bill), and there are two more on this ballot, Measure O and Measure J.

Under the new federal tax law, there's a limit on deducting such local taxes. Proposition 13 doesn't limit voter-approved taxes.

*PSD should fund maintenance from its ongoing, adequate revenues, and make basic repairs without our having to pay extra.* It should prioritize and budget responsibly. PSD doesn't recognize that there's a limit to what Pacificans can afford.

I'm voting "No on O."

**Bill Collins**