

To: Menlo Park City School District Board of Trustees
From: Superintendent's Communication Advisory Committee
RE: Summary of Findings from Community Input Process
DATE: November 4, 2016

As a key component of the discussion about MPCSD's structural deficit, the Advisory Committee was tasked with gathering input from the community about the following:

- Reaction to the failure of June 2016 Measure C renewal and Measure A new parcel tax.
- Superintendent's recommendations for potential reductions beginning in year 2016-17.
- Alternatives to reductions, including a potential parcel tax.

The Committee provided several avenues through which the community could provide input, including:

- Special Board meetings, i.e. community input sessions. Sessions were video recorded, posted to the MPCSD website, and transcribed for public record.
- Online feedback form, available on the MPCSD website.
- Email channel for direct feedback.

Notice of these input avenues was made through school newsletters, the Almanac, and various social media platforms.

From September 27 through October 31, 470 community members submitted online input forms, 77 people spoke at special Board meeting community input sessions, and many others emailed the Committee directly with comments and questions. It is important to note that almost 80% of the respondents to the input form are current MPCSD parents.

The following priorities, ranked from highest to lowest, emerged from the community input received via the online form:

- Attracting and retaining high-quality teachers
- High-quality educational program
- Small class sizes
- Music, theater, and the arts programs
- Learning and educational innovation
- Library programs; safe, clean and attractive facilities
- Administration and leadership support
- Technology used to improve learning
- World language and immersion programs

The majority of respondents (78.6%) were supportive of increasing funding via a parcel tax. Specifically, respondents noted the following factors as important elements of their support:

- Renewal of Measure C at its current level of \$201 per parcel: 83.3% of respondents
- Increase beyond simple renewal of Measure C: 71.7% of respondents
- Sunsetting (specific expiration date) versus evergreen (ongoing until the public or Board of Trustees votes to end): not important 28.5%; very important 37.4%

The overwhelming majority (73.9%) of respondents believe that if MPCSD puts a parcel tax measure on the ballot, it should be done as quickly as possible, i.e. March 2017.

We have provided detailed response data and verbatim commentary for your review. Please note that names have been redacted in some cases to maintain the objectivity of the input.

In addition to the data we have listed above, review of the written commentary also reveals that while there is clear support for continuing to fund MPCSD with parcel taxes, there remains some uncertainty and confusion about District spending.

The Board should consider the community's concerns about:

- The level of administrative spending.
- The perception of a lack of transparency regarding District finances.
- The lack of participation by non-parents in the overarching conversation.
- The desire for clearer and more accessible communication from the District.

The Communication Advisory Committee respectfully submits this record of community input for the Board's review. Should the Board have any follow-up or clarifying questions, please contact us at commadvisoryteam@mpcsd.org.