

**ALBANY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

November 19, 2013

Special Meeting

**Board Conversation with the Community
to Discuss placing A Parcel Tax On The November 2014 Ballot**

By: President Black

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Board Highlights

The Board met on November 19 for a special meeting to discuss the possibility of putting a new parcel tax on the ballot in 2014.

Currently, the Measure I parcel tax, which brings in approximately \$1.25 million, is scheduled to expire in 2015. Although that parcel tax was passed as an emergency measure to ameliorate the loss of funds from the State due to the bad economy, the State has yet to make up the lost revenue.

The parcel tax in Alameda was challenged in court and invalidated because it was a split-roll tax; that is, it charged residential parcels and commercial parcels at different rates. Our Measure I and J parcel taxes are also split-roll taxes. Our taxes are legal because they were not challenged within the 60-day limit for appeals. However, any new parcel tax we pass will have to be a flat tax, charging all parcels the same amount. That means that a private house and Golden Gate Fields will pay exactly the same amount, as each is a single parcel on the tax roles. Currently, residential parcels are paying \$159 per parcel for Measure I. To replace the revenue from Measure I with a flat tax, each parcel will have to pay approximately \$228.

The Board heard from Miriam Walden, who spearheaded the efforts to get our last two parcel tax measures passed. She told us of the importance of polling before the election and of identifying "yes" voters and following up to make sure they vote. A very large and determined volunteer effort is needed to succeed in getting a parcel tax passed, especially as a 2/3 "yes" vote is required.

The Board also heard from a variety of parents. The general feeling of the people present at the meeting was that the parcel tax was needed and was worth whatever effort is necessary to get it on the ballot and approved.

The Board decided that an item will be put on the agenda of a future Board meeting for a vote to begin the effort of getting a parcel tax on the ballot. The Board will need to decide whether the tax should be targeted at one or a few items, such as smaller class sizes, or kept more general so it can be used as needed depending on current exigencies. The Board also needs to talk with the City to make sure we're not going out for tax measures on the same ballot.