

Why You Benefit

From educating my little tax deductions

Chosen sides in Eugene's school tax fight? There's no neutrality option, sorry. In the "yes" corner: parents, education advocates and kids. In the "no" corner: Americans for Prosperity (AFP), the national right-wing Tea Party-affiliate whose Eugene chapter named themselves – get ready – Citizens for Jobs and Schools.

The stakes? A "yes" retains 100 teachers, preventing the addition of four to seven kids per class, and restores lost instructional days. A "no" (or non-vote) allows the deepest cuts and – importantly – furthers AFP's agenda. AFP has declared our local measure a priority for their foot soldiers to defeat. Why? Funded by the mega-rich Koch brothers, AFP isn't only against new taxes; they want education privatized, and hope Measure 20-182's defeat helps open the door for trampling public schools. AFP wants unregulated free enterprise, and works to destroy unions, health care programs, NPR, NEA, consumer and environmental laws, and public education. If that alone isn't enough for you to crayon "yes!" across your ballot, here are 12 reasons why supporting Measure 20-182 benefits you.

- Bored kids probably won't TP your house on furlough days. If they're in school and have good opportunities, they'll be busy heading toward their own prosperity.

- My kids will pay your Social Security. Dream away about shuffleboard, RV-ing, Medicare – all at my kids' expense because you helped them get decent educations, which will help them find jobs.

- Eugene's school violence risk will be lowered. Researchers advocated anti-bullying and violence prevention programs after the nation was shaken by several school shootings – including here at Thurston. Dr. Scott Poland, an internationally recognized expert on school violence prevention, states, "We need to build connections between students and all adults and, very importantly, their schools ... [and] take care of [students'] social and emotional welfare. We need to build relationships with every student. It's not just Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. There's a fourth 'R' – Relationship." How can teachers "build relationships" with so danged many children? Eugene's impending closure of six schools will dismantle several communities, making it even more critical to hold the line on overcrowding. Students will be safer. Period.

- Your neighbors will yell less. Families are distressed by closings and cuts. Michelle Obama's quote speaks for most moms: "I'm only as happy as my most unhappy child." Reasonable classes make families happier, and that means better neighborhoods.

- Your town won't go down the toilet. One hundred laid-off teachers can contribute to a downward spiral in burdened social services, decreased revenue and depressed housing prices. Measure 20-182 tells potential investors and business relocation prospects that Eugene is still committed to world-class schools. Economic consultants ECONorthwest found that this tax will be "a large net benefit to the Lane County economy," creating or retaining 250 jobs.

- You can feel less embarrassed about Oregon. Only Missouri has fewer instructional days – two – than Oregon. Without this tax, Eugene has three fewer weeks than most states. Teachers must cover the same material regardless of how many instructional days they're given. Fewer days means "teaching to the test" more than ever.

- Your town will remain autonomous. A "yes" vote tells out-of-state conservatives to stay out of our local politics – and our schools.

- You'll be distinguished from barbarians, defined as people "without culture or education." Barbarians miss basic concepts. For example, individuals needn't haul water from the Willamette because we worked together to create EWEB. We've also created libraries, roads, parks, fire stations and Medicare. AFP calls this socialism. Most of us call it civilization.

- You'll be a public education champion. AFP is targeting 20-182 to advance its national anti-public education agenda. The rationale? If liberal Eugene submits to AFP attacks, America might surrender to privatization. Instead, hand public education a victory.

- You're less likely to catch diseases. Without 20-182, there'll be 31-plus elementary students per class, nine more sneezers, coughers and nose-pickers than in 2008. High school classes? Up to 57. Smaller classes means fewer epidemics.

- You'll avoid the worse evil. Yes, this measure is imperfect, but it's the only fix left. It buys us time. Opponents offer absolutely nothing to prevent those devastating cuts for 2011-12.

- You'll feel good. Kids will feel good. Studies show people feel better when they perform or even witness kindness. Our kids are watching to see how much their needs matter. Wouldn't it feel good to support them now, and model one generation helping the next?

Mary DeMocker has two children in 4J schools. She can be reached at marydemocker@gmail.com

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

THE TOP SECRET 100% TRUE STORY OF GEORGE W. BUSH: TIME TRAVELER!

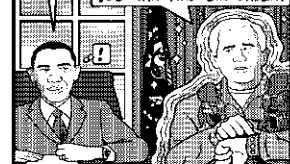
AT A CIA "BLACK SITE" IN 2002. WHERE IS THE "TICKING TIME BOMB"? I WANT ANSWERS NOW!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT! BUT I DO KNOW WHERE OSAMA IS PLANNING TO SET UP A SAFEHOUSE-- IN FIVE OR TEN YEARS!



THE OVAL OFFICE, APRIL, 2011. GEORGE W. BUSH?? WHAT--???

LISTEN CLOSELY! I'M FROM THE YEAR 2002-- AND THANKS TO THE UNAMBIGUOUS SUCCESS OF MY INTERROGATION POLICY, I KNOW WHERE YOU CAN FIND BIN LADEN!



SHORTLY THEREAFTER... EXCELLENT WORK, EVERYONE! BUT REMEMBER--NO ONE CAN EVER KNOW THAT I WAS HERE! DON'T LET THAT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER IN THE ROOM UNTIL THE TEMPORAL DISPLACEMENT SUBSIDES!

NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME--I'M LATE FOR A SPEECH--IN 2003!



NEXT STOP? THE U.S.S. LINCOLN, APRIL, 2003!

HEH HEH! IF YOUR VIEW OF TIME WASN'T SO PATHETICALLY LINEAR, YOU'D UNDERSTAND HOW TRUE THAT BANNER REALLY IS!

BEG YOUR PARDON, SIR?

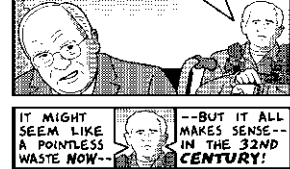
ER--I SAID, GREAT JOB! KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!



THEN--THE PRESENT DAY...

DAMMIT GEORGE--IT'S NOT FAIR THAT OBAMA GETS ALL THE CREDIT WHEN YOU DID ALL THE WORK!

THAT'S THE WAY IT HAS TO BE, DICK! NOW I'M OFF TO 2001--TO GET THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN STARTED!



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TAPPED OUT

Jennifer Solomon and her rich friends claim they are "tapped out" and just can't pay any more taxes. Since they are "tapped out," they are spending a fortune to try to convince voters to reject the city ballot measure to tax everybody a little bit, in the same graduated categories the state income tax uses, but at only a tiny fraction of the state tax rate.

The rich people are claiming it's unfair because families with incomes below \$20,000 won't have to pay the tax. They want to tax families living in poverty, wearing clothes from Goodwill, with children eligible for free lunch and breakfast at school. Some of these families are living in cars or sleeping on the floors, but Solomon and her friends want to make them pay taxes.

Because people who don't have any money won't pay this tax, Solomon wants to withhold the money needed to keep the schools open. The school year is already full of holes. Children are going to school three or four days a week and having weekends that are just as long. They are forgetting everything they've learned during these long weekends.

At the same time, positions such as librarians are now filled by instructional aides who earn half the hourly wage of teachers. They are expected to do the same job in 15 hours a week that a few years ago paid them for 25 hours. They work five to 10 hours a week for free, rely on parent volunteers and are not eligible for health insurance.

A friend who works for a Eugene elementary school as a library aide had a heart attack. He has no health insurance. I drove him to the VA hospital in Roseburg because he refused to go to the Eugene area hospitals because they would hound him for the rest of his life to make him pay. He survived the drive, but there is more damage to his heart because of the delay.

Who is "tapped out?" The ultra-rich like Jennifer Solomon, or the public employees without health insurance?

Ann Tattersall
Eugene

STOP THE BLEEDING

Our children need a solution to our education emergency sooner rather than later. The state will not help us with our immediate crisis. Measure 20-182 is a goodwill effort to plug the dike on a hemorrhaging local, state and national problem. For far too long schools have been asked to cut, cut, cut. Now we understand the consequences of cutting beyond a reasonable point. Thus far, we have been relatively immune to the slash-and-burn techniques of many educational reformers nationwide, but we must not weaken our local schools so that they too become easy prey for the teacher-blaming, test-based curriculum and a corporate charter school crowd seeking to privatize this most sacred institution.

Our country was built upon the rock of a public school system. Our democracy needs a strong public school system. We cannot afford to wait until the bottom falls out before we act. Let us pass this measure and then all work to rebuild a system which should provide equal opportunity for all, so that we can begin to ensure liberty and justice for all. Education is the soul of a society, and we ignore the souls of our children at their peril, and ours.

Christopher Michaels
Eugene

CIVIC CASH COW

It's hard to believe how short sighted some people can be. The Civic Stadium site is a cash cow waiting to be milked, hopefully for the benefit of all Eugene, and here's how. The City Council buys the property from the 4J School District and leases it short term to the Save Civic Stadium group so they can use their nonprofit status to get grants and donations to repair the historic bleachers. While they're doing that, local investors organize, buy a pro soccer franchise (cheap at only \$150,000) and start building the new facilities.

Part of the site is leased long-term to the Y so they can build their new digs. In about two years, when the work is done and the pro soccer club and other entertainments are generating a handsome income, the city sells the property at a