

WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
May 7, 2019

Agenda Item #11

**MOTION REGARDING MEASURE EE (QUALITY TEACHER, CLASS SIZE REDUCTION,
AND LOCAL SCHOOL SAFETY MEASURE)**

On Feb. 28, 2019, the Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) Board of Education unanimously voted to place on a June 4th Special Election ballot a new \$500 million property tax on homes, apartments and business properties throughout the LAUSD's service area. The district's proposed property tax would assess a tax of 16-cents per square foot on all properties, which is in addition to an existing 12-cent per square foot property tax already levied by the district, and statewide tax increases dedicated to schools passed by voters in 2012 and 2016. The property tax requires two-thirds voter approval.

The Board's decision to tax homeowners, renters and businesses is in direct response to the promises made by the district to meet union demands to end the strike earlier this year. These promises were made knowing the district did not have the funds to pay for the union's demands. In fact, the district projects a more than \$400 million annual shortfall, due in large measure to skyrocketing retiree health care costs and pension debt.

WHEREAS, the LAUSD has an annual budget of \$13.7 billion and spends more than \$7.5 billion a year and has a structural budget deficit;

WHEREAS, the LAUSD has lost 245,000 students over the last 15 years. The district has 65,000 employees, but only 24,000 teachers. In spite of the fact that the district has lost students, it has increased the number of administrative staff;

WHEREAS, the LAUSD, by a number of impartial measurements, fails to educate students. The district is plagued by low graduation rates, lack of proficiency in math and English and chronic student absenteeism. As reported recently in the Los Angeles Times, half of all LAUSD students do not have grades to qualify them to attend schools in the University of California or California State University system;

WHEREAS, Measure EE, a \$500 million/year property tax for 12-years contains no language guaranteeing that monies raised by the tax will go toward students or the classroom, has no independent financial oversight and provides no guarantee that the district will implement much-needed reform;

WHEREAS, by placing Measure EE on a June 4, 2019 Special Election, this off-year election will cost taxpayers \$12.5 million - funds that could have been saved had this tax measure been added to a regularly scheduled election in 2020;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Westwood NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL opposes Measure EE and will communicate this opposition publicly. Furthermore, Westwood NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL will urge city council to educate the community about Measure EE.