



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DATE: November 20, 2019**

**SUBJECT: Oak Grove School District Considers a Parcel Tax Measure**

**SAN JOSE – The Board of Trustees approves a Parcel Tax Measure for March 2020**

Last week, the Oak Grove School District Board of Trustees voted to place a tax measure on the March 3, 2020 election ballot. This affirms their intent to seek voter approval for local funds. If voters approve the \$132 parcel tax, it would help solve a budget deficit that has grown each year due to inadequate State funding and significant loss of revenue. Like most districts in the Bay Area, enrollment has declined in Oak Grove School District by 19% as families leave the area due to the high cost of living. This has forced the district to seek a local solution to protect its students and schools. The impact on homeowners comes to \$11 per month with an exemption option for senior citizens.

Each year, families including some staff and teachers, leave San Jose in favor of more affordable areas. Ironically, those lower-cost areas receive the same level of State funding, regardless of where in California they are. We certainly know districts in Silicon Valley pay higher costs for labor and materials than those in a low cost of living part of the state. District officials have exhausted all avenues and analyzed every area to cut costs and create savings.

The District has maintained sound budgeting with clean audit reports. Just last month an external performance audit of the District Office was completed by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP (CLA) to assess staffing levels, efficiency, processes, and benchmark the district against comparable districts. The audit returned overall favorable findings with minimal areas to suggest monetary savings. In fact, the audit found that reductions to date created an agile organization with a collaborative and team-centered culture and model practices.

The costs of pensions, health care and special education outpace revenue received from the state. For example, last year Oak Grove spent \$27 million on mandated Special Education only to be given \$8 million from the State and Federal Government. For a program enforced by the government, it has left the district scrambling to cover the remaining \$19 million, in just one year. Oak Grove is not alone; most districts are struggling with the same challenges and have been for decades because California ranks among the worst in per pupil funding.

The district hopes to pass a local parcel tax to backfill the income void by seeking alternative funding sources.

“We have made drastic cuts and now we are at the bare minimum. The next line of cuts will impact students directly, and none of us want that for our students. We need stability to serve every child with a high-quality education. We are hopeful the community wants the same.” - **Superintendent José L. Manzo**.

At last week’s board meeting, the five-member Board expressed their full support:

“We are all in favor of this parcel tax for the health of our district and most importantly, the success of our students in the classroom; that is why we are all here.” – **John Mackey**, Board President, Area 4

José L. Manzo, Superintendent

Board of Trustees: Brian LoBue, Jorge Pacheco Jr., John Mackey, Tami Moore, Mary Noel  
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**Our mission . . . “to ensure that every child’s potential is achieved.”**

“We have so many great successes to be proud of and we all need to get out there and share those with voters.” - **Mary Noel**, Board of Trustee, Area 1

“It will be a hard day on March 4<sup>th</sup> if this is not passed. It will take everyone in this district getting out and helping to pass it.” – **Brian LoBue**, Board of Trustee, Area 5

“I want to express my support for this parcel tax. The consequences without it would be devastating. We all know what is at stake, so we need to unify our community in support of this to make sure we get a 2/3 vote. We also need to make them aware of the lack of State funding which is why we are here.” - **Jorge Pacheco Jr.**, Board of Trustee, Area 3

“If voters understand this is for the kids and for our schools I am hoping they would want to vote yes. I work hard for my money too and my kids are no longer in school, but I would definitely do it for the kids that are in my community.” – **Tami Moore**, Board of Trustee, Area 2

To learn more about the budget, programs, services, and plans for the future please join us for a **State of the District Event on January 23, 2020**, in the Herman Intermediate School gym. Resource and Program Fair begins at 5 pm with the presentation beginning at 6 pm.

For more facts on the parcel tax please visit [www.ogsd.net](http://www.ogsd.net) and click the Parcel Tax tab for frequently asked questions and additional details.