

**BOLINAS-STINSON UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PARCEL TAX INFORMATION SHEET  
MEASURE A**

On December 4, 2008, the Bolinas-Stinson Union School District Board of Trustees adopted a resolution to place a measure on the ballot for the March 3, 2009 general election regarding the renewal of a parcel tax on property owners in the communities of Bolinas and Stinson Beach. The information below addresses some of the commonly asked questions regarding the existing BSUSD parcel tax and the reasons for renewing this tax via Measure A.

**What exactly is a Parcel Tax?**

Under California State Law, special districts like school districts, fire districts, community recreation districts, etc., may ask voters to approve an ad valorem or additional tax to support their operation. This is a common practice where state and federal resources are limited or declining and additional funds are needed to sustain certain levels of services to the community.

**What are the requirements for passage of a parcel tax measure?**

Two thirds (2/3rds) of the registered voters casting ballots in the election must vote in favor of the parcel tax measure in order for it to pass.

**Are seniors exempt from paying an additional parcel tax?**

Yes. The current Measure A does exempt senior citizens from paying the parcel tax if their primary residence is located on that parcel. Exemption forms are available through the BSUSD District office at 868-1603 and can also be downloaded from the District's website at <http://bolinas-stinson.org>. Additionally, any resident can apply for a merger of two or more contiguous parcels through the County of Marin, which if approved would require that person to pay only one parcel tax for the merged parcels. Information for mergers can be accessed by calling the Marin County Assessor's office at 499-7215.

**Has the Bolinas–Stinson Union School District had a parcel tax in the past?**

Since 1988, residents of Stinson Beach and Bolinas have approved parcel tax assessments specifically for the Bolinas-Stinson Union School District. The typical authorization lasts for 5 years and must be renewed by the voters if it is to continue.

**What is the current parcel tax for BSUSD and how long will it continue?**

The current tax is \$198 per parcel per year. It has been that amount for the past ten (10) years. It expires on June 30, 2009.

**What is the proposed tax?**

The proposed parcel tax, replacing the expiring tax, is \$250 per parcel per year for five (5) years. This is an increase of \$52 over the current parcel tax to help cover the cost of inflation, including health benefits for employees, salaries and other mandated state and federal costs.

**What will be the impact on our School District if Measure A does not pass?**

The Bolinas-Stinson School District currently receives approximately \$360,000 dollars annually from the parcel tax for its operating budget. Given that 85% of the District's expenses are for personnel, a loss of this magnitude will seriously impact staffing across all aspects of the school. If the parcel tax is not renewed, the District will be required to implement significant reductions in educational programs and services to its students. Among those services that will be impacted are class sizes (fewer classroom teachers), specialized instruction in art, music, foreign language, physical education and technology, counseling, support for English language learners and academic support services. Additionally, services such as student transportation, the organic snack and lunch program, grounds, maintenance and custodial service, operations and administrative oversight will be reduced.

**Why does the District need the additional money?**

For the past 10 years the parcel tax has remained at \$198 per parcel. Adjusted for inflation, \$198 ten years ago would be \$253 today. Recent cutbacks from both the state and federal governments and diminishing property values and

therefore property tax collection have resulted in the District needing to spend down its reserves (savings account) in order to meet its obligations. Inflationary costs, including salary steps, health benefits, and utilities, are rising faster than income. Even with the renewed Parcel Tax of \$250, the District will be required to reduce expenditures to make sure it is not spending more money than it brings in every year. That process has begun with the 2008-09 school year.

**Will the District be asking for more money each year?**

The Board of Trustees has made it clear that the District must reduce its expenditures and has noted that they will not be returning to the voters for additional parcel taxes unless an absolute emergency occurs. Future Boards will likely ask for a renewal of the parcel tax (if it passes successfully) when it expires in five years.

**Who can I contact if I have questions or if I want more information about the parcel tax or the Bolinas-Stinson Union School District's finances?**

Members of our community may contact Larry Enos, District Superintendent at 868-1603 if they have questions or need information. Additionally, community members can contact their elected representatives, the Board of Trustees whose names and contact information are listed below.

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