

Oakland Unified School District

Independent Citizens Oversight Committee Report

Measure G Parcel Tax

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For the Year Ended on June 30, 2018

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I. Introduction & Committee Purpose

A. Legislative History

The voters of the city of Oakland passed the Measure G Parcel Tax on February 5, 2008. The Registrar of Voters for the County of Alameda, State of California certified the results of the election on February 29, 2008. The purpose and proceeds of the Measure G Parcel Tax are stipulated in the election Ballot language:

Measure G: *To attract and retain highly qualified teachers, maintain courses that help students qualify for college, maintain up-to-date textbooks and instructional materials, keep class sizes small, continue after-school academic programs, maintain school libraries, and provide programs, including arts and music, that enhance student achievement, shall Oakland Unified School District, without increasing the current rate, continue to levy its education special tax of \$195 per parcel, commencing July 1, 2009, exempting low-income taxpayers, and with all money benefiting Oakland schools.*

B. Oversight Committee

The Measure G Oversight Committee (“Committee”) was created on August 27, 2008 with Resolution No. 0809-0043. The purpose of the Committee is to review and annually report to the public on the expenditure of taxpayers’ money generated by the Measure G parcel tax.

II. Active Committee Members

The Board of Education, pursuant to a requirement of Measure G, adopted Resolution No. 0809-0043, on August 27, 2008, established the seven (7) members Measure G Independent Citizens Oversight Committee. The Committee operates pursuant to said Resolution and adopted Board Bylaw 9131.

The Measure G Committee had two vacancies for the time period of this report. The Committee members were:

- 1. John Baldo (*Chairperson*):** A community member who does not currently have a child enrolled in the District. February 1, 2015 – January 31, 2017 (1st term)
- 2. Daniel Bellino:** A community member who does not currently have a child

enrolled in the District. February 1, 2015 – January 31, 2017 (1st term).

3. **Sandy Carpenter-Stevenson: A community member who does not currently have a child enrolled in the District; a property owner in the District. February 1, 2014 - January 31, 2018 (2nd term).**
4. **Amber Childress (*Vice Chairperson*): A community member who does not have a child enrolled in the District; and a representative of the business community. February 1, 2016 – January 31, 2018. (1st term)**
5. **Amy Golden: A parent or guardian of child enrolled in the District. March 1, 2018- January 31, 2020 (1st term).**
6. **Bradley Mart: Both a parent or guardian of child enrolled in the District and active in a parent teacher organization; a representative of the business community; a property owner in Oakland; demonstrated financial expertise. February 1, 2014 – January 31, 2018 (2nd term)**

III. Staff Liaisons To The Committee

<insert staff history, note gaps/changes and lag with audit report>

IV. Summary Of Findings

Area	Finding
Appropriate Expenditures	
Reporting and Record Keeping	Unsatisfactory
Action On Committee Recommendations	Unsatisfactory

V. Appropriate Expenditures

Finding:	
Progress: The “Basic School Support” category of spending has decreased every year for the last 5 years. Measure G spending on Music increased from \$300k in 2016-17 to \$1 million in 2017-18. Measure G funding on Libraries increased from \$985,339 in 2016-17 to \$1,592,704 in 2017-18.	Improvement Needed: There isn’t a direct connection between “Basic School Support” and Measure G’s list of intended uses. About \$4.6 million or 23% of funds were spent in this category. This highlights that Measure G is used to provide basic supports to schools and not as a strategic supplement as it was intended. Although the law states that Measure G funds will not be used for administration, some funds are spent at the central office. This includes faculty who are hired centrally even though they work at school sites. The Measure G Committee has heard concerns from community members about this and plans to investigate in the coming year.

<insert chart with breakdown by program>

VI. Reporting and Record Keeping

<p>Finding: Unsatisfactory</p>	
<p>Progress:</p> <p>The audit report was an improvement from previous year. The district produced 68 of 105 artifacts requested, up from 0 of 80 in the previous year.</p>	<p>Improvement Needed:</p> <p>The district did not produce 33 of 85 artifacts which verify certain employees' roles within the district. Without that documentation, it is impossible to verify that the positions are consistent with Measure G programs. For example, In the past, funds designated for library use have been used for other purposes. Without clearer documentation, neither the auditor nor the Committee can guarantee that the funds are being spent as intended. The auditor concluded that this a failure of compliance policy and recommended that the district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Designate specific people to approve Measure G expenses - Document procedures so they are not lost when employees leave - Develop a document retention policy so that documents are available for audit <p>3 of 40 sampled tax exemption applications were found to be incomplete.</p> <p><i>The auditor noted in his presentation to the Committee that a Qualified Opinion raises a serious concern, and in a district that was not facing so many budgetary</i></p>

	<p><i>problems, it would raise significant concerns. The Committee maintains that OUSD should not be judged on a curve, and should be held to the same standard as all school districts.</i></p>
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The district needs to improve its procedures in order to fully comply with the law and to respond to audit requests in a timely manner.

VII. Action On Committee Recommendations

<tracker for action on committee recommendations for allocations process improvement. Changing Measure G to be a restricted resource is the only one acted on so far>

VIII. Special Note On School Library Funding Allocations

In 2017-18, Measure G spending on libraries increased by \$345,961 over 2016-17 spending. As noted above, this is consistent with the Committee’s recommendation that more money should be directed towards libraries and less towards Basic School Support and Class Size Reduction. During the Spring of 2018, three committee members, Bradley Mart, Dr. Sandra Carpenter, and Amy Golden, visited the library and Emerson Elementary on April 30, 2018. In September 2016, the library at Emerson was resuscitated using Measure G funds to hire a part time librarian (.5 FTE) and update the collection. In 2017-18, the librarian’s hours were increased to .75 FTE, again using Measure G funds. Committee members learned that circulation had increased by x amount and (other facts).

Even though there were only 5 weeks remaining in the school year at the time of the visit, the librarian informed Committee Members she did not know if her position would be funded for the next year because the Measure G funds had not yet been allocated for 2017-18. This type of uncertainty makes it

difficult for schools to maintain qualified personnel. The Committee recommends that funds be allocated earlier in the budgeting process, and that programs be funded for a period of 3 years so that principals can be ensured that investments in programs will sustained.

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