

Resolution opposing Amendments 60, 61 and Proposition 101

WHEREAS, the Delta County School District 50J Board of Education is a public entity that provides educational services to the children in the Delta County School District; and

WHEREAS, the following three ballot measures will appear on the general election ballot November 2, 2010 and will collectively have a detrimental impact on the ability of the state and local governments to provide services and build public improvements:

Amendment 60: an amendment to Article X, Section 20 ("Taxpayers Bill of Rights" or "TABOR") of the Colorado Constitution, will reduce the School District's property tax collections by an estimated \$4.5 Million at the end of 10 years by cutting in half all local property taxes used for the Delta County School District's general fund and mandate that the state replace this revenue from the state general fund without providing a credible means to do so.

Amendment 61: an amendment to the Colorado Constitution, will curtail approximately \$2 billion a year in publicly financed construction projects, resulting in a significant loss of public and private sector jobs, by banning the use of any kind of debt by the State of Colorado and severely restricting the ability of local school districts and other local public entities to issue debt or to utilize appropriate and prudent business practices in managing the finances of the School District.

Proposition 101: an amendment to Colorado Statutes, will reduce state and local government revenue by approximately \$1.6 billion annually by reducing the state income tax rate over time, reducing specific ownership taxes received by the District annually by \$1.4 million and other taxes and fees related to motor vehicles and prohibiting state and local governments from charging any telecommunication fees or taxes.

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the *total* fiscal and economic impact of these three initiatives will be \$6.3 billion if they were fully implemented in this fiscal year which includes cuts in local state and local government revenues, losses in federal funding if the state is unable to match Medicaid funding and cessation of financing for state and local construction projects, including schools, highways and other public infrastructure. This amounts to \$6.2 million dollars per year in 10 years for the School District; and

WHEREAS, Delta County School District receives 70% of its funding from State sources and 75% of the District's costs are associated with salary and benefits, class sizes will have to increase dramatically as teaching and non-teaching staff are reduced to meet the lower funding levels if these initiatives pass.

WHEREAS, Delta County School District has kept funding closest to kids and the classroom, the District will have to explore major schedule modifications, school consolidations, and elimination of activities to address the lower level of funding if these initiatives pass.

WHEREAS, Colorado is near the bottom of all states in the dollars spent on K-12 education and Delta County School District is one of the 7th lowest funded districts in the State: These cuts will have a significant impact on the District's ability to educate children to the level the citizens of the District have come to expect.

WHEREAS, estimates by the Colorado Legislative Council, the nonpartisan research agency for the General Assembly, indicate that once these measures are completely phased-in,

funding for K-12 education will consume about 99 percent of the state general fund budget, leaving the state \$38 million to fund *all* other state services; and

WHEREAS, these measures are unnecessary because there are already provisions in the Colorado Constitution which require the state to balance its budget and that give citizens the right to vote on all tax increases and creation of debt; and

WHEREAS, sales and income tax revenues were down significantly because of the recent recession and the State of Colorado had to balance its budget, school districts faced an unprecedented 6.3 percent cut in total program funding this fiscal year which was on top of a state-imposed rescission of 2.3 percent in the previous fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, it is extremely difficult to fully appreciate the major tax policy changes that these three ballot measures impose because there are so many issues addressed in each initiative, the changes are phased-in on different cycles and there is widespread confusion about the legal implications of each, which means voters are deprived of an opportunity to weigh the costs and benefits of each tax cut or change in policy on its own merits;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Delta County School District 50J Board of Education officially declares its opposition to Amendments 60, 61 and Proposition 101 because each of these proposals will significantly interfere with the ability of the State of Colorado and local governments, including school districts, to provide the public services and infrastructure that the citizens expect and deserve and because collectively, these three proposals will cripple the ability of the State to meet its obligations to sufficiently fund public education, leading to more budget cuts, larger class sizes, and fewer teachers and programs to meet the educational needs of this community.



Bob Tweedell, President
Board of Education