

Hand-out 4.1: _____ School Bond Levy

CCSS Appendix C: Student Sample: Grade 10, Argument

This argument was produced by a student who was asked to write a persuasive essay that required research. The student generated the topic and had an opportunity to revise.

_____ School Bond Levy

The _____ School Board has recently proposed a bond levy to add new facilities as well as conduct some major repairs to the school. The bond includes building a new gymnasium, a new science room and lab, a new Media Center/Library, new Chapter 1 and Special Education classrooms, and other facilities such as more parking space, an increase in storage area, and new locker rooms. Along with new construction, the board is proposing to remodel facilities such as the drama/music areas, the entire roof, the heating system, the school kitchen, and present gym as well. This bond allowing _____ School to add more facilities should be passed in order for young students to be provided with a better education.

Several arguments have been brought up concerning the levy since it failed in the March election. Some say that the school doesn't need to have brand new facilities and better classrooms, but it does. Just this year the school had to shut down for days at a time as a result of a malfunction of the heating system. The roof of the library also had a leaking problem all winter long. The leaking has actually caused the ceiling tiles to rot to the point where they are having to be removed. It isn't safe to sit underneath them because, in fact, they have fallen to tables where students had been working only minutes before.

Another issue that people may be concerned with is the money that taxpayers have to put up for the building. The cost of the project in its entirety will be 2.9 million dollars, meaning that for the next 25 years, taxpayers would pay 40 cents more per thousand dollars in property tax than they do this year. The project does cost a significant amount of money, but the school needs it. If something isn't done now, then the facilities such as the library, the science room and others will continue to grow steadily worse. The construction and remodeling needs to be done eventually, so why not now, when interest rates are low and expenses are also low. Superintendent _____ commented that it would cost the taxpayers much less money now than ten years from now. Another reason that this is a good time to pass this bond is that the results of Ballot Measure 5 are going into effect at the same time as the levy. As it stands now, property tax rates will go down another \$2.50 by next year; however, if taxpayers don't mind paying what they do now and can handle a 40 cent increase, then the school can be that much better.

Many other good reasons we exist for funding this construction now. For one, better facilities will be made available to everyone: staff members, students, and community members. The new gym will allow student athletes to have earlier practices and more time for homework. With only one gym in a K-12 school system, the junior high has to practice in the morning before school, starting at 6:30 A.M., meaning that both the girls and boys teams had to practice at the same time, with half of the court for the girls half for the boys. After school, the high school girls would practice from 3:30 to 5:30 P.M. The varsity boys would then start at 5:30 or 6:00 and go until 7:30. After that, the junior varsity boys would come in for an hour and a half. It's absurd to think that student athletes can make good use of their time with a schedule like that. If the bond were to pass, both the new gym and the present gym would be used for practices and athletes wouldn't have to wait so long to practice every day.

Another reason that the gym should be built is that it is no longer adequate. The bleachers are too close to the court and so there is no room to walk by without getting in the way during a game. The gym also poses a problem for the cheerleaders. As it is now, there is no room for them to cheer. They have to

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stand on one of the ends which, of course, is right in the way of people walking by. If a new gym were built, enough room would be provided surrounding the court that there wouldn't be any of the problems there are now.

Another advantage to the bond proposed is that it would provide more space in the school. The school has always been small, which is in some ways nice, but it needs to expand. The lack of space is a problem because everyone is crammed into one little hallway trying to make it around from class to class. As it is, there isn't enough room for the library to just be a library or the kitchen to just be a kitchen. Students can't even go to the library when they need to because Health, Media, and other classes are held there. The Satellite Learning classroom, which shares a space with the kitchen, usually has a difficult learning atmosphere each day people prepare food for the hot lunch program. Another problem area is the current science room and lab. Lab facilities are outdated and cannot be replaced for a variety of reasons related to the plumbing and electrical systems. Both science teachers have said publicly that the chemical storage room is inadequate and unsafe. The science curriculum is a core part of students' education and they deserve good facilities.

It is clear then, that _____ School needs significant improvements in which case the bond must be passed. As a community, education is an essential part of the future. In the past, _____ has relied in the timber industry for employment, but times are changing and the younger generations need to be better prepared to meet the challenges that arise. For example, they need to be able to take part in a variety of activities and be able to achieve in many different areas. If the school is inadequate, how can the younger generations be provided with the education and training they need to be successful in the future?