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But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.  
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**Questions bond proposal Letter to the Editor:**

I could not hold back any further in regards to the Fruitport School bond vote slated for February 23, 2010. I voted no on the last huge school bond tax increase, which was just plain wrong-headed and way too expensive. Besides, the exclusive, mysterious, secret and elitist Facilities Study Committee was way too focused on what a small minority of people wanted, rather than dealing with the reality of declining personal income and the economic collapse that Michigan has undergone. The State of Michigan has lost around 800,000 good paying manufacturing jobs, along with defined pensions and family health benefits with no property tax relief from their state and local governments. Michigan is a state with the nation's highest unemployment rate, with Muskegon County leading the way in unemployment of Michigan's 83 counties. Now just what part of that does the school Facilities Study Committee not understand?

I just can't understand that with a totally stressed out economy; thousands of people in Muskegon County out of work; families losing their homes; and going without health insurance or even adequate food to put on their tables, how this unrepresentative Facilities Study Committee can ask us to vote for a property tax.

I question just how many members of this committee actually live and pay school property taxes in our school district. If this committee is so concerned about education, why have they not addressed the need to hire more teachers to reduce class sizes? The people who want us to pay for their bond tax ideas need to synchronize their wants and perceived school needs with our desires and ability to pay for them.

Just who are these people who meet in secret and pretend to know what is best for our school district at the exclusion

**More on the upcoming bond – millage from Max Riekse Letter to the Editor:**

A few weeks ago, I wrote an article that appeared in the Muskegon Chronicle about Fruitport's upcoming school facility committee bond – millage. That article appears in this issue of the FAN. What I've learned since is that the same facility committee that tried to pass the previous defeated huge school property tax increase met within 24 hours following that vote, at night, to put forth this bond-millage to be voted on this February. The same people who tried to saddle us with the last huge property tax increase proposal are the ones who came up with this one.

Why a February vote when many senior citizens have gone south for the winter? I was told that the school facilities committee wants to get "free" federal dollars from Washington, D.C. that are now available for only a limited time. And if we, the people, vote for their millage, they can get this money. I'm all for obtaining "free" money from Washington, D.C., as I think the time is coming when the Federal government will have little money to send back to the states, so we should get as much of our hard-earned tax dollars back from Washington, D.C. as soon as possible. I'm all for "free" federal money for our local school system, strings or no strings attached. Our federal government is trillions of dollars in deficit spending; some sources put it at over \$10 trillion or more, which could make our currency worth next-to-nothing in a few short years. Americans are going to be reduced to raising chickens and eggs to live on, barter with, and pay their doctor bills with. I will have to ask my doctor if he likes chickens. By the way, most people who go south for the winter have gotten used to these winter bond millages over the years and take out absentee ballots before they leave.

Dave Markgraf (who is on the facilities committee) recently told me that "only" 30 percent of the school facilities committee members do not live in the district; do not pay property taxes in the district; and do not vote in the district. And for the most part, they are school employees. I'll let you get your head around that one. They are locked in to vote for what the superintendent and the school board want — not us. I received a Fruitport school Focus magazine, which had an article inviting people to be on the committee. I gave my name to the superintendent's office last August/September. I never did get invited to be a member of this mysterious committee. I wanted to voice my very strong support for keeping the high school just where it is and build into it capabilities for the latest technology. I also wanted to voice my support for technology upgrades in all our school buildings, along with all-day kindergarten; reduced class sizes by hiring more teachers; and the need for more reading teachers and even Chinese language classes in our school. To be fair, the Edgewood school principal was kind enough to invite me to attend a facilities committee meeting when she "heard" of my interest, but through no fault of hers or mine, that never materialized. I was going to try and attend the next one.

Since Washington, D.C. free trade lobbyists have bought and paid for most of our politicians in Congress, who, in turn, have sold out our country to Communist (Red) China; it only makes sense that our children learn Chinese because that's who they will be working for in a future New World Order — neo-con America at very low pay with no health benefits or defined retirement pensions.

Our last superintendent didn't think too much of my idea of having Chinese language classes in our schools. He was too focused on passing his huge and very costly property tax

of those whom they expect to pay the bill for their concept of educating our children? I for one share the thoughts of many Fruitport school property taxpayers when I say: "Show me the bottom line." I want to know where every nickel, dime and dollar goes. Forgo the slush funds, travel expenses and other nefarious expenditures. Let the light shine in so that we, the Fruitport school property taxpayers, can be sure that our hard-earned tax dollars truly and honestly go to educating our young; preparing them for a prosperous and bright future. Reduce class sizes and hire more qualified teachers.

Now I understand that the facilities committee is justifying this property tax bond stating that it is not a net tax increase. I for one could use a property tax decrease, which would result if this bond were voted down. And what of the February 23rd timing of the bond? Was it timed so that all the senior citizens and snowbirds would not be around to vote on it? That was rather sneaky, dishonest and underhanded of the facilities committee!

I strongly support giving our local Fruitport school system the money it needs to upgrade dated classrooms with the newest technological upgrades and improvements that are available. And to be sure, some buildings are in need of repair, but the same facilities committee that wants us to vote for THEIR February 23 bond is the same one that wanted to saddle us with a huge school property tax increase last year for a new high school in the middle of nowhere; leaving the way wide open for future property tax increases. These people have absolutely NO credibility with me, whatsoever. I don't believe a thing they say. Show me the beef? I want good, quality classroom facilities with the latest technology to educate our young people for the future.

Enough said!

Max Riekse  
7010 S. Brooks

increase while seeking another job outside our school district where he would not have to pay our increased property taxes. He also trash-talked a family that has lived here for over 150 years, and who have had grand children and great-grandchildren attend our Fruitport Community Schools. Somehow, he thought of them as anti-education because they would not support his grandiose ideas on how he wanted to spend their (our) money. The "old" superintendent thought the school language focus should be on Spanish since that's the language of America's future.

Personally, I would support making Spanish a graduation requirement so our students can all go down to Mexico where a lot of free trade NAFTA good-paying manufacturing jobs ended up. Besides favoring less government, lower taxes, trashing NAFTA, and unfair job-losing free trade, I'm big on learning foreign languages for our students and seeing that my hard-earned school property taxes are well spent — every nickel, dime and dollar. I don't have a lot of faith that the majority of the current school facilities committee cares what I think and are way too focused on what they think is best, i.e. how to spend my tax dollars.

From what I've been able to gather from talking to the new superintendent, there are several million dollars of "slop" built into the bond, which can be "moved" around as needed. The facilities committee had an absolutely brilliant idea to bring on board newly-elected Fruitport Township Trustee David Markgraf to help sell their bond. He helped defeat the last one. If this bond passes, and I'm not at all sure it will, he thinks he can hold their feet to the fire and see that our tax dollars are spent wisely. Good luck. He has no official position with the school system; and once they have their (our) money, they can forget him and do what they want with their (our) money. If the millage fails, the school board president should resign and Dave Markgraf should be elected in her place. I trust him with our tax dollars. The sooner the better. We will also need a new, more representative and inclusive group of Fruitport residents for the next school facilities committee to address pressing and important building needs in a cost effective manner, including badly needed technology upgrades, along with a more efficient boiler for the middle school, long overdue as I understand. We need to move forward for a more positive future for our children.

To paraphrase an old David Carridine, Kung Fu saying, "vote wisely, grasshopper!"

Enough said!

Max Riekse (a 1965 FHS graduate)  
7010 S. Brooks

**Needs are great; solution is simple Letter to the Editor:**

The upcoming bond election for Fruitport Schools is a good thing.

It will provide needed funds to address the issues of safety at Shettler School, and technology at all the buildings. This is a way to provide extra dollars with the least amount of effect on the public. The technology needs of the district are great, as many of the computers that students use are 10 years old. They are not able to handle the programs and use what is available through technology because they are too old. It is good for our community to have schools that are up to date and that can provide students with the learning capabilities of the century.

Vote yes on February 23.

Kathy Smith  
5720 Stillwater Trail