



## **It adds up: Port Huron Schools need your vote**

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If your home has a market value of \$90,000 and a taxable value of \$45,000 then you will pay an extra \$6.53 a month over what you are now paying for the school district bonded indebtedness. It's a more reasonable amount than the \$13.32 you would have paid if the May proposals had passed.

If you are on a fixed income, then you may have to find some creative ways to save \$7 a month. Do you pay someone to cut your grass, clean off leaves, shovel snow? Call both high schools and post a notice for any, or all, service clubs to help you out.

If the high schools can't accommodate you try the local churches that have youth groups, or call the Council on Aging ((810) 984-5061) and ask for assistance.

The highest resistance to the May school millage proposals came from Kimball and Port Huron Townships. Do they accept the reduced proposal of 1.74 mill increase for the Aug. 2 bond proposal? I would hope so, but again they need to check the source — the PHASD for the comparison between the previous May proposal and the upcoming Aug. 2 proposal.

There may be some voters without a smart phone, or home computer with internet access. In that case call Keely Baribeau, PHASD director of community relations at (810) 984-3101 ext. 4021, and request a paper copy of the three-page new bond proposal web site information.

There are some voters who have strong anti-public education views who are represented by Citizens Advocating Responsible Education. They urged a no vote for the previous May 3rd proposal and called for the Port Huron school board to go back to the drawing boards for a better proposal. The board has now done this.

Let's hope the CARE members who voted no last May will accept the remarkable changes made for the Aug. 2 bond proposal. If they do not, then it seems they have been influenced by the Cato Institute's Education Director, Andrew Coulson. His study showed that public education costs increased considerably between 1972 and 2012, but the SAT average scores showed no significant gain.

Unfortunately, Mr. Coulson died this past February, so he cannot reply to challenges that might discredit his study. However, his personal views on public education reveal his strong anti-public education stance. In a Feb. 18 Cato Institute tribute to Andrew Coulson (available on the Cato Institute web site) they praised his belief that public education was hurting society because it was illogical, rigid, moribund, government-dominated and needed to be replaced with a free market approach where teachers, students and families would voluntarily interact. His extreme libertarian view of public education could return us to the status of the 1700s.

The flaw in the Cato Institute Education study is the fact that SAT scores do fluctuate, but the reason the overall average remains flat is because the Educational Testing Service, which conducts the SAT, uses what it calls “mean centering” which adjusts the mean score back to 500. This has been done multiple times between 1972 and 2012. The costs obviously rise with increased enrollments and inflationary costs. So yes, the costs rise, but the SAT raw scores increased without “mean centering,” so flat scores do not mean that public education needs to be dismantled.

It is well known that the Cato Institute was founded by billionaire Charles Koch. His brother, David, sits on the board, to promote libertarian policy which would benefit his fellow billionaires with far less government regulation, no progressive income taxes, the elimination of the Department of Education, and repeal the Affordable Health Care Act. If you want to know more, read Jane Mayer’s new book, “Dark Money,” it’s an eye-opening account of billionaire greed.

Vote yes for the Aug. 2 PHASD millage increase and take pride in your community development investment.