

April 14, 2008

For Immediate Release

Contact: Eric Brown, 650-852-1299/ericpeterbrown@yahoo.com

## **Measure A Supporters Kick Off “Strong Schools” Campaign**

PALO ALTO, CA – On a breathtaking Sunday afternoon, one could be forgiven for having other plans, but on April 13, for scores of Palo Altans, there was no better place to be than the “Strong Schools for Strong Community” campaign kick-off event.

The event brought members of the community together to mobilize support for Measure A, a school facilities bond measure on the June 3, 2008 ballot. The bond would raise \$378 million to construct new classrooms and renovate aging facilities in the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD).

School Superintendent Kevin Skelly told the enthusiastic crowd that “today is a reflection of the passion we have in education” in Palo Alto, adding that “one of the most important things we can do is pass Measure A.”

Former School Board President Carolyn Tucher was no less emphatic, noting the many schools that had been built in Palo Alto over the years. She then gathered the dozens of children in attendance, and implored the audience to “leave these kids the same legacy,” by working to pass Measure A.

“This is a broad-based effort to invest to repair and improve our school facilities for today's children and generations to come,” said former Palo Alto Mayor and City Councilmember Gary Fazzino. “But this is also an investment in strengthening our community as a whole. We are getting tremendous response from seniors, the local business community, and other concerned neighbors who realize that great schools are key to a great community.”

This sentiment was echoed by California State Senator Joe Simitian, who has long been a champion for education. “When we educate our kids, the benefit accrues to the entire community,” he said. Nevertheless, he added, “if we think we can look to Sacramento to do the job, we’re going to be disappointed.”

Gretchen Edmonds, celebrating her seventy fifth birthday, agreed that the excitement surrounding the event was proof that Palo Altans are not sitting back waiting for Sacramento to help solve the significant infrastructure challenges that the district faces. “The key is for us to raise the necessary funds to maintain the excellent quality of our children’s education while accommodating growth in enrollment,” she said. “My kids have long since graduated, but I know how important this is. The beauty of Measure A is that we can achieve these improvements without a tax rate increase.”

Organizers were leaving nothing to chance, however - working the crowd to line up phone bankers and precinct walkers, distributing buttons and lawn signs, and soliciting for all-important donations to the campaign. And on a sunny day in April, they had every reason to be encouraged.

# # #