

BARRINGTON ENLIGHTENED TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION (BETA)

P.O. Box 1522 • Barrington, Illinois 60011

October 2004

School District #220 Referendum

On November 2, 2004, District #220 will ask voters to approve a \$.20 cent increase in the annual tax rate for educational purposes. This is intended to provide \$4.9 million more annually to avoid projected deficits in future operating budgets. This would NOT be used

for buying land or the building of new schools which we will be asked to support in the spring of 2005.

BETA's analysis indicates that this proposed increase of 20¢ per \$100 of equalized assessed value is unwarranted. The school district is underestimating future

revenues for 2005-2010 by as much as \$30 million! Additionally, there is little evidence that the school district is exercising restraint in expenditures.

The annual increase in taxes if the 20¢ increase passes will be as follows: ■

Home Value	Lake County	Cook County
\$300,000.	\$190.	\$115.
\$500,000.	\$325.	\$200.
\$800,000.	\$525.	\$325. *

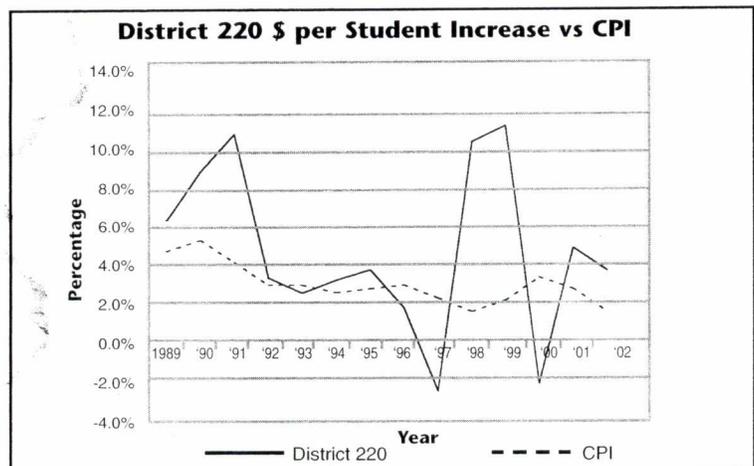
*Senior discount lowers each figure by \$6.00

The Revenue Problem - Tax Cap Excuse

In 1988 BETA helped defeat a large increase in the educational levy for the identical reason - the school district had dramatically underestimated future revenues. We were correct because the district never came back to the voters for an increase in the education levy until 2002 when the voters approved a 20¢ increase. While there were numerous referenda on bond issues for school expansion and renovation from 1988 to 2002, all of the dire predictions failed to materialize without that 1988 increase. The sun came up every day, kids went to school and learned, all was ok.

One of the most overused excuses for the financial difficulties of school districts is that they are

hamstrung by the limits on what they can collect. The implication is that a "tax cap" reduces the money available to the district. The fact is that the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) allows school districts to increase property taxes every year without voter approval, but only by limited amounts. The limit (either 5% or the CPI), plus



the revenue from new growth can be overridden and increased even more with citizen referenda. Over the past 10 years, the average increases, CPI plus new property growth, has been 5%.

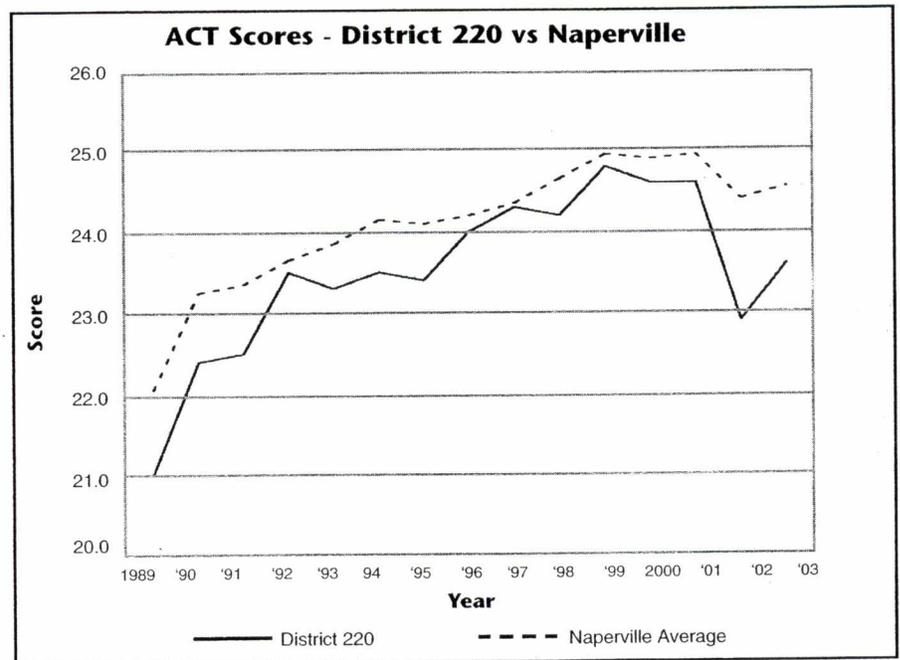
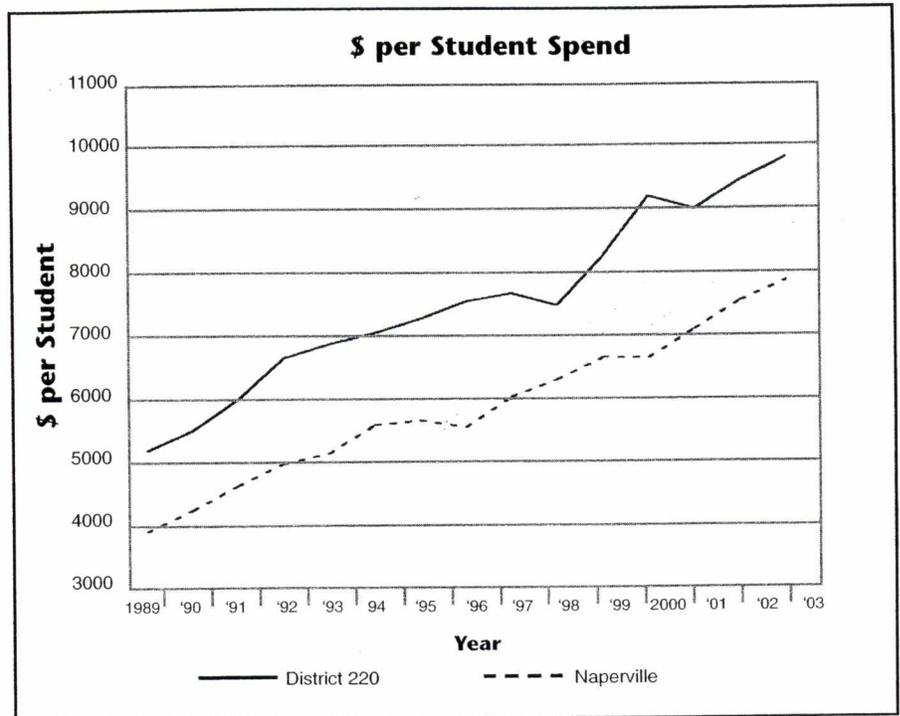
So the innuendo that since the

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Naperville is a high performing unit school district that represents the “gold standard,” like #220. As shown in the accompanying chart, Naperville spends about \$1,700. less per year per student than #220. Yet, its ACT scores for the two high schools average well above ours demonstrating no correlation between spending and high test scores. Both districts test about 80% of their prospective graduates. The dramatic differences suggest that #220 can develop new paradigm to reduce expenditures while still maintaining quality.

Even with no reduction in cost per student, BETA believes that no increase in the education levy will be required in the next 5 plus years. With moderate reductions we should not need an increase for the next 20 years, as opposed to what is demonstrated in the graph using CUSD #220 projections. ■



Library

We love the library. We use the library. We support the library. It is busy, one of the most popular places in town. They are proposing to increase space by 75% and adding amenities like “drive

through 24 hour automated material pick-up and return, more computers and seating to accommodate quiet family sharing.” We have much difficulty justifying the need for such a large expansion, large expense at this time.

So it is with much heartache that we would ask the board to rethink the proposal and come back to the taxpayers with a pared down plan in the spring. ■

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TAX CAPS IN DANGER?



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BARRINGTON AREA LIBRARY
305 N. Northwest Hwy.
Barrington, Illinois 60010
Barrington, Illinois 60010

Conclusion

Yes, enrollment is growing but the other half of the equation, not mentioned by CUSD #220, is that the revenue is also growing due to additional new properties added to the tax rolls. The education establishment always seems to be coming up with new ideas for the way we teach our children. Why can't we try some new ideas to reduce spending, save money? With all we've spent on technology, computers as time savers and programmed with tutorials shouldn't that free up teacher time and negate the recurring theme for "smaller class size?"

Recently, Mt. Prospect's District #26 voted to freeze administrator's salaries offering instead a stipend linked to CPI. "School

districts are being forced to economize," said Illinois Schools Superintendent Robert Schiller. "One of the first steps they have to look at are, what are redundant costs and can they be reduced?" Some districts take on the challenge with optimism rather than threatening "drastic cuts" or "looming financial crisis" as we too often hear in #220.

We know that more can be done with less because it's being done in Naperville where per pupil expenditures are \$1700/year below ours.

HB750, the "property tax swap" that we referred to earlier, has already passed the Illinois House. If it passes the Senate, the Governor will likely sign it into

law. It is imperative for you to contact your Senator, your elected representatives. The "fix" that needs to happen is on the spending side, the out of control salaries and benefits packages.

Invitation:

You are invited to a presentation by *Citizens for Reasonable and Fair Taxes (CRAFT)*

SUNDAY

October 10, 2004

2:00 pm

Barrington Area Library

You will hear some interesting information and some effective ideas. Please come and bring your friends and neighbors.