

Jamie Cain editorial
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Looking to The Future, The Stakes Are High

Congratulations to the students and families of the class of 2016 throughout our district. It was inspiring to recognize this distinguished group of young men and women during our commencement ceremonies earlier this month. I had the pleasure of meeting and greeting many of our graduates at Port Huron High School, Port Huron Northern and Harrison Center. As a community and district, we will be cheering you on as you take the next steps in your life towards a career, furthering your education, and pursuing your dreams.

As we close the chapter on another school year, I can't help but think about the students currently in 6th grade, kindergarten, or even children in our community that will not enter school for several more years. We must ensure that when these students walk across the stage to receive their high school diplomas, they received the best possible educational experience and are prepared for the next phase of their life journey. Will we as a school district be prepared to meet this challenge? Ultimately, a huge part of being able to answer that question with a resounding "yes" lies in the hands of you, the members of this community.

The school district has been engaged in a period of significant change, intentionally and strategically moving forward to ensure our students and staff are equipped and prepared for success in an ever changing world. We have every intention of continuing the trend of being a proactive school district that evolves, shifts, and responds to provide a standard of excellence in education. Ultimately, our ability to move forward in leading the way lies in the hands of you, the members of this community.

I cannot stress enough the reality that any local community school district, Port Huron Area School District included, ultimately rises and falls based on the level of support it receives from its community. Communities thrive when the citizens of the community make an intentional choice to invest in services that directly benefit its people. Is there any investment more critical than investing in our youth? They are our future. Again, ultimately, this choice to invest in our public schools lies in the hands of you, the members of this community.

On August 2, you can ensure the future success of our local public school system and our community as a whole by voting "YES" for the school district bond proposal.

We are confident that this reduced proposal - by 51% cost to the district taxpayers - will begin to address the very real, continued and immense needs that our schools have to serve our children in the environments they deserve: safe, comfortable and technologically adequate for teaching the workforce of tomorrow. We did not compromise the vision of our school district, rather we adjusted our strategies to accomplish it.

We have the support and endorsement of community organizations, business leaders, parent groups, our teacher's union, and the unanimous approval of our Board of Education, which was

elected by this community. Perhaps most importantly, we have heard from many students who have expressed their excitement in our plans to assure their continued achievement.

We are ready to move forward. As a community, we *must* move forward. Do not keep the continued progress for our community and its deserving students stuck in neutral or even worse block it from happening, based on grudges of this district's past. Give my leadership team a chance to build a better future for our youth. We expect and welcome the accountability in doing so.

Please help our future graduates make their mark with resources that help them learn and prepare them to compete. We need the learning facilities that will help support their future and give our educators the ability to teach with the innovation that is expected in today's learning environments. Teachers need to prepare students for the future. As a community, we need to support that effort and vision. Ultimately, that is in the hands of the members of our community.

Jamie Cain