



January Newsletter

2024

Want to submit a piece for a future newsletter?

Click the button below to visit the submission link.

Write for CCDU's
Next Newsletter!

Newsletter
Submissions are due
the first of each month.

Submissions will be
selected one week
before our monthly
meeting.

Authors will be notified
if their submission is
chosen.

Newsletters will be
published the Tuesday
before our monthly
meetings.

Mix and Mingle **Happy Hour**



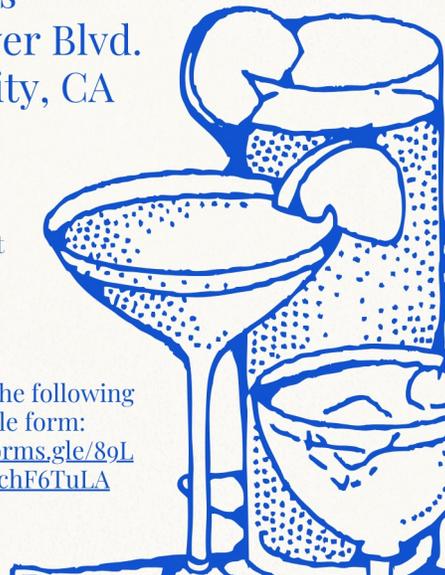
Tuesday, January 16, 2024

5:00pm — 7:00pm

At 33 Taps
9739 Culver Blvd.
Culver City, CA
90232

Come join us
for some fun at
this in person
gathering.

RSVP at the following
google form:
[https://forms.gle/89L
UL3jk6chF6TuLA](https://forms.gle/89LUL3jk6chF6TuLA)



RSVP: <https://forms.gle/89LUL3jk6chF6TuLA>

Meeting Reminder - Tomorrow, January 10, 2024

Please join us on the evening of Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. for our monthly meeting!

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks from President Eric Rudin;

2. Approval of Minutes from December 13, 2023 CCDU Meeting;
3. Report from Treasurer Judy Scott;
4. Report from VP of Membership Ron Ostrin;
5. Special Guest Speakers: Congresswoman Sydney Kamlager-Dove (D-CA);
Assemblyman Isaac Bryan (D-CA);
6. Consent Calendar – March 2024 Primary Endorsements (*See more info below);
7. Endorsements for Judicial Races (**See more info below);
8. Consideration of Culver City Measure E;
9. Items from the Floor;
10. Adjournment.

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86858894560?pwd=SmZhd3MzRIJ2cGJ2aHFESldSNkxXZz09>

Meeting ID: 868 5889 4560
Passcode: 626064

We look forward to seeing you all tomorrow night!

*Consent Calendar – March 2024 Primary Endorsements
Recommended by CCDU Executive Board:

1. County Supervisor, 2nd District: Holly Mitchell (D-Incumbent)
2. Assembly Member 55th District: Isaac Bryan (D-Incumbent)

Procedure: Motion to Approve Consent Calendar. Requires 60% of Members Present Voting in Affirmative;

**Endorsements for Judicial Races

Each candidate's questionnaire is accessible at the corresponding links below.

Seat 39

Jacob Lee, [Questionnaire](#)

Seat 48

Renee Rose, [Questionnaire](#)

Seat 97

Sam Abourched, [Questionnaire](#)

Seat 115

Christmas Brookens, [Questionnaire](#)

Seat 124

Emily Spear, [Questionnaire](#)
Kimberly Repecka, [Questionnaire](#)

Seat 130

Christopher Darden, [Questionnaire](#)
Leslie Gutierrez, [Questionnaire](#)

Seat 135

Steven Mac, [Questionnaire](#)
Georgia Huerta, [Questionnaire](#)

Seat 137

Opinion Piece: Measure E

By John Derevlany

I am a parent, homeowner, 24-year resident of Culver City, and a lifelong Democrat, and I urge you to vote NO on this \$358 million school bond.

I am not opposed to school repairs. Our facilities are old and in need of millions of dollars of upgrades. But \$358 MILLION? This is an obscene amount for a district of our size.

CCUSD has less than 7,000 students in five elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school. Of those 7,000 students, many don't even live in Culver City, and will pay nothing towards this bond. 2022 Census Data estimates there are only 4,071 kids between the ages of 3 and 17. in Culver City.

And then there's the issue of leadership and trust. In 2014, our schools were in "desperate" need of repairs, and voters approved a \$106 million bond - which should've been enough to rebuild almost every building in the district. Ten years later, after four superintendents and a dozen different board members, the money's all gone and the schools are somehow still "desperately" in need of repairs.

Do you trust this revolving door of superintendents and board members to now spend THREE TIMES AS MUCH doing the repairs they couldn't do in 2014?

We need accountability, not "blank checks." So instead of \$358 million, why not a \$50 million bond? If repairs are still needed in a few years, we can approve another \$50 million bond. That's accountability. That's democracy. We don't elect people for 30-year terms, but that's how long we will be paying off any bond.

Please vote NO on this super-sized bond so we may begin the work of fixing our schools with a bond that is smaller, accountable and more appropriate to our district.

President's Message

WHY IS OUR CCUSD SCHOOL BOND MEASURE NOT A LOCK TO WIN?

Dear Fellow Culver City Democrats United Members and Supporters,

As many of you know, my wife and I moved to Culver City in 2018 with CCUSD being a major reason for choosing Culver City as our home. We were blessed with the birth of our daughter and she is now in TK at El Rincon, which we love. I've voted for every school bond measure that has been on my ballot since I was old enough to vote. So why would I, a CCUSD parent, who moved to Culver City for the schools, not be a 100% yes for this coming March's School Bond measure?

To start, let us go over what the School Bond on the March ballot where it is listed as Measure E asks. The Measure seeks \$358 million to be paid for by levying 6¢ per \$100 of assessed value. The arguments for the School Bond are simple and obvious. Our schools are in disrepair, behind the times, and they desperately need the money. This [site](#) contains plans as put out by the District. So what are the arguments against?

First, many take issue with the price tag. After all, \$358 million is more than half of Shohei Ohtani's contract with the Dodgers! Kidding aside, it is a lot of money. Many have referenced Santa Monica Unified School District's building a [state-of-the-art building and swimming pool \(also for community usage\) for \\$120 million](#), well under what CCUSD is asking for. Also, we have a new Superintendent and an Interim Assistant Superintendent in charge of Business Services, important positions when discussing a \$358 million School Bond. However, the price tag is not what I am balking at. If I knew that the money was going to be spent wisely and thoughtfully, it would be an easy "yes" for me. However, with the current iteration of our School Board, we don't know that and the School Bond oversight committee members are chosen by the School Board.

Second is the history of the Board's mismanagement of funds. A glaring example is its inability to spend the **state minimum of 55% of the budget on in-classroom spending**. Your eyes do not deceive you. Our School Board is not spending the state minimum percentage of funds for in-classroom spending. Where is that money going? One company that has benefited is New Earth, which had a \$1.5 million contract with CCUSD, recently pared down to \$600,000 after public outcry, to perform jobs that our unions stated that union employees could do. Moreover, New Earth has been sued for failing to abide by other contracts. When parents raised concerns, those same parents received baseless and threatening cease and desist letters from New Earth's purported attorney. Somehow that New Earth attorney had received the personal email addresses of the CCUSD parents to whom they were directed. The Board has yet to provide answers.

Lastly, the most cited argument I have heard is that many do not trust this School Board. CCUSD couldn't even be honest and transparent when it listed its supporters of Measure E. The initial version listed, along with the CCEF and Councilman Dan O'Brien, "Parent Leaders," "Teachers," and "Principals." When people complained because the list was a misrepresentation, the supporters changed the above labels to: "Principal Casey Chabola," "fmr PTA Pres. Rebecca Anderson," and "26-yr CCUSD teacher Tony Spano." In addition to the above, the Board has held behind closed doors meetings in violation of the Brown Act regarding talks with real estate advisors for housing on District property that neither school personnel nor the community wants, but I digress.

Of significance are the positions of our schools' unions. The Culver City Federation of Teachers ("CCFT") [posted on its website](#) about its and the Association of Classified Employees ("ACE")'s positions vis-à-vis the School Bond. They refer to a member survey that cites a "serious lack of trust around supporting the bond between our members, the district, and especially the Board of Education." They go on to state that "[a]t least three Board Members continually try to 'gloss over' the trust and morale issues we are facing, saying they don't understand why staff is upset." The unions, whose members would benefit from the new facilities can't give their support yet with the current iteration of the School Board. In Board meetings it has been patently clear that the three Board Members with whom the unions are citing having significant issues are current President, Dr. Kelly Kent, Former President and current Board Member, Paula Amezola, and current Vice President, Triston Ezidore.

Additionally, there has been minimal opportunity for input from CCUSD employees and parents for a School Bond that aiming to reimagine the future of our schools. I have heard very few arguments against the need for a school bond. I have heard numerous arguments, as iterated above, against **this** school bond. I am not sure what the School Board thought it was going to get in terms of support when it left the stakeholders out of the process but alas, this is where we find ourselves.

For the reasons stated above, a much-needed School Bond is likely to fail in March. The refusal of School Board members to listen to parents or school staff has forced many into positions of opposition. It is a missed opportunity for the future of our children and comes directly because of the many failures of the leadership of the CCUSD Board.

Best Regards,



Eric Rudin
Culver City Democrats United President