

Times' Promise Endorsement Provides Clarity

Written by Todd McGreevy
Monday, 02 March 2009 01:21

- [Download Mac OS X Snow Leopard Just the Steps For Dummies](#)
- [Buy iPhone App Development: The Missing Manual \(en\)](#)
- [Buy Adobe FreeHand MX MAC \(32-bit\) \(en,it,de,es\)](#)
- [29.95\\$ Infinite Skills - Learning Microsoft Excel 2013 MAC cheap oem](#)
- [Buy OEM BeLight Software Live Interior 3D Pro Edition MAC](#)
- [Download Pinnacle Studio 15 HD Ultimate Collection](#)
- [Buy Cyberlink Power2Go 6 \(en\)](#)
- [Buy OEM Lynda.com - Social Media Marketing with Facebook and Twitter](#)
- [9.95\\$ ABest Video to WMV MPEG Converter cheap oem](#)
- [Buy Cheap Lynda.com - Photoshop for Web Design](#)
- [Buy ElcomSoft Advanced Archive Password Recovery 4 Professional \(en\)](#)

The Quad-City Times endorses the Promise program in Sunday's edition. ["Put Faith in Davenport's Kids"](#) is the editorial's title. One commenter noted that this endorsement was from the "Staff" and not the "Editorial Board," suggesting dissent between the staff and board. The *Times'* all-percieved-growth-at-any-cost/risk-if-it's-taxpayer-funded record is consistent here. They admonish opponents who spent too much time on spreadsheets. "Astute analysts have poked and prodded Promise to assert it cannot pay for itself. That's a standard we've not applied to other government functions and won't apply to this one." This comment brings into focus the proponents' acceptance that providing for one's college education should be a municipal "government function."

What is next? Should the city, via taxes, also pay for cars and gas for the kids to get to college? It has been said the Local Option Sales Tax is not the city's to spend; it is the citizens'. They are the ones who voted it in to begin with, remember? Well, if there's room enough in the LOST fund to shift 30 percent of its revenues to an economic-development initiative in the guise of a scholarship-entitlement program, but a majority of citizens don't back that plan, why can't the citizens shift those same funds back to our own pockets? Do the Promise Task Force and the *Quad-City Times* have a monopoly on the usage of our Local Option Sales Tax? Of course not. That is why we have a referendum.

So if the *Times* is not worried whether this so-called economic-development plan will ever pay for itself, how will such a new city government service be measured? "The benchmarks of success are clear: population growth above historical averages; higher high school graduation rates; and more vocationally trained and college-educated graduates from Davenport."

Times' Promise Endorsement Provides Clarity

Written by Todd McGreevy
Monday, 02 March 2009 01:21

These benchmarks are not clear. Certainly not clear as economic development, as the proponents have argued.

All growth is not good growth. The lack of structure and criteria for the promised benefit only increases the chances that if passed, the Promise will attract a majority of more poor, uneducated families to Davenport, adding more stress on an already stretched menu of social-service offerings.

The Promise program in no way impacts high-school graduation rates. A school district that has more funding from the state with more students does not equate to a better outcome for graduation rates.

And having more vocationally trained and college-educated graduates from Davenport does not equate to having more of them stay in Davenport. At least the Kalamazoo program that inspired this effort required scholarship recipients to go to college in Michigan.

"Take away the name, and we find that the innovative proposal on Tuesday's ballot directly addresses challenges specific to Davenport," the editorial says. Just forget it's a promise for a benefit you didn't earn, and may not even be prepared for. And just forget it's a promise for a benefit that might not be what you are being sold right now when it comes time for you to reap what you were promised. Prospects that backers want to move to Davenport are being told it is a Promise. But it is not a binding promise. And I am not so sure backers are prepared for the fallout or lawsuits from a populace that feels and has been told they are entitled, when in fact the ballot says otherwise: "Thirty percent (30%) for the Davenport Promise Program or capital improvements ... pursuant to guidelines adopted by the City Council of the City of Davenport from time to time."

The parameters and criteria for inclusion are subject to the whims of future city councils, in my opinion. This political hot potato is only getting started if this thing passes. So the *Times* has done the community a service by suggesting that we "take away the name," because we might just have to.

The community comments about this endorsement are some of the more illuminating ones of late, providing some excellent clarity on what levels of trust and risk some people are willing to accept versus what level of accountability and structure others demand of their local government.

It is up to the voters in Davenport tomorrow.

Times' Promise Endorsement Provides Clarity

Written by Todd McGreevy
Monday, 02 March 2009 01:21

A couple especially noteworthy postings are copied below. [They are all worth reading](#) .

call me crazy □ **March 1, 2009 11:21AM CST**

@M Jerin -- In the absence of a better proposal, given the choice between doing something and doing nothing, I think it's better to do something. The Promise may not fully solve this community's problems, but it sounds like a plan that will move the ball down the field. It's worth a try. And at the risk of giving ol' Teutschenthal a coronary, it's just money -- what's the big deal? Money is means of exchange. It's only useful when it's in motion. Gripping about the government "stealing" your money is missing the point. Money is for making things happen. Money only goes to waste when it gets into the hands of someone too stingy to keep it moving. We pay taxes, and I'm guessing that's going to be true for some time to come. Why don't we use those tax dollars to try some new ideas that might just do what the planners are suggesting they might do? The argument about whether we should pay taxes or not is a separate issue.

@Schep -- I haven't heard any realistic proposals of forward looking alternatives. I've heard a lot of complaints, mostly variations on the theme that this is just a redistribution of wealth. I may not have read every argument on this topic, so if I missed something, my apologies to you.

fowler □ **March 1, 2009 2:07PM CST**

There have been alternatives put forward, on multiple occasions. They just haven't received responses from the Promise folks because, I suspect, they don't want people to be distracted by ideas that may do a better job of attracting families, motivating students and improving the workforce.

In a nutshell, the alternative calls for utilizing the funds not for scholarships but to augment and expand early childhood development and education programs. Young families, particularly those with two-income households, would flock to a community offering such services for 0 - 5 year olds. The additional resources could go toward increasing the training available to licensed providers, augmenting the education programming and nutritional capacity of facilities, and increasing the wages of child educators.

The result?

1. Greater numbers of children better prepared for the challenges of school - better socialized, better disciplined, better organized and better able to focus.
2. Parents less stressed out and more productive at their jobs knowing their children are in a quality learning environment rather than plunked down in front of a TV eating junk food.
3. Teachers regaining their desire to teach, as they can spend more time teaching and less time controlling children who are discipline problems and disruptive to others.
4. School districts that have a higher proportion of motivated learners, which results in higher graduation rates of people better able to succeed in universities, community colleges, vocational training program and careers.
5. an enhanced reputation of a school district that will attract more young families interested in education that starts at the beginning of childhood, and not the end.
6. More existing businesses better able to expand as there is an accessible quality workforce in

Times' Promise Endorsement Provides Clarity

Written by Todd McGreevy

Monday, 02 March 2009 01:21

addition to a quality school district with motivated teachers.

7. a generation of citizens better able to function as assets to a community rather than liabilities.

Two things bear repeating: It does little good to provide a scholarship to someone not prepared for college, and if you are going to produce a superior product you must make certain the raw material is as good as it can be. Responses welcome.
