Prop 38: Abandons Neighborhood Schools

To the editor:
Our public schools are starting a new year on their most optimistic note in decades. A broad array of reforms are beginning to show results. Statewide, Stanford 9 scores in elementary grades in math, language skills, reading and spelling have gone up each of the last three years. SAT math scores are at their highest level in 30 years. Classrooms have new money – thanks to the state budget surplus – to spend on textbooks, computers and helping students master the basics.

The only sour note this fall is Prop 38, the school voucher initiative. I think it is the biggest threat facing education in California. It abandons our neighborhood schools by draining away their funding.

The creator and financier of Prop 38, Silicon Valley billionaire Tim Draper, hopes his private voucher schools will eventually replace public schools. What a disaster that would be!

Imagine if all 6 million California students attended Prop 38 voucher schools. Since these schools would be totally unregulated, with no required standards, it would be impossible to measure the academic progress of California students. Voucher schools would not have to disclose how they were spending tax dollars. We would have publicly supported schools catering to every off-beat cult imaginable.

Our public schools are on the right track. Let’s not derail them with Prop 38.

To the editor:
Election Day will not only give us a new president, it will determine the future of education in California.

Prop 38, the school voucher initiative, asks voters to radically change the way we educate our children. It creates a system of unregulated private voucher schools at the expense of our neighborhood schools.

This is why a broad coalition, which includes parents, educators, businesses, ethnic community leaders, public officials, and community-based organizations, is working to defeat Prop 38. It is also why the list of Prop 38 supporters easily fits on an index card. Longtime advocates of school vouchers have turned their backs on Prop 38 because it is too extreme and will not help students in low-performing public schools.

I find Prop 38 particularly objectionable because it allows voucher schools to discriminate against children for almost any reason, including gender, religion, language ability, ability to pay and academic or physical ability. Prop 38 is a false promise for children who do not fit a voucher school’s profile.
Prop 38: Provides No Accountability To Taxpayers

To the editor:
A new school year is underway and the outlook for students is the best in years.
I believe the biggest threat to improving our public schools is Prop 38, the school voucher initiative. According to an editorial in the San Diego Union Tribune opposing Prop 38, the initiative would add $3.2 billion to the state budget just to provide $4,000 vouchers to the students already enrolled in public schools. Public schools would receive none of this huge sum. In fact, Prop 38 would drain away funds from our neighborhood schools leaving them with less money for computers, textbooks and teachers.

Taxpayers, too, would feel Prop 38’s sting. They are the ones who would pick up the $3.2 billion tab. And, because Prop 38 provides no accountability to taxpayers, they would not be able to find out if voucher schools were spending their money in educationally sound ways.

Improved student test scores on the Stanford 9 and SAT show that we are on the right track to better schools. Abandoning our public schools now is indefensible. I am voting “no” on Prop 38.

To the editor:
As a new school year gets underway a Gallup poll shows that 75 percent of Americans support efforts to improve existing public schools over paying for vouchers. I hope California voters show their support for improving public schools by voting against Prop 38, the school voucher initiative. It will siphon away funds from our neighborhood schools and devastate reforms that are producing improved test scores on SAT and Stanford 9 tests.

The California Budget Project says Prop 38 will increase state costs for K-12 education by as much as $3.9 billion. This is a huge new expenditure that the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association says will raise taxes. Most of this increase will be used to provide vouchers for children already in private schools.

What assurances can Tim Draper, the Silicon Valley billionaire who is financing Prop 38, give us that his voucher schools will provide a quality education? His initiative does not require financial audits, and teachers in voucher schools would not need to have credentials or even college degrees. The only assurances I have gotten so far is that Prop 38 will abandon our neighborhood schools and provide no accountability to taxpayers.
To the editor:
I am very concerned about the negative effects of Proposition 38 on our neighborhood school. My children attend this school and I am very satisfied with the quality of their education. The latest Stanford 9 test scores were up in every grade level, which reinforces the high quality work my child brings home.

Prop 38 removes funding from public schools while it gives $4,000 vouchers to those now attending private schools. This is very shortsighted. Why should we support an initiative that would harm our public schools? I am definitely voting against Prop 38.

To the editor:
I am not at all interested in sending my children to a voucher school, which is why I am voting against Proposition 38. Voucher schools would take tax money but would not be required to follow any standards. The state has a strict teacher licensing system for public schools, but voucher schools could hire teachers without a teaching credential or even a college diploma. I think this is the height of folly. We should give our public schools all the support we can, not spend billions to create an unaccountable system of voucher schools.

To the editor:
Thanks to the hard work of the teachers in our district, student test scores are improving each year. Because I feel that my son/daughter is getting a good education, I am a strong supporter of our public schools. I am concerned that if Proposition 38 passes, voucher schools will open and drain funding from public schools. We will have no assurance that students in voucher schools are getting a quality education. They won’t have to give the tests that public schools do and they won’t have to hire teachers with credentials or college degrees.

We need to stay focused on improving public schools, not on creating an expensive voucher school system. I am voting “no” on Proposition 38.