**A Backpack Can Make a Difference!**

Lots of demo and new construction is happening at our schools. Heavy equipment and contractors are working full-time as a result of the recent Bond Measures passed by our community. It is exciting to see hundreds of millions of dollars being used to renew and rebuild our schools. Gresham High School is especially visible from both sides of the campus. You can see the project in process. The rebuilding and remodeling of Reynolds High School is visible driving by as well. Powell Valley Elementary is on my way to work and home each day. I am amazed at the progress made daily!  We will truly have schools that will be the envy of the entire Metro area, if not the entire State of Oregon.

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With that said, we all know that the funds to make the construction a reality comes from property taxes. While 40% of that revenue comes from residential property taxes the remaining 60% is derived from the business and commercial real estate property taxes.  As a result, businesses have seen a substantial increase in their cost for doing business. Even if they rent, those costs are usually passed on to the renter/business owner.  So, when shopping for “Back to School” items remember it is local businesses that are helping to fund all these construction projects that will benefit our children for years to come.  Shoes, backpacks, binders, pants, shirts, coats, pencils, markers, lunch boxes, can be purchased locally. Those purchases help pay the taxes that support the bonds. Buying a backpack full of back to school items at local businesses will help those businesses prosper. Then they can continue to support education as well as the extracurricular activities that are sponsored by these same proprietors. Continue to support our schools by shopping as local as possible. Go backpack shopping in your own back yard.  **“Try Local First”**!