A G E N D A
NOTICE OF SPECIAL
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
RIVERSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board Room
6735 Magnolia Avenue, Riverside, California
February 16, 2016
8:00 a.m.

BOARD OF EDUCATION:
MR. TOM HUNT, PRESIDENT
MR. BRENT LEE, VICE PRESIDENT
MRS. PATRICIA LOCK-DAWSON, CLERK
MRS. KATHY ALLAVIE AND DR. ANGELOV FAROOQ, MEMBERS

You are hereby notified that the Board of Education of the Riverside Unified School District will hold a special meeting at 8:00 a.m. Tuesday, February 16, 2016, at the Board Room, Riverside Adult School – 6735 Magnolia Avenue, Riverside, California.

The only business to be transacted at this meeting shall include discussion and/or action on the following items:

Upon request, this agenda will be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with disabilities, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Any person with a disability who requires a modification of accommodation in order to participate in a meeting should direct such request to the District Superintendent at 788-7135, Ext. 80402 at least 48 hours before the meeting, if possible.

As required by Government Code 54957.5, agenda materials can be reviewed by the public at the District's administrative offices, Reception Area, First Floor, 3380 14th Street, Riverside, California.

Members of the public will be provided an opportunity to directly address the Governing Board about an item described in this Notice before or during consideration of that agenda item, as facilitated by the Board President. Presentations should be limited to three minutes or less. Individuals with questions or comments on general School District issues not on the agenda for this Special Meeting may address those issues at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Governing Board.

OPEN SESSION

CALL MEETING TO ORDER – 8:00 a.m.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SECTION A – REPORT/DISCUSSION	Oral Report Assigned To	For Board	Page
A.1 Bond Feasibility Tracking Study – Survey Report	Asst. Supt. Operations	Report	1-60

Staff and our survey consultant will present the findings from the feasibility tracking survey that was conducted in late January 2016.

Moved_____ Seconded_____ Vote_____

SECTION B – CONCLUSION

B.1 Board Members' Comments

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2016. The meeting will be called to order at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room at 6735 Magnolia Avenue, Riverside, California. The Board will adjourn to Closed Session from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. at which time the Board of Education will reconvene in Open Session in the Board Room at 6735 Magnolia Avenue, Riverside, California.

Copies to: Board Members
News Media

Posted 9:00 a.m., Thursday, February 11, 2016

Riverside Unified School District

3380 14th Street • Riverside, CA • 92501

Board Meeting Agenda
February 16, 2016

Topic:	Bond Feasibility Tracking Study – Survey Report
Presented by:	Kirk R. Lewis, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Operations
Responsible Cabinet Member:	Kirk R. Lewis, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Operations
Type of Item:	Report
Short Description:	Staff and our survey consultant will present the findings from the feasibility tracking survey that was conducted in late January 2016.

DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM:

This bond feasibility tracking study is a follow-up to the initial baseline feasibility study conducted in June 2015. The primary purpose of this tracking study was to produce an up-to-date, statistically reliable evaluation of voters' interest in supporting a local bond measure.

Specifically, the tracking survey was designed to:

- Gauge current support for a local bond measure to fund the repair and improvement of school facilities and classroom technology,
- Identify the types of projects that voters are most interested in funding,
- Gauge how information affects support for the measure,
- Estimate support for the measure once voters are presented with the types of information they will likely be exposed to during the election cycle, and
- Provide guidance as to how to structure a measure so that it is consistent with the community's priorities and expressed needs.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of Education ask clarifying questions and discuss the findings of the survey report.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL: Bond Feasibility Tracking Study Survey Report and Presentation.

Attached: Yes

Bond Feasibility Tracking Study
Survey Report

prepared for the
Riverside Unified School District

February 4, 2016

TrueNorth Research | 1061 Neptune Avenue Encinitas CA 92024 760.632.9900 www.tn-research.com

TBWB Strategies

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INTRODUCTION

Located in Riverside County, the Riverside Unified School District is committed to providing a well-balanced educational program that nurtures academic growth in a safe, modern learning environment. Although the District has award-winning schools and has an impressive track record of academic improvement, the quality and condition of school facilities has not kept pace with this progress. Indeed, many of the schools in the district were built more than 40 years ago and require extensive repairs including fixing deteriorating roofs, plumbing, and electrical systems, making seismic safety improvements, as well as upgrades to classroom technology, safety and security systems. To adequately fund its ongoing facility needs and access State matching funds when they become available, the District will need the financial support of the communities it serves through the passage of a local bond measure.

MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH The primary purpose of this tracking study was to produce an up-to-date, statistically reliable evaluation of voters' interest in supporting a local bond measure to partially fund the school facility repairs and technology improvements noted above. Additionally, should the District decide to move forward with a bond measure, the survey data provides guidance as to how to structure a measure so that it is consistent with the community's priorities and expressed needs. Specifically, the tracking survey was designed to:

- Gauge current support for a local bond measure to fund the repair and improvement of school facilities and classroom technology
- Identify the types of projects that voters are most interested in funding, should the measure pass
- Expose voters to arguments in favor of—and against—the proposed bond measure to gauge how information affects support for the measure, *and*
- Estimate support for the measure once voters are presented with the types of information they will likely be exposed to during the election cycle.

It is important to note at the outset that voters' opinions about tax measures are often somewhat fluid, especially when the amount of information they initially have about a measure is limited. How voters think and feel about a measure today may not be the same way they think and feel once they have had a chance to hear more information about the measure in the months leading up to election day. Accordingly, to accurately assess the feasibility of passing a bond measure, it was important that in addition to measuring *current* opinions about the measure (Question 2), the survey expose respondents to the types of information voters are likely to encounter in future months—including arguments in favor (Question 7) and opposed (Question 9) to the measure—and gauge how this information ultimately impacts their voting decision (Questions 8 & 10).

OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY For a full discussion of the research methods and techniques used in this study, turn to *Methodology* on page 28. In brief, the survey followed a mixed-method design that employed multiple recruiting methods (telephone and email) and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). The survey was administered to a random sample of 533 registered voters in the Riverside Unified School District who are likely to participate in the November 2016 election, with a subset who are also likely to participate in the lower turn-

out June 2016 primary election. Administered in English and Spanish languages between January 16 and January 28, 2016, the average interview lasted 17 minutes.

ORGANIZATION OF REPORT This report is designed to meet the needs of readers who prefer a summary of the findings as well as those who are interested in the details of the results. For those who seek an overview of the findings, the sections titled *Just the Facts* and *Conclusions* are for you. They provide a summary of the most important factual findings of the survey in bullet-point format and a discussion of their implications. For the interested reader, this section is followed by a more detailed question-by-question discussion of the results from the survey by topic area (see *Table of Contents*), as well as a description of the methodology employed for collecting and analyzing the data. And, for the truly ambitious reader, the questionnaire used for the interviews is contained at the back of this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 30) and a complete set of crosstabulations for the survey results is contained in Appendix A.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS True North thanks the Riverside Unified School District for the opportunity to assist the District in this important effort. District staffs' collective expertise, local knowledge, and insight improved the overall quality of the research presented here. A special thanks also to Jared Boigon (TBWB Strategies) and Adam Bauer (Fieldman, Rolapp & Associates) for assisting in the design of the study.

DISCLAIMER The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the authors (Dr. Timothy McLarney and Richard Sarles) at True North Research, Inc. and not necessarily those of the Riverside Unified School District. Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

ABOUT TRUE NORTH True North is a full-service survey research firm that is dedicated to providing public agencies with a clear understanding of the values, perceptions, priorities and concerns of their residents and voters. Through designing and implementing scientific surveys, focus groups and one-on-one interviews, as well as expert interpretation of the findings, True North helps its clients to move with confidence when making strategic decisions in a variety of areas—such as planning, policy evaluation, performance management, establishing fiscal priorities, passing revenue measures, and developing effective public information campaigns.

During their careers, Dr. McLarney and Mr. Sarles have designed and conducted over 900 survey research studies for public agencies, including more than 300 revenue measure feasibility studies. Of the measures that have gone to ballot based on Dr. McLarney's recommendation, more than 93% have been successful. In total, the research that Dr. McLarney has conducted has led to over $24 billion in successful local revenue measures.

JUST THE FACTS

The following section is an outline of the main factual findings from the survey. For the reader's convenience, we have organized the findings according to the section titles used in the body of this report. Thus, if you would like to learn more about a particular finding, simply turn to the appropriate report section.

IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES

- When presented with a list of seven specific issues and asked to rate the importance of each, maintaining the quality of education in local schools received the highest percentage of respondents indicating that the issue was either extremely or very important (90%), followed closely by reducing crime and improving public safety (86%), and creating jobs and improving the local economy (86%).
- Given the purpose of this study, it is instructive to note that preventing local tax increases (61%) was rated lower in importance than maintaining the quality of education in local schools (90%) and the issue of repairing and renovating aging school facilities (67%).

INITIAL BALLOT TEST

- With only the information provided in the ballot language, 70% of likely November 2016 voters indicated that they would support the proposed $392 million school bond measure, whereas 21% stated they would oppose the measure and 9% were unsure.

TAX THRESHOLD

- At the highest tax rate tested ($59 per $100,000 of assessed valuation), 51% of voters indicated that they would support the bond. Incremental reductions in the tax rate resulted in incremental increases in support for the measure, with 60% of voters indicating that they would support the bond at the lowest tax rate tested ($39 per $100,000 of assessed valuation).
- When the highest tax rate ($59 per $100,000 of assessed valuation) was translated into an annual cost for the median home owner ($127 per year), 59% of those surveyed indicated that they would support the bond.
- When the lowest tax rate of $39 per $100,000 of assessed valuation was translated into an annual cost for the median home owner ($84 per year), 62% of those surveyed indicated that they would support the bond.

PROJECTS

When presented with a list of 11 projects and improvements that could be funded by the bond, voters were most interested in using the money to:

- Repair or replace deteriorating roofs, plumbing, and out-dated electrical systems where needed.
- Retrofit older school buildings so they are earthquake safe.
- Provide classrooms and labs for career and technology education classes so students are prepared for college and good paying jobs in fields like health sciences, engineering, technology, robotics, and skilled trades.

- Improve student safety and campus security systems, including security lighting, security cameras, emergency communications systems, smoke detectors and fire alarms.

POSITIVE ARGUMENTS

When presented with arguments in favor of the measure, voters found the following arguments to be the most persuasive:

- *Many Riverside schools were built more than 40 years ago and need facility repairs and technology upgrades. It's time to make essential repairs and upgrades so that these schools can serve our community well for the decades to come.*
- *Our students deserve to have the same educational opportunities as others in the region. We need to upgrade our schools, facilities, and classroom technology to keep pace.*
- *This measure requires a clear system of accountability, including a project list detailing exactly how the money will be used, a Citizens' Oversight Committee, and independent audits to ensure the money is spent properly.*

INTERIM BALLOT TEST

- After being presented with potential tax rates, projects that could be funded, as well as arguments in favor of the school bond measure, overall support for the measure among likely November 2016 voters remained stable at 70%, with 38% of voters indicating that they would *definitely* vote yes on the measure. Approximately 23% of respondents opposed the measure at this point in the survey, and an additional 7% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.

NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS

Of the arguments in opposition to the measure, voters found the following arguments to be the most persuasive:

- *People are having a hard time making ends meet with high unemployment and a sluggish economy. Now is NOT the time to be raising taxes.*
- *The District already passed a 175 million dollar bond to fix our schools—now they want more money? That's not fair to taxpayers.*
- *Don't be fooled. Including interest, this bond will cost taxpayers nearly a billion dollars.*

FINAL BALLOT TEST

- After being presented with projects that could be funded by the measure, possible tax rates, as well as arguments in favor and against the measure, support for the school bond measure was found among 64% of likely November 2016 voters, with 30% indicating that they would *definitely* support the measure. Approximately 30% of respondents were opposed to the measure at the Final Ballot Test, and 6% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.

CITY MEASURE

- A majority (56%) of voters indicated they would support a $150 million bond to build a new police station and 9-1-1 emergency response facilities, expand the city library system, construct an Event Center downtown, and repair city streets, potholes and storm drains, whereas 25% were opposed and 9% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.

Conclusions

The bulk of this report is devoted to conveying the details of the study findings. In this section, however, we attempt to 'see the forest through the trees' and note how the collective results of the tracking survey answer the key questions that motivated the research. The following conclusions are based on True North's and TBWB's interpretations of the survey results and the firms' collective experience conducting revenue measure studies for public agencies throughout the State.

Should the Riverside Unified School District proceed with plans to place a bond measure before voters in 2016?

Yes. Voters generally have a positive opinion of the quality of education provided by the Riverside Unified School District and they consider maintaining the quality of education in local public schools to be the *most* important issue facing the community—more important than all other benchmark issues tested including preventing local tax increases. These sentiments translate into strong natural support (70%) for a $392 million bond measure to repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems, improve student safety, campus security and seismic safety, and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades.

The results of this tracking study are consistent with those of the baseline study conducted in 2015. The research continues to indicate that—if structured appropriately and combined with a broad-based and effective public education effort—the proposed school bond measure has a good chance of passage in 2016.

Having recommended that the District move forward, it is important to note that this recommendation to take the next steps toward placing a measure on the ballot comes with several qualifications and conditions. Indeed, although the results are promising, all revenue measures must overcome challenges prior to being successful. The proposed measure is no exception. The following paragraphs discuss some of the challenges and the next steps that True North and TBWB recommend.

How does the election date affect support for the proposed measure?

Different election dates have different turnouts, different electorates, and—by extension—different opportunities and challenges. When compared to the November 2016 election, for example, the June 2016 election turnout will be substantially smaller and have a somewhat different demographic profile. These demographic differences translate into substantially different levels of support for the proposed bond measure.

Among the larger number of voters (75,325) expected to participate in the November 2016 election, 70% supported the bond measure on the natural. By comparison, the corresponding figure among the 33,574 high propensity voters who are expected to participate in the lower-turn-

out June 2016 primary was approximately 6% lower at 64%. This difference in support for the proposed bond measure between the two electorates increased somewhat over the course of the interview, with the likely June 2016 electorate exhibiting just 56% support at the Final Ballot Test, eight percentage points lower than that expressed by likely November 2016 voters.

In addition to the difference in support for the bond at the ballot tests, likely June 2016 voters were also more sensitive to the tax rate associated with the bond. For example, whereas 51% of likely November voters were willing to support the bond at a tax rate of $53 per $100,000 of assessed valuation, the corresponding figure among likely June 2016 voters was 47%. This, in combination with the lower levels of support at the ballot tests, means that the tax rate and total bond amount for a measure placed on the June ballot would need to be substantially lower than what can be placed on the November ballot.

Given the substantially higher level of voter support for the bond among likely November 2016 voters, the higher tax rate and bond amount that can be supported in that election environment, as well as the potential for the June 2016 primary election to have a more conservative turnout profile and tone than that modeled in this study if the Republican Party presidential nomination remains contested at that point, we strongly recommend that the District focus on a November 2016 election.

What projects do voters identify as priorities for a future bond?

One of the goals of this study was to identify voters' preferences with respect to how the proceeds of a successful bond should be spent. This information can be used to ensure that the resulting bond project list and the measure are consistent with voters' priorities.

Riverside USD voters clearly see a need for the proposed projects and improvements that could be funded by the bond. In fact, all projects tested were favored by more than two-thirds of voters surveyed. That said, voters expressed the *greatest* interest in using bond proceeds to repair or replace deteriorating roofs, plumbing, and out-dated electrical systems where needed, retrofit older school buildings so they are earthquake safe, provide classrooms and labs for career and technology education classes so students are prepared for college and good paying jobs in fields like health sciences, engineering, technology, robotics, and skilled trades, and improve student safety and campus security systems.

How will the tax rate affect support for the measure?

Naturally, the willingness of voters to support a specific revenue measure is contingent, in part, on the tax rate associated with a measure. The higher the rate, all other things being equal, the lower the level of aggregate support that can be expected. It is important that the rate be set at a level that the necessary proportion of voters view as affordable.

As was found in the baseline study conducted in 2015, one of the clear patterns in the tracking survey data is that some voters are price sensitive with respect to the proposed school bond. A significant percentage of voters who were initially supportive of the $392 million bond, for example, later hesitated when presented with the individual tax rates that could be associated with the bond.

The sensitivity of some voters to the individual tax rates indicates that price will be an important factor shaping the measure's potential for success. Voter sensitivity regarding the "price" of the measure was partially overcome when the tax rates were converted to an annual total tax for the median home owner, as well as once voters were exposed to additional information about what the measure would accomplish and why it is needed. Nevertheless, it will be important to keep the tax rate within voters' comfort zone.

True North, TBWB, and Fieldman, Rolapp & Associates will continue to work closely with the District in the coming months to select the appropriate rate and corresponding bond amount as the District proceeds. According to the findings of this tracking survey, we recommend at this point that the District consider a tax rate in the range of $39 to $49 per $100,000 of assessed valuation assuming a November 2016 ballot. If the District were to opt for a June 2016 election (not recommended as explained above), the recommended tax rate should not exceed $34 $100,000 of assessed valuation.

How might a public information campaign affect support for the proposed measure?

As noted in the body of this report, individuals' opinions about revenue measures are often not rigid, especially when the amount of information presented to the public on a measure has been limited. Thus, in addition to measuring current support for the measure, one of the goals of this study was to explore how the introduction of additional information about the measure may affect voters' opinions about the bond.

It is clear from the survey results that voters' opinions about the proposed school bond measure are somewhat sensitive to the nature—and amount—of information that they have about the measure. Information about the specific improvements that could be funded by the bond, as well as arguments in favor of the measure, were found by many voters to be compelling reasons to support the measure. Moreover, this information played an important role in limiting the erosion of support for the measure once respondents were exposed to the types of opposition arguments they will likely encounter during an election cycle.

Accordingly, one of the keys to building and *sustaining* support for the school bond measure will be the presence of an effective, well-organized public outreach effort and independent campaign to that focuses on the need for the measure as well as the many benefits that it will bring.

How might the economic or political climate alter support for the measure?

A survey is a snapshot in time—which means the results of this study and the conclusions noted above must be viewed in light of the current economic and political climates. Despite ongoing concerns about the economy and high cost of living, voter support for the proposed bond measure continues to be strong, which speaks volumes about the value that Riverside voters place on having high quality schools. Nevertheless, should the economy and/or political climate continue to improve, support for the measure could increase. Conversely, negative economic and/or political developments, especially at the local level, could dampen support for the measure below what was recorded in this study.

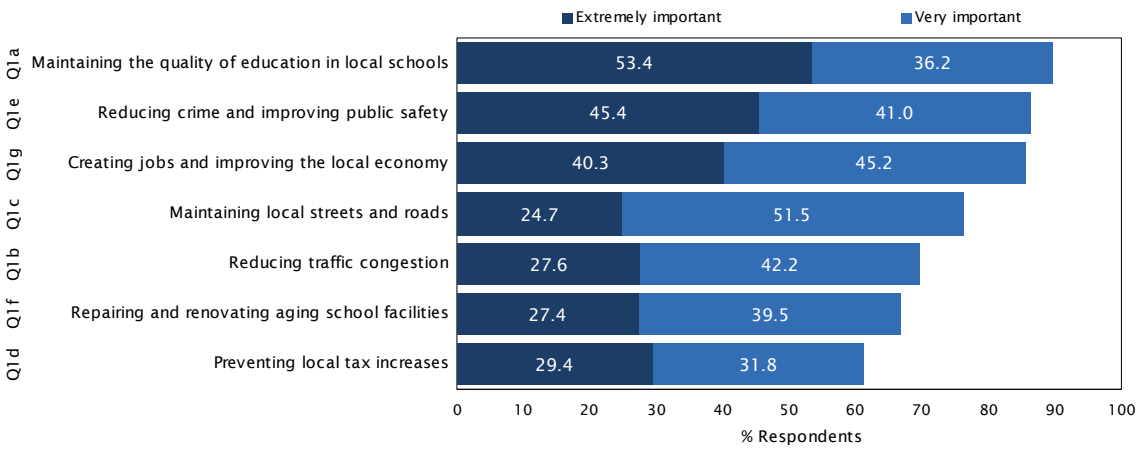
Importance of Issues

The first substantive question of the survey presented respondents with several issues facing residents in the District and asked them to rate the importance of each issue. Because the same response scale was used for each issue, the results provide an insight into how important each issue is on a scale of importance *as well as* how each issue ranks in importance relative to the other issues tested. To avoid a systematic position bias, the order in which the issues were presented was randomized for each respondent.

Figure 1 presents the issues tested, as well as the importance assigned to each by survey participants, sorted by order of importance.[1] Overall, maintaining the quality of education in local schools received the highest percentage of respondents indicating that the issue was either extremely or very important (90%), followed closely by reducing crime and improving public safety (86%), and creating jobs and improving the local economy (86%). Given the purpose of this study, it is instructive to note that preventing local tax increases (61%) was rated lower in importance than maintaining the quality of education in local schools (90%) and the issue of repairing and renovating aging school facilities (67%).

Question 1 *To begin, I'm going to read a list of issues facing your community and for each one, please tell me how important you feel the issue is to you, using a scale of extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not at all important.*

Figure 1 Importance of Issues



1. Issues were ranked based on the percentage of respondents who indicated that the issue was either *extremely* important or *very* important.

Initial Ballot Test

The primary research objective of this tracking survey was to provide an up-to-date estimate of voters' support for a bond measure that would raise $392 million to repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems, improve student safety, campus security, and seismic safety, and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades. To this end, Question 2 was designed to take an early assessment of voters' support for the proposed measure.

The motivation for placing Question 2 up-front in the survey is twofold. First, voter support for a measure can often depend on the amount of information they have about a measure. At this point in the survey, the respondent has not been provided information about the proposed measure beyond what is presented in the ballot language. This situation is analogous to a voter casting a ballot with limited knowledge about the measure, such as what might occur in the absence of an effective education campaign. Question 2—also known as the Initial Ballot Test—is thus a good measure of voter support for the proposed measure *as it is today*, on the natural. Because the Initial Ballot Test provides a gauge of natural support for the measure, it also serves a second purpose in that it provides a useful baseline from which to judge the impact of various information items conveyed later in the survey on voter support for the measure.

Question 2 *Your household is within the Riverside Unified School District. Later this year, voters in the District may be asked to vote on a local ballot measure. Let me read you a summary of the measure. In order to repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities, including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems; improve student safety, campus security, and seismic safety; and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades, shall the Riverside Unified School District issue 392 million dollars in bonds at legal interest rates, with independent citizen oversight, no money for administrator salaries, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?*

Figure 2 Initial Ballot Test

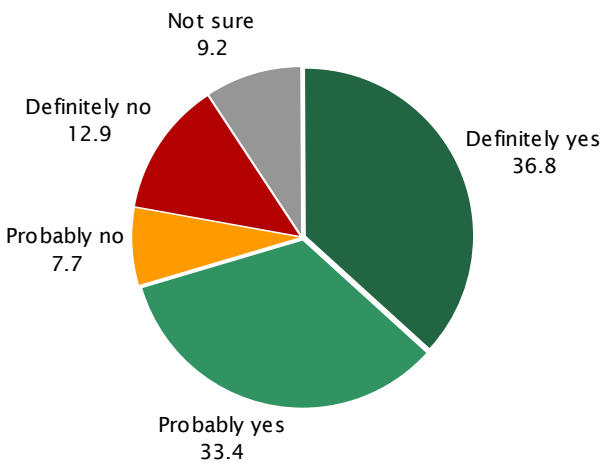


Figure 2 presents the results of the Initial Ballot Test among likely November 2016 voters. Overall, 70% of respondents indicated that they would definitely or probably support the measure at this stage in the survey, whereas 21% stated that they would oppose the measure and 9% were unsure or unwilling to share their vote choice. For Proposition 39 school bonds in California, support at the Initial Ballot Test was approximately 15% above the 55% super-majority support level required for the measure to pass.

SUPPORT BY SUBGROUPS For the interested reader, Table 1 shows how support for the measure at the Initial Ballot Test varied by key demographic traits. The blue column (Approximate % of Likely Voter Universe) indicates the percentage of the electorate that each subgroup category comprises.

Similar to the baseline survey conducted in 2015, initial support for the proposed bond measure in the current tracking survey was widespread, exceeding 55% in every identified subgroup except one (dual Republican households). It's worth noting, moreover, that initial support for the bond among the subset of high propensity voters who are also likely to participate in the June 2016 election was significantly lower (64%) when compared to that found among the larger group of likely November 2016 voters (70%).

TABLE 1 DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SUPPORT AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST

		Approximate % of Voter Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	% Not sure
Overall		100	70.1	9.2
Child Under 19 in Hsld (QD1)	Yes	29	71.5	8.2
	No	71	69.5	9.5
Household Party Type	Single dem	18	86.1	11.5
	Dual dem	12	80.2	11.7
	Single rep	14	60.2	5.8
	Dual rep	17	48.2	12.1
	Other	14	66.0	6.3
	Mixed	26	76.4	7.9
Age	18 to 29	15	87.8	10.6
	30 to 39	13	58.6	17.1
	40 to 49	11	79.6	1.7
	50 to 64	37	63.4	6.2
	65 or older	24	71.8	12.1
Registration Year	2016 to 2009	46	74.8	8.0
	2008 to 2005	18	62.1	15.3
	2004 to 2001	14	67.0	8.3
	2000 or before	22	69.0	7.3
District Child in Hsld (QD2,3)	Yes, current	22	75.9	8.2
	Yes, past	48	71.4	7.2
	No, never	40	68.4	10.3
Party	Democrat	39	84.1	11.1
	Republican	41	57.3	8.7
	Other / DTS	20	69.5	6.6
Homeowner on Voter File	Yes	63	66.7	10.8
	No	37	76.2	6.4
Gender	Male	50	73.0	6.6
	Female	50	67.6	11.7
Likely to Vote by Mail	Yes	33	71.6	9.0
	No	67	69.4	9.3
Likely June 2016 Voter	Yes	45	64.0	10.8
	No	55	75.0	8.0
Hispanic Surname	Yes	18	79.5	12.4
	No	82	68.1	8.5

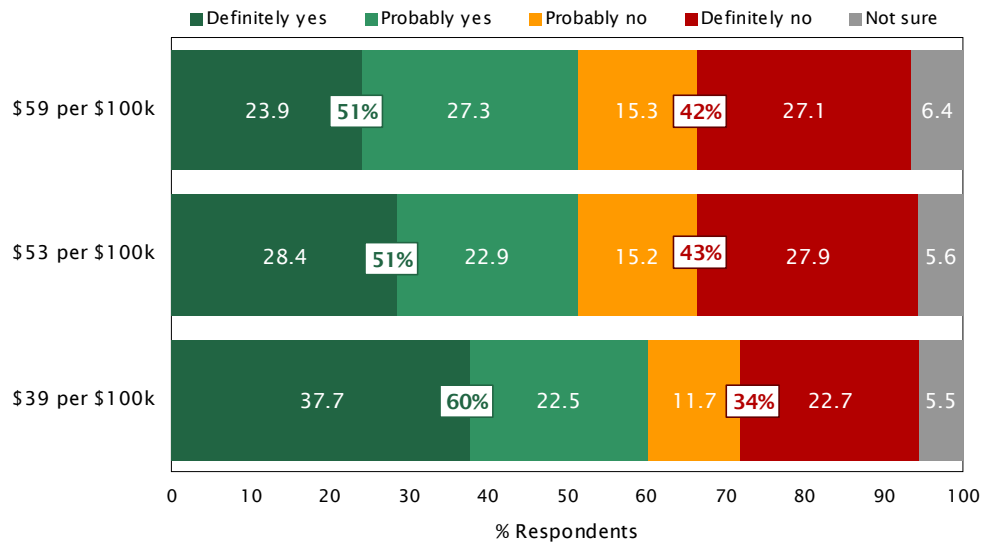
Tax Threshold

Naturally, voter support for a revenue measure is often contingent on the cost of the measure. The higher the tax rate, all other things being equal, the less likely a voter is to support the measure. One of the goals of this study was thus to gauge the impact that changes in the tax rate can be expected to have on voter support for the proposed school bond measure.

Questions 3, 4 and 5 were designed to do just that. Respondents were first instructed that the amount each home owner will pay if the measure passes depends on the *assessed* value of their home—not the market value. Voters were then presented with the highest tax rate ($59 per $100,000 assessed valuation) and asked if they would support the proposed measure at that rate. If a respondent did not answer 'definitely yes', they were asked whether they would support the measure at the next lowest tax rate. The three tax rates tested using this methodology and the percentage of respondents who indicated they would vote in favor of the measure at each rate are shown in Figure 3.

Question 3 *The amount each home owner will pay if the school bond passes depends on the assessed value of their home - not the current market value of the home. If you heard that the annual property taxes on your home would increase: _____ per 100,000 (one hundred thousand) dollars of assessed valuation, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure?*

Figure 3 Tax Threshold



The most obvious pattern revealed in Figure 3 is that voters are somewhat price sensitive when it comes to their support for the proposed school bond measure. As the cost of the measure to their household increases, support for the bond decreases. At the highest tax rate tested ($59 per $100,000 of assessed valuation), 51% of voters indicated that they would support the bond. Incremental reductions in the tax rate resulted in incremental increases in support for the measure, with 60% of voters indicating that they would support the bond at the lowest tax rate tested ($39 per $100,000 of assessed valuation). Support at each tax rate among the subset of likely June 2016 voters was 3% to 5% lower than that expressed by likely November 2016 voters.

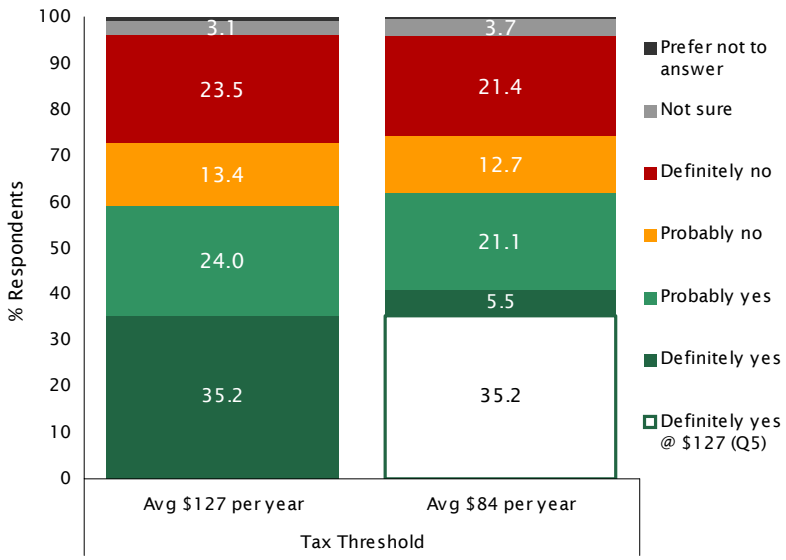
ANNUALIZED IMPACT FOR MEDIAN HOME OWNER Because voters occasionally overestimate their current assessed valuation and/or have difficulty translating the tax rate into an annualized total, the survey also tested a different approach for conveying the tax rate information. In addition to presenting a rate as described above, voters were also provided with the total annual cost of the bond for the median homeowner (see Questions 4 & 5) based on the $59 and $39 tax rates tested in Question 3. The results to this approach are presented in Figure 4.

Voters generally respond more positively when the cost of the measure is expressed as an annual total for the median home owner when compared with a rate per $100,000 of assessed valuation. At the highest tax *rate* tested ($59 per $100,000 of assessed valuation), 51% of voters indicated that they would support the proposed bond measure. When that rate was translated into an annual cost for the median home owner (approximately $127 per year), 59% of those surveyed indicated that they would support the bond. The difference in support for the bond was more modest when the tax rate of $39 per $100,000 AV (60%) was translated to an annualized total of $84 for the median home owner (62%).[2]

Question 4 *Let me put it another way: If you knew that this measure would cost the typical home owner in the Riverside Unified School District about $127 per year, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure?*

Question 5 *If you knew that this measure would cost the typical home owner about $84 per year, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure?*

FIGURE 4 SUPPORT FOR MEASURE AT $127 & $84 PER YEAR



2. Support for the proposed bond was lower among the subset of Likely June voters at each annualized amount tested in Questions 4 and 5 (54% at $127 and 58% at $84).

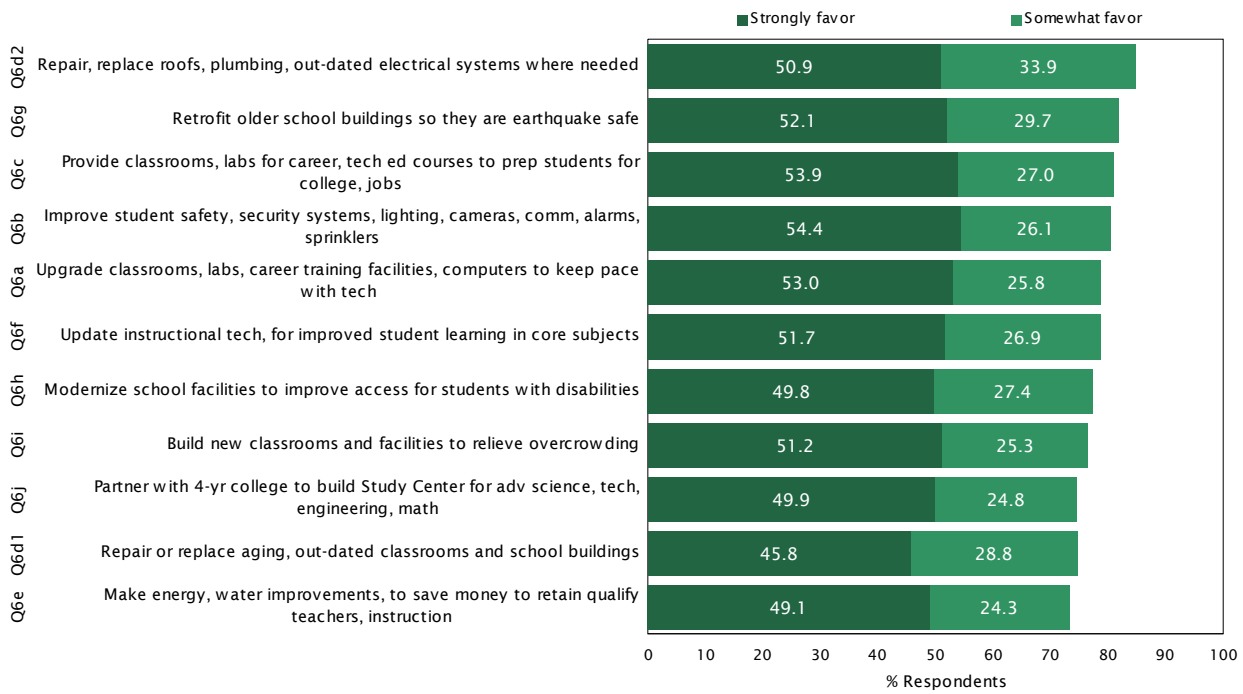
PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

The ballot language presented in Question 2 indicated that the proposed bond measure would be used to repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems, improve student safety, campus security, and seismic safety, and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades. The purpose of Question 6 was to provide respondents with the full range of projects and improvements that may be funded by the proposed measure, as well as identify which of these improvements voters most favored funding with bond proceeds.

After reading each improvement that may be funded by the measure, respondents were asked if they would favor or oppose spending some of the money on that particular improvement assuming that the measure passes. Truncated descriptions of the improvements tested, as well as voters' responses, are shown in Figure 5 below.[3]

Question 6 *The measure we've been discussing would provide funding for a variety of school projects and improvements. If the measure passes, would you favor or oppose using some of the money to: _____, or do you not have an opinion?*

FIGURE 5 PROJECTS & PROGRAMS



Overall, the improvement that resonated with the largest percentage of respondents was repairing or replacing deteriorating roofs, plumbing, and out-dated electrical systems where needed (85% strongly or somewhat favor), followed by retrofitting older school buildings so they are earthquake safe (82%), providing classrooms and labs for career and technology education

3. For the full text of the improvements tested, turn to Question 6 in *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 30.

classes so students are prepared for college and good paying jobs in fields like health sciences, engineering, technology, robotics, and skilled trades (81%), and improving student safety and campus security systems, including security lighting, security cameras, emergency communications systems, smoke detectors and fire alarms (81%).

PROJECT RATINGS BY SUBGROUP Table 2 presents the top five projects (showing the percentage of respondents who *strongly* favor each) by position at the Initial Ballot Test. Not surprisingly, individuals who initially opposed the measure were generally less likely to favor spending money on a given project or service when compared with supporters. Nevertheless, initial supporters, opponents, and the undecided did agree on one of the top five priorities for funding.

TABLE 2 TOP PROJECTS & PROGRAMS BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST

Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q2)	Item	Program or Project Summary	% Strongly Favor
Probably or Definitely **Yes** (*n* = 374)	Q6a	Upgrade classrooms, labs, career training facilities, computers to keep pace with tech	63
	Q6d2	Repair, replace roofs, plumbing, out-dated electrical systems where needed	63
	Q6c	Provide classrooms, labs for career, tech ed courses to prep students for college, jobs	63
	Q6i	Build new classrooms and facilities to relieve overcrowding	62
	Q6b	Improve student safety, security systems, lighting, cameras, comm, alarms, sprinklers	61
Probably or Definitely **No** (*n* = 110)	Q6b	Improve student safety, security systems, lighting, cameras, comm, alarms, sprinklers	34
	Q6g	Retrofit older school buildings so they are earthquake safe	30
	Q6j	Partner with 4-yr college to build Study Center for adv science, tech, engineering, math	22
	Q6h	Modernize school facilities to improve access for students with disabilities	21
	Q6f	Update instructional tech, for improved student learning in core subjects	20
Not Sure (*n* = 49)	Q6c	Provide classrooms, labs for career, tech ed courses to prep students for college, jobs	66
	Q6a	Upgrade classrooms, labs, career training facilities, computers to keep pace with tech	64
	Q6i	Build new classrooms and facilities to relieve overcrowding	50
	Q6f	Update instructional tech, for improved student learning in core subjects	50
	Q6b	Improve student safety, security systems, lighting, cameras, comm, alarms, sprinklers	46

Positive Arguments

If the Board chooses to place a bond measure on an upcoming ballot, voters will be exposed to various arguments about the bond in the ensuing months. Proponents of the measure will present arguments to try to persuade voters to support a measure, just as opponents may present arguments to achieve the opposite goal. For this study to be a reliable gauge of voter support for the proposed bond measure, it is important that the survey simulate the type of discussion and debate that will occur prior to the vote taking place and identify how this information ultimately shapes voters' opinions about the bond.

The objective of Question 7 was thus to present respondents with arguments in favor of the proposed measure and identify whether they felt the arguments were convincing reasons to support it. Arguments in opposition to the measure were also presented and will be discussed later in this report (see *Negative Arguments* on page 21). Within each series, specific arguments were administered in random order to avoid a systematic position bias.

Question 7 *What I'd like to do now is tell you what some people are saying about the measure we've been discussing. Supporters of the measure say: _____. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to SUPPORT the measure?*

Figure 6 Positive Arguments

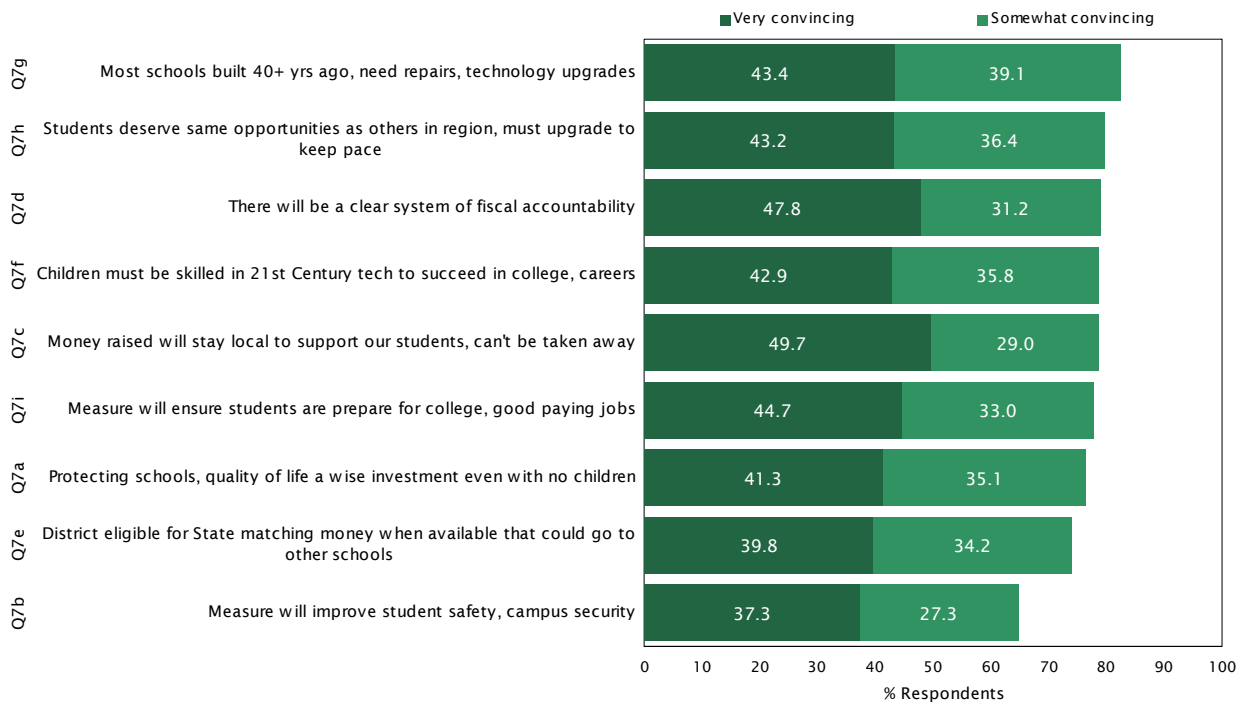


Figure 6 presents the truncated positive arguments tested, as well as voters' reactions to the arguments. The arguments are ranked from most convincing to least convincing based on the percentage of respondents who indicated that the argument was either a 'very convincing' or 'somewhat convincing' reason to support the measure. Using this methodology, the most compelling positive arguments were: *Many Riverside schools were built more than 40 years ago and need facility repairs and technology upgrades. It's time to make essential repairs and upgrades*

so that these schools can serve our community well for the decades to come (83%), *Our students deserve to have the same educational opportunities as others in the region. We need to upgrade our schools, facilities, and classroom technology to keep pace* (80%), and *This measure requires a clear system of accountability, including a project list detailing exactly how the money will be used, a Citizens' Oversight Committee, and independent audits to ensure the money is spent properly* (79%).

POSITIVE ARGUMENTS BY INITIAL SUPPORT Table 3 lists the top five most convincing positive arguments (showing the percentage of respondents who cited it as *very* convincing) according to respondents' vote choice at the Initial Ballot Test. The most striking pattern in the table is that the positive arguments resonated with a much higher percentage of voters who were initially inclined to support the measure when compared with voters who initially opposed the measure or were unsure. Nevertheless, two arguments were ranked among the top five most compelling by all three groups.

TABLE 3 TOP POSITIVE ARGUMENTS BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST

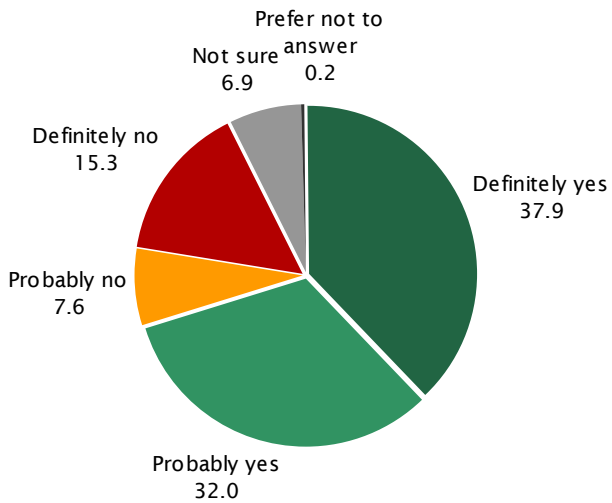
Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q2)	Item	Positive Argument Summary	% Very Convincing
Probably or Definitely **Yes** (*n* = 374)	Q7d	There will be a clear system of fiscal accountability	59
	Q7c	Money raised will stay local to support our students, can't be taken away	58
	Q7g	Most schools built 40+ yrs ago, need repairs, technology upgrades	53
	Q7h	Students deserve same opportunities as others in region, must upgrade to keep pace	53
	Q7i	Measure will ensure students are prepare for college, good paying jobs	53
Probably or Definitely **No** (*n* = 110)	Q7c	Money raised will stay local to support our students, can't be taken away	20
	Q7f	Children must be skilled in 21st Century tech to succeed in college, careers	17
	Q7e	District eligible for State matching money when available that could go to other schools	14
	Q7i	Measure will ensure students are prepare for college, good paying jobs	14
	Q7d	There will be a clear system of fiscal accountability	14
Not Sure (*n* = 49)	Q7i	Measure will ensure students are prepare for college, good paying jobs	54
	Q7c	Money raised will stay local to support our students, can't be taken away	50
	Q7g	Most schools built 40+ yrs ago, need repairs, technology upgrades	49
	Q7a	Protecting schools, quality of life a wise investment even with no children	44
	Q7h	Students deserve same opportunities as others in region, must upgrade to keep pace	43

Interim Ballot Test

After informing respondents about the potential tax rates associated with the bond, the projects that could be funded, as well as exposing them to positive arguments they may encounter about the bond, the survey again presented voters with the ballot language used previously to gauge how their support for the proposed school bond measure may have changed. As shown in Figure 7, overall support for the measure among likely November 2016 voters remained stable at 70%, with 38% of voters indicating that they would *definitely* vote yes on the measure. Approximately 23% of respondents opposed the measure at this point in the survey, and an additional 7% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.

Question 8 *Sometimes people change their mind about a measure once they have more information about it. Now that you have heard a bit more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it again. In order to repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities, including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems; improve student safety, campus security, and seismic safety; and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades, shall the Riverside Unified School District issue 392 million dollars in bonds at legal interest rates, with independent citizen oversight, no money for administrator salaries, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?*

Figure 7 Interim Ballot Test



SUPPORT BY SUBGROUPS Table 4 on the next page shows how support for the measure at this point in the survey varied by key voter subgroups, as well as the percentage change in subgroup support when compared with the Initial Ballot Test. Positive differences appear in green, whereas negative differences appear in red. As shown in the table, support for the bond generally changed by small amounts (+/- 4% or less) for most subgroups between the Initial and Interim Ballot Test, although several groups posted larger changes in support for the bond including voters age 18 to 29 (+8%), voters who are likely to participate by mail (-6%), and voters with a Hispanic surname (-5%).

TABLE 4 DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SUPPORT AT INTERIM BALLOT TEST

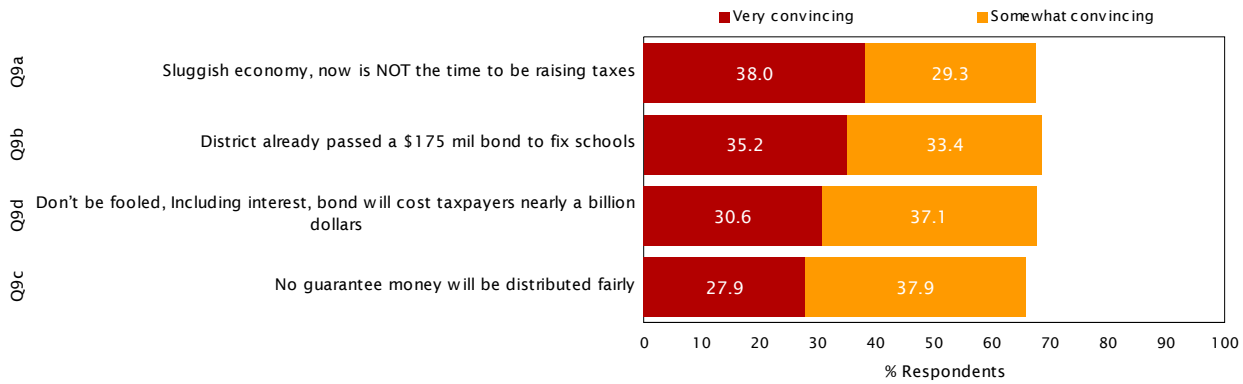
		Approximate % of Voter Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	Change From Initial Ballot Test (Q2)
Overall		100	69.9	-0.2
Child Under 19 in Hsld (QD1)	Yes	29	68.1	-3.3
	No	71	70.4	+0.9
Household Party Type	Single dem	18	86.3	+0.2
	Dual dem	12	78.1	-2.1
	Single rep	14	62.8	+2.6
	Dual rep	17	50.2	+2.0
	Other	14	63.0	-3.0
	Mixed	26	75.3	-1.1
Age	18 to 29	15	96.2	+8.4
	30 to 39	13	54.7	-4.0
	40 to 49	11	76.2	-3.4
	50 to 64	37	61.0	-2.4
	65 or older	24	73.2	+1.4
Registration Year	2016 to 2009	46	75.5	+0.7
	2008 to 2005	18	64.8	+2.7
	2004 to 2001	14	65.4	-1.7
	2000 or before	22	65.3	-3.7
District Child in Hsld (QD2,3)	Yes, current	22	74.7	-1.2
	Yes, past	48	69.6	-1.8
	No, never	40	70.4	+2.0
Party	Democrat	39	85.0	+0.9
	Republican	41	57.5	+0.2
	Other / DTS	20	66.3	-3.2
Homeowner on Voter File	Yes	63	66.0	-0.6
	No	37	76.7	+0.5
Gender	Male	50	70.1	-2.9
	Female	50	69.9	+2.3
Likely to Vote by Mail	Yes	33	65.7	-5.9
	No	67	72.0	+2.6
Likely June 2016 Voter	Yes	45	62.2	-1.9
	No	55	76.1	+1.1
Hispanic Surname	Yes	18	74.7	-4.8
	No	82	68.9	+0.8

Negative Arguments

Whereas Question 7 presented respondents with arguments in favor of the measure, Question 9 presented respondents with arguments designed to elicit opposition to the measure. In the case of Question 9, however, respondents were asked whether they felt that the argument was a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to *oppose* the measure. The arguments tested, as well as voters' opinions about the arguments, are presented in Figure 8.

Question 9 *Next, let me tell you what opponents of the measure are saying. Opponents of the measure say: _____. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to OPPOSE the measure?*

Figure 8 Negative Arguments



Among the negative arguments tested, the most compelling were: *People are having a hard time making ends meet with high unemployment and a sluggish economy. Now is NOT the time to be raising taxes* (67%), *The District already passed a 175 million dollar bond to fix our schools - now they want more money? That's not fair to taxpayers* (69%), and *Don't be fooled. Including interest, this bond will cost taxpayers nearly a billion dollars* (68%).

NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS BY INITIAL SUPPORT Table 5 ranks the negative arguments (showing the percentage of respondents who cited each as very convincing) according to respondents' vote choice at the Initial Ballot Test.

Table 5 Negative Arguments by Position at Initial Ballot Test

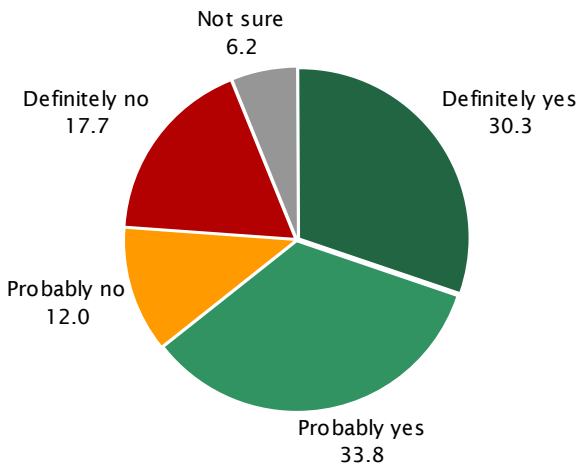
Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q2)	Item	Negative Argument Summary	% Very Convincing
Probably or Definitely **Yes** (*n* = 374)	Q9a	Sluggish economy, now is NOT the time to be raising taxes	30
	Q9b	District already passed a $175 mil bond to fix schools	26
	Q9c	No guarantee money will be distributed fairly	22
	Q9d	Don't be fooled, including interest, bond will cost taxpayers nearly a billion dollars	22
Probably or Definitely **No** (*n* = 110)	Q9b	District already passed a $175 mil bond to fix schools	62
	Q9a	Sluggish economy, now is NOT the time to be raising taxes	61
	Q9d	Don't be fooled, including interest, bond will cost taxpayers nearly a billion dollars	57
	Q9c	No guarantee money will be distributed fairly	41
Not Sure (*n* = 49)	Q9b	District already passed a $175 mil bond to fix schools	44
	Q9a	Sluggish economy, now is NOT the time to be raising taxes	44
	Q9c	No guarantee money will be distributed fairly	40
	Q9d	Don't be fooled, including interest, bond will cost taxpayers nearly a billion dollars	35

Final Ballot Test

Voters' opinions about ballot measures are often not rigid, especially when the amount of information presented to the public on a measure has been limited. An important goal of the survey was thus to gauge how voters' opinions about the proposed measure may be affected by the information they could encounter during the course of an election cycle. After providing respondents with the wording of the proposed measure, potential tax rates, projects that could be funded by the measure, as well as arguments in favor and against the proposal, respondents were again asked whether they would vote 'yes' or 'no' on the proposed school bond measure.

Question 10 *Now that you have heard a bit more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it one more time. In order to repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities, including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems; improve student safety, campus security, and seismic safety; and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades, shall the Riverside Unified School District issue 392 million dollars in bonds at legal interest rates, with independent citizen oversight, no money for administrator salaries, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?*

Figure 9 Final Ballot Test



At this point in the survey, support for the school bond measure was found among 64% of likely November 2016 voters, with 30% indicating that they would *definitely* support the measure. Approximately 30% of respondents were opposed to the measure at the Final Ballot Test, and 6% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.[4]

4. Support for the bond among the subset of likely June 2016 primary voters continued to be softer, with 56% indicating they would support the bond at the Final Ballot Test.

Change in Support

Table 6 provides a closer look at how support for the proposed bond measure changed over the course of the interview by calculating the difference in support between the Initial, Interim, and Final Ballot Tests within various subgroups of voters. The percentage of support for the measure at the Final Ballot Test is shown in the column with the heading *% Probably or Definitely Yes*. The columns to the right show the difference between the Final and the Initial, and the Final and Interim Ballot Tests. Positive differences appear in green, whereas negative differences appear in red.

Table 6 Demographic Breakdown of Support at Final Ballot Test

		Approximate % of Voter Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	Change From Initial Ballot Test (Q2)	Change From Interim Ballot Test (Q8)
Overall		100	64.1	-6.0	-5.8
Child Under 19 in Hsld (QD1)	Yes	29	68.1	-3.3	+0.0
	No	71	63.2	-6.3	-7.2
Household Party Type	Single dem	18	82.6	-3.5	-3.7
	Dual dem	12	83.9	+3.7	+5.8
	Single rep	14	54.3	-5.9	-8.5
	Dual rep	17	40.3	-7.9	-9.8
	Other	14	55.5	-10.5	-7.5
	Mixed	26	67.7	-8.7	-7.6
Age	18 to 29	15	89.6	+1.9	-6.6
	30 to 39	13	56.5	-2.2	+1.8
	40 to 49	11	75.1	-4.5	-1.0
	50 to 64	37	52.6	-10.8	-8.4
	65 or older	24	65.2	-6.6	-7.9
Registration Year	2016 to 2009	46	69.2	-5.6	-6.3
	2008 to 2005	18	65.9	+3.8	+1.1
	2004 to 2001	14	56.8	-10.2	-8.5
	2000 or before	22	56.6	-12.4	-8.7
District Child in Hsld (QD2,3)	Yes, current	22	75.9	+0.0	+1.3
	Yes, past	48	63.6	-7.9	-6.1
	No, never	40	63.6	-4.8	-6.8
Party	Democrat	39	83.6	-0.5	-1.4
	Republican	41	48.9	-8.4	-8.5
	Other / DTS	20	57.5	-11.9	-8.7
Homeowner on Voter File	Yes	63	61.0	-5.6	-5.0
	No	37	69.4	-6.7	-7.2
Gender	Male	50	62.8	-10.3	-7.4
	Female	50	65.6	-2.0	-4.3
Likely to Vote by Mail	Yes	33	60.6	-11.0	-5.1
	No	67	65.9	-3.5	-6.2
Likely June 2016 Voter	Yes	45	56.3	-7.7	-5.8
	No	55	70.3	-4.7	-5.8
Hispanic Surname	Yes	18	74.0	-5.6	-0.8
	No	82	62.0	-6.1	-6.9

As expected, voters generally responded to the negative arguments with a reduction in their support for the bond measure when compared with the levels recorded at the Interim Ballot Test. The general trend over the course of the entire survey (Initial to Final Ballot Test) was also one of declining support, averaging -6% across subgroup categories. Even with this trend, however, support for the bond still exceeded the 55% threshold overall at the Final Ballot Test—overall and within all but four subgroups.

Whereas Table 6 displays change in support for the measure over the course of the interview at the group level, Table 7 displays the individual-level changes that occurred between the Initial and Final Ballot Tests for the measure. On the left side of the table is shown each of the response

options to the Initial Ballot Test and the percentage of respondents in each group. The cells in the body of the table depict movement within each response group (row) based on the information provided throughout the course of the survey as recorded by the Final Ballot Test. For example, in the first row we see that of the 36.8% of respondents who indicated that they would definitely support the measure at the Initial Ballot Test, 22.9% also indicated that they would definitely support the measure at the Final Ballot Test. Approximately 8.5% moved to the probably support group, 3.0% moved to the probably oppose group, 1.7% moved to the definitely oppose group, and 0.7% percent stated they were now unsure of their vote choice.

To ease interpretation of the table, the cells are color coded. Red shaded cells indicate declining support, green shaded cells indicate increasing support, whereas white cells indicate no movement. Moreover, within the cells, a white font indicates a fundamental change in the vote: from yes to no, no to yes, or not sure to either yes or no.

TABLE 7 MOVEMENT BETWEEN INITIAL & FINAL BALLOT TEST

Initial Ballot Test (Q2)		Final Ballot Test (Q10) Definitely support	Probably support	Probably oppose	Definitely oppose	Not sure
Definitely support	36.8%	22.9%	8.5%	3.0%	1.7%	0.7%
Probably support	33.4%	6.5%	19.5%	3.8%	1.0%	2.6%
Probably oppose	7.7%	0.6%	1.1%	4.0%	2.0%	0.1%
Definitely oppose	12.9%	0.1%	0.3%	0.4%	11.9%	0.3%
Not sure	9.2%	0.2%	4.5%	0.9%	1.1%	2.5%

As one might expect, the information conveyed in the survey had the greatest impact on individuals who either weren't sure about how they would vote at the Initial Ballot Test or were tentative in their vote choice (probably yes or probably no). Moreover, Table 7 makes clear that although the information did impact some voters, it did not do so in a consistent way for all respondents. Some respondents found the information conveyed during the course of the interview to be a reason to become more supportive of the measure, whereas a somewhat larger percentage found the same information to be a reason to be less supportive. Despite 22% of respondents making a *fundamental*[5] shift in their opinion about the measure over the course of the interview, the net impact is that support for the measure at the Final Ballot Test was approximately 6% different than support at the Initial Ballot Test.

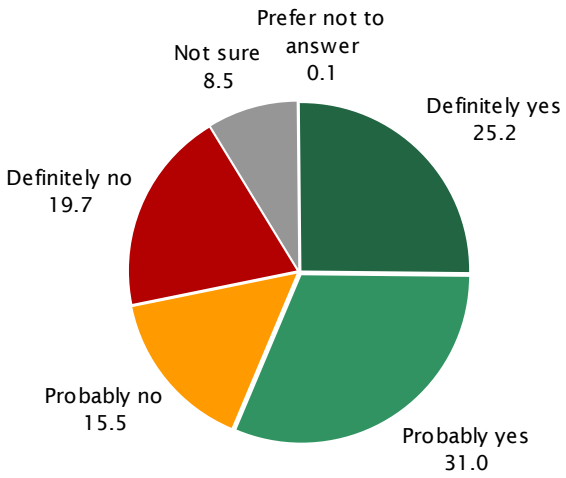
5. This is, they changed from a position of support, opposition or undecided at the Initial Ballot Test to a different position at the Final Ballot Test.

City Measure

Although most of the interview was devoted to gauging voters' opinions about the proposed school bond, the survey also presented an opportunity to estimate voters' support for a separate bond measure that may be proposed by the City of Riverside. As shown in Figure 10 below, a majority (56%) of voters indicated they would support a $150 million bond to build a new police station and 9-1-1 emergency response facilities, expand the city library system, construct an Event Center downtown, and repair city streets, potholes and storm drains, whereas 25% were opposed and 9% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion. It should be noted, however, that unlike a Proposition 39 school bond that requires 55% support to pass, a city-sponsored bond has a threshold of two-thirds support for passage. Thus, the support levels found in Question 11 are 11% below the required threshold for passage.

Question 11 *Changing topics for a moment, the City of Riverside may also place a measure on the ballot later this year. Let me read you a summary. To provide funding for city projects and improvements, including: building a new police station and 9-1-1 emergency response facilities; expanding the city library system; constructing a city Event Center downtown; and repairing city streets, fixing potholes, and repairing storm drains, shall the City of Riverside issue 150 million dollars in bonds, with independent citizen oversight, annual reports to the community, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?*

Figure 10 Support For City Measure



For the interested reader, Table 8 on the next page shows how support for the city bond tested in Question 11 varied across subgroups of Riverside voters.

TABLE 8 DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SUPPORT FOR CITY MEASURE

		Approximate % of Voter Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	% Not sure
Overall		100	56.2	8.5
Child Under 19 in Hsld (QD1)	Yes	29	55.8	10.6
	No	71	56.6	6.9
Household Party Type	Single dem	18	69.2	12.4
	Dual dem	12	68.8	3.8
	Single rep	14	44.4	7.8
	Dual rep	17	36.6	8.7
	Other	14	52.0	6.2
	Mixed	26	62.7	9.6
Age	18 to 29	15	85.3	4.1
	30 to 39	13	53.3	17.3
	40 to 49	11	60.5	10.5
	50 to 64	37	44.9	5.3
	65 or older	24	55.1	10.5
Registration Year	2016 to 2009	46	59.6	9.0
	2008 to 2005	18	62.5	9.5
	2004 to 2001	14	37.8	9.5
	2000 or before	22	55.4	6.2
District Child in Hsld (QD2,3)	Yes, current	22	59.8	7.9
	Yes, past	48	54.9	7.0
	No, never	40	57.1	8.6
Party	Democrat	39	71.5	7.4
	Republican	41	43.5	8.6
	Other / DTS	20	52.3	10.7
Homeowner on Voter File	Yes	63	53.7	10.1
	No	37	60.4	5.9
Gender	Male	50	56.3	6.2
	Female	50	56.3	10.8
Likely to Vote by Mail	Yes	33	53.0	8.9
	No	67	57.7	8.4
Likely June 2016 Voter	Yes	45	48.3	7.6
	No	55	62.5	9.3
Hispanic Surname	Yes	18	69.5	12.0
	No	82	53.2	7.8

TABLE 9 DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE

Total Respondents	*533*
Child Under 19 in Hsld (QD1)	
Yes	28.1
No	70.1
Prefer not to answer	1.7
District Child in Hsld (QD2,3)	
Yes, current	21.5
Yes, past	46.4
No, never	38.6
Homeowner on Voter File	
Yes	63.4
No	36.6
Age	
18 to 29	14.7
30 to 39	13.4
40 to 49	11.1
50 to 64	36.9
65 or older	23.8
Registration Year	
2016 to 2009	45.9
2008 to 2005	18.0
2004 to 2001	13.9
2000 or before	22.2
Party	
Democrat	38.7
Republican	41.0
Other / DTS	20.3
Household Party Type	
Single dem	18.1
Dual dem	11.8
Single rep	13.6
Dual rep	17.1
Other	13.8
Mixed	25.5
Likely to Vote by Mail	
Yes	33.3
No	66.7
Gender	
Male	50.1
Female	49.5
Prefer not to answer	0.4
Likely Jun 2016 Voter	
Yes	44.5
No	55.5
Hispanic Surname	
Yes	17.9
No	82.1

In addition to questions directly related to the proposed measure, the study collected basic demographic information about respondents and their households. Some of this information was gathered during the interview, although much of it was collected from the voter file. The profile of the likely November 2016 voter sample represented in this report is shown in Table 9.

METHODOLOGY

The following sections outline the methodology used in the study, as well as the motivation for using certain techniques.

QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT Dr. McLarney of True North Research worked closely with the Riverside Unified School District and TBWB to develop a questionnaire that covered the topics of interest and avoided possible sources of systematic measurement error, including position-order effects, wording effects, response-category effects, scaling effects, and priming. Several questions included multiple individual items. Because asking the items in a set order can lead to a systematic position bias in responses, items were asked in random order for each respondent.

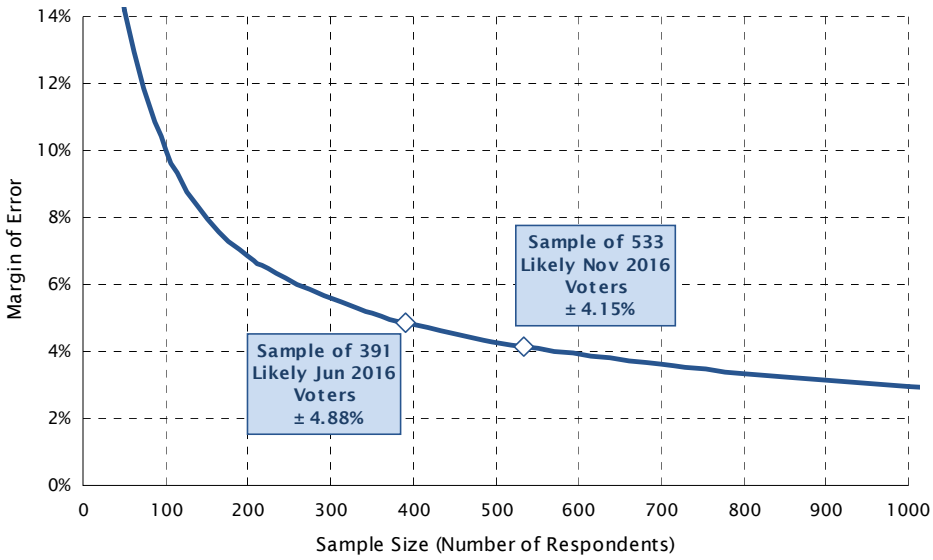
Some of the questions asked in this study were presented only to a subset of respondents. For example, only individuals who reported having school-aged children in their household (Question D1) were asked the follow-up Question D2 regarding whether one or more children in their household attend a Riverside USD school. The questionnaire included with this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 30) identifies the skip patterns that were used during the interview to ensure that each respondent received the appropriate questions.

PROGRAMMING, PRE-TEST & TRANSLATION Prior to fielding the survey, the questionnaire was CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) programmed to assist interviewers when conducting the telephone interviews. The CATI program automatically navigates the skip patterns, randomizes the appropriate question items, and alerts the interviewer to certain types of keypunching mistakes should they happen during the interview. The survey was also programmed into a passcode-protected online survey application to allow online participation for sampled residents. The integrity of the questionnaire was pre-tested internally by True North and by dialing into voter households in the district prior to formally beginning the survey. Once finalized, the questionnaire was professionally translated into Spanish to allow for interviewing in English or Spanish according to a respondent's preference.

STATISTICAL MARGIN OF ERROR By using the probability-based sampling design noted above, True North ensured that the final sample was representative of voters in the Riverside USD who are likely to participate in the November 2016 election, with a subset that is also likely to participate in the June 2016 primary election. The results of the survey can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* voters likely to participate in the November and June 2016 elections, respectively. Because not all voters participated in the study, however, the results have what is known as a statistical margin of error due to sampling. The margin of error refers to the difference between what was found in the survey of 533 voters for a particular question and what would have been found if all 75,325 likely November 2016 voters (or 33,574 likely June voters) identified in the district had been surveyed for the study.

Figure 11 provides a graphic plot of the *maximum* margin of error in this study. The maximum margin of error for a dichotomous percentage result occurs when the answers are evenly split such that 50% provide one response and 50% provide the alternative response. For this survey, the maximum margin of error is ± 4.15% for results among all 533 likely November voters surveyed, and ± 4.88% for results among the subset of 391 likely June 2016 voters.

FIGURE 11 MAXIMUM MARGIN OF ERROR DUE TO SAMPLING



Within this report, figures and tables show how responses to certain questions varied by subgroups such as age, gender, and partisan affiliation. Figure 11 is thus useful for understanding how the maximum margin of error for a percentage estimate will grow as the number of individuals asked a question (or in a particular subgroup) shrinks. Because the margin of error grows exponentially as the sample size decreases, the reader should use caution when generalizing and interpreting the results for small subgroups.

RECRUITING & DATA COLLECTION The survey followed a mixed-method design that employed multiple recruiting methods (telephone and email) and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). Telephone interviews averaged 17 minutes in length and were conducted during weekday evenings (5:30PM to 9PM) and on weekends (10AM to 5PM). It is standard practice not to call during the day on weekdays because most working adults are unavailable and thus calling during those hours would likely bias the sample.

Voters who were recruited via email were assigned a unique passcode to ensure that only voters who received an invitation could access the online survey site, and that each voter could complete the survey only one time. During the data collection period, one email reminder notice was sent to encourage participation among those who had yet to take the survey. A total of 533 surveys (414 by telephone, 119 online) were completed between January 16 and January 28, 2016.

DATA PROCESSING Data processing consisted of checking the data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, and preparing frequency analyses and crosstabulations.

ROUNDING Numbers that end in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole number, whereas numbers that end in 0.4 or lower are rounded down to the nearest whole number. These same rounding rules are also applied, when needed, to arrive at numbers that include a decimal place in constructing figures and charts. Occasionally, these rounding rules lead to small discrepancies in the first decimal place when comparing tables and pie charts for a given question.

TRUE NORTH RESEARCH

Riverside Unified School District
Bond Tracking Survey
Final Toplines
January 2016

Section 1: Introduction to Study
Hi, may I please speak to _____. My name is _____, and I'm calling on behalf of TNR, an independent public opinion research firm. We're conducting a survey of voters about important issues in Riverside and I'd like to get your opinions.
If needed: This is a survey about important issues in your community. I'm NOT trying to sell anything and I won't ask for a donation. *If needed:* The survey should take about 12 minutes to complete. *If needed:* If now is not a convenient time, can you let me know a better time so I can call back? *If the person asks why you need to speak to the listed person or if they ask to participate instead, explain:* For statistical purposes, at this time the survey must only be completed by this particular individual. *If the person says they are an elected official or is somehow associated with the survey, politely explain that this survey is designed to measure the opinions of those not closely associated with the study, thank them for their time, and terminate the interview.*

Section 2: Importance of Issues							
Q1	To begin, I'm going to read a list of issues facing your community and for each one, please tell me how important you feel the issue is to <u>you</u>, using a scale of extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not at all important. Here is the (first/next) issue: _____. Do you think this issue is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?						
	Randomize.	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Maintaining the quality of education in local schools	53%	36%	8%	1%	1%	0%
B	Reducing traffic congestion	28%	42%	25%	5%	0%	0%
C	Maintaining local streets and roads	25%	51%	22%	1%	1%	0%
D	Preventing local tax increases	29%	32%	26%	10%	2%	1%
E	Reducing crime and improving public safety	45%	41%	12%	1%	0%	0%
F	Repairing and renovating aging school facilities	27%	39%	29%	4%	0%	0%
G	Creating jobs and improving the local economy	40%	45%	13%	1%	0%	0%

True North Research, Inc. © 2016

Section 3: Initial Ballot Test			
Your household is within the Riverside Unified School District. Later this year, voters in the District may be asked to vote on a local ballot measure. Let me read you a summary of the measure.			
Q2	In order to: ◇ Repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities, including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems ◇ Improve student safety, campus security, and seismic safety ◇ And upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades Shall the Riverside Unified School District issue **392** million dollars in bonds at legal interest rates, with independent citizen oversight, no money for administrator salaries, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? Get answer, then ask: Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?		
	1	Definitely yes	37%
	2	Probably yes	33%
	3	Probably no	8%
	4	Definitely no	13%
	98	Not sure	9%
	99	Prefer not to answer	0%

Section 4: Tax Threshold	
Q3	The amount each home owner will pay if the school bond passes depends on the assessed value of their home – <u>not</u> the current market value of the home. If you heard that the annual property taxes on your home would increase: _____ per 100,000 (one hundred thousand) dollars of assessed valuation, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure? *Get answer, then ask:* Is that definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)? *If needed:* The assessed value of your home is listed on your property tax bill.

Read in sequence starting with the highest amount (A), then the next highest (B), and so on. If respondent says 'definitely yes', record 'definitely yes' for all LOWER dollar amounts and go to next question.

	Ask in Order	Definitely Yes	Probably Yes	Probably No	Definitely No	Not Sure	Prefer not to answer
A	$59	24%	27%	15%	27%	6%	0%
B	$53	28%	23%	15%	28%	5%	0%
C	$39	38%	22%	12%	23%	5%	1%

Q4	Let me put it another way: If you knew that this measure would cost the typical home owner in the Riverside Unified School District about $**127** per year, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure? *Get answer, then ask:* Is that definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?			
	1	Definitely yes	35%	*Skip to Q6*
	2	Probably yes	24%	*Ask Q5*
	3	Probably no	13%	*Ask Q5*
	4	Definitely no	23%	*Ask Q5*
	98	Not sure	3%	*Ask Q5*
	99	Prefer not to answer	1%	*Ask Q5*
Q5	If you knew that this measure would cost the typical home owner about **$84** per year, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure? *Get answer, then ask:* Is that definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?			
		Definitely yes @ $127 (Q5)	35%	
	1	Definitely yes	5%	
	2	Probably yes	21%	
	3	Probably no	13%	
	4	Definitely no	21%	
	98	Not sure	4%	
	99	Prefer not to answer	0%	

Section 5: Projects & Programs

Q6 The measure we've been discussing would provide funding for a variety of school projects and improvements.

If the measure passes, would you favor or oppose using some of the money to: _____, or do you not have an opinion? *Get answer, if favor or oppose, then ask:* Would that be strongly (favor/oppose) or somewhat (favor/oppose)?

	Randomize. Split sample D1/D2 using odd/even clusters	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology	53%	26%	5%	8%	7%	1%
B	Improve student safety and campus security systems, including security lighting, security cameras, emergency communications systems, smoke detectors and fire alarms	54%	26%	6%	7%	6%	1%
C	Provide classrooms and labs for career and technology education classes so students are prepared for college and good paying jobs in fields like health sciences, engineering, technology, robotics, and skilled trades	54%	27%	4%	6%	9%	0%
D1	Repair or replace aging, out-dated classrooms and school buildings	46%	29%	8%	10%	7%	0%

D2	Repair or replace deteriorating roofs, plumbing, and out-dated electrical systems where needed	51%	34%	1%	7%	6%	0%
E	Make energy and water efficiency improvements that will free-up money to retain highly qualified teachers and improve the quality of classroom instruction	49%	24%	7%	10%	8%	1%
F	Update instructional technology in the classroom for improved student learning in core subjects like reading, math, science and technology	52%	27%	5%	8%	8%	0%
G	Retrofit older school buildings so they are earthquake safe	52%	30%	7%	6%	5%	0%
H	Modernize school facilities to improve access for students with disabilities	50%	27%	6%	7%	9%	0%
I	Build new classrooms and facilities to relieve overcrowding	51%	25%	8%	10%	5%	0%
J	Partner with a local four-year college to build a Center for the Study of advanced science, technology, engineering and math that will give local high school students access to college-level instruction	50%	25%	6%	9%	11%	0%

Section 6: Positive Arguments

What I'd like to do now is tell you what some people are saying about the measure we've been discussing.

Q7	Supporters of the measure say: _____. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to **SUPPORT** the measure?						
	Randomize	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Not At All Convincing	Don't Believe	Don't Know/No Opinion	Prefer not to answer
A	Even if you do not have school-age children, supporting this school bond is a wise investment. Good schools improve the quality of life in our community and protect the value of our homes.	41%	35%	19%	2%	2%	1%
B	The recent shootings in San Bernardino are another tragic example of how important it is to keep our schools safe. This bond will improve student safety and campus security.	37%	27%	28%	4%	3%	1%
C	All money raised by the measure will stay in Riverside to support our students. It cannot be taken away by the State or used for other purposes.	50%	29%	17%	2%	2%	1%

D	This measure requires a clear system of accountability, including a project list detailing exactly how the money will be used, a Citizens' Oversight Committee, and independent audits to ensure the money is spent properly.	48%	31%	16%	3%	2%	1%
E	If voters approve this measure, our District will qualify for millions of dollars in State matching money when it becomes available that otherwise will go to other school districts.	40%	34%	19%	3%	3%	1%
F	If we want our kids to succeed in college and careers, they must be skilled in the use of today's technologies and have a solid background in science, math, engineering and technology. This measure will make this possible.	43%	36%	16%	2%	2%	1%
G	Many Riverside schools were built more than 40 years ago and need facility repairs and technology upgrades. It's time to make essential repairs and upgrades so that these schools can serve our community well for the decades to come.	43%	39%	14%	2%	1%	1%
H	Our students deserve to have the same educational opportunities as others in the region. We need to upgrade our schools, facilities, and classroom technology to keep pace.	43%	36%	16%	3%	1%	1%
I	This measure will ensure that students who plan to go to college are prepared to succeed, and those who don't plan to go to college receive the career training they need to compete for good paying jobs.	45%	33%	17%	2%	2%	1%

Section 7: Interim Ballot Test			
Sometimes people change their mind about a measure once they have more information about it. Now that you have heard a bit more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it again.			
Q8	In order to: ◇ Repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities, including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems ◇ Improve student safety, campus security, and seismic safety ◇ And upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades Shall the Riverside Unified School District issue **392** million dollars in bonds at legal interest rates, with independent citizen oversight, no money for administrator salaries, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? *Get answer, then ask:* Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?		
	1	Definitely yes	38%
	2	Probably yes	32%
	3	Probably no	8%
	4	Definitely no	15%
	98	Not sure	7%
	99	Prefer not to answer	0%

Section 8: Negative Arguments							
Next, let me tell you what opponents of the measure are saying.							
Q9	Opponents of the measure say: _____. Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to OPPOSE the measure?						
	Randomize.	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Not At All Convincing	Don't Believe	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	People are having a hard time making ends meet with high unemployment and a sluggish economy. Now is NOT the time to be raising taxes.	38%	29%	29%	2%	1%	1%
B	The District already passed a 175-million-dollar bond to fix our schools – now they want more money? That's not fair to taxpayers.	35%	33%	26%	1%	3%	1%

C	There is no guarantee that the money will be distributed fairly. Some schools will get more than their fair share from the bond, while others will get less.	28%	38%	29%	1%	3%	1%
D	Don't be fooled. Including interest, this bond will cost taxpayers nearly a **billion** dollars.	31%	37%	27%	2%	3%	1%

Section 9: Final Ballot Test			
Now that you have heard a bit more about the measure, let me read you a summary of it one more time.			
Q10	In order to: ◇ Repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities, including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems ◇ Improve student safety, campus security, and seismic safety ◇ And upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades Shall the Riverside Unified School District issue **392** million dollars in bonds at legal interest rates, with independent citizen oversight, no money for administrator salaries, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? Get answer, then ask: Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?		
	1	Definitely yes	30%
	2	Probably yes	34%
	3	Probably no	12%
	4	Definitely no	18%
	98	Not sure	6%
	99	Prefer not to answer	0%

Section 10: City Measure			
Changing topics for a moment, the City of Riverside may also place a measure on the ballot later this year. Let me read you a summary.			
Q11	To provide funding for city projects and improvements, including: ◇ Building a new police station and 9-1-1 emergency response facilities ◇ Expanding the city library system ◇ Constructing a city Event Center downtown ◇ And repairing city streets, fixing potholes, and repairing storm drains Shall the City of Riverside issue **150** million dollars in bonds, with independent citizen oversight, annual reports to the community, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? *Get answer, then ask:* Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?		
	1	Definitely yes	25%
	2	Probably yes	31%
	3	Probably no	16%
	4	Definitely no	20%
	98	Not sure	9%
	99	Prefer not to answer	0%

Section 11: Background & Demographics				
Thank you so much for your participation. I have just a few background questions for statistical purposes.				
D1	Do you have school-aged children under the age of 19 living in your household?			
	1	Yes	28%	*Ask D2*
	2	No	70%	*Skip to D3*
	99	Prefer not to answer	2%	*Skip to D3*
D2	Do one or more of the children in your household attend a school in the Riverside Unified School District?			
	1	Yes	76%	
	2	No	21%	
	98	Not sure	0%	
	99	Prefer not to answer	3%	

D3	Do you have grown children who previously attended a school in the Riverside Unified School District when they were younger?		
	1	Yes	46%
	2	No	51%
	99	Prefer not to answer	3%
Those are all of the questions that I have for you. Thanks so much for participating in this important survey.			

Post-Interview & Sample Items			
S1	Gender		
	1	Male	50%
	2	Female	49%
	3	Prefer not to answer	0%
S2	Party		
	1	Democrat	39%
	2	Republican	41%
	3	Other	5%
	4	DTS	15%
S3	Age on Voter File		
	1	18 to 29	15%
	2	30 to 39	13%
	3	40 to 49	11%
	4	50 to 64	37%
	5	65 or older	24%
	99	Not Coded	0%
S4	Registration Date		
	1	2016 to 2009	46%
	2	2008 to 2005	18%
	3	2004 to 2001	14%
	4	2000 to 1997	6%
	5	Before 1997	16%

S5	Household Party Type		
	1	Single Dem	18%
	2	Dual Dem	12%
	3	Single Rep	14%
	4	Dual Rep	17%
	5	Single Other	11%
	6	Dual Other	3%
	7	Dem & Rep	8%
	8	Dem & Other	7%
	9	Rep & Other	9%
	0	Mixed (Dem + Rep + Other)	1%
S6	Homeowner on Voter File		
	1	Yes	63%
	2	No	37%
S7	Likely to Vote by Mail		
	1	Yes	33%
	2	No	67%
S8	Likely June 2016 Voter		
	1	Yes	45%
	2	No	55%
S9	Likely November 2016 Voter		
	1	Yes	100%
	2	No	0%
S10	Hispanic Surname		
	1	Yes	18%
	2	No	82%

Bond Feasibility Tracking Study Survey Report

Conducted for the Riverside Unified School District

Presented By
Timothy McLarney Ph.D.

2/16/2016

TrueNorth Research

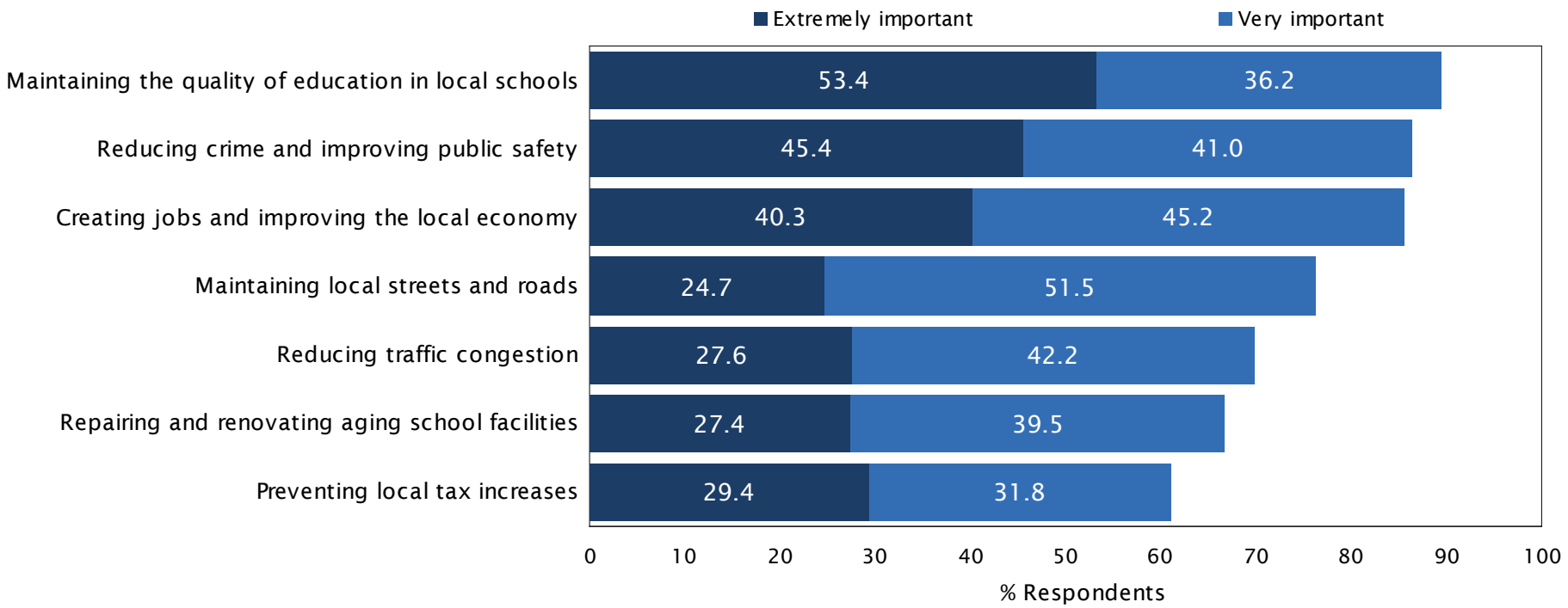
PURPOSE OF STUDY

- Provide an up-to-date assessment of support for the proposed bond measure using revised ballot language
- Profile how November and June electorates differ in support for the bond & tax rate sensitivity
- Gather information for continued communications & outreach efforts

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

- Conducted January 16th to January 28th, 2016
- 533 District voters likely to participate in November 2016 election, with June 2016 subset
- Mixed-Method approach
  - Recruit via telephone and email
  - Data collection via telephone and online
  - English & Spanish
- Overall margin of error is ± 4.15% for November 2016, ± 4.88% for June 2016

IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES



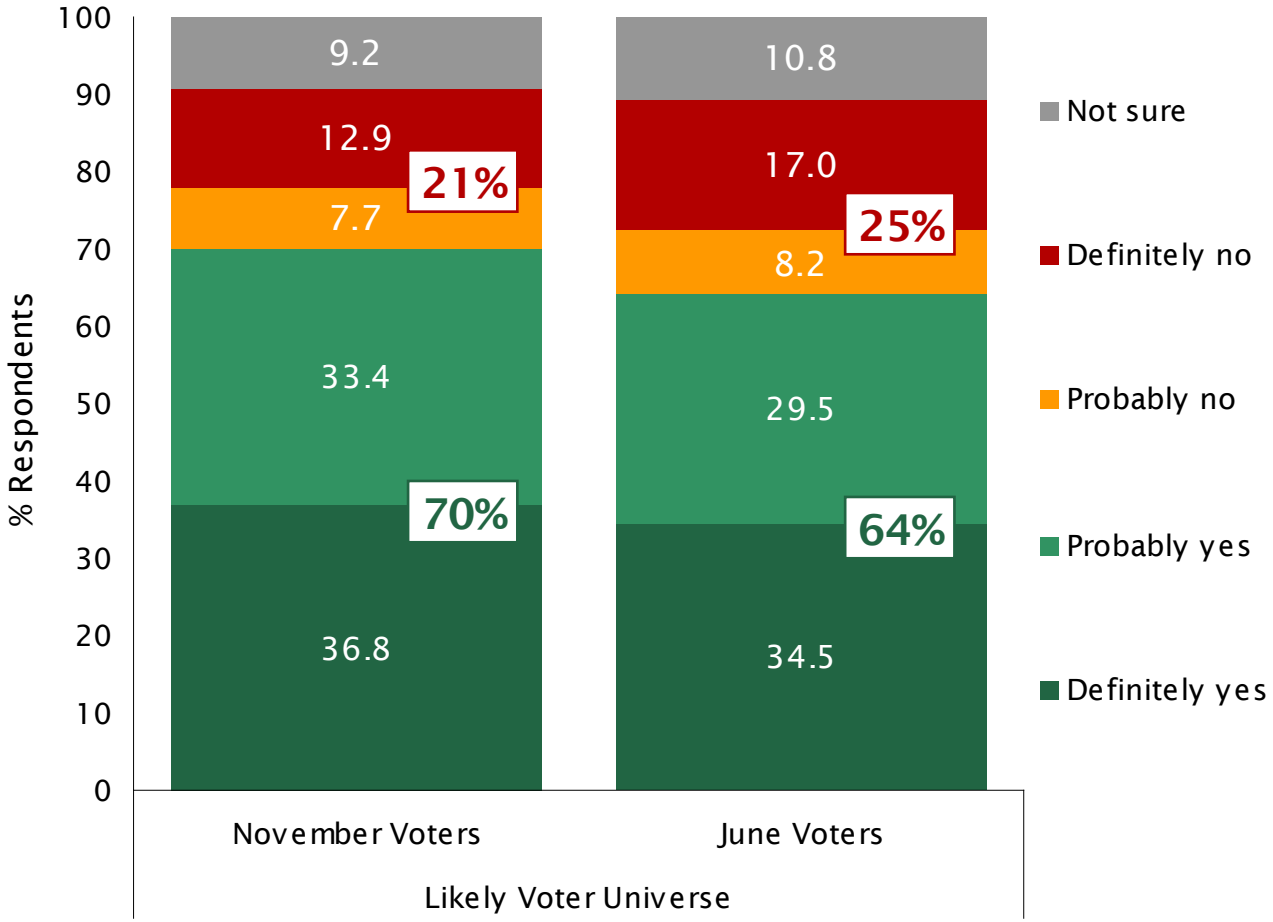
INITIAL BALLOT TEST

In order to:

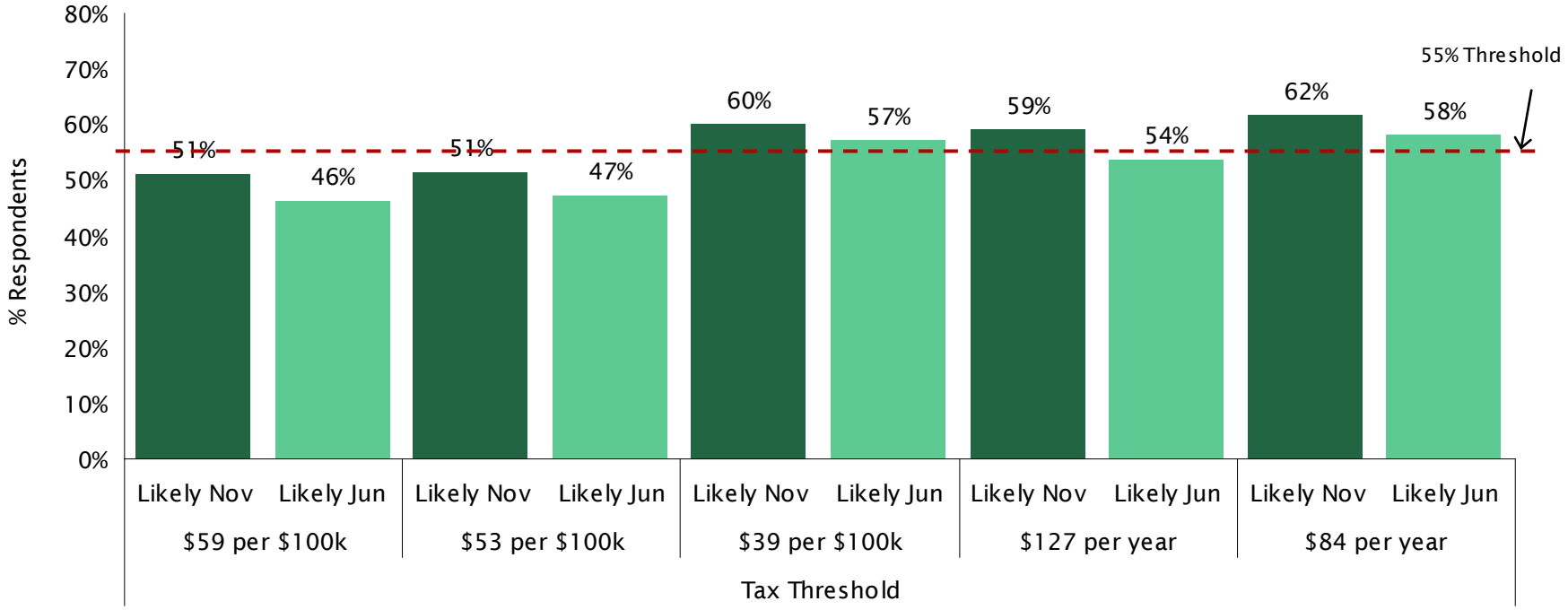
- Repair and modernize classrooms and school facilities, including repairing deteriorating roofs, plumbing and electrical systems
- Improve student safety, campus security, and seismic safety
- And upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and computer systems to keep pace with technology and support student achievement in math, science, engineering and skilled trades

Shall the Riverside Unified School District issue 392 million dollars in bonds at legal interest rates, with independent citizen oversight, no money for administrator salaries, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?

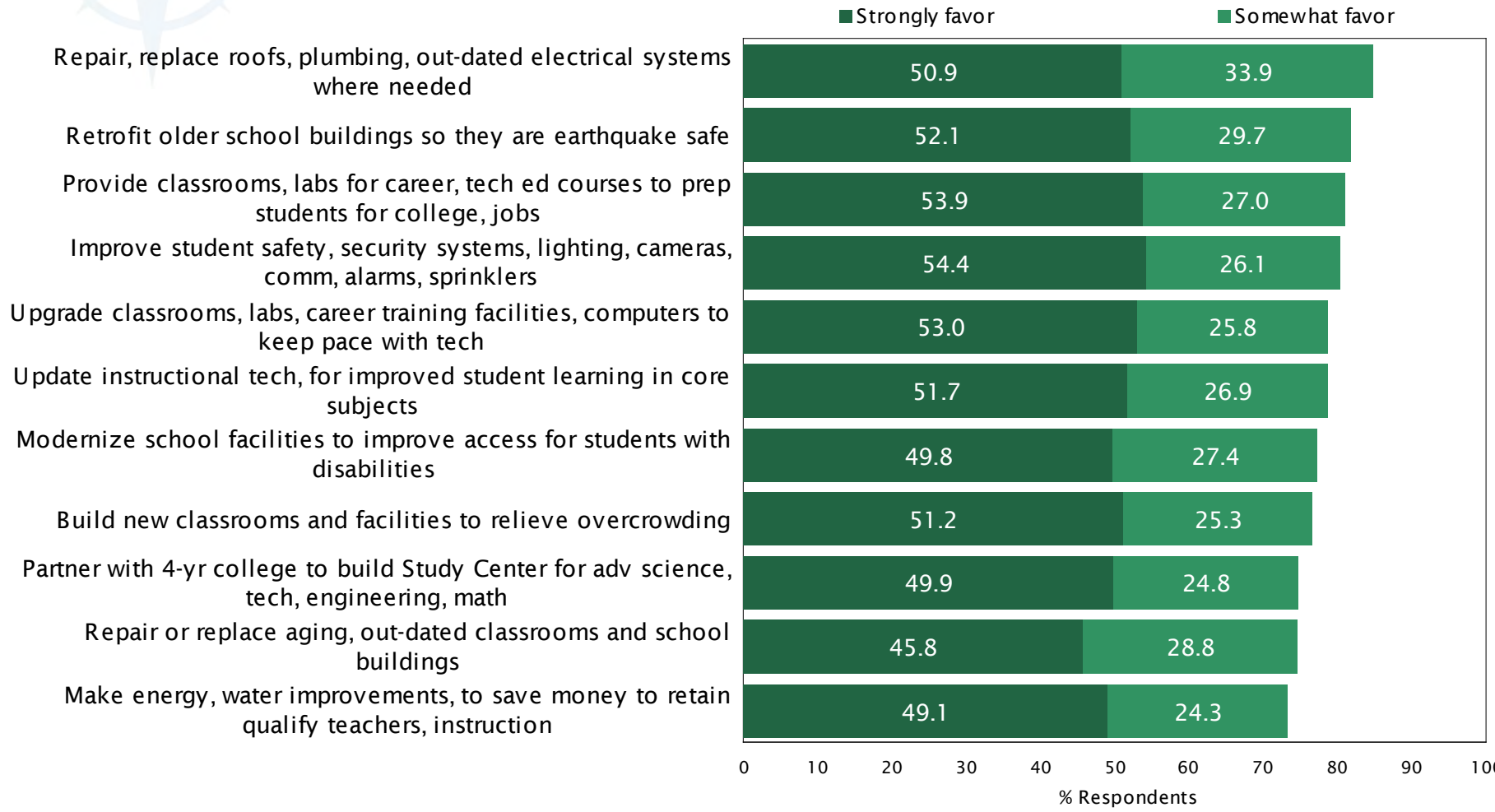
INITIAL BALLOT TEST



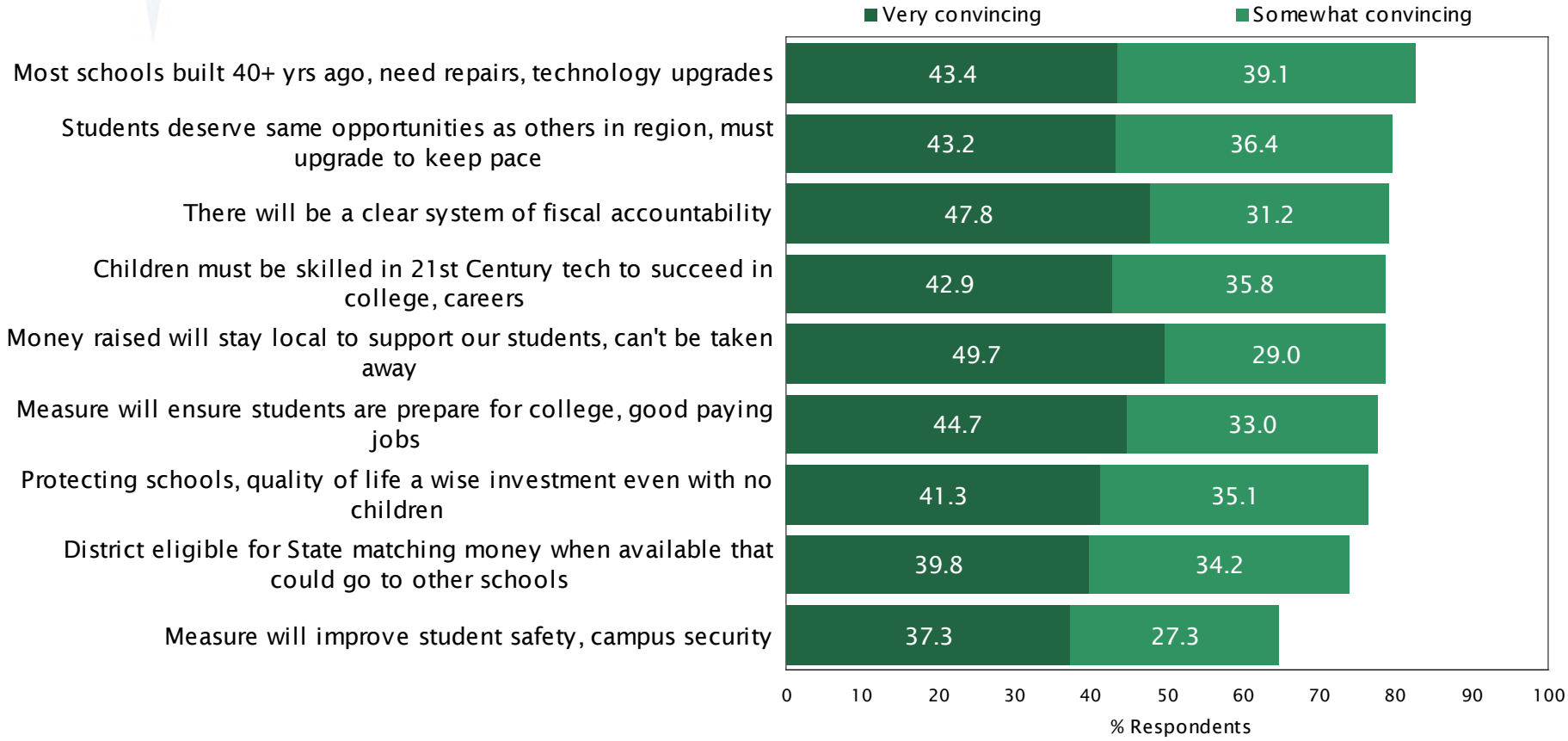
TAX THRESHOLD



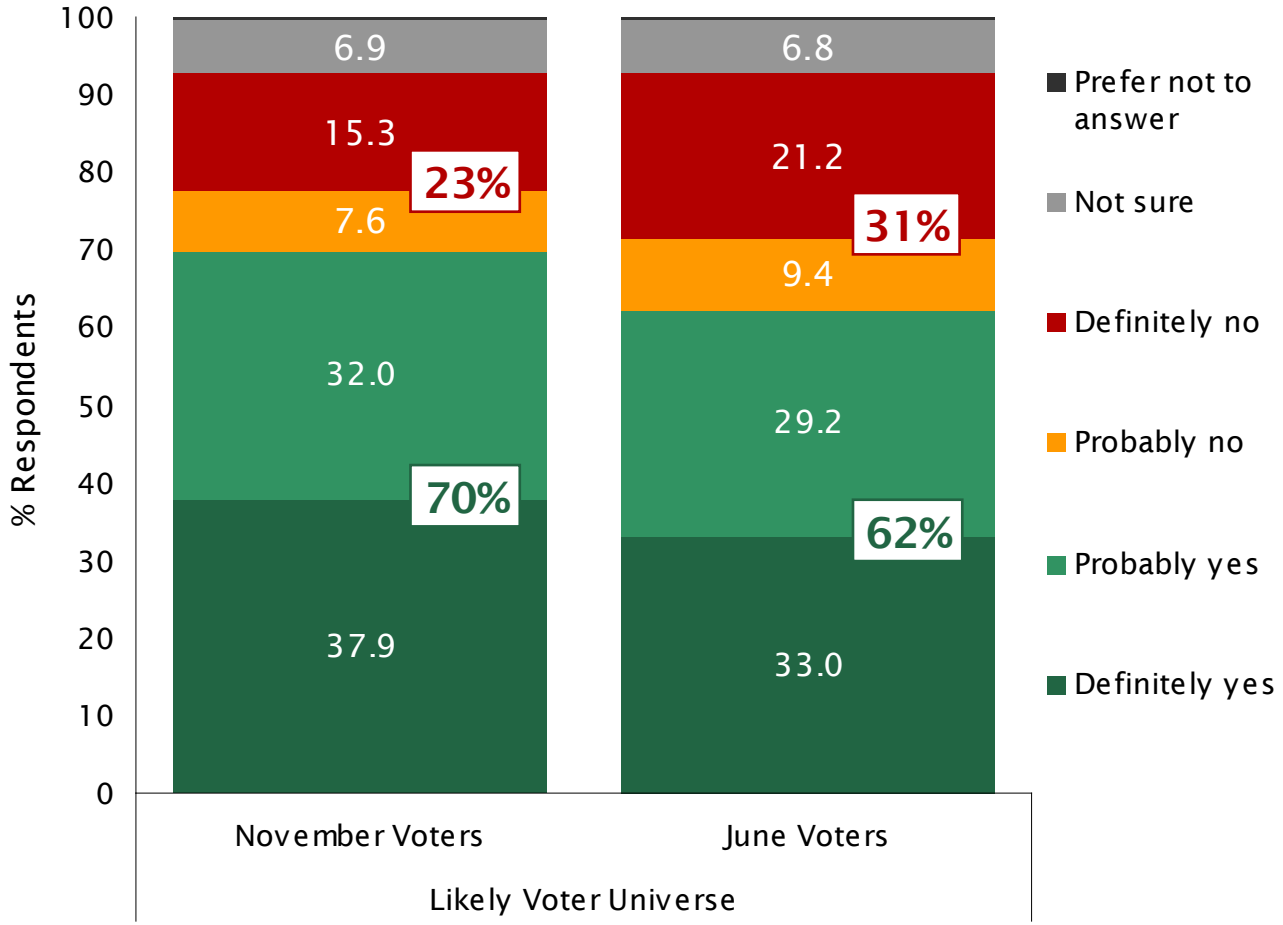
PROJECTS & PROGRAMS



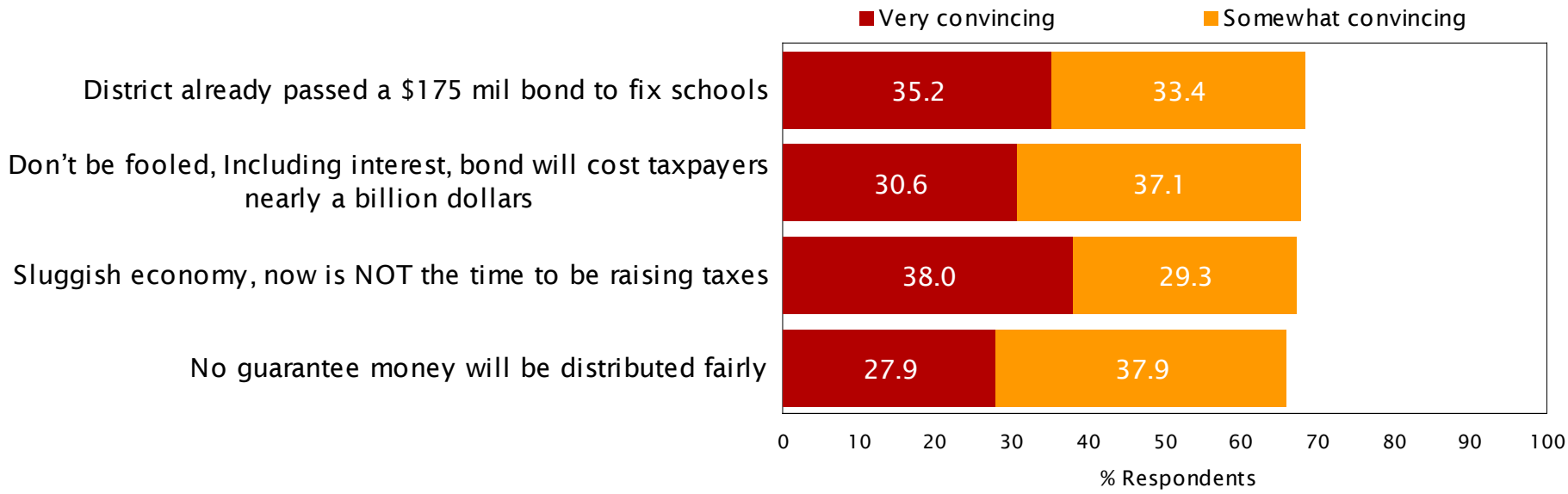
POSITIVE ARGUMENTS



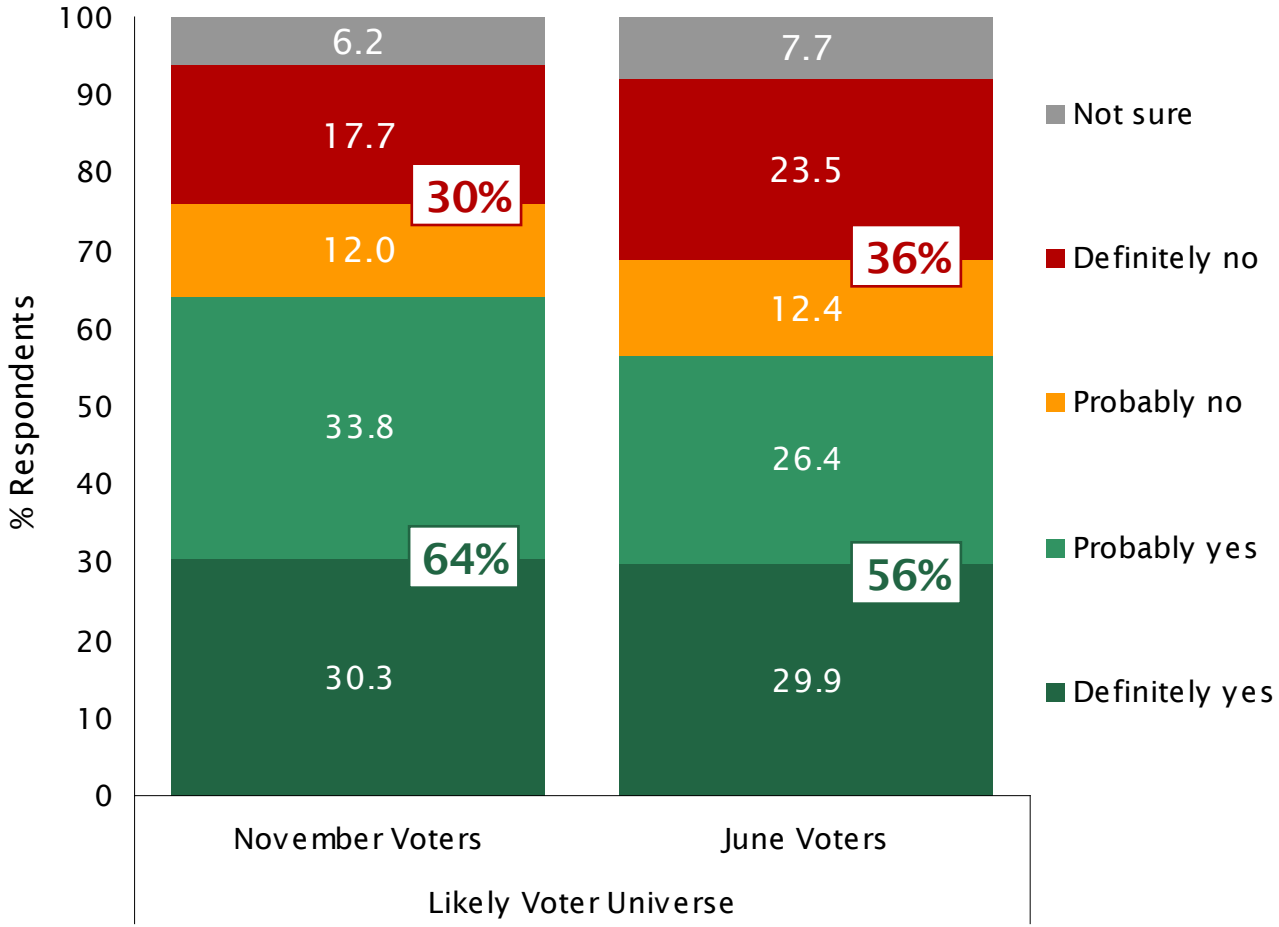
INTERIM BALLOT TEST



NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS



FINAL BALLOT TEST



KEY CONCLUSIONS

- Is it feasible to move forward with a bond measure? ***Yes***.
  - Voters perceive that maintaining the quality of education is among the most important issues facing the community
  - Strong natural support for bond in November (70%)
  - Popular projects
  - Strong positive arguments
  - All ballot tests are above 55% required for passage of Prop. 39 bond

RECOMMENDATIONS & CONSIDERATIONS

- Poll is a snapshot in time, not a crystal ball
- Election date: Strongly recommend November 2016
  - Substantially higher support among voters (+8%)
  - All ballot tests above 55% by more than margin of error
  - Able to support a higher tax rate and bond amount
  - Less risk associated with turnout and tone of election
- Tax rate: $39 to $49 per $100K AV is within voters' comfort zone in November.
- Continued outreach & communications are important so voters understand the need, the plan, accountabilities, and the benefits to their particular communities.