



# Whitefish Bay School District

Community Survey Report

December 10, 2025

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Our mission is to help educational leaders gather, organize, and use data to make strategic decisions.

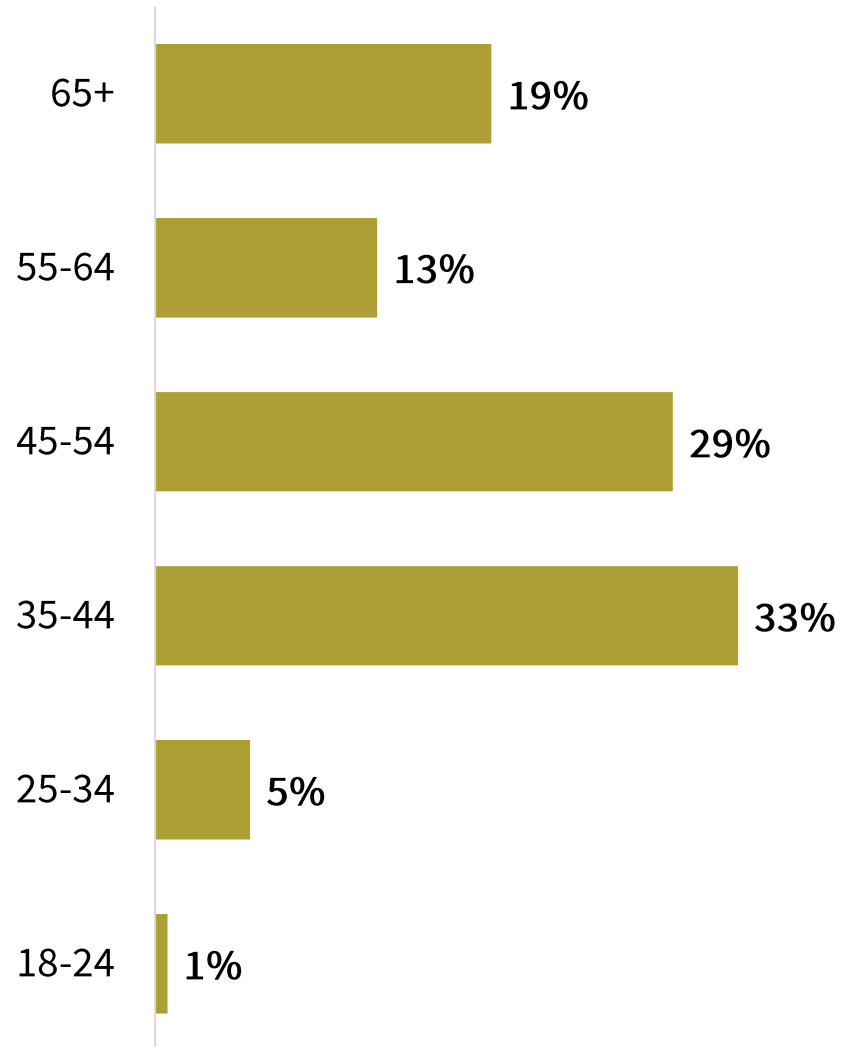
- Founded in 2002 to provide independent research
- Conducted over 3 million staff, parent, and student, and community surveys for school improvement
- Helped more than 1,300 school districts navigate the strategic planning and referendum planning process

# Survey Information

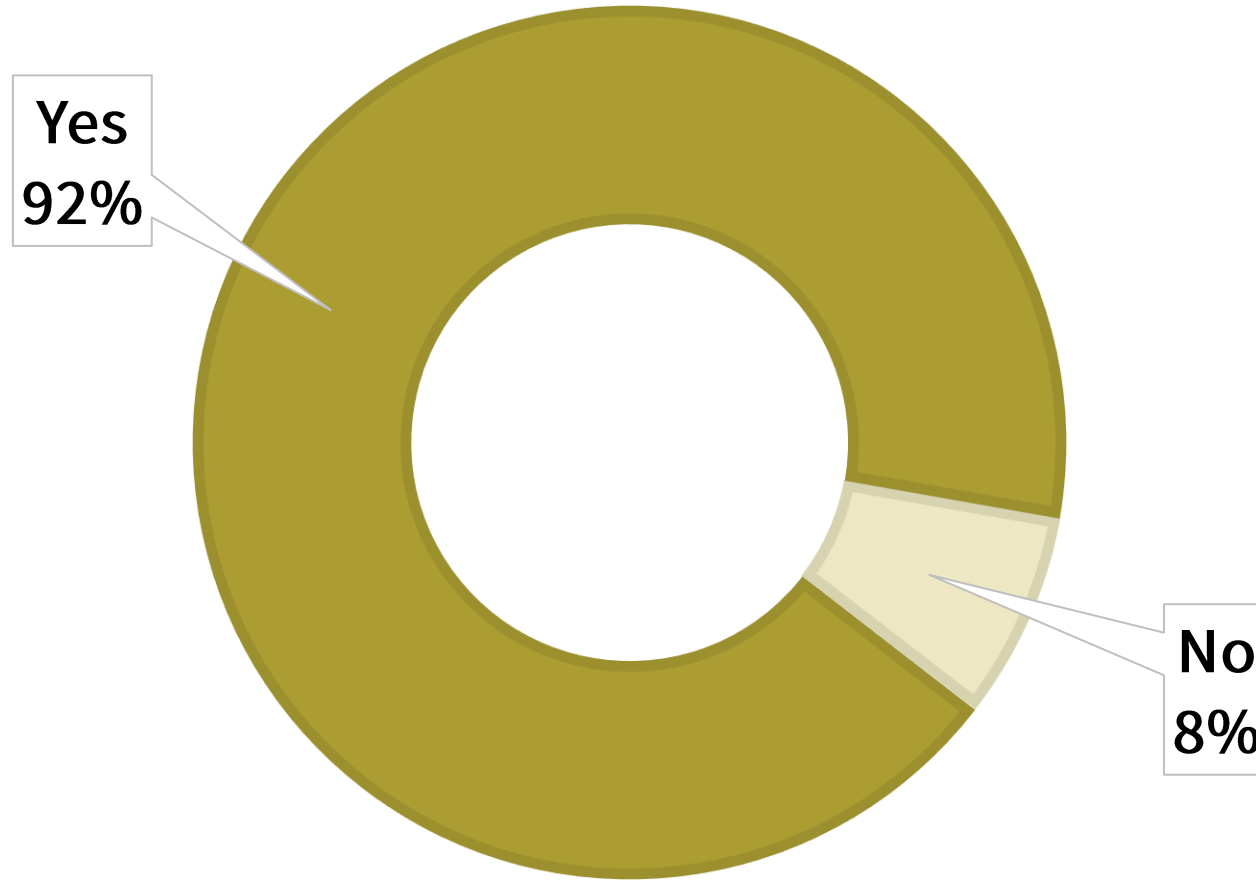
- November 20, 2025 survey deadline
- 2,234 respondents
- 45% response rate
- +/- 2.12% statistical margin of error



# What is your age?



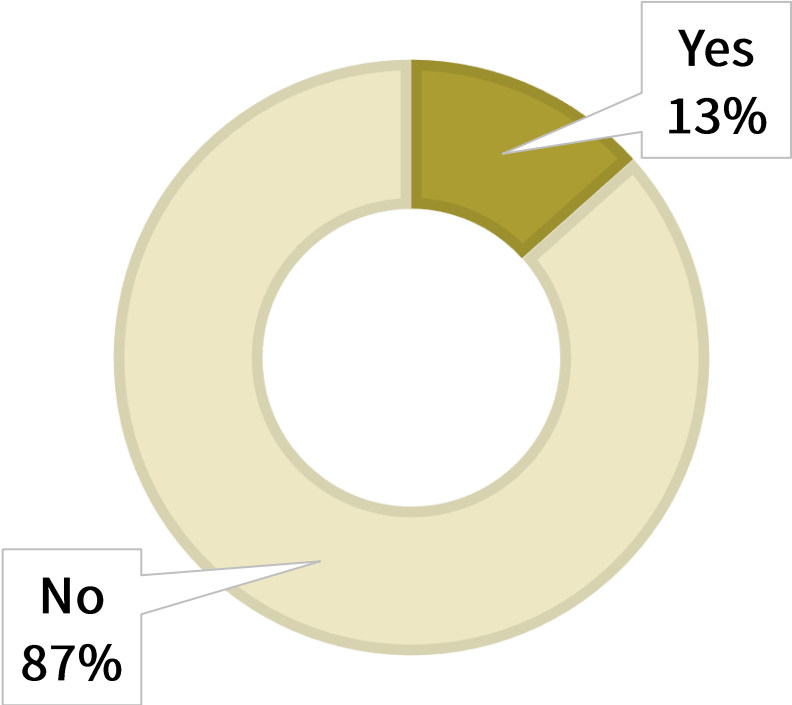
# Is your primary residence in the Whitefish Bay School District?



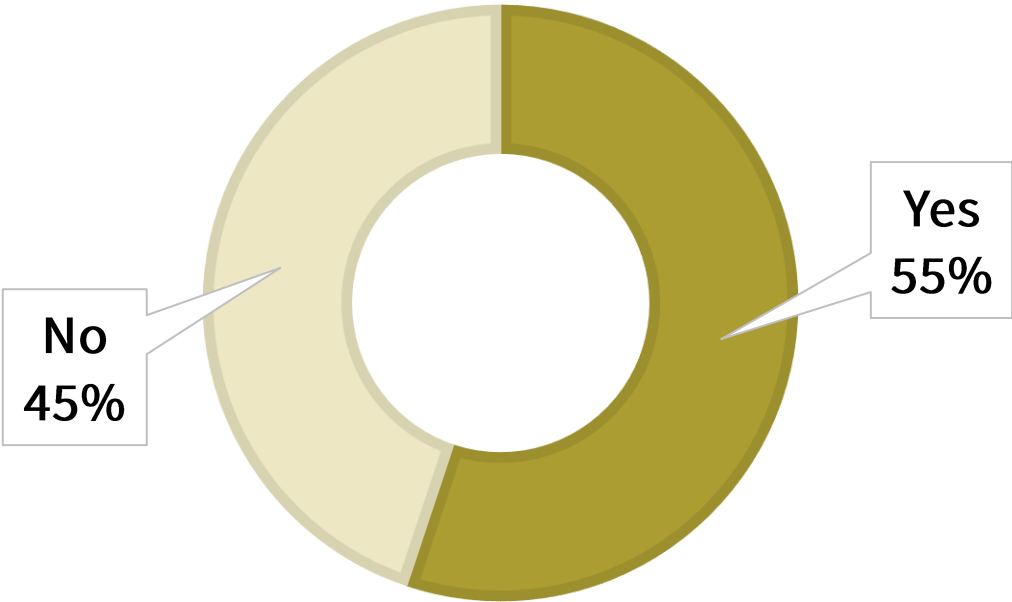
# Respondent Information



Are you an employee of the Whitefish Bay School District?

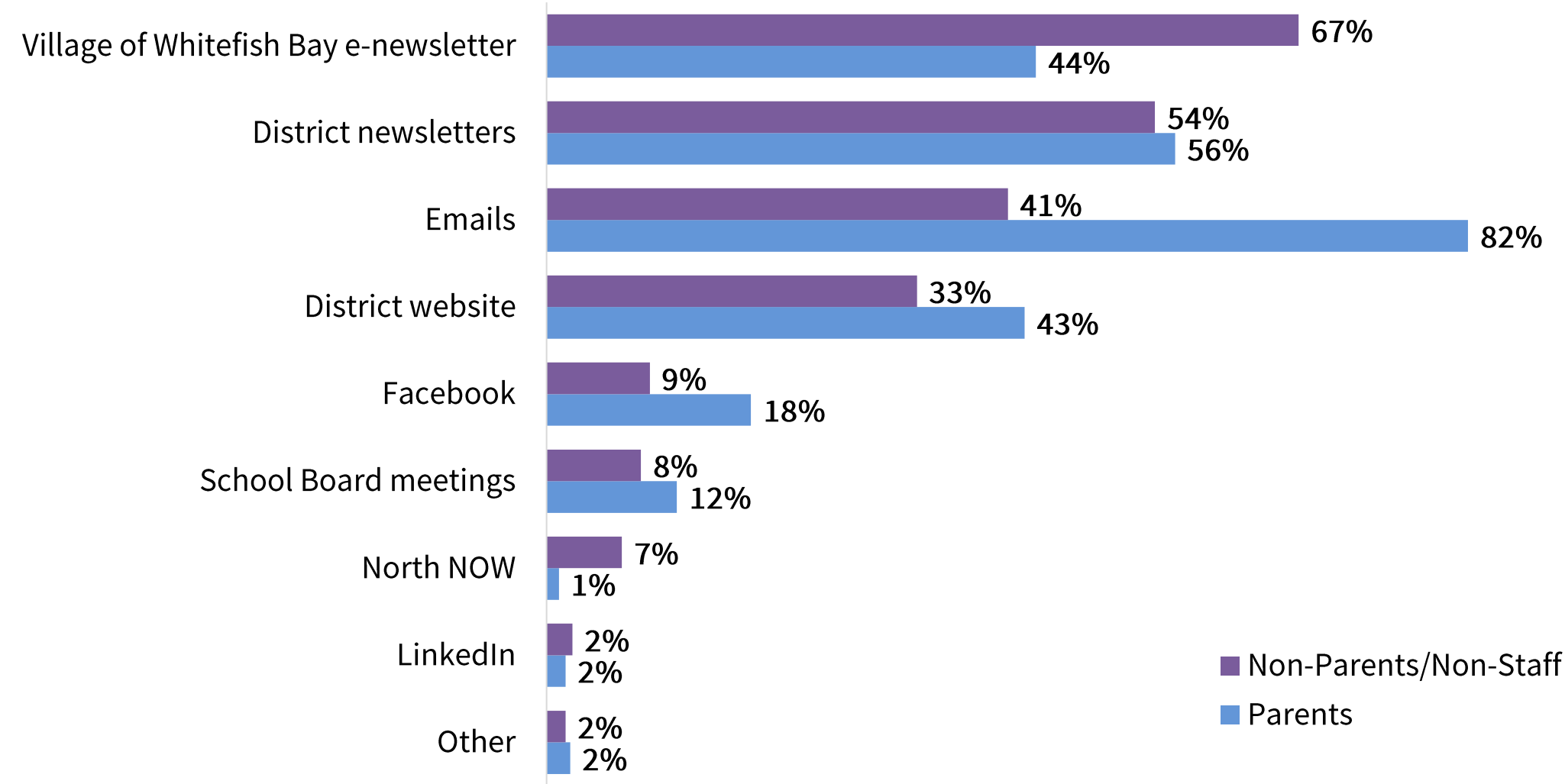


Do you have children attending a Whitefish Bay school?





# How do you like to receive information from us?





# Facility Planning Background

The most pressing challenges identified during the facilities planning process are:

- **Aging infrastructure and unreliable systems** (such as HVAC, plumbing, electrical, windows, roofs, etc.)
- **Small and outdated classrooms** (limited technology access and lack of flexible learning spaces)
- **Building safety, security, and accessibility**

In addition to the needs above, the FAC identified other improvements at each building that are included in the potential costs in the table below. To view a detailed breakdown, please visit our website at [www.wfbschools.com](http://www.wfbschools.com) or scan the QR code.



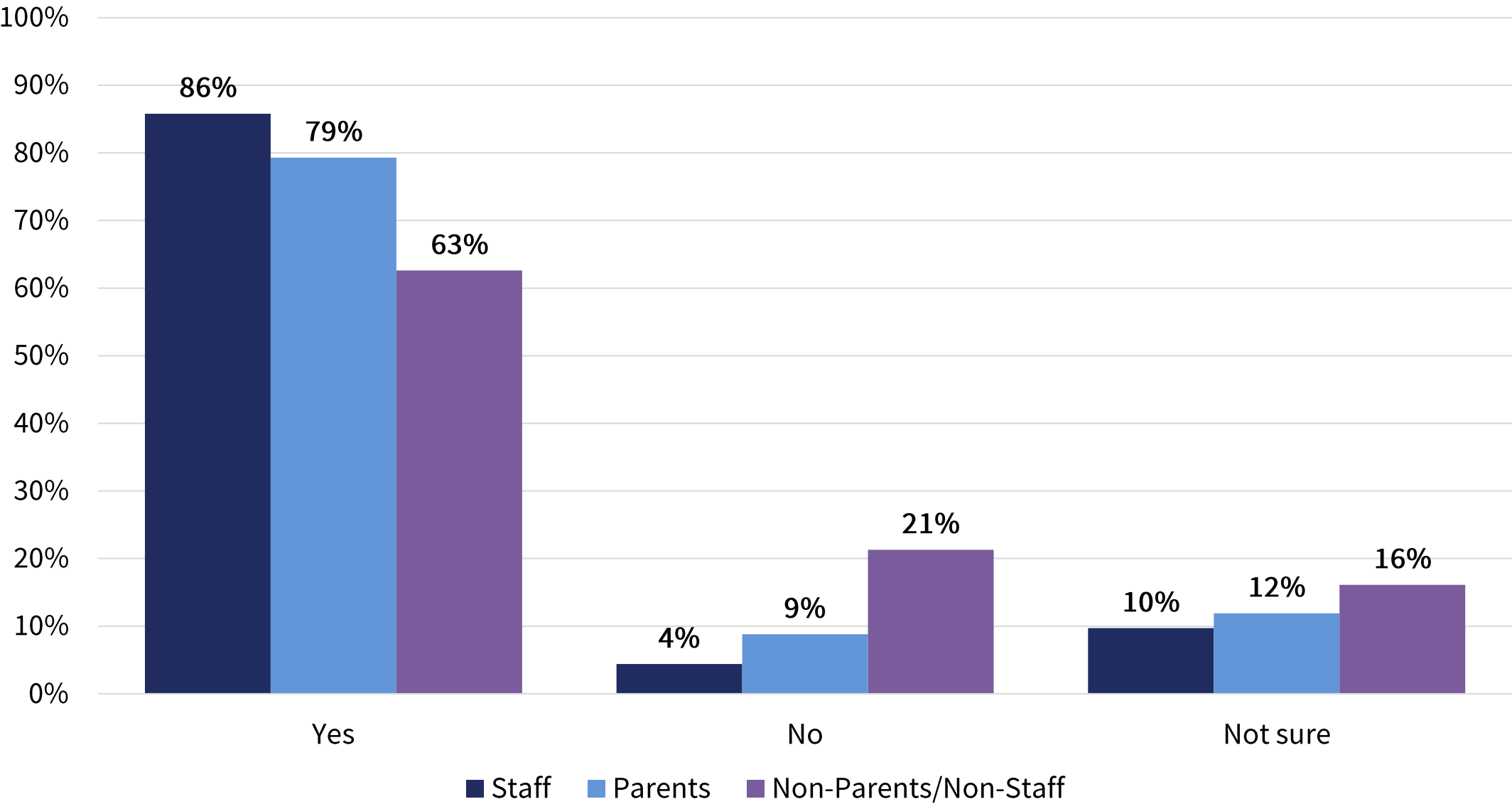
Building	Year Built	Potential Project Cost
Cumberland and Richards Elementaries	1928	\$78.9 million
Middle School	1918	\$67.7 million
High School	1932	\$161.1 million
Lydell School & Community Center	1955	\$21.1 million
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$328.8 million</b>

The School Board sets aside money each year to cover building maintenance. However, the state limits the amount of money available to the District from state aid and local property taxes. As a result, the cost to address the issues above is too expensive to be paid from the annual budget.

**Combined, these factors make it very difficult to address the issues above without additional funding through a capital/building referendum.** Approval of a referendum would allow the District to take out a loan (issue debt). Like a home mortgage, the loan would be financed over many years.



# Would you support the District exploring a building referendum at this time? *(Residents)*



# Most Pressing Facility Issues



Based on the facilities assessment and feedback from the FAC, the School Board determined that the following two projects (totaling \$125.9 million) were the most pressing.

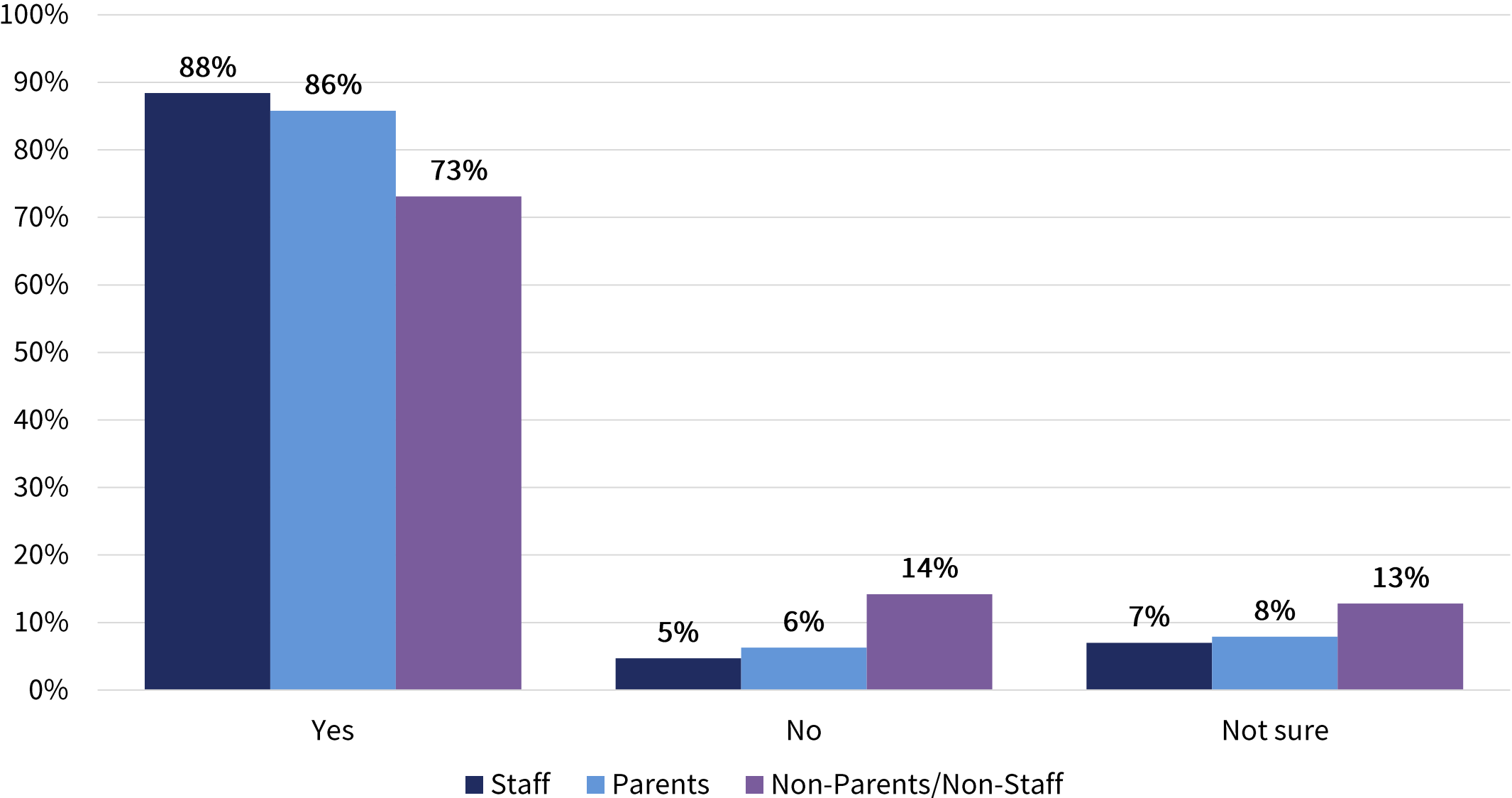
## **Project 1: Addressing safety, security, and building infrastructure** *(Est. cost: \$58.2 million)*

The facility study identified critical infrastructure needs at the following schools: High School (\$35.5 million), Cumberland and Richards (totaling \$20.3 million), and Lydell (\$2.4 million). Many building systems are original (some nearly 100 years old) and are beyond their useful life.

**Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC):** Current systems are outdated, inefficient, and difficult to maintain. In addition, without air conditioning, classrooms are very uncomfortable in the summer and during warm school days.

**Fire Safety:** Any significant changes to our buildings would require updates to our fire and sprinkler systems to comply with today's standards.

# Would you support a referendum to address safety, security, and building infrastructure projects? (*Residents*)



# Most Pressing Facility Issues

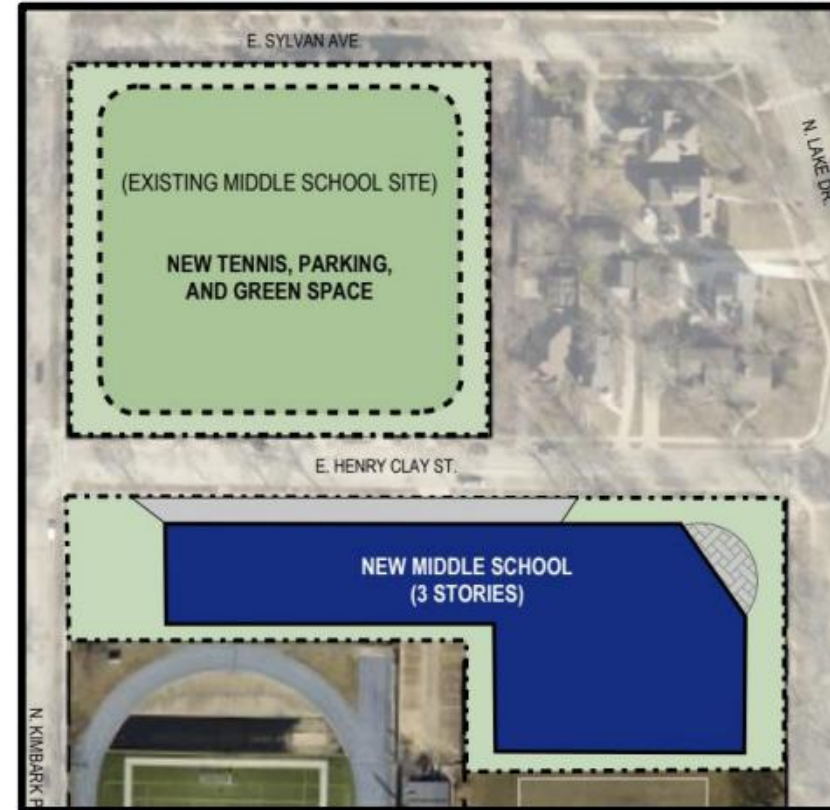


## **Project 2: Building a new middle school** *(Est. cost: \$67.7 million)*

The School Board explored a number of options to update the existing building, which is over 100 years old. Given its age, layout, and inflexible design, the cost to renovate is approximately the same as a new building.

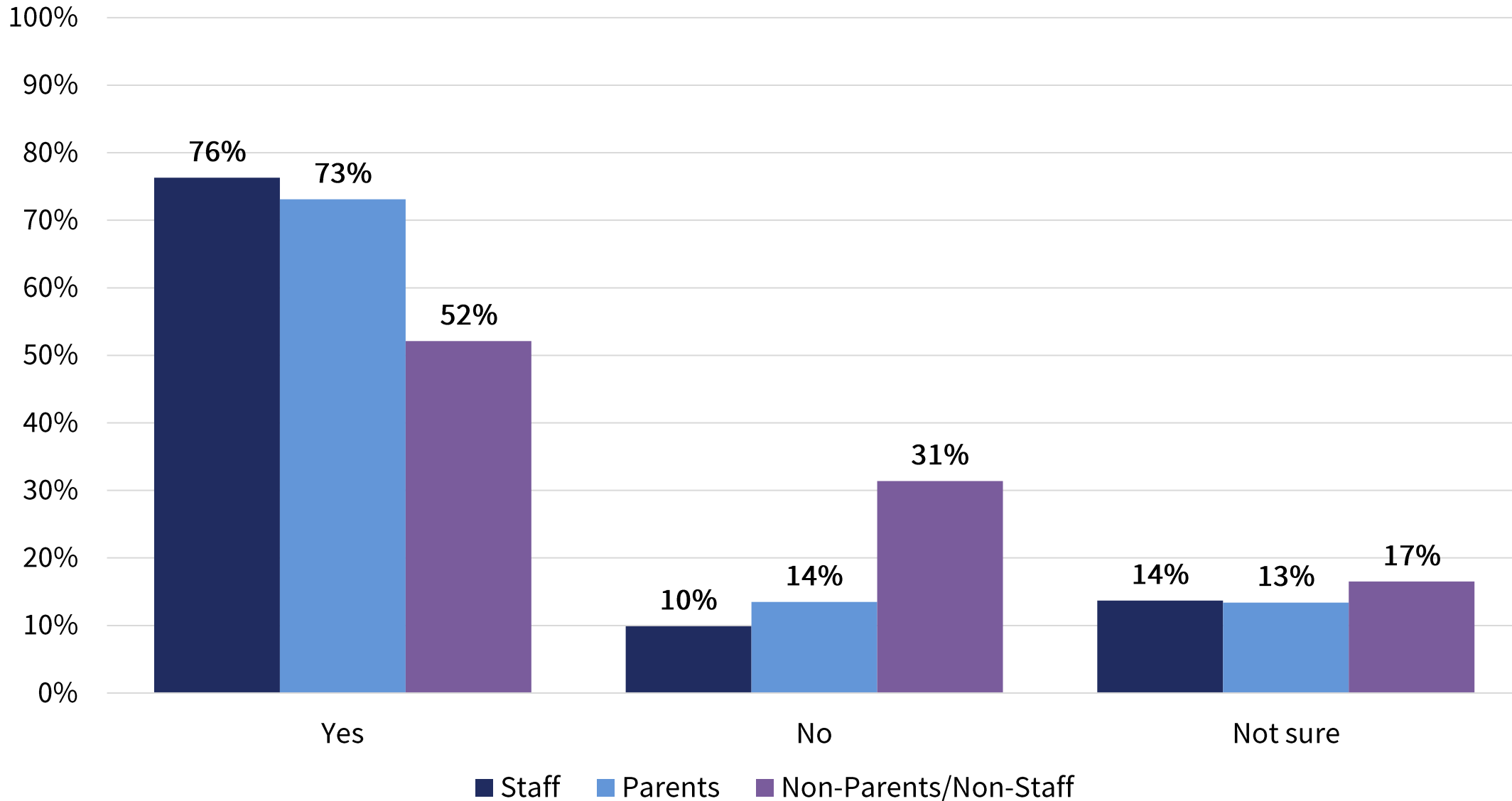
**Therefore, the School Board is recommending building a new middle school on the south side of Henry Clay Street (see image).** The Veterans' Memorial Monument would be reestablished on or near its current site, and the tennis courts and parking lot would be relocated.

The School Board chose this option because it provides the best long-term investment in facilities, avoids disruption to teaching and learning, and provides the most design flexibility.





# Would you support a referendum to build a new middle school? (Residents)



# Additional Projects

To finalize the long-term facility plan, which will include future phases, we need your input to prioritize additional projects.

***Please note that the two projects on the previous page must be addressed before any of the projects below can be considered.***

**Please use this scale when responding to the following items.**

**High:** Address now in this first phase  
**Medium:** Important but address in a future phase  
**Low:** Not a priority





# Whitefish Bay High School Projects



**Additional Infrastructure** Update/replace plumbing and electrical systems, brickwork, foundations, etc. (*Estimated cost: \$10.7 million*)

**Additional Safety, Security, and Accessibility** Renovate main offices to better monitor and control visitor access and improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility (*Estimated cost: \$2.1 million*)

**Classrooms and Student Support** Expand general and special education classrooms, update furniture/fixtures, and create flexible spaces for collaboration and instruction (*Estimated cost: \$28.1 million*)

**Electives** Expand art and technical education classrooms and update furniture/fixtures (*Estimated cost: \$19.1 million*)

**Performing Arts** Address ADA accessibility in the auditorium and update auditorium finishes and lighting/sound systems (*Estimated cost: \$10.8 million*)

**Athletics** Address locker room ADA accessibility, update the fieldhouse, and build a new multipurpose athletics center and student commons (*Estimated cost: \$38.2 million*)

**Pool** Replace the aging pool and expand the facility to meet community recreation and competition needs (*Estimated cost: \$16.6 million*)

# Whitefish Bay High School projects

*Priority score is calculated based on High = 3, Medium = 2, Low = 1*

Additional Infrastructure	<div><div>55%</div><div>35%</div><div>10%</div></div>	<i>Priority Score = 2.46</i>
Additional Safety, Security, and Accessibility	<div><div>53%</div><div>27%</div><div>20%</div></div>	<i>Priority Score = 2.33</i>
Classrooms and Student Support	<div><div>38%</div><div>37%</div><div>25%</div></div>	<i>Priority Score = 2.13</i>
Electives	<div><div>23%</div><div>43%</div><div>34%</div></div>	<i>Priority Score = 1.88</i>
Pool	<div><div>19%</div><div>38%</div><div>43%</div></div>	<i>Priority Score = 1.76</i>
Athletics	<div><div>20%</div><div>34%</div><div>46%</div></div>	<i>Priority Score = 1.75</i>
Performing Arts	<div><div>16%</div><div>39%</div><div>45%</div></div>	<i>Priority Score = 1.72</i>

■ High ■ Medium ■ Low



# Cumberland/Richards Elementary Projects



**Additional Infrastructure** Update/replace plumbing and electrical systems, brickwork, foundations, etc. (*Estimated cost: \$8.1 million*)

**Additional Safety, Security, and Accessibility** Reconfigure drop-off/pick-up areas, renovate main offices to improve security and accessibility, and improve front entrance ADA accessibility (*Estimated cost: \$7.6 million*)

**Classrooms and Student Support** Expand general and special education classrooms, update furniture/fixtures, and create flexible spaces for collaboration and instruction (*Estimated cost: \$33.8 million*)

**Electives** Expand art and music classrooms, renovate gyms, update furniture/fixtures, and reconfigure classrooms to keep elective/specials courses together (*Estimated cost: \$9.1 million*)

# Cumberland/Richards Elementary projects

Priority score is calculated based on High = 3, Medium = 2, Low = 1

Additional Infrastructure	<div><div>56%</div><div>32%</div><div>12%</div></div>	Priority Score = 2.44
Additional Safety, Security, and Accessibility	<div><div>52%</div><div>26%</div><div>22%</div></div>	Priority Score = 2.30
Classrooms and Student Support	<div><div>33%</div><div>37%</div><div>30%</div></div>	Priority Score = 2.02
Electives	<div><div>22%</div><div>39%</div><div>39%</div></div>	Priority Score = 1.83

■ High ■ Medium ■ Low



# Lydell School/Community Center Projects



**Additional Infrastructure** Update/replace plumbing and electrical systems, brickwork, foundations, etc. (*Estimated cost: \$1.0 million*)

**Additional Safety, Security, and Accessibility** Reconfigure drop-off/pick-up areas, renovate main offices to improve security, and improve front entrance ADA accessibility (*Estimated cost: \$0.6 million*)

**Classrooms and Student Support** Relocate early childhood classrooms to one side of the building to improve security and expand spaces (*Estimated cost: \$1.4 million*)

**Recreation Department Spaces** Renovate areas for community recreation programming (*Estimated cost: \$3.1 million*)

**Athletics** Build a full-size gym and weight/fitness area in response to community demand (*Estimated cost: \$6.7 million*)

**Additional Athletics** Build another full-size gym for increased access and opportunities for students and the community (*Estimated cost: \$5.9 million*)

# Lydell School/Community Center projects

Priority score is calculated based on High = 3, Medium = 2, Low = 1

Additional Infrastructure	<div> <div>37%</div> <div>31%</div> <div>32%</div> </div>	Priority Score = 2.06
Additional Safety, Security, and Accessibility	<div> <div>33%</div> <div>26%</div> <div>41%</div> </div>	Priority Score = 1.92
Classrooms and Student Support	<div> <div>23%</div> <div>32%</div> <div>45%</div> </div>	Priority Score = 1.78
Athletics	<div> <div>19%</div> <div>27%</div> <div>54%</div> </div>	Priority Score = 1.65
Recreation Department Spaces	<div> <div>14%</div> <div>34%</div> <div>52%</div> </div>	Priority Score = 1.61
Additional Athletics	<div> <div>13%</div> <div>22%</div> <div>65%</div> </div>	Priority Score = 1.48

■ High
 ■ Medium
 ■ Low



# Funding Support

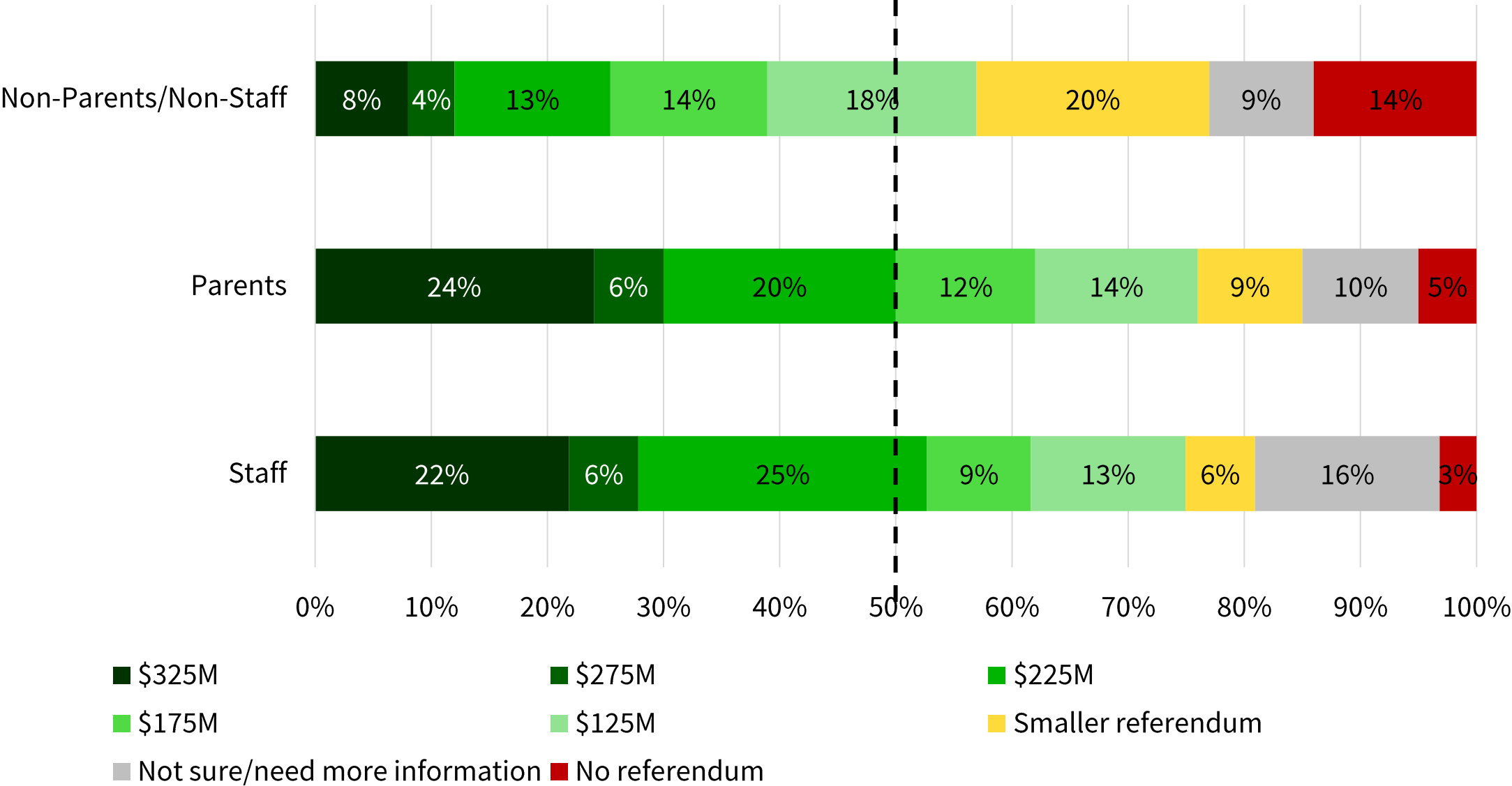
Given the cost, facility updates will need to be done in phases. Your feedback will help determine the size/scope of a potential referendum. Tax impacts below assume borrowing over a 21-year period at an interest rate of 5% to 5.25%.

Referendum amount	\$125 million	\$175 million	\$225 million	\$275 million	\$325 million
Estimated tax increase per \$100,000 of property value	\$235 per year	\$354 per year	\$473 per year	\$592 per year	\$711 per year

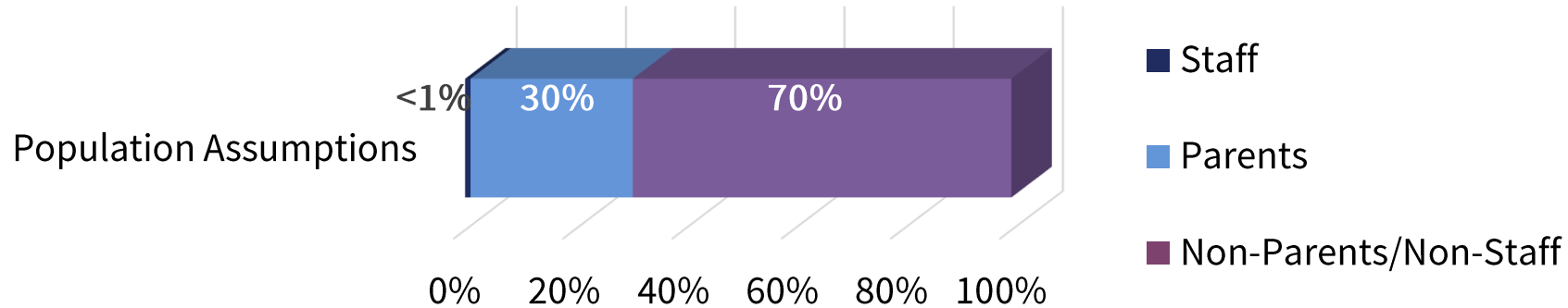




# What referendum amount would you support, assuming the projects included were acceptable to you?



# Additional Analysis: Referendum support for each amount



Weighted support for *Definitely yes* and *Probably yes*:

$$\text{\$325M: } 0.30 (24\%) + 0.70 (8\%) = \underline{12.8\%}$$

$$\text{\$275M: } 0.30 (30\%) + 0.70 (12\%) = \underline{17.4\%}$$

$$\text{\$225M: } 0.30 (51\%) + 0.70 (25\%) = \underline{32.8\%}$$

$$\text{\$175M: } 0.30 (63\%) + 0.70 (39\%) = \underline{46.2\%}$$

$$\text{\$125M: } 0.30 (76\%) + 0.70 (57\%) = \underline{62.7\%}$$

$$\text{Smaller: } 0.30 (85\%) + 0.70 (77\%) = \underline{79.4\%}$$

# How is the District doing in each of the following areas?

*Great = 4, Good = 3, Fair = 2, Poor = 1*



Item	Staff	Parents	Non-Parents/ Non-Staff
Delivering a high-quality education	3.83	3.67	3.73
Keeping the public informed	3.54	3.27	3.03
Managing funds appropriately	3.31	3.27	3.00
Building pride in the community	3.51	3.44	3.38

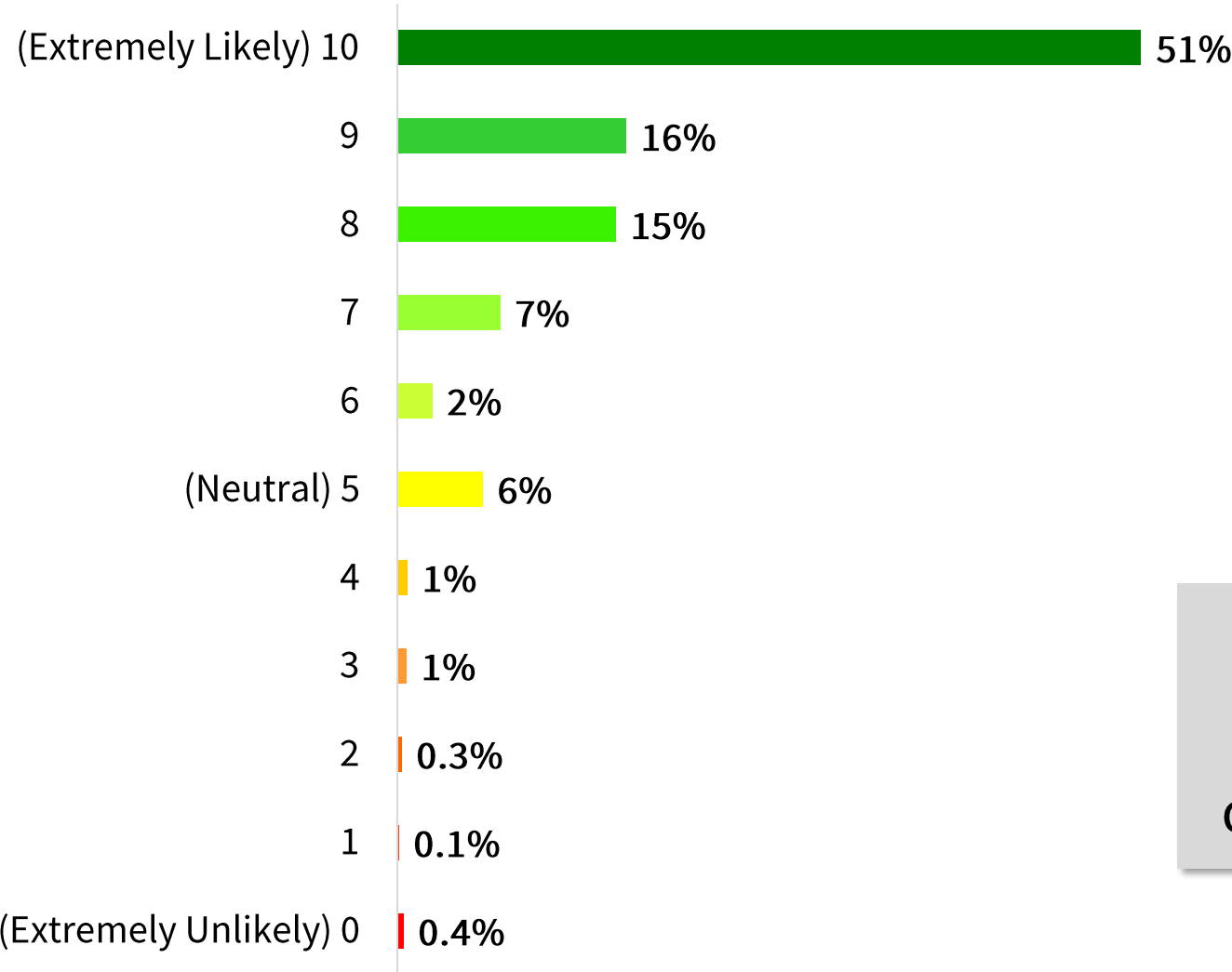
# How is the District doing in each of the following areas?

*Great = 4, Good = 3, Fair = 2, Poor = 1*



Item	Percent “Great” or “Good”	Average	Comparison Percentile
Delivering a high-quality education	96%	3.71	99 <sup>th</sup>
Keeping the public informed	83%	3.21	95 <sup>th</sup>
Managing funds appropriately	80%	3.19	99 <sup>th</sup>
Building pride in the community	90%	3.42	99 <sup>th</sup>

On a scale of 0 – 10, how likely would you be to recommend the District to a friend or family member?



Whitefish Bay Score: 8.76  
Comparison Score: 7.18  
Comparison Percentile: 99<sup>th</sup>



# What did we learn?



- All three subgroups support the District pursuing a building referendum at this time.
- There is majority weighted support (62.7%) for a \$125 million referendum to pay for Project 1 (safety, security, and infrastructure) and Project 2 (building a new middle school). *Detailed descriptions of those two projects are included on slides 11 and 13 of this report.*
- There is not majority weighted support for a \$175 million referendum that would include additional projects.



# SCHOOL PERCEPTIONS

*Measuring what matters*

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