



Exit Survey Report

for Voorheesville Central School District

Prepared by:

Vanessa Salman, Communications Specialist

Capital Region BOCES Communications Service

900 Watervliet-Shaker Road, Albany, NY 12205 | (518) 464-3960

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| INTRODUCTION | 2 |
| SURVEY ANALYSIS | 3 |
| VOTER TURNOUT AND SURVEY PARTICIPATION | 3 |
| HOW AND WHY DID VOTERS VOTE THE WAY THEY DID | 4 |
| ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK | 7 |
| RECOMMENDATIONS | 8 |
| APPENDIX: SURVEY RESPONSES | 9 |

Introduction

The Voorheesville Central School District conducted an exit survey during the district's annual school budget vote on May 17, 2022. The purpose was to collect demographic data about who voted on the budget, additional proposals and information about why voters voted the way they did.

The survey was voluntary and anonymous. Surveys were made available, both electronically and in paper form, to voters at the polling sites for anyone who chose to fill one out after voting. While these results do not represent the opinions of all voters, they do provide many residents' perceptions about the district and the building proposal.

The following data was compiled by the Capital Region BOCES Communications Service in cooperation with the BOCES public information specialist assigned to Voorheesville, Julia Lilkendey.

Please note: Percentages, where provided, are out of the number of survey participants who responded to that particular question, and not out of the total number of survey participants. For some questions, total percentages may add up to more than 100% because participants were able to select more than one answer choice or as a result of rounding to the nearest whole number.

Survey Analysis

Voter Turnout and Survey Participation

On May 17, 1,101 Voorheesville Central School District residents cast ballots on the proposed school budget, with 893 (81.1%) voting yes, and 208 (18.9%) voting no.

At the polling sites, 96 voters elected to complete the voluntary exit survey — a **response rate of nearly 8.7%**. A copy of the complete survey results can be found in the [APPENDIX](#) of this document.

Voter demographics

Voters were asked demographic questions about age, residence, and parental status.

The largest category of respondents by age group were those ages 45-64, who constituted close to 39% of survey respondents. Taken together, nearly three-quarters of respondents were between the ages of 25 and 64. Broadly speaking, **this sampling is fairly representative of the demographics of the district as a whole**, according to the most recent data from the National Center for Education Statistics.

| RESPONDENTS | AGE RANGE |
|-------------|-----------|
| 39% | 45-64 |
| 33% | 25-44 |
| 26% | 65+ |
| 2% | 18-24 |

Voters were asked to indicate where they live. When surveyed, nearly all respondents (close to 89%) indicated they live in the 12186 zip code. More than 8% were 12159 residents and more than 3% of voters indicated they were residents of the 12209 zip code. **Close to half of respondents (45%) have lived in the district for 20 years or more.** Few respondents were new arrivals to the district (less than one year).

| RESPONDENTS | YEARS LIVED IN DISTRICT |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| 25% | 30 years or more |
| 20% | 6-9 years |

| | |
|-----|--------------------|
| 20% | 20-29 years |
| 17% | 10-19 years |
| 14% | 1-5 years |
| 3% | Less than one year |

When asked about parental status, **more than 80% of respondents indicated they were parents of a Voorheesville student.** More than one-third (37%) of respondents indicated that their children are past school age. Among those respondents who are parents of Voorheesville students, their children’s grade levels were as follows (categories were not exclusive, meaning that totals do not equal 100%):

| RESPONDENTS | GRADE LEVEL |
|-------------|-------------|
| 32% | K-5 |
| 26% | 6-8 |
| 24% | 9-12 |

How and why did voters vote the way they did

Voters were asked to indicate how they voted on the proposed budget, and to provide some information about what informed their vote. Due to the low response rate, it is not possible to provide meaningful comparisons of how “yes” and “no” voters differed. However, the survey can still provide a snapshot of some voter behaviors and beliefs.

More than 91.4% of respondents indicated they voted “yes” on the proposal. It is not uncommon for exit surveys to indicate a higher approval rate than the actual ballots. This is the case here, with the actual budget approval rate being 81%. Among respondents, a majority (75%) indicated they typically vote “yes” on the school budget, with fewer than 10 respondents giving different answers to that question.

| RESPONDENTS | VOTING PATTERN |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 75% | Typically vote yes |
| 10% | I have not voted in the past. |
| 9% | My vote varies |
| 6% | Typically vote no |

Propositions

Two questions asked voters how they voted on two separate propositions on the ballot. On the survey, a majority of respondents indicated they voted “yes” on both propositions at rates similar to the budget proposition itself.

Yes voters

Among “yes” voters, most respondents (82%) indicated that the budget proposal met the needs of students, while just over half of respondents indicated their reason for supporting the budget was that they agreed with the district’s decisions, or that the proposed tax increase was reasonable.

Three voters offered other responses, as follows:

- I believe in a well-funded public education system
- I'm a retired educator!
- The District is well run

I voted yes because:

| PERCENTAGE | STATEMENT |
|------------|---|
| 82% | The budget proposal meets the needs of students |
| 58% | I agree with the decisions of the district |
| 54% | The proposed tax increase is reasonable |
| 4% | Other |

No voters

Eight of the total 96 respondents voted “no” on the budget. Of those, four respondents (40%) indicated that their main reason for their vote was that they disagreed with the decisions of the district. The second most popular reason was “other,” (3 respondents) which one respondent indicated that this was due to their financial situation on a fixed income.

I voted no because:

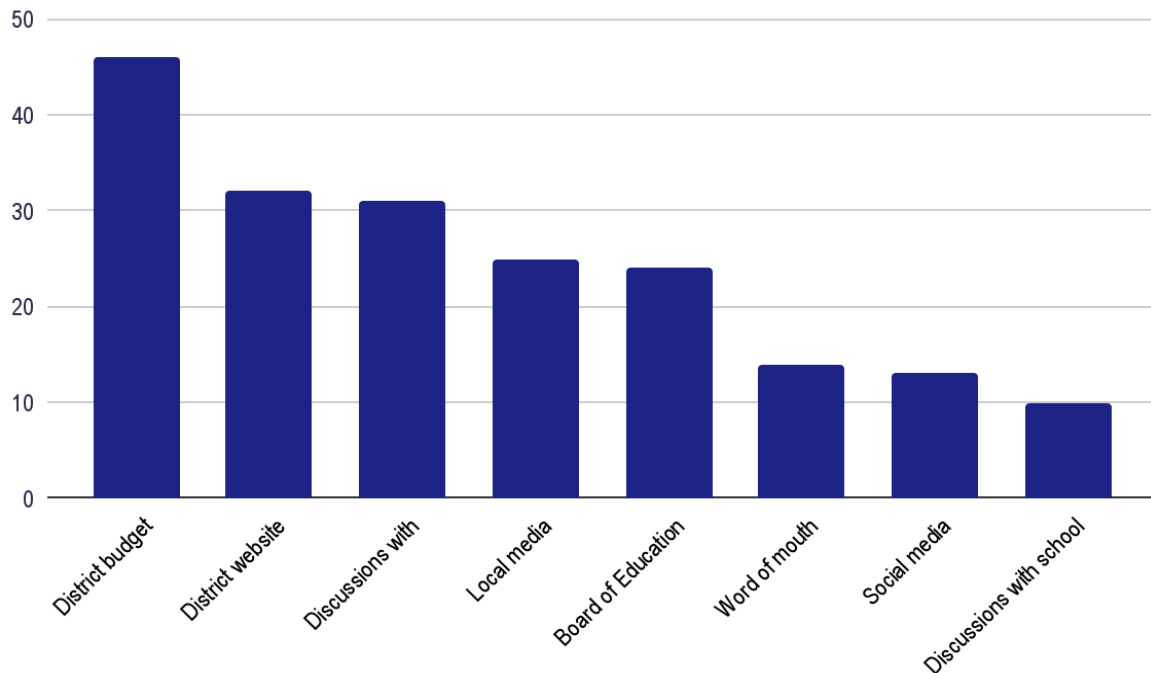
| PERCENTAGE | STATEMENT |
|------------|---|
| 40% | I disagree with the decisions of the district |
| 30% | Other |
| 20% | The budget proposal does not meet the needs of students |

20% The proposed tax increase is not reasonable

Information about the proposal

More than 79% of respondents indicated they felt they had adequate information about the building proposal. Of those, 41% were in the 25-44 age range. Additionally, 52 of these respondents indicated they had children in at least one of the three schools in the district. **There did not appear to be a discrepancy between having school-aged children in the district and information accessibility**, as 31 respondents that did not have children in the school district indicated they had adequate information, whereas only 7 respondents without children in the district reported not having adequate information on the vote.

When asked to identify their **best sources of information** about the budget, respondents ranked the information sources as follows:



Just over half of respondents (51%) indicated that the district's budget newsletter/brochure was their most reliable source of information about the vote. About one-third of respondents checked that the district website (35%) and discussions with friends/neighbors (34%) were their best sources of information. This trend shows that district-driven information is considered most valuable to this sect of voters.

Of note, respondents with children in the district and children past school-age both considered the district budget newsletter/brochure to be one of the most reliable sources of information about the vote. In contrast, those that indicated their children either attend school outside the district, or

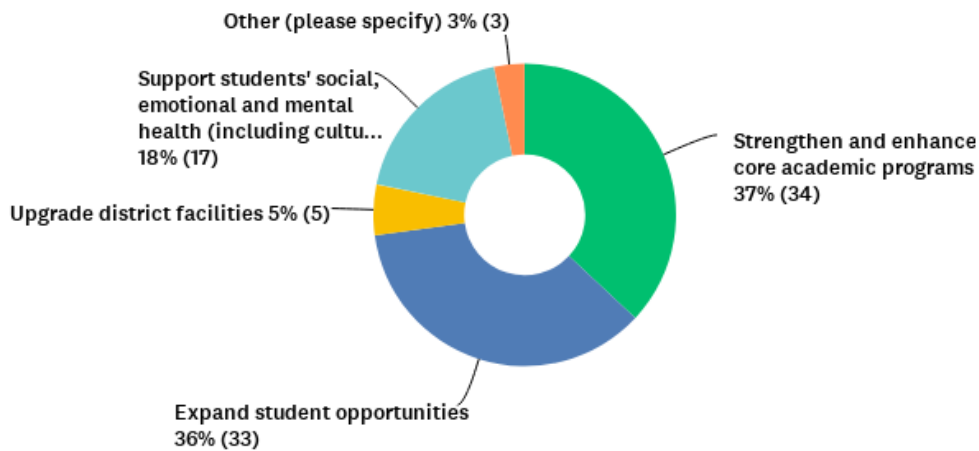
whose children have not yet entered the district, did not find the district budget publication to be as useful a source of information. While there were not a significant number of total respondents from these categories, this finding may be worth further investigation.

Additional feedback

District priorities

When asked to indicate what the district's top priority should be as it plans for the future, respondents were almost evenly divided between strengthening and enhancing core academic programs, and expanding student opportunities. Respondents were limited to selecting one response to this question. Full responses were as follows:

Q10 As we plan for the future, what should the district's top priority be?



Comments

When given an opportunity to submit comments, 17 respondents provided additional feedback. Those comments can be found on Page 23 of this report.

Recommendations

The following recommendations may help the district develop a more effective survey instrument for future votes.

Disseminate exit survey **strategically**

To get a better understanding of voter opinions, the district may wish to do more to encourage participation in future exit surveys. Recruiting student volunteers to solicit participation, providing both written and electronic surveys on-site, and publicizing the exit survey when promoting the budget vote are some strategies to consider employing in the future.

Collect **more precise, actionable** demographic information

For future surveys, the district may wish to reflect in more detail about **what it hopes to learn through these demographic questions**. The Capital Region BOCES Communications Service can support Voorheesville in refining its survey instrument so that the questions being asked are targeted to provide the district with actionable information.

For example, Question 12 in the current survey was geared towards parents of current or past students of the district. **The survey did not provide respondents with any way to indicate whether they have no children**. Additionally, respondents have no way to indicate other familial relationships to students, such as aunts, grandparents, siblings, etc. If the district wishes to understand whether respondents have a familial relationship to a current student, there may be more direct and inclusive ways of asking that question that could encompass a broader range of relationships.

APPENDIX:

Exit Survey Summary for Voorheesville Central School District

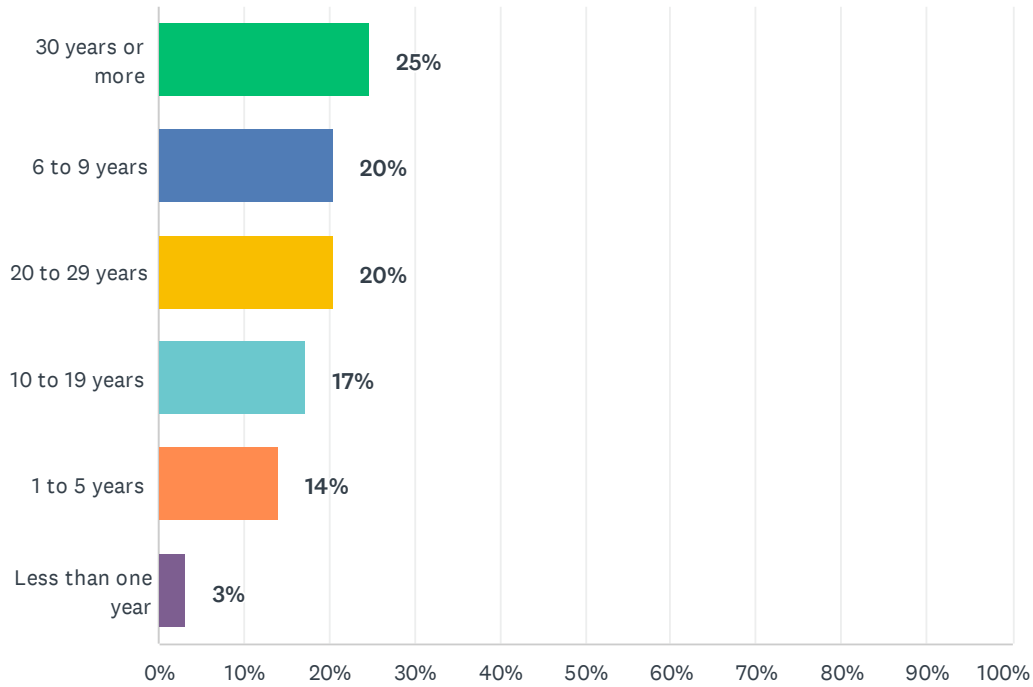
Survey participants' responses to all questions

All data from the survey can also be viewed at

https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-Sc5UqMSt9RYuOjeuWr4uaA_3D_3D/. This is a shareable link that can be viewed by anyone with the URL.

Q1 How long have you resided in the Voorheesville Central School District?

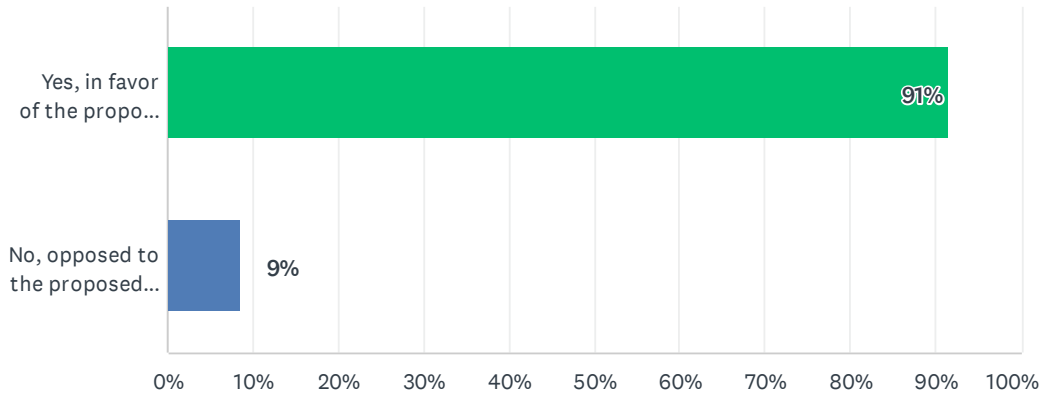
Answered: 93 Skipped: 3



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 30 years or more | 25% | 23 |
| 6 to 9 years | 20% | 19 |
| 20 to 29 years | 20% | 19 |
| 10 to 19 years | 17% | 16 |
| 1 to 5 years | 14% | 13 |
| Less than one year | 3% | 3 |
| TOTAL | | 93 |

Q2 How did you vote on the proposed 2022-23 school budget?

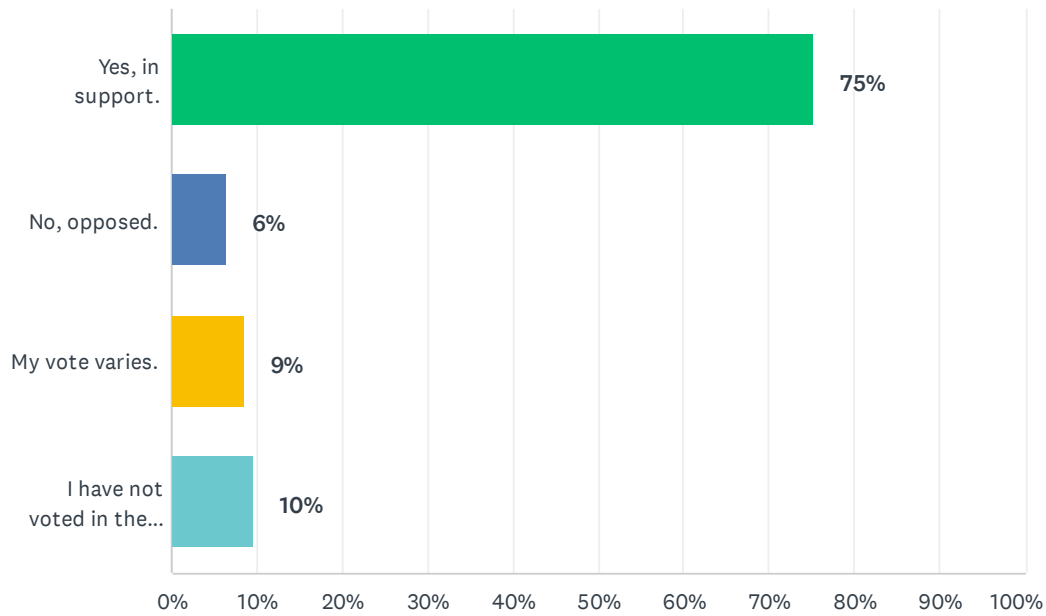
Answered: 93 Skipped: 3



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|----|
| Yes, in favor of the proposed budget | 91% | 85 |
| No, opposed to the proposed budget | 9% | 8 |
| TOTAL | | 93 |

Q3 How have you typically voted on the school budget in the past?

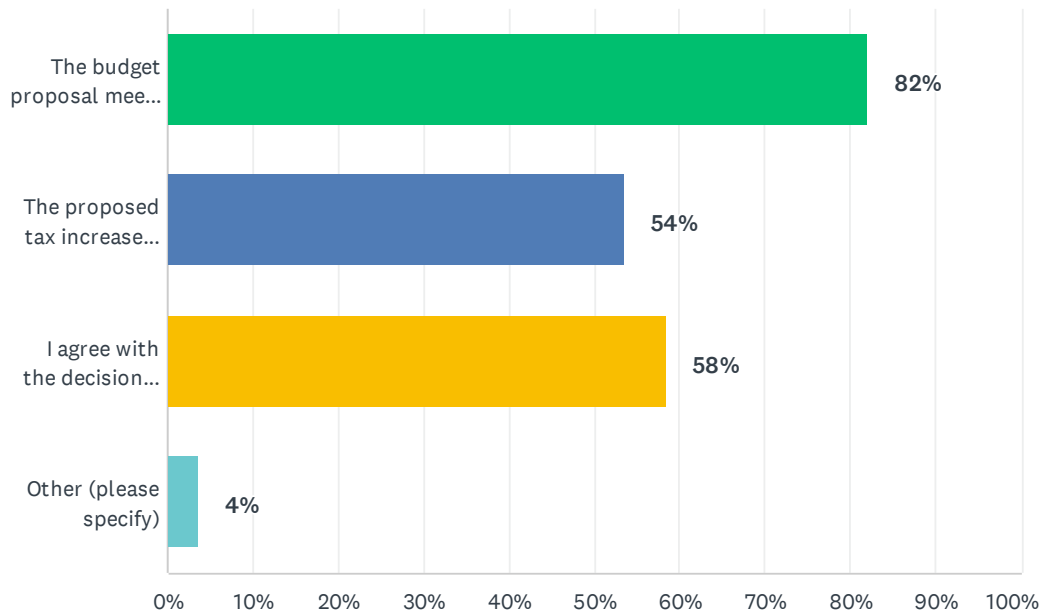
Answered: 93 Skipped: 3



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Yes, in support. | 75% | 70 |
| No, opposed. | 6% | 6 |
| My vote varies. | 9% | 8 |
| I have not voted in the past | 10% | 9 |
| TOTAL | | 93 |

Q4 I voted YES on the proposed budget because (check all that apply):

Answered: 84 Skipped: 12

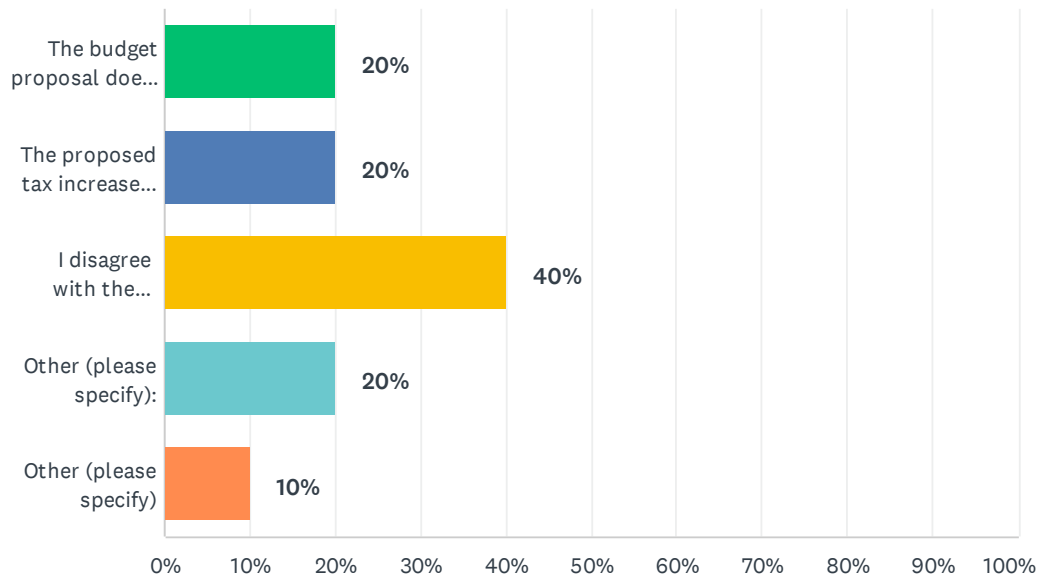


| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|----|
| The budget proposal meets the needs of students. | 82% | 69 |
| The proposed tax increase is reasonable. | 54% | 45 |
| I agree with the decisions of the district. | 58% | 49 |
| Other (please specify) | 4% | 3 |
| Total Respondents: 84 | | |

| # | OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) | DATE |
|---|--|-------------------|
| 1 | I believe in a well-funded public education system | 5/17/2022 8:45 PM |
| 2 | I'm a retired educator! | 5/17/2022 4:38 PM |
| 3 | The District is well run | 5/17/2022 3:02 PM |

Q5 I voted NO on the proposed budget because (check all that apply):

Answered: 10 Skipped: 86

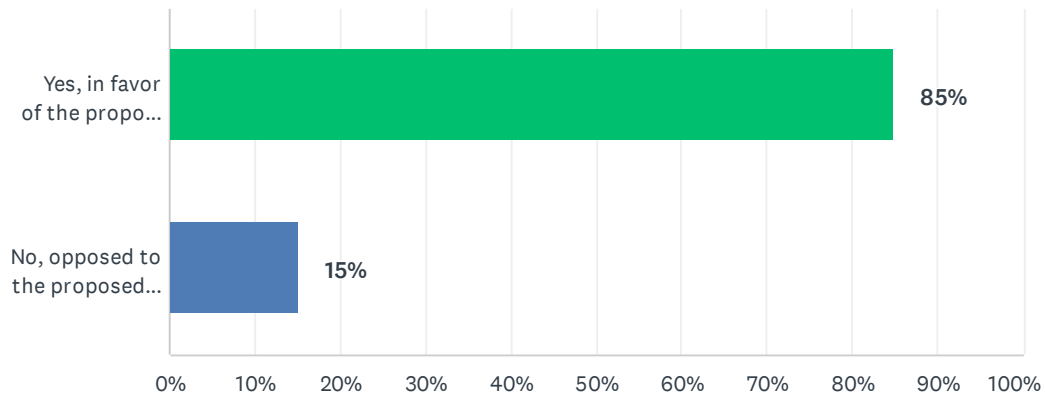


| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|---|
| The budget proposal does not meet the needs of students. | 20% | 2 |
| The proposed tax increase is not reasonable. | 20% | 2 |
| I disagree with the decisions of the district. | 40% | 4 |
| Other (please specify): | 20% | 2 |
| Other (please specify) | 10% | 1 |
| Total Respondents: 10 | | |

| # | OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) | DATE |
|---|--|------------------|
| 1 | on fixed income and inflation makes it difficult to get basics | 6/9/2022 9:10 AM |

Q6 How did you vote on the bus and work truck proposition?

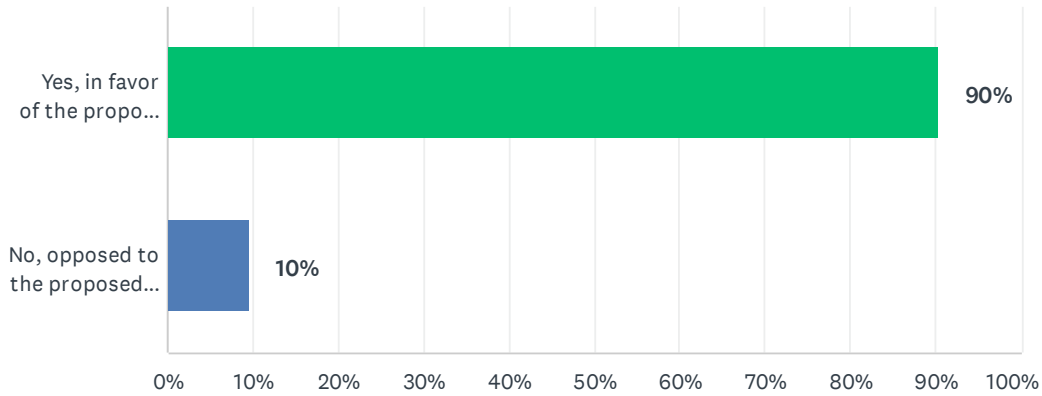
Answered: 93 Skipped: 3



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Yes, in favor of the proposed bus and work truck purchase | 85% | 79 |
| No, opposed to the proposed bus and work truck purchase | 15% | 14 |
| TOTAL | | 93 |

Q7 How did you vote on the proposition to add a student board member?

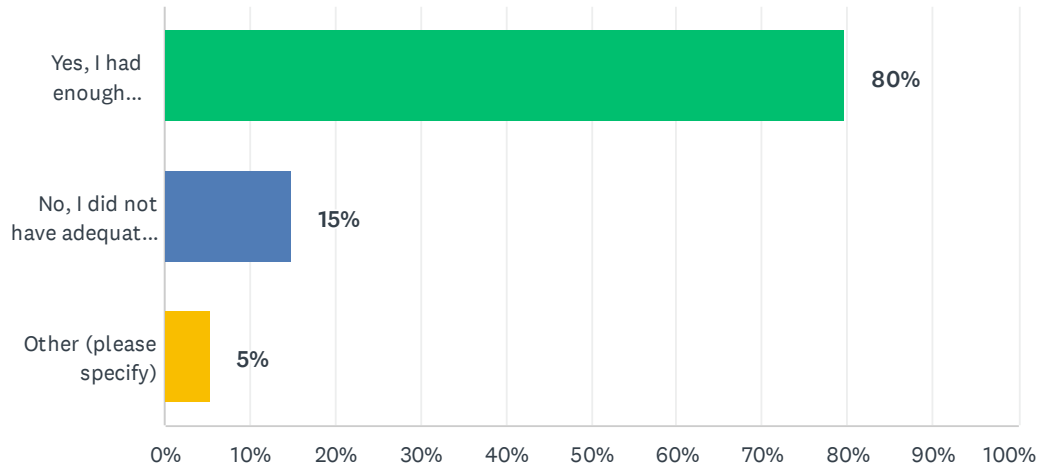
Answered: 93 Skipped: 3



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Yes, in favor of the proposed student board member | 90% | 84 |
| No, opposed to the proposed student board member | 10% | 9 |
| TOTAL | | 93 |

Q8 Do you feel like you had adequate information about the proposed budget?

Answered: 94 Skipped: 2

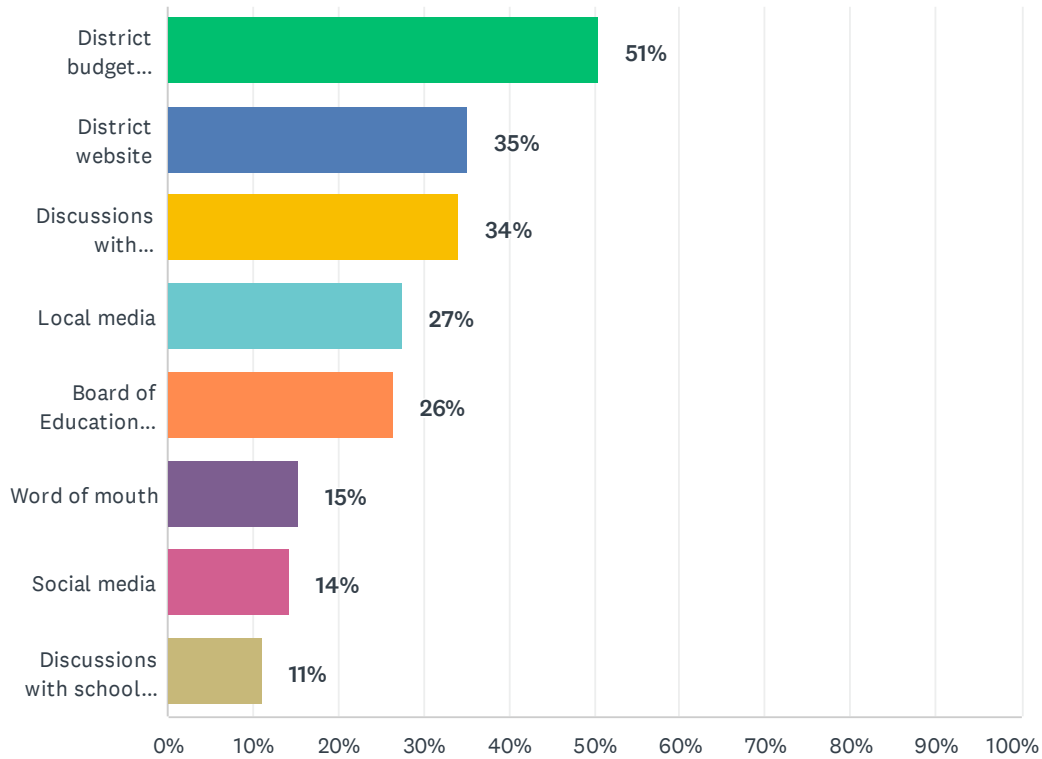


| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Yes, I had enough information. | 80% | 75 |
| No, I did not have adequate information. | 15% | 14 |
| Other (please specify) | 5% | 5 |
| TOTAL | | 94 |

| # | OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) | DATE |
|---|--|-------------------|
| 1 | (none provided) | 6/9/2022 9:22 AM |
| 2 | I would like to see the larger more detailed budget packet which we used to receive. It might be available on the internet now- I didn't look yet. | 6/9/2022 9:14 AM |
| 3 | 31st | 5/18/2022 7:25 PM |
| 4 | The brochure that was sent out was terrible. It was not informative. More information should have been included and it should not have just been a carbon copy of every other district's . | 5/17/2022 3:50 PM |
| 5 | I read what was available - but i could have done more researc | 5/17/2022 2:08 PM |

Q9 What were your best sources of information about the budget? (Check all that apply.)

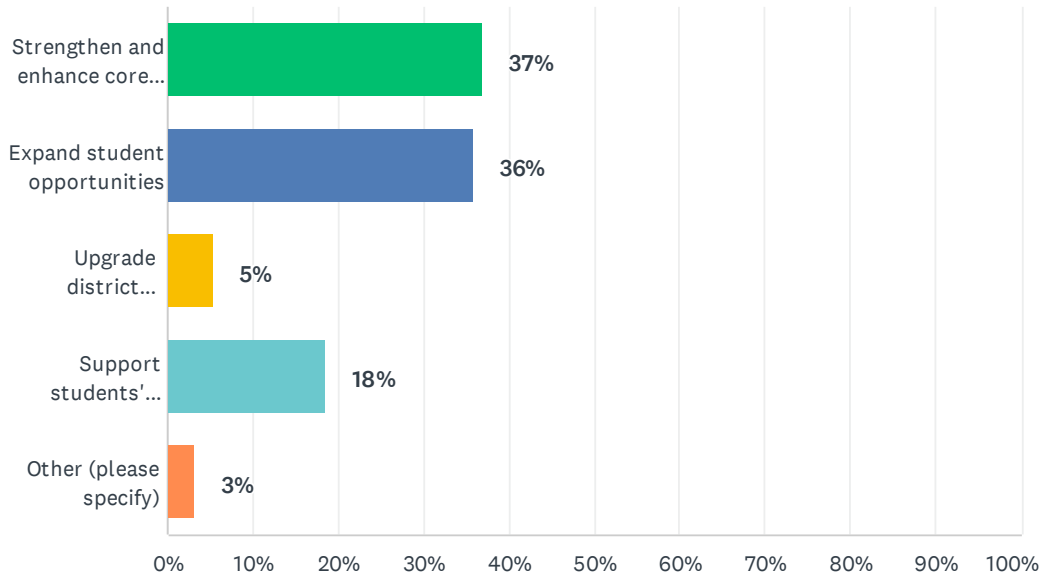
Answered: 91 Skipped: 5



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|----|
| District budget newsletter/brochure | 51% | 46 |
| District website | 35% | 32 |
| Discussions with friends/neighbors | 34% | 31 |
| Local media | 27% | 25 |
| Board of Education meetings | 26% | 24 |
| Word of mouth | 15% | 14 |
| Social media | 14% | 13 |
| Discussions with school staff | 11% | 10 |
| Total Respondents: 91 | | |

Q10 As we plan for the future, what should the district's top priority be?

Answered: 92 Skipped: 4

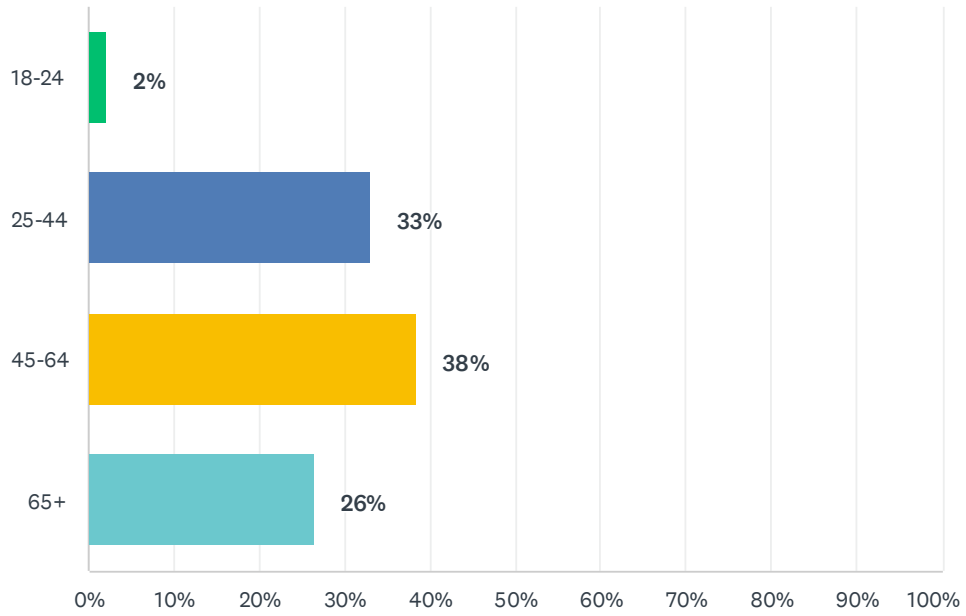


| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Strengthen and enhance core academic programs | 37% | 34 |
| Expand student opportunities | 36% | 33 |
| Upgrade district facilities | 5% | 5 |
| Support students' social, emotional and mental health (including culture and climate) | 18% | 17 |
| Other (please specify) | 3% | 3 |
| TOTAL | | 92 |

| # | OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) | DATE |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | prepare students for what is needed | 6/9/2022 9:10 AM |
| 2 | No CRT | 5/17/2022 5:22 PM |
| 3 | Broad based education is best | 5/17/2022 3:27 PM |

Q11 What age group are you in?

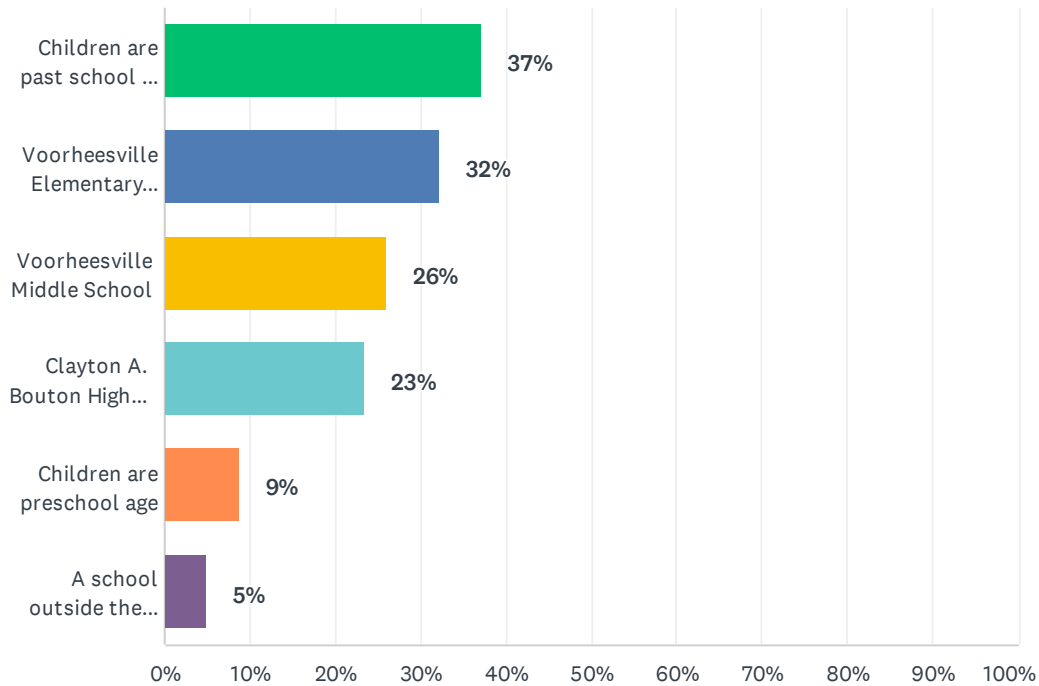
Answered: 91 Skipped: 5



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|----------------|-----------|----|
| 18-24 | 2% | 2 |
| 25-44 | 33% | 30 |
| 45-64 | 38% | 35 |
| 65+ | 26% | 24 |
| TOTAL | | 91 |

Q12 If you are a parent or guardian of a future, past, or current Voorheesville student, please indicate your child(ren)'s school status (if not applicable, please continue to Question 14):

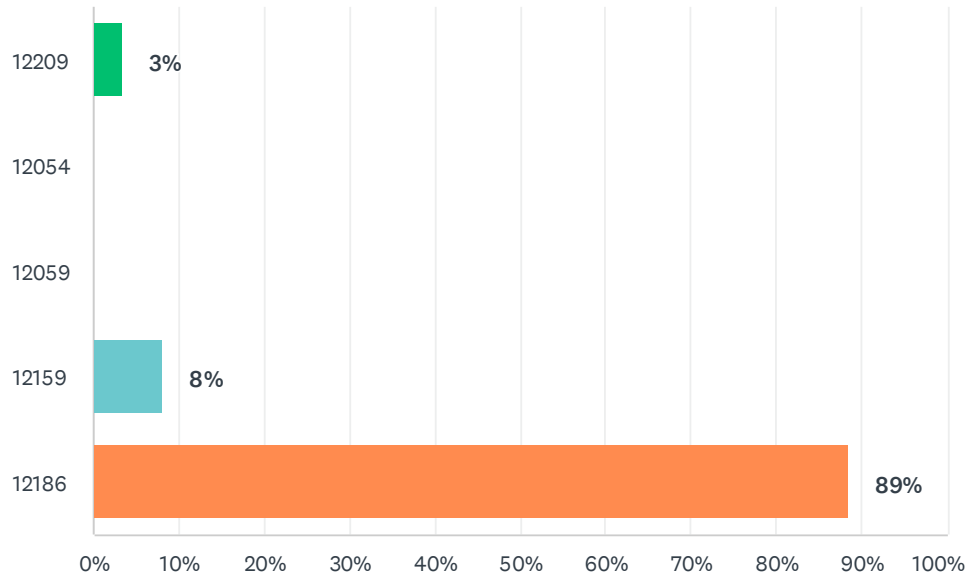
Answered: 81 Skipped: 15



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|---|-----------|----|
| Children are past school age | 37% | 30 |
| Voorheesville Elementary School | 32% | 26 |
| Voorheesville Middle School | 26% | 21 |
| Clayton A. Bouton High School | 23% | 19 |
| Children are preschool age | 9% | 7 |
| A school outside the Voorheesville district | 5% | 4 |
| Total Respondents: 81 | | |

Q13 What is your zip code?

Answered: 87 Skipped: 9



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|----------------|-----------|----|
| 12209 | 3% | 3 |
| 12054 | 0% | 0 |
| 12059 | 0% | 0 |
| 12159 | 8% | 7 |
| 12186 | 89% | 77 |
| TOTAL | | 87 |

Q14 Any additional comments?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 79

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|----|--|--------------------|
| 1 | More elective classes ie mechanics, tech class, wood shop, etc | 6/9/2022 9:34 AM |
| 2 | #10- also indicated "Support students' social, emotional and mental health (including culture and climate)" | 6/9/2022 9:31 AM |
| 3 | Thanks | 6/9/2022 9:28 AM |
| 4 | #6- I support the continuous replacement of number of busses each year so that you have a revolving fleet of new/used/old | 6/9/2022 9:14 AM |
| 5 | Cost to fixed income must be considered for retirees/inflation! #8- Too little to late. Voting process is messy and dangerous and crowded #9- Mailing though it was inaccurate and flawed with sums, confusing and I have MBA in finance | 6/9/2022 9:10 AM |
| 6 | also indicated "support students' social, emotional and mental health (including culture and climate) for #10 | 6/9/2022 8:40 AM |
| 7 | Thanks | 5/17/2022 11:56 PM |
| 8 | The ZIP Code 12009 was not present in the above question. | 5/17/2022 7:41 PM |
| 9 | Voting was not safe for Covid. There was not enough room for people to be far enough apart | 5/17/2022 7:25 PM |
| 10 | Keep up the good work. | 5/17/2022 7:11 PM |
| 11 | More music | 5/17/2022 6:33 PM |
| 12 | Thanks | 5/17/2022 6:27 PM |
| 13 | Thank you | 5/17/2022 5:45 PM |
| 14 | We loved the opportunities that our sons had in Voorheesville and wish the same for future generations. Thanks! | 5/17/2022 4:39 PM |
| 15 | 12009 | 5/17/2022 3:08 PM |
| 16 | Having lived in Ohio, I am concerned about the excessively high school taxes with no major difference in the long term success of the children. | 5/17/2022 2:54 PM |
| 17 | no | 5/17/2022 2:47 PM |