



YELLOW MEDICINE EAST – ISD 2190

Serving Clarkfield, Echo, Granite Falls, Hanley Falls, Hazel Run, Upper Sioux Community

Rich Schneider, Superintendent

450 9th Avenue - Granite Falls, MN 56241 - 320-564-4081

Date: October 1, 2023

To: YME Community Stakeholders

From: Rich Schneider, YME Superintendent

Subject: Operating Referendum Community Survey & Information

Welcome to the start of the school year at YME Schools. You are encouraged to follow us on our Facebook account (Yellow Medicine East Schools) and/or through our school website.

Last spring, the YME School District conducted a survey using School Perceptions. The intent of this survey was to determine the local taxpayer's appetite to extend our current operating referendum that was approved in the Fall of 2015. Please go to our website to view the summary of the results provided to the school board at the June School Board meeting. Paper copies are available upon request.

Highlights of Survey Results:

- Over 7,000 surveys were mailed out
- 635 surveys were completed for a 9% return rate
- 36% of respondents were 65+ years of age
- 42% of respondents were from the city of Granite Falls
- 89% of respondents were NOT YME employees
- 72% of respondents did NOT have children attending school
- 82% of parents prefer to receive information via email
- 51% of non-parents prefer to receive information via newsletters
- 62% of parents supported renewing the operating referendum (18% would not support it)
- 44% of non-parents supported renewing the operating referendum (28% would not support it)
- When considering cost-cutting measures, class size was cited as the most important area to maintain (not cut) and athletic/extracurricular offerings would be the recommended area for preferred cuts

During the most recent legislative session, the legislature granted school boards the authority to extend their operating referendum for another 10 years. At the August 2023 school board meeting, the YME school board passed a resolution to extend the current operating referendum (including an inflationary factor) for another 10 years.

The survey results indicated to us that an opportunity to visit and discuss our programs and facilities would be beneficial. As a result, in the future, I will be providing a variety of opportunities for stakeholders such as yourself, to learn more about the YME School District.

If you have questions or would like further information about the survey results, please contact me directly at (rschneider@isd2190.org) or at 320-564-4081.



Yellow Medicine East

Community Survey Report

May 24, 2023

Contents



Background Info



**Survey/Respondent
Information**



Results & Analysis



Wrap-up/Questions





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 **10,000** staff, parent, and student, and community surveys for school improvement
- Helped more than **900** districts navigate the strategic planning and referendum planning process

Your School Perceptions Team



Daren Sievers
Project Manager



Rob DeMeuse, Ph.D.
Research Director

Yellow Medicine East Community Survey Process



Households within the District were mailed a paper survey.
Respondents could:

1) Fill out the paper survey and return directly to School Perceptions

or

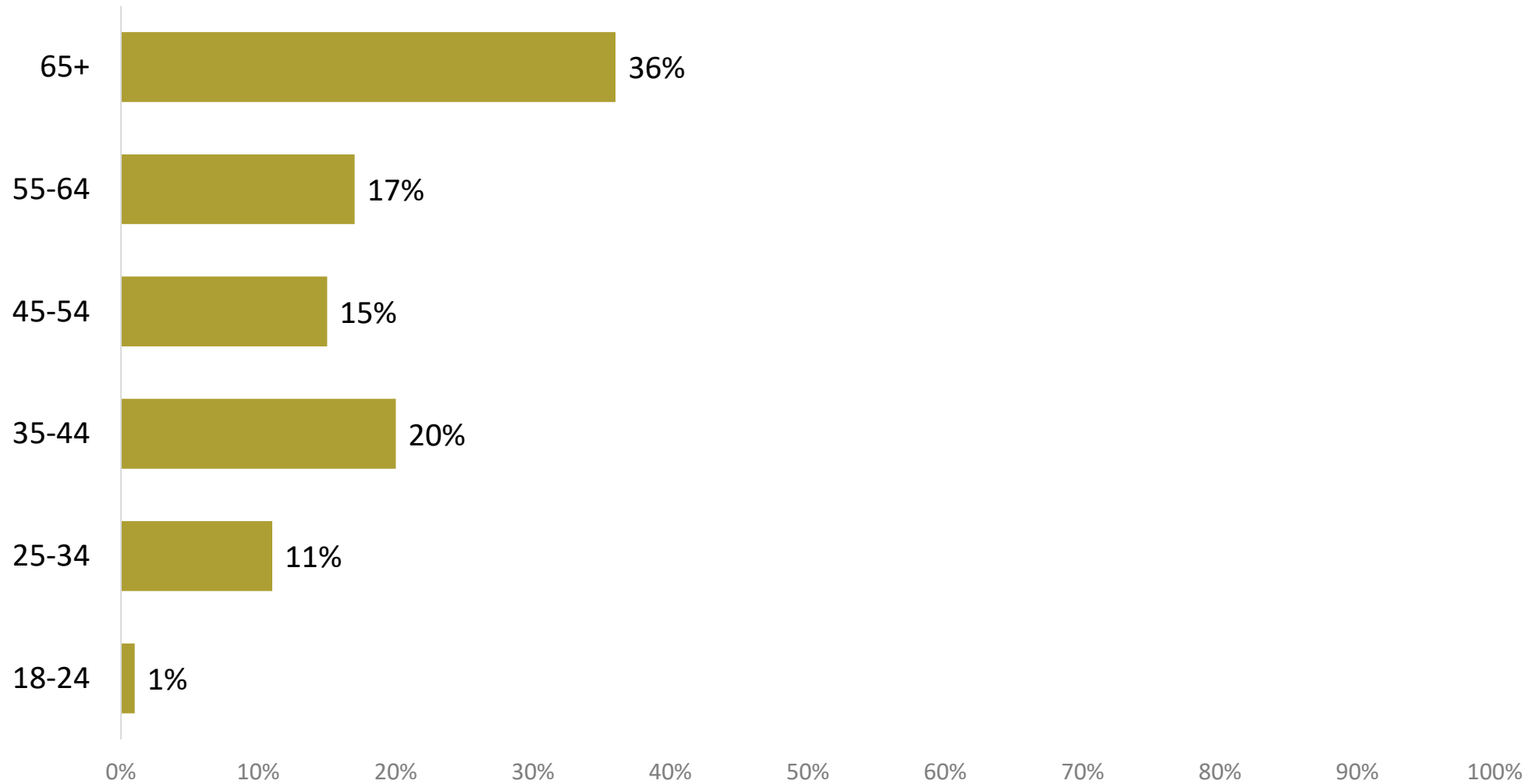
2) Take the survey online with a one-time-use code

Survey Information

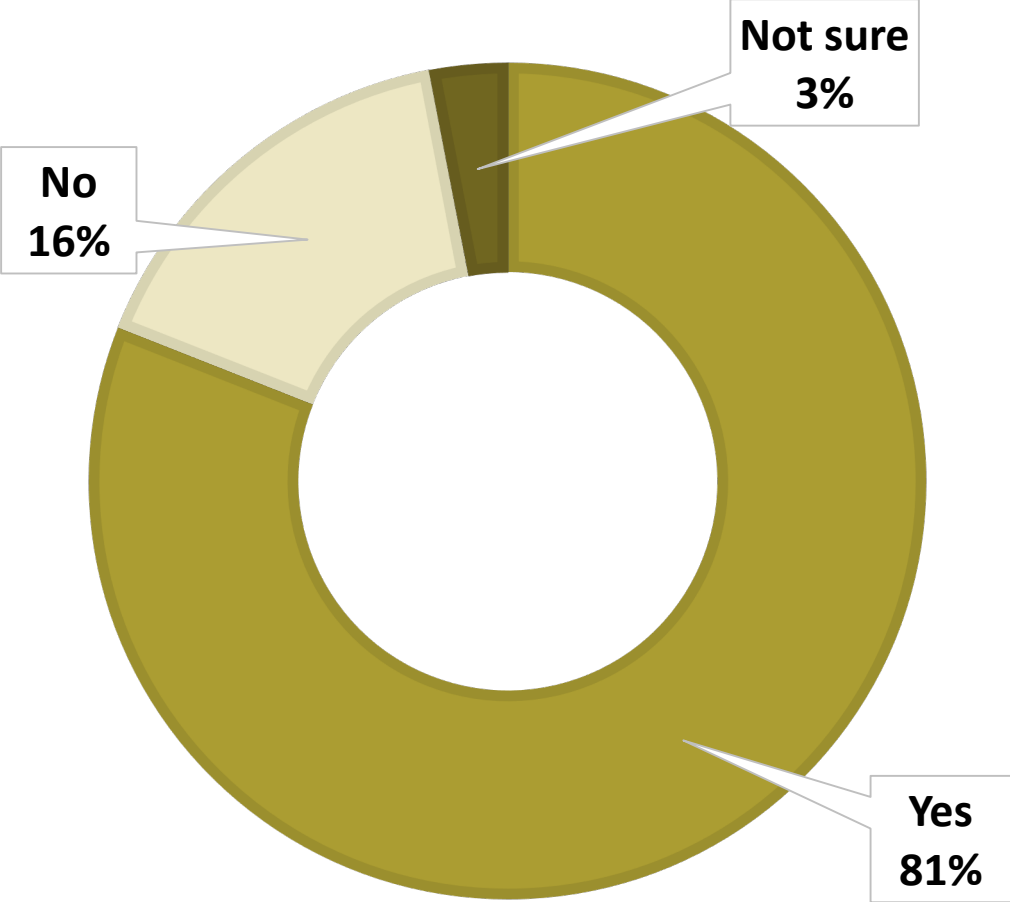


- Survey deadline **May 18, 2023**
- **635** total respondents
- **9%** response rate
- margin of error **+/- 3.97%**

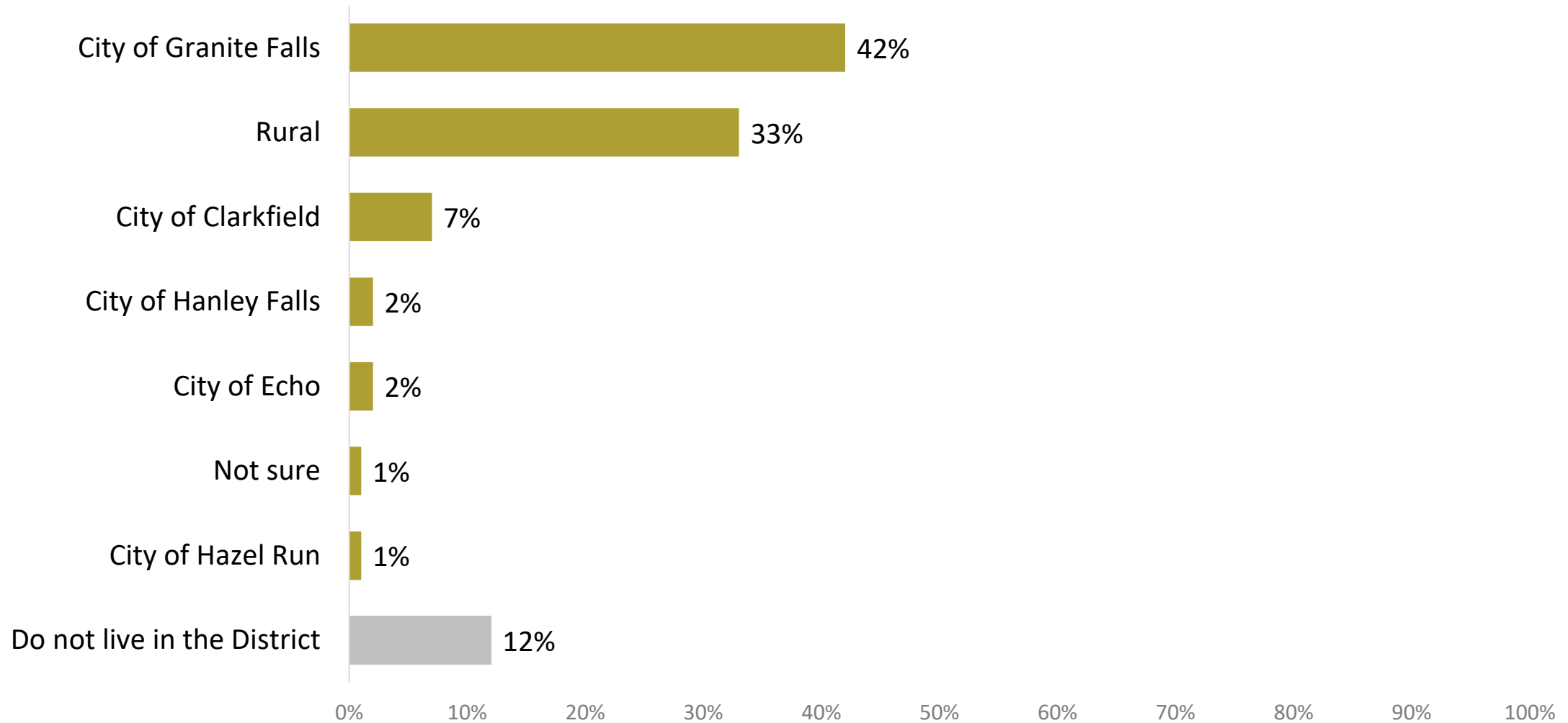
What is your age?



Is your primary residence in the Yellow Medicine East Schools?



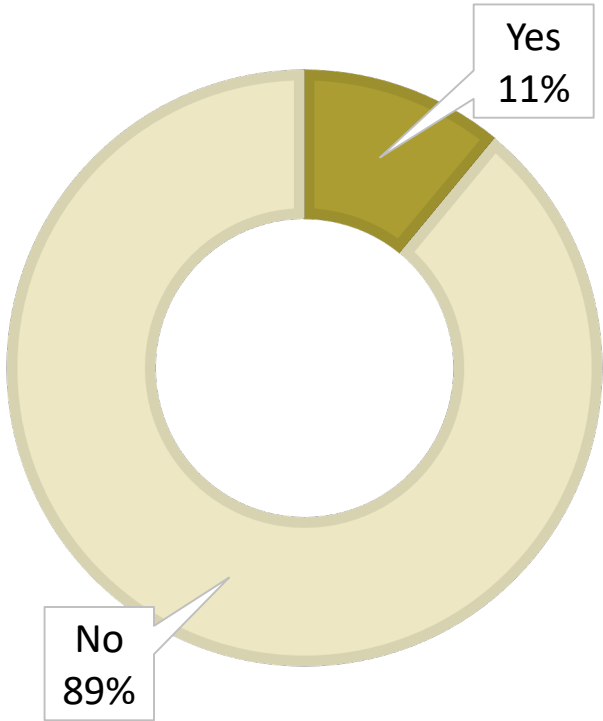
In which municipality do you live?



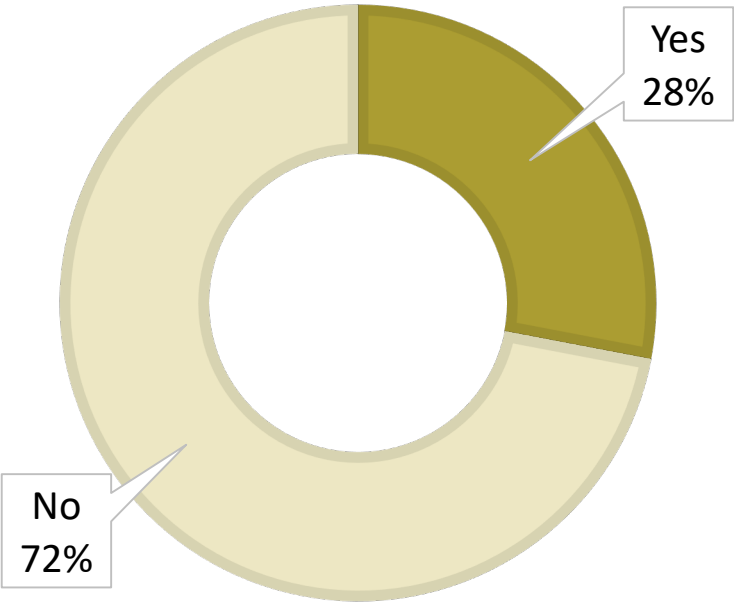
Respondent Information



Are you an employee of the Yellow Medicine East Schools?

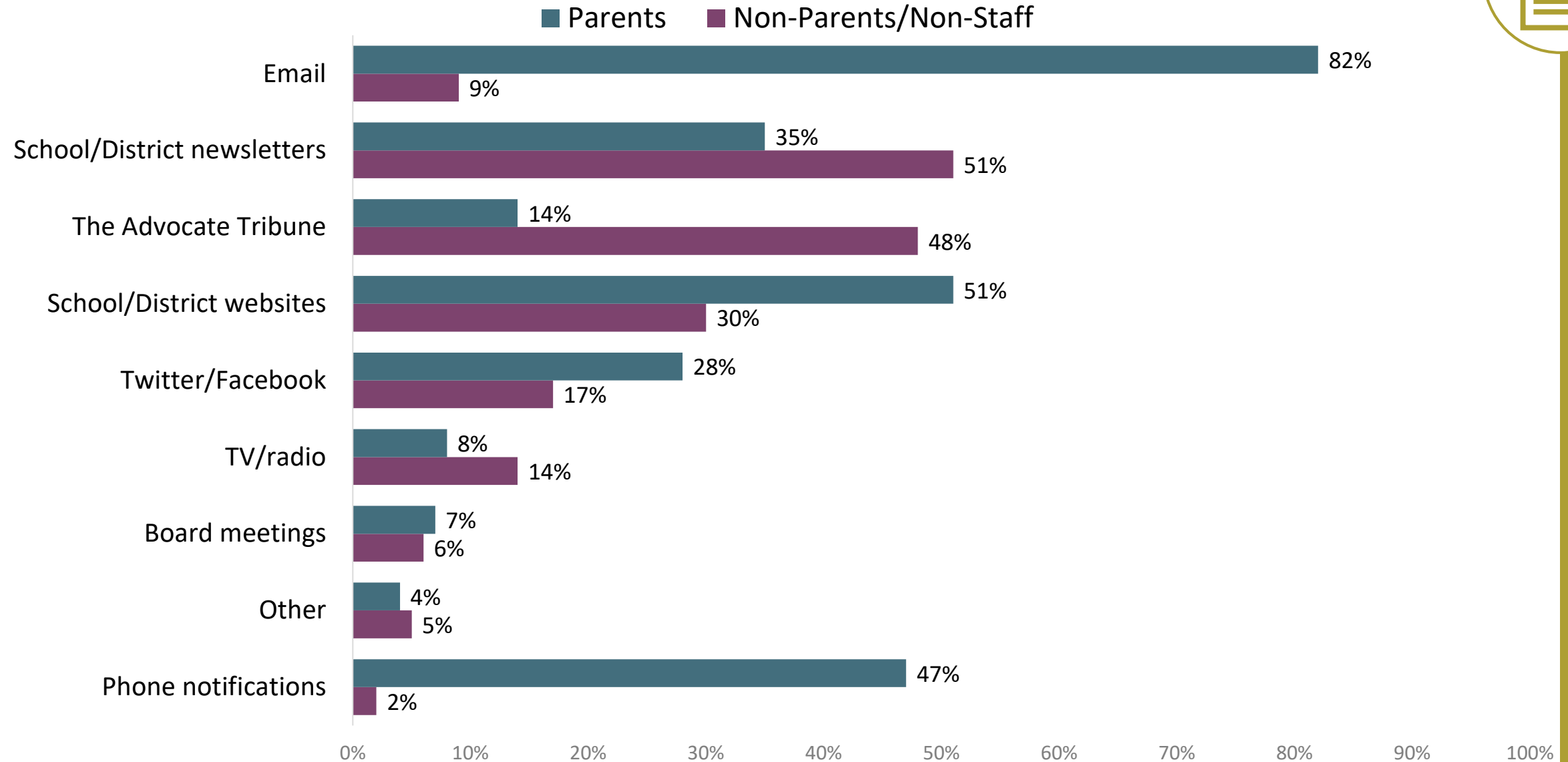


Do you have children attending a school in the District?



How do you like to receive school/District information?

(Mark all that apply.)





Results & Analysis

Operational Funding



There are two types of local funding sources that school districts can pursue.

Type	Purpose
Levies	Levies fund educational programming, student services, staffing, and maintenance. Funds are used the same year they are received, help address ongoing budget challenges, and make up for state aid that has not kept up with operating expenses. <i>Voters approved an operating levy in 2015, and it currently stands at \$1221.28 per pupil for the 2022-2023 school year.</i>
Bonds	Bonds are used to pay for major building projects, such as renovations or building a school. Like a home mortgage, a bond is typically financed over an extended period, often 20 years. In 2010 and 2014, YME issued total bonds of \$11.475 million to update our buildings including air quality upgrades and energy savings projects. This bond will be paid in full in 2025.

We like to think of it this way: ***bonds are for buildings, and levies are for learning.***

Operational Funding



What factors are impacting our funding?

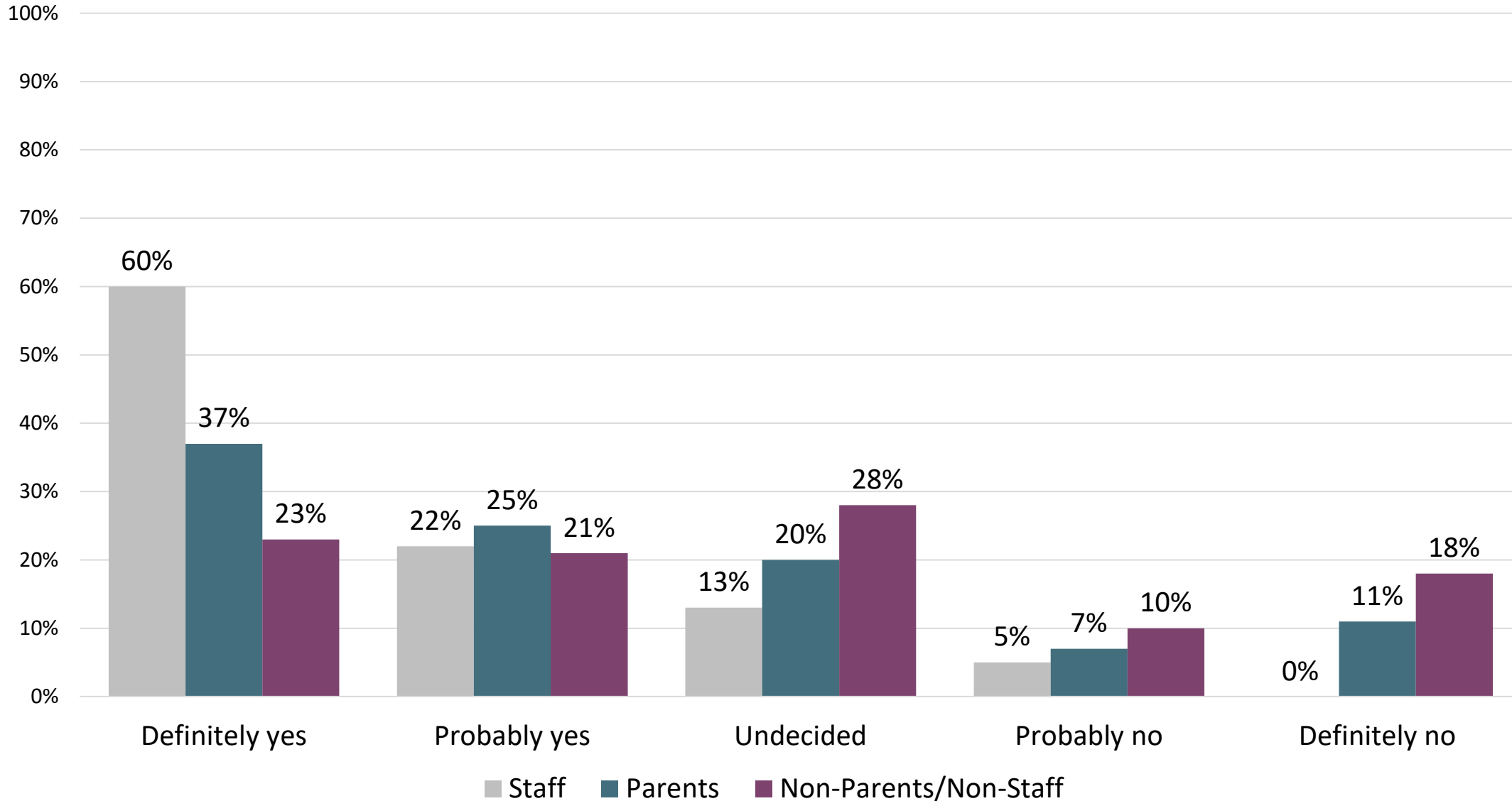
- Like many districts in the state, we are experiencing an enrollment decline. In fact, about 51% of districts in Minnesota have fewer kids now than they did five years ago. State funding is tied to enrollment. Thus, the fewer students we have, the less money we receive. The aid we have received from the state has not kept up with inflation and increasing costs.
- In 2015, voters approved an operating levy as outlined above. This levy approved \$1221.28 per pupil and provides \$850,000 to operate our current programs. This funding expires in 2024-2025.
- While we did receive federal COVID-19 relief funding, this money was used to improve indoor air quality. These funds were a one-time source and cannot be used for long-term planning.

Operational Funding

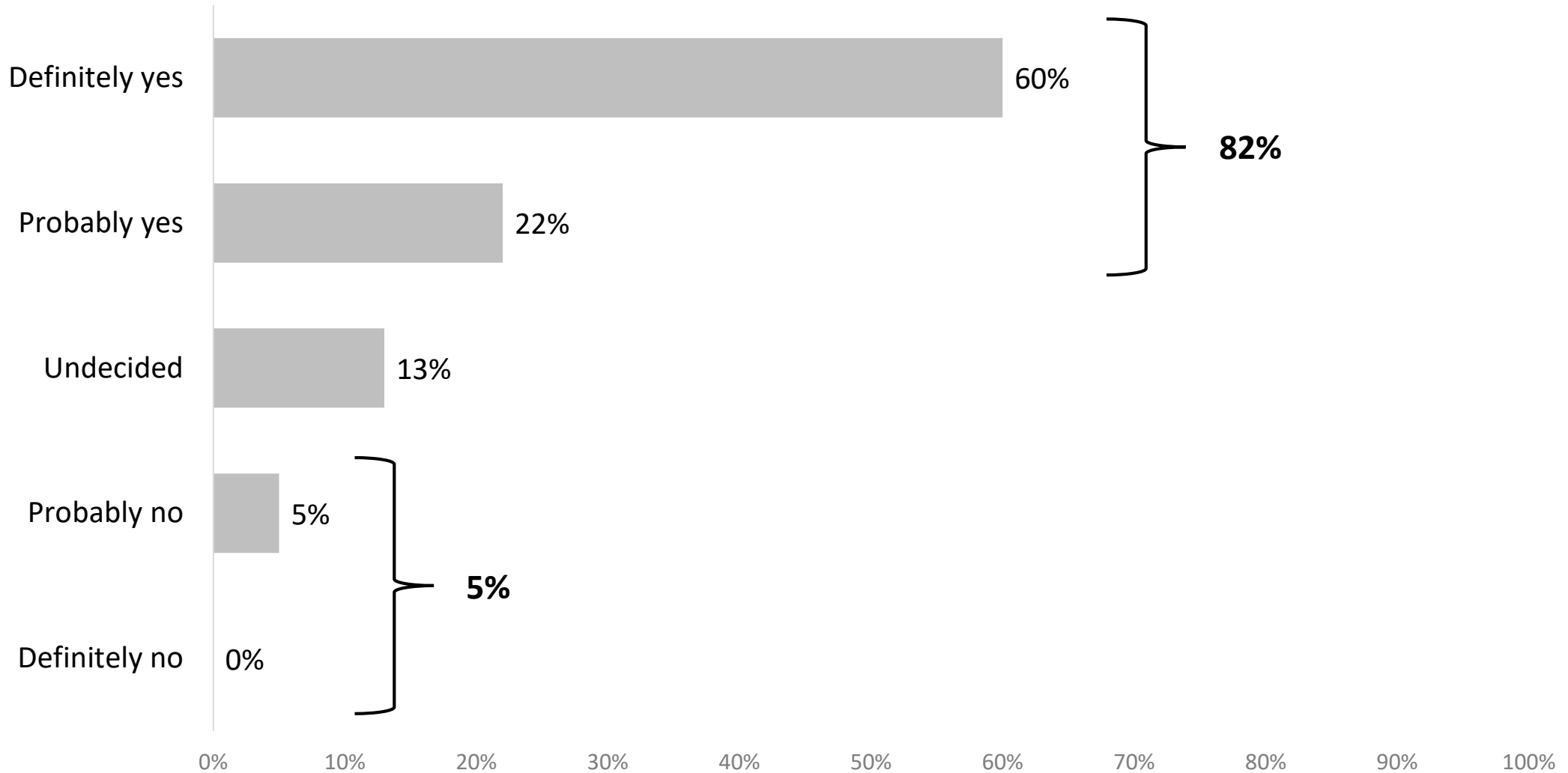


ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX IMPACT OVER THE CURRENT LEVEL		
Type of Property	Estimated Market Value	Projected Net Tax Impact
Taxable Property <i>Residential homesteads, apartments, and commercial-industrial property</i>	\$100,000	\$37.99 annually
	\$150,000	\$56.98 annually
	\$200,000	\$75.97 annually
	\$250,000	\$94.96 annually
	\$300,000	\$113.96 annually
	\$350,000	\$132.95 annually

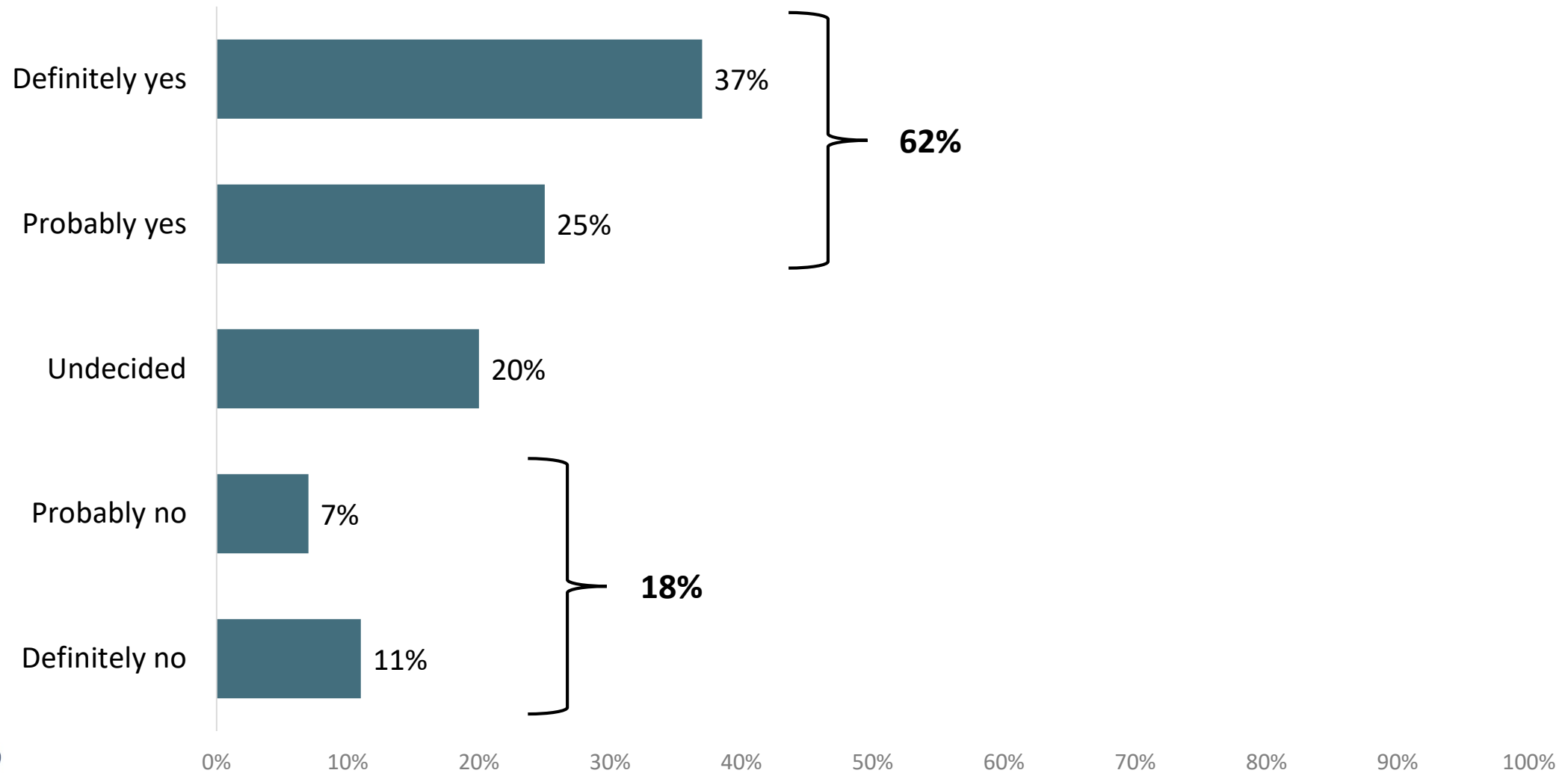
Would you support renewing an operational levy at \$1525 per pupil for each of the next 10 years to maintain current programs, services, and course offerings? (All Respondents)



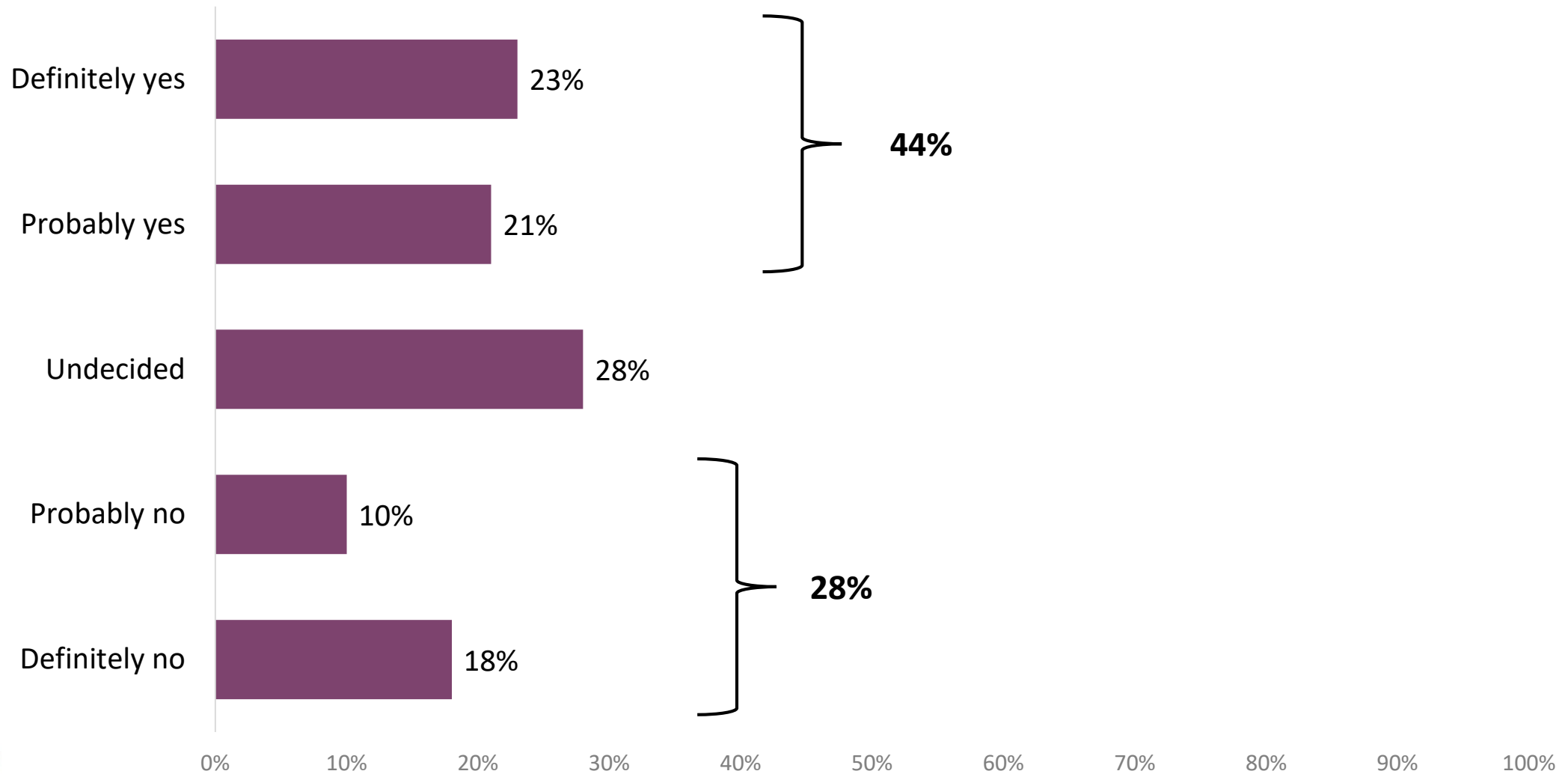
Staff Support (Residents)



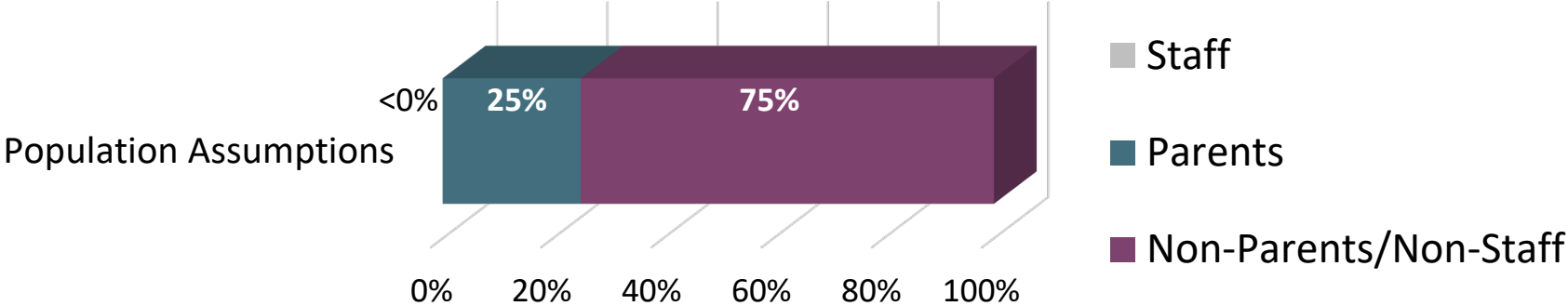
Parent/Caregiver Support



Non-Parent/Non-Staff Support



Would you support renewing an operational levy at \$1525 per pupil for each of the next 10 years to maintain current programs, services, and course offerings?



Weighted support for *Definitely yes and Probably yes*:

$$0.25 (62\%) + 0.75 (44\%) = \mathbf{48.50\%}$$

Cost-Cutting Options



If voters do not support renewing the operational levy, the District will need to make substantial cuts from our budget beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. We do not endorse any of the following, but we must consider all options to reduce expenses. **Survey results will help determine what cuts are made.**

Cost-Cutting Options

Yes = 10 No = 1 Median = 5.5



	Staff	Parents/Caregivers	Non-Parents/Non-Staff
Athletic/Extracurricular Offerings	3.32	3.44	4.50
Curriculum	3.66	3.15	4.24
Transportation	3.68	3.15	4.06
Course Offerings	2.65	2.68	3.38
Health and Safety	2.36	2.56	2.91
Class Sizes	1.27	2.46	2.89
Facilities	2.22	2.60	2.86

How is the District doing in the following areas?

Great (4), Good (3), Fair (2), Poor (1)



Item	Staff	Parents	Non-Parents/Non-Staff
Delivering a high-quality education	2.74	2.89	2.61
Keeping the public informed	2.78	2.87	2.42
Managing funds appropriately	2.63	2.63	2.37
Building pride in the community	2.45	2.63	2.55
Improving and maintaining facilities	2.33	2.73	2.71

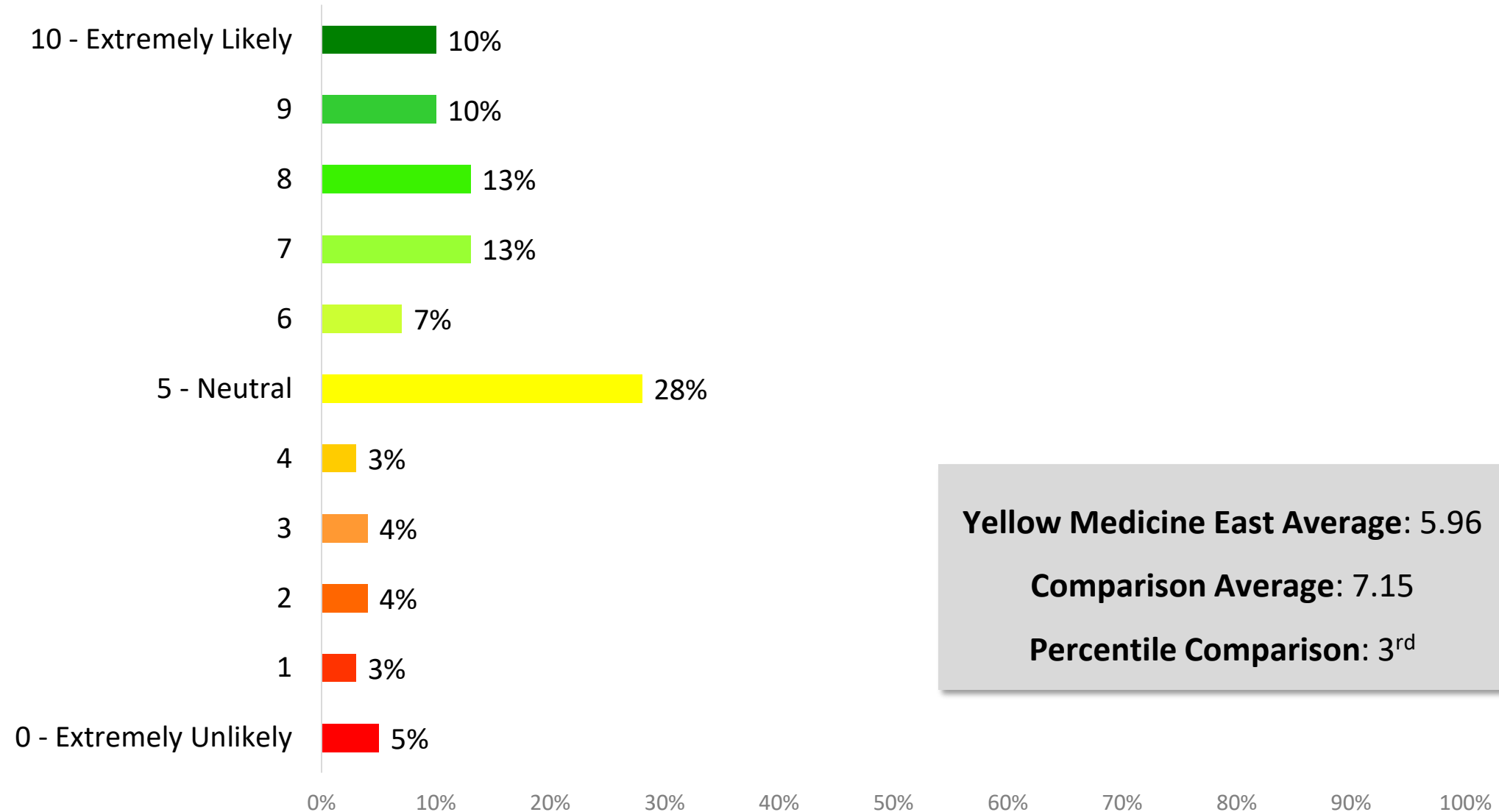
How is the District doing in the following areas?

Great (4), Good (3), Fair (2), Poor (1)



Item	Percent “Great” or “Good”	Average	Comparison Percentile
Delivering a high-quality education	66%	2.72	4 th
Keeping the public informed	57%	2.60	14 th
Managing funds appropriately	54%	2.48	15 th
Building pride in the community	57%	2.56	4 th
Improving and maintaining facilities	62%	2.66	N/A

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



What did we learn?



- If the operational levy referendum were held today, it would be too close to call when we account for low response rate and margin for error.
- There was a higher than usual number of respondents who indicated they were undecided.
- It appears the community needs more information given the high % of “undecided”.
- Most respondents were not in favor of making budget cuts in any of the areas tested in the survey.



Questions or Comments?



Thank you!