# Shakopee Public Schools

# 2021 Community Survey Summary of Results





INTRODUCTION

# **Survey outline**

- Survey included interviews with 407 registered voters in the Shakopee School District.
- Interviews were completed between May 4<sup>th</sup> and May 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Approximate margin of error is ±4.8%.



- Interviews included demographic targets intended to provide a representative sample of voters in the district.
- To the extent that any demographic dimension was under- or over-sampled, sample weights were adjusted to compensate.

INTRODUCTION

# Who we called (cont.)

- Demographic targets included:
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Parent status
  - Voting history
  - Geographic area
- Cell phones and homeownership were tracked, but were not demographic targets.

# Survey structure

SURVEY RESULTS

- Main body of survey consisted of two sections.
- First sections asked for community feedback:
  - Grading various aspects of the District's performance.
  - Comparing the current schools to neighboring districts.
- Second section asked for opinions about a potential operating levy:
  - Reactions to impacts on programs and classrooms.
  - Reactions to potential tax increases.
- Two supplementary reports have been prepared in addition to this summary:
  - Detailed survey results by demographic group
  - Summary of responses to one open-ended probe

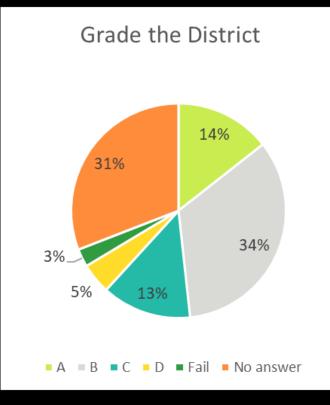
# **Grading the District**

"Students are often given the grades of A, B, C, D and Fail to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the Shakopee Public Schools were graded in the same way.

What grade would you give to the public schools here?"

# **Overall grades**

- 48% of respondents give A and B grades to the School District.
- 7% gave D and F grades.
- 31% of participants could not offer a response.

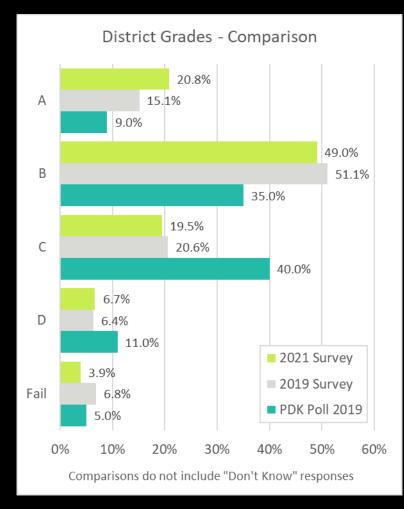


# **Benchmark grades**

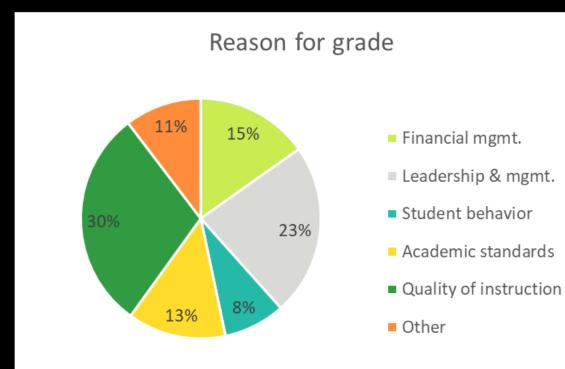
- For reference, we compare District grades from current survey against a national benchmark, the PDK *Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools,* conducted in 2019.
- For purposes of comparison between surveys, we do not include "I Don't Know" responses.

# Benchmark grades (cont.)

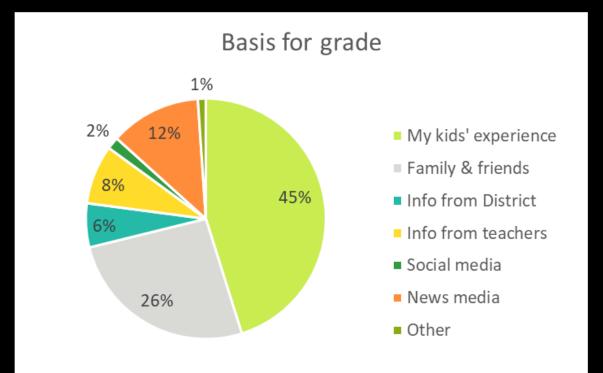
- Very good grades by comparison to national benchmark from PDK.
- Much higher proportion of A and B grades; lower numbers of C and D grades.
- More A grades compared to 2019 survey.



# **Benchmark grades – reasons for grades given**

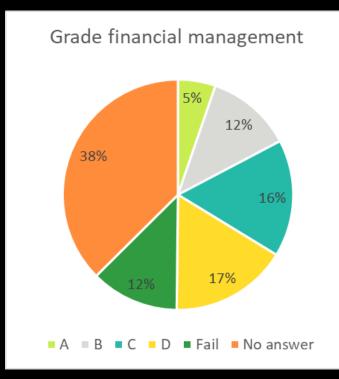


# **Benchmark grades – basis for opinion on grade**



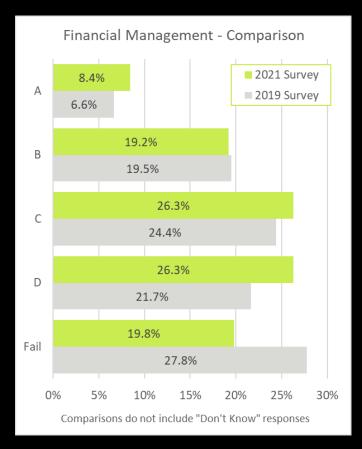
# **Financial management**

- Participants were asked to grade the District's financial management.
- 17% of respondents gave A and B grades to the School District.
- 29% gave D and F grades.
- 38% did not offer a response.



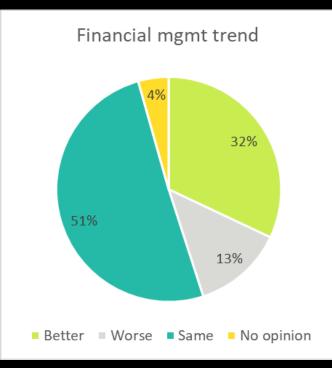
# Financial management (cont.)

- Compared to 2019 survey results, financial mgmt. grades are slightly improved.
- Fewer failing grades; slightly more A grades.



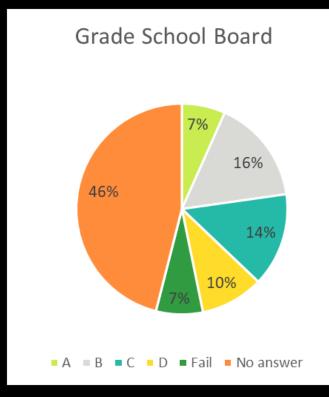
# Financial management (cont.)

- Participants were also asked if their opinion had changed over the past 12 months.
- 32% said their opinion was improving.
- 13% said financial management was getting worse.



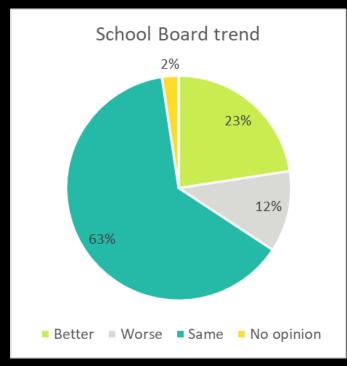
# **School Board**

- 23% of respondents gave
  A and B grades for the
  School Board's performance.
- 17% gave D and F grades.
- Nearly half of participants had no opinion to share.



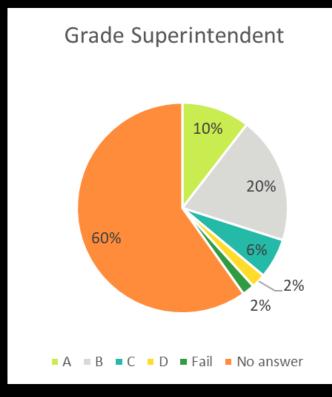
# School Board (cont.)

- 23% of participants said their opinion of the School Board had improved over the past year.
- 12% said performance was getting worse.
- 63% said their opinion was unchanged.



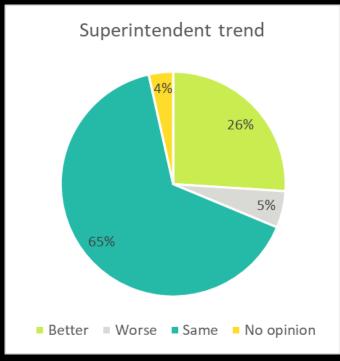
# Superintendent

- 30% of respondents gave A and B grades to the performance of the Superintendent.
- Just 4% gave D and F grades.
- Very large proportion (60%) could not offer an opinion.



# Superintendent (cont.)

- 26% said their opinion of the Superintendent had improved over the past year.
- 5% said their opinion had become more negative.
- 65% said their opinion was unchanged.



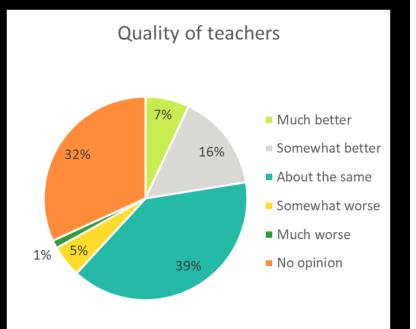
# **District comparisons**

- Participants were asked a set of questions asking them to compare Shakopee to neighboring school districts.
- Questions included the quality of teachers, the quality of education provided, and the variety of courses offered.

DISTRICT COMPARISONS

# **Quality of teachers**

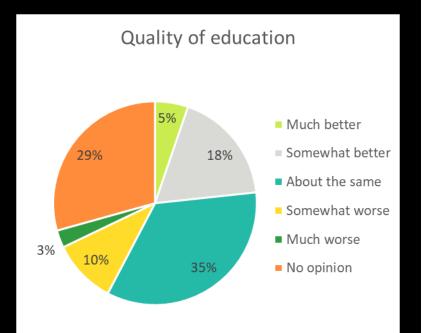
- 23% say Shakopee's teachers are better than neighboring school districts.
- 6% feel Shakopee's teachers are not as good.
- A plurality of 39% feel that teachers are comparable to neighboring districts.



DISTRICT COMPARISONS

# **Quality of education**

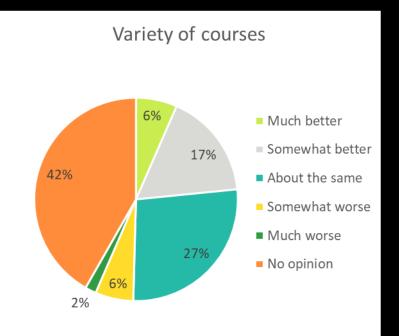
- Responses are very similar to those for teacher quality.
- 23% say Shakopee provides a higher quality of education than neighboring districts.
- 13% feel Shakopee's quality is not as good.
- 35% feel quality is comparable.



DISTRICT COMPARISONS

# Variety of courses offered

- 23% say Shakopee provides a better variety of courses to its students.
- 8% feel Shakopee's variety of courses is not as good.
- 27% feel courses are comparable.



# Support for operating levy

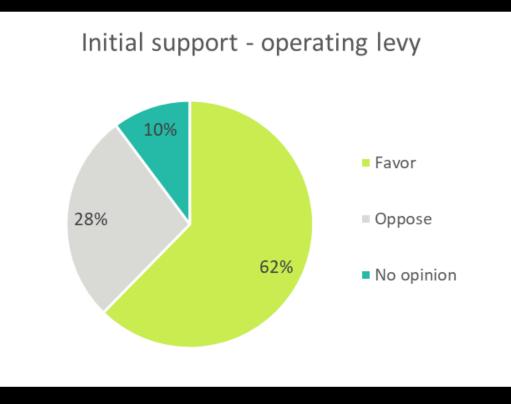
- Participants were asked about a potential operating levy to provide additional funding for the District.
- Support was measured before and after hearing details about how the levy would affect the District's operations and student programs.

### OPERATING LEVY Initial support for operating levy

"In order to avoid another round of budget cuts in the 2023-24 school year, Shakopee Public Schools may ask voters to approve an operating levy to provide additional funding for the District. Approving an operating levy would increase local property taxes.

Based on what you know now, would you favor or oppose such a proposal?"

### operating levy Initial support



# Effect of information

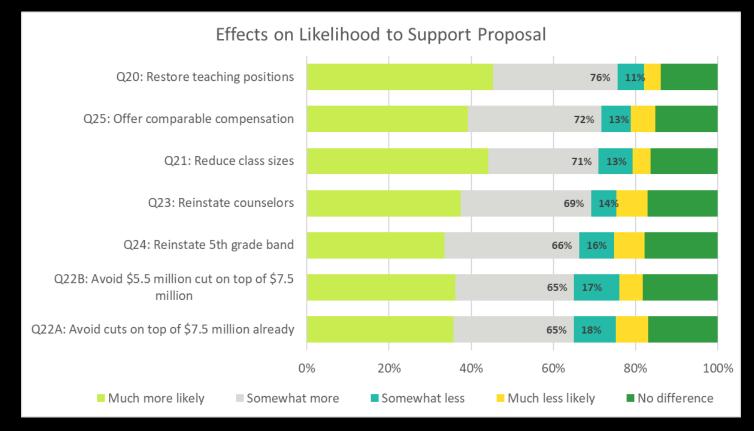
- Participants were asked to react to several statements about a potential operating levy.
- Items were presented in random order.
- One item was presented in two different wordings.
  - Smaller sample size due to split sample results in a margin of error of ±6.8% for this item.



"I am going to read some statements about the proposal to increase the district's operating levy.

Please tell me whether the information in each statement would make you more likely or less likely to vote for such a proposal."

# Reaction to impacts



Labels show combined % for more/much more and less/much less.

# **Informed support**

"Now that you have heard more information about the proposal to raise additional funding for the District through a property tax increase, would you favor or oppose such a proposal?"

# **Comparison – initial and informed**

80%		
75%		
70%		
65%		66.0%
60%	61.4%	
55%		
50%		
45%		
40%		
	Initial	Informed
	Difference is 4.6%; margin of error is ±4.8%	

### Difference is <u>not</u> statistically significant.

# **Demographic differences**

- The following slides show a quick snapshot of differences in support between demographic groups:
  - Parent status

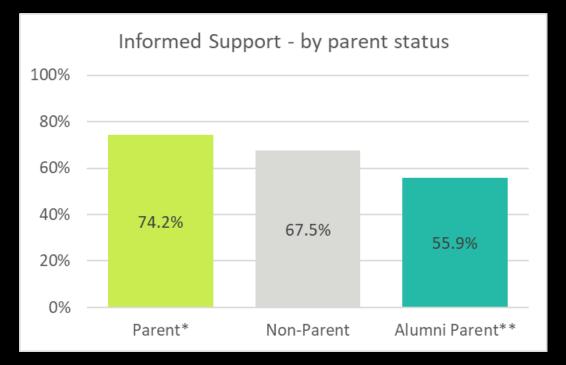
• Location

• Gender

• Homeownership

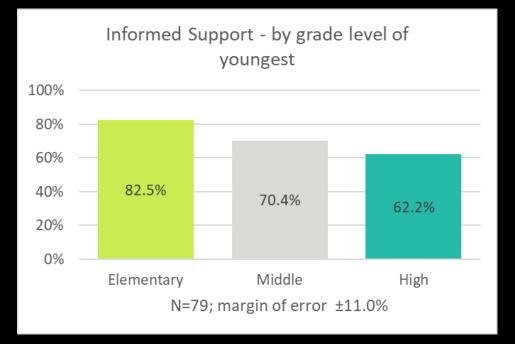
• Age

- Voting activity
- Charts show level of support after hearing information about each proposal.

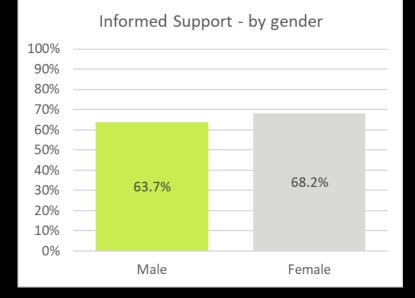


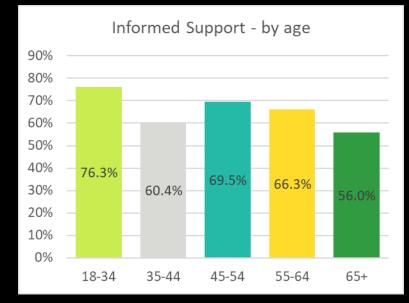
- \* "Parent" includes respondents with children attending Shakopee Schools.
- \*\* "Alumni Parent" includes parents whose grown children attended Shakopee schools in the past.

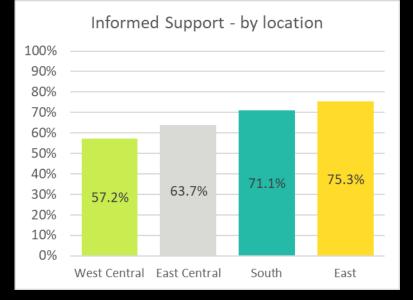
# **Demographic differences** (cont.)

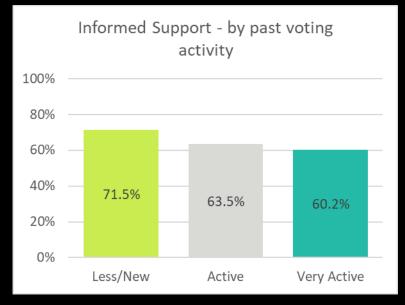


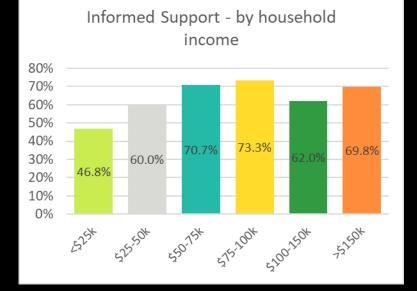
The chart above includes only responses from voters with children attending Shakopee Public Schools.

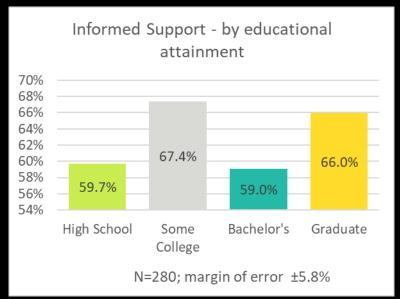










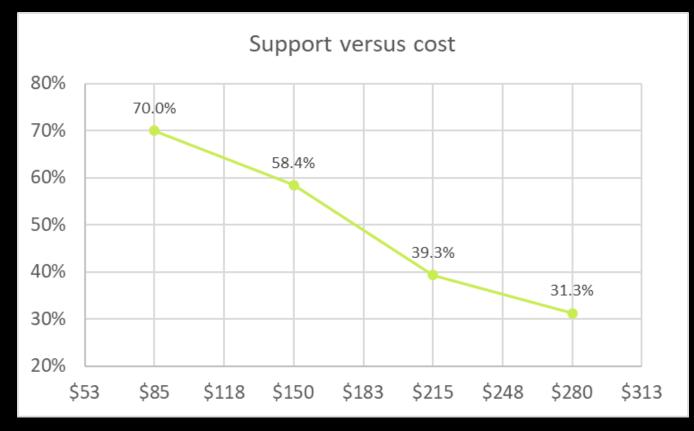




- Participants were asked about four potential property tax increases to fund programs: \$85, \$150, \$215 and \$280 per year on an average home valued at \$317,000.
- To preclude responses given in anticipation of higher or lower options, dollar values were presented in random order.

#### SURVEY RESULTS

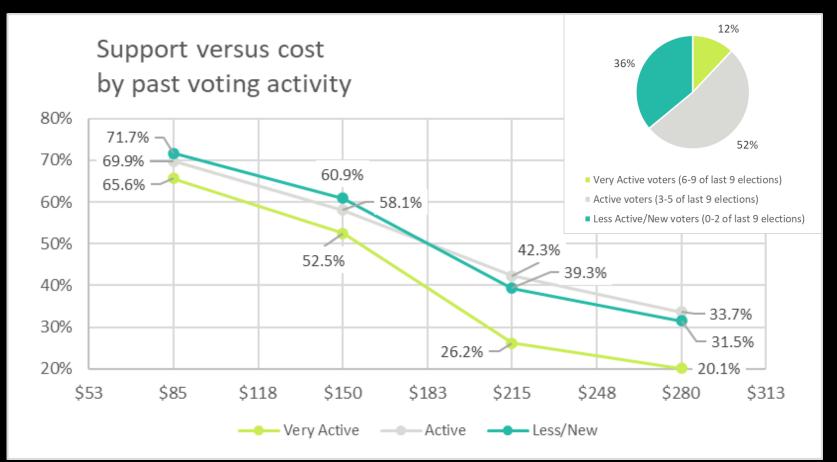
#### Impact of cost information (cont.)



Potential tax impacts tested were \$85, \$150, \$215 and \$280.

#### SURVEY RESULTS

### Impact of cost information (cont.)

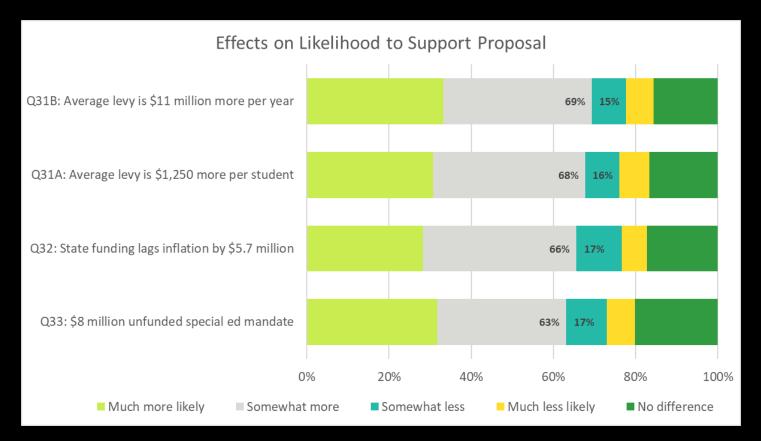


### **Funding environment**

The next few items asked participants to react to statements about the District and its funding.

FUNDING ENVIRONMENT

#### **Reaction to impacts**



Labels show combined % for more/much more and less/much less.

## **Community environment**

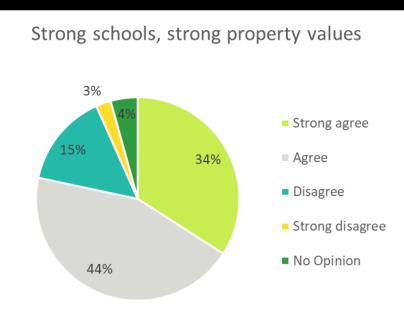
The last few questions asked participants for their level of agreement with several statements about the District and its role in the community.



# Schools and the community

"Strong public schools are directly linked to strong property values."

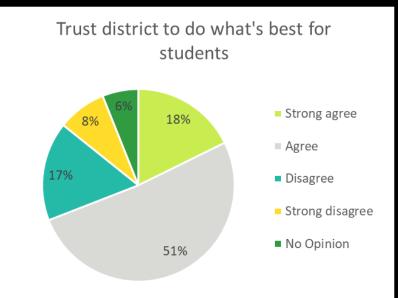
78% agree with this statement.



## **Trust in the District**

"I have trust and confidence in the school district to do what's best for our students."

• 69% say they agree.



### **Trust in teachers**

"I have trust and confidence in the men and women who are teaching the kids in our public schools."

• 84% say they agree.

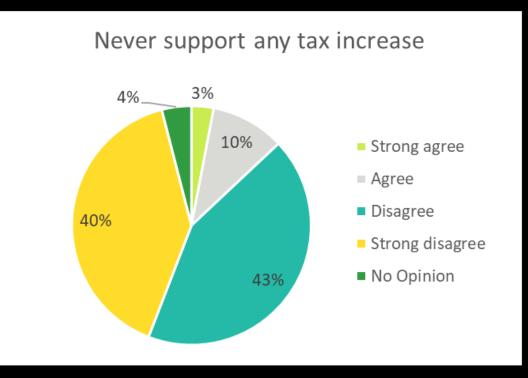


#### **Tax aversion**

Participants were asked how much they agreed with the following statement:

"I would never vote for a tax increase, no matter what the amount or how the money raised would be used."

#### Tax aversion (cont.)

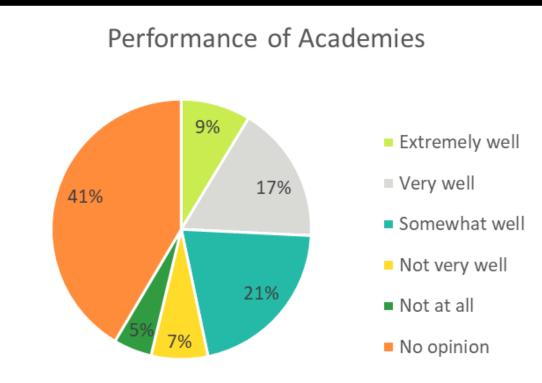


We typically see anti-tax sentiment of 15-25% in our community surveys. Response of 13% is lower than normally seen.

#### **Academies of Shakopee**

 Participants were asked how well the Academies of Shakopee were doing at preparing students for careers and post-secondary success. ACADEMIES OF SHAKOPEE

#### **Performance of Academies**



49

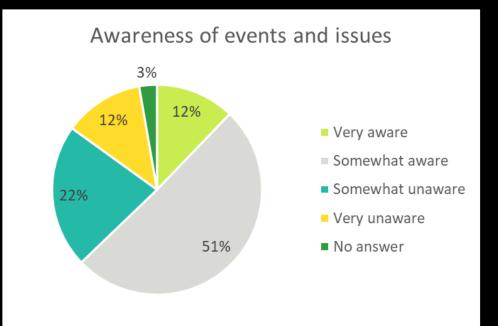


## Awareness of District events and issues

"The School District uses a variety of ways to provide information to the community about programs and events and about issues facing the District.

Do you consider yourself very aware, somewhat aware, somewhat unaware or very unaware of events and issues at the District?"

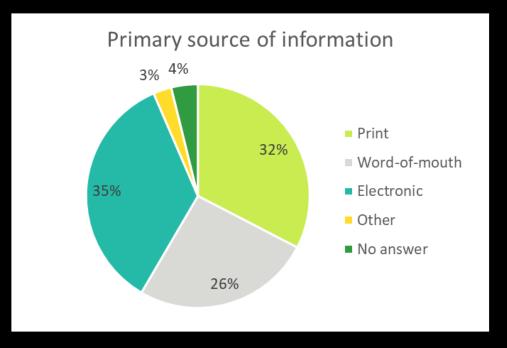
## Awareness of District events and issues (cont.)



# **Preferred source of information**

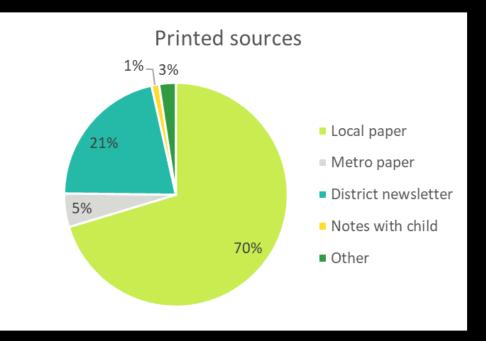
- Participants were asked where they got most of their information about the School District.
- First question asked in broad terms: printed materials, word-of-mouth, or electronic sources.
  - Each group then chose from a list of specific examples in the appropriate category.

## **Preferred information source – general**

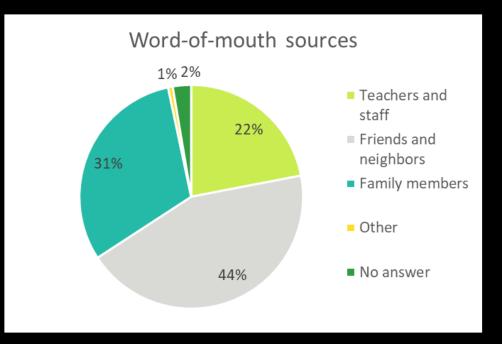


• "Other" responses were primarily from using a combination of sources.

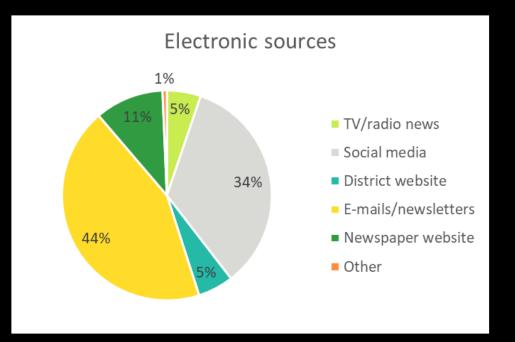
## **Preferred information source – print sources**



## **Preferred information source – word-of-mouth**



## **Preferred information source – electronic**



#### SURVEY FINDINGS

#### **Findings**

- PDK benchmark grades improved since last survey.
- Perceptions of financial management and School Board performance have improved somewhat since 2019 but are still more negative than what we typically find.
- For questions asking if things were getting better or worse in the last year, each had a favorable ratio of "getting better" versus "getting worse" responses.
- Similarly, comparisons with neighboring districts showed favorable ratio of "better than" versus "worse than" ratings.



- Initial support for operating levy was 61.4%.
- Informed support was 66%.
  - Better, but not enough to be statistically significant.
- All 6 impacts tested had positive effect on support.
- Parents of elementary school students, voters under 35, and less active voters were among the strongest supporters in terms of demographics.



# **Findings – Community environment**

- Community is generally supportive of the District.
- Strong level of trust in teachers; more moderate trust in School Board.
- Levels of tax aversion are lower than typically seen in our surveys.
- 63% of respondents say they are at least somewhat aware of events and issues in the schools.

### Recommendations

- Responses at this time indicate that an operating levy tax impact of approximately \$150 for an average homeowner would be feasible.
- Changes in the final ballot proposal and factors such as local economic conditions and campaign efforts leading up to a future operating levy can affect voter support and turnout.

## Thank you!

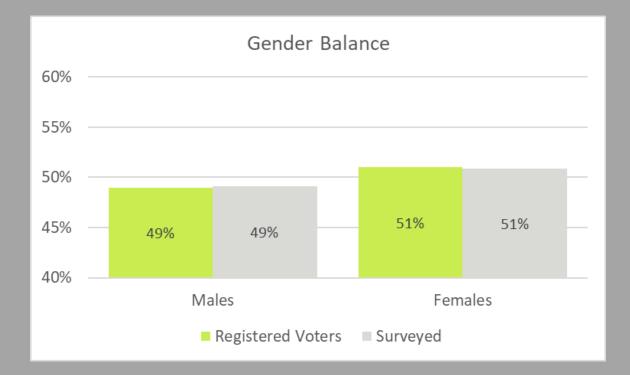
Don Lifto, Ph.D. Director 651-223-3067 Kelly D. Smith, Ed.D. Director 651-223-3099

Matthew Stark Senior Analyst 651-223-3043

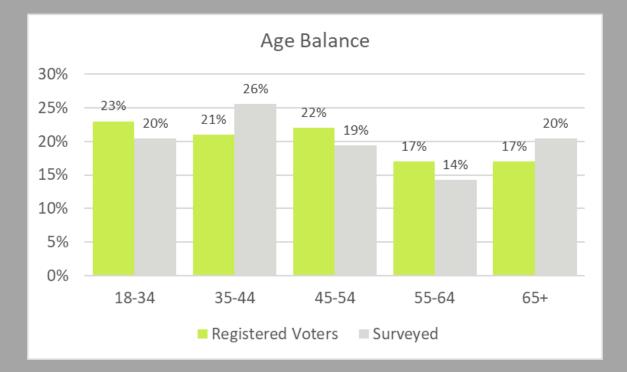
## **Survey demographics**

- The following slides show proportions of total interviews versus targets before any sample weighting was performed.
- After re-balancing, samples were each within 2.5% of targets.
- Cell phones and homeownership were tracked for informational purposes, but were not treated as targets.

#### **Demographic targets: Gender**

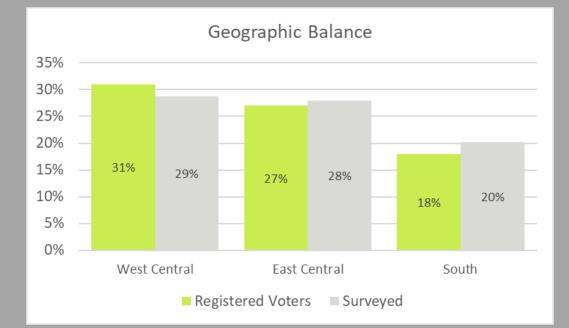


#### **Demographic targets: Age**

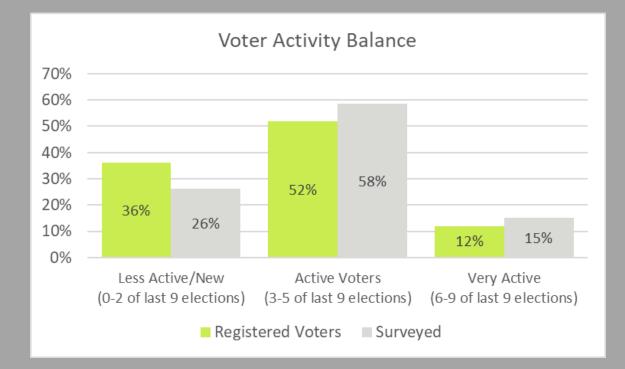


## **Demographic targets: Geographic location**

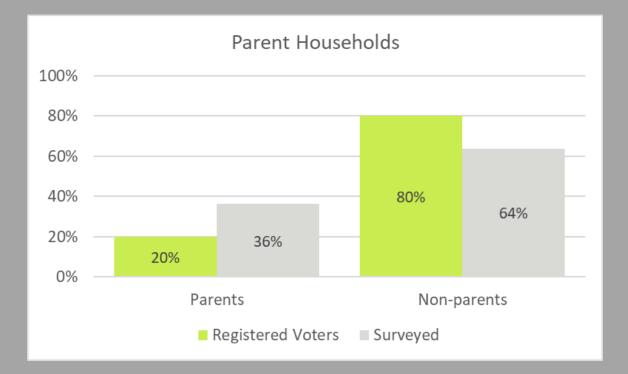
- West Central: Precincts 1, 2, 5, 6
- East Central: Precincts 3, 7, 8, 10
- South: Precincts 9, 11, 13 and townships
- East: Precincts 4 & 12, Prior Lake and Savage

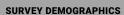


#### **Demographic targets:** Past voting activity

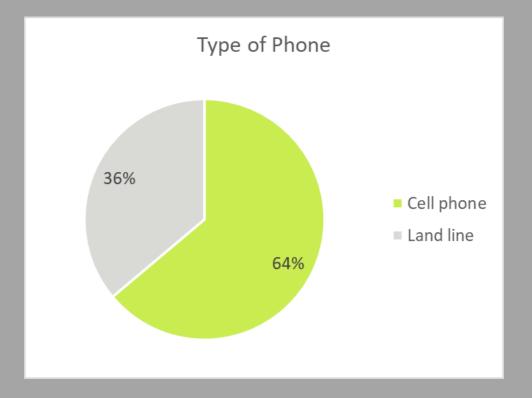


#### **Demographic targets: Parent households**

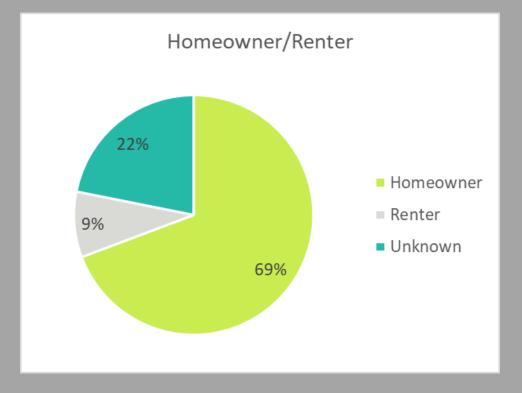




## **Demographic targets: Type of phone**



## **Demographic targets: Homeowner/renter**





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