







# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Motivation for Research .....	1
Overview of Methodology.....	2
Organization of Report.....	2
Acknowledgments .....	2
Disclaimer .....	2
About True North.....	2
<b>Key Findings</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Importance of Issues</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Question 1 .....	7
<b>Initial Ballot Test</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Question 2 .....	8
Support by Subgroups .....	9
Reasons For Not Supporting Measure .....	9
Question 3 .....	10
<b>Tax Threshold</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Question 4 .....	11
Annualized Impact for Median Home Owner .....	12
Question 5 .....	12
Question 6 .....	12
<b>Related Attitudes</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Quality of Education .....	13
Question 7 .....	13
Need for Facility Repairs & Upgrades .....	14
Question 8 .....	14
<b>Projects &amp; Improvements</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Question 9 .....	15
Project Ratings by Initial Support .....	16
<b>Positive Arguments</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Question 10 .....	18
Positive Arguments by Initial Support .....	19
<b>Interim Ballot Test</b> .....	<b>21</b>
Question 11 .....	21
Support by Subgroups .....	21
<b>Negative Arguments</b> .....	<b>23</b>
Question 12 .....	23
Negative Arguments by Initial Support .....	23
<b>Final Ballot Test</b> .....	<b>25</b>
Question 13 .....	25
<b>Change in Support</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>Background &amp; Demographics</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Methodology</b> .....	<b>29</b>
Questionnaire Development .....	29
Programming, Pre-Test & Translation .....	29
Sample .....	29
Statistical Margin of Error .....	29
Recruiting & Data Collection.....	30
Data Processing .....	31
Rounding .....	31

Questionnaire & Toplines ..... 32





# LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Demographic Breakdown of Support at Initial Ballot Test . . . . .	9
Table 2	Top Projects & Improvements by Position at Initial Ballot Test . . . . .	17
Table 3	Top Positive Arguments by Position at Initial Ballot Test . . . . .	20
Table 4	Demographic Breakdown of Support at Interim Ballot Test . . . . .	22
Table 5	Top Negative Arguments by Position at Initial Ballot Test . . . . .	24
Table 6	Demographic Breakdown of Support at Final Ballot Test . . . . .	26
Table 7	Movement Between Initial & Final Ballot Test . . . . .	27
Table 8	Demographics of Sample . . . . .	28



# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Importance of Issues . . . . .	7
Figure 2	Initial Ballot Test . . . . .	8
Figure 3	Reasons For Not Supporting Measure . . . . .	10
Figure 4	Tax Threshold . . . . .	11
Figure 5	Support for Measure at \$138 & \$83 per Year for Typical Homeowner . . . . .	12
Figure 6	Quality of Education . . . . .	13
Figure 7	Quality of Education by Child in Hsld, Age & Position at Initial Ballot Test . . . . .	13
Figure 8	Need for School Facilities Repairs, Upgrades . . . . .	14
Figure 9	Need for School Facilities Repairs, Upgrades by Child in Hsld, Age & Position at Initial Ballot Test . . . . .	14
Figure 10	Projects & Improvements . . . . .	15
Figure 11	Positive Arguments . . . . .	18
Figure 12	Interim Ballot Test. . . . .	21
Figure 13	Negative Arguments . . . . .	23
Figure 14	Final Ballot Test . . . . .	25
Figure 15	Maximum Margin of Error Due to Sampling. . . . .	30



## INTRODUCTION

Serving the communities of Lompoc, Vandenberg Village, Mesa Oaks, Mission Hills, Vandenberg Air Force Base, and neighboring rural areas, the Lompoc Unified School District (District) is committed to providing a well-balanced educational program that nurtures academic growth in a safe, modern learning environment. On a daily basis, approximately 8,900 students participate in engaging and innovative learning experiences at one of the District's 16 schools.

Although the District has a solid academic track record, the quality and condition of school facilities have not kept pace. Indeed, most of the schools in the District were built more than 60 years ago and need to be modernized. In addition to extensive repairs including fixing aging roofs, plumbing, and electrical systems and removing hazardous materials like asbestos and lead pipes, there is also a clear need to improve school safety systems and upgrade classrooms, science labs, school facilities, and equipment to support student achievement in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades. To adequately fund its ongoing facility needs and access additional 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 study was to produce an unbiased, statistically reliable evaluation of voters' interest in supporting a local bond measure to fund the school facility construction, repairs, and improvements noted above. Additionally, should the District decide to move forward with a bond measure, the survey data can guide how best to structure a measure so that it is consistent with the community's priorities and expressed needs. Specifically, the survey was designed to:

- Gauge current, baseline support for a local bond measure to fund the construction, improvement, and repair of school classrooms and facilities,
- 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 of (Question 10) and opposed to (Question 12) the measure—and gauge how this information ultimately impacts their voting decision (Questions 11 & 13).

**OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY** For a full discussion of the research methods and techniques used in this study, turn to *Methodology* on page 29. In brief, the survey was administered to a random sample of 543 registered voters in the Lompoc Unified School District who are likely to participate in the November 2024 general election, with a subset who are also likely to participate in the lower turnout March 2024 primary election. The survey followed a mixed-method design that employed multiple recruiting methods (email, text, and telephone) and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). Administered in English and Spanish between May 7 and May 15, 2023, the average interview lasted 16 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 section titled *Key Findings* is for you. It provides a summary of the most important findings of the survey 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 32) and a complete set of crosstabulations for the survey results is contained in Appendix A.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** True North thanks the Lompoc Unified School District for the opportunity to assist the District in this important effort. The collective expertise, local knowledge, and insight provided by district staff and representatives improved the overall quality of the research presented here. A special thanks also to Charles Heath (TeamCivX) and Tim Carty (Piper Sandler & Co) 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 Lompoc 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 opinions, 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 1,200 survey research studies for public agencies, including more than 400 revenue measure feasibility studies. Of the measures that have gone to ballot based on Dr. McLarney’s recommendation, more than 95% have been successful. In total, the research that Dr. McLarney has conducted has led to over \$35 billion in voter-approved local revenue measures.





## KEY FINDINGS

As noted in the *Introduction*, this study was designed to provide the Lompoc Unified School District with a statistically reliable understanding of voters' interest in funding the construction, improvement, and repair of school classrooms and facilities with a local bond measure. Whereas subsequent sections of this report are devoted to conveying the detailed results of the survey, in this section we attempt to 'see the forest through the trees' and note how the collective results of the survey answer some of the key questions that motivated the research. The following conclusions are based on True North's and TeamCivX's interpretations of the survey results and the firms' collective experience conducting revenue measure studies for public agencies throughout the State.

*Does a bond measure appear feasible for a 2024 ballot?*

Yes. Voters in Lompoc Unified School District consider improving the quality of education in local schools to be among the *most* important issues facing the community—on par with reducing crime and gang activity, and more important than maintaining local streets and roads, protecting the environment, preventing local tax increases, and other benchmark issues. This sentiment translates into solid natural support (64%) for a bond that would raise \$160 million to repair and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and instructional technology to support college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades; fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical, and ventilation; and repair, construct, and acquire classrooms, facilities, sites and equipment.

The results of this survey indicate that a bond is likely feasible for the November 2024 ballot provided that it is kept affordable, focuses on projects and improvements that voters identify as their priorities, *and* is accompanied by robust community/opinion leader engagement, education, and communication (more on this below).

Having stated that a bond measure appears feasible, it is important to note that the bond's prospects will be shaped by external factors and that a recommendation to place the measure on a 2024 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 recommends.

*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 2024 election, for example, the March 2024 election is expected to have lower turnout and a somewhat different demographic profile among participating voters. In some communities, these differences translate to substantially different levels of support for a bond measure.

In part because of their different size and make-up, the survey results indicate that the March 2024 and November 2024 electorates have somewhat different perspectives on a potential bond measure, with higher propensity March 2024 voters being less supportive on the natural (-8%) when compared to the larger November 2024 electorate of which they are a part. Although the differences between the two electorates faded somewhat over the course of the interview, likely March voters remained approximately 5% less supportive at the Final Ballot Test.

Although there are a variety of factors to consider when choosing an election date—including the number and types of other measures that may share the ballot, the time available to engage and communicate with local voters, the volume of ‘noise’ associated with each election environment, and the ability of an independent campaign to form, raise funds, and advocate for the measure—the significantly higher level of natural support for the bond that accompanies higher turnout makes November 2024 our recommendation.

*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.

Voters in the Lompoc Unified School District clearly see a need for the proposed projects and improvements that could be funded by a bond. Although nearly all potential uses of bond proceeds were favored by at least three-quarters of voters, the improvements that resonated with the *largest* percentage of voters were providing the classrooms, facilities and technology needed to support high quality instruction in math, science, engineering, and technology (87% strongly or somewhat favor), removing hazardous materials like asbestos and lead pipes from older school sites, where encountered (86%), upgrading older schools so they meet current health codes, building safety codes, and provide proper access for students with disabilities (86%), and providing modern labs and career technical facilities and equipment so students are prepared for college and in-demand careers in fields like health sciences, engineering, technology, and skilled trades (85%).

Given the intensity of responses (% strongly favor), other notable projects included making repairs to older classrooms and school facilities including deteriorating roofs, plumbing, sewer, heating, ventilation, and electrical systems (67% strongly favor) and improving student safety and campus security systems including security fencing, security cameras, emergency communications systems, smoke detectors, and fire alarms (62% strongly favor).

*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.

One of the clear patterns in the survey data is that some voters are price sensitive with respect to the proposed bond. A significant percentage of voters who were initially supportive of the \$160 million bond later hesitated when presented with the individual tax rates that could be associated with the bond. Although voter sensitivity regarding the “price” of the measure was partially overcome when the tax rates were converted to an annual total tax for the typical home owner, as well as once voters were exposed to additional information about what the measure would accomplish and why it is needed, it will nevertheless be important to keep the overall bond amount and tax rate within voters’ comfort zone.

True North will work closely with the District and the District’s financial advisor (Piper Sandler & Co) to select a tax rate and bond amount that best balances the District’s need for revenue with the political challenges associated with passing a bond measure.

*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 proposal.

It is clear from the survey results that voters’ opinions about the proposed 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. However, voters also exhibited sensitivity to opposition arguments, and there is a risk they could be swayed by divisive and hyper-partisan campaigning during the 2024 election cycle. Accordingly, one of the keys to building and *sustaining* support for the bond measure will be the presence of an effective, well-organized public outreach effort, as well as an independent campaign that focuses on the need for the measure as well as the many benefits that it will bring.

*How might changes to 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. On the one hand, this should provide some reassurances to the District that a bond measure is feasible. Even

with lingering concerns regarding the pandemic, inflation, high gas prices, and the trajectory of the economy, voters were supportive of the proposed school bond measure.

On the other hand, the months leading up to a 2024 election are likely to be punctuated with significant events on the public health, economic, and political fronts. Exactly how these events unfold and may shape voters' opinions remains to be seen. Should the economy and/or political climate improve, support for the measure could increase. Conversely, negative economic and/or political developments (including devolving into a hyper-partisan environment) and/or skewed voter turnout could dampen support for the measure below what was recorded in this study.

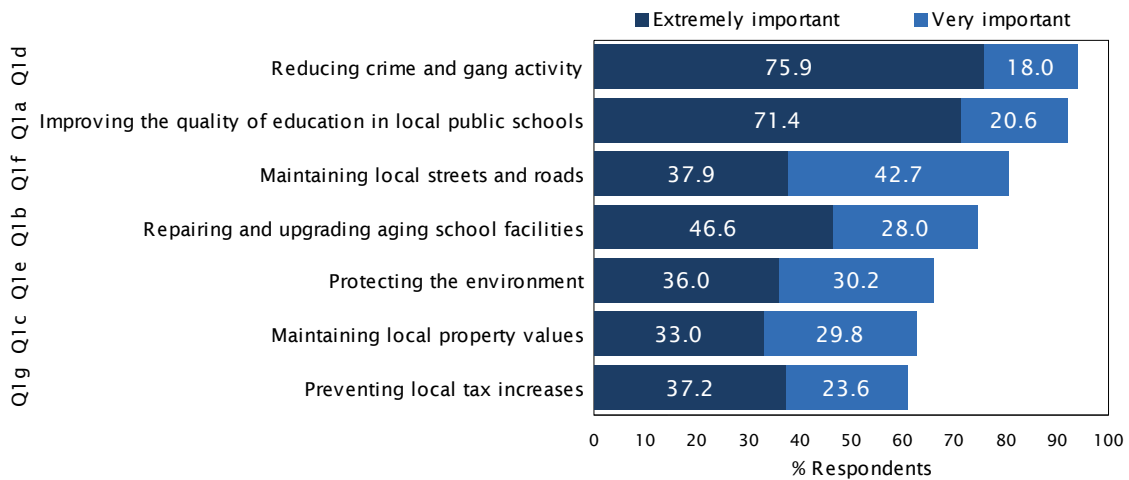
## IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES

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.<sup>1</sup> Overall, reducing crime and gang activity received the highest percentage of respondents indicating that the issue was either extremely or very important (94%), followed by improving the quality of education in local public schools (92%), maintaining local streets and roads (81%), and repairing and upgrading aging school facilities (75%). Given the purpose of this study, it is instructive to note that preventing local tax increases (61%) was rated lower in importance than improving the quality of education in local schools (92%) and repairing and upgrading aging school facilities (75%).

**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 survey was to estimate voters' support for a bond measure that would raise up to \$160 million to repair and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and instructional technology to support college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades; fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical, and ventilation; and repair, construct, and acquire classrooms, facilities, sites and equipment. To this end, Question 2 was designed to take an early assessment of support for the proposed measure.

The motivation for placing Question 2 near the front of 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 Lompoc Unified School District. Next 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 upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and instructional technology to support college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades; fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical, and ventilation; and repair, construct, and acquire classrooms, facilities, sites and equipment; shall the Lompoc Unified School District measure authorizing \$160 million in bonds at legal rates be adopted, levying 5 cents per 100 dollars assessed value (\$9 million annually) while bonds are outstanding, with citizen oversight, audits, 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

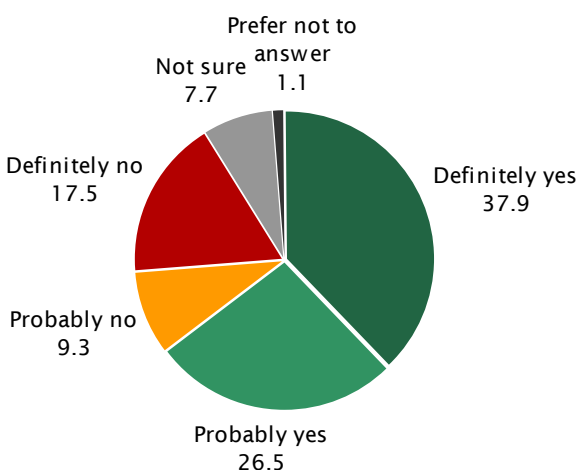


Figure 2 presents the results of the Initial Ballot Test among all respondents. Overall, 64% of likely November 2024 voters surveyed indicated that they would support the proposed \$160 million school bond, whereas 27% stated that they would oppose the measure, and approximately 9% were unsure or unwilling to share their vote choice. For Proposition 39 school bonds in California, support at the Initial Ballot Test was approximately 9 percentage points above the 55% 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 Universe) indicates the percentage of the likely November 2024 electorate that each subgroup category comprises. Initial support for the proposed bond measure varied substantially across voter subgroups, with the largest differences found among party and household party-type subgroups, as well as whether the voter is also likely to participate in the March 2024 primary election. As shown below, likely March 2024 voters were approximately 8% less supportive of the bond than the larger November 2024 electorate of which they are a part.

**TABLE 1 DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SUPPORT AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST**

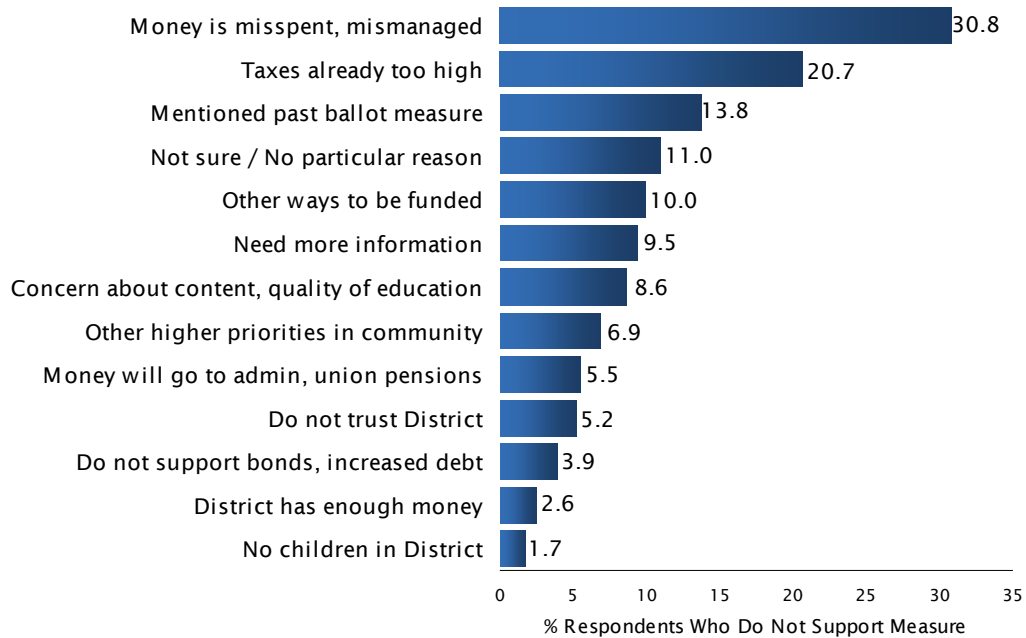
		Approximate % of Voter Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	% Not sure
Overall		100	64.4	7.7
District Child in Hsld (QD1,2)	Yes, current	35	67.6	7.5
	Yes, past	44	56.0	7.9
	No, never	38	76.8	5.8
Party	Democrat	41	79.1	6.4
	Republican	29	41.5	9.9
	Other / DTS	30	65.8	7.5
Homeowner on Voter File	Yes	53	58.1	8.2
	No	47	71.5	7.2
Age	Under 40	35	78.8	7.2
	40 to 49	16	66.2	11.9
	50 to 64	23	52.0	4.9
	65 or older	25	54.4	8.2
Household Party Type	Single dem	22	78.9	3.9
	Dual dem	10	80.3	7.7
	Single rep	13	47.0	14.0
	Dual rep	11	35.0	7.2
	Other / Mixed	44	65.7	8.0
Registration Year	Since Nov '18	24	80.3	5.5
	Jun '06 to <Nov '18	33	63.1	11.6
	Before Jun '06	43	56.4	5.9
Likely to Vote by Mail	Yes	82	64.7	7.7
	No	18	62.8	7.6
Likely Mar 2024 Voter	Yes	66	55.9	7.7
	No	34	80.7	7.8
Gender	Male	48	60.1	8.3
	Female	52	72.7	7.0

**REASONS FOR NOT SUPPORTING MEASURE** Respondents who did not support or were unsure about the measure at the Initial Ballot Test were subsequently asked if there was a particular reason for their position. Question 3 was asked in an open-ended manner, allowing respondents to mention any reason that came to mind without being prompted by or restricted to a particular list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in Figure 3 on the next page.

Among the *specific* reasons offered for not supporting the measure, a belief that money is/will be mismanaged or misspent (31%), a concern that taxes are already too high (21%), and references to a previous ballot measure (14%) were the most common.

**Question 3** *Is there a particular reason why you do not support or are unsure about the school measure I just described?*

**FIGURE 3 REASONS FOR NOT SUPPORTING MEASURE**





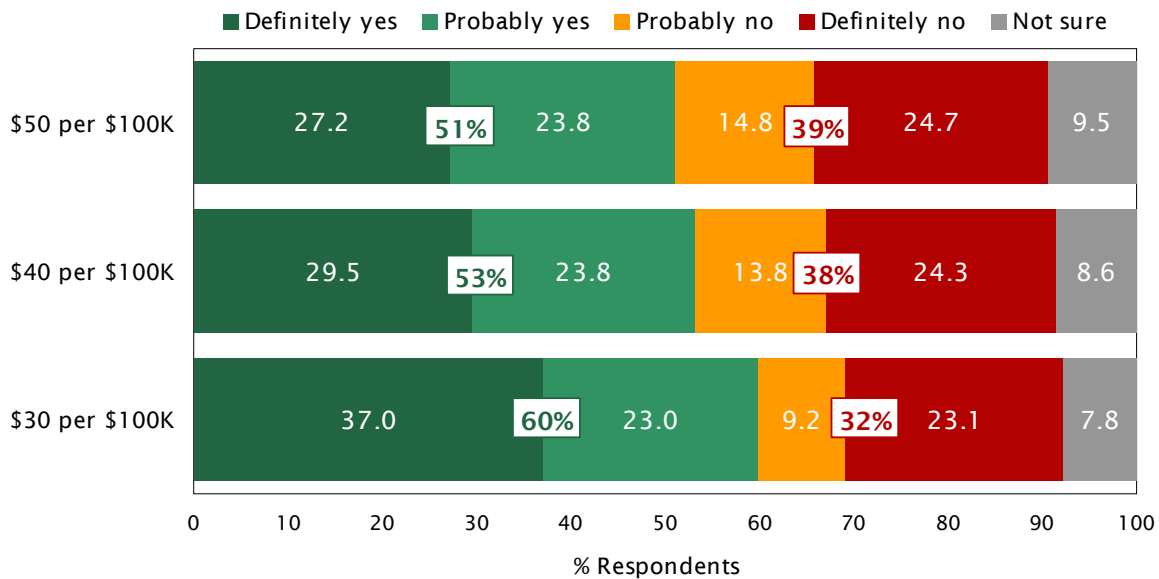
## TAX THRESHOLD

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 4, 5, and 6 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 (\$50 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 lower 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 4.

**Question 4** *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 dollars of assessed valuation, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure?*

FIGURE 4 TAX THRESHOLD



The most obvious pattern revealed in Figure 4 is that some voters are 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 (\$50 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 (\$30 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation).

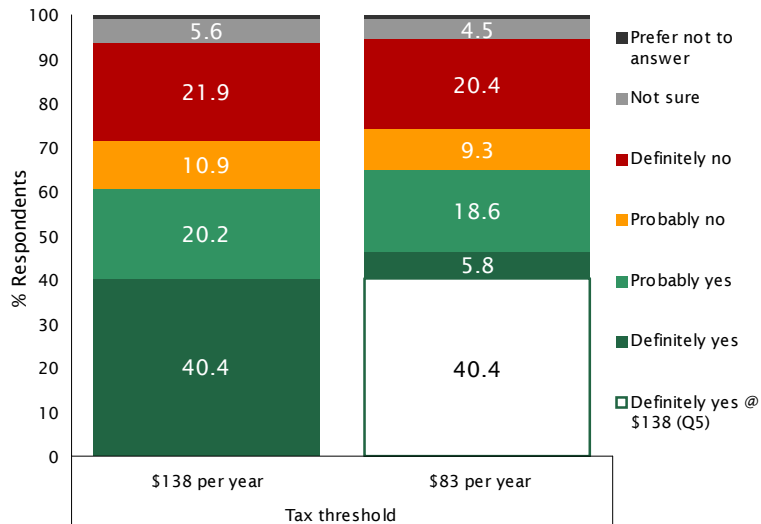
**ANNUALIZED IMPACT FOR MEDIAN HOME OWNER** Because voters occasionally overestimate their current assessed valuation and/or have difficulty translating the tax rate into an annualized total, the survey also tested a different approach for conveying the tax rate information. In addition to presenting rates as described above, voters were also provided with the total annual cost of the bond for the median homeowner (see questions 5 and 6) based on the \$50 and \$30 tax rates tested in Question 4. The results are presented below in Figure 5.

Voters responded more positively when the cost of the measure was 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 (\$50 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation), 51% of voters indicated that they would support the proposed bond measure. When that rate was translated to an annual cost for the median home owner (approximately \$138 per year), 61% of those surveyed indicated that they would support the bond. Support was also higher when the tax rate of \$30 per \$100,000 AV (60%) was translated to an annualized total of \$83 for the median home owner (65%).

**Question 5** *Let me put it another way: If you knew that this measure would cost the typical home owner about \$138 per year, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure?*

**Question 6** *If you knew that this measure would cost the typical home owner about \$83 per year, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure?*

**FIGURE 5 SUPPORT FOR MEASURE AT \$138 & \$83 PER YEAR FOR TYPICAL HOMEOWNER**



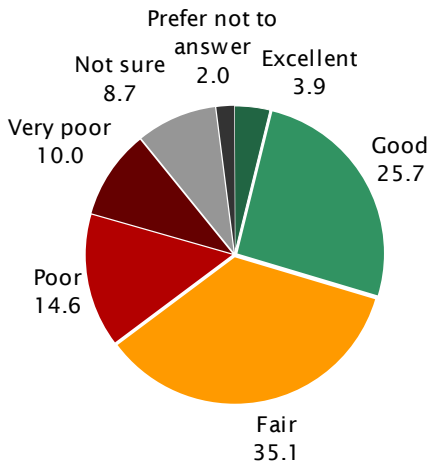
## RELATED ATTITUDES

To understand *why* voters take the positions they do with respect to a revenue measure, it is often instructive to look beyond the specifics of the measure itself. In particular, how voters perceive the quality of education being provided by the District and the need for facility improvements can have a meaningful impact on their support for the proposed bond measure.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION** Accordingly, respondents were asked to rate the quality of education provided in Lompoc Unified School District using a five-point scale of excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor. As shown in Figure 6, the results were mixed, with approximately one-third rating the quality of education as excellent (4%) or good (26%), one-third rating it as fair (35%), and one-quarter describing it as poor (15%) or very poor (10%). The remaining 11% of voters surveyed were unsure or declined to provide their opinion.

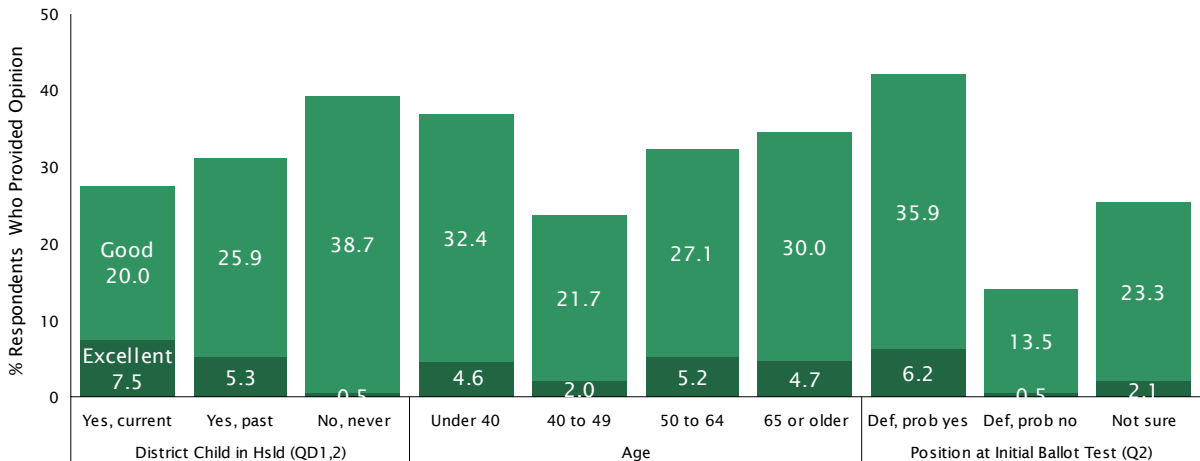
**Question 7** *In general, how would you rate the quality of education provided in the Lompoc Unified School District? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor?*

**FIGURE 6 QUALITY OF EDUCATION**



For the interested reader, Figure 7 shows how perceptions of the quality of education provided by Lompoc Unified School District varied (among those with an opinion) across key voter subgroups. It is worth noting the positive relationship between having a high opinion of the District’s performance in providing a quality education and support for the proposed bond measure at the Initial Ballot Test.

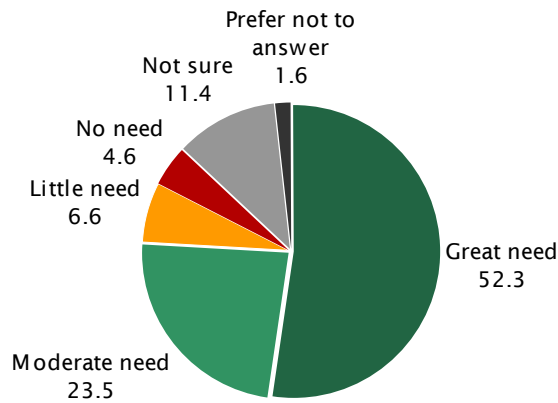
**FIGURE 7 QUALITY OF EDUCATION BY CHILD IN HSLD, AGE & POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST**



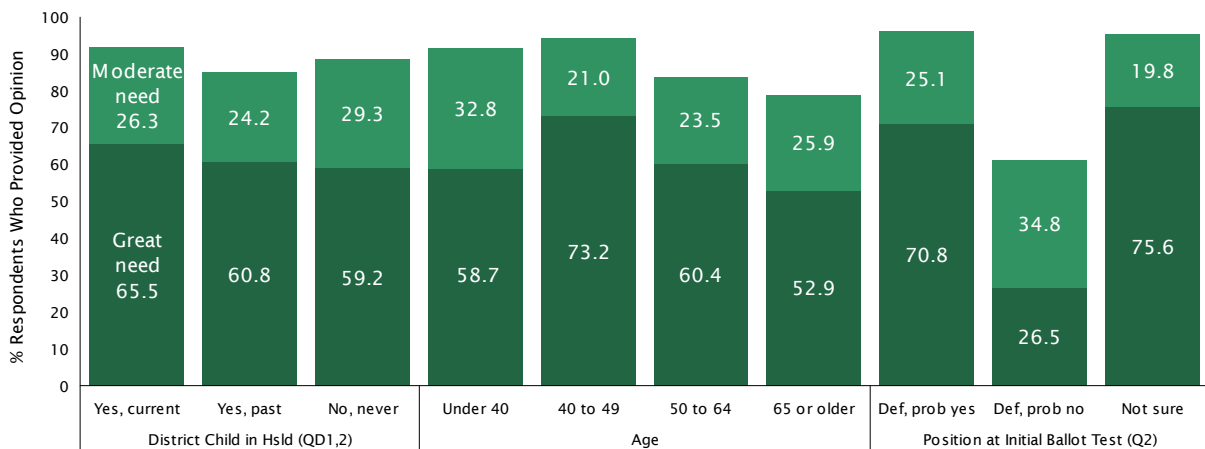
**NEED FOR FACILITY REPAIRS & UPGRADES** Similar to the above, respondents were also asked to rate the District’s need for repairs and upgrades to school classrooms and facilities. The majority of respondents described the need for classroom and school facility upgrades as great (52%), with an additional 24% describing the need as moderate. Just 11% indicated that the District has little or no need for facility repairs and improvements, while 13% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion (Figure 8). The perceived need for facility improvements was widespread regardless of whether the respondent has (or has had) a child in a District school or the respondent’s age, but was much lower among those who initially opposed the bond measure (Figure 9).

**Question 8** *How would you rate the District's need for repairs and upgrades to its classrooms and school facilities? Would you say it has a great need, moderate need, little need, or no need?*

**FIGURE 8 NEED FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES REPAIRS, UPGRADES**



**FIGURE 9 NEED FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES REPAIRS, UPGRADES BY CHILD IN HSLD, AGE & POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST**



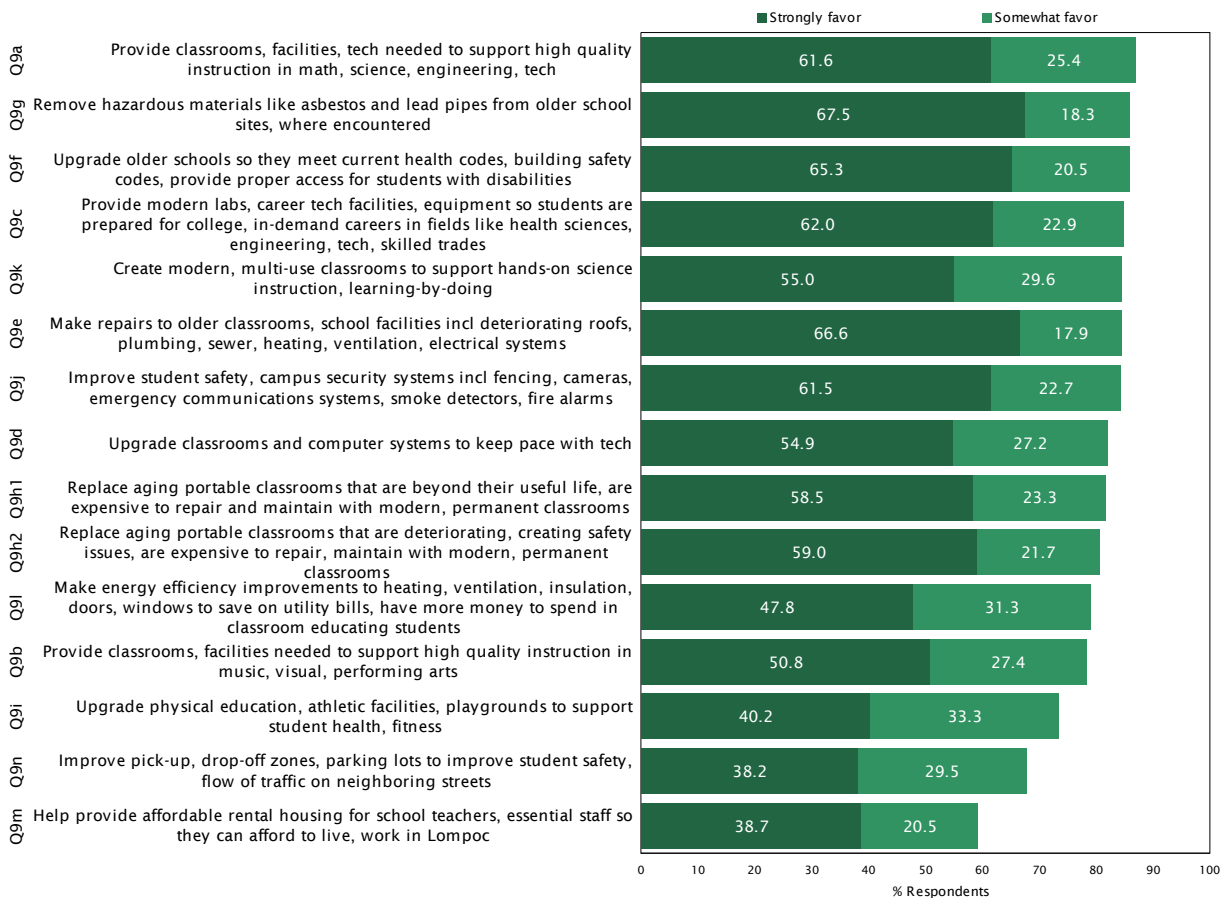
## PROJECTS & IMPROVEMENTS

The ballot language presented in Question 2 indicated that the proposed bond measure would be used to repair and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and instructional technology to support college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades; fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical, and ventilation; and repair, construct, and acquire classrooms, facilities, sites and equipment. The purpose of Question 9 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. Descriptions of the improvements tested, as well as voters' responses, are shown in Figure 10 below.<sup>2</sup>

**Question 9** *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 10 PROJECTS & IMPROVEMENTS**



2. For the full text of the improvements tested, turn to Question 9 in *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 32.

Although nearly all potential uses of the bond proceeds tested in Question 9 were favored by at least three-quarters of voters, the improvements that resonated with the *largest* percentage of voters were providing the classrooms, facilities and technology needed to support high quality instruction in math, science, engineering, and technology (87% strongly or somewhat favor), removing hazardous materials like asbestos and lead pipes from older school sites, where encountered (86%), upgrading older schools so they meet current health codes, building safety codes, and provide proper access for students with disabilities (86%), and providing modern labs and career technical facilities and equipment so students are prepared for college and in-demand careers in fields like health sciences, engineering, technology, and skilled trades (85%).

Given the intensity of responses (% strongly favor), other notable projects included making repairs to older classrooms and school facilities including deteriorating roofs, plumbing, sewer, heating, ventilation, and electrical systems (67% strongly favor) and improving student safety and campus security systems including security fencing, security cameras, emergency communications systems, smoke detectors, and fire alarms (62% strongly favor).

**PROJECT RATINGS BY INITIAL SUPPORT** Table 2 on the next page 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 improvement when compared with supporters. Nevertheless, initial supporters, opponents, and the undecided were in agreement on three of the top five priorities for funding.

**TABLE 2 TOP PROJECTS & IMPROVEMENTS BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST**

Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q2)	Item	Project & Improvement Summary	% Favor
Probably or Definitely Yes (n = 350)	Q9g	Remove hazardous materials like asbestos and lead pipes from older school sites, where encountered	82
	Q9e	Make repairs to older classrooms, school facilities incl deteriorating roofs, plumbing, sewer, heating, ventilation, electrical systems	81
	Q9f	Upgrade older schools so they meet current health codes, building safety codes, provide proper access for students with disabilities	80
	Q9h2	Replace aging portable classrooms that are deteriorating, creating safety issues, are expensive to repair, maintain with modern, permanent classrooms	78
	Q9c	Provide modern labs, career tech facilities, equipment so students are prepared for college, in-demand careers in fields like health sciences, engineering, tech, skilled trades	77
Probably or Definitely No (n = 145)	Q9j	Improve student safety, campus security systems incl fencing, cameras, emergency communications systems, smoke detectors, fire alarms	41
	Q9g	Remove hazardous materials like asbestos and lead pipes from older school sites, where encountered	36
	Q9e	Make repairs to older classrooms, school facilities incl deteriorating roofs, plumbing, sewer, heating, ventilation, electrical systems	32
	Q9f	Upgrade older schools so they meet current health codes, building safety codes, provide proper access for students with disabilities	30
	Q9c	Provide modern labs, career tech facilities, equipment so students are prepared for college, in-demand careers in fields like health sciences, engineering, tech, skilled trades	30
Not Sure (n = 42)	Q9e	Make repairs to older classrooms, school facilities incl deteriorating roofs, plumbing, sewer, heating, ventilation, electrical systems	69
	Q9h1	Replace aging portable classrooms that are beyond their useful life, are expensive to repair and maintain with modern, permanent classrooms	66
	Q9f	Upgrade older schools so they meet current health codes, building safety codes, provide proper access for students with disabilities	65
	Q9g	Remove hazardous materials like asbestos and lead pipes from older school sites, where encountered	63
	Q9a	Provide classrooms, facilities, tech needed to support high quality instruction in math, science, engineering, tech	59

## 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 10 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 are discussed later in this report (see *Negative Arguments* on page 23). Within each series, specific arguments were administered in random order to avoid a systematic position bias.

**Question 10** *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 11 POSITIVE ARGUMENTS**





Figure 11 presents the truncated positive arguments tested, as well as voters' reactions to the arguments. The arguments are sorted 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: *There are 136 portable classrooms at our schools that are at least 20 years old and falling apart. Most have structural damage and water leaks. It's expensive to keep repairing these units. We need this bond to replace decaying portables with modern, permanent classrooms* (80% very or somewhat convincing), *All classrooms and most science labs at our schools haven't been upgraded in 20 years. We need to modernize our classrooms and labs to meet today's academic standards and ensure that our students don't fall behind students from other districts* (79%), and *Our students deserve to have the same educational opportunities as others in the region. We need to upgrade our schools, facilities, and classrooms to keep pace* (77%).

**POSITIVE ARGUMENTS BY INITIAL SUPPORT** Table 3 on the next page 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 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, one argument was ranked among the top five most compelling by all three groups.

**TABLE 3 TOP POSITIVE ARGUMENTS BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST**

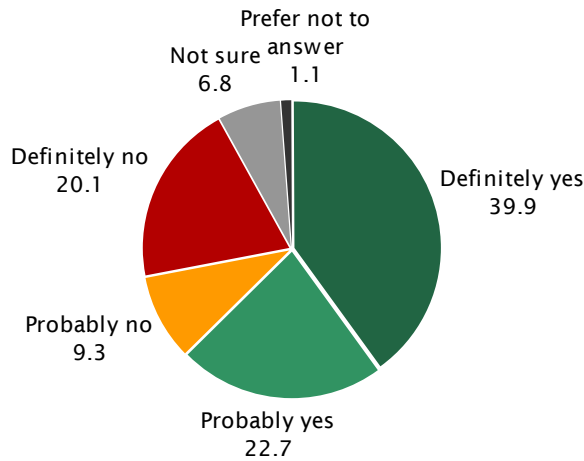
Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q2)	Item	Positive Argument Summary	% Very Convincing
Probably or Definitely Yes (n = 350)	Q10a	All money raised by measure will stay in community to support students; it cannot be taken away by State or used for other purposes	73
	Q10l	There are 136 portable classrooms at schools that are at least 20 yrs old, falling apart; most have structural damage, water leaks; it's expensive to keep repairing these units; we need bond to replace decaying portables with modern, permanent classrooms	71
	Q10f1	Most schools were built in 1960s or earlier (60+ yrs ago), need to be repaired, upgraded; it's time to make essential repairs, improvements so schools can serve community well for decades to come	68
	Q10f2	Classrooms, most science labs at schools haven't been upgraded in 20 yrs; we need to modernize classrooms, labs to meet today's academic standards, ensure that students don't fall behind students from other districts	66
	Q10e	Students deserve to have same educational opportunities as others in region; we need to upgrade schools, facilities, classrooms to keep pace	65
Probably or Definitely No (n = 145)	Q10b	By law, no money from this measure can be used for administrators' salaries or benefits	24
	Q10c	Measure requires a transparent system of accountability, incl a project list detailing how money can be used, a Citizens' Oversight Committee, public disclosure of how all funds are spent	19
	Q10a	All money raised by measure will stay in community to support students; it cannot be taken away by State or used for other purposes	19
	Q10k	Student safety, security has become a top priority for schools around nation; bond will provide funding for increased safety, security measures that will protect students, staff in case of an emergency	16
	Q10i	If voters approve measure, schools will be eligible to receive \$46M in State matching money when it becomes available that otherwise will go to other school districts	14
Not Sure (n = 42)	Q10c	Measure requires a transparent system of accountability, incl a project list detailing how money can be used, a Citizens' Oversight Committee, public disclosure of how all funds are spent	47
	Q10l	There are 136 portable classrooms at schools that are at least 20 yrs old, falling apart; most have structural damage, water leaks; it's expensive to keep repairing these units; we need bond to replace decaying portables with modern, permanent classrooms	47
	Q10a	All money raised by measure will stay in community to support students; it cannot be taken away by State or used for other purposes	46
	Q10b	By law, no money from this measure can be used for administrators' salaries or benefits	42
	Q10e	Students deserve to have same educational opportunities as others in region; we need to upgrade schools, facilities, classrooms to keep pace	38

## INTERIM BALLOT TEST

After informing respondents about the potential tax rates associated with the bond, projects and improvements 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 12, overall support for the measure among likely November 2024 voters declined slightly to 63%, with 40% of voters indicating that they would *definitely* vote yes. Approximately 29% of respondents opposed the measure at this point in the survey, and an additional 8% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.

**Question 11** *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 upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and instructional technology to support college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades; fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical, and ventilation; and repair, construct, and acquire classrooms, facilities, sites and equipment; shall the Lompoc Unified School District measure authorizing \$160 million in bonds at legal rates be adopted, levying 5 cents per 100 dollars assessed value (\$9 million annually) while bonds are outstanding, with citizen oversight, audits, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?*

FIGURE 12 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 in red. Support for the proposed school bond increased or decreased by modest amounts (five percentage points or less) between the Initial and Interim Ballot Tests for most voter subgroups, with the exception of voters who don't identify with one of the major parties (-6%), voters under the age of 40 (-6%), and those not likely to vote by mail (-7%).

TABLE 4 DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF SUPPORT AT INTERIM BALLOT TEST

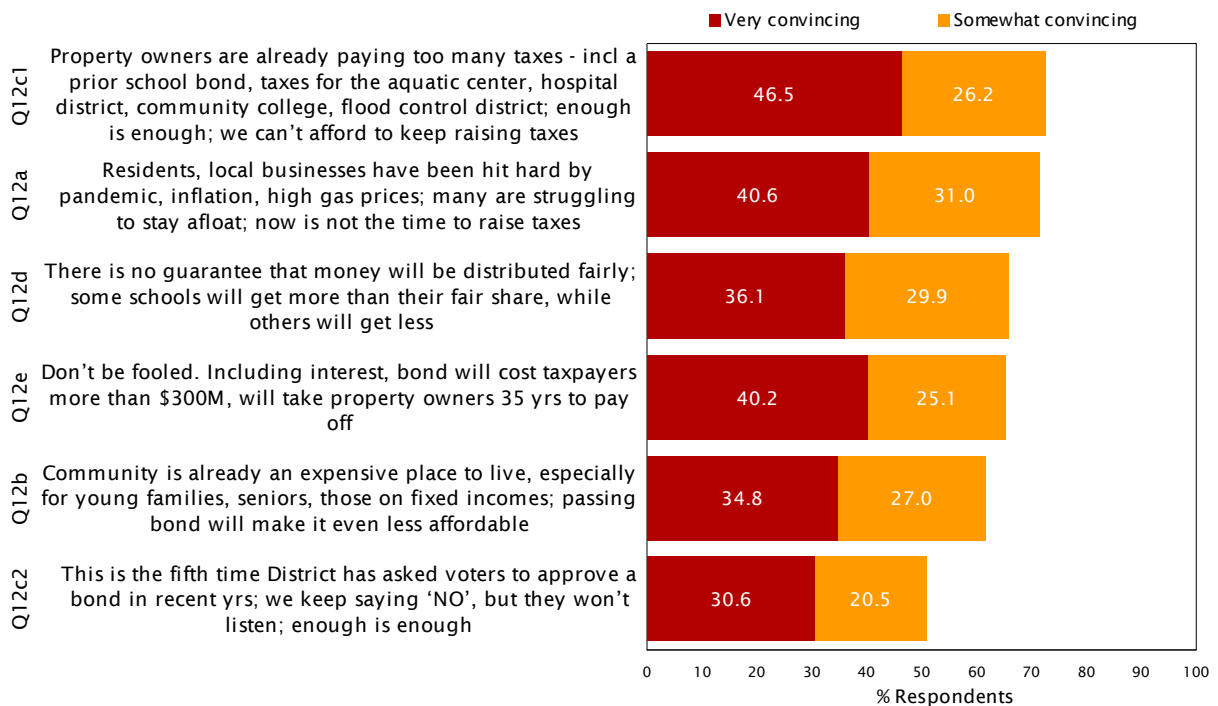
		Approximate % of Voter Universe	% Probably or Definitely Yes	Change From Initial Ballot Test (Q2)
Overall		100	62.6	-1.7
District Child in Hsld (QD1,2)	Yes, current	35	66.2	-1.4
	Yes, past	44	53.9	-2.1
	No, never	38	75.4	-1.4
Party	Democrat	41	79.8	+0.7
	Republican	29	41.0	-0.6
	Other / DTS	30	59.6	-6.2
Homeowner on Voter File	Yes	53	58.7	+0.6
	No	47	67.1	-4.5
Age	Under 40	35	73.3	-5.5
	40 to 49	16	68.6	+2.4
	50 to 64	23	52.7	+0.7
	65 or older	25	53.0	-1.4
Household Party Type	Single dem	22	78.1	-0.7
	Dual dem	10	84.1	+3.8
	Single rep	13	42.2	-4.8
	Dual rep	11	36.7	+1.7
	Other / Mixed	44	62.1	-3.6
Registration Year	Since Nov '18	24	75.6	-4.7
	Jun '06 to <Nov '18	33	64.1	+1.0
	Before Jun '06	43	54.2	-2.3
Likely to Vote by Mail	Yes	82	64.0	-0.7
	No	18	56.3	-6.5
Likely Mar 2024 Voter	Yes	66	55.7	-0.3
	No	34	76.1	-4.6
Gender	Male	48	56.7	-3.4
	Female	52	71.8	-0.9

## NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS

Whereas Question 10 presented respondents with arguments in favor of the measure, Question 12 presented respondents with arguments designed to elicit opposition to the measure. In the case of Question 12, however, respondents were asked if 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 13.

**Question 12** *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 13 NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS



The most compelling negative arguments tested were: *Property owners are already paying too many taxes - including a prior school bond and taxes for the aquatic center, hospital district, community college, and flood control district. Enough is enough. We can't afford to keep raising our taxes* (73% very or somewhat convincing), *Residents and local businesses have been hit hard by the pandemic, inflation, and high gas prices. Many are struggling to stay afloat. Now is not the time to raise taxes* (72%), and *There is no guarantee that the money will be distributed fairly. Some schools will get more than their fair share, while others will get less* (66%).

**NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS BY INITIAL SUPPORT** Table 5 on the next page lists the negative arguments (showing the percentage of respondents who cited each as *very convincing*) according to respondents’ vote choice at the Initial Ballot Test. As one might expect, the negative arguments resonated with a higher percentage of voters who were initially inclined to oppose the measure when compared with voters who initially supported the measure or were unsure.

**TABLE 5 TOP NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS BY POSITION AT INITIAL BALLOT TEST**

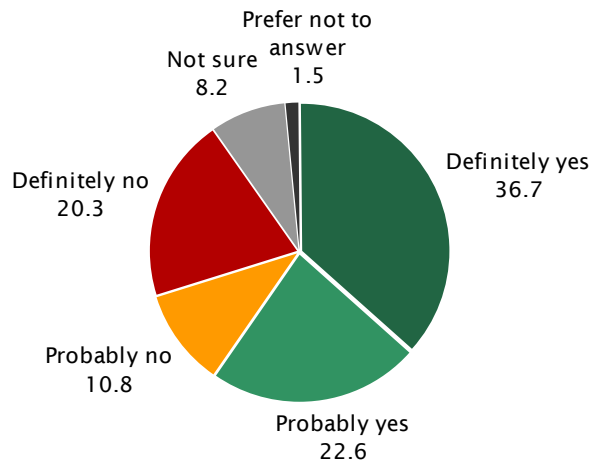
Position at Initial Ballot Test (Q2)	Item	Negative Argument Summary	% Very Convincing
Probably or Definitely Yes (n = 350)	Q11a	Residents, local businesses have been hit hard by pandemic, inflation, high gas prices; many are struggling to stay afloat; now is not time to raise taxes	30
	Q11b	Community is already an expensive place to live, especially for young families, seniors, those on fixed incomes; passing bond will make it even less affordable	24
	Q11c	We passed a \$42M bond to upgrade schools in 2016; it will take 25+ yrs for taxpayers to pay off that bond; now they want more money? enough is enough	22
	Q11e	We can't trust the District with this tax, they will mismanage the money	19
	Q11d	Don't be fooled. Including interest, bond will cost taxpayers about \$80M, will take property owners 35 yrs to pay off	19
Probably or Definitely No (n = 145)	Q11a	Residents, local businesses have been hit hard by pandemic, inflation, high gas prices; many are struggling to stay afloat; now is not time to raise taxes	65
	Q11b	Community is already an expensive place to live, especially for young families, seniors, those on fixed incomes; passing bond will make it even less affordable	58
	Q11c	We passed a \$42M bond to upgrade schools in 2016; it will take 25+ yrs for taxpayers to pay off that bond; now they want more money? enough is enough	53
	Q11d	Don't be fooled. Including interest, bond will cost taxpayers about \$80M, will take property owners 35 yrs to pay off	46
	Q11e	We can't trust the District with this tax, they will mismanage the money	37
Not Sure (n = 42)	Q11a	Residents, local businesses have been hit hard by pandemic, inflation, high gas prices; many are struggling to stay afloat; now is not time to raise taxes	52
	Q11b	Community is already an expensive place to live, especially for young families, seniors, those on fixed incomes; passing bond will make it even less affordable	45
	Q11c	We passed a \$42M bond to upgrade schools in 2016; it will take 25+ yrs for taxpayers to pay off that bond; now they want more money? enough is enough	37
	Q11d	Don't be fooled. Including interest, bond will cost taxpayers about \$80M, will take property owners 35 yrs to pay off	35
	Q11e	We can't trust the District with this tax, they will mismanage the money	15

## 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. A key 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, and arguments in favor of and against the proposal, the survey again asked voters whether they would vote 'yes' or 'no' on the proposed school bond measure.

**Question 13** *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 upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and instructional technology to support college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades; fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical, and ventilation; and repair, construct, and acquire classrooms, facilities, sites and equipment; shall the Lompoc Unified School District measure authorizing \$160 million in bonds at legal rates be adopted, levying 5 cents per 100 dollars assessed value (\$9 million annually) while bonds are outstanding, with citizen oversight, audits, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?*

FIGURE 14 FINAL BALLOT TEST



At this point in the survey, support for the bond measure was found among 59% of likely November 2024 voters, with 37% indicating that they would *definitely* support the measure. Approximately 31% of respondents opposed the measure at the Final Ballot Test, and 10% were unsure or unwilling to state their vote choice.



## 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, and 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 (Q1 I)
Overall		100	59.3	-5.0	-3.3
District Child in Hsld (QD1,2)	Yes, current	35	60.6	-7.0	-5.6
	Yes, past	44	46.1	-9.9	-7.9
	No, never	38	75.6	-1.2	+0.2
Party	Democrat	41	75.0	-4.1	-4.7
	Republican	29	39.6	-1.9	-1.4
	Other / DTS	30	56.4	-9.4	-3.2
Homeowner on Voter File	Yes	53	56.9	-1.2	-1.9
	No	47	62.2	-9.4	-4.9
Age	Under 40	35	67.6	-11.2	-5.7
	40 to 49	16	66.8	+0.6	-1.9
	50 to 64	23	51.7	-0.2	-1.0
	65 or older	25	50.0	-4.5	-3.1
Household Party Type	Single dem	22	72.6	-6.2	-5.5
	Dual dem	10	80.2	-0.0	-3.8
	Single rep	13	43.5	-3.5	+1.4
	Dual rep	11	31.8	-3.2	-5.0
	Other / Mixed	44	59.2	-6.5	-3.0
Registration Year	Since Nov '18	24	68.4	-11.9	-7.2
	Jun '06 to <Nov '18	33	60.7	-2.4	-3.4
	Before Jun '06	43	53.2	-3.3	-1.0
Likely to Vote by Mail	Yes	82	60.3	-4.4	-3.7
	No	18	54.9	-7.9	-1.4
Likely Mar 2024 Voter	Yes	66	54.1	-1.8	-1.6
	No	34	69.4	-11.3	-6.6
Gender	Male	48	56.4	-3.7	-0.3
	Female	52	67.4	-5.3	-4.4

As expected, voters responded to the negative arguments with a reduction in their support for the measure when compared with 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 modestly declining support for most voter subgroups, averaging -5 percentage points overall. Nevertheless, even with this decline, support at the Final Ballot Test (59%) remained above the 55% threshold required for passage.

Whereas Table 6 displays change in support for the measure over the course of the interview at the subgroup level, Table 7 on the next page presents 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 37.9% of respondents who indicated they would definitely support the measure at the Initial Ballot Test, 30.0% indicated they would definitely support the measure at the Final Ballot Test. An additional 4.6% moved to the probably support group, 1.1% moved to the probably oppose group, 0.4% moved to the definitely oppose group, and 1.8% 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 (Q13)				
		Definitely support	Probably support	Probably oppose	Definitely oppose	Not sure
Definitely support	37.9%	30.0%	4.6%	1.1%	0.4%	1.8%
Probably support	26.5%	6.5%	14.7%	2.2%	0.3%	2.9%
Probably oppose	9.3%	0.1%	0.7%	4.8%	2.6%	1.1%
Definitely oppose	17.5%	0.0%	0.1%	1.2%	16.2%	0.0%
Not sure	8.9%	0.1%	2.5%	1.5%	0.9%	3.8%

As one might expect, the information conveyed in the survey generally 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 presented in the survey did impact some voters, it did not do so in a consistent way for all respondents. Some respondents found the information provided during the course of the interview to be a reason to become more supportive of the measure, while a larger percentage found the same information reason to be less supportive. Although 16% of respondents made a *fundamental*<sup>3</sup> shift in their opinion regarding the measure over the course of the interview, the net impact is that support for the measure at the Final Ballot Test (59%) was approximately five percentage points different than support at the Initial Ballot Test (64%).

3. 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.



## BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS

**TABLE 8 DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE**

<i>Total Respondents</i>	543
<b>District Child in Hsld (QD1,2)</b>	
Yes, current	33.4
Yes, past	41.8
No, never	35.3
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	43.9
Female	48.0
Non-binary	0.8
Prefer not to answer	7.3
<b>Party</b>	
Democrat	41.5
Republican	28.6
Other / DTS	30.0
<b>Age</b>	
Under 40	35.3
40 to 49	16.3
50 to 64	23.2
65 or older	25.2
<b>Registration Year</b>	
Since Nov '18	23.9
Jun '06 to <Nov '18	33.4
Before Jun '06	42.7
<b>Household Party Type</b>	
Single dem	22.4
Dual dem	10.3
Single rep	12.5
Dual rep	11.2
Other / Mixed	43.5
<b>Homeowner on Voter File</b>	
Yes	53.3
No	46.7
<b>Likely to Vote by Mail</b>	
Yes	82.2
No	17.8
<b>Likely Mar 2024 Voter</b>	
Yes	65.9
No	34.1

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 2024 voter sample represented in this report is shown in Table 8.



## M E T H O D O L O G Y

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 District 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. In some cases, two versions of an issue, project, or argument were tested to identify how wording differences impact perception of the item. In such cases, half of the sample received the item with version 1 wording (e.g., Question 10, item F1) and the other half received version 2 (e.g., Question 10, item F2).

Some questions asked in this study were presented only to a subset of respondents. For example, only individuals who did not support the measure (or were unsure) at the Initial Ballot Test (Question 2) were asked the follow-up, open-ended Question 3 regarding their reasons for not supporting the measure. The questionnaire included with this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 32) 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 telephone interviews. The CATI program automatically navigates skip patterns, randomizes the appropriate question items, and alerts the interviewer to certain types of keypunching mistakes should they occur. The survey was also programmed into a passcode-protected online survey application to allow online participation for sampled voters, and professionally translated into Spanish. 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.

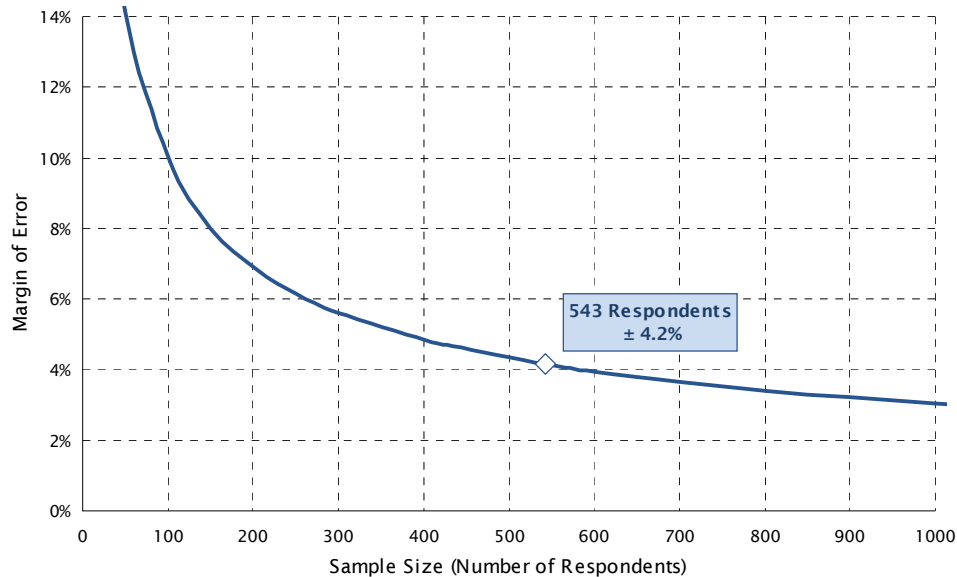
**SAMPLE** The survey was administered to a stratified and clustered random sample of registered voters in the District who are likely to participate the November 2024 general election, with a subset of voters who are also likely to participate in the lower turnout March 2024 primary election. Consistent with the profile of this universe, the sample was stratified into clusters, each representing a combination of age, gender, and household party type. Individuals were then randomly selected based on their profile into an appropriate cluster. This method ensures that if a person of a particular profile refuses to participate, they are replaced by an individual who shares their same profile.

**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 District who are likely to participate in the November 2024 general election. The results of the survey can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* voters likely to participate in said election. 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 543 voters for a particular question and what would have been found if all of the estimated 24,387 likely November 2024 voters identified in the District had been surveyed for the study.

Figure 15 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  $\pm 4.2\%$ .

**FIGURE 15 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 15 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, text, and email) and multiple data collection methods (telephone and online). Telephone interviews averaged 16 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 recruited via email and text 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, an email reminder notice was also sent to encourage participation among those who had yet to take the survey. A total of 543 surveys were completed between May 7 and May 15, 2023.

**DATA PROCESSING** Data processing consisted of checking the data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, weighting, and preparing frequency analyses and cross-tabulations.

**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 tables. Occasionally, these rounding rules lead to small discrepancies in the first decimal place when comparing tables and charts for a given question.

# QUESTIONNAIRE & TOPLINES



Lompoc USD  
Baseline Bond Feasibility Survey  
Final Toplines (n=543)  
May 2023

## 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 about important issues in the Lompoc (LAHM-poke) area 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 you, 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?

		Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all important	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
	<i>Randomize</i>						
A	Improving the quality of education in local public schools	71%	21%	6%	2%	0%	0%
B	Repairing and upgrading aging school facilities	47%	28%	19%	6%	0%	0%
C	Maintaining local property values	33%	30%	30%	6%	1%	0%
D	Reducing crime and gang activity	76%	18%	4%	1%	0%	0%
E	Protecting the environment	36%	30%	24%	9%	1%	0%
F	Maintaining local streets and roads	38%	43%	18%	1%	0%	0%
G	Preventing local tax increases	37%	24%	27%	10%	1%	0%

**Section 3: Initial Ballot Test**

Your household is within the Lompoc Unified School District. Next 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:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Repair and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and instructional technology to support college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades</li> <li>o Fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical, and ventilation</li> <li>o And repair, construct, and acquire classrooms, facilities, sites and equipment</li> </ul>			
	Shall the Lompoc Unified School District measure authorizing <b>\$160</b> million in bonds at legal rates be adopted, levying 5 cents per 100 dollars assessed value (\$9 million annually) while bonds are outstanding, with citizen oversight, audits, and all money staying local?			
	If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure? <i>Get answer, then ask:</i> Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?			
	1	Definitely yes	38%	Skip to Q4
	2	Probably yes	26%	Skip to Q4
	3	Probably no	9%	Ask Q3
4	Definitely no	17%	Ask Q3	
98	Not sure	8%	Ask Q3	
99	Prefer not to answer	1%	Skip to Q4	
Q3	Is there a particular reason why you do not support or are unsure about the school measure I just described? <i>If yes, ask:</i> Please briefly describe your reason. <i>Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.</i>			
	Money is misspent, mismanaged		31%	
	Taxes already too high		21%	
	Mentioned past ballot measure		14%	
	Not sure / No particular reason		11%	
	Other ways to be funded		10%	
	Need more information		9%	
	Concern about content, quality of education		9%	
	Other higher priorities in community		7%	
	Money will go to admin, union pensions		6%	
	Do not trust District		5%	
	Do not support bonds, increased debt		4%	
	District has enough money		3%	
	No children in District		2%	

Section 4: Tax Threshold									
<p>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.</p> <p>Q4 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? <i>Get answer, then ask: Is that definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?</i></p> <p><i>If needed: The assessed value of your home is listed on your property tax bill.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>									
	<i>Ask in Order</i>			Definitely Yes	Probably Yes	Probably No	Definitely No	Not Sure	Prefer not to answer
A	\$50			27%	24%	15%	25%	8%	1%
B	\$40			29%	24%	14%	24%	7%	2%
C	\$30			37%	23%	9%	23%	6%	1%
<p>Q5 Let me put it another way: If you knew that this measure would cost the <u>typical</u> home owner about <b>\$138</b> per year, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure? <i>Get answer, then ask: Is that definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?</i></p>									
	1	Definitely yes		40%		<i>Skip to Q7</i>			
	2	Probably yes		20%		<i>Ask Q6</i>			
	3	Probably no		11%		<i>Ask Q6</i>			
	4	Definitely no		22%		<i>Ask Q6</i>			
	98	Not sure		6%		<i>Ask Q6</i>			
	99	Prefer not to answer		1%		<i>Skip to Q7</i>			
<p>Q6 If you knew that this measure would cost the <u>typical</u> home owner about <b>\$83</b> per year, would you vote yes or no on the school bond measure? <i>Get answer, then ask: Is that definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?</i></p>									
		Definitely yes @ \$138 (Q5)		40%					
	1	Definitely yes		6%					
	2	Probably yes		19%					
	3	Probably no		9%					
	4	Definitely no		20%					
	98	Not sure		5%					
	99	Prefer not to answer		1%					



Section 5: Quality of Education		
Q7	In general, how would you rate the quality of education provided in the Lompoc Unified School District? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor?	
	1	Excellent 4%
	2	Good 26%
	3	Fair 35%
	4	Poor 15%
	5	Very poor 10%
	98	Not sure 9%
	99	Prefer not to answer 2%
Q8	How would you rate the District's need for repairs and upgrades to its classrooms and school facilities? Would you say it has a great need, moderate need, little need, or no need?	
	1	Great need 52%
	2	Moderate need 24%
	3	Little need 7%
	4	No need 5%
	98	Not sure 11%
	99	Prefer not to answer 2%

Section 6: Projects & Improvements							
Q9	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? <i>Get answer, if favor or oppose, then ask: Would that be strongly (favor/oppose) or somewhat (favor/oppose)?</i>						
	<i>Randomize. Split Sample H1/H2</i>	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Provide the classrooms, facilities and technology needed to support high quality instruction in <b>math, science, engineering, and technology</b>	62%	25%	4%	5%	1%	2%
B	Provide the classrooms and facilities needed to support high quality instruction in <b>music, visual, and performing arts</b>	51%	27%	11%	7%	2%	2%

C	Provide modern <b>labs and career technical facilities and equipment</b> so students are prepared for college and in-demand careers in fields like health sciences, engineering, technology, and skilled trades	62%	23%	5%	5%	2%	2%
D	Upgrade classrooms and computer systems to keep pace with technology	55%	27%	7%	6%	2%	3%
E	Make repairs to older classrooms and school facilities including deteriorating roofs, plumbing, sewer, heating, ventilation, and electrical systems	67%	18%	5%	6%	2%	2%
F	Upgrade older schools so they meet current health codes, building safety codes, and provide proper access for students with disabilities	65%	20%	5%	5%	2%	3%
G	Remove hazardous materials like asbestos and lead pipes from older school sites, where encountered	68%	18%	5%	5%	2%	2%
H1	Replace aging portable classrooms that are beyond their useful life and are expensive to repair and maintain with modern, permanent classrooms	58%	23%	5%	5%	5%	4%
H2	Replace aging portable classrooms that are deteriorating, creating safety issues, and are expensive to repair and maintain with modern, permanent classrooms	59%	22%	5%	7%	5%	2%
I	Upgrade physical education, athletic facilities, and playgrounds to support student health and fitness	40%	33%	12%	9%	3%	2%
J	Improve student safety and campus security systems including security fencing, security cameras, emergency communications systems, smoke detectors, and fire alarms	62%	23%	6%	5%	2%	2%
K	Create modern, multi-use classrooms to support hands-on science instruction and learning-by-doing	55%	30%	6%	5%	2%	3%
L	Make energy efficiency improvements to heating, ventilation, insulation, doors, and windows to save on utility bills and have more money to spend in the classroom educating students	48%	31%	7%	9%	3%	3%
M	Help provide affordable rental housing for school teachers and essential staff so they can afford to live and work in Lompoc	39%	21%	15%	19%	4%	3%
N	Improve pick-up and drop-off zones and parking lots to improve student safety and the flow of traffic on neighboring streets	38%	30%	12%	10%	7%	3%

Section 7: Positive Arguments							
What I'd like to do now is tell you what some people are saying about the measure we've been discussing.							
Q10	Supporters of the measure say: ----- Do you think this is a very convincing, somewhat convincing, or not at all convincing reason to <b>SUPPORT</b> the measure?						
	<i>Randomize. Split Sample F1/F2</i>	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Not At All Convincing	Don't Believe	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	All money raised by the measure will stay in our community to support our students. It cannot be taken away by the State or used for other purposes.	56%	20%	12%	8%	2%	2%
B	By law, no money from this measure can be used for administrators' salaries or benefits.	52%	21%	14%	9%	2%	3%
C	This measure requires a transparent system of accountability, including a project list detailing how the money can be used, a Citizens' Oversight Committee, and public disclosure of how all funds are spent.	51%	23%	13%	9%	2%	2%
D	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.	43%	30%	13%	9%	2%	2%
E	Our students deserve to have the same educational opportunities as others in the region. We need to upgrade our schools, facilities, and classrooms to keep pace.	49%	28%	15%	5%	1%	2%
F1	Most of our schools were built in the 1960s or earlier (more than 60 years ago) and need to be repaired and upgraded. It's time to make essential repairs and improvements so our schools can serve our community well for the decades to come.	48%	26%	14%	6%	3%	3%
F2	All classrooms and most science labs at our schools haven't been upgraded in 20 years. We need to modernize our classrooms and labs to meet today's academic standards and ensure that our students don't fall behind students from other districts.	49%	30%	12%	7%	0%	1%
G	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.	46%	30%	12%	8%	1%	2%

H	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.	41%	30%	16%	8%	2%	2%
I	If voters approve this measure, our schools will be eligible to receive 46 million dollars in State matching money when it becomes available that otherwise will go to other school districts.	48%	28%	13%	8%	2%	2%
J	Every school in the community will benefit if the measure passes. Each school will get its fair share.	37%	28%	18%	14%	2%	2%
K	Student safety and security has become a top priority for schools around the nation. This bond will provide funding for increased safety and security measures that will protect our students and staff in case of an emergency.	46%	28%	14%	9%	1%	2%
L	There are 136 portable classrooms at our schools that are at least 20 years old and falling apart. Most have structural damage and water leaks. It's expensive to keep repairing these units. We need this bond to replace decaying portables with modern, permanent classrooms.	52%	28%	11%	6%	1%	2%

**Section 8: 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.

Q11	In order to:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Repair and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and instructional technology to support college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades</li> <li>o Fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical, and ventilation</li> <li>o And repair, construct, and acquire classrooms, facilities, sites and equipment</li> </ul>		
	<p>Shall the Lompoc Unified School District measure authorizing <b>\$160</b> million in bonds at legal rates be adopted, levying 5 cents per 100 dollars assessed value (\$9 million annually) while bonds are outstanding, with citizen oversight, audits, and all money staying local? If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on this measure?  <i>Get answer, then ask: Would that be definitely (yes/no) or probably (yes/no)?</i></p>		
	1	Definitely yes	40%
	2	Probably yes	23%
	3	Probably no	9%
	4	Definitely no	20%
98	Not sure	7%	
99	Prefer not to answer	1%	

<b>Section 9: Negative Arguments</b>							
Next, let me tell you what opponents of the measure are saying.							
Q12	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?						
	<i>Randomize. Split Sample C1/C2</i>	Very Convincing	Somewhat Convincing	Not At All Convincing	Don't Believe	Not sure	Prefer not to answer
A	Residents and local businesses have been hit hard by the pandemic, inflation, and high gas prices. Many are struggling to stay afloat. Now is not the time to raise taxes.	41%	31%	19%	5%	3%	2%
B	Our community is already an expensive place to live, especially for young families, seniors, and those on fixed incomes. Passing this bond will make it even less affordable.	35%	27%	25%	9%	3%	1%
C1	Property owners are already paying too many taxes - including a prior school bond and taxes for the aquatic center, hospital district, community college, and flood control district. Enough is enough. We can't afford to keep raising our taxes.	46%	26%	19%	6%	2%	1%
C2	This is the fifth time the District has asked voters to approve a bond in recent years. We keep saying 'NO', but they won't listen. Enough is enough.	31%	21%	33%	11%	4%	1%
D	There is no guarantee that the money will be distributed fairly. Some schools will get more than their fair share, while others will get less.	36%	30%	23%	6%	4%	1%
E	Don't be fooled. Including interest, this bond will cost taxpayers more than 300 million dollars and will take property owners 35 years to pay off.	40%	25%	19%	11%	4%	1%

**Section 10: 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.

In order to:

- Repair and upgrade classrooms, science labs, career-training facilities, and instructional technology to support college/career readiness in math, science, technology, engineering, arts, and skilled trades
- Fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical, and ventilation
- And repair, construct, and acquire classrooms, facilities, sites and equipment

Q13

Shall the Lompoc Unified School District measure authorizing **\$160** million in bonds at legal rates be adopted, levying 5 cents per 100 dollars assessed value (\$9 million annually) while bonds are outstanding, with citizen oversight, audits, 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	23%
3	Probably no	11%
4	Definitely no	20%
98	Not sure	8%
99	Prefer not to answer	1%

**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 any children who currently attend a school in the Lompoc Unified School District?

1	Yes	33%
2	No	59%
99	Prefer not to answer	8%

D2 Do you have grown children who previously attended a school in the Lompoc Unified School District when they were younger?

1	Yes	42%
2	No	52%
99	Prefer not to answer	6%

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 44%
	2	Female 48%
	3	Non-binary 1%
	99	Prefer not to answer 7%
S2	Party	
	1	Democrat 41%
	2	Republican 29%
	3	Other 13%
	4	DTS 17%
S3	Age on Voter File	
	1	18 to 29 18%
	2	30 to 39 18%
	3	40 to 49 16%
	4	50 to 64 23%
	5	65 or older 25%
S4	Registration Date	
	1	Since Nov 2018 24%
	2	Jun 2012 to before Nov 2018 24%
	3	Jun 2006 to before Jun 2012 10%
	4	Before June 2006 43%
S5	Household Party Type	
	1	Single Dem 22%
	2	Dual Dem 10%
	3	Single Rep 13%
	4	Dual Rep 11%
	5	Single Other 14%
	6	Dual Other 8%
	7	Dem & Rep 5%

	8	Dem & Other	10%
	9	Rep & Other	7%
	0	Mixed (Dem + Rep + Other)	1%
<b>S6</b>	<b>Homeowner on Voter File</b>		
	1	Yes	53%
	2	No	47%
<b>S7</b>	<b>Likely to Vote by Mail</b>		
	1	Yes	82%
	2	No	18%
<b>S8</b>	<b>Likely March 2024 Voter</b>		
	1	Yes	66%
	2	No	34%
<b>S9</b>	<b>Likely November 2024 Voter</b>		
	1	Yes	100%
	2	No	0%