MENLO PARK
CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Menlo Park City School District

Public Opinion Research Results Report

EMC research

Presented to MPCSD Board of Education

March 7, 2024

Methodology

- Multimodal telephone, email-/text-to-web survey of likely November 2024 voters
- Survey conducted February 6-19, 2024
- 300 interviews; overall margin of error ±5.7 percentage points
- Interviews were conducted in English by trained, professional interviewers; landlines and mobile phones included
- Where applicable, results compared with the following:

Methodology	Dates	Universe	Sample Size	Margin of Error	EMC #
Mixed Mode	Feb. 23 - March 7, 2021	Likely Nov. 2021 Voters	300	±5.7 percentage points	21-8075

Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

Key Findings

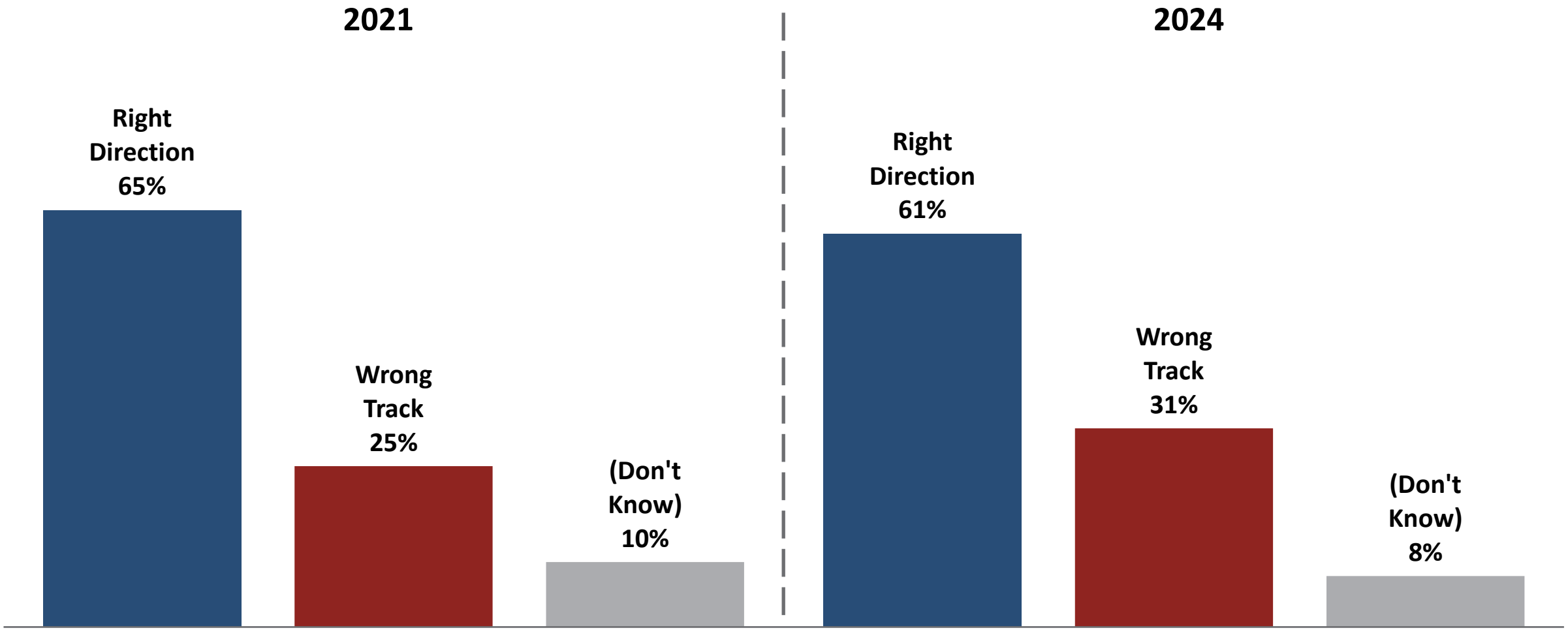
- Voters rate the District very highly on the job it is doing overall, as well as on the quality of education and the condition of school buildings and grounds.
- Voters do not perceive that the District has much of a need for more funding, with less than half indicating that the District has either some need or a great need.
- Tax sensitivity is higher than has been measured in earlier polling, but voters have high trust in MPCSD and indicate they can overcome those concerns to preserve school quality.
- Initial support for the measure just exceeds the 55% passage threshold, and support grows slightly after additional information. Negative messaging does somewhat undermine support.
- Safety, security, and seismic improvements are the most important outcomes for voters. In addition to those elements, they are also interested in the strong accountability controls and matched funding potential that can be part of the measure.



Issue Environment

General Area Direction

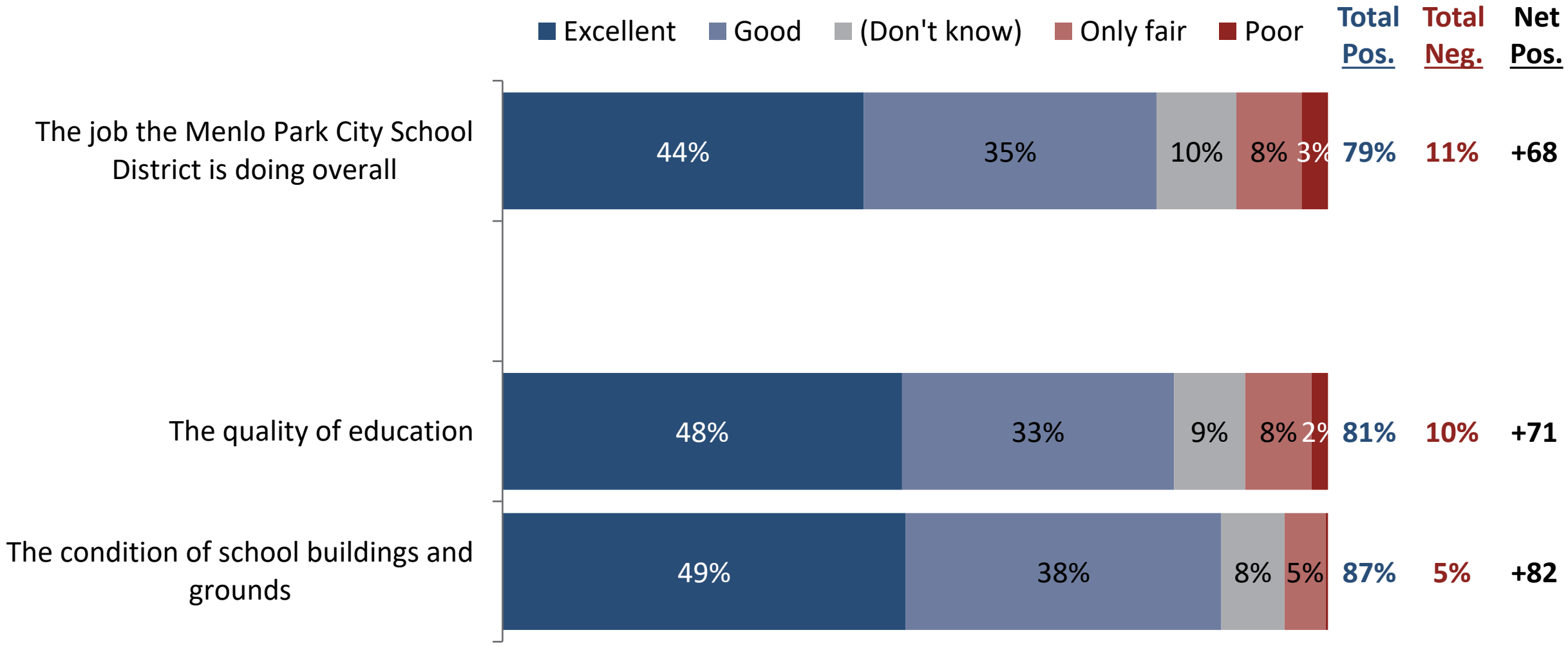
When asked a general question about how things are going in their area (not specifically about schools or the school district), 60% feel things in the area are going in the right direction, similar to the mood leading up to the 2021 election.



Q3. Do you feel that things in your area are generally going in the right direction or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

District Ratings

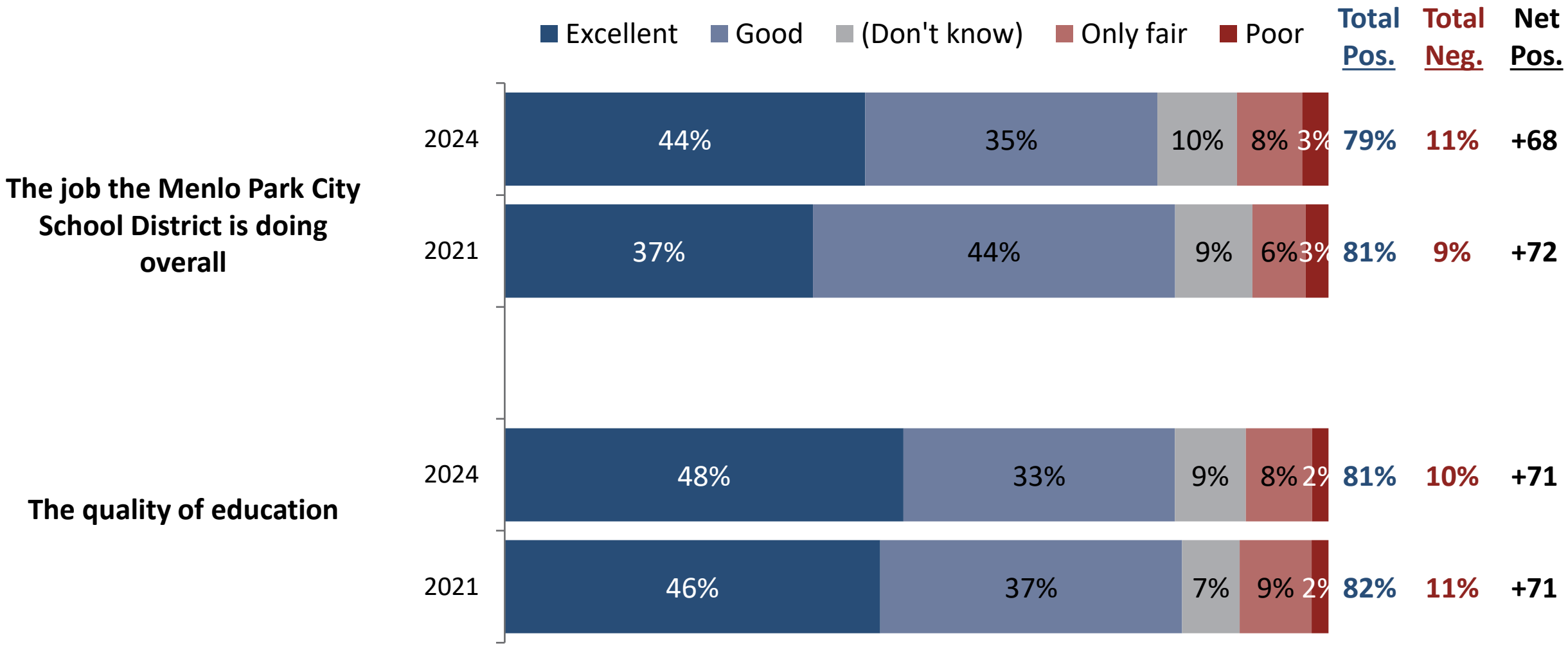
Voters have strongly positive views of the District, including the condition of school buildings and grounds.



Q5-7. Regardless of whether you currently have children in school, please rate each of the following areas relating to the Menlo Park City School District, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor.

District Ratings Over Time

Voters rate the District similarly over time.

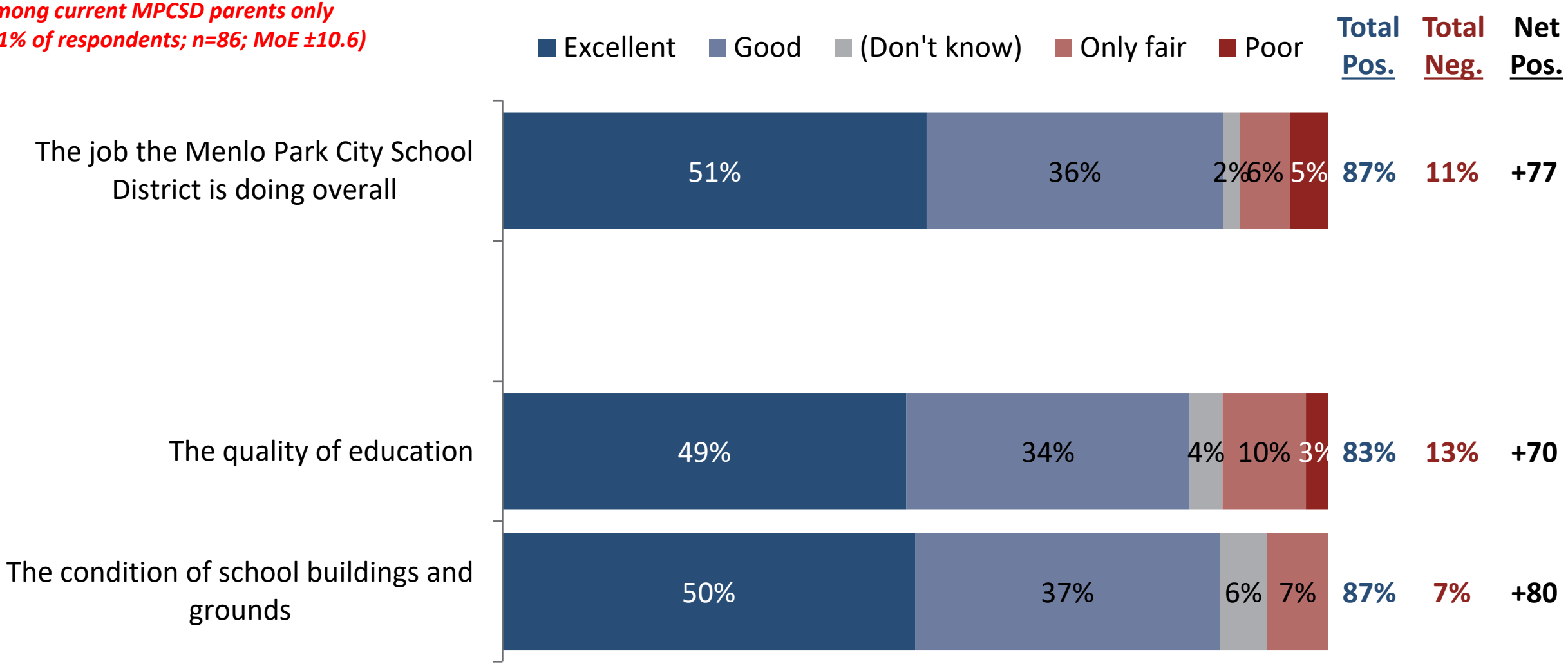


Q5-7. Regardless of whether you currently have children in school, please rate each of the following areas relating to the Menlo Park City School District, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor.

District Ratings: MPCSD Parents

MPCSD Parents hold even more positive views of the District, with over half rating the job it is doing overall as excellent.

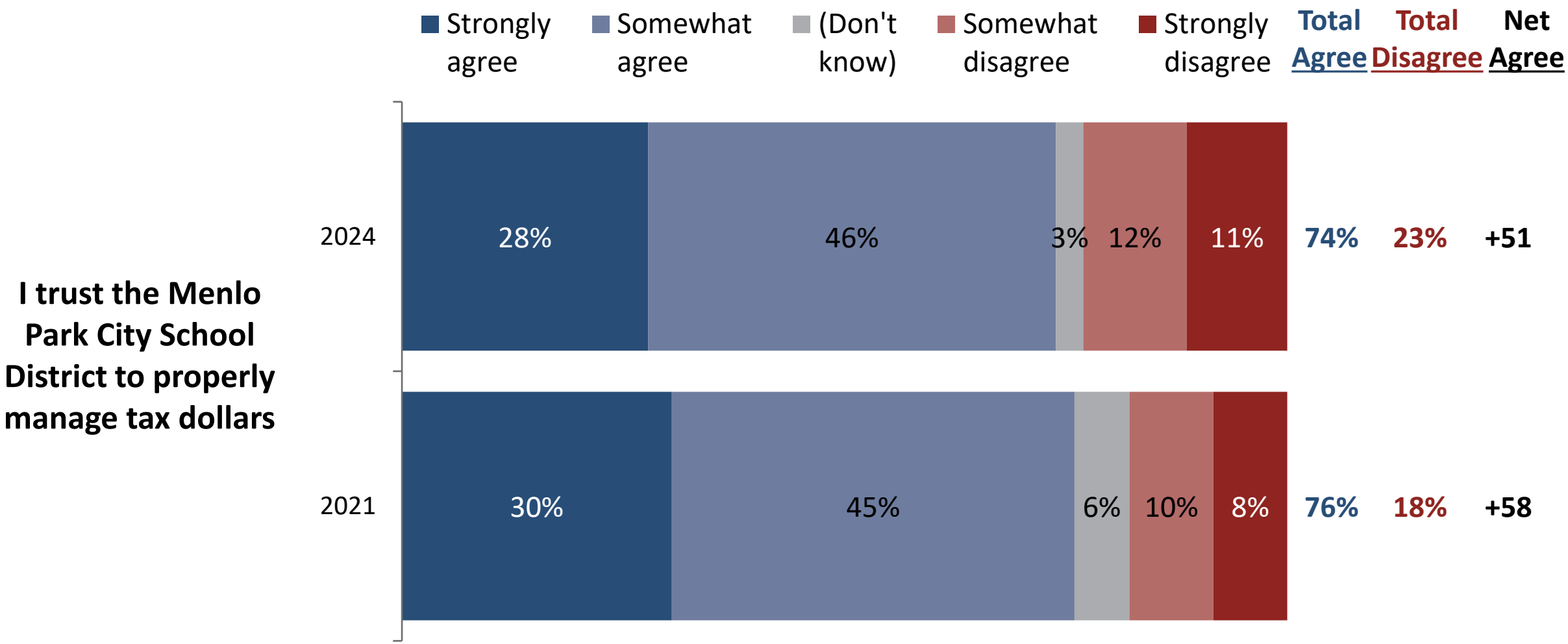
Among current MPCSD parents only
(31% of respondents; n=86; MoE ±10.6)



Q5-7. Regardless of whether you currently have children in school, please rate each of the following areas relating to the Menlo Park City School District, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor.

Trust in Management of Tax Dollars

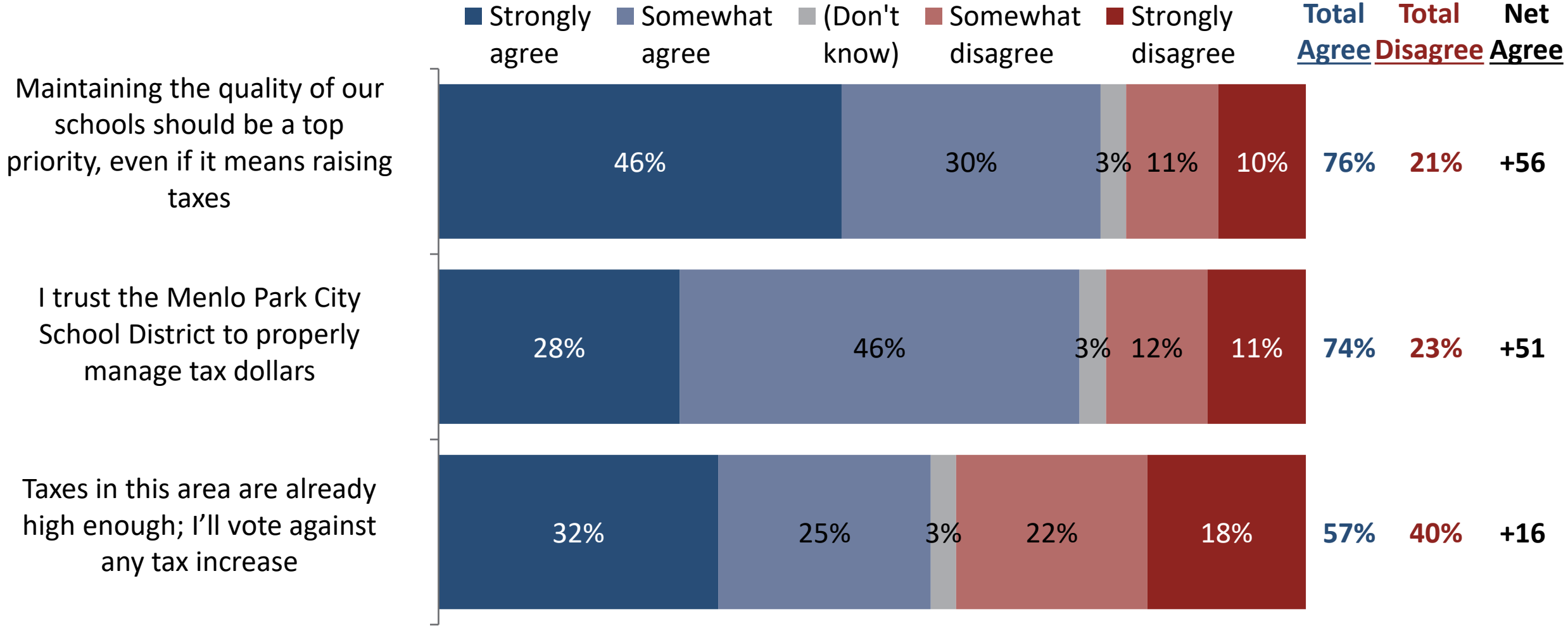
Three-quarters of voters agree that they trust MPCSD to properly manage tax dollars, consistent with 2021.



Q9-11. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements.

Tax Sentiment

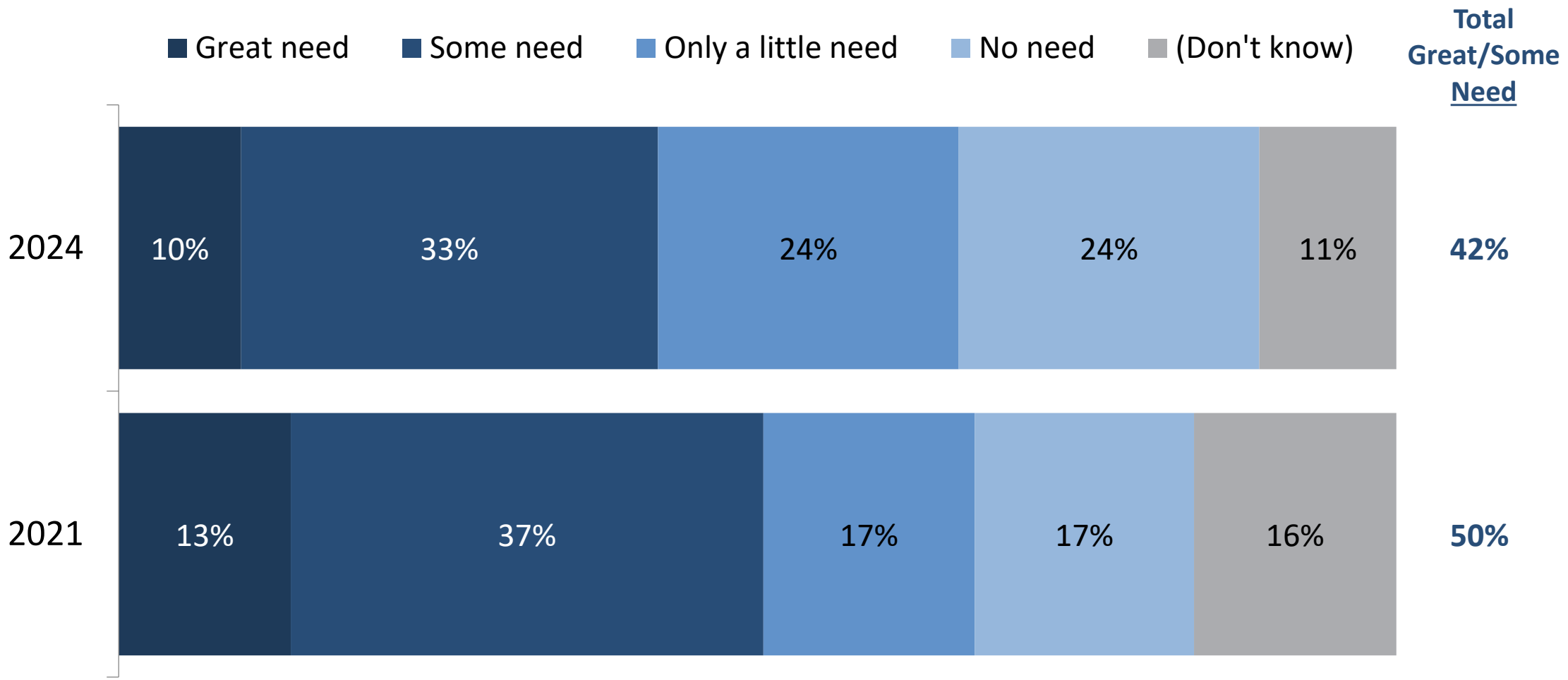
Most voters feel quality schools are worth raising taxes and trust the District with tax dollars, but there is some sensitivity to tax increases.



Q9-11. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements.

Perceived Need for Funding

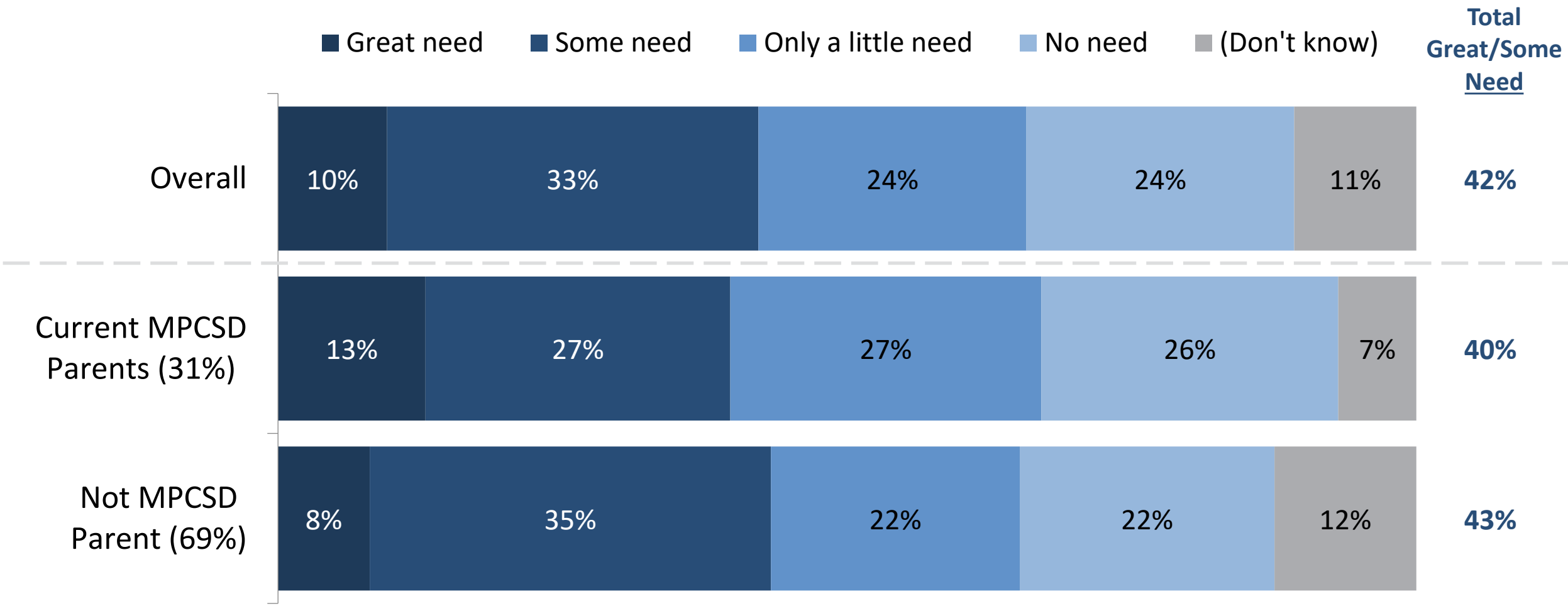
Less than half feel the District has at least some need for money, a decline from awareness in the 2021 survey.



Q4. As you may know, you live in the Menlo Park City School District which includes... Would you say that Menlo Park City School District has a great need for more money, some need for more money, only a little need or no real need for more money?

Perceived Need for Funding: MPCSD Parents

MPCSD parents are even less likely to perceive a need for funding.



Q4. As you may know, you live in the Menlo Park City School District which includes... Would you say that Menlo Park City School District has a great need for more money, some need for more money, only a little need or no real need for more money?

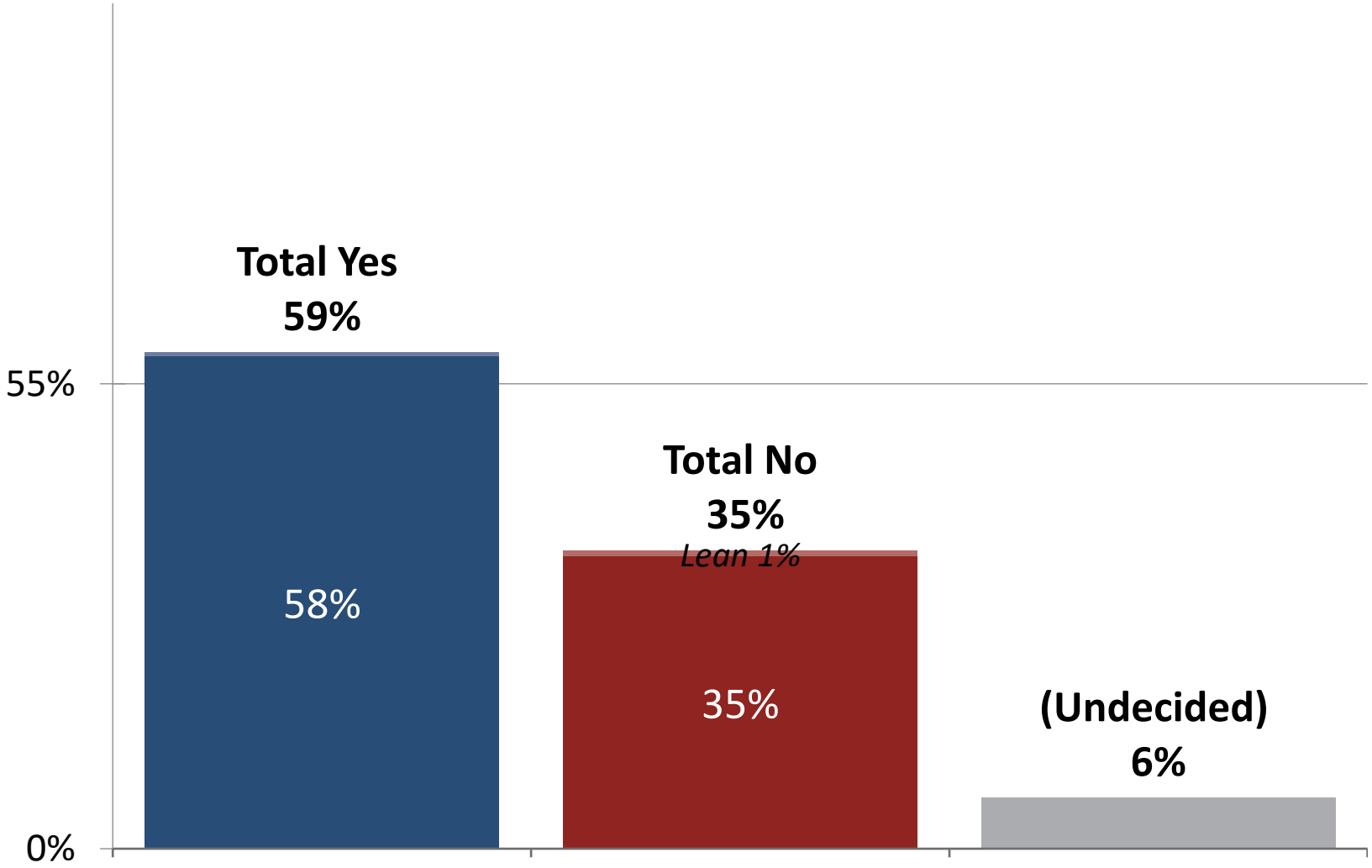
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Potential Bond Measure

Potential Bond Measure: Initial Vote

Support for a bond measure is at 59% in the initial ask, just above the required 55% threshold needed for passage.

To improve local elementary and middle schools, upgrade seismic safety, and enhance sustainability by: replacing aging buildings; modernizing classrooms and facilities; improving safety and security; updating learning technology; and installing classroom air conditioning; shall Menlo Park City School District's measure authorizing $161 million in bonds at legal rates be adopted, levying approximately $24 per $100,000 of assessed value (raising $11.2 million annually) while bonds are outstanding, with annual audits, citizen oversight, no money for administrators, and all funds benefitting local schools?

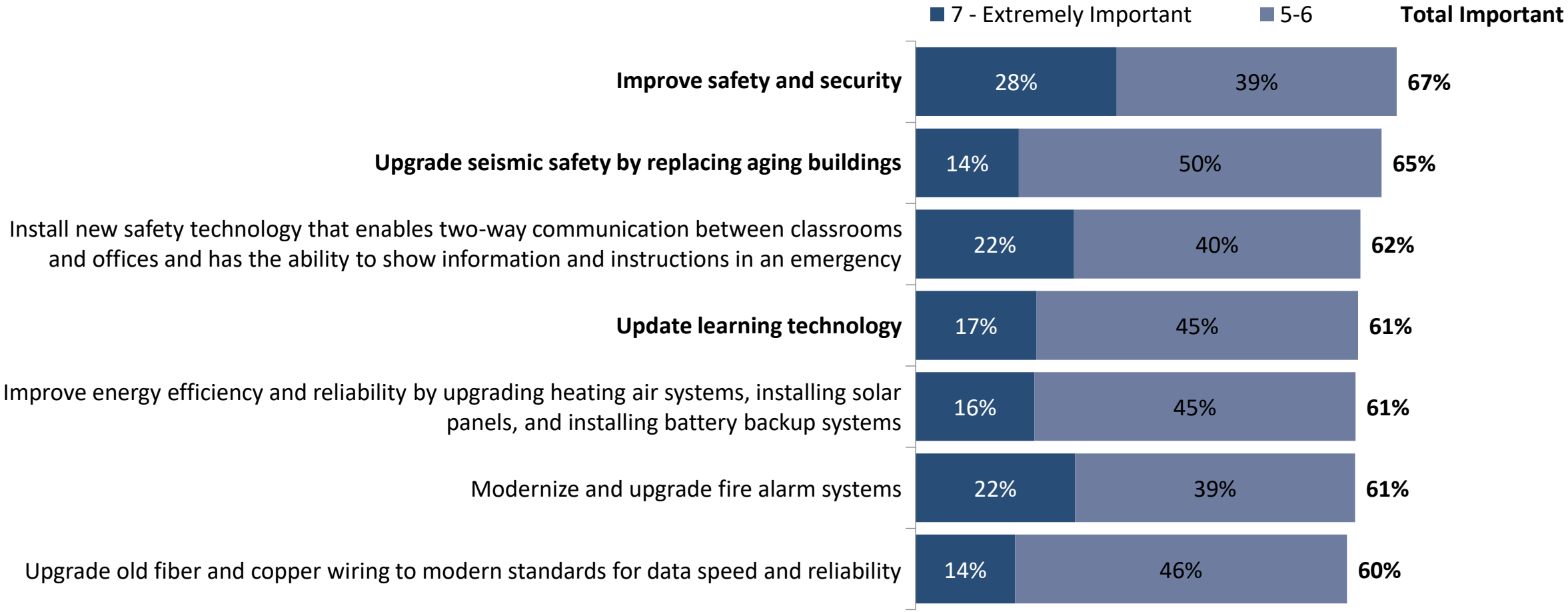


Q8. Now I'd like to ask you about a measure that may appear on a ballot next year that reads as follows:….
If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject this measure?

Voter Priorities

Projects relating to school safety, security, and seismic safety are rated by voters as some of the most important.

***Bold text indicates project specifically mentioned in ballot language**

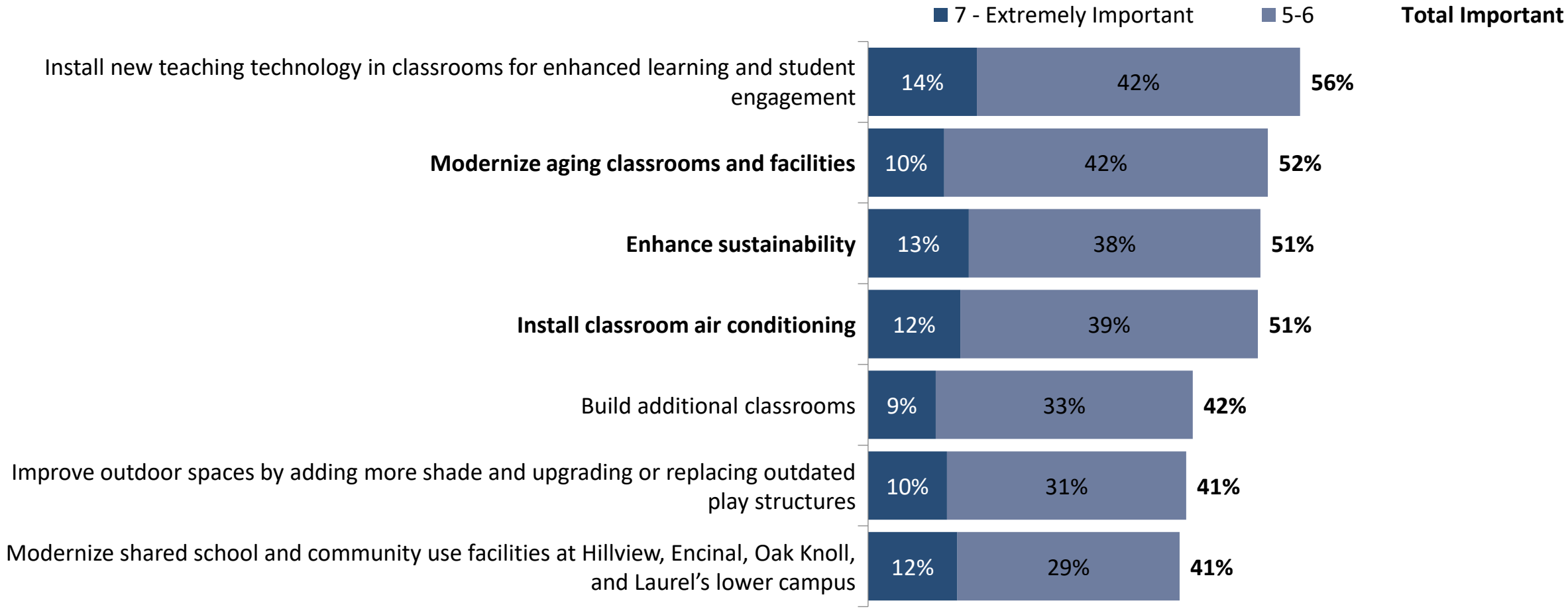


Q12-25. I'm going to read you a list of projects that could be funded by the Menlo Park City School District bond measure. On a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is not at all important and 7 is extremely important, please indicate how important each of the following is to you.

Voter Priorities

Other bond projects are viewed as less important.

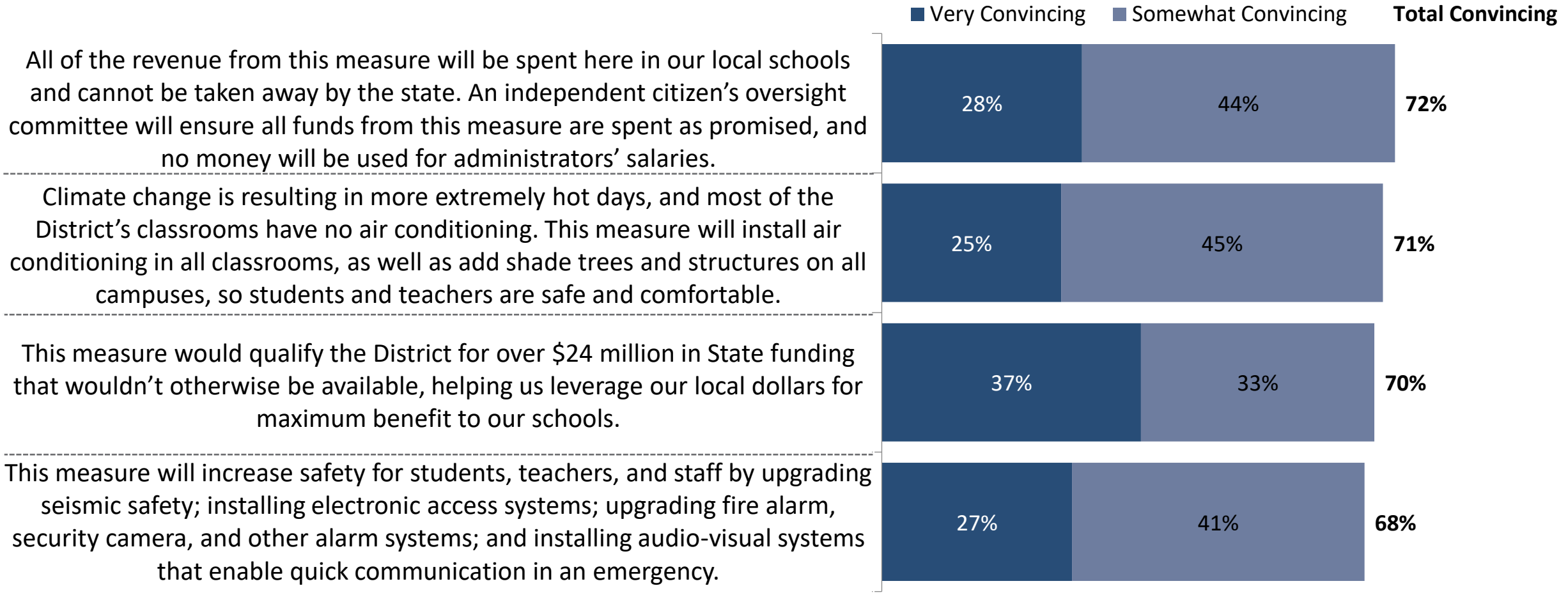
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Q12-25. I'm going to read you a list of projects that could be funded by the Menlo Park City School District bond measure. On a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is not at all important and 7 is extremely important, please indicate how important each of the following is to you.

Additional Information

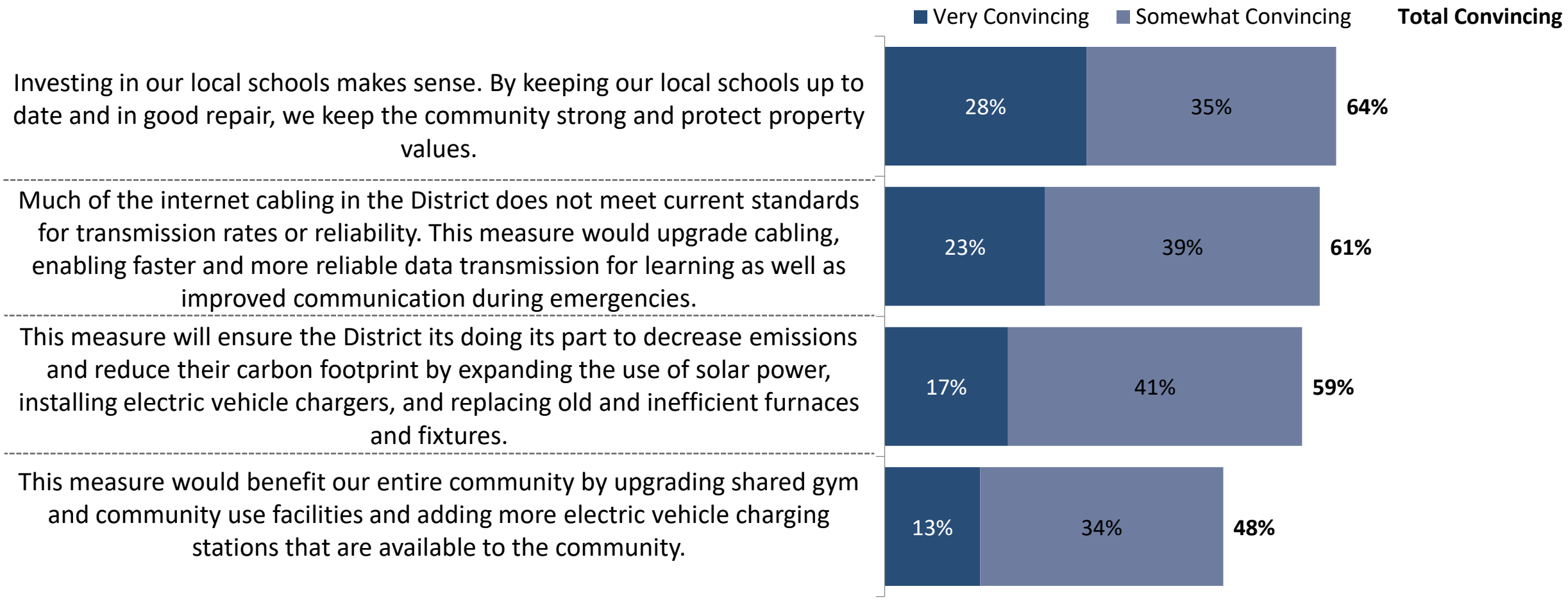
Accountability components and accessing matching funds are compelling ways to talk about a bond measure, as well as talking about improved safety and comfort on hot days.



Q26-33. Next I'd like to read you statements from people who SUPPORT the proposed measure for the Menlo Park City School District. After each one, please tell me how convincing that statement is as a reason to vote FOR the measure – very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing, or not at all convincing.

Additional Information

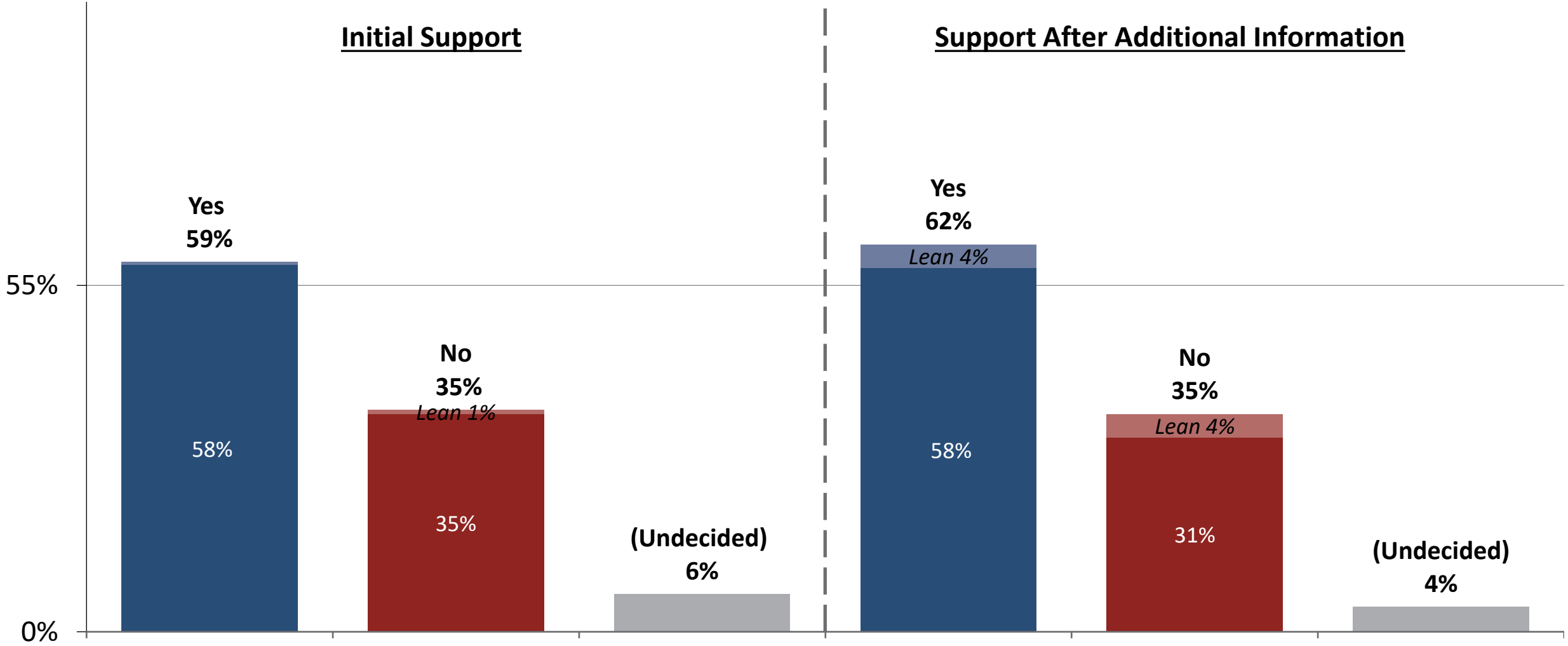
Other statements are less compelling to voters.



Q26-33. Next I'd like to read you statements from people who SUPPORT the proposed measure for the Menlo Park City School District. After each one, please tell me how convincing that statement is as a reason to vote FOR the measure – very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing, or not at all convincing.

Vote After Additional Information

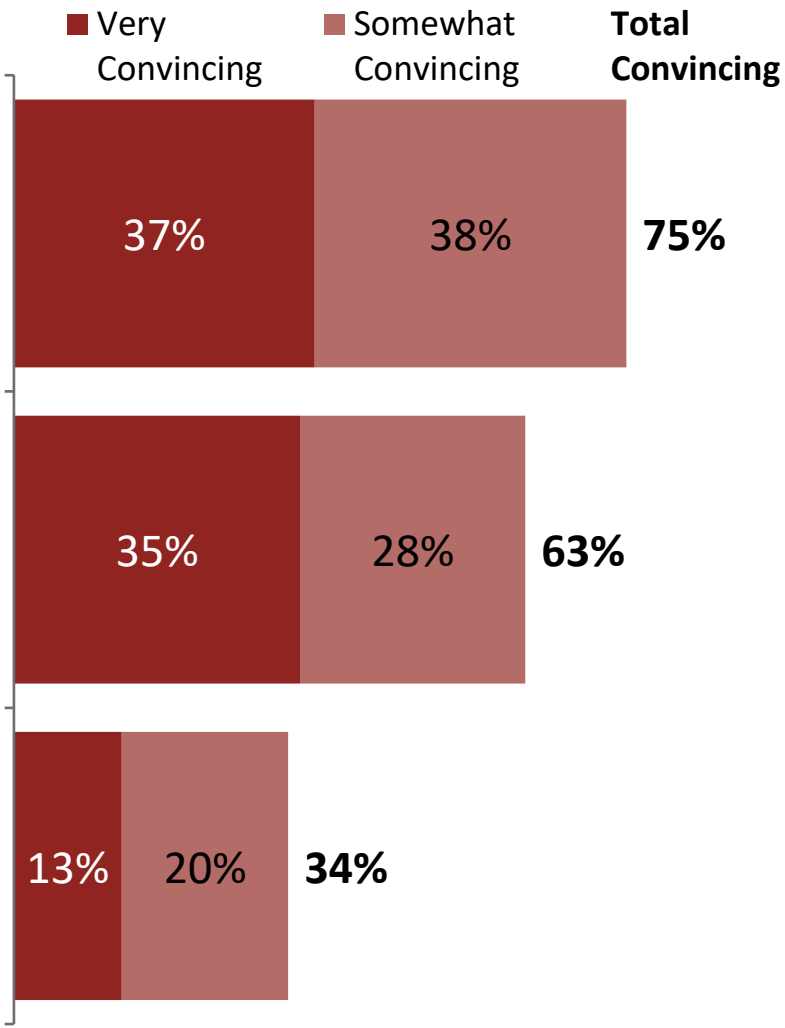
Support for the measure remains consistent after additional information about the measure's outcomes.



Q8./Q34. Based on what you've heard, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject a measure that reads:…

Potential Opposition Statements

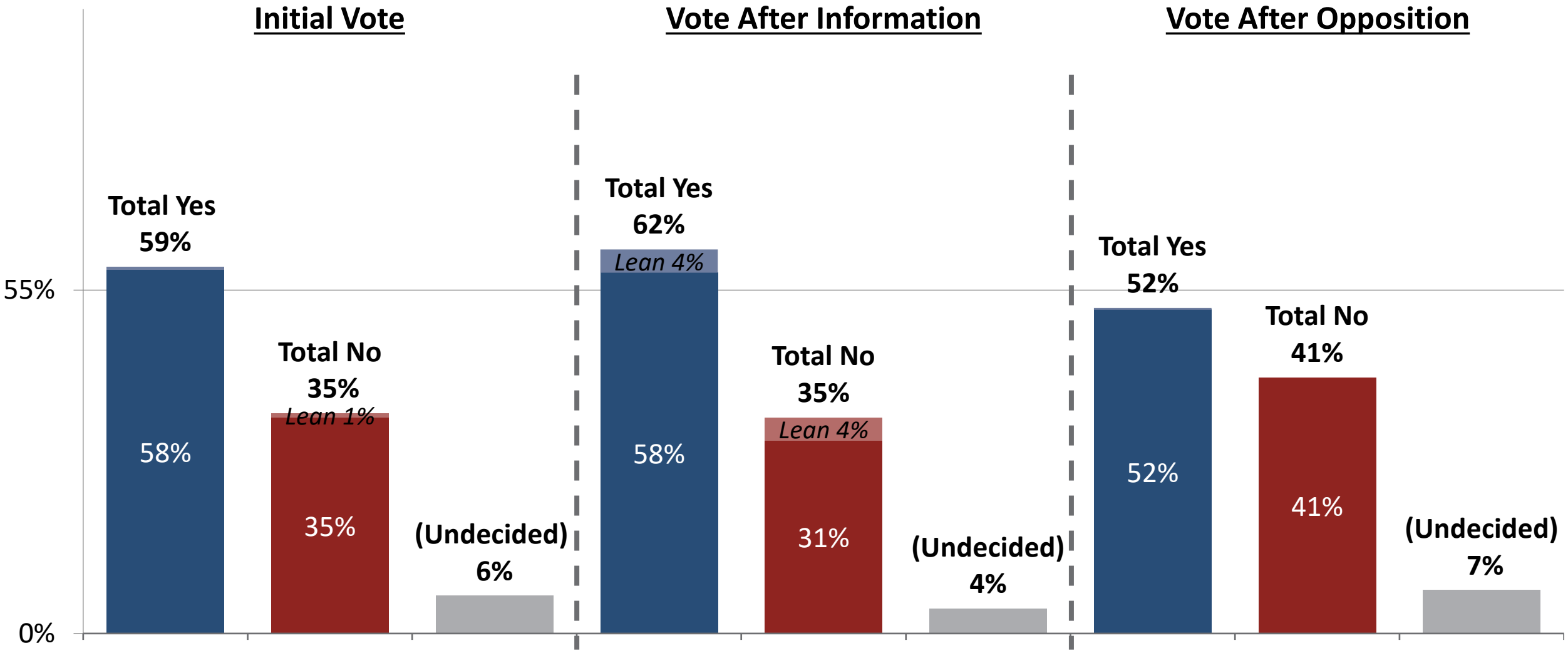
Opposition messaging that focuses on the cost is compelling to voters.



Q35-37. Next I'd like to read you statements from people who OPPOSE the proposed measure for the Menlo Park City School District. After each one, please tell me how convincing that statement is as a reason to vote AGAINST the measure – very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing, or not at all convincing..

Vote Progression

The measure does show some vulnerability to a focused opposition effort.

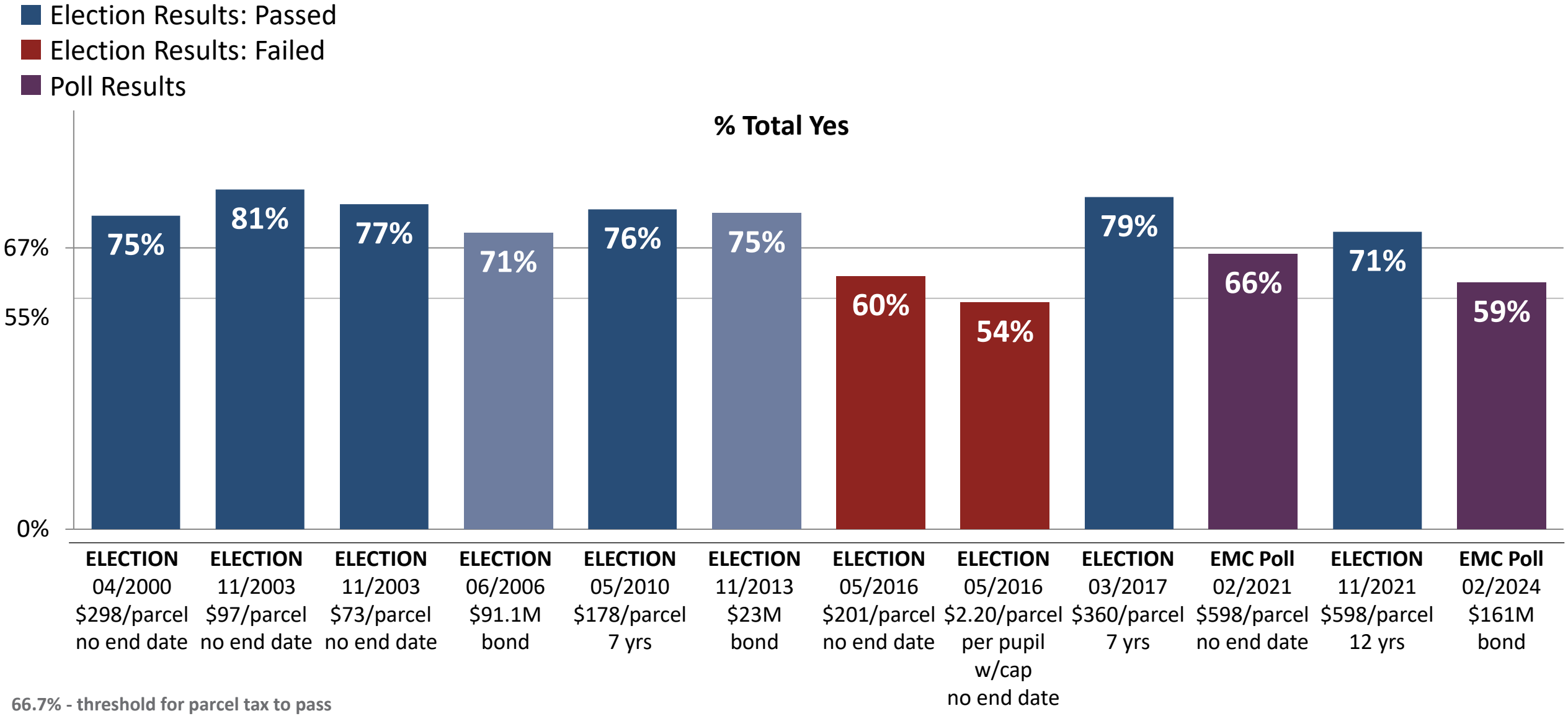


Q38. Now, given everything you've heard, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject a bond measure for the Menlo Park City School District?

Conclusions

- MPCSD voters are happy with the District's quality of education and facilities, but awareness of need for funding is limited.
- The electorate is showing signs of sensitivity to taxes, but they value high-quality schools and likely can overcome those concerns on a bond measure if they are aware of why it is needed.
- An information effort that focuses on the needs a bond can meet around campus safety and security, seismic improvements, and adapting to hotter environments will be critical to establish awareness of need and enthusiasm around a bond effort.
  - The parent community in particular needs to be educated and engaged to understand the impact a successful bond could have on their childrens' experience.
- Ensuring voters are aware of strong accountability controls and matching opportunities a bond brings will help assuage some of the cost concerns.

Historical Context: MPCSD Measures



66.7% - threshold for parcel tax to pass
55% - threshold for GO bond to pass

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