The Morris Leatherman Company
3128 Dean Court
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416

PRINCETON SCHOOL DISTRICT
RESIDENTIAL SURVEY
FINAL JANUARY 2025

Hello, I'm _____of the Morris Leatherman Company, a national survey research firm located in Minneapolis. We are speaking with a random sample of residents about issues facing the Princeton School District. Even if you do not have children currently in the Princeton School District, the District is interested in your opinions and suggestions. I want to assure you that all individual responses will be held strictly confidential; only summaries of the entire sample will be reported.

1. Approximately, how many years have you lived in the Princeton School District?

FIVE YEARS OR LESS	12%
SIX TO TEN YEARS	19%
11 TO TWENTY YEARS	25%
21 TO THIRTY YEARS	24%
OVER THIRTY YEARS	19%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	1%

2. How would you rate the quality of education provided by the Princeton School District – excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

EXCELLENT	20%
GOOD	62%
ONLY FAIR	14%
POOR	2%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	2%

3. What do you like most about the Princeton School District?

UNSURE, 3%; NOTHING, 4%; GOOD TEACHERS, 25%; VARIETY OF PROGRAMS, 7%; BROAD CURRICULUM, 8%; SPORTS, 7%; GOOD ACADEMICS, 9%; COMMUNITY FEEL/INVOLVEMENT, 6%; HIGH ACHIEVEMENT STATISTICS, 7%; CLASS SIZES, 3%; EXTRA-CURRICULARS, 3%; GOOD COMMUNICATION, 6%; LOCATION, 2%; FOCUSED ON STUDENTS' NEEDS, 2%; COLLEGE PREP, 4%; SCATTERED, 4%.

4. What do you think is the most serious issue facing the Princeton School District?

UNSURE, 7%; NOTHING, 14%; LACK OF FUNDING, 20%; POOR SPENDING, 8%; BUDGET CUTS, 3%; LACK OF DISCIPLINE, 8%; STAFF SHORTAGES, 5%; LARGE CLASS SIZES, 4%; FACILITIES NEEDS, 5%; TOO POLITICAL, 2%; DECLINING QUALITY, 4%; GROWTH, 2%; STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH, 2%; HIGH TAXES, 9%; DRUGS/ALCOHOL, 3%; SCATTERED, 4%.

5. Overall, do you think the Princeton School District meets the learning needs of all students, most students, only some students, or very few students?

ALL.....60%
MOST.....29%
ONLY SOME.....7%
VERY FEW.....1%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....4%

IF "MOST," "ONLY SOME" OR "VERY FEW," ASK: (n=183)

6. What students do not have their learning needs met?

UNSURE, 15%; SPECIAL EDUCATION, 13%; AVERAGE, 12%; GIFTED AND TALENTED, 7%; BIPOC, 2%; ELL, 3%; BEHAVIOR ISSUES, 3%; LOW INCOME, 4%; UNDERACHIEVERS, 10%; STRUGGLING, 24%; MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES, 3%; SCATTERED, 4%.

7. Do you think the overall quality of education provided by the Princeton School District is much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse than five years ago?

MUCH BETTER.....9%
SOMEWHAT BETTER.....28%
ABOUT THE SAME.....55%
SOMEWHAT WORSE.....3%
MUCH WORSE.....1%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....4%

IF "SOMEWHAT WORSE" OR "MUCH WORSE," ASK: (n=21)

8. Why do you feel that way?

FACILITIES NEEDS, 10%; STAFF SHORTAGES, 15%; TOO POLITICAL, 20%; BACK TO BASICS, 10%; POOR TEACHERS, 15%; LOWER ACADEMIC STANDARDS, 25%; STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH, 5%.

I would like to read you a short list of statements others have told us. For each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. If you don't know, just say so.

9. During the last couple of years, the Princeton School District Administration and School Board have spent tax money effectively and efficiently.

STRONGLY AGREE.....6%
AGREE.....64%
DISAGREE.....22%
STRONGLY DISAGREE.....4%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....4%

10. Our community receives a good value from its investment in the Princeton School District.

STRONGLY AGREE.....16%
AGREE.....65%
DISAGREE.....14%
STRONGLY DISAGREE.....1%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....4%

11.	When the Princeton School District asks voters to approve a property tax increase, it is only after the Administration and School Board have considered all other budget alternatives.	STRONGLY AGREE.....13% AGREE.....53% DISAGREE.....22% STRONGLY DISAGREE.....6% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....7%
12.	The Princeton School District Administration and School Board do a good job of involving community leaders, parents, and interested citizens in decisions about the schools.	STRONGLY AGREE.....11% AGREE.....67% DISAGREE.....16% STRONGLY DISAGREE.....1% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....5%
13.	The Princeton School District is a good investment and I would support a property tax increase to protect that investment.	STRONGLY AGREE.....10% AGREE.....55% DISAGREE.....17% STRONGLY DISAGREE.....11% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....7%

Let's shift the conversation to talk about the management of our local schools.

14.	Overall, how would you rate the job performance of the Princeton School Board members – excellent, good, only fair, or poor?	EXCELLENT.....8% GOOD.....55% ONLY FAIR.....28% POOR.....5% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....5%
15.	How would you rate the performance of the District's Administration, including the Superintendent - excellent, good, only fair, or poor?	EXCELLENT.....13% GOOD.....53% ONLY FAIR.....25% POOR.....4% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....5%
16.	And, how would you rate the performance of the teachers and instructional staff in the Princeton School District – excellent, good, only fair, or poor?	EXCELLENT.....31% GOOD.....55% ONLY FAIR.....10% POOR.....1% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....3%
17.	How would you rate the financial management of the Princeton School District - excellent, good, only fair, or poor?	EXCELLENT.....4% GOOD.....51% ONLY FAIR.....33% POOR.....9% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....3%

18.	Do you think Princeton School District is adequately funded?	YES.....56% NO.....38% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....6%

IF "NO," ASK: (n=188)

19. What do you believe is the primary reason the Princeton School District does not have adequate funding? UNSURE, 11%; LACK OF STATE FUNDING, 29%; POOR SPENDING, 6%; INFLATION, 16%; NEVER ENOUGH FUNDING, 8%; LACK OF FEDERAL FUNDING, 4%; HIGH ADMINISTRATION SALARIES, 2%; LACK OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR FUNDING REQUESTS, 5%; GROWTH, 4%; STAFF SHORTAGES, 2%; STATE MANDATES, 2%; LOWER PROPERTY VALUES, 3%; OFFER TOO MANY PROGRAMS, 2%; SCATTERED, 6%.

There has been a lot of discussion about funding from the State of Minnesota to public school districts.

20.	Do you believe the State of Minnesota has provided sufficient funding to school districts so they can provide a quality education to students? (WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do you feel strongly that way?	STRONGLY YES.....7% YES.....47% NO.....30% STRONGLY NO.....12% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....4%

Turning to the quality of school buildings and facilities....

21.	Do you think the buildings and facilities meet the needs of educating today's children? (WAIT FOR RESPONSE) Do you feel strongly that way?	STRONGLY YES.....6% YES.....76% NO.....13% STRONGLY NO.....1% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....4%

IF "NO" OR "STRONGLY NO," ASK: (n=70)

22. Why do you feel that way?

NEED MORE SPACE, 30%; NEED MAINTENANCE, 24%; NEED UPDATING, 23%; NEED SAFETY/SECURITY UPGRADES, 6%; NEED MODERN CLASSROOMS, 17%.

23.	Do you think the District should improve existing buildings and facilities or build new buildings and facilities?	IMPROVE EXISTING.....63% BUILD NEW.....29% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....9%

Moving on....

24.	In comparison with neighboring	VERY HIGH.....15%

areas, do you consider total property taxes in your community to be very high, somewhat high, about average, somewhat low, or very low?	SOMEWHAT HIGH.....37% ABOUT AVERAGE.....43% SOMEWHAT LOW.....2% VERY LOW.....0% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....3%
25. In comparison with other neighboring school districts, do you think that school taxes in the Princeton School District are very high, somewhat high, about average, somewhat low, or very low?	VERY HIGH.....12% SOMEWHAT HIGH.....35% ABOUT AVERAGE.....45% SOMEWHAT LOW.....2% VERY LOW.....0% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....5%

Moving on....

26. Which of the following statements comes closest to your opinion? A) I would vote against almost any proposal to increase local property taxes for education; B) I would vote for some proposals to increase local property taxes for education, but there are others that I would not vote for; OR C) I would vote in favor of nearly any proposal to increase local property taxes to provide more funding for local schools.	STATEMENT A.....26% STATEMENT B.....46% STATEMENT C.....27% DON’T KNOW/REFUSED.....1%

Let me read you a few of the identified infrastructure and maintenance needs. For each of the following, please tell me if you would strongly support a property tax increase for that purpose, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a property tax increase for that purpose. (ROTATE)

	STS	SMS	SMO	STO	DKR
27. Deferred maintenance projects, such as roofs, windows, and flooring?	37%	31%	17%	13%	2%
28. Updating HVAC systems to improve air quality?	39%	29%	15%	14%	4%
29. Improving mechanical systems to create energy savings?	37%	28%	17%	16%	3%
30. Safety and security improvements, such as secured entrances and cameras?	46%	25%	12%	16%	1%

Next, let’s discuss classroom education improvements....

	STS	SMS	SMO	STO	DKR

31.	Rebuild and modernize lab and shop space at the High School for career, technical, and apprenticeship programs?	31%	35%	12%	17%	5%
32.	Increase the size of classrooms at the High School to meet current standards?	37%	30%	16%	16%	2%
33.	Remodel the High School media center to address modern needs?	27%	32%	18%	20%	3%
34.	Expansion of the Intermediate and High School cafeterias and kitchens?	27%	32%	14%	23%	3%

Finally, let's discuss improvements for activities....

35.	Upgrades to athletic locker and weight rooms?	21%	28%	23%	26%	2%
36.	Installation of artificial turf on High School athletic fields?	20%	23%	20%	35%	1%
37.	Construction of additional gymnasium space at the High School?	20%	28%	21%	29%	2%
38.	Construction of a fieldhouse at the High School?	17%	29%	22%	29%	3%

Suppose you heard that the Princeton School Board was considering a bond referendum in the future focused on the items you believe need to addressed.

39. How much would you be willing to pay in additional property taxes in order to fund a bond referendum in the Princeton School District? [SELECT RANDOM STARTING POINT; MOVE UP OR DOWN DEPENDING ON ANSWER] How about _____? [REPEAT]

NOTHING	34%
$6 A MONTH	22%
$12 A MONTH	21%
$18 A MONTH	13%
$24 A MONTH	3%
$30 A MONTH	0%
$36 A MONTH	0%
OVER $36 A MONTH	2%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	5%

As the District considers a future bond referendum....

40. Do you think construction costs for building projects are increasing every year often at a higher rate than inflation?

YES	47%
NO	41%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED	12%

IF "YES," ASK: (n=235)

41. Should these rising costs be a

VERY IMPORTANT	60%

very important factor in the timing of a potential bond referendum, a somewhat important factor, or not a factor at all in the timing?

SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT....35%
NOT A FACTOR.....3%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....2%

Continuing....

As you may know, voter-approved operating levies are used to fund a school district's curriculum and program needs, salaries, class sizes and support staff.

For each of the following, please tell me if you would strongly support a property tax increase for that purpose, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a property tax increase for that purpose. (ROTATE)

		STS	SMS	SMO	STO	DKR
42.	Retain and attract quality teachers and staff?	51%	30%	8%	10%	1%
43.	Maintain class sizes at their current level?	42%	30%	11%	13%	4%
44.	Maintain career and technical education programs?	41%	33%	9%	14%	4%
45.	Avoid cuts to electives, such as world languages, arts, and music?	44%	28%	10%	14%	4%
46.	Maintain core academic programs, such as reading, writing, and math?	52%	28%	8%	11%	1%
47.	Avoid cuts to athletics and extra-curricular programs?	36%	27%	16%	18%	2%
48.	Provide financial stability to avoid future budget cuts?	40%	31%	13%	13%	4%

49. How much would you be willing to pay in additional property taxes in order to fund an operating levy proposal? [SELECT RANDOM STARTING POINT; MOVE UP OR DOWN DEPENDING ON ANSWER] How about _____? [REPEAT]

NOTHING.....34%
$6 A MONTH.....23%
$12 A MONTH.....25%
$18 A MONTH.....10%
$24 A MONTH.....2%
$30 A MONTH.....1%
$36 A MONTH.....0%
OVER $36 A MONTH.....2%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....3%

The District is projecting a budget deficit in the next few years. The deficit could be as high as $3 million or about 5% of the District's budget.

Some people have said the District needs to undertake multiple strategies to deal with this deficit. For each of the following, please tell me if you think it is absolutely necessary for the District to do, very important, somewhat important, or is it not important for the District to do. (ROTATE)

	ABN	VRY	SOM	NOT	DKR
50. Ask residents to support an operating levy to provide additional funding?	20%	28%	26%	26%	0%
51. Lobby the State of Minnesota to provide more education funding?	50%	29%	15%	6%	1%
52. Lobby the State of Minnesota to eliminate mandates that impact school district's operating budgets?	43%	30%	15%	8%	3%
53. Attract more families and students to provide more revenue to the District?	29%	34%	21%	12%	5%
54. Cut the District's operating budget?	17%	27%	25%	28%	4%

After hearing about a potential bond referendum and operating levy....

55. Which statement comes closest to your opionion:
A) The District should prioritize facility improvements;
B) The District should prioritize the operating budget shortfall; OR
C) The District should set priorities for both facility improvements and operating budget shortfall.

STATEMENT A.....6%
STATEMENT B.....26%
STATEMENT C.....59%
DO NOTHING (VOL.).....6%
DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....3%

Turning to communications....

56. What is your principal source of information about the Princeton School District? (DO NOT READ LIST)

DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0%
NOTHING.....3%
ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER..6%
LOCAL NEWSPAPER.....11%
DISTRICT WEBSITE.....21%
WORD OF MOUTH.....12%
TEACHERS/STAFF.....3%
EMAIL.....12%
LOCAL TELEVISION.....4%
SOCIAL MEDIA.....8%
MAILINGS/NEWSLETTER...20%
SCATTERED.....1%

57.	What is the most effective way for you to receive information about the Princeton School District - mailed newsletter, electronic newsletter, email, School District website, the local newspaper, local cable channel or something else? (IF "SOMETHING ELSE," ASK:) What would that be?	MAILED NEWSLETTER.....32% ELECTRN NEWSLETTER.....8% EMAIL.....19% SCHL DIST WEBSITE.....19% LOCAL NEWSPAPER.....13% LOCAL CABLE CHANNEL....3% WORD OF MOUTH.....2% SOCIAL MEDIA.....2% SCATTERED.....2%

I would like to read you a number of sources of information about the Princeton School District. For each one, please tell me if you receive a lot of your information about the school district from that source, some information, a little information, or none at all? (ROTATE LIST)

			ALT	SOM	LIT	NAA	DKR
58.	The Union Times newspaper?		13%	22%	28%	37%	0%
59.	School District newsletter?		22%	31%	19%	28%	0%
60.	School District employees?		8%	12%	19%	60%	1%
61.	School District website?		23%	19%	14%	44%	1%
62.	Social media, such as Facebook or Twitter?		9%	24%	20%	47%	0%
63.	School Board members?	1%	9%	22%	67%	0%	
64.	Informal discussions with neighbors or acquaintances?		14%	46%	24%	16%	1%

Now, just a few more questions for demographic purposes....

65.	Which of the following ranges contains your age? Please stop me when I reach the correct one.	18-24.....8% 25-34.....18% 35-44.....19% 45-54.....19% 55-64.....18% 65 AND OVER.....18% REFUSED.....0%
66.	Does your household contain any pre-schoolers or infants?	YES.....19% NO.....81% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0%

67.	Are there school-aged children in your household (IF "YES," ASK:) Do they attend the Princeton School District, public schools in other District, parochial or private schools, charter schools, or home-school?	NO.....62% YES/PRINCETON.....32% YES/OTHER PUBLIC.....2% YES/PAROCHIAL/PRIVATE..3% YES/CHARTER.....1% YES/HOMESCHOOL.....0% YES/COMBINATION.....0% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0%
68.	What is the highest level of formal education you completed?	LESS THAN HS GRAD.....3% HIGH SCHOOL GRAD.....22% VO-TECH SCH/TCH COLL..16% SOME COLLEGE.....20% COLLEGE GRADUATE.....34% POST-GRADUATE.....5% REFUSED.....0%
69.	Do you own or rent your present residence? (IF "OWN," ASK:) Which of the following categories contains the approximate value of your residential property -- under $150,000, $150,000-$250,000, $250,000-$350,000, or over $350,000?	RENT.....9% OWN/UNDER $150,000.....7% OWN/$150K-$250K.....33% OWN/$250K-$350K.....38% OWN/OVER $350K.....12% OWN/UNSURE.....1% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....0%
70.	Finally, thinking about your household finances, how would you describe your financial situation, would you say that - A) Your monthly expenses are exceeding your income; B) You are meeting your monthly expenses but are putting aside little or no savings; C) You are managing comfortably while putting some money aside; D) Managing very well?	STATEMENT A.....6% STATEMENT B.....38% STATEMENT C.....41% STATEMENT D.....13% DON'T KNOW/REFUSED.....3%
71.	Gender [BY OBSERVATION]	MALE.....47% FEMALE.....53%
72.	Area of District (FROM LIST)	PRINCETON.....21% PRINCETON TOWNSHIP....11% BLUE HILL TOWNSHIP....12% BALDWIN CITY.....34% REST OF DISTRICT.....22%