

Welcome!

Levy Advisory Committee

October 7, 2025

Meeting 5



ISSAQUAH
SCHOOL DISTRICT 411

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on the Indigenous Land of Coast Salish peoples who have reserved treaty rights to this land, specifically the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe and Duwamish. We thank these caretakers of this land who have lived and continue to live here since time immemorial.



OBJECTIVES

- Ground ourselves in our collective purpose.
- Recap Levy Packages, Funding & Budgets
- Gather committee input to shape conceptual communication and marketing strategies

01

AGENDA

Welcome, Purpose & Recap

- Recap of Levy Packages, Funding & Budget

02

Regulations & Ballot Trends

- Provide clarity on what a district can do per PDC rules
- Share research on perceptions and voter attitudes

03

Framing the Broader Context

- Connect levy renewal to broader themes
- Review and discuss perceptions, sentiment & risks

04

Cake Break & Group Table Discussion

05

Key Messages, Tactics & Engagement

- Review message framing concepts and facts
- Table exercise – discuss concepts & share-out

06

Closeout & Committee Comments

- Complete Exit Survey
- Committee members share final thoughts

Welcome!

Take a moment to say hi to someone sitting at a different table

Purpose & Goals

Purpose

To advise the Superintendent as she prepares a recommendation for the School Board to approve a levy issue for the 2026 ballot.

Goals

Recommend for Superintendent Tow-Yick's approval the proposed content, total cost, and tax impact of 3 ballot measures:

- Educational Programs and Operations Levy
- Capital Levy (Technology and Capital)
- Transportation

Parameters

Aiming to keep local school taxes stable, each levy package will include funding essential to:

- Ensure the Issaquah School District has all the resources possible to meet its mission and student learning goals
- Maintain facilities according to state and District use standards, while reflecting community expectations
- Prioritize safety and security for students, staff, and visitors across all schools
- Future opportunities

Recap & Update

Recap and update from last meeting

Recap – Combined Recommendation

Proposed Funding Amounts (in \$1,000's)

Year	Bonds	Transportation Levy	Technology Levy	Critical Repairs Levy	EP&O Levy
2027	69,492	2,000	24,866	14,303	75,200
2028	79,148	-	25,379	12,427	78,200
2029	84,571	-	26,006	13,335	81,000
2030	91,163	-	26,658	14,536	82,800

Estimated Resulting Tax Rates

Year	Bonds	Transportation Levy	Technology Levy	Critical Repairs Levy	EP&O Levy	Combined Tax Rate
2027	\$ 1.19	\$ 0.03	\$ 0.43	\$ 0.24	\$ 1.28	= \$ 3.17
2028	\$ 1.29	\$ -	\$ 0.41	\$ 0.20	\$ 1.27	= \$ 3.17
2029	\$ 1.31	\$ -	\$ 0.40	\$ 0.21	\$ 1.25	= \$ 3.17
2030	\$ 1.34	\$ -	\$ 0.40	\$ 0.21	\$ 1.22	= \$ 3.17

Existing
Bond Debt

Committee
Recommendation

Committee
Recommendation

Committee
Recommendation

Committee
Recommendation

Updated Estimated Tax Rates as of Oct. 6

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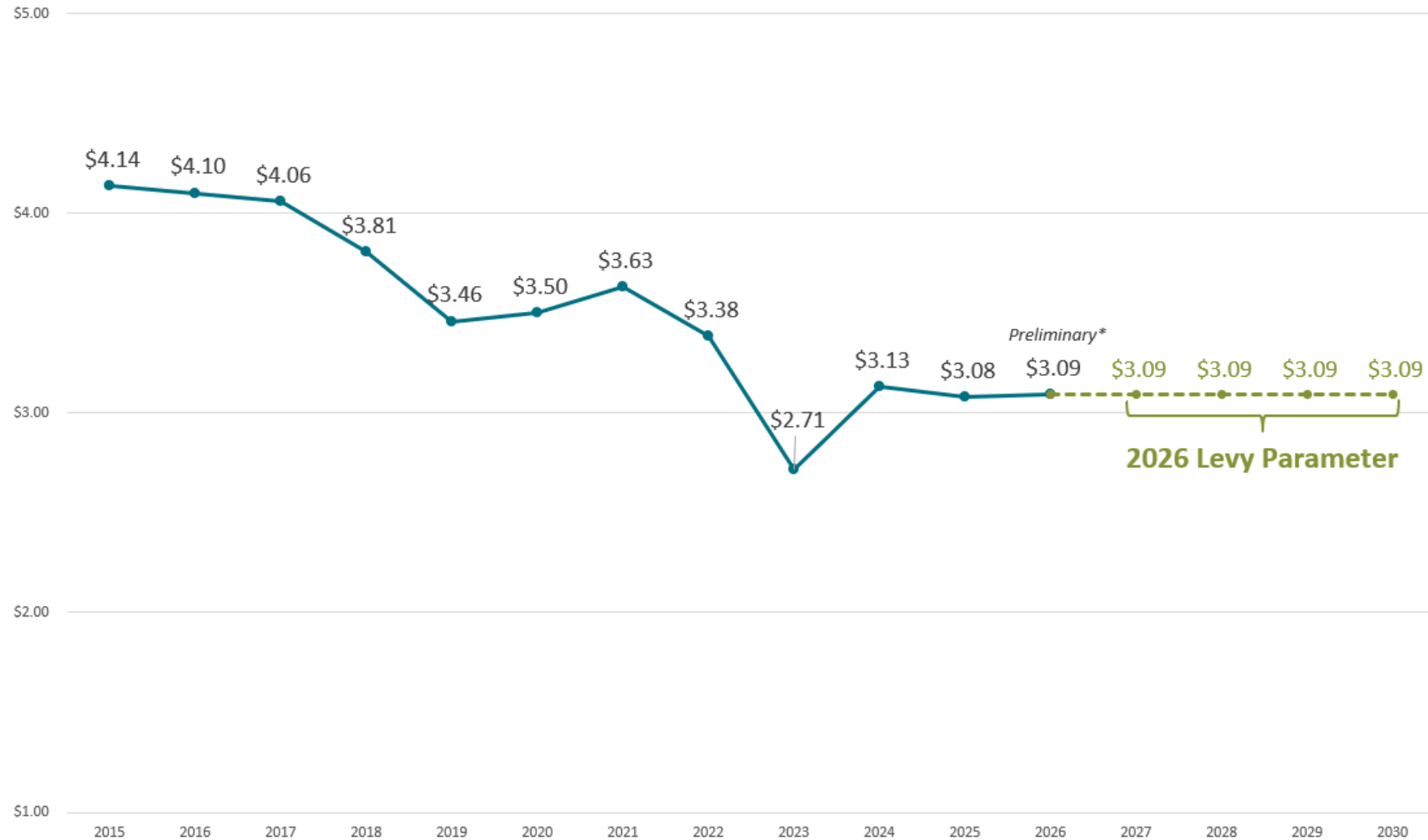
Estimated Resulting Tax Rates

Year	Bonds	Transportation Levy	Technology Levy	Critical Repairs Levy	EP&O Levy	Combined Tax Rate
2027	\$ 1.16	\$ 0.03	\$ 0.41	\$ 0.24	\$ 1.25	= \$ 3.09
2028	\$ 1.25	\$ -	\$ 0.40	\$ 0.20	\$ 1.24	= \$ 3.09
2029	\$ 1.28	\$ -	\$ 0.39	\$ 0.20	\$ 1.22	= \$ 3.09
2030	\$ 1.31	\$ -	\$ 0.38	\$ 0.21	\$ 1.19	= \$ 3.09



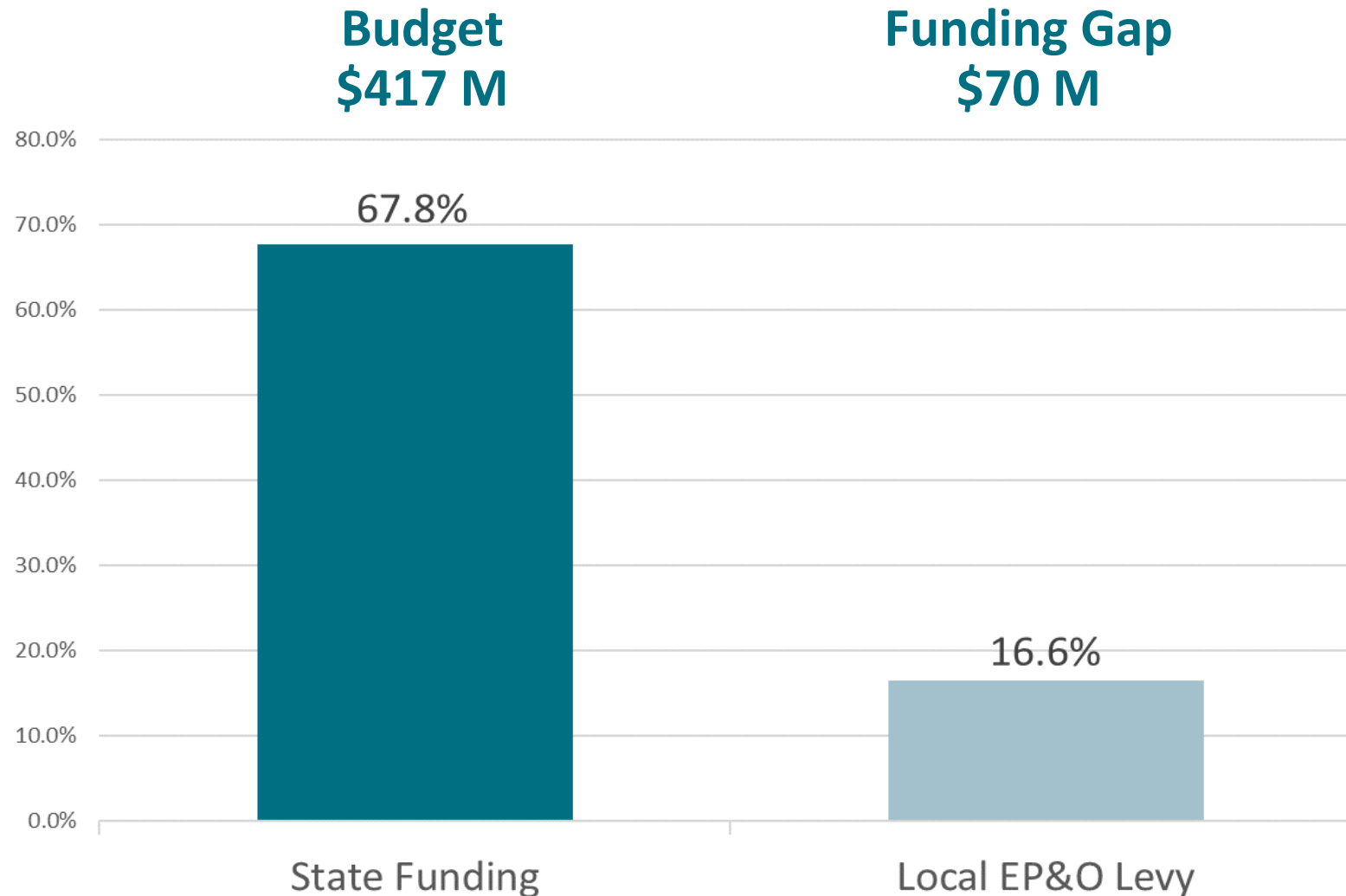
On October 6, 2025, the district received the preliminary 2026 assessed valuation from the King County Assessor. The committee approved dollar amounts remain the same and estimated tax rates were updated according to the new assessed valuation.

Updated ISD Combined Tax Rate History



*Updated per preliminary King County assessed valuation for 2026. Initial estimate was a \$3.17 combined tax rate, updated to \$3.09. Parameter for levy committee was to stay within existing tax rate.

Recap – Budget, Revenue & Funding Gaps



Menti

Review and Submit Your Response

What do you believe our community values most about our schools that should come through in levy communications?

(Menti available for committee members' participation during meeting).



Regulations & Ballot Trends

Compliance Requirements and Emerging Patterns

Regulations

Public Disclosure Commission

Compliance Basics - What's Restricted for School Districts

- RCW 42.17A.555 prohibits use of public facilities to promote or oppose a ballot measure.
- Public facilities include: staff time, equipment, email, district social media, vehicles, publications and mailing lists.
- Violations may result in:
 - PDC investigation, settlement or hearing
 - \$10,000 per violation (PDC increasing fines and scrutiny of digital/social media outreach)
 - Election results possibly voided if violations likely affected outcome
 - Delays in levy collections or bond issuance
 - Negative media coverage and loss of community trust

Regulations

Yes Committee vs. District Side

- Citizens – the YES campaign
 - Made up of community volunteers and funded via private donations
 - Can say “VOTE YES” and advocate for the passage of the levies or bond
 - Can use campaign resources for phone/text banking, canvassing, signage (lawn, large posters, billboards), advertising, multiple postcards/mailed, social media and honk & sign waving
- District – the informational/communications side
 - Supported by School Board, Superintendent and Communications Department
 - Districts can say “vote” but not “vote yes” and provide facts about what is on the ballot
 - Communicate via regular channels such as newsletters, social media, website, robocalls, video and signage

Regulations

Emotional Appeals and Key Risks

What Counts as “Emotional” or Promotional

- PDC rules forbid communications that appeal to emotion rather than present neutral facts.
- Emotional appeal is subjective: “I know it when I see it” (1964 SCOTUS).
- Risky phrases that imply advocacy:
 - “Vote yes,” “renew support,” “don’t let kids down”
 - “Protect,” “save,” “critical,” “essential” and “invest” when used as calls to action
- Safe zone: Stick to neutral descriptors, numbers and program impacts.
- Remember: “Normal and regular” district communications ≠ marketing a campaign.



Results of the 2025 Washington Education Survey

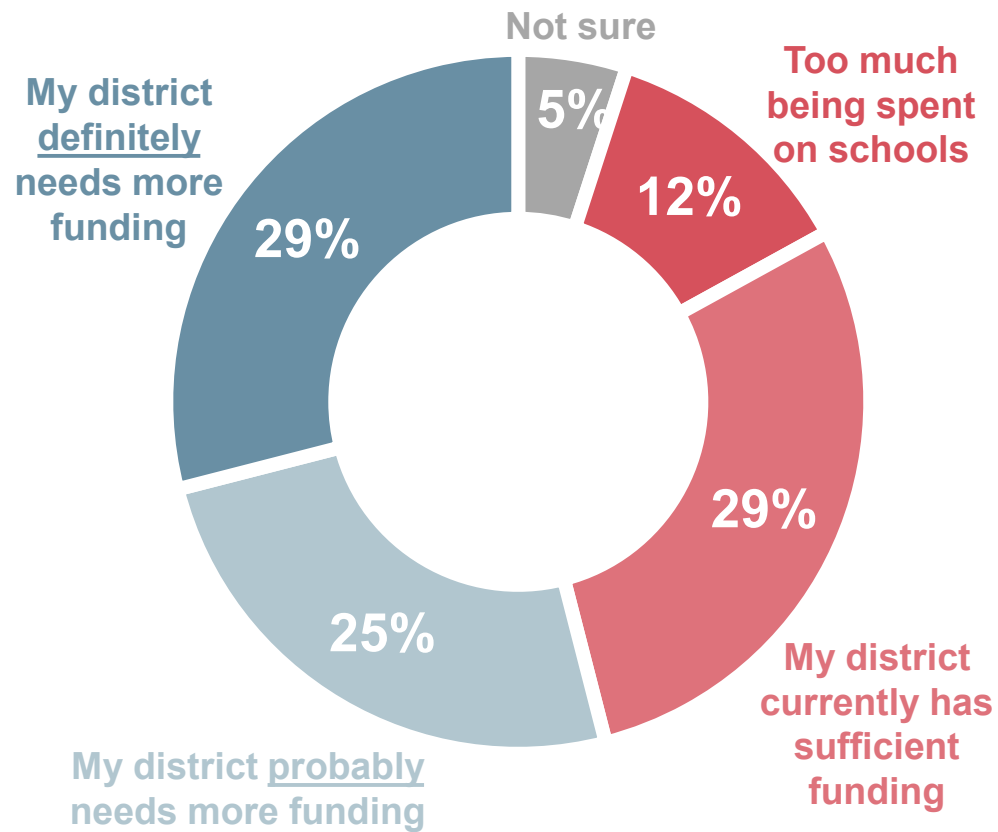
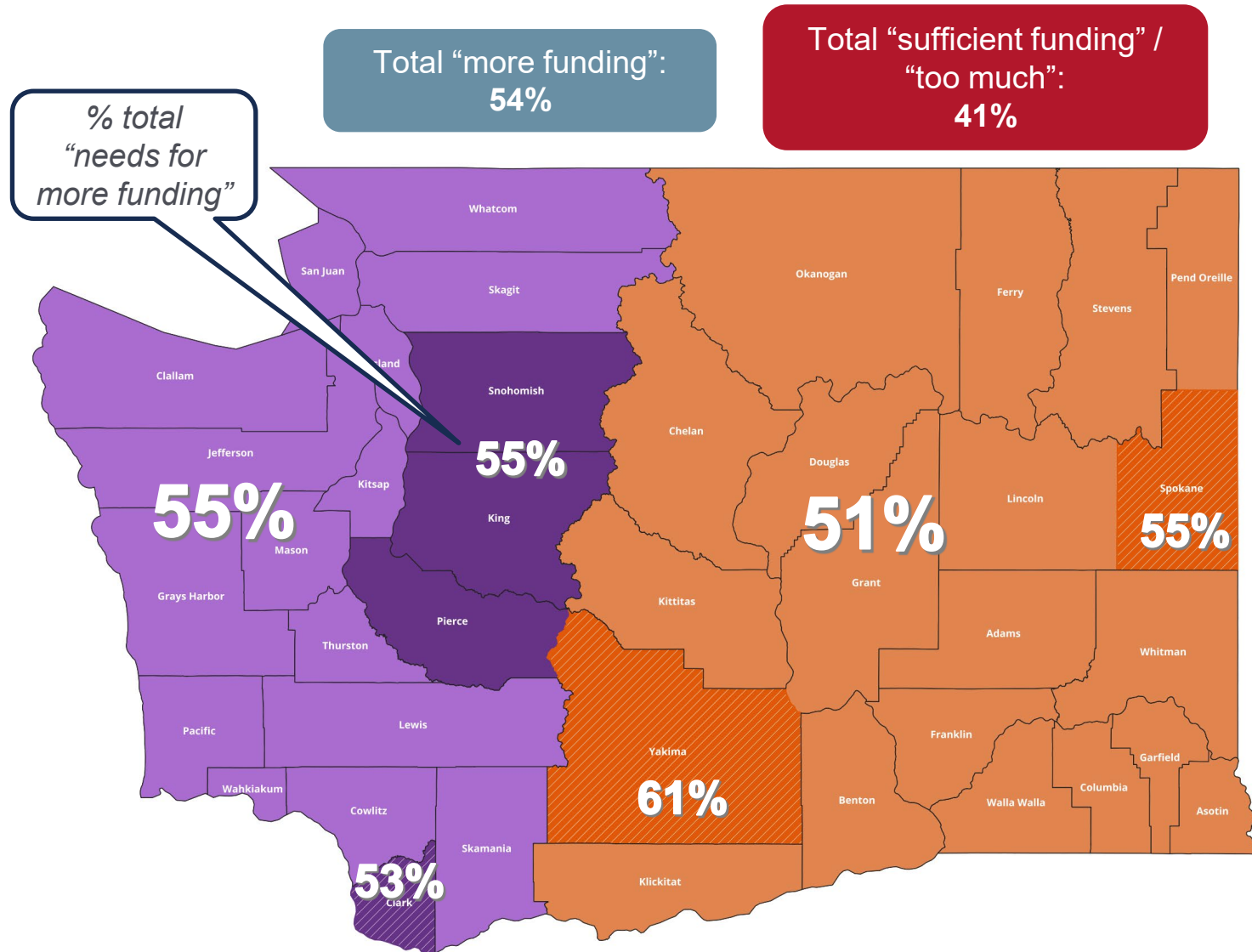
PIPER | SANDLER

Realize the power of partnership.

Rachel Nakanishi - Vice President, Education | **S360**

About half of Washington voters think their school district needs more funding.

Perceived Funding Need of “Your Local School District”*

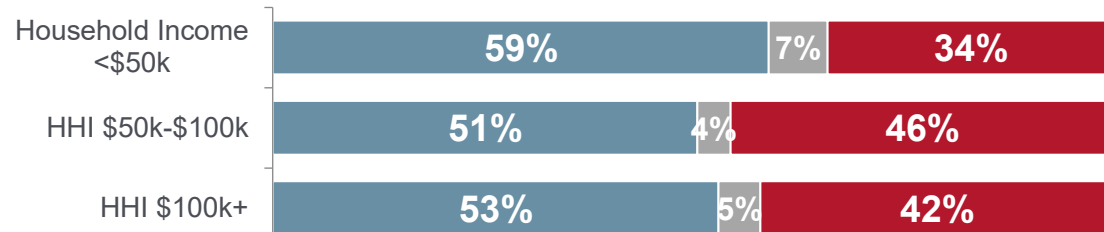
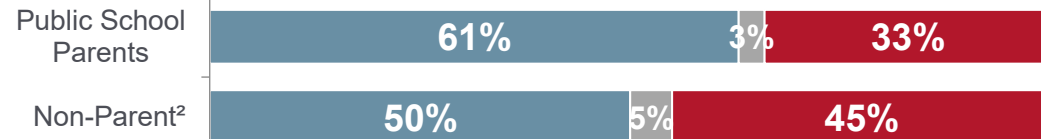
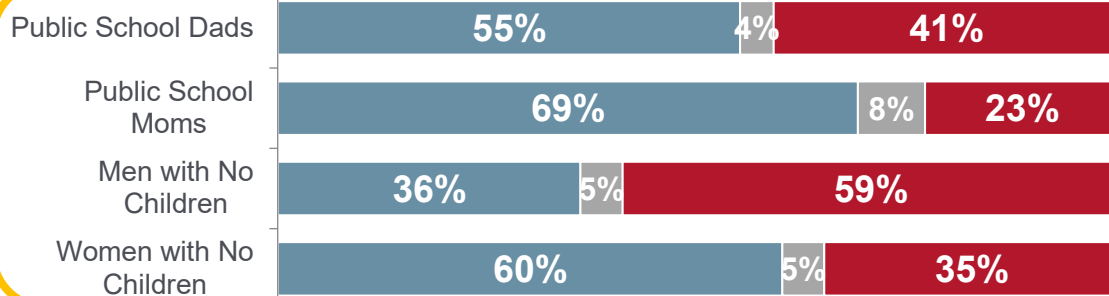
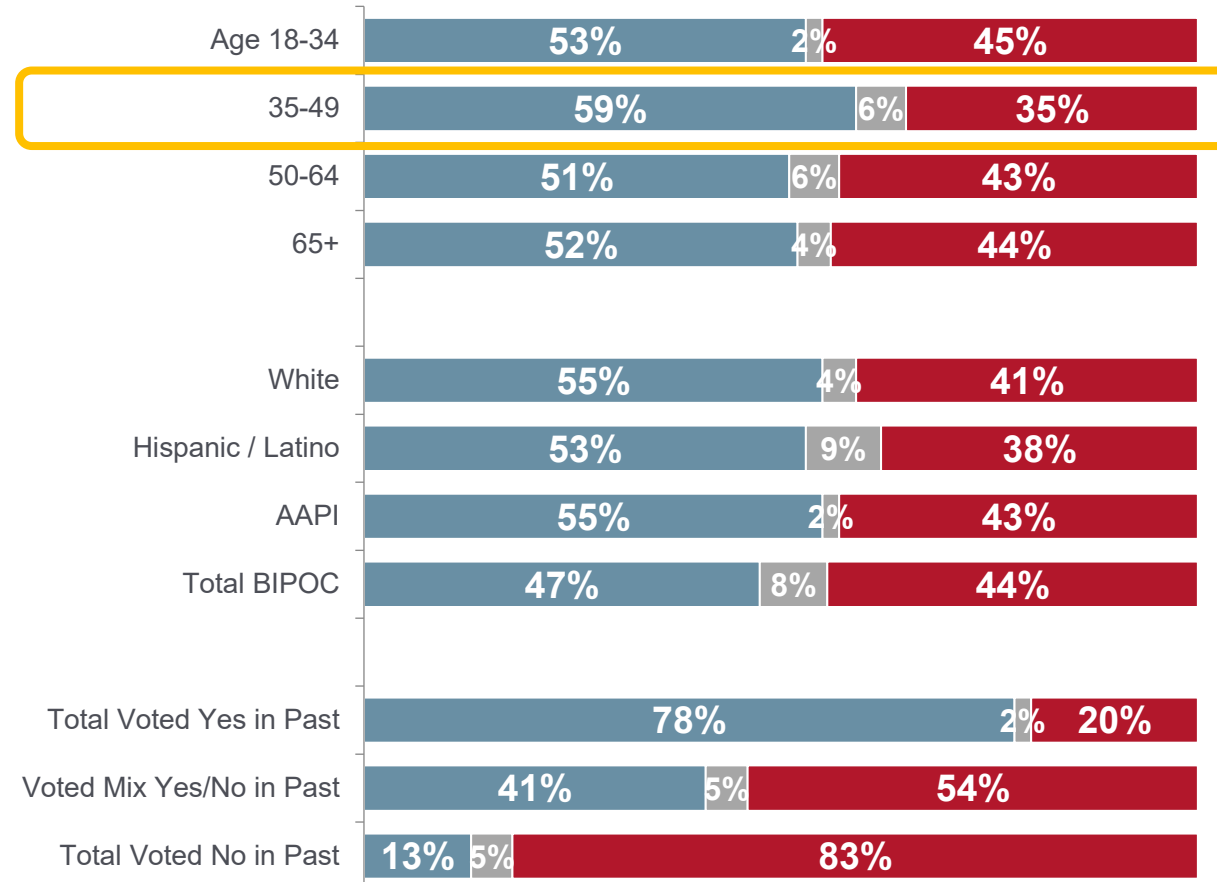


*From what you know, does your local school district (ROTATE) <have sufficient funding as it is> or do they <need more funding than they get right now>?

The most common parental age, voters ages 35 to 49 years-old, and women voters regardless of parental status report the highest rates of perceiving a need for additional school funding.

Perceived Funding Need of “Your Local School District”*

Total Need Additional Funding | Not Sure | Total Sufficient / Too Much Funding



*From what you know, does your local school district (ROTATE) <have sufficient funding as it is> or do they <need more funding than they get right now>?

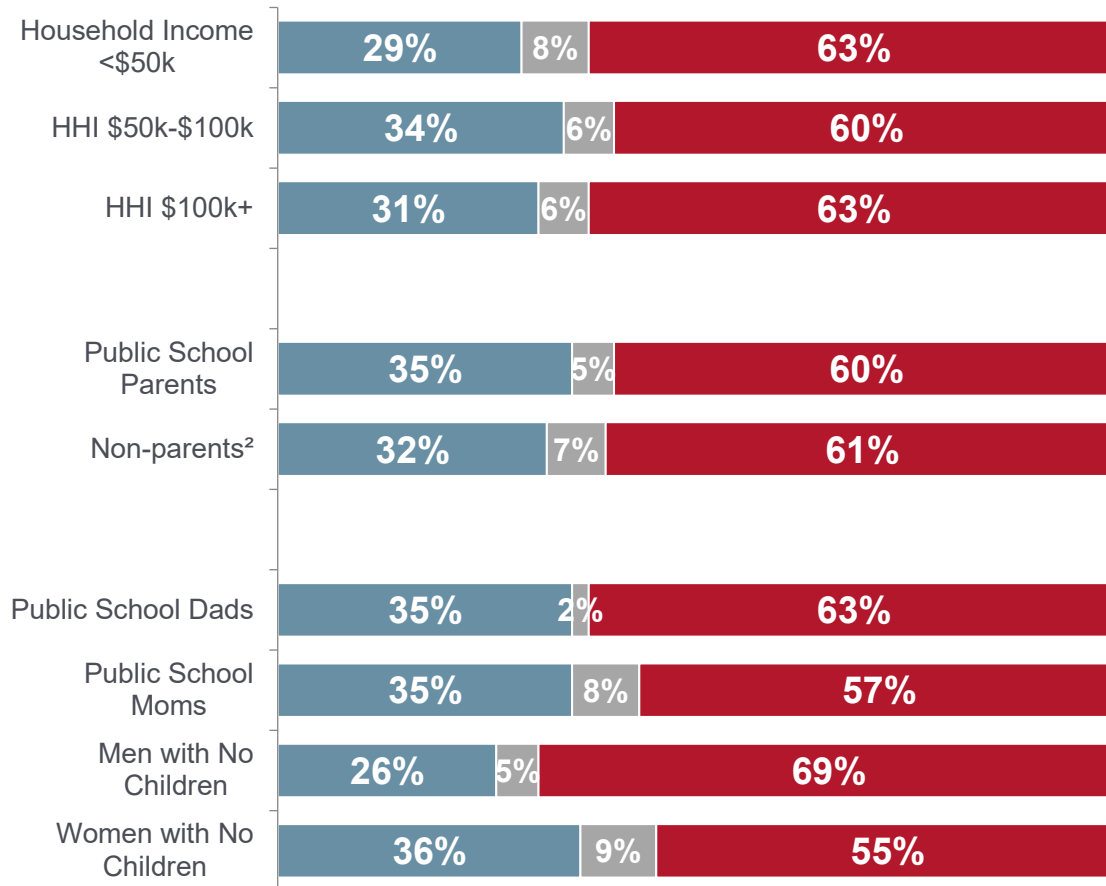
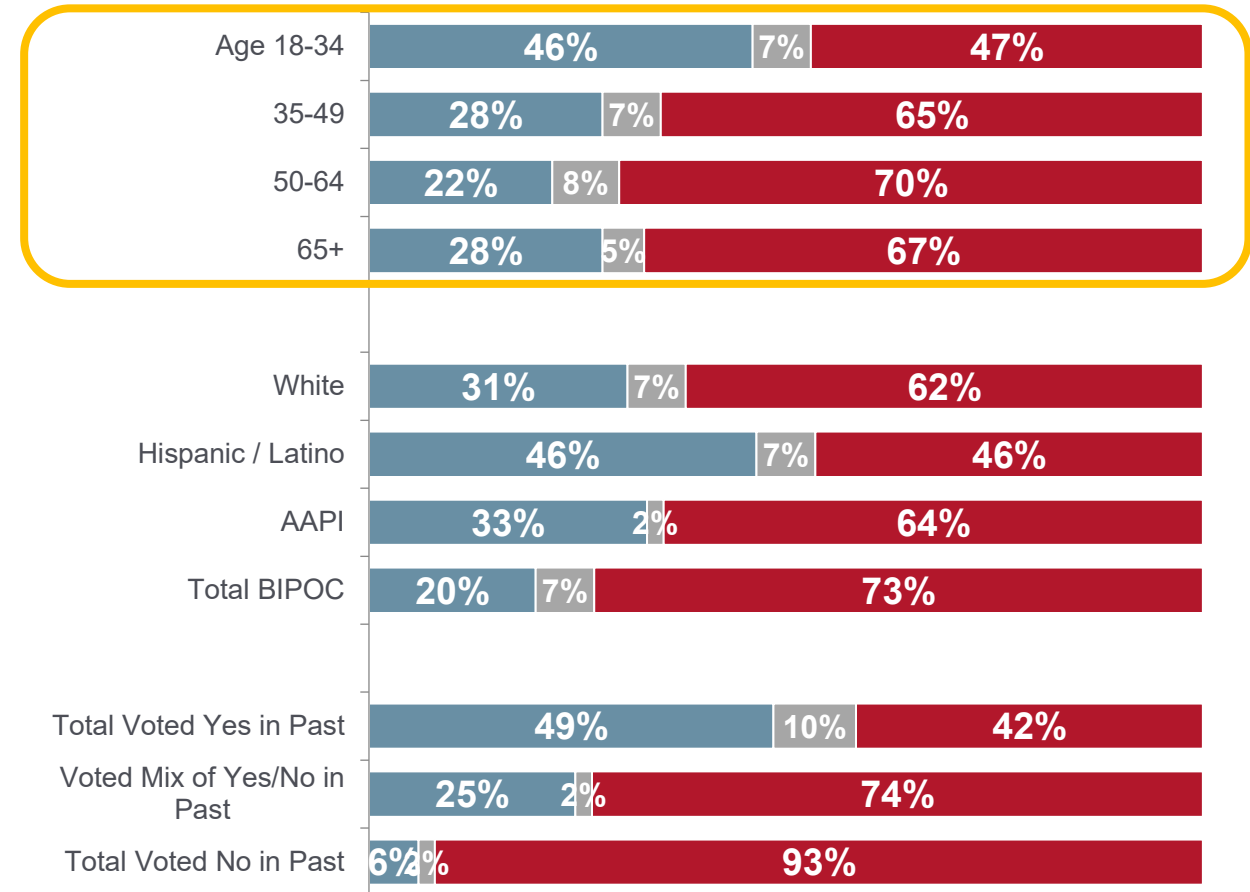
²Non-parents = Not parents of school-aged children OR parents of school-aged children who do not attend public school

NOTE: Percentages may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding to whole numbers.

School districts should assume that voters already believe their local property taxes are “Too High.”

Local Property Tax Rate Sensitivity*

Total Taxes About Right / Too Low | Not Sure | Total Taxes Too High



*And in general, would you say local property taxes are too high, too low, or about right for the quality of public services in your community?

²Non-parents = Not parents of school-aged children OR parents of school-aged children who do not attend public school

NOTE: Percentages may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding to whole numbers.

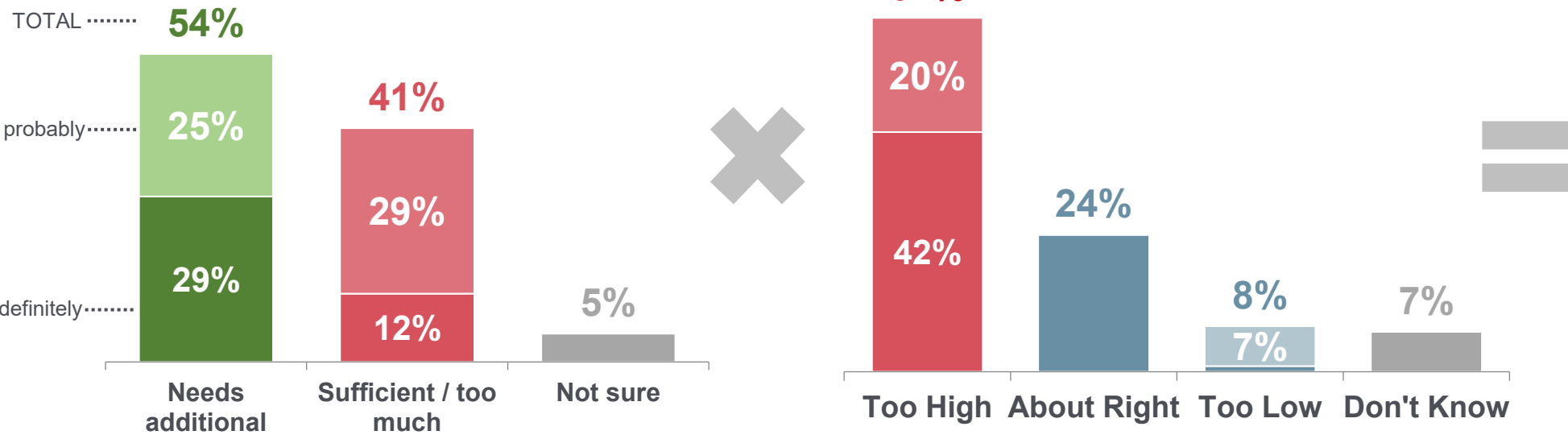
Sensitivity to property taxes *even among* supporters of increased school funding means it is more important than ever to communicate a clear, consistent, and concise case about the positive outcomes of increased funding.

Funding need by tax sensitivity in Washington State*

Initial funding needs*

Tax sensitivity**

Funding need by Tax sensitivity



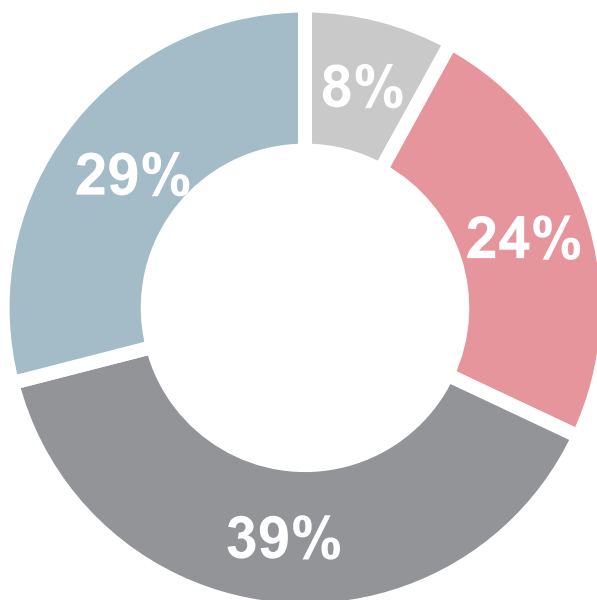
Total "Need Additional Funding" AND Total "Too High Taxes"	27%
Total "Need Additional Funding" AND "Taxes About Right / Too Low"	22%
Total "Don't Need Additional Funding" (regardless of tax sensitivity)	41%
Not Sure on Either Question	10%

*Which of the following best describes your opinion about education funding in your local school district? Do you think your local school district's schools...
**And in general, would you say local property taxes are (ROTATE) <too high>, <too low>, or about right for the quality of public services in your community? (PROBE) Is that much <too high / too low> or only a little?
NOTE: Percentages may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding to whole numbers.

Increase in tax sensitivity: Fewer voters than in 2023 say the amount they pay towards public schools is “about right,” and the number saying they would prefer to pay less has grown slightly.

Tax Burden vs. School Funding, 2023 to 2025*

2023

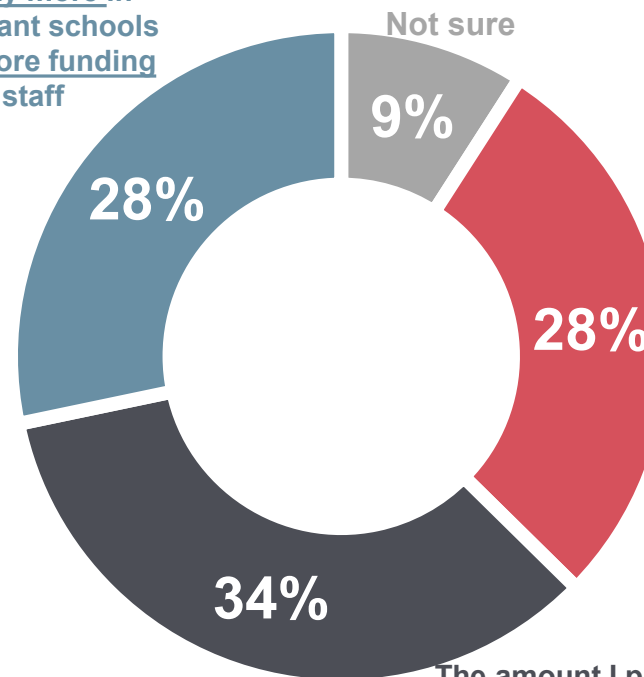


I would be willing to pay more in property taxes if that meant schools in my community had more funding for programs and staff

Change from 2023 to 2025

Prefer to pay less, even if cuts to schools	+ 4
Willing to pay more to fund schools	- 1
Amount I pay is about right	- 5
Not sure	+ 1

2025



I would prefer to pay less in property taxes, even if that meant schools in my community had to cut programs and staff

The amount I pay in property taxes going towards public schools is about right

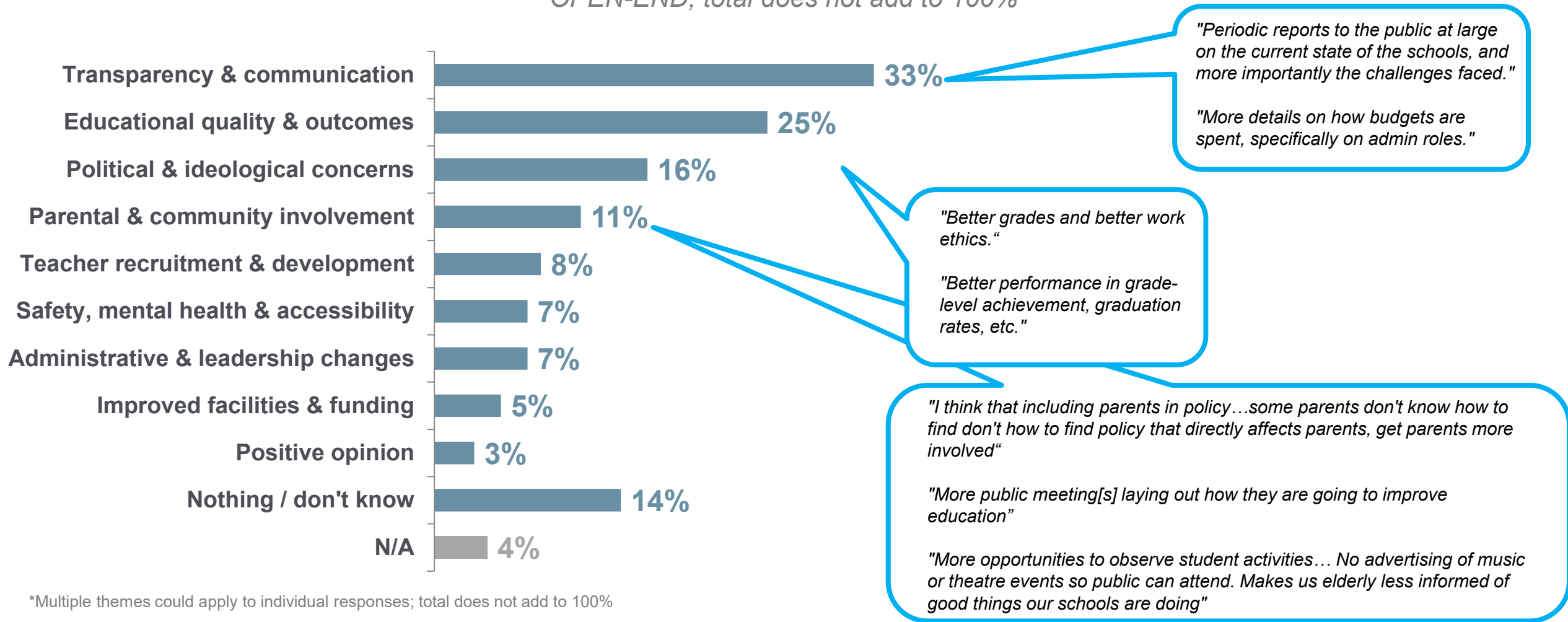
*As you may know, schools in Washington receive some funding from the state and some funding from local voter-approved levies and bonds paid for by local property taxes. When it comes to your local property taxes going towards public schools in your area, which of the following statements best represents your view? (due to rounding, totals may not add to 100%)

NOTE: Percentages may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding to whole numbers.

Transparency and communication was most common answer when asked how districts can increase trust. Followed closely behind is a desire for increased education quality and rigor.

What actions or information would INCREASE YOUR TRUST in your local school district?*

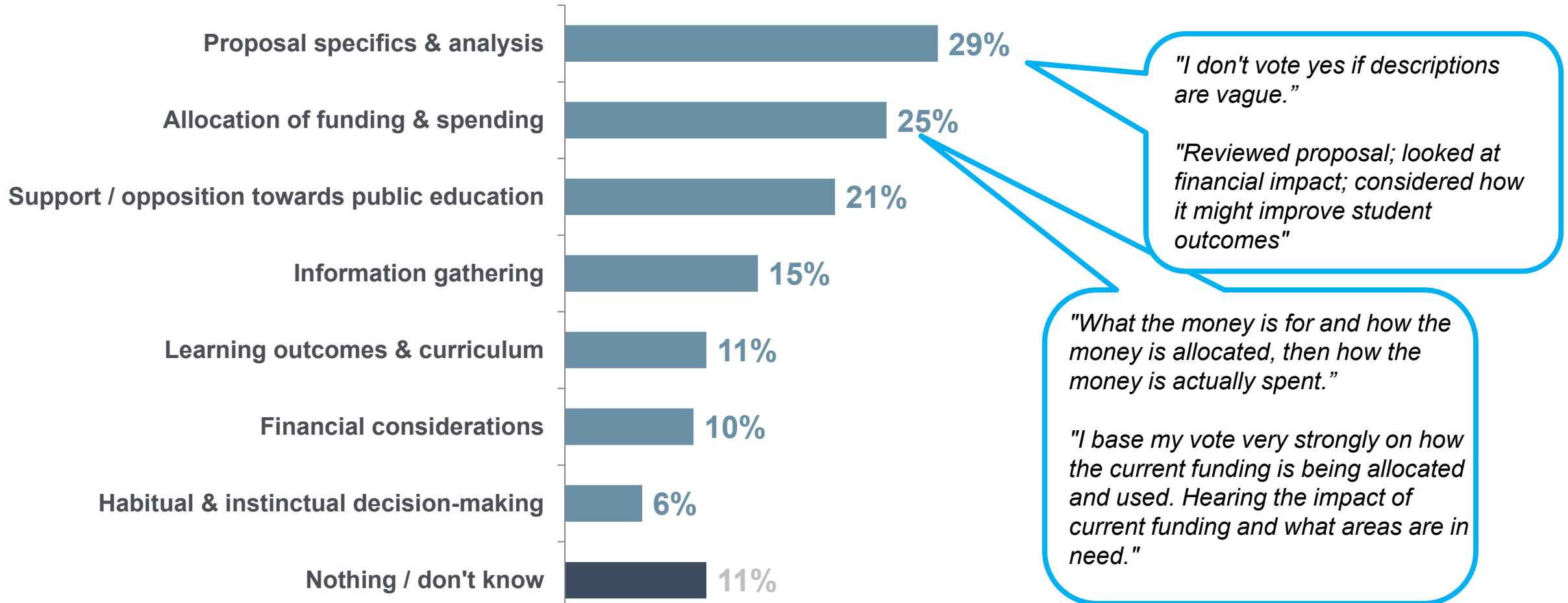
OPEN-END, total does not add to 100%



A plurality of voters say the proposal specifics are important for determining how they vote. About one-fifth of voters are entrenched in their pre-existing opinion.

How have you made up your mind on how to vote on school bonds and levies?*

OPEN-END, total does not add to 100%



*Thinking of when you have voted FOR or AGAINST school bonds or levies in the past, how have you made up your mind on how to vote? (OPEN-END)

NOTE: Percentages may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding to whole numbers.

Parents get their news primarily from district and school sources; non-parents are more likely to rely on public sources like TV and newspapers.

News and Information Sources About Your Local District*

MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED, TOTAL DOES NOT ADD TO 100%

	Pub Schl Parents	Non-Parents ²
From print or online newspapers	28%	33%
On local television and radio	21%	31%
Emails from the district or a school	61%	11%
From district or school websites	46%	16%
From printed mailers	23%	25%
From community discussions or posts on Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, or Twitter / X	20%	25%
From a friend or neighbor	21%	22%
From the district's social media channels, like Facebook or Instagram	27%	18%
From text messages from the district or a school	32%	5%
At meetings held by the district	18%	10%
On local blogs	9%	7%
I don't receive any information about the district	2%	13%
Don't know / Refused	2%	5%

1st Highest News Source

2nd Highest News Source

*From which of the following sources do you CURRENTLY receive news and information about your local public school district?

²Non-parents = Not parents of school-aged children OR parents of school-aged children who do not attend public school

NOTE: Percentages may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding to whole numbers.

Career and Technical Education is a priority across the spectrum of self-reported vote choice on bonds and levies, including voters who say “yes”, mixed support, and voting “no”.

Single Most Supported Funding Component, by Voting Choice*

	Usually/Always Vote Yes	Mixed Yes/No	Usually/Always Vote No
CTE courses / facilities	33%	31%	34%
Mental health	20%	16%	3%
Safety upgrades	13%	16%	14%
Modernizing infrastructure	7%	6%	3%
Updating technology	7%	6%	4%
Classroom space	6%	5%	2%
Building new schools	5%	4%	1%
Community use of facilities	1%	2%	4%
Athletic facilities	1%	-	3%
Don't Know	6%	15%	31%

*And if you could tell the superintendent in your area to put more funding than they do now towards just ONE of those areas, which one would it be?

NOTE: Percentages may not add to exactly 100% due to rounding to whole numbers.

Q & A - Ballot Trends & Regulations

Open Mic

Do you have any questions regarding voter trends, perceptions and/or regulations?



Framing the Broader Context

Linking Local Levies to Statewide and Community Realities

Framing the Broader Context

Linking Local Levies to Statewide and Community Realities

- **State funding gaps** – local levies cover what the state does not fully fund (staffing, programs and student supports)
- **Cost pressures vs. stable tax rate** – highlight inflation, cost of housing, enrollment changes, but note levy structure helps stabilize rates
- **Rising property values** – balance of equity protection and taxpayer concerns
- **Value of strong schools** – connect quality schools to property values, community pride and quality of life

Framing the Broader Context

Why Context Matters in Levy Conversations

- Voters want to understand the “why” beyond the numbers
- Broader context helps reduce confusion and counter misinformation
- Framing connects everyday community priorities such as housing, taxes, neighborhood quality to a levy’s purpose
- Clear and consistent explanation of what levies do and don’t fund builds trust

Activity: Turn and talk at your table

-10 min

Prompts:

Which context points (funding gaps, costs, property values, community quality of life or other areas) are most persuasive in your circle of influence?

Which need the most careful explanation to avoid confusion or pushback?

What language or examples make these points feel relevant to neighbors, families, or colleagues?



Table Exercise

Committee Consideration

At your table, individually reflect and answer the Poll

Prompt: Please review the list of strengths. Select the top three you believe will have the greatest impact on community perceptions when voting.

(Menti available for committee members' participation during meeting).

Steps:

- Individual reflection and Menti poll – 2 minutes

Table Exercise

Committee Consideration

At your table, individually reflect and answer the Poll

Prompt: Please review the list of challenges. Select the top three you believe will have the greatest impact on community perceptions when voting.

(Menti available for committee members' participation during meeting).

Steps:

- Individual reflection and Menti poll – 2 minutes

Cake Break & Homework Discussion

Sharing Insights: Your Top Questions and Concerns

Cake Break & Homework Group Table Talk -10 min

Prompt: Discuss top questions and concerns you have heard about the district budget and levy measures.

Share-out: Choose a table spokesperson, select one question and one concern and be ready to share-out verbally with the committee. (write it on a notecard)



Key Messages, Tactics & Engagement

Refining Levy Messages and Engagement Strategies

Key Messages, Tactics & Engagement

The big-picture value of the levy package

Message Themes:

- **Renewing** – these levies replace expiring ones and maintain a stable tax rate
- **Funding What the State Does Not** – programs, student support services, technology, safety and maintenance
- **Transparent, Accountable Spending** – strong fiscal oversight ensures responsible use of community funds
- **Student Experience and Community Strength** – Strong schools support property values, learning and overall community well-being

Key Messages, Tactics & Engagement

Levy-Specific Message Themes

Educational Programs & Operations (EP&O) Levy

- Funds classroom teachers, counselors, nurses and student programs.
- Supports day-to-day operations that state funding does not cover

Capital Levy (Technology & Facilities)

- Updates and maintains technology – devices, infrastructure, applications and security
- Funds critical repairs to keep learning environments warm, safe and dry

Transportation Levy

- Maintains safe, reliable buses.
- Supports equitable access to learning opportunities for all students

Key Messages, Tactics & Engagement

High-Level Tactics

Timeline: Nov. 5 – Feb. 10

- Nov. 5 – Dec. 1: Highlight funding gaps, explain impacts and past levy projects
- Dec. 1 – Feb. 10: Promote facts regarding levy packages and student/community impacts.

Tactics:

- Community conversations and school informational sessions.
- Trusted messengers: parents, staff, alumni and civic leaders
- Digital/social campaigns, direct mailers, FAQ sheets and seek media engagement

Key Messages, Tactics & Engagement

Civic Engagement: District vs. Committee Roles

District Actions

- Provide transparent, factual information about levies and funding
- Share FAQs, one-page summaries, and “Follow the Funds” resources
- Host public meetings and school info sessions; distribute digital briefings
- Maintain fiscal oversight and report accountability metrics

Committee/Volunteer Actions

- Share personal experiences and rationale
- Encourage informed discussion in neighborhoods and networks
- Amplify district-provided materials via social media or community groups
- Participate in town halls, civic meetings and outreach events

Activity: Turn and talk at your table

-10 min

Prompts: Discuss your ideas about community engagement to increase levy awareness.

Discuss your personal commitment moving forward to increase levy awareness.

Prepare your table's final closing share-out comments.



Table Exercise

Committee Consideration

At your table, individually reflect and answer the Poll

Prompt:

What message concepts resonate most strongly?

What feels unclear, risky or needs clarification?

What tactics would best build trust and engagement in the community?

(Menti available for committee members' participation during meeting).

Steps:

- Individual reflection and Menti poll – 2 minutes

Closeout & Committee Comments

Final Reflections From Committee Members

Closing

Next Steps

The District will reach out to Levy Advisory Committee members about opportunities to place factual signs in the community, attend information sessions and more.

Please monitor social media and respond with facts – redirect to the district website for information.

THANK YOU!!!

(Menti available for committee members' participation during meeting).



ISSAQUAH
SCHOOL DISTRICT 411

QUESTIONS or CONCERNS:

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