

# Community Survey Results

## Lodi School District

Fall 2021

# SCHOOL PERCEPTIONS

**Our mission is to help educational leaders gather, organize, and use data to make strategic decisions.**

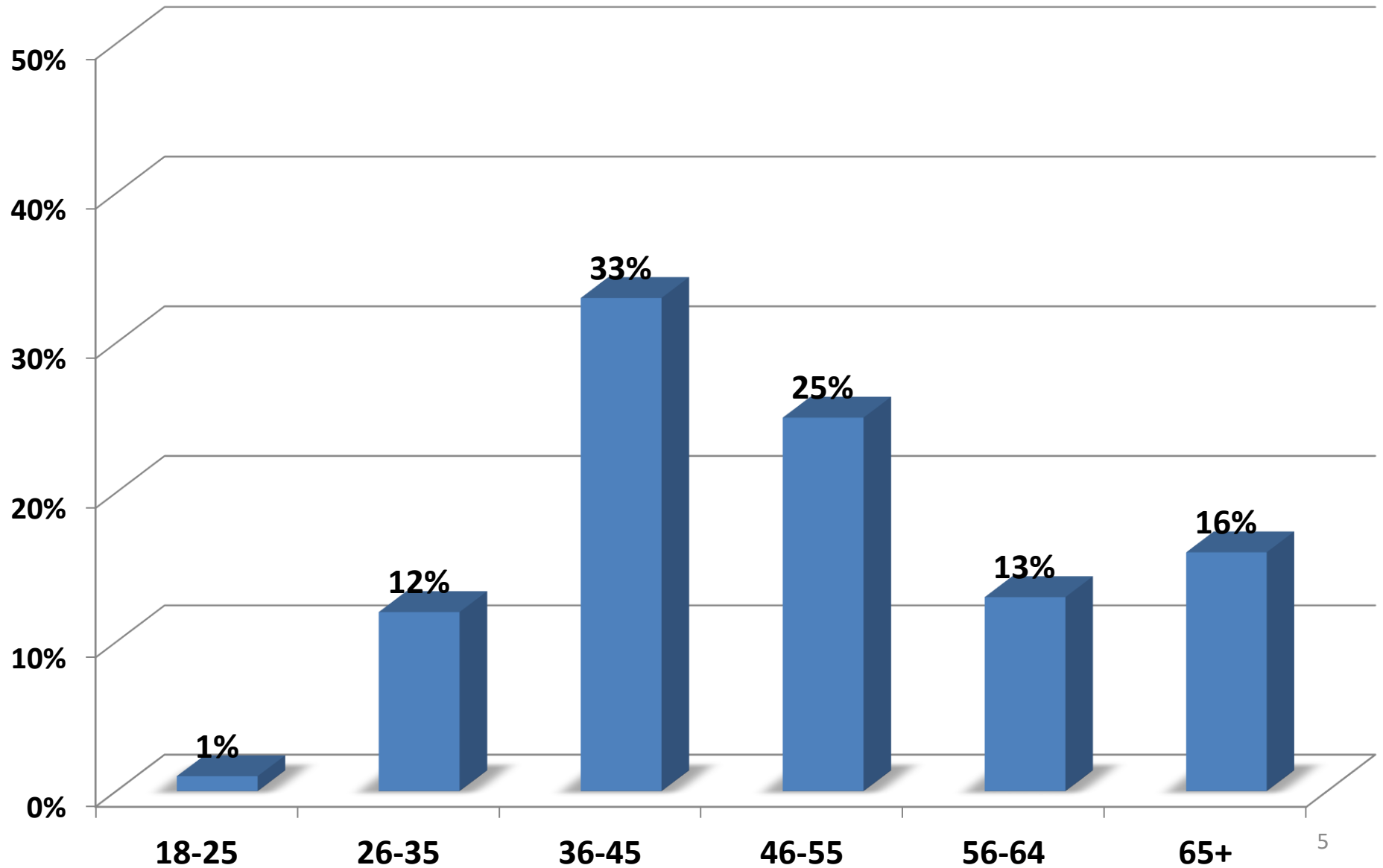
- Founded in **2002** to provide independent research
- Conducted more than **10,000** staff, parent, student, and community surveys for school improvement
- Helped more than **800** districts navigate the strategic planning and referendum planning process

# Survey Summary

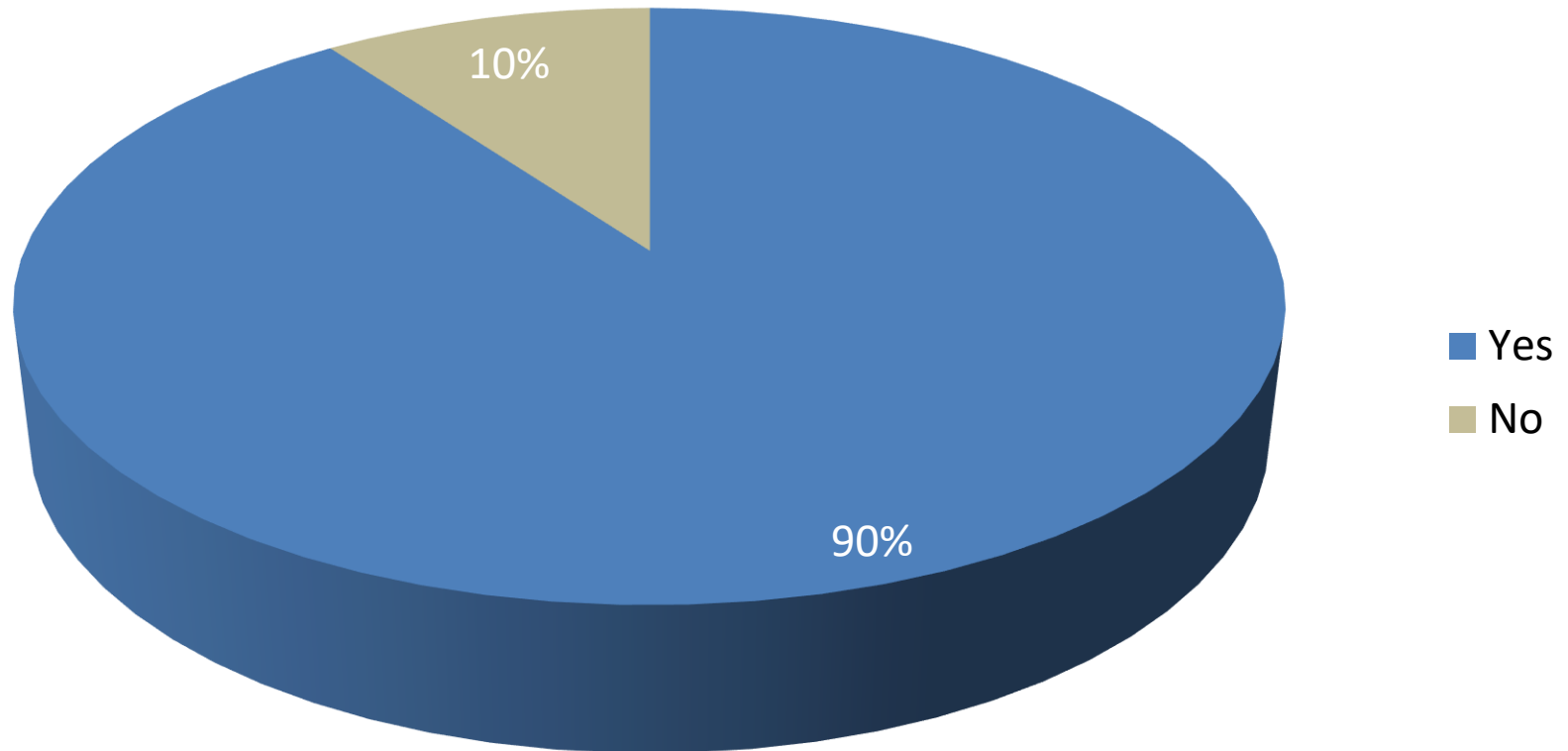
- The survey was conducted in November of 2021.
- Residents within the District were mailed a paper survey.
  - Each survey included a unique survey access code for those who preferred to take the survey online.
- Total responses = 971 (220 paper)
- Response rate: 22%

# Respondent Information

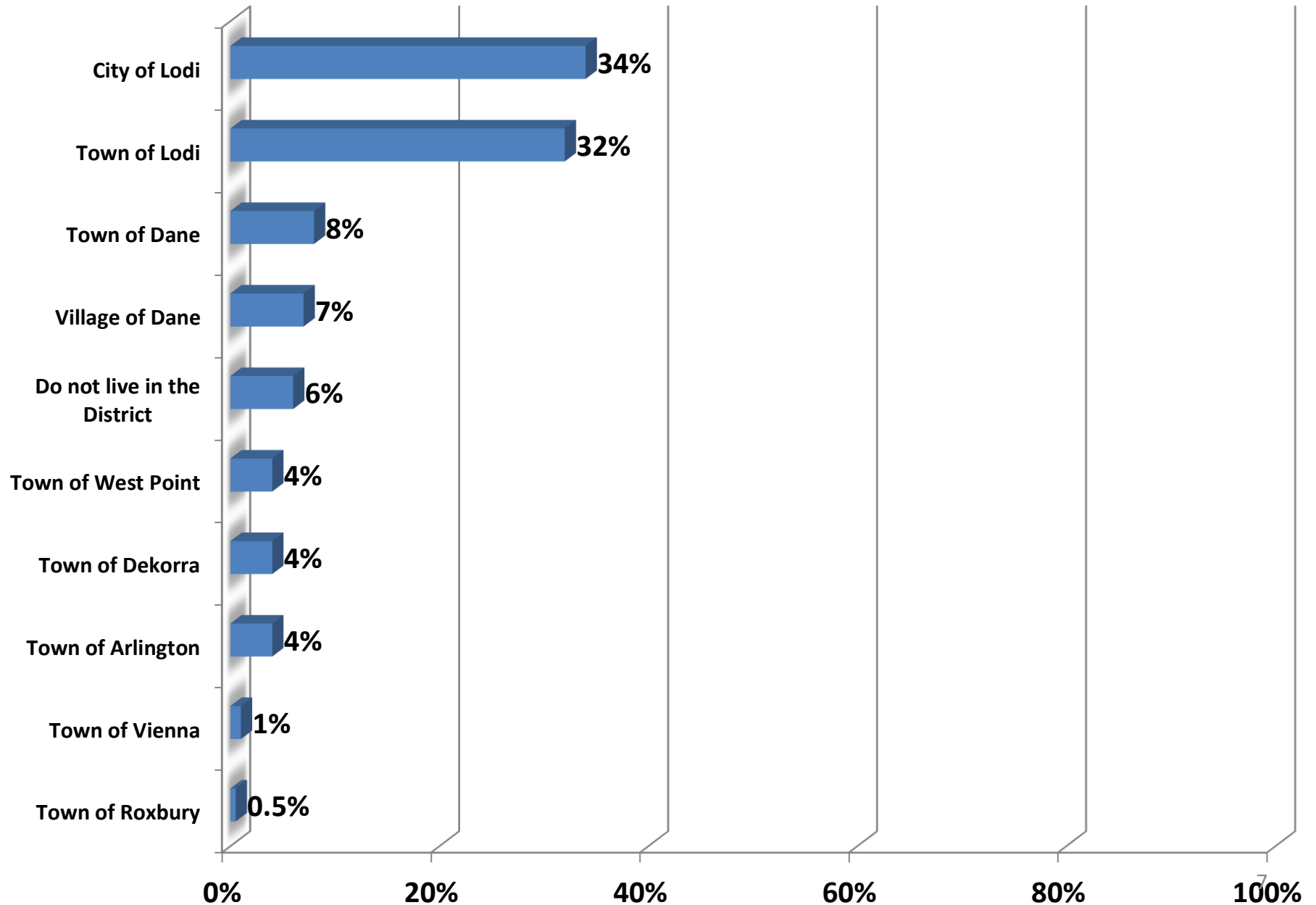
# What is your age?



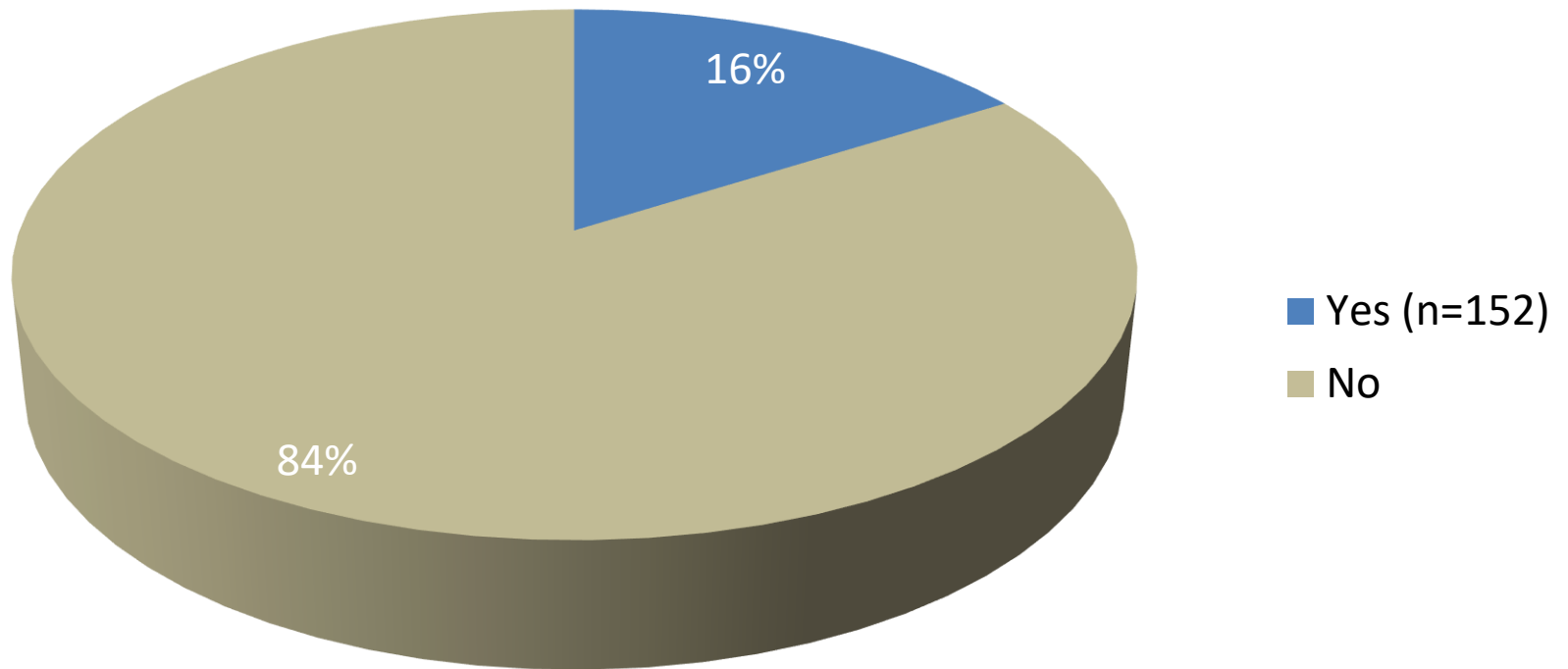
# Is your primary residence in the School District of Lodi?



# In which municipality do you live?

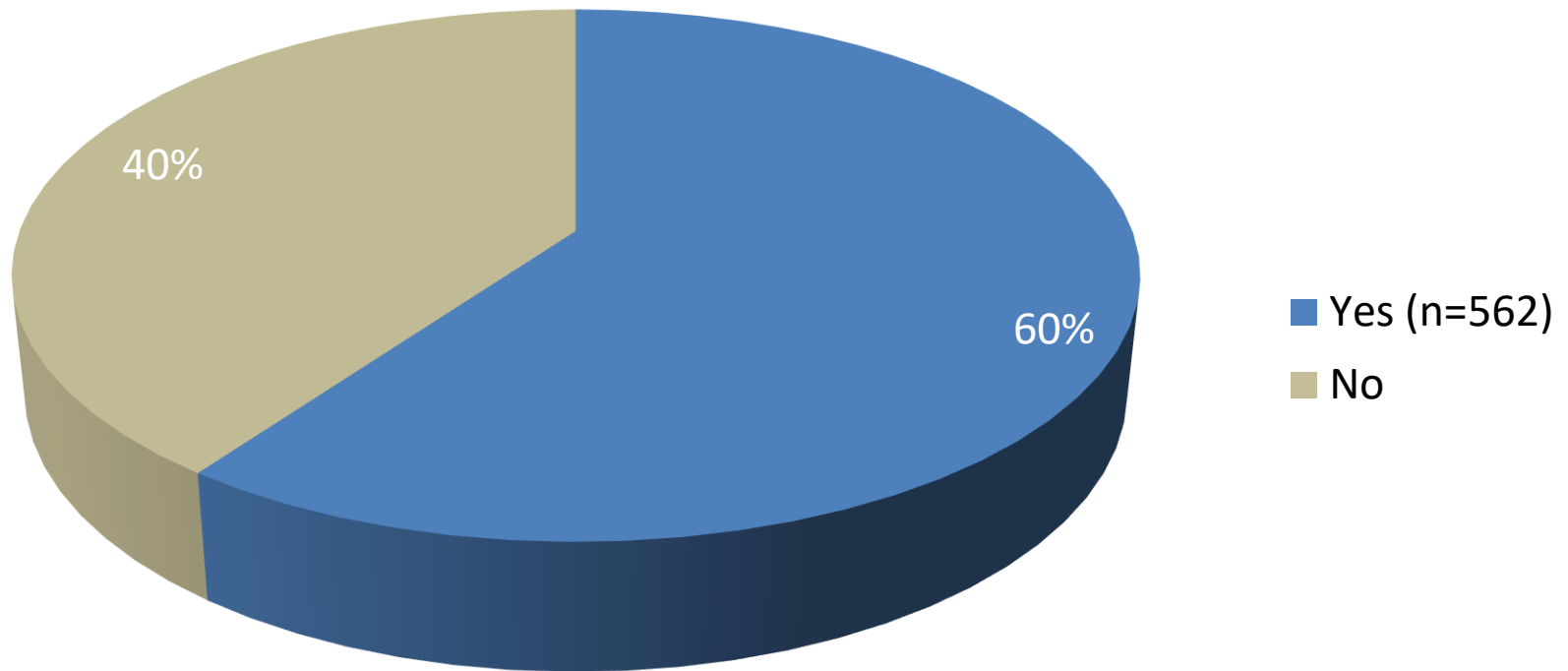


# Are you employed by the School District of Lodi?

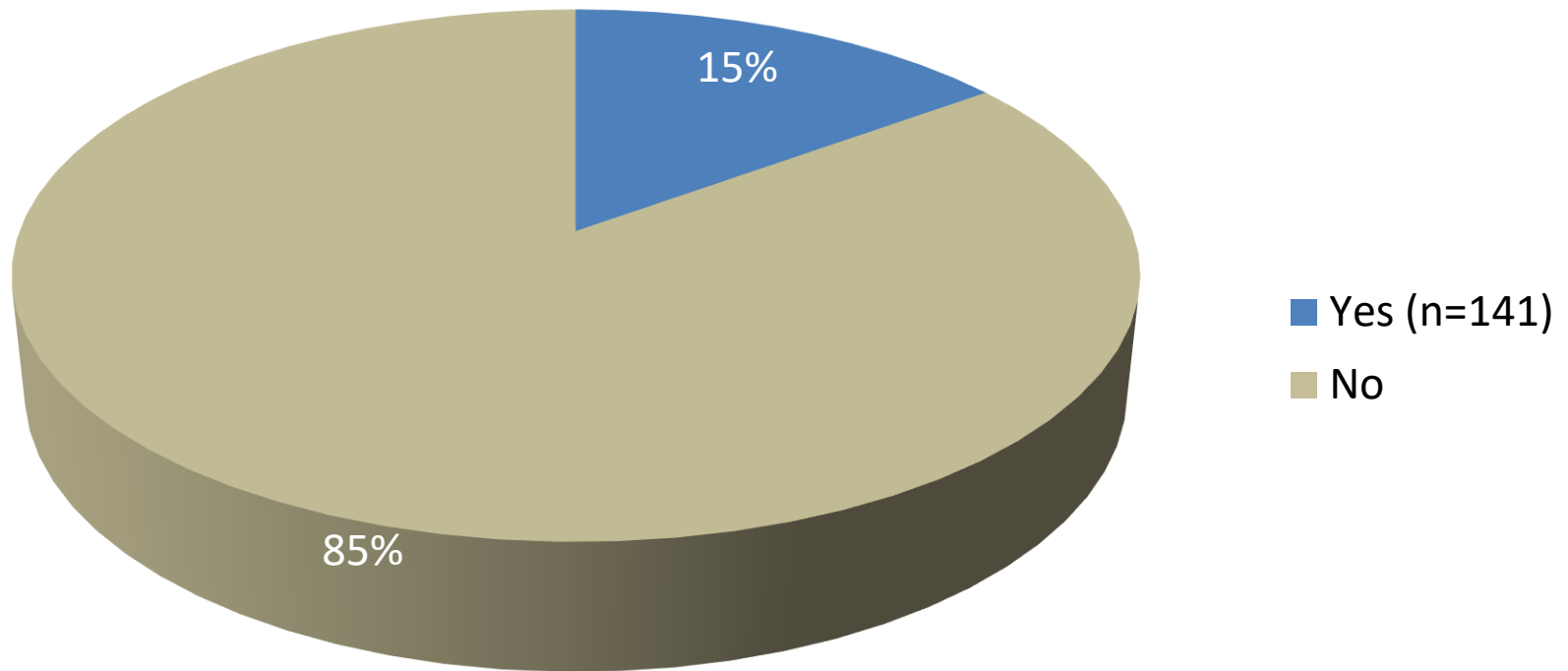




# Do you have children attending our schools?



# Do you have children younger than school age?



# Planning Background

Earlier this year, a group of more than 100 Lodi community members came together for two nights to develop a new strategic plan. A strategic plan guides our decisions, lays out our goals, and helps ensure our students can continue their success.

One priority that was established at these meetings is called “Operational Excellence.” This means that we must create an innovative, proactive budgeting process to ensure that we remain a viable district. As district leaders, we are determined to honor the priorities set by our community.

# Financial Background

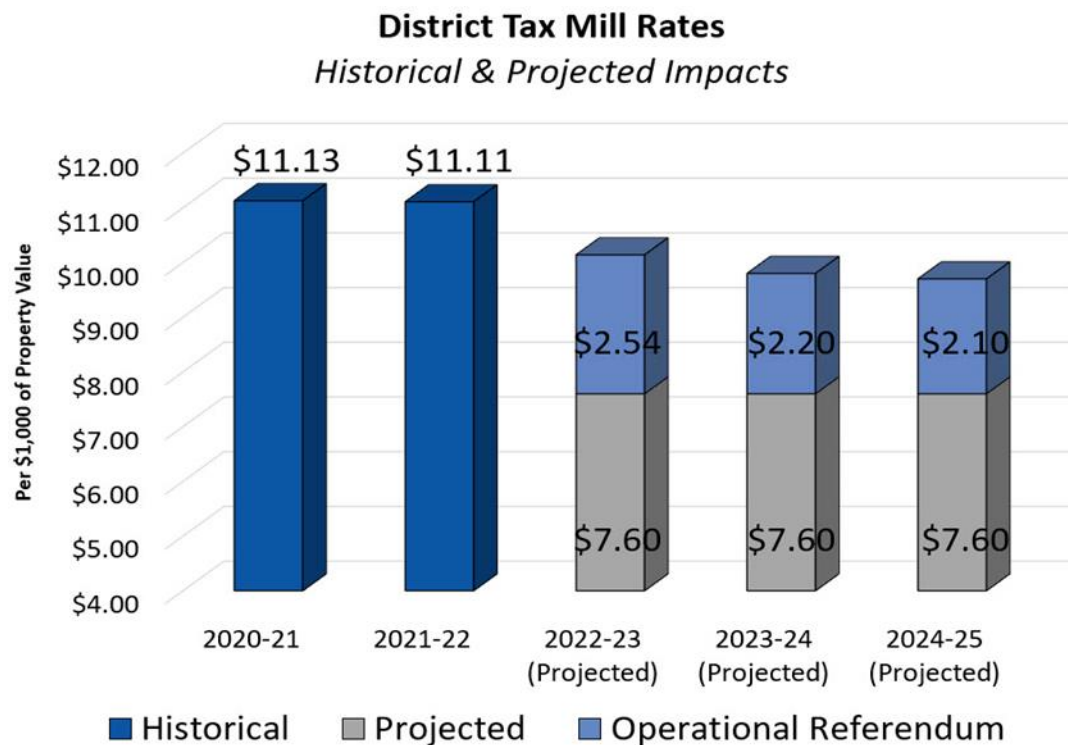
Voters approved operational referendums in 2008, 2014, and 2016. This funding has allowed us to keep our class sizes reasonable, cover routine building maintenance, and stay up to date with technology, curriculum, and course offerings. As we plan for future budgets, there are several factors we are keeping mind:

- The latest **state budget did not increase the revenue limits** for schools next year. A revenue limit caps the amount of money districts can receive from state aid and local property taxes.
- We are receiving some COVID-19 relief funding from the federal government. The challenge is that the federal funding **will end and, therefore, cannot address our long-term financial challenges.**
- At the end of this school year, **funding from our current operational referendum will expire.**

Given these factors, the School Board is proposing renewing the operational referendum for \$3.85 million for each of the next five years.

# **Funding Support: Operational Referendum**

In order to maintain current programs and services, the District is proposing a five-year, \$3.85 million per-year operational referendum. **As shown in the chart below, if voters approve this referendum renewal, our district's tax mill rate (which is used to calculate our share of property tax bills) will drop by \$97 for every \$100,000 of property value (8 percent).**



**Renewing the operational referendum** will result in a tax decrease of \$97 for each \$100,000 of property value (shown in light blue).

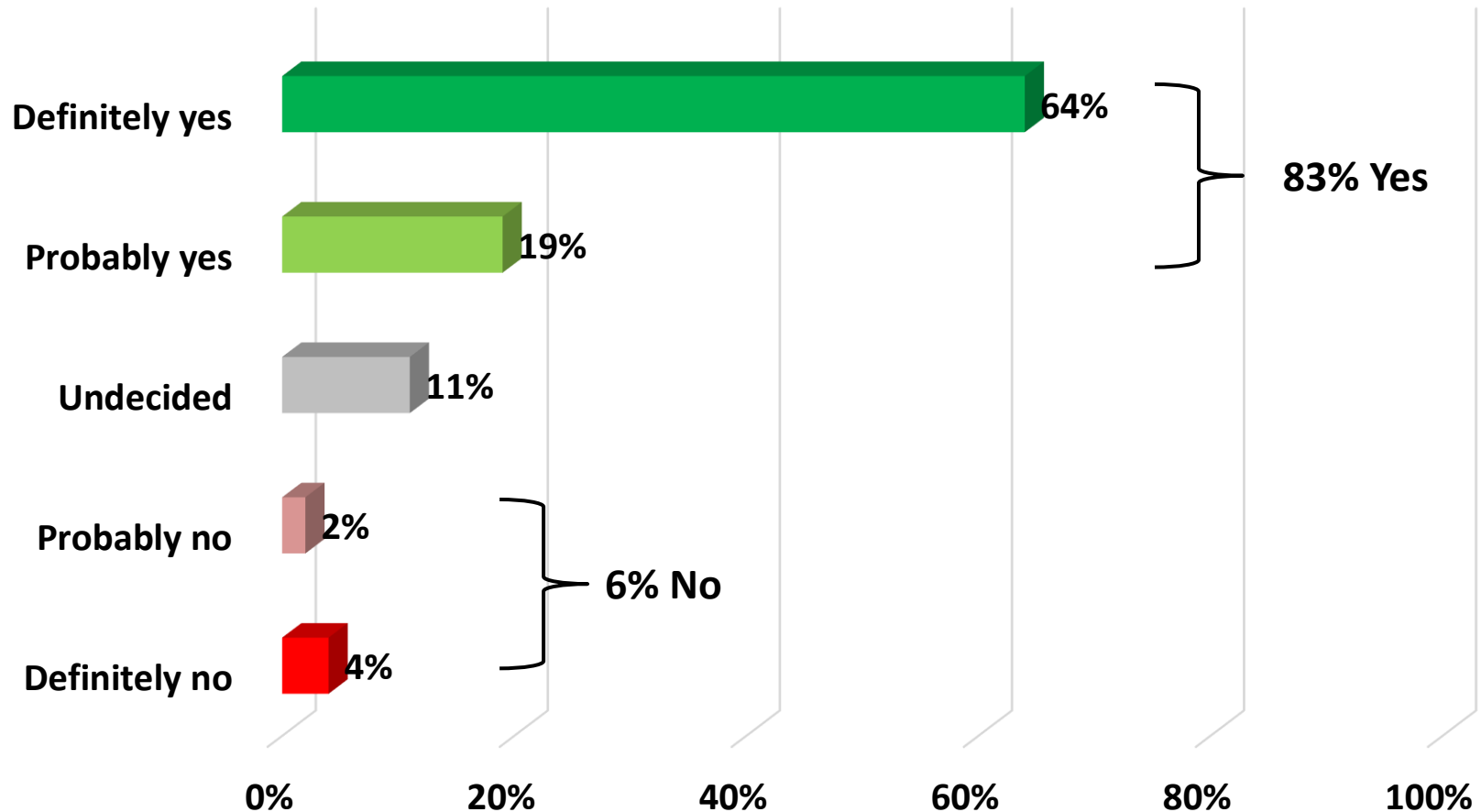
**Not renewing the operational referendum** will result in a tax decrease of \$351 for every \$100,000 of property value (shown in gray).



# Would you support a \$3.85 million operational referendum for each of the next five years?

*Resulting in an estimated annual tax mill rate \$0.97 below the current level or a reduction of \$97 for each \$100,000 of property value.*

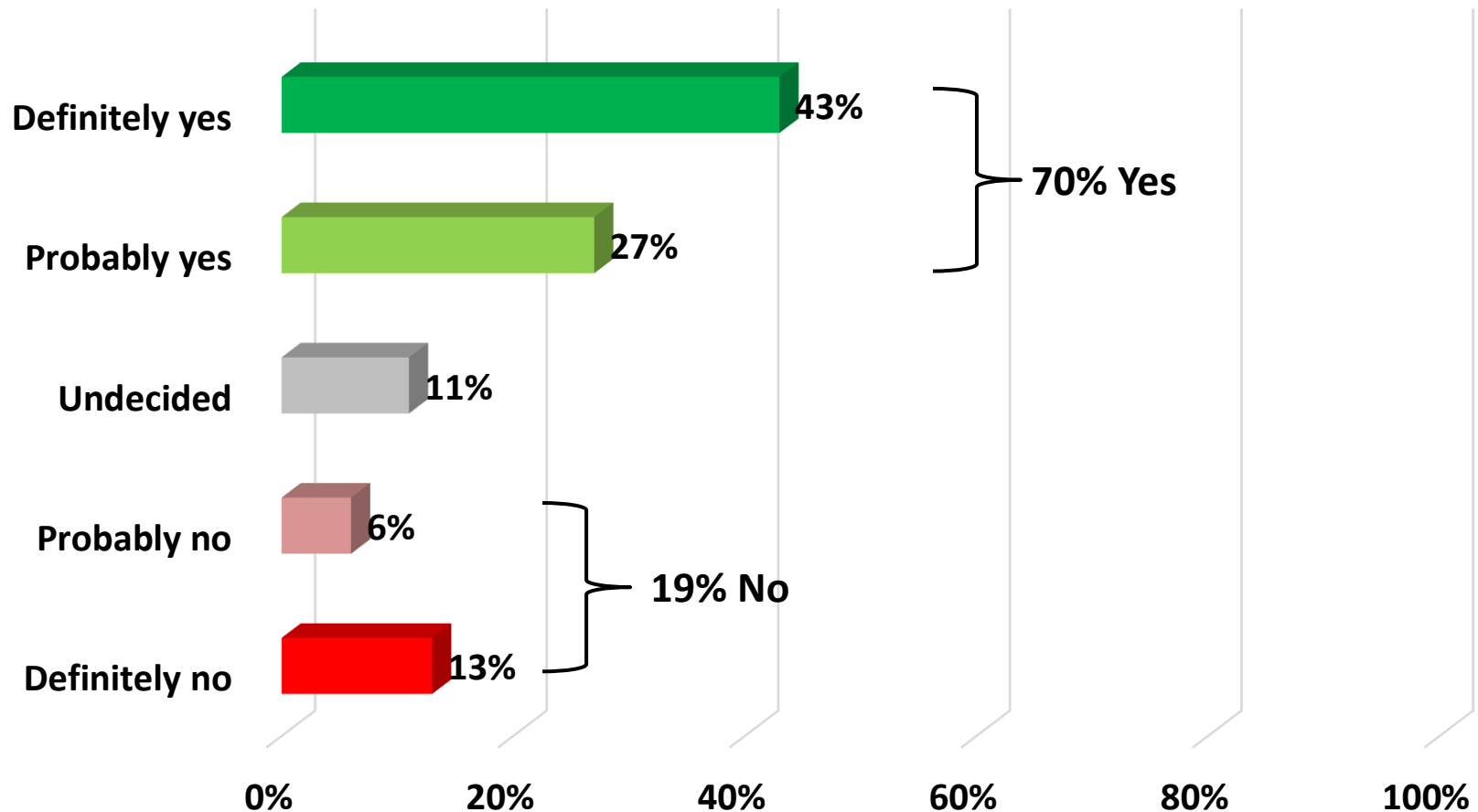
Staff Residents



# Would you support a \$3.85 million operational referendum for each of the next five years?

*Resulting in an estimated annual tax mill rate \$0.97 below the current level or a reduction of \$97 for each \$100,000 of property value.*

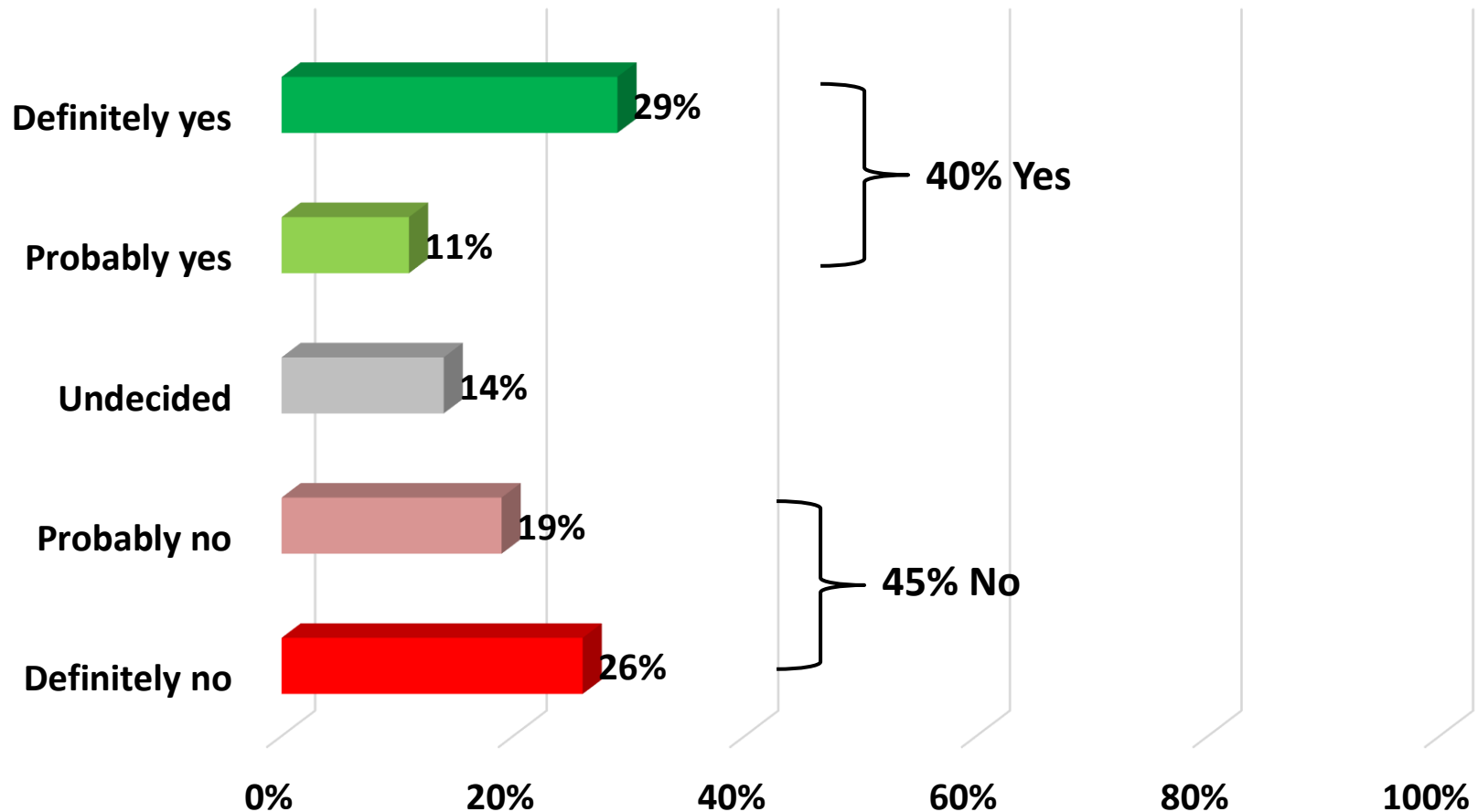
Parent Residents (Non-Staff)



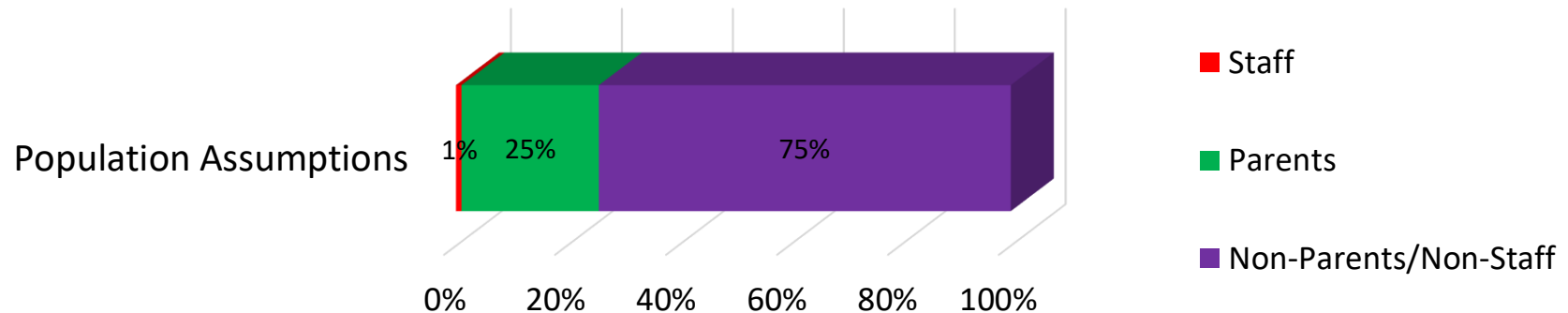
# Would you support a \$3.85 million operational referendum for each of the next five years?

*Resulting in an estimated annual tax mill rate \$0.97 below the current level or a reduction of \$97 for each \$100,000 of property value.*

Non-Parent Residents (Non-Staff)



# Would the community support the operational referendum?



- Of those responding “Definitely yes” or “Probably Yes”  
–  $0.75 (40\%) + 0.25 (70\%) = \underline{\underline{47.5\%}}$
- Inclusion of 1/3 of “Undecided” respondents:  
–  $0.75 (45\%) + 0.25 (74\%) = \underline{\underline{52.3\%}}$

# Cost-Cutting Options

If voters do not support an operational referendum, the District will need to make reductions to balance the budget. Survey results will help determine what reductions are made. We do not endorse any of the following, but we must consider all options to reduce expenses.

**Class Sizes:** Class sizes currently range from an average of 17 to 24 students at the elementary level and 18 to 28 at the middle/high school level.

**Course Offerings:** We offer courses in career planning and technical education (“shop”), STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), a fab lab, Advanced Placement Classes (AP), and college-level courses.

**Curriculum:** Our plans call for regularly updating textbooks and other classroom materials, such as language arts resources and elementary school reading books.

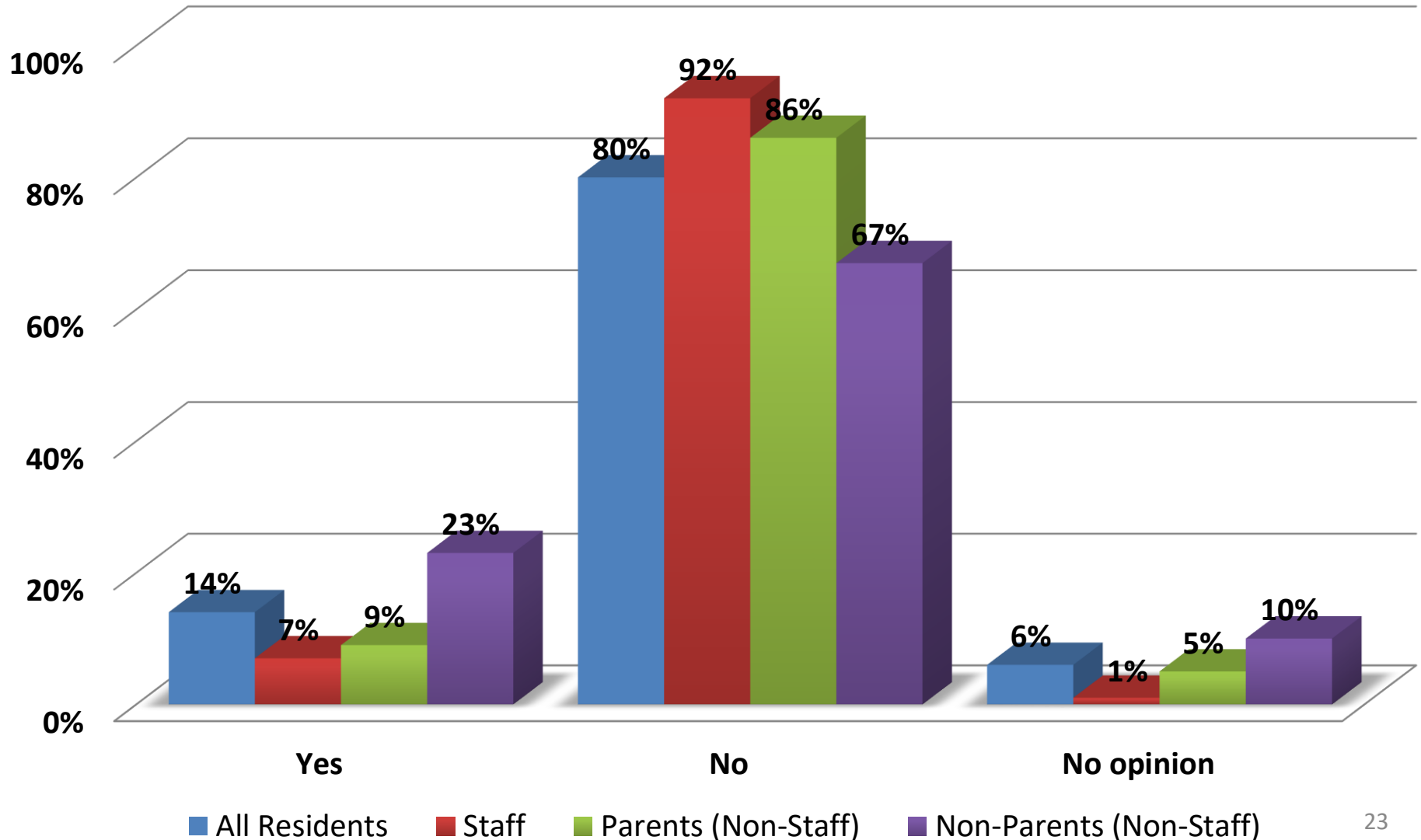
**Athletics/Co-Curricular Offerings:** The District offers a number of athletic and co-curricular offerings for middle and high school students.

**Technology:** The District’s technology infrastructure (including wireless access, servers, and classroom computers) needs regular maintenance and replacement to meet students’ learning needs.

**Facilities:** The District has a limited budget to stay current with building maintenance, make routine security updates, and prevent project backlogs.

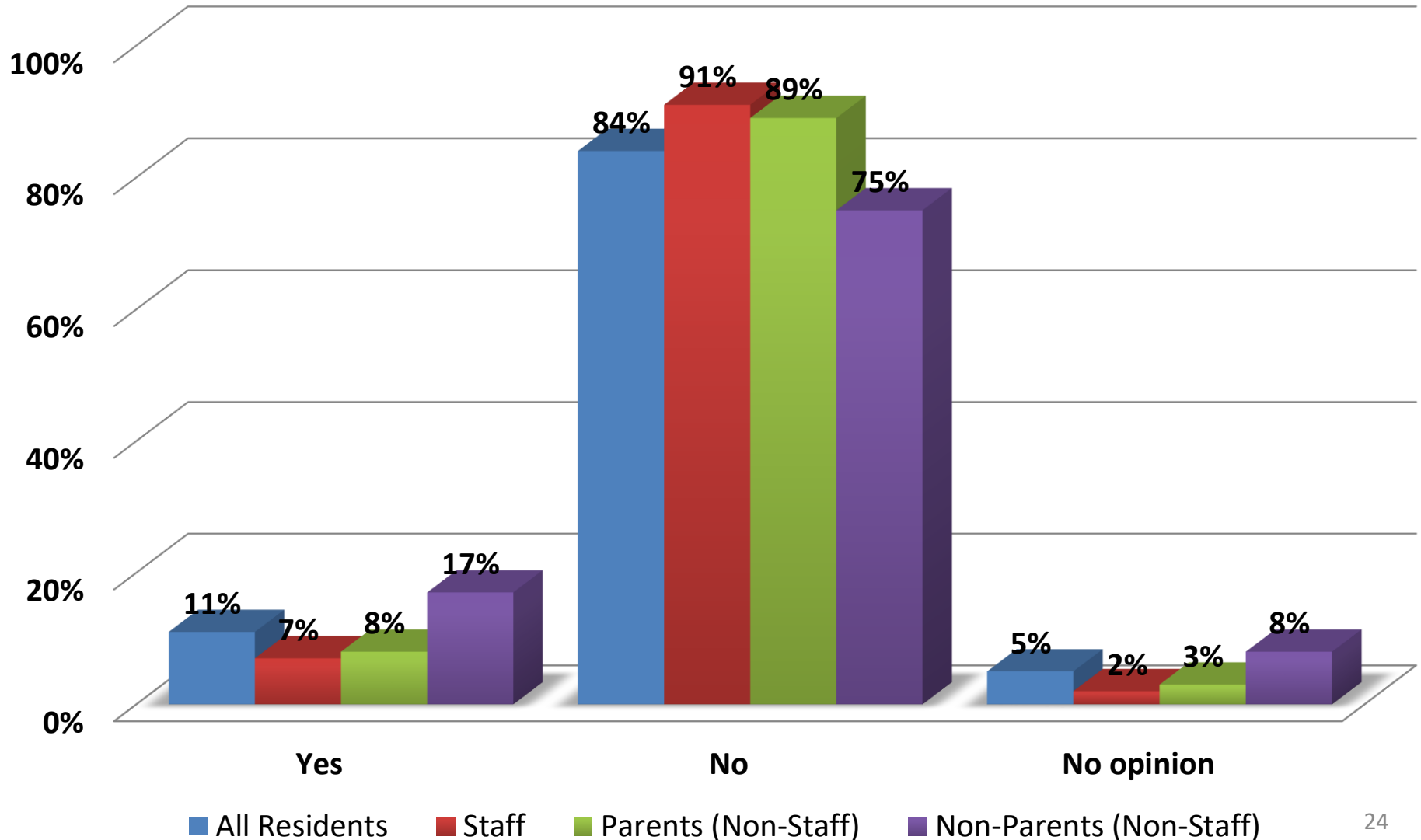
# Should the District consider cutting teachers and increasing class sizes?

*(School District Residents Only)*



# Should the District consider reducing career-ready and college-level courses?

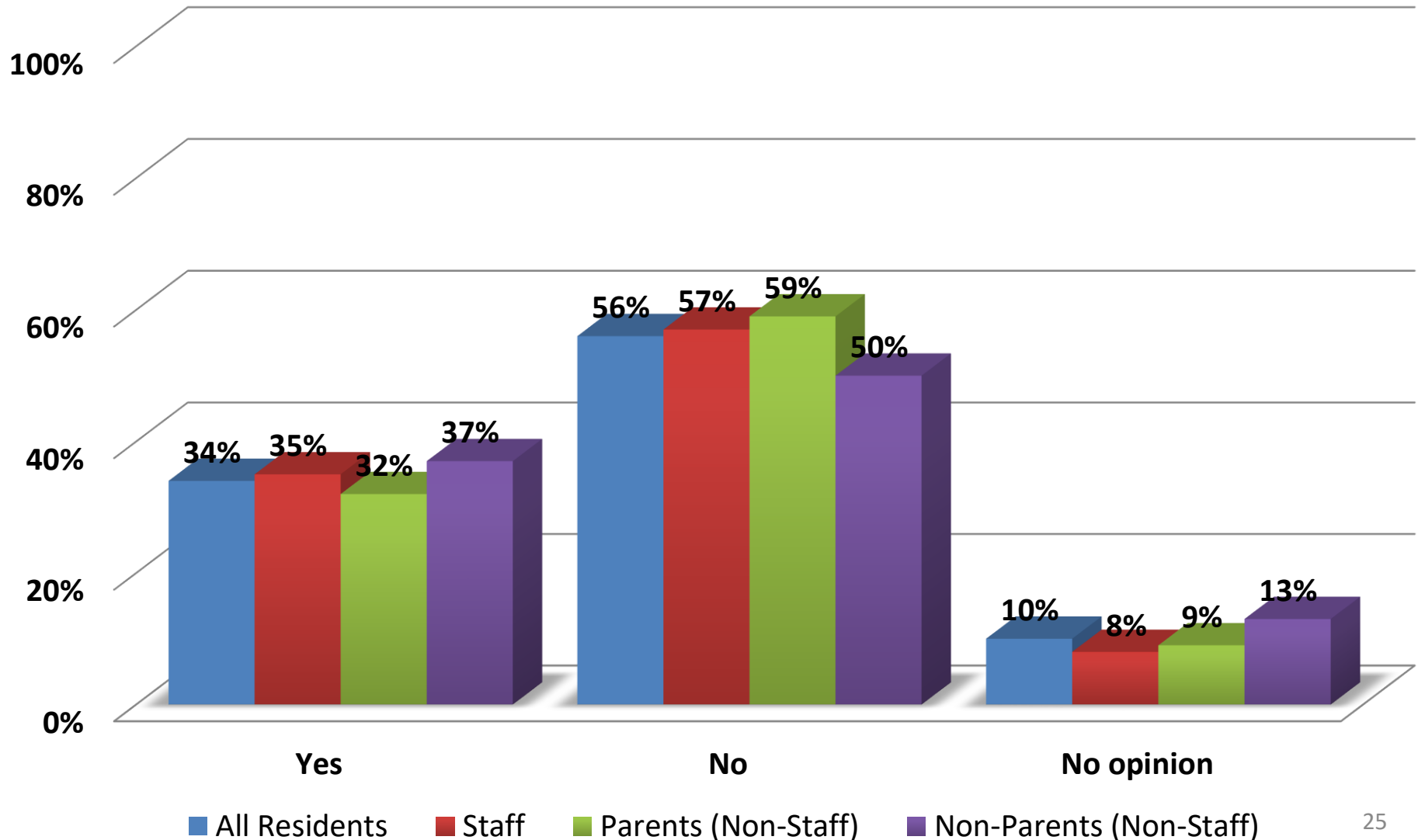
*(School District Residents Only)*





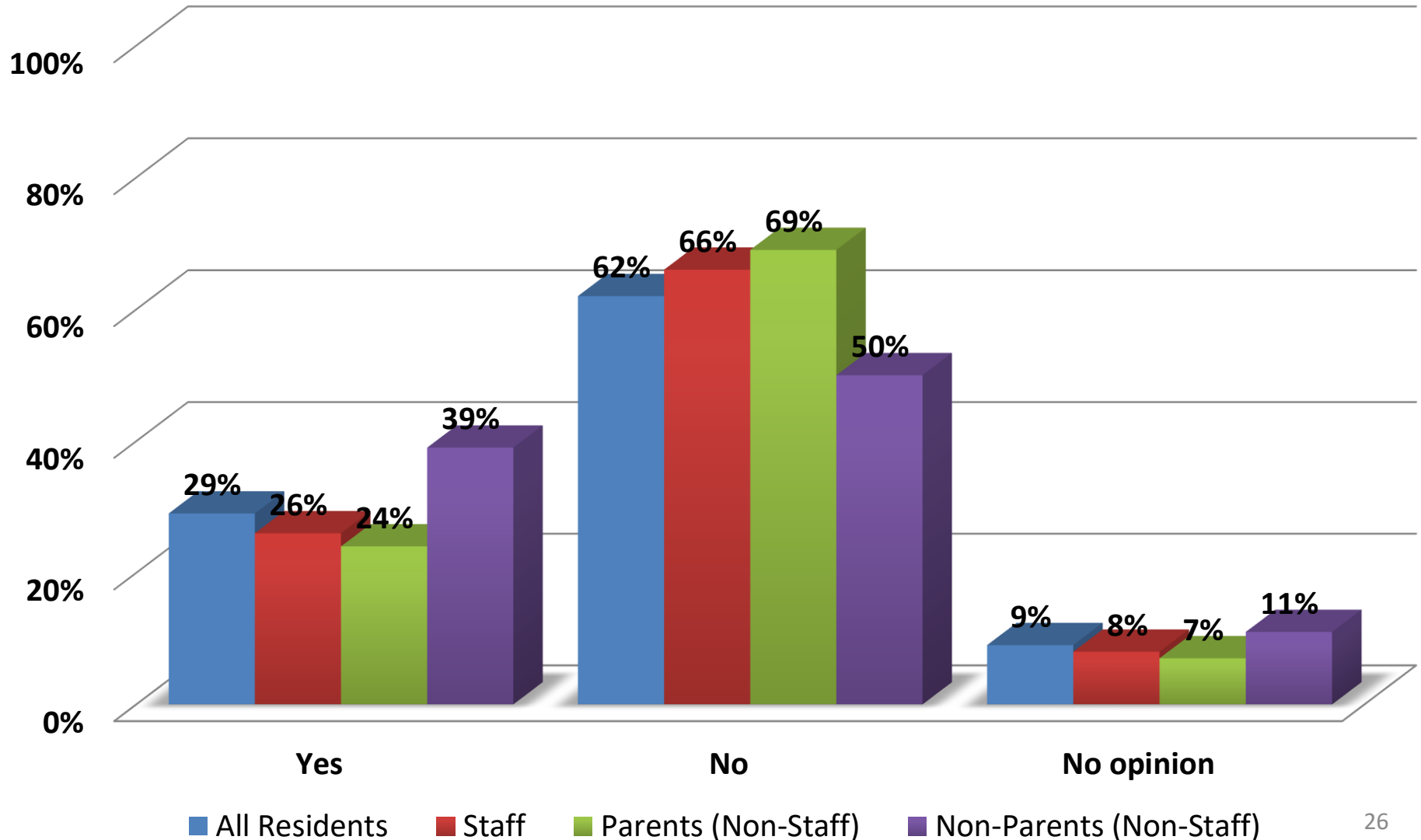
# Should curriculum and textbook updates be reduced/postponed?

*(School District Residents Only)*



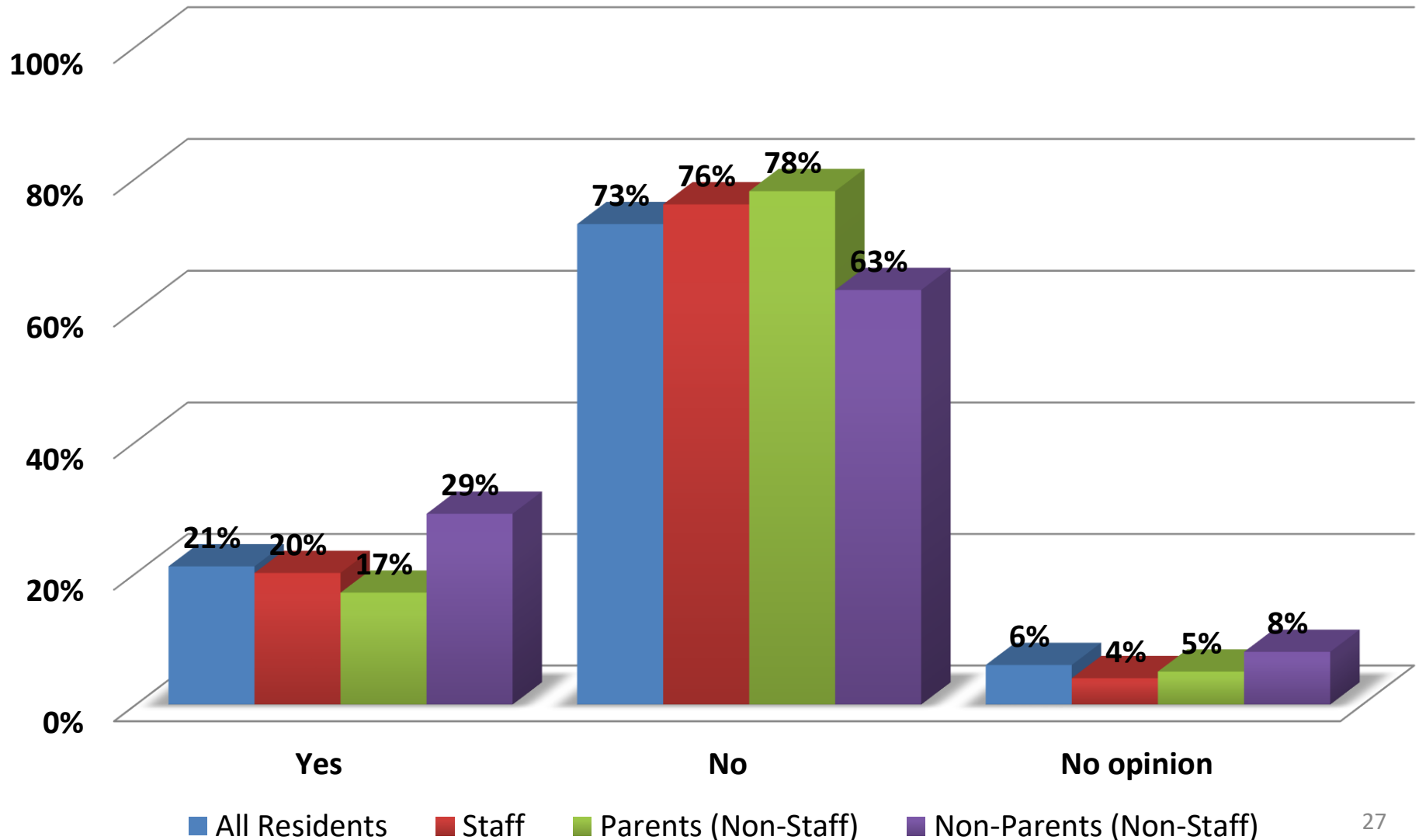
# Should the District consider reducing athletic/co-curricular offerings?

*(School District Residents Only)*



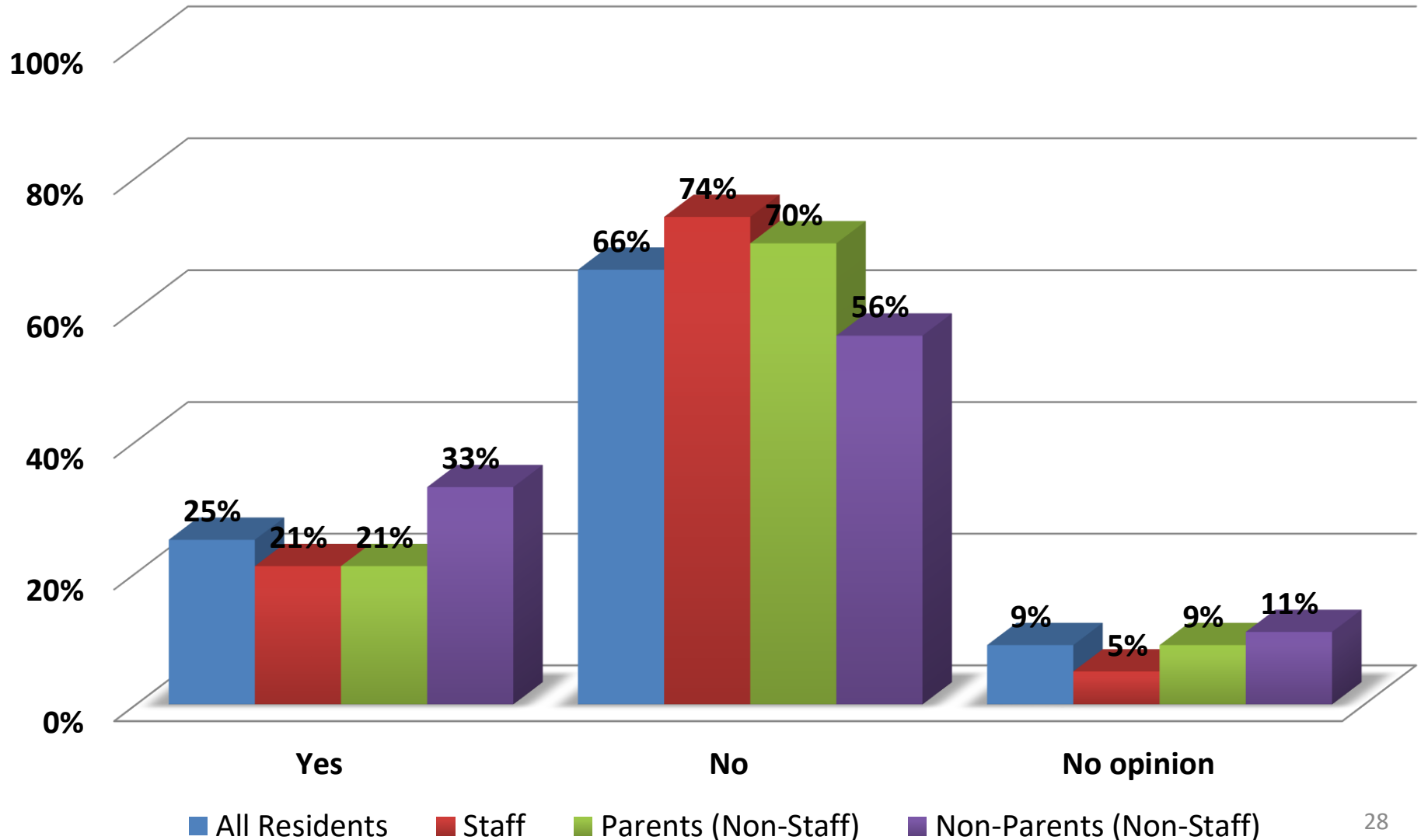
# Should the District consider delaying technology updates?

*(School District Residents Only)*



# Should the District reduce the annual maintenance budget?

*(School District Residents Only)*



# Cost-Cutting Options

*Yes (10), No (1), No opinion (0)*

Item	All Residents	Staff	Parents (Non-Staff)	Non-Parents (Non-Staff) *
Should the District consider reducing athletic/co-curricular offerings?	3.87	3.52	3.33	4.92
Should curriculum and textbook updates be reduced/postponed?	4.39	4.39	4.12	4.85
Should the District reduce the annual maintenance budget?	3.49	3.01	3.13	4.30
Should the District consider delaying technology updates?	3.03	2.88	2.61	3.82
Should the District consider cutting teachers and increasing class sizes?	2.33	1.64	1.89	3.32
Should the District consider reducing career-ready and college-level courses?	2.01	1.64	1.71	2.68

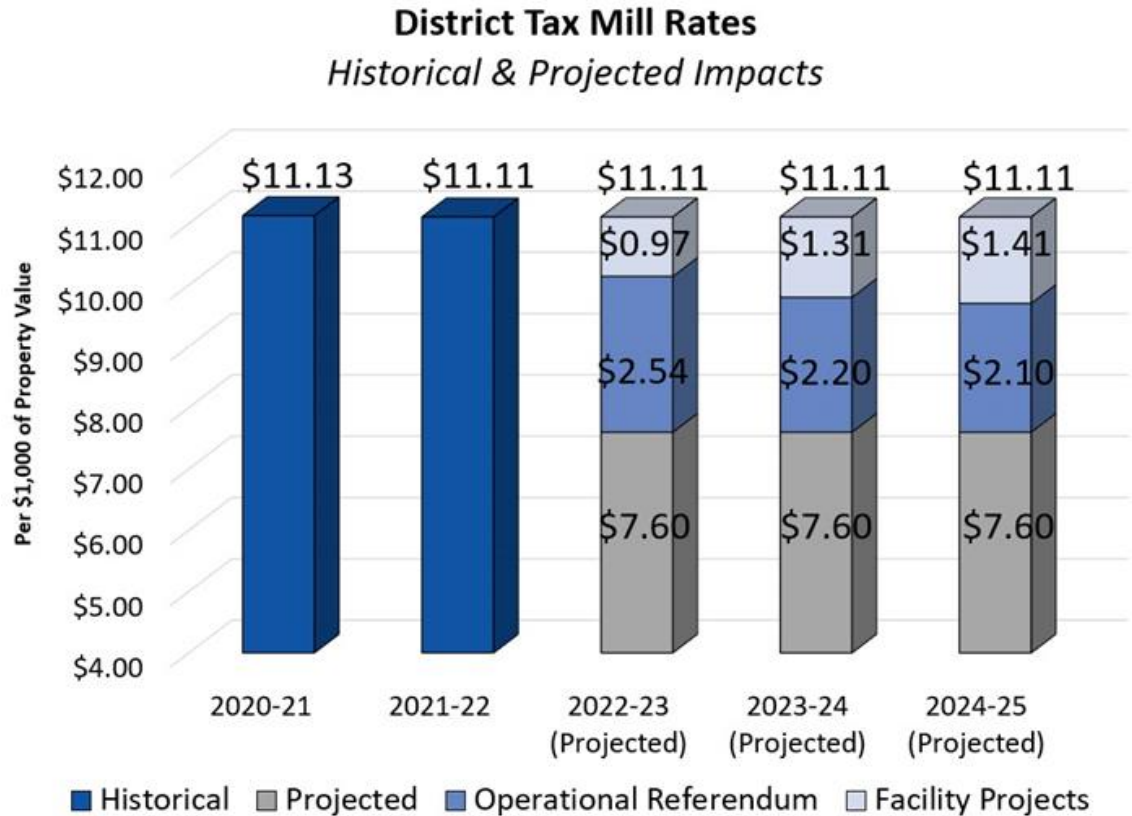
# Facility Planning

Earlier this year, the District hired an outside firm to conduct a thorough study of our buildings and grounds. Some of the more pressing projects include:

- **Major building systems** (such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning/circulation, electrical, and plumbing) need to be replaced across the District (except for the primary school).
- **Roofs** at the elementary and high school leak and must be replaced.
- The **track** is at the end of its service life and poses some safety concerns, and the inside of the track floods easily.
- The **parking lot** at the middle school needs to be resurfaced.

We could begin addressing these projects listed above and maintain the current tax mill rate, which is \$11.11.

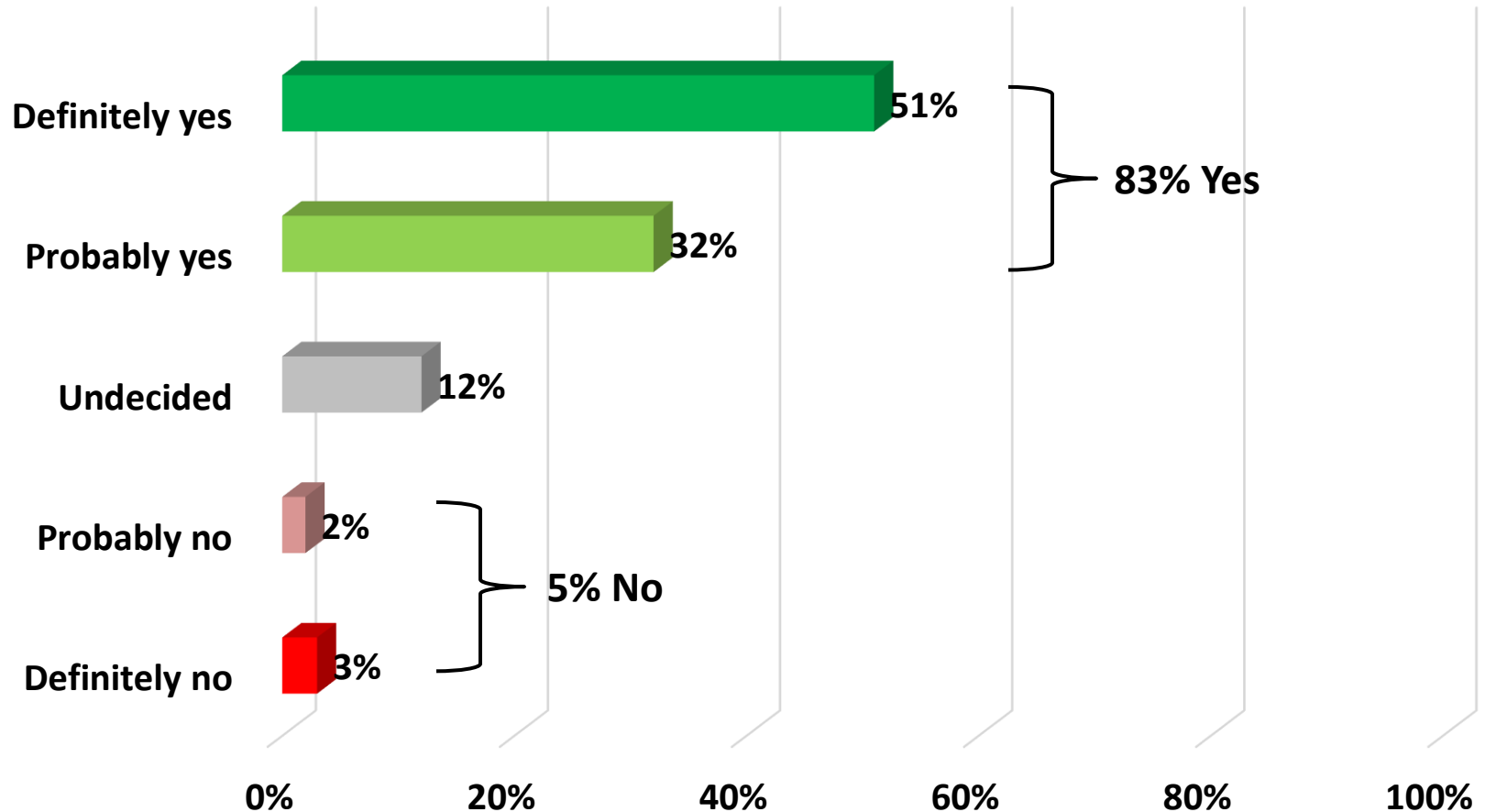
The graph to the right shows the tax impact to fund the facility projects, as well as the proposed operational referendum.





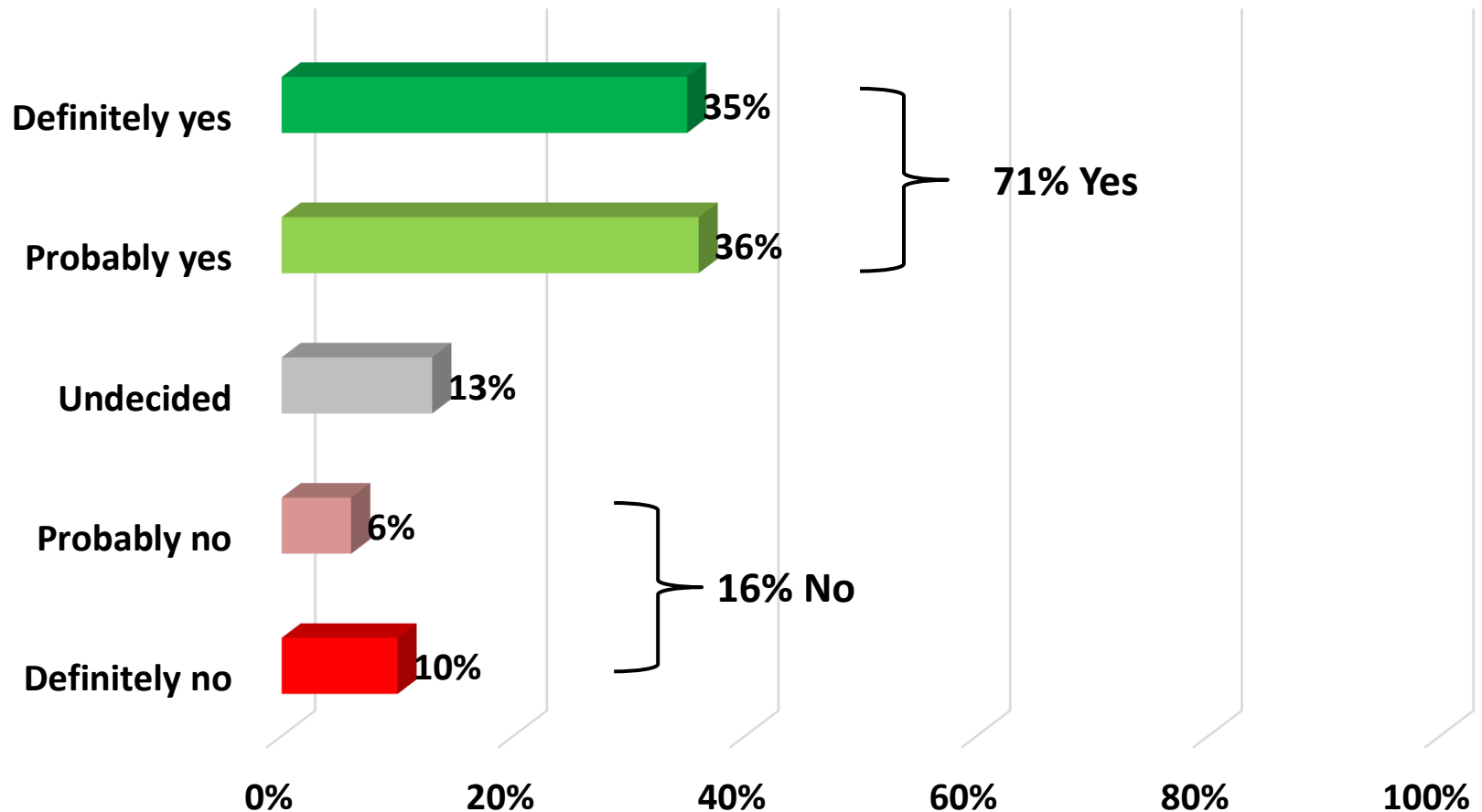
# Would you support funding that maintains the current mill rate of \$11.11 to pay for some of the facility projects listed above?

Staff Residents



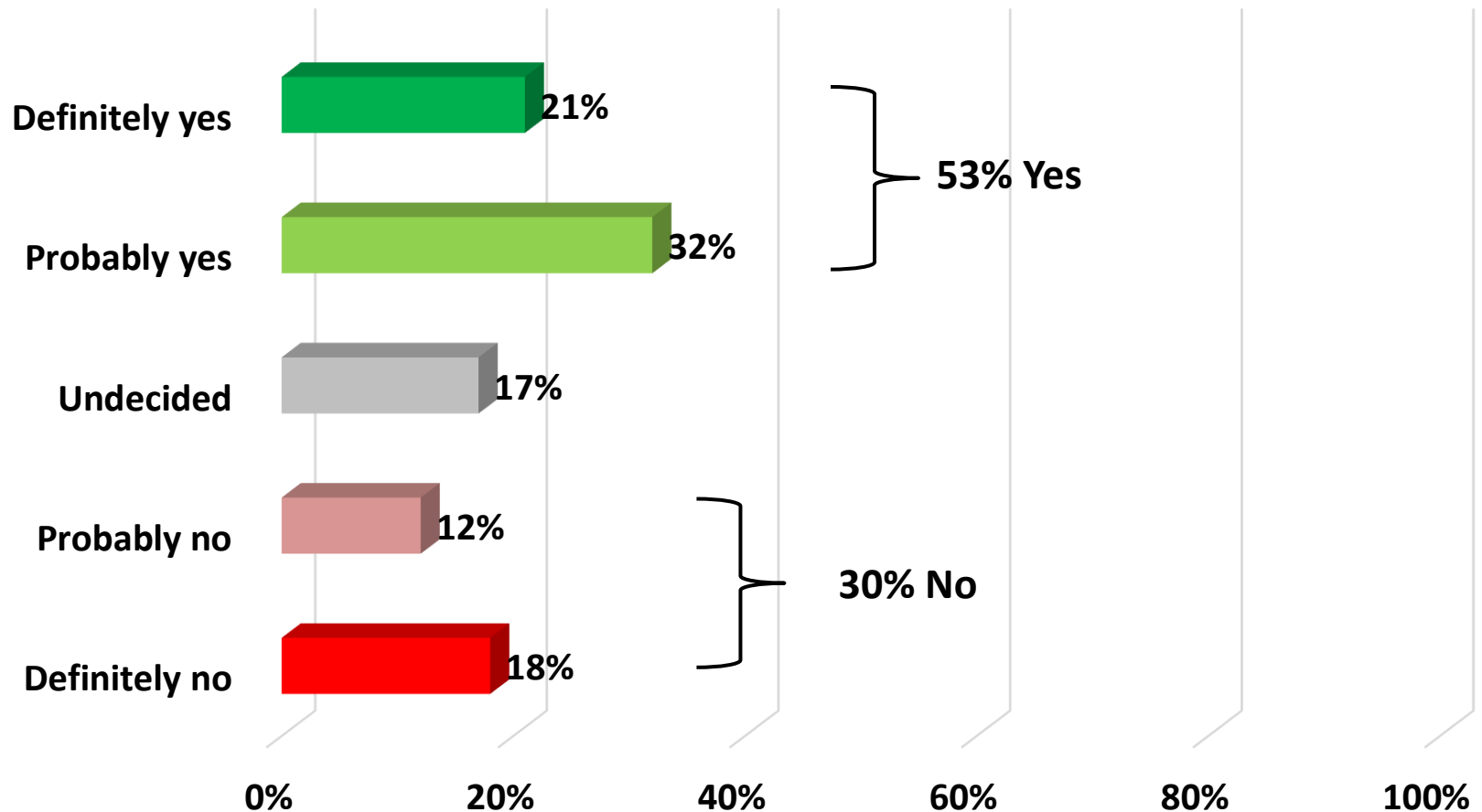
# Would you support funding that maintains the current mill rate of \$11.11 to pay for some of the facility projects listed above?

Parent Residents (Non-Staff)

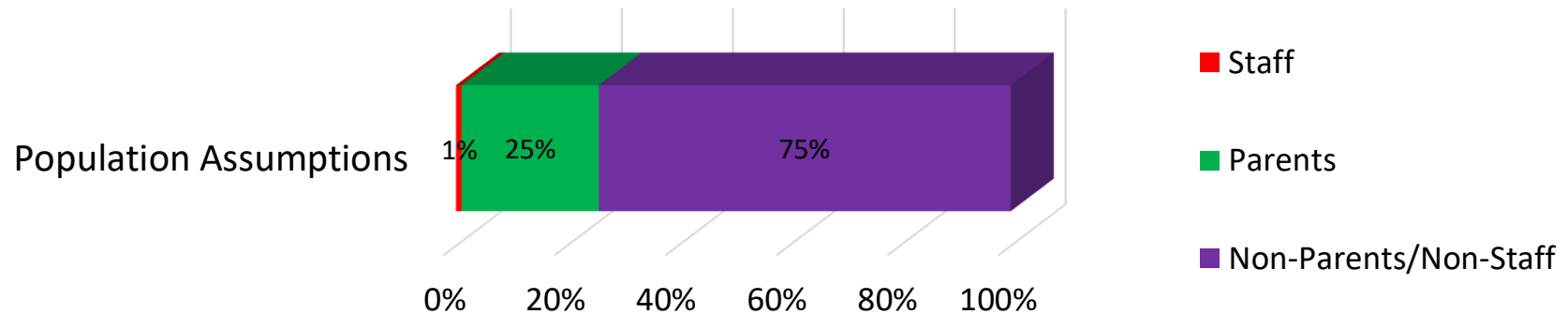


# Would you support funding that maintains the current mill rate of \$11.11 to pay for some of the facility projects listed above?

Non-Parent Residents (Non-Staff)



# Would the community support the operational referendum?



- Of those responding “Definitely yes” or “Probably Yes”  
–  $0.75 (53\%) + 0.25 (71\%) = \underline{\underline{57.5\%}}$
- Inclusion of 1/3 of “Undecided” respondents:  
–  $0.75 (59\%) + 0.25 (75\%) = \underline{\underline{63\%}}$

# Planning Ahead: Future Facility Projects

**We realize addressing all the projects identified in the study is not realistic at this time.** Therefore, we could complete them in future phases. The remaining projects are summarized below:

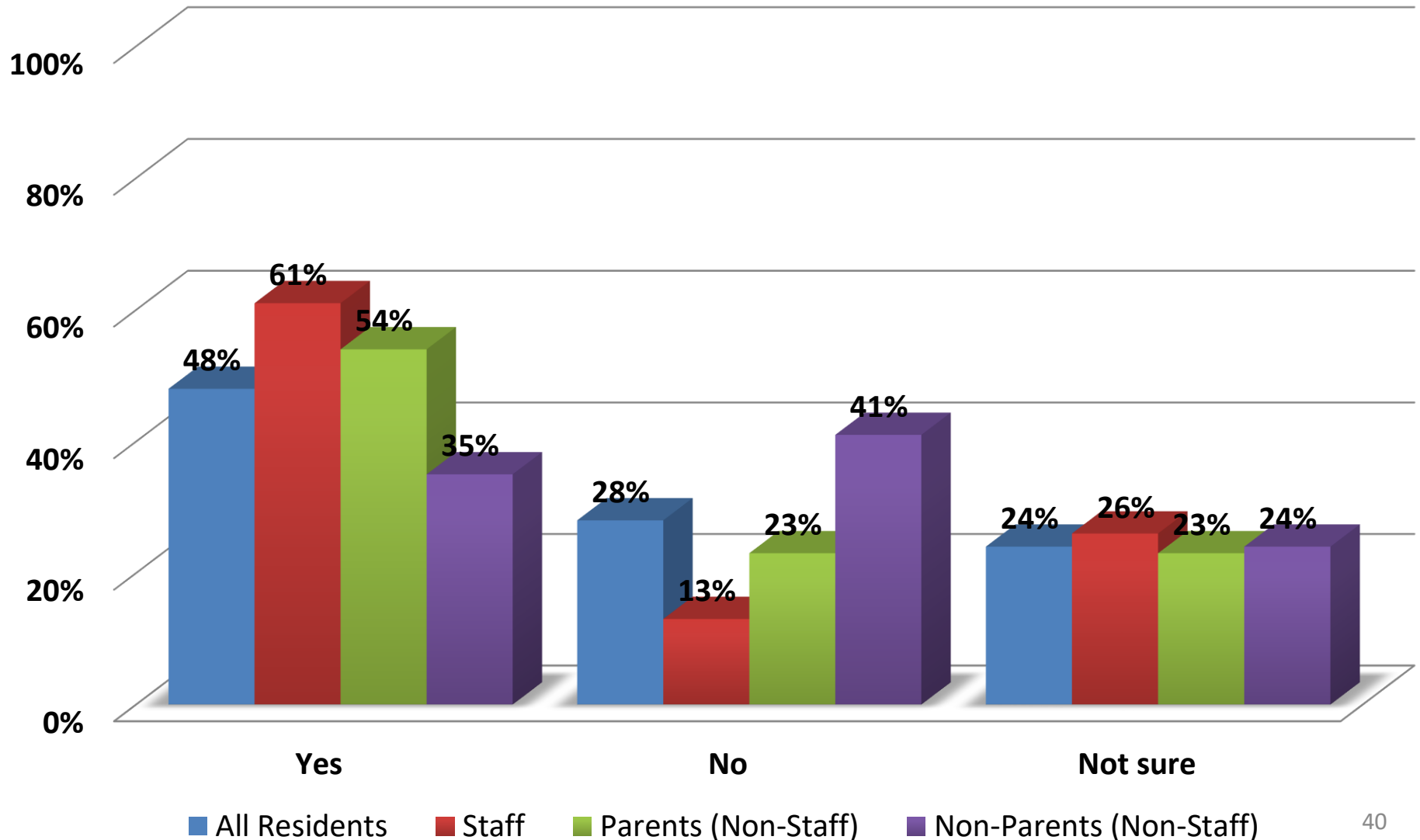
- The **greenspace** around the primary school needs to be developed so that it could be used by softball, baseball, soccer, football, and other activities.
- The **greenspace** near the elementary school is typically wet, in poor condition, and could be improved for use as a play area and by co-curricular activities.
- The **performing arts center** (PAC) needs upgrades to the curtains, stage, spotlights, lighting, and audio systems.
- The athletic fields at the **Highway 60 complex** are outdated, have limited use for student-athletes, and have water issues.
- We need a long-term solution for the **track**, which could include improving drainage, redoing the field inside the track, relocating field events closer to the track, improving the sound system, and adding restrooms/concession area.

To address these remaining issues, we would need to pursue a capital referendum. The difference between an operational and capital referendum is explained below.

Type	Purpose
<b>Operational referendum</b>	This type helps fund day-to-day operations, such as maintaining class sizes and student services. Funds secured are used within the year they are received. This is what voters approved in 2008, 2014, and 2016.
<b>Capital referendum</b>	This allows a district to issue debt to pay for major building projects, such as building renovations. Much like a home mortgage, a capital referendum is typically financed over an extended period, often up to 20 years. This is the type voters approved in 2016 to build the primary school.

# Would you support the District exploring a capital referendum in the next few years to address the other facility projects listed above?

*(School District Residents Only)*





# Overall Satisfaction

# How well are we doing in each of the following areas?

*Great (4), Good (3), Fair (2), Poor (1)*

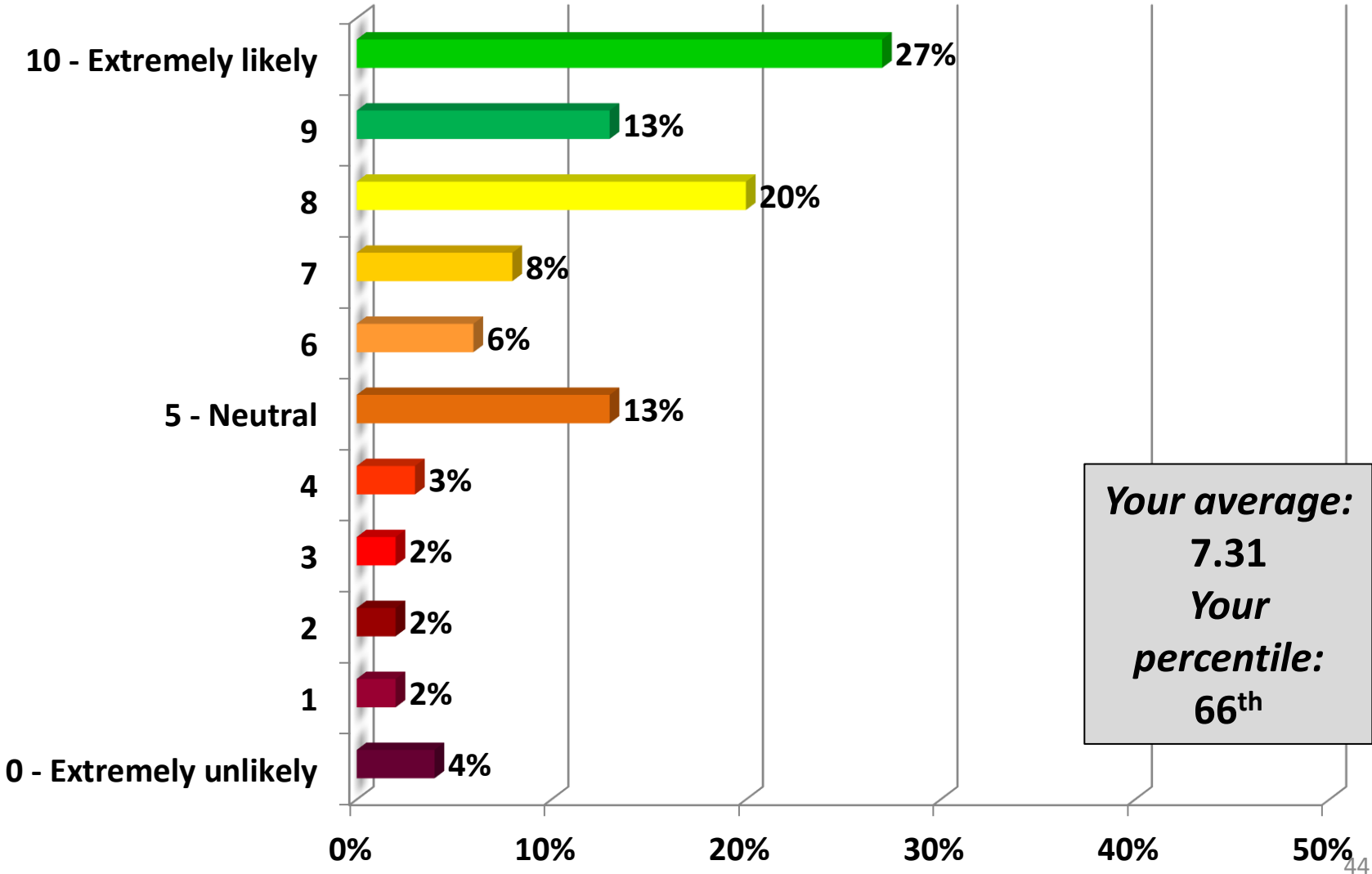
Item	Staff	Parents (Non-Staff)	Non-Parents (Non-Staff)
Delivering a high-quality education	3.43	3.21	2.93
Keeping the public informed	3.24	2.92	2.59
Managing funds appropriately	3.06	2.70	2.44
Building pride in the community	3.38	3.15	2.94

# How well are we doing in each of the following areas?

*Great (4), Good (3), Fair (2), Poor (1)*

Item	Agree Percent	Average	Percentile
Delivering a high-quality education	85%	3.19	69 <sup>th</sup>
Keeping the public informed	71%	2.89	63 <sup>rd</sup>
Managing funds appropriately	63%	2.71	25 <sup>th</sup>
Building pride in the community	80%	3.15	57 <sup>th</sup> 43

**On a scale of 0 – 10, how likely would you be to recommend  
the District to a friend or family member?**  
*(All Respondents)*



# Thank you!



Parent Surveys - Staff Surveys - Student Surveys - Community Surveys  
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