

## Public Sector Advisors



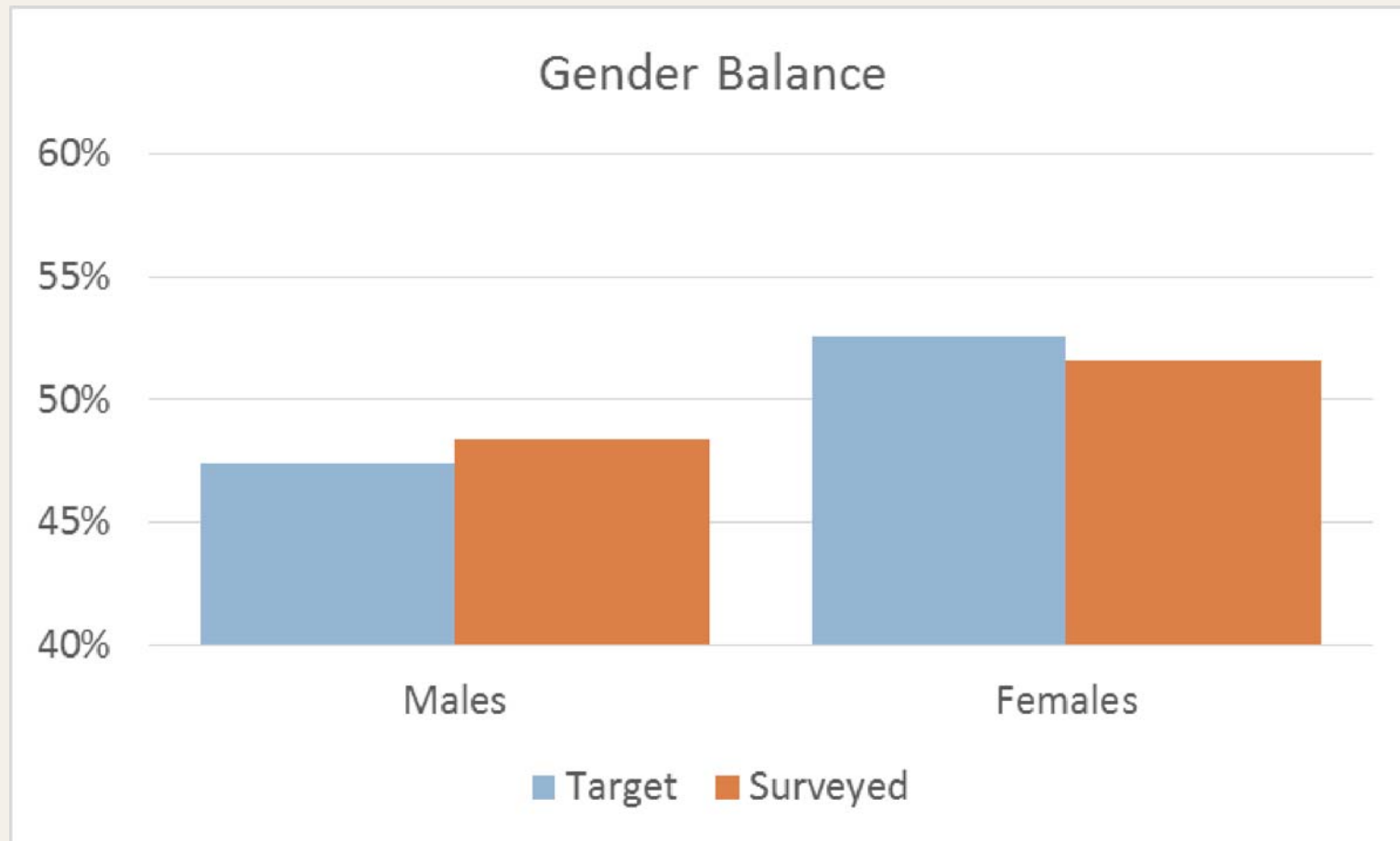
# Survey outline

- Survey included interviews with 401 registered voters in the District
- Interviews were completed between May 30<sup>th</sup> and June 7<sup>th</sup>
- Approximate margin of error is  $\pm 4.9\%$

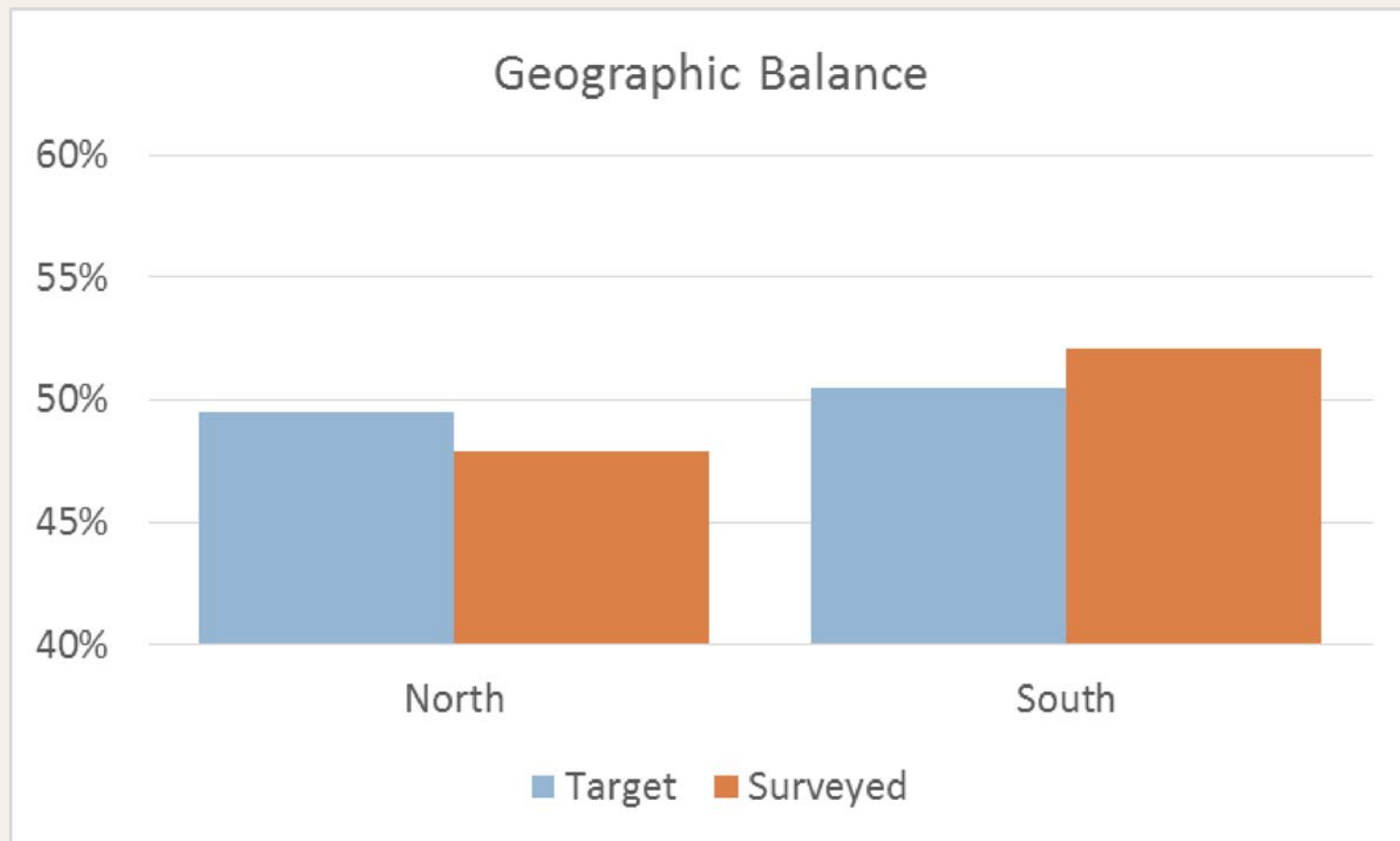
# Who we called

- Interviews included demographic targets intended to provide a representative sample of voters in the district
- Actual interviews came very close to targets
- Cell phones were tracked, but were not a demographic target

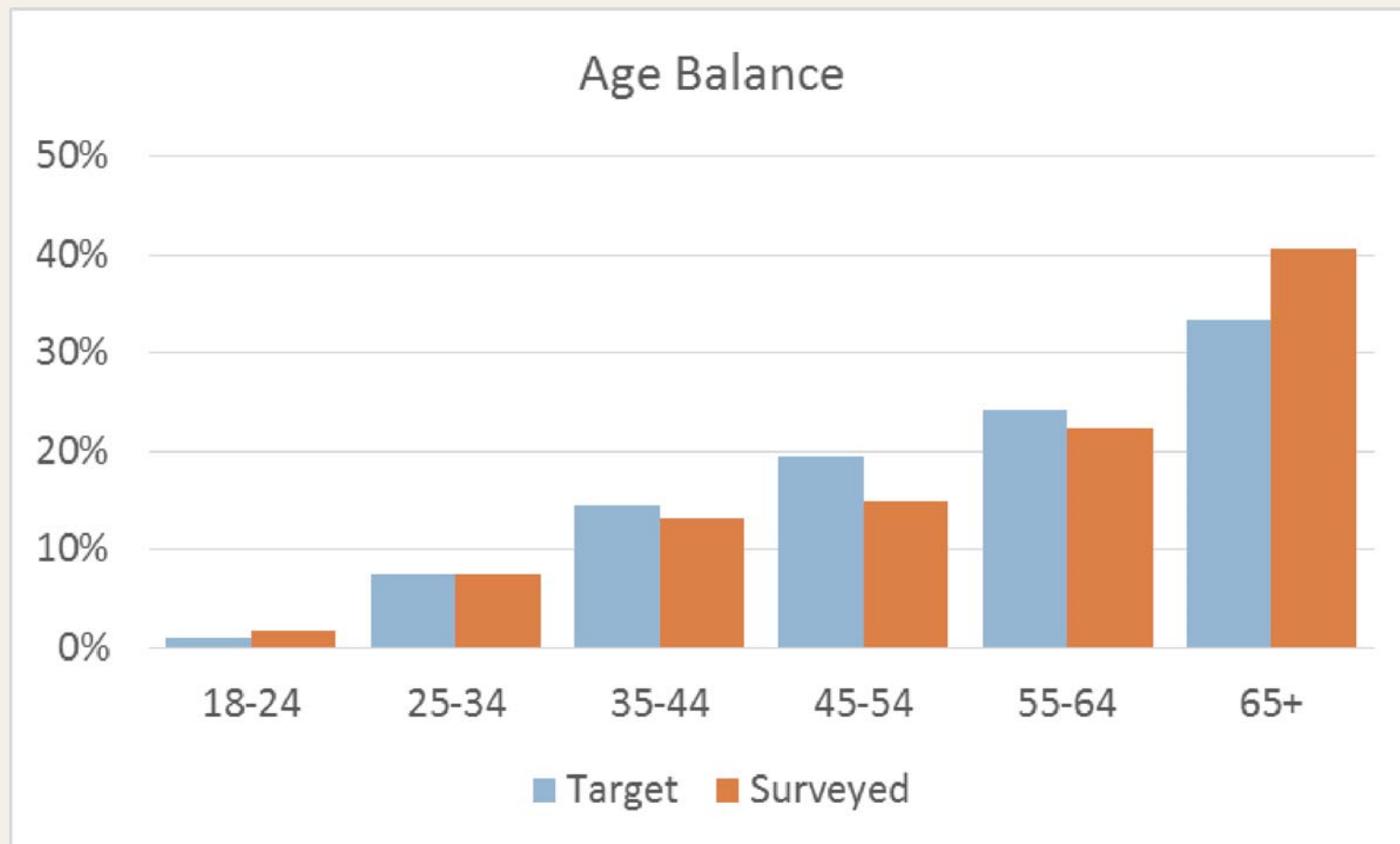
# Who we called: Gender



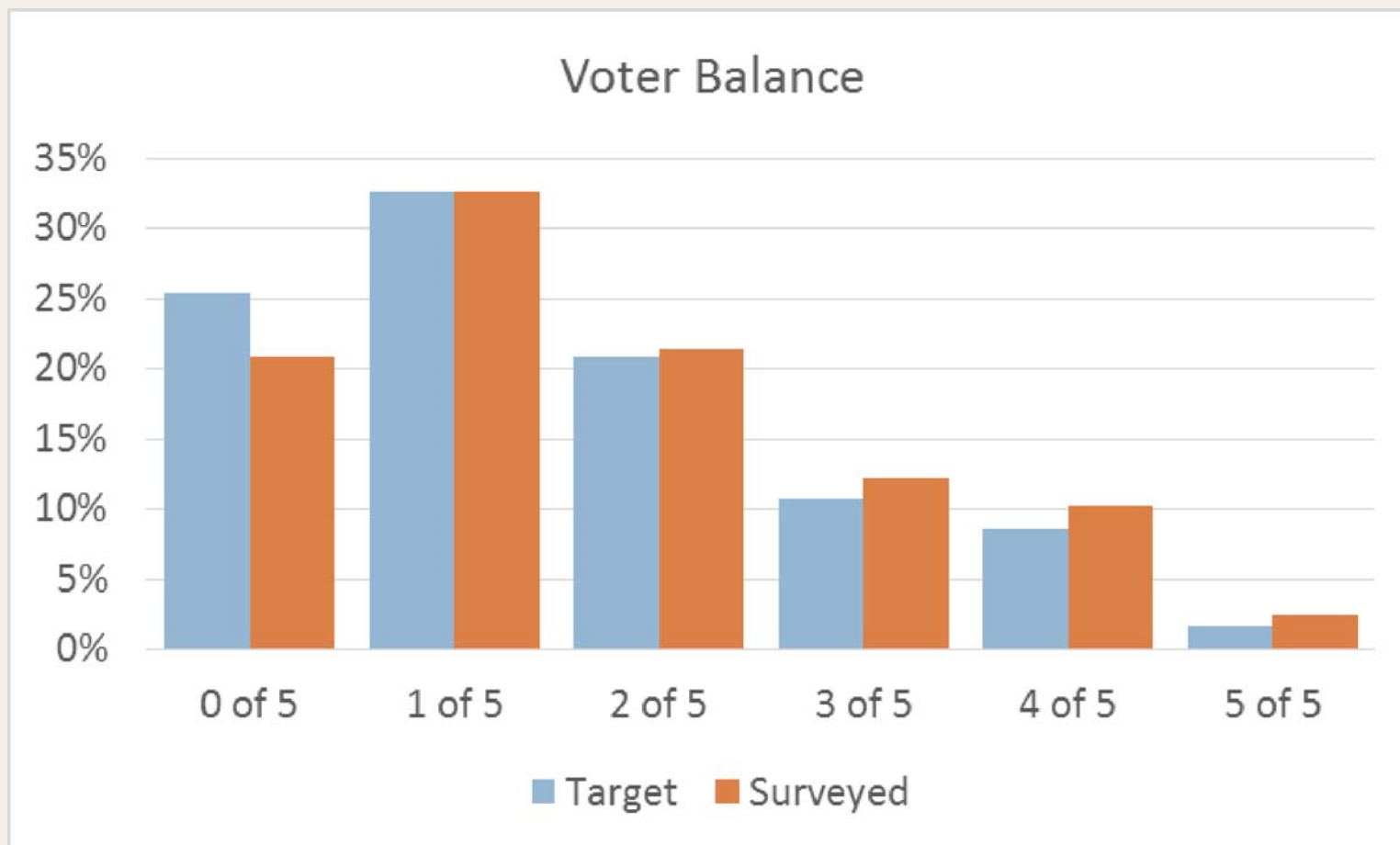
# Who we called: Location



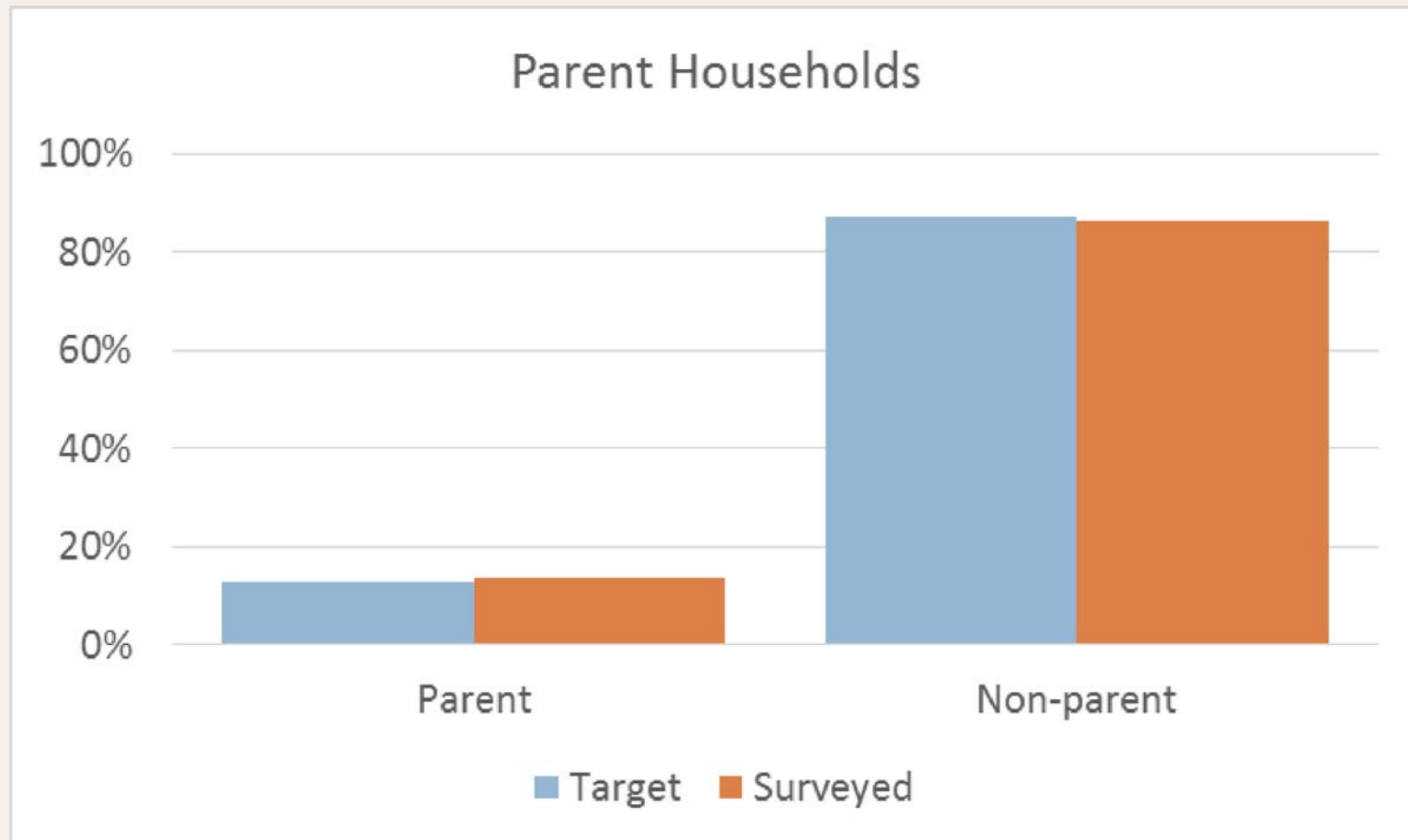
# Who we called: Age



# Who we called: Past voting activity

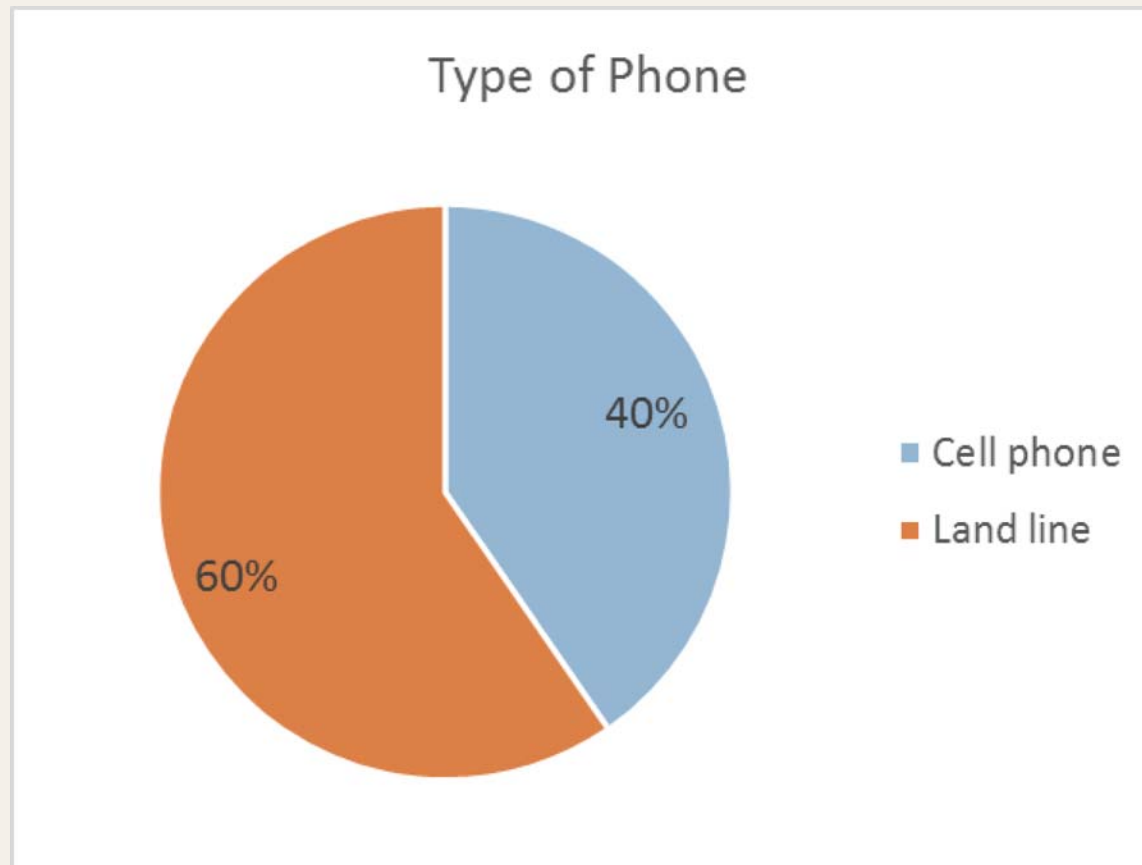


# Who we called: Parent households





# Who we called: Cell phones



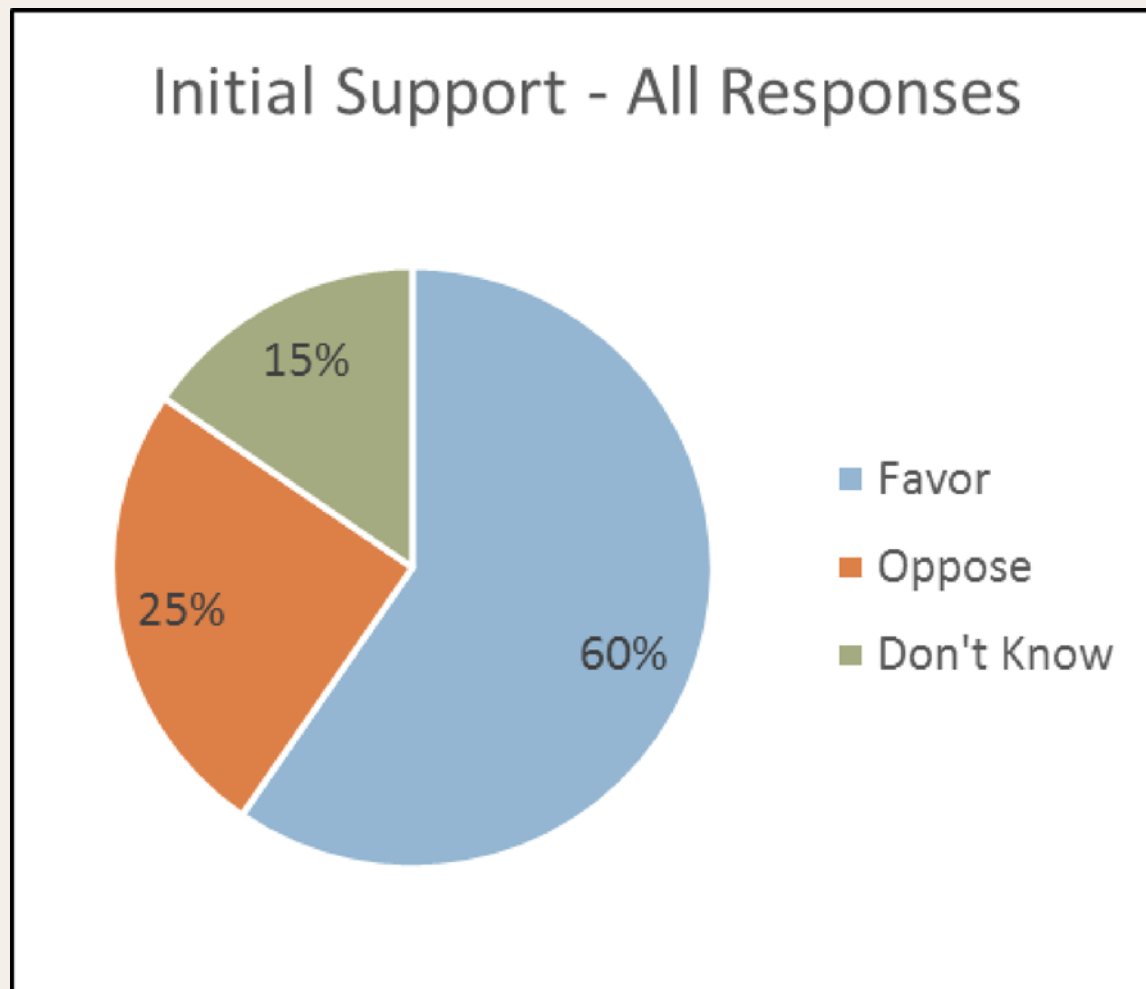
# Proposal: Exceeding the revenue cap

“The School District plans to seek voter approval this fall to exceed the state’s revenue cap for 15 years.

The proposal will raise property taxes to generate an estimated \$5.8 million in additional funding per year to invest in debt service for high-priority building maintenance projects, safety and security improvements, lowering class sizes, technology enhancements, and to provide more competitive compensation for teachers and staff.

Would you favor or oppose such a proposal?”

# Initial support

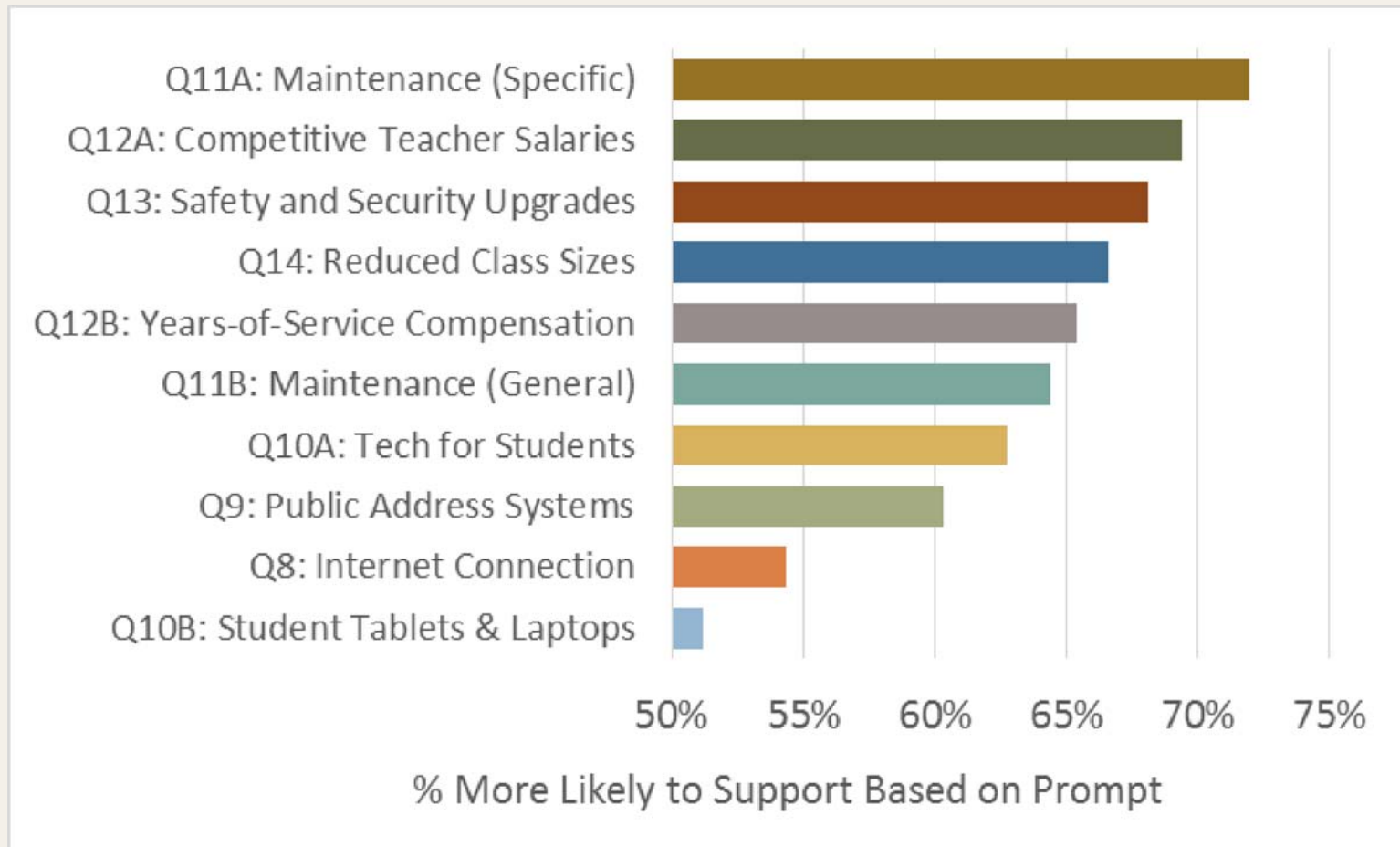


# Effects of information about proposal

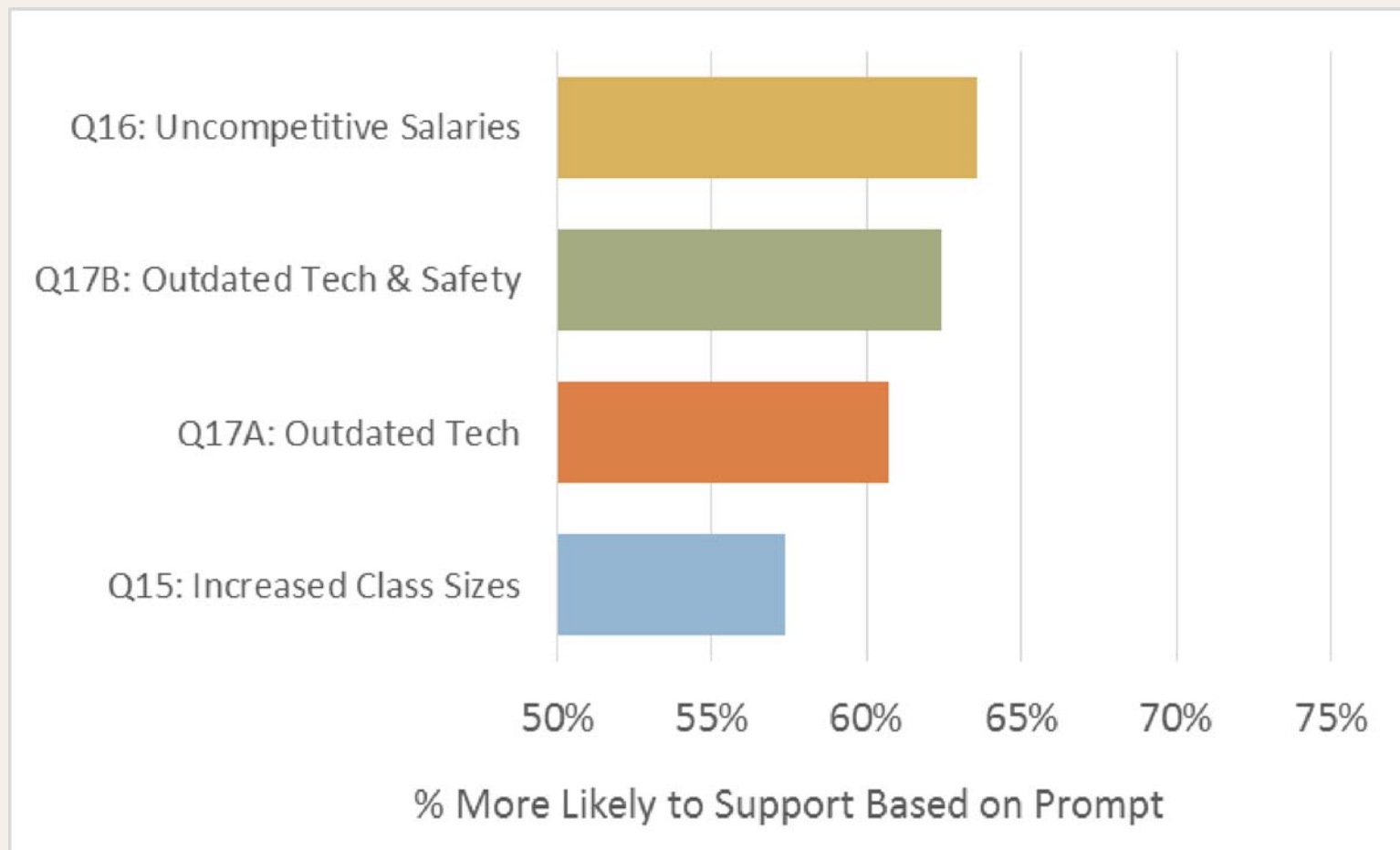
“I am going to read some statements about the increase in the revenue cap the District is considering.

Please tell me whether the information in each statement would make you more likely or less likely to vote for such a proposal. ”

# Potential Improvements



# Potential Consequences

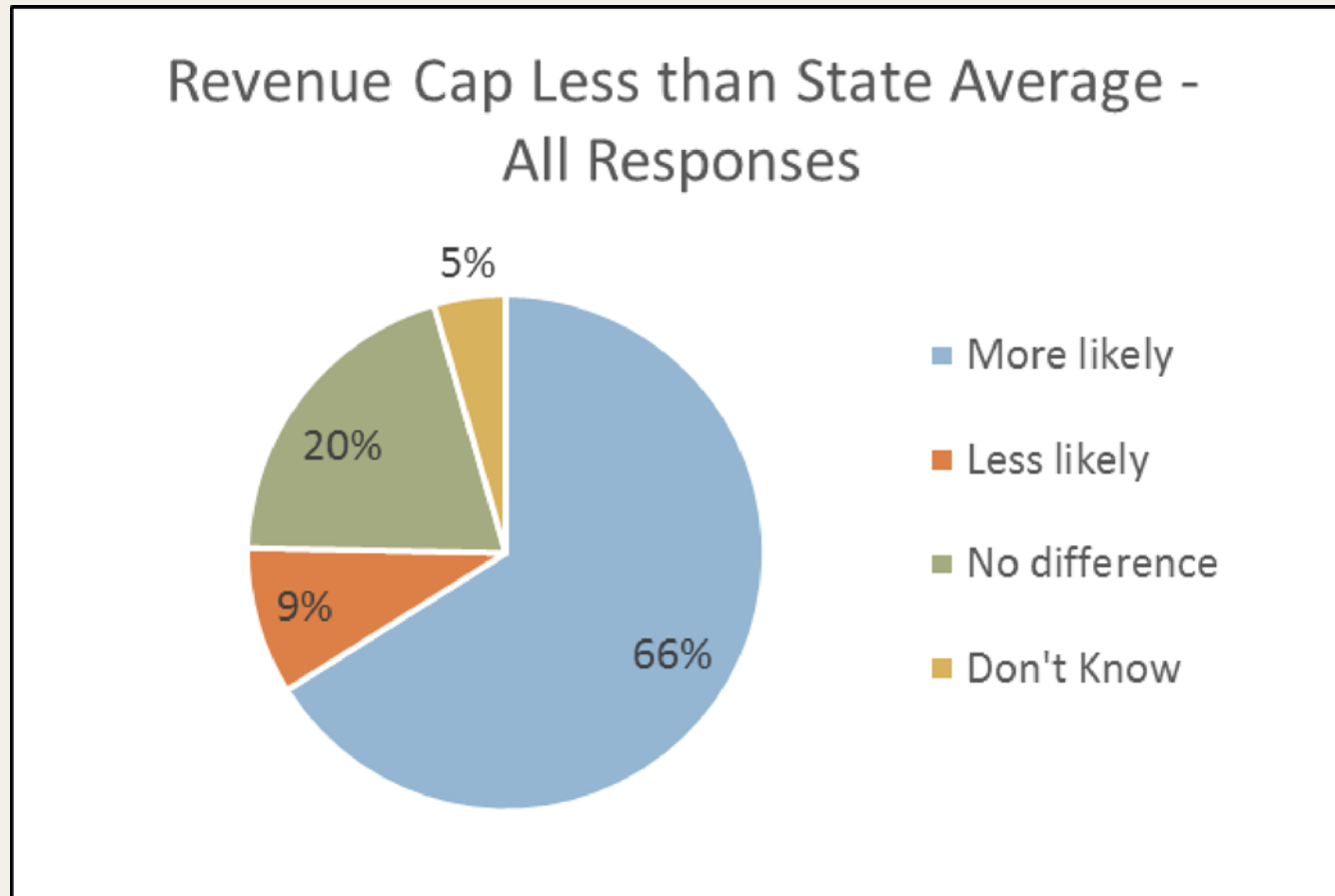


## Effects of current revenue cap

“Please tell me whether this information would make you more likely or less likely to vote for such a proposal:

The Eau Claire School District has been limited by a state-imposed revenue cap since 1993; as a result, the District currently receives \$357 less per student for teaching and learning, as compared to the state average.”

# Current revenue cap



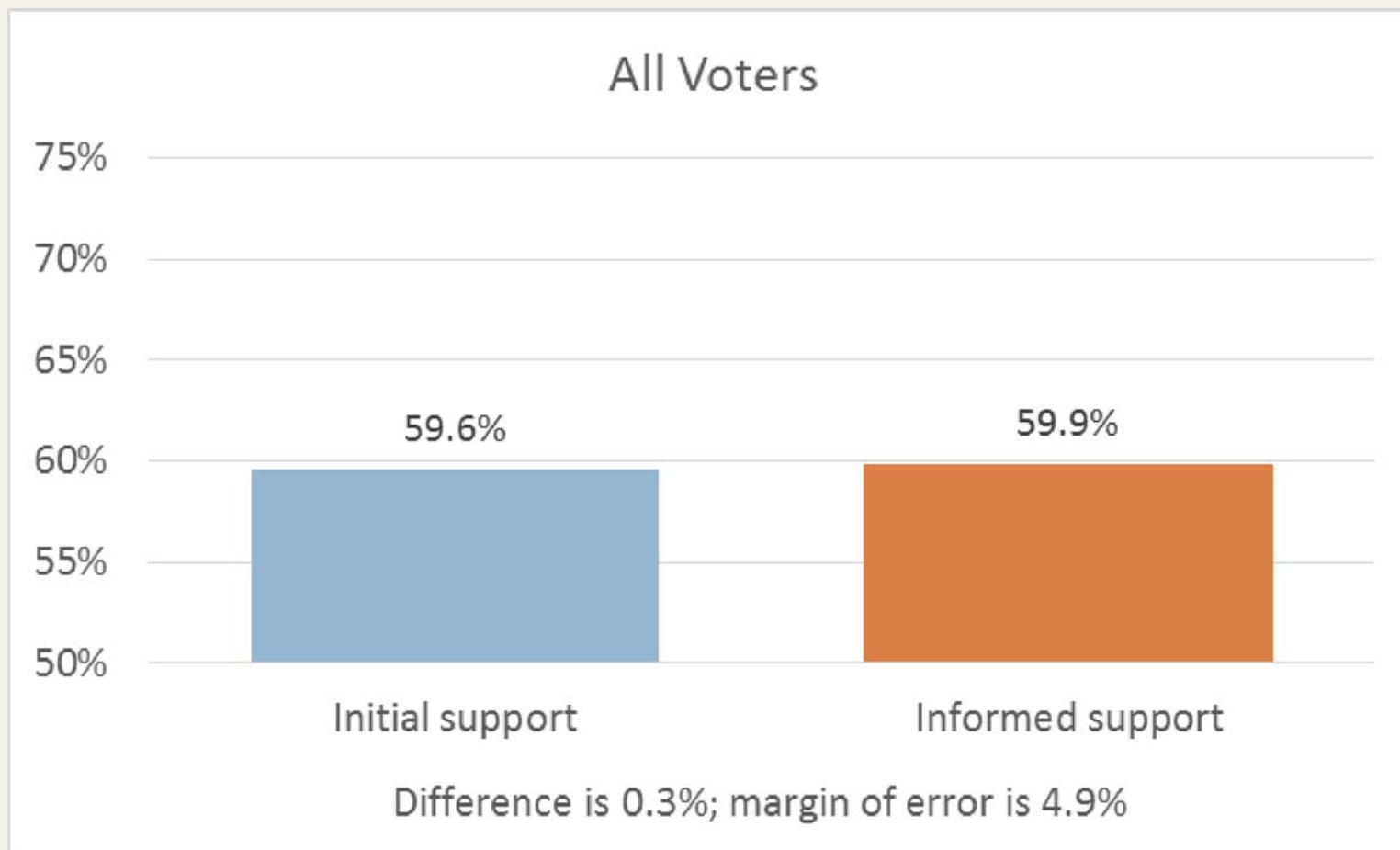


## Impact of information about levy

“Now that you have heard some information about the District’s proposed increase in its revenue cap, I want to see if this information has changed your opinion.

Would you favor or oppose the District’s proposal to increase property taxes to raise an additional \$5.8 million above the revenue cap for 15 years?”

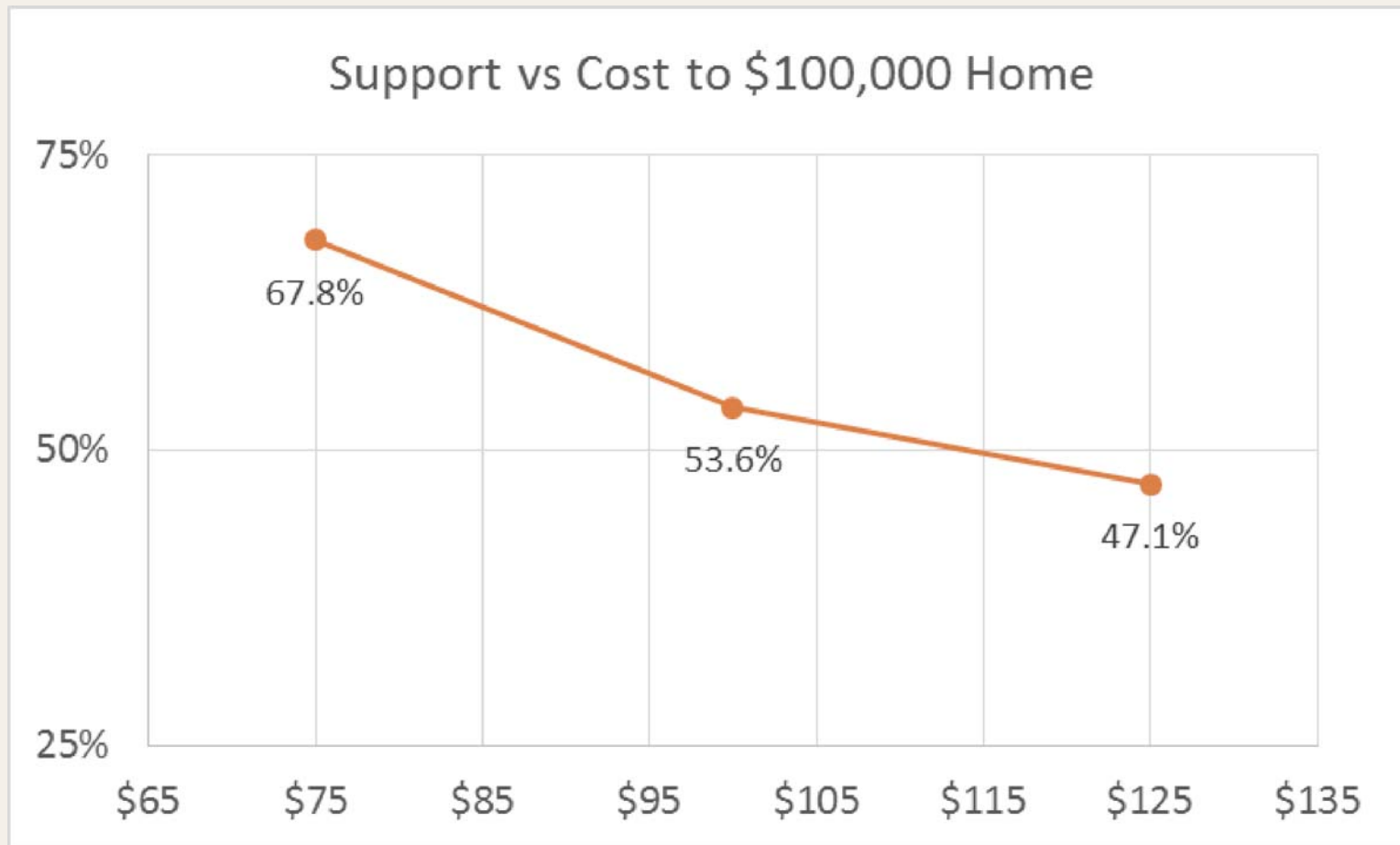
# Impact of information



# Impact of cost information

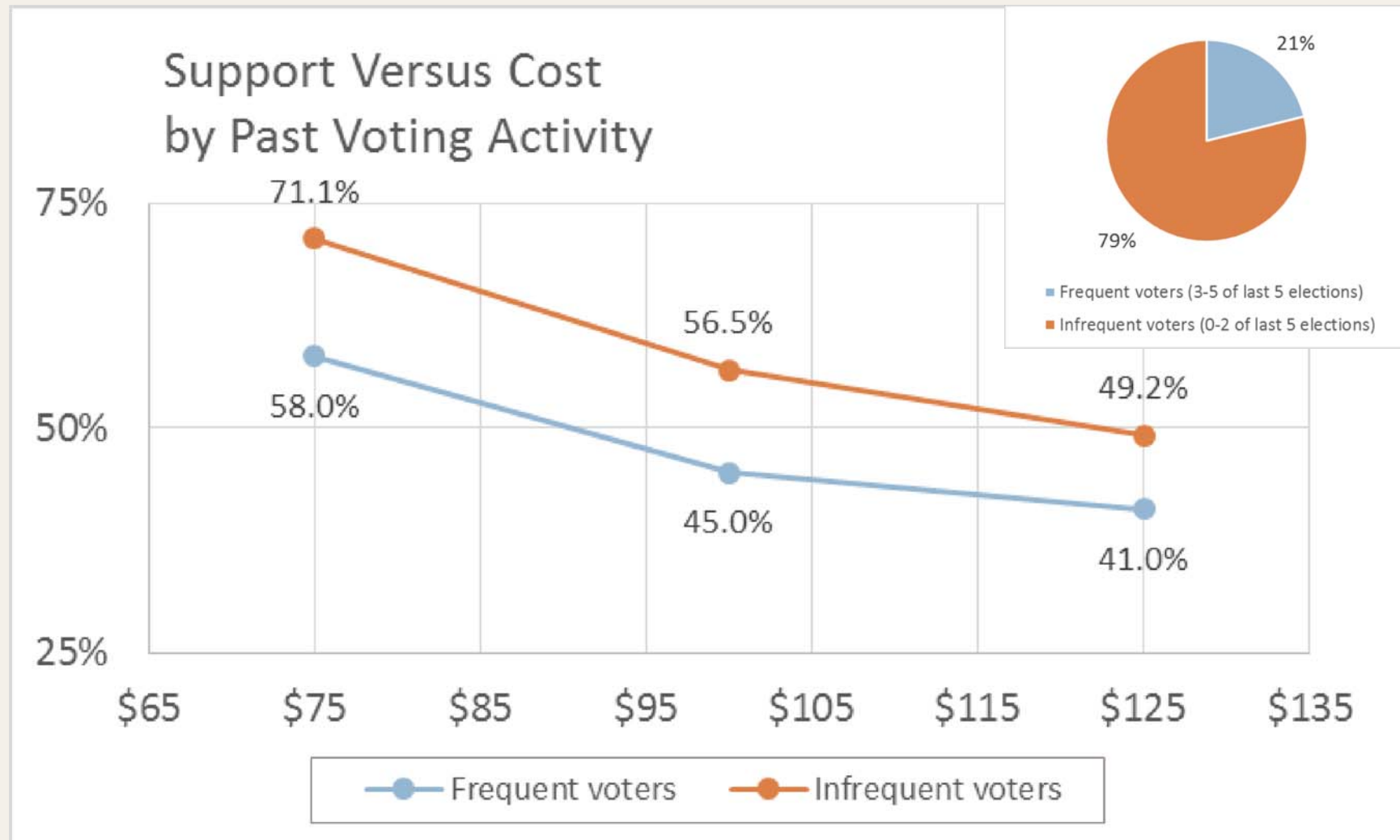
- Participants were asked about three potential property tax increases: \$75, \$100, or \$125 per year
  - Impacts were based on a home valued at \$100,000

# Impact of cost information



Potential tax impacts tested were \$75, \$100, and \$125

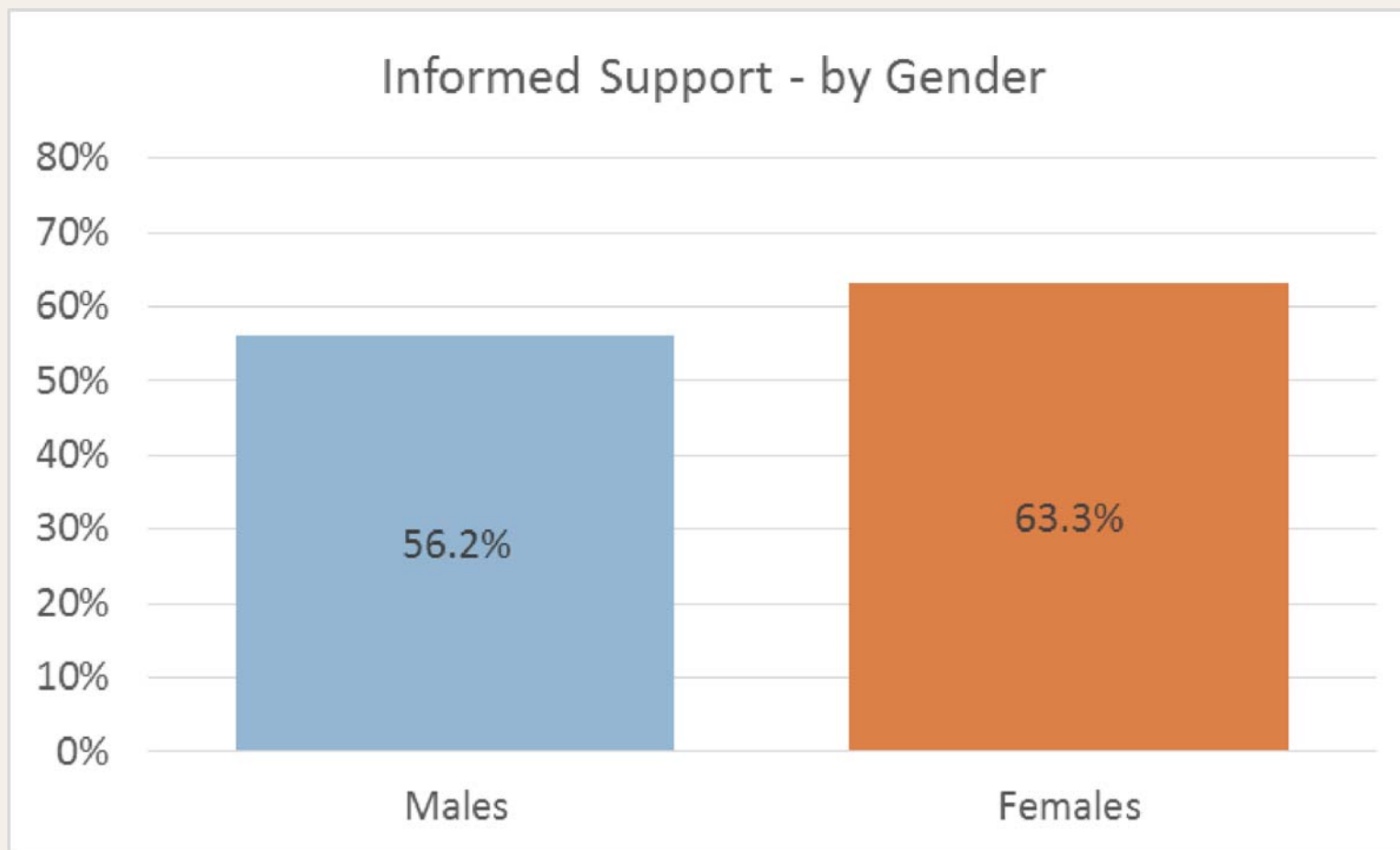
# Impact of cost information – voter groups



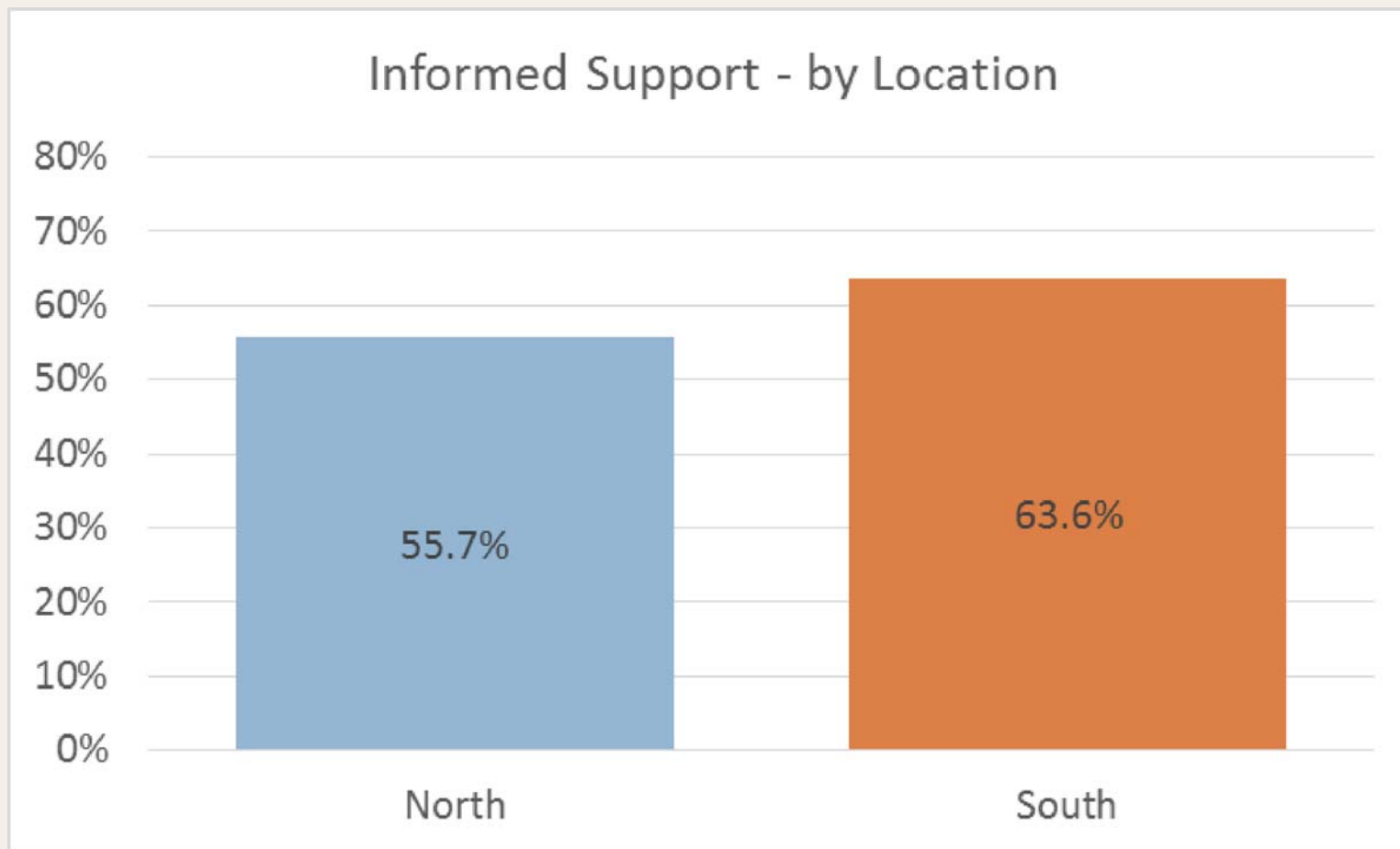
# Demographic differences

- The following slides show a quick snapshot of differences in support between demographic groups
  - Gender
  - Location
  - Age
  - Parent households
  - Voter activity
- Charts show % of favorable responses after hearing information about the proposed levy

# Demographic differences

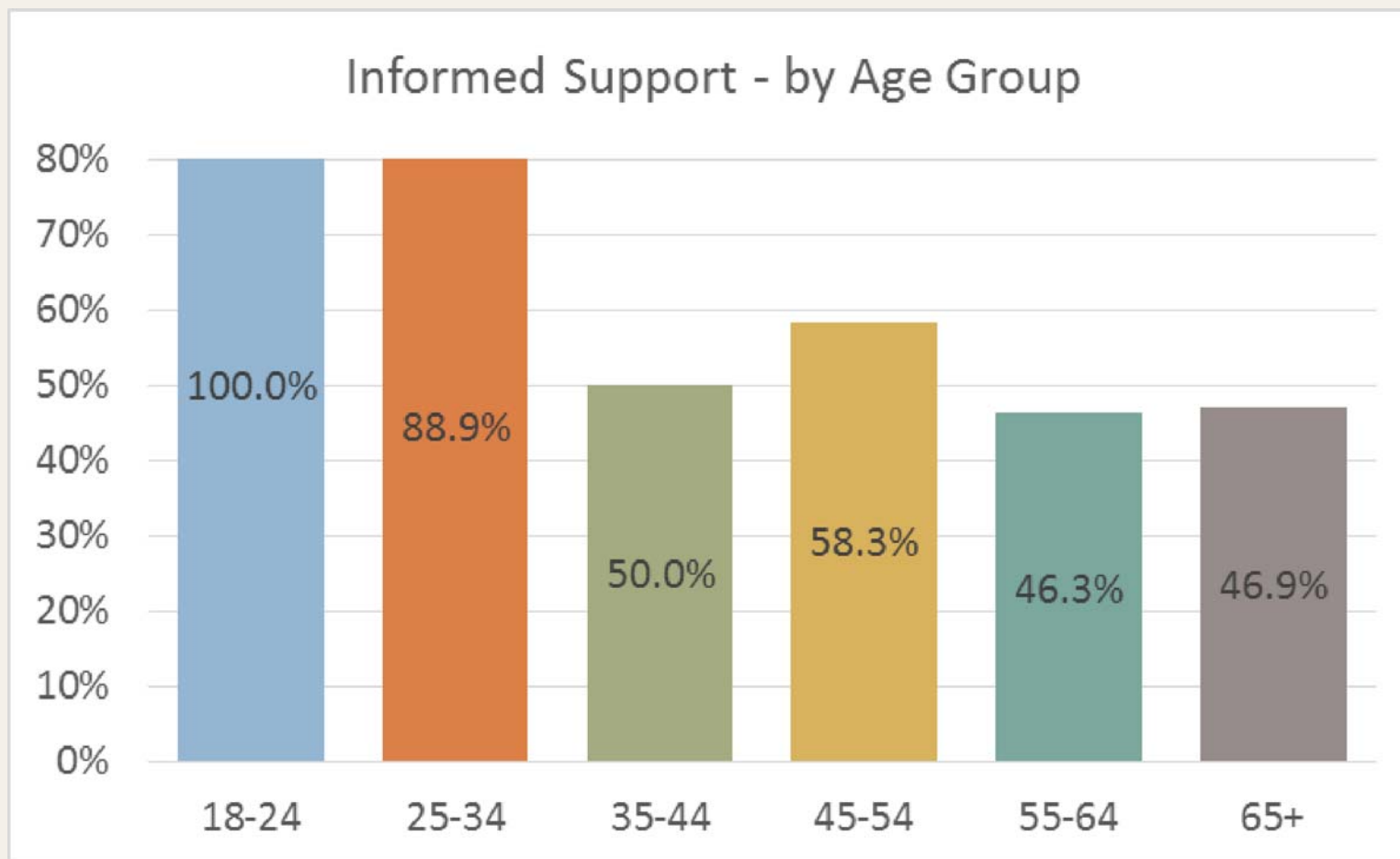


# Demographic differences

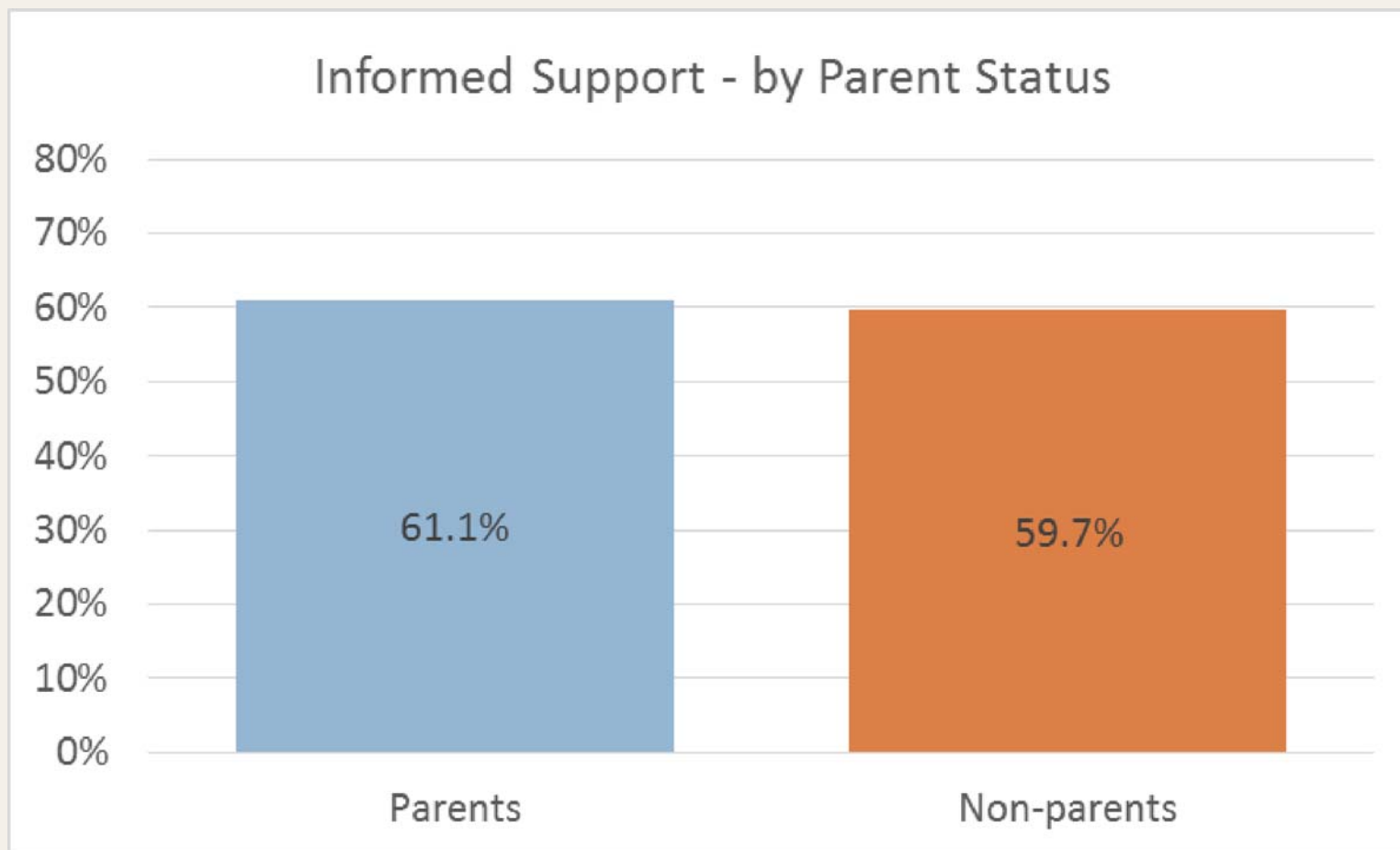




# Demographic differences



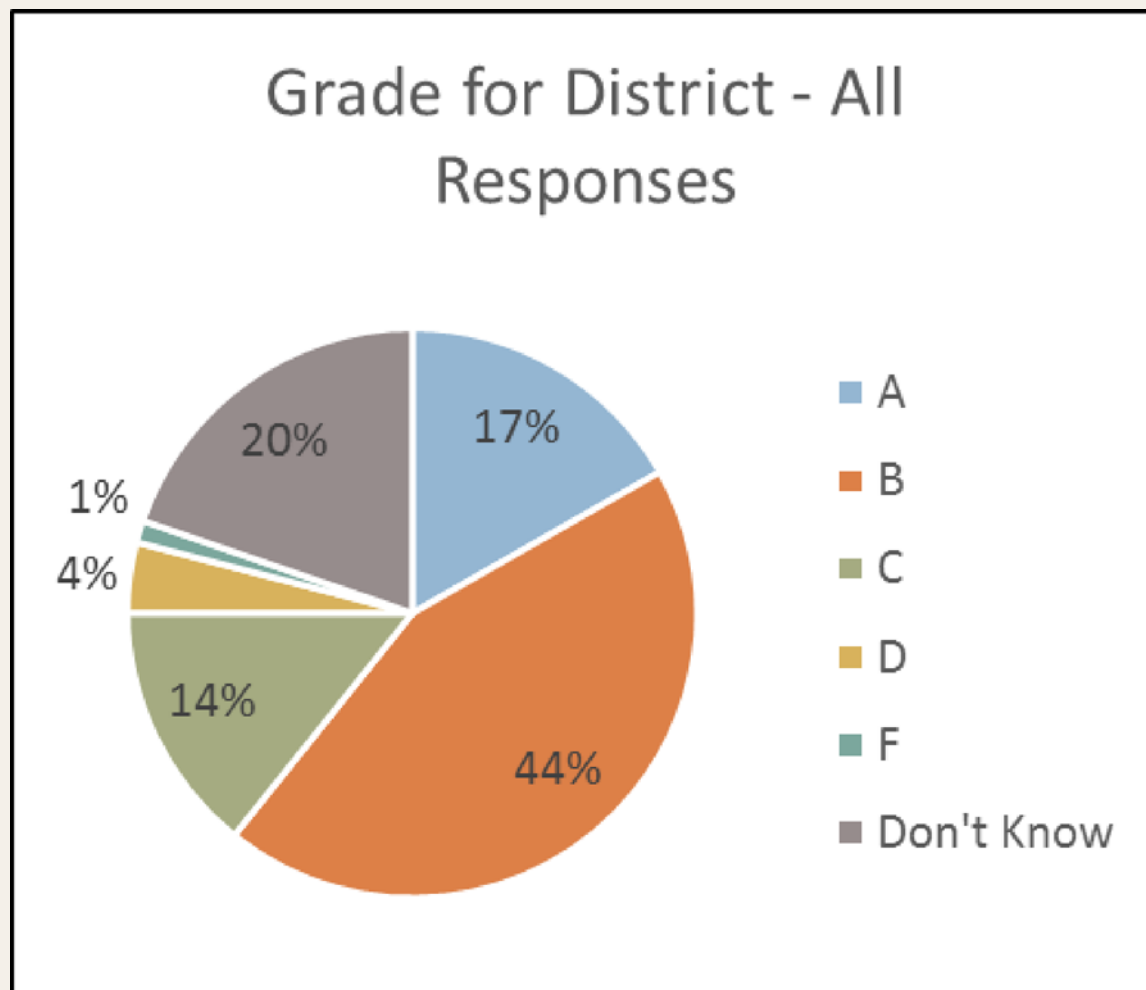
# Demographic differences



# Grading the public schools

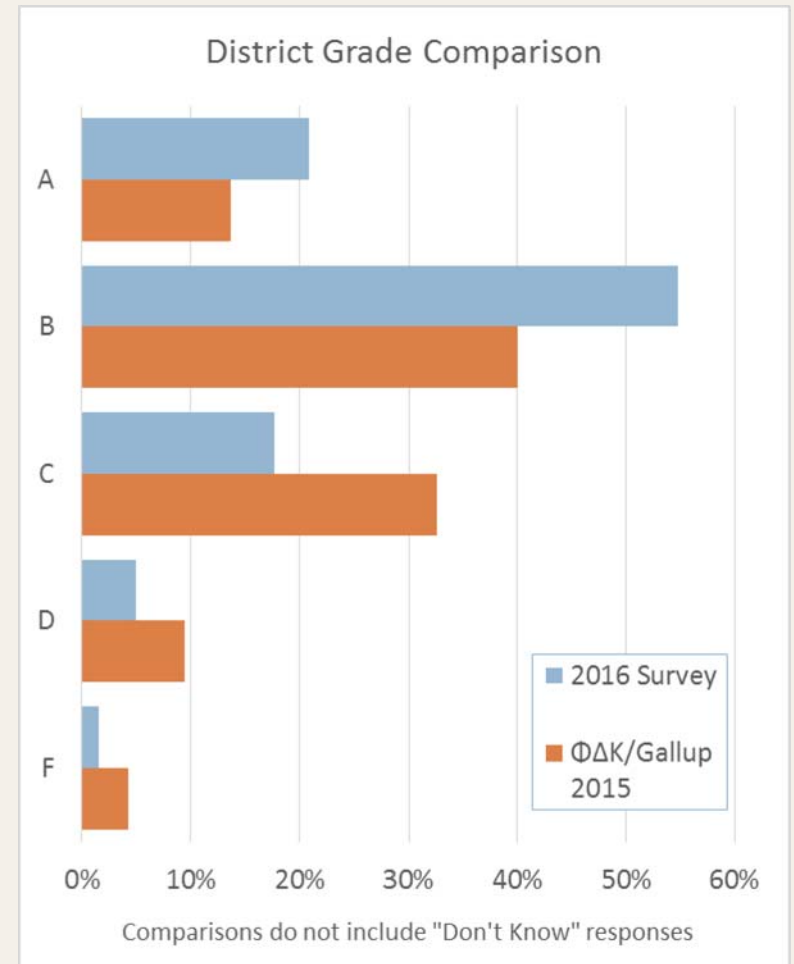
- Participants asked to give a letter grade to the school district
- District-wide grade also shows comparison with Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup national survey

# District's overall grade



# District's overall grade – comparisons

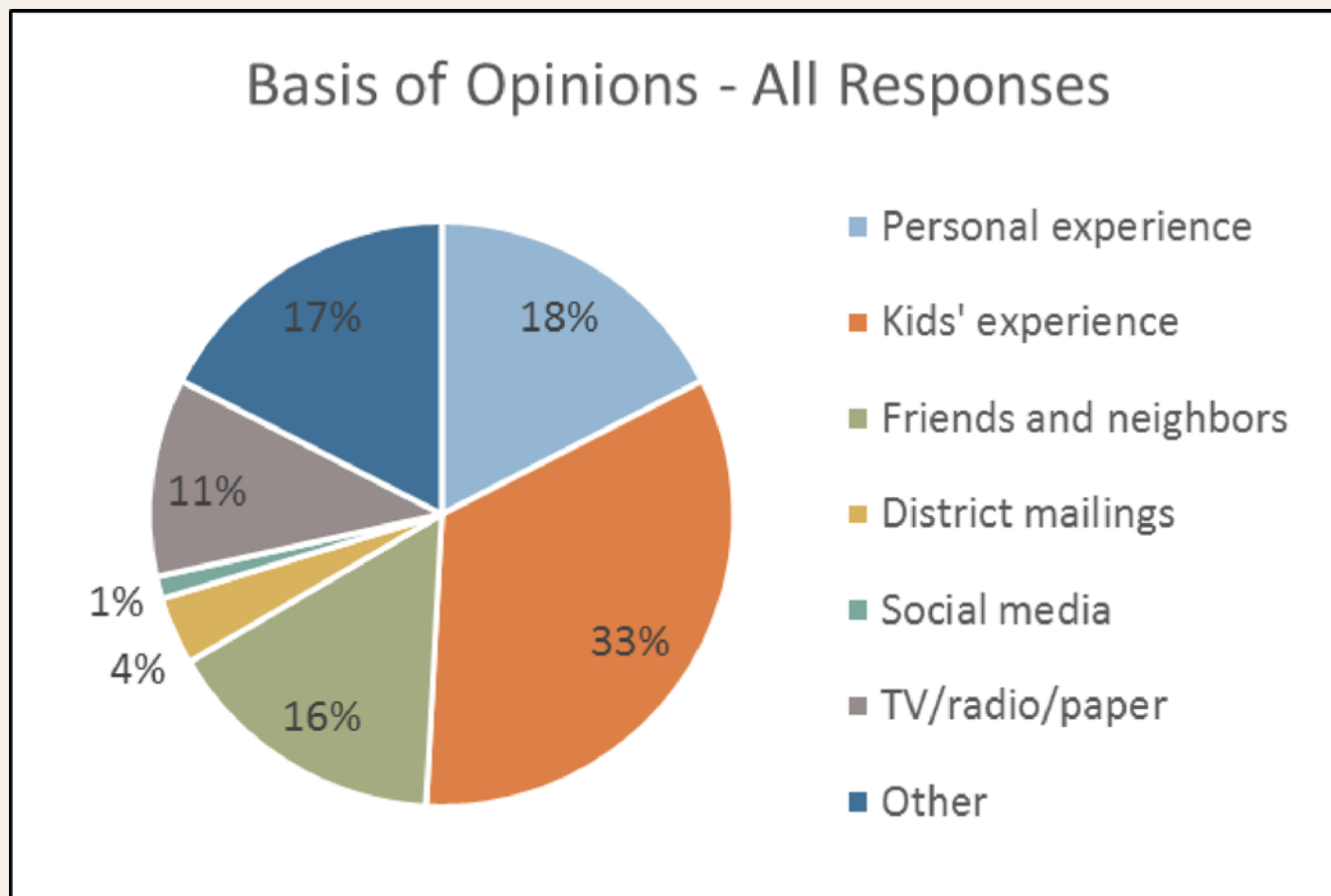
- Overall grades for District favorable in comparison with national survey by Phi Delta Kappa/ Gallup
- Many more A and B grades given



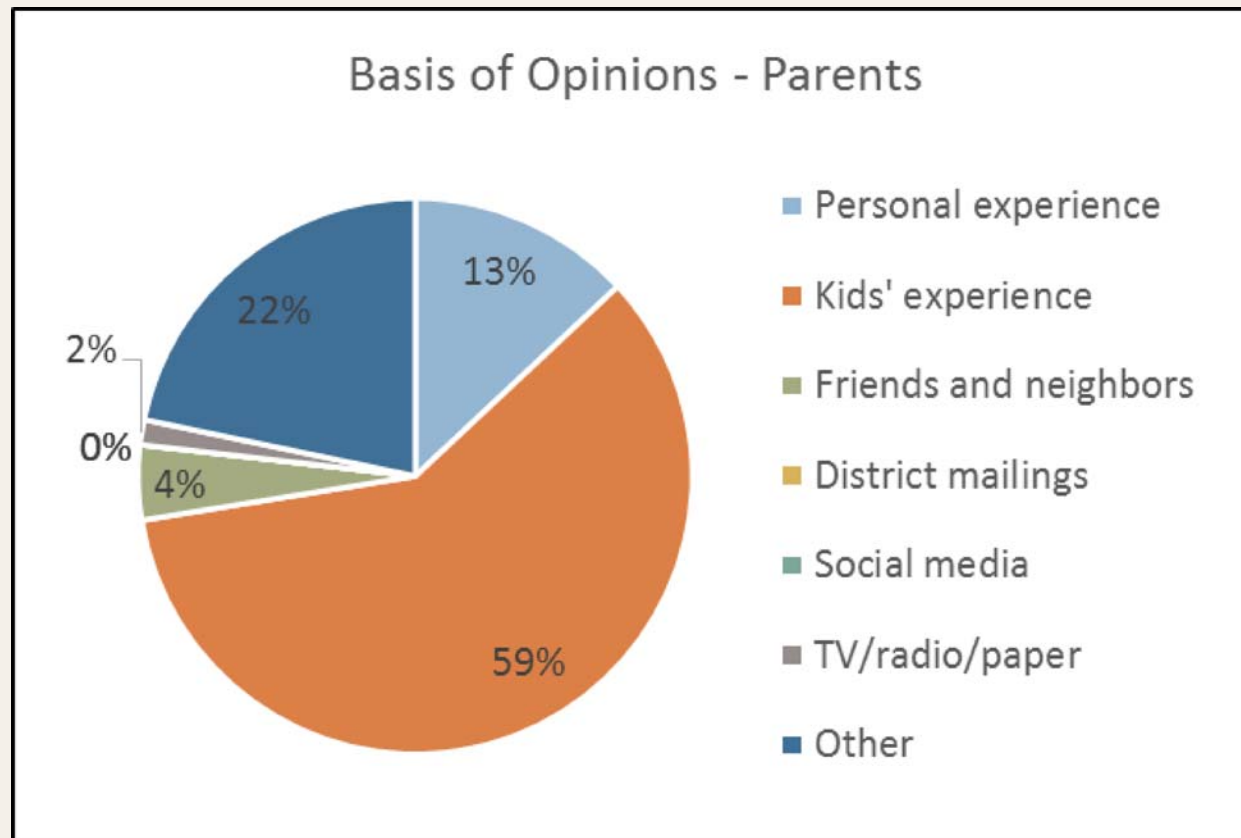
# Basis for grading the District

- Participants were asked for the primary basis of the grades they gave to the District
- Six options, presented in random order
  - Some responded with other sources or “Don’t Know”

# Basis for grading the District



# Parent basis for grading the District



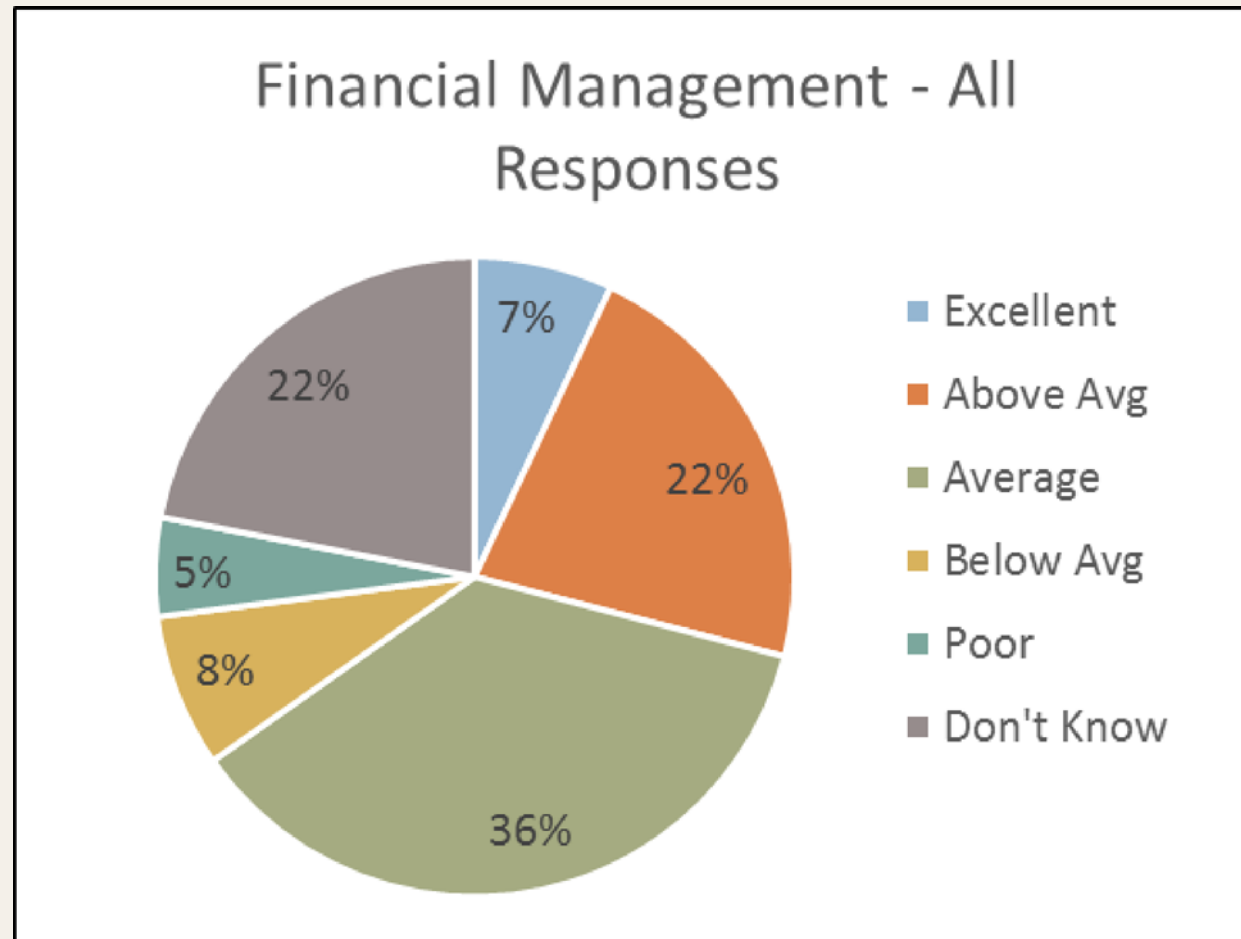
- Heavily weighted toward children's experience



## Other perceptions about District

- In addition to the letter grade given to the District, participants were asked their opinion about the District's management of its finances

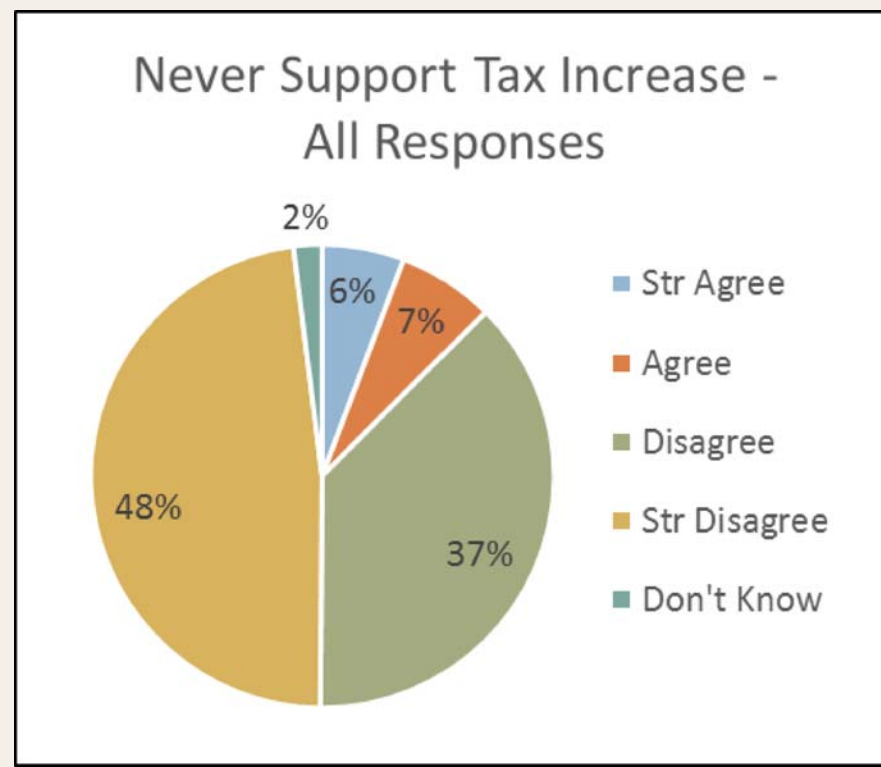
# Voter perceptions – financial management



# Voter perceptions – aversion to tax increases

Participants asked to respond to the following statement:

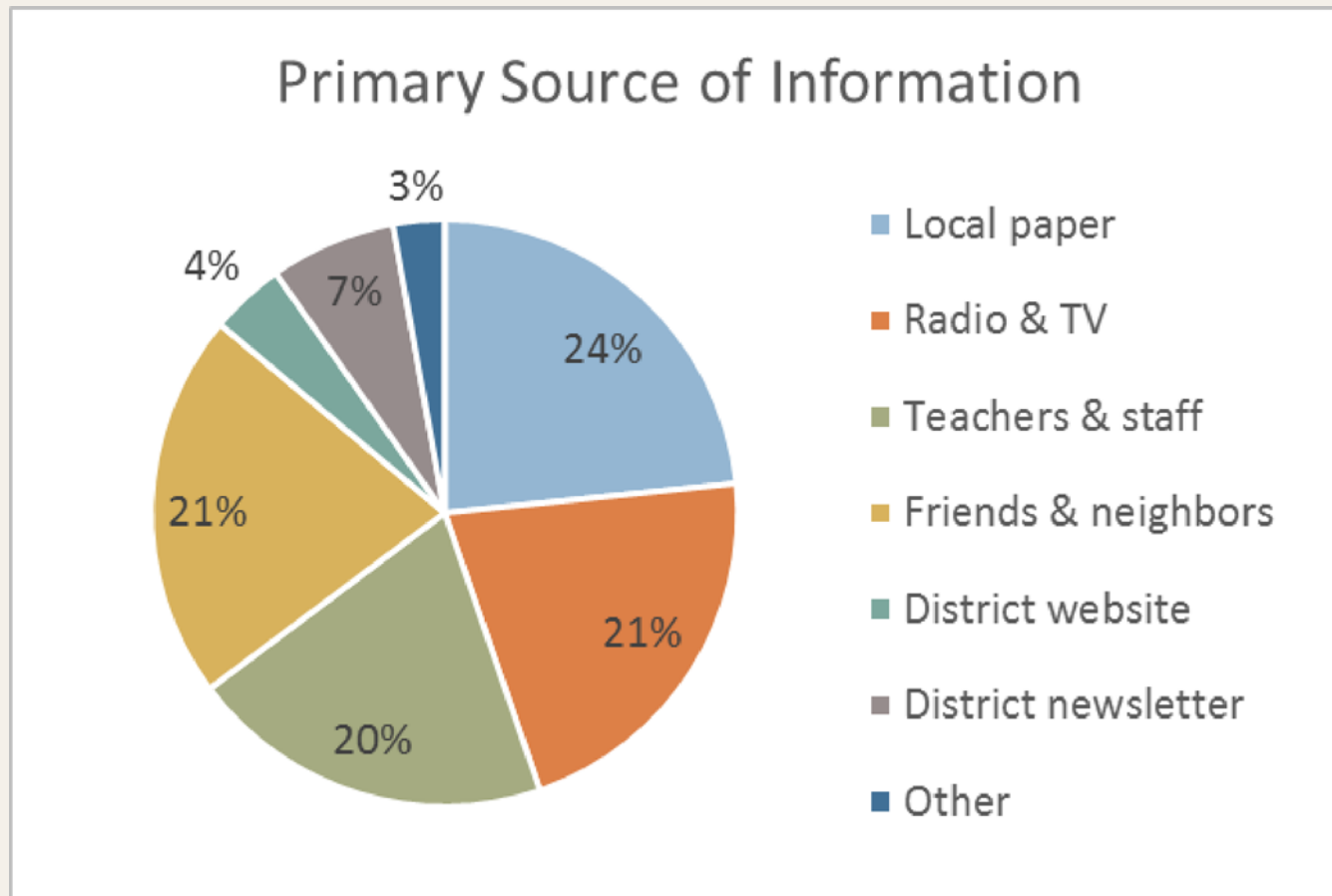
“I would never vote for a tax increase, no matter the amount or how the money raised would be used.”



# Information sources

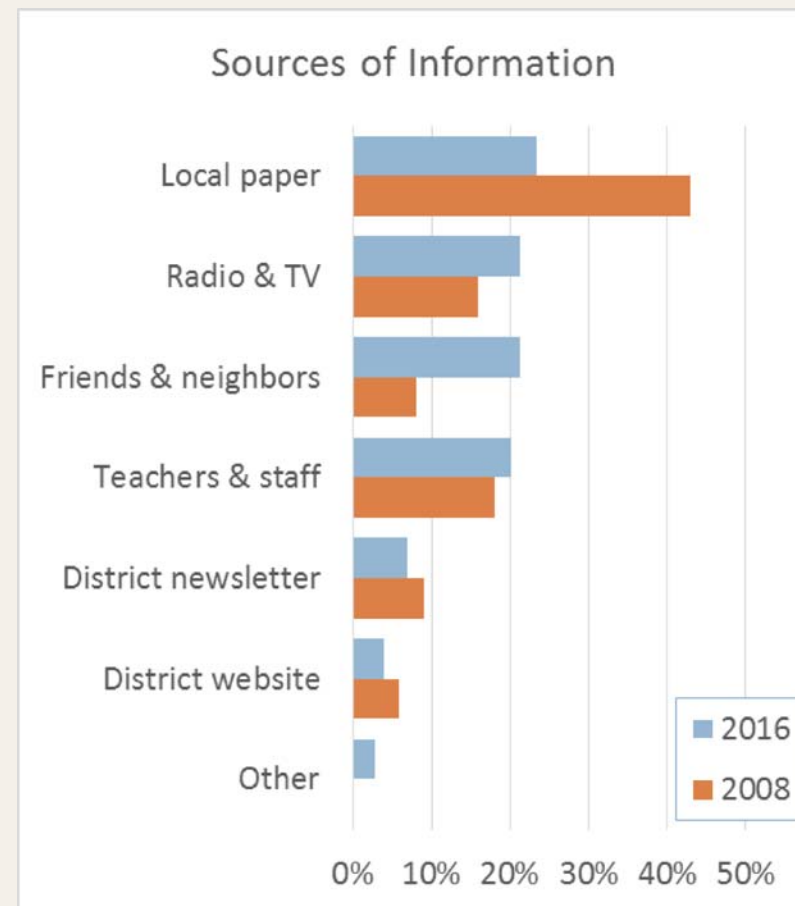
- At the conclusion of the survey, participants were asked for their primary source of information about the District
- Six options, again presented in random order

# Voter sources of information



# Voter sources of information - comparison

- Same question was asked in 2008 survey
- In 2016, far more participants rely on friends and neighbors for news about District
- Far fewer rely on newspaper



# Findings

- Healthy support for the future bond referendum
  - Initial support was 56.6%
  - Informed support was 59.9%
  - Impact of information was negligible

## Findings *(cont.)*

- Respondents given 10 statements about potential improvements to District
  - 5 of these caused 65% or more of respondents to express increased support for the proposal
  - 1 statement had positive impact higher than 70%
    - Highest impact was in support of specific maintenance projects: roofs, windows, plumbing, parking, gym, etc.



## Findings (*cont.*)

- Respondents given 4 statements about potential negative impacts if referendum does not pass
  - Smaller effect on respondents
  - All 4 statements make 55%-65% of respondents more supportive

## Findings *(cont.)*

- Three potential tax impacts were tested
  - \$75, \$100 and \$125 per year
- Participants asked about impact on “\$100,000 home”
- Support above 50% is seen within the range of impacts tested

# Conclusions and recommendations

- If the district seeks to approve a levy increase, we recommend no more than a \$90 impact on a \$100,000 home
  - Support for an tax increase of \$100 resulted in support levels at 53.6%, which is within the survey's margin of error
- At \$75, support was 67.8%.
- Projected support drops to within the margin of error at an impact of approximately \$95

# Questions?

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