Neenah Joint School District

Community Survey Results

Fall 2018

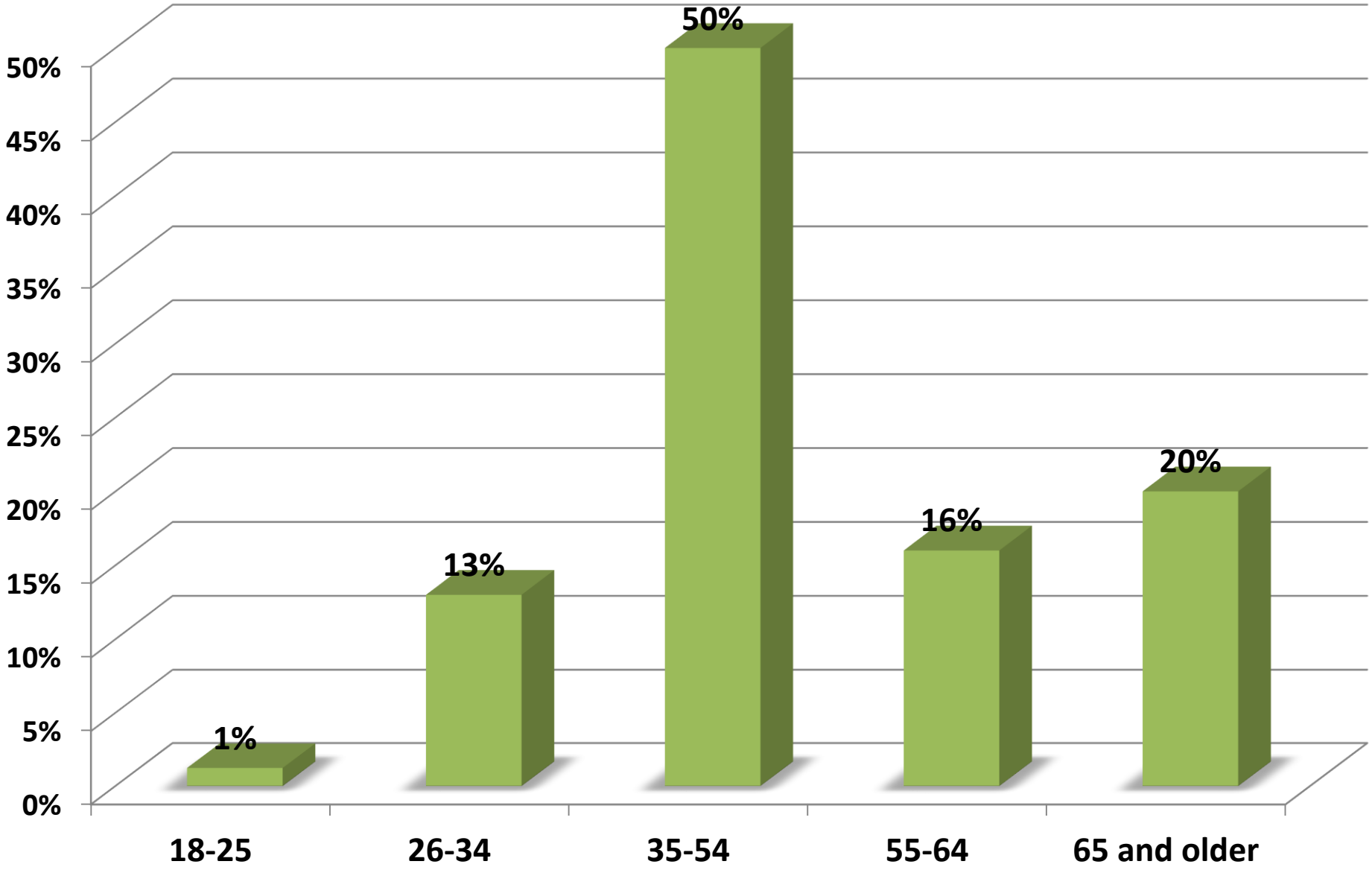
SCHOOL PERCEPTIONS
Measuring what matters

Survey Summary

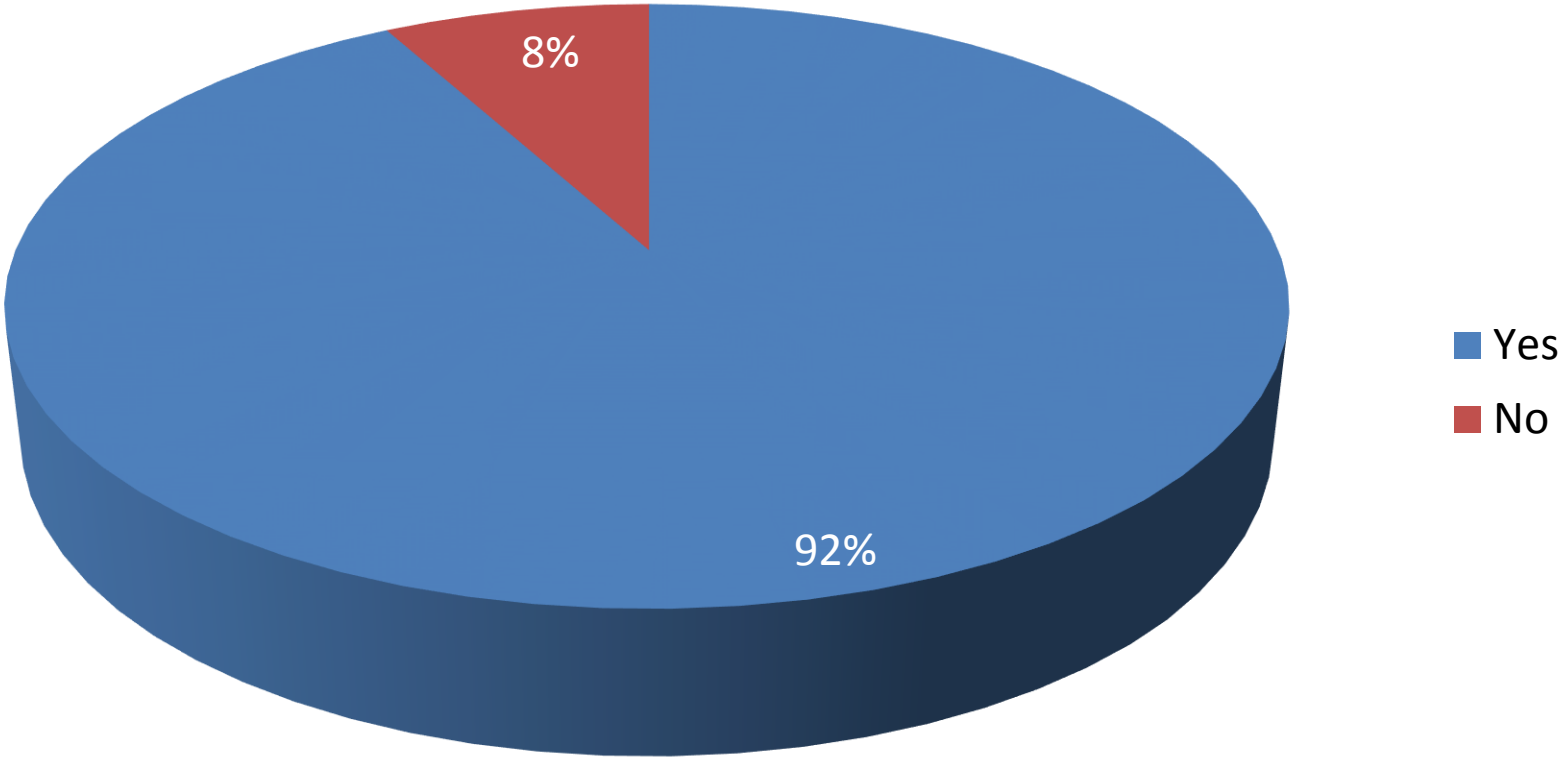
- The survey was conducted in October of 2018.
- Residents within the District were mailed a paper survey. Each survey included a unique survey access code for those who preferred to take the survey online.
- Total responses = 3,657 (1,226 paper)
- Margin of error = +/- 1.7%

Respondent Information

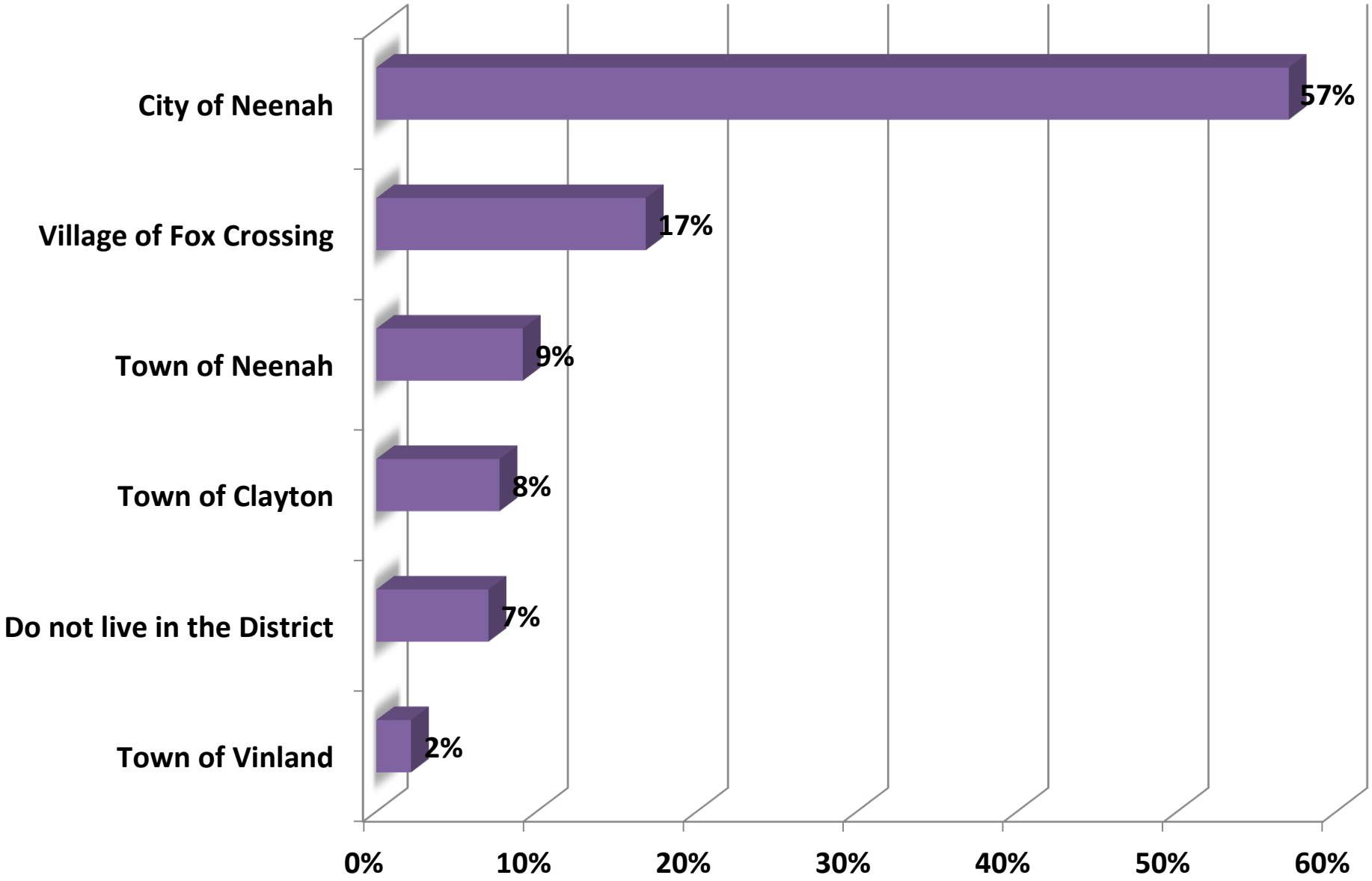
What is your age?



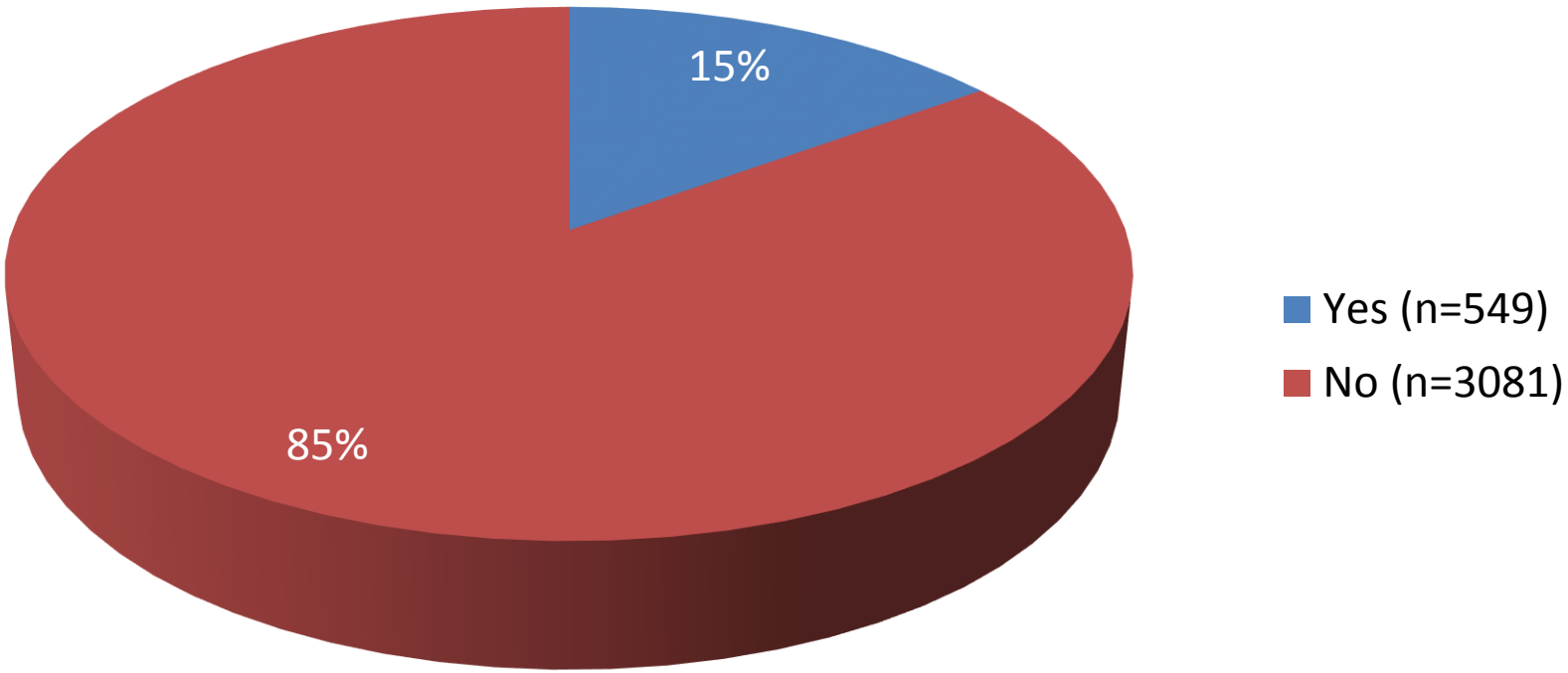
Do you live in the Neenah Joint School District?



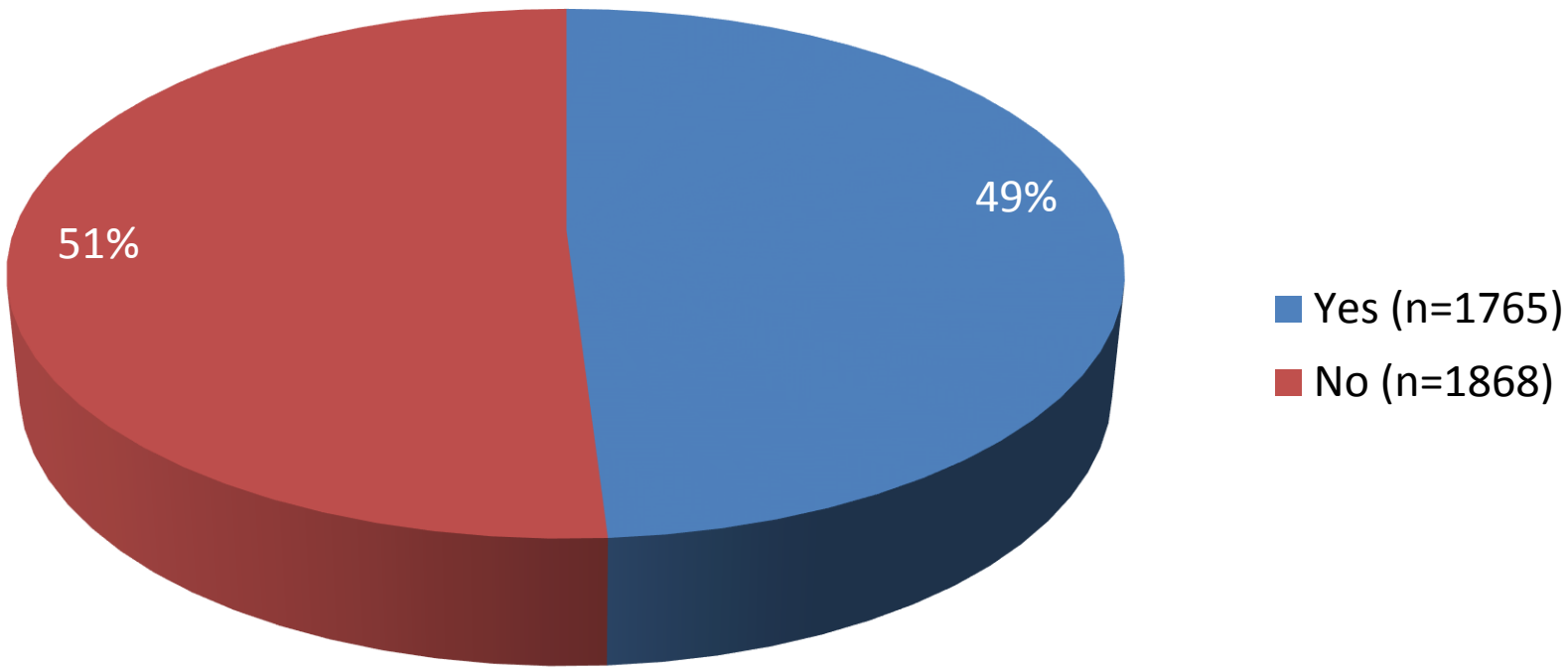
In which municipality do you reside?



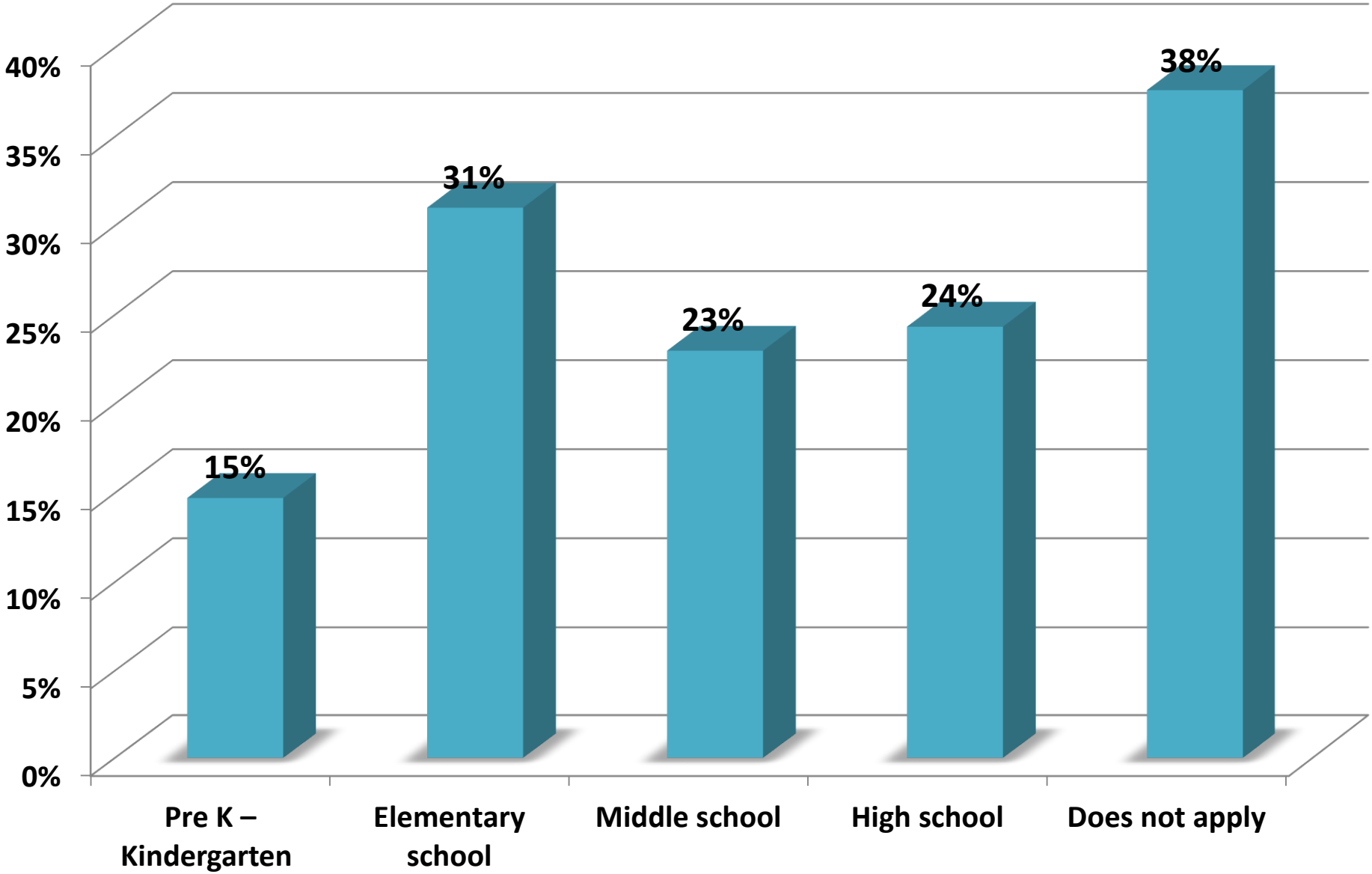
Are you an employee of the Neenah Joint School District?



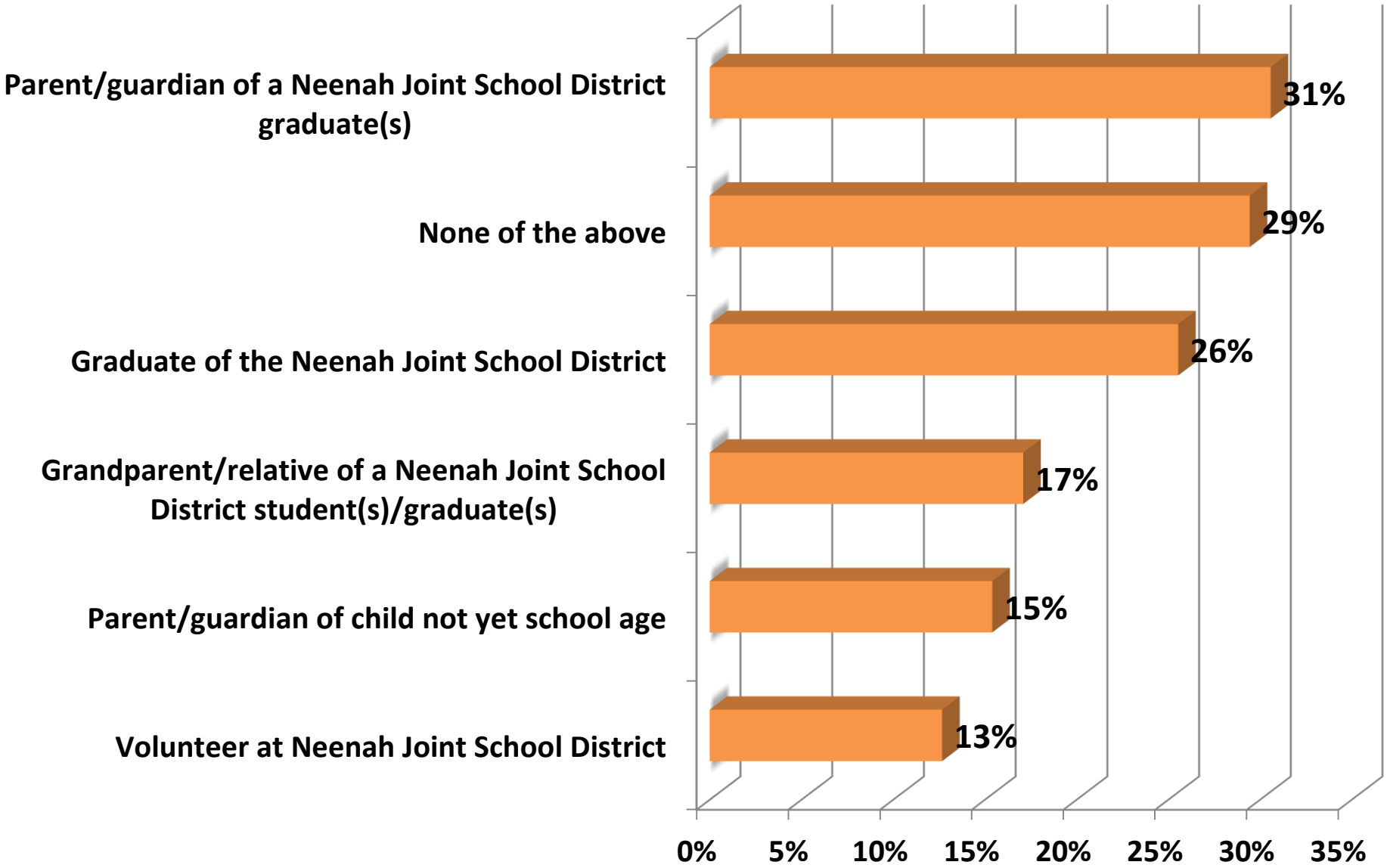
Do you have child(ren) attending schools in the District?



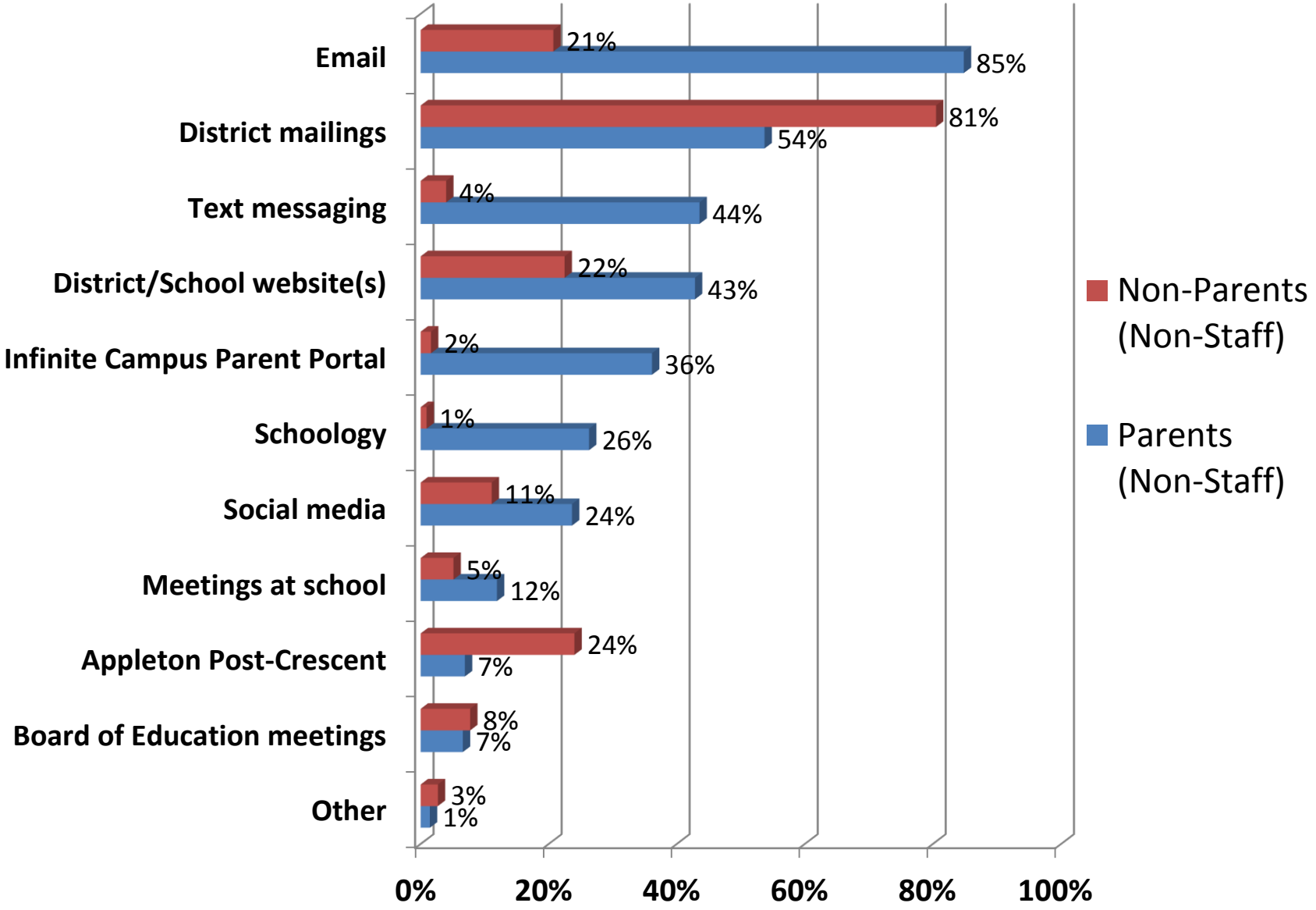
If you have school-age children, please check all grade ranges that apply:



Please mark ALL other relationships you have with the District:



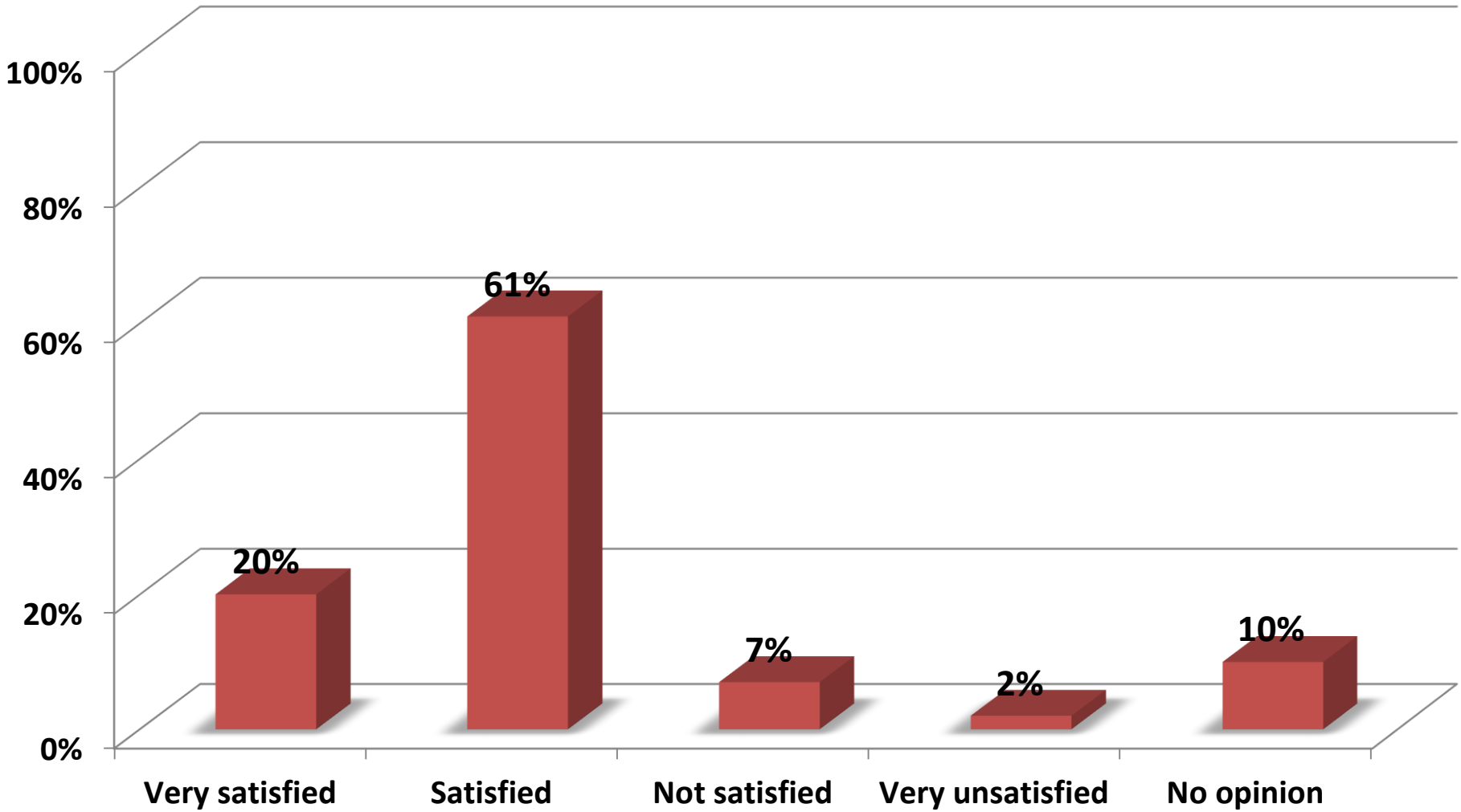
How would you like to receive information from the District?



Overall Satisfaction

Overall, how satisfied are you with the Neenah Joint School District?

(All Respondents)

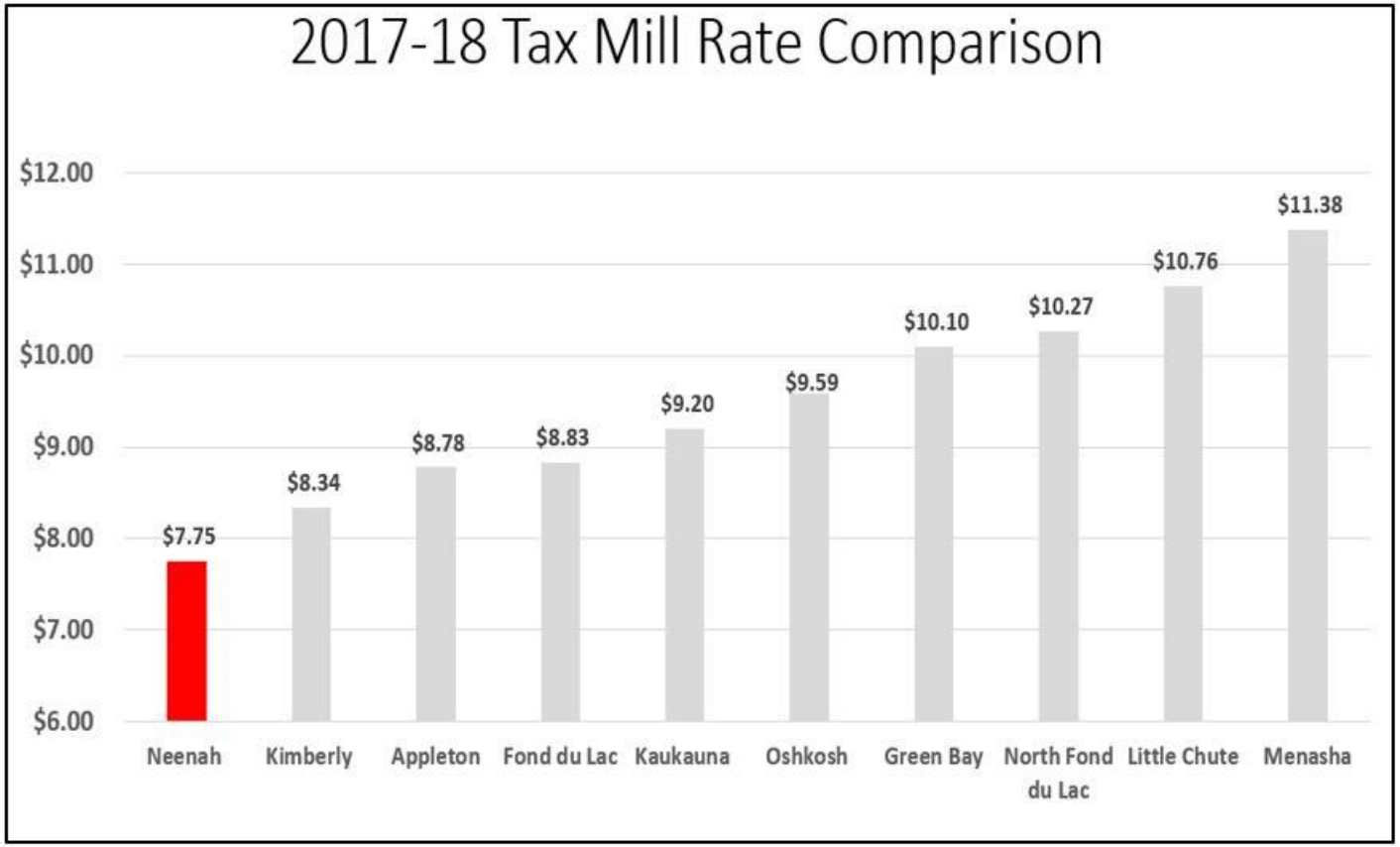


Financial Background

The District works hard to be good stewards of taxpayers' dollars. In fact, the District is referendum debt-free.

As a result, the District's tax mill rate, which is used to calculate property taxes, is the lowest in our area and $3.63 below the neighboring school district of Menasha.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction



Facility Background

The Neenah Joint School District is comprised of one high school (grades 9-12), two middle schools (grade 6 and grades 7-8), ten elementary schools and one school of early learning.

In 2009, the District was allocating $458,000 annually to maintain these schools. Since that time, this budget has increased to $2.1 million annually. However, even with this increase, significant maintenance projects and infrastructure updates are needed that cannot be funded within the District's annual budget.

Updates are needed to address the following:

• **SAFETY/SECURITY** The safety of our students and staff is our top priority. The main entrances of some of our buildings should be reconfigured to better control visitor access. The schools' door locking systems also need to be updated to include an access control system, remote monitoring of all entrances and the ability to lock down sections of the school. Additionally, the fire alarm, sprinkler and public address systems should be updated, and the security camera systems should be expanded.

• **AGING INFRASTRUCTURE** The average age of our buildings is 70.5 years old, and despite having been well maintained, many of the major systems (heating/ventilation, electrical and plumbing) are original to their building and have exceeded their service life, resulting in inefficiencies and ongoing costly repairs. In addition, updates are needed to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

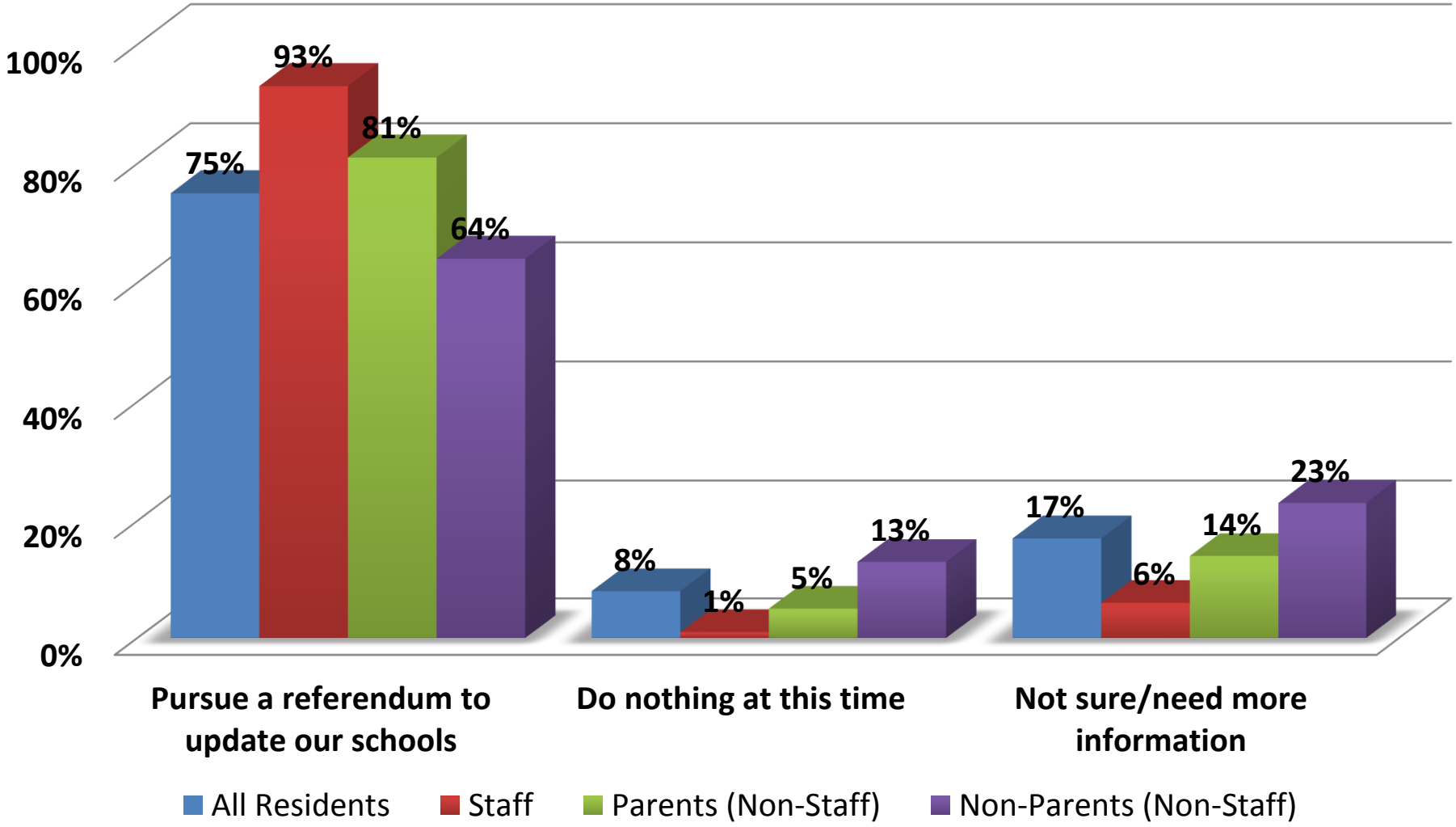
• **OUTDATED EDUCATIONAL SPACES** Teaching and learning have changed significantly in the last 50 years. Our classrooms need to be renovated to meet the needs of students today and in the decades to come. Many of our classrooms are too small and lack the flexibility needed for both large and small group instruction, as well as student collaboration. Today's classrooms require greater electrical capacity to meet technology demands as well as additional space for special education programming. The elementary schools lack dedicated classrooms for music and art. Additionally, due to space shortages, areas and rooms are being used for functions other than their intended purposes, including using hallways and storage spaces for instruction.

• **INADEQUATE SUPPORT SPACES (CAFETERIAS, KITCHENS AND LIBRARIES)** Many of our schools lack adequate support spaces to meet the needs of students and the community. Some of the elementary schools do not have a dedicated cafeteria, requiring staff to set up/take down the lunch tables each day. In addition, the schools' kitchens need to be redesigned to improve efficiencies, and equipment that has exceeded its service life needs to be replaced. Many of the libraries have not been updated since original construction and are not designed to meet the collaborative learning and technology needs of today's students.

If the public chooses to address these needs, the primary way to obtain funding is through a referendum.

What advice would you give the District?

(Neenah Joint School District Residents Only)



Project Priorities

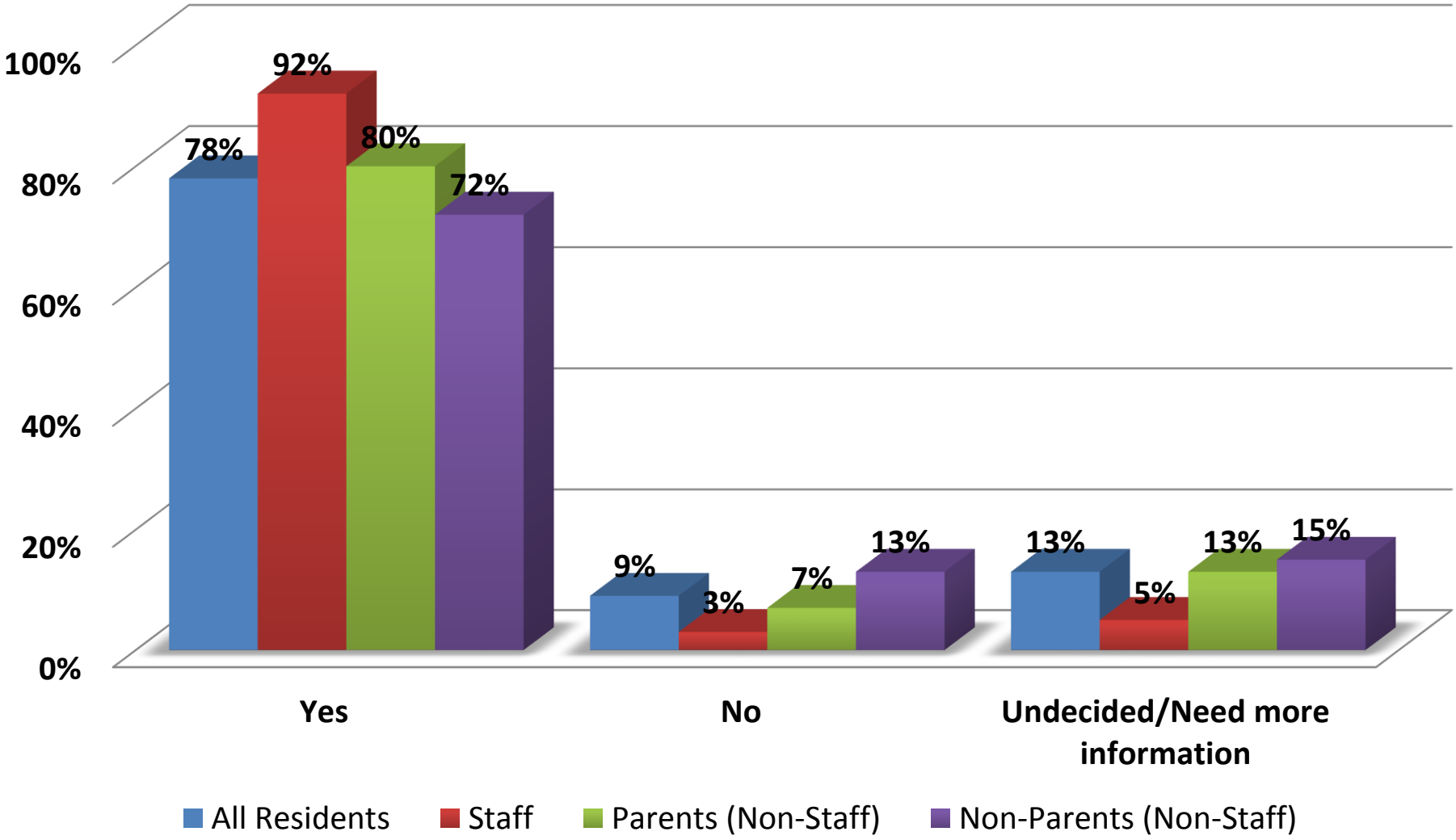
PROJECT 1: ENHANCE SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY AT ALL SCHOOLS

This project is estimated to cost $5 million and would:

- Create secure entry sequences and other security improvements at every school.
- Expand the access control system and remote monitoring of all entrances.
- Add lockable interior doors to partition off school sections and install additional security camera systems.

Would you support a plan to enhance school safety and security?

(Neenah Joint School District Residents Only)



PROJECT 2: REPLACE SHATTUCK MIDDLE SCHOOL

The original school was built in 1928 and has been expanded and renovated multiple times between 1953 and 1981. The facilities study identified more than $65 million in needed updates to:

- Replace major building systems/components, including plumbing, heating/ventilation and electrical.
- Replace classroom floors, lighting, ceilings and cabinetry.
- Repair exterior masonry and replace single-pane windows, roof sections and poorly insulated and rusting exterior doors.
- Update restrooms, fixtures and accessibility to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.

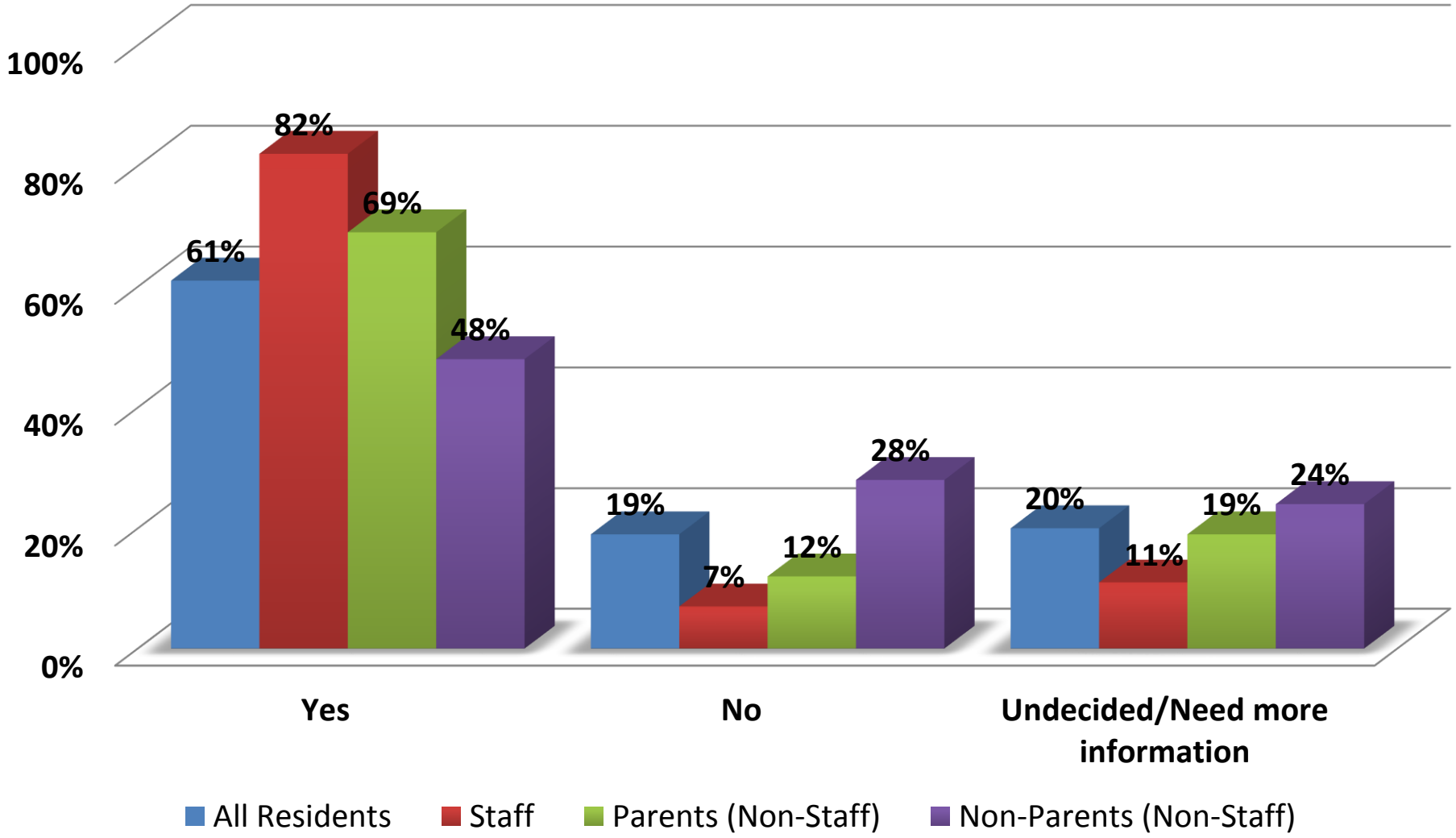
Even with this investment, the school's structure (supporting beams and a large number of load-bearing walls) and layout do not allow for remodeling to meet today's educational needs, including classrooms with the flexibility for large and small group instruction and space for project-based learning. Therefore, the Board of Education is recommending building a new school at the current site at an estimated cost of $84.3 million.

The new school would:

- Have classrooms and support spaces designed to incorporate small group instruction.
- Have flexible spaces to support class offerings in science, technology, art, music and engineering.
- Have a dedicated cafeteria, auditorium and gym.

Would you support a plan to replace Shattuck Middle School?

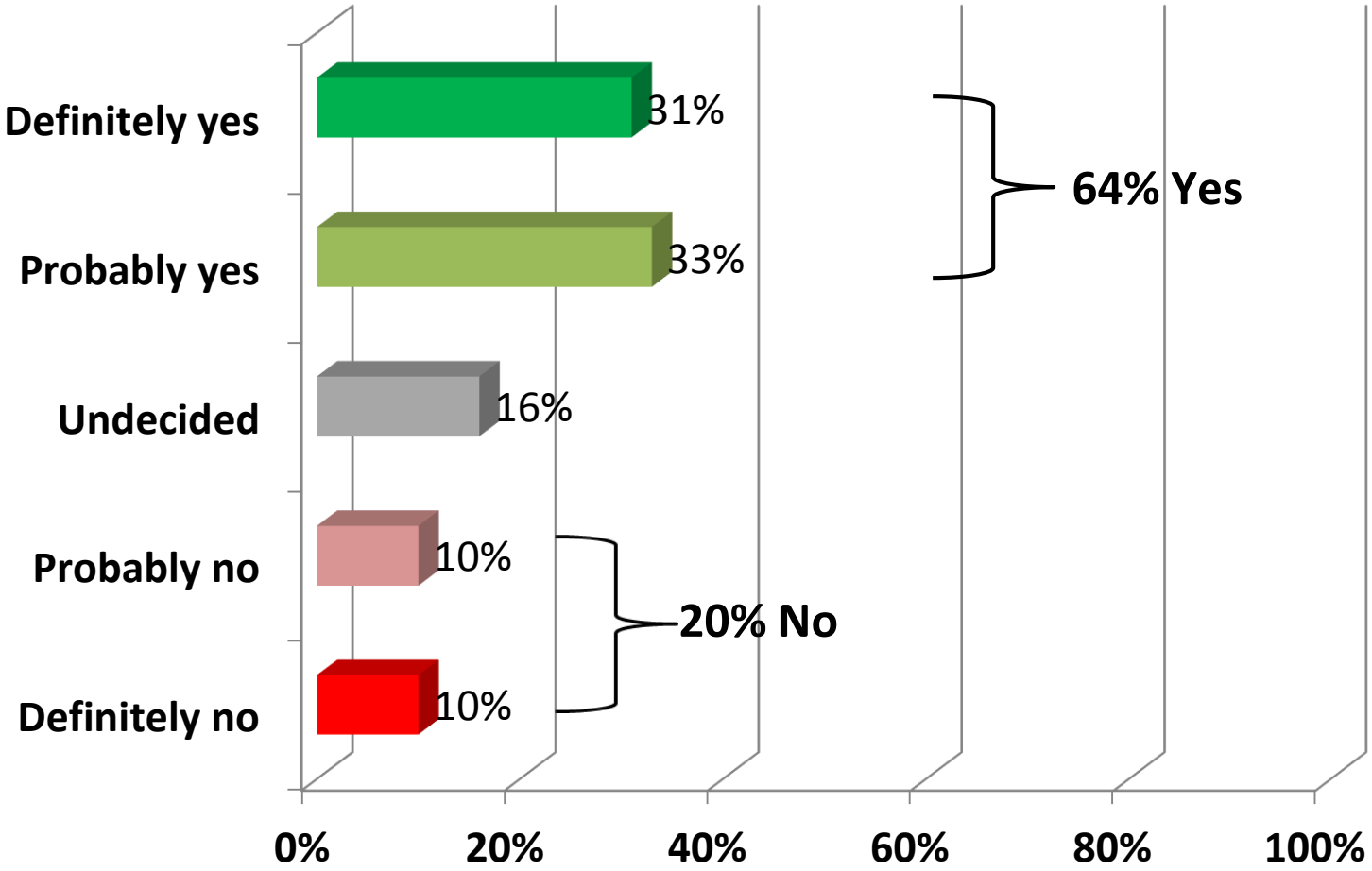
(Neenah Joint School District Residents Only)



Would you support an $89.3 million referendum to address Projects 1 and 2?

Representing an estimated average annual tax increase of $125 ($10.39 per month) for each $100,000 of property value. Tax impact assumes phased 20-year borrowings and an interest rate range of 4.25% - 4.75%.

All Residents



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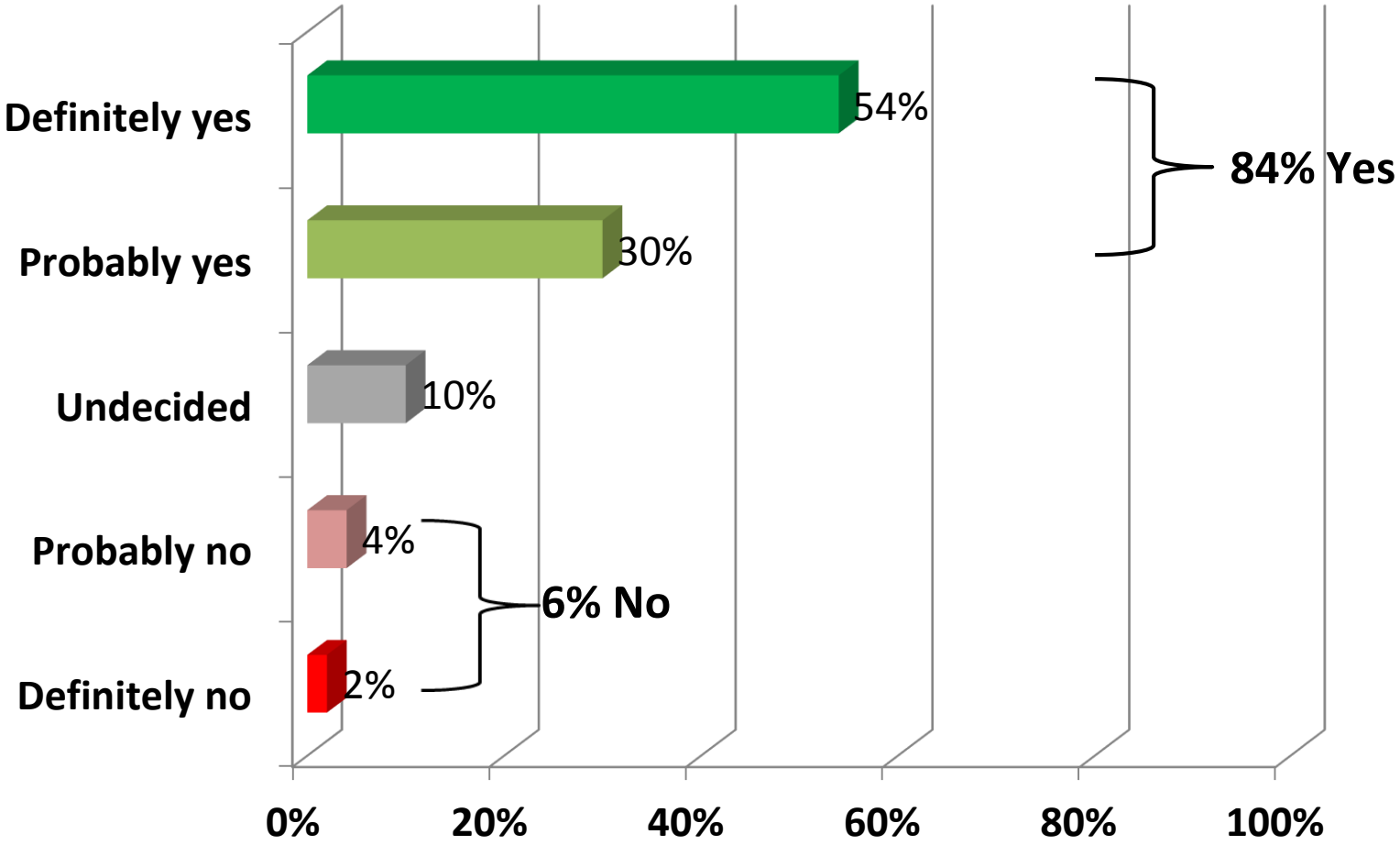
Staff Residents



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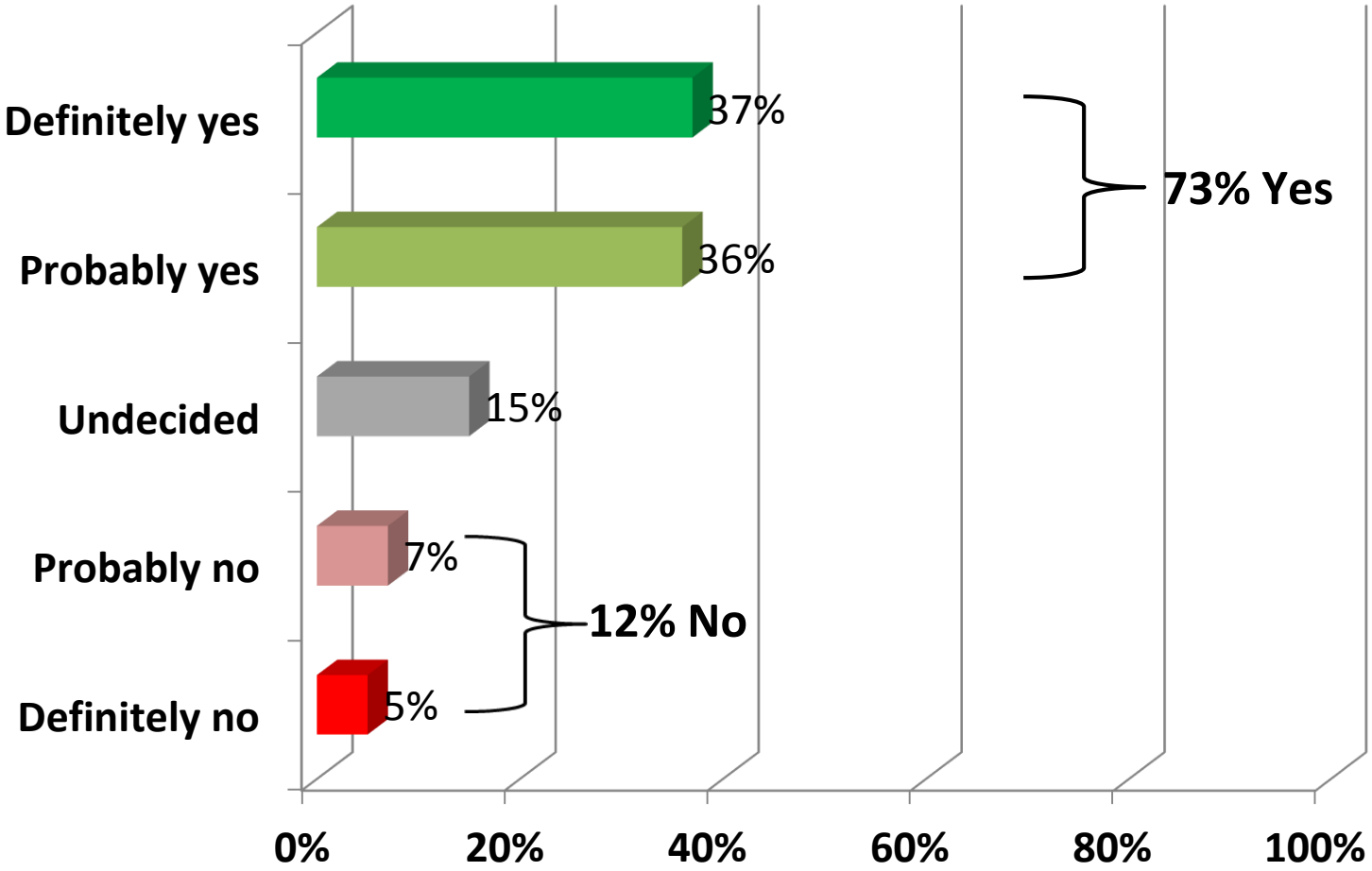
Parent Residents (Non-Staff)



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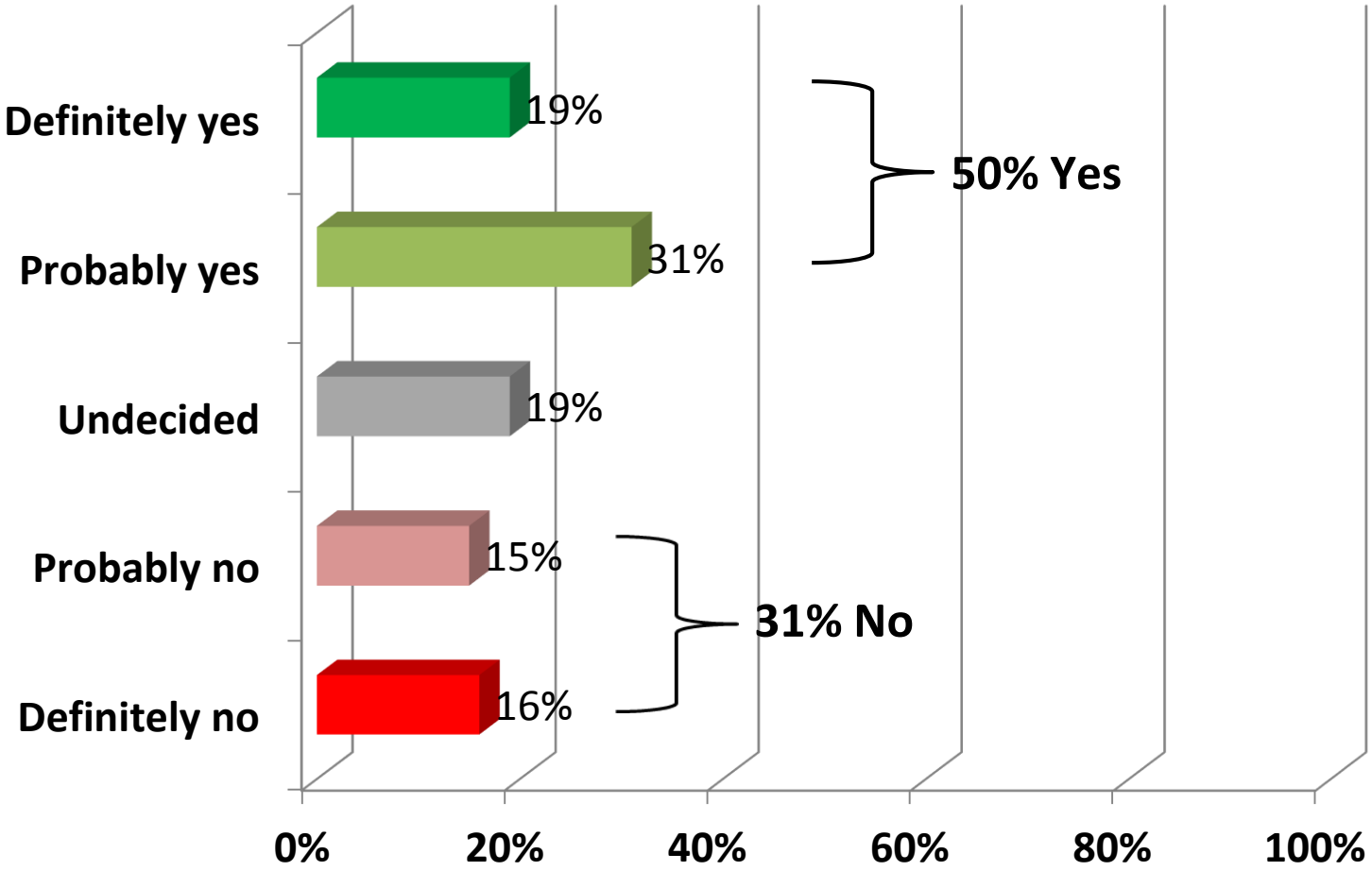
Non-Parent Residents (Non-Staff)



Elementary School Projects

BUILD A NEW 5TH AND 6TH GRADE MIDDLE SCHOOL

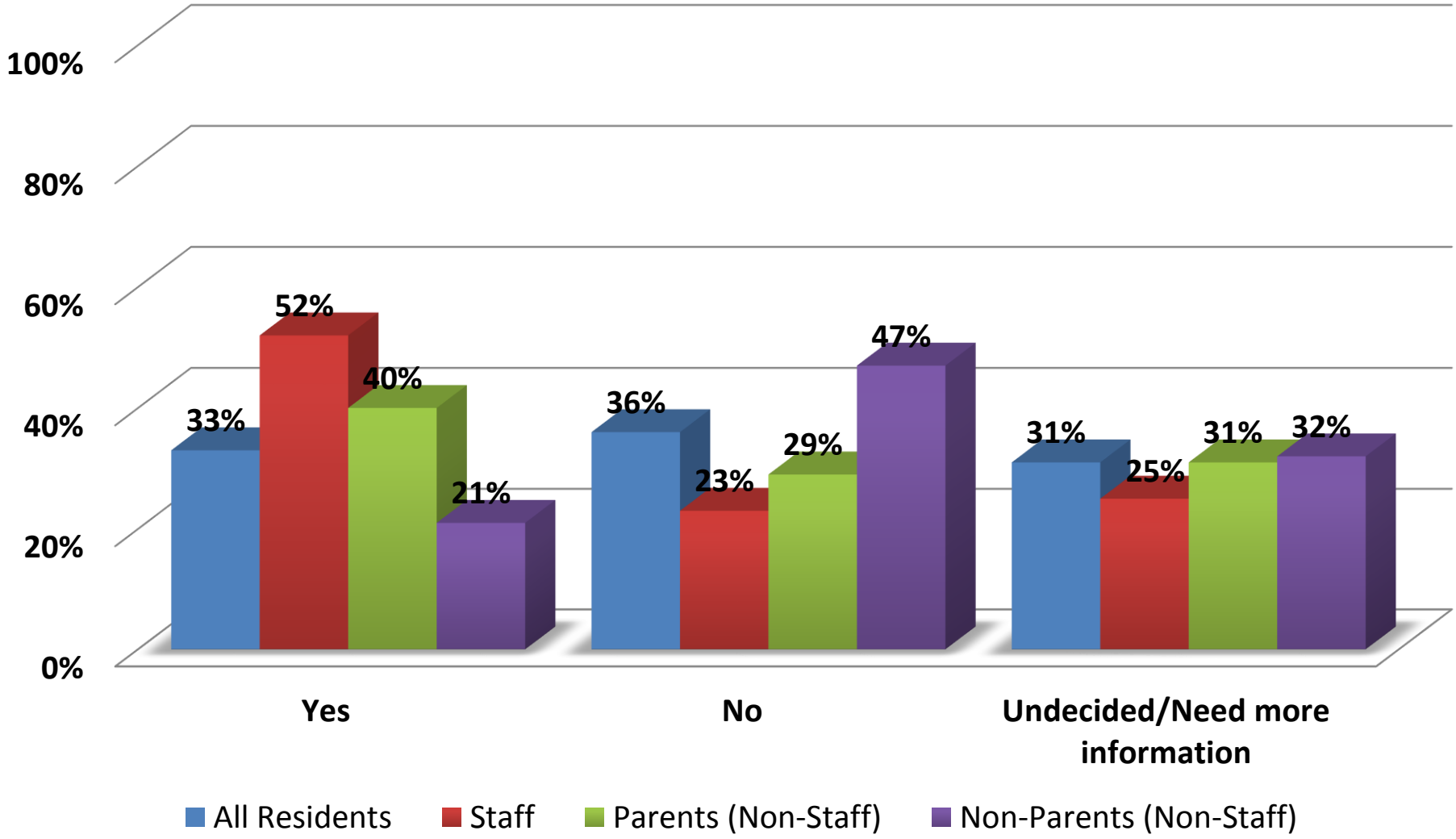
To provide needed space at all of the elementary schools, the District is recommending reconfiguring the elementary schools to serve students in kindergarten through 4th grade and moving 5th grade students to the middle school level. This plan would also:

- Improve the students' learning experience by providing middle school staff an additional year to connect and work with students during these critical developmental years.
- Improve staff collaboration and resource sharing at the 5th and 6th grade level.

Horace Mann Middle School is too small to accommodate both 5th and 6th grade students, and the site is not large enough to expand the school. Therefore, the District is recommending building a new middle school on District-owned property at an estimated cost of $56 million.

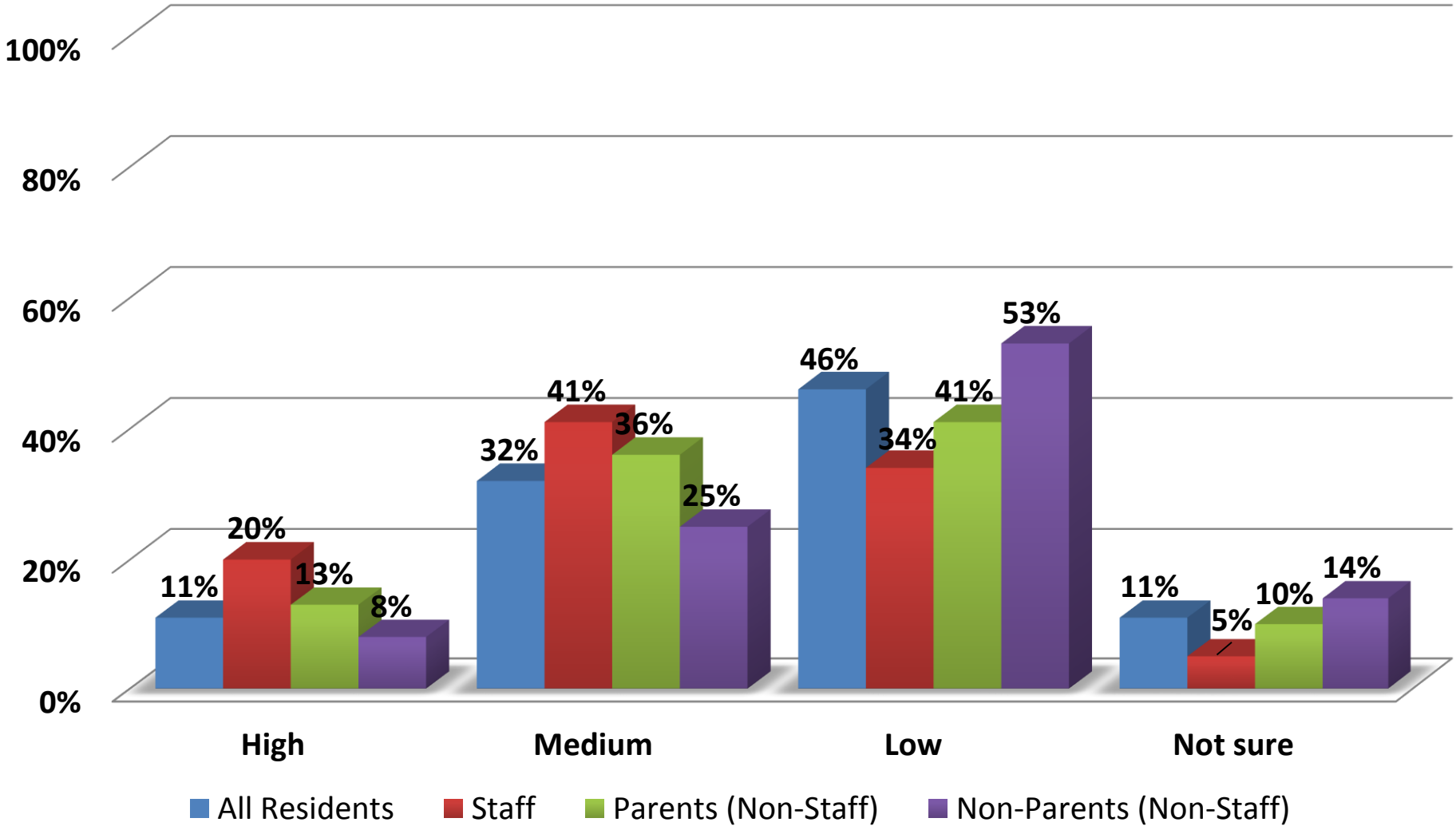
Would you support a plan to build a new 5th and 6th grade middle school?

(Neenah Joint School District Residents Only)



What priority would you place on building a new 5th and 6th grade middle school?

(Neenah Joint School District Residents Only)



UPDATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

What priority would you place on the following?

High (3), Medium (2), Low (1)

Item	All Residents	Staff Residents	Parent Residents (Non-Staff)	Non-Parent Residents (Non-Staff)
Renovate/update building systems such as plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning that are at the end of their service life ($20.9 million)	2.47	2.63	2.55	2.33
Address compliance issues with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 ($5.2 million)	2.29	2.50	2.31	2.23
Update libraries and create more areas for hands-on learning and instruction in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) ($10.6 million)	2.10	2.01	2.24	1.96
Renovate building interior, exterior and site by updating paint, flooring and ceilings; upgrading exterior doors/windows and tuck-pointing; and site improvements to pavement, sidewalks and stormwater management ($13.5 million)	2.05	2.31	2.10	1.95
Renovate/modernize general and special education classrooms ($21.4 million)	2.03	2.27	2.14	1.86
Create dedicated cafeterias and expanded kitchens to allow the gyms to be used for physical education throughout the day and eliminate the need to set up and take down lunch tables daily ($6.0 million)	1.82	1.97	1.91	1.69
Create dedicated art and music classrooms ($4.3 million)	1.86	2.10	1.98	1.69

High School Projects

UPDATE HIGH SCHOOL

What priority would you place on the following?

High (3), Medium (2), Low (1)

Item	All Residents	Staff Residents	Parent Residents (Non-Staff)	Non-Parent Residents (Non-Staff)
Renovate career, technical education (shop) and art areas to better support course offerings in engineering, welding, automotive, family/consumer science and art ($5.0 million)	2.20	2.22	2.21	2.19
Renovate/update building systems by improving major infrastructure systems (plumbing, heating/ventilation, electrical); replacing flooring, ceilings and doors; and completing exterior improvements (windows, doors, tuck-pointing) ($29.9 million)	2.32	2.46	2.45	2.16
Renovate general and special education classrooms and labs to create more flexible spaces for student collaboration and hands-on learning and improve Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) labs ($10.2 million)	2.16	2.21	2.30	2.01
Renovate/expand the library to provide more flexible space for student learning and collaboration ($3.8 million)	1.79	1.72	1.93	1.67
Renovate Pickard Auditorium by expanding the lobby, adding a black box theater, upgrading the sound, seating, flooring and lighting systems, as well as renovating the dressing and green rooms, and addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) deficiencies ($10.3 million)	1.74	1.98	1.87	1.56
Build new band, choir and orchestra areas to provide space for practice, instruction and instrument storage ($5.5 million)	1.67	1.75	1.77	1.54
Build a new cafeteria, kitchen and connecting corridor to connect our lunch and culinary program and improve student circulation throughout the building ($20.9 million)	1.58	1.62	1.71	1.44
Renovate locker rooms including improving interior finishes (paint, flooring, ceilings, doors) ($3.8 million)	1.48	1.66	1.53	1.38
Build a multi-purpose indoor turf area to create indoor space for physical education classes and provide year-round practice and performance space for athletic teams, marching band and other school and community activities ($18.4 million)	1.47	1.59	1.65	1.26

Funding Support

The cost to address all the projects identified in the survey is estimated at $335 million. Given the cost, the projects may need to be completed in phases, based on the priorities of the community and its willingness to financially support the projects.

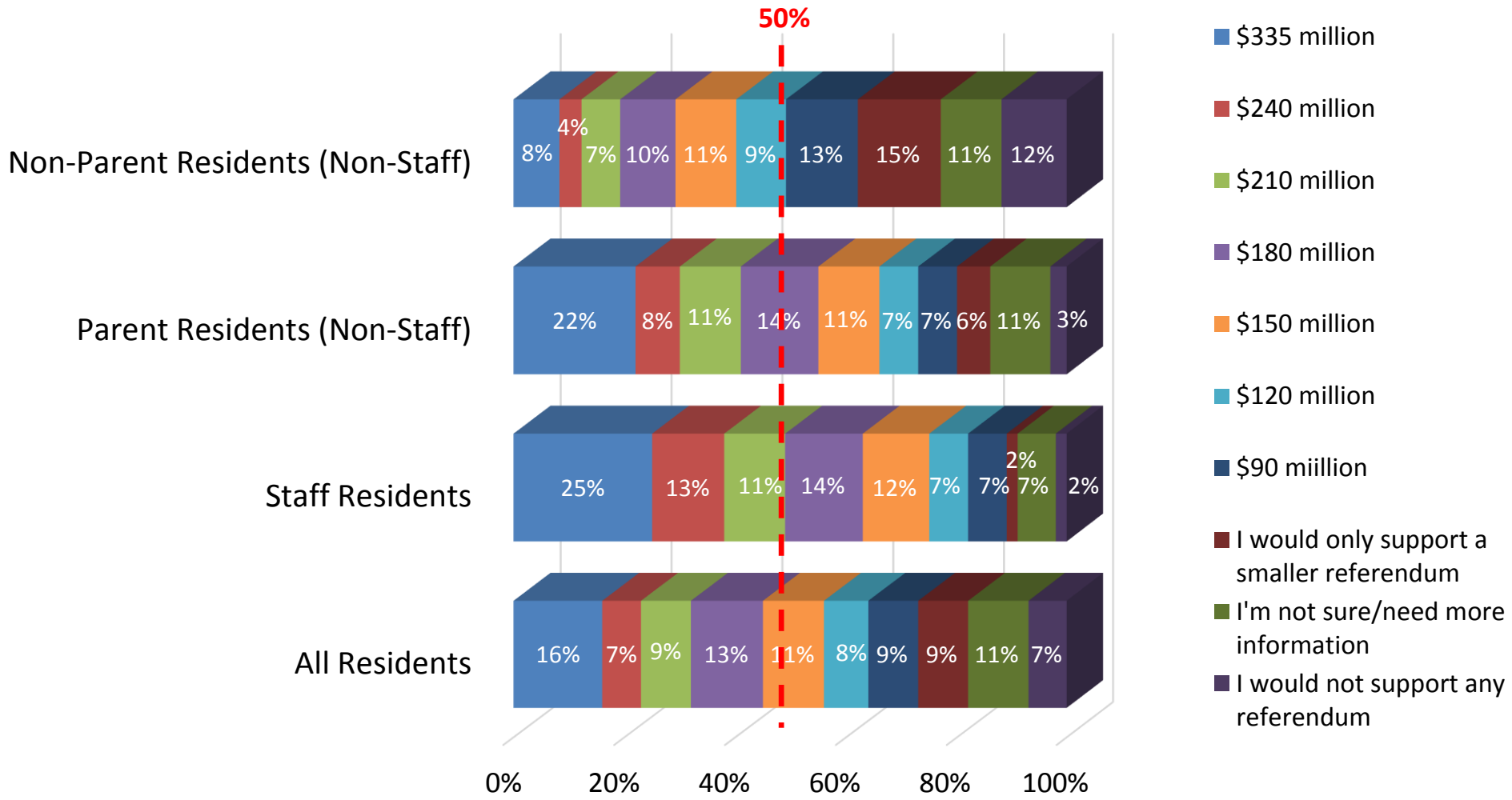
Projects	Cost up to:
Enhance School Safety and Security At All Schools	$5.0 million
Replace Shattuck Middle School	$84.3 million
Build a New 5th and 6th Grade Middle School	$56.0 million
Elementary School Projects	$81.9 million
High School Projects	$107.8 million
Total	$335.0 million

The following table shows an average estimated property tax increase under the current state school funding formula for various referendum amounts. The District would like to know your level of support should they consider a referendum.

Referendum amount	$90 million	$120 million	$150 million	$180 million	$210 million	$240 million	$335 million
Tax increase per $100,000 of property value	$126 per year ($10.50/month)	$168 per year ($14.00/month)	$209 per year ($17.42/month)	$251 per year ($20.92/month)	$293 per year ($24.42/month)	$335 per year ($27.92/month)	$468 per year ($39.00/month)

How much of a tax impact would you support through a referendum, assuming the projects included were acceptable to you?

(Neenah Joint School District Residents Only)



What did we learn?

- Overall there is strong satisfaction with the District
- A majority of all subgroups and 75% of all respondents encourage the District to explore a referendum

What should be included in a referendum?

- Enhance school safety and security at <u>all</u> schools
- Replace Shattuck Middle School
- Make <u>some</u> investment at both the elementary <u>and</u> high school levels
  - Renovate/update building systems
  - Address elementary school ADA issues
  - Renovate high school career, technical education (shop) and art areas

How much of an investment is your community willing to support through a referendum?

- There is support for a minimum $120 million from the non-parent/non staff subgroup
- Based on strong parent support, a logical target may be to develop a project around $130 million

Thank you!

SCHOOL PERCEPTIONS
Measuring what matters