



Online Survey Executive Summary

Center Moriches School District

•

March 9, 2015



Online Survey Executive Summary

METHODOLOGY

The following results are based on a website and paper survey of 356 residents of the Center Moriches School District. The survey was advertised on the district's website and in the February edition of *District News*. While respondents had the option of taking the survey online, they could also respond through a paper survey that was included in the *District News*. Copies were also made available at all district buildings.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Who responded to the survey? The survey opened with several demographic questions concerning gender, age, household income, level of education, etc. The majority of respondents (63%) were female, and nearly 4 in 10 respondents were between the ages of 40-49, which is the largest age bloc of survey participants. Most who responded to the survey reported a high level of education – just over 70% have earned an undergraduate degree or higher, and household incomes were broadly represented. When asked how to BEST describe themselves, the majority (approximately 56%) of respondents reported they are parents of children who currently attend Center Moriches schools (25% with children at Clayton Huey Elementary and 31% with children at the MS/HS). Approximately 16% of respondents identified themselves best as a resident with no school-age children.

Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents pay somewhere between \$8,001 – \$14,000 in property taxes.

In addition, the majority of respondents (74%) indicated they voted in the bond election on December 9.



Respondents indicated that they relied on the district newsletter as their primary source of information about the proposed scope of work. Almost 43% of respondents reported that the district newsletter was their primary source of information about the project. Meeting attendance (29%), the district’s website (29%) and other residents (word of mouth - 28%) were reported as other important sources of information.

Respondents overwhelmingly indicated that they were aware of the various issues concerning the capital bond project. Regarding the full scope of Proposition 1, more than 92% of respondents indicated some level of awareness (44% said they were completely aware, 36% reported they were aware and almost 12% indicated they were somewhat aware). Regarding the condition of the district’s facilities, this strong level of awareness was consistent, with just over 93% of respondents indicating some level of awareness (43% reported they were completely aware, 35% said they were aware and 15% reported they were somewhat aware). Again, this same high level of awareness was reported when asked about the total cost of the project and its tax impact to the household – 93% reported some level of awareness.

When broken down by the demographics of the respondents, there was still a high level of awareness even among those residents who do not have children within the Center Moriches schools. Respondents who BEST identified themselves as a resident with no school-age children still overwhelmingly reported some level of awareness concerning the full scope of Proposition 1 (81%). 84% had some level of awareness in regard to the condition of the district’s facilities and 82% of respondents in this demographic were aware of the project’s cost and impact.

For those who did not vote in the election, there was not a reliable or consistent answer provided as to their lack of participation. While only 26% of survey respondents reported they did not vote in the election on December 9, there was not a consistent answer provided as to their reasoning. While 15% reported that the time and place of the vote was inconvenient and 13% said they were unaware of the vote, almost 53% of respondents who did not vote in the election indicated an “other” response to this question.

For those who did vote in the election, the primary motivation for voting on Proposition 1 was highly varied. When asked “If you did vote, which of the following best expresses your primary motivation in the way in which you voted for Proposition 1?,” respondents had an opportunity to choose among nine answers. Just over 25% of

respondents indicated that they did not agree with the scope of work associated with the bond. When broken down by demographics, almost 67% of residents who best described themselves as a resident with school-age child(ren) who do not attend Center Moriches Schools indicated they disagreed with the scope of work. Perhaps most interesting of all the responses to this question, almost 44% of respondents with children currently in the district also reported they disagreed with the scope of work.

At the same time, almost 25% of *all* respondents said their primary motivation for voting the way they did for Proposition 1 was that they believe infrastructure and facilities need renovation to better enable students to maximize their learning potential. For those people who indicated this response, the majority (59%) were parents with children currently in the district.

It is also interesting to report that only 8% of respondents reported that they voted the way they did for Proposition 1 because they could not afford the tax increase and only 9% said they believed the tax increase associated with the bond was too high. This leads to the conclusion that cost was *not* a factor in the defeat of Proposition 1.

Respondents overwhelmingly support potential repairs, renovations and acquisition opportunities. When asked their level of support for various repairs, renovations or acquisition opportunities within the district, the majority supports, at some level, all items that were listed. In order of support, the items were:

- New roof at the elementary school and roof repairs at the HS – 93%
- Replacement of the septic system and renovation of bathroom at the ES – 92%
- Repair brickwork and façade at the ES – 84%
- New doors, windows, hardware, protective film and safety features as necessary and appropriate districtwide – 81%
- Replacement of HVAC in the ES Main Street gym – 80%
- Replacement of HVAC in the HS auditorium – 76%
- New science, technology, art, home and careers classrooms at the HS – 69%
- Renovation/repurpose of MS/HS 300 wing – 64%
- Track and tennis court repair – 64%
- Purchase of real property adjacent to the school to be used for fields and potential future district and community needs provided such cost did not result in a tax increase in the school district tax levy for the average household of more than \$50 a year - 57%



The majority of respondents would like Center Moriches schools to be ranked among the highest on Long Island academically. More than 95% of all respondents agreed at some level that they want the district to be ranked among the highest on Long Island academically (60% strongly agreed, 25% agreed and 10% somewhat agreed).

Residents also want to see an expansion of programs and offerings for students. When asked about an expansion of various programs and offerings for students, respondents overwhelmingly agreed at some level. In order of support, they were:

- I believe the district should expand its technology offerings for students – 89%
- I believe the district should expand its enrichment and advanced course offerings for students - 88%
- I believe the district should expand its business offerings for students – 85%
- I believe the district should expand its music offerings for students – 78%
- I believe the district should expand its art offerings for students – 75%
- I believe the district should expand its sports resources for students – 62%

The majority of respondents think that district teachers, administrators and the Board of Education work hard to meet students’ needs. Almost 87% of respondents agreed at some level that the teachers work hard to meet children’s needs, approximately 76% believes the Board of Education does the same, and almost 67% believe the administration works hard to meet students’ needs.

Selected Cross-Tabulations

Men and Women

When the results of the survey are analyzed comparing male and female responses, the answers to each question are relatively consistent among the genders with certain differences. For example, for the question that asked “If you did vote, which of the following best expresses your primary motivation in the way in which you voted for Proposition 1,” the answer that gained the highest percentage among males was “I do not agree with the scope of work associated with the bond.” Almost 29% of male respondents who voted in the December 9 election responded in that manner.



However, the answer that was chosen the most by women who voted in the election was “Infrastructure and facilities need renovation to better enable students to maximize their learning potential,” with almost 28% selecting this. The second answer chosen most by women voters to this question was that they did not agree with the scope of work (22% selected this choice). So, again, while there are slight variations in answers to the survey questions, there is no glaring difference between the male and female perspectives.

Ages 40-49

When the data is examined for only those respondents aged 40-49, 41% of these respondents depended on information provided at meetings as their primary source of information about the proposed scope of work, while another 41% relied upon the district’s website as their main source (the district newsletter followed closely behind, with over 39% of respondents aged 40-49 selecting this choice). This age bracket also overwhelmingly reported that they were aware to some level of the issues concerning the capital bond project. Regarding the awareness of the full scope of Proposition 1, 94% reported they were either completely aware, aware, or somewhat aware. This level of awareness remained consistent when asked about their knowledge of the condition of the district’s facilities and the total cost of the project and its tax impact.

When asked what their primary motivation was for voting the way they did for Proposition 1, the answer chosen most frequently by respondents aged 40-49 was that they believe infrastructure and facilities need renovation to better enable students to maximize their learning potential (over 31% responded in this manner). When compared to the data of all respondents (not just those aged 40-49), this answer differs slightly (as reported earlier, the answer chosen most frequently among all respondents was that they disagreed with the scope of work associated with the bond). The second most frequent response to this question by respondents aged 40-49 was that they did not agree with the scope of work (almost 19% of this subgroup responded this way).