

Community Survey Results

Wisconsin Rapids School District

Fall 2020

Questions About This Information Can Be Directed to:

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SCHOOL PERCEPTIONS

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

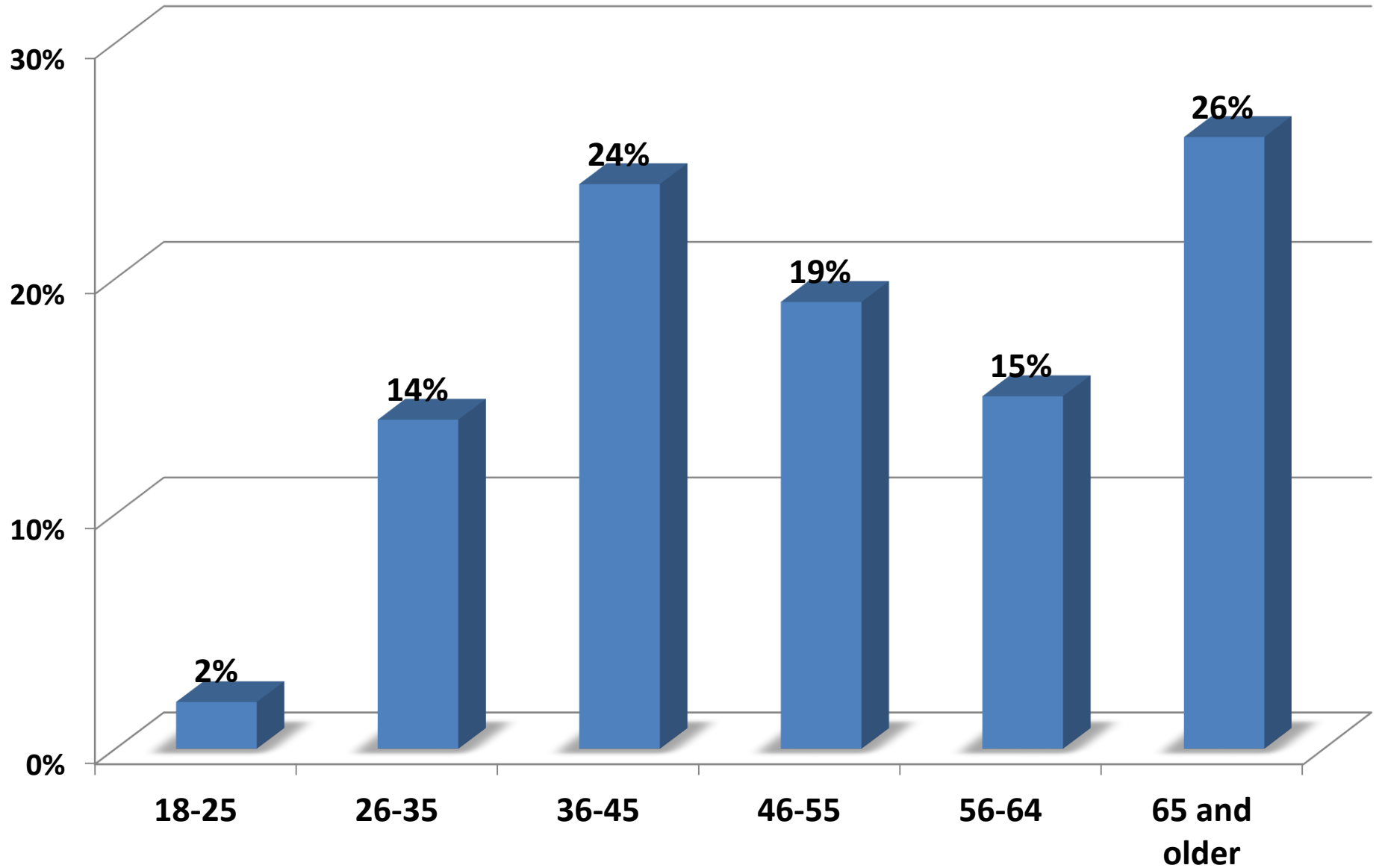
- Founded in 2002 to provide independent and unbiased research
- Conducted over 10,000 staff, parent, student, and community surveys for school improvement
- Helped more than 700 districts navigate the strategic planning and referendum planning process

Survey Summary

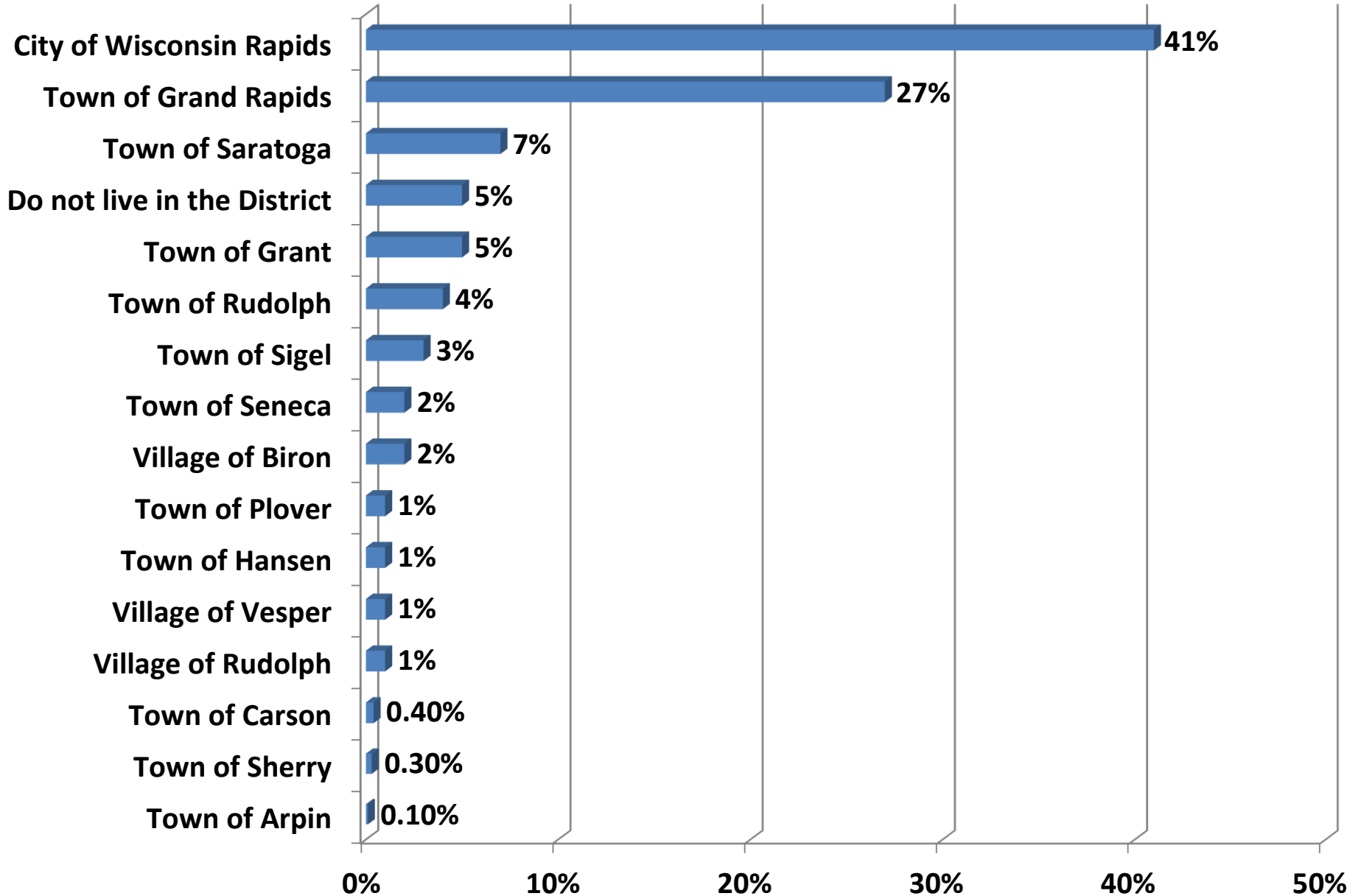
- The survey was conducted in November of 2020.
- Residents within the District were mailed a paper survey. Each survey included a unique survey access code for those who preferred to take the survey online.
- Total responses = 2,660 (1007 paper)
- Margin of error = +/- 1.9%

Respondent Information

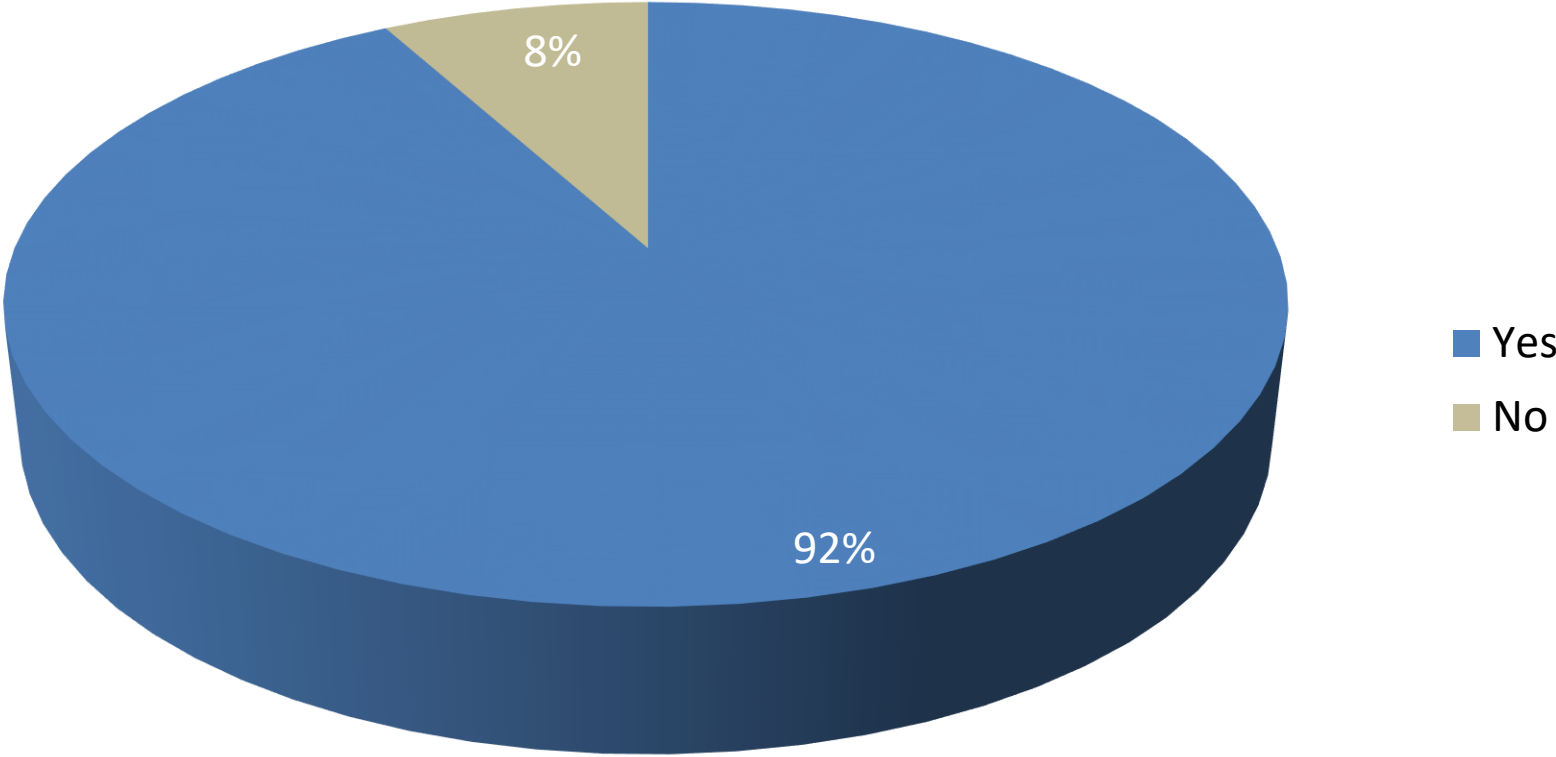
What is your age?



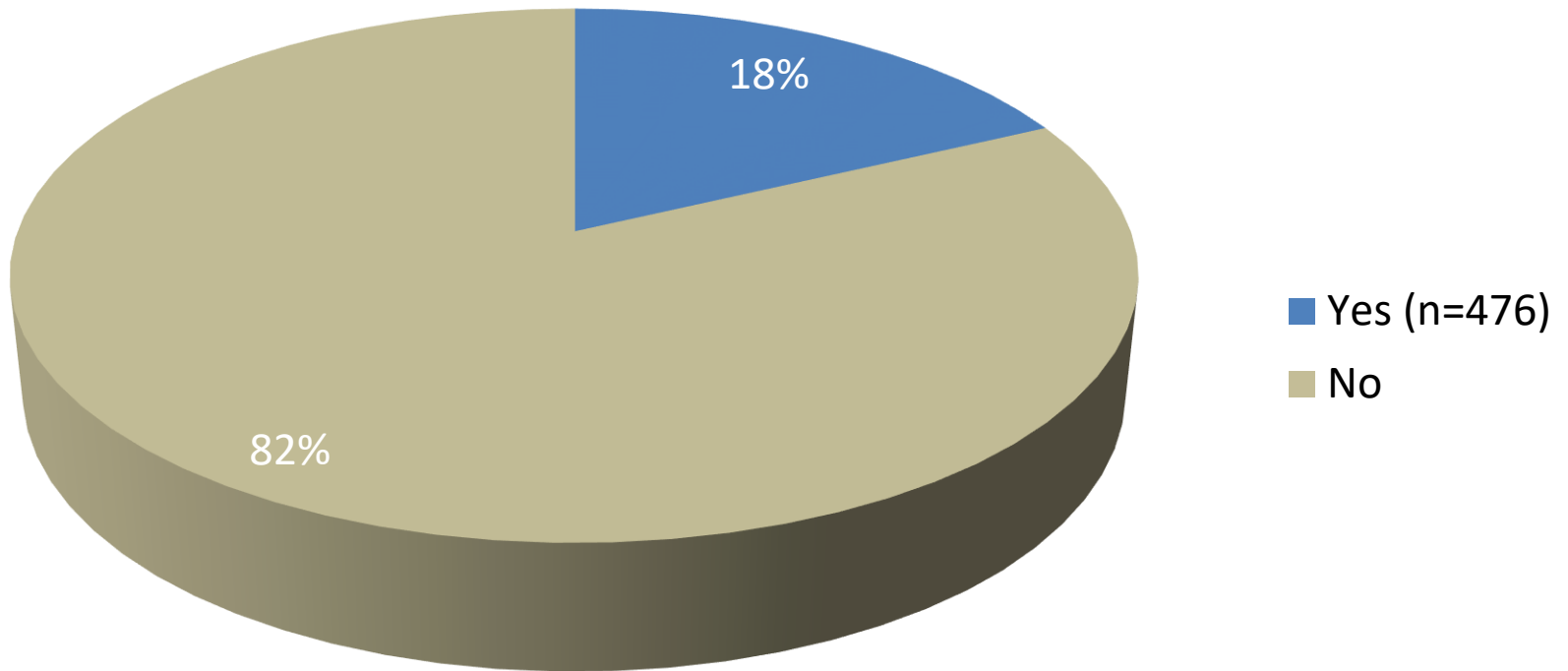
In which municipality do you reside?



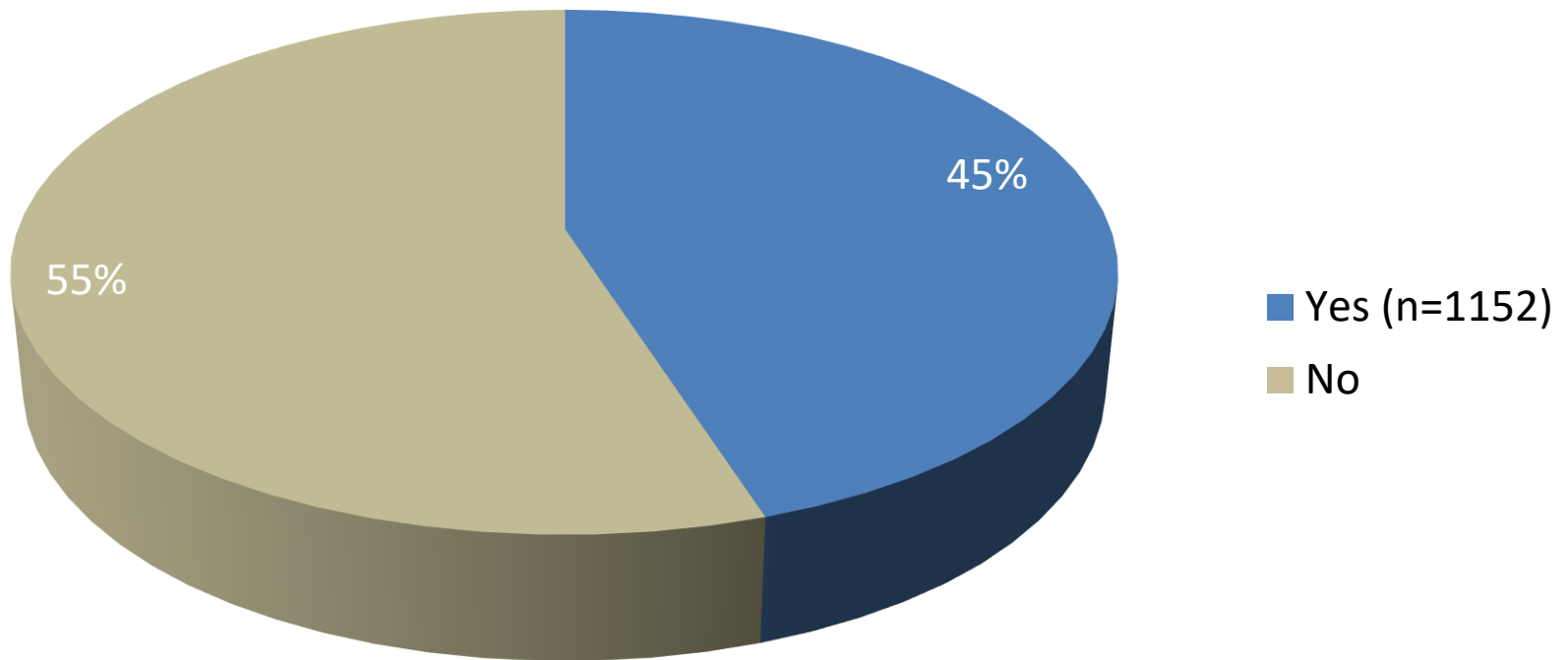
Is your primary residence in the Wisconsin Rapids School District?



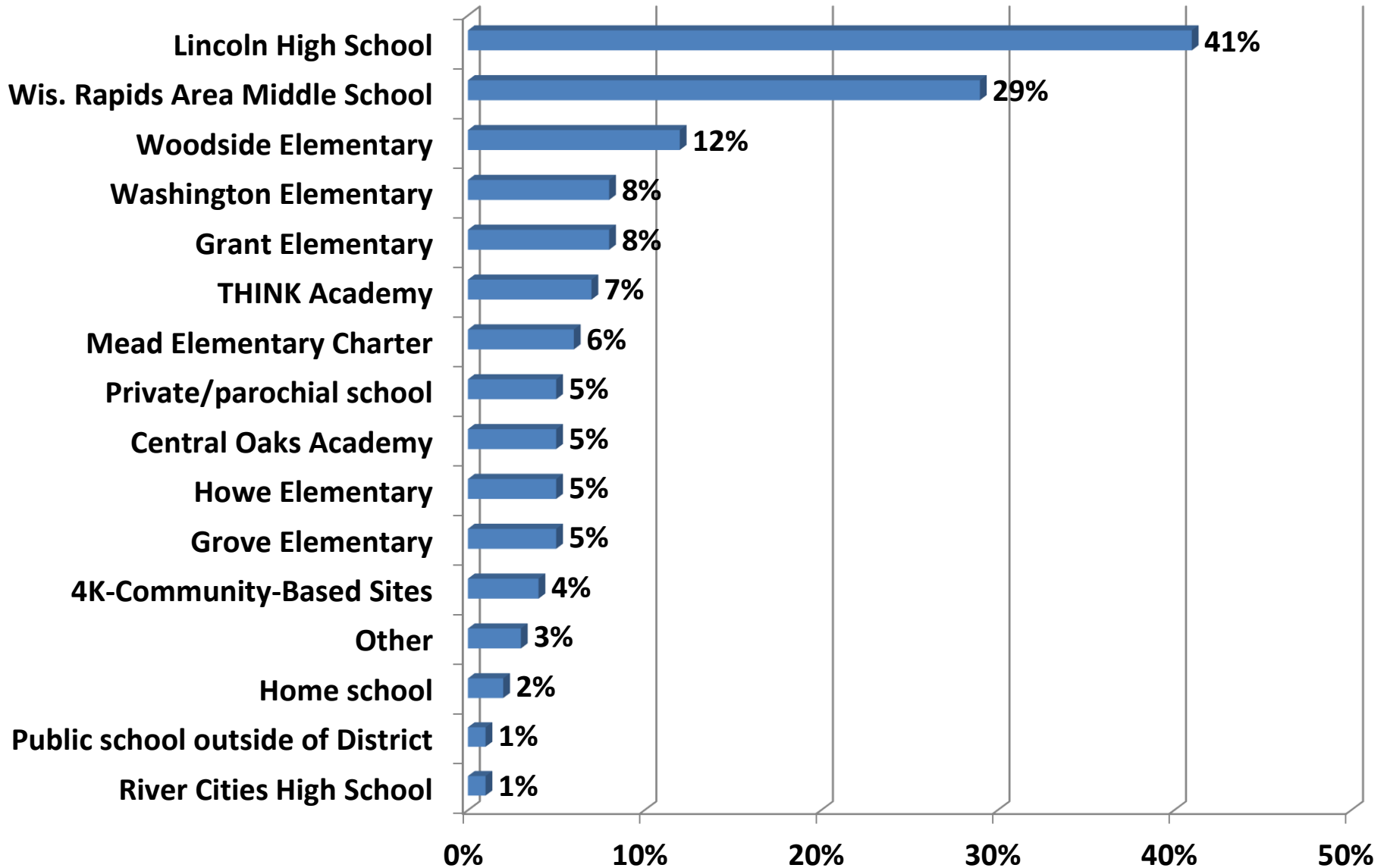
Are you an employee of the Wisconsin Rapids School District?



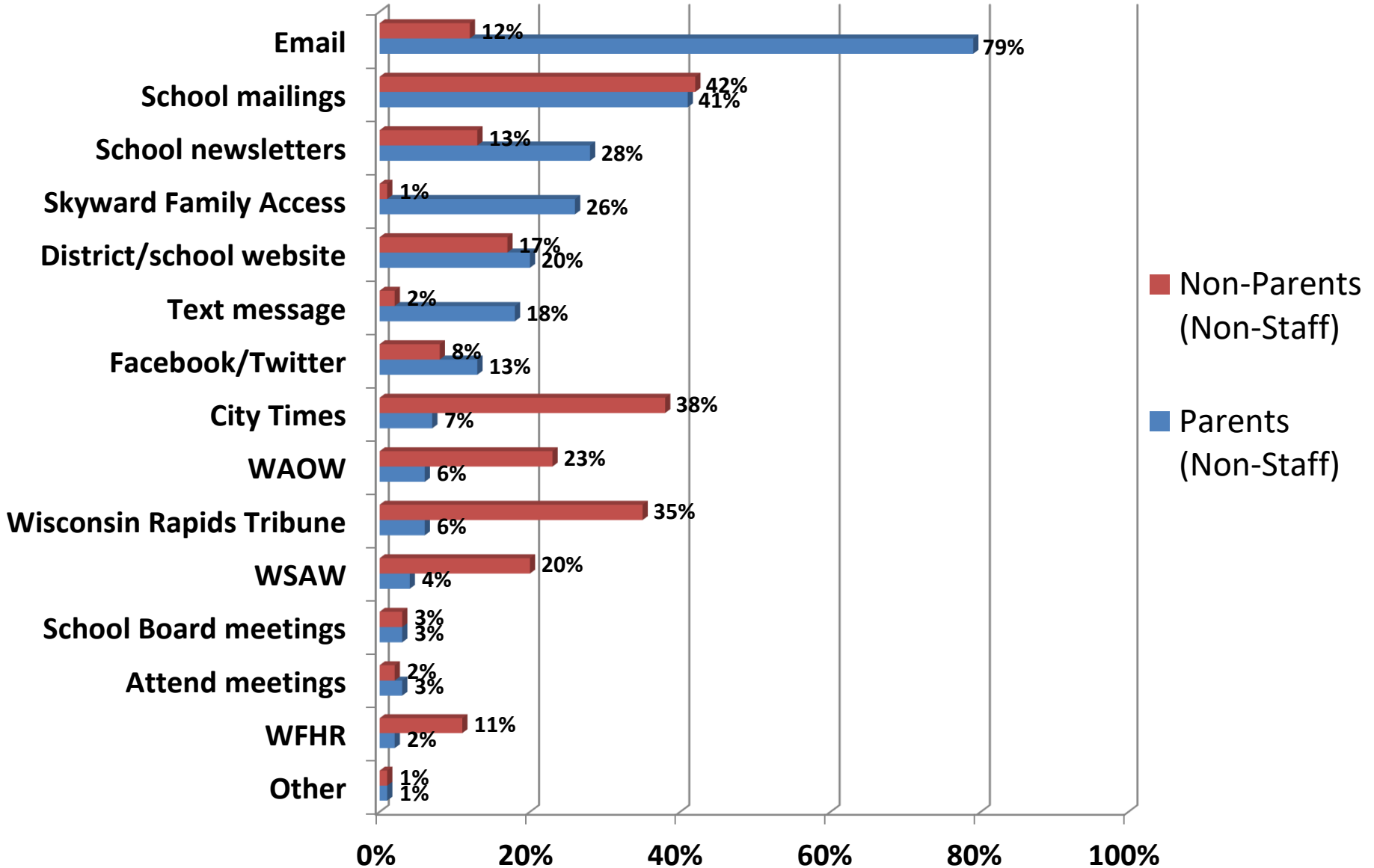
Do you have children attending our schools?



If you have school-aged children, what school(s) do they attend?



How would you like to receive information regarding the School District?



Overall Satisfaction

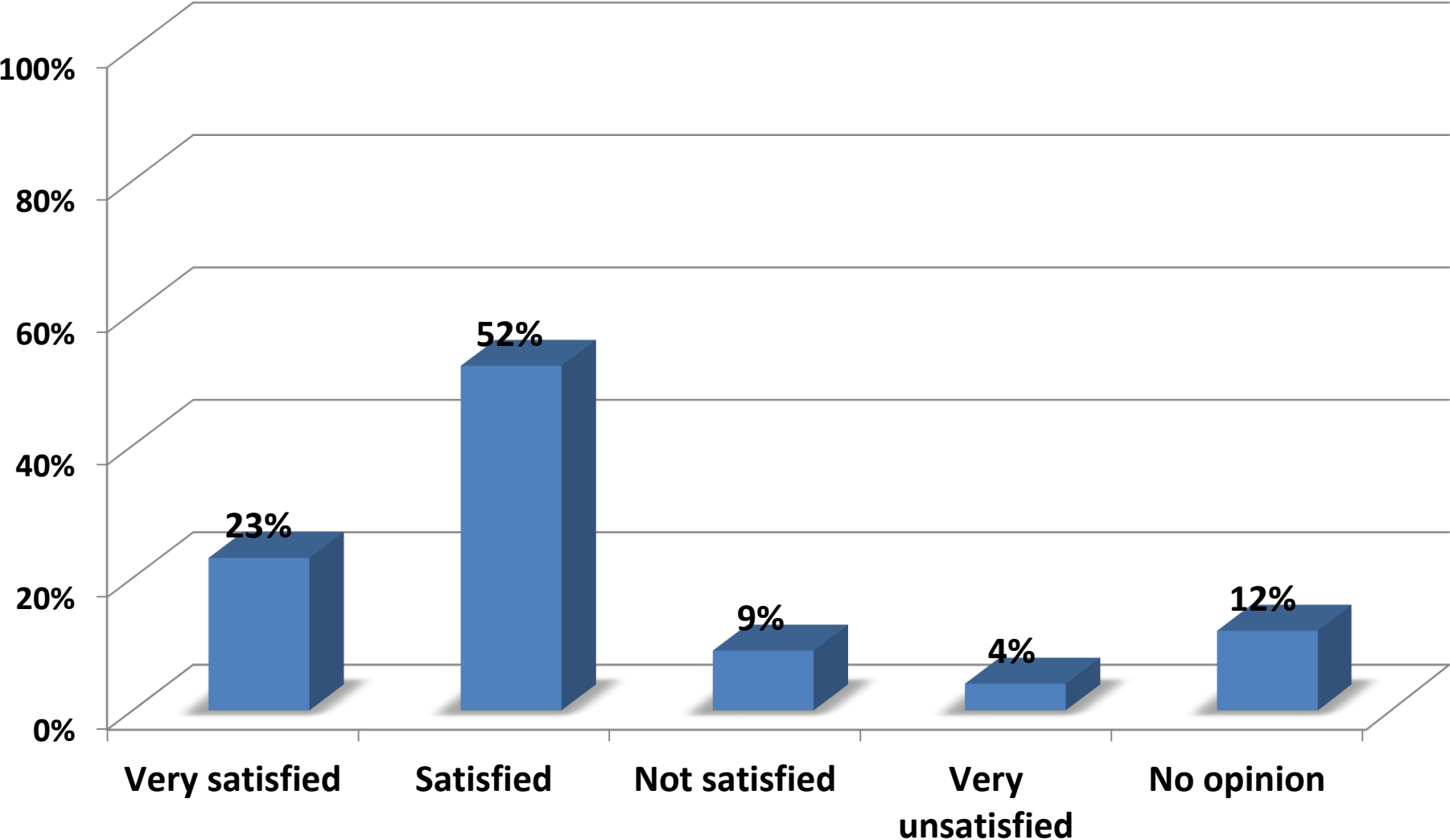
How well are we doing in each of the following areas?

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

Item	Staff	Parents (Non-Staff)	Non-Parents (Non-Staff)
Delivering a high-quality educational experience	3.39	2.93	2.76
Preparing students for life after high school	3.26	2.73	2.68
Building pride in our community	3.26	2.98	2.67
Spending tax dollars wisely	3.22	2.85	2.45
Keeping the public informed	3.31	3.06	2.43

Overall, how satisfied are you with the Wisconsin Rapids Public School District?

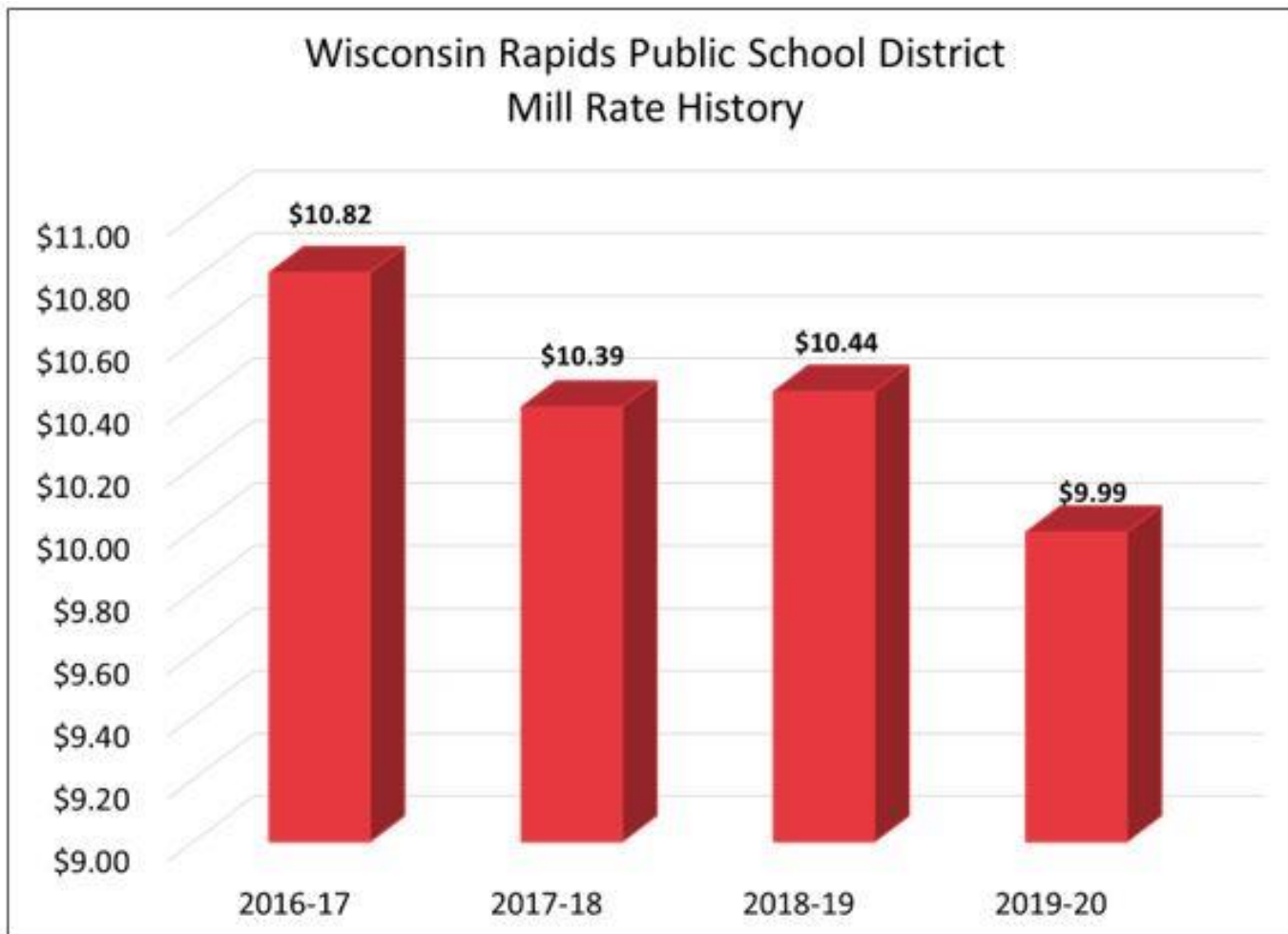
(All Respondents)



Financial Information (Information Only)

The Board of Education believes this is an appropriate time to explore making an investment in our schools.

- The District has worked hard to control expenses and invest money wisely. In fact, the school portion of local property taxes (the “mill rate”) is **the lowest it has been in recent memory.**



Two Types of Referenda (Information Only)

There are two types of referenda school districts can use:

1. Funds secured through an **operational referendum are used to support the day-to-day operations of the district.** These operations include staffing, educational programming, student services, and maintenance of district buildings. Funds secured through an operational referendum are used within the year they are received.
2. A **capital referendum is the method a district must use to issue debt to pay for major facility projects,** much like a home mortgage. A capital referendum is typically financed over an extended period of time, often 20 years.

Operational Referendum

The state's funding formula for public schools presents ongoing budget challenges. Nevertheless, we remain committed to providing the best education possible for all students by ensuring adequate funding for programs and services and maintaining the infrastructure of our schools.

In 1993, state law changed, limiting revenues for public schools and requiring school districts to gain permission from citizens to increase their school tax levy. Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools' last operational referendum occurred in 2006 and provided \$1.142 million per year for five years. ***Since that time, every other district in the Wisconsin Valley Conference besides Wisconsin Rapids has passed an operational referendum. In fact, nearly two-thirds of districts in Wisconsin have held an operational referendum in that same time period.***

Funding from the 2006 referendum launched our efforts to complete critical maintenance projects, update curriculum, improve classroom technology, and implement a one-to-one initiative that provides a computer to every student at the middle and high school levels.

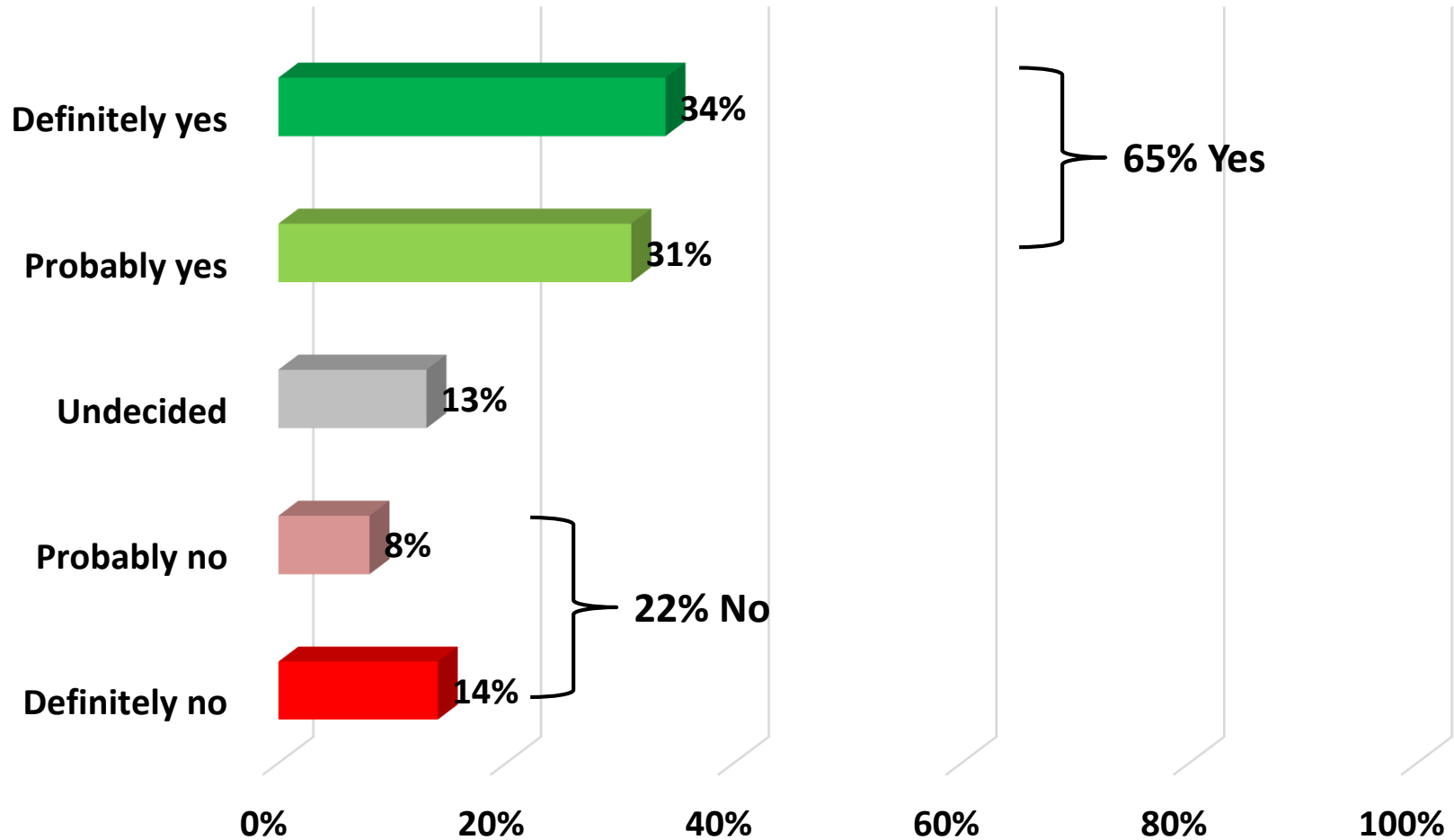
To continue to make progress, **the District is interested in pursuing a five-year operational referendum to fund the following needs:**

- Continue to update curriculum and expand digital access to curriculum and academic software
- Purchase annual instruction kits for constantly updating subjects, such as science and technology
- Provide professional development for staff to best implement new curriculum
- Improve internet speed and reliability
- Replace aging audio-visual equipment in classrooms

The District will need \$2 million annually to address most of the issues listed above.

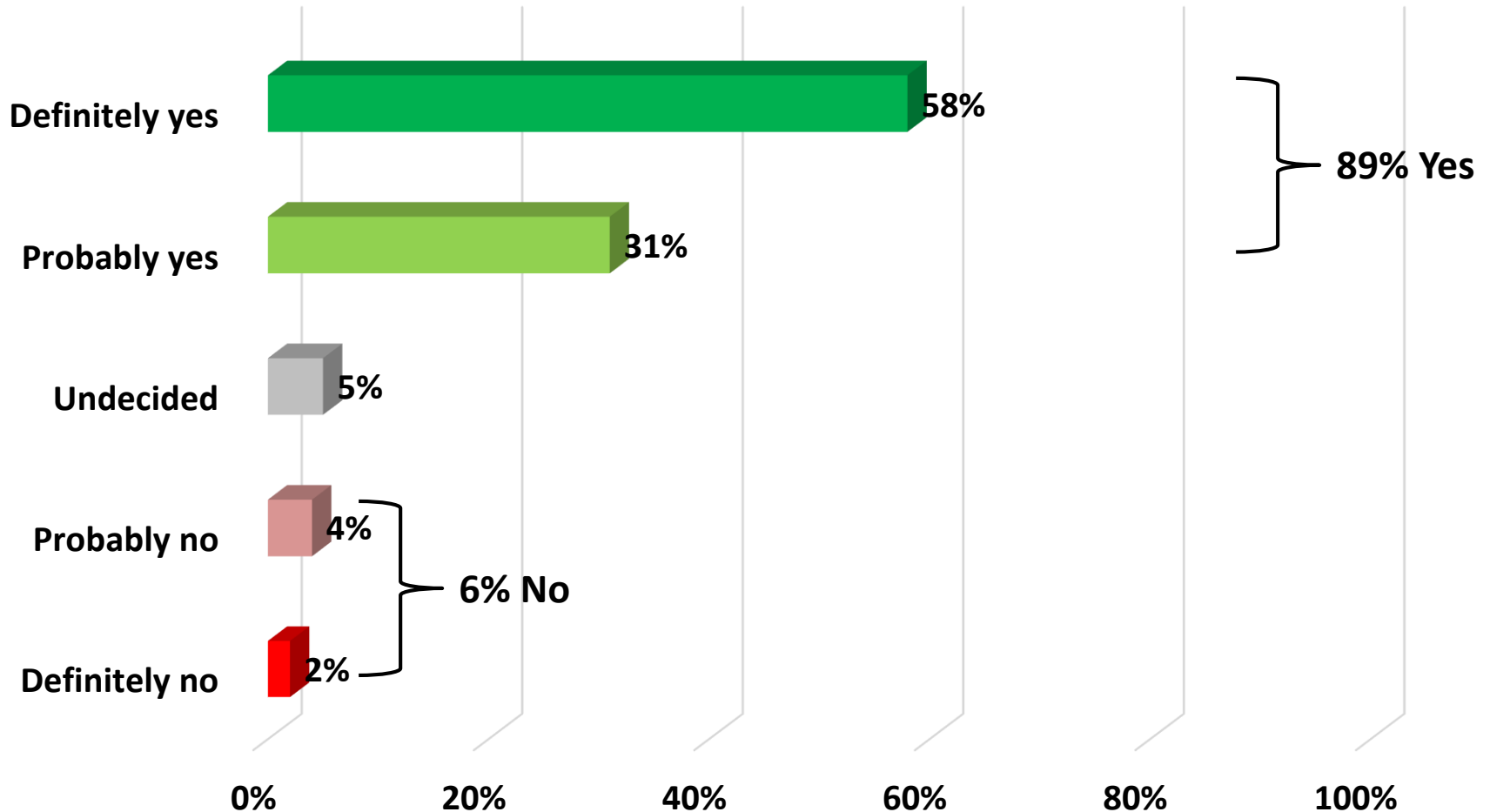
Would you support a \$2 million operational referendum for technology and curriculum updates for each of the next five years?

All Residents



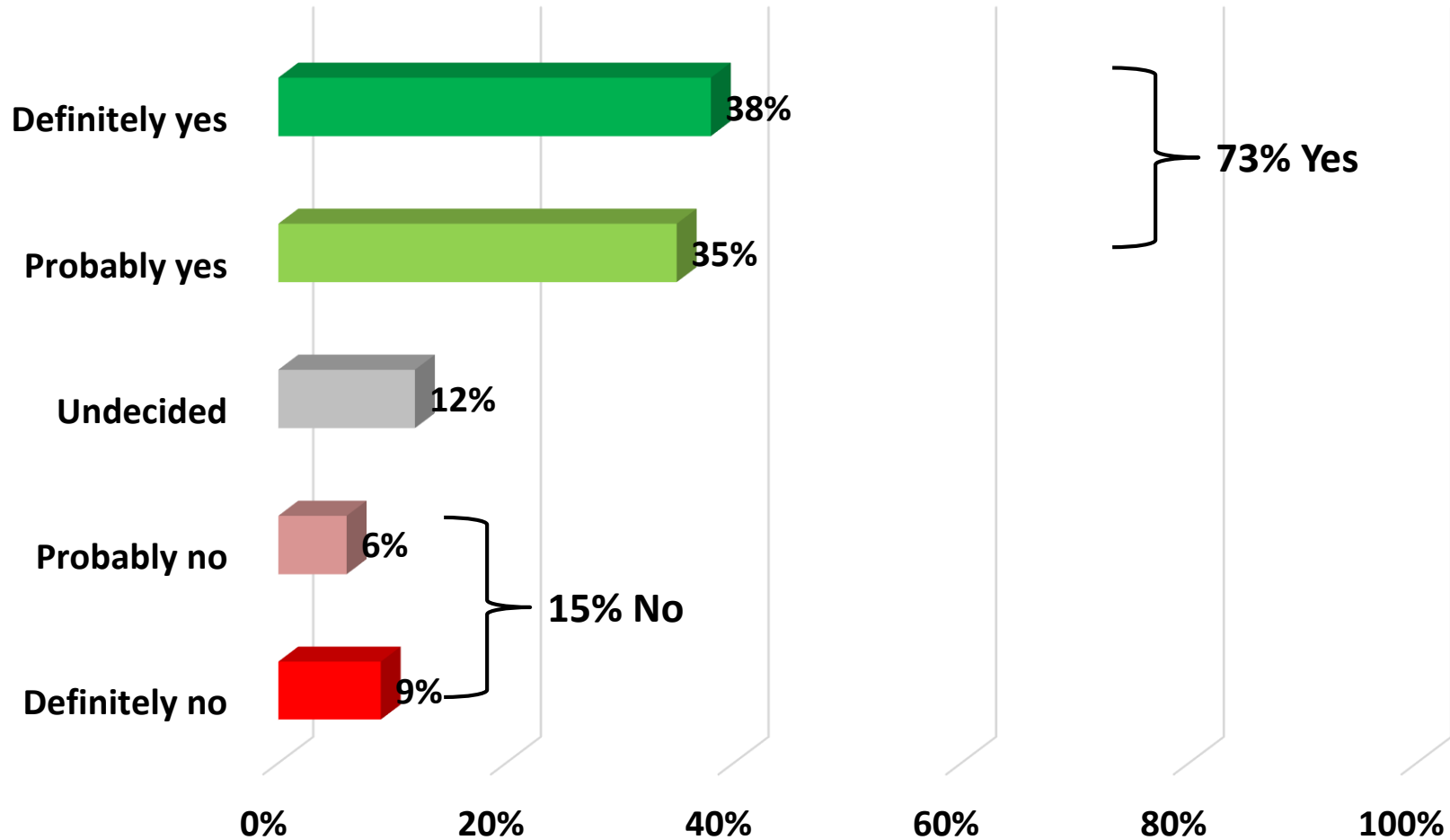
Would you support a \$2 million operational referendum for technology and curriculum updates for each of the next five years?

Staff Residents



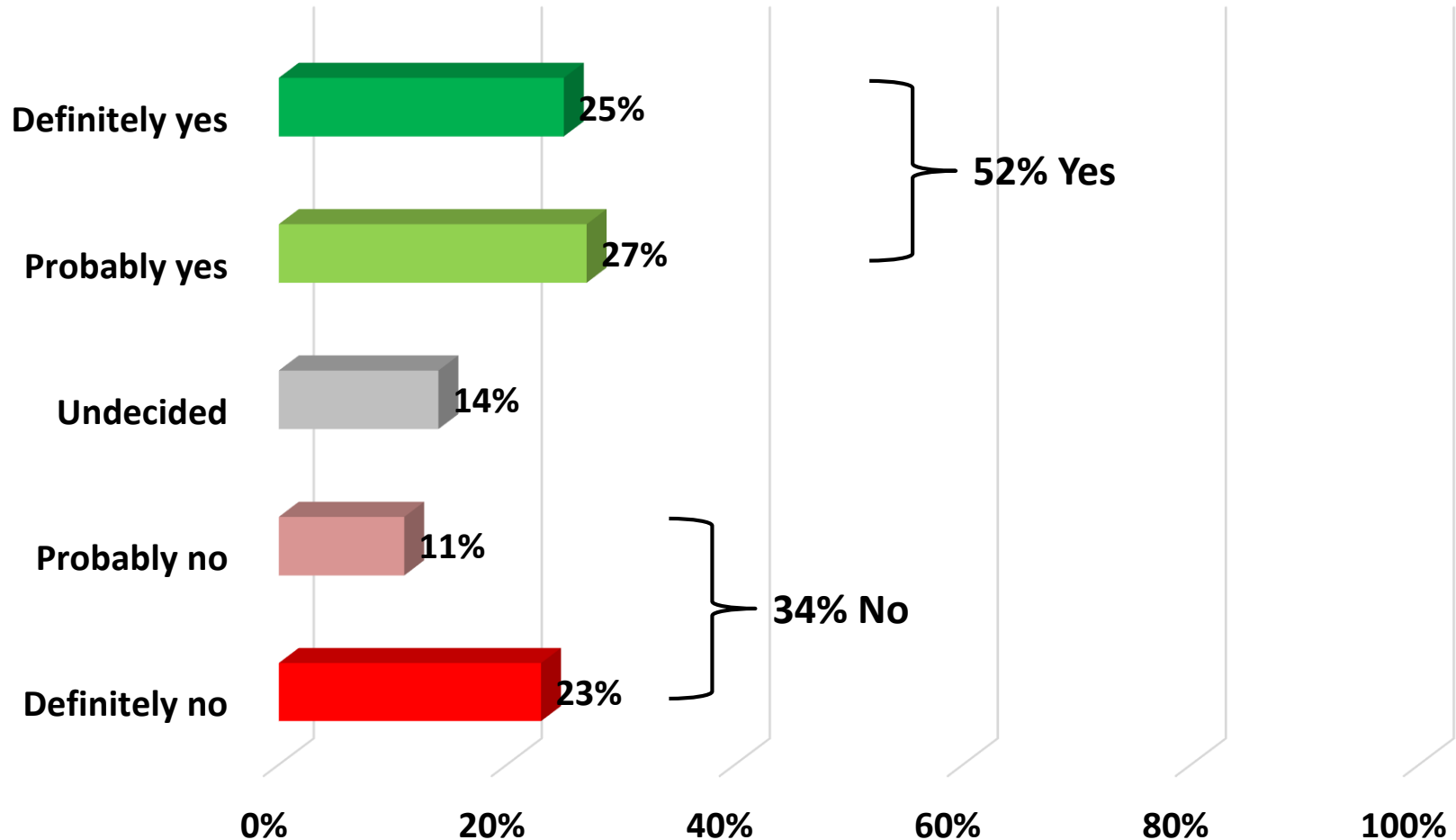
Would you support a \$2 million operational referendum for technology and curriculum updates for each of the next five years?

Parent Residents (Non-Staff)



Would you support a \$2 million operational referendum for technology and curriculum updates for each of the next five years?

Non-Parent Residents (Non-Staff)



Additional Analysis

Percent of Resident Population Assumptions:

- Non-parent/non-staff = 75%
- Parents = 25%
- Staff < 1%

Of those responding either Definitely yes, or Probably yes:

$$.75(52\%) + .25(73\%) = \underline{57.25\%}$$

Assuming carrying 1/3 of undecided

$$.75(56\%) + .25(77\%) = \underline{61.25\%}$$

Proposed Facility Projects

(Information Only)

Over the past few years, the District completed projects in our long-range facility plan that updated energy and heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) systems throughout our schools. These new energy-efficient systems have allowed us to save money.

The District has now identified the next projects in our long-range facility plan. These projects are too expensive to be funded through our annual budget. A capital referendum, used for facility renovations, could fund the following projects (see next page).

Improve School Security

The safety of our students and staff is our top priority. The District is constantly evaluating current safety recommendations to meet this priority and make upgrades as needed. The District was successful in securing more than \$570,000 in safety grant funding over the past two years from the Office of School Safety to implement school safety enhancements across the District.

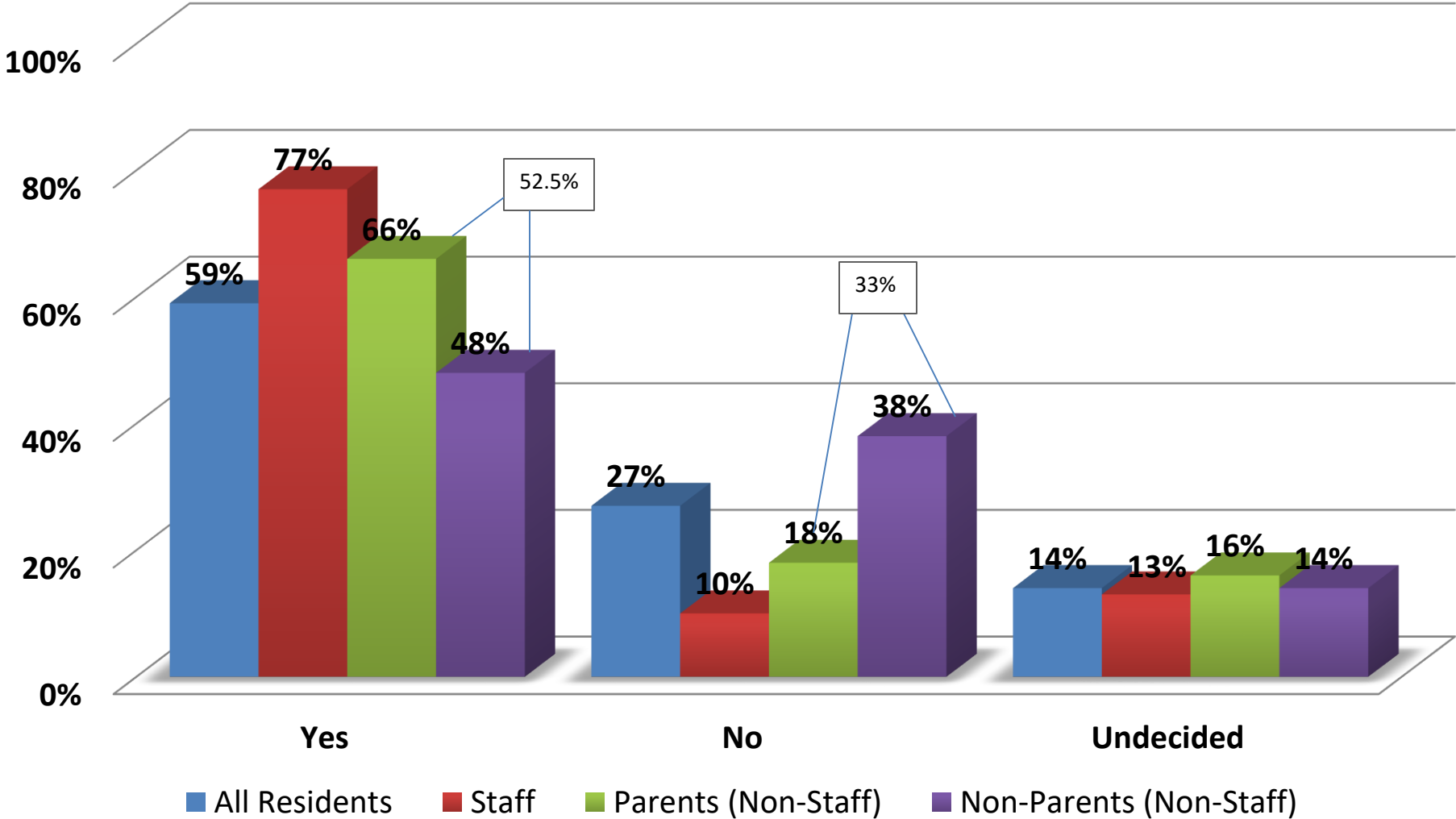
Our next security project would:

- Redesign the main entrances **at all schools** to better monitor and control visitor access.
- Route all visitors through **all schools'** main offices before gaining access to the rest of the school.

Estimated cost: \$12.74 million

Would you support a referendum that would provide funding to update entrances at all schools?

(Wisconsin Rapids School District Residents Only)



Renovations at Lincoln High School

Renovate Lincoln High School's Science Classrooms and Educational Support Areas

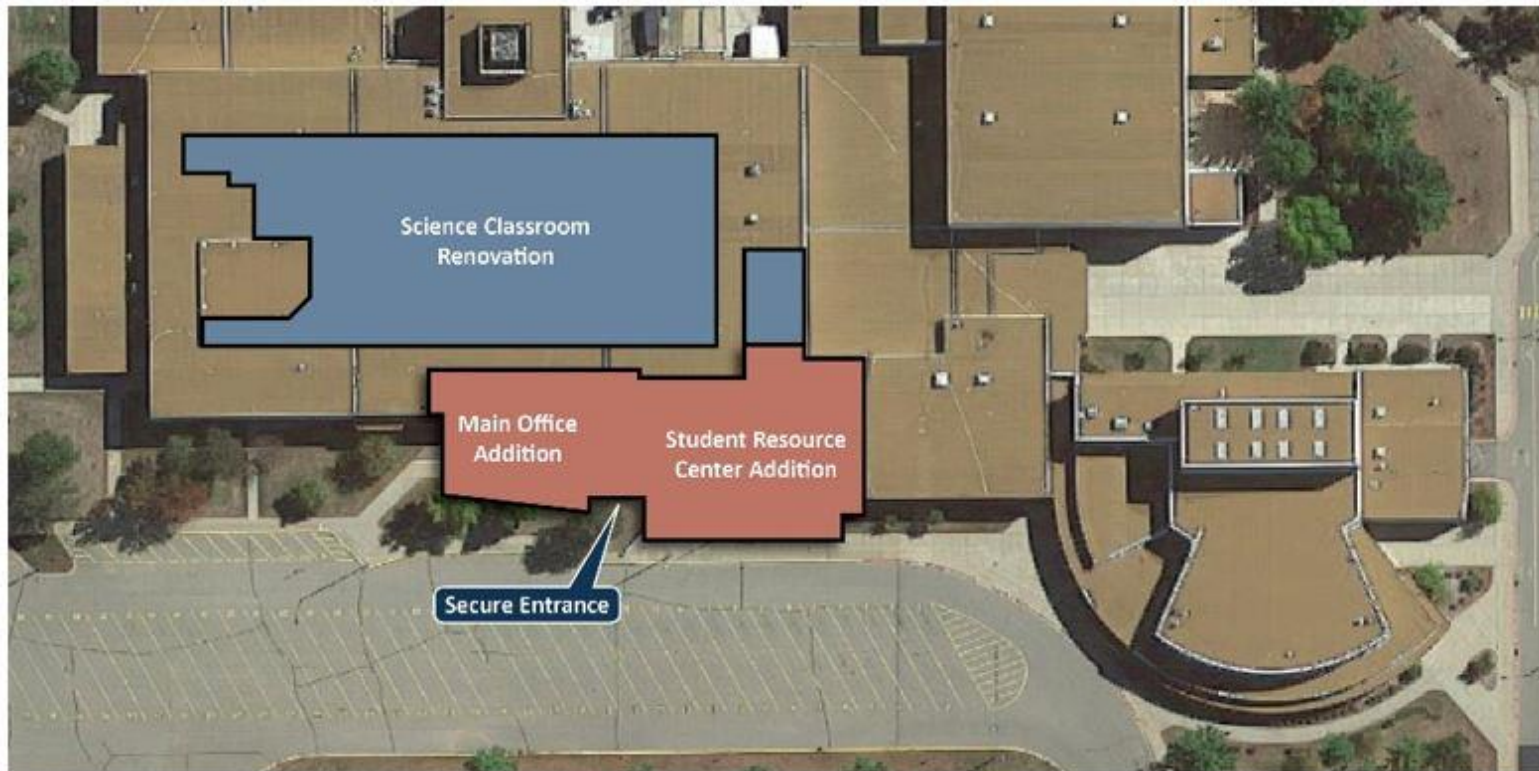
The District is extremely proud of our students' academic accomplishments. In fact, Lincoln High School "exceeds expectations" according the latest state report card. Two facility updates have been identified to ensure this excellence continues:

UPDATE SCIENCE CLASSROOMS AND LABS

Our science classrooms and labs were built in 1979. Instruction has greatly changed since that time, and our science department is undersized by today's educational standards.

Upgrades would include:

- Expanding spaces for flexible small- and large-group instruction.
- Providing additional lab storage.
- Creating the opportunities to conduct more advanced labs.
- Boosting electrical systems to better accommodate the use of technology and the latest equipment in science instruction.
- Add course offerings for demand science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.



**Estimated
Cost:
\$9.93 million**

UPDATE LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

Libraries are also used differently than in previous generations. No longer just for quiet, independent study, these flexible learning spaces now have purposes such as:

- Research
- Students' group-project meetings
- Academic assistance in math, reading, and writing
- Technology access
- Staff professional development

The District would like to construct a Student Resource Center, which would include the following:

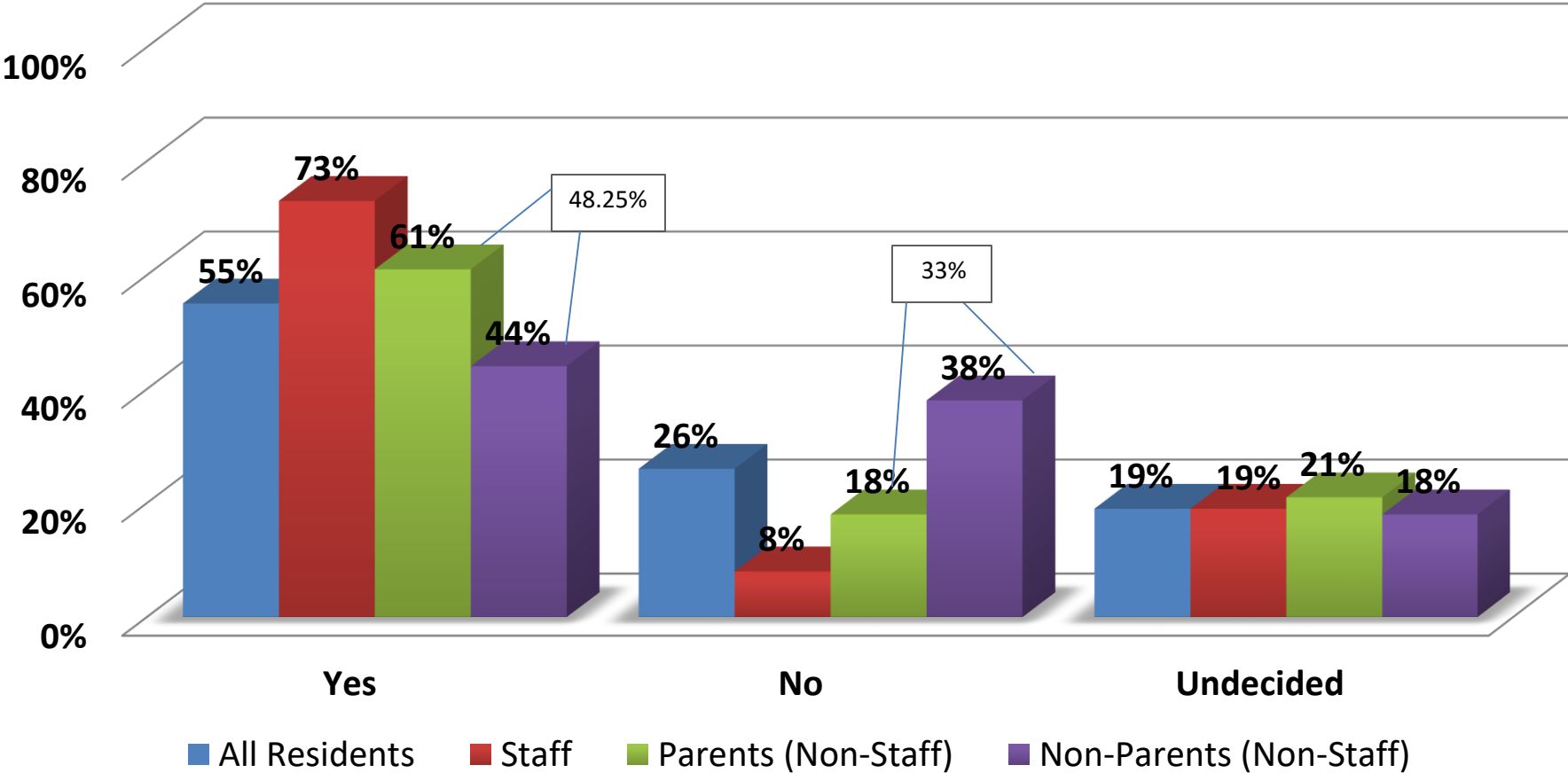
- Relocate the library to the 1st floor
- Create collaborative learning spaces for students and staff, as listed above
- Repurpose the existing library into expanded science classrooms and labs
- Design a gathering space for both school and community use

Estimated Cost: \$6.73 million

Would you support a referendum that would provide funding to update Lincoln High School's science classrooms and labs and create a new library/Student Resource Center for school and community use?

Estimated cost: \$16.66 million

(Wisconsin Rapids School District Residents Only)



THINK Academy Addition

The cafeteria and gym at THINK Academy share a space. This layout requires daily setup and take-down of tables and chairs and quick deep cleans to prepare the gym for afternoon physical education. The space is also too small for the size of today's physical education classes. A bigger gym could be built, and the existing space repurposed into a dedicated cafeteria. Once complete, this project would:

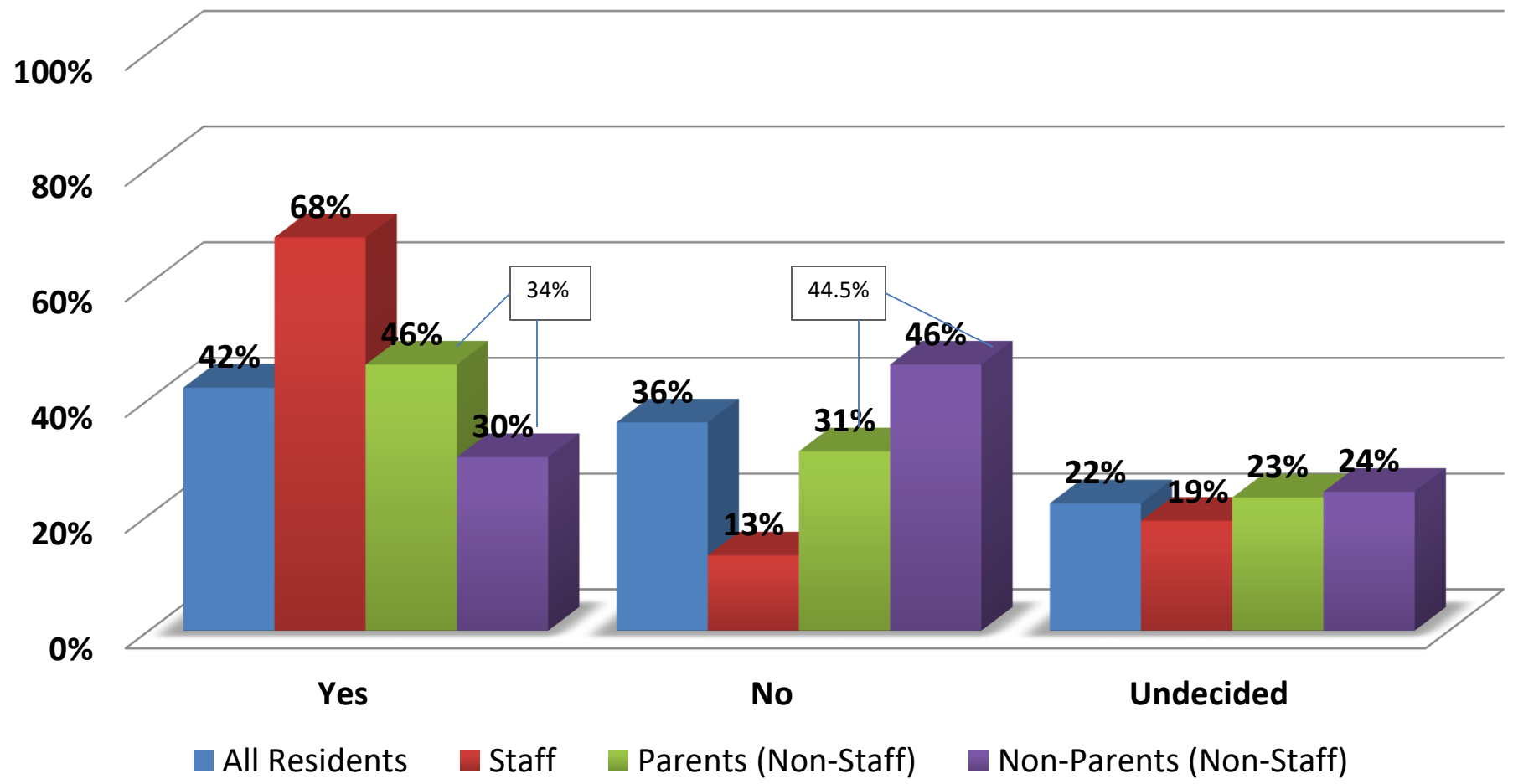
- Create a separate gym and cafeteria space.
- Alleviate scheduling conflicts.
- Allow greater access for youth sports and community use.

Estimated cost:
\$4.6 million



Would you support a referendum that would provide funding to add a gym at THINK Academy?

(Wisconsin Rapids School District Residents Only)



Funding Support

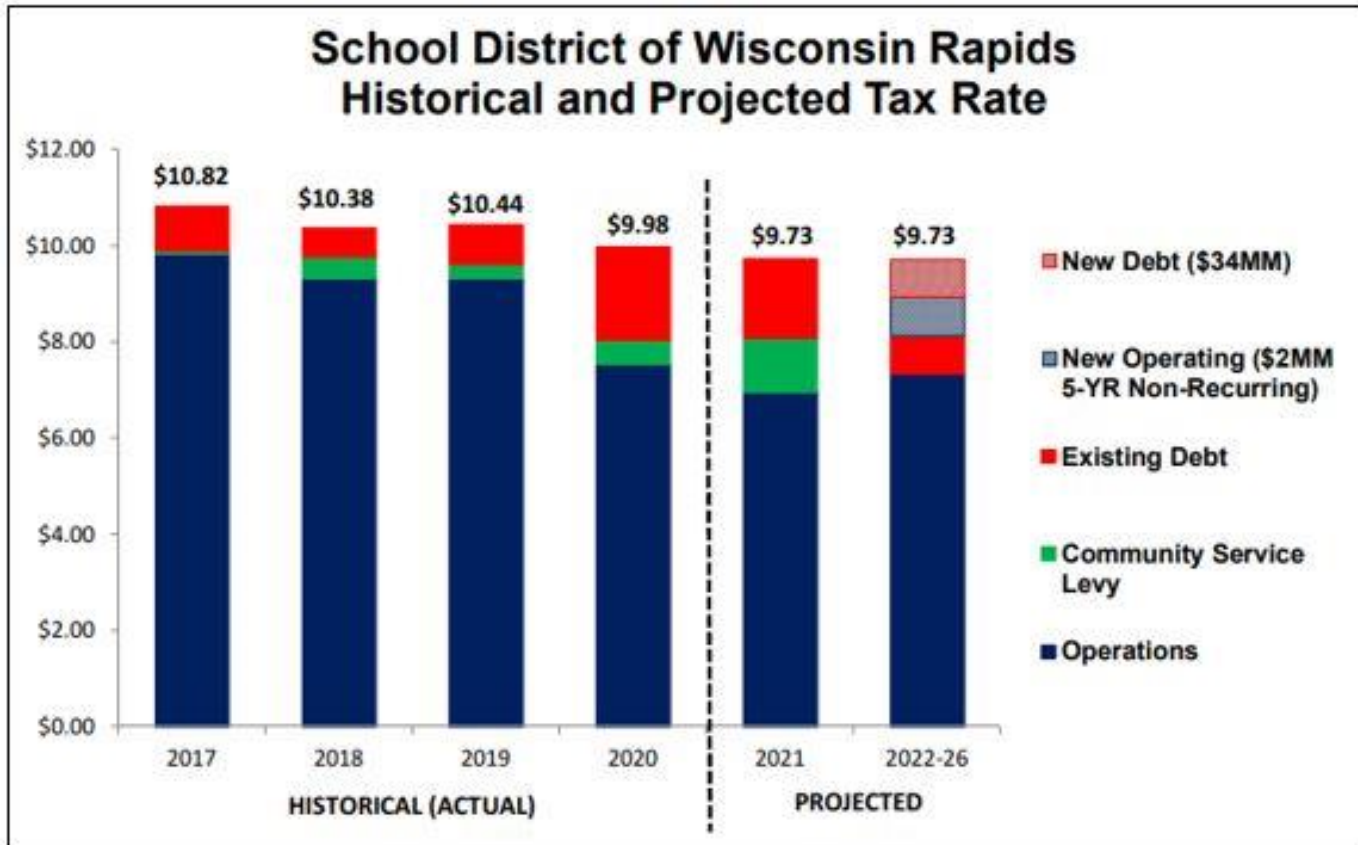
The cost to complete all of the proposed facility projects totals \$34 million and includes:

Update school security at all schools	\$12.74 million
Renovate science classrooms and create Student Resource Center at Lincoln High School	\$16.66 million
Add a gym to THINK Academy	<u>\$ 4.6 million</u>
Total	\$ 34.0 million

Voters would need to approve both an operational and capital referendum to address the District's curriculum and technology needs and complete the proposed facility projects.

The District's careful financial planning over the years and retiring of existing debt allow these projects to be completed with no tax increase over the current level.

- The District's existing debt that funded past facility projects will be paid off in the coming years. As a result, the debt portion of the school property tax levy will continue to drop. This reduction of loan payments and the ability to refinance remaining debt at lower interest rates gives **the community the opportunity to address identified operating and facility needs with little to no increase over the current level.**

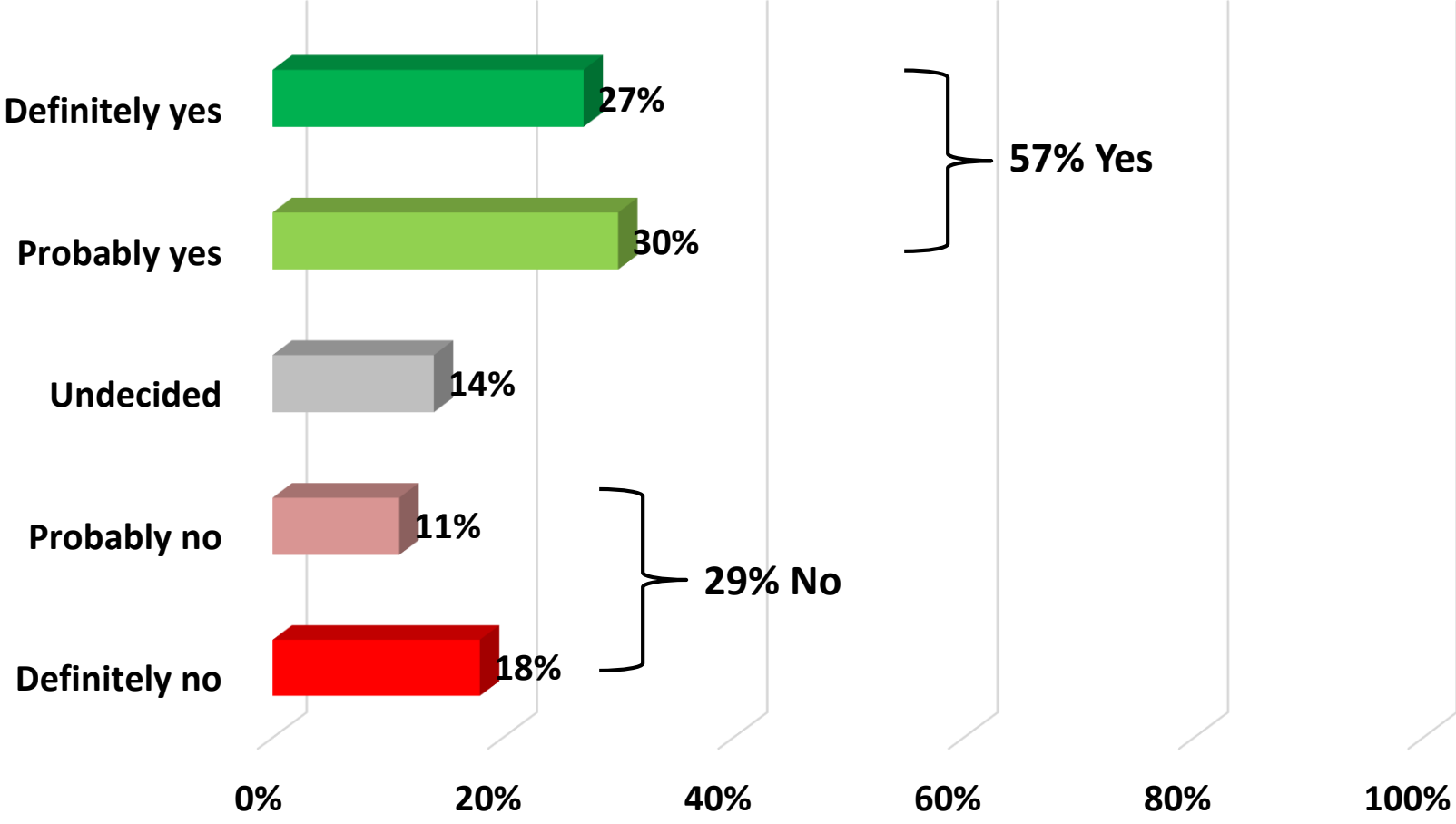


- Interest rates remain at historic lows.
- Construction costs are currently very competitive.

Would you support a \$2 million annual operating referendum AND a \$34 million capital referendum to finance the plans and priorities?

Representing no tax increase over the current level.

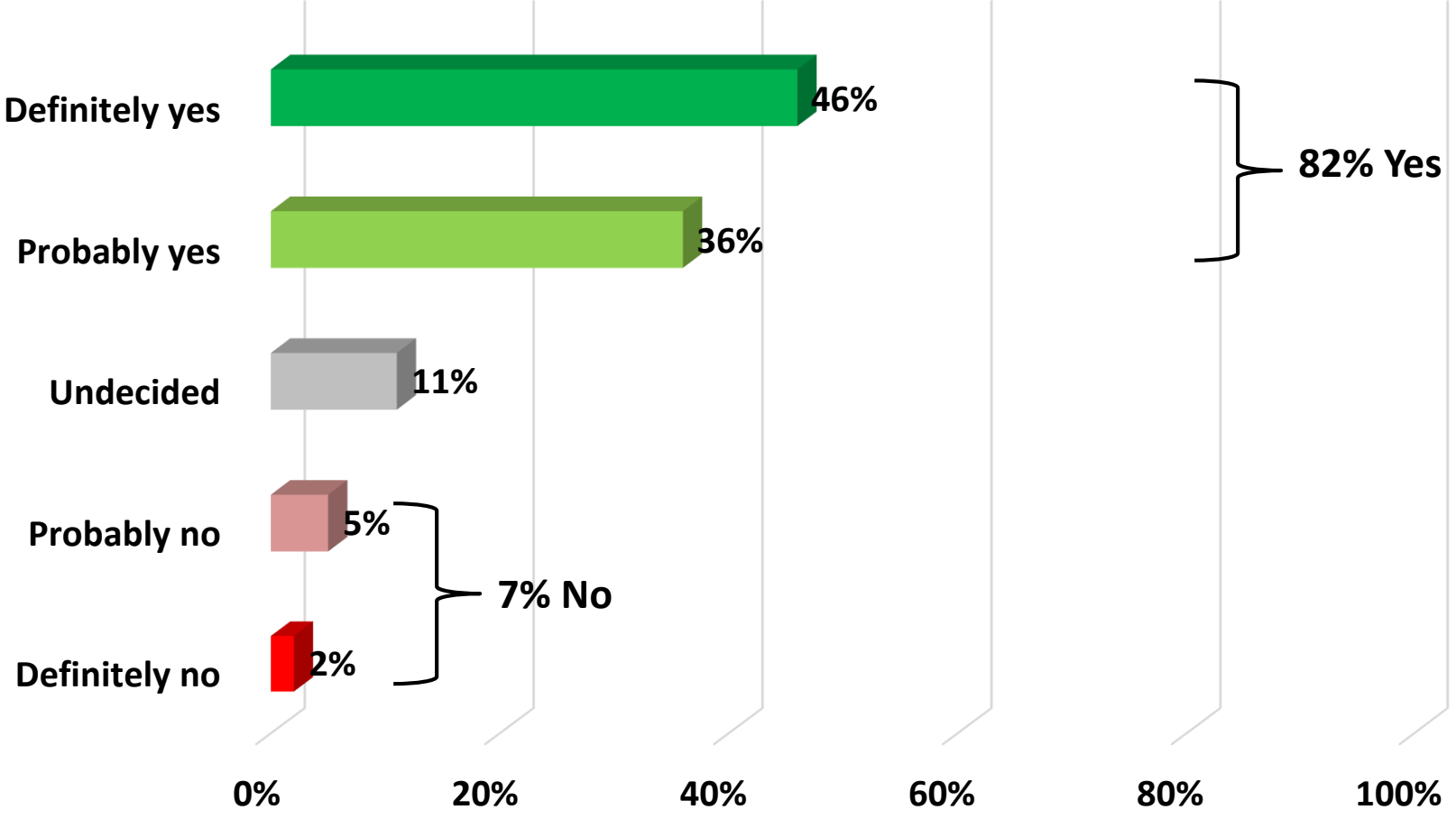
All Residents



Would you support a \$2 million annual operating referendum AND a \$34 million capital referendum to finance the plans and priorities?

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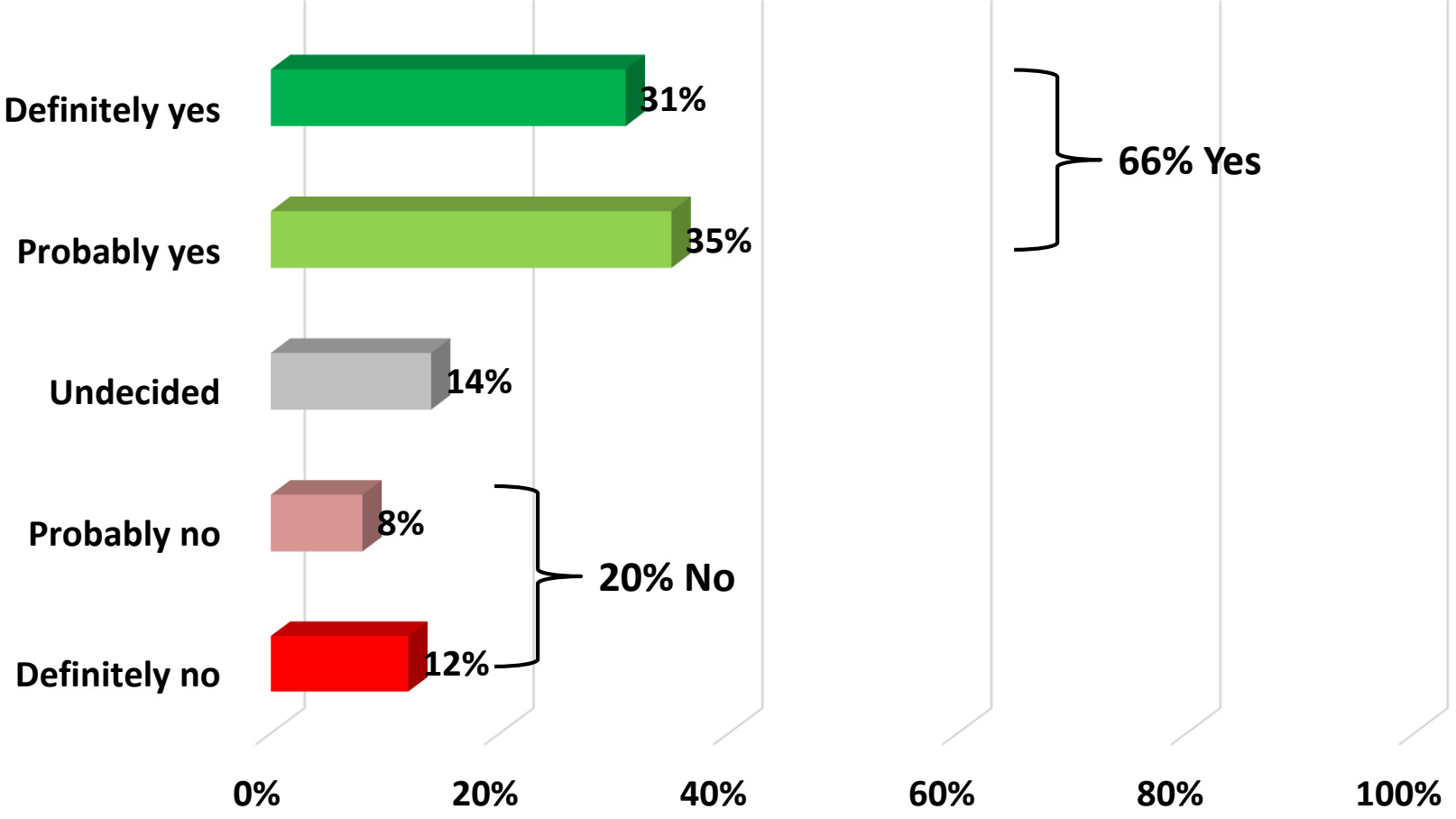
Staff Residents



Would you support a \$2 million annual operating referendum AND a \$34 million capital referendum to finance the plans and priorities?

Representing no tax increase over the current level.

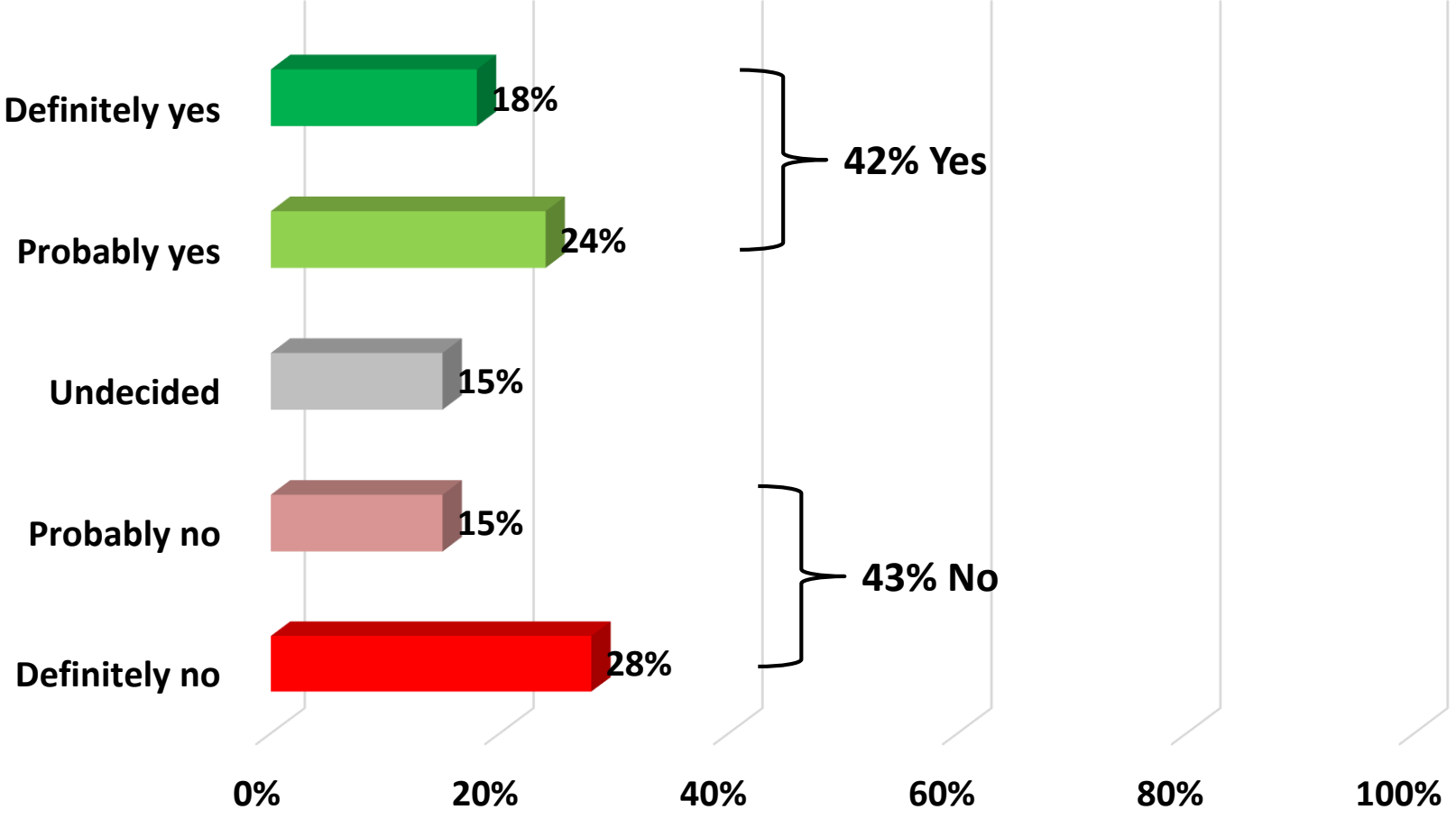
Parent Residents (Non-Staff)



Would you support a \$2 million annual operating referendum AND a \$34 million capital referendum to finance the plans and priorities?

Representing no tax increase over the current level.

Non-Parent Residents (Non-Staff)



Additional Analysis

Percent of Resident Population Assumptions:

- Non-parent/non-staff = 75%
- Parents = 25%
- Staff < 1%

Of those responding either Definitely yes, or Probably yes:

$$.75(42\%) + .25(66\%) = \underline{48\%}$$

Assuming carrying 1/3 of undecided

$$.75(47\%) + .25(70\%) = \underline{52.75\%}$$

Thank you!



Parent Surveys - Staff Surveys - Student Surveys - Community Surveys
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