

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING TO HEAR COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS  
PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS' ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, CONF. RM. #1, 8701 MUSTANG DRIVE,  
PORTAGE, MI 49002  
APRIL 27, 2020, 4:00 PM  
AGENDA**

**VISION STATEMENT**

An exceptional, continuously improving learning culture with high expectations, committed to all!

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Portage Public Schools will educate all students to achieve their potential.

<b>I. CALL TO ORDER</b>	
<b>II. REVISIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>III. PRESENTATION OF SURVEY RESULTS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>IV. DISCUSSION</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>V. COMMENTS OR COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>VI. ADJOURNMENT</b>	

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION - SPECIAL MEETING  
MEETING CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY**

**APRIL 27, 2020, 4:00 P.M.**

**Note Page**

**II. Revisions/Approval of Agenda**

**Recommended Motion:**

**Motion offered by \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_, that the Board of Education approve the Agenda as printed (or as amended).**

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION - SPECIAL MEETING  
MEETING CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY**

**APRIL 27, 2020, 4:00 P.M.**

**Note Page**

**III. Presentation of Survey Results**

# Elementary Community Survey

Portage Public Schools  
April 2020



# Survey Overview

23 questions  
Online/mail survey

Survey window of March 16-27, 2020

Open to all residents of Portage Public Schools district age 18 and over

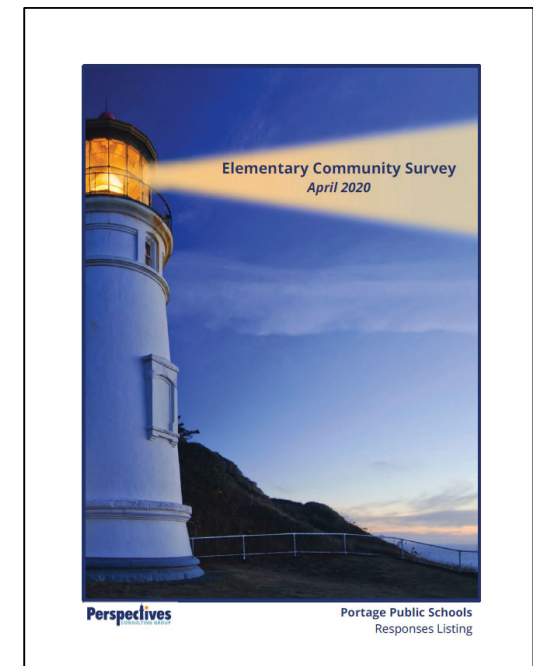
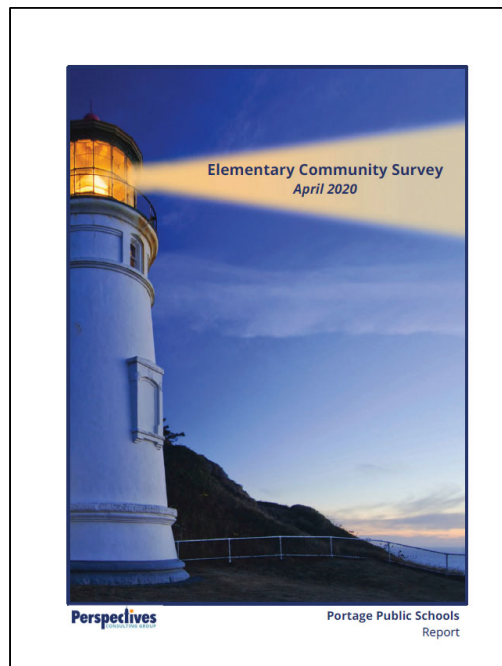
# Survey Overview

1,350 respondents  
Margin of error: +/- 2.7%

Data weighted to reflect proportions of households near each school

# Survey Overview

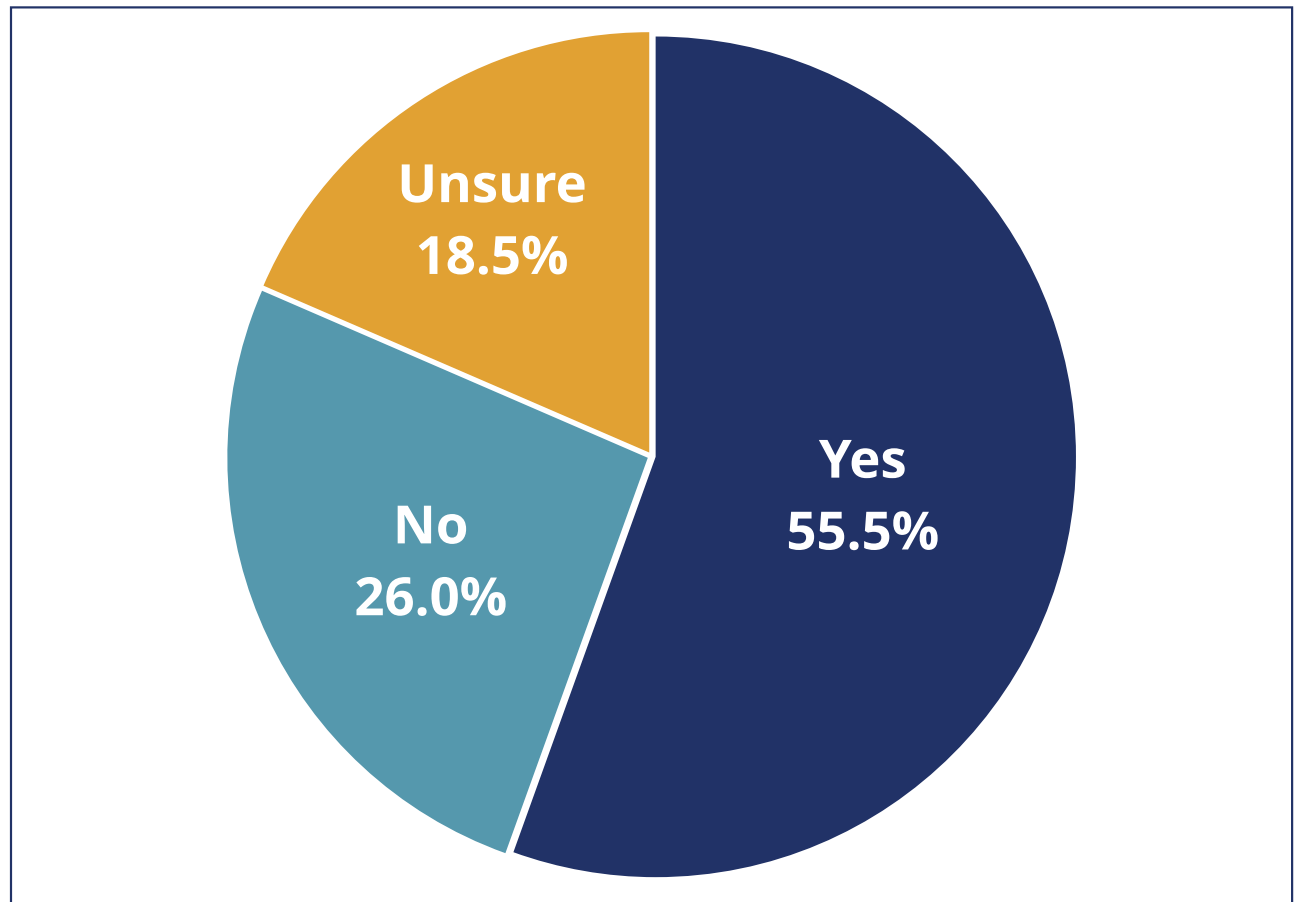
## Two reports



Elementary Community Survey  
Portage Public Schools

# Buildings and Facilities Need to be Improved

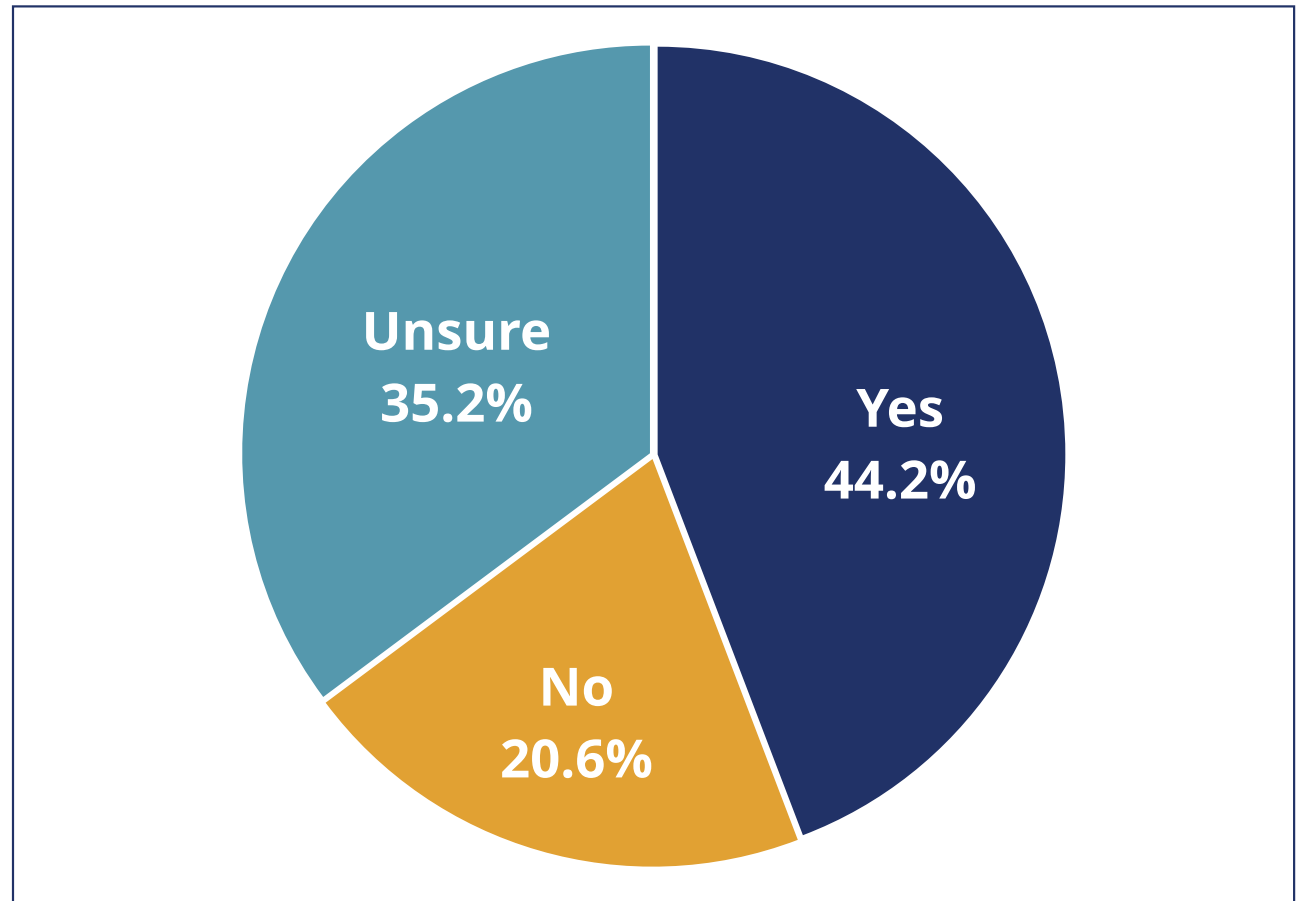
Do you feel the buildings and facilities in PPS need to be improved?



Elementary Community Survey  
Portage Public Schools

# Fiscally Responsible

Do you feel PPS is fiscally responsible?



Elementary Community Survey  
Portage Public Schools

## Fiscally Responsible

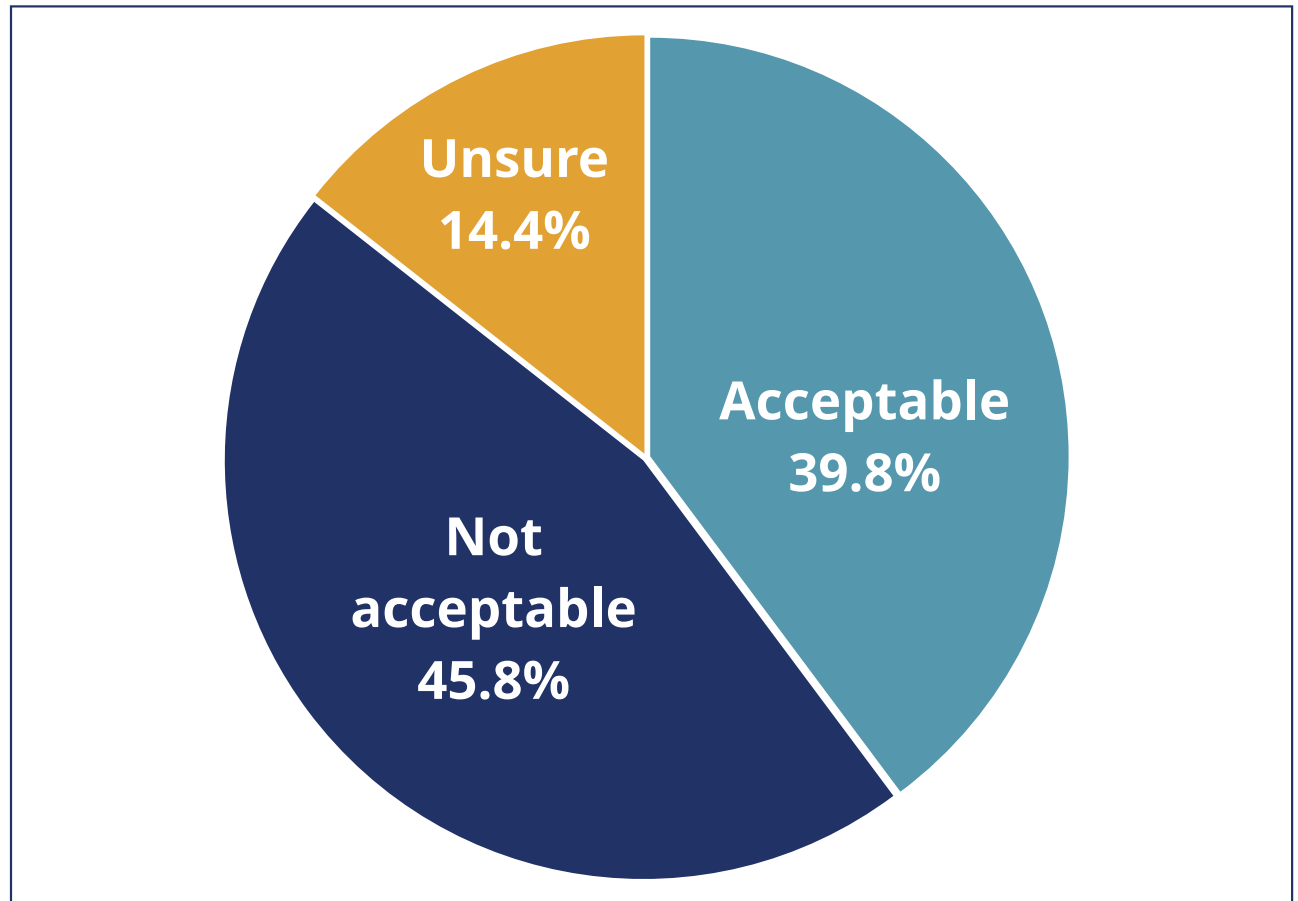
If no or unsure, why?

Bond request is too close to last request

Two stadiums were unnecessary

# Support Plan

How do you feel about this plan for addressing the district's elementary school facility needs?



Elementary Community Survey  
Portage Public Schools

# Support Plan

If not acceptable, why?

Building new instead of renovating

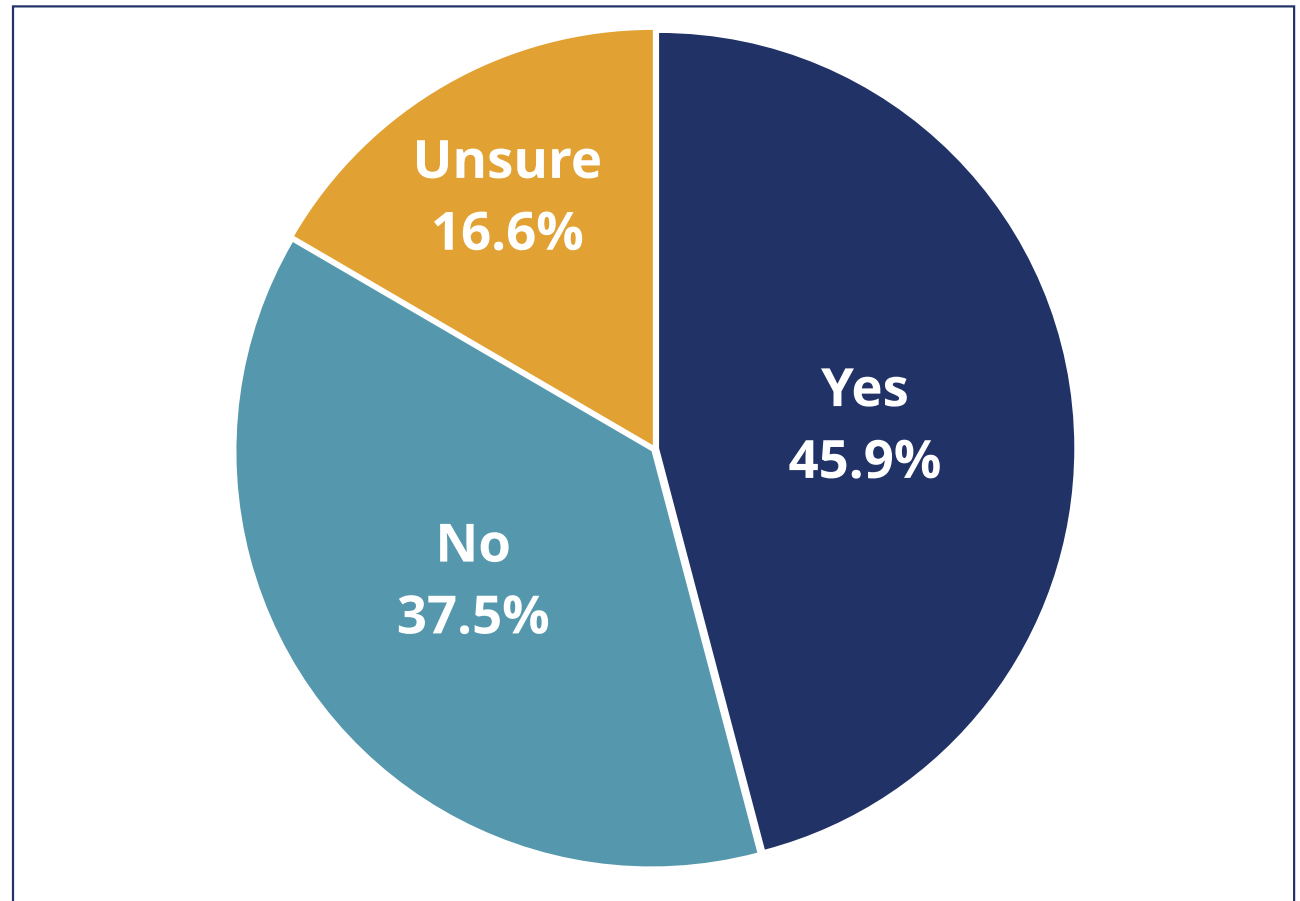
Central Elementary location

Cost

Overcrowding

## Approve Bond

Would you vote to approve a 25-year bond to pay for renovating Moorsbridge Elementary, building five new elementary schools, updating technology, purchasing new busses, and addressing facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School?



Elementary Community Survey  
Portage Public Schools

# Approve Bond

If no or unsure, why?

Building new instead of renovating

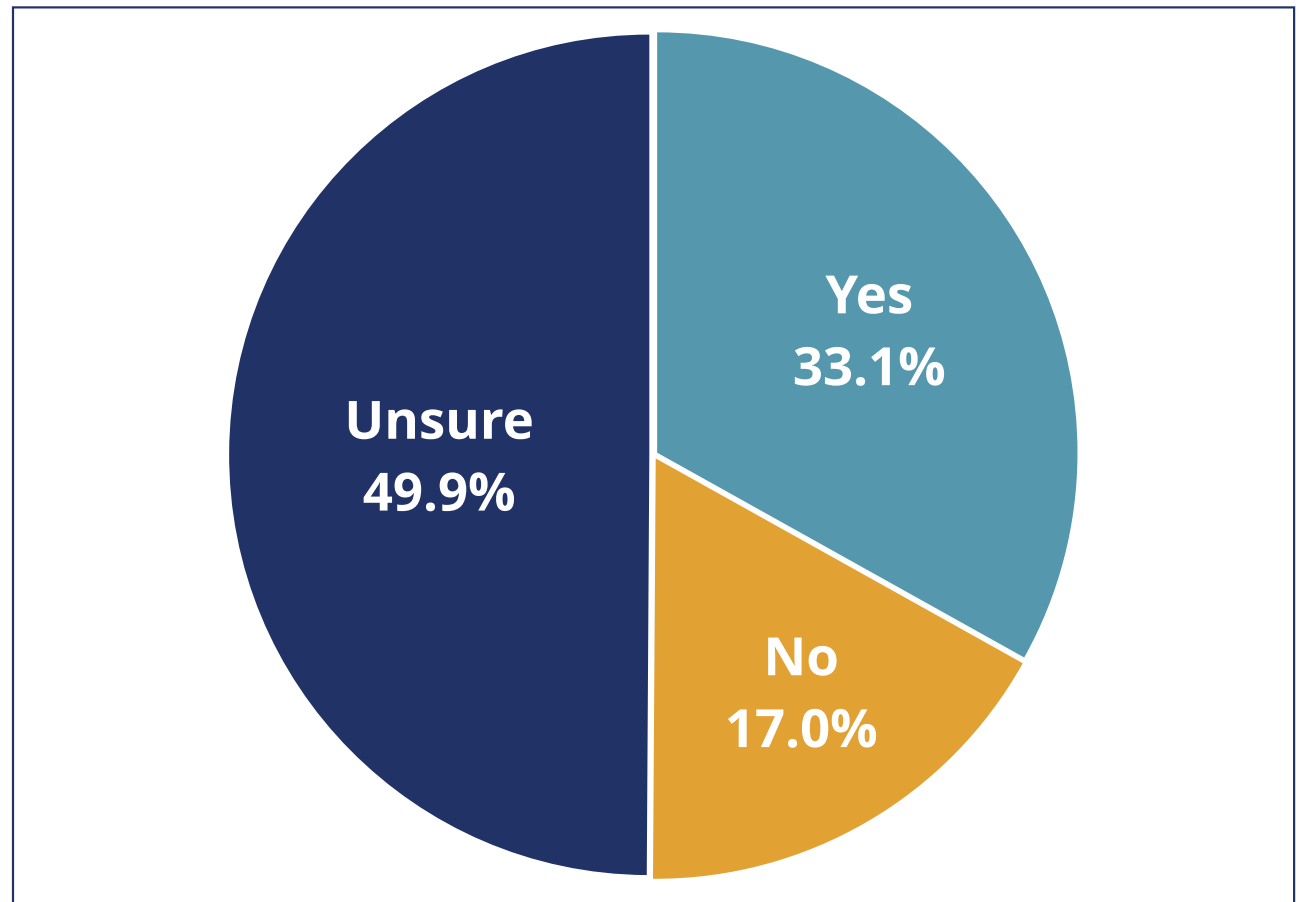
Central Elementary location

Cost

Overcrowding

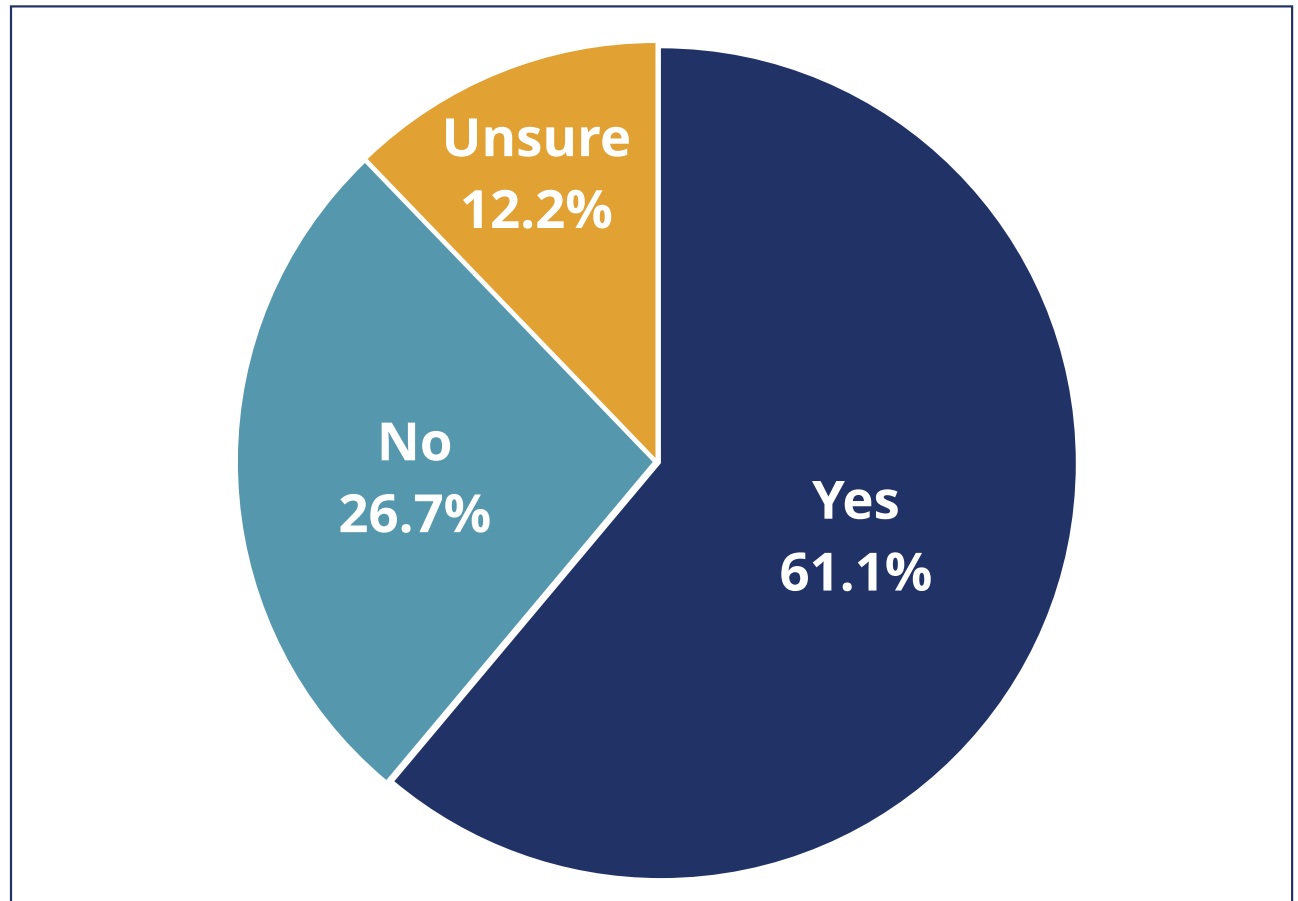
## Support Less Expensive Option

Would you vote to support an option to address elementary school needs that would cost less per year?



# Sufficient Information

Do you feel comfortable that you have sufficient information to vote on a bond for elementary facilities?



# Sufficient Information

If they did not have sufficient information, what information would you want?

Central Elementary location

Plan details

Cost

Other options

Swing schools

# Conclusion

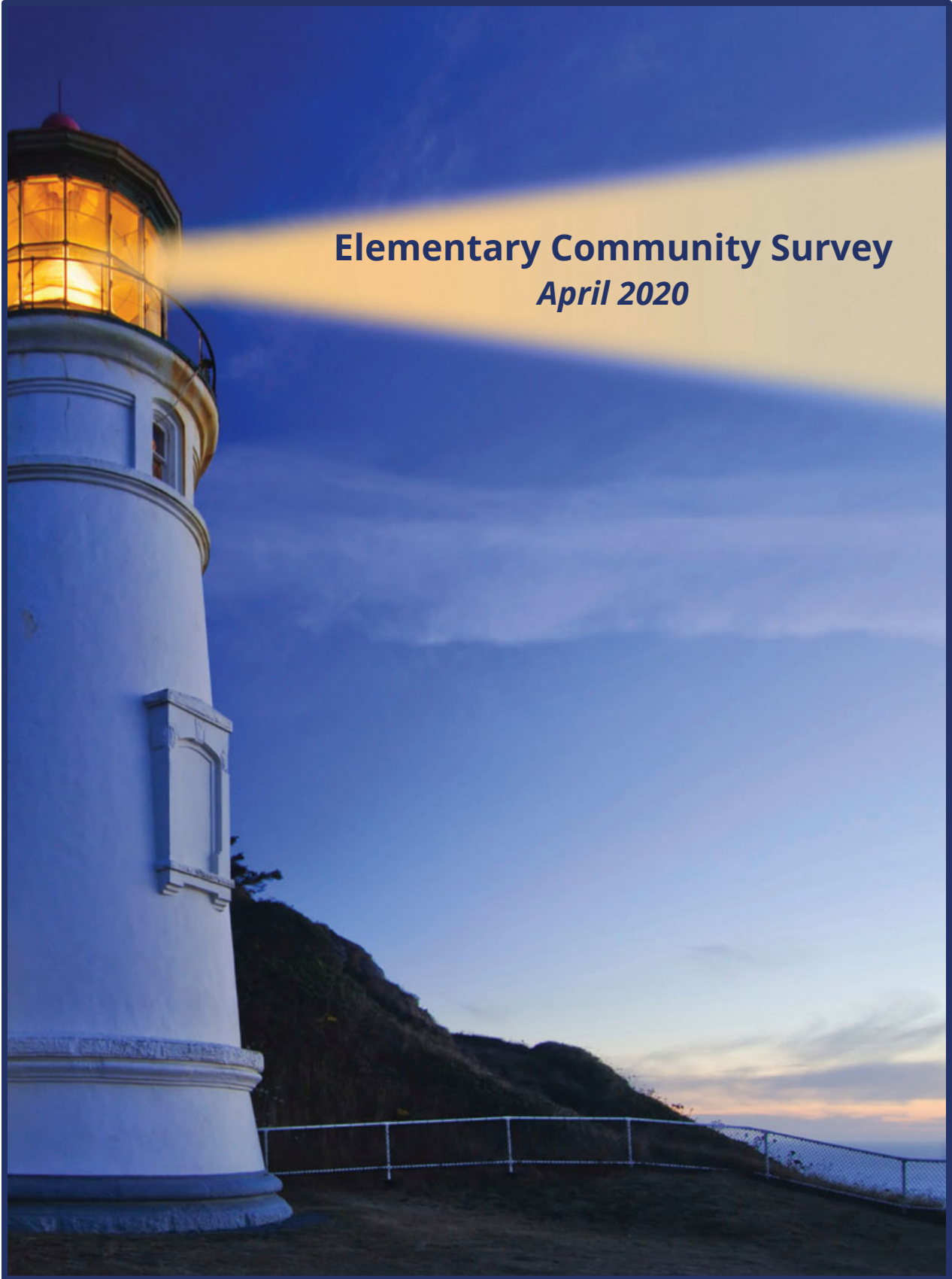
1,350 residents participated

55.5% feel buildings and facilities need improved

39.8% find the plan acceptable

45.9% would vote to approve the bond

61.1% have sufficient information to vote



**Elementary Community Survey**  
*April 2020*



---

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Portage Public Schools .....	3
Grading Portage Public Schools .....	4
Facilities in Need of Improvement .....	16
District Performance .....	20
Proposed Bond.....	31
Introduction.....	32
Support for the Plan.....	33
Assessing the Bond .....	41
Support Alternative Option .....	48
Information .....	55
Information Needed.....	56
Providing Information.....	62
Suggestions and Concerns .....	67
Appendices.....	73
Survey Methodology .....	74
Respondent Profile.....	75
Elementary Community Survey Instrument .....	85
Report Credits and Contact Information.....	90

---

---

## Index of Charts

Overall Grade of Portage Public Schools .....	4
Grading Portage Public Schools' Academic Programs .....	7
Grading Portage Public Schools' Extracurricular Activities .....	9
Grading Portage Public Schools' Buildings and Facilities.....	12
Feel Buildings and Facilities in Need of Improvement .....	16
Buildings and Facilities Most in Need of Improvement .....	17
Fiscally Responsible .....	20
Good Job Communicating .....	26
Support for Plan .....	33
Vote to Approve Bond .....	42
Support Alternative Option.....	48
Sufficient Information.....	56
Best Way to Provide Information .....	62
Age of Respondent.....	75
Geographic Location.....	77
Relationship with Portage Public Schools.....	79
Gender of Respondent .....	81
Inside Elementary School Buildings.....	82
Home Ownership .....	83
Voted in Last School Election.....	84

Throughout this report, responses from survey respondents are displayed in italic. All of the responses are presented as submitted and have not been edited to allow you to reach your own conclusion as to the meaning and intent of the survey respondent.

---

---

## Executive Summary

The following is a summary of the findings from the 2020 Elementary Community Survey for Portage Public Schools. The survey was completed by 1,350 Portage Public Schools district residents between March 16, 2020 to March 27, 2020. While this report provides examples of the open-ended responses provided by survey respondents, all of the open-ended responses are available in a separate document.

**Portage Public Schools.** More than three-quarters (79.1%) of respondents gave Portage Public Schools an overall grade of either A or B, while a similar percentage (81.2%) graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs with an A or B. More than three-quarters (78.3%) of respondents gave Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities an A or B, while close to two-thirds (65.7%) of respondents gave Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities a grade of A or B.

Half (55.5%) of respondents indicated that they felt Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities were in need of improvement. Nearly all respondents (97.8%) of respondents who felt buildings and facilities were in need of improvement identified elementary schools as those most in need of improvement.

Less than half of respondents (44.2%) felt that Portage Public Schools are fiscally responsible. Slightly more than half (54.7%) of respondents indicated that they feel Portage Public Schools does a good job communicating with district residents.

- Nearly eighty percent of survey respondents gave Portage Public Schools an overall grade of A or B, while nearly the same percentage graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs with an A or B as well. Portage Public Schools should continue to share information about their quality of education/academic programs and teachers, especially to community residents who may be less informed or unaware of these strengths.
- Over half of the survey respondents indicated they were unsure or did not think Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible. The most common reasons respondents were unsure or did not think Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible included: two stadiums were unnecessary, and this bond request is too close to the last one. It will be essential for Portage Public Schools to explain why they are bringing this bond request for elementary schools to residents at this time as people who feel Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible are more likely to vote for the bond.

---

**Proposed Bond.** After the need to renovate the elementary schools and the subsequent plan to do so was explained to survey respondents, more than one-third of respondents (39.8%) felt the plan was acceptable, while slightly less than half of respondents (45.8%) did not find the plan acceptable. Slightly less than half of respondents (45.9%) indicated that they would vote to approve the bond, and 37.5% said they would not approve the bond. Half of respondents were unsure if they would vote in favor of an option to address the needs of the elementary schools if the option cost less, and one third of respondents indicated that they would vote in favor of a less expensive option.

- Slightly more survey respondents feel the plan for addressing the district's elementary school facility needs is not acceptable than those who feel the plan is acceptable. The most common concerns about the plan include: building new instead of renovating, the cost, overcrowding, and the Central Elementary location. Portage Public Schools should carefully consider residents' concerns about the plan as nearly nine out of ten survey respondents who do not feel the plan is acceptable are opposed to the bond.
  
- Less than half of the survey respondents are willing to approve a 25-year bond to pay for renovating Moorsbridge Elementary, building five new elementary schools, updating technology, purchasing new busses, and addressing facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School. The most common reasons survey respondents would not approve the bond include: the cost, building new instead of renovating, overcrowding, and the Central Elementary location. Portage Public Schools should carefully consider residents' concerns about the bond which are similar to their concerns about the plan.

**Information.** Almost two-thirds (61.1%) of respondents indicated that they had sufficient information to vote on a bond for elementary facilities. When asked about the best way for Portage Public Schools to provide respondents with information about the bond, the most common answer (34.3%) was that respondents would like information mailed to their homes. When asked if they had any other suggestions or concerns about Portage Public Schools that had not been talked about, respondents provided a variety of answers, which were most often related to general praise for Portage Public Schools, communication with the community, and concerns about cost.

- Over one-third of survey respondents do not feel comfortable or are unsure they have sufficient information to vote on a bond for elementary facilities. Residents want to know why the Central Elementary location needs to change and what will happen to the current Central Elementary building, the costs for each building and the timeline, and general information about the plan. Portage Public Schools must provide residents with sufficient information to understand the district's elementary facility needs and detailed information about how the district is proposing to address those needs.
  
- There is not one method of communication that will reach all parents or community members, so Portage Public Schools should use a combination of methods, including: mailings, email, district Website, and the Portager newsletter, in order to provide information to as many people as possible.

---

## Portage Public Schools

### Recommendations:

- Nearly eighty percent of survey respondents gave Portage Public Schools an overall grade of A or B, while nearly the same percentage graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs with an A or B as well. Portage Public Schools should continue to share information about their quality of education/academic programs and teachers, especially to community residents who may be less informed or unaware of these strengths.
  
- Over half of the survey respondents indicated they were unsure or did not think Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible. The most common reasons respondents were unsure or did not think Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible included: two stadiums were unnecessary, and this bond request is too close to the last one. It will be essential for Portage Public Schools to explain why they are bringing this bond request for elementary schools to residents at this time as people who feel Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible are more likely to vote for the bond.

**Importance:** There are many ways to measure success for a school district, and the best way to measure success varies by who you ask. For example, community members who do not have children attending the schools are less likely to rely on quantitative measures in comparison to staff members or parents of children attending the school.

It is also important to be perceptive of the issues which the community members feel are important. This allows the school district to address the issues that are troubling the community and parents the most.

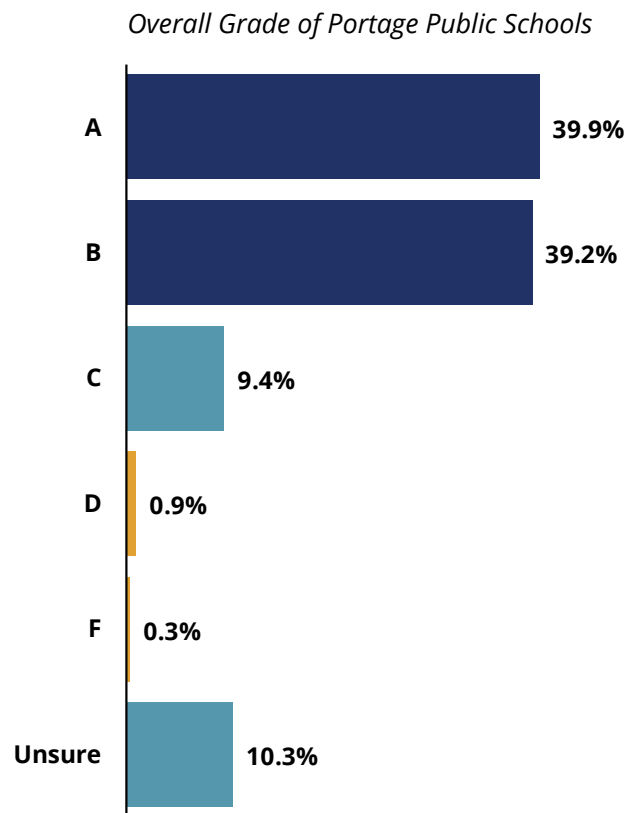
### Section Table of Contents

Grading Portage Public Schools .....	4
Facilities in Need of Improvement .....	16
District Performance .....	20

---

## Grading Portage Public Schools

When asked what grade they would give Portage Public Schools overall – an A, B, C, D, or F, the majority of respondents graded Portage Public Schools with either an A (39.9%) or B (39.2%). Less than one-tenth (9.4%) of respondents graded Portage Public Schools with a C, while just over one percent of respondents (1.2%) graded Portage Public Schools overall with a D or F. Approximately one out of every ten respondents were unsure.



*Question: Overall, what grade would you give PPS?*

---

Respondents who graded Portage Public Schools overall with either a D or F were asked to indicate why. Responses included:

**Grade D – Overall Grade**

- Accommodation of special ed students, especially at the high school level.*
- Administration does not listen to teaching staff. Classroom numbers are too large, not enough support for special education students, all children suffer in that scenario.*
- Because they are clearing that woods already without consulting the people who have to pay for this. The middle school isn't even done and they want more more more. The taxes are bad enough as it is.*
- Decisions are made with so little community input. I feel the board has way too much power and they've forgotten who they represent*
- Expenses to high test scores going down. No bang for the buck.*
- Kids allowed to vape in bathrooms and sometimes class. Teachers don't get grades online in a timely manner and don't respond to emails.*
- Lack of communication and a willingness to continually spend money at a time when they should be finishing one project and pay off one bond before another one is take out.*
- Lack of enrichment for advanced students in elementary school. Had a miserable experience at Moorsbridge elementary due to politics and incompetence of principal.*
- Misuse of public funds*
- No communication about the school closing and no information sent out about how to educate our children during this prolonged school closure*
- No school of choice!*
- Poor care of special needs kid*
- Poor planning. With schools shutting down for covid-19, information is slow to get out to the community. There should be learning in place for issues like this. Teachers get all this time off for in services and meetings but they should be also learning virtual, e-learning, etc. to implement when children are off school for extended periods of time.*
- Portage schools teach as most schools teach religion and not science. The schools teach that there is an overwhelming tendency for order to increase. Any child up through adults knows that order decreases over time. The school system teaches order increases yet wants new buses and buildings. The ultimate problem with this is they teach the students that are evolving animals and we end up with moral chaos.*
- Stronger consequences for misbehavior, lack of respect for adult supervision, poor planning on the design of the new North Middle School (lockers, noise, balcony), eliminating programs for talented students (E squared program)*
- Their dealing with our special needs child have been woefully inadequate.*

---

**Grade F – Overall Grade**

*At this point your plan to destroy a rare wooded section of Portage to build a school when I have to think there are other properties already available boggles the mind.*

*Far too much ideologically-driven politically-correct policies and curriculum, far too little basic literacy, math, science, and history.*

*Previous experience with my child in the PPS several years ago and had a very negative experience with a special needs child and navigating the school district. We moved from the district after 1 year and a negative experience.*

*Unhappy with administration and school board*

*With the elimination of vocational programs they chose 25 years ago has failed many students.*

*Now this area is left with a demand for these very jobs that employers can not fill! Due to the fact they aren't being transparent with the public.*

**Demographic Considerations – Overall Grade**

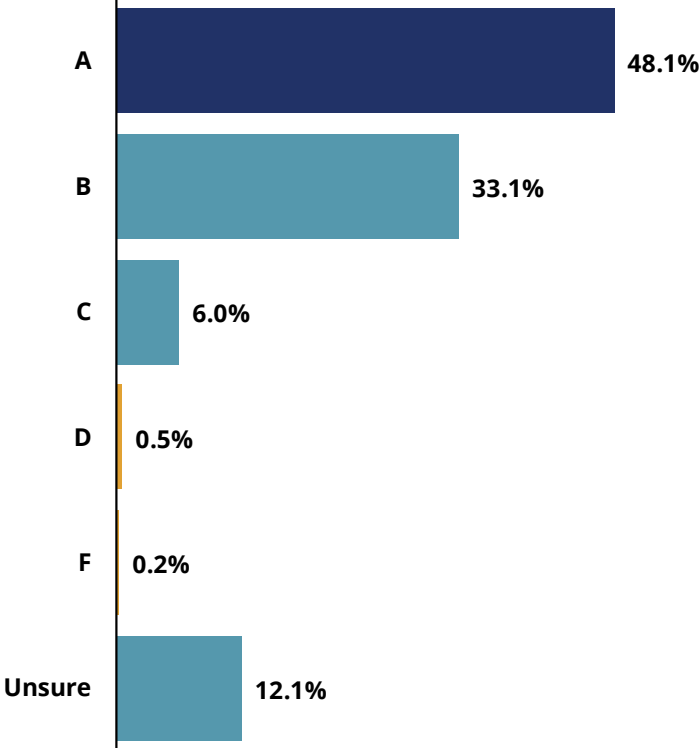
Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who gave Portage Public Schools an overall grade of A included: live near Woodland Elementary (46.0%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who gave Portage Public Schools an overall grade of A included: age 25-34 (33.3%).

There was a strong correlation among respondents between how high they graded Portage Public Schools overall and the following: how high they graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs and how high they graded Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities. Respondents who graded Portage Public Schools overall highly, were more likely to grade these other items higher as well.

When asked what grade they would give Portage Public Schools' academic programs – an A, B, C, D, or F, the majority of respondents graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs with either an A (48.1%) or B (33.1%). Only 6.0% of respondents graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs with a C, while less than one percent of respondents (0.7%) graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs with a D or F. Just over one-tenth (12.1%) of respondents were unsure.

*Grading Portage Public Schools' Academic Programs*



*Question: Overall, what grade would you give PPS' academic programs?*

---

Respondents who graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs with either a D or F were asked to indicate why. Responses included:

**Grade D – Academic Programs**

*Low state test scores.*

*Poor care of special needs kid*

*See first note.*

*The teachers need more resources and training in their subject being taught.*

*They do great with resources for children that are low and need help, however children that are academically talented they don't do enough for these students. Sitting them in front of a computer to challenge them is unacceptable.*

*Too much government involvement*

*Too many children per class*

**Grade F – Academic Programs**

*Elimination of vocational programs*

*Misuse of public funds*

*Too politically driven, not enough focus on math, science, literacy, history*

**Demographic Considerations – Academic Programs**

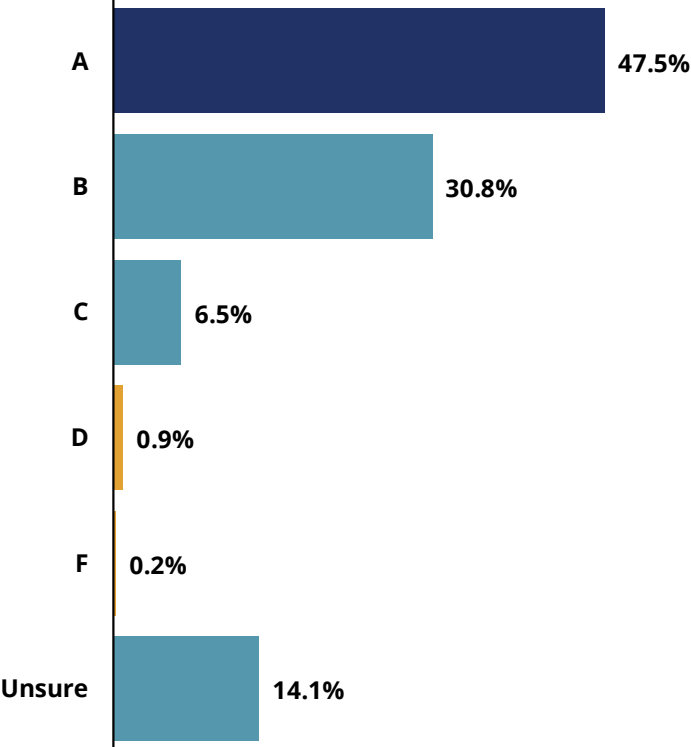
There were no demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who gave Portage Public Schools a grade of A for academic programs.

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who gave Portage Public Schools a grade of A for academic programs included: live near Haverhill Elementary (37.3%).

There was a strong correlation among respondents between how high they graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs and the following: how high they graded Portage Public Schools overall and how high they graded Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities. Respondents who graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs highly, were more likely to grade these other items higher as well.

When asked what grade they would give Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities – an A, B, C, D, or F, the majority of respondents graded Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities with either an A (47.5%) or B (30.8%). Only 6.5% of respondents graded Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities with a C, while one percent of respondents (1.1%) graded Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities with a D or F. Approximately one out of every seven respondents were unsure.

*Grading Portage Public Schools' Extracurricular Activities*



*Question: Overall, what grade would you give PPS' extracurricular activities, such as athletics and fine arts?*

---

Respondents who graded Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities with either a D or F were asked to indicate why. Responses included:

**Grade D – Extracurricular Activities**

- Availability to all students as a means of personal development for free*
- Because of many other states they have a lot better sports programs and extracurricular activities that blow PPS right out of the water!*
- Because they barely get enough time for it. My first grader has gym once per week for 30 minutes. That's it! Ridiculous! They spend too much time testing and not enough learning through athletic and arts.*
- Because you have little to no options for younger elementary. It would be great to see basketball, soccer, cheer, all those sports offered through the school in elementary. I don't have older kids so I can't speak on older grade sports but elementary lacks.*
- Bullying occurs - where are the coaches?*
- Costs are too high*
- Extra-curricular activities? For elementary aged students? I don't know of any*
- Kids should be exposed to various activities at a young age. Let them explore, build confidence, learn, and work on social skills.*
- Our school age children have no sports programs or school teams in the district. Example like no girls or boys basketball teams for elementary. No music programs or track and field days. Nothing!*
- There are less extracurricular activities etc. all monies have been put into buildings and less into activities, just saying!*
- They restrict after school programs for the students. Not allowing students to use their own buildings for meetings. Boy/girl scouts can't recruit at school. The afterschool art program left. The buildings should be there for the students and their growth and programing not only for curious kids*
- Too much parent politics in the sports programs.*
- Waste too much tax funds on duplicate facilities that are underutilized. Best example of waste is two football fields.*
- Why all the money to football? While band, lacrosse, and other smaller sports have to be funded by families*

**Grade F – Extracurricular Activities**

- Misuse of public funds*
- Same answer as the first.*
- Too many expensive team sports, not enough cultural education.*

---

### **Demographic Considerations- Extracurricular Activities**

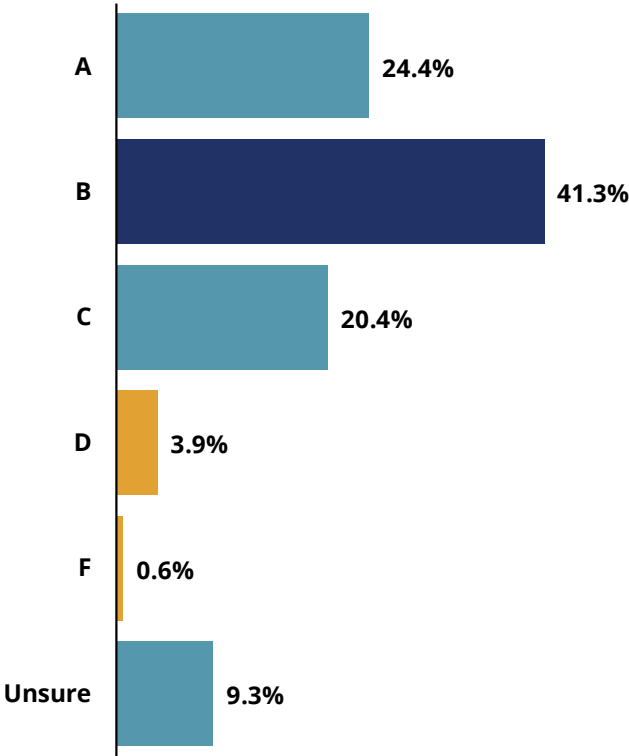
Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who gave Portage Public Schools a grade of A for extracurricular activities such as athletics and fine arts included: live near Twelfth Street Elementary (53.4%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who gave Portage Public Schools a grade of A for extracurricular activities such as athletics and fine arts included: age 55-64 (41.4%), live near Angling Elementary (40.7%), and live near Haverhill Elementary (41.3%).

There was a strong correlation among respondents between how high they graded Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities such as athletics and fine arts and the following: how high they graded Portage Public Schools overall and how high they graded Portage Public Schools' academic programs. Respondents who graded Portage Public Schools' extracurricular activities such as athletics and fine arts highly, were more likely to grade these other items higher as well.

When asked what grade they would give the condition of Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities – an A, B, C, D, or F, the majority of respondents graded Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities with either an A (24.4%) or B (41.3%). One-fifth (20.4%) of respondents graded Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities with a C, while less than five percent of respondents (4.5%) graded Portage Public Schools buildings and facilities with a D or F. Less than one out of every ten respondents (9.3%) were unsure.

*Grading Portage Public Schools' Buildings and Facilities*



*Question: Overall, what grade would you give PPS' buildings and facilities?*

Respondents who graded the condition of Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities with either a D or F were asked to indicate why. Responses included:

---

## Grade D – Buildings and Facilities

*Amberly Elementary needs to be modernized/reconditioned*

*Because back when you had your own custodial staff they were a lot better taken care of! And since you privatized PPS facilities activities and many other things are as well kept up and or cleaned!*

*Buildings need to be updated (rebuilt). Air conditioning is needed due to the school year going into June. I am concerned about safety. At Amberly the smell of natural gas is present near the boiler room despite it being checked routinely.*

*Cleanliness in buildings provided by third party is unacceptable. Lack of cleaning supplies is inadequate to provide clean and safe environment*

*Cleanliness is inadequate. Third party custodians are not providing the quality or even basic supplies that is needed to provide a clean and safe environment for our students.*

*Elementaries are outdated*

*Elementary schools need updates and air conditioning*

*Elementary schools needed to be updated and made larger to accommodate the growing number of students*

*Extremely outdated facilities with no air conditioning for the warmer months in most buildings.*

*Facilities are old, outdated, but most importantly too small for the number of students placed in them. I sincerely hope the growing number of students in the PPS district is one of the top concerns when planning for the new schools. There are housing developments going up at an insane rate around Portage which means more students. However, it also means more tax money for PPS so I hope the new schools will address the size of our cramped classrooms and our high student to teacher ratios.*

*Having so many buildings that are old/not air conditioned, making space for the students to use adequately while updating extracurricular items lacks a sense of academic focus to me*

*I am referring to the remaining elementary buildings that are in the plans to be rebuilt. They are in poor shape, especially Central Elementary. They are dirty and do not get cleaned well by our cleaning service. Water fountains were recently taken out of classrooms due to poor quality of water and plumbing. Our youngest and most influential learners deserve high quality facilities to learn and grow in.*

*I don't like three story buildings. The grounds look terrible but getting better.*

*I think some of them need air conditioning and need to be updated.*

*Just open the doors and look around!*

*Lack of air conditioning in many elementary building. Concern over asbestos and mold*

*Lots of these elementary schools aren't even air conditioned but officials are building million-dollar sports stadiums for the high schools*

*Many are old and lack modern touches. They don't have air conditioning.*

*Many of the elementaries (my children are young) are old and need to be updated. No air conditioning in the summer is awful.*

*Many of them are old and in need of upgrades.*

*Most are very old and outdated*

*My daughter goes to Angling road elementary, which needs to be renovated or replaced badly. Air conditioning in all of the schools would be great too!*

*My kids are at central, and the elementary I went to in Grandville is super old and in better condition*

*My kids elementary school is outdated and needs to be updated.*

*New buildings not being kept up. Does not feel clean, men's bathroom wall unit pulled off wall.*

---

## Grade D – Buildings and Facilities – continued

*Old*

*Old elementary schools and West is old*

*Our elementary buildings need improvements and updates!*

*Outdated, dark, and no air conditioning*

*Over capacity*

*Poor design of North Middle School. (1) Balcony so kids can throw things off to lower floor, leaning over railing (2) Hard to get to lockers stacked on top of each other, too small for winter coats, boots, books. Poor design of Central Pool. Not able to use for community since it has no shallow end. Can't have diving apparatus due to structural limitations*

*Really feel that Haverhill, Woodland, Amberly, Angling, Central Elementary, and the building that houses Curious Kids Program are all buildings that are way passed being functionally fit for students and teachers to be in. I have felt this way since our children were attending Haverhill back in 1990 through 1996.*

*Several of the facilities, especially the elementary schools, are out of date.*

*So the new buildings already have problems that need fixing. Guessing that the PPS needed to look harder into the blueprint proofs before accepting. Now we have repairs on finished projects.*

*Some buildings are in dire need of repair or replacement.*

*Students with allergies, especially to mold, are suffering in every building. Ceiling tiles with water stains and carpet are not our friends.*

*The buildings are aging. HVAC is a concern. Those elementary buildings are hot and hold heat.*

*The buildings need updating with current technology and bigger classrooms—more space as PPS grow in capacity.*

*The buildings themselves seem fine but they need air conditioning and to be larger to accommodate the significant increase in student population.*

*The elementary buildings are outdated and overcrowded. They need to have elementaries with air conditioning*

*The elementary buildings have been neglected so the high schools and middle schools could get better/upgraded facilities. There have been issues with the upgrades that cost the taxpayers more money because they were not done correctly/with little foresight. Having air conditioning and proper ventilation in some buildings and not others is a health risk that apparently PPS is willing to take.*

*The elementary buildings, for the most part, are from the '60s. They are too small for the student load and do not adequately support modern technology. The two new elementaries were built with known issues but completed as planned. The new middle school has security and locker issues that should have been anticipated by a professional superintendent.*

*The elementary schools are not anywhere near what they need to be for our children. We need more space with safe and economical facilities.*

*The majority of the buildings are aging horribly and general maintenance and proper cleaning lack in the buildings*

*The new middle school buildings do not look like they were designed for use by people easily. The gym on the second floor is not easily accessed for people, the library entryways are not open or inviting. The sound inside parts of the building is too disruptive for function. Safety is a huge concern, all that glass is great for lights, but why is there no ballistic spray on the windows? It looks like the design of the building was more focused on architectural look than function.*

---

**Grade D – Buildings and Facilities – continued**

*There are still ceiling tiles in an elementary school which I decorated, and I'm almost 39. They are getting run down. They aren't large enough for the population and they need air conditioning. There is so much more but I will save you the time.*

*They are not well planned out. The facilities planning was not done well. Why do we not have enough room for young fives in each school or early special education. They are definitely not secure or well planned to keep a shooter out.*

*They are old and outdated - have far surpassed their original lifespan*

*We attend Amberly Elementary which is extremely outdated and lacks basic amenities such as a proper HVAC system*

*While the high school and middle schools are new, elementary schools are far behind and lacking in many ways.*

*You are contemplating ANOTHER bond to build more schools. You haven't paid off the PCHS bond, haven't finished the middle school and now want more money! I am considering moving out. I have lived in Portage for 47 years. KRESA just got more money from us too! I am sick of my taxes going up and up!*

**Grade F – Buildings and Facilities**

*Have not been properly maintained ever since the whole privatization plague happened a decade ago.*

*Maintain the buildings you have - they should last a century easily if maintained properly*

*Misuse of public funds*

*New buildings are great. The older elementary buildings and PCEC are in really bad shape.*

*The grounds at Central Elementary never get cleaned and only mowed once in a while.*

*They are dirty and they smell. Cleaning and sanitizing should be done more often while kids are in school, to eliminate germs floating around in the air. I see kids walking around coughing/sneezing without coughing in the bends of their elbows. Teach proper hygiene even to high schoolers.*

*Too hot*

*Two new schools and taxes last year okay*

**Demographic Considerations – Buildings and Facilities**

There were no demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who gave Portage Public Schools a grade of B for the condition of buildings and facilities.

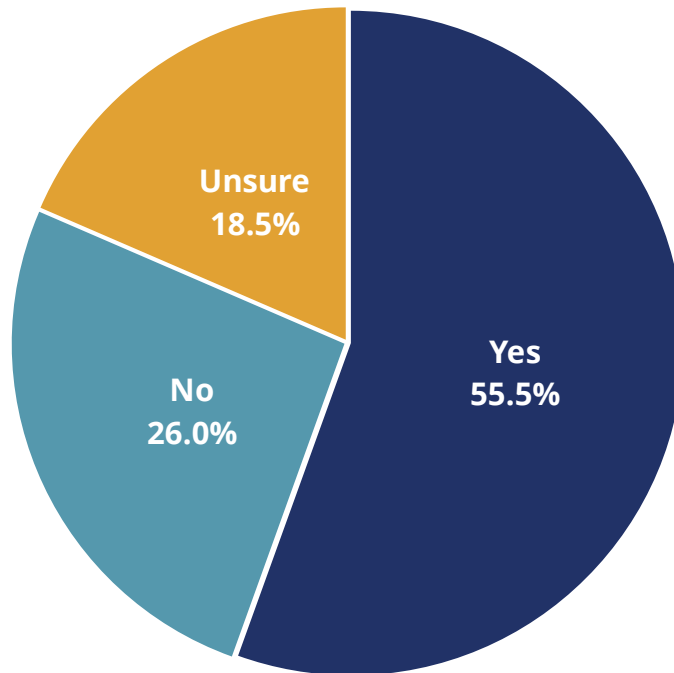
Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who gave Portage Public Schools a grade of B for the condition of buildings and facilities included: did not vote in last facilities election (33.0%) and live near Woodland Elementary (30.2%).

---

## Facilities in Need of Improvement

Survey respondents were asked if they felt that the buildings and facilities in Portage Public Schools are in need of improvement. Over half (55.5%) of respondents indicated that they did feel buildings and facilities were in need of improvement, while one-quarter (26.0%) did not, and 18.5% were unsure.

*Feel Buildings and Facilities in Need of Improvement*



*Question: Do you feel the buildings and facilities in PPS need to be improved?*

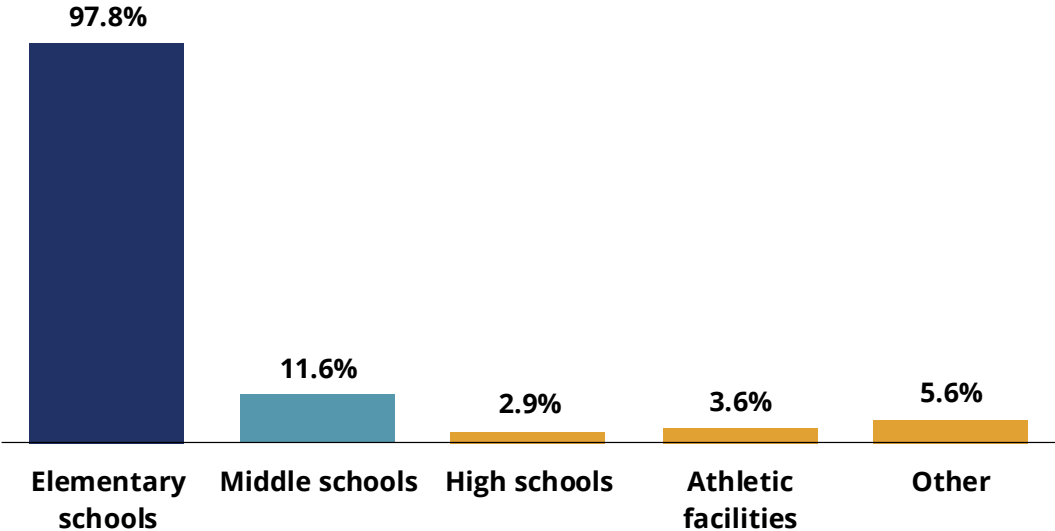
### Demographic Considerations

There were no demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who feel Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities need to be improved.

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who feel Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities need to be improved included: age 25-34 (41.7%), live near Haverhill Elementary (48.0%), and rent your home (36.8%).

Respondents who indicated that they felt there were buildings and facilities in Portage Public Schools that are in need of improvement were asked to indicate which district buildings and facilities were in need of improvement. Nearly all respondents (97.8%) indicated that district elementary schools were in need of improvement. Far fewer respondents indicated that middle schools (11.6%), high schools (2.9%), and athletic facilities (3.6%) are in need of improvement.

*Buildings and Facilities Most in Need of Improvement*



*Question: What buildings and facilities in PPS are most in need of improvement?*

*\*Responses total greater than 100% as respondents could select multiple answers.*

Respondents could give other responses for the building and facilities in Portage Public Schools they felt need to be improved. Other responses are listed below.

- Curious Kids (3 respondents)*
- PCEC (3 respondents)*
- Administration building (2 respondents)*
- Alternative High School, Curious Kids (2 respondents)*
- Curious Kids & Community High (2 respondents)*
- Dumb question (2 respondents)*
- I don't know (2 respondents)*
- West Middle School (2 respondents)*
- Access to "Curious Kids" at all elementary buildings*
- A few of the elementary schools - not all.*
- Amberly Elementary*
- Amberly Elementary needs AC bad*
- Any needed maintenance*
- Auditoriums at Central and Northern*
- Central Elementary*
- Central, Haverhill, Amberly, Woodland, and Angling need new schools!*

---

## **Buildings and Facilities Most in Need of Improvement – continued**

*Community High*

*Current PCMS, which new PCMS opens in fall 2020, all elementaries except Lake Center Elementary & 12th. I strongly believe that Portage Central Elementary is in need of a new facility first. The school is in horrible and honestly unsafe condition!*

*Don't know*

*Dumb question - isn't this survey all about elementary schools*

*Dumb question. You are fishing for elementary*

*Dumb you want elementary and did most already*

*Good progress has been made but it is a continual process*

*Grounds need a lot of work*

*High School auditoriums*

*High school, middle, and some elementary have been updated.*

*I currently do not have a child in the PPS system but the older elementaries may need upgrades.*

*Portage residents were told that Waylee would cost too much to upgrade so new elementary was built. Now Waylee is used for administration. PPS is not upfront with their citizens*

*I do not have children in the schools and therefore I am not able to provide an educated response.*

*However, based on the exterior I firmly believe the elementary schools can be renovated.*

*I don't know. I haven't been in any school building since 2017*

*I know that as of 2020-2021 PCMS will transfer to our new middle school. I'm elated because I feel extremely uncomfortable sending my children back to school in the Old/Current PCMS. It's in such poor condition. Matter of fact when you enter the building all you smell is order, which isn't any of the facility's or student's responsibility. It's been this way ever since my eldest daughter went there in 2010. Short of the long. I honestly don't feel comfortable sending my children back to PCMS. I'd feel 100% if they were to start back school in new Middle School. I know that many other parents that feel the same.*

*I support upgrading infrastructure but I think the schools themselves are in excellent condition.*

*I think these questions are loaded for you to use as an excuse to push through your bond.*

*Improve does not mean all replaced*

*Just a couple more elementary schools and the PCEC bldg*

*Just the oldest 5 elementary buildings and perhaps PCEC. I disagree with the boards intent to replace the 5 elementary buildings with 5. I think we should downsize to perhaps 7 elementary buildings from 8. Angling has served its purpose. Sell the land to the city to become a park for that area. I feel that certain board members are biased towards that building as they live near it and/or had kids attend. A smaller number of school building makes things more efficient.*

*Many of the adult bathrooms need improvement.*

*Many upgrades have been done and need to keep these improvements moving forward.*

*Middle school issues need to be corrected. Hopefully they are doing that in Central now.*

*Middle schools in process, some elementary schools*

*Offer a culinary program for all, even adult education too*

*Other*

*Outdoor education facility for the entire district to access*

*PCEC and some elementary*

*Pool locker rooms and toilets within*

*Portage Central auditorium*

---

## **Buildings and Facilities Most in Need of Improvement – continued**

*Portage Central Middle and Central Elementary*

*Portage West needs improvement, and you are improving it right now.*

*Possibly build less elementary schools.*

*Regular cleaning/maintenance needs to be performed at higher levels*

*Renovate to current needs.*

*Ridiculous spending requests*

*Some buildings need more improvement than others. I am not sure all elementaries need the same updating or rebuilding. Certainly West Middle needs some work, too.*

*Some buildings need more work than other.*

*Some elementary*

*Some of the elementary schools could be improved*

*Some of the older buildings. In South Portage the buildings are new, with the exclusion of the new middle school*

*The auditorium at Portage Northern High school.*

*The older ones - AC needed!*

*The oldest buildings. Most likely elementary schools.*

*The only ones left are elementary schools. The rest have already been voted on to be improved.*

*This question is ridiculous. The construction continues from the last one.*

*There is a need of air conditioning at Moorsbridge Elementary School*

*This is an obvious choice. Knowing that the athletic, high school, and middle school facilities are already being renovated or done. People have no choice but to pick elementary schools.*

*Picking elementary schools in this survey question obviously will show the public that this is what is needed.*

*Unsure as I have not been in all the buildings, only three elementary buildings*

*Unsure as to condition. Our children have all graduated*

*West Middle*

*While we haven't been in these facilities for years, it stands to reason they need upgrading and maybe replacement. Here's a sensible proposition for the School Board to consider. The Central Elementary is in an ideal location when you consider the location of the new middle school and high school. You could build a new elementary school in the location of the old middle school or when the middle school moves, use the old middle school for Central Elementary students for 1-2 years and build a new Central Elementary on the current location. Too small? Build up two stories. Creating heavy traffic through another neighborhood 2 miles away will destroy several neighborhoods in that area. Portage Rd. is a mess now. So this area would be locked in with no good way to exist between South Westnedge and Portage Rd. You will destroy these neighborhoods with the high volume traffic. Consolidation is simply in the best interest of all who live within a mile of the proposed school.*

*Without a structural report it is hard to make a intelligent decision. Based on the age of the schools only, I would say the elementary schools may need remodeling.*

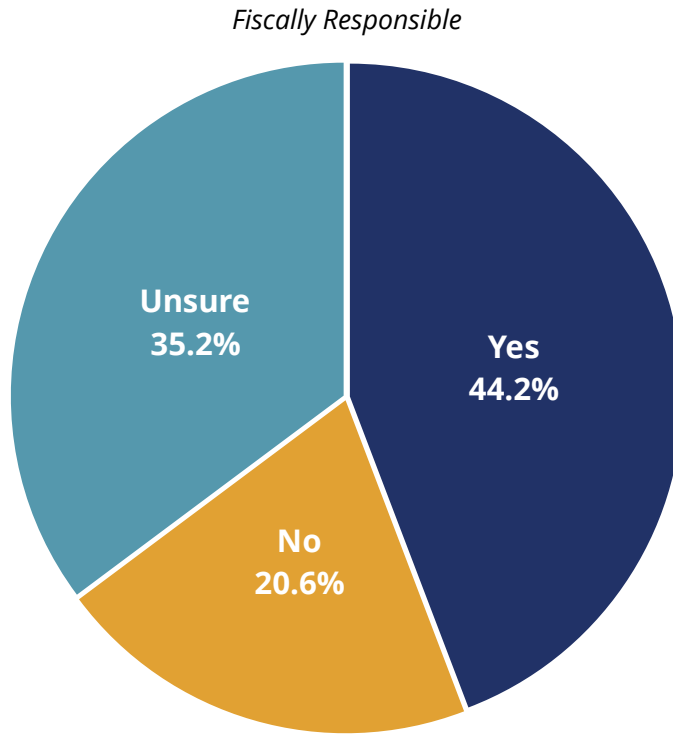
## **Demographic Considerations – Buildings and Facilities Most in Need of Improvement**

There were no demographic categories with a significantly higher or lower percentage of respondents who named elementary schools.

---

## District Performance

When asked if they felt that Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible, slightly less than half (44.2%) of respondents felt that Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible, while one-fifth did not think that Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible, and slightly more than one-third of respondents were unsure.



*Question: Do you feel PPS is fiscally responsible?*

Respondents who indicated they did not feel Portage Public Schools are fiscally responsible were asked to explain why. The most common responses were related to the idea that building two stadiums was unnecessary and that this bond is being requested too soon after the last. Examples of common responses are sorted below by the school nearest to respondents' homes. A complete list of all responses to this question is available in a separate document.

---

**Amberly Elementary****Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*In 10 years or less you are trying to replace all buildings  
Wanting two bonds close together. Both 25 years and included buses and technology financed  
over 25 years.*

**Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*Building these schools/monuments has gone beyond the pale. Two football stadiums? Why, other  
than ego?  
Money is spent on high school athletic stadiums and pools while my kids go to elementary school  
in a rundown building with no AC.*

**Angling Elementary****Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*PPS LOVES to spend money. They should pay off debt before going further in debt.*

**Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*Too much money is spent on athletics.*

**Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School****Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*All of these new schools, all at once, within a four year period is driving our taxes up so high that  
many of us on fixed incomes will have to sell our homes if this continues!  
Asking for a millage too many times and for too much money.  
Too many bond issues too close together. No more building for at least 10 years*

**Dishonesty From the Board**

*Free and easy with taxpayers dollars. No informing citizens of the ideas before they have been  
formulated*

*I believe that Portage Public Schools participates in covering up important issues that need to be  
addressed. Especially when there is a bond issue on the table everything else gets swept  
underneath the table so that the community thinks we are this perfect school and they  
will vote. There are so many issues that need to be addressed before we continue to put  
new buildings in our district. For example elementary classroom sizes. Also, programming  
at the secondary level. It cannot be all about IB. Every schedule is built around the IB  
program. That is absolutely ridiculous when the majority of our students are not planning  
to be IB diploma recipients. We need stronger college readiness programs and we should  
be investing in some sort of early college program. We have the EMC but nobody talks  
about it. It isn't even presented at eighth grade parent night. Additionally, with the  
elimination of E2 the community was told that teachers would be able to affectively  
differentiate within their classrooms. While I believe our teachers are fully capable, the  
class sizes are completely preventative. We are not serving our students in a valuable way.  
A better district is not all about new buildings. We need to invest in our students in a more  
valuable way.*

*You told the voting public that Waylee was unsafe to use because of something, we vote for new  
buildings and you are still using Waylee school*

---

## **Fiscally Responsible – continued**

### **Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*2 new stadiums, where 1 has worked well for decades. New schools rather than upgrades, and the new schools still have numerous issues.*

*I believe it was irresponsible to spend so much money on sports facilities (including two football stadiums within the district) when there is a more pressing need for quick improvement in elementary schools in the district.*

## **Haverhill Elementary**

### **Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*I would like to see PPS pay off their bond issues before considering additional debt.*

### **Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*New stadium, new pool, new schools, new new new.*

*No need for new middle schools and 2 football stadiums*

## **Lake Center Elementary**

### **Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*As senior citizens on a fixed income, we are stretched to our limit because of the new high school and middle schools along with everything else that goes up every year. Now we hear about asking for millions more in millage for 5 elementary schools. We can't keep this up. Wait till the high schools and middle schools are paid off. We simply can't afford more millage.*

*The sheer amount of property tax increase due to construction bond issues. As a property owner it's unfair to be getting "all of the tax burden" compared to apartment dwellers.*

### **Board Doesn't Listen to the Public**

*I feel like PPS makes decisions about spending the budget without really considering what is best for the community. They then follow up with a survey to placate the residents, but really have no intention to do anything differently.*

*I feel that the district does not listen first to the taxpayers before making important decisions. I feel like PPS asks their residents for a lot of money, but isn't willing to hear from the people as to how to spend it.*

*Spending too much with taxpayers dollars in excess and not hearing public concern. Need more affordable and reasonable options for school building/remodeling.*

*The district spends taxpayer's dollars without input from community.*

### **Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*Building a second football field was not necessary. Building new schools instead of updating old ones is not necessary. PPS needs to spend more money in the actual classrooms instead of wanting the latest and greatest in buildings.*

*I feel they spend more on a football stadium than they do on students and teachers.*

*It seems unneeded to have two huge stadiums for the two schools in the same city. It's also irresponsible to invest so much into sports when teachers are underpaid and the students are lacking supplies*

---

**Fiscally Responsible – continued**

**Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School**

**Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*I was taught to pay off an existing loan before borrowing again  
PPS just got a \$144 million bond approved to build new schools and upgrades in 2015. Now, 5 years later you are asking for another \$100+ million. It is completely irresponsible and careless of you to ask for all of this money in such a short period of time. Many parents have asked about reducing class size. Your time should be spent on addressing this issue before planning so many new, fancy buildings. By the way, did you stay within budget with these last projects? And what is with all of the half days of school? It is tough on the budget to have so many half days of school, using all of those resources for only a few hours.*

**Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*Education does not have to come with a state of the art facility that is put on the backs of tax payers. Two huge football stadiums are not necessary for games that are played about 8 times a year.  
Wasted money on sports complexes and TVs.*

**North Middle School/Portage Northern High School**

**Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*Do not need to build 5 new schools that would significantly raise our taxes.  
They are looking for more money when they haven't even finished the buildings they are currently building that the tax payers are shelling out for.*

**Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*PPS pursued a bond purposely to build athletic facilities before pursuing a bond purpose for needed updates and repairs to their elementary schools. Several schools are approaching, or past, 50 years old and lack the needed improvements for the 21st century. The primary mission of the school should be education not the boosters.*

---

## **Fiscally Responsible – continued**

### **Twelfth Street Elementary**

#### **Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*Too many new school buildings. Taxes too high. Too many bonds.*

#### **Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*It feels like the past few years PPS and KRESA are continually asking for additional millage on every vote. I understand updating educational opportunities and technologies with our tax dollars. I am not in agreement with using that money to fund two new football stadiums and auditoriums.*

*PPS has built 2 fabulous football fields, each team only plays 6 games, now with 2 artificial fields to maintain, the costs will certainly increase for taxpayers. We thought Portage was exemplary in having 2 schools share a field. It would have been less costly to build 2 fabulous locker rooms adjoining the one field with appropriate upgrades.*

### **Woodland Elementary**

#### **Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*Recent bond proposals have been excessive*

#### **Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*Millage dollars spent on athletic complexes, but not enough money to run elementary (e.g. 3rd grade) advanced academic programs. Last I checked, the primary purpose of a public school was education. Doesn't seem to be a priority here in Portage I guess. I'm all for the benefits that sports provide kids, but I think the priority and spending decisions are way out of touch with common sense. And way out of touch with your website tagline, "The future learns here." If sports and planning fields are what the priorities are, maybe change the tagline to something like "The future learns here, so long as we have enough money for a new stadiums and landscaping." Good luck with the future, I'm considering moving my kids to a district where the mathletes take priority over the athletes.*

*Spend money on one idea then in one or two years later that idea is scrapped and you are off on another tangent. Can't believe that there are two stadiums in a town the size of Portage.*

### **Respondent Did Not List School Closest to Their Home**

#### **Bond is Too Close to the Last One**

*Portage total millage rate has increased nearly 25% since I bought my house in 1999. You've rebuilt just about all the schools in this area. It seems like nothing is ever enough. Same with KRSA.*

*They need to be more fiscally responsible and not keep asking for more money. Some residents are living on fixed income and it would be a shame taxing them out of their house after spending a lifetime getting to where they are.*

---

## **Fiscally Responsible – continued**

### **Spending is Out of Control**

*Frivolous spending*

*Spending \$150 million to add 150 students does not make sense or fiscally responsible*

### **Two Stadiums Were Unnecessary**

*I feel that money is spent that isn't necessary, such as we spent years doing just fine without two football fields. Would rather see that money go towards the teachers salaries*

## **Respondent Unsure of School Closest to Their Home**

### **Bond Is Too Close to The Last One**

*Pay off the last mileage before you try to start another.*

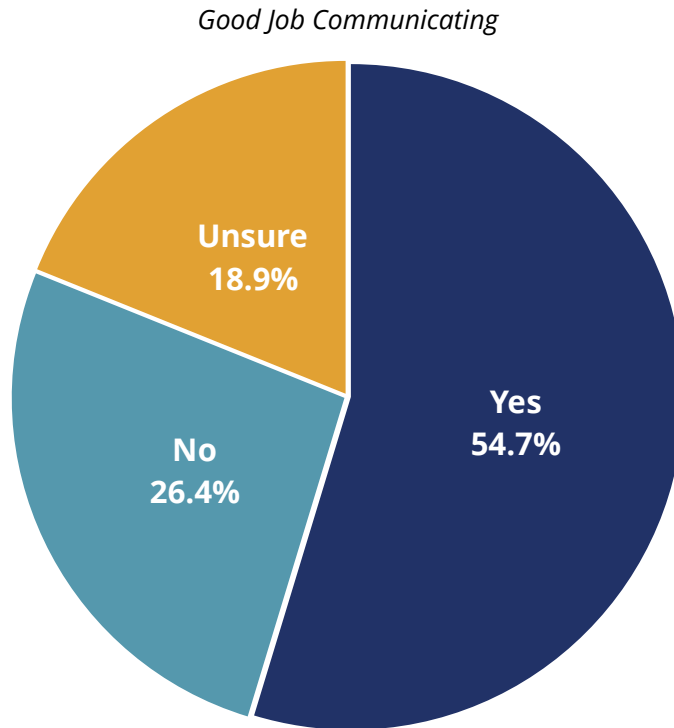
## **Demographic Considerations – Fiscally Responsible**

There were no demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who feel Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible.

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who feel Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible included: did not vote in last facilities election (37.5%), age 25-34 (35.8%), age 75 and over (29.9%), and live near Twelfth Street Elementary (37.4%).

---

When asked if they felt that Portage Public Schools are doing a good job communicating with district residents, more than half of respondents (54.7%) felt that Portage Public Schools are doing a good job of communicating, while one quarter (26.4%) did not, and 18.9% were unsure.



*Question: Do you feel PPS are doing a good job communicating with district residents?*

Respondents who indicated they did not feel Portage Public Schools are doing a good job of communicating with district residents were asked to indicate why. The most common responses were related to poor communication about the proposed elementary plan and a sense that the board is not listening to district residents. Examples of common responses are sorted below by the school nearest to respondents' homes. A complete list of all responses to this question is available in a separate document.

**Amberly Elementary**

**Board Doesn't Listen to Feedback/Have Open Communication**

*I can't help but think of the way the district handled the cancellation of the Esquared program.*

*Administration knew the program was going to be canceled but it wasn't communicated in advance and there was no opportunity for dialogue with parents prior to decision making.*

*I feel like the residents are being pulled in, but their opinions are not being heard or responded to well*

---

## **Not Doing a Good Job Communicating – continued**

### **Information is Coming from Sources Other Than the District**

*As residents who do not have children in the school system, we seem to get most of our information from neighbors and not PPS.  
I just heard about this survey from a friend. I did not receive a mailing*

### **Not All of the Information is Provided or Accurate**

*Administration is not available to parents and information presented at board meetings is not always up to date and accurate.  
Like a politician that wants what they want just because they want it and understandably slant what they want to communicate instead of full disclosure.*

## **Angling Elementary**

### **Board Doesn't Listen to Feedback/Have Open Communication**

*Don't feel they are upfront with some decisions that are made. They ask the public but do what they want anyway.*

### **Information is Coming from Sources Other Than the District**

*No regular community wide communications. Certainly no communications explaining why any school system would wait until crisis time and then declare they needed five new elementary schools.*

## **Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School**

### **Board Doesn't Listen to Feedback/Have Open Communication**

*Comes off as very one sided in discussions and meetings. Feel like decisions are already made before the public can really comment and give input  
I feel like decisions are being made without community input. It seems you already have plans to build a new Central Elementary in the wooded area off South Westnedge, but are only appeasing the community by sending out this survey. This is a bad idea! Please listen to the residents. When the district makes mistakes, those mistakes are never brought to light or addressed. We only hear the positive, which we know is unrealistic.*

### **Information is Coming from Sources Other Than the District**

*Because we are hearing things from citizens and Facebook posts rather than our board. Because there is not regular communication or information shared—they steamroll through their agenda  
Have not received any information concerning schools from the school board, have had to learn all from neighbors*

### **Lack of Communication Concerning Woods on Westnedge**

*I personally discovered pink stakes in our woods, started some investigating only to then find out about the plan to build there. That's a huge change to our city and it should have been communicated publicly sooner.  
You have planned on building a school off Westnedge and never informed anyone until your pen is about to hit the paper to sign*

---

## **Not Doing a Good Job Communicating – continued**

### **Not All of the Information is Provided or Accurate**

*Communication can be spotty and misleading*

*Communication is meant to mislead and leave out some information that could lead to disagreement with what the school board and administration want to do.*

*I don't believe we're always told the whole truth*

## **Haverhill Elementary**

### **Information is Coming from Sources Other Than the District**

*I found out about building the new elementary school through friends and not from the district itself.*

### **Not All of the Information is Provided or Accurate**

*Frequent errors on published materials. Information is not timely and focuses only on a few vectors of distribution. Information and news is reactionary in nature, not proactive or lending itself to 'selling' what the district is doing with tax dollars. Communication used to be stellar up until a few years ago.*

## **Lake Center Elementary**

### **Board Doesn't Listen to Feedback/Have Open Communication**

*Again, PPS has not asked the community for input prior to making decisions about how to spend our money.*

*Because they only hear but do not listen to what residents say, the district goes ahead and does whatever they want.*

### **Information is Coming from Sources Other Than the District**

*Have received no information concerning PPS wanting to build a school on South Westnedge near Cherryview except by the 'Woods on Westnedge' group.*

*I am only hearing about new school developments through Facebook.*

### **Not All of the Information is Provided or Accurate**

*The communication regarding the current situation has been slow and incomplete.*

### **Poor Communication With Residents With No Children in PPS**

*Most communications come through PPS with children actively in school. Our children have been out of PPS for some years - now looking forward to grandchildren attending. But without active students we receive NO information*

*Residents without children in school do not get much information unless the district is looking for money. As a retired district employee I feel like I've been disowned.*

*Unless you have children in the system you hear nothing!*

---

**Not Doing a Good Job Communicating – continued**

**Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School**

**Board Doesn't Listen to Feedback/Have Open Communication**

*Did not talk to residents before springing new mileage for new schools. No impact studies whatsoever*

**Information is Coming from Sources Other Than the District**

*If we didn't have grandchildren in the school district, nobody has mentioned this to us, and we wouldn't have heard about this.*

**Not All of the Information is Provided or Accurate**

*I don't think that you have been forthcoming about the \$144 million projects and if you have stayed on budget.*

**North Middle School/Portage Northern High School**

**Information is Coming from Sources Other Than the District**

*Only know about this because of family, haven't heard anything from PPS directly. Until the Facebook page I had no idea what you had planned.*

**Twelfth Street Elementary**

**Board Doesn't Listen to Feedback/Have Open Communication**

*It is a little challenging to find information about the district. They aren't around and don't listen*

**Woodland Elementary**

**Information is Coming from Sources Other Than the District**

*I do not hear about building upgrades except from my neighbors.*

**Respondent Did Not List School Closest to Their Home**

**Board Doesn't Listen to Feedback/Have Open Communication**

*Not enough serious conversations, not enough depth into certain areas  
You do what you want. You don't communicate with us and take our opinions into consideration.*

**Information is Coming from Sources Other Than the District**

*I have not received any communication until I saw this on Nextdoor app*

**Not All of the Information is Provided or Accurate**

*Because they hide too much behind closed doors and don't share many things with the community!  
No transparency to the public. Clearing of trees on Westnedge lot. Tells me they already have their minds made up. So, this poll is not valid.  
Public does not get all of the facts, only cherry picked for the public.*

---

## **Not Doing a Good Job Communicating – continued**

### **Respondent Unsure of School Closest to Their Home**

#### **Board Doesn't Listen to Feedback/Have Open Communication**

*They still aren't addressing so many things parents are concerned about such as class size. Listen to the parents!*

#### **Not All of the Information is Provided or Accurate**

*The new development site on South Westnedge appears to be pushed through as quickly and quietly as possible.*

### **Demographic Considerations – Good Job Communicating**

Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who feel Portage Public Schools are doing a good job communicating with residents included: live near Haverhill Elementary (61.3%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who feel Portage Public Schools are doing a good job communicating with residents included: live near Lake Center Elementary (47.8%) and live near Twelfth Street Elementary (47.3%).

---

## Proposed Bond

### Recommendations:

- Slightly more survey respondents feel the plan for addressing the district’s elementary school facility needs is not acceptable than those who feel the plan is acceptable. The most common concerns about the plan include: building new instead of renovating, the cost, overcrowding, and the Central Elementary location. Portage Public Schools should carefully consider residents’ concerns about the plan as nearly nine out of ten survey respondents who do not feel the plan is acceptable are opposed to the bond.
  
- Less than half of the survey respondents are willing to approve a 25-year bond to pay for renovating Moorsbridge Elementary, building five new elementary schools, updating technology, purchasing new busses, and addressing facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School. The most common reasons survey respondents would not approve the bond include: the cost, building new instead of renovating, overcrowding, and the Central Elementary location. Portage Public Schools should carefully consider residents’ concerns about the bond which are similar to their concerns about the plan.

**Importance:** Residents have many reasons for supporting or opposing a school funding request. In some cases, these reasons are entirely outside of the control of the school district. But, in other cases, these reasons can be impacted by the school district, such as the amount of the request, and the specific projects to be funded.

Understanding how residents feel about the amount of the funding request, and the specific projects to be funded, is essential to shaping an appropriate funding request that meets the needs of the school district, while responding appropriately to the ideas and concerns of residents.

### Section Table of Contents

Introduction.....	32
Support for the Plan.....	33
Assessing the Bond .....	41
Support Alternative Options .....	48

---

## Introduction

Following the rating questions and questions about the performance of Portage Public Schools, respondents were told the following:

“Portage Public Schools currently operates eight elementary schools. Two of the elementary schools – Lake Center and 12th Street – were constructed in 2009 and are in good condition. Moorsbridge Elementary was built over 25 years ago in 1994 and is in need of renovation and updating.

The remaining five elementary schools – Amberly, Angling, Central, Haverhill, and Woodland – are all over 50 years old. These buildings were constructed in the 1960’s from inexpensive materials and were expected to have a useful life of 30 to 40 years. None of these buildings have air conditioning. Since the 1960’s, the standards for energy conservation, computers, technology, and serving children with special needs have all changed. All-day kindergarten, Young 5’s, and pre-school have also been added to the elementary schools in the past 50 years, which has brought several elementary schools close to capacity or over capacity.

Last year, a committee of parents and community members was formed to study and prepare recommendations for addressing PPS elementary school facilities. Based on the work of the committee, the school board has identified a potential plan for replacing and renovating elementary schools.

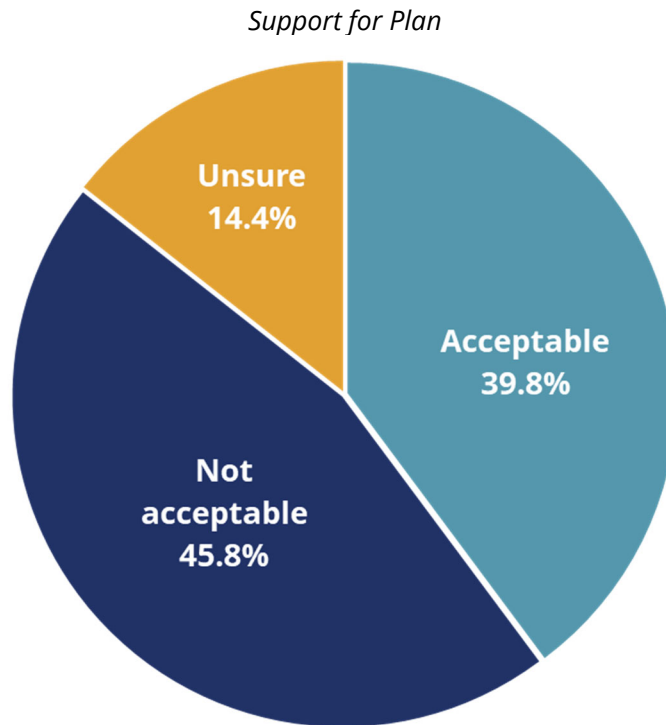
The plan would renovate Moorsbridge Elementary and build five new elementary schools to replace Amberly, Angling, Central, Haverhill, and Woodland elementary schools. The new Amberly Elementary would be replaced on its current site and continue to have a capacity of 600 students. The new Central Elementary would have a capacity of 600 students, an increase from its current capacity of 450 students. The new Central Elementary would be built on a 20-acre property currently owned by Portage Public Schools on South Westnedge, about 1 ½ miles south of the current Central Elementary location. The new Angling, Haverhill, and Woodland elementary schools would be built on their current locations and would continue to have a capacity of 450 students each.

There would be minor redistricting to eliminate overcrowding at Amberly, Moorsbridge, and 12th Street elementary schools. Construction could begin as early as 2021 and finish in 2027.”

---

## Support for the Plan

After the need to renovate the elementary schools and the subsequent plan to do so was explained to survey respondents, respondents were asked if they felt the plan was acceptable. The plan was acceptable to more than one-third of respondents (39.8%), while slightly less than half of respondents (45.8%) did not find the plan acceptable, while 14.4% were unsure what they thought about the plan.



*Question: How do you feel about this plan for addressing the district's elementary school facility needs?*

The respondents who indicated they did not feel that the plan was acceptable were asked to indicate why. The most common responses were related to concerns about constructing new schools instead of renovating, the Central Elementary location, cost, and overcrowding. Examples of common responses are sorted below by the school nearest to respondents' homes. A complete list of all responses to this question is available in a separate document.

### **Amberly Elementary**

#### **Building New Instead of Renovating**

*My house is older than some of the schools and I don't go out and build a new house, I remodel it to bring it up to code. PPS is proposing excessive spending.*

#### **Central Elementary Location**

*Central Elementary should be rebuilt at its current site, not on busy Westnedge. The other elementaries should be built to accommodate larger enrollment and lower class size. They do need air conditioning and be set up for advanced technology.*

---

## Support for Plan – continued

### **Cost**

*It is too ambitious a plan to do all at once. Especially when we are still paying for the last huge improvements.*

*We have not paid off the new high schools, middle schools, or sports facilities. I can't afford more in taxes as a single parent*

### **Overcrowding**

*Amberly is planned to house 600 students and it already is over that. Any plan should take this into account. Also, any plans to rebuild Amberly needs to take into account the impact on the neighborhood as many residents moved to that neighborhood in favor of the current layout.*

*Amberly needs to have a larger capacity. 600 students isn't enough. The neighborhood is going through a "change over" phase where empty nesters are moving out of the neighborhood and young families are moving in. The woods at Amberly is a big draw to young families looking to be in the city but have nature nearby.*

*Fix the overcrowding issue first, then you can have my financial support to build.*

### **Woods Near Amberly**

*Amberly School's new building would result in the removal of the woods near the school. There is a outdoor classroom that the students use. Plus now a disc golf which is used almost daily. We value green spaces and outdoor learning spaces I see people using the woods almost daily. Scout groups have used the space for learning about nature.*

*I know schools need to be replaced and I do understand that. But, let's not be in a hurry to do it quickly. Let's do it right! I do not agree with taking out wooded areas to build schools. I live close to the Amberly woods and there are people using that woods EVERYDAY. Not sometimes, EVERYDAY. It is a huge part of our neighborhood that everyone enjoys. Since they have thinned out the woods a few years ago there is no longer any problems back there and people use it in many capacities including: Playing on the trees and benches, walking their dogs, playing on the newly installed disc golf course that was put in by an Amberly 5th grade teacher, teachers using it for extended movement time as well as learning time on the benches. I will not vote yes on this bond until it is made VERY CLEAR where these schools will be built.*

---

## Support for Plan – continued

### Angling Elementary

#### **Building New Instead of Renovating**

*Plenty of people live in houses over 25 and 50 years old and don't tear them down and build new ones. I think you have been asking for way too much over the years.*

*The greenest building is one that already exists and is renovated. PPS is taxing the older Portage population out of their homes.*

#### **Central Elementary Location**

*I don't feel that Central Elementary should be relocated. It should be rebuilt on its current site.*

*Neighbors of the new Central Elementary building are rightfully concerned about how their entire neighborhood will be changed forever. Angling students are expected to be housed in the new Central Elementary while their school is under construction, this is not an acceptable solution as it puts students across town, further even than other buildings in the district. Being separated from their neighborhood, home, and known campus will be too much of a disruption to the lives of our children.*

#### **Cost**

*PPS just asked for a lot of money to update and rebuild high schools and middle. Let's get this debt either paid off or significantly paid down before adding more.*

*Still paying for the high schools and middle schools. Pay off debt before going further into debt.*

*Treat taxpayer money as your own! The building site selected for Central Elementary is a flood plain. Building here will cause additional flooding, create traffic problems, and take away residents' small front yards.*

*The plan sounds way too expensive.*

#### **Overcrowding**

*Why would there be no plan to account for increase population? Why build brand new school that would still have capacity issues?*

### Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School

#### **Building New Instead of Renovating**

*Air conditioning is not a valid excuse for a new facility. I did not have air conditioning at Waylee elementary, and I am still alive and undamaged. Additionally, the current buildings have drop ceilings and adequate space for upgrades to be installed, and the grounds offer adequate space for additions. The roofs offer plenty of space for solar arrays and additional hardware. The use of Portage residents as a "blank check" is unacceptable. Who is going to do quality control? Can we certify the new materials will be of superior quality?*

*Consider renovation. The people are sick of taxes being raised every single year.*

*Go in and modernize each school instead of building new schools.*

---

## Support for Plan – continued

### **Central Elementary Location**

*A new school should not be built in those vacant woods! There is plenty of space in the lots where the elementary and the old middle school are now.*

*As stated previously this is an unacceptable increase in taxes. The proposed new school on South Westnedge would severely impact traffic in adjacent neighborhoods. We are already overrun with vehicles cutting through from Westnedge to Portage using Calico, Velvet, and South Shore.*

### **Cost**

*As a senior who did vote for the last building improvement I feel I can't afford new taxes YET. Get other debt paid off first!*

*Too much money was already pulled out for new schools and athletic fields as it is*

### **Overcrowding**

*Already the number of students per classroom is too high, the projected numbers for new schools does not add that much more classroom space*

*Too much traffic in area, limited increase in student count*

## **Haverhill Elementary**

### **Building New Instead of Renovating**

*It seems like a lot to spend for just a few more seats. Remodeling seems more cost effective*

*Really, we don't need new schools just renovate what you have. The community cannot afford more taxes.*

### **Central Elementary Location**

*Do not need all new. Already have a great location for Central Elementary.*

*I'd prefer to see schools built in areas that do not require the forest to be cut down. Renovate if necessary or choose a different site. That acreage being removed would have significant impacts on those who have homes around it.*

### **Cost**

*Too high a cost to replace so many schools. From what I have been reading enrollment is going down and may continue to decline in the future. The city needs to focus on education and not on sports etc. Portage may not even need so many schools in the future.*

### **Overcrowding**

*New schools lasting 40 years. Growth needed? Amberly, Moorsbridge, 12th St. and Lake Center at capacity*

---

## **Lake Center Elementary**

### **Building New Instead of Renovating**

*I believe that renovations of prior buildings would be a much better way rather than building a new school. I would say the schools, such as Central Elementary, should be kept within that Central campus by the middle and high school. This is also a major environmental issue where the local government would have to tear down 20 acres of forest which is absolutely unacceptable. This issue can be resolved with renovations to the existing buildings. I live near where the new school is planned to be built and it has angered many residents including myself. Portage claims to be a Tree City USA and I don't see how that is if Portage is prepared to tear down 20 acres of forest.*

*Not sure it's necessary. What's wrong with renovating to keep it cheaper? The elementary buildings seem in great shape compared to many other elementary buildings around the county and surrounding counties. We've spent so much money already. At a minimum I think we need to wait quite awhile before asking to pay for all this. Renovation plans make the most sense to me.*

### **Central Elementary Location**

*Accept the rebuilding of current schools on their property location. Do not believe in relocating Portage Central Elementary into a new location. Considering it's a residential area with marshland adjacent in neighborhood.*

*All of the elementary schools are to be rebuilt on their current property, while Central is to be moved further South. The plan does not seem to consider the added traffic needs in an area of Westnedge with only 2 lanes. The Portage Central campus area appears to be designed to handle traffic flow better. Also, the continued loss of natural areas in the city is growing. New growth is great for the city, but it seems that it could be done on existing vacant lots and not in natural wooded areas that could allow for other educational purposes such as a nature trail or nature learning facility. The new Portage Central Elementary would also seem to be secluded and disconnected from other learning resources that were convenient for walking field trips such as to the Public Library.*

### **Cost**

*Asking the residents for another \$150 Million just after getting approval in 2015 for \$150 Million which was spent on football fields and swimming pools. We are on a fixed income and cannot afford the continual millage increases.*

*Costs too much money for a senior*

*Don't do it all at once. You are asking too much, especially of people living on a fixed income. Times are tough and going to get tougher. Timing is everything.*

### **Overcrowding**

*I believe that future growth will require more capacity. Larger facilities will be needed sooner than expected.*

*I don't feel that they are building in enough additional capacity to account for future growth*

---

## Support for Plan – continued

### **Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School Building New Instead of Renovating**

*The schools should be renovated not reconstructed.*

#### **Central Elementary Location**

*Central Elementary should not be built on the 20 acre site on Westnedge - that would destroy that property!*

*The new central elementary would create many problems. - Ruining neighborhoods, traffic problems, eliminating land for existing wildlife, etc.*

#### **Cost**

*Again, too much money spent at the taxpayers expense. If schools are going to be air conditioned, then why not have year-round school?*

*Portage schools cannot just keep raising property taxes on its residents with bonds. We have to come up with less expensive solutions than a constant state of new construction.*

#### **Overcrowding**

*By what you have written, you are only increasing the capacity by 150 students overall. The main concern of many parents is not fancy buildings, it is large class sizes. This plan does not solve that issue long term and is irresponsible.*

*This does not solve overcrowding classrooms. Too many kids in rooms.*

### **North Middle School/Portage Northern High School Building New Instead of Renovating**

*I think remodeling would be a better option. The school is not the building. It's the teachers. A new building will not make education better. That's just optics.*

### **Twelfth Street Elementary**

#### **Central Elementary Location**

*Central Elementary should be rebuilt on its current site, not on the Westnedge Woods  
Keep Portage Central Elementary at its current location. There is no reason to move it and cut down more trees in the community.*

*The new area would cause too much traffic congestion, flooding problems for homes surrounding it and I'm not sure a minor redistricting would truly help with class sizes. We need more classrooms and teachers.*

#### **Cost**

*Taking on too much debt.*

*Tired of paying for new buildings every couple of years. Too much construction. Debt is pricing homeowners out of district.*

*Too costly. Portage taxes are already out of bounds. Just voted to give PPS a land purchase millage last fall. This is too much. 5 new buildings*

---

**Support for Plan – continued****Overcrowding**

*All of the schools need a larger capacity like the 600 mentioned. Families continue to move to Portage and Texas Township, we need to make room for them!  
Six more years of overcrowding is unacceptable.*

**Woodland Elementary****Central Elementary Location**

*Change of location for Central Elementary is unacceptable. Move students to current Central Middle while building new facility at current location.*

*I do not think Central Elementary should relocate. There is room to put it still in the same general area. We worked very hard to improve the playground for the students there for years and it will be terrible if all that hard work is thrown away, too!*

**Cost**

*Taxes in Portage are too much already.*

**Overcrowding**

*Too much money. No increase in capacity*

**Respondent Did Not List School Closest to Their Home****Building New Instead of Renovating**

*I believe that these schools could be renovated and brought up to the standards they need to be without building completely new schools*

**Central Elementary Location**

*Central Elementary School's location should not change. The school hub's central location, which includes the current Central Elementary School, is a slow, safe zone. Adding an additional school hub on Westnedge adds needless additional congestion and would significantly slow traffic on a busy street. The value of the current Central Elementary's proximity to middle and high schools allows for partnering programs between older and younger students. The proximity of Central Elementary's current location to the library, within easy walking distance, works well for research and other activities. Central Elementary School is in a location that lends itself well to the needs of the students it serves. It should not move to a new location.*

*I feel moving Central Elementary to the vacant lot on Westnedge is a bad idea.*

*There is no need to move Central Elementary. There is plenty of room to build on the current site.*

**Cost**

*My taxes have gone from \$2,700 to \$5,200 since I bought it. Figure out how to upgrade and maintain what you have for lots less money, then we can talk about it. You've rebuilt Lake Center, Portage Middle, Portage High, and more already. This is getting ridiculous.*

*Spending is out of control*

---

## Support for Plan – continued

### **Overcrowding**

*Class sizes need to be smaller as this is more important. Students can learn in an old fashion building but the relationships with the teacher and small classes are more important. The dynamics within a classroom are unreal in these days. There's so many students with issues and classes of 28 and 30 kids does not provide what the kids need.*

*No plans for growth. 150 students for a building to last 40 plus years doesn't sound adequate We need to be addressing class sizes before making schools to hold the same amount of children that are already overcrowded*

## Respondent Unsure of School Closest to Their Home

### **Central Elementary Location**

*The location that has been selected will affect the surrounding neighborhoods. The water levels of the surrounding area will rise due the decreased ground being covered by asphalt and a new building. This will attract more mosquitoes in the neighborhoods increasing the chances of infections.*

### **Cost**

*I am going to be asked to pay more in taxes.  
We're not done paying off the other mileage.*

### **Overcrowding**

*You still are not addressing class size and capacities are still the same, unacceptable! The area where they want to build Central Elementary floods all the time, bad choice.*

## Demographic Considerations – Support for Plan

Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who feel the plan is acceptable included: live near Woodland Elementary (47.6%).

There were no demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who feel the plan is acceptable.

---

## Assessing the Bond

Survey respondents were then informed of the following:

“In addition to renovating Moorsbridge Elementary and building five new elementary schools, Portage Public Schools has also identified needs in updating technology, new busses, and address facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School. The total cost for all of these improvements would be \$155 million.

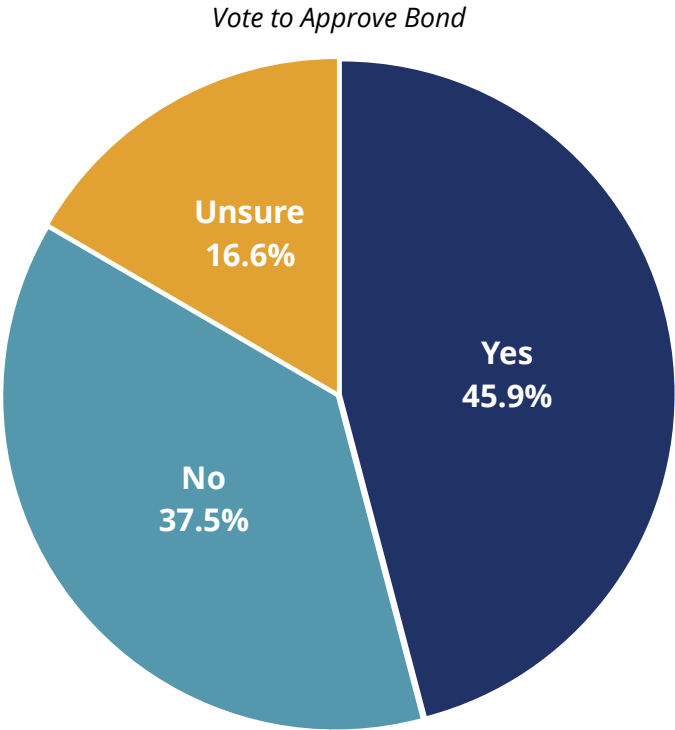
The estimated annual cost to Portage homeowners for renovating Moorsbridge Elementary, building five new elementary schools, updating technology, purchasing new busses, and address facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School over the next 25 years would be:

<u>Taxable Value*:</u>	<u>Market Value:</u>	<u>Additional Annual Cost:</u>
\$50,000	\$100,000	\$46 per year
\$75,000	\$150,000	\$69 per year
\$100,000	\$200,000	\$92 per year
\$125,000	\$250,000	\$115 per year
\$150,000	\$300,000	\$138 per year
\$200,000	\$400,000	\$184 per year
\$250,000	\$500,000	\$230 per year

This would be an additional .92 mills. \* The taxable value is approximately half of the market value.”

---

After details of the proposed bond, including its cost to taxpayers, were explained to survey respondents, respondents were then asked if they would vote to approve the bond. Slightly less than half (45.9%) said they would vote to approve the bond, 37.5% said they would not approve the bond, and 16.6% of respondents were unsure.



*Question: Would you vote to approve a 25-year bond to pay for renovating Moorsbridge Elementary, building five new elementary schools, updating technology, purchasing new busses, and addressing facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School?*

The respondents who indicated they would not vote for the bond were asked to explain why. The most common responses were related to the Central Elementary location, cost, and overcrowding. Examples of common responses are sorted below by the school nearest to respondents' homes. A complete list of all responses to this question is available in a separate document.

---

**Amberly Elementary****Central Elementary Location**

*I agree with the elementary school portion but don't like the idea of using the wooded land for Central Elementary.*

*I disagree with the location of the new Central school.*

**Cost**

*Because it would cost a lot of extra money while most of the work could easily be done without tearing down entire schools.*

*It is WAY too much money in a short period of time. Not everyone can afford that amount of tax increase*

**Overcrowding**

*As I said before, this will NOT resolve the overcrowding*

*I don't really understand why only 1 school is increasing in capacity. If Portage continues to grow then there will be overcrowding again in the near future.*

*I probably wouldn't approve it because it's not addressing the issue of overcrowded schools and high student to teacher ratios.*

**Woods Near Amberly**

*I feel like taking out the Amberly woods is a mistake.*

*Because I don't know where they are actually going to build the schools. I DO NOT support taking out woods to build them. I have made sure that all of my neighbors in the Amberly neighborhood are aware of the possible plans of taking out the woods and they are all very distraught about it. Please listen to us and do the right things. Finalize a new plan so that we can trust our woods is safe.*

**Angling Elementary****Building New Instead of Renovating**

*We don't need brand new buildings! Just updates*

**Central Elementary Location**

*Depending on location of Central Elementary, I would vote against approval.*

**Cost**

*Bonds were recently approved for the high schools and middle schools. We are not an endless pot of gold! You are taxing a lot of people out of Portage.*

*It's a lot of money to ask from taxpayers just after the high school and middle school was done and still being paid for.*

**Overcrowding**

*As previously stated, does not fully address capacity needs.*

---

## Would Not Vote in Support – continued

### Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School

#### Building New Instead of Renovating

*I believe that retrofitting current schools has not been offered as an option. I am proud of the Portage school system and want to continue to support PPS but when I look at the money in the proposal it leaves me reeling.*

*I don't think we need brand new schools for all of these schools! Renovate with local contractors! Keep our jobs here!*

*I feel more renovating could be done. I strongly disagree with taking the woods on Westnedge.*

#### Central Elementary Location

*Because of issues previously stated about the new site of Central Elementary. Also because 150 million dollars to increase student capacity by 6 classrooms is unacceptable. All of these schools do not need to be torn down. Some upgrades yes, but we do not need every school in all of Portage to be replaced all at once.*

*Don't like the idea of relocating Central Elementary and increasing traffic/congestion further down Westnedge.*

*I would support the measure if Central Elementary is rebuilt on the existing site, if not, I will oppose the entire proposal.*

#### Cost

*Approved every bond in the last 15 years. I don't have an endless pocket to reach into.*

*As mentioned previously, I feel as though PPS spends ludicrous amounts of money on unnecessary amenities. I would like to see the line item budgeting prior to approving this spend.*

*Waste of money!*

### Haverhill Elementary

#### Cost

*More tax is just too hard for so many families.*

### Lake Center Elementary

#### Building New Instead of Renovating

*I'd approve new buses, etc. I don't think we need all those new buildings. I'd approve renovating for all, possibly 1 new building if shown why it couldn't be renovated.*

#### Central Elementary Location

*As long as the site for the new Central Elementary is slated for the wooded area off of South Westnedge, I will not support this bond.*

*Don't agree with the plan. Specifically the moving of Central Elementary to the vacant property and inclusion of a new Angling Road as mentioned previously.*

*I am concerned with the plan to relocate Central Elementary. I think another location needs to be considered. Having a Central Elementary, Middle, and High school "CAMPUS" is preferred. I would be concerned about placing the school on the 20 acre plot.*

---

**Would Not Vote in Support – continued****Cost**

*Already paying a lot. It's becoming a financial burden.*

*It is too much money and would create too much traffic on South Westnedge*

**Overcrowding**

*Building more schools with the same capacity is not taking into consideration of future growth. It's like buying a sports car when you really need an SUV for the whole family.*

**Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School****Building New Instead of Renovating**

*Too costly and would recommend renovating existing properties*

**Central Elementary Location**

*The proposed location for Central Elementary school is irresponsible. If the proposal is changed to have the Central Elementary school rebuilt at its current location, I would agree to the proposal.*

*We don't want a new school built on the wooded property on Westnedge, and it is a lot of money to ask for.*

**Cost**

*I think it is much too expensive and based on the reasons I have listed before in the survey.*

*Too expensive. Thought we were still paying off bonds for Central Middle School (currently under construction) and Central High School.*

**Overcrowding**

*Because it's not going to solve classroom size*

*I'm concerned that you have not addressed class size, reducing the student to teacher ratio. I agree that the work needs to be done, but I want class size to be addressed also. I don't want to spend all of this money and still not have this issue addressed.*

**North Middle School/Portage Northern High School****Cost**

*Because I already pay enough taxes and I am getting raked over the coals by the last two bonds to build schools*

**Twelfth Street Elementary****Building New Instead of Renovating**

*Not convinced it's always necessary to tear down buildings vs. remodeling.*

**Central Elementary Location**

*I would not vote for a millage that involves removing the woods from South Westnedge or any other part of the city of Portage*

---

**Would Not Vote in Support – Continued****Cost**

*Costs are an estimate and actual cost is ALWAYS more. Foolish and extravagant to try to update schools, build five new schools, improve technology, purchase new buses etc. Very fiscally irresponsible.*

*The added cost to us as taxpayers is significant.*

**Overcrowding**

*I will be voting no unless there is a plan to reduce classroom sizes throughout the district and keep Portage Central Elementary at its current location.*

*The school size needs to change. The class sizes are ridiculously large.*

**Woodland Elementary****Building New Instead of Renovating**

*Renovate first. New buildings are not needed.*

**Cost**

*As a Portage taxpayer, I am tired of having my taxes raised every year for bond issues, that supposedly have an expiration date.*

*No more taxes. I'm on a limited income and I'm tired of the school board wanting more. Enough is enough.*

**Respondent Did Not List School Closest to Their Home****Building New Instead of Renovating**

*I feel that renovations on some of the schools could take place of completely rebuilding new ones. Especially since we have just built two new high schools, two new middle schools, and a new football field*

**Central Elementary Location**

*Due to the location of the proposed new Central Elementary. If the plan changes and it is to be built at its current location, I would strongly consider voting to approve the bond.*

**Cost**

*Because I can't afford any more in taxes.*

*Learn to live within your budget. We're taxed too much already*

**Overcrowding**

*Class sizes*

---

## Would Not Vote in Support – Continued

### Respondent Unsure of School Closest to Their Home

#### Central Elementary Location

*I listed all my reasons previously. In short, I do not want to see 20 acres of woods destroyed when it is still possible to build on the current Central Elementary site, larger schools decrease the ability to build community, and redistricting plans need to be made public before the vote.*

#### Cost

*Taxes already too high. How else could fundraising be done?*

#### Overcrowding

*I would approve it if it also stated all elementary class sizes will stay at 24 students or lower. Until class size is addressed I will not vote yes and I currently have 2 children in elementary school in Portage.*

## Demographic Considerations – Vote in Support

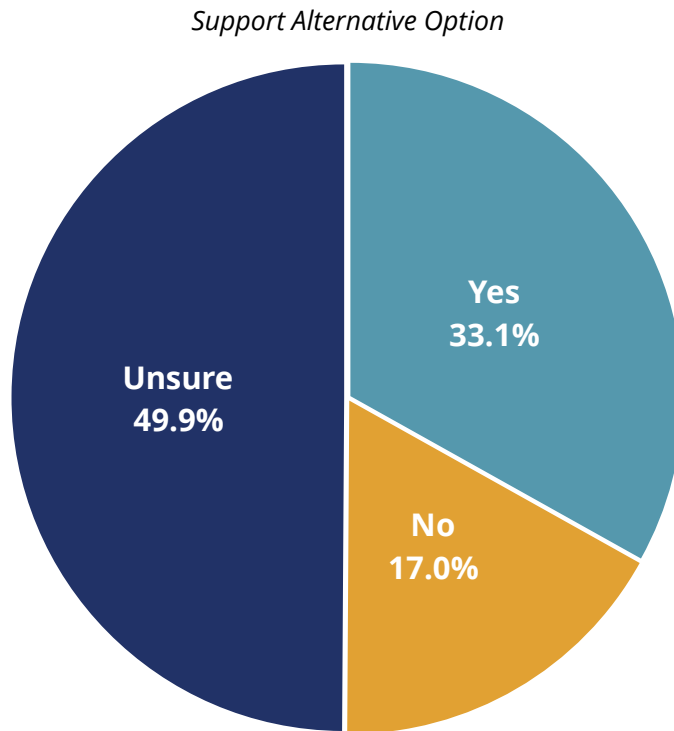
Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who would vote for a 25-year bond for improvements included: live near Woodland Elementary (55.6%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who would vote for a 25-year bond for improvements included: rent your home (35.1%).

---

## Support Alternative Option

The respondents who indicated that they would not vote in favor of the bond were asked if they would consider an option to address the needs of the elementary schools if it cost less. Half of respondents were unsure if they would vote in favor of an option to address the needs of the elementary school if the option cost less. One third of respondents indicated that they would vote in favor of a less expensive option, while 17% said they would not.



*Question: Would you vote to support an option to address elementary school needs that would cost less per year?*

The respondents who indicated they would not consider supporting a less expensive option to address the elementary school needs were asked to explain why they would not support an option to address elementary school needs. The most common responses were related to the Central Elementary location, cost, and overcrowding and all of the responses are listed below.

*Accepting school of choice students has negatively contributed to our larger class sizes. The Portage taxpayers are paying for this. Our Portage students are sharing this burden. Move fifth graders to the excess space in North Middle to free up some elementary classroom space. Stop accepting any additional students from outside the district. Be creative.*

*Again for clarity. I am not concerned about the cost for the bond. I have never voted against a bond proposal. However, I don't think this plan was well thought out, so I do not support this.*

*Again not as long you plan relocating Central Elementary  
Again, TAXES ARE ALREADY TOO HIGH*

---

## Would Not Support Alternative Option – continued

*Again, I insist on seeing detailed plans for the new Westnedge school and specific measures put in place to protect nearby homeowners from any property damage due to flooding or other development-related issues*

*Again, I think that the community needs to be involved on the options and I DON'T want a bandage approach.*

*Again, if you had been looking ahead and fiscally responsible, there would have been money saved for this need.*

*Again, until class size is addressed I would vote no on everything because new buildings aren't fixing the overcrowded class problem that parents have begged to be fixed!*

*Already explained*

*Are you just looking to see what my threshold is?*

*Bad timing given present health crisis. I realize this survey was formulated before we reached this crisis level. Thank you.*

*Bad timing with our economy devastated by coronavirus.*

*Because I can't afford anymore in taxes*

*Because I would vote for an option that costs more. Just not the current plan to move Central Elementary from the current site.*

*Because it's not about the cost. Its about the plan and how it impacts our elementary school children and teachers!*

*Because its not about cost it's about the environment.*

*Because you refuse for political, ideological, and reasons of self-interest to address issues that cripple education and the futures of students.*

*Because you're a bunch of shysters just like [name redacted] was back when he was with the district!!*

*Because your first responsibility is to teach accurate information to the students. Until you do that I will not support any money for "public education".*

*Building multiple new schools is not cost effective; see Mattawan School districts answer.*

*Cost is not my concern, I want to know how this will address class sizes. Also, where will the student be transferred if we do replace buildings. i.e. will Amberly be built on the current site or adjacent? I want to know the details before we vote on raising taxes.*

*Cut teacher pay and benefits before asking for more tax dollars.*

*Do not support/understand the current plan.*

*Don't like your plan*

*Don't approve of plan*

*Economic uncertainty.*

*Enough is enough, come back in 5 years*

*Fancy buildings don't mean better education. Measures of making the best use of the resources we have is a good life lesson.*

*I am already stretched thin, financially.*

*I am not opposed to new buildings but they need to be built to accommodate student needs and smaller class size.*

*I am paying enough taxes to support PPS. I would be willing to support more new schools when existing bonds are paid off.*

*I am really tired of giving you people money.*

*I am still going to be asked for money that I don't have.*

*I believe that more money should be allocated and given to public schools.*

---

## Would Not Support Alternative Option – continued

*I do not agree with the location of the new proposed Central Elementary*

*I do not believe that Portage Public Schools would use that savings in a way that would serve our students. Right now we need to invest more money in lowering our class sizes and providing programming that works for all of our learners. Just because we're saving on facilities does not mean that we are investing that money back into the right places.*

*I don't think that moving Central Elementary makes sense, no matter how much or cost*

*I don't want to spend more*

*I don't think it would be enough less*

*I have already approved a bond for new high school, new middle school, and athletic fields*

*I have lost all trust in the board and administrators to be trusted with my tax dollars.*

*I have no issues with the costs, I will not vote yes until the build site for Central Elementary School is moved back the the original location.*

*I voted for the bonds for the new high school and middle schools, but you just keep asking for more and more.*

*I will not support ANY measure that includes building on the 20 acres. If that is not included I will vote for it.*

*I will only support if Central Elementary stays at the current location.*

*I will support an option that doesn't include building in the woods on Westnedge*

*I would need more details on HOW they would be reduced*

*I would not approve of it right now. Maybe a less costly option in a couple years.*

*I would support one that costs less in a two years. NOT now.*

*I'm repeating myself. I'm paying a lot, already. If these renovations and improvements were necessary, it should have been rolled into the previous requests for funding.*

*I'm tired of having to pay for everything. We don't and never had children in Portage schools.*

*It is not the cost that concerns me but the plan.*

*It would depend on PPS's definition of "less." At this point in time, I don't trust PPS to have a good conception of what "less" means.*

*It's not needed! Concentrate on a high level of academics and everything else will fall into place!*

*No more taxes!*

*Maybe*

*Need to see greater research and appropriate building plans for the future of our district.*

*New school on Westnedge*

*No more taxes. No more bonds. It is passed on to homeowners.*

*No new school in Westnedge woods*

*No new taxes*

*Not at this time. Maybe down the road when true needs and cost are discovered*

*Not focused on most important issues*

*Not the amount but the plan that doesn't work*

*Not until there is support given to educators*

*Only if it costs nothing or is low cost.*

*Pay off the other bonds first.*

*Poor decisions made by Portage Schools administration. Schools should have been addressed first, not athletic complexes.*

*Prioritize! Not every need must be addressed at the same time. This country is headed for recession*

---

## Would Not Support Alternative Option – continued

*Quit trying to spend money!*

*Reduce my tax burden from where it currently is. That is the best plan.*

*Same reason as noted for current bond request.*

*Same reason as previous answer. Allow time before asking for additional money*

*See previous comment.*

*See previous responses. Take better care of existing buildings.*

*Stated in previous reasons*

*Still too much. I'm paying enough as it is.*

*Taxed enough already*

*Taxes*

*Taxes are already \$5,200. That's enough.*

*Taxes are too high*

*Taxes too high already*

*Taxes will go up even if this is not approved.*

*The cost is not the issue here, the planning is. If the final proposal costs twice the current amount, but it is good for the public, students, and faculty, I will gladly vote yes. Right now we seem to be a family of 9 that wants to buy a very nice 2 bedroom lake house. Sure, the views are good and we can say that we have a nice lake house, but inside the family is miserable because they don't have any room. This will be students home for another 50 years (at least.) We must make sure that we account for the students now as well as in 25 years or more when we plan.*

*The cost is not the issue. I will not vote for a proposal that involves building the new Central Elementary school on the proposed lot on South Westnedge regardless of the cost to me.*

*The cost isn't an issue. I would pay whatever is needed if it was in the best interest for all future students as well as the community.*

*The current bond should be paid off first.*

*The pattern of school spending is out of control not to mention all of administrative payroll.*

*Supporting pensions and health care benefits for employees for the rest of their lives is taking a priority over all improvements. These issues are first and foremost taking a big part of taxes. Don't guilt residents into more bond issues.*

*The proposed new location of Central Elementary is my concern - NOT how much I'll be paying per year. It's the LOCATION you want to move the school to that is my concern. Otherwise I would support an increase in millages.*

*These buildings need to be rebuilt for better use and safety, not just updated*

*These questions are ridiculous, I have seen you can make a survey say whatever you want it to say. Good luck with that. Residents of Portage are smarter than you want to think.*

*They have plenty of money now. Also, where's all the lottery money going?*

*Time for a break. No new bonds*

*Tired of dumping money into a bottomless pit. Learn to live on what you already have.*

*Too expensive in a time when fiscal restraint is needed. Our taxes are very high at current levels.*

*Too much money even if you cut the dollar amount.*

*Uncertain times the need to be more conservative*

*Updating technology, purchasing new buses, and addressing facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School? Why add this? Over 25 years go for two bonds - one now one later*

*Use already-cleared land.*

---

**Would Not Support Alternative Option – continued**

*Use future revenue from large projects already underway in Portage to fund improvements.*

*Use what you have now.*

*We are on a limited income.*

*Would need to see the plan first. Technically - yes I would approve. Transportation, didn't we just buy new buses with last vote. Build all the elementary schools on the same lots as the old - yes I would approve that*

*Would vote to not support if plan included building a new school on the wooded lot on South Westnedge.*

*You are asking for too much, too soon. It seems that you are entitled to all of this taxpayer money, and yet unaccountable to be fiscally responsible.*

*You don't need anymore money.*

*You need to figure out where else to get money*

*Your timing is off not your plan. If a major recession is starting you could be killing the Portage economy. There are 2 major employers and if either is bought out you could see massive job loss*

---

The respondents who indicated they would consider supporting a less expensive option to address elementary school needs were asked to explain what they would support and at what cost. The most common responses were related to renovating the schools or not building the schools in proposed locations. Examples of common responses are sorted below by the school nearest to respondents' homes. A complete list of all responses to this question is available in a separate document.

**Amberly Elementary**

*A variety of responses were provided with no consistent themes or amounts*

**Angling Elementary**

*A variety of responses were provided with no consistent themes or amounts*

**Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School**

**Central Elementary Location**

***What would you support?*** *A decision that does not include clear cutting the woods on Westnedge*

***At what amount?*** *\$100*

***What would you support?*** *I would support the higher amount, I'm just not in favor of the plan to build new elementary off South Westnedge*

***At what amount?*** *No answer provided*

**Renovations**

***What would you support?*** *A renovation instead of a new building.*

***At what amount?*** *A slight increase because we are already paying for the new high schools and 2 new stadiums.*

***What would you support?*** *Renovating the current elementary school only not building a new school that we don't need!*

***At what amount?*** *No answer provided*

**Haverhill Elementary**

*A variety of responses were provided with no consistent themes or amounts*

**Lake Center Elementary**

**Central Elementary Location**

***What would you support?*** *I support the plan with the exception of the new Central Elementary location but would also like to hear what options are available that are not so expensive.*

***At what amount?*** *Without options and cost for those options this is not a question I can answer. Perhaps a plan that addresses part of the need (like 3 school rebuilds) with a plan later for the remainder could be considered.*

***What would you support?*** *Again, would approve if an additional school on South Westnedge was not being considered*

***At what amount?*** *My concern is the school on South Westnedge*

---

## Would Support Alternative Option – continued

### Renovations

**What would you support?** Renovation and any price tag < \$100m

**At what amount?** <\$100M

**What would you support?** Renovation of the existing buildings.

**At what amount?** Unsure

### Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School

#### Build Fewer Elementary Schools

**What would you support?** 3 new schools with new technology to control cooling and heating and lighting

**At what amount?** Not sure

**What would you support?** Building fewer new buildings that are larger and can handle more students

**At what amount?** \$75

### North Middle School/Portage Northern High School

*A variety of responses were provided with no consistent themes or amounts*

### Twelfth Street Elementary

*A variety of responses were provided with no consistent themes or amounts*

### Woodland Elementary

*A variety of responses were provided with no consistent themes or amounts*

### Respondent Did Not List School Closest to Their Home

*A variety of responses were provided with no consistent themes or amounts*

### Respondent Unsure of School Closest to Their Home

*A variety of responses were provided with no consistent themes or amounts*

## Demographic Considerations – Support Alternative Option

Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who would vote to support an option that would cost less per year included: live near Woodland Elementary (41.1%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who would vote to support an option that would cost less per year included: age 25-34 (25.4%).

---

## Information

### Recommendations:

- Over one-third of survey respondents do not feel comfortable or are unsure they have sufficient information to vote on a bond for elementary facilities. Residents want to know why the Central Elementary location needs to change and what will happen to the current Central Elementary building, the costs for each building and the timeline, and general information about the plan. Portage Public Schools must provide residents with sufficient information to understand the district's elementary facility needs and detailed information about how the district is proposing to address those needs.
  
- There is not one method of communication that will reach all parents or community members, so Portage Public Schools should use a combination of methods, including: mailings, email, district Website, and the Portager newsletter, in order to provide information to as many people as possible.

**Importance:** Some residents will know a lot about the school district and require little additional information, in order to vote for a funding request; however, the majority of residents will need information about the elementary schools and the proposed funding to pay for the projects.

Providing this information to residents in an effective manner requires an understanding of how residents want to receive information, and the specific information they want to receive, in order to make an informed decision about the funding request.

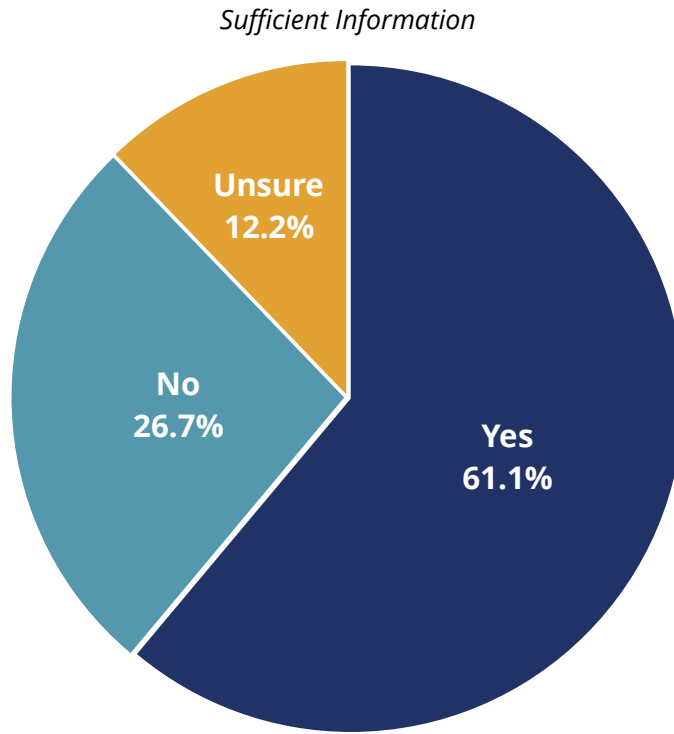
### Section Table of Contents

Information Needed.....	56
Providing Information.....	62
Suggestions and Concerns.....	67

---

## Information Needed

Respondents were asked if they felt that they had sufficient information to vote on a bond for elementary facilities. Almost two-third (61.1%) of respondents indicated that they felt they had sufficient information to vote on a bond for elementary schools. One-quarter (26.7%) indicated that they did not, and 12.2% were unsure.



*Question: Do you feel comfortable that you have sufficient information to vote on a bond for elementary facilities?*

---

Respondents who indicated they did not have enough information about the bond were asked what additional information they would like. The most common responses were related to Central Elementary, swing schools, and consistent communication of plan details. Examples of common responses are sorted below by the school nearest to respondents' homes. A complete list of all responses to this question is available in a separate document.

### **Amberly Elementary**

#### **Central Elementary Location**

*I want the location of the Central school to remain where it is.*

*I want to understand the Central Elementary piece. Why it has to be moved to the wooded land.*

#### **Consistent Communication of Plan Details**

*More information from the district about plans rather than having to rely on the hard work of neighbors to provide the information*

#### **Cost**

*Costs involved in upgrading current buildings as compared to starting over with totally new buildings*

*I'd like to see some itemized costs for these buildings, and then justifications for them.*

### **Swing Schools**

*I would like to see the plan for where students would be located while the schools are being constructed. With the increased capacity at Central Elementary, would the school boundaries change? If so, how will that change be implemented? I would also like a guarantee that the schools will not go over capacity.*

*I would want to know what will happen to the children attending the schools while the new schools are being built, I would want to know exactly what types of changes we could expect to see in these new buildings and the building being renovated, I would like to know what kind of traffic studies have been done to be sure these construction projects won't negatively affect the neighborhoods, I want to know how classroom overcrowding is going to be addressed in the schools that are not gaining any more capacity, I want to know what kind of redistricting is being proposed, I want to know how long I can expect our own elementary school to be under construction and what kind of changes this will mean for my children who attend the school.*

### **Angling Elementary**

#### **Consistent Communication of Plan Details**

*Please keep residents updated as info is available. Written and mailed would be best.*

#### **Cost**

*I would want to know where savings and consolidation of operations will provide ongoing cost savings. I would also want to know what new programs (or enhancements) will be introduced around STEM and healthy lifestyle education.*

*Specific costs per building*

---

**Information Needed – continued**

**Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School**

**Central Elementary Location**

*A better location for Central Elementary school*

*I want to know why a more environmentally-friendly, logical site is not being considered for Central Elementary. In addition, I need to understand why it cannot be built on its current site.*

*More data on the property for the new Central Elementary. Experts to study the environmental impact of building there.*

**Consistent Communication of Plan Details**

*A flyer to my home with the requests laid out, alternative plans if full requested bond not supported. How am I supposed to make an informed decision otherwise. If you want my vote and taxes you're going to have to educate us voters/homeowners.*

*Basically any information other than what I've learned on Facebook from other residents. As a Portage resident I feel I should've received information directly from PPS or the city not other residents on Facebook*

*I feel there should be numerous open meetings to discussion the bond agenda. We are all feeling left out and being told to trust the Board.*

**Cost**

*An actual list of what is being updated or improved along with actual costs for these items.*

*I want to know yearly projections and how this will improve the EDUCATION of our students!*

*I would like more information regarding individual costs per building.*

**Haverhill Elementary**

**Central Elementary Location**

*A study should be done to determine the effect of housing prices on surrounding neighborhoods and possible flooding since removing the forest would have ramifications.*

**Consistent Communication of Plan Details**

*I think that detailed information for each building needs to be presented to everyone in the community, not just people taking this survey.*

*More information, only have information from this survey, which is very little.*

**Cost**

*An itemized list on cost of building new schools, renovations, upgrades and a timeline each project.*

*More than a pages worth of information. Is there information where the existing budget can be used instead of raising taxes again?*

---

## Information Needed – continued

### Lake Center Elementary

#### Central Elementary Location

*Full disclosure of plans for Central Elementary location.*

*I am concerned and question why the elementary school needs to be placed on a empty nature lot south of its current location when for the last ten years all projects have been on existing campuses. My concern comes to cost and community impact.*

*I am okay with the bond, but would want to be assured of the issues relating to the Central Elementary building being addressed - environmental impact and traffic.*

#### Consistent Communication of Plan Details

*A mailing to residents with ALL expenses being listed, and detailed descriptions for everything. I've been a resident of Portage for 20 years, my taxes have almost tripled, and my property value has only gone up about 35% in that same time period.*

*I just want additional information as to other options that might be able to be explored.*

#### Cost

*A breakdown in cost per complex would be helpful so we know the money is being spent appropriately.*

*Cost for repairs of said buildings*

#### Other Options Provided

*I would like other options to be presented*

*See my prior comments. What are the alternatives to another campus on South Westnedge?*

*Would like to see other options that make better use of the money.*

#### Swing Schools

*I would want more information as to where kids would go while buildings are being constructed and reasoning why it is better to build Central on a different piece of property.*

### Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School

#### Cost

*A detailed accounting of where the money is going.*

*Budget transparency*

*I would like more details, specific to how the money would be allocated.*

#### Other Options Provided

*Full options besides replace them all at \$155 million needs to be communicated.*

*What would be the alternative plans for a lower cost?*

#### Swing Schools

*What is going to happen to the students while their school now is being built.*

---

**Information Needed – continued**

**North Middle School/Portage Northern High School**

**Cost**

*I want to see the breakdown of these costs/proposals. Materials, labor, contractors. The entire list*

**Twelfth Street Elementary**

**Consistent Communication of Plan Details**

*I would want clear details of the plan the district has in place.*

**Cost**

*Breakdown of how the money would be used for individual schools/projects.*

*Something that looks like a budget.*

*The individual building cost per school and for the improvements. I would like to see that broken down.*

**Other Options Provided**

*Alternatives that could be or were considered. I feel Portage Public Schools is taking on too much debt and seemingly try to force this.*

*I would like to see what specifically is needed for new construction and some alternate options that have been explored.*

**Woodland Elementary**

**Consistent Communication of Plan Details**

*I don't think the entire plan has been shared and that is a problem. I haven't seen many emails to the district, etc.*

**Respondent Did Not List School Closest to Their Home**

**Central Elementary Location**

*Central Elementary location?*

*If the current plan for the wooded lot on Westnedge is included, I absolutely will not support the bond. It is a poor environmental decision on the school's part and I would expect them to have already identified that on their own.*

**Consistent Communication of Plan Details**

*I have not been provided any information from the city. I found this survey from a friend and was not informed about any new school and I live in the neighborhood near where they are proposing the new school for Portage Central Elementary*

*Open forum discussions*

**Cost**

*Costs of upgrades, costs of redrawing student boundaries for schools to equalize, SES, achievement and ethnicity. I would like to be able to walk through the buildings to see what makes them unusable. What would upgrades cost?*

*Detailed, long range financials*

---

## Information Needed – continued

### Other Options Provided

*I would like to see other feasible plans.*

### Swing Schools

*I would like to see a more drawn out plan. My worry is for the children that will be displaced during construction on those sites that will be building on their already existing sites. Elementary aged children quite often respond to change and transition differently than older children. What's the plan to make sure they are ok during this time and there isn't overcrowding in the other schools while construction is going on?*

## Respondent Unsure of School Closest to Their Home

### Central Elementary Location

*I would like to find out more about the wooded lot that the new Central building would be put on. What would happen to where the current Central Elementary building is located.*

### Cost

*Breakdown of amounts*

## Demographic Considerations – Information Needed

Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who feel comfortable they have sufficient information to vote on a bond included: live near Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School (71.4%), live near Twelfth Street Elementary (69.5%), live near Woodland Elementary (69.8%), and rent their home (78.6%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who feel comfortable they have sufficient information to vote on a bond included: age 75 and over (54.4%), live near Lake Center Elementary (52.7%), and live near Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School (48.4%).

---

## Providing Information

Survey respondents were asked what the best way would be for Portage Public Schools to provide them with information about the proposed bond. The most common answer (34.3%) was that survey respondents would like information mailed to their homes.

### *Best Way to Provide Information*

	<b>% Total</b>
<b>Mailed to your home</b>	<b>34.3%</b>
Email	19.0%
District website (www.portageps.org)	13.4%
Portager newsletter	13.4%
Hold community forums	4.7%
Facebook	3.7%
Mlive	2.9%
Kalamazoo Gazette	1.3%
Instagram	0.2%
Twitter	0.1%
Other	5.5%
Unsure	1.6%

*Question: What would be the best way for PPS to provide information about the bond proposal to you?*

The respondents who indicated that email would be the best way for Portage Public Schools to share information about the bond with them were given the opportunity to provide their email addresses without their name being associated with their survey responses. A total of 183 email addresses were provided, which are available in a separate document.

---

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide other responses. The following responses were provided:

*All of the above (8 respondents)*

*A combination of all of these.*

*A combination of in person community forums, and online forums using social media*

*A combination of several if not all of the above. Maybe not Twitter.*

*All are good ways to communicate*

*All forms of local media*

*All of the above plus Channel 3 News!*

*All of the above should have all the detail*

*All of the above! So everyone gets!*

*All of the above. This entire plan and survey has been hidden and unpublicized by the board and city. Do better.*

*Along with community forums, and the Portage newsletter. Not all have internet access, Instagram, Twitter, or the Gazette.*

*Any information that the district puts out is all one sided and biased. I want to see honest pros and cons*

*As a community we are could benefit from being informed on a regular basis about the status, what to expect next, purposed starting of construction, and approximately the deadline. I feel strongly that since we voted yes on the unbelievable opportunity for our children's future in a national rated school district we should be receiving updates on a regular basis*

*Both district website and mailed home*

*Combination of all of the examples*

*Combination of Portager, community forums, etc.*

*Combination of posting on the district website, email, and public forum.*

*Community forum, mailed to home, Portage newsletter.*

*Community forums and mailings with details. You didn't allow for 2 options*

*Community forums and newsletter*

*Do not need more information*

*Don't bother, I won't change my vote.*

*Don't issue any bond proposal*

*Email and community forums. I believe community forums are needed no matter what other print means are used.*

*Email, website, forums, newsletter*

*Every possible means should be used*

*Forums, mailings, and email. Use as many as possible*

*Hopefully, PPS realize they need to get information out through multiple outlets, including email, community forums, Gazette, mailed to our homes, and Portager newsletter. However, only one of these is two-way communication and that is what is needed most.*

*I believe multiple of these would be a proper response not just one.*

---

## Providing Information – continued

- I feel comfortable with many of the ways to communicate, but it only allowed me to pick on. The following are excellent ways to communicate with parents and the public. Especially us parents, we are very interested in knowing what's the status of projects and same goes for future plans. Good advertising and keeping parents update are: by website, email, hold community forms, information mailed or Portager mailed to our homes would be wonderful. Obviously I don't expect all, but please remember that many parents are in the dark because of lack of communication from PPS. We are extremely thankful that we have such a great school system. All facility, students, and parents should be proud of PPS. I'd just like to see more updates as we progress with our future plans*
- I think a combination of these need to be done: mailed, newsletter, MLive, community forums, and the district website. There is no ONE way of communicating this information.*
- I think PPS needs to provide communication in multiple ways. Some people look at the newsletter and others look at Facebook. We absolutely need community forums and emails and the website and mail to our homes. You should be doing all of the options you listed in this question.*
- I would like information on alternatives. The high school I attended was built in 1920 and is still there as a working high school.*
- I would liked to have been able to list a number of ways to respond to question 17, e.g. District website, Kalamazoo Gazette, Portage newsletter.*
- I'm not at all interested.*
- It doesn't matter what you present. Districts have to expect parents to be parents. Teachers to be teachers. Stop asking for money*
- It needs to be some form of mail/newspaper because my husband will not read it otherwise.*
- It needs to go in paper, forums, and direct mailing to every home.*
- It would take more than one platform of getting the information out. Mail is one way, signs up, to let people know. If you wanted people to know, all of the above could have been done. Its when you are trying to hide the facts when you don't use all your resources.*
- Mail to home and district website*
- Mail to home, newsletter, email, hold forums*
- Mail to homes (there are many elderly people that do not have the internet, (they have a right to vote on this too)), use district website, hold forums*
- Mailed postcard and website*
- Mailed to my home, highly detailed but easy to understand.*
- Mailed with extra information in the Portage newsletter and online. Don't exclude information or people with technology limitations.*
- Mailing, email, forums. All of these*
- Maybe PPS should rethink their request for a bond proposal at this time. With current belt tightening, maybe PPS should also make similar actions.*
- More than one of the above options. Signage to bring attention to detailed info elsewhere.*
- Multiple avenues of communication*
- Multiple formats. Have meetings, mail letters, post to social media, post to the Portage website.*
- Multiple means of communication leveraging various channels: district website, email, community forums, and mailer. Can't assume that one means of communication will be sufficiently effective to make it the only channel.*
- Multiple modalities: website, email, forums, newsletter*
- Multiple outlets - all online/social and a mailing*

---

## Providing Information – continued

*Multiple sources would be best (newsletter, and site, etc.)*

*Multiple ways to get the information, not just one*

*Need to use multiple platforms to educate all*

*No new taxes.*

*Please use a variety of methods so all stakeholders are aware of the needs of the elementaries for our students to compete academically. The foundation for all learning begins early! Those years must be supported by the best teachers and facilities.*

*Portage newsletter!*

*Postcard (low cost but wide reach) directing to detailed online info*

*Probably social media, MLive, and mailers*

*Put their bond proposal on hold for at least 15 year :)*

*Radio messages*

*Several of the options above*

*Should be allowed to hit multiple buttons like mailings, MLive, newsletter, etc.*

*Should snail mail all residents, email all residents, and website. Need to make effort to reach all residents in multiple ways to ensure all taxpayers are aware of the project, process and ramifications*

*Since I can't choose more than 1. M-Live or the Portager newsletter. As I no longer have students in the school system, I don't check your website, go to community forums. I no longer get the Gazette or use Instagram or Twitter. I don't check your website and I see no need to go to a community forum.*

*Social media, US mailed postcards, flyers at schools, emails.*

*Television*

*Tell us what is really happening in some way. Break it down by cost. We need numbers!*

*There is no single best way, it's foolish to think there is*

*There should be multiple ways to communicate including Portager newsletter, district website, community forums. Please advise where any of this has been communicated in any detail*

*Tired of the never ending want - no more information for me*

*Tours of the current buildings would be helpful*

*Use all of these methods.*

*Use as as many of these as can be afforded and done*

*USPS, Portage newsletter, local news*

*Website, forums, Gazette, Portager, mailers*

*Would like 2 choices*

*You should use every single one of the above medias to be transparent about the bond proposal AND INFORMATION SUPPORTING IT. PPS was not forthcoming with all of the information, other than minor posts on website, and failed to bring this to the attention of Portage tax payers. It wasn't until a few people started bringing this to the public's attention, that I had a clue what your plan was.*

---

### **Demographic Considerations – Providing Information**

Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who feel the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal was email included: I am the parent of one or more children currently attending PPS (33.6%), age 35-44 (32.0%), live near Angling Elementary (27.6%), and live near Twelfth Street Elementary (33.1%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who feel the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal was email included: age 55-64 (7.7%), age 65-74 (8.6%), and age 75 and over (9.1%).

Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who feel the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal would be mailing information to their home included: age 25-34 (45.4%), age 55-64 (42.3%), age 65-74 (45.4%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who feel the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal would be mailing information to their home included: age 35-44 (26.4%).

---

## Suggestions and Concerns

All respondents were asked if they had any other suggestions or concerns about Portage Public Schools that had not been talked about. The most common responses were related to general praise for Portage Public Schools, communication with the community, and concerns about cost. Examples of common responses are sorted below by the school nearest to respondents' homes. A complete list of all responses to this question is available in a separate document.

### **Amberly Elementary**

#### **Capacity**

*I don't understand why only one elementary school (Central) will have increased capacity. I think if we are spending this much money we should be forward thinking and expand each elementary school to accommodate additional students and not start with new schools that are near capacity.*

*I would like to see a lowered student teacher ratio in kindergarten and first grade if there will be new elementary schools*

*We HAVE to redistrict the elementary lines to reduce overcrowding at Amberly. We MUST level it out so each student gets the equal education for ALL Portage Elementaries! We must get these class sizes under control during this rebuilding time. Otherwise I will not vote for the millage.*

#### **Central Elementary Location**

*Please do not relocate the Central school.*

*We should be able to come up with another option that would allow us to maintain the natural habitat that is slotted for the new Central Elementary building.*

#### **Communication with Community**

*I do not feel supported as a parent from the administration aspect. There is a lot to be said about a district that is making the best decisions for their students and this has been hard to see the last few years*

#### **Cost**

*You're asking for \$155 million, can you provide renderings of these buildings, a list of amenities, and justifications for them?*

#### **General Praise**

*Fine educational opportunities served our children well. We want these opportunities to be available for current children.*

*I am proud of our schools. My children received a very good education from the schools and were well prepared for a university education.*

---

## Suggestions and Concerns – continued

### Communication with Community

*Perhaps small group meetings for neighborhoods, news media coverage, and definitely promotion of the whys and hows of the proposed bond could also be part of the information distribution.*

*When Waylee was closed to build 12th Street the reason given was that Waylee was too far gone to renovate. Before 12th Street was finished renovation started for a state of the art Administration building. This sort of double-dealing does not lend itself to the support of the taxpayers.*

### Cost

*Interested to understand if building 4 schools with all higher capacity would be less expensive. What other options were explored?*

### General Praise

*My children attended PPS and I was very happy with the academic curriculum and services offered in this district. I'm hoping that buildings can be upgraded so my grandson can attend PPS in the near future.*

## Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School

### Central Elementary Location

*I agree with the plan to rebuild the schools if necessary. However, I do not agree with moving Central Elementary down Westnedge from the current location.*

*I really feel the woods in Westnedge should be left as is. There is plenty of room on the campus of Central Elementary to build.*

*If you would leave the woods alone on Westnedge, I would support this bond.*

### Communication with Community

*Also detailed info on proposals should be mailed to residents.*

*Better your communication process*

*Disappointed about the lack of transparency and "sneakiness" about this one. Have trust in our leaders, but this has disappointed me.*

*I found out about this potential bond issue and survey from a discussion on Facebook. Not happy about that at all, I have a child in the PPS elementary and have significant property value in PPS school district. I was not happy to find out about this proposal from a random Facebook conversation.*

### Cost

*After the previous mileages that we actually supported, this is too much money too soon.*

*I am in full support of our children and students! They need better! Please though, do not make hasty decisions about the amount of money this will cost tax payers and the damage this will cause to a community neighborhood*

---

## **Suggestions and Concerns – continued**

### **General Praise**

*Great schools and good curriculum.*

*I love Central and think they do a wonderful job, they just need a new building*

## **Haverhill Elementary**

### **Central Elementary Location**

*After Central Elementary is relocated in their new building, what is the disposition of the old Central Elementary building, parking lot, and playground?*

*Don't use the land for Central Elementary. This would be too disruptive to the neighborhoods and cause too many traffic problems. Find a different site for the new school - perhaps some of the extremely large parking lot that sits in front of Central Elementary currently. The residents near Central Elementary do NOT want you to use this undeveloped land. Portage is supposed to be a "natural" place to move - you're taking away a lot of the "natural" with all of your new developments!*

### **Cost**

*Just realize we do not all have the extra money to throw at big projects all the time*

### **General Praise**

*Congrats on PNHS, PCHS and NMS! Thank you for all the hard work you have done.*

*Thank you for allowing for the community to voice its concerns in this time of change.*

## **Lake Center Elementary**

### **Capacity**

*Fantastic teachers, but they are frustrated with class size.*

### **Central Elementary Location**

*Do not build another elementary school on Westnedge! LISTEN AND HEAR what residents have to say about this in meetings with an open mind.*

*I do not approve of the location of the proposed Central Elementary*

### **Communication with Community**

*Please make sure the information is well communicated. A number in the community are concerned about the plans for Central Elementary and the impact to the community having not been communicated earlier to those most impacted.*

### **Cost**

*As stated earlier, a little tax increase here, another there, another there, etc. mounts up to TOO much for retirees.*

*Don't raise our taxes, lower our taxes*

---

## **Suggestions and Concerns – continued**

### **General Praise**

*As an alum and three children grads of PPS I am proud of our schools, it is time to reflect on how much taxpayers are willing to spend.*

## **Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School**

### **Capacity**

*I feel class sizes in elementary need to be reduced to be able to meet the needs of all students in a reasonable way.*

*I was a long time employee of Portage Schools and I'm left wondering about the planned capacity of each of these schools school, how that was determined in the planning. I am fully aware of the stress on community and school employees involved in redistricting but I'd like to know more about the specifics of this information.*

*You need smaller class sizes. Increased technology for students. All should have a computer.*

### **Cost**

*Fix your budget*

*You are so ready to tax and spend! Instead, be good stewards and wise in use of all resources.*

### **General Praise**

*Keep up funding for the arts!*

*People find change hard even when they see a clear need. My compliments to the efforts the district has made this far.*

## **Twelfth Street Elementary**

### **Capacity**

*My children attend Moorsbridge, which is currently overcrowded. They are continuing to build with people zoned to this school. It seems like we need another school. Should an additional elementary school be considered, given that housing demand seems to just be increasing? Having almost 30 children in 1st grade is sub-par, especially for such a great school and staff. Just makes it difficult for teachers to do their jobs.*

*New buildings are needed, but it is even more important to reduce class size and expand differentiated instruction.*

### **Central Elementary Location**

*Think! The location of the new Central Elementary is terrible. Just jamming buildings in tight spaces. Horrible and I question the safety of that building sitting practically road side!*

### **Communication with Community**

*I think more information should be shared with the public on the timeline, order of building and specifics on how the overcrowding at Amberly and Moorsbridge will be fixed.*

---

## **Suggestions and Concerns – continued**

### **General Praise**

*Great school system, great teachers, and administrators.*

*I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback. Thank you for your consideration and for everyone's hard work on behalf of the students and families of Portage.*

*Our children had a wonderful education at PPS. We attribute their current successes to outstanding educational opportunities. We support our dedicated educators and our Portage Public School system.*

## **North Middle School/Portage Northern High School**

### **Central Elementary Location**

*Not certain about building a new Central Elementary on the site on Westnedge. Would need more information.*

*The only reason I have reservations about the proposal is the designated site for Portage Central. Can it, too, not be built on the same site as the present school?*

### **Communication with Community**

*Better communication from the district. It seems like we make our decisions based on what other schools have done and don't have our own plans on how to handle situations. PPS seems behind the times in many cases.*

*I feel our community has been well informed of the needs of the students and our responsibilities for them.*

### **Cost**

*Spending is out of control. The administration is way over compensated and the people who actually teach our kids are not treated with respect financially.*

### **General Praise**

*I believe that they are doing a good job.*

## **Woodland Elementary**

### **Communication with Community**

*Total transparency and communication through PPS website would be greatly appreciated.*

### **Cost**

*Overtaxed for schools. No no for seniors*

### **General Praise**

*Both of our daughters went through PPS and we were very happy with the education they received.*

*I think this community is outstanding in their support of the schools. I intend to continue that tradition.*

---

## **Suggestions and Concerns – continued**

### **Respondent Did Not List School Closest to Their Home**

#### **Central Elementary Location**

*I am on board with updating facilities, technology, etc. I am just not okay with the thought/decision to move Central Elementary. More information on why this is the proposed plan is needed and why it can't go on the current site. Additionally, what is the current site going to be used for since a school isn't in the plan right now? That is a large plot of land and I'd be curious to know what the next steps for that space would be.*

*I am very disappointed that PPS has identified the wooded lot on Westnedge as a build site. I am normally more than happy to support a bond vote, but not this one. Current buildings are on sites that can easily accommodate a build at the same time. If PPS wants to use the wooded lot, why not have students use it as an outdoor rec area, or a earth science outdoor classroom.*

#### **Communication with Community**

*There needs to be better communication about what is going on in the city. There was nothing in the latest newsletter about wanting to build a new school on South Westnedge*

#### **Cost**

*I'm a senior citizen with no kids even going to school, I feel that I pay enough in taxes for schools Quite honestly I am shocked PPS is coming back to the residents so soon on the heels of all that we have so generously given.*

### **Respondent Unsure of School Closest to Their Home**

#### **Capacity**

*Take class size seriously. Lower the cap in elementary to 24 students or less Portage wide. Otherwise you will be losing a lot of support from parents for this bond.*

#### **General Praise**

*Great schools and staff. Portage schools provided a great education that prepared all of our children to pursue their dreams upon graduation.*

---

# Appendices

## Section Table of Contents

Survey Methodology .....	74
Respondent Profile.....	75
Elementary Community Survey Instrument .....	85
Report Credits and Contact Information.....	90

---

## Survey Methodology

The Portage Public Schools 2020 Community Survey included 23 questions on a variety of topics, including: awareness and perception of Portage Public Schools, marketing and communications, satisfaction with Portage Public Schools, residents' opinions on a bond proposal, and demographic information. The survey was developed based on input from Portage Public Schools. Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. assembled and ordered the survey questions.

The population surveyed was specifically limited to residents of Portage Public Schools. The survey was open to the public from March 16, 2020 to March 27, 2020 using the online survey platform SurveyMonkey. The survey was completed by 1,350 residents of the Portage Public School district.

Based on the number of households in the Portage Public School district and the number of survey completions, a confidence level and confidence interval can be calculated. In statistical terms, the confidence level is the likelihood that, if the survey were replicated, the results would be the same. The confidence level for this survey is 95.0%, meaning that 95 times out of 100 this survey would produce substantially the same results as achieved this time.

The confidence interval is the range that any answer could vary from the actual value. This is the “+/- xxx percent” margin of error value that pollsters reference. In this case, the 2020 Community Survey has a confidence interval of +/- 2.7%. Therefore, the answers provided by respondents are within plus or minus 2.7% of the actual value. When comparing the responses from any two questions, any difference of less than 5.4% needs to be examined carefully, since statistically the difference could be considered negligible.

Throughout this report, responses from survey respondents are displayed in italic. All of the responses are presented exactly as submitted and have not been edited to allow you to reach your own conclusion as to the meaning and intent of the survey respondent.

Ideally, the survey respondents participating in this survey would reflect the population of the Portage Public Schools district as a whole. Since the survey was an online opt-in survey, and anyone over 18 living in the Portage Public Schools district could take the survey, the survey respondents did not reflect the population of the Portage Public Schools district as a whole.

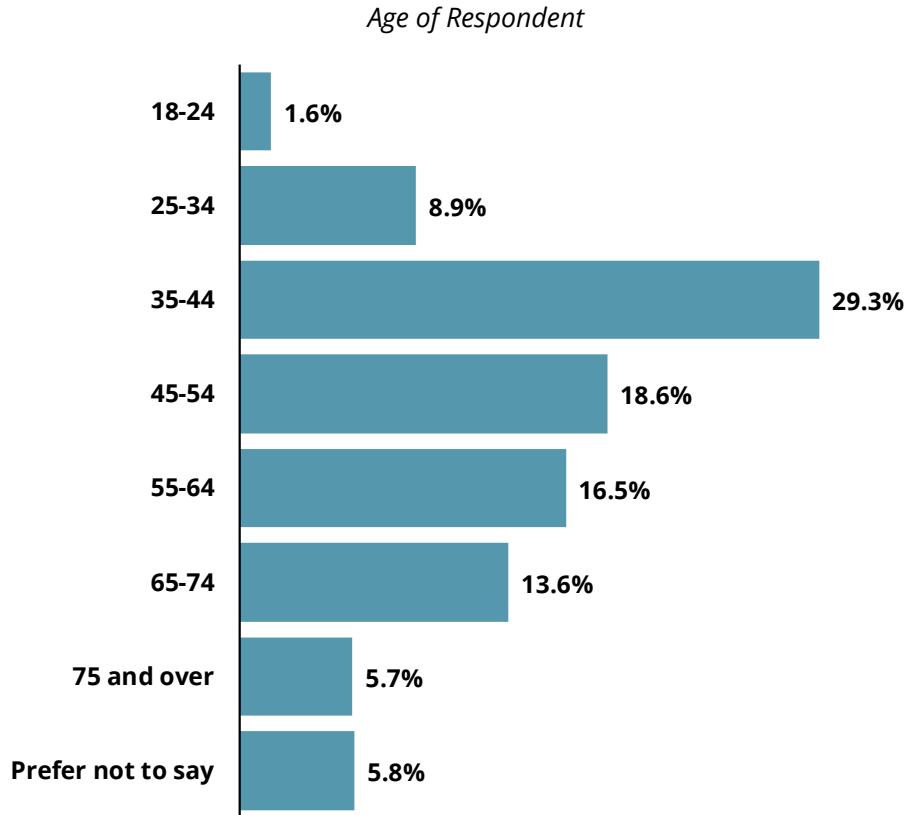
In particular, the number of survey respondents living near each of the schools in the district was not proportional to the number of households near each of the schools. For example, approximately twice as many surveys were received from households near Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School as would be expected based on the number of households in the Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School area.

Using a weighting process, all of the survey responses received were weighted to reflect the proportion of households near each of the schools. The percentage responses to each question in the report reflect using the weighted data. Although the data was weighted to determine the percentage responses to each question, the open-ended responses from all survey respondents are included in this report.

---

## Respondent Profile

All respondents were asked to indicate their age. The ages of the respondents ranged from age 35-44 at 29.3% to age 18-24 at 1.6%.



*Question: What is your age?*

---

## Demographic Considerations – Age of Respondent

The significant differences by age of the respondent are summarized below. An up arrow (↑) indicates a higher or greater difference, while a down arrow (↓) indicates a lower or lesser difference. There were not enough survey respondents age 18-24 to determine if significant differences existed in that age group.

### Age 25-34

- ↓ Gave Portage Public Schools an overall grade of A
- ↓ Feel Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible
- ↓ Feel Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities need to be improved
- ↓ Would vote to support an option that would cost less per year
- ↓ Parent of one or more children who graduated from PPS

### Age 35-44

- ↑ Email is the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal
- ↑ Parent of one or more children who currently attend PPS
- ↑ Been inside any of PPS' elementary school buildings in the past year
- ↓ Mail is the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal
- ↓ Parent of one or more children who graduated from PPS

### Age 45-54

- ↑ Parent of one or more children who currently attend PPS
- ↑ Been inside any of PPS' elementary school buildings in the past year

### Age 55-64

- ↑ Mail is the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal
- ↑ Parent of one or more children who graduated from PPS
- ↓ Gave PPS a grade of A for extracurricular activities such as athletics and fine arts
- ↓ Email is the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal
- ↓ Been inside any of PPS' elementary school buildings in the past year

### Age 65-74

- ↑ Mail is the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal
- ↑ Parent of one or more children who graduated from PPS
- ↓ Email is the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal
- ↓ Been inside any of PPS' elementary school buildings in the past year

### Age 75 and over

- ↑ Parent of one or more children who graduated from PPS
- ↓ Feel Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible
- ↓ Email is the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal
- ↓ Been inside any of PPS' elementary school buildings in the past year

All respondents were asked to indicate which Portage Public School building they lived closest to. Due to the weighting of the survey data (see Survey Methodology), responses were distributed based on the distribution of houses and neighborhoods in Portage. The greatest percentage of responses came from the areas nearest Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School, followed by Central Elementary/Middle School/High School, Lake Center Elementary, and Angling Elementary.

*Geographic Location*

	<b>% Total</b>
Amberly Elementary	9.4%
Angling Elementary	12.0%
Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School	14.2%
Haverhill Elementary	5.5%
Lake Center Elementary	13.6%
Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School	15.3%
North Middle School/Portage Northern High School	3.4%
Twelfth Street Elementary	9.7%
Woodland Elementary	9.3%
Unsure which school I live closest to	2.8%
Prefer not to answer	4.8%

*Question: Which PPS' building do you live closest to?*

---

## Demographic Considerations – Geographic Location

The significant differences by the PPS' building the respondent lives closest to are summarized below. An up arrow (↑) indicates a higher or greater difference, while a down arrow (↓) indicates a lower or lesser difference.

### Amberly Elementary

No significant differences

### Angling Elementary

- ↑ Email is the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal
- ↓ Gave Portage Public Schools a grade of A for extracurricular activities such as athletics & fine arts

### Haverhill Elementary

- ↑ Feel Portage Public Schools are doing a good job communicating with residents
- ↓ Gave Portage Public Schools a grade of A for academic programs
- ↓ Gave Portage Public Schools a grade of A for extracurricular activities such as athletics & fine arts
- ↓ Feel Portage Public Schools' buildings and facilities need to be improved

### Lake Center Elementary

- ↓ Feel Portage Public Schools are doing a good job communicating with residents
- ↓ Feel comfortable they have sufficient information to vote on a bond

### Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School

- ↑ Feel comfortable they have sufficient information to vote on a bond

### Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Central High School

- ↓ Feel comfortable they have sufficient information to vote on a bond

### Twelfth Street Elementary

- ↑ Gave Portage Public Schools a grade of A for extracurricular activities such as athletics & fine arts
- ↑ Feel comfortable they have sufficient information to vote on a bond
- ↑ Email is the best way for PPS to provide them information about the bond proposal
- ↓ Feel Portage Public Schools is fiscally responsible
- ↓ Feel Portage Public Schools are doing a good job communicating with residents

### Woodland Elementary

- ↑ Gave Portage Public Schools' an overall grade of A
- ↑ Feel the plan is acceptable
- ↑ Would vote for a 25-year bond for improvements
- ↑ Would vote to support an option that would cost less per year
- ↑ Feel comfortable they have sufficient information to vote on a bond
- ↓ Gave Portage Public Schools' a grade of B for the condition of buildings and facilities

All respondents were asked to indicate their relationship with Portage Public Schools. The largest percentage of respondents indicated that they were a parent of at least one child currently attending Portage Public Schools (44.1%), followed by 38.9% of respondents who had at least one child who had graduated from Portage Public Schools.

*Relationship with Portage Public Schools*

	<b>% Total</b>
I am the parent of one or more children currently attending Portage Public Schools	44.1%
I am the parent of one or more children who have graduated from Portage Public Schools	38.9%
I graduated from Portage Public Schools	18.5%
I am an employee of Portage Public Schools	11.4%
I currently attend Portage Public Schools	0.6%
None of the above apply to me	16.2%

*Question: Please check ALL of the following statements that may describe you.*

*\* The percent total equals more than 100% as respondents could select multiple answers.*

---

### **Demographic Considerations – Relationship with Portage Public Schools**

Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who are the parent of one or more children who currently attend PPS included: age 35-44 (83.8%), age 45-54 (68.1%), and females (50.2%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who are the parent of one or more children who currently attend PPS included: age 55-64 (11.7%), age 65-74 (0.0%), age 75 and over (0.0%), and males (32.4%).

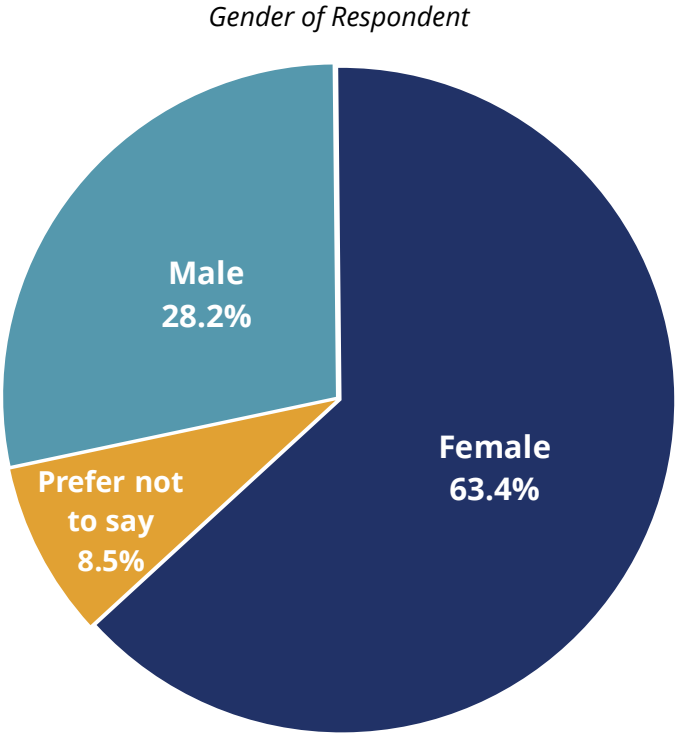
Demographic categories with a significantly higher percentage of respondents who are the parent of one or more children who graduated from PPS included: age 55-64 (74.0%), age 65-74 (67.4%), and age 75 and over (76.6%).

Demographic categories with a significantly lower percentage of respondents who are the parent of one or more children who graduated from PPS included: age 25-34 (0.8%), and age 35-44 (7.3%).

Note: Demographic differences were only determined for respondents with one or more children that currently attend or have graduated from Portage Public Schools.

---

All respondents were asked their gender. Nearly two-thirds (63.4%) were female, more than one-quarter were male (28.2%), and 8.5% of respondents did not provide their gender.



*Question: What is your gender?*

**Demographic Considerations**

The significant differences by gender of the respondent are summarized below. An up arrow (↑) indicates a higher or greater difference, while a down arrow (↓) indicates a lower or lesser difference.

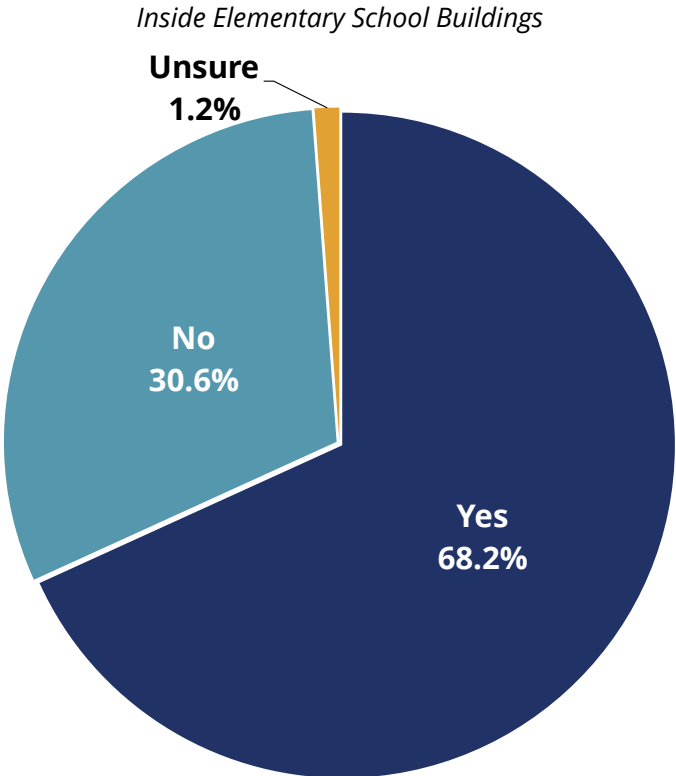
**Males**

- ↓ I am the parent of one or more children currently attending PPS
- ↓ Been inside any of PPS' elementary school buildings in the past year

**Females**

- ↑ I am the parent of one or more children currently attending PPS

All respondents were asked to indicate whether they had been inside of any of Portage Public Schools' elementary school buildings in the past year. More than half (68.2%) of respondents had been, while one-third (30.6%) had not, and 1.2% were unsure.



*Question: In the past year, have you been inside any of PPS' elementary school buildings?*

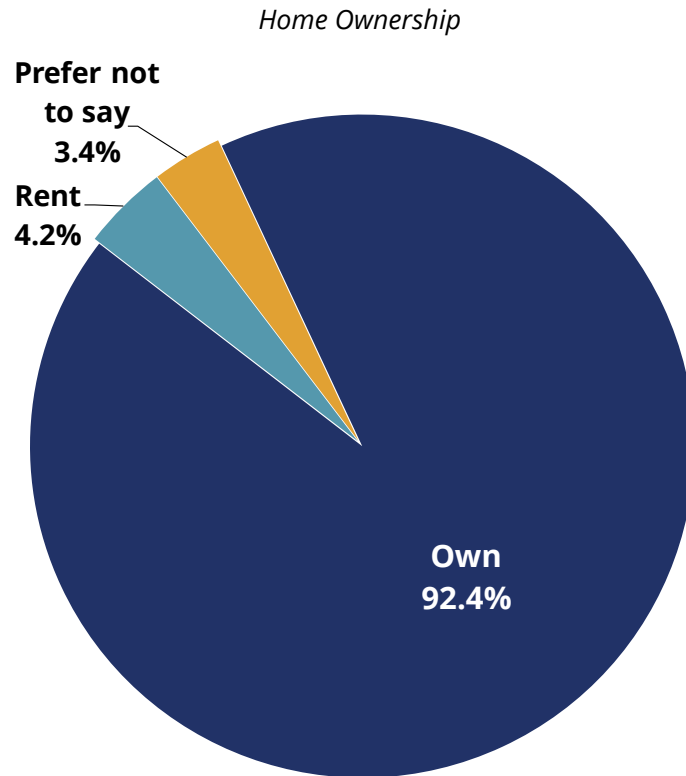
**Demographic Considerations**

The significant differences by the respondent having been inside any of Portage Public Schools' elementary school buildings in the past year are summarized below. An up arrow (↑) indicates a higher or greater difference, while a down arrow (↓) indicates a lower or lesser difference.

- ↑ I am the parent of one or more children currently attending PPS
- ↑ Age 35-44
- ↑ Age 45-54
- ↓ Age 55-64
- ↓ Age 65-74
- ↓ Age 75 and over
- ↓ Males

---

All respondents were asked to indicate whether they rented or owned their home. The vast majority of respondents (92.4%) indicated that they owned their homes, while 4.2% indicated that they rented, and 3.4% did not provide information on their home ownership.



*Question: Do you rent or own your home?*

**Demographic Considerations**

The significant differences by the respondent owning or renting their home are summarized below. An up arrow (↑) indicates a higher or greater difference, while a down arrow (↓) indicates a lower or lesser difference.

**Own**

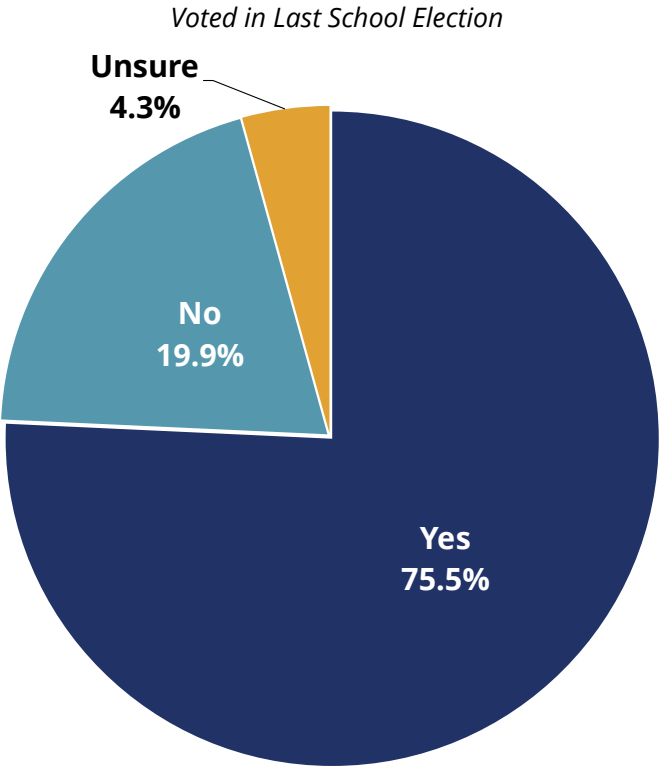
No significant differences

**Rent**

- ↓ Voted in the last facilities election

---

All respondents were asked to indicate whether they had voted in the 2015 school facilities election. Three-quarters (75.5%) indicated that they had, while 19.9% of respondents indicated they had not, and 4.3% were unsure.



*Question: Did you vote in the last PPS facilities election in 2015?*

**Demographic Considerations**

The significant differences in respondents who voted in the last PPS facilities election in 2015 are summarized below. An up arrow (↑) indicates a higher or greater difference, while a down arrow (↓) indicates a lower or lesser difference.

- ↑ Age 55-64
- ↑ Age 65-74
- ↑ Age 75 and over
- ↓ Age 25-34
- ↓ Live near Twelfth Street Elementary
- ↓ Rent your home



---

Portage Public Schools currently operates eight elementary schools. Two of the elementary schools – Lake Center and 12<sup>th</sup> Street – were constructed in 2009 and are in good condition. Moorsbridge Elementary was built over 25 years ago in 1994 and is in need of renovation and updating.

The remaining five elementary schools – Amberly, Angling, Central, Haverhill, and Woodland – are all over 50 years old. These buildings were constructed in the 1960's from inexpensive materials and were expected to have a useful life of 30 to 40 years. None of these buildings have air conditioning. Since the 1960's, the standards for energy conservation, computers, technology, and serving children with special needs have all changed. All-day kindergarten, Young 5's, and pre-school have also been added to the elementary schools in the past 50 years, which has brought several elementary schools close to capacity or over capacity.

Last year, a committee of parents and community members was formed to study and prepare recommendations for addressing PPS elementary school facilities. Based on the work of the committee, the school board has identified a potential plan for replacing and renovating elementary schools.

The plan would renovate Moorsbridge Elementary and build five new elementary schools to replace Amberly, Angling, Central, Haverhill, and Woodland elementary schools. The new Amberly Elementary would be replaced on its current site and continue to have a capacity of 600 students. The new Central Elementary would have a capacity of 600 students, an increase from its current capacity of 450 students. The new Central Elementary would be built on a 20-acre property currently owned by Portage Public Schools on South Westnedge, about 1 ½ miles south of the current Central Elementary location. The new Angling, Haverhill, and Woodland elementary schools would be built on their current locations and would continue to have a capacity of 450 students each.

There would be minor redistricting to eliminate overcrowding at Amberly, Moorsbridge, and 12<sup>th</sup> Street elementary schools. Construction could begin as early as 2021 and finish in 2027.

9. How do you feel about this plan for addressing the district's elementary school facility needs?

- The plan is acceptable
- The plan is not acceptable, why not? \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure

In addition to renovating Moorsbridge Elementary and building five new elementary schools, Portage Public Schools has also identified needs in updating technology, new busses, and address facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School. The total cost for all of these improvements would be \$155 million.

The estimated annual cost to Portage homeowners for renovating Moorsbridge Elementary, building five new elementary schools, updating technology, purchasing new busses, and address facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School over the next 25 years would be:

<b>Taxable Value*:</b>	<b>Market Value:</b>	<b>Additional Annual Cost:</b>
\$50,000	\$100,000	\$46 per year
\$75,000	\$150,000	\$69 per year
\$100,000	\$200,000	\$92 per year
\$125,000	\$250,000	\$115 per year
\$150,000	\$300,000	\$138 per year
\$200,000	\$400,000	\$184 per year
\$250,000	\$500,000	\$230 per year

This would be an additional .92 mills. \* The taxable value is approximately half of the market value.

10. Would you vote to approve a 25-year bond to pay for renovating Moorsbridge Elementary, building five new elementary schools, updating technology, purchasing new busses, and addressing facility needs for Curious Kids and Community High School?

- Yes - please continue with question 13
- No - please continue with question 11
- Unsure - please continue with question 11

11. Why wouldn't you vote to approve the bond, or why are you unsure about voting to approve the bond?

---



---

12. Would you vote to support an option to address elementary school needs that would cost less per year?

- Yes, what would you support? \_\_\_\_\_  
And at what amount? \_\_\_\_\_
- No, why not? \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure

13. Do you feel comfortable that you have sufficient information to vote on a bond for elementary facilities?

- Yes
- No, what information would you want, list: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure

---

14. What would be the best way for PPS to provide information about the bond proposal to you?

- District website ([www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org))
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Mailed to your home
- Portager newsletter
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure
- Email
- Hold community forums
- Kalamazoo Gazette
- MLive
- Twitter

15. If you would like Portage Public Schools to email you information about the bond proposal, please enter your email address below. Please note that your email address will be provided to PPS separate from your survey response; no one from PPS will connect your answers to this survey with you.

*Email Address:* \_\_\_\_\_

16. Please list any other comments you would like to share about PPS:

---

---

---

---

To help PPS better understand the results of this survey, please answer these questions:

17. Please check ALL of the following statements that may describe you:

- I am the parent of one or more children currently attending Portage Public Schools
- I am the parent of one or more children who have graduated from Portage Public Schools
- I currently attend Portage Public Schools
- I graduated from Portage Public Schools
- I am an employee of Portage Public Schools
- None of the above apply to me

18. In the past year, have you been inside any of PPS' elementary school buildings?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

19. Did you vote in the last PPS facilities election in 2015?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

20. Your age:

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75 and over
- Prefer not to say

---

21. Which PPS' building do you live closest to:

- Amberly Elementary
- Angling Elementary
- Haverhill Elementary
- Lake Center Elementary
- Moorsbridge Elementary/West Middle School
- North Middle School/Portage Northern High School
- Central Elementary/Central Middle School/Portage Central High School
- Twelfth Street Elementary
- Woodland Elementary
- Unsure which school I live closest to
- Prefer not to say

22. Do you own or rent your home?

- Own                       Rent                       Prefer not to say

23. Your gender:

- Male                       Female                       Other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to say

Thank you for completing this survey. Your responses to this survey, along with the responses from other community members, will be used to inform and guide the work of the Portage Public Schools. If you have additional questions about Portage Public Schools, please visit: [www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org)

You can drop off this survey in person at the Portage Public Schools Administration Building located at 8107 Mustang Drive, Portage, MI 49002

Or, you can mail the survey to:

Perspectives Consulting Group  
P.O. Box 496  
Paw Paw, MI, 49079

---

## Report Credits and Contact Information

### Elementary Community Survey • Portage Public Schools

Survey Open: March 16, 2020 – March 27, 2020

Project Completed: April 23, 2020

Founded in 1987, Perspectives provides planning, consulting, research, and ideas to maximize impact for public sector and nonprofit organizations.

If you have questions or comments about this project, contact us at (269) 657-5400 or [info@perspec.com](mailto:info@perspec.com).

**Project Consultant:** Gary M. Goscenski

**Project Coordinator:** Sarah Piper

**Data Analysis/Reporting:** Bryn Bogemann, Kirsten Koefoed



(269) 657-5400 • [info@perspec.com](mailto:info@perspec.com) • P.O. Box 496, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

**PORTAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION – SPECIAL MEETING  
MEETING CONDUCTED VIRTUALLY**

**APRIL 27, 2020, 4:00 P.M.**

**Note Page**

**IV. Discussion**

