



Niskayuna Central School District Building Project Exit Survey

conducted January 24, 2006

Introduction

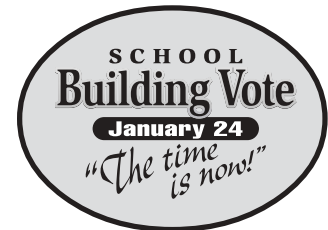
The Niskayuna Central School District conducted an exit survey of the 4,265 residents who voted on the \$94.5 million building project on January 24, 2006. The purpose was to collect information about the residents who vote, including why they voted the way they did and changes they suggest for the proposal. (The full survey is attached to the back of this report.)

The survey was voluntary. Residents were handed a survey by voting booth attendants, and asked to complete the survey as they exited the high school cafeteria. The percentages of respondents may be less than 100 percent for some questions because not every person answered every question on the survey. While the results do not represent all voters — the return rate was about 56 percent — they do provide 2,400 residents' perceptions about the building project. Of those surveyed, 70 percent voted in favor of the project. This is slightly higher than the actual vote tally of those in favor, which was 64 percent. (This difference is typical -- usually the district's exit surveys run six to seven percent more positive than the actual voting results.)

The following is a compilation of the data. Where appropriate, data from the May 2005 and May 2004 budget vote exit surveys have been listed for comparison purposes. Generally percentages from previous surveys are included; raw numbers have also been included if they are telling.

This report is also posted on the district Web site, www.niskayunaschools.org.

Megan Allen
communications



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Question 1: How did you vote on the building project today?

Yes, in favor	1,664	70%
No, opposed	702	30%

Question 2: Which of the factors below influenced your vote?

Note: Percentage is out of the total Yes or No voters

If you voted YES, was it because:

the plan addresses structural problems (roofs, heating, etc.)	1,351	81%
the schools need more space	1,334	80%
the plan provides safety upgrades	945	57%
the plan includes technology upgrades	927	56%
the tax increase is reasonable	684	41%
the plan makes sense financially	662	40%
the planning process was thorough	589	35%
other	205	12%

(most common responses: have children or grandchildren in the schools who will benefit; because will receive state aid; supporting the schools is important)

the plan addresses a specific area that is important to me	183	11%
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If you voted NO, was it because:

the cost of the plan is too large	437	62%
the plan includes unnecessary items	353	50%
school taxes in general are too high	301	43%
the tax increase is unreasonable	270	38%
the plan does not make sense financially	189	27%
the planning process was not thorough	168	24%
other	119	17%

(most common responses: should have offered voters several options; poor long-term maintenance of buildings)

I want to support the plan, but I cannot afford it	107	15%
the plan does not address all needs	68	10%
the schools do not need more space	58	8%
no school upgrades are needed	23	3%

Question 3: In the past, how did you typically vote on school issues (including budgets)?

I typically vote yes	1,447	60%
I switched my vote from year to year	405	17%
I typically vote no	173	7%
new voter (respondents wrote in -- this was not given as an option)	53	2%

2005	2004
Budget	Budget

65%	67%
15%	9%
8%	9%

This answer was not a choice in previous surveys

Question 4: Which town do you live in?

Niskayuna	2,017	84%	84%	88%
Glenville	184	8%	8%	4%
Clifton Park	108	5%	4%	4%
Colonie	50	2%	2%	3%

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				2005 Budget	2004 Budget
Question 5: What age category do you fit in?					
	31-50	1,253	52%	738/42%	43%
	51-64	583	24%	471/26%	28%
	65+	409	17%	406/23%	22%
	25-30	62	3%	27/2%	1%
	18-24	43	2%	95/5%	4%
Question 6: Do you have children currently attending Niskayuna schools?					
	Yes	1,236	52%	737/41%	45%
	No	612	26%	600/34%	25%
	Not now, but one or more has graduated from Niskayuna	347	14%	337/19%	23%
	Not now, but my child(ren) will attend in the future	151	6%	72/4%	4%

Question 7: What additional items should have been included in the building proposal?

full-day kindergarten	30	1%
brand-new high school	23	1%
more new classrooms	15	1%
geothermal at all schools	14	1%

This question was not included in previous surveys

Question 8: What items should have been eliminated from the building proposal?

geothermal heating at the high school	95	4%
moving the high school media center	80	3%
Study Commons at the high school	13	1%

This question was not included in previous surveys

General Comments:

Most common responses (all made by less than 1% of respondents): should have split up the project and let residents vote on separate pieces; question why the pool was built; thank you/great job

Cross Tabulation Results

By Voting History - Of those who typically vote yes, typically vote no, or switch their vote from year to year, how did they vote?*

				2005 Budget	2004 Budget
Typically vote yes	Yes	1,149	79%	81%	84%
	No	285	20%	18%	16%
Typically vote no	Yes	54	31%	3%	0%
	No	116	67%	97%	100%
Switch my vote from year to year	Yes	185	46%	19%	18%
	No	213	53%	79%	82%
new voter (respondents wrote in -- this was not given as an option)	Yes	47	89%		
	No	6	11%		

This answer was not a choice in previous surveys

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					2005 Budget	2004 Budget
By Town - Of those living in Niskayuna, Glenville, Clifton Park and Colonie, what percentage voted yes or no on the budget?						
Niskayuna	Yes	1,391	69%		60%	67%
	No	597	30%		38%	33%
Glenville	Yes	128	70%		60%	69%
	No	56	30%		38%	31%
Clifton Park	Yes	80	74%		67%	92%
	No	26	24%		32%	8%
Colonie	Yes	42	84%		80%	88%
	No	8	16%		17%	13%

By Age - Of those identifying an age category, what percentage voted yes or no on the budget?

18-24	Yes	32	74%		51/54%	73%
	No	11	26%		44/46%	27%
25-30	Yes	46	74%		21/78%	100%
	No	16	26%		6/22%	0%
31-50	Yes	1,040	83%		509/69%	75%
	No	202	16%		216/29%	25%
51-64	Yes	332	57%		277/59%	65%
	No	241	41%		186/39%	35%
65+	Yes	194	47%		200/49%	62%
	No	207	51%		196/48%	38%

By Parental Status - Of those identifying themselves as a parent with school-age children, with graduates, etc., what percentage voted yes or no on the budget?

Children currently attending Niskayuna schools	Yes	1,068	86%		553/75%	76%
	No	206	17%		173/23%	24%
No children currently attending Niskayuna schools	Yes	283	46%		271/45%	58%
	No	316	52%		309/52%	42%
Not now, but one or more children have graduated from Niskayuna	Yes	186	54%		196/58%	71%
	No	155	45%		138/41%	29%
Not now, but child(ren) will attend in the future	Yes	126	83%		43/60%	77%
	No	25	17%		28/39%	23%



Voter Survey

How did you vote on the building project today? Yes, in favor No, opposed

Which of the factors below influenced your vote?

If you voted YES, was it because:

- the schools need more space
- the plan addresses structural problems (roofs, heating, etc.)
- the plan provides safety upgrades
- the plan includes technology upgrades
- the tax increase is reasonable
- the planning process was thorough
- the plan makes sense financially
- the plan addresses a specific area that is important to me (specify): _____
- other _____

If you voted NO, was it because:

- the schools do not need more space
- the plan does not address all needs (*see question below*)
- the plan includes unnecessary items (*see question below*)
- the cost of the plan is too large
- no school upgrades are needed
- the tax increase is unreasonable
- the planning process was not thorough
- the plan does not make sense financially
- I want to support the plan, but I cannot afford it
- school taxes in general are too high
- other _____

In the past, how did you typically vote on school issues (including budgets)?

- I typically voted yes
- I typically voted no
- I switched my vote from year to year

Which town do you live in? Niskayuna Glenville Clifton Park Colonie

Which age category do you fit in? 18-24 25-30 31-50 51-64 65+

Do you have children currently attending Niskayuna schools?

- Yes (Which grade(s)? _____)
- No
- Not now, but one or more has graduated from Niskayuna
- Not now, but my child(ren) will attend in the future

What additional items should have been included in the building proposal?

What items should have been eliminated from the building proposal?

**Please write any additional comments on the back of this sheet.
Thank you for your input!**