



LASD

Telephone Survey of Los Altos School District Voters Presentation of Findings July 2016

EMC
RESEARCH

MARKET
& OPINION
RESEARCH
SERVICES

TBWB

STRATEGIES

Methodology

- ▶ Telephone survey of likely voters in Los Altos School District
- ▶ Interviews conducted by trained, professional interviewers
- ▶ Interviews conducted in English and Chinese

Dates	Year	Number of Interviews	Languages	Margin of Error
June 15-25	2016	400	English & Chinese	± 4.89 percentage points
November 5-22	2015	372	English & Chinese	± 5.10 percentage points
June 8-15	2014	402	English	± 4.89 percentage points
January 22-28	2014	500	English	± 4.38 percentage points
April 23-28	2012	500	English	± 4.38 percentage points
July 5-10	2012	402	English	± 4.89 percentage points
December 1-6	2010	400	English	± 4.89 percentage points

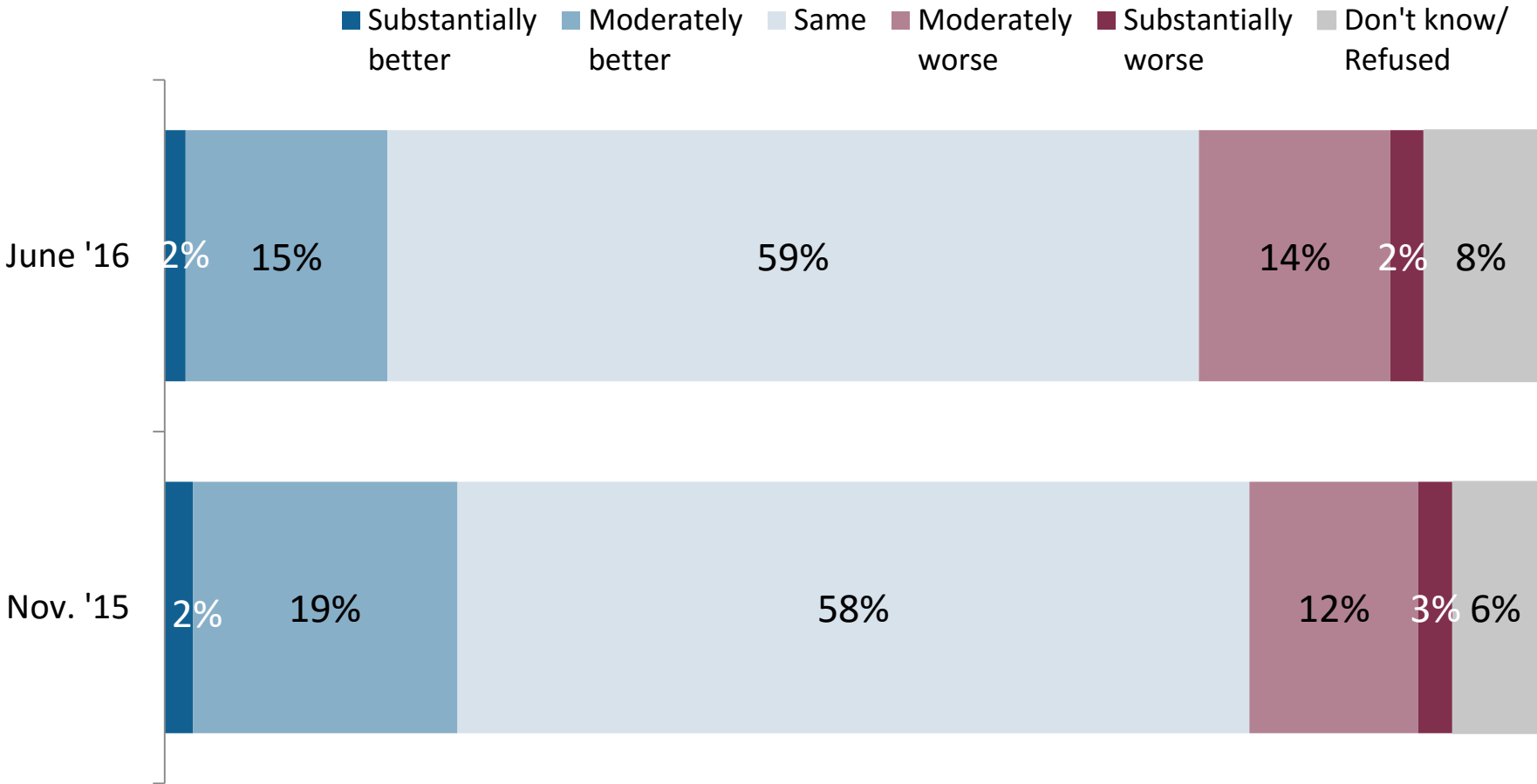
Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

Key Findings

- ▶ Support for a \$223 parcel tax measure to maintain excellent educational programming exceeds the two-thirds threshold necessary for passage.
- ▶ Although the poll shows clear evidence of price sensitivity, two-thirds of voters support a measure with a \$30 increase from the current parcel tax.
- ▶ Presenting voters with additional information about the benefits of the measure does not lead to a change in overall support.
- ▶ However, the measure is vulnerable to a potential opposition message that focuses on the total cost to taxpayers with this measure.

Future Economic Confidence

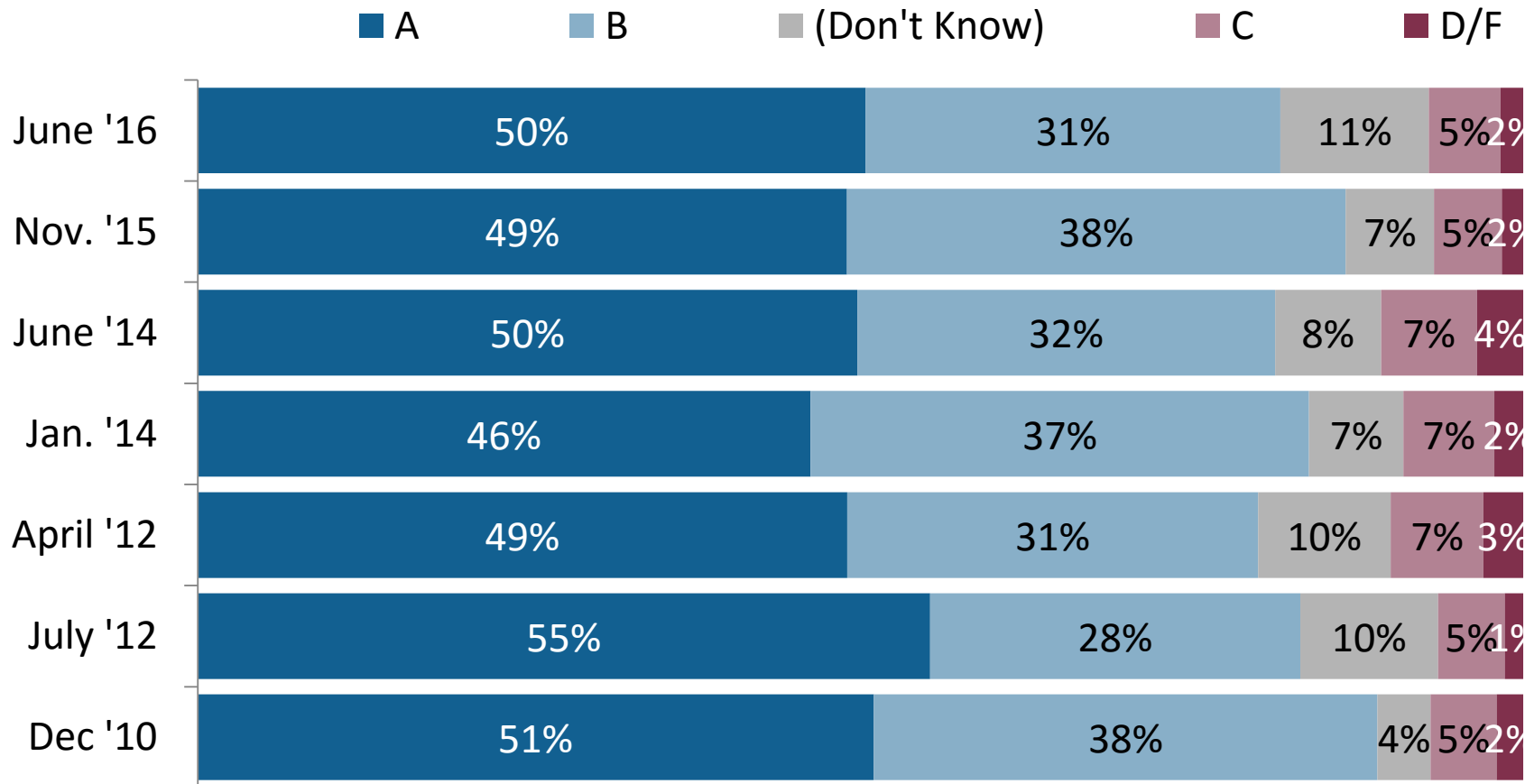
Confidence in economic conditions has softened slightly since last year.



Q4. Thinking about the future, how do you expect economic conditions to be six months from now?

Los Altos School District Overall Rating

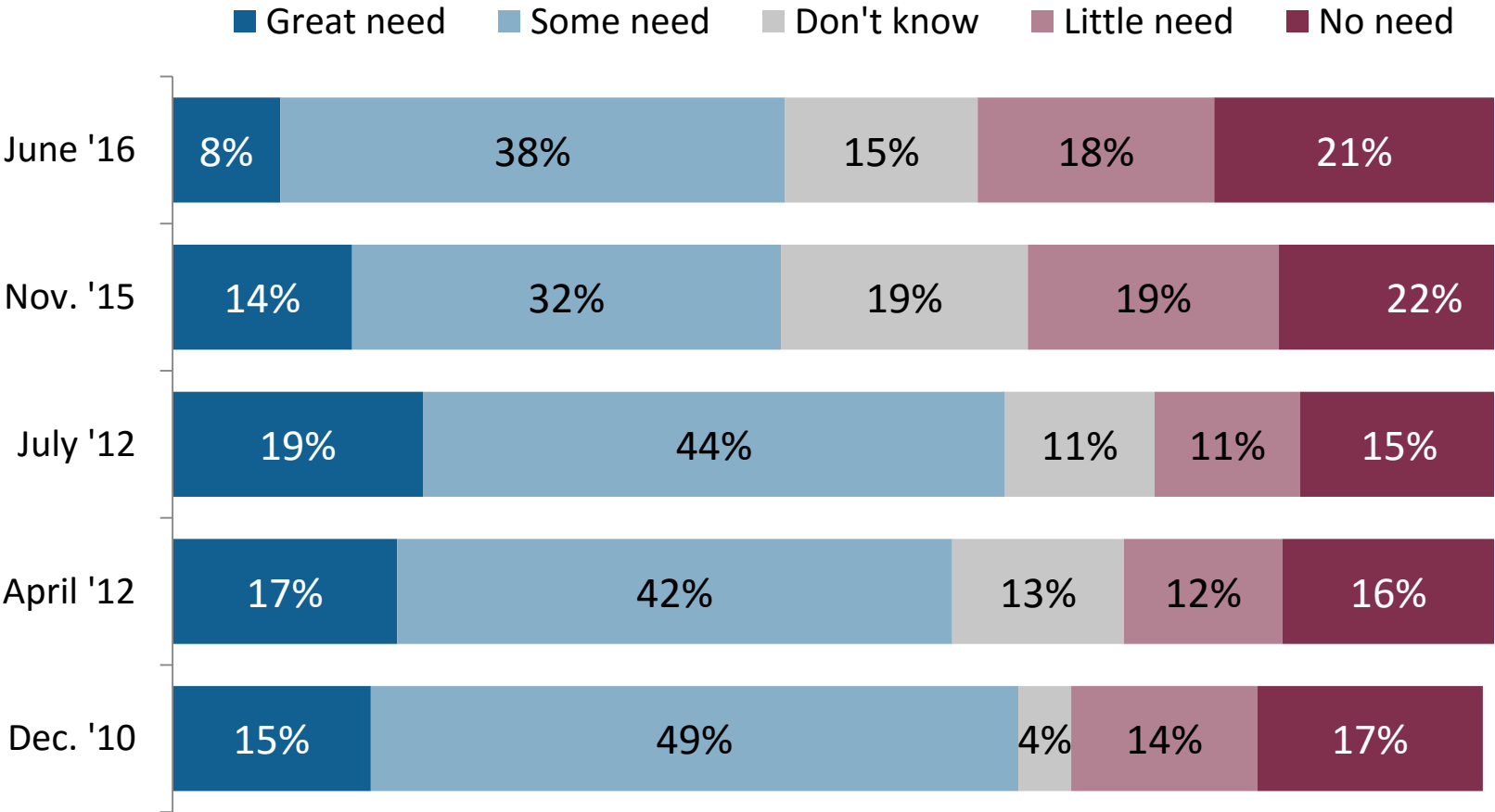
The District continues to get an extremely positive rating.



Q8. Students are often given the grades of A, B, C, D, and F to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools in your community were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the Los Altos School District?

Need for More Funding Over Time

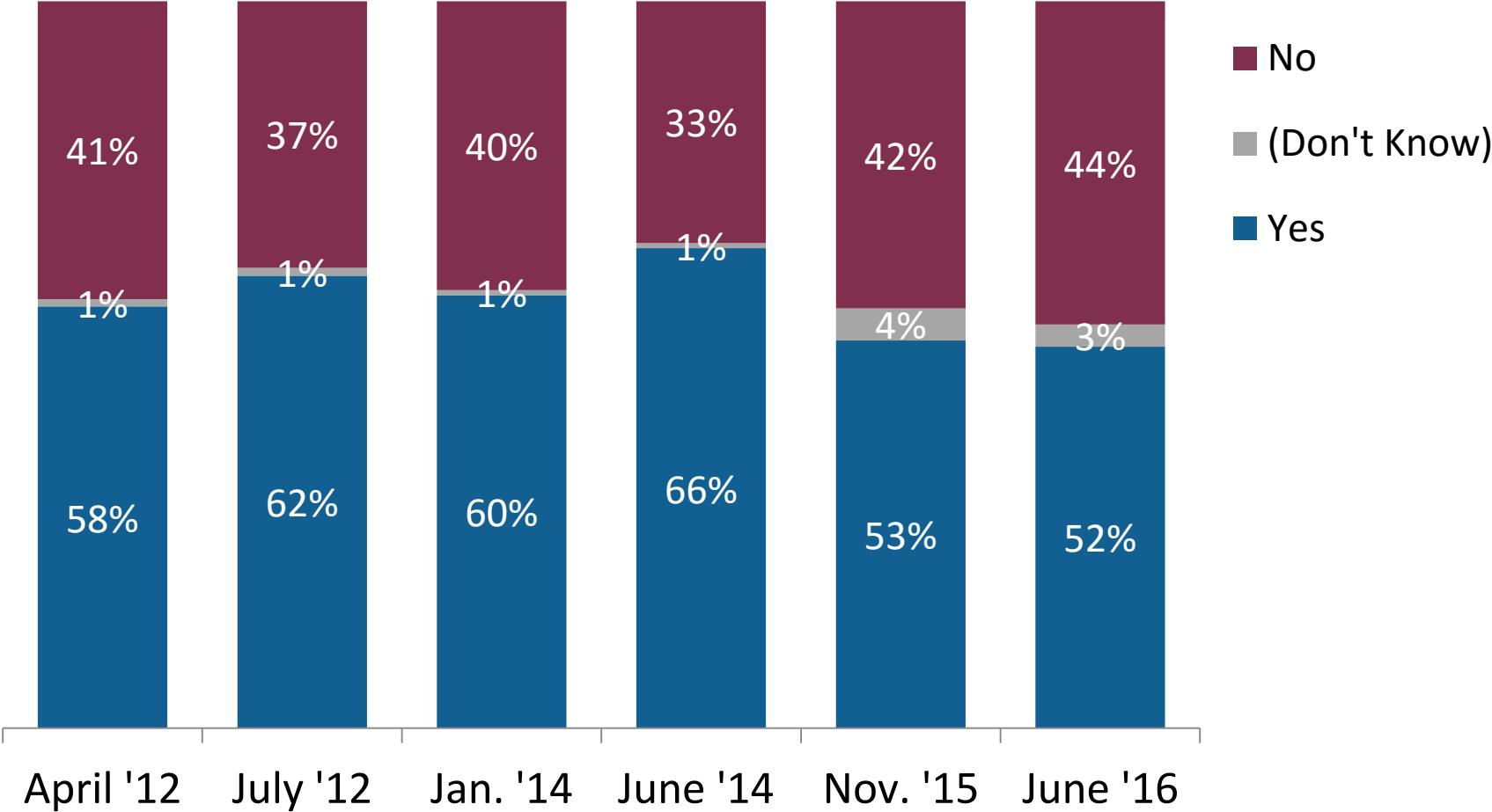
Perceived need for funding continues to decline.



Q5. Would you say that the elementary and junior high schools in the Los Altos School District have a great need for more money, some need, a little need or no real need for more money?

Heard/Seen Anything about LASD

As in November, about half say they have seen or heard something recently about the District.



Recollections of LASD

Forty-two percent of those who have heard about the district recently mention something about a new school site.

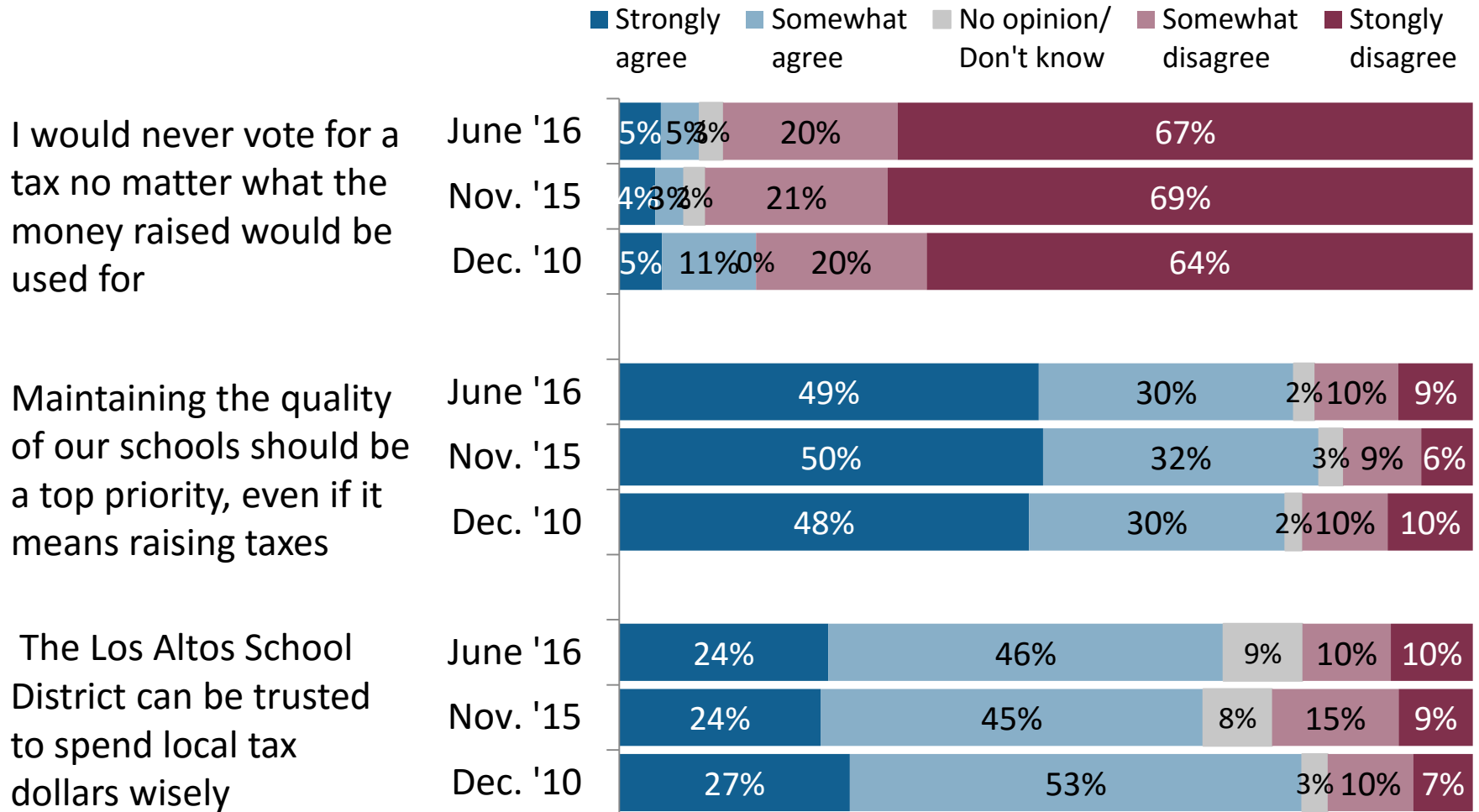
Of those who have heard something about LASD (n=200)	Jan. '14	June '14	Nov. '15	June '16
Where to build a new school	2	6	15	30
Where to build a new school for Bullis	-	-	-	12
Conflict between LASD and Bullis/charter school	30	18	10	12
Bond Issue/Measure	-	12	12	10
They want to tax us/Wasting taxpayer money	1	1	8	9
Fundraising	1	3	5	6
Excellent teachers and staff/Schools	6	7	8	6
Need money for district/school (unspecified)	-	-	-	6
Bullis Charter School wants more resources/Facilities/Space	10	4	7	5
Debate about how to spend/distribute funds	-	-	-	4
I have children in school	-	-	-	3
Mention article/paper/blog/read something	8	6	2	3
Other	-	-	-	19
Don't Know/Refused/None	-	-	-	4

Q6. Have you heard or seen anything recently about the Los Altos School District?

Q7. What have you heard?

Local Tax Sentiment

Over three-quarters of voters are willing to raise taxes in order to maintain the quality of local schools, and over two-thirds trust the District to spend tax dollars wisely.

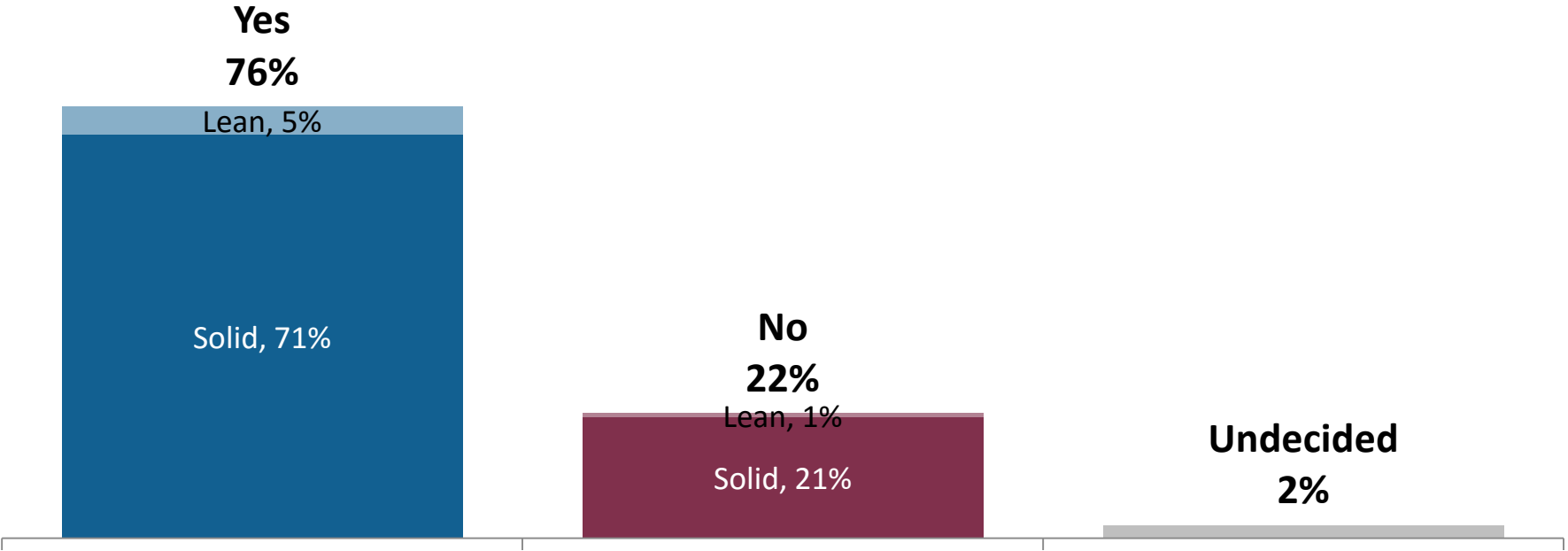


Q10-12. For each of the following statements please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement.

Initial Parcel Tax Vote

Support for a \$223 parcel tax is above the two-thirds threshold necessary for passage.

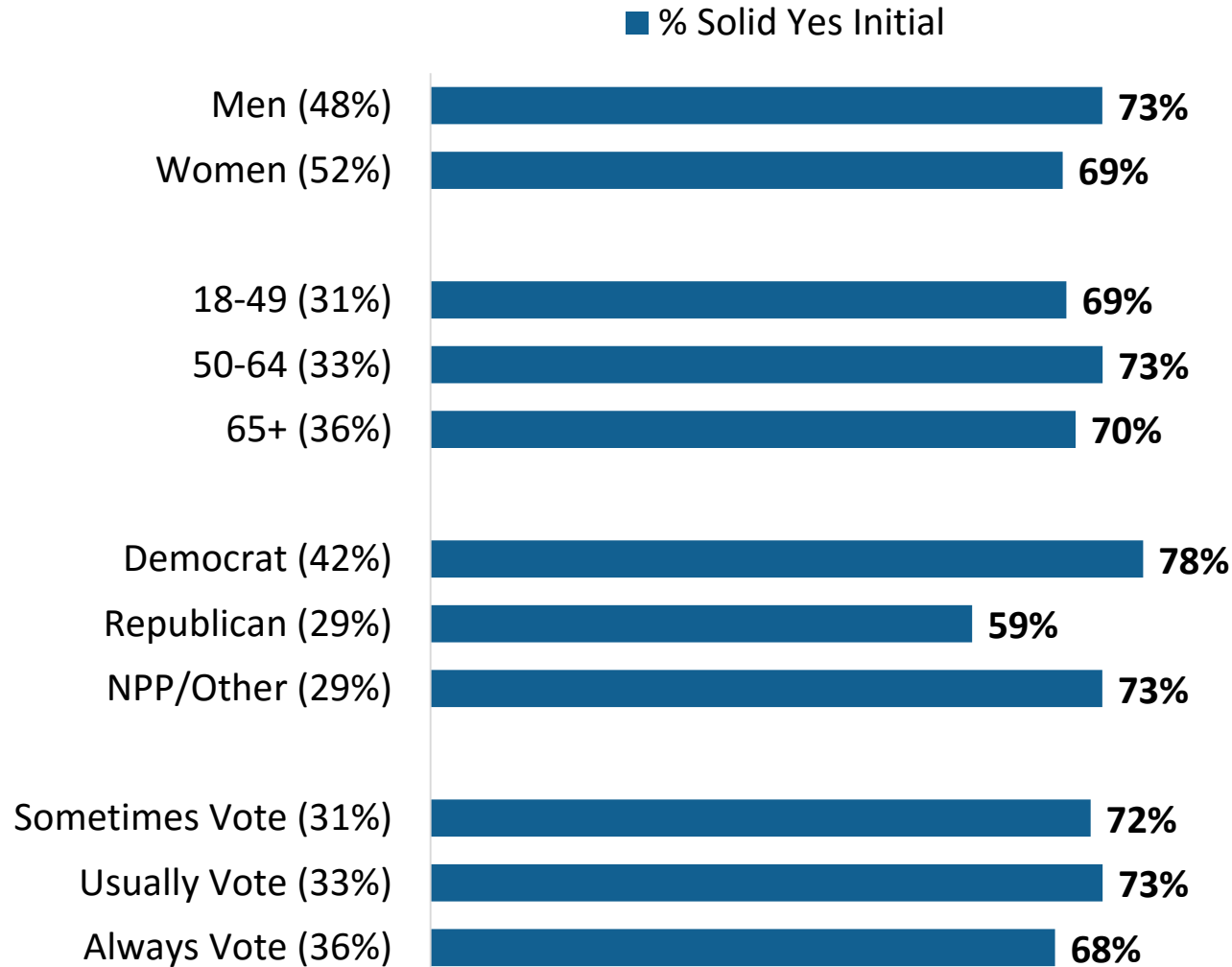
*To continue excellent education for all local public elementary and junior high school students; maintain outstanding core academics, innovative science, technology, engineering and math programs; and attract and retain highly qualified teachers; shall Los Altos School District renew its expiring annual education parcel tax at **\$223** per parcel for eight years, providing approximately **\$2.8 million** annually for local schools, with independent oversight, no funds for administrators' salaries, exemptions for seniors, and all funds benefitting local public schools?*



Q9. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve this measure or no to reject it?

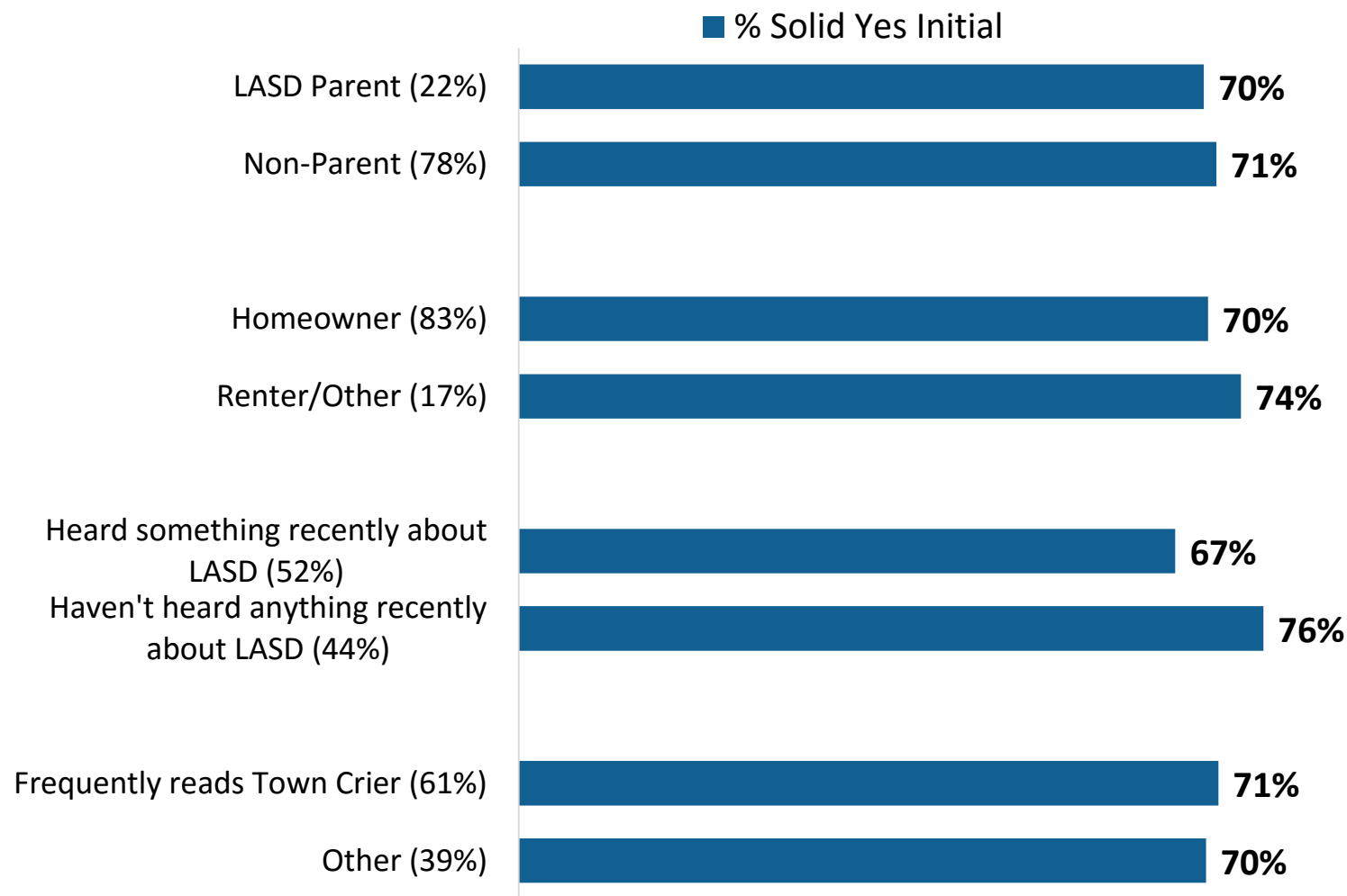
Initial Vote by Subgroup

Support is strong across demographic subgroups.



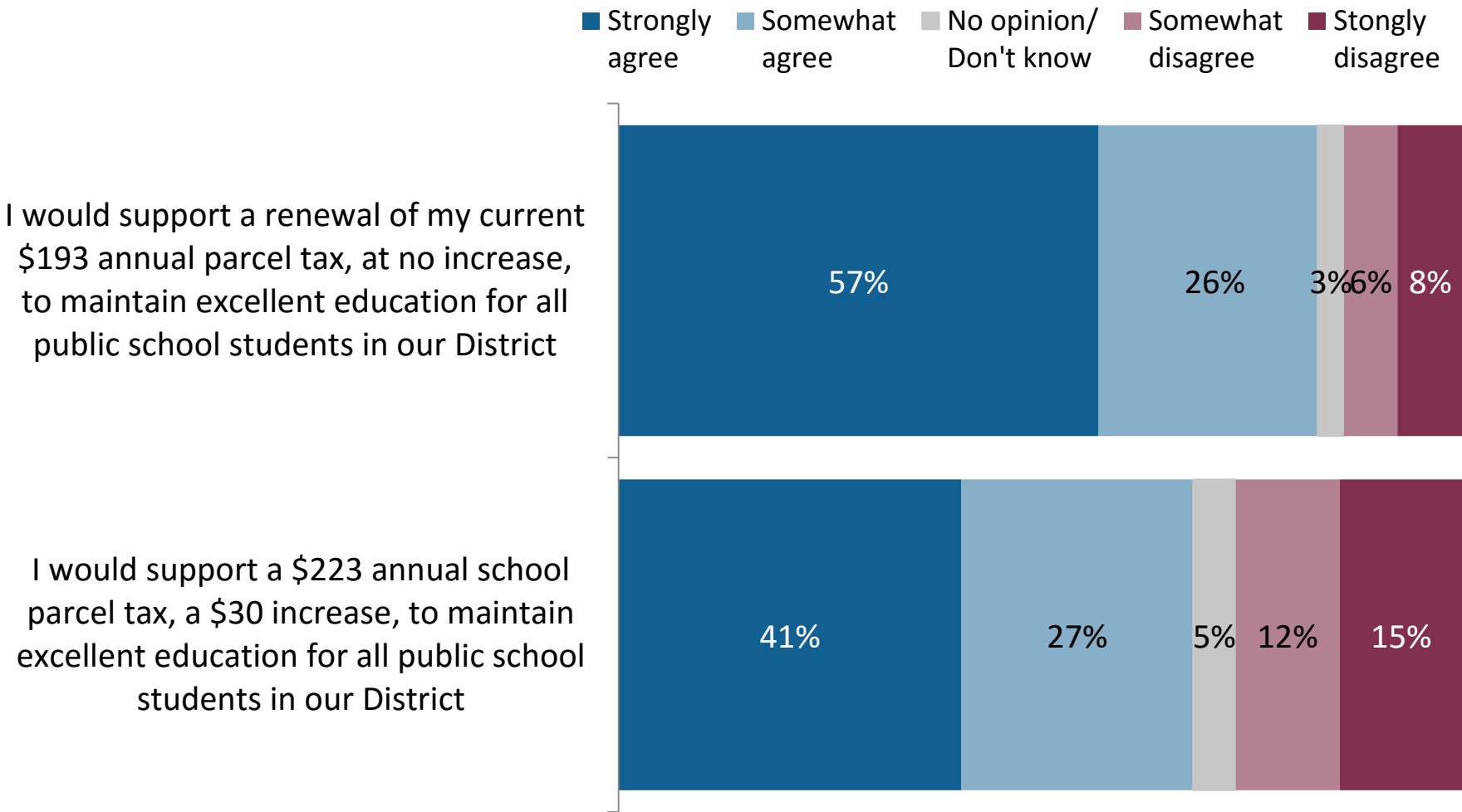
Initial Vote by Subgroup

Solid support is substantially higher among those who say they haven't heard anything recently about the district than among those who have.



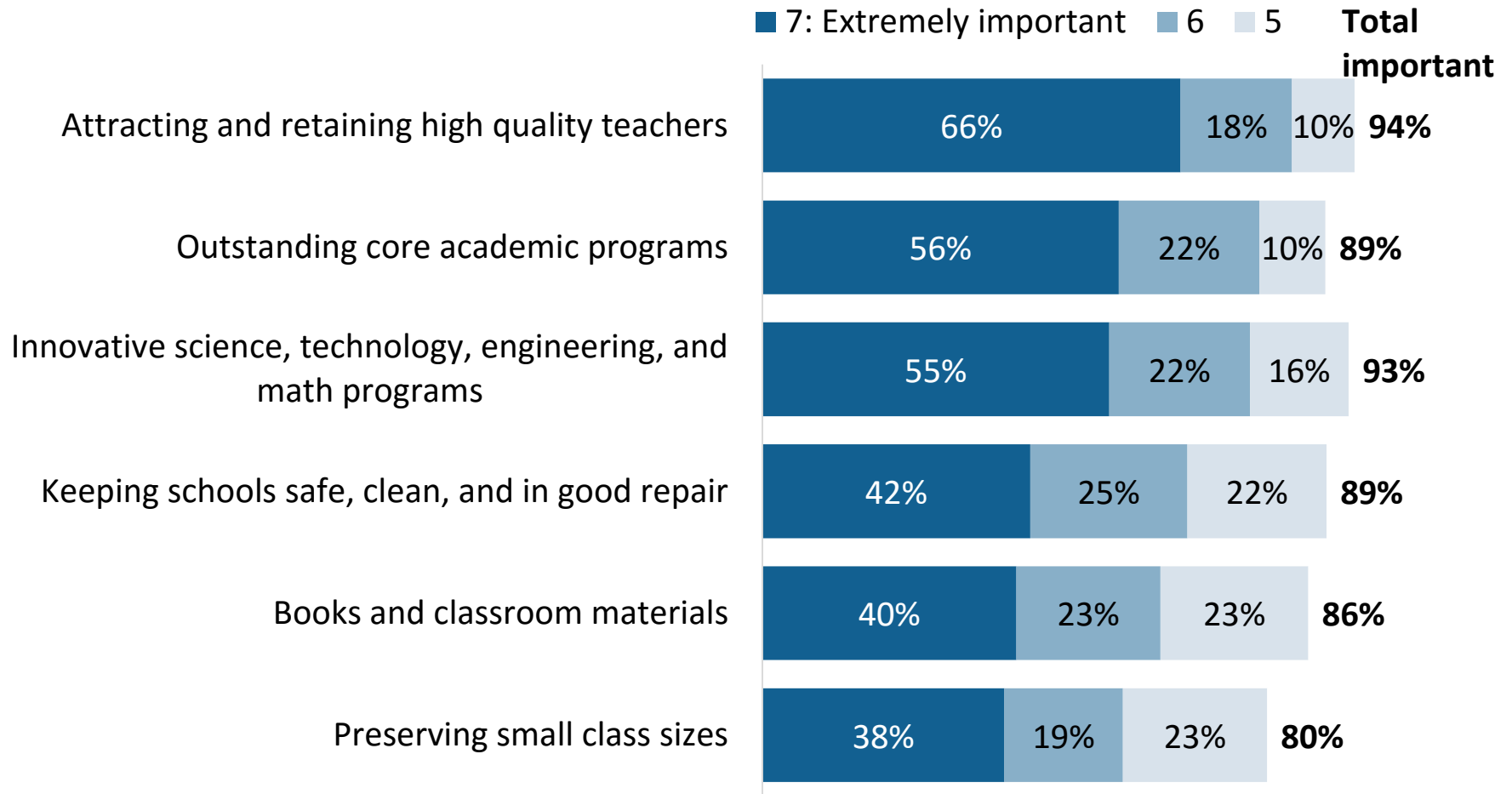
Parcel Tax Rate Sentiment

Two-thirds of voters agree they would support a parcel tax renewal with a \$30 increase.



Measure Elements

A strong majority of voters say attracting and retaining high quality teachers, and maintaining outstanding core academic programs like STEM are extremely important components of the measure.



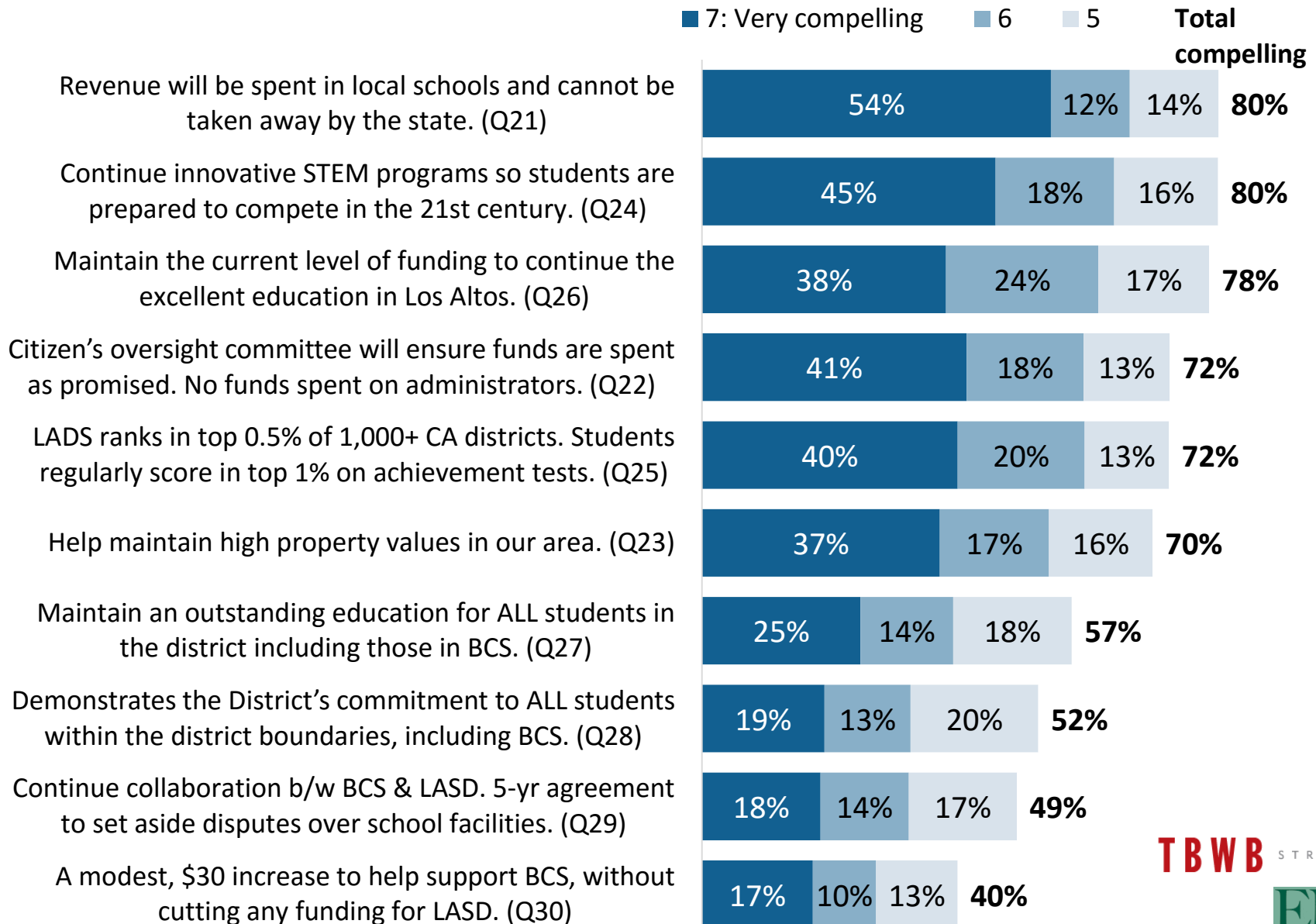
Q15-20 I'm going to read you some specific programs that could be supported by a school parcel tax measure. On a scale of one to seven, where one is not at all important and seven is extremely important, please tell me your opinion of each.

Presentation of Additional Information

- ▶ A list of messages was presented and respondents were asked whether each piece of information was a compelling reason for supporting the measure.

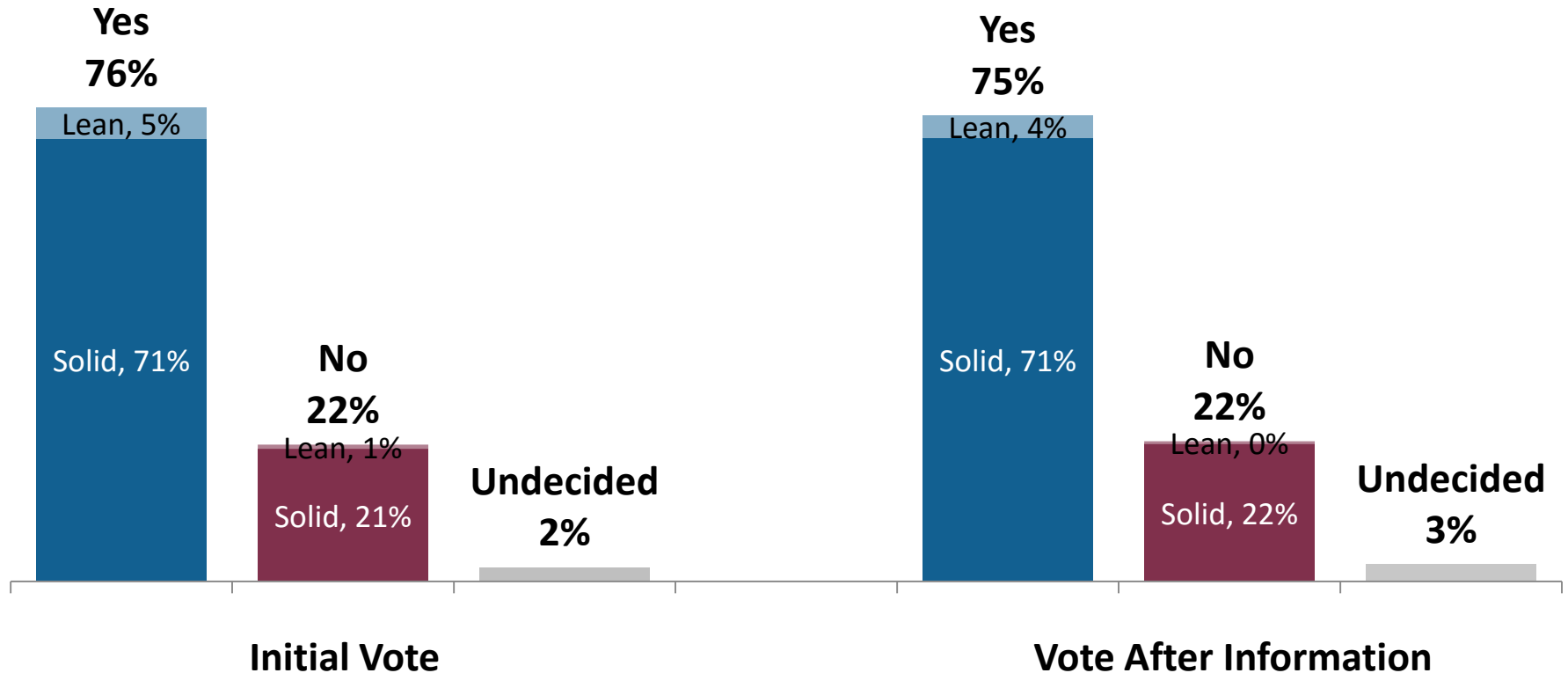
Question: For each statement please tell me how compelling this is as a reason to support a school parcel tax measure. Please use a scale from one to seven, where one is not at all compelling and seven is a very compelling reason to support the measure.

Additional Information



Vote After Information

After additional information about the parcel tax, support remains above the two-thirds threshold necessary for passage.



Q31: Given what you've heard, if the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject a measure that reads

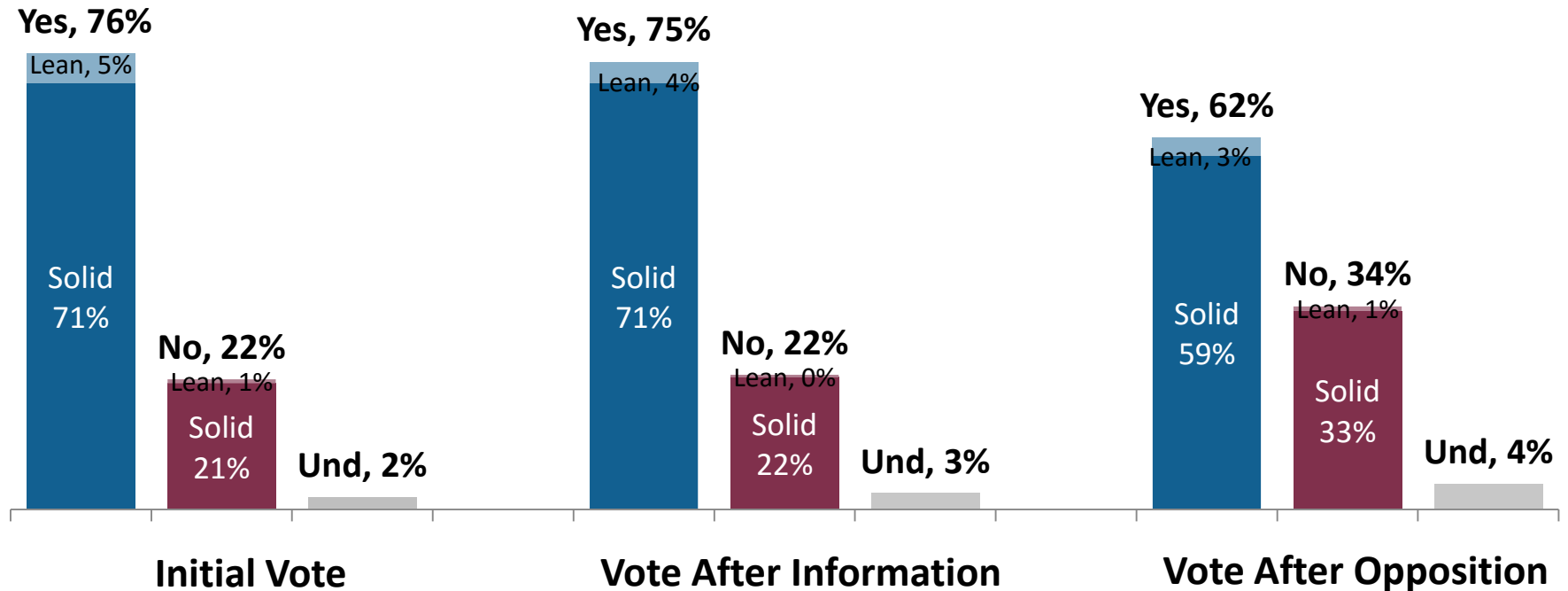
Why Would You Vote No?

Of the 89 voters who say they would vote no on the parcel tax, 50% mention general opposition to taxes or the District's lack of a need for funds as a reason to vote no.

Reasons to Vote No	% Who Vote No (n=89)	% All Respondents (n=400)
General Anti-Tax/District Spending Sentiment	50%	11%
Oppose paying more taxes/ taxed enough	14%	3%
Money not needed/ sufficient funds exist	14%	3%
Funds aren't spent/managed properly	9%	2%
We've paid them enough/ previous bond measures	8%	2%
Lack of trust in district/board	5%	1%
General Anti-Charter Sentiment	22%	5%
Oppose public funds supporting private/charter school/ other schools lose out	12%	3%
Dislike Bullis Charter School/Disapprove of charter schools	4%	1%
Bullis/charter school is in a different city	3%	1%
District not dealing with Bullis in good faith	2%	0%
No kids in school/charter school/ I won't benefit directly	2%	0%
Other Misc. Responses	14%	3%
Need more information/ measure is unclear	6%	1%
Cost will be too high for me/ can't afford	3%	1%
Teachers of higher quality are needed	2%	0%
Disapprove of senior exemption; they will also benefit	2%	0%
Other/Don't know/NA/Refused	13%	3%

Vote After Opposition

Support for the measure drops after voters hear a potential opposition argument that highlights the total cost to the taxpayer if this measure passes.



Q34: Given everything you've heard, if the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve or no to reject a measure that reads

Conclusions

- ▶ Support for a parcel tax measure to maintain quality education at the LASD schools is strong.
- ▶ There is some sensitivity to cost.
- ▶ A coordinated effort that focuses on the positive outcomes of this potential measure, such as maintaining outstanding core academics and innovative STEM programs, attracting and retaining high quality teachers, and ensuring that all funds benefit local schools is likely to be successful.

Next Steps (Assuming Nov. Election)

- **Now-Aug. 8:** District continues to conduct informational outreach to key internal and external stakeholders to garner feedback about plans to renew expiring parcel tax funding
- **Week of July 18:** Begin drafting resolution calling November election
- **Week of July 25:** District sends informational mailer to all registered voters and parents outlining need to renew local parcel tax funding and inviting community to Aug. 8 Board meeting
- **Aug. 8*:** Resolution calling November parcel tax election presented to Board for adoption
- **Week of Aug. 15:** District sends second informational mailer informing community of decision to place parcel tax measure on November ballot

* Aug. 12 is the County deadline to qualify for the November ballot.

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