

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This project was fielded between November 18th and 25th, 2001. Seven hundred fifty-one respondents were surveyed. The respondents were randomly selected from supervoter households within the Municipality of Anchorage. Supervoter households are defined as a household that contains one or more persons that have voted in at least three of the last four Municipal elections.

A sample size of 751 respondents from the Municipality of Anchorage population yields frequency results for measured household data that are subject to a maximum margin of error of +/-3.58% at 95% confidence. In other words we can be 95% sure that our results differ from their true voter population proportions by no more than 3.58% on either side.

The weighted area breakdown by Assembly section of the 751 respondents is as follows:

ASSEMBLY DISTRICT	COUNT	PERCENT
#1 – Downtown	56	7.5%
#2 – Eagle River	101	13.5%
#3 – West Anchorage	148	19.7%
#4 – Midtown	121	16.1%
#5 – East Anchorage	125	16.6%
#6 – South Anchorage	200	26.6%

Fielding was conducted by telephone from our centralized facility in Anchorage. Quality control measures were taken to ensure as high a response rate as possible for this study. These included supervision of interviewers, limitation of the calling set, repeated callbacks, post-interview interview quality control surveys, and calling at various times of day and evening over the course of the fielding period. As a result, we can be very confident of the accuracy of results within the statistical margin of error.

Collected data has been data entered, verified, checked for accuracy, coded and processed using SPSS, a standard statistical package for survey research. The elements of this report include the questionnaire in its final form, collated with the frequency results for each question, and a crosstabulation section that breaks the sample down into core demographic groups.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

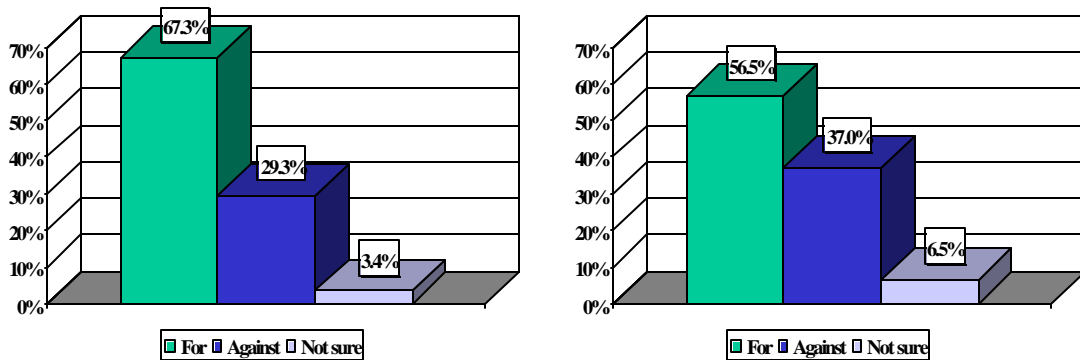
School bonds

Both tested school bonds pass comfortably this year...

- The \$44 million maintenance bond by 67.3% to 29.3%, with 3.4% undecided, and...
- The \$52 million construction bond by 56.5% to 37.0%, with 6.5% undecided.

Bond support

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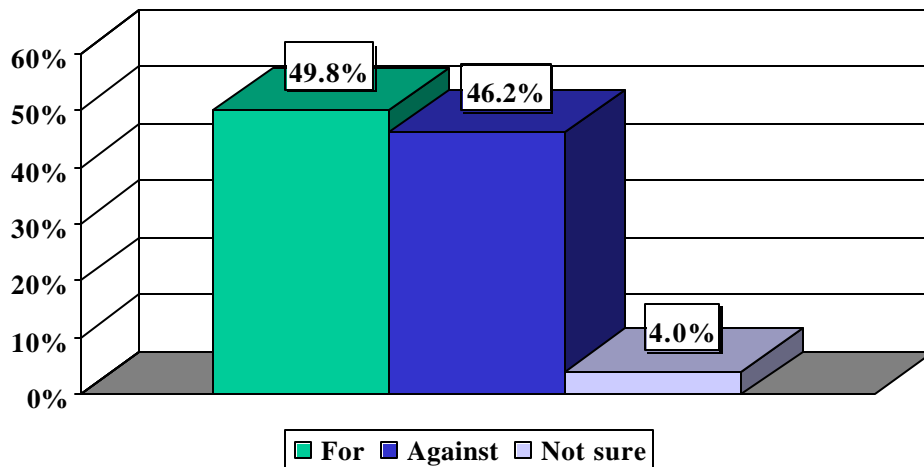
It can become somewhat intoxicating studying the large margins with these results. We prefer to assume that “undecided” responses are likely to become no votes, and that any result with a yes percentage close to 50% is marginal.

Combined bond

Combining the bonds together does not do well this year in comparison...

- The \$96 million combined bond passes by 49.8% to 46.2%

Combined bond support



Like last year, there is no margin in combining the bonds this year – leave them separate. This may be a result of the nature of the bonds, it may be a hangover reaction from the combination of last year's bonds.

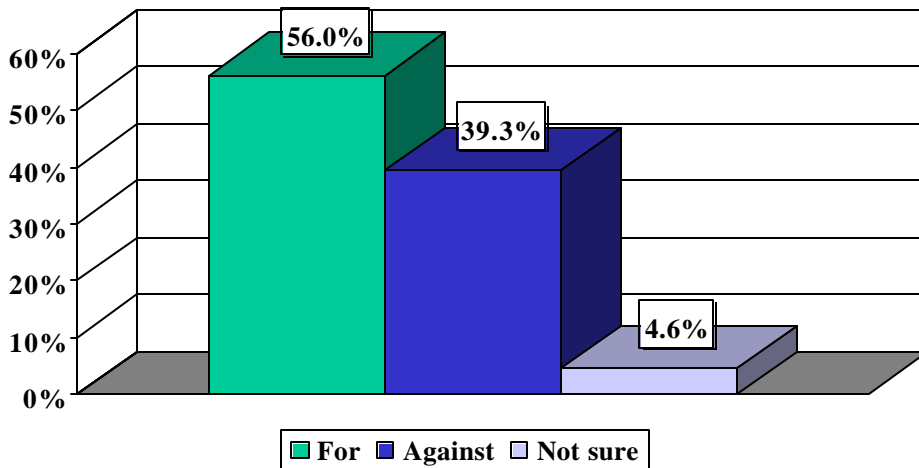
Comparison to last year - Last year's survey showed a combined \$114 million bond passing by 53.9% to 40.3%, a larger amount that passed more comfortably... evidence that the appetite for combined bonds has decreased. We can't forget, of course, that last year's bond didn't end up passing at the polls.

Interesting result - Among the 104 respondents who voted **for** the \$44 million bond maintenance bond, but **against** the \$52 million construction bond... put the bonds together and 85.4% of them vote no. The voter frame of mind this year leaves little appetite for being forced, through a combining of bonds, into voting for something they don't want to vote for.

Eagle River high school

A \$49 million Eagle River high school construction bond fares fairly well, passing by 56.0% to 39.3%.

Eagle River bond support



The questioning for this bond predicates that it would be on the ballot with the other two, so it is a realistic measure for support for the bond. However, it is inevitable that the presence of a third Eagle River bond on the ballot will put some downward pressure on the other two bonds, potentially placing the \$52 million bond at risk.

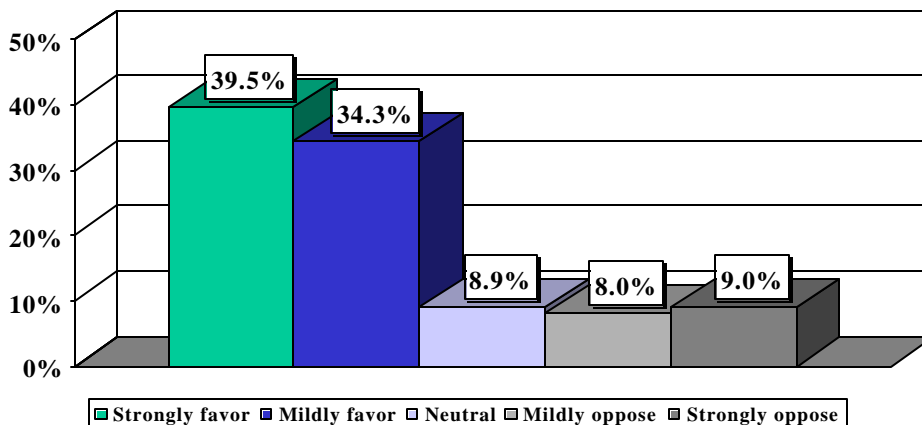
Comparison to last year - This result does not compare as favorably to last year, when a \$40 million Eagle River bond was tested and passed 62.9% to 29.5%.

Eagle River/Chugiak support – 101 respondents were interviewed in the Eagle River/Chugiak area. These respondents support the Eagle River high school bond very strongly, 80.0% to 18.5%

Chugiak High overcrowding

There is strong support for the idea of converting Gruening and Mirror Lake middle schools to include 9th grade as possible solutions for Chugiak High overcrowding. 73.8% of respondents favor the idea, with only 17.4% opposing.

Gruening/Mirror Lake grade change support



There is larger, but less strong support for continuing use of portable classrooms – 78.4% of respondents support portables, but the majority of the support is mild, indicating perhaps that it is viewed by many as being a temporary, and not ideal solution.

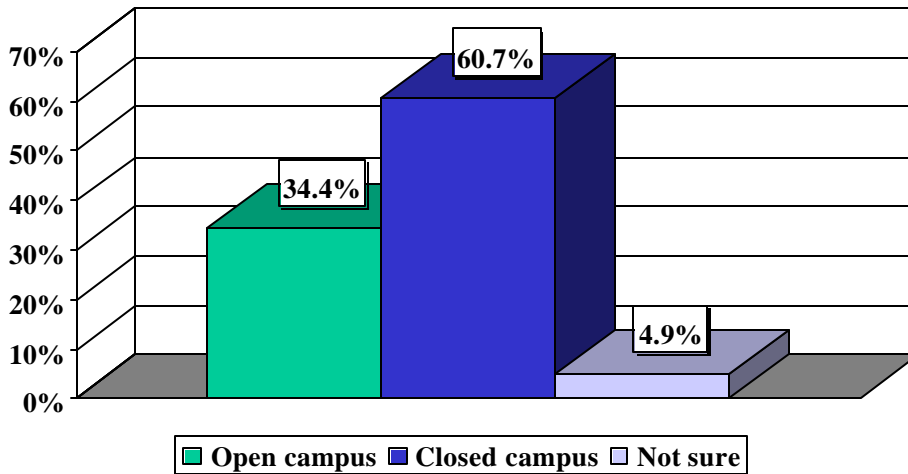
Double shifting does not go down well, opposed by 51.9% of respondents

One concern - The questioning on this issue indicated that these potential solutions would be necessary in the short term even if a new high school is approved. One issue to be considered is the future effect on a high school bond proposition if the Gruening/Mirror Lake change is enacted. There is a possibility that the grade change would be perceived as a permanent solution, particularly by people outside of Eagle River/Chugiak, and reduce support for a future high school bond.

Open/closed campus

Respondents show strong support for Anchorage high schools being closed campus. 60.7% of respondents favor closed campus, 34.4% open campus.

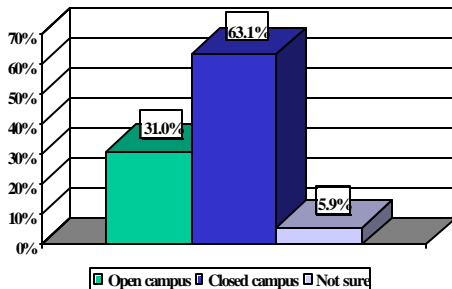
Campus issue support



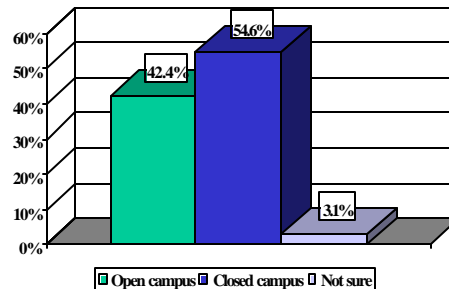
There is a tendency for some demographic segments to be more supportive of open-campus, for example respondents with ASD children...

Campus issue by ASD children

No kids



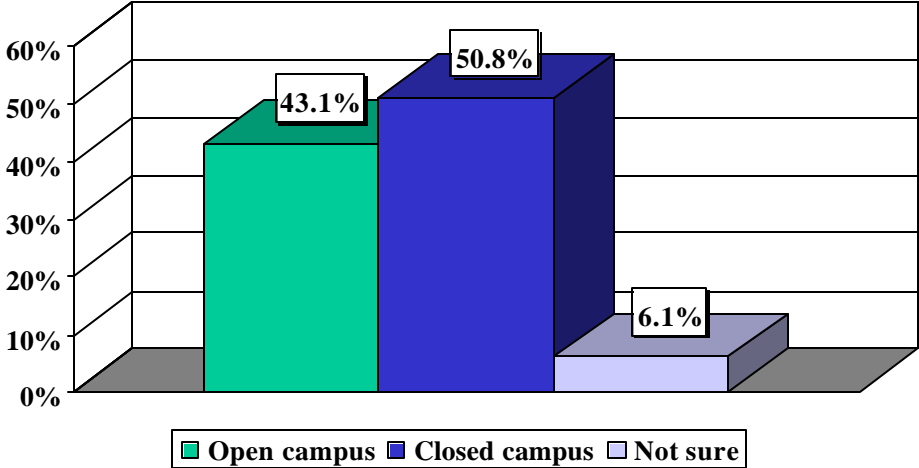
Kids



...but across all demographic groups, closed campus receives a greater percentage of the vote.

The money issue – the projected cost of \$1.5 million per year to close campuses - tightens the vote slightly, but closed campus still wins 50.8% to 43.1%. But while it is still winning, the money element does have the potential to defeat the move to close campuses.

Campus issue support #2

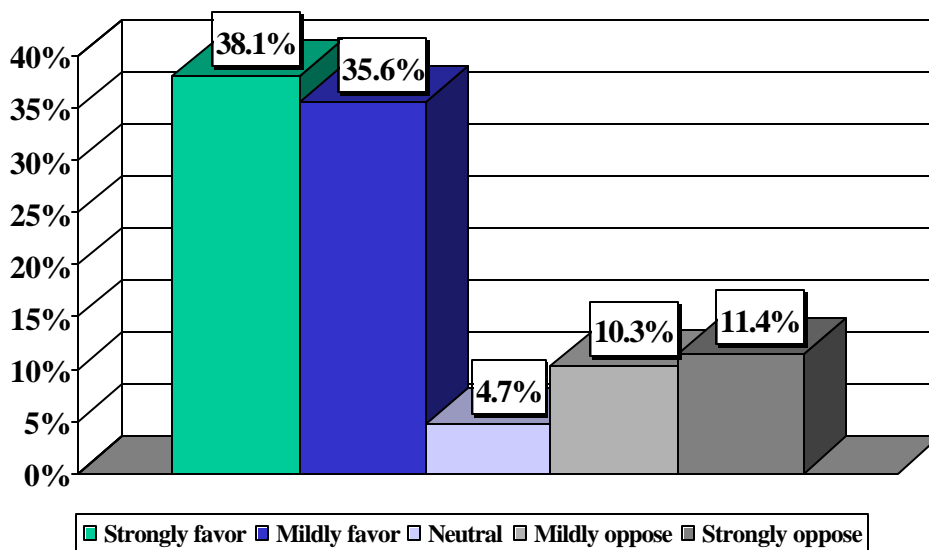


Technology

If there was a surprise to be found in this survey, it is the broad support for technology issues, particularly bonding for computers.

It was the perception of many observers that the 1996 technology bond issue was too much, too soon – and also that the idea of bonding for items that become so rapidly obsolete was a significant part of the bond’s downfall. Which is why the following result is so surprising...

Bonding for technology

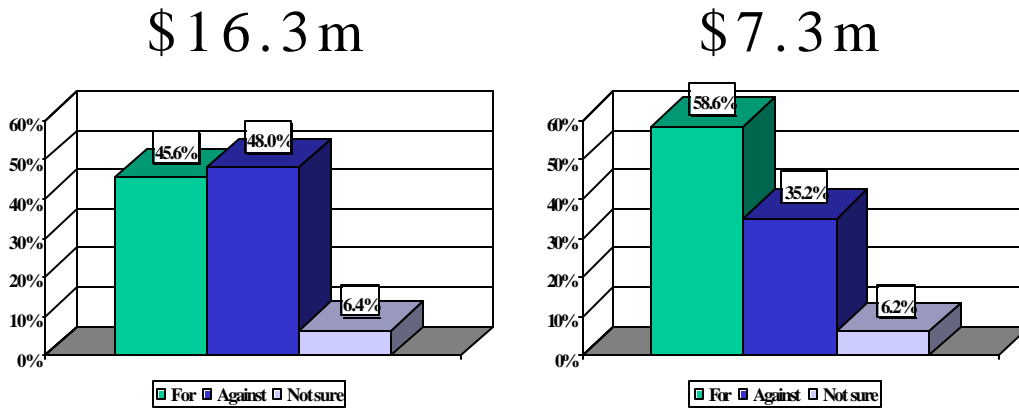


While 21.7% of respondents oppose bonding for technology items, this figure is not much larger than the percent who oppose bonding for school maintenance, 17.7%, and is not as large as the percent who oppose new school construction, 26.1%.

Bond support

There is clear preference for a multi-bond approach to funding computers and technology items for the school district. A bond for \$16.3 million to fund all the district's needs would likely fail, but a smaller \$7.3 million bond this year, with \$3 million to follow each of the next three years, shows encouraging support.

Technology bond support



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Leave the \$44 million maintenance bond and the \$52 million construction bond separate on the April ballot. Like last year, combining the bonds together reduces the chances of either passing.
- The Eagle River high school remains a problem. Suffice to say, do not combine it with any other bond. It stands its best chance on its own – but the question remains as to whether to put it on the ballot at all... with three bonds on the ballot, either all of them will pass, or people will prioritize between the two construction bonds and one of them will fail.
- Should a new high school bond be put on the ballot when there are other options available? There is considerable public support for the Mirror Lake and Gruening grade change option and this should be given consideration.
- Voters support the idea of closing high school campuses. It should be the responsibility of the School District to communicate cost issues with voters, and indeed a cost element should be written into the ballot wording. With the cost issue communicated, there is an increased potential of voters deciding to leave campuses open.
- Go with a four-year technology bond with a \$7.3 million bond on the ballot in April. It is small enough that is unlikely to impact the other bonds significantly, and shows fairly solid support.
- As ever, both an ASD informational campaign should be conducted, as well as an independent marketing effort to push the bonds, particularly the construction bond and the technology bond.

Thank you for the opportunity to conduct this research. Any questions about the contents of this report should be directed to Ivan Moore at 278-4600 or by e-mail at

ivan@ivanmoorerresearch.com