

Ohioans Consider Funding of the Public Schools

Results of a public opinion research of Ohio voters on a plan to restructure the funding of Ohio's public schools

Conducted for

The Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Financing Student Success

by

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Table of Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	1
Detailed Findings	8
1. Priorities for the public schools: Fixing funding system and improving academic achievement.....	8
2. School funding system needs a major overhaul	15
3. Task Force’s proposal: Some doubts and questions, but a potential move in the right direction	21
4. Priorities for funding proposal: Schools focus more on student achievement	23
5. Criticisms of the proposal: Concerns about older taxpayers, economically disadvantaged students, and increases in taxes	28
Appendix A: Methods	
Appendix B: Questionnaire with response totals	

Executive Summary

The Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Financing Student Success in Ohio is charged with recommending a plan to change the system by which Ohio's public schools are funded.

The Task Force commissioned Belden Russonello & Stewart to conduct focus groups and a survey among Ohio voters to examine public awareness and attitudes about public school funding generally and the Task Force's proposed plan in particular. The objective of the current opinion research is to help the Task Force communicate about the proposed plan for changing the way public schools in Ohio are funded.

The research project had two phases: Four focus group discussions followed by a statewide survey of voters in Ohio. During the focus groups and in the survey, voters were presented with a draft of the proposed plan that the Task Force is considering. In both phases of the research, voters reacted to the draft plan, expressed their priorities for a new funding system, and raised doubts and questions about the potential plan.

The focus groups were conducted in two Ohio cities in October 2004. On October 6, we spoke with suburban mothers and fathers of public school students in the Cleveland area. On October 14, in Columbus, we spoke to public school teachers and older homeowners (55 years old and older) with no school-aged children at home. The groups consisted of a mix of races and all the non-educator participants were homeowners. The survey of 751 Ohio voters was conducted November 3 through 9 among a representative sample of Ohio voters. The margin of sampling error (or sampling tolerance) for the entire survey is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points at the .95 confidence level. (See appendix A for a detailed methodology.)

Overview

Ohio voters see an urgent need to fix the current system of funding the public schools. Majorities say the system needs major changes, and when asked about priorities for the schools, they place an extremely high priority on changing the current funding system. When presented with the Task Force's potential plan to fund the schools, voters react with some doubts and questions but more favor than oppose the plan.

A top priority for the proposed system, according to voters, is ensuring that educators can focus on student achievement and worry less about financial resources. Also important, especially to older voters, is fiscal accountability, expressed as having reliable funding for the schools and allowing schools to plan their budgets year to year.

While voters voice concerns about fiscal accountability in the schools and the burden on older taxpayers, they appear resigned to the use of school levies to fund the schools. Concerns about the proposed plan have more to do with the burden on older taxpayers, lack of guarantees to assist economically disadvantaged students, and a potential increase in property taxes than on the continued use of levies.

Homeowners are more likely than renters to believe the current funding system needs major changes and to highly prioritize fixing how the schools are funded. Homeowners' main concerns with the proposed plan are that it will result in automatic increases in property taxes and the tax burden on older taxpayers.

Key Findings

The following are key findings from the survey and focus group research:

1. School funding system needs an overhaul. The Task Force's mission to revise the funding of the public schools is a salient concern for Ohio voters. It is among their top priorities for the schools, and a large majority of Ohio voters reports that the way the public schools are funded needs to be changed.

They need to find a better way to fund the schools. They need to educate the taxpayers. The whole thing is a mess. – *Mother, Cleveland*

Six in ten Ohio voters believe the current system needs major changes and a quarter believes minor changes are in order. Less than one in ten believe the system is fine the way it is currently.

A majority of voters also believes the public schools are under funded, while only a third reports that they are funded adequately.

2. Proposed funding plan faces doubts and questions, but more voters favor than oppose it. In the focus groups and survey, voters were given a short description of the proposed funding system.

Under a proposed plan the school districts would receive 2.2 percent of the property taxes each year. This would allow the money the districts receive to increase with inflation and with the property values in the area and reduce the number of levies necessary to fund the schools.

While the proposed funding plan is still being developed, voters react with doubts and questions when presented with the plan. But, more believe the plan is a step in the right direction than going down the wrong path. A third (35%) thinks the proposed plan is a "good" idea and two in ten (21%) think it may be a "bad" idea. Not surprising, many voters have questions. A plurality (44%) is unsure whether the plan goes in the right or wrong direction.

You would have to look at some numbers. The way the schools are funded now it doesn't seem to work. You kind of go into everything hesitant saying well, would this actually fund the schools properly for the kids to get a good education? - *Father, Cleveland*

3. Setting priorities for funding system: Emphasis in schools should be on student achievement and less on money concerns. When considering changes to the funding system, voters were asked to prioritize those aspects important to them in a new funding system for the schools. Voters are most likely to place a top priority on:

- Allowing the schools to focus more on teaching and student achievement than on money issues.

The next tier of important criteria includes:

- Enabling the schools to institute reforms such as more professional development, increased parental involvement, and smaller classes.
- Having reliable funding for the schools.
- Enabling the schools to plan their budgets year to year knowing how much funding they will have.

Slightly fewer voters emphasize the parts of the proposed plan that focus solely on property taxes -- creating a stable and predictable property tax system in Ohio and for any increases in property taxes needing approval by voters.

Reducing the number of levies and focusing on economically disadvantaged students are lesser priorities for most voters when they consider the proposed plan. However, for African-American voters, directing more state resources to assist economically disadvantaged students is extremely important.

4. Potential criticisms of plan: Burden on older taxpayers, not enough help for economically disadvantaged students, and potential increases in property taxes. The proposed funding plan is most vulnerable to criticisms regarding the burden on older taxpayers and concerns that the proposed plan does not address the needs of economically disadvantaged students. Additionally, homeowners are likely to be influenced by criticism that the plan will result in automatic increases in property taxes. Less of a concern at the moment is that the new system continues to allow levies and still funds the schools through the property tax.

5. Voters in Ohio are resigned to the levy system. Ohio voters do not feel an urgent need to eliminate the use of levies to fund their schools. Reducing the number of levies is only a top priority for two in ten voters and, overall, voters believe the school districts use levies only when they are really needed.

But, a sizable segment of about a third of voters believes school districts use levies to raise money they do not need and in the focus groups among suburban mothers we heard many calls for eliminating the levy system. Therefore, communications about reducing the number of levies may be most useful among targeted audiences.

Communications Recommendations

The primary strategy for communications to voters on the proposed plan should be: Focus on outcomes and not on process. Voters want to know that the proposed plan is a move in the right direction and how it will benefit the schools. Less important as they make up their minds on the plan will be how it actually works. While there will be situations that call for explaining the mechanics of the plan, general communications should focus on those outcomes that voters value most and, in situations that call for a detailing of the process, a description of the plan should start with the outcomes.

Based on the four focus groups and statewide survey, we offer the following guidelines for communicating about the proposed funding plan.

Presenting the proposed funding plan to Ohioans:

- First, emphasize the need for a system that creates a reliable source of funds for public schools.

The proposed plan will...

“Allow schools to focus more on teaching and student achievement than on money issues.”

“Enable schools to plan their budgets year to year knowing how much funding they will have.”

The plan will...

“Enable the public schools to reduce class sizes, address issues of parental involvement, provide professional development, and many other programs in the goal of helping all students in Ohio achieve.”

- For older voters and homeowners without children specifically, emphasize the need to have a reliable source of funding for the schools to allow the schools to have more fiscal discipline and accountability.

- Prepare to answer questions about: What does the plan do to address the needs of economically disadvantaged students? Does it continue to overburden older taxpayers? Will it increase property taxes every year?
- Do not over-promise. Across the groups, participants in the focus groups expressed the belief that the proposed plan would not solve all of the funding and academic problems facing public schools in Ohio, but, most think it is a move in the right direction. Therefore, the Task Force should avoid over-promising what the plan will accomplish. The plan is viewed as a step in the right direction, but not as a final solution.

When describing the process: These themes should be used in situations that call for explaining the details of the plan.

- Remind Ohioans that the current system based on levies consists of fixed dollar amounts going to the schools and does not take into consideration inflation or changing circumstances, such as new growth. In the focus groups, this point was salient to voters' views on the proposed plan.
- In describing the proposed plan talk about the 2.2% yearly tax rate, rather than 22 mills. Ohioans in our groups think of levies when they hear mills, and, in that context, 22 is a large amount.
- When introducing the proposed plan, the Task Force should try to avoid talking about a "new" system or "guaranteed increases" in funds for the schools. Both of these phrases say to voters that their taxes are going to go up. Instead, introducing the proposal as a way to create a reliable and stable funding source for the schools reduces the initial outcries of "do not raise my taxes."

Detailed Findings

1. Priorities for the public schools: Fixing funding system and improving academic achievement

Jobs and education are the top issues Ohio voters want their state government to address. When voters think about education, top priorities are improving student achievement and fixing the way the schools are funded.

While voters place high importance on addressing how education is funded in the state, they do not express high concerns about property taxes and are mixed on whether property taxes are too high in the state.

Priorities for the state

In thinking about issues for their state to address, Ohio voters place jobs (45% extremely high priority) and public education (45%) at the top of their priority list, closely followed by health care (40%). Fighting crime (29%) and reducing property taxes (21%) are considered less of a priority.

Views on property taxes in the state are generally mixed with four in ten (39%) voters believing property taxes are too high. Over a third (34%) believes they are at the right level and a quarter (25%) is unable to offer an opinion.

Homeowners are split in their views of property taxes with about four in ten (43%) saying property taxes are too high and another four in ten (40%) saying they are about right.

Those who are more likely than others to say property taxes are too high include voters 45 and older (44%), those less educated (high school or less 48%; some college 42%), moderates (41%), and conservatives (45%).

Property Taxes in Ohio

Q6. In your opinion are property taxes in Ohio too high, too low, or at about the right level, or do you not have an opinion on this?

	Too high	Too low	About Right	No opinion/DK
TOTAL	39%	1	34	25
<45 years old	34%	1	31	34
45+ years old	44%	1	37	17
<HS/HS grad	48%	1	22	29
Some college	42%	--	37	21
College grad+	29%	2	43	25
Homeowner	43%	1	40	16
Renter	26%	1	19	53
Liberal	24%	2	44	30
Moderate	41%	1	30	29
Conservative	45%	1	34	19

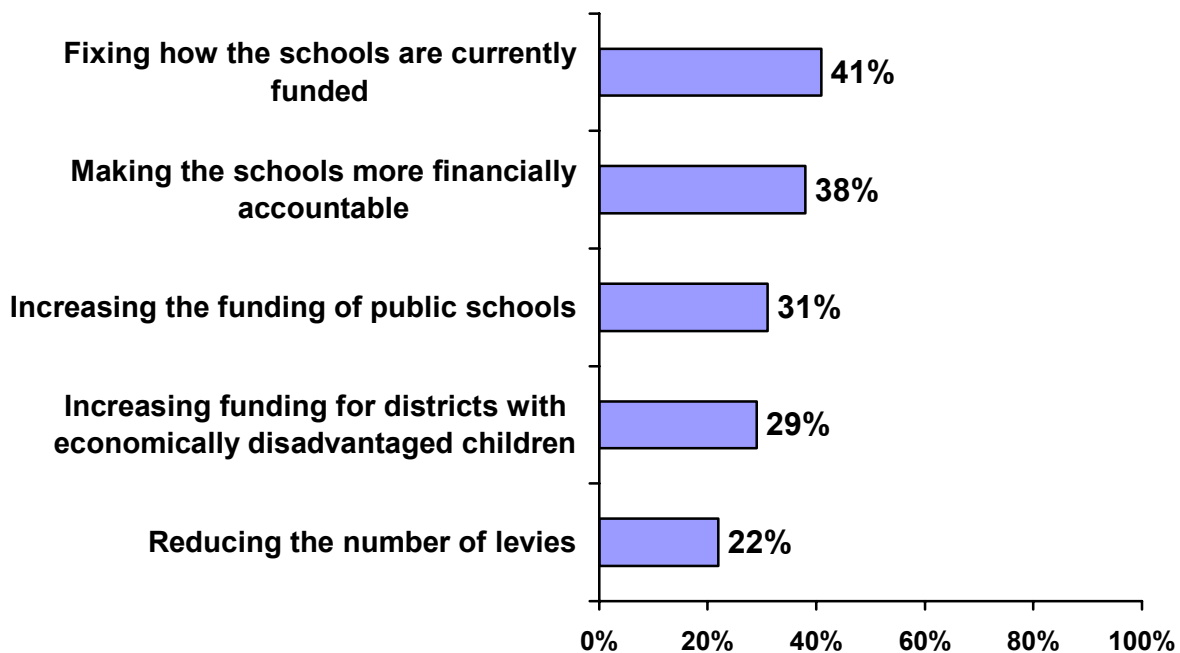
Priorities for the public schools

The survey asked Ohio voters to rate the importance of nine priorities for the schools. Five of the nine involved financial issues and four pertained to academics. The top two priorities for voters are improving the academic achievement of students and fixing how the schools are currently funded.

Of the five funding priorities, the most widely viewed as important are fixing the way the schools are funded (41% extremely high priority) and making schools more financially accountable (38%). To a slightly lesser extent, Ohioans place importance on increasing funding (31%), especially for disadvantaged students (29%), and reducing the number of levies (22%).

Funding Priorities for Public Schools in Ohio

% saying "extremely high priority"

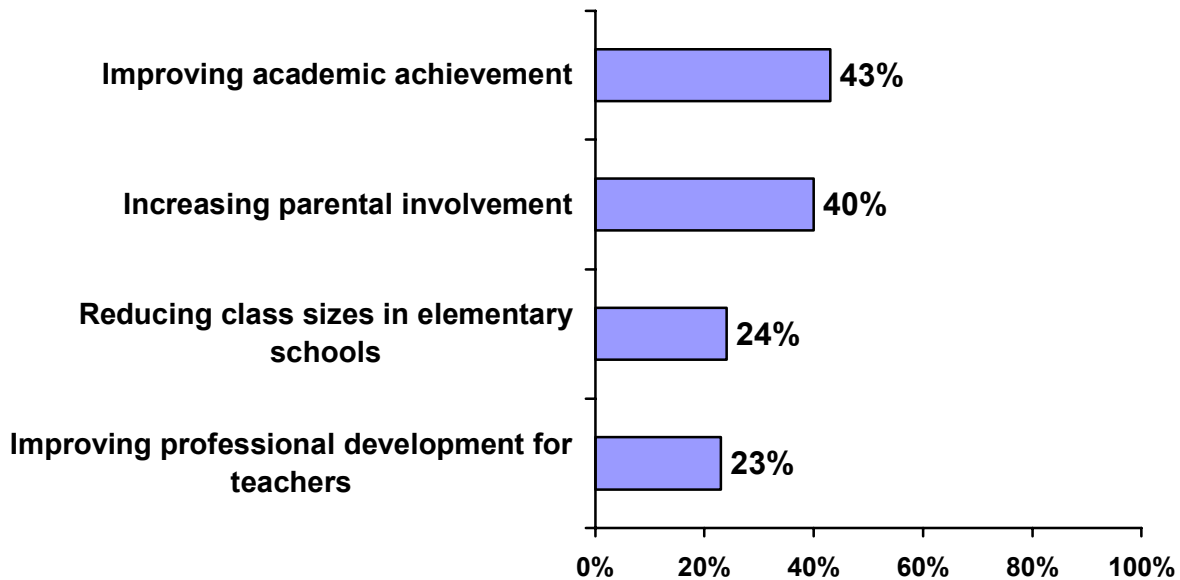


Thinking specifically about the public schools in Ohio, how high a priority do you think each of the following issues should be given – an extremely high priority, a high, middle, low or very low priority? Q8. Increasing funding of the public schools. Q9. Fixing how the public schools are currently funded. Q10. Reducing the number of school levies put before voters. Q11. Increasing the funding for school districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged children. Q15. Making the schools more financially accountable.

On the academic side, the top priorities include improving the academic achievement of all students (43%) and increasing parental involvement (40%). To a lesser extent, voters prioritize reducing class sizes (24%) and professional development (23%).

Academic Priorities for Public Schools in Ohio

% saying "extremely high priority"



Thinking specifically about the public schools in Ohio, how high a priority do you think each of the following issues should be given - an extremely high priority, a high, middle, low or very low priority? Q7. Improving the academic achievement of students in the public schools. Q12. Reducing class sizes in elementary schools. Q13. Increasing parental involvement in the schools. Q14. Improving professional development for teachers and administrators.

Fixing the current funding system is a top priority especially for parents of school-aged children (47%), suburban voters (49%), and independents (52%).

A top priority for voters over 45 years old (43%), especially voters 60 and older (42%), and conservative voters (43%) is making the schools more financially accountable.

Funding Priorities for Ohio's Public Schools

Thinking specifically about the public schools in Ohio, how high a priority do you think each of the following issues should be given – an extremely high priority, a high, middle, low or very low priority? Q8. Increasing funding of the public schools. Q9. Fixing how the public schools are currently funded. Q10. Reducing the number of school levies put before voters. Q11. Increasing the funding for school districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged children. Q15. Making the schools more financially accountable.

[% saying “extremely high priority”]

	Fixing how schools are currently funded	Making schools more financially accountable	Increasing funding of the schools	Increasing funding for economically disadvantaged	Reducing the number of levies
TOTAL	41%	38%	31%	29%	22%
18 to 29 years	36%	27%	37%	37%	12%
30 to 44 years	49%	39%	38%	35%	24%
45 to 59 years	42%	44%	27%	26%	26%
60+ years old	32%	42%	20%	18%	21%
White	40%	37%	28%	24%	21%
Black	45%	48%	47%	61%	26%
Homeowner	42%	39%	27%	24%	24%
Renter	37%	37%	40%	43%	13%
K-12 parent	47%	41%	39%	36%	22%
Not K-12 parent	38%	37%	27%	26%	21%
Urban	39%	43%	27%	38%	22%
Suburban	49%	39%	39%	32%	24%
Sm. Town/rural	35%	35%	27%	21%	20%
Liberal	44%	31%	41%	46%	17%
Moderate	42%	38%	35%	30%	23%
Conservative	38%	43%	21%	18%	23%
Democrat	40%	37%	38%	40%	23%
Independent	52%	39%	33%	30%	19%
Republican	36%	40%	21%	18%	21%

Academic Priorities for Ohio's Public Schools

Thinking specifically about the public schools in Ohio, how high a priority do you think each of the following issues should be given – an extremely high priority, a high, middle, low or very low priority? Q7. Improving the academic achievement of students in the public schools. Q12. Reducing class sizes in elementary schools. Q13. Increasing parental involvement in the schools. Q14. Improving professional development for teachers and administrators.

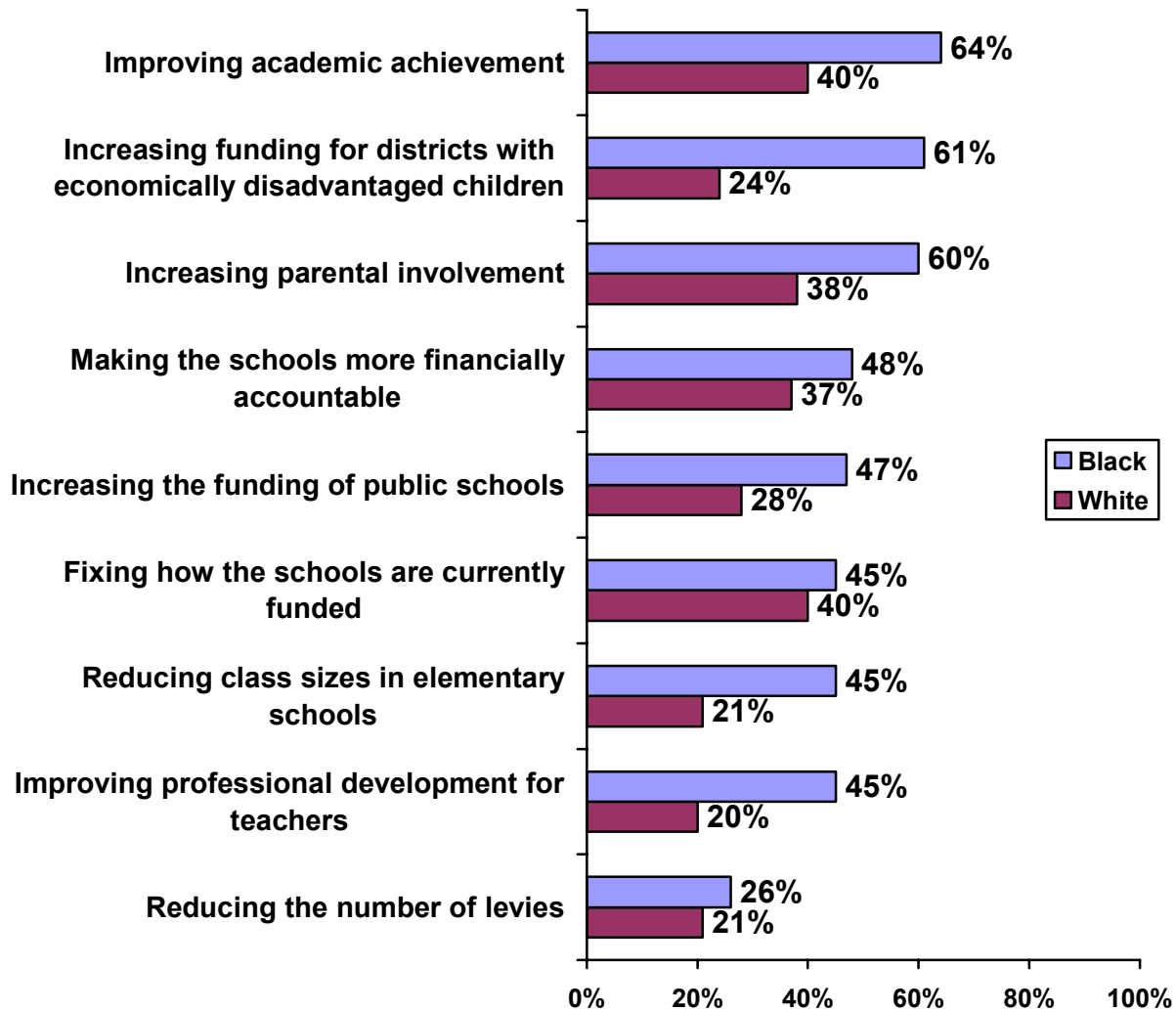
[% saying “extremely high priority”]

	Improving academic achievement	Increasing parental involvement	Reducing class sizes in elementary schools	Improving professional development
TOTAL	43%	40%	24%	23%
Male	42%	39%	19%	21%
Female	43%	41%	29%	26%
18 to 29 years	50%	39%	24%	19%
30 to 44 years	41%	42%	29%	22%
45 to 59 years	45%	42%	26%	30%
60+ years old	34%	36%	14%	20%
White	40%	38%	21%	20%
Black	64%	60%	45%	45%
Homeowner	40%	39%	21%	22%
Renter	50%	44%	34%	30%
K-12 parent	46%	40%	33%	27%
Not K-12 parent	41%	40%	20%	22%
Urban	48%	45%	29%	28%
Suburban	41%	43%	26%	20%
Sm. Town/rural	40%	35%	19%	22%
Liberal	48%	35%	28%	24%
Moderate	43%	43%	27%	25%
Conservative	39%	40%	21%	22%
Democrat	46%	38%	30%	28%
Independent	43%	43%	28%	23%
Republican	39%	40%	17%	20%

African-American voters order their priorities for the schools differently than Caucasian voters. African Americans place higher priorities on improving student achievement (64%), increasing parental involvement (60%), and increasing funding for schools with high concentrations of disadvantaged students (61%) above fixing how the schools are funded (45%) and making the schools more fiscally accountable (48%).

Funding Priorities for Public Schools in Ohio

% saying "extremely high priority"



Thinking specifically about the public schools in Ohio, how high a priority do you think each of the following issues should be given - an extremely high priority, a high, middle, low or very low priority? Q7. Improving the academic achievement of students in the public schools. Q8. Increasing funding of the public schools. Q9. Fixing how the public schools are currently funded. Q10. Reducing the number of school levies put before voters. Q11. Increasing the funding for school districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged children. Q12. Reducing class sizes in elementary schools. Q13. Increasing parental involvement in the schools. Q14. Improving professional development for teachers and administrators. Q15. Making the schools more financially accountable.

2. School funding system needs a major overhaul

Ohio voters are generally aware that the public schools are funded by property taxes and they report that the current funding system is in crisis. Voters believe "major" changes are needed to fix the funding of the school system and they say the schools are under-funded.

Even though they believe changes need to be made to the current system, Ohio voters appear resigned to the use of levies to fund the schools. Reducing levies is not a high priority for voters and a majority believes schools only use levies when they need them.

Awareness of current funding system

The large majority of Ohio voters are aware that the public schools are funded through property taxes (70%). But sizable segments of some groups of voters do not know how the schools are funded. In particular, less than half of younger voters (18 to 29) (49%) and African Americans (44%) know that the schools are mainly funded through property taxes.

How the Public Schools Are Funded

Q16. As far as you are aware, are the public schools in Ohio mainly funded by revenues from property taxes, from sales and income taxes, or some other way?

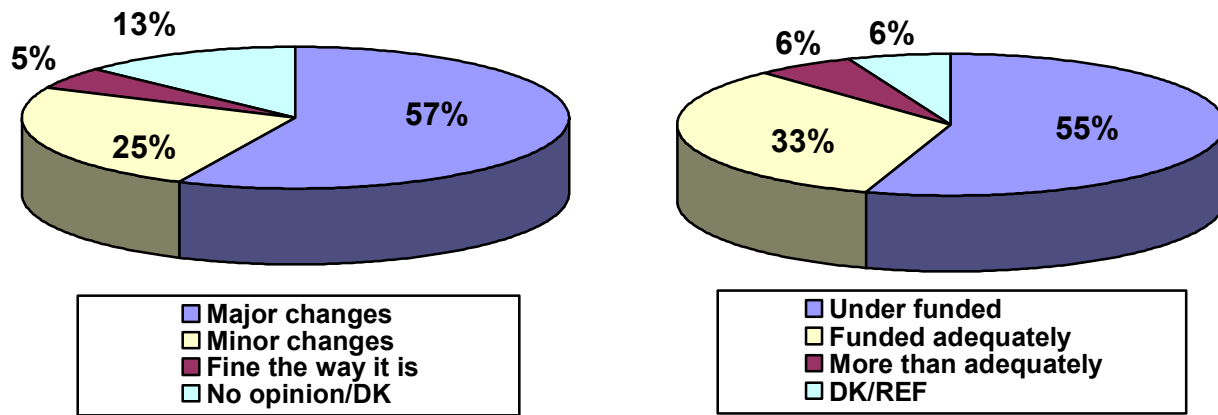
	Property taxes	Sales and income taxes	Other way	DK/REF
TOTAL	70%	5	14	11
18 to 29 years	49%	10	23	17
30 to 44 years	73%	5	12	10
45 to 59 years	74%	3	14	9
60+ years old	81%	2	6	10
White	74%	5	11	11
Black	44%	11	27	17
Homeowner	77%	5	10	8
Renter	52%	5	24	20

Need to change current funding system

Just as seven in ten Ohioans know that property taxes fund the schools, even higher percentages agree the current system needs changes. Majorities believe "major" changes are necessary and that the schools are under-funded.

Three-quarters believe the funding system in Ohio needs to be changed with a majority believing major changes (57%) are needed and a quarter (25%) believing minor changes are needed. Over half (55%) of voters believes the schools are under-funded and a third (33%) believes they are adequately funded.

Amount of Change Needed in System of Funding Schools



Q18. Which of the following statements best represents how you feel about the system of funding public schools in Ohio: does it need major changes, does it need minor changes, or is the funding system basically fine the way it is - or don't you have an opinion about this?

Q17. In general, would you say the public schools, kindergarten through 12th grade, in Ohio are more than adequately funded, funded adequately, or are the public schools under-funded?

Those more likely to feel the current funding system needs major changes include African Americans (76%), voters 30 years old and over (30 to 44 years old 61%; 45 years and older 60%), parents of school-aged children (63%), liberals (65%), Democrats (61%) and independents (67%).

Lack of funding for the schools is particularly a concern for women (60% under-funded), African Americans (80%), parents (64%), renters (62%), liberals (64%), moderates (63%), Democrats (66%) and independents (62%).

Current System of Funding Ohio's Public Schools

Q18. Which of the following statements best represents how you feel about the system of funding public schools in Ohio: does it need major changes, does in need minor changes, or is the funding system basically fine the way it is – or don't you have an opinion about this?

	Major changes	Minor changes	Fine the way it is	No opinion/DK
TOTAL	57%	25	5	13
Male	55%	28	5	12
Female	60%	22	5	13
18 to 29 years	44%	31	3	21
30 to 44 years	61%	28	3	8
45 to 59 years	62%	23	7	9
60+ years old	59%	17	7	16
White	55%	26	6	13
Black	76%	16	1	6
K-12 parent	63%	27	3	6
Not K-12 parent	55%	24	5	16
Liberal	65%	21	3	11
Moderate	59%	25	2	14
Conservative	53%	26	8	13
Democrats	61%	24	3	12
Independents	67%	17	2	14
Republicans	47%	31	9	13

Adequacy of Funding for Ohio's Public Schools

Q17. In general, would you say the public schools, kindergarten through 12th grade, in Ohio are more than adequately funded, funded adequately, or are the public schools under-funded?

	More than adequately	Funded adequately	Under-funded	DK/REF
TOTAL	6%	33	55	6
Male	9%	36	49	6
Female	4%	30	60	6
18 to 29 years	5%	35	54	6
30 to 44 years	3%	29	65	3
45 to 59 years	8%	35	53	4
60+ years old	9%	35	44	12
White	7%	35	51	7
Black	1%	17	80	2
Homeowner	7%	35	52	5
Renter	4%	25	62	9
K-12 parent	3%	30	64	3
Not K-12 parent	7%	34	51	7
Liberal	2%	26	64	8
Moderate	4%	28	63	5
Conservative	10%	41	44	6
Democrats	3%	25	66	5
Independents	2%	31	62	6
Republicans	12%	42	40	7

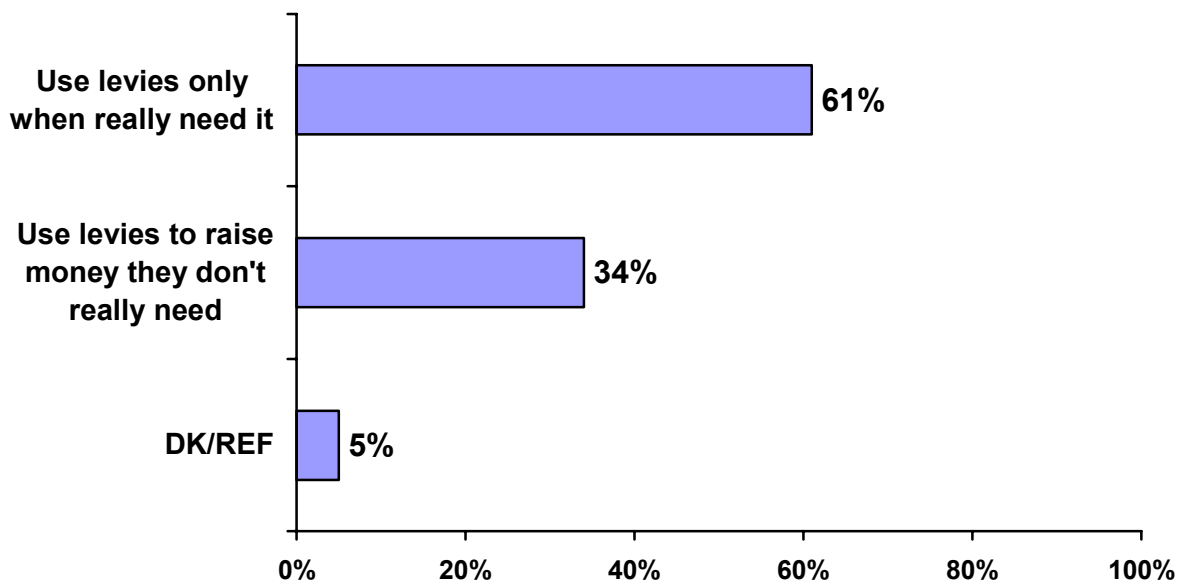
Levies: Used when needed

Ohio voters do not appear overly concerned about the use of levies to fund their schools. Reducing the number of levies is only a top priority for two in ten voters (22%) and overall, voters believe the school districts use levies only when they are really needed.

Six in ten voters (61%) agree with the statement that the school districts use levies to raise money only when they really need it and a third (34%) believes that too many times school districts use levies to raise money they do not need. While majorities of almost all subgroups of voters say districts only use levies when they need them, voters 60 and over hold more mixed views (49% only use levies when needed; 43% use levies to raise money not needed).

This difference of opinion among older voters is seen throughout the survey, as older voters are also more likely to prioritize making the schools more fiscally accountable.

Two Views of Levies



Q20. Here are two views on school levies. Please tell me which one you agree with more: A) generally, school districts use levies to raise money only when they really need it; or B) too many times school districts use levies to raise money they don't really need. Which side do you agree with more? Is that much more or somewhat more?

Two Views of Levies

Q20. Here are two views on school levies. Please tell me which one you agree with more: A) generally, school districts use levies to raise money only when they really need it; or B) too many times school districts use levies to raise money they don't really need. Which side do you agree with more? Is that much more or somewhat more?

	Use levies when ...					
	Need it	Don't need	Need it		Don't need	
			Much more	Smwht more	Smwht more	Much more
TOTAL	61%	34	30%	31	20	14
18 to 29 years	66%	31	29%	37	20	11
30 to 44 years	66%	29	37%	29	16	13
45 to 59 years	61%	34	29%	32	20	14
60+ years old	48%	43	23%	25	26	17
White	60%	35	29%	31	21	14
Black	71%	24	37%	34	13	11
K-12 parent	67%	31	37%	30	16	15
Not K-12 parent	58%	36	27%	31	22	14
Liberal	71%	25	35%	36	15	10
Moderate	64%	31	33%	31	17	14
Conservative	53%	42	25%	28	25	17
Democrats	69%	27	33%	36	17	10
Independents	61%	34	33%	28	18	16
Republicans	52%	40	25%	27	24	16

3. Task Force's proposal: Some doubts and questions, but a potential move in the right direction

In the survey, voters heard the following description of the proposed plan:

Under a proposed plan the school districts would receive 2.2 percent of the property taxes each year. This would allow the money the districts receive to increase with inflation and with the property values in the area and reduce the number of levies necessary to fund the schools.

After hearing the description, voters generally are unsure (44%), but more voters support than oppose it. As in the focus groups, voters have questions about the proposed plan and how it will improve the funding of the schools. Over a third of voters (35%) believe the plan is good idea and two in ten (21%) believe it goes in the wrong direction.

Those voters most likely to be unsure about the proposal include: women (49%), voters under 45 (47%), and moderates (50%).

Those who are more likely to believe the plan goes in the right direction include men (40%), 18 to 29 year olds (42%), liberals (45%), and Democrats (41%).

On the other hand, voters who are more likely to believe initially that the proposed plan is a bad idea include voters 45 and older (25%), homeowners without children (26%), conservatives (26%), and Republicans (25%).

Caution: One of the findings from the focus groups is not to over-promise when communicating about the proposed funding system. Across the groups, participants expressed the belief that the proposed plan would not solve all of the funding and academic problems facing public schools in Ohio, but most think it is a move in the right direction.

Perceptions of Taskforce's Plan to Fund the Public Schools

Q21. Now, I would like to read you a proposal to change the way the public schools are funded. Under a proposed plan the school districts would receive 2.2 percent of the property taxes each year. This would allow the money the districts receive to increase with inflation and with the property values in the area and reduce the number of levies necessary to fund the schools. Do you think this proposed plan to fund the public schools is a good idea or a bad idea, or are you unsure?

	Good idea	Bad idea	Unsure/DK
TOTAL	35%	21	44
Male	40%	23	37
Female	30%	20	49
18 to 29 years	42%	15	43
30 to 44 years	31%	18	50
45 to 59 years	37%	25	38
60+ years old	31%	27	42
<i>Homeowners:</i>			
K-12 parent	32%	21	47
Not K-12 parent	34%	26	40
Liberal	45%	16	39
Moderate	29%	19	50
Conservative	33%	26	41
Democrats	41%	18	42
Independents	28%	20	51
Republicans	34%	25	40

4. Priorities for funding proposal: Schools focus more on student achievement

When Ohio voters think about changing the way the public schools are funded, a top priority across all groups of voters is allowing schools to focus more on teaching and student achievement than on money issues. This goal is shared broadly across voter segments. While other priorities such as reducing levies, increasing funding for economically disadvantaged students, and others garner support among certain segments the unifying theme for communications is allowing the schools to focus on student achievement.

The survey presented eight statements about the Task Force's proposed funding plan. Voters give a top priority to allowing schools to focus more on teaching and student achievement than on money issues (45% "extremely" high priority).

This is a popular theme across all voter groups, but it is particularly resonant with women (48%), voters under 45 (50%), African Americans (63%), parents (51%), urban voters (51%), liberals (55%) and Democrats (53%).

The next tier of priorities includes:

- Enable the schools to plan their budgets year to year knowing how much funding they will have (34%).
- Provide reliable funding year to year for the public schools (33%).
- Enable the public schools to reduce class sizes, provide professional development, and many other programs in the goal of helping all students in Ohio achieve (31%).

The next two priorities address property taxes specifically:

- Create a more stable and predictable property tax system (29%).
- Require increases in property taxes above the 2.2 percent to be approved by school district voters (28%).

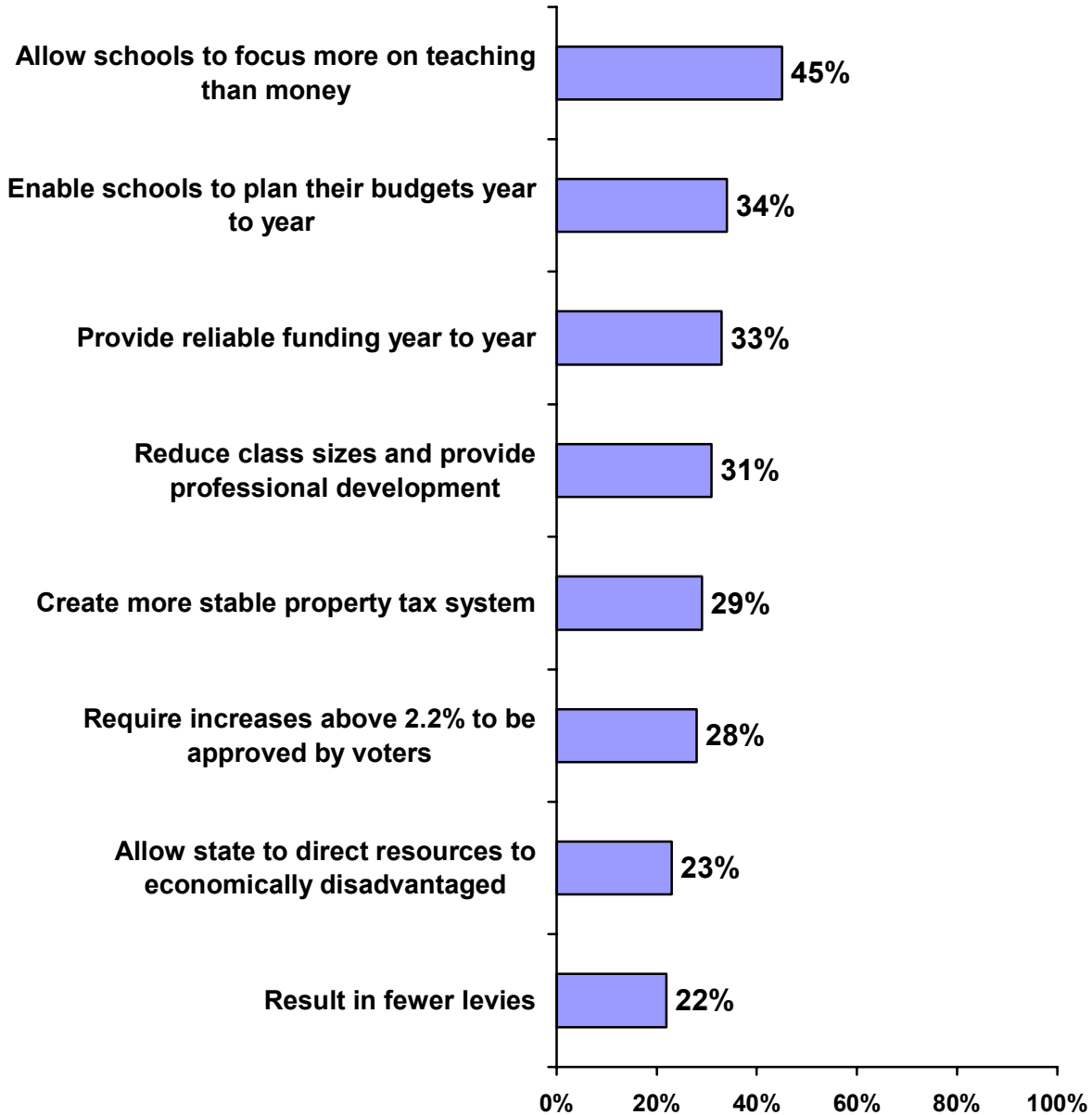
The final two priorities are:

- Direct state resources to districts with high concentration of economically disadvantaged students (23%).
- Reduce the number of levies (22%).

African-American voters place a higher priority than Caucasian voters on many of the items and in particular place a higher priority on enabling the public schools to focus more on teaching than on money issues (63%) and directing resources to districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students (47%).

Priorities for Funding Public Schools in Ohio

% saying "extremely high priority"



Please tell me how high a priority you would place on each of the following as something to consider for the proposed funding system for the public schools: extremely high priority, high, middle, low, or very low priority. Q22. Enable the public schools to reduce class sizes, provide professional development, and many other programs in the goal of helping all students in Ohio achieve. Q23. Provide reliable funding year to year for the public schools in Ohio. Q24. Require any increases in property taxes above the 2.2 percent to be approved by school district voters. Q25. Create a more stable and predictable property tax system in Ohio. Q26. Result in fewer levies. Q27. Allow the state to direct resources to districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. Q28. Allow schools to focus more on teaching and student achievement than on money issues. Q29. Enable schools to plan their budgets year to year knowing how much funding they will have.

Priorities for Funding Ohio's Public Schools

Please tell me how high a priority you would place on each of the following as something to consider for the proposed funding system for the public schools: extremely high priority, high, middle, low, or very low priority. Q22. Enable the public schools to reduce class sizes, provide professional development, and many other programs in the goal of helping all students in Ohio achieve. Q23. Provide reliable funding year to year for the public schools in Ohio. Q28. Allow schools to focus more on teaching and student achievement than on money issues. Q29. Enable schools to plan their budgets year to year knowing how much funding they will have.

[% saying "extremely high priority"]

	Allow schools to focus more on teaching than money issues	Enable schools to plan their budgets year to year	Provide reliable funding year to year for public schools	Reduce class size; provide professional development
TOTAL	45%	34%	33%	31%
Male	41%	33%	31%	29%
Female	48%	34%	34%	33%
18 to 29 years	51%	34%	36%	35%
30 to 44 years	49%	38%	41%	39%
45 to 59 years	43%	35%	34%	31%
60+ years old	34%	27%	16%	16%
White	43%	32%	31%	27%
Black	63%	47%	45%	53%
Homeowner	42%	33%	30%	27%
Renter	50%	38%	42%	42%
K-12 parents	51%	38%	38%	38%
Not K-12 parents	45%	32%	30%	28%
Urban	51%	36%	34%	35%
Suburban	45%	34%	36%	35%
Sm. town/rural	40%	32%	29%	26%
Liberal	55%	36%	43%	37%
Moderate	43%	36%	33%	37%
Conservative	39%	31%	27%	23%
Democrats	53%	37%	39%	39%
Independents	42%	36%	31%	35%
Republicans	38%	30%	27%	21%

Priorities for Funding Ohio's Public Schools

Please tell me how high a priority you would place on each of the following as something to consider for the proposed funding system for the public schools: extremely high priority, high, middle, low, or very low priority. Q24. Require any increases in property taxes above the 2.2 percent to be approved by school district voters. Q25. Create a more stable and predictable property tax system in Ohio. Q26. Result in fewer levies. Q27. Allow the state to direct resources to districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students.

[% saying "extremely high priority"]

	Create a more stable property tax system	Require increases above 2.2% to be approved by voters	Allow state to direct resources to economically disadvantaged	Result in fewer levies
TOTAL	29%	28%	23%	22%
18 to 29 years	26%	22%	30%	17%
30 to 44 years	30%	35%	25%	22%
45 to 59 years	32%	29%	25%	26%
60+ years old	26%	26%	13%	23%
White	28%	29%	20%	21%
Black	38%	26%	47%	30%
<HS/HS grad	34%	29%	26%	25%
Some college	29%	28%	21%	20%
College grad+	25%	28%	23%	21%
<\$50,000	26%	23%	28%	17%
\$50,000+	34%	34%	20%	28%
Homeowner	29%	30%	20%	24%
Renter	29%	24%	33%	18%
Urban	30%	24%	31%	24%
Suburban	31%	31%	22%	22%
Sm. town/rural	27%	29%	20%	22%
Liberal	33%	28%	33%	25%
Moderate	33%	26%	27%	21%
Conservative	25%	30%	15%	23%
Democrats	31%	26%	33%	25%
Independents	29%	28%	27%	24%
Republicans	37%	30%	12%	19%

5. Criticisms of the proposal: Concerns about older taxpayers, economically disadvantaged students, and increases in taxes

While the proposed funding plan is still being developed, there are a number of concerns and questions raised in the focus groups which the survey presented to voters. Some of these concerns could become barriers for garnering voter support if not answered.

Tax burden for older taxpayers:

The first issue which dampens support is the tax burden to older taxpayers because the proposed plan continues to rely on property taxes to fund the schools. Three in ten (29%) of voters believe this is a "very" good reason to oppose the plan. Not surprisingly, a large segment of voters 60 and older say this is a "very" good reason to oppose the plan (56% good reason; 42% "very" good).

Increases in property taxes:

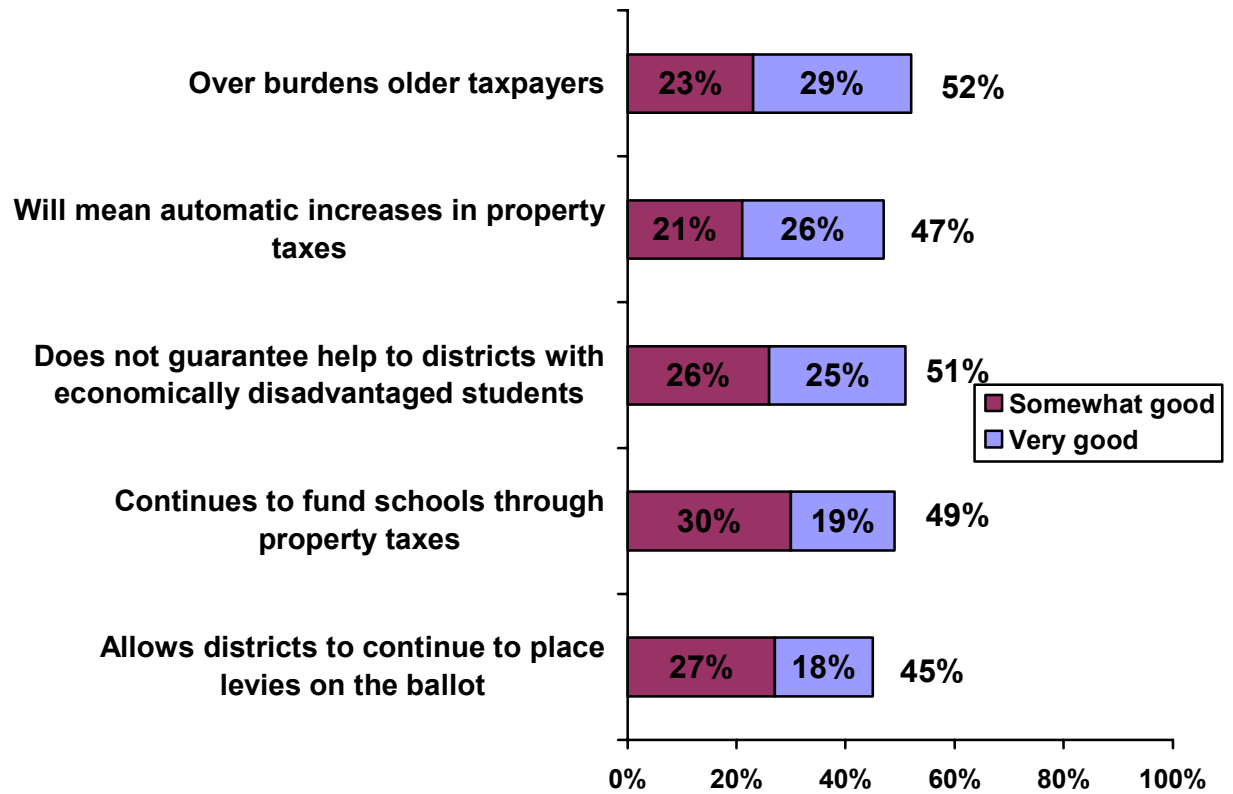
Another concern is that the proposed plan would mean "automatic increases in property taxes - it is really a levy without end" (47% good reason to oppose; 26% "very" good). Voters 45 and over (31%) and homeowners (28%) find this a "very" good reason to oppose. As we found in the focus groups, voters' initial reaction is that their property taxes are going to increase when they hear there is a new proposal to fund the schools.

Lack of help for economically disadvantaged students:

In the focus groups, voters also raised concerns about how helpful the proposed plan would be for disadvantaged students. Because funding will continue to be dependent on property taxes, some believed the schools in poorer neighborhoods would continue to lack funding and since they would rely on the state government for funding, they would be vulnerable to state budget cuts.

In the survey, half of voters (51%) finds the criticism that the plan "does not guarantee help to districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students and these districts will continue to be dependent on the state legislature and be harmed by state budget cuts" a good reason to oppose it and a quarter (25%) believes it is a "very" good reason.

Reasons to Oppose Proposed Plan



Now, I would like to read you some statements people have made opposing the proposed plan. Please tell me if you think each is a good reason or poor reason to oppose the proposed plan to fund the public schools. Q30. The proposed plan allows school districts to continue to place levies on the ballot. Q31. The proposed plan does not guarantee help to districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. These districts will continue to be dependent on the state legislature and be harmed by state budget cuts. Q33. The proposed plan continues to fund the public schools through property taxes. Q32. The proposed plan will mean automatic increases in property taxes – it is really a levy with no end. Q34. The proposed plan over burdens older taxpayers because it continues to rely on property taxes to fund the schools.

Reasons to Oppose the Taskforce's Plan to Fund Ohio's Public Schools

Now, I would like to read you some statements people have made opposing the proposed plan. Please tell me if you think each is a good reason or poor reason to oppose the proposed plan to fund the public schools. Q34. The proposed plan over burdens older taxpayers because it continues to rely on property taxes to fund the schools. Q32. The proposed plan will mean automatic increases in property taxes – it is really a levy with no end. Q31. The proposed plan does not guarantee help to districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. These districts will continue to be dependent on the state legislature and be harmed by state budget cuts.

[% saying “very good reason”]

	Over burdens older taxpayers because it continues to rely on property taxes.	Will mean automatic increases in property taxes – it is really a levy with no end	Does not guarantee help to districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students
TOTAL	29%	26%	25%
18 to 29 years	16%	13%	24%
30 to 44 years	26%	25%	28%
45 to 59 years	32%	31%	23%
60+ years old	42%	32%	25%
White	30%	26%	25%
Black	23%	26%	27%
Homeowner	32%	28%	25%
Renter	20%	18%	24%
Liberal	24%	23%	27%
Moderate	31%	26%	29%
Conservative	30%	27%	21%
Democrats	24%	24%	23%
Independents	33%	24%	32%
Republicans	32%	28%	22%

Another concern raised by some of the voters in the focus groups is that money for the economically disadvantaged students will be taken away from their districts to help fund the Task Force's programs for the poorer districts, while others are concerned that money is not being taken away from wealthier districts and redistributed. The survey confirms these divided opinions of Ohio voters on this issue.

When given a choice of how they would like to see the schools funded, nearly half of voters (49%) choose putting together the revenues from property taxes across the state and then allocating funding according to need. Forty-five percent of voters prefer that each school district keep the revenue from its property taxes to fund the schools in that district. On each side, about three in ten voters (28%) feel strongly about their position.

Those who feel strongly that the revenue should be combined and allocated by need include African Americans (40% strongly), urban voters (34%), liberals (35%), Democrats (32%), and independents (39%).

On the other hand, strong feelings for districts to keep their own revenue are expressed by parents (34%), especially homeowners with children (37%), suburban voters (34%) and Republicans (34%).

Two Views of Allocating Funds from Property Taxes

Q35. Here are two views on funding the public schools. Please tell me which one you support more: A) having each school district keep the revenue from its property taxes to fund the schools in that district; or B) putting together the revenues from property taxes across the state and then allocating funding to school districts according to need. Which side do you agree with more? Is that much more or somewhat more?

	Keep in district	Put together	Keep in district		Put together	
			Much more	Smwht more	Smwht more	Much more
TOTAL	45%	49	28%	17	21	28
18 to 29 years	44%	56	21%	23	25	31
30 to 44 years	45%	47	29%	16	19	28
45 to 59 years	42%	51	27%	15	23	28
60+ years old	49%	44	32%	17	19	25
White	45%	48	28%	17	23	25
Black	40%	57	24%	16	17	40
<HS/HS grad	46%	49	24%	22	21	28
Some college	47%	48	35%	12	20	28
College grad+	43%	51	26%	17	23	28
<i>Homeowner:</i>						
K-12 parent	55%	37	37%	18	17	20
Not K-12 parent	43%	52	25%	18	22	30
K-12 parent	50%	42	34%	16	17	25
Not K-12 parent	43%	52	25%	18	23	29
Urban	39%	57	21%	18	23	34
Suburban	50%	45	34%	16	21	24
Sm. town/rural	45%	47	27%	18	20	27
Liberal	32%	63	18%	14	28	35
Moderate	44%	50	28%	16	20	30
Conservative	52%	41	32%	20	19	22
Democrats	38%	56	22%	16	24	32
Independents	37%	60	24%	13	21	39
Republicans	55%	38	34%	21	19	19

Still have levies and continue to rely on property taxes

Two other criticisms are considered less persuasive, but may have potential to build opposition once the debate about the proposed plan begins.

- The proposed plan continues to fund the public schools through property taxes (49% good reason, 19% “very” good).
- The proposed plan allows school districts to continue to place levies on the ballot (45% good reason, 18% “very” good).

Reasons to Oppose the Taskforce’s Plan to Fund Ohio’s Public Schools

Now, I would like to read you some statements people have made opposing the proposed plan. Please tell me if you think each is a good reason or poor reason to oppose the proposed plan to fund the public schools. Q33. The proposed plan continues to fund the public schools through property taxes. Q30. The proposed plan allows school districts to continue to place levies on the ballot

[% saying “very good reason”]

	Continues to fund the schools through property taxes	Allows school districts to continue to place levies on the ballot
TOTAL	19%	18%
18 to 29 years	13%	14%
30 to 44 years	18%	17%
45 to 59 years	22%	21%
60+ years old	20%	20%
White	19%	19%
Black	15%	17%
Homeowner	21%	19%
Renter	14%	15%
Democrats	19%	15%
Independents	18%	14%
Republicans	18%	22%

Appendix A: Methods

Methods

With funding from Edward Howard & Co. and the KnowledgeWorks Foundation, The Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Financing Student Success commissioned Belden Russonello & Stewart to conduct a research project among Ohio voters to ascertain the public's perceptions of the system for funding public education and support for the Task Force's proposals to change the system.

The public opinion research is designed to assist in understanding and communicating with the public about the Task Force's recommendations by providing an effective way to listen to what the Ohio public has to say about public school funding, in general and the proposal, more specifically.

Focus groups

In October 2004, BRS held four focus groups among Ohioans in Cleveland and Columbus. In Cleveland, the groups were among suburban mothers and fathers of public school students and in Columbus we talked to teachers and older taxpayers (55 and older) with no children currently in the public school system.

The groups consisted of a mix of races and all the non-educator participants were homeowners. The moderator's guide used in the discussions was developed by BRS in consultation with staff and consultants to the Task Force. The groups were moderated by BRS partner Kate Stewart and John Russonello.

Survey

The focus group discussions were followed by a statewide survey of Ohio voters, conducted by telephone November 3 to 9, 2004. The questionnaire for the survey was written by BRS in collaboration with members of and consultants to the Task Force. The survey was carried out among a representative probability sample of 751 voters.

Professional, fully trained and supervised telephone interviewers, using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing system, conducted the fieldwork. A briefing session was

conducted to familiarize the interviewers with the sample specifications and the instrument for this study. The sampling frame used for the study was a list of randomly created telephone numbers (a technique known as random digit dial or RDD) for telephone exchanges across Ohio. Interviewers randomly selected respondents by requesting to speak with the adult in the household who had the most recent birthday. All phases of interviewing, training, and data collection were supervised daily by BRS. Each interview lasted approximately 15 minutes.

The demographic characteristics of the sample were matched to 2004 exit poll data for voters in Ohio. The data have been weighted statistically in order to bring age and party identification into their proper proportions. The margin of sampling error (or sampling tolerance) for the entire survey is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points at the .95 confidence level. Tables in the report use many cross tabulations, based on smaller subgroups and thus the margin of error for these is higher.

Reading this report

Tables and graphs included in the text of this report highlight selected relevant survey findings and are expressed in percentages. The base for each table is all respondents (N=751) unless otherwise noted. In reading these data, when the percent sign (%) appears at the top of a column, the numbers add vertically; when % appears at the left of a row, the numbers add horizontally. An asterisk (*) indicates less than 1%; a double hyphen (-) indicates zero.

Due to weighting, rounding, omission of "don't know," "refused," and other responses, or, in the case of multiple response questions, percentages may add to more than or less than 100%.

The cross tabulations for the survey results are largely self-explanatory, but a few notes may be helpful. "Parents" are those respondents who say they have a child or children in K-12th grade attending schools; all other respondents, with or without children, are in the non-parent category.

**Appendix B:
Questionnaire
with response totals**

Funding Public Education in Ohio

Interviewing conducted November 3 to 9, 2004.

N = 751 Ohio voters

Margin of sampling error for each state is ± 3.7 percentage points.

The data have been weighted by age and party.

Percents may add to 99% or 101% due to rounding.

* indicates less than 1% , -- indicates zero.

Hello, my name is ____ and I am an interviewer with TPG Research. We are conducting a public opinion survey about Ohio issues. Your telephone number was selected at random. May I please speak to the person 18 or older who had a birthday most recently? (IF NECESSARY ARRANGE FOR A CALL BACK AND RECORD DATE AND TIME. REPEAT INTRO AS NECESSARY)

S1. Everyone does not always have a chance to vote in every election. Did you happen to vote in the election for President this year?	YES	100%
	NO	--
	DK/REF	--

Here are a number of issues for the state of Ohio to address, how high a priority do you want the state to give each of the following issues - an extremely high priority, a high, middle, low or very low priority? [RANDOMIZE]

	Extremely high	High	Middle	Low	Very low	DK/REF
1. Improving public education.	45%	42	10	2	*	1
2. Improving the health care system.	40%	43	13	3	1	*
3. Creating jobs.	45%	43	9	2	*	1
4. Fighting crime.	29%	53	16	2	*	*
5. Reducing property taxes.	21%	38	30	8	1	2

6. In your opinion are property taxes in Ohio too high, too low, or at about the right level, or do you not have an opinion on this?	TOO HIGH	39%
	TOO LOW	1
	ABOUT RIGHT	34
	NO OPINION/DK	25
	REF	*

Thinking specifically about the public schools in Ohio, how high a priority do you think each of the following issues should be given – an extremely high priority, a high, middle, low or very low priority? [RANDOMIZE]

	Extremely high	High	Middle	Low	Very low	DK/REF
7. Improving the academic achievement of students in the public schools.	43%	44	11	1	*	1
8. Increasing funding of the public schools.	31%	34	23	8	3	2
9. Fixing how the public schools are currently funded.	41%	35	16	3	*	4
10. Reducing the number of school levies put before voters.	22%	28	32	12	1	5
11. Increasing the funding for school districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged children.	29%	41	22	6	1	1
12. Reducing class sizes in elementary schools.	24%	32	31	8	2	3
13. Increasing parental involvement in the schools.	40%	40	14	4	--	1
14. Improving professional development for teachers and administrators.	23%	43	25	6	1	1
15. Making the schools more financially accountable.	38%	42	14	3	1	2

16. As far as you are aware, are the public schools in Ohio mainly funded by revenues from property taxes, from sales and income taxes, or some other way?	PROPERTY TAXES	70%
	SALES AND INCOME TAXES	5
	OTHER	14
	DK/REF	11

17. In general would you say the public schools, kindergarten through 12 th grade in Ohio are more than adequately funded, funded adequately, or are the public schools under funded?	MORE THAN ADEQUATELY	6%
	FUNDED ADEQUATELY	33
	UNDERFUNDED	55
	DK/REF	6

18. Which of the following statements best represents how you feel about the system of funding public schools in Ohio: [REVERSE ORDER] does it need major changes, does it need minor changes, or is the funding system basically fine the way it is - or don't you have an opinion about this?	MAJOR CHANGES	57%
	MINOR CHANGES	25
	FINE THE WAY IT IS	5
	NO OPINION/DK	13
	REF	*

Currently in Ohio the public schools rely on property taxes for their funding. Under the current system, school districts must ask voters to pass levies on property values to provide basic funding for the schools' budgets. This funding is fixed and does not increase with inflation or take into consideration special circumstances or changes the district may face.

19. Now that I have read to you how the schools are funded, which of the following statements best represents how you feel about the current system of funding public schools in Ohio: [REVERSE ORDER] does it need major changes, does it need minor changes, or is the funding system basically fine the way it is - or don't you have an opinion about this?	MAJOR CHANGES	57%
	MINOR CHANGES	27
	FINE THE WAY IT IS	8
	NO OPINION/DK	8
	REF	1

20. Here are two views on school levies. Please tell me which one you agree with more: [ROTATE A AND B] A) generally, school districts use levies to raise money only when they really need it; or B) too many times school districts use levies to raise money they don't need. Which side do you agree with more? Is that much more or somewhat more?	MUCH MORE LEVIES ONLY WHEN REALLY NEED IT	30%
	SOMEWHAT MORE LEVIES ONLY WHEN REALLY NEED IT	31
	SOMEWHAT MORE LEVIES THEY DON'T NEED	20
	MUCH MORE LEVIES THEY DON'T NEED	14
	DK/REF	5

Now, I would like to read you a proposal to change the way the public schools are funded: (READ TWICE)

Under a proposed plan the school districts would receive 2.2 percent of the property taxes each year. This would allow the money the districts receive to increase with inflation and with the property values in the area and reduce the number of levies necessary to fund the schools.

21. Do you think this proposed plan to fund the public schools is a good idea or a bad idea, or are you unsure?	GOOD IDEA	35%
	BAD IDEA	21
	UNSURE/DK	44
	REF	*

Please tell me how high a priority you would place on each of the following as something to consider for the proposed funding system for the public schools: extremely high priority, high, middle, low, or very low priority. [RANDOMIZE]

	Extremely high	High	Middle	Low	Very low	DK/REF
22. Enable the public schools to reduce class sizes, provide professional development, and many other programs in the goal of helping all students in Ohio achieve.	31%	42	19	5	1	2
23. Provide reliable funding year to year for the public schools in Ohio.	33%	46	16	2	1	3
24. Require any increases in property taxes above the 2.2 percent to be approved by school district voters.	28%	40	15	10	3	3
25. Create a more stable and predictable property tax system in Ohio.	29%	42	19	5	2	3
26. Result in fewer levies.	22%	41	23	7	2	4
27. Allow the state to direct resources to districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students.	23%	43	22	7	3	2
28. Allow schools to focus more on teaching and student achievement than on money issues.	45%	46	6	2	--	1
29. Enable schools to plan their budgets year to year knowing how much funding they will have.	34%	53	10	2	*	1

Now, I would like to read you some statements people have made opposing the proposed plan. Please tell me if you think each is a good reason or poor reason to oppose the proposed plan to fund the public schools. Very or somewhat good/poor? [RANDOMIZE]

	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor	DK/REF
30. The proposed plan allows school districts to continue to place levies on the ballot.	18%	27	30	19	5
31. The proposed plan does not guarantee help to districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. These districts will continue to be dependent on the state legislature and be harmed by state budget cuts.	25%	26	25	18	7
32. The proposed plan will mean automatic increases in property taxes – it is really a levy with no end.	26%	21	23	27	4
33. The proposed plan continues to fund the public schools through property taxes.	19%	30	27	19	4
34. The proposed plan overburdens older taxpayers because it continues to rely on property taxes to fund the schools.	29%	23	27	18	3

35. Here are two views on funding the public schools. Please tell me which one you support more: [ROTATE A& B] A) having each school district keep the revenue from its property taxes to fund the schools in that district; or B) putting together the revenues from property taxes across the state and then allocating funding to school districts according to need. Which side do you agree with more? Is that much more or somewhat more?	MUCH MORE SCHOOL DISTRICT KEEP REVENUE	28%
	SOMEWHAT MORE SCHOOL DISTRICT KEEP REVENUE	17
	SOMWHAT MORE PUT TOGETHER REVENUES	21
	MUCH MORE PUT TOGETHER REVENUES	28
	DK/REF	6

DEMOGRAPHICS

Now, I have a few questions to help classify your interview:

D1. Do you have any children currently in Kindergarten through 12 th grade?	YES	31%
	NO	69
	DK/REF	*
D2. IF YES: Are they in public school, private independent, parochial school, or home schooled? [MULTIPLE RESPONSE]	PUBLIC	83%
	PRIVATE/INDEPENDENT	9
	PAROCHIAL	7
	HOMESCHOOLED	3
	DK/REF	1
D3. In terms of your political outlook, do you usually think of yourself as: [REVERSE ORDER] very conservative, somewhat conservative, middle of the road, somewhat liberal, very liberal?	VERY CONSERVATIVE	18%
	SMWHT CONSERVATIVE	25
	MIDDLE OF THE ROAD	31
	SOMEWHAT LIBERAL	16
	VERY LIBERAL	7
	DK/REF	2
D4. Do you consider yourself to be [ROTATE DEM & REP] a Democrat, a Republican, an independent, or something else?	DEMOCRAT	37%
	REPUBLICAN	39
	INDEPENDENT	23
	SOMETHING ELSE	*
	DK/REF	*
D5. What was the last grade of school you completed? (READ CODES IF NECESSARY)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL	4%
	HIGH SCHOOL GRAD/GED	30
	SME CLG/TECH/2-YR	26
	CLG GRAD/4-YR/BA OR BS	23
	GRAD WORK OR DEGREE	17
	DK/REF	*
D6. Do you currently rent or own your home?	RENT	24%
	OWN	73
	DK/REF	3

D7. Which of the following best describes the place where you live: a city, a suburb, a small town, or a rural area?	CITY	27%
	SUBURB	31
	SMALL TOWN	21
	RURAL AREA	20
	DK/REF	1
<hr/>		
D8. In what year were you born?	18-29	21%
D8a. [IF DK/REF IN D8] Are you between 18 to 24 years, 25 to 29 years, 30 to 44 years, 45 to 59 years, or 60 years old or older?	30-44	30
	45-59	28
	60+	21
	DK/REF	*
	<hr/>	
D9. Are you of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or other Spanish background?	WHITE	83%
	BLACK	13
	HISPANIC	2
	ASIAN	*
	D10. And what is your race? Are you white, black or African American, Asian, or something else?	OTHER
DK/REF		1
<hr/>		
D11. Stop me when I come to the category in which your total <u>household</u> income fell before taxes in 2004. Your best estimate is fine.	Less than \$25,000	18%
	\$25,000-\$49,000	26
	\$50,000-\$74,000	24
	\$75,000-\$99,000	12
	More than \$100,000	8
	DK/REF	12
<hr/>		
GENDER	MALE	47%
	FEMALE	53
<hr/>		