



**Smithville R-2 School District
2014 Patron and Staff Online Surveys
Final Report
May 19, 2014**

At the same time a statistically reliable telephone survey was being conducted with residents of the Smithville R-2 School District, similar online surveys were made available to patrons (via the district's website) and to staff members (through an e-mail distribution of a survey link).

A total of 209 community members and 108 staff members chose to take part in the separate surveys, though not all those who participated answered all the questions – a situation that is typical with online surveys.

The results of these online surveys are shown below, in a form that allows for direct comparison to the more statistically reliable telephone survey of randomly selected heads of households in the district, where appropriate. All online data should be considered supplemental information.

Because the numbering varies between the telephone and online surveys, the results below are shown in the order in which the questions appeared in the online survey, but without question numbers. All wording reflects the online survey wording, meaning that phrases, such as “As we just discussed,” and other language, which would take place during a phone conversation, have been replaced with more directive language for respondents who were completing the survey on their own.

As you know, students in school are usually given a grade to reflect the quality of their work. Those grades are usually A, B, C, D or F. Based on your experience, the experience of your children, or things you have heard about the Smithville R-2 School District from others, what grade you would give the Smithville School District for its overall performance?

Response	Percentage/Patron telephone survey (n=400)	Percentage/Patron online survey (n=209)	Percentage/Staff online survey (n=108)
A	47%	30%	43%
B	41%	53%	49%
C	8%	11%	8%
D	3%	3%	0%
F	1%	2%	0%
Don't know (not read to telephone respondents; available to online respondents)	1%	<1%	1%

As you may recall, the Smithville School District proposed a bond issue in April 2013 that was created with input from area residents and that included new construction and renovation projects. That proposal was defeated at the ballot box. Since then, the district has been seeking additional input from residents to determine the next steps to address these needs. In that process, residents have shared a lot of thoughts. Would you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of the following statements?

Response	Percentage/ Patron telephone survey (n=400)	Percentage/ Patron online survey (n=209)	Percentage/ Staff online survey (n=108)
People thought the bond issue was going to pass, so they didn't get out to vote – Strongly agree/agree	21%	29%	44%
Disagree/strongly disagree	70%	47%	44%
The district did not do a good job of explaining about the projects in the bond issue – Strongly agree/agree	43%	45%	47%
Disagree/strongly disagree	44%	44%	41%
People didn't think everything that was in the bond issue was needed – Strongly agree/agree	66%	58%	65%
Disagree/strongly disagree	15%	21%	23%
The economy was not good, which is why many people voted "no" on the bond issue – Strongly agree/agree	78%	60%	74%
Disagree/strongly disagree	18%	27%	18%
The last-minute postcards and phone calls from opponents of the bond issue caused a lot of people to decide to vote "no" – Strongly agree/agree	44%	31%	60%
Disagree/strongly disagree	32%	37%	25%
A lot of people thought the cost of the bond issue was too much – Strongly agree/agree	77%	61%	76%
Disagree/strongly disagree	10%	16%	11%
People in this community talk about the schools a lot – Strongly agree/agree	51%	67%	79%
Disagree/strongly disagree	7%	21%	9%
A lot of people didn't like the idea of changing to neighborhood elementary schools, and would rather leave things the way they are – Strongly agree/agree	36%	38%	53%
Disagree/strongly disagree	29%	34%	27%
The school district has generally done a good job managing tax dollars – Strongly agree/agree	71%	74%	90%
Disagree/strongly disagree	18%	10%	4%

Response	Percentage/ Patron telephone survey (n=400)	Percentage/ Patron online survey (n=209)	Percentage/ Staff online survey (n=108)
People would support most, or even all, of what was in the plan if they understood it – Strongly agree/agree	41%	61%	72%
Disagree/strongly disagree	30%	26%	17%
Nobody was really talking about the school district’s proposal out in the community– Strongly agree/agree	38%	42%	47%
Disagree/strongly disagree	37%	42%	35%
Most people in the area know how crowded the schools are – Strongly agree/agree	57%	35%	14%
Disagree/strongly disagree	34%	54%	77%
Most of the people in our community think our school district is one of the best in the area – Strongly agree/agree	75%	74%	90%
Disagree/strongly disagree	14%	17%	5%
Most people know that district hasn’t raised taxes in 16 years – Strongly agree/agree	16%	13%	25%
Disagree/strongly disagree	29%	63%	61%
A lot of people move here just for the schools – Strongly agree/agree	74%	60%	85%
Disagree/strongly disagree	10%	24%	6%
People in the community trust the district to keep them informed – Strongly agree/agree	89%	78%	81%
Disagree/strongly disagree	4%	14%	9%
When the school district tells you something, you can believe what they say – Strongly agree/agree	72%	67%	71%
Disagree/strongly disagree	4%	22%	22%

Below is a short list of ideas that has been discussed that might appear on a future operating tax levy proposal for the district. Please indicate if including it in a proposal would make you more likely to vote in favor, more likely to vote against, or would it make no difference to you, as you think about it today. *Staff members were asked using the term “support,” taking into account that not all staff members live within the district’s boundaries.*

Response	Percentage/ Patron telephone survey (n=400)	Percentage/Patron online survey (n=209)	Percentage/ Staff online survey (n=108)
Adding eight classrooms at Smithville High School, plus expanding and renovating the cafeteria at the high school – Favor	54%	66%	58%
Against	7%	8%	3%
Make no difference	35%	20%	34%
Add more parking at Smithville High School– Favor	30%	45%	38%
Against	32%	20%	16%
Make no difference	37%	30%	42%
Upgrade security systems at the main entrances of all the district’s schools – Favor	73%	66%	73%
Against	8%	18%	2%
Make no difference	12%	12%	24%
Replace roofs at the high school and the district’s elementary schools – Favor	51%	58%	58%
Against	14%	5%	1%
Make no difference	25%	26%	34%
Construct a new elementary school on the northeast corner of F Highway and 188th Street, which would be able to serve close to 450 students – Favor	56%	58%	79%
Against	21%	15%	6%
Make no difference	17%	19%	11%

If the district did construct a new elementary school, the plan would be to change the elementary schools to neighborhood schools – all of them having students from kindergarten through sixth grade. The idea behind this switch is to cut down on the number of times a student has to transition to a new school while they are a student in the district. But it would be a change from what the community has been used to. Which of the following best describes how you feel about this idea?

Response	Percentage/ Patron telephone survey (n=400)	Percentage/ Patron online survey (n=209)	Percentage/ Staff online survey (n=108)
I like switching to neighborhood elementary schools	42%	40%	63%
I like things the way they are now	20%	22%	16%
I don't have a strong feeling one way or the other	38%	35%	19%
Don't know (not read to telephone respondents, but available to online respondents)	1%	4%	3%

Now that you have read some of the ideas being considered by the school district, do you think you would strongly favor an operating tax levy increase proposal, favor it, oppose it, or strongly oppose it, if the election were held today? *Staff members were asked whether they would “support” it, taking into account that not all staff members live within the district’s boundaries. A follow-up question asked about a potential \$23.51 per month tax increase that might be associated with the proposal. Opponents or those who were undecided were then asked about a potential \$19 per month increase. Those who were still in opposition or undecided were then asked about a potential \$15 per month increase. Support level for the lower two tax figures includes those who supported a higher tax figure. Individuals who were opposed at the lowest level were asked why, and the responses focused on the tax increase almost exclusively.*

Combined “Strongly favor/favor” percentage	Percentage/Patron telephone survey (n=400)	Percentage/Patron online survey (n=209)	Percentage/Staff online survey (n=108)
Potential operating tax levy increase proposal	60%	68%	86%
\$23.51 a month increase	48%	56%	73%
\$19 a month increase	51%	66%	83%
\$15 a month increase	52%	72%	90%

Would knowing that the district had not had a tax increase since 1997 make you more likely to vote in favor of a proposal, more likely to vote against, or would it make no difference to you?

Response	Percentage/ Patron telephone survey (n=400)	Percentage/ Patron online survey (n=209)	Percentage/Staff online survey (n=108)
More likely to vote in favor	13%	51%	70%
More likely to vote against	1%	3%	2%
It would make no difference	84%	43%	27%
Don't know (not read to telephone respondents; available to online respondents)	3%	4%	2%

Demographics

Patron Online Survey

Number of respondents – 209

Student status (individuals were permitted to select more than one answer, if they believed that more than one applied to their situation):

Current student families – 141

Past student families (all have graduated) – 25

Private/parochial/home-school families – 4

Families who have never had a child in Smithville R-2 – 8

Individuals who chose not to answer this question – 40

Location of residence:

North of Highway 92, east of Highway 169 – 79

South of Highway 92, east of Highway 169 – 60

North of Highway 92, west of Highway 169 – 23

South of Highway 92, west of Highway 169 – 5

Individuals who chose not to answer this question – 42

Staff Online Survey

Number of respondents – 108

Staff Status

Certified staff – 76

Classified staff – 16

Administration – 5

Individuals who chose not to answer this question – 11

Location of residence

Inside the boundaries of Smithville R-2 – 53

Outside the boundaries of Smithville R-2 – 48

Individuals who chose not to answer this question – 7