



S School District of Shiocton Newsletter

2024 Referendum Update

In February, 2024, Shiocton School District voters approved a three-year **Operational Referendum**. These funds will be used to cover the costs of the ongoing, day-to-day operational expenses necessary to maintain the educational programs of the District.

The **Capital Referendum**, however, was not approved by Shiocton School District voters. The funds requested would have supported six (6) key projects as indicated below.

Following the defeat of the Capital Referendum, in-person meetings were held to gather feedback from attendees regarding the vote and the projects. Too, a postal mail and on-line survey was provided so that those who were unable to attend the meetings on campus could still provide valuable feedback.

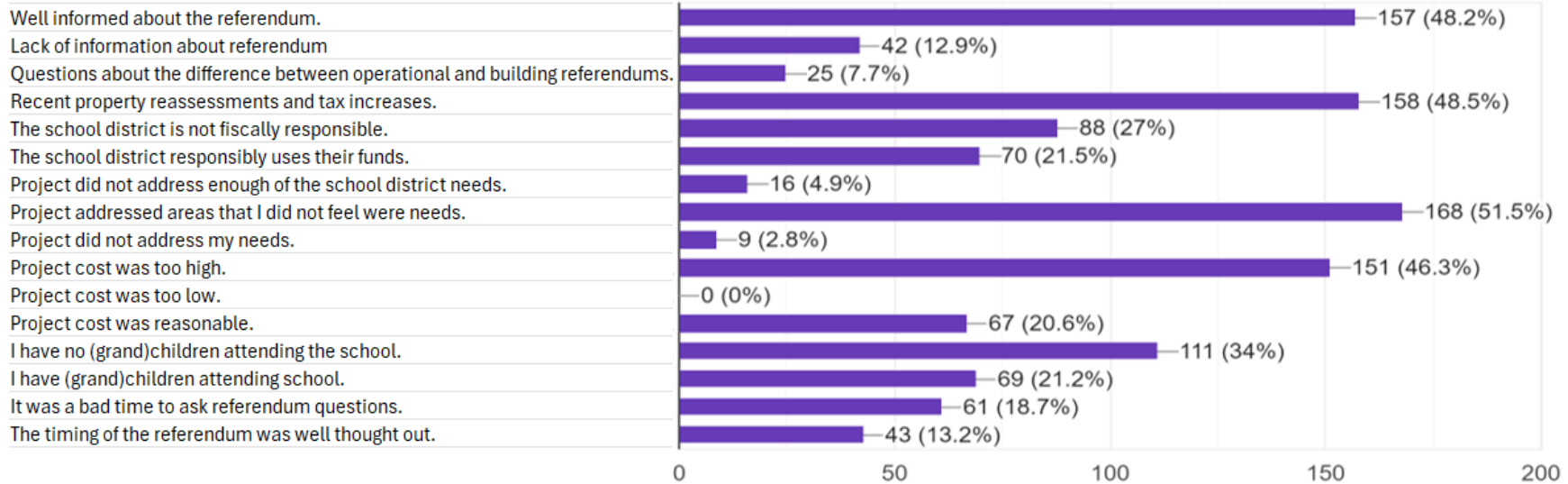
The feedback from the meetings and the survey are shared on the following pages so that all voters may see the results, as well as the comments received. This information is currently being reviewed and will be taken into consideration as the Building Project Committee and the Board of Education seek to address the needs that prompted the Capital Referendum and which still exist despite the outcome of the vote this past February.

1. **Infrastructure** (HVAC, electrical, plumbing, boilers, chillers, etc.)
2. **Safe and Secure Entrances** (elementary and middle/high school)
3. **Technical Education Wing**
4. **Fine Arts/ Gymnasium w/ Locker Rooms**
5. **Child Care Center Wing**
6. **Playground** (play structure, surface, and surrounding asphalt)



I supported or I did not support the building referendum because: (check all that apply)

326 Responses



While there are many data points to consider, the following were key take-aways from the feedback:

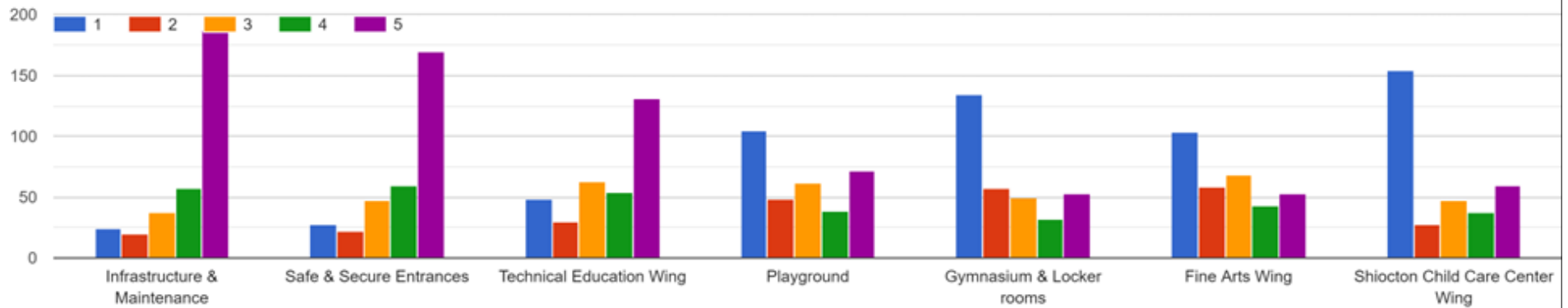
- ⇒ Nearly 50% of respondents indicated that the recent **increase in property valuation** was a factor that influenced their vote. During the meetings, attendees echoed this same sentiment, adding that the increase in property valuation resulted in a great increase in their property taxes, especially since this was the year that the State law allowed for a \$1,000/student increase to district tax payers.
- ⇒ Just over 50% of the respondents indicated that the **projects areas that were not**

needed. Those attending the meeting also echoed this sentiments. Discussion centered around why a District our size needed another gymnasium (or one so large), as well as why tax payers should fund the building of a child care wing. Two other points of discussion revolved around other sources of funding for the playground and if the infrastructure repairs and replacements could spread out over a few years and paid for through the Operational Budget.

Additional talking points from the meetings included:

- Emphasizing the positive academic impact of the projects; discuss test scores
- Explain the importance, academic need, benefit to larger community for each project; include sq ft of each project
- Use the two questions allowed and split the projects up for voters to decide on
- Explain how the committee started at \$70 mill and narrowed it down to \$35.8 mill (how went from "Cadillac" to "Chevy")
- Explore other funding for safe & secure entrances such as DOJ/OSS at State, Federal level
- Expand upon the impact of voucher money deducted from State funding
- Get information out to tax payers earlier in the process; increase communication with tax payers; address the "NO" letter
- Vote in April next time, not February

Using the scale below, please score the importance of the projects that were identified in the building referendum. 1 = not important to 5 = most important



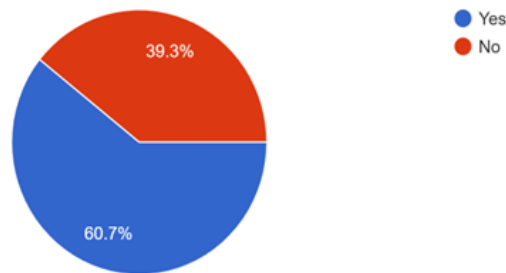
Feedback on the importance of projects show that the majority of respondents—187 of 326 responses— agreed that repairing and replacing components of the **Infrastructure** - electrical panels, aged and energy-costing HVAC systems, and plumbing/piping from the 1960's—is the most important project of all presented.

Safe and Secure Entrances was a close second with 170 of the 326 responses indicating this was a high priority project.

The remodel and building of a **Technical Education wing** rounded out the Top 3, garnering 131 votes for most important.

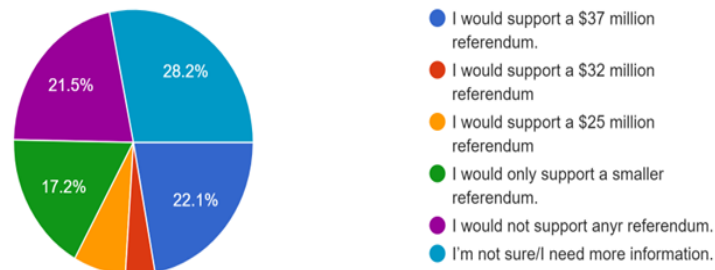
I would support the school district continuing to pursue a building referendum.

326 responses



How much would you support for a referendum project addressing facility needs?

326 responses



The various space, safety, and academic needs that fueled the decision to seek a Capital Referendum have not gone away just because the 'no' votes prevailed in February.

These needs exist and persist. The costs to meet these needs will likely grow the longer we wait to address them due to the rising costs of materials and labor, as well as to the worsening conditions.

Given that over 60% of the survey response indicate there would be **support for the continued pursuit of a building referendum** and coupled with the data related to those projects seen to be of greatest importance, it is very likely that the District will return to the voters in April with a revised request.