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Douglas County School District Survey #2

N=808 Likely Voters

MoE= +/- 3.4%

July 9-15, 2024

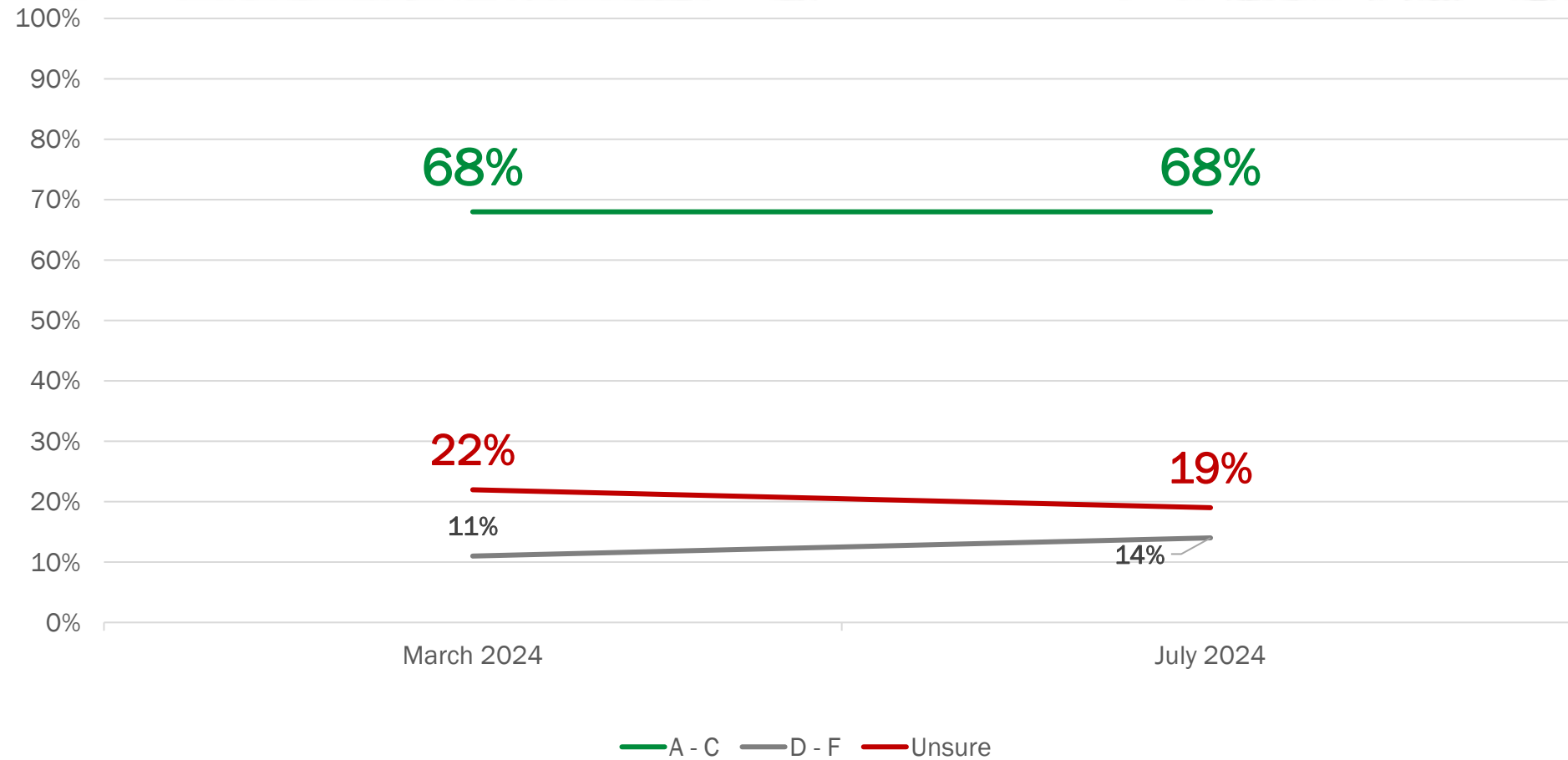
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Douglas County School District continues to receive solid performance marks, with the highest scores from younger women, those with kids in district, and voters in Highlands Ranch.

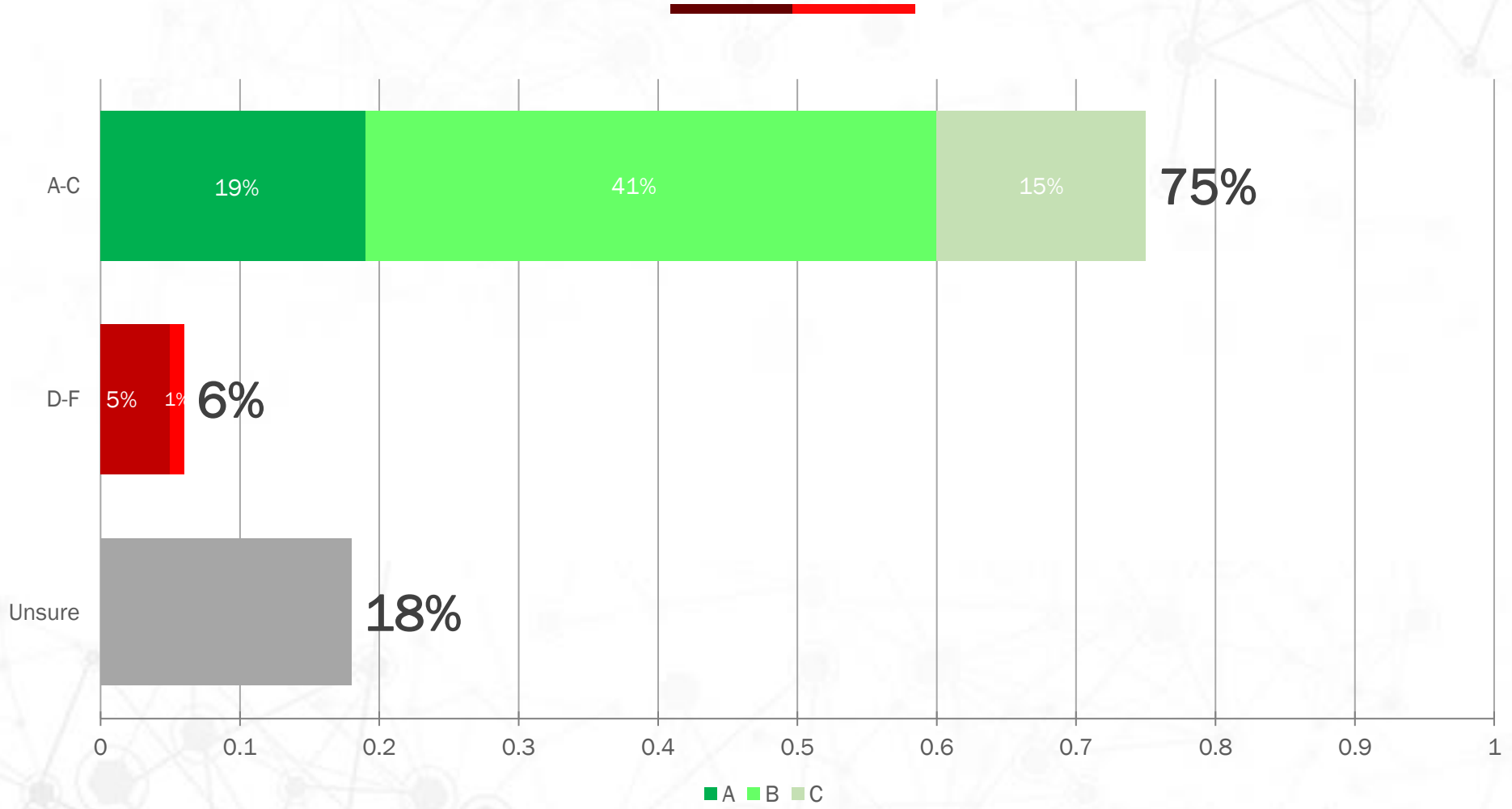


4. Students are often given the grades of A, B, C, D or Fail to rate the quality of their work at school. Suppose Douglas County School District was graded the same way, what grade would you give Douglas County School District?



Sixty percent of voters give the district buildings/facilities an A or B grade. Republicans and those with kids in district rate the facilities the highest, with 81% and 86%, respectively, giving an A-C grade.

5. Suppose Douglas County School District school buildings & facilities were graded the same way, what grade would you give district buildings & facilities?



A majority of voters (60%) would vote for the bond proposal as described in **Ballot A (\$490 M)**

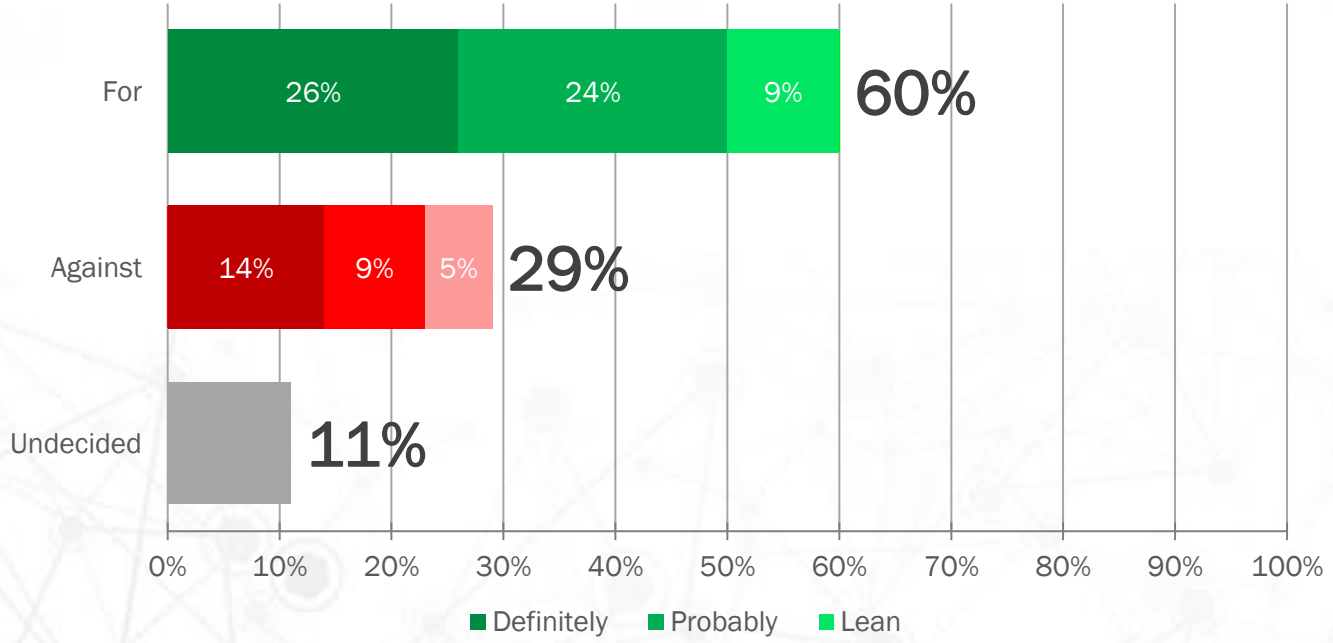
Q7A. Would you say you would vote for or against such a bond proposal?



WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY NEW TAX, SHALL DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT DEBT BE INCREASED \$490 MILLION, WITH A MAXIMUM TOTAL REPAYMENT COST NOT TO EXCEED \$895 MILLION, FOR THE PURPOSES OF ENHANCING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS BY:

- UPDATING AND EQUIPPING AGING SCHOOLS AND FACILITIES;
- BUILDING ADDITIONAL CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PATHWAYS INCLUDING FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, BY CONSTRUCTING AND EXPANDING SCHOOL FACILITIES;
- CONSTRUCTING, EQUIPPING AND EXPANDING NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS TO ACCOMMODATE GROWTH AND REDUCE OVERCROWDING; AND
- UPGRADING SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY;

AND SHALL THE TAXES AUTHORIZED AT THE DISTRICT'S BOND ELECTIONS IN 2000, 2003, 2006, AND 2018 BE EXTENDED AND AUTHORIZED TO BE USED TO PAY THE DEBT AUTHORIZED AT THIS ELECTION IN ADDITION TO THE DEBT AUTHORIZED AT SUCH PRIOR ELECTIONS; AND SHALL THE DISTRICT'S EXPENDITURES BE SUBJECT TO OVERSIGHT BY A CITIZENS' COMMITTEE?



A majority of voters (60%) say they would support the bond proposal described in **Ballot A (\$490 M)**, with high support among younger college-educated women, in Highlands Ranch and Parker being the most supportive. And, a 56% majority of Republicans say they would support the \$490 M proposal.

Q7A. Would you say you would vote for or against such a bond proposal?



\$490 M Bond (Proposal A)

	Size	For	Against	Undecided
Total	100%	60%	29%	11%
Republican	38%	56%	36%	8%
Independent/NPP	42%	63%	28%	10%
Democrat	21%	60%	20%	20%
Men 18-54	30%	63%	29%	8%
Men 55+	17%	40%	47%	14%
Women 18-54	27%	68%	20%	11%
Women 55+	23%	60%	27%	13%
<College Men	18%	51%	34%	15%
College+ Men	30%	57%	36%	7%
<College Women	21%	57%	26%	17%
College+ Women	30%	69%	22%	9%
<College <\$75K	11%	64%	23%	14%
<College \$75K+	24%	53%	32%	15%
College+ <\$75K	6%	70%	23%	6%
College+ \$75K+	49%	64%	29%	7%
DCSD Children Yes	44%	59%	34%	8%
DCSD Children No	55%	62%	24%	15%
0-1 of 4	23%	58%	24%	18%
2 of 4	10%	85%	12%	2%
3 of 4	10%	73%	24%	3%
4 of 4	57%	53%	34%	12%
Castle Rock/Castle Pines	26%	49%	35%	16%
Highlands Ranch/Lone Tree	29%	67%	17%	16%
Parker	29%	64%	30%	6%
Rural/Unincorporated	17%	57%	38%	5%

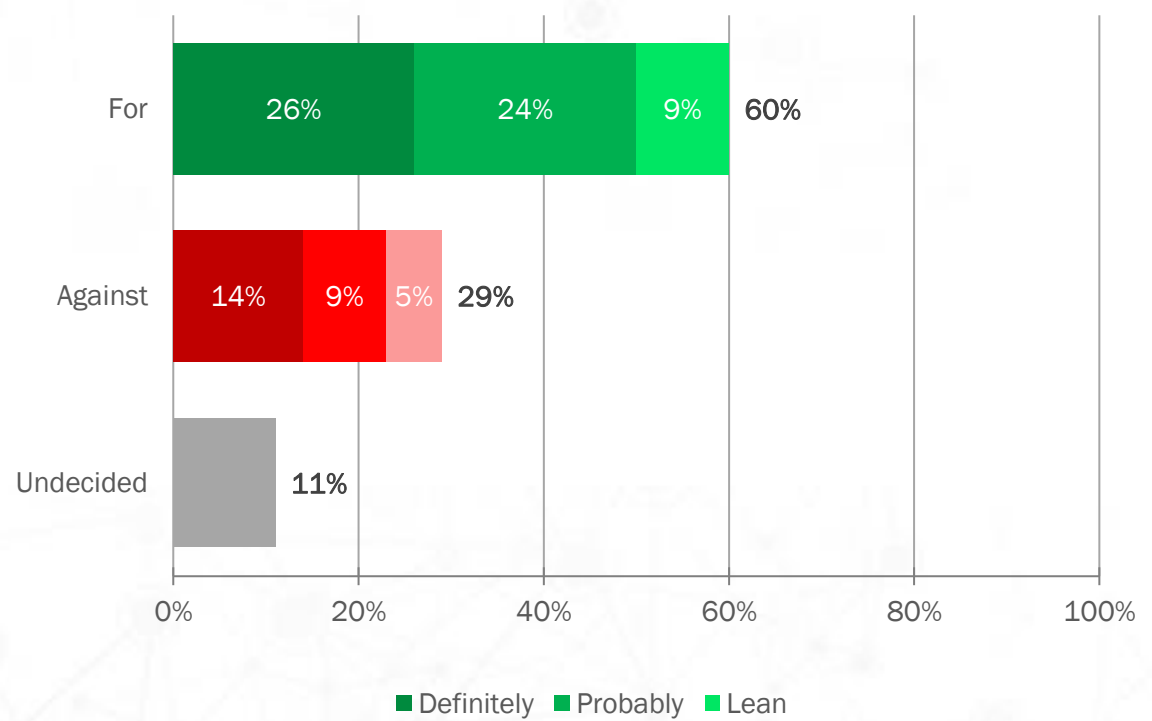
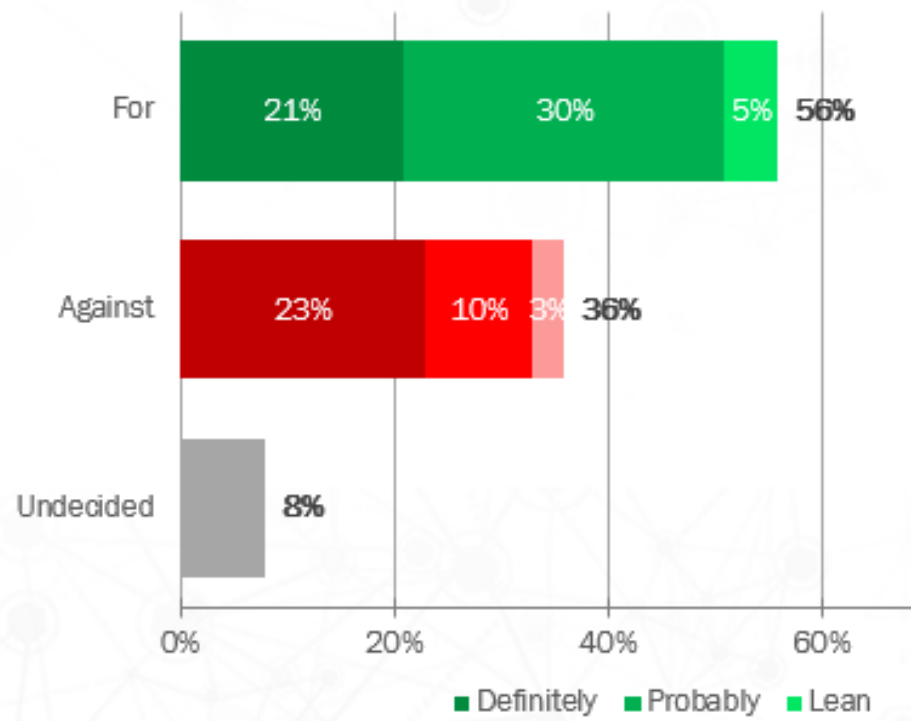
Support for the \$490M Bond increased by four points since our last Spring poll.

Q7A. Would you say you would vote for or against such a bond proposal?



March 2024

July 2024



Support for **Ballot B (\$590 M)** drops below a majority, with 48% of voters saying they would vote for the (more expensive) option. Support for this option remains high with Democrats (67%), but, 58% of Republicans say they would oppose this (version of the) proposal.

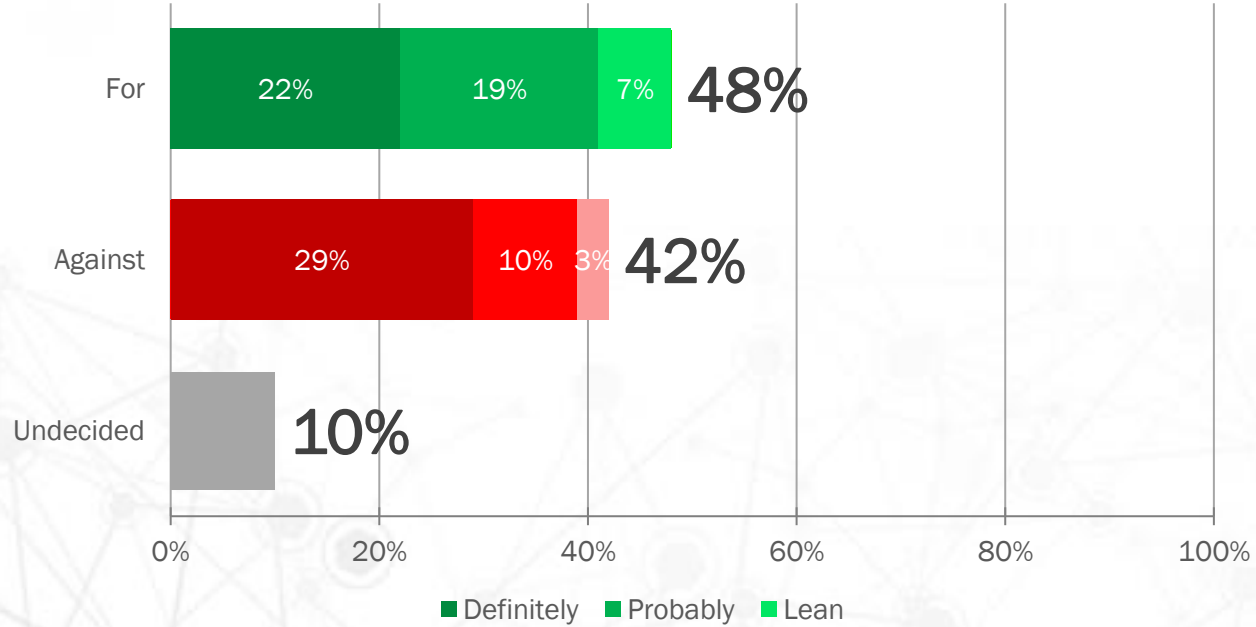
Q7B. Would you say you would vote for or against such a bond proposal?



SHALL DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT DEBT BE INCREASED \$590 MILLION WITH A REPAYMENT COST OF NOT TO EXCEED \$990 MILLION, AND SHALL TAXES BE INCREASED NOT MORE THAN \$60 MILLION ANNUALLY TO PAY SUCH DEBT, ALL FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENHANCING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS BY:

- UPDATING AND EQUIPPING AGING SCHOOLS AND FACILITIES;
- BUILDING ADDITIONAL CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PATHWAYS, INCLUDING FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, BY CONSTRUCTING AND EXPANDING SCHOOL FACILITIES;
- CONSTRUCTING, EQUIPPING AND EXPANDING NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS TO ACCOMMODATE GROWTH AND REDUCE OVERCROWDING; AND
- UPGRADING SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY;

AND SHALL THE MILL LEVY BE IMPOSED EACH YEAR AT A RATE SUFFICIENT TO PAY THE PRINCIPAL OF AND INTEREST ON THE DISTRICT'S DEBT (OR TO CREATE A RESERVE FOR SUCH PAYMENT); AND SHALL THE DISTRICT'S EXPENDITURES BE SUBJECT TO OVERSIGHT BY A CITIZENS' COMMITTEE?



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Pro-Bond Messages

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Messages - Ballot A



9. The District has over one hundred buildings, many of which have aging equipment requiring replacement. If not addressed, taxpayer dollars will continue to be expended on avoidable and reactive measures due to aging infrastructure not being updated.

10. Passing a bond will provide the Douglas County School District with funding to increase and maintain school safety and security by upgrading school buildings with new technology and safety advancements to keep students, teachers, and staff safe.

11. If we don't pass the bond, our ability to provide safe and adequate educational spaces for students, which research shows are critical for learning, will be compromised.

12. If we don't pass the bond, the quality of our learning environments will continue to deteriorate. We will use \$20M of reserves for emergency capital needs, but the backlog is \$300M, which will continue to grow by an average of \$35M per year. Spending from reserves is a temporary solution.

13. The Douglas County School District is the highest-performing school district in the Denver Metro area and student test scores are currently higher than they were before the pandemic. Passing the bond allows us to continue to support this high performance.

14A. Because many of our school buildings are overcrowded, we are spending \$1 million dollars a year on temporary modular classroom units, which are not ideal from a security, learning and cost perspective.

15. The District's athletic and extra-curricular facilities are aging and require major upgrades.

16. If we don't pass the bond, busing and transportation for all students will require additional and longer routes to serve new communities, making our busing challenges worse.

17A. Passing a \$490 million dollar bond would not raise the property tax rate you are paying today for schools.

18. Ensuring safe, modern and efficient schools for our children is fiscally responsible and benefits the entire community.

19A. This \$490 bond allows the district to restructure its debt in order to keep the tax rate from increasing, which is fiscally responsible.

Best Bond Messages

Most Effective

2nd Most Effective

Overall

Overall	100%
Undecided	11%
Persuadable	58%

Spending \$1 million dollars a year on temporary modular classroom units.
Bond allows district to restructure its debt, keep tax rate same.
Bond allows district to restructure its debt, keep tax rate same.

Bond would not raise the property tax rate.
If no bond, need to tap emergency reserve, no dent in \$300M backlog.
Bond would not raise the property tax rate.

Top Movers

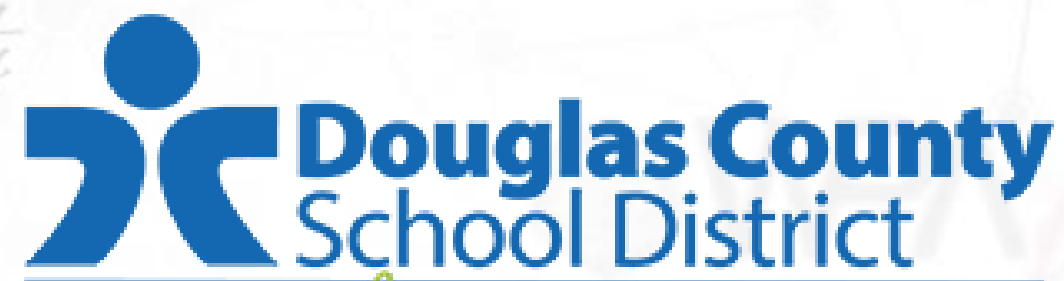
<College <\$75K	11%
Men 55+	17%
DCSD Children Yes	44%
College+ Women	30%
Democrat	21%

If no bond, need to tap emergency reserve, no dent in \$300M backlog.
Athletic and extra-curricular facilities require major upgrades.
One hundred buildings requiring improvements, should not continue to waste money on stop-gap.
One hundred buildings requiring improvements, should not continue to waste money on stop-gap.
Spending \$1 million dollars a year on temporary modular classroom units.

If no bond, bus/transportation issues worsen.
Bond would not raise the property tax rate.
Spending \$1 million dollars a year on temporary modular classroom units.
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One hundred buildings requiring improvements, should not continue to waste money on stop-gap.

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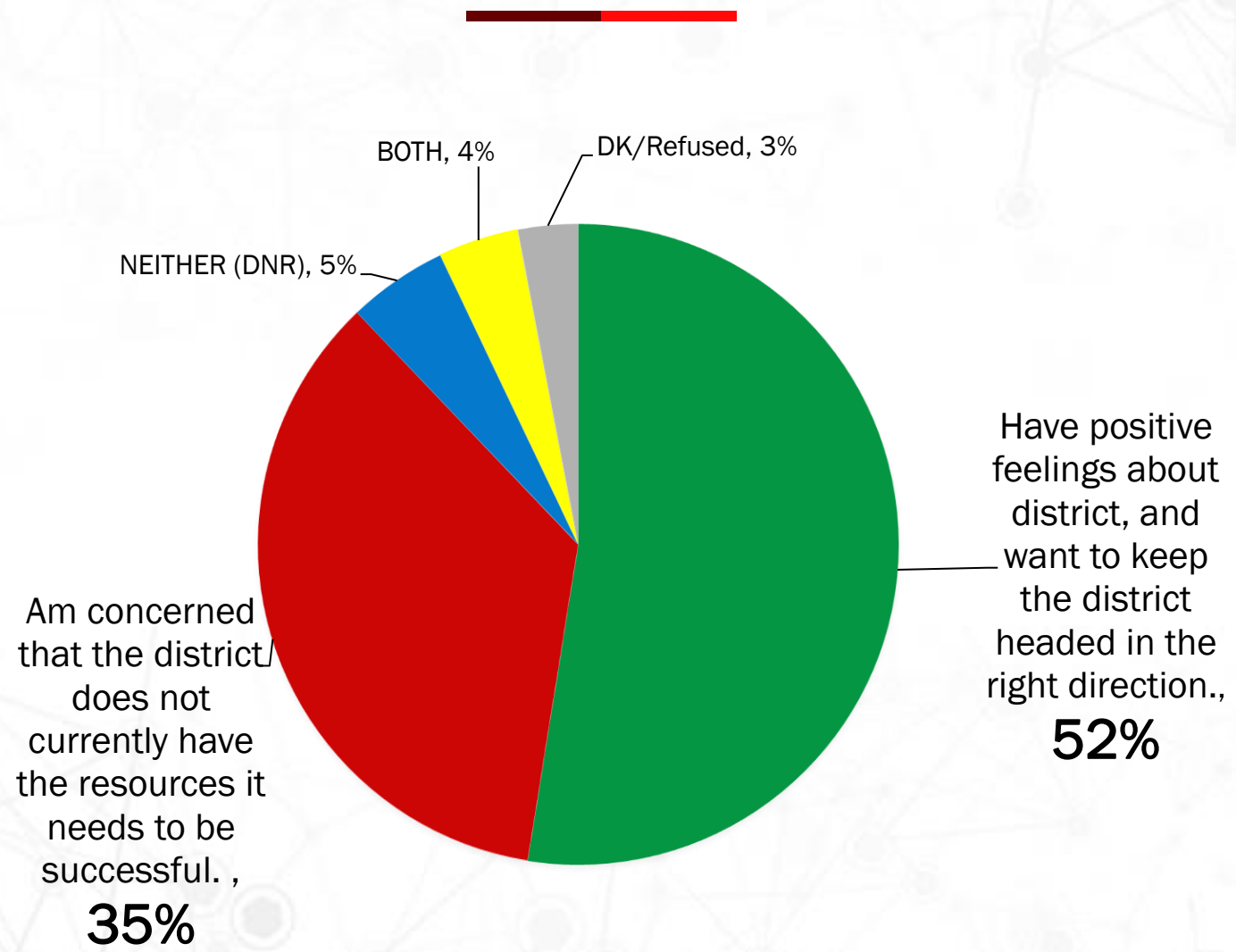


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Proposal Viewpoints

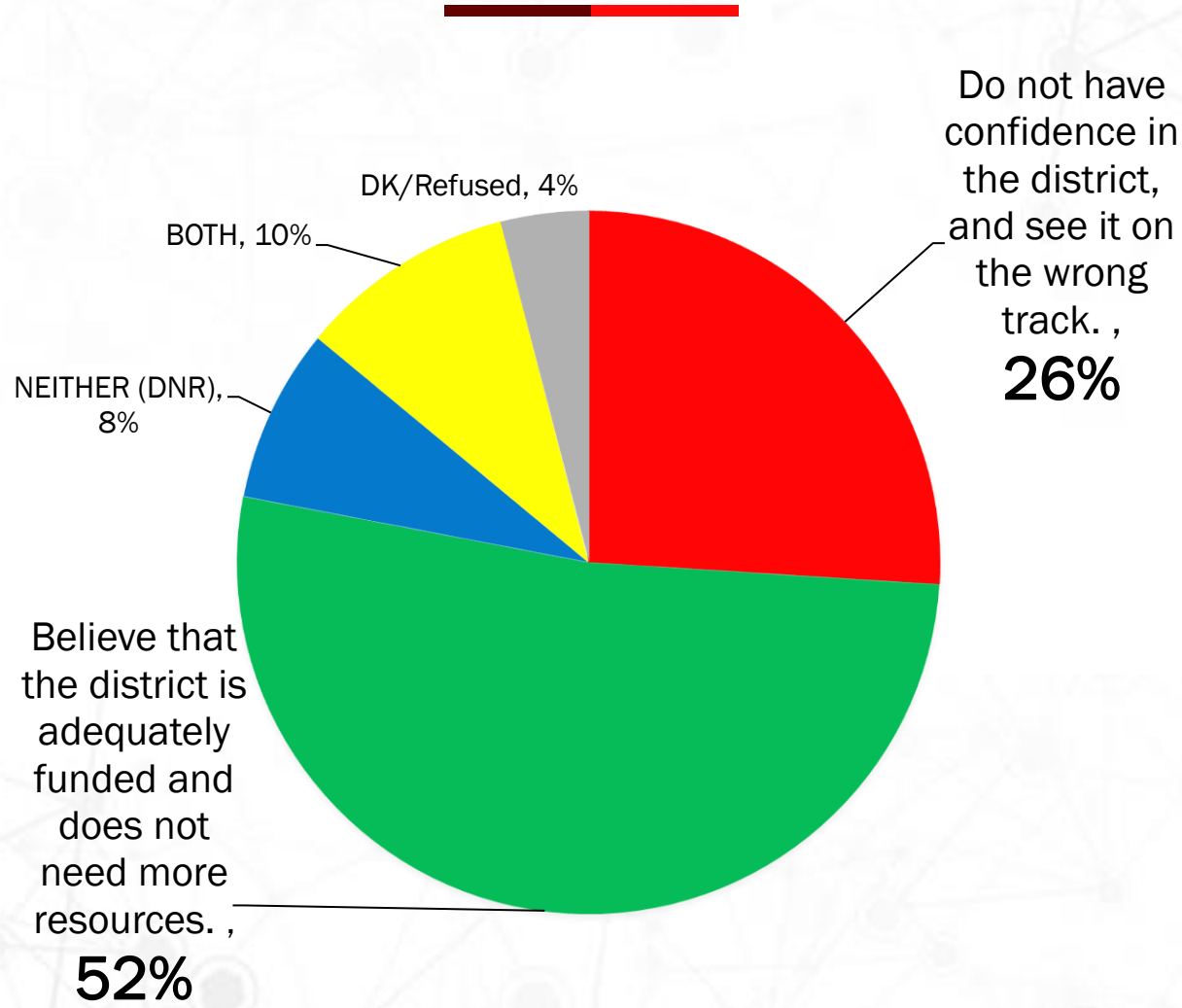
A majority of Bond Supporters (52%) explain their support for the proposal based on their current positive feelings about the district and desire to keep it that way, particularly among less educated and less affluent voters

Q22. Which of the following viewpoints would you say better explains your SUPPORT?



A majority of Bond Opponents (52%) believe the district is already adequately funded, including 55% of Republicans and 68% of Men 55+

Q22. Which of the following viewpoints would you say better explains your **OPPOSITION**?

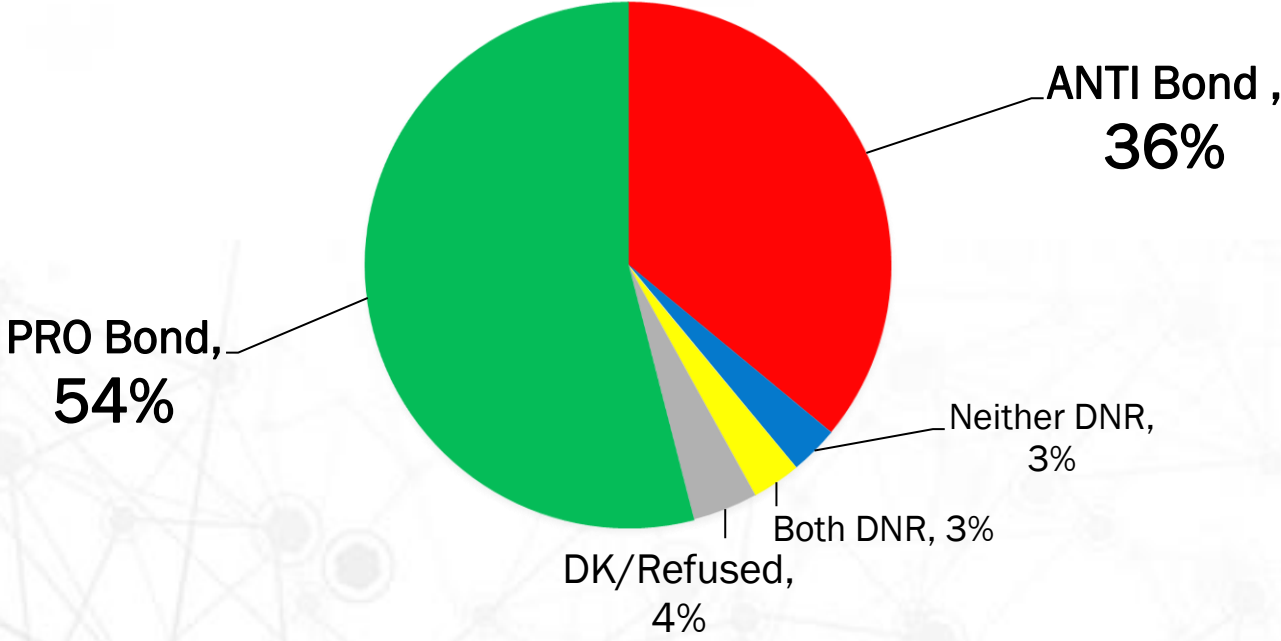


We tested two opposing Bond Proposal viewpoints – one argument supporting the bond and another in opposition. A 54% majority of voters believe the \$490M Bond measure is necessary and can be done without an increase in the school tax rate.

Q23. I am going to read you two points of view about the bond proposal, and please tell me which one you agree with more

Anti-Bond POINT A: (Some/Other) people say the District failed in its last two attempts to pass a bond measure, because we cannot continue to strap our future generations with more and more debt. The District should live within its means and accept the will of the voters – “no” means “no” – especially considering that districtwide student enrollment has declined for two years in a row.
...while...

Pro \$490 M Bond POINT B: (Some/Other) people say that the District’s aging infrastructure, repair backlog, safety and security needs will become more urgent and expensive over time. Our property values will stay high as long as we continue to invest in our school system. Every Douglas County student and resident deserves a quality school in their community, which we cannot provide without a voter-approved bond measure. Additionally, we can do this without an increase in the tax rate we are paying for schools today.



Conclusions & Recommendations

- Our most recent survey finds a majority of Douglas voters holding positive attitudes about district performance overall, and about the District's buildings and facilities. These positive views about the district should be helpful to passing a Bond.
- Still, only about half of the district voters have any interaction with the district, so there is an ongoing gap in awareness of district finances and capital needs.
- Initial support for a \$490M bond measure with no rate increase comes in at sixty percent (60%), showing a viable path for passage in November.
 - This poll finds increased support for a \$490M bond, compared to our March poll, and previous year efforts.
 - Still, this result does not predict an easy road and it is not a prediction of the future, but rather a snap-shot of likely Nov 2024 voter attitudes at this time. A well-run, well-funded campaign -- combined with community leader consensus -- will be required to maintain this majority support through November.
- After positive message tests, our survey found that target persuadable voter subgroups include Democrat women 18-54 years old, College+ women, voters with DCSD Children, and Democrat/IND men 55+. The most hesitant are men over 55 years old.
- The most persuasive messages overall emphasize that this proposal is the most fiscally responsible thing to do, as this restructuring plan can be done with no increase in tax rates/prop taxes for schools, And, that this proposal will keep the district from spending money on short-term stop-gap measures (such as modular buildings and long-distance busing). Other, more targeted messages should include improvements to the districts' athletic and extra-curricular facilities (men 55+), and the growing \$300M repair backlog remaining (younger IND/DEM women).



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