KDPaine & Partners

GRS Cooperative School District

Constituency Audit

Prepared by: Bruce Aube
Managing Director
KDPaine & Partners
177 Main Street
Berlin, NH 03570-2411
baube@kdpaine.com
www.measuresofsuccess.com
Wednesday, 13 June 2007

METHODOLOGY

The GRS Cooperative School District recently had a failed bond vote (only 47% votes for the bond) for a renovation project for the district's schools. The school district needs to address the aging and deterioration of its schools and must get a two-thirds vote amongst its constituents on any plan aimed at addressing such problems. In order to create a plan that addresses the school district's immediate and future needs, which will also meet the approval of the district's voters, the GRS Cooperative School District, in partnership with KDPaine & Partners, conducted a comprehensive survey of all GRS Cooperative School District constituents.

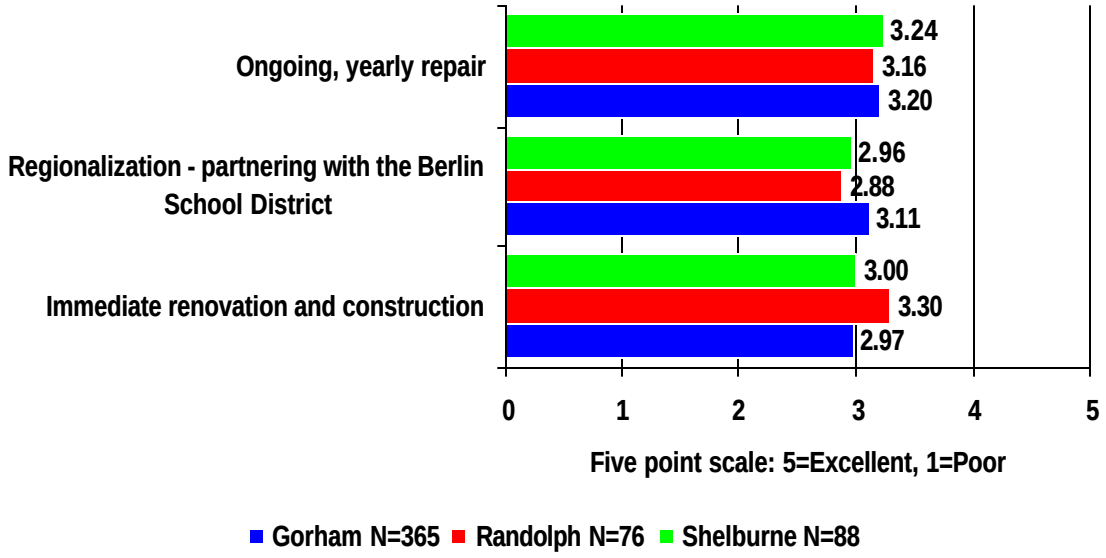
KDPaine & Partners and the GRS Cooperative School District developed a mail survey aimed to determine how the residents within the school district want to address the aging and deterioration of its schools. The GRS Cooperative School District distributed the mail survey and business reply envelopes to all 2,560 registered voters within the school district; a total of 555 completed surveys (response rate of 22%) was yielded. The robust response provides a statistically representative dataset of those who live in the school district; we can say with 95 percent confidence that overall findings (findings based on all respondents) are within +/- 3.68% of what the entire GRS Cooperative School District population would state as a whole.

A complete set of cross-tabulation tables was generated and used to produce this report. Statistical testing was conducted across all questions/variables on key demographic subgroups, including town, length of residency in town and home appraisal value. Statistical testing was also conducted across all questions/variables by key survey questions, including recent bond voters vs. non-voters. All testing was conducted using a 95 percent confidence interval.

Respondents were most likely to favor ongoing, yearly repair of the GRS Cooperative School District's aging and deteriorating facilities

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *excellent* and one representing *poor*, registered voters living in the GRS Cooperative School District were asked to rate three potential solutions aimed at addressing the school district's aging and deteriorating facilities. Overall, respondents were most likely to favor *ongoing, yearly repair* (**3.22**) as a solution. The *regionalization with the Berlin School District* (**3.05**) and *immediate renovation and construction* (**2.99**) options received slightly less approval.

Q1: How would you rate the following proposed solutions as a means of solving the GRS Cooperative School District's aging and deteriorating facilities?



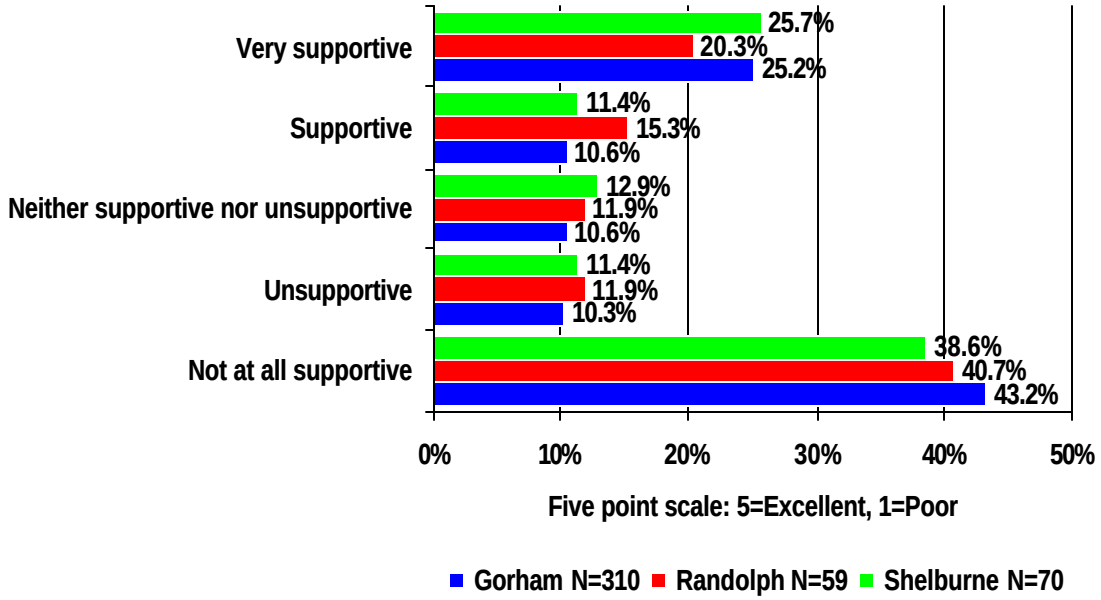
Difference in opinion existed among those who voted on the bond on March 21, 2007 and those who did not. More specifically, those who voted on the bond were significantly less likely to support the *regionalization with the Berlin School District* solution (**2.80**) than those who did not vote on the bond (**3.39**). Conversely, those who voted on the bond were significantly more likely to support the *immediate renovation and construction* solution (**3.24**) than those who did not vote on the bond (**2.63**).

The majority of respondents would not support paying tuition to Berlin for GRS students in grades 9-12 to attend Berlin High School

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *very supportive* and one representing *not at all supportive*, registered voters living in the GRS Cooperative School District were asked to describe the extent to which they would support paying tuition to Berlin for GRS students in grades 9-12 to attend Berlin High School. The majority of all respondents (54%) said that they *would not* support such an idea, scoring **2** (10%) or the lowest score of **1** (44%). Only about one-third (35%) said that they would *support* such an idea,

scoring **4** (12%) or the top score of **5** (23%). The mean score on this measure was a low **2.61** on the five-point scale. Respondents from Gorham (**2.59**) and Randolph (**2.62**) were slightly less likely to support this idea than were respondents from Shelburne (**2.68**).

Q2: To what extent would you support paying tuition to Berlin for GRS students in grades 9-12 to attend Berlin High School?

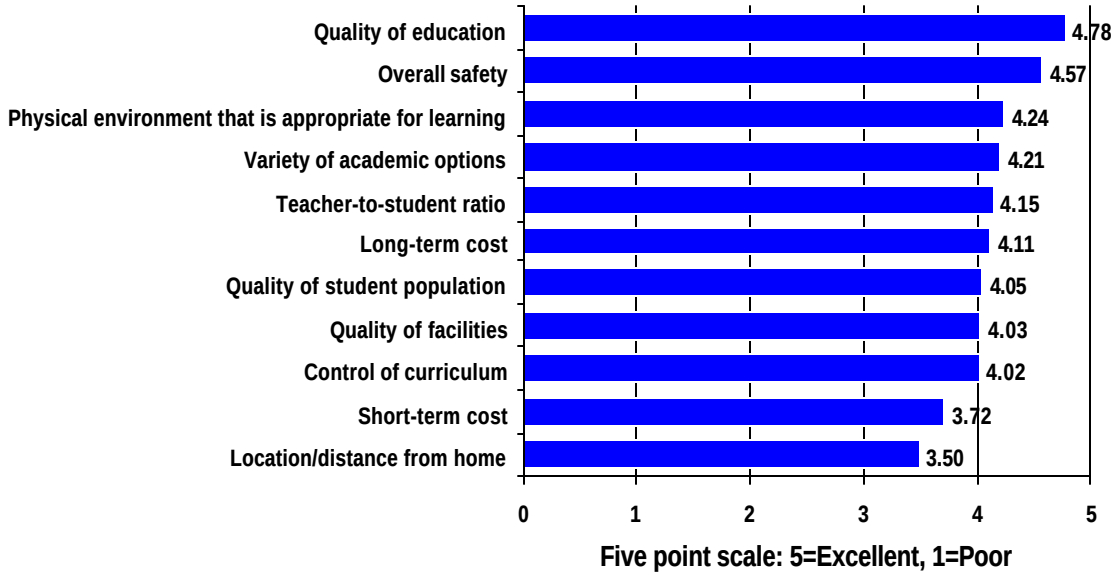


Respondents who voted on the bond were less likely to *support paying tuition to Berlin for GRS students in grades 9-12 to attend Berlin High School* (**2.59**) than those who did not vote on the bond (**2.88**).

Quality of education and overall safety rank as most important when evaluating any educational experience

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *very important* and one representing *not at all important*, respondents were asked to rate the importance of eleven factors when evaluating any educational experience. Overall, respondents deemed *quality of education* (**4.78**) most important, followed by *overall safety (crime/drugs)* (**4.57**). Other attributes deemed important by the vast majority of respondents included having a *physical environment that is appropriate for learning (quiet, non-disruptive, etc.)* (**4.24**), *variety of academic options* (**4.21**), *teacher-to-student ratio* (**4.15**), *long-term cost* (**4.11**), *quality of student population* (**4.05**), *quality of facilities* (**4.03**) and *control of curriculum* (**4.02**). More than half of all respondents (56%) also considered *short-term cost* (**3.72**) important, while *location or distance from home* (**3.50**) was deemed important by less than one-half (49%) of all respondents.

Q3: Please rate the importance of the following when evaluating any educational experience.

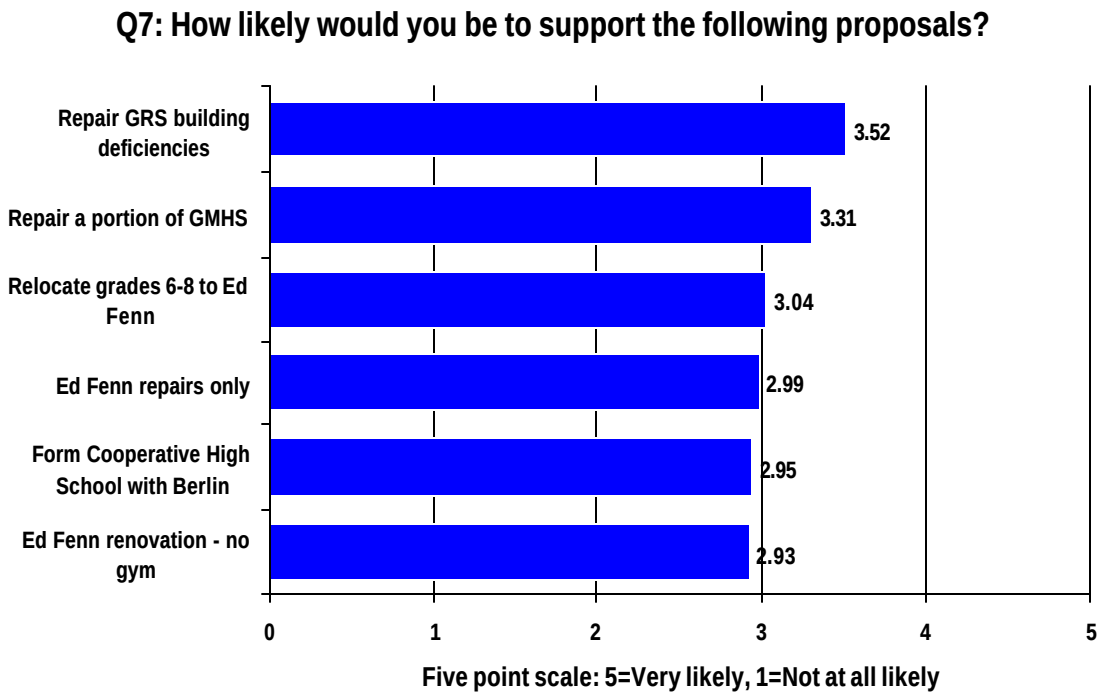


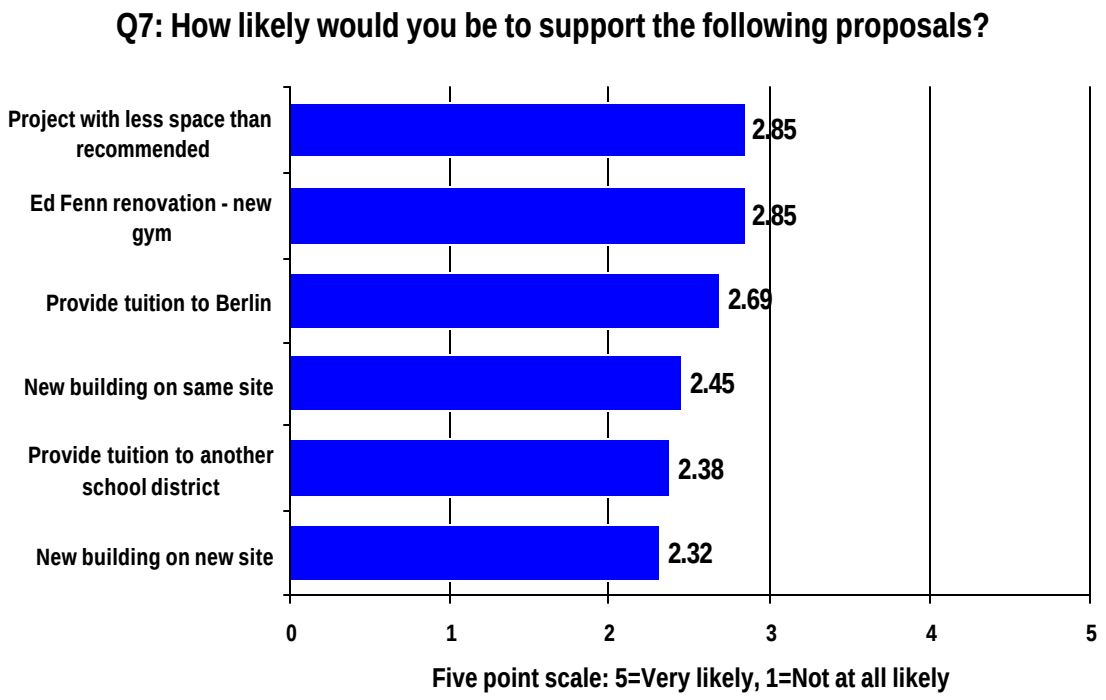
The following table illustrates the respondents' perceived mean rating on each attribute for each of the three proposed solutions (green = highest mean score in category, red = lowest mean score in category):

Importance	Attribute	Regionalization	Ongoing	Immediate
4.78	Quality of education	3.39	3.83	3.82
4.57	Overall safety	2.86	3.79	3.85
4.24	Physical environment that is appropriate for learning	3.20	3.27	3.62
4.21	Variety of academic options	3.63	3.34	3.49
4.15	Teacher-to-student ratio	3.03	3.90	3.85
4.11	Long-term cost	3.11	3.05	2.92
4.05	Quality of student population	3.00	3.86	3.81
4.03	Quality of facilities	3.23	3.08	3.73
4.02	Control of curriculum	2.94	3.84	3.74
3.72	Short-term cost	3.11	3.20	2.75
3.50	Location or distance from home	2.72	3.93	3.85

Respondents are much more likely to support repairing existing facilities than building new facilities

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *very likely* and one representing *not at all likely*, respondents were asked to rate their likelihood to support 12 potential proposals. Overall, respondents stated that they were most likely to support *repairing GRS building deficiencies* (**3.52**) or *a portion of GMHS* (**3.31**). Respondents were least likely to state that they would support creating a *new building on a new site* (**2.32**) or a *new building on the same site* (**2.45**); most were also against *providing tuition to another school district* (**2.38**) or more specifically, *provide tuition to Berlin* (**2.69**).





Respondents who voted on the bond were significantly more likely to support a proposal aimed to *repair GRS building deficiencies* (**3.73**) than those who did not vote on the bond (**3.22**). Other significant differences in support also existed between respondents who voted on the bond and those who did not; the following table illustrates suggested

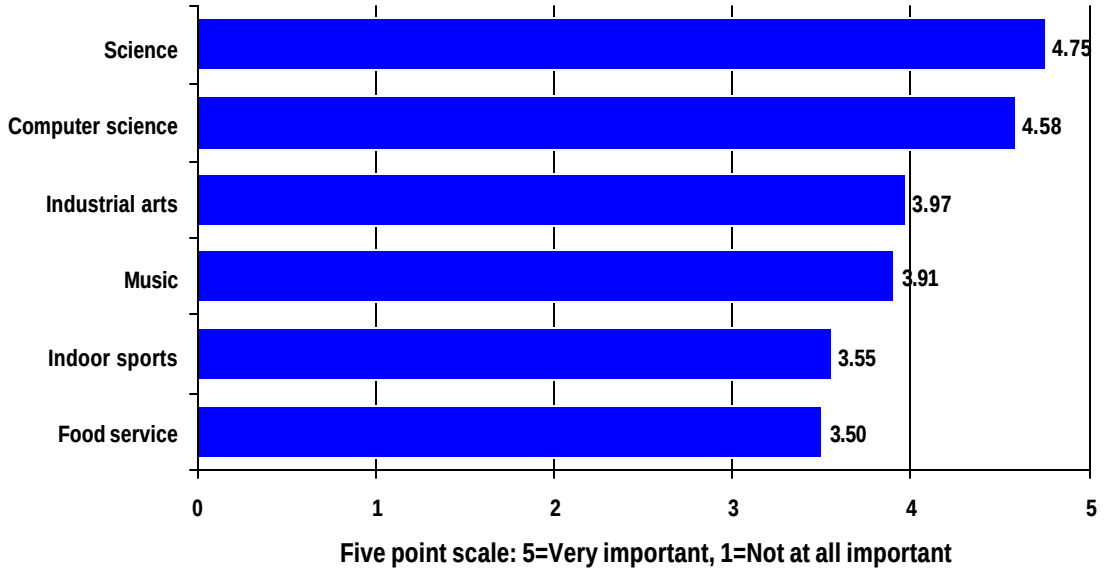
proposals which experienced significantly different levels of support from the two respondent groups (green scores are significantly greater than scores in red):

Proposal	Voted on bond	Did not vote on bond
Repair GRS building deficiencies	3.73	3.22
Relocate grades 6-8 to Ed Fenn	2.92	3.33
Ed Fenn repairs only	2.88	3.23
Form Cooperative High School with Berlin	2.82	3.23
Ed Fenn renovation – no gym	3.09	2.79
Project with less space than the education assessment recommended	3.02	2.69
Provide tuition to Berlin	2.55	2.97
New building on same site	2.65	2.26
Provide tuition to another school district	2.21	2.62

Science and computer science were deemed the most important programs at the GRS Cooperative

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *very important* and one representing *not at all important*, respondents were asked to rate the importance of six programs of the GRS Cooperative School District. Overall, respondents felt that the *science* (**4.75**) and *computer science* (**4.58**) programs are most important. *Food service* (**3.50**) and *indoor sports* (**3.55**) programs were deemed least important by respondents.

Q8: How important are each of the following programs at the GRS Cooperative?

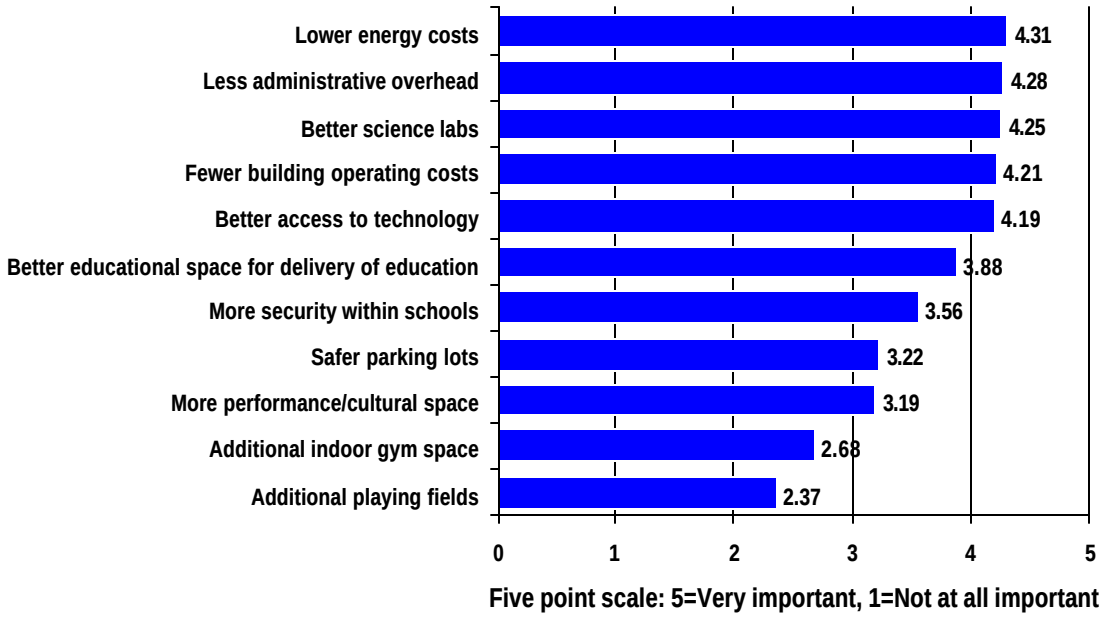


Renovations aimed at reducing costs (energy, administrative overhead, operating costs) are more important to respondents than having additional playing fields or indoor gym space

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *very important* and one representing *not at all important*, respondents were asked to rate the importance of several renovations.

Overall, respondents felt that renovations aimed to *lower energy costs* (**4.31**), *reduce administrative overhead* (**4.28**) or *reduce building operating costs* (**4.21**) were most important. Renovations that would create *additional playing fields* (**2.37**) or *additional indoor gym space* (**2.68**) were deemed least important.

Q9: How important are each of the following renovations?

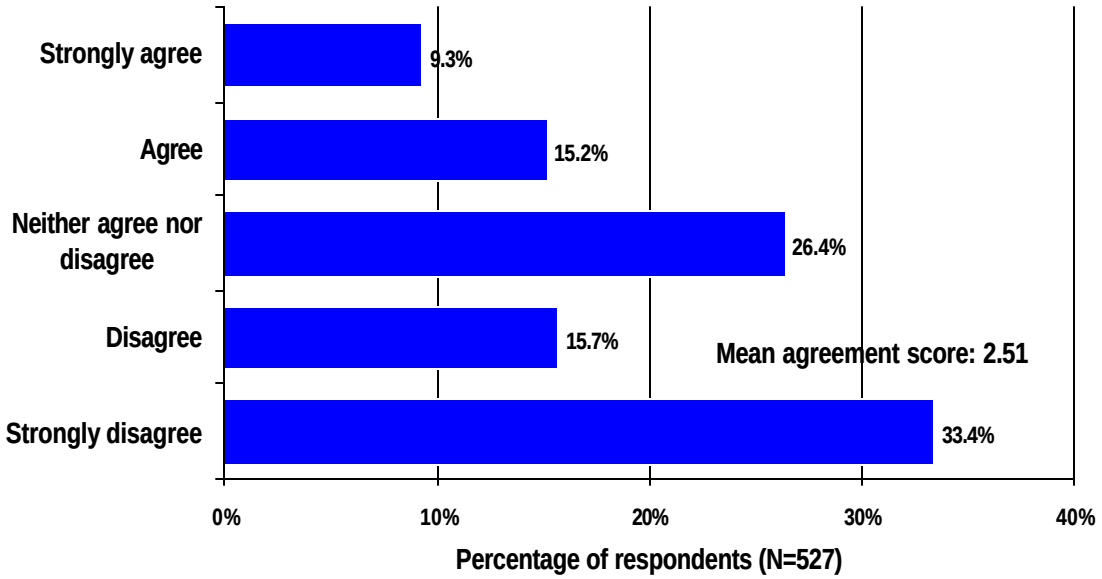


Nearly half of all respondents do not feel that overcrowding is an issue that needs to be addressed

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *strongly agree* and one representing *strongly disagree*, respondents were asked to describe their level of agreement with the statement, "Overcrowding is an issue that needs to be addressed." Close to half (49%) said that they *disagree* with the statement, scoring **2** (16%) or the lowest score of **1** (33%). More than one-quarter (26%) said that they *neither agree nor disagree*, scoring **3.** Less than one-quarter (24%) said that they *agree* with the statement, scoring **4** (15%) or the top score of **5** (9%). The mean agreement rating for the statement, "Overcrowding is an issue that needs to be addressed," was a **2.51** on the five-point scale.

Respondents who voted on the bond on March 21st were significantly less likely to agree with the statement (**2.41**) than those who did not vote on the bond (**2.74**).

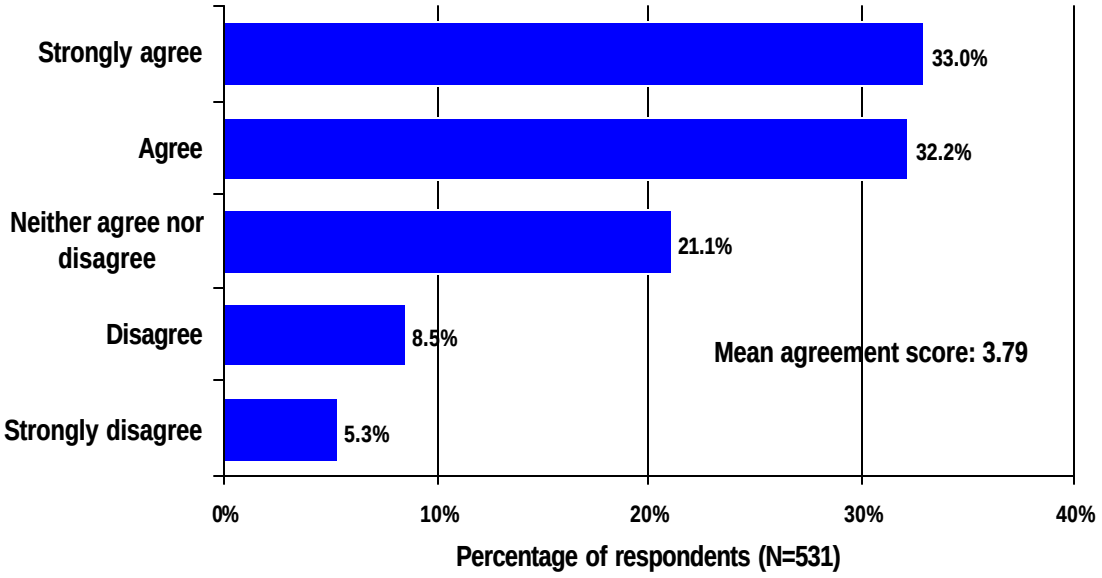
Q10a: To what extent do you agree with the statement, "Overcrowding is an issue that needs to be addressed?"



Two-out-of-three respondents believe that technology in school is an issue that needs to be addressed

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *strongly agree* and one representing *strongly disagree*, respondents were asked to describe their level of agreement with the statement, "Technology in schools is an issue that needs to be addressed." Nearly two-thirds (65%) said that they *agree* with the statement, scoring **4** (32%) or the top score of **5** (33%). More than one-fifth (21%) said that they *neither agree nor disagree*, scoring **3.** Just one-in-seven (14%) said that they *disagree* with the statement, scoring **2** (9%) or the lowest score of **1** (5%). The mean agreement rating for the statement, "Technology in the school is an issue that needs to be addressed," was a **3.79** on the five-point scale.

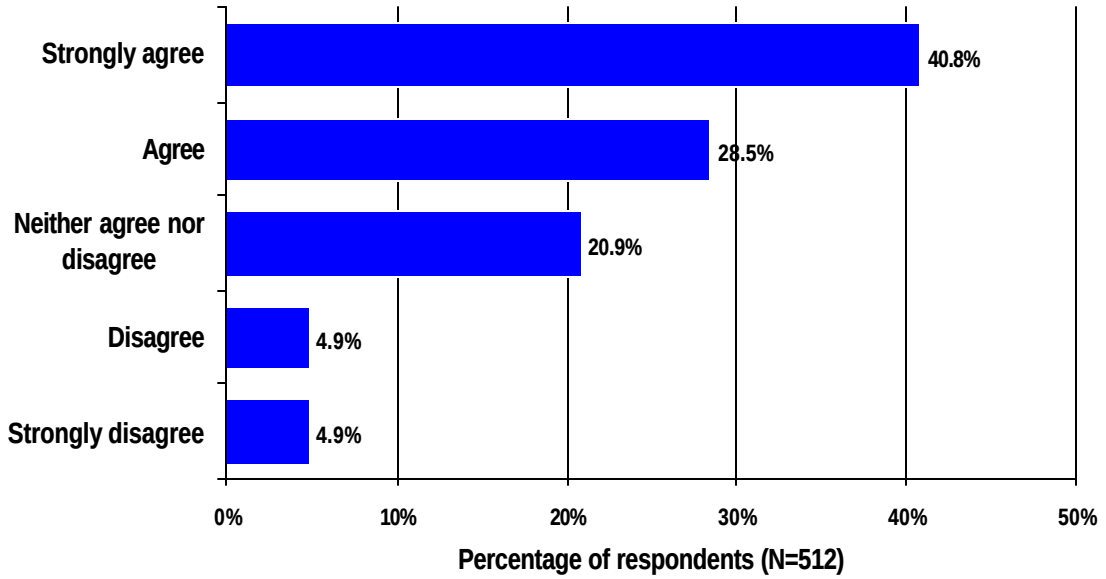
Q10b: To what extent do you agree with the statement, "Technology in schools is an issue that needs to be addressed?"



More than two-thirds of respondents think that current science labs are unsatisfactory

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *strongly agree* and one representing *strongly disagree*, respondents were asked to describe their level of agreement with the statement, "Current science labs are unsatisfactory." More than two-thirds (69%) said that they *agree* with the statement, scoring **4** (29%) or the top score of **5** (41%). More than one-fifth (21%) said that they *neither agree nor disagree*, scoring **3.** Just 10 percent said that they *disagree* with the statement, scoring **2** (5%) or the lowest score of **1** (5%). The mean agreement rating for the statement, "Current science labs are unsatisfactory," was a **3.96** on the five-point scale.

Q10c: To what extent do you agree with the statement, "Current science labs are unsatisfactory?"

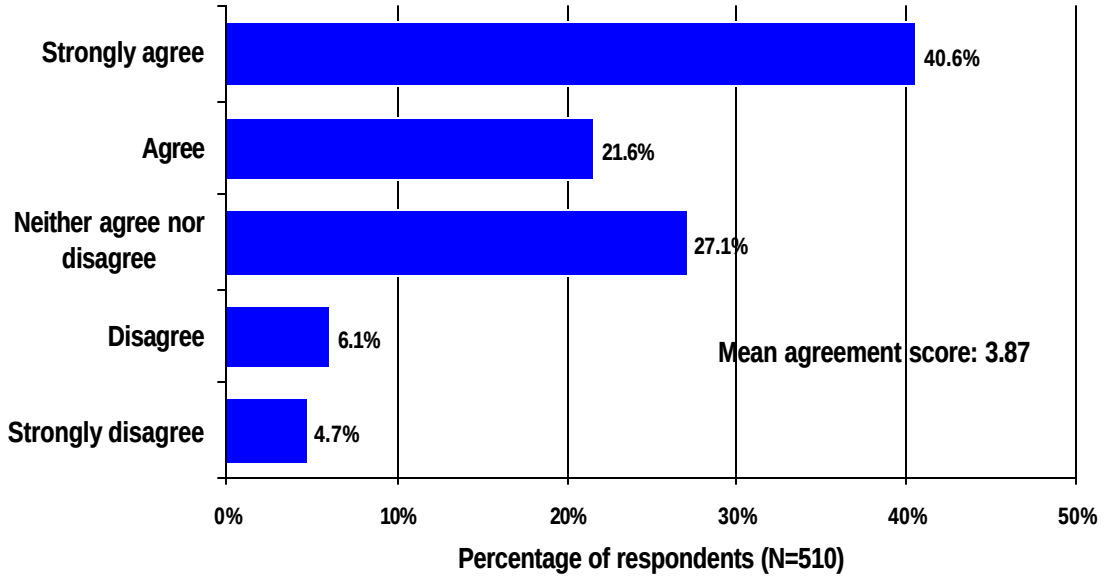


A clear majority of respondents believe that current ventilation systems are unsatisfactory and unhealthy

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *strongly agree* and one representing *strongly disagree*, respondents were asked to describe their level of agreement with the statement, "Current ventilation systems are unsatisfactory and unhealthy." Close to two-thirds (62%) said that they *agree* with the statement, scoring **4** (22%) or the top score of **5** (41%). More than one-quarter (27%) said that they *neither agree nor disagree*, scoring **3.** Just one-in-nine (11%) said that they *disagree* with the statement, scoring **2** (6%) or the lowest score of **1** (5%). The mean agreement rating for the statement, "Current ventilation systems are unsatisfactory and unhealthy," was a **3.87** on the five-point scale.

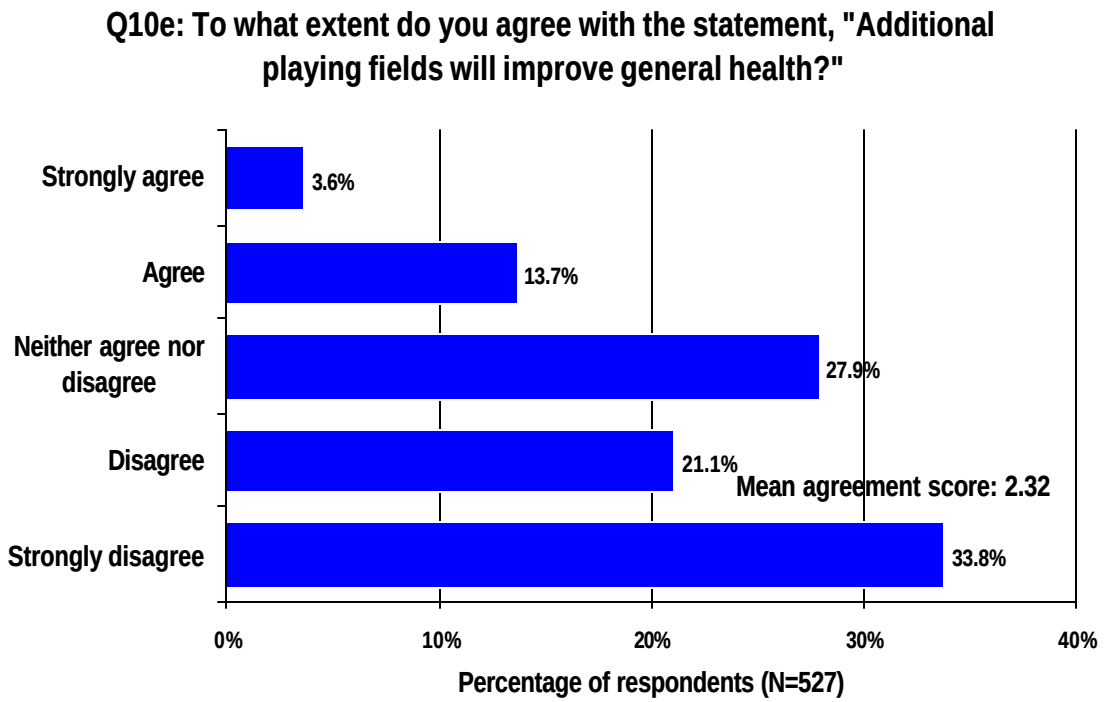
Respondents who voted on the bond on March 21st were significantly more likely to agree with the statement (**4.03**) than those who did not vote on the bond (**3.73**).

Q10d: To what extent do you agree with the statement, "Current ventilation systems are unsatisfactory/unhealthy?"



More than half of all respondents do not feel that additional playing fields will improve general health

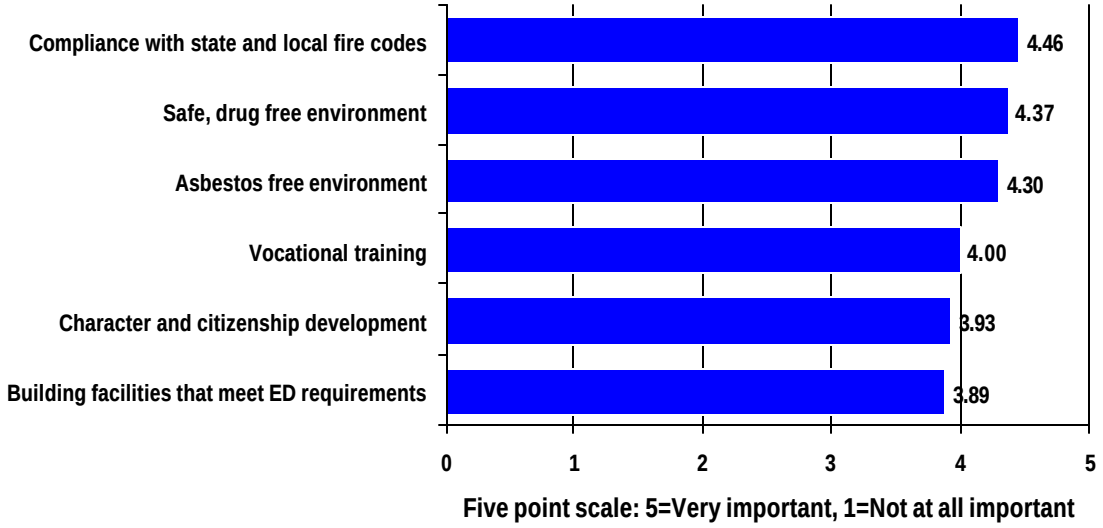
Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *strongly agree* and one representing *strongly disagree*, respondents were asked to describe their level of agreement with the statement, "Additional playing fields will improve general health." More than half (55%) said that they *disagree* with the statement, scoring **2** (21%) or the lowest score of **1** (34%). More than one-quarter (28%) said that they *neither agree nor disagree*, scoring **3.** Just one-in-six (17%) said that they *disagree* with the statement, scoring **4** (14%) or the top score of **5** (4%). The mean agreement rating for the statement, "Additional playing fields will improve general health," was a low **2.32** on the five-point scale.



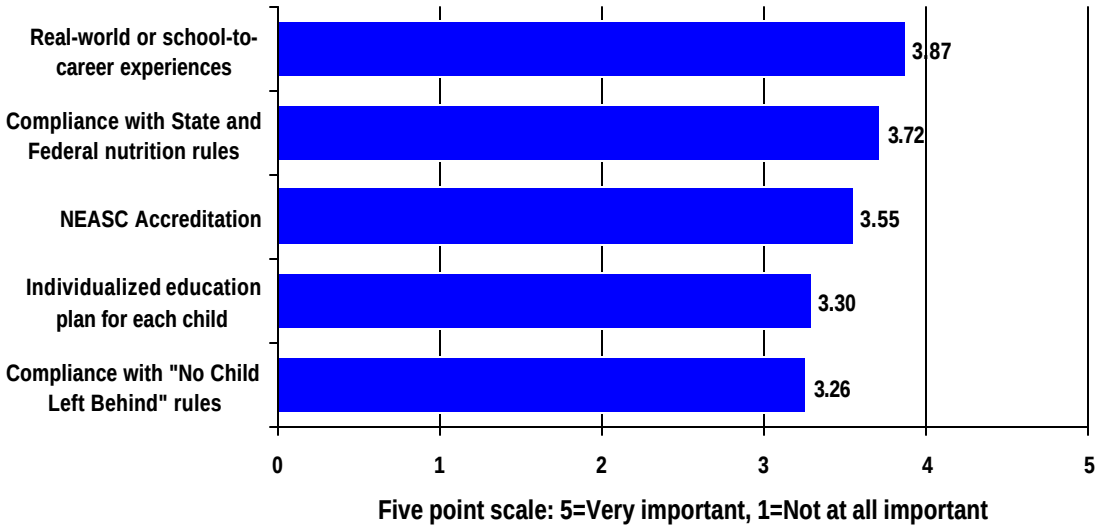
Safety was deemed significantly more important than compliance with "No Child Left Behind" rules or individualized education plans for each child

Using a one-to-five scale, with five representing *very important* and one representing *not at all important*, respondents were asked to rate the importance of 11 characteristics when considering any solution to the GRS Cooperative's aging and deteriorating facilities. *Compliance with state and local fire codes* (**4.47**) was deemed most important, followed closely by having a *safe, drug-free* (**4.39**) and *asbestos-free* (**4.28**) environment. Characteristics deemed least important included *compliance with federal "No Child Left Behind" rules* (**3.27**) and *individualized education plans for each child* (**3.34**).

Q11: How important are each of the following when considering any solution to the GRS Cooperative's aging and deteriorating facilities?



Q11: How important are each of the following when considering any solution to the GRS Cooperative's aging and deteriorating facilities?

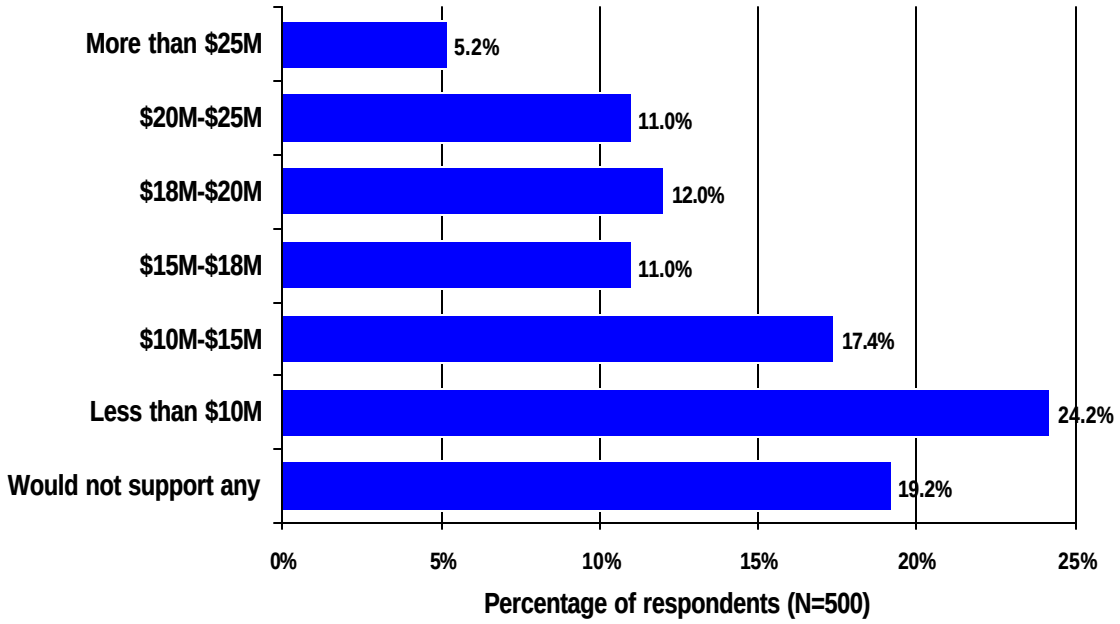


The majority of respondents would support a school renovation project that cost less than $15M

In a multiple-choice question, respondents were asked to state the maximum project cost that they would support. The majority of respondents (57%) stated that they would

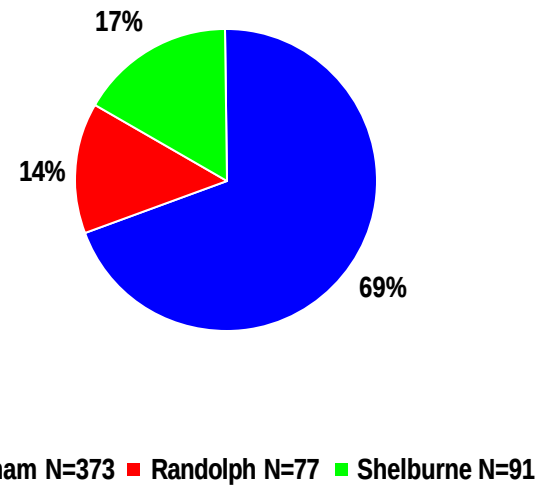
support a project under $15M. Just 24 percent said that they would only support a project that cost *less than $10M*, while 19 percent stated that they *would not support any* project.

Q12:What is the maximum project you would support?

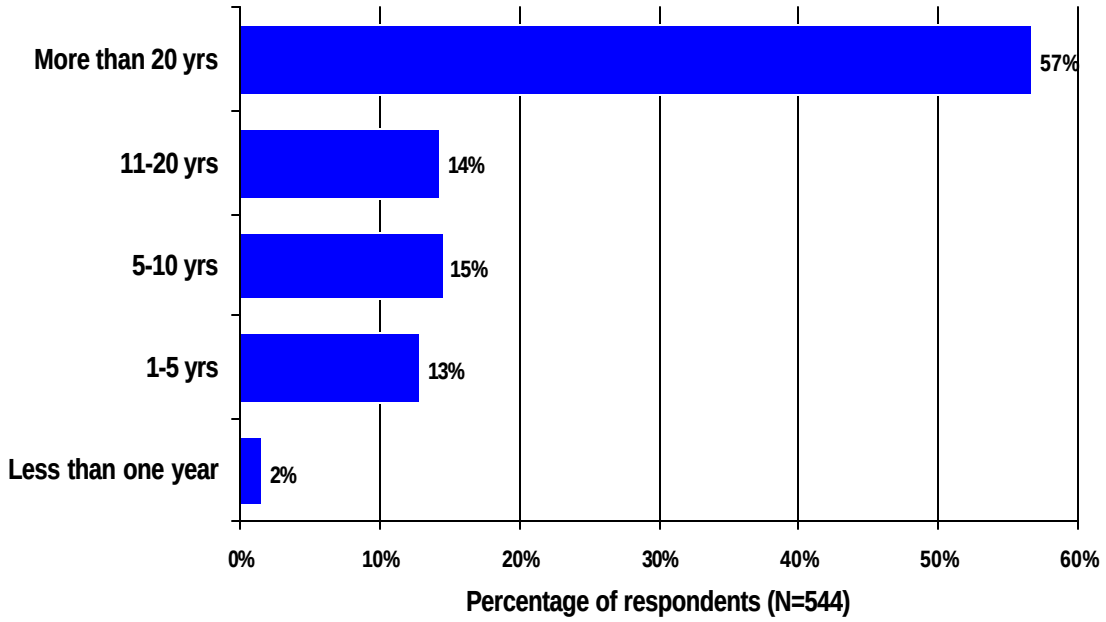


DEMOGRAPHICS

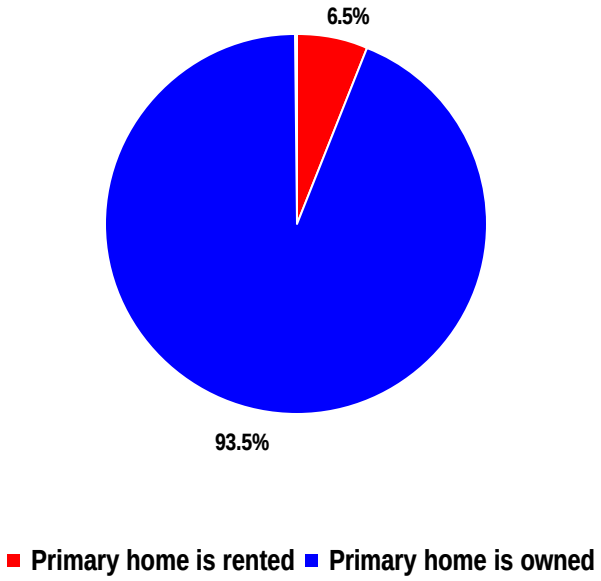
Q13: In which of the following municipalities is your permanent residence?



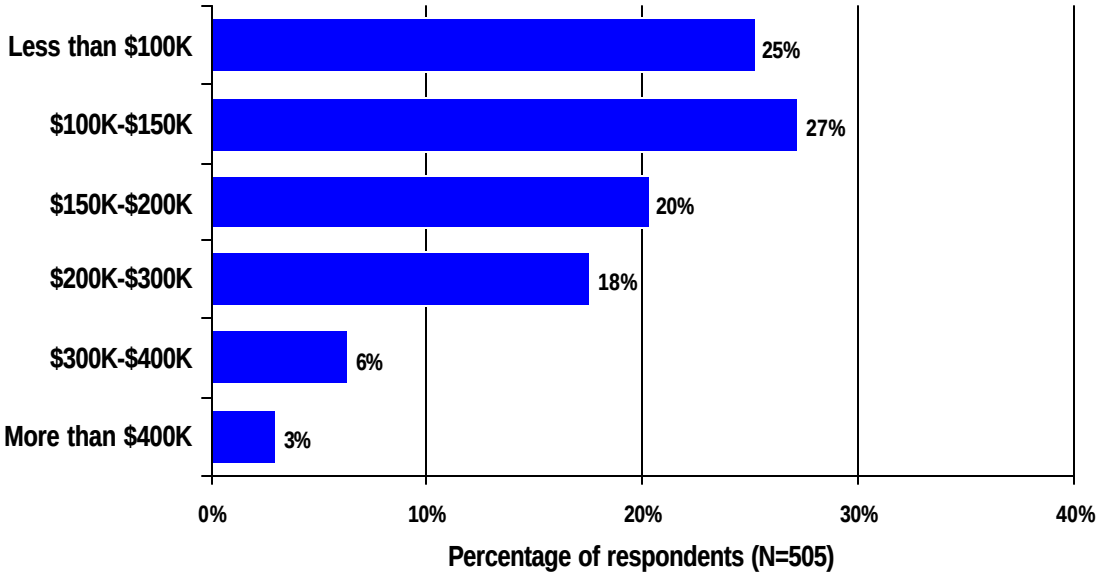
Q14: How long have you lived in your current town?



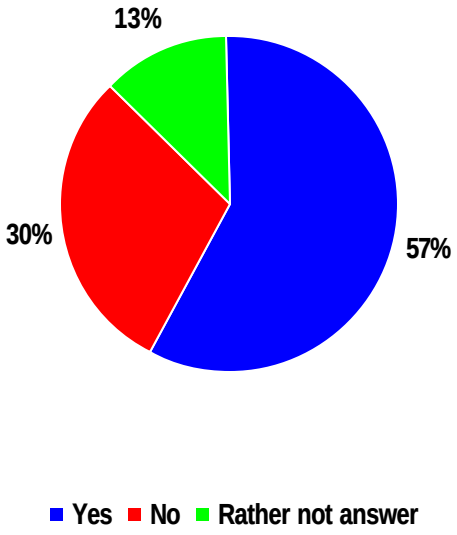
Q15: Which of the following best describes your residence?



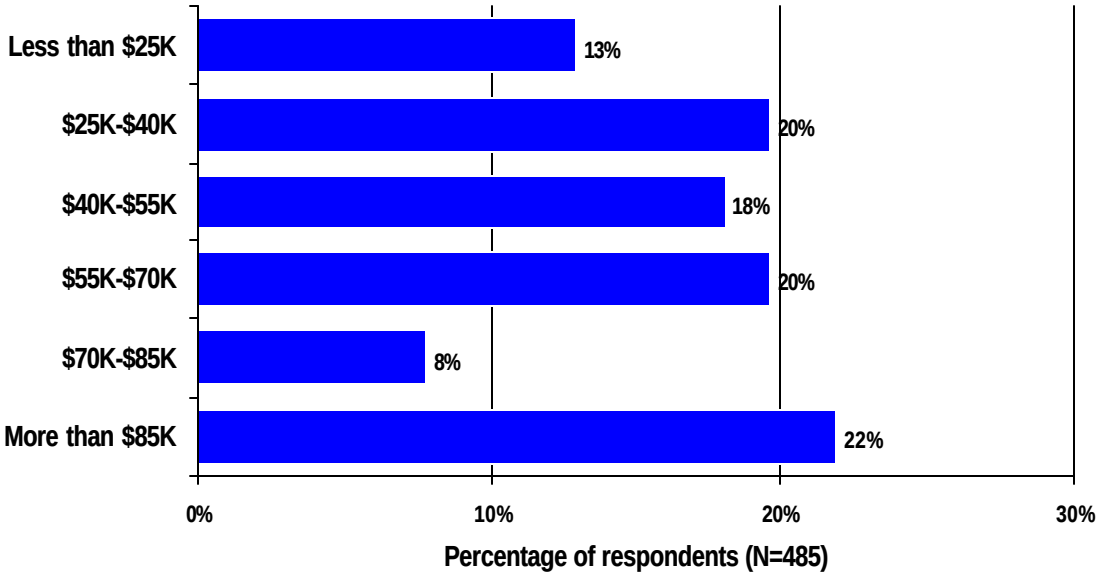
Q16: What is the approximate appraisal value of your property?



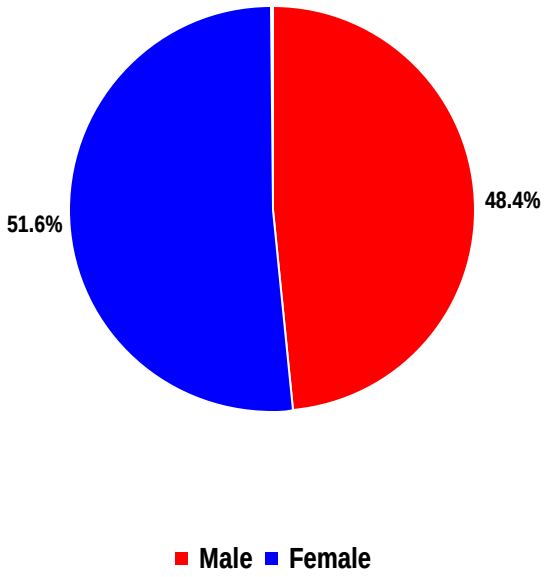
Q17: Did you vote on the bond for the GRS Cooperative construction project on March 21, 2007?



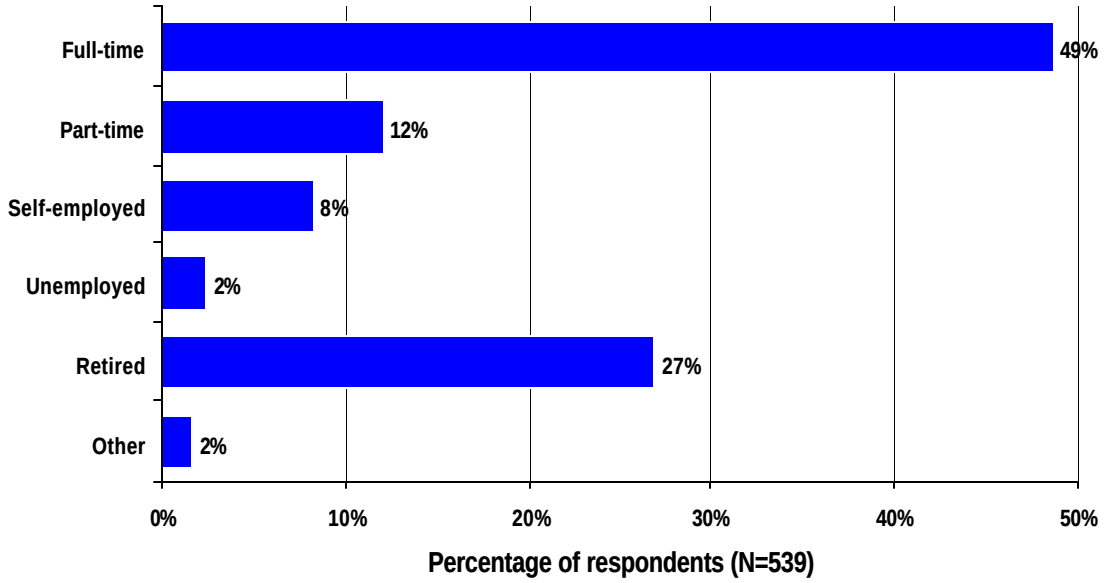
Q18: Which of the following best describes your annual household income?



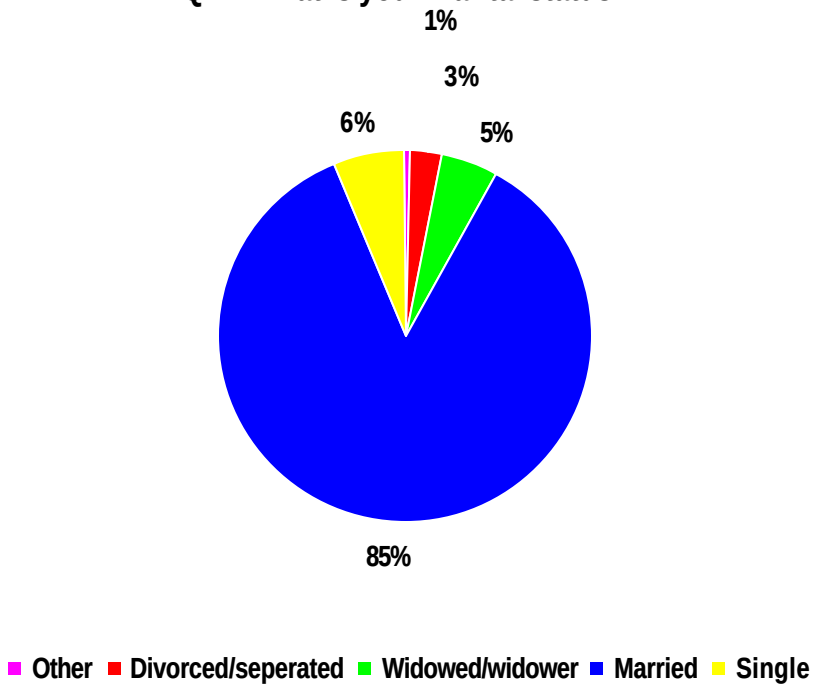
Q19: Gender



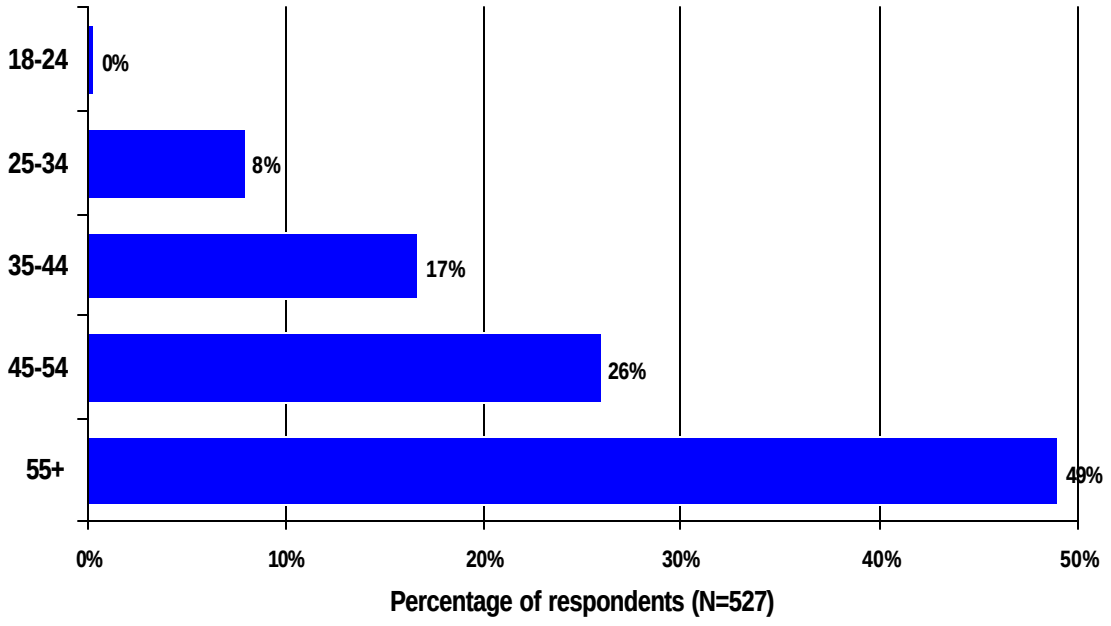
Q20: Which of the following best describes your employment status?



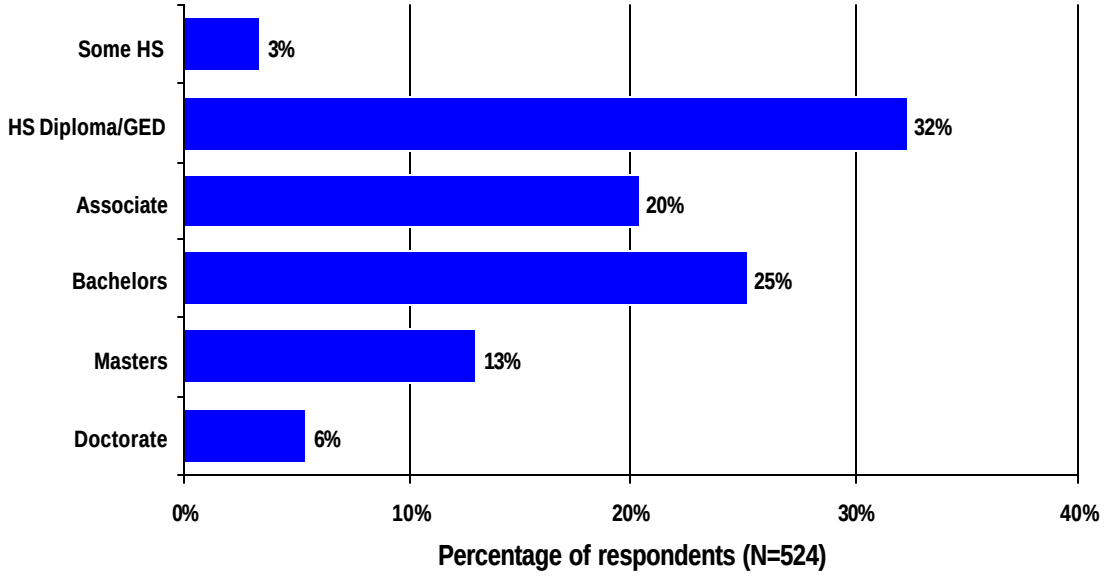
Q21: What is your marital status?



Q23: Which of the following best describes your age?



Q24: Which of the following best describes your level of education?



VERBATIM COMMENTS

- Do not team up with Berlin School District.
- Please come up with a proposal our tax base can support
- If cannot afford repairs or rebuild how are you going to afford tuition? What is the overall cost? Food costs? Bring own lunch! Berlin in future is going to have problems with aging facilities. Also why out of area contractors to benefit like non profit organizations. Pool in your local talent to construct what you can for decent and current wages with an over all project manager to direct and control and sub out what needed (ventilation). Whatever overall solution is if people can't afford there'll have to move else where. The way area is changing this could just be a tourist area. Who really knows what is going on? Someone dies! All this Mass building coming our way, Lincoln condos, Bretton Woods future expand 100 condos no work in area! Secure good paying prison is only secure work and schools if you don't drive away everyone! Current people natives most these jobs don't help us not qualified or other reasons? Do teachers get paid too much for six months? I make $30-33K. Do you need $50-75K? Maybe these people should move to the city.
- I think that Paul Bousquet should stop crying wolf and stop using the children as a shield for the principle of Ed Fenn and Gorham High Principal not noticing the due needed repairs for the last 10-15 years.
- Renovations of old outdated buildings are a waste of taxpayer's money. Combining our resources with Berlin is the only realistic option. As the area's school age population decreases it will be more difficult to keep separate SAU's/districts solvent and educationally relevant. Often-mentioned opinions that Berlin and Gorham are rivals and couldn't possibly work together are lame. Look no further than Lancaster-Whitefield and the WMRSD!
- The Ed Fenn windows and roof are a concern. I do not support repairs at the GMHS until we know what the future of our students' education environment will be. I do not want to do repairs now if we will be tearing down the building next year.
- While a regional school district should be a long-term goal, I do not think either school district is ready to embrace this idea.
- I went to Berlin High and I think our kids would do fine there thank you very much.
- I believe the survey to be biased in the presentation of questions towards a regional approach. Also many of the questions are none of your business! At least one has no basis in fact.
- I had six children educated paying tuition in Gorham. All have done very well in life, all with college degrees.
- Including Berlin in a MS-HS Coop would lower costs of educating students.
- Partner with Berlin School District.
- Tuition the students to Berlin; our tax rate is way too high!
- Suggest Regional school. It would be cheaper when school is closed, buses shouldn't be on the streets.
- If I had voted I would have voted yes on the bond.

- It would be sinful to continue dumping money into the existing building. Also, the aesthetics are very important if we are to remain a Class S School. Places and spaces for drama, sports (indoor and outdoor) are truly needed. It is shameful that the town has lost is focus and pride to help support these components.
- A safe accredited school is important. More important is the quality of the education, the quality of the teachers and a good range of 3elective courses. If a new school means there will be no money to provide quality education and pay quality teachers it is not worth it.
- If the district thinks they can not afford a 20-year plan, why not think of a 20-40 year or 50-year plan. Makes no sense to us. Rita and Bob St. Onge.
- There has been way too much money spent to date on studies, surveys and plans and we haven't yet so much as bought a shingle! I applaud the people who have volunteered their time to serve on all the committees, only to have all their hard work shot down in an instant but those who know it all but won't become a part of the solution. Any new proposal will be shot down just as quick if there is the possibility that taxes will go up as much as a nickel! The blue collar mentality that has made Berlin what it is has migrated in force to our community so thinking forward is an option of the past.
- Enrollment in our schools is decreasing. Money would best be spent on Ed Fenn and should only seek what is necessary for GMHS. There is currently too much space at Ed Fenn for total number o students-why not put middle school there? How much money are we paying for all of the propaganda that has been sent/printed-regarding the Coop school? That money would have been better spent on our school's renovations!
- Keep up the good work. Do not get discouraged! We need your effort and ideas!
- Many issues have been around for a long time but not addressed. Poor science for more than 30 years. The fire alarm etc. listed in the paper has been needed/advised for many years. Nothing done about it.
- I think it's time to look into a regional school. Would cut costs in the long run. We already pay very high taxes. We need a break.
- Stop spending millions on projects we don't need with money we don't have, but a Route 2 bypass to get all those big noisy trucks out of downtown is a good idea.
- This survey is a waste of time and money! How can anyone accurately answer any of the questions without any knowledge of cost, pros and cons? The Building Committee should be performing an unbiased study of potential solutions staying cost, benefit (pros) and compromise (cons). This information should be brought o the voters so that they can provide the committee with an informed/educated decision which represents their true feelings. This building committee should be released from their responsibility and a new committee should be formed! You guys just don't get it!!
- My daughter will be a 2008 graduate, so I'm not that concerned about GMHS.
- Dear Mr. Bousquet: your cover letter says that the voters told you that the project was too expensive at the March 21st meeting. I don't know how you are able to make that specific determination from the vote. If you "know" that it was too expensive, then why are you putting out this survey? You seem to have already drawn your conclusions. I hope this "professional" survey didn't cost us taxpayers too much. If it did, may we have our money back? Wouldn't the money being spent on this survey be better used repairing the buildings? The survey looks like an amateur did it. The columns don't even line up. It asks questions that have nothing to do with building issues like "no child left behind" and

"nutritional rules" don't you have to comply with those laws anyway? Several of the questions are so confusing that I am unable to determine whether a 5 or a 1 is the appropriate response to a given question. "How do I perceive the GRS coop. …considering "ongoing/yearly repairs" solution? The first item says, "quality of education." What exactly do you mean by the question in this case? The long term project cost is high, whether it is 24 or 20 million dollars. Making repairs year after year will cost even more and be even more disruptive to the students. It seems from all the work done and documented by the building committee that the proposal is what is needed and is estimated to get the job done right, and avoids the fiasco of the Gorham Town Hall. Randolph and Shelburne joined the Cooperative to allegedly have control and active participation in the educational decision making process. That was the basis of the intensive marketing from the organization committee. Sending our children to Berlin violates the agreement. We were led to believe that the agreement meant the children would attend our schools, and not send them out of the district. In fact we were told if we didn't join, Gorham especially with a tuition agreement strips us of the very reason why we joined. If the GMHS is closed, will Gorham now contribute funds into the buy in account? According to the cooperative agreement, Gorham put in the buildings; Randolph and Shelburne are putting in cash. If Gorham's contribution [the building] is no longer considered an asset, Gorham should now pay cash too. Gorham voters clearly wanted the cooperative pass. GRS's school performance ratings are far superior to Berlin's. GRS financial stability is far superior to that of the cit of Berlin, which appears to be sliding toward bankruptcy. This is the first I have heard from the school board in months perhaps longer, and it seems during the last two years the building committee did all the work, and did it well! I went to enough of the focus meetings to realize the members of the board were scarce and uniformed. It seems very hypocritical that one member of the board is always talking about how concerned she is about our schools and children, sends her own children to a private school. A lot of people know it, but are too apprehensive to say anything because of the family's business ties. All the members of the board should be replaced. This survey is a waste of time and money. If you think the problem was too high of a price, the obvious solution is for the building committee to down scale the existing proposal to bring in more voter support. You receive a 50% positive vote right? That's a lot closer than the result of the vote in 2003. Retool the existing plan, make it smaller and represent it. Whatever you do, don't stand in front of the meeting and say to the public that if you want to vote no, than vote no. Tell the people that it needs to pass, and voting no is not an option. The design by the Banwell Company is great. Replace the board for wasting money. Spend our tax dollars on the school not surveys.

- Dear SA Unit#20: It is a little difficult for us to answer all of this survey, although all my children were educated in the Gorham school system. We are retired and in our mid 70's naturally our biggest concern is, if you build a new school will it tax us out of our home as we live on a fixed income. Joining the Berlin school system is something we would support. We trust that you will do what is best for our community and grand children.
- Where has the money that we spend on school maintenance gone? If high energy costs have crippled the schools, why cant the government pay for newer more efficient furnaces and better windows like they do for the bums un Berlin that don't work and get free oil tanks, fuel assistance and other benefits from CAP or other agencies of this nature. Sending the kids to Berlin with all of the welfare recipients that have moved into the area from Mass, Southern, NH (because of the big city's have the means of running these people out of town) would be the worst thing that Gorham could ever do. Berlin is a drug, welfare, cancer from the mill, ridden city that will only get worse with the prison

families that will move here to be with their relatives. Bad idea! If this happens I assure you we will move away. Thank you, $5000 a year property tax payer.

- Regional High School is a way to go and fully support that option!
- Absolutely not in favor of combining with the Berlin Schools. \
- Can't afford more taxes.
- I would like to see an annual proposal for repair work to address each issue for each school.
- Stop wasting money on projects that will not get approved and start budgeting annual repairs to facilities.
- #9 SAU admin is costly, unnecessary and should have staff reduced! Student population is decreasing every year, staff has increased. We need to reduce staff to reflect student levels. People live in Gorham, Randolph, and Shelburne for a reason and pay a premium for it. Sending kids to Berlin is not what the tax base wants.
- K-8 in Gorham, High School Regional, minimum investments at Ed Fenn. Sell High School property. Why are we paying a consulting firm to create a poorly written survey? This should have been done "in house."
- Keep Gorham Schools don't coop with Berlin with prisons comes lower standard of people let Berlin Have them. Keep Gorham as it always has been or as it is now.
- No increase in students so let's repair what we have.
- Need to be frugal with the tax dollars. We cannot afford to put seniors in the street.
- Is this survey necessary?
- People in Gorham can not and do not want a new school, I think we should shut it down and sell it then put this money in Ed Fenn.
- I feel tuition to Berlin is a long term commitment which will be very costly. The tuition will increase frequently and Gorham revenue will be drained They are in financial trouble.
- The subject is not education, it is about providing a building where education can take place. If the roof is leaking how does that affect the student teacher ratio and why does it matter? I could go on but I think you get my point, Thanks for your attention.
- Project number of students in GRS in next 10-20 years and publish along with results of survey.
- GMHS: there is electricity, a wood working shop and automotive was removed, why? There's no plumbing. Why can't some of these students help with the knowledge and experience of righting the problem? You people make it sounds as if its about to fall apart any day now. Plus the lockers look like a disaster hit town. Will the new building help clean up?
- It is time for Berlin-Gorham to work as a solid unit on all fronts. We will need this cohesiveness to go into the future.
- I don't feel joining with Berlin is an answer to be considered. Too many problems with the school there.

- We should fix the problems that need addressing and put all other efforts into a regional school for the Androscoggin Valley.
- Regional school w/Berlin, Gorham, Shelburne and Milan would be best for all.
- Work with Berlin to forma regional school district for all communities in the area.
- I strongly support keeping our students in Gorham I feel the proposed plan to renovate and add on to the school was the best solution. I was extremely disappointed with many residents who voted it down. The majority of the people against the renovation were people who no longer have children in our schools or are retired and have lots of money they don't want to part with. It's a shame people only think of themselves and not the next generation. Our child has truly been well educated in both Ed Fenn and GMHS. I only wish that every child in our town and Shelburne and Randolph could complete their education here. Sending the students to Berlin would be a huge mistake!
- The Berlin school system is completely different than ours with different attitudes from students and teachers. I pray we never send our children there!
- Berlin is not the answer! It is a band-aid that will take too long to achieve and when it is everyone will hate it. I started in Berlin than transferred to Gorham. The quality of education more than doubles that of Berlin schools due to the student/teacher ratios…. Average class size in Gorham is 20 and under and in Berlin is 20 plus. If regionalization is determined to be the answer my home will be for sale and my tax money will be lost. As I will move to a small town with a small school system. With all te chnges taking place in our community and our town father's trying to preserve our "small town," Berlin is not going to preserve this atmosphere.
- Would love to have a new school but simply cannot afford any more taxes. We would be forced to move if taxes increase much more. Cut other parts of school budget like salaries or benefits.
- I think that we should talk to several contractors, local ones would be appreciated.
- Not enough info provided on many topics to enable an informed response! We need to join Berlin school!
- I think something has to be done to fix the schools. I also don't want to loose my house because of taxes so high we can't afford to keep it after being in our house for over 30 years.
- Don't want to lose my house to high taxes.
- Who ever wrote the survey is a fool to obscure questions and responses- confusing and convoluted. Very poorly conceived. The Paine and Partners need some education on survey development.
- Can the renovations/rebuilding be done in sections? For instance, wing off of the gym-possibly the gym could be torn down and separate building be build-have hallway that connects the two afterwards-same with the wing that houses the music room-shop class.
- It is amazing that the fire marshal Is invited up to tell us some of needs for the school, problems that were here since it was built. Poor maintenance on needed work.
- Berlin and Gorham are one community. Resolve the issues. Make a B-G-R-S-M coop happen.
- If you have children move to Berlin.

- I am all for cooperating with Berlin for sharing AP classes, band, some sports (track, tennis, skiing)but would not want to send my children to Berlin for school.
- I believe the school board and their consultants did a superb job planning for a new and better facility and that they were sincere in their beliefs of what would be the best value for the money. Unfortunately we live in an environment in which construction costs, like so many other things, have gone out of control. Many local incomes have not risen in proportion; many are fixed and some are diminished. One mill is closed and the other may close at anytime according to my understanding. I do not believe the new federal prison or the proposed conversion of the Burgess Mill into a bio mass power generator will significantly alter the equation since they may keep as many or more new people away as they hire. Even now I understand the population of the GRS in down more than 60 students from a few years ago. Furthermore, working more than 25 years as an architect here, never once has anything other than cost and meeting the bare essentials of the codes governed those public projects in which I have been involved. Hence architectural solutions involving aesthetic or spatial quality elements have not been tolerated accept when they also can be justified as meeting the essentials. While I voted for the proposed renovations at the town meeting, my experience with this community as an architect would suggest the maintenance and repair would be the most acceptable to the community even though it arguably may cost more in the long run. I do, however, think the community would accept critical life safety improvements including structural upgrades to roofs etc… and some energy and HVAC improvements. Finally, we should keep in mind the GHS rates one of the highest in the state in terms of quality of education despite the physical plant, and for that we should be proud.
- The needs of our schools should be addressed immediately! Our students and community deserve the best. We have neglected the issues for too long!
- State and Federal governments should be paying much more than they do.
- I absolutely refuse to send my kids to Berlin and will relocate if this ever passes. I moved to Gorham for on reason-good schools/education. Berlin is a cesspool and I am very aware of the trash moving there-all newcomers to Berlin have multiple kids and the majority are special needs with 504's and IEPs hooking up with Berlin is akin to tying oneself to the titanic-short term it may be cheaper but once they have suckered us in we will pay. Berlin wants us Because Gorham people have hobs and will [pay. They need our money. Berlin is headed for disaster financially. Ask people who work with this new population. Berlin's going down, don't let them take Gorham with them.
- It is very important to look at the financial climate of the area, but also necessary at some near future date to get started on solutions for Gorham schools.
- Regionalization with minimal building repairs over a period of time. This area can not afford elaborate expansion. The education standards are very good now… if it's not broke don't fix it.
- Ho much is this costing the school??
- The bottom line is these buildings should have been repaired yearly like you do your home and are still repairably yearly. How do you expect people to put a lot of money into these projects when job salaries are very poor in the area and it is taking every cent everyone has to repair their own homes yearly and live. Who ever controlled the budget for school repairs did a poor job and now we are all going to pay. If I did a poor job

controlling my own finances would you pay to bail me out? Probably not! What are you people trying to do, tax us into leaving our homes!

- Need to look at do some renovations each year to weight cost on taxes. Too costly with gas and oil costs. Will not ever send my child to Berlin!
- Regionalization is the long term answer. Renovation is a waste of money.
- Need to focus on a new facility with adequate space indoors and athletic fields on site.
- Gorham cannot afford the high cost to rebuild.
- Regionalization of the whole area is the way to go.
- I think a K-8 school would be an excellent idea. The HS should form a co-op with Berlin or tuition students to BHS.
- Repair school as needed no new building!
- I attended BHS and would not recommend the merger.
- This survey was a good idea but many questions were ambiguous or lacked explanation. Survey would have been better done if done by a [professional. The facilities have been neglected for 20 years. One does not live in a house until it falls down then build a new one. All of the uses at the school could have been addressed one by one and fixed. Perhaps no the best solution to each but a serviceable solution. This must be started now! Aristotle taught in a cave. Facility is a secondary consideration. Staff community and curriculum make the education.
- I believe the only solution is to send 9-12 to Berlin. K-8 to Ed Fenn. Fix Ed-Fenn.
- Tuitioning our students to another district makes sense with our declining population of students. It allows us to give our children more options. The feel that is perceived is among parents not the children as most of our current students have friends in the Berlin school district currently.
- The people want different options to chose from.
- Unless *?* world facility I fail to see what needs accreditation has to do with education. It's the teaching, learning and test scores that matter not the building.
- I believe this area can only support one school district and would like to see a new high school, a new middles school and repaired elementary schools in the two towns to support that district. I also believe you can build that building for $15 million or less. It is also imperative that we continue to support the performing arts and athletics.
- At this time I feel the best option for the school district is to combine with Berlin whether it is a regional or tuition. I would support a new K-8 school in Gorham.
- I feel that education is very important but at what cost! Taxes are too high. In the 28 years I have lived her it has more than quadrupled over the years. Think about the elderly who are on a small pension!
- New building and location for more grounds and future expansions Mandatory –PBIS certification.
- I would think the Alumni should be involved in the decisions and fund raising they should do more than give a scholarship.

- In the plans you tried to pass you were wasting 6-8 million dollars. I would rather spend money on functionality rather than looks. I feel that the town was misled when it joined the coop. We need to go from the Cadillac to the Chevy. I also feel that the questions are worded so you get the answers you wanted, to skew the results. You should have had the BDS do the survey then the questions wouldn't have been biased.
- You are to be commended for your efforts and diligence. Thank you.
- We are a town of approximately 3000 residents. Mostly older generations with limited income. Taxes are too high now. Classes getting smaller by the year.
- I'm in favor for GHS students to be bussed to BHS. Renovate the Ed Fenn School. Mr. Bousquet at the meeting stated we could just give up a pizza once a week. He's fortunate if that's all he has to give up. What extra money we may have goes into our gas tanks. If there's any left it will go to budgeting for the fuel this winter. As for groceries, there isn't any left for extras!
- Gorham only joined with Randolph and Shelburne to use them as their cash cows. They let buildings fall into disrepair and now want others to pay for repairs. Shelburne saw a 50 percent increase in property taxes in 2006 and we will tolerate no more!!!
- Repair as needed not wait 40 years!!!
- We need to have a facility that will actually meet code and provide space for future needs. We need to have a safe environment including playing fields. Please, whatever you do don't go to Berlin! We love the Gorham school. Would consider a private school before going to Berlin. We moved to Gorham for the Gorham school!
- Did not vote on bond- working. Do not support regionalization to Berlin. Too much jealousy between communities. Has not changed since I graduated from GHS in the early 60's.
- Repair Ed Fenn and Add 6-8! Tuition to Berlin until a COOP w/Berlin can be established.
- Why did we not have ongoing repairs? Would we again leave a new school in disrepair for 40 years? Do not mix with Berlin! We cannot afford to pay for that! We need some federal monies-we are not a wealthy community!
- Will never go for combined with Berlin!
- This thing is a waste of time and money.
- A merger with Berlin should be considered as a last and therefore lasting resort. The community must be 75 percent on board- any less will mean a waste of time, money and effort.
- School count is down.
- Please remember the number of students versus the cost. We are not a large area.
- The GRS Coop needs to not only look at the schools but how things are handled at an administrative and SAU level. Administrators are often met with resistance at an SAU level not necessarily from the superintendent but from others. Money could be significantly saved through possibly electronic bill paying thereby eliminating the need for paper checks and other technologically advanced ideas. An SAU and their boards are not run by one or two people but by it's staff, students and community.

- Sixth grade back to Ed Fenn. New high school if things don't work out with a coop with Berlin. Thank You!
- Cooperative projects with Berlin City have never worked. We do not have time to develop trust with Berlin. If we were forced to tuition students as the only short term economical solution, then we should be able to select where each student would go based upon need, distance, quality, etc.
- Poorly worded, constructed-this survey is worthless. A grade of 50 out of 100 would be the best I could give it.
- I supported the bond issue. It is our moral and legal responsibility to educate our children. My reason for backing the coop was to have a vote on that issue. If we tuition HS away we are loosing our say. If the Only politically feasible solution is tuition lets at least leave it open so students could to Telstar or White Mountain or Berlin or elsewhere.
- Gorham can use the baseball fields it has. You don't use Ed Fenn's ballfield. You don't use the ballfield at the common. That is a waste. The park manager should be fired for not letting Gorham resident's use the community ball fired. We don't need Berlin problems in Gorham. If the parents of the children want their kids to go to Berlin let them pay, not the tax payer. I am tired of paying school tax through rent. I should not and those who do not have kids should not pay school tax.
- Elderly are struggling with every day costs of living and health care. We cannot continue to have our taxes increased.
- I don't understand why the committee didn't meet and come up with a new plan. Lets get started. Bond 8 million or 9 million. Fix the Ed Fenn except the foolish fancy parking lot. Use 5-5.5 million on that then start repairs on the middle high school. Fix roofs and windows and science area and gym. It is a simple thing. But these are sometimes the hard things to comprehend.
- We need a new updated school facility not with Berlin. Taxpayers should cut back on luxury expenses and support the future of our children.
- No matter what we do GHS is too small to offer the curriculum needed for students to excel in this world. When GHS starts graduating 35 kids the cost to provide them the education options needed will be too high.
- A strong diverse regional school district including Berlin and GRS would be best, with solid funding to provide quality buildings and provisions in both towns. But have to get the Berlin School board out from under the Town Council. Quick, cheap solutions will sink long term economic growth.
- The quality of life here, economic diversification and growth, recovery and enhancement of social capital above all, deepening and enhancement of spiritual. moral values for life in a global community require a first class liberal education-languages other than English, the cultivation of the critical intellect, the enlargement of curiosity and the capacity for a humane and inclusive imagination-the arts, music theatre, creative play. This outward looking and inward awareness fostering of the human spirit has not been sought or afforded as community goals. For what do we live-money or the amazing abundance of the human spirit?
- Only logical solution is to join with Berlin to have a regional school. Gorham needs to lose its elitist attitude that their residents are better than Berlins. There are good and bad kids in both school systems.

- I would support giving parents a tuition voucher to use at any school they wished (including private and Christian schools), though I would rather build our children a new facility. I did not move to this area so that my kids could be thrown into a large school system. Part of the attraction of our school system is that it is a small school where everyone knows everyone else. Teachers don't allow your child to fall through the cracks. Teachers here know every child by name! This fives our kids a sense of belonging. Going to school in our community, strengthens children's sense of belonging to our community. Every child needs to feel like they belong. I would never want to take that away from all of our children.
- I would bus students to Whitefield before Berlin. Parking for high school students is a privilege not a right. We pay for school busses. Has any consideration been made for purchasing additional properties that border both school sites? Keep up the great work!
- Consolidation with Berlin appears to make sense.
- Gorham has its own issues and feel Berlin has to find its own answers! Gorham taxes are high enough! Gorham school administration is top heavy. Time to review this issue.
- I noted this survey. Many of the questions were very hard to understand what you were asking. Such as short-term and long-term costs. I understand the concept. I couldn't figure out how they related to the questions. There seemed to be quite a few questions that weren't really relevant, especially since your opening line of the letter assumed we voted "no" because it was too expensive. First of all I voted yes and secondly I thought it was expensive but necessary. The projects were well thought out, took environmental issues into consideration, along with minimizing the disruption to the students. I want you to read this as I am shouting this loud and clear, I do not/will not send my children to Berlin! I will sell my home- even at a loss if necessary – and be gone so fast people will wonder if I was ever really here. Enough about Berlin! They don't want us unless we can help their finances and we don't want Berlin. The students have said no to Berlin- most people with children in the GRS schools say no to Berlin. Lets stop wasting time and deal with reality which is our buildings need help now. We can't afford to sit back anymore. Gorham messed up by not taking care of the schools – by the way where did all our tuition money go? Now is the time for action. What is happening now? What is going to be done in a few weeks when the school year is over? This is a perfect opportunity to get work done. Or shold we just let the board take the summer off, while they consider the options and here the fire marshal or some other agency close our schools down? Once again I say no Berlin, use the plans presented at the district meeting now!
- It's time to abolish the good ole boy thinking. The GMHS needs a shakeup. Outside impartiality is needed to better benefit our school system. Regionalization is not what we want or what we will accept. It's time to give our kids what they deserve no matter what the cost. It is still going to be pay me now or pay me later.
- The average person living here can not afford these outrageous taxes. The renovations on the school buildings should have been done every year on a regular basis not let accumulate to this crazy figure! This is directly the fault of the administration.
- I personally am angry that the past superintendent did not fix the building problems. Also, the use of scare tactics is most objectional. The bottom line is whether the citizens have enough money to pay their taxes. Everyone wants our children to be educated but you can not sacrifice one section of the community over another. People who have been long term community citizens will be forced to leaver their homes. Try to be a little more flexible. All of us want the best for our children.

- Surely there is an affordable solution!
- The building committee did an excellent job! I was very disappointed the bond did not pass. We would have sacrificed for it education is so very important! Thank you.
- Scale the project money down and bring it back to voters before spending thousands on repairs!
- Re: bond issue-presentation addressed a proposed project which represented "what everyone wanted" in a new school. What should have been proposed is what everyone needed! What you need and what you want are always different with the latter usually costing considerably more. UI have no idea if this is legally possible but many cities have local sales taxes which generate income for targeted expenses. Why not a five percent sales tax in Gorham, Randolph and Shelburne with the revenues going only toward funding school renovations/construction.? With all the auto sales, wal-mart shopping and motel/hotel income flowing into this area, from out of town we could raise a considerable amount of money without putting the bite on GRS property owners.
- #12 is a poor question. Survey questions do not seem relevant to the issues. I will be interested to see the results!
- Buy with Berlin but not joining Berlin. Work with Berlin, do not become.
- Repair HS problems-move JS students to Berlin keep grades 1-8 in Gorham.
- GRS should seriously look at BHS as a viable alternative because the population in this area does not warrant a new school.
- We need to regionalize the education systems and other municipal services.
- I think most people don't know what is the best solution,. They want to address the problem but affordably so.
- Thanks for all your hard work! Vocational skills training a must for this area!!
- To seriously answer these questions took much more than 10 minutes.
- Save money-no food service-bring lunches. Performance space-use town hall.
- Appropriate funds yearly to repair or do some separate bonds for $5-6 million dollars to repair buildings-bond intervals five years.
- I went to Gorham schools growing up. Not once during that time or since, have there been only repairs or maintenance to any of the schools. Therefore it should not be surprising that they are in serious disrepair. Better parking and traffic flow could be obtained by having a better drop off area in front of both schools. Also less student parking at the high school. If students residence is less then a ½ mile from school you can walk to school. Avoid using low-cost alternatives to masonry construction. This usually involves metal framing and sheet rock. Short term initial savings outweighed by long term costs of repairs due to vandalism and water damage. Hire a highly reputable constructor. Don't automatically accept low bid. Insist on a well trained workforce. Accept only skilled and experienced tradesman for masonry, electrical, plumbing, roofing, etc… Have qualified control superior. Consider making this a union project as this would ensure better pay, benefits, and working conditions. Costs for jobs would remain about the same. Develop long term maintenance plans for school buildings and other town properties so we can avoid these types of problems in the future.

- Not in support of regionalization with Berlin because of influx of low income, high crime drugs in Berlin. I am all too familiar with this because I work in public safety sector in Berlin.
- I personally feel a high quality K-8 building should be constructed and tuition GRS students to Berlin on a trial basis.
- This survey is absolutely ridiculous! These are decision to be made by the schools. The schools have been left to deteriorate for much to long! Work should have been done through the years so that the conditions would not be in the state that they are in!
- Using the same list of categories for four questions in a row makes for confusion and will skew the validity of the questionnaire.
- I am very disappointed in the recent proposal by the board to build new. Consideration for the elderly and young families with increased taxes was disappointing. Four years ago the town said loud and clear at the board meeting we want the school to put forth a budget to repair and construction of needed areas. Science wing, larger gym. After speaking with a building committee member I was told they did look at this but did not feel it was in the best interest to put the repair budget before the town for a vote. We should have the choice of one or the other not just the huge cost of a new school. The negligence of the board and superintendent for not putting forth at least the repairs is an accountability I hold strong.
- What would be the per student tuition cost to Berlin and how would that amount compare to the GRS total annual budget?
- I am appalled that maintenance of buildings has not been done. In my opinion that's a major reason why we are in so much trouble. I hope that whatever is done in the future, that it will be kept up. Too often a grand idea is presented with it's price tag to build it but maintenance isn't factored in-please do this! I also might add that I tried to attend all the public hearings and was quite upset at the low turnout. Why do the voters wait until town meeting to complain when they haven't attended the prior hearings and are not informed? This negligence has added to this whole mess! I complement the building committee and school board. You did do your job-the issues is getting people more involved in the planning. I will never support regionalization with Berlin. The communities are far too divers. These comments are from a past educator in the Gorham school.
- My husband and I bought a home in Gorham a couple of years ago so we could avoid sending our children to Berlin schools. It is not that we don't think the teachers, curriculum or facilities in Berlin aren't good. It is the fact that the quality of students is lower and that there is more crimes and drugs in Berlin school system. We do not support any plan that would consist of our child and future children going to the same school with Berlin students.
- Schools have to learn to project outward and be a part of the community.
- Move 7th grade back to Ed Fenn. Hold off on the new gym for Ed Fenn until the high school construction is done. If Gorham merges with Berlin, I will remove my children from the public school system. I know many teachers in both school systems personally. The challenges of the Berlin school system's student body would not benefit my children in the least. I believe that renovations should be done at GRS with an amount of money set aside yearly to keep up with renovations and repairs. This all or nothing mentality will not benefit anyone. I will say this: not too long ago I brought my children to a park in

is just as important as AP classes. And please revamp the 4X4 blocking. That is a collegiate schedule and you are teaching high school students.

- Use town hall for performances. Why do kids have to drive to school? We have three ball fields now!
- Berlin doesn't want Gorham. Time and money should not be used to pursue this.
- Keep Gorham school doing the work that needs to be done,. Keep cost down-we're taxed enough.
- Both of my children graduated from GHS. The school needed repairs ten. Why did they wait so long to do something about it! Repairs should have been done as needed! The Gorham community would more than likely not be faced with such a decision about their schools if this had occurred. My kids had a great education at GHS and I would want the same for the kids attending the school there now. But as a taxpayer I can't afford it~ Lets repair what we have to meet all of the requirements or send the kids to Berlin for their high school.
- Gorham can not own property and think you don't need to do repairs yearly! Negligence!
- The 2007 Building Committee did as fine a job as any such building committee could do given Gorham's 60-year plus irresponsibility regarding education, it would be best to tuition out secondary students.
- It is appalling that the HS has no certified librarian. A person to fix computers is not the same. Students need a full-time person to select media and show students how to search productively in a library and on a computer (beyond Google). I don't think the BHS students would contaminate the GHS students. They would soon seek their own level, sort of like the real world. Budget money to implode GHS that place is seriously unsafe, a catastrophe waiting to happen. Work quickly to have students moved to BHS by September 2007. Don't spend anymore on GHS. Apply for whatever waivers necessary to speed things up. The committee did and outstanding job in presenting the best possible plan for the least amount of money, too bad many are more interested in fire trucks instead of a safe education.
- I think the community would like to know how expensive it would be to tuition students to Berlin.
- Tuitioning to Berlin would be bad. Do we want the educational future of our kids decided by the Berlin City Council?
- Quality schools are a key to Gorham's future social economic growth. Partnering with Berlin is simply not a good option at this time or any time in the near future.
- As far as regionalization of GRS coop. and Berlin District, I am very much against it for the following reasons. From what I have read in news papers, the Berlin High School could possibly take in GRS high school (grades 9-12) students. What would happen to GRS middle school students? We know that Berlin could not take them in. They would need to remain in Gorham. That would mean that we would need to renovate/repair the G.M.H.S. building anyway (for he middle school students to remain there). So we might as well keep our high school students here, instead of tuitioning them to Berlin, in addition to paying to have the G.M.H.S. building repaired. By tuitioning our students to Berlin, or joining Berlin's school district, we would lose our (votes) control over the school budget. Not having a high school in our town would be very detrimental to the future of our town. When people relocate to a new town, proximity to school is an

important factor on deciding where to relocate, especially in the case of younger families with children. We say we believe that the population of our town will not increase in the near future, but how do we know that for sure? With the new Wal Mart opening up. The federal prison, ATV Park, biomass facility, ect. More people will be moving into the area, looking for a place to live. Gorham will look more attractive if it has its own school. Otherwise, if it's a regional school in Berlin, most people will want to relocate in Berlin, closer to the school. Also, this increase in population may end up over loading the BHS facility, beyond its capacity. Anyways and were back to square one. In-school violence in BHS is much worse in Berlin than Gorham.

- A difficult survey to answer. Very displeased with "quality of student population" questions-all children deserve education and none can control their backgrounds. In fact the more difficult the background. The more important the education.
- Food service needs to offer better and nutritious choices. As a community we cannot afford all the best even though we want the best. Compromises need to be made in materials but not in education. Do not put in an auditorium we have one at the town hall.
- I would like to keep Gorham and Berlin schools separate. Make the necessary repairs to the Gorham schools.
- The first page of the survey was vague, confusing and will provide misinformation!
- We already have a very good school. Thank you!
- Quality of student population? What is that supposed to mean? Are we being elitist?
- The true quality of the teachers, their value and investment in students is what matters not where or what the facilities are.
- We must first provide a safe environment for our kids and teachers-fix problems if no new solution is in the immediate future.
- Don't go with Berlin- to much crime, drugs and teen pregnancy.
- We should begin repairing the existing buildings soon. Start with structural issues first then work through a few at a time until the work is complete. This seems like the only solution the community will vote for.
- I think we need a regional school of the kids are your top priority! All the rest are smoke and mirrors!
- We strongly oppose our kids going to Berlin HS for two reasons, one, location and distance from home and two, the welfare population and quality of students.
- I am against joining with Berlin. Their facilities are aging and working with the city council would be a nightmare. I think partial renovations at GMHS and needed repairs at EFS would be logical. I feel the biggest road block is the small school population. Something on a smaller scale would be expectable to the town.
- Questions 4-6 are confusing. Need to better define the situations along 5 answers. Quality of students?
- What do the last 10 questions have to do with? Most shouldn't make a difference.
- Would suggest that no further money be wasted on surveys. Rather use that money to contact local services (no doubt free estimate) to fix what needs to be fixed, etc… What part of 2/3 of the voters said no to a 25 million dollar debt do you not understand?

- Welcome to the real world! $$ is this more about the kids or the teachers? Adults?
- I support keeping Gorham district as small, community-based schools. Whatever it takes.
- I would totally disapprove sending elementary students to Berlin facilities. Bhs has a high drug environment.
- Let's get moving.
- No increase in property taxes!!!
- I, like everyone else would love to see a new school in Gorham. Some how we need to find a way to pay for it with out jamming it to the home owners. It truly is becoming a punishment to own a home in this town and state for that matter. Maybe we should start on the state government to find different ways to pay for education. I.E. a statewide sales tax where everybody pays. I don't know what can be done, but the home owners need a break from these taxes. They're chasing the average working man in this area right out of the dream of owning a home.
- Put together a plan that will allow our small town-local plan to work that everyone can afford. Stop reaching for the top shelf solutions: work on a year by year improvement plan!
- Some of the questions were not clear #'s 5 and 6.
- This was not a very useful questionnaire. Poorly developed. It appears the school board already has an agenda and wants to back it up. I hope the tax payers money will be put to better use than this survey.
- The 1st problem with building community was ludicrous. First fix Edd Fenn, the set-up has worked for over 50 years, leave it alone! Fix the roof; bring it up to code, done! 2nd, middle and high, fix the wall in the gym, leave the bleachers as they are. Fix the safety issues and bring the labs up to date. Invest more in the buildings for learning and less for sports use. Too much importance on sports, make our kids better in school and not the sports field!
- Move 6th to Edd Fenn, tuition 7-12 to Berlin
- The GRS coop. school system is, and always has been a wonderful system. We are in need of some common sense in dealing with facilities and needs of students. We can no longer afford 5-6 students in any class, specialists with low class/ student loads, extra administrators who do very little for their extra pay, out of state training for staff, extra long bus trips, etc…
- Not only facilities need to be upgraded, but variety in course offerings with upper levels. A variety of <u>real</u> industrial arts courses with technical training to keep students in school who don't meet the "academic mold." This survey is terrible. To spend tax payer's money on such poor questions that the majority of people are unable to answer is another waste. For example, you would really cut out any of the programs in question # 8? # 11- I.E.P. for each child? Are you kidding? The law says you have to for those in need, but everyone? # 11- nutrition rules? What we feed kids now is awful.
- After the survey results are posted, a new vote then should be presented for the former March 21, 2007 proposal.
- I vote in favor of the 3/21/07 proposal renovations!-and will fight to make all necessary improvement-the kids need it!

- You have done a great job – keep up the battle.
- Thank you for all the time and energy put into this. I hope we can all come to an agreement soon.
- Hello, I've tried to answer your survey, but in many ways, it doesn't give a lot of opportunity to say what is really on my mind. The survey seems to be mostly about buildings and facilities, and doesn't concentrate much on education. In my mind, it is putting the cart before the horse. The education should come first – the facilities should match our plans to provide a world class education. It is of great concern to me that our education system in the U.S. is fall8ing behind many, many countries in the world, and there just isn't enough alarm about this. Why does Finland have the #1 education system in the world, when the children start school later and have long summer vacations? Why are home schoolers so successful, without much access to school facilities? I'd really like to hear more about this type of thing. How about computer education supervised by teachers? Wouldn't the students be more advantaged by learning more through computer programs? The faster students could almost be self taught, allowing teachers to work more with the students having a harder time with concepts. Having a "computer lab" sounds somewhat old fashioned. Shouldn't the kids all have computers with programs that make learning fun and providing means for reinforcement? Moving the kids to the Berlin school buildings doesn't make sense, because they are having problems of their own, and we'll be facing the same problems there later on. I would support a new regional school only if was going to be a school of the future. Things like game fields and tracks, etc., should be done by fundraising, rather than taxes. They are not essential to education. WE certainly do not want to force people out of their homes because they can no longer afford the real estate taxes. Of course, safety should be the major concern in the current buildings and those problems need to be taken care of immediately, but hopefully when we start putting millions into new or renovated buildings, they will be to support the plans we have to provide our kids with a world class education, comparable to Finland, India, etc. Apparently, comparing our schools with other American schools is just not a high enough standard anymore. Could we just start talking about education instead of buildings for awhile? Educate us all on how our kids are doing when compared with others in the state, the nation, and the world? We've lived here since 1987, and we've spent a lot of money on the school buildings in the last 20 years (does anyone know how much?) My opinion is that if there is not going to be a study of our educational results and make plans to adjust our system as indicated, we should just make the current school buildings safe for the kids.
- Survey poorly written, overly complex and confusing. Do Berlin and Gorham study, then do survey. Question 8 is fear mongering. Many of the questions (IEP for all kids) have nothing to do with new or renovated or coop. schools. Need to flesh out idea of a new/renovated Edd Fenn for elementary/middle school students… what is the cost? Too many are saying they were confused, upset, frustrated with the survey-so they tossed it = skewed the results. This is a waste of time and money. Taxes are too high, avg. pay is too low, unemployment is too high, and the student #'s are dropping. The paper mill will force toward school cuts and consolidation/coop. with area towns and Berlin. School staff and board are not listening… or leading.
- I would be for splitting up the projects and doing so much each year to keep the cost down. If taxes, gas, and heating oil go up much more, we will have to sell our houses.
- Regional or tuition to Berlin is not a good idea.

- We need to continue to educate our children in our own community!!! Tax payers need to think about the future of our town and not their own selfish needs.
- Close GHS and do repairs to Edd Fenn and construction if necessary to have k-8 at that school. Tuition H.S. students in full an part to parents choice of school.
- I support tuitioning 9-12 to other schools. I don't think we can support a new high school for the amount of children that are in grammar school now.
- We need to do something!! Our children are attacked because of adults bickering and getting personal. They question us frequently on how and when and if Gorham will still exist! We need to address this issue as needed.
- Repair the buildings. Got fuels used to repair bills every year. Then perhaps in a few years. Expansion/rebuilding funds can renovate.
- Fixed income.
- Fixed income.
- I'm sorry for the delay, I've been traveling. During my trip I quizzed many educators and they all felt that $25 million was too much for our size student population.
- I found the wording on many of these questions quite confusing.
- We don't need a facility that is perfect according to everyone's "wish list." We need a new building. A safe, healthy "adequate" facility. Let's have Dick Hebert do the Ed Fenn, pay cash, then evaluate the results, with the Ed Fenn done. (Grades k-6) then that's off the table. Now we can build a regional 9-12, repair existing HS/MS; build a new HS/MS. No board, ½ the concern solved and no options eliminated. Please, I'll pay!
- With all the money we pay in taxes, the biggest chunk goes to the school, why haven't any repairs been done on a yearly, as needed, basis? Shouldn't there be a reserve of money since no money has been spent all these years for repairs? If we did send all our kids to Berlin school, would we still pay our super-high Gorham taxes on top of paying tuition to Berlin?
- I am strongly opposed to "regionalization" with the Berlin School District.
- Add to the school in stages. Build a main building, and sprout from there. Minimize the cost to the people, stop wasting our money. Your questionnaire just works for a new school, of course we want a new school, but we can't afford it all at once.
- I don't have kids in the schools, so some items I don't feel qualified enough to answer, as I'm not sure of all the details in our school system. I'd primarily like to see a regionalized school that would offer more variety of choices for classes, more vocational opportunity, and a variety of sports, clubs, and activities. If it's not possible to regionalize in Berlin, then I'd support any upgrades that will make a good school system which would draw non- locals to want to live here and have their kids attend our schools, or at least a school system good enough that people don't choose not to live here because of the quality of education. If we want to prosper economically, we've got to have a decent school system and reputation, so families and kids would want to live & move here.
- How much money would tuition-ing kids to Berlin save? Question 4- How do we know what the student-to-teacher ratio be? This entire question is difficult to answer because we don't have the information needed. Questions 5 & 6- same as before, this questionnaire is very hard to respond to. The questions are confusing, and I'm a fairly

educated is difficult to answer because we don't have the information needed. Questions 5 & 6- same as before, this questionnaire is very hard to respond to. The questions are confusing, and I'm a fairly educated son. I feel sorry for other folks! Question 8- Why are these programs at risk? These programs can be maintained without a whole new school. Is this fear mongering? Question 9- Fewer building operating costs? Would paying for a new building be just as costly as higher operating expenses in an old building? Lower energy costs? Less administrative overhead- what does that have to do with renovations? Question 11- what are ED requirements? What do these things have to do with a new building? This question is ridiculous! Question 12- What would these amounts buy us? What could we get for 10million? 18 million? ect. The study with Berlin needs to be done before a survey is sent out. How can these questions be answered if we don't know what Berlin has to offer-at what costs? It's high time we look at combining forces for the betterment of both communities.

- People with children should have more weight with the votes then these without children.
- Berlin and Gorham need to work together – get egos and agendas out of the way. Think "solutions" and "possibilities" for all kids in region without the "want for control" and I believe you will begin to create workable ideas. Stop thinking about what "we lack" or what we "don't have," and concentrate on what we do have.
- We were genuinely shocked that this was voted down! Almost everything passed at town meetings? Education and a quality school should be a priority in this town.
- I do not support the building of a new school. I question why up keep was not better? Gorham-Berlin cooperation should be addressed. Schools need to be combined.
- Questions 4, 5, 6 are irrelevant.
- Efficiency first please.
- I find this survey very poorly worded.
- Quality teachers have to be hired- masters plus- with reading in k-5. For students to grow, changes have to be made in every capacity.
- I believe the school board and their consultants did a superb job planning for a new and better facility and that they were sincere in their beliefs of what would be the best value for the money. Unfortunately we live in an environment in which construction costs, like so many other things, have gone out of control. Many local incomes have not risen in proportion; many are fixed and some are diminished. One mill is closed and the other may close at anytime according to my understanding. I do not believe the new federal prison or the proposed conversion of the Burgess Mill into a bio mass power generator will significantly alter the equation since they may keep as many or more new people away as they hire. Even now I understand the population of the GRS in down more than 60 students from a few years ago. Furthermore, working more than 25 years as an architect here, never once has anything other than cost and meeting the bare essentials of the codes governed those public projects in which I have been involved. Hence architectural solutions involving aesthetic or spatial quality elements have not been tolerated accept when they also can be justified as meeting the essentials. While I voted for the proposed renovations at the town meeting, my experience with this community as an architect would suggest the maintenance and repair would be the most acceptable to the community even though it arguably may cost more in the long run. I do, however, think the community would accept critical life safety improvements including structural upgrades to roofs etc… and some energy and HVAC improvements. Finally, we should

keep in mind the GHS rates one of the highest in the state in terms of quality of education despite the physical plant, and for that we should be proud.

- No matter if it's a mansion, I found out kids don't come out any better. That's the bottom line. People that want a new school like idiots carpenter and *** then pay for it and difference in the taxes. You don't build a new school cause showers or sinks or stoves are what you want. You replace them not build a new school. I can afford any new taxes but am against unnecessary foolishness like you people want. I see so many people worried about their few jobs and low income people worried about higher taxes they can't afford prescriptions and good health insurance. Teachers have too much they should five some back and they complain and want more. No heart, no soul. It's sickening. Some towns would want a school like we have and I'm there a lot with my kids. You're too piggish and I know teachers inside say that too. There are too many have-nots-losers. If you inflate it, it won't work. They tried it downstate and now school building is empty. Even with funds approved taxes went up and people left. Be grateful for what you have or you won't have anything at all. You can't tax a town for more than people can pay. It doesn't work.