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INTRODUCTION

Located in Orange County, Fountain Valley School District's (District) mission is to promote a foundation of academic excellence, mastery of basic skills, responsible citizenship, and a desire by students to achieve their highest potential through a partnership with home and community. The student-centered educational program emphasizes a standards-based curriculum and a commitment to the academic success of each and every student. High test scores, highly qualified teachers, staff dedicated to serving students, and active parent and community involvement place Fountain Valley in the upper echelon of school districts in Orange County.

MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH The primary purpose of this study was to provide the District with a statistically reliable understanding of voters' perceptions, opinions and priorities as they pertain to the District, school facilities, and the quality of education in local schools. How do voters' rate the quality of education in local elementary and middle schools? What changes do they perceive are most needed to protect and improve the quality of education in local schools? Among the facility and technology improvements that could be considered, which do they feel should be priorities for future funding? By profiling the community's preferences on these and related matters, this survey will help the District make sound, strategic decisions that are designed to improve the overall educational experience in local schools and prepare students for success in high school, college, and 21st Century careers.

OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY For a full discussion of the research methods and techniques used in this study, turn to *Methodology* on page 23. In brief, the survey was administered by telephone to a random sample of 400 registered voters in the Fountain Valley School District. The survey was administered between November 14 and November 20, 2014, and the average interview lasted 15 minutes.

ORGANIZATION OF REPORT This report is designed to meet the needs of readers who prefer a summary of the findings as well as those who are interested in the details of the results. For those who seek an overview of the findings, the sections titled *Just the Facts* and *Conclusions* are for you. They provide a summary of the most important factual findings of the survey in bullet-point format and a discussion of their implications. For the interested reader, this section is followed by a more detailed question-by-question discussion of the results from the survey by topic area (see *Table of Contents*), as well as a description of the methodology employed for collecting and analyzing the data. And, for the truly ambitious reader, the questionnaire used for the interviews is contained at the back of this report (see *Questionnaire & Toplines* on page 26) and a complete set of crosstabulations for the survey results is contained in Appendix A.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS True North thanks the Fountain Valley School District for the opportunity to assist the District in this important effort. A special thanks also to Dr. Marc Ecker (Superintendent) and Christine Fullerton (Assistant Superintendent, Business Services) for providing their valuable input during the design stage of this study. Their collective expertise, local knowledge, and insight improved the overall quality of the research presented here.

DISCLAIMER The statements and conclusions in this report are those of the authors (Dr. Timothy McLarney and Richard Sarles) at True North Research, Inc. and not necessarily those of the Fountain Valley School District. Any errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors.

ABOUT TRUE NORTH True North is a full-service survey research firm that is dedicated to providing public agencies with a clear understanding of the values, perceptions, priorities and concerns of their residents and voters. Through designing and implementing scientific surveys, focus groups and one-on-one interviews, as well as expert interpretation of the findings, True North helps its clients to move with confidence when making strategic decisions in a variety of areas—such as planning, policy evaluation, performance management, establishing fiscal priorities, passing revenue measures, and developing effective public information campaigns.

During their careers, Dr. McLarney and Mr. Sarles have designed and conducted over 800 survey research studies for public agencies, including more than 100 studies for school districts in California.



JUST THE FACTS

The following section is an outline of the main factual findings from the survey. For the reader's convenience, we have organized the findings according to the section titles used in the body of this report. Thus, if you would like to learn more about a particular finding, simply turn to the appropriate report section.

IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES

- When presented with seven issues and asked to rate the importance of each, improving the quality of education in local schools received the highest percentage of respondents indicating that the issue was either extremely or very important (82%), followed by improving the local economy (80%), maintaining local streets and roads (71%), protecting local property values (71%), and improving public safety (70%).
- When compared to the other issues tested, voters assigned less importance to preventing local tax increases (66%) and protecting the environment (66%).

PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL SCHOOLS

- When asked to rate the quality of education in Fountain Valley schools, elementary schools received the most positive assessment with 65% rating the quality of education as excellent or good, 8% fair, 5% poor or very poor, and 23% unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.
- For middle schools, 61% of voters rated the quality of education as excellent or good, 10% fair, 3% poor or very poor, whereas 27% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.
- Overall, 43% of respondents perceived that Fountain Valley schools are better than other schools in Orange County, whereas 31% felt they are about the same, 5% indicated they are worse, and 22% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.
- Similarly, 45% of respondents rated Fountain Valley schools as better than other schools in Southern California, whereas 25% felt they are about the same, 5% indicated they are worse, and 25% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.
- When voters were asked to compare Fountain Valley schools with the schools they attended as a child, the results were more mixed. Overall, 37% rated Fountain Valley schools as better, 29% stated they are about the same as those they attended as a child, whereas 16% indicated they are worse and 17% were unsure.
- Approximately one-in-five voters (22%) perceived that the District has a great need for additional money to repair and upgrade school facilities and technology, and an additional 41% felt that the District's need was moderate. Approximately 21% perceived that the District has little or no need for additional money for these purposes, whereas 16% were unsure or unwilling to answer the question.
- Approximately 42% of voters rated the District's performance in managing its finances as excellent (9%) or good (33%), 25% indicated it is fair, 7% used poor or very poor to describe the District's performance in this respect, whereas 26% confided that they were unsure or unwilling to answer the question.

PRIORITY IMPROVEMENTS

- When asked in an open-ended manner the one change they would make to improve the quality of education in local **elementary schools**, 25% of respondents could not identify a desired change and an additional 10% indicated that no changes are needed/everything is fine. Among the specific improvements that were requested, the most common were improving the quality of instruction/teachers (9%), reducing class sizes (8%), and improving the nature of subjects/programs offered (6%).
- For **middle schools**, 32% of respondents could not identify a desired change and an additional 13% indicated that no changes are needed/everything is fine. Among the specific improvements that were requested, the most common were hiring additional/qualified teachers (10%), reducing class sizes (9%), and improving the nature of subjects/programs offered (6%).
- When presented with a list of 10 specific items and asked to rate their priority for future funding, repairing or replacing leaky roofs, worn-out floors, old rusty plumbing, and faulty electrical systems received the highest percentage of respondents indicating that it is a high or medium priority (91%), followed by upgrading outdated classrooms, science labs, libraries, and computer systems (90%), ensuring that all teachers are adequately trained in the use of modern instructional technologies (89%), keeping computer systems and classroom technology up-to-date over time (88%), and updating instructional technology in the classroom for improved student learning in core subjects like math, science and technology (86%).
- Second-tier priorities included upgrading and repairing physical education facilities and children's playground equipment so they meet current safety standards (81%), retrofitting older buildings so that they meet modern earthquake safety standards (81%), installing air conditioning in classrooms to improve air quality and keep classrooms from reaching temperatures of 85 to 100 degrees (80%), and improving student safety and campus security systems, including security cameras, lighting, fencing, smoke detectors, fire alarms and sprinklers (79%).
- When compared to the other improvements tested, improving insulation and windows to increase energy efficiency and save money was viewed as the lowest priority (73%).

RELEVANT ATTITUDES

More than eight-in-ten respondents agreed with the statements:

- *If we want our kids to succeed in college and careers, they must be skilled in the use of today's technologies and have a solid background in science, math and technology* (91%).
- *Good schools help protect and improve local property values* (84%).

At least two-thirds of Fountain Valley voters also agreed that:

- *We need to update our school buildings, technology and equipment if we expect our students to have the same opportunities as others to succeed* (77%).
- *We need to improve campus security and safety at our local schools* (72%).
- *Students learn better when they can use computers and laptops in classrooms* (66%).



C O N C L U S I O N S

The bulk of this report is devoted to conveying the details of the study findings. In this section, however, we attempt to ‘see the forest through the trees’ and note how the collective results of the survey answer the key questions that motivated the research. The following conclusions are based on True North’s interpretations of the survey results and the firm’s collective experience conducting similar studies for public agencies throughout the State.

Where do voters rank education among important issues in the community?

Voters in the Fountain Valley School District consider improving the quality of education in local schools to be the *most* important issue facing the community—even more important than other benchmark issues including improving public safety, maintaining local streets and roads, protecting the environment, and preventing local tax increases. The survey results also make clear that voters are supportive of continuing to improve local schools through a variety of instructional, facility, and technology improvements (see below for more on this topic).

How do voters view the current quality of education in Fountain Valley schools?

Approximately one-quarter of voters who reside in the district do not know enough about Fountain Valley schools to be able to comment on the quality of education provided in local elementary and middle schools, respectively. Among those who do have an opinion, however, the results are overwhelmingly favorable. Positive assessments about the quality of education in local elementary schools outnumbered negative assessments by a ratio of more than 13 to 1. The ratio of positive to negative assessments regarding the quality of education was even more positive for middle schools (20 to 1).

Voters’ favorable impressions of Fountain Valley schools were also evident when they were asked to compare the quality of Fountain Valley schools to others in Orange County, Southern California, as well as the schools they attended as a child. In all three scenarios, Fountain Valley schools were most often viewed as being better than the comparison schools, followed by being about the same.

What improvements do voters perceive to be priorities for local schools?

To better prepare students for success in high school, college and 21st Century careers, schools throughout California are making changes to how they teach, to the types of courses they offer, and to their facilities. Recognizing that the District’s budget is limited, one of the primary goals of this study was to profile the types of improvements that Fountain Valley voters feel should be priorities for future funding.

One of the more striking patterns in the survey is the priority that Fountain Valley voters place on a mix of facility and technology improvements. Voters recognize that academic standards are rising in today’s world, and that we need to provide local students a competitive edge by providing modern facilities, an education that includes practical use of

today's technologies, as well as a solid background in science, math, and technology.

Specifically, Fountain Valley voters agreed that the following are the **top priority** improvements for future funding:

- Repairing or replacing leaky roofs, worn-out floors, old rusty plumbing, and faulty electrical systems.
- Upgrading outdated classrooms, science labs, libraries, and computer systems.
- Ensuring that all teachers are adequately trained in the use of modern instructional technologies.
- Keeping computer systems and classroom technology up-to-date over time.
- Updating instructional technology in the classroom for improved student learning in core subjects like math, science and technology.

Voters' **second-tier priorities** focused on upgrading other outdated facilities and systems, including:

- Upgrading and repairing physical education facilities and children's playground equipment so they meet current safety standards.
- Retrofitting older buildings so that they meet modern earthquake safety standards.
- Installing air conditioning in classrooms to improve air quality and keep classrooms from reaching temperatures of 85 to 100 degrees.
- Improving student safety and campus security systems, including security cameras, lighting, fencing, smoke detectors, fire alarms and sprinklers.

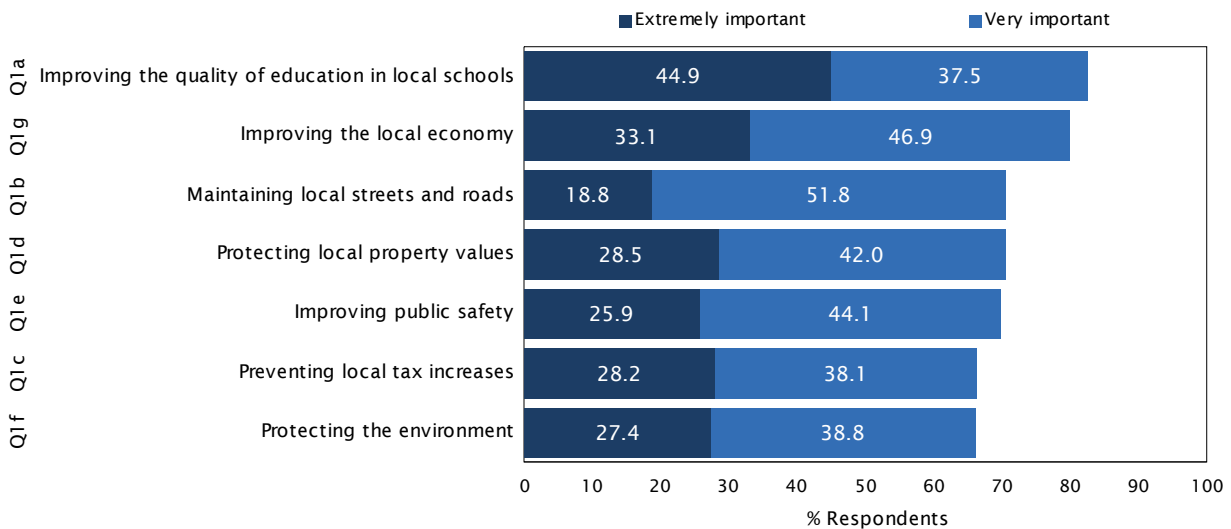
IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES

The first substantive question of the survey presented respondents with several issues facing residents in the District and asked them to rate the importance of each issue. Because the same response scale was used for each issue, the results provide an insight into how important each issue is on a scale of importance *as well as* how each issue ranks in importance relative to the other issues tested. To avoid a systematic position bias, the order in which the issues were presented was randomized for each respondent.

Figure 1 presents the issues tested, as well as the importance assigned to each by survey participants, sorted by order of importance.¹ Overall, improving the quality of education in local schools received the highest percentage of respondents indicating that the issue was either extremely or very important (82%), followed by improving the local economy (80%), maintaining local streets and roads (71%), protecting local property values (71%), and improving public safety (70%). When compared to the other issues tested, voters assigned less importance to preventing local tax increases (66%) and protecting the environment (66%).

Question 1 *To begin, I'm going to read a list of issues facing your community and for each one, please tell me how important you feel the issue is to you using a scale of extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not at all important. Here is the (first/next) issue: ----- Do you think this issue is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?*

FIGURE 1 IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES



1. Issues were ranked based on the percentage of respondents who indicated that the issue was either extremely important or very important.

PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL SCHOOLS

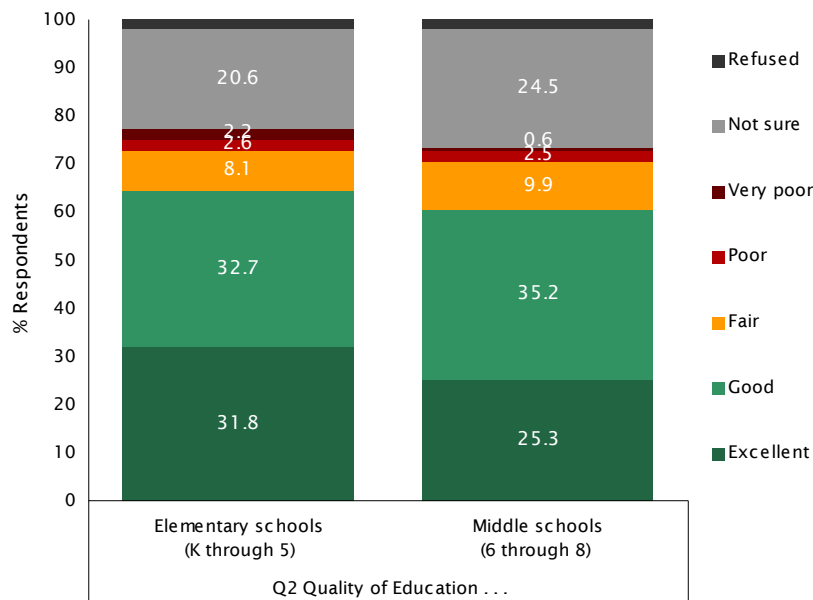
Having identified the relative importance of various issues in the community, the survey next focused on respondents' perceptions of the quality of education provided in Fountain Valley schools, as well as the District's need for additional resources and its performance in managing finances.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION Rather than combine all school levels into a single assessment, Question 2 asked respondents to rate the quality of education separately for elementary schools (Kindergarten through 5th grade) and middle schools (6th through 8th grade) using a five point scale ranging from excellent to very poor. Figure 2 presents the results to Question 2 among all respondents.

Overall, elementary schools received the most positive assessment, with 65% rating the quality of education as excellent or good, 8% fair, 5% poor or very poor, and 23% unsure or unwilling to share their opinion. For middle schools, 61% of voters rated the quality of education as excellent or good, 10% fair, 3% poor or very poor, whereas 27% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.

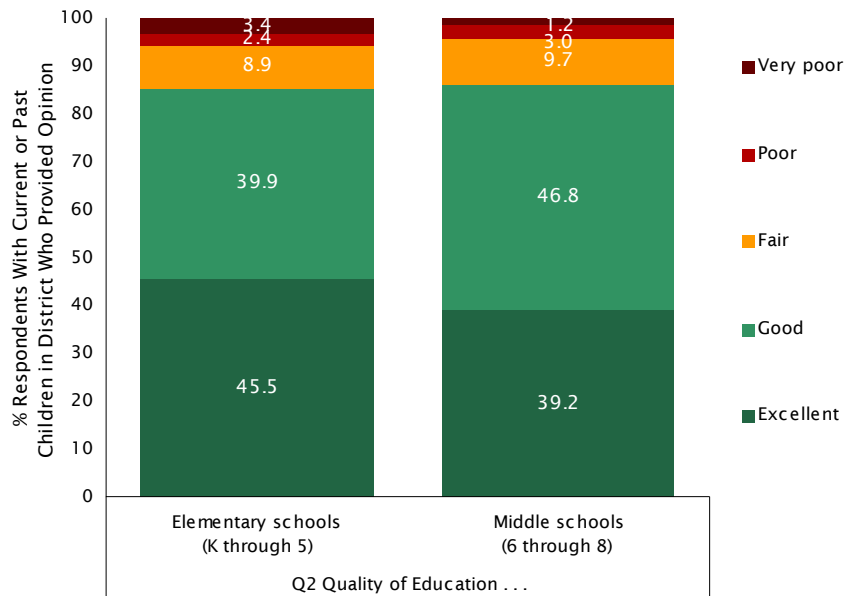
Question 2 *Your household is within the Fountain Valley School District. In general, how would you rate the quality of education provided by the Fountain Valley School District in _____? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor*

FIGURE 2 QUALITY OF EDUCATION



For the interested reader, Figure 3 on the next page displays the quality ratings provided by those who have (or previously had) a child attend a school in the Fountain Valley School District. Only those who had an opinion are shown to allow for direct comparisons across the schools. The most striking pattern in the figure is that more than 85% of current or former parents with an opinion rated the quality of education for each level of school as excellent or good.

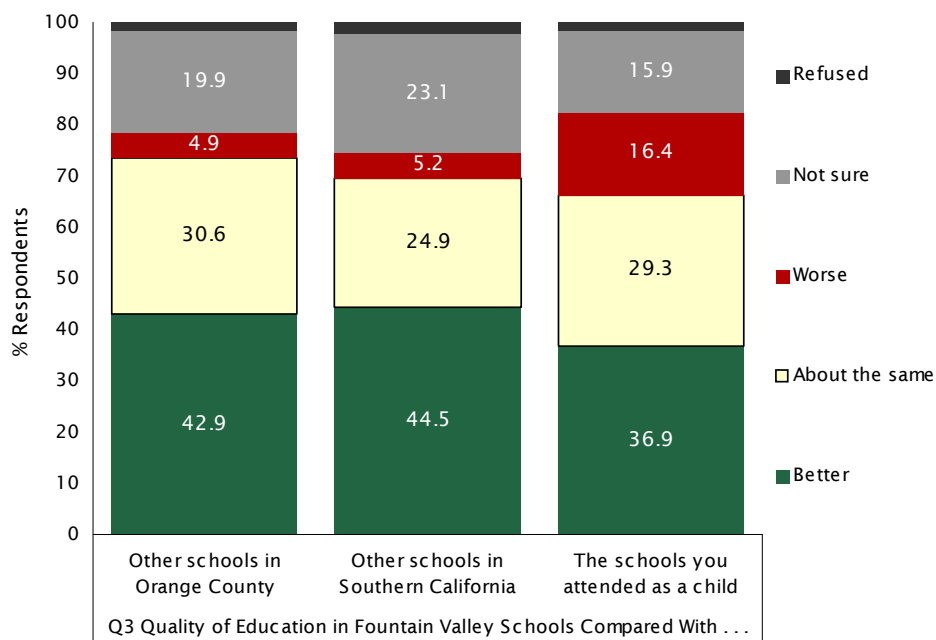
FIGURE 3 QUALITY OF EDUCATION AMONG THOSE WITH A DISTRICT CHILD, CURRENT OR PAST



COMPARISON RANKINGS Having measured voters’ opinions about the quality of education provided in Fountain Valley schools, the survey next asked respondents to *compare* Fountain Valley schools to others in terms of overall quality of education (see Figure 4).

Question 3 *When compared to _____, would you say the quality of education provided in Fountain Valley schools is better, about the same, or worse?*

FIGURE 4 COMPARING FOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOLS



In general, voters held favorable opinions about the quality of education provided in Fountain Valley schools when compared to others. Overall, 43% of respondents perceived that Fountain Valley schools are better than other schools in Orange County, whereas 31% felt they are about the same, 5% indicated they are worse, and 22% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion. Similarly, 45% of respondents rated Fountain Valley schools as better than other schools in Southern California, whereas 25% felt they are about the same, 5% indicated they are worse, and 25% were unsure or unwilling to share their opinion.

Interestingly, however, when voters were asked to compare Fountain Valley schools with the schools they attended as a child, the results were more mixed. Overall, 37% rated Fountain Valley schools as better, 29% stated they are about the same as those they attended as a child, whereas 16% indicated they are worse and 17% were unsure.

For the interested reader, Figure 5 presents the comparative ratings for Fountain Valley schools among parents of current or past students, whereas Figure 6 shows how voters' comparisons of Fountain Valley schools to the schools they attended as a child varied by respondent age. In both figures, only those who had an opinion are shown to allow for direct comparisons across the schools.

FIGURE 5 COMPARING FOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOLS AMONG THOSE WITH A DISTRICT CHILD, CURRENT OR PAST

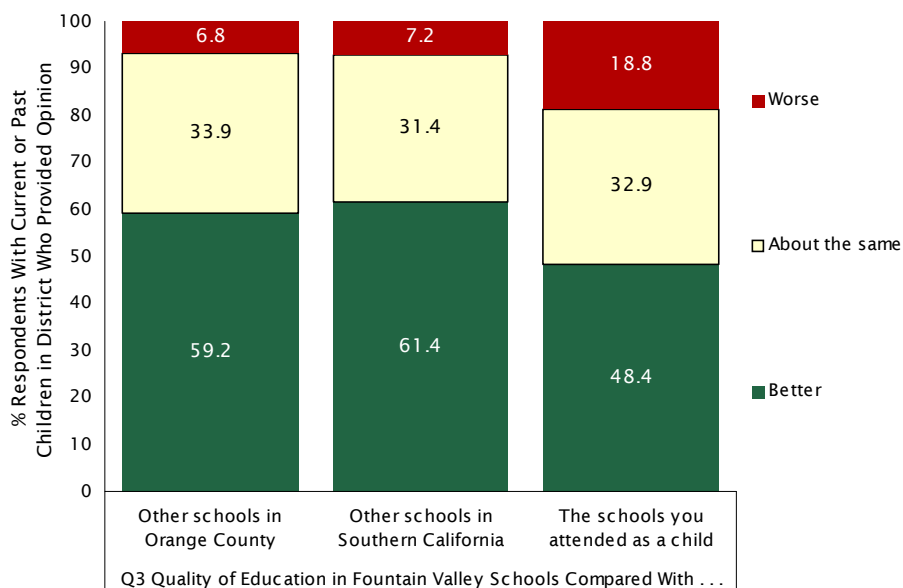
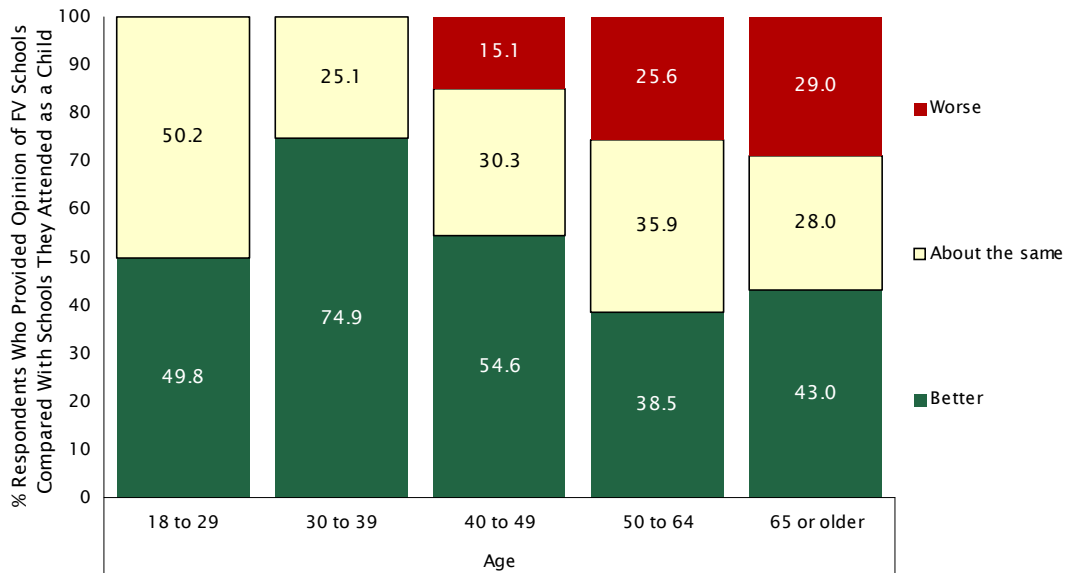


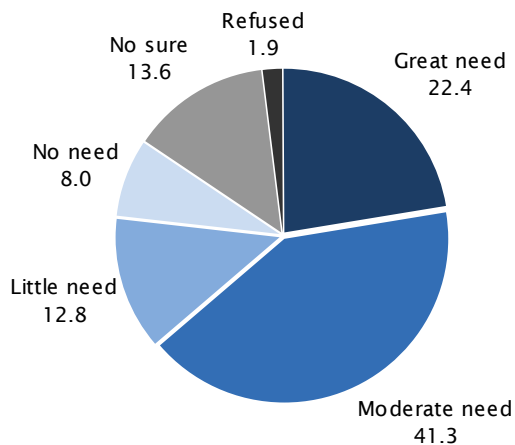
FIGURE 6 COMPARING FOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOLS AMONG THOSE WHO ATTENDED AS A CHILD



NEED FOR ADDITIONAL MONEY TO REPAIR & UPGRADE SCHOOLS All voters were next queried about the District’s need for additional money to repair and upgrade school facilities and technology.

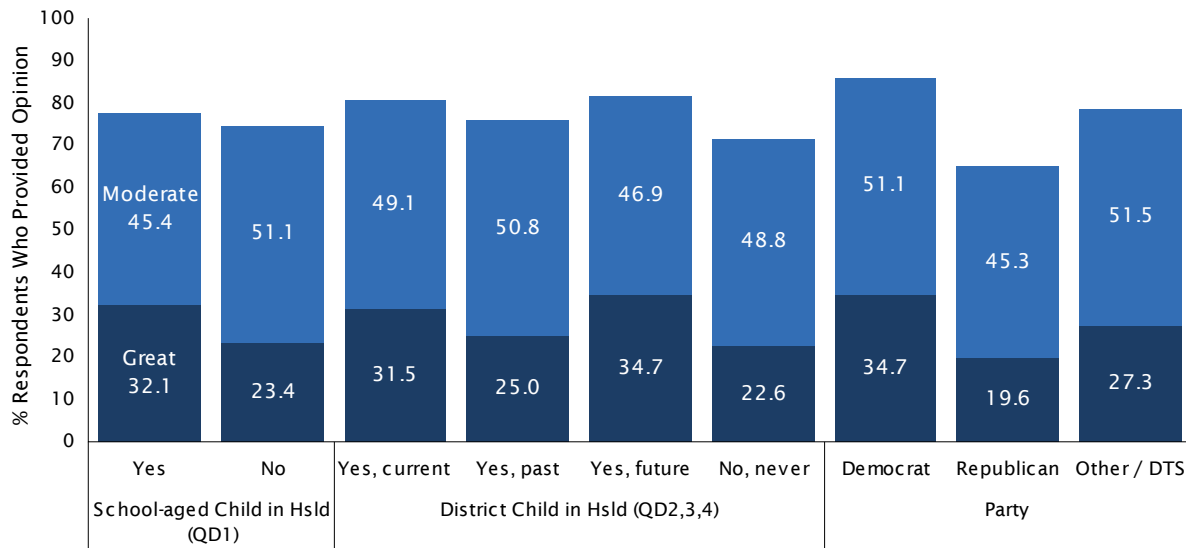
Question 4 *How would you rate the Fountain Valley School District's need for additional money to repair and upgrade school facilities and technology? Would you say it has a great need, moderate need, little need, or no need?*

FIGURE 7 NEED FOR ADDITIONAL MONEY



Overall, 22% of voters perceived that the District has a great need for additional money to repair and upgrade school facilities and technology, and an additional 41% felt that the District’s need was moderate (see Figure 7). Approximately 21% perceived that the District has little or no need for additional money for these purposes, whereas 16% were unsure or unwilling to answer the question. Figure 8 on the next page displays how perceptions of the District’s need for additional money to repair and upgrade school facilities and technology were related to whether respondents have a school age child in the home, whether they have (or had) a child attend a District school, and partisan affiliation.

FIGURE 8 NEED FOR ADDITIONAL MONEY BY SCHOOL-AGE CHILD IN HSLD, DISTRICT CHILD IN HSLD & PARTY



FISCAL MANAGEMENT The final question in this series asked voters to rate the Fountain Valley School District’s performance in managing its finances. Approximately 42% of voters rated the District’s performance in managing its finances as excellent (9%) or good (33%), 25% indicated it is fair, 7% used poor or very poor to describe the District’s performance in this respect, whereas 26% confided that they were unsure or unwilling to answer the question (Figure 9). Figure 10 on the next page displays how opinions on this matter varied by whether respondents have a school age child in the home, whether they have (or had) a child attend a District school, and partisan affiliation.

Question 5 *In general, how would you rate the job the Fountain Valley School District has done in managing its finances? Would you say it has done an excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor job?*

FIGURE 9 OVERALL RATING OF MANAGING FINANCES OF FOUNTAIN VALLEY SD

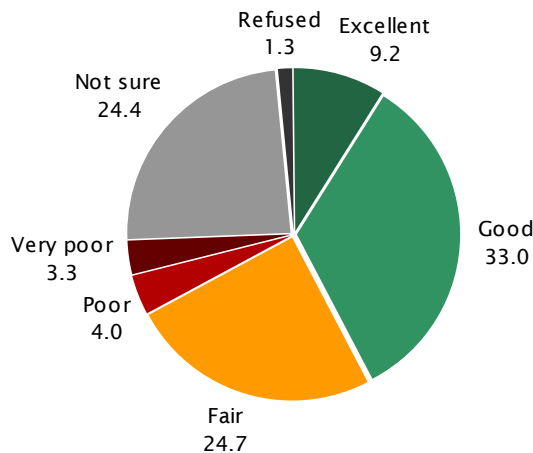
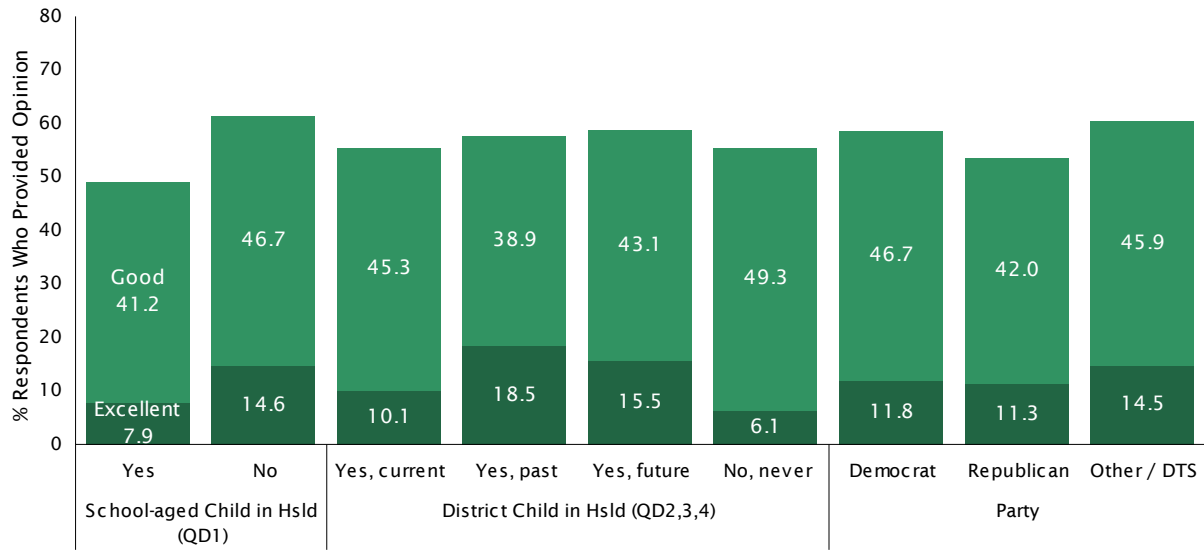


FIGURE 10 OVERALL RATING OF MANAGING FINANCES OF FOUNTAIN VALLEY SD BY SCHOOL-AGE CHILD IN HSLD, DISTRICT CHILD IN HSLD & PARTY



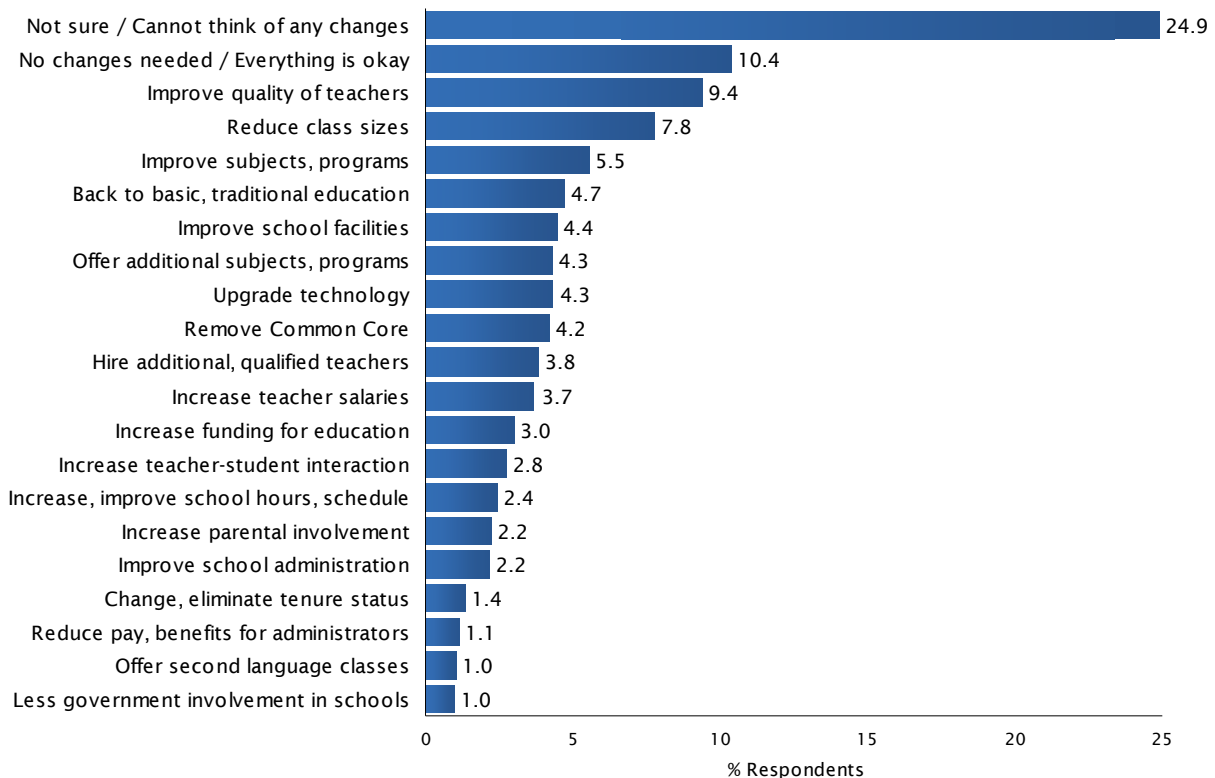
P R I O R I T Y I M P R O V E M E N T S

To better prepare students for success in high school, college and 21st Century careers, schools throughout California are making changes to how they teach, to the types of courses they offer, and to their facilities. Using a combination of open-ended and structured questions, the survey sought to identify the types of changes and improvements voters in the Fountain Valley School District feel should be priorities for the District in the coming months and years.

MOST SALIENT CHANGES DESIRED The first questions in this series asked voters to identify the *one* specific change they would make to improve the quality of education at local elementary and middle schools, respectively. Questions 6 and 7 were presented in an open-ended manner, which allowed respondents to mention any change that came to mind without being prompted by, or restricted to, a particular list of options. True North later reviewed the verbatim responses and grouped them into the categories shown in the following figures. Asking about potential changes in an open-ended manner (without prompting) identifies those changes that are most salient/top-of-mind for respondents.

Question 6 *If you could make one specific change at local elementary schools to improve the quality of education, what change would you make?*

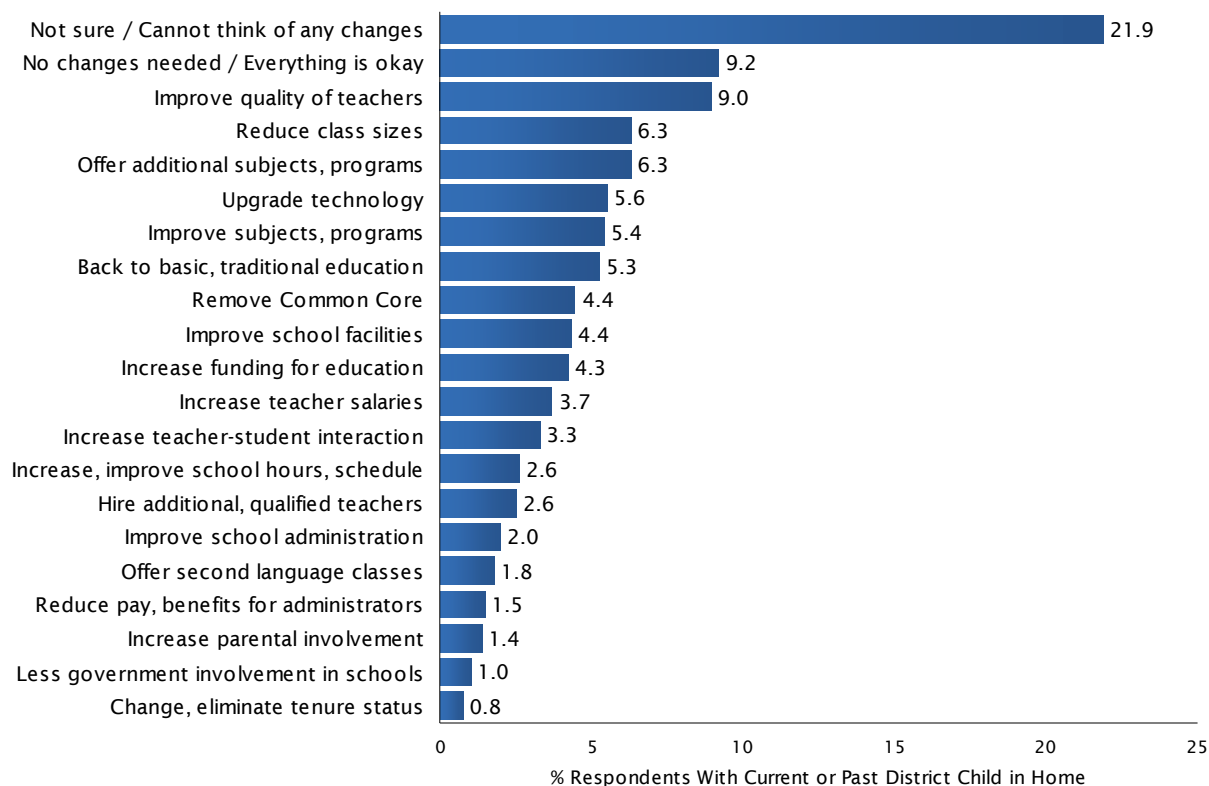
FIGURE 11 CHANGES TO IMPROVE LOCAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS



Figures 11 and 13 present the results to this common question for elementary and middle schools, respectively. For elementary schools (see Figure 11), 25% of respondents could not identify a desired change and an additional 10% indicated that no changes are needed/everything is fine. Among the specific improvements that were requested, the most common were

improving the quality of instruction/teachers (9%), reducing class sizes (8%), and improving the nature of subjects/programs offered (6%). Figure 12 presents the responses just among parents of current or former students who attended a school in the Fountain Valley School District.

FIGURE 12 CHANGES TO IMPROVE LOCAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WITH CURRENT OR PAST DISTRICT CHILD IN HOME



For middle schools (see Figure 13), 32% of respondents could not identify a desired change and an additional 13% indicated that no changes are needed/everything is fine. Among the specific improvements that were requested, the most common were hiring additional/qualified teachers (10%), reducing class sizes (9%), and improving the nature of subjects/programs offered (6%). Figure 14 presents the responses just among parents of current or former students who attended a school in the Fountain Valley School District.

Question 7 *If you could make one specific change at local middle schools to improve the quality of education, what change would you make?*

FIGURE 13 CHANGES TO IMPROVE LOCAL MIDDLE SCHOOLS

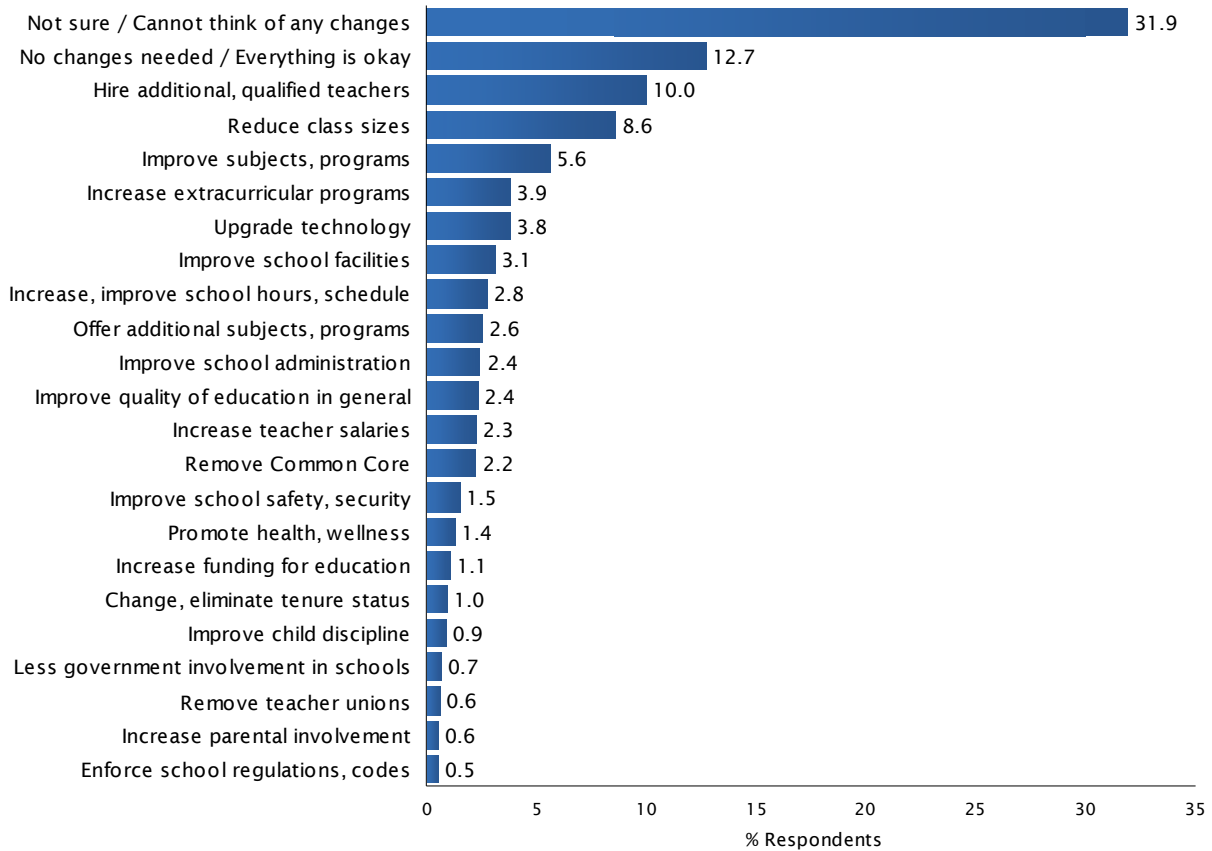
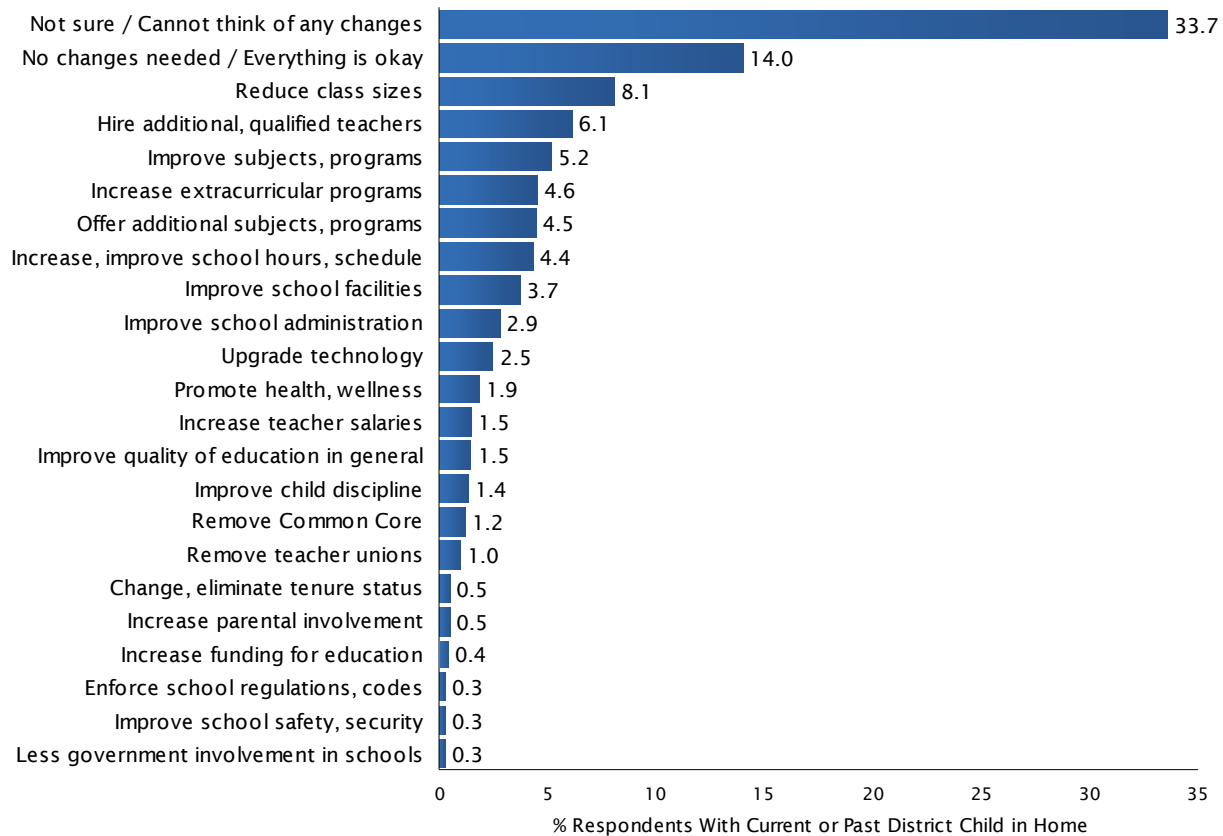


FIGURE 14 CHANGES TO IMPROVE LOCAL MIDDLE SCHOOLS WITH CURRENT OR PAST DISTRICT CHILD IN HOME



RANKING OF PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE FUNDING Whereas Questions 6 and 7 presented respondents with an open-ended opportunity to mention any improvements that came to mind that would enhance the quality of education in local schools, Question 8 presented voters with a specific list of potential improvements and asked them to identify whether each improvement should be a high, medium or low priority for future funding. To introduce a sense of competition, respondents were instructed that due to limited funds, not all improvements could be high priorities. The improvements tested, as well as the priority assigned to each, are shown in Figure 15 on the next page.

Overall, repairing or replacing leaky roofs, worn-out floors, old rusty plumbing, and faulty electrical systems received the highest percentage of respondents indicating that it is a high or medium priority (91%), followed by upgrading outdated classrooms, science labs, libraries, and computer systems (90%), ensuring that all teachers are adequately trained in the use of modern instructional technologies (89%), keeping computer systems and classroom technology up-to-date over time (88%), and updating instructional technology in the classroom for improved student learning in core subjects like math, science and technology (86%). Second-tier priorities included upgrading and repairing physical education facilities and children's playground equipment so they meet current safety standards (81%), retrofitting older buildings so that they meet modern earthquake safety standards (81%), installing air conditioning in classrooms to improve air quality and keep classrooms from reaching temperatures of 85 to 100 degrees (80%), and

improving student safety and campus security systems, including security cameras, lighting, fencing, smoke detectors, fire alarms and sprinklers (79%). When compared to the other improvements tested, improving insulation and windows to increase energy efficiency and save money was viewed as the lowest priority.

For the interested reader, Table 1 on the next page presents the top five funding priorities according to whether a voter has, had, or expects to have a child attend a Fountain Valley school.

Question 8 *Next, I'm going to read a list of changes that could take place in local Fountain Valley schools in the next few years. As I read each item, please tell me whether you think the change should be a high, medium, or a low priority for future funding. If you don't think any funds should be spent on the item, just say so. Please keep in mind that due to limited funds, not all items can be high priorities. Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Should this item be a high, medium or low priority for future funding - or should no money be spent on this project?*

FIGURE 15 FUNDING PRIORITIES

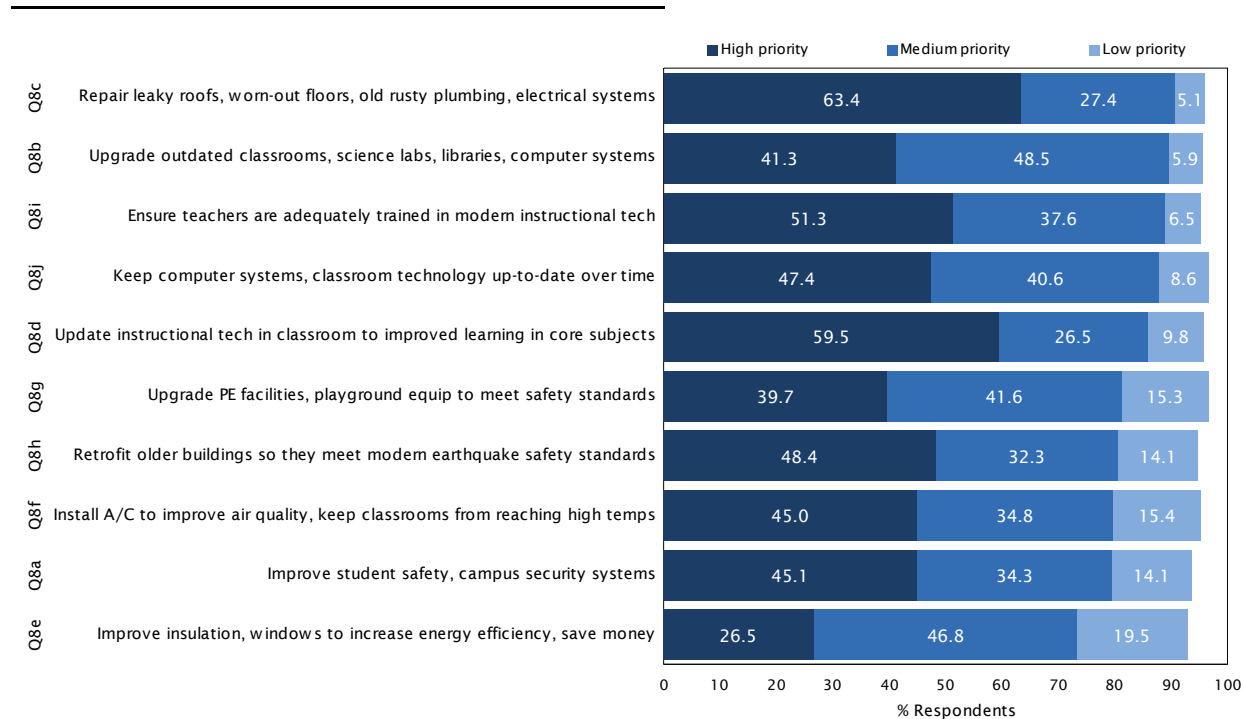


TABLE 1 TOP FUNDING PRIORITIES BY DISTRICT CHILD IN HOME

District Child in Hsld?	Item	Proposed Change Summary	% High Priority
Yes, Current (n = 90)	Q8c	Repair leaky roofs, worn-out floors, old rusty plumbing, faulty electrical systems	61
	Q8d	Update instructional tech in classroom to improved learning in core subjects	57
	Q8f	Install A/C to improve air quality, keep classrooms from reaching high temps	55
	Q8h	Retrofit older buildings so that they meet modern earthquake safety standards	53
	Q8j	Keep computer systems, classroom technology up-to-date over time	50
Yes, Past (n = 161)	Q8c	Repair leaky roofs, worn-out floors, old rusty plumbing, faulty electrical systems	62
	Q8d	Update instructional tech in classroom to improved learning in core subjects	60
	Q8i	Ensure teachers are adequately trained in the use of modern instructional tech	54
	Q8j	Keep computer systems, classroom technology up-to-date over time	52
	Q8f	Install A/C to improve air quality, keep classrooms from reaching high temps	47
Yes, Future (n = 110)	Q8c	Repair leaky roofs, worn-out floors, old rusty plumbing, faulty electrical systems	60
	Q8d	Update instructional tech in classroom to improved learning in core subjects	59
	Q8j	Keep computer systems, classroom technology up-to-date over time	53
	Q8a	Improve student safety, campus security systems	52
	Q8b	Upgrade outdated classrooms, science labs, libraries, computer systems	48
No, Never (n = 133)	Q8c	Repair leaky roofs, worn-out floors, old rusty plumbing, faulty electrical systems	66
	Q8d	Update instructional tech in classroom to improved learning in core subjects	62
	Q8i	Ensure teachers are adequately trained in the use of modern instructional tech	55
	Q8h	Retrofit older buildings so that they meet modern earthquake safety standards	51
	Q8g	Upgrade PE facilities, playground equip to meet safety standards	45

RELEVANT ATTITUDES

The final substantive question of the survey was designed to profile voters' opinions about a variety of education-related topics. The format of Question 9 was straightforward—for each of the statements shown in truncated form on the left of Figure 16, voters were simply asked the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement. Although the statements were randomized for each respondent to avoid a systematic position bias, they are sorted in Figure 16 from high to low based on the percentage of respondents that agreed with each statement.

Overall, more than eight-in-ten respondents agreed with the statements *If we want our kids to succeed in college and careers, they must be skilled in the use of today's technologies and have a solid background in science, math and technology* (91%) and *Good schools help protect and improve local property values* (84%). At least two-thirds of Fountain Valley voters also agreed that *We need to update our school buildings, technology and equipment if we expect our students to have the same opportunities as others to succeed* (77%), *We need to improve campus security and safety at our local schools* (72%), and *Students learn better when they can use computers and laptops in classrooms* (66%).

Question 9 *Next, I'm going to read you a series of statements. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement. Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree, or do you have no opinion? Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?*

FIGURE 16 AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT SCHOOLS

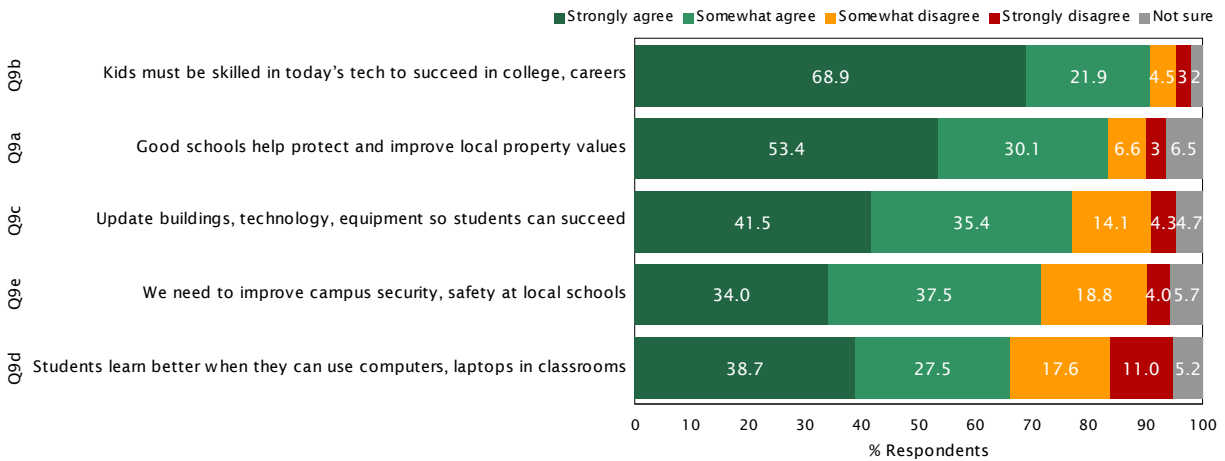


Table 2 on the next page lists the statements with the highest levels of agreement according to whether the respondent has, had, or expects to have a child attend a Fountain Valley school. Although the rank ordering of the top five statements is somewhat different across subgroups, the top two statements are the same for each subgroup.

TABLE 2 TOP STATEMENTS ABOUT SCHOOLS BY DISTRICT CHID IN HOME

District Child in Hsld?	Item	Statement Summary	% Strongly Agree
Yes, Current (n = 90)	Q9b	Kids must be skilled in today's technologies to succeed in college, careers	71
	Q9a	Good schools help protect and improve local property values	50
	Q9d	Students learn better when they can use computers, laptops in classrooms	41
	Q9c	Update buildings, technology, equipment so students can succeed	40
	Q9e	We need to improve campus security, safety at local schools	38
Yes, Past (n = 161)	Q9b	Kids must be skilled in today's technologies to succeed in college, careers	70
	Q9a	Good schools help protect and improve local property values	56
	Q9c	Update buildings, technology, equipment so students can succeed	41
	Q9d	Students learn better when they can use computers, laptops in classrooms	37
	Q9e	We need to improve campus security, safety at local schools	32
Yes, Future (n = 110)	Q9b	Kids must be skilled in today's technologies to succeed in college, careers	71
	Q9a	Good schools help protect and improve local property values	55
	Q9c	Update buildings, technology, equipment so students can succeed	46
	Q9d	Students learn better when they can use computers, laptops in classrooms	44
	Q9e	We need to improve campus security, safety at local schools	35
No, Never (n = 133)	Q9b	Kids must be skilled in today's technologies to succeed in college, careers	71
	Q9a	Good schools help protect and improve local property values	50
	Q9c	Update buildings, technology, equipment so students can succeed	42
	Q9d	Students learn better when they can use computers, laptops in classrooms	42
	Q9e	We need to improve campus security, safety at local schools	38

BACKGROUND & DEMOGRAPHICS

TABLE 3 DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE

<i>Total Respondents</i>	400
School-aged Child in Hsld (QD1)	
Yes	33.8
No	64.2
Refused	2.0
District Child in Hsld (QD2,3,4)	
Yes, current	22.4
Yes, past	40.3
Yes, future	27.5
No, never	33.2
Refused	3.1
Homeowner on Voter File	
Yes	61.6
No	38.4
Party	
Democrat	30.4
Republican	41.3
Other / DTS	28.2
Household Party Type	
Single dem	18.0
Dual dem	5.7
Single rep	18.0
Dual rep	15.8
Other	20.0
Mixed	22.6
Age	
18 to 29	14.7
30 to 39	12.0
40 to 49	17.4
50 to 64	29.2
65 or older	26.6
Refused	0.2
Registration Year	
2014 to 2009	35.4
2008 to 2005	22.4
2004 to 2001	10.1
2000 or before	32.2
Likely to Vote by Mail	
Yes	34.1
No	65.9
Likely June 2016 Voter	
Yes	45.2
No	54.8
Likely November 2016 Voter	
Yes	86.8
No	13.2
Gender	
Male	47.5
Female	52.5

In addition to questions directly related to education issues, the study collected basic demographic information about respondents and their households. Some of this information was gathered during the interview, although much of it was collected from the voter file. The profile of the voter sample used for this study is shown in Table 3.



M E T H O D O L O G Y

The following sections outline the methodology used in the study, as well as the motivation for using certain techniques.

QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT Dr. McLarney of True North Research worked closely with the Fountain Valley School District to develop a questionnaire that covered the topics of interest and avoided possible sources of systematic measurement error, including position-order effects, wording effects, response-category effects, scaling effects, and priming. Several questions included multiple individual items. Because asking the items in a set order can lead to a systematic position bias in responses, items were asked in random order.

PROGRAMMING, PRE-TEST & TRANSLATION Prior to fielding the survey, the questionnaire was CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) programmed to assist the interviewers when conducting the telephone interviews. The CATI program automatically navigates the skip patterns, randomizes the appropriate question items, and alerts the interviewer to certain types of keypunching mistakes should they happen during the interview. The integrity of the questionnaire was pre-tested internally by True North and by dialing into random homes in the District prior to formally beginning the survey. Once final, the questionnaire was also professionally translated into Spanish and Vietnamese to allow for interviewing in English, Spanish and Vietnamese according to a respondent's preference.

SAMPLE The survey was administered to a stratified and clustered random sample of registered voters in the District. Consistent with the profile of this universe, the sample was stratified into clusters, each representing a particular combination of age, gender, and household party type. Individuals were then randomly selected based on their profile into an appropriate cluster. This method ensures that if a person of a particular profile refuses to participate in the study, they are replaced by an individual who shares their same profile.

STATISTICAL MARGIN OF ERROR By using the probability-based sampling design noted above, True North ensured that the final sample was representative of voters in the District. The results of the sample can thus be used to estimate the opinions of *all* voters in the District. Because not all voters participated in the study, however, the results have what is known as a statistical margin of error due to sampling. The margin of error refers to the difference between what was found in the survey of 400 voters for a particular question and what would have been found if all voters in the District had been surveyed for the study.

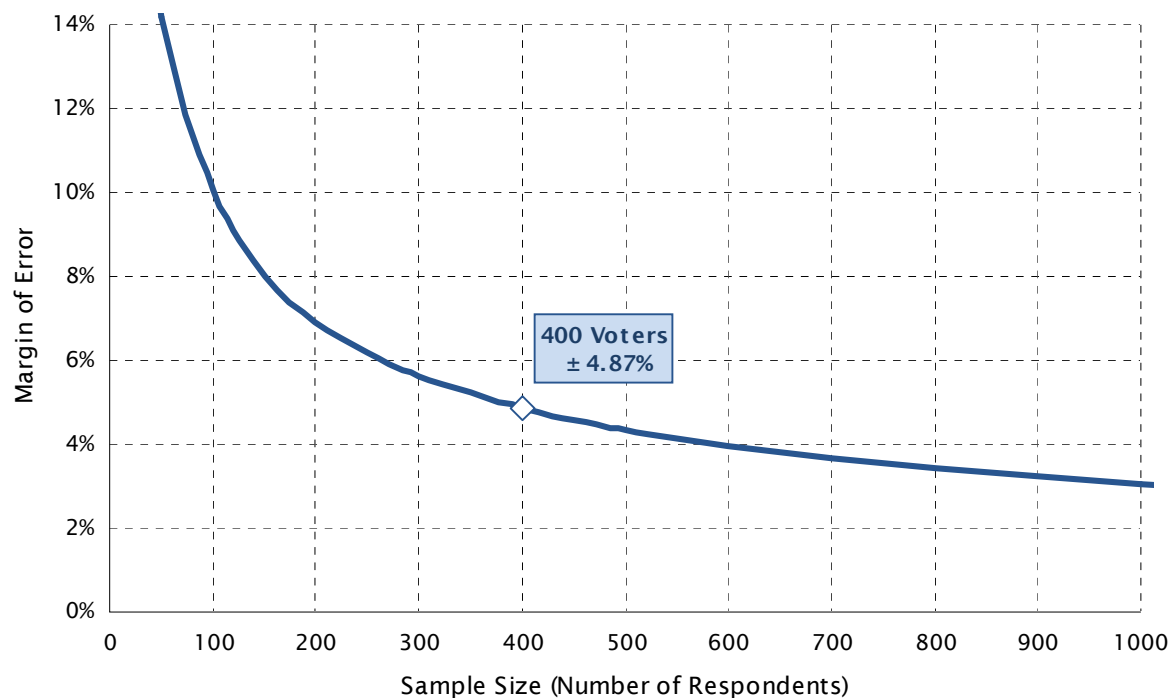
For example, in estimating the percentage of voters that consider maintaining the quality of education in local schools to be *extremely important* (Question 1a of the survey), the margin of error can be calculated if one knows the size of the population, the size of the sample, a confidence level, and the distribution of responses to the question. The appropriate equation for estimating the margin of error, in this case, is shown below.

$$\hat{p} \pm t \sqrt{\left(\frac{N-n}{N}\right) \frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n-1}}$$

Where \hat{p} is the proportion of voters who said maintaining the quality of education is *extremely important* (0.45 for 45% in this example), N is the population size of voters from which the sample was drawn (31,927), n is the sample size that received the question (400) and t is the upper $\alpha/2$ point for the t-distribution with $n - 1$ degrees of freedom (1.96 for a 95% confidence interval). Solving the equation using these values reveals a margin of error of $\pm 4.85\%$. This means that with 45% of survey respondents indicating that they consider maintaining the quality of education in local schools to be extremely important, we can be 95% confident that the actual percentage of all voters that hold this opinion is between 40% and 50%.

Figure 17 provides a graphic plot of the *maximum* margin of error in this study. The maximum margin of error for a dichotomous percentage result occurs when the answers are evenly split such that 50% provide one response and 50% provide the alternative response. For this survey, the maximum margin of error is $\pm 4.87\%$.

FIGURE 17 MAXIMUM MARGIN OF ERROR DUE TO SAMPLING



Within this report, figures and tables show how responses to certain questions varied by subgroups such as age, gender, and partisan affiliation. Figure 17 is thus useful for understanding how the maximum margin of error for a percentage estimate will grow as the number of individuals asked a question (or in a particular subgroup) shrinks. Because the margin of error grows exponentially as the sample size decreases, the reader should use caution when generalizing and interpreting the results for small subgroups.

DATA COLLECTION The method of data collection was telephone interviewing. Interviews were conducted during weekday evenings (5:30PM to 9PM) and on weekends (10AM to 5PM) between November 14 and November 20, 2014. It is standard practice not to call during the day

on weekdays because most working adults are unavailable and thus calling during those hours would bias the sample. The interviews averaged 15 minutes in length.

DATA PROCESSING Data processing consisted of checking the data for errors or inconsistencies, coding and recoding responses, and preparing frequency analyses and crosstabulations.

ROUNDING Numbers that end in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole number, whereas numbers that end in 0.4 or lower are rounded down to the nearest whole number. These same rounding rules are also applied, when needed, to arrive at numbers that include a decimal place in constructing figures and charts. Occasionally, these rounding rules lead to small discrepancies in the first decimal place when comparing tables and pie charts for a given question.

QUESTIONNAIRE & TOPLINES



Fountain Valley School District
 Planning Survey
 Final Toplines
 November 2014

Section 1: Introduction to Study

Hi, may I please speak to _____. My name is _____, and I'm calling on behalf of TNR, an independent public opinion research firm. We're conducting a survey about important issues in Fountain Valley and Huntington Beach and I'd like to get your opinions.

If needed: This is a survey about important issues in your community. I'm NOT trying to sell anything and I won't ask for a donation.

If needed: The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

If needed: If now is not a convenient time, can you let me know a better time so I can call back?

If the person asks why you need to speak to the listed person or if they ask to participate instead, explain: For statistical purposes, at this time the survey must only be completed by this particular individual.

If the person says they are an elected official or is somehow associated with the survey, politely explain that this survey is designed to measure the opinions of those not closely associated with the study, thank them for their time, and terminate the interview.

Section 2: Importance of Issues

Q1 To begin, I'm going to read a list of issues facing your community and for each one, please tell me how important you feel the issue is to you using a scale of extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not at all important.

Here is the (first/next) issue: _____. Do you think this issue is extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?

	<i>Randomize</i>	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not at all Important	Not sure	Refused
A	Improving the quality of education in local schools	45%	38%	13%	2%	1%	0%
B	Maintaining local streets and roads	19%	52%	27%	2%	0%	0%
C	Preventing local tax increases	28%	38%	23%	7%	3%	0%
D	Protecting local property values	29%	42%	23%	3%	3%	0%
E	Improving public safety	26%	44%	25%	3%	2%	0%
F	Protecting the environment	27%	39%	25%	7%	2%	0%
G	Improving the local economy	33%	47%	17%	1%	1%	1%

Section 3: Perceptions of Local Schools

Your household is within the Fountain Valley School District.

Q2 In general, how would you rate the quality of education provided by the Fountain Valley School District in ____? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor

<i>Randomize</i>		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Not sure	Refused
A	Elementary schools , grades Kindergarten through 5	32%	33%	8%	3%	2%	21%	2%
B	Middle schools , grades 6 through 8	25%	35%	10%	2%	1%	25%	2%

Q3 When compared to _____, would you say the quality of education provided in Fountain Valley schools is better, about the same, or worse?

<i>Randomize</i>		Better	About the same	Worse	Not sure	Refused
A	other schools in Orange County	43%	31%	5%	20%	2%
B	other schools in Southern California	44%	25%	5%	23%	2%
C	The schools you attended as a child	37%	29%	16%	16%	2%

Q4 How would you rate the Fountain Valley School District's need for additional money to repair and upgrade school facilities and technology? Would you say it has a great need, moderate need, little need, or no need?

1	Great need	22%
2	Moderate need	41%
3	Little need	13%
4	No need	8%
98	Not sure	14%
99	Refused	2%

Q5	In general, how would you rate the job the Fountain Valley School District has done in managing its finances? Would you say it has done an excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor job?		
	1	Excellent	9%
	2	Good	33%
	3	Fair	25%
	4	Poor	4%
	5	Very poor	3%
	98	Not sure	24%
	99	Refused	1%

Section 5: Priority Improvements

Q6	If you could make one specific change at local elementary schools to improve the quality of education, what change would you make? Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.	
	Not sure / Cannot think of any changes	25%
	No changes needed / Everything is okay	10%
	Improve quality of teachers	9%
	Reduce class sizes	8%
	Improve subjects, programs	6%
	Back to basic, traditional education	5%
	Remove Common Core	4%
	Offer additional subjects, programs	4%
	Increase teacher salaries	4%
	Improve school facilities	4%
	Upgrade technology	4%
	Hire additional, qualified teachers	4%
	Increase teacher-student interaction	3%
	Increase funding for education	3%
	Improve school administration	2%
	Increase parental involvement	2%
	Increase, improve school hours, schedule	2%
	Change, eliminate tenure status	1%
	Reduce pay, benefits for administrators	1%
	Less government involvement in schools	1%
	Offer second language classes	1%

Q7	If you could make one specific change at local middle schools to improve the quality of education, what change would you make? Verbatim responses recorded and later grouped into categories shown below.	
	Not sure / Cannot think of any changes	32%
	No changes needed / Everything is okay	13%
	Hire additional, qualified teachers	10%
	Reduce class sizes	9%
	Improve subjects, programs	6%
	Upgrade technology	4%
	Increase extracurricular programs	4%
	Offer additional subjects, programs	3%
	Increase, improve school hours, schedule	3%
	Improve school facilities	3%
	Increase teacher salaries	2%
	Remove Common Core	2%
	Improve school administration	2%
	Improve school safety, security	2%
	Improve quality of education in general	2%
	Improve child discipline	1%
	Less government involvement in schools	1%
	Increase parental involvement	1%
	Change, eliminate tenure status	1%
	Remove teacher unions	1%
	Increase funding for education	1%
	Promote health, wellness	1%
	Enforce school regulations, codes	1%

Q8		Next, I'm going to read a list of changes that could take place in local Fountain Valley schools in the next few years. As I read each item, please tell me whether you think the change should be a high, medium, or a low priority for future funding. If you don't think any funds should be spent on the item, just say so. Please keep in mind that due to limited funds, not <u>all</u> items can be high priorities.					
		Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Should this item be a high, medium or low priority for future funding – or should no money be spent on this project?					
<i>Randomize</i>		High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Should not spend \$ on project	Not sure	Refused
A	Improve student safety and campus security systems, including security cameras, lighting, fencing, smoke detectors, fire alarms and sprinklers	45%	34%	14%	3%	3%	0%
B	Upgrade outdated classrooms, science labs, libraries, and computer systems	41%	48%	6%	2%	2%	0%
C	Repair or replace leaky roofs, worn-out floors, old rusty plumbing, and faulty electrical systems	63%	27%	5%	1%	3%	0%
D	Update instructional technology in the classroom for improved student learning in core subjects like math, science and technology	59%	26%	10%	2%	3%	0%
E	Improve insulation and windows to increase energy efficiency and save money	27%	47%	20%	5%	3%	0%
F	Install air conditioning in classrooms to improve air quality and keep classrooms from reaching temperatures of 85 to 100 degrees	45%	35%	15%	3%	2%	0%
G	Upgrade and repair physical education facilities and children's playground equipment so they meet current safety standards	40%	42%	15%	2%	1%	0%
H	Retrofit older buildings so that they meet modern earthquake safety standards	48%	32%	14%	2%	3%	0%
I	Ensure that all teachers are adequately trained in the use of modern instructional technologies	51%	38%	6%	2%	3%	0%
J	Keep computer systems and classroom technology up-to-date over time	47%	41%	9%	1%	2%	0%

Section 6: Relevant Attitudes

Q9	Next, I'm going to read you a series of statements. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement.						
	Here is the (first/next) one: _____. Do you agree or disagree, or do you have no opinion? Would that be strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?						
	<i>Randomize</i>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	Refused
A	Good schools help protect and improve local property values	53%	30%	7%	3%	5%	1%
B	If we want our kids to succeed in college and careers, they must be skilled in the use of today's technologies and have a solid background in science, math and technology.	69%	22%	5%	3%	1%	1%
C	We need to update our school buildings, technology and equipment if we expect our students to have the same opportunities as others to succeed.	42%	35%	14%	4%	4%	0%
D	Students learn better when they can use computers and laptops in classrooms.	39%	27%	18%	11%	4%	1%
E	We need to improve campus security and safety at our local schools	34%	37%	19%	4%	5%	1%

Section 7: Background/Demographics

Thank you so much for your participation. I have just a few background questions for statistical purposes.

D1	How many school-aged children under the age of 19 do you have living in your household?		
	0	None	64% <i>Skip to D3</i>
	1	One	14% <i>Ask D2</i>
	2	Two	15% <i>Ask D2</i>
	3	Three or more	4% <i>Ask D2</i>
	99	Refused	2% <i>Skip to D3</i>
D2	Do one or more of the children in your household attend a school in the Fountain Valley School District?		
	1	Yes	66%
	2	No	33%
	98	Not sure	1%
	99	Refused	0%

D3	Do you have grown children who previously attended a school in the Fountain Valley School District when they were younger?		
	1	Yes	40%
	2	No	57%
	99	Refused	2%
D4	Do you have, or expect to have, children who will attend a school in the Fountain Valley School District in the future?		
	1	Yes	28%
	2	No	69%
	99	Refused	4%
Those are all of the questions that I have for you. Thanks so much for participating in this important survey.			

Post-Interview – This information is obtained from the voter file, it is not asked of respondents

S1	Gender		
	1	Male	47%
	2	Female	53%
S2	Party		
	1	Democrat	30%
	2	Republican	41%
	3	Other	6%
	4	DTS	22%
S3	Age on Voter File		
	1	18 to 29	15%
	2	30 to 39	12%
	3	40 to 49	17%
	4	50 to 64	29%
	5	65 or older	27%
	99	Not Coded	0%

S4 Registration Date		
1	2014 to 2009	35%
2	2008 to 2005	22%
3	2004 to 2001	10%
4	2000 to 1997	5%
5	Before 1997	35%
S5 Household Party Type		
1	Single Dem	18%
2	Dual Dem	6%
3	Single Rep	18%
4	Dual Rep	16%
5	Single Other	14%
6	Dual Other	6%
7	Dem & Rep	5%
8	Dem & Other	7%
9	Rep & Other	10%
0	Mixed (Dem + Rep + Other)	1%
S6 Homeowner on Voter File		
1	Yes	62%
2	No	38%
S7 Likely to Vote by Mail		
1	Yes	34%
2	No	66%
S8 Likely June 2016 Voter		
1	Yes	45%
2	No	55%
S9 Likely November 2016 Voter		
1	Yes	87%
2	No	13%