



**Beloit Schools USD 273**  
**Patron Online Survey & Patron Focus Groups Report**  
**June 26, 2024**

**Introduction**

At the same time as a statistically reliable telephone survey was being conducted with residents of the Beloit Schools USD 273, a similar online survey was made available to district patrons (via the district’s website).

A total of 224 patrons chose to participate. However, not all who participated answered all the questions, which is a situation that is typical with online surveys.

The results of the online survey are shown below, in a form that allows for direct comparison, where possible, to the telephone survey. Because those who participate are self-selected, rather than randomly drawn, all online data should be considered supplemental information.

Additionally, because of rounding, all questions with percentages may add to more or less than 100%.

*Note: Only the online responses (not telephone) for the three open-ended questions are included in this report.*

**Results Summary**

The results of these online surveys are as follows:

- The telephone participants graded all but one of the factors – plus the district’s overall performance – higher than the online participants.
- The number one reason online respondents voted, “No” on the referendum was because they thought the bond had “Too much in it/not all was needed/too much focus on sports.”
- The number one reason “Yes” voters thought the referendum failed was because it was “Too expensive/couldn’t afford/25-year bond is too long.”
- The top suggestion for helping the ballot measure pass was “Reduce the items in the referendum/only include critical/necessary items/not sports-related ones.”
- The telephone participants were more supportive of the highest cost (\$4.4 million) for the new AG Center, while the online participants were more supportive of the two lower dollar amounts.

- Both groups were more supportive of spending another \$1 million to remodel the current AG Center into the Woods Construction area than adding the Woods Construction area to the new AG Center.
- The telephone participants were more supportive than the online participants of all but one of the other six projects.
- The online participants who live “in town” showed stronger support than the telephone participants for all four tax increase amounts, especially the \$100 per year increase.
- The telephone participants who live “on Ag land” showed stronger support than the online participants for the three dollar amount increases to their land, especially the \$60 increase.

### **Online Survey Report**

The following are the questions as they were presented in the online survey.

**As you know, students in school are traditionally given a grade of A, B, C, D or F to reflect the quality of their work, with A meaning outstanding; B meaning above average; C meaning average; D meaning below average; and F meaning failing. Based on your experience or things you have heard about the Beloit Schools from others, what grade you would give the district on each of the following items?**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>5-point weighted scale rating/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>5-point weighted scale rating/ Online survey</b>
Preparation of students for college, vocational training, or employment	4.60	4.30
Quality of education	4.43	4.32
Overall grade	4.35	4.10
The value received for the tax dollars spent (the district has been financially responsible)	4.13	3.44
Quality of the school facilities	4.05	3.66
Performance of the School Board	4.03	3.88
Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom	3.91	4.24

**The charts below show the grading questions from the online survey by percentage.**

**Quality of education**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	48%
B	34%
C	14%
D	2%
F	0%
Don't know	2%

**Preparation of students for college, vocational training, or employment**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	50%
B	28%
C	12%
D	2%
F	2%
Don't know	5%

**Performance of the School Board**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	38%
B	24%
C	19%
D	11%
F	3%
Don't know	6%

**Quality of the school facilities**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	14%
B	46%
C	31%
D	7%
F	1%
Don't know	2%

**The value received for the tax dollars spent (district has been financially responsible)**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	23%
B	27%
C	24%
D	14%
F	8%
Don't know	4%

**Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	37%
B	45%
C	13%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know	5%

**Thinking about everything you know or have heard about the district, what overall grade would you give the Beloit Schools?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	40%
B	37%
C	16%
D	6%
F	<1%
Don't know	<1%

**Did you vote in the April 2024 Beloit Schools bond election?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Yes	88%	87%
No	12%	13%

**Did you vote, “Yes” or “No” for the Beloit Schools referendum?** *This question was only answered by the respondents who said they voted in the April 2024 bond election. If they responded, “No,” they skipped ahead to the questions about the potential projects.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Yes	61%	51%
No	39%	49%

**Why did you vote, “No?”** *This question was only asked of the respondents who said they voted, “No” for the Beloit Schools referendum. Responses were coded, based on common words, phrases, and ideas. Those that were outside of these “common” responses or had more than one idea in the response are shown below in verbatim form with minor edits for punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
Too much in it/not all was needed/too much focus on sports	56
Too expensive/couldn’t afford/25-year bond is too long	39
Spend more wisely/budget better/don’t trust would spend wisely	18
Tax increase too high/taxes are already high	16
Other (see below)	13
Should focus more on education/students’ needs	11
Poor communication/no transparency about cost/no community input	8

**Verbatim “other” comments**

I believe funding for schooling should come from the government who is making a curriculum, not taxpayers who may not even have children in the school system. I didn’t trust that funds would be allocated in a common-sense fashion.

HVAC in the elementary school is a need. Everything else was a want. Refinancing lease/purchase arrangements that mature in 3-4 years into 25-year bond was foolish. Spending money on flashy activity buses, yet letting critical infrastructure languish is the wrong priority. Asking huge amounts of money to refurbish locker rooms was irresponsible. The Ag building needed more details provided. I didn’t know what we were getting for the money spent, I voted, “No” because I think a press box that is used a few times per year was a want and putting it as a top need reflected the wrong priorities the Board had for how to spend our tax money.

I felt the scope of many of the projects were unnecessary. I think the current facilities are adequate for the education the students are and will need to receive other than the absolute need for a new boiler system. The district has known the boiler system was in need of replacement, yet they have chosen not to allocate money correctly in that last 20 years.

The package deal of a high dollar amount. I would rather do it in phases with much smaller amounts and terms moving from one need to the next as feasible with our community.

The dollars listed for the individual projects were astronomical for this community. We should recruit local businesses and the community to do most of these projects. There is a lot of local talent willing to pitch in and get things done.

Several reasons. The HVAC system in the grade school have needed repair for quite a while. The HVAC system should have been budgeted for and dealt with years ago. Additionally, the lion's share of the bond items were heavily weighted in the athletic facilities. Those are wants, not needs. Academics tended to be secondary to the athletic facilities. Lastly, there isn't a farmer in the state of Kansas that has a \$4 million shop. A \$4 million ag shop is ridiculous.

I don't feel like the bond was well written, and after listening to the meetings, I did not trust the people making the decisions to be fiscally responsible with that type of money. I think we need real or as close as possible estimates for the work. I think we need to fund some portion of the overall project in house, and I think we should be able to demonstrate we have exhausted all other means of funding 'sports' projects prior to requesting taxpayers to fund activities.

The cost was too high. For question two, concerning the football field, I don't think playing on turf makes it any better than grass. I also did not think there was a good plan of how to replace it. But my biggest concern is only one Junior High team, no freshman, and barely at TV schedule. The number of boys who actually benefit from playing football is very few upon the cost. I think if you could come up with how to have two Junior High teams, where each kid could play more, a freshman schedule, JV and varsity then more boys would get the benefit. I would have loved to have seen the Ag shop. That would have been something very positive, but, again, I feel like cost was too high.

Farmers had a rough year last year with drought and reduce income. Then you want to add additional tax dollars that farmers can't afford right now! Very irresponsible and greedy move! If you want tax dollars INCREASE TAXES IN THE CITY, so we have a choice on whether we want to spend tax dollars in the school district! OUR ANSWER ON THE BOND ISSUE AND ON RAISING PROPERTY TAXES WILL ALWAYS BE NO!

Disagree with doubled land taxes. No new business would want to start up in our community with taxes that high. USD 273 knew these issues were at least 10 years old, some in excess of 30 years old. No communication with the public prior to working on getting public approval for two years, without our knowledge. No alternatives were suggested. Poor decisions made at the time of elementary addition construction. Artificial turf is always a bad idea. I'd rather pay a water bill. Using our children's education as leverage to get us to agree.

Bond should have had two needs: elementary school and Ag building. The rest was simple repairs and maintenance.

The Board seemed to attack the farmers as the main source of income. The farmers will continue to be the main reason Beloit as a community survives. Also, they asked for way too much. We absolutely do not need a turf football field, nor do we need a huge Ag shop to accommodate farm equipment, when you have a dying college across the highway that would probably love to accommodate high schoolers in the ag mechanic program.

Would lead to current students to having to deal with the debt it would put the community in when they get older.

**Why do you think the referendum failed?** *This question was only asked of the respondents who said they voted, “Yes” for the Beloit Schools referendum. Those who voted, “No” were asked to skip this question. However, the numbers will be higher, as some respondents who voted, “No” chose to answer this question. Responses were coded, based on common words, phrases, and ideas. Those that were outside of these “common” responses or had more than one idea in the response are shown below in verbatim form with minor edits for punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
Too expensive/couldn't afford/25-year bond is too long	53
Too much in it/not all was needed/too much focus on sports	48
Lack of/timing of info/no transparency about costs/no community input	31
Tax increase too high/taxes are already high	29
Divide between Beloit Schools and St. John's patrons	22
Other (see below)	16
Farmers & community struggling/poor economy	15
Misinformation/scare tactics from opposition groups	11
Budgeting/spending concerns/explore other financial options	10
Should focus more on education/students' needs	9
Mail-in ballot	2
North Central Kansas Tech College already has an Ag shop	2

**Verbatim “other” comments**

Too much greed by the School Board, administration, and bond council.

Possibly because of a few reasons. The BES gym and classrooms were built within the last five years. Could those tax dollars have been spent elsewhere? The timing of the bond, with inflation and higher rates all around. Couldn't get a good grasp at how much each project was going to cost.

I think it failed because people are uneducated about how taxes and valuations work. I also think it was poor timing due to the high jump in property taxes in 2023. Overall, people do not understand a failing school equals a failing community. I also think the opposition did a lot of fear mongering, even if that 'wasn't their intention.'

I think we can restructure the bond to have fewer items and it will pass.

I think many people didn't understand the need for the community or didn't agree with the percentage landowners had to contribute.

Allow a vote on the most important projects to include. Include future costs/upkeep in plan. Publicly show we are trying to pay for some of this in house. Examples: charge more and everyone for facility use (Bombers, Bucks, Volleyball, Basketball). Increase the rental fee \$50 to \$100 isn't enough. Charge sports participation fee per athlete. Paint sponsors on the current field. Banners on the stadium. Video board ads. Charge \$1-5K depending on the number of ads. Broadcast activities in house like COVID, but make people pay to watch, and sell ads so this money stays with us. Play interviews (from students) about business and feature as an ad. This could be both educational and profitable.

You failed to listen to the public or even ask the vast majority for any input before the bond was put forth. This survey process is a step forward to possibly eliminate some things the public obviously didn't support. But unless it is recognized that this community feels spending is simply out of line with what the needs really are, the result won't change much by trying to convince people they need things they don't need and can't afford. Don't treat the voters like they are idiots who simply need to be convinced they got it wrong the first time by making small changes to what you're asking for.

People don't want it.

I believe it came down to image. You had some of the wealthier families/individuals pushing the bond. So, it appeared from the community's side that these are the people who can afford it and are the ones always pushing to get what they want. I honestly think if you had a more diverse committee trying to pass it, the results would have been closer or even passed. I've heard numerous times about how the booster club and other boards are handpicked and part of a clique. I personally did vote, 'Yes,' but I can see why some were put off or felt like this was coming from the part of Beloit that could afford it.

I voted, "Yes for the first part and "No" on the second part. I think it failed because part of the list people didn't like and/or the amounts seemed high.

Small-minded people who are OK with the status quo and don't have the vision for the future that our School Board and administration have.

Not all improvements were fiscally responsible because some improvements would need to be updated before the bond was even paid off. Also, outside contractors being used to accomplish improvements did not allow local businesses to benefit from the projects.

I think when you tie sports to anything, it's going to fail. Put the Ag building and the HVAC together and it'll pass.

Too much money has been put on taxpayers for a very long time. Scale back the size of the new Ag building and reduce the cost to about half and I think it has the chance to pass. If not, start charging other schools to use the track and football field. Charge them when they use the high school or grade school gym. Charge them extra if they want to use a/c, bathrooms, or concession stands. The majority of the naysayers said they wanted to see what money was going towards. So, any way to break it down more, so that they can see an estimate of the item might be helpful. I'd also try to put only the high school items on one vote and then anything dealing with the stadium, field, gyms on a second vote.



Think we needed to go out to assisted living and anywhere that the older generation was and talk to them and explain to them everything because many of them don't have social media and many of them don't get the newspaper because of cost. Many of them didn't really understand it. Maybe do a walk-through and show everybody what needs to be fixed for anybody that wants to see it.

I don't believe you really want to know my opinion about most of the people who voted, "No."

**What could the Beloit Schools do to help the ballot measure pass?** *This question was only asked of the respondents who said they voted in the April 2024 bond election. Responses were coded, based on common words, phrases, and ideas. Those that were outside of these "common" responses or had more than one idea in the response are shown below in verbatim form with minor edits for punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
Reduce the items in the referendum/only include critical/necessary items/not sports-related ones	94
Reduce the cost/more reasonable cost/25-year bond is too long	30
Other (see below)	29
Budget/spend more wisely/explore other financial options (e.g., fundraising, Capital Outlay	18
Get more input from the community	16
Provide more/better information prior/transparency/better info campaign	16
Don't raise taxes/lower tax increase	13
Focus on education/students' needs	11
Don't know/Nothing/Not sure	10
Lower the price for the AG Center	5
Certain items will never pass/should not be in bond	3
In-person voting	2

**Verbatim "other" comments**

Make it cost less. Questions 8, 9, and 10 are difficult to answer because I don't know exactly how much I will have to pay and that's what I base my decision on. Question 19 is difficult because I don't know what an average house in Beloit is.

Explain as times change and technologies advance, it's important to emphasize the need for a great education to attract younger people and ensure the town's growth, building a stronger community and future.

Don't give up trying, as the students and staff would truly benefit from the school improvements. After this first time, the experience gained by the group of leaders may help to avoid the pitfalls that developed because of having two schools in this size community.

Downsize it. Focus on the BES building. As far as the message sent, possibly have spokespeople who are 'the single mom that works at Caseys' or 'factory worker from Sunflower' speak up in support of this bond. The message that was sent possibly rubbed people the wrong way.

I would remove the press box from Question 1. Otherwise, I have no idea! I was on the side of being just absolutely certain it was going to pass, so I am probably not the right person to answer this question. If the county could do some budget cuts, then an increase from the bond would not have as much of an impact (but we know the county will never do that and I know that is out of your control).

Parking lot: Charge to park. Teachers too for specific place. Ask Abram what he might charge to fix the lot over the next four years with ads write-off. Small percentage of all concessions go to building fund. Add people like: Jake Sloan, Greg Thiessen, Brad Schroeder. Brainstorm ideas. St. John's might want to fund this: host their events, add a Special Ed need, could they use the field for their games? Cut back on the bus costs. Maybe the booster club/sports teams might need to pay for some of the cost of transporting kids. Look into setting up BHS investment fund like Cornerstones, Solomon Valley, etc. We have several and this is how others have money to keep big projects in the future. Usually funded with life insurance policies or gifts at death. Have an all-sports fundraising banquet at year end with Hall of Fame inductee to bring back alumni. Nothing as big as Trojan Night Out but enough to bring people there.

Wait until it rains. Worry only about the HVAC. Until then, nothing else.

Increase city taxes!!

Continue to stay on course and be persistent in what we need to continue to evolve as a community, school, and district.

Request funding for actual projects that are in dire need of repair. Just like they requested for the plumbing and HVAC. A new football field, press box, track, etc. are not needed projects when the economy is the current situation. The Beloit Schools should have done this survey before the bond measure to get a feel of what taxpayers are willing to pay for. The bond committee and community members for the bond need to be open to criticism and hard questions, especially when the community will be funding this project for years to come.

If we were a town with one school this would have passed easily. Unfortunately, those who attend the private school will never vote, 'Yes,' regardless of what's in the bond. The best possible chance would be to lessen the amount of the bond or the years. I personally would choose the athletic facilities over other things, but that will always be a hard sell in this town. Split the two questions into a more even amount.

This survey to find out what the community supports. Get ballpark figures for the construction projects. Stop talking to the taxpayer group. Send out mailers explaining the proposed bonds. Have an in-person vote.

Find ways to partner with vo-tech for students' needs; budget with local businesses for repairs that are needed. Absolutely no artificial turf as the health of athletes and replacement turf costs outweigh a water bill. Don't make the public pay for mistakes made by USD 273 during construction, like no air conditioning in the elementary addition. That was not smart, and you know it. No tax increases by 43 points making more than 60 mils in this economy on a public that can't afford it. Period.

I kind of answered this above but will throw a couple more ideas out there. Get buy-in with more diverse groups. Ask what's important before giving options that may not relate to everyone. Don't give up! As much as I'm being negative on how it went the first time, I do believe we need these things and encourage everyone to keep moving forward and try again. It was out of everyone's control, but the local economy isn't in the best place to ask for this big of a bond. We either need to look ahead when doing this in the future or find a way to bridge our gap, until the economy comes back some.

Just this – surveying the greater public. Odd this was not thought of. We have some wonderfully creative individuals/groups here in Beloit. Take advantage of them. (BTW, the actual vote resoundingly said, 'what was listed/how it was presented/how candid the Board was' did not seem right. Most folks felt misled, especially when directly asked about the costs/items. Following that disclosure, folks felt, 'What else might we not be told the truth about?' Bring in the local entrepreneurial folks – SVCF, SVED, both school boards, city manager/mayor, etc. All local citizens want the best for their community, regardless of where their children attend. Seriously, consider and explore significant fundraising. What harm might that bring, especially if a simple foray into that arena proved fruitful. What skin would be lost?

Schools had no say what was voted on. All projects were brought to school by a group of people who could care less about hardworking citizens of the district. Tax burdens mean nothing to them. This is an Ag community, and farmers can't pass on the burdens of more taxes on to anyone else, like businesses can do to their customers.

Present a bond that represents what the overall community wants and values.

ONLY replace currently existing HVAC. No additions to it! This is the only true need for the school; the rest are simply wants.

Less is more. Fix tennis courts with tax dollars. Have city seal the parking lot. Then hire professionals to paint it. \$50,000 for a parking lot is insane.

Make plan slower without incurring debt beyond utilities and necessities. Year 1 fix utilities, year 2 add bathrooms, year 3 AG Center after other loan has been paid off.

Break it up into categories and have each category be voted on separately. Or do this survey to everyone asking which parts they agree with or would vote, "Yes" to. Then use that info to decide how to move forward.

Unify the voter base to counteract the automatic "No" votes of St. John's.

A time frame of five years. We would've been paying this off when most students have students of their own in the district. Don't solely attack the farmers and landowners. Seek additional funding from bonds and grants to prove to the taxpayers that you aren't being lazy about it.

Maybe have an in-depth presentation of how school budgets and funding work.

Vote separately on the issues.

Look into more grants and funding that is available for those kinds of projects. If Cloud County Community College Board can do it, why can't you guys do that and not put current students in debt later? Why take more money from people who truly are struggling already? Why can't the community members that truly want this to go through donate their money for it?

Provide tours of current facilities. Provide project numbers and information on why the numbers are so high. Get all current staff and 273 families on board with the bond; don't focus so much on trying to appease the Catholic community. Look at paying for part of the bond with a city sales tax, such as Hays and Lacrosse.

Less focus on sports facilities first, the shop class built a shed at the daycare for the kids to play under. Why couldn't the shop class and the masonry guys from the college work with a local contractor coming up with a solution for the press box?

I am honestly not sure what more could have been done unless we wanted to go to nursing homes and door to door educating people.

**The school district has been discussing its long-term needs in an effort to set priorities. Below is a brief description of each of the project ideas. After each one, please indicate if including that particular idea in a bond issue would make you "More likely to vote in favor," "More likely to vote against" or that it would "Make no difference in your voting decision."**

**The first idea is to build a new \$4.4 million AG Center, which would include a new shop area, two new classrooms, and a multi-purpose classroom. If this project were part of a bond issue, and the election were held today, would you be...?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
More likely to vote in favor of the ballot issue	46%	39%
More likely to vote against	35%	35%
It would make no difference in my voting decision	12%	19%
*Don't know	7%	7%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**What if, instead, the new AG Center cost \$3.4 million to build. If this project were part of a bond issue, and the election were held today, would you be...?** *This question only was asked of those respondents who answered the previous question, “More likely to vote against,” “It would make no difference in my voting decision” or “Don’t know.” The “vote in favor” response percentages shown below represent the combined scores from this question and the previous one, under the assumption a respondent who supported a higher cost for the AG Center would support a lower one as well.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
More likely to vote in favor of the ballot issue	46%	49%
More likely to vote against	35%	27%
It would make no difference in my voting decision	13%	18%
*Don’t know	6%	7%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**What if, instead, the new AG Center cost \$2.4 million to build. If this project were part of a bond issue, and the election were held today, would you be...?** *This question only was asked of those respondents who answered the previous question, “More likely to vote against,” “It would make no difference in my voting decision” or “Don’t know.” The “vote in favor” response percentages shown below represent the combined scores for this question and the previous two questions, under the assumption a respondent who supported a higher cost for the AG Center would support a lower one as well.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
More likely to vote in favor of the ballot issue	48%	55%
More likely to vote against	34%	20%
It would make no difference in my voting decision	13%	18%
*Don’t know	5%	8%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**Do you support spending another \$1 million to remodel the current Ag Center into the Woods Construction area?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Yes	51%	54%
No	32%	24%
*Don’t know	17%	22%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**Do you support spending \$1 million to add the Woods Construction area to the new Ag Center, meaning they would both be part of one new building?** *This question only was asked of the respondents who answered the previous question “No” or “Don’t know.”*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Yes	13%	11%
No	76%	47%
*Don’t know	11%	42%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**Another idea is to complete Phase 4 of the HVAC projects, including replacing the boiler system and all air-conditioning units at Beloit Elementary School and replacing four rooftop units at Beloit Junior-Senior High School. If this project were part of a bond issue, and the election were held today, would you be...?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
More likely to vote in favor of the ballot issue	87%	83%
More likely to vote against	4%	5%
It would make no difference in my voting decision	6%	7%
*Don’t know	3%	5%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**Another idea is to build a new press box at Trojan Stadium. The current press box has been deemed unsafe by the district’s architect. If this project were part of a bond issue, and the election were held today, would you be...?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
More likely to vote in favor of the ballot issue	60%	32%
More likely to vote against	33%	44%
It would make no difference in my voting decision	6%	15%
*Don’t know	1%	9%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**Another idea is to build new restrooms on the west end of the home side of Trojan Stadium to replace the current restrooms in the stadium. If this project were part of a bond issue, and the election were held today, would you be...?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
More likely to vote in favor of the ballot issue	58%	53%
More likely to vote against	35%	28%
It would make no difference in my voting decision	6%	14%
*Don't know	1%	5%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**Another idea is to renovate the locker rooms at Beloit Junior-Senior High School. If this project were part of a bond issue, and the election were held today, would you be...?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
More likely to vote in favor of the ballot issue	37%	29%
More likely to vote against	31%	42%
It would make no difference in my voting decision	30%	21%
*Don't know	2%	8%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**Another idea is to resurface the track at Trojan Stadium. If this project were part of a bond issue, and the election were held today, would you be...?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
More likely to vote in favor of the ballot issue	34%	35%
More likely to vote against	52%	39%
It would make no difference in my voting decision	8%	17%
*Don't know	5%	9%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**Another idea is to resurface two tennis courts. If this project were part of a bond issue, and the election were held today, would you be...?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
More likely to vote in favor of the ballot issue	55%	35%
More likely to vote against	39%	34%
It would make no difference in my voting decision	4%	20%
*Don't know	2%	10%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**Do you live...?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
In town	71%	77%
On Ag land	29%	23%

**What if the projects you just read about were part of a bond issue proposed by the school district and resulted in a tax increase of \$250 per YEAR for the owner of an average home in the district? If the election on such a ballot issue were held today, would you...? This question only was asked of the respondents who answered the previous question, "In town."**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Strongly support it	31%	34%
Support it	17%	21%
Oppose it	28%	14%
Strongly oppose it	19%	15%
*Don't know	5%	15%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*



**What if, instead, the bond issue resulted in a tax increase of \$200 per YEAR for the owner of an average home in the district? If the election on such a ballot issue were held today, would you...?** *This question only was asked of those respondents who answered the previous question, “Oppose it,” “Strongly oppose it” or “Don’t know.” The “support” percentages shown below represent the combined scores for this question and the previous question, under the assumption a respondent who supported a higher tax increase would support a lower one as well.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Strongly support it	31%	34%
Support it	17%	26%
Oppose it	27%	11%
Strongly oppose it	19%	14%
*Don’t know	5%	15%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**What if, instead, the bond issue resulted in a tax increase of \$150 per YEAR for the owner of an average home in the district? If the election on such a ballot issue were held today, would you...?** *This question was only asked of those respondents who answered the previous question, “Oppose it,” “Strongly oppose it” or “Don’t know.” The “support” percentages shown below represent the combined scores for this question and the previous two questions, under the assumption a respondent who supported a higher tax increase would support a lower one as well.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Strongly support it	31%	34%
Support it	20%	34%
Oppose it	25%	7%
Strongly oppose it	18%	12%
*Don’t know	5%	12%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**What if, instead, the bond issue resulted in a tax increase of \$100 per YEAR for the owner of an average home in the district? If the election on such a ballot issue were held today, would you...?** *This question was only asked of those respondents who answered the previous question, “Oppose it,” “Strongly oppose it” or “Don’t know.” The “support” percentages shown below represent the combined scores for this question and the previous three questions, under the assumption a respondent who supported a higher tax increase would support a lower one as well.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Strongly support it	31%	34%
Support it	21%	41%
Oppose it	24%	6%
Strongly oppose it	18%	9%
*Don’t know	5%	10%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**What if the projects you just read about were part of a bond issue proposed by the school district and resulted an increase of \$181 to your land? If the election on such a ballot issue were held today, would you...?** *This question was only asked of the respondents who answered, “On Ag land” to the “Do you live” question.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Strongly support it	0%	20%
Support it	43%	20%
Oppose it	28%	17%
Strongly oppose it	6%	24%
*Don’t know	23%	20%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**What if, instead, the bond issue resulted in an increase of \$120 to your land. If the election on such a ballot issue were held today, would you...?** *This question only was asked of those respondents who answered the previous question, “Oppose it,” “Strongly oppose it” or “Don’t know.” The “support” percentages shown below represent the combined scores for this question and the previous question, under the assumption a respondent who supported a higher increase to their land would support a lower one too.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Strongly support it	0%	20%
Support it	47%	24%
Oppose it	22%	16%
Strongly oppose it	6%	20%
*Don’t know	26%	20%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

**What if, instead, the bond issue resulted in an increase of \$60 to your land? If the election on such a ballot issue were held today, would you...?** *This question was only asked of those respondents who answered the previous question, “Oppose it,” “Strongly oppose it” or “Don’t know.” The “support” percentages shown below represent the combined scores for this question and the previous two questions, under the assumption a respondent who supported a higher increase to their land would support a lower one too.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage/ Telephone survey</b>	<b>Percentage/ Online survey</b>
Strongly support it	0%	22%
Support it	63%	29%
Oppose it	17%	13%
Strongly oppose it	5%	18%
*Don’t know	15%	18%

*\*(Not read to telephone respondents but a response option for online participants.)*

## **Demographics**

**Number of respondents – 224**

### **Location of residence:**

North of Eighth Street – 49

South of Eighth Street – 84

East of Mill Street – 26

West of Mill Street – 34

*(Individuals who chose not to answer this question – 31)*

### **Length of time living in the district:**

Less than 2 years – 6

2 years to 5 years – 14

More than 5 years to 10 years – 24

More than 10 to 15 years – 35

More than 15 years – 67

I’ve lived here all my life – 55

*(Individuals who chose not to answer this question – 23)*

### **Beloit Schools student status:**

Do have a child in the Beloit Schools – 131

Do not have a child in the Beloit Schools – 73

*(Individuals who chose not to answer this question – 20)*

### **Home-schooled or St. John’s Catholic School student status:**

Do have a child who is home-schooled or attends St. John’s Catholic School – 8

Do not have a child who is home-schooled or attends St. John’s Catholic School – 64

*(Individuals who chose not to answer this question – 152)*

## **Focus Group Report**

In addition to the telephone and online surveys, Beloit Schools engaged ExcellenceK12 to conduct five focus groups with district patrons.

The original focus group list was:

1. Teachers and staff
2. Gen Z
3. Senior citizens
4. Farmers
5. Parishioners of St. John's

These groups convened on the evenings of June 12 and 13 at the district office. ExcellenceK12 President Rick Nobles moderated all the groups.

Due to scheduling issues and difficulties finding interested participants, we eliminated the Farmers group. For teachers and staff, we had 11 participants. For Gen Z, only two people showed up, although six people had confirmed the day before. Twelve "senior citizens" participated, however, many of them were only in their 50s. For the St. John's group, we had 11 participants.

In general, the focus group participants were asked the same type of questions as those from the phone and online surveys. The responses and discussions were remarkably similar for all the groups, although the teachers and staff group participants were, as would be expected, more positive in their responses.

While the district did not receive as high of grades as the ones for the phone survey, there still was solid support for the district from all four groups.

Specifically, all the groups were in favor of the HVAC upgrades and, to a lesser extent, the new AG Center, if the scope and cost of the AG Center project could be downgraded considerably.

There were mixed reactions to the other potential projects, with most participants voicing the same concern – some of the projects felt like something the district wanted, instead of needed. Many participants expressed concerns about the district's motivations for some ideas, while flatly stating there are trust issues.

Patrons, especially the senior citizens and St. John's parishioners, felt the district had not done a great job in listening to patron concerns on many issues. One significant bit of information from the St. John's parishioners was they felt the district blamed them for losing the election. However, everyone in the group strongly refuted this idea and indicated they had the same concerns and feedback about the bond issue as the other groups.

In summary, based on what we heard in the focus groups, a second effort for the bond issue might very well succeed if the emphasis is on the HVAC upgrades with separate questions for the remaining issues. This would allow patrons to have more of a choice at the ballot box. There are lingering trust issues to be dealt with. And more and better communication is paramount.

Finally, it would behoove the district to engage with patrons in multiple ways, as a bond issue is considered. All focus group participants expressed a desire to have an ongoing dialogue with the district.