



**coalition
of advocates**

FOR MONTANA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MASBO | MREA | MTSBA | MQEC | SAM

2023

coalitionofmtk12advocates.org

A VISION FOR THE SUCCESS OF MONTANA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Montana's Public Schools are on a mission to develop the full potential of each child in every public school in Montana.

The Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO), Montana Rural Education Association (MREA), Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA), Montana Quality Education Coalition (MQEC), and School Administrators of Montana (SAM) are united by our shared commitment to this important goal of the educational leaders we represent.

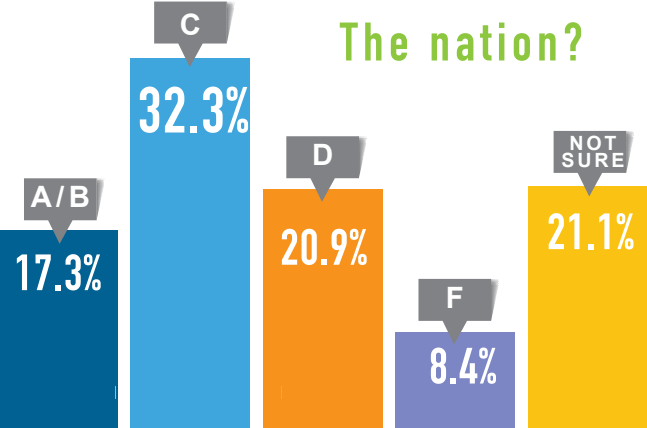
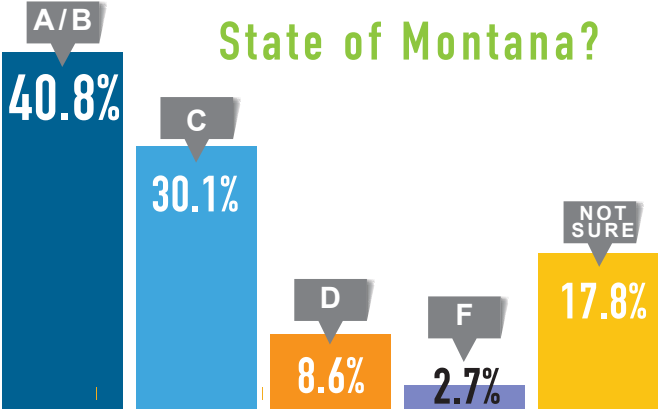
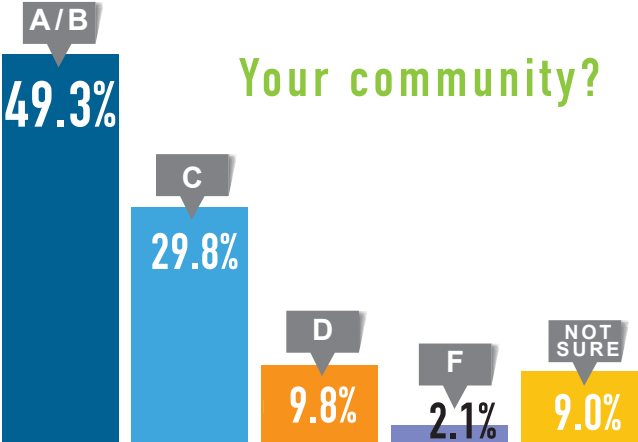
The K-12 Vision Project is infused with new energy, fueled by an increased awareness of how important our public schools and school communities are to the vitality of our state. Strong, capable, innovative public schools have never been more critical, and we are leading a resurgence of hope and optimism regarding the future of our great state and the children we serve together.

Developed and sustained by the cumulative work of over 500 teachers, elected trustees, superintendents, principals, and school business officials from across the state of Montana, the K-12 Vision Project has created an inspiring vision, aligned with the guarantees afforded children under our Constitution and providing actionable steps to achieve goals that will strengthen the bonds between schools and communities, trustees, staff, and families, all united by our shared interest in the best interests of each child in every public school.

This publication illustrates that Montanans trust their public schools and those who work for them. We are grateful for that trust and intent on continuing to earn it each and every day in each and every public school in Montana.

The closer people are to their schools, the more they trust and like them.

WHAT GRADE, A through F, would you give public schools in:



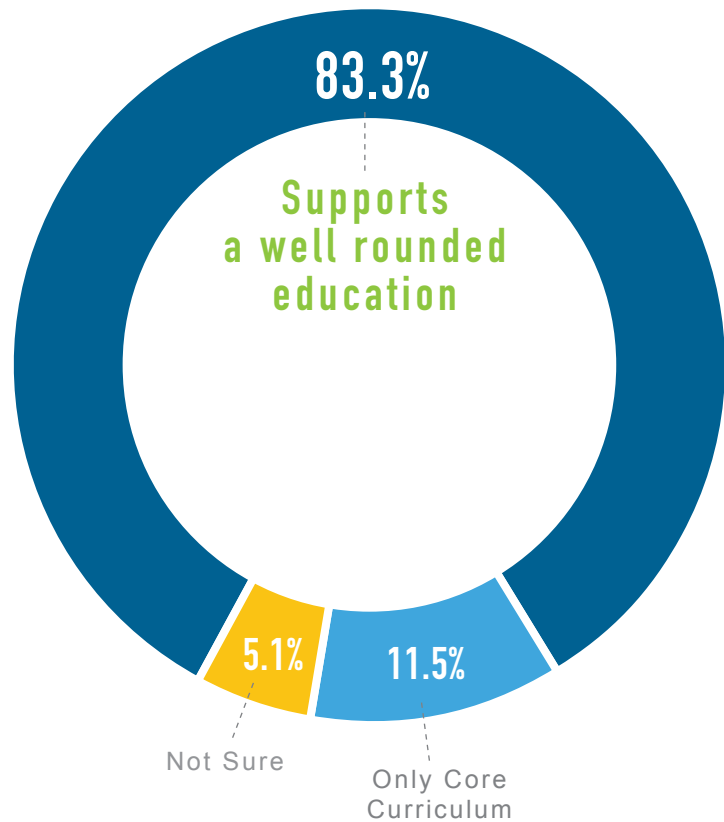
LEADING A PATH OF SUCCESS

"When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it." - Henry Ford

Montanans recognize and appreciate the value of Montana's public schools. We are proud to have consistently maintained that support over the course of the last decade, and we are intent on continuing to further build support and earn the trust of Montanans into the future.

In your opinion, should public schools provide a well-rounded education to all children, including

items such as early childhood education beginning at age 4, gifted and talented, music, art, physical education, technology, career and technical education and advanced placement courses or should public schools provide only core curriculum (math, English, science, social studies)?



48% Local School Boards

27% State Board of Public Education

8.0% Not Sure

6.1% Governor

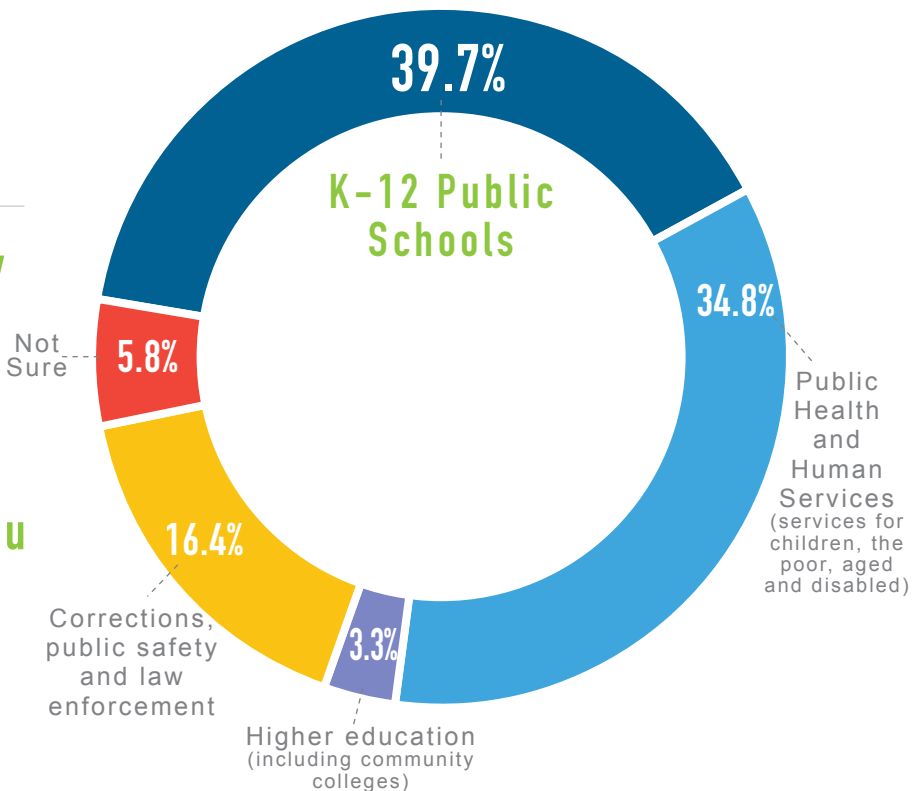
4.9% State Superintendent

3.5% Federal Government

2.6% Legislature

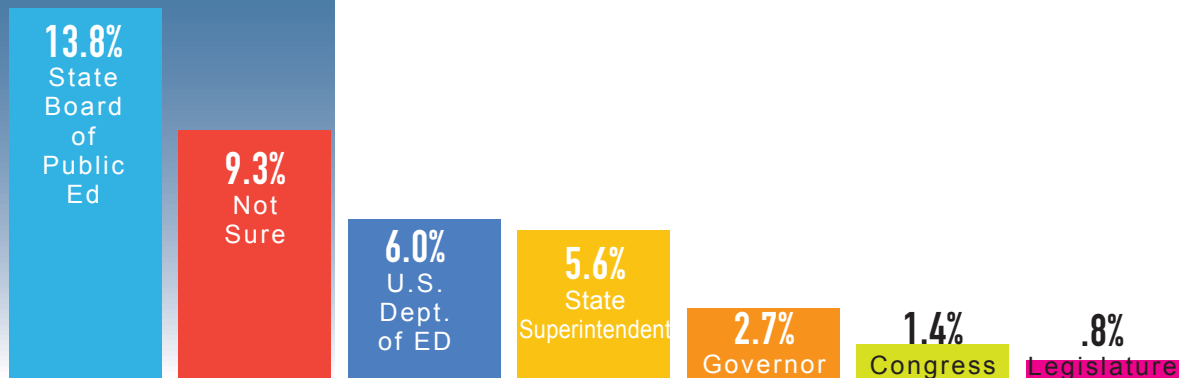
Which of the following do you think should have the MOST AUTHORITY to determine how public schools are operated?

When it comes to how state government spends your tax dollars, which of the following areas do you think should be the HIGHEST PRIORITY?



60.3%
Teachers,
locally
elected
school
boards,
principals,
superintendents

Who among the following
public employees and
officials **DO YOU TRUST**
the most when it comes
to deciding what is best
academically for
students in Montana's
public schools?



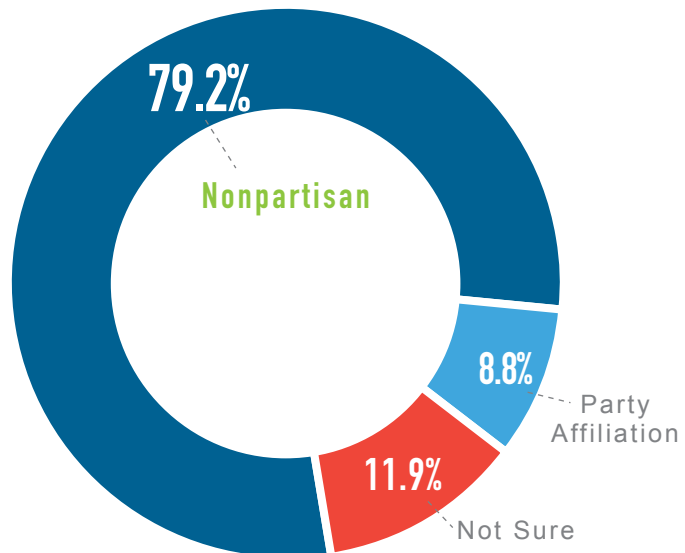
VOTERS AGREE -
ELECTED TRUSTEES AND LOCAL VOTERS SHOULD
BE MAKING KEY DECISIONS ABOUT CHILDREN

WORKING TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE THAT HAPPEN

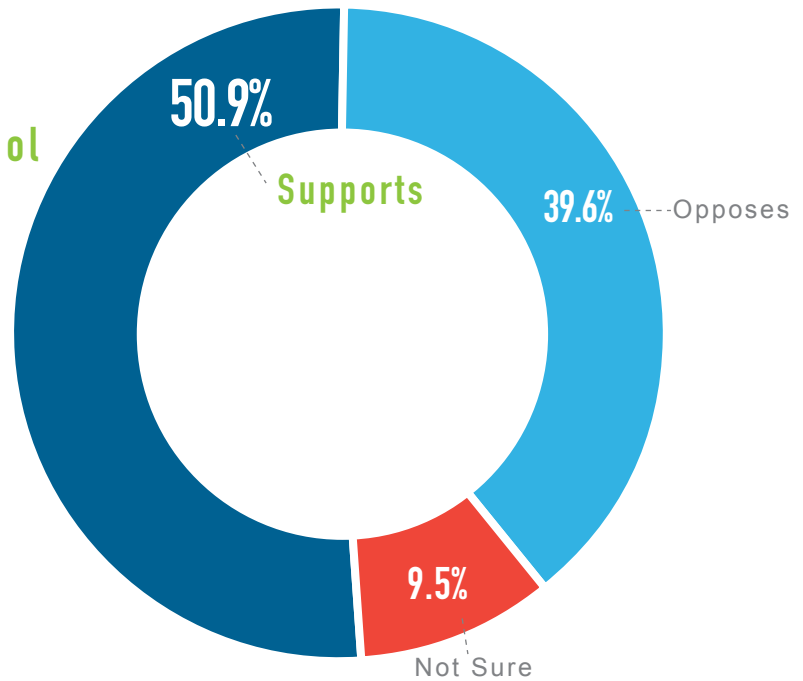
Montana's public schools prioritize safety for the 150,000+ children and their families we serve. Local school boards protect the health and safety of over 22,000 dedicated educators and leaders who operate our public schools on a daily basis across Montana.

Montana's public schools keep communities safe by providing secure and effective learning environments throughout the state. We do so through locally crafted solutions that meet the specific and unique needs of each community, collaborating with students and families to ensure that opportunities to learn and grow together are sustained.

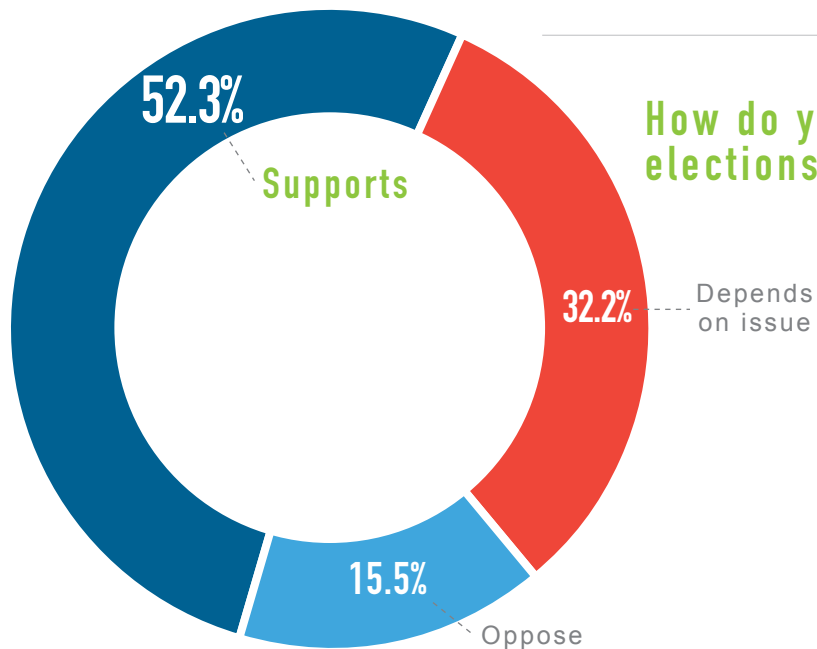
Do you believe an elected school board member should make nonpartisan decisions or do you believe an elected school board member should make decisions that reflect the school board member's political party affiliation?



Do you support or oppose funding private K-12 school with state income tax and local property taxes?

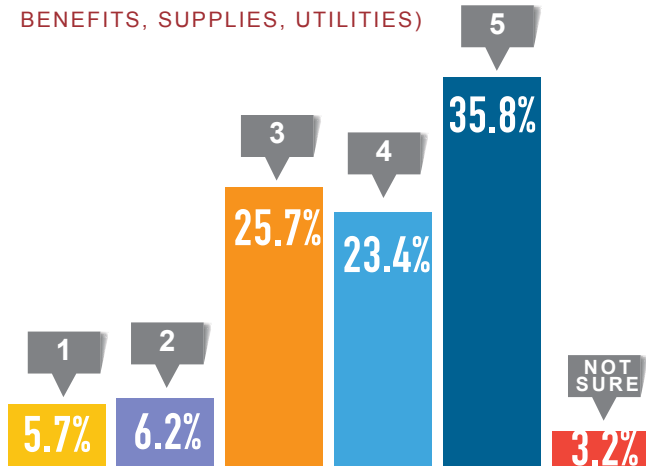


How do you view local school levy elections as a general principle?

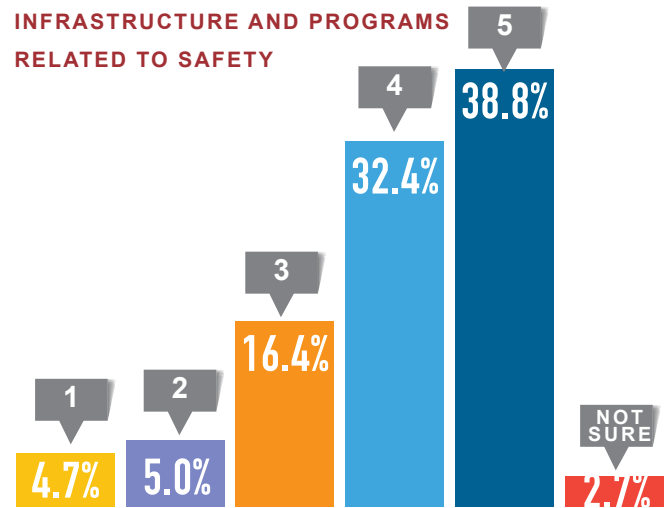


Which of the following types of levies are you likely to support on a scale of 1-5, where 1 being not supportive at all and 5 being very supportive?

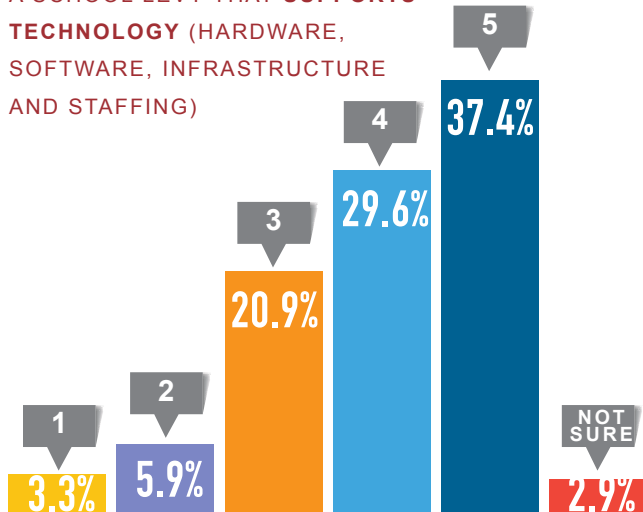
A SCHOOL LEVY THAT **SUPPORTS OPERATIONS** (SALARIES, BENEFITS, SUPPLIES, UTILITIES)



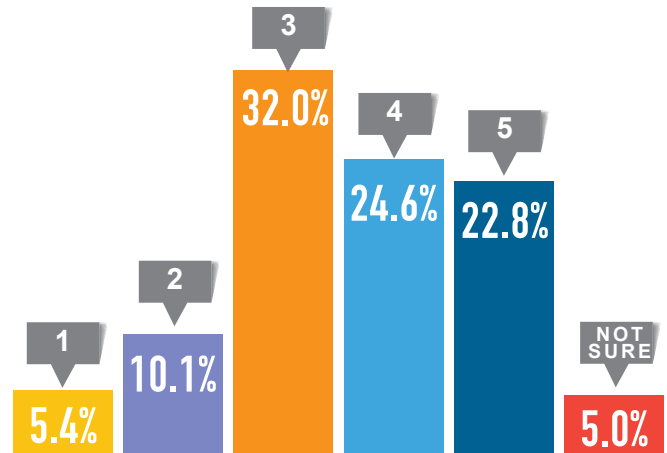
A SCHOOL LEVY THAT **SUPPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROGRAMS RELATED TO SAFETY**



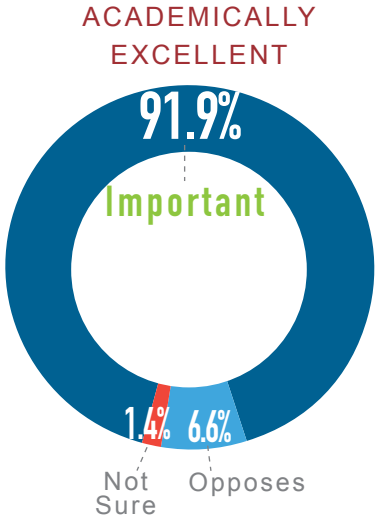
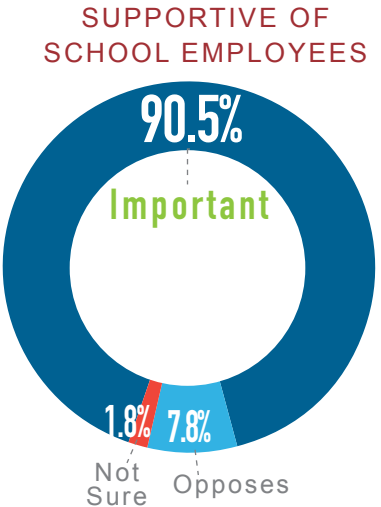
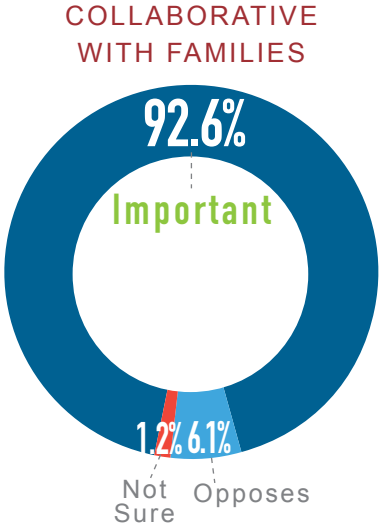
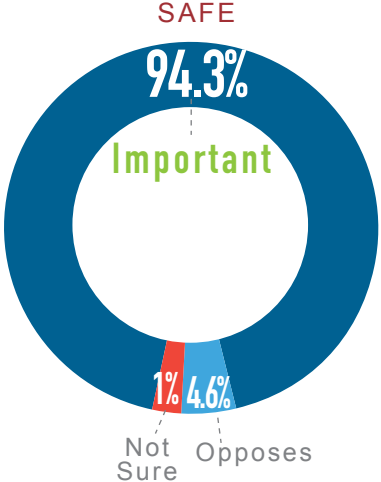
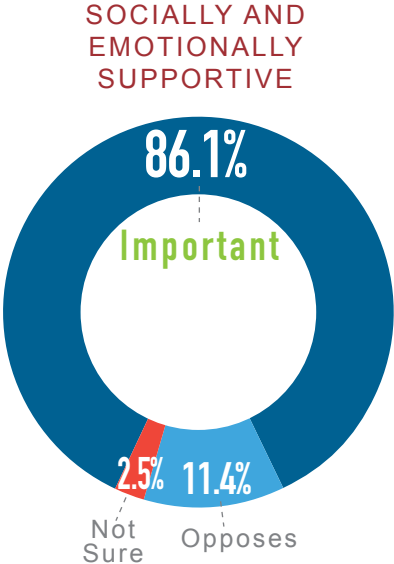
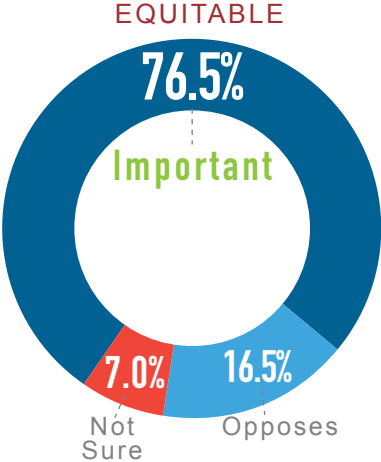
A SCHOOL LEVY THAT **SUPPORTS TECHNOLOGY** (HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND STAFFING)



A SCHOOL LEVY THAT **SUPPORTS A SPECIFIC BUILDING, CONSTRUCTION OR MAINTENANCE PROJECT**



Please indicate your opinion of the importance of the following characteristics of public schools:

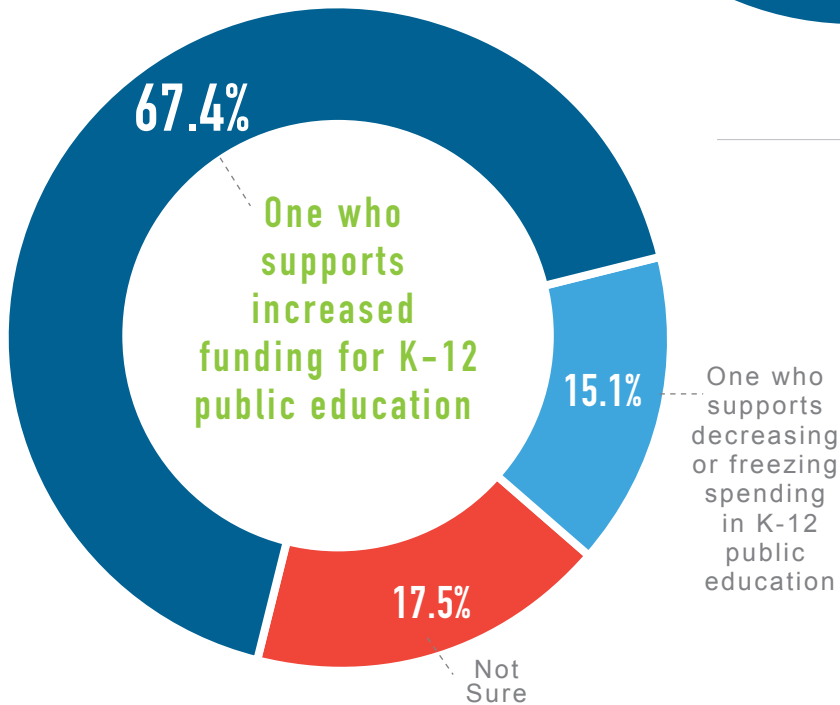
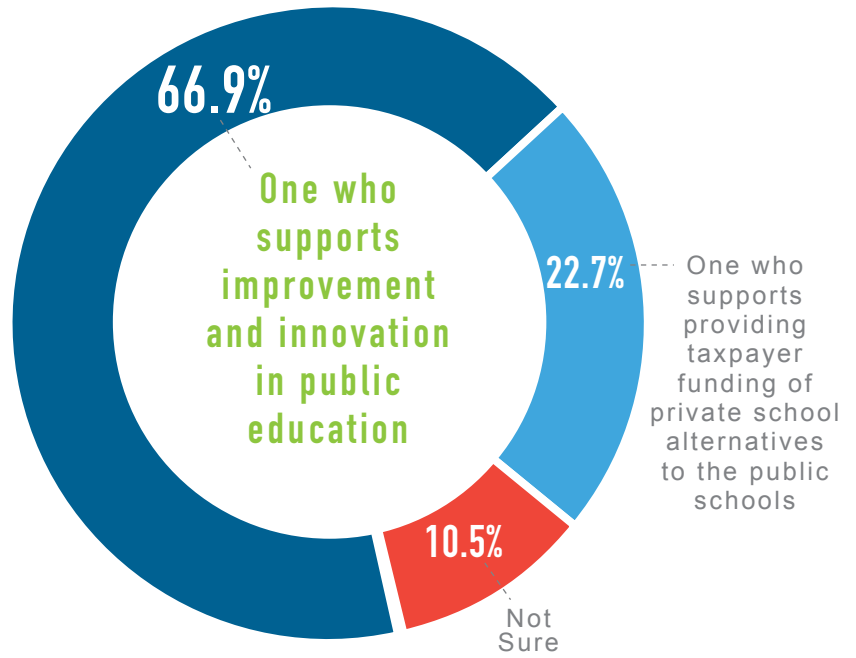


THE MULTIPLIER EFFECT - THE BENEFITS OF A STRONG PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM IN EACH COMMUNITY

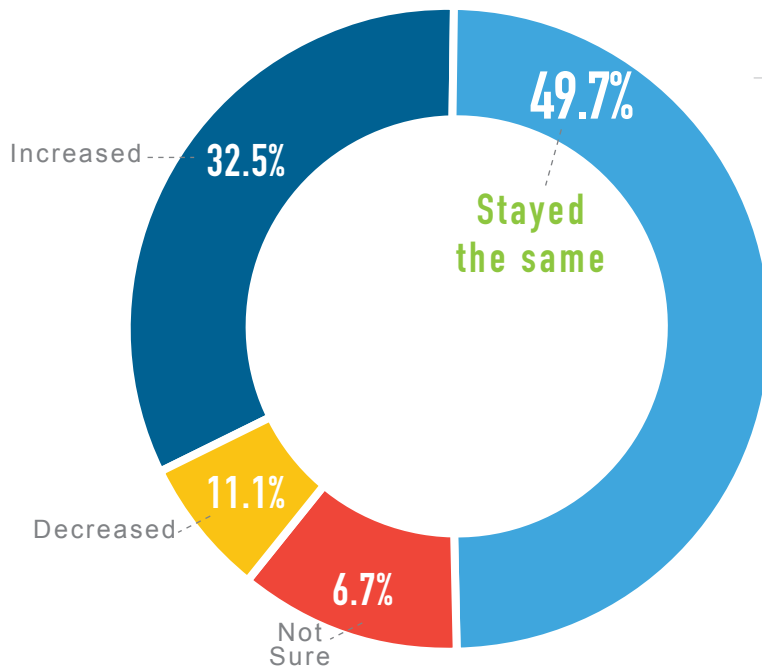
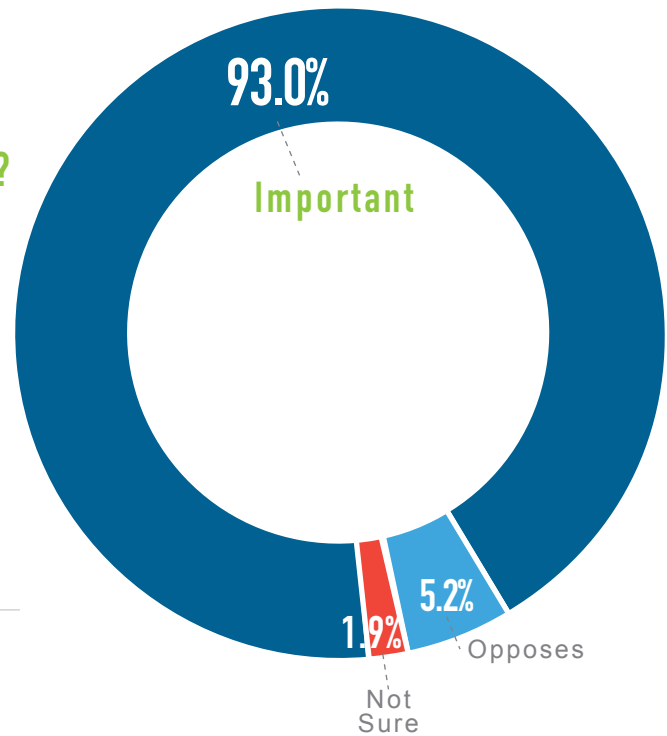
Vibrant public schools provide invaluable benefits in each community. In addition to developing the full potential of each child and creating a bright future for Montanans everywhere, quality schools provide tangential benefits for each community.

- **Montana's public schools employ over 22,000 full-time equivalent staff** who serve over 150,000 children in schools throughout Montana each day, developing students for a lifetime of success as Montana's future labor force. In addition to the direct benefits to children and their families, expenditures of each public school provide reverberating benefits to each community.
- The National Bureau of Economic Research has found for every dollar spent on public schools in an area, home values increased by \$20, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research. These benefits accrue to all homeowners in a community, regardless of whether they have children in the public school system.
- Direct expenditures by schools on local businesses for services, goods, and supplies necessary to operate the school are estimated at over **\$300 million annually**.
- **Wages paid to school employees are spent within the community**, becoming income for businesses who then invest that revenue into worker wages and services, building and distributing economic stability.
- The perpetuation of this cycle provides benefits at five-fold the original expenditures attributable to the presence of a public school in the community. With total public school expenditures of approximately \$2 billion per year, that translates into **\$10 billion in total economic benefit to the people of Montana** or roughly \$10,000 for each Montanan. Public schools provide value-added benefits while creating our future Montana leaders and entrepreneurs.

Please tell us which type of legislator or other state elected official you most support?



How important is having quality K-12 public schools operating in your community?



Thinking about how important K-12 public schools are to your community. Have your experiences over the last year increased or decreased your perception regarding the importance of having quality K-12 public schools operating in your community?

THE IMPORTANCE OF STRIVING FOR UNITY, COURAGE, AND FOCUS DURING POLARIZED TIMES

There is little surprise that the characteristics of grit, determination, commitment, and independence are equally applicable when describing Montana's public schools, our children, and Montanans alike. Montana's public schools are a natural reflection of and intrinsically linked to the communities they serve. We are in this together.

There may only be seven people per square mile across the expanse of our great state, but when we care for one another when we are loyal to a fault, and we lead rather than follow, we cannot help but succeed. We are better together than we are alone, and the combined power of our efforts to serve children is greater than the sum of our individual parts.

These shared commitments of Montanans and their public schools have sustained and will continue to nurture the endurance, resilience, unity, courage, and focus that will allow us to prevail during these challenging times. While others elsewhere may choose to give into the temptation to fight with one another, Montanans will do better, standing tall for what they believe in but also leaving themselves open to the positions of others who may have different points of view.

We will find a way to respectfully disagree when necessary, recognizing and delivering on our debt of civility and respect for the individual dignity of each other. This is the Montana way, and we can remain “The Last Best Place” if we honor and abide by this simple but powerful practice of decency.



WHO IS THE COALITION OF ADVOCATES FOR MONTANA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

The Coalition of Advocates for Montana's Public Schools is a partnership of public education advocates focused on ensuring success for each child in every public school, in furtherance of the Peoples' goal under Article X, Section 1 "to develop the full educational potential of each person."



coalitionofmtk12advocates.org