

The Survey

21 volunteers visited or called voters on randomly selected streets distributed all over Albany over a 2 week period

148 likely voters were surveyed – approximately the same as the 2004 survey which had a sampling error of 5.7%

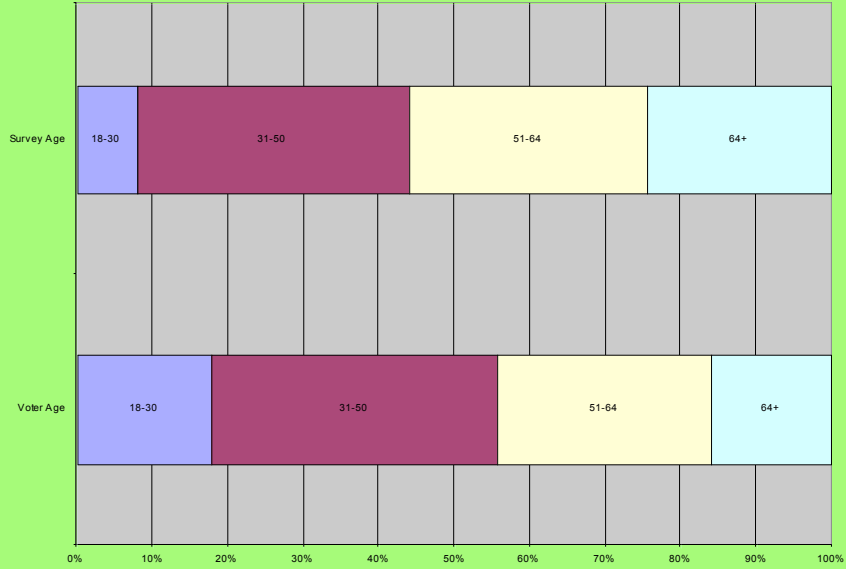
Support is likely overstated to “please” us.

No survey can predict an election – surveys can only inform a proposal & campaign.

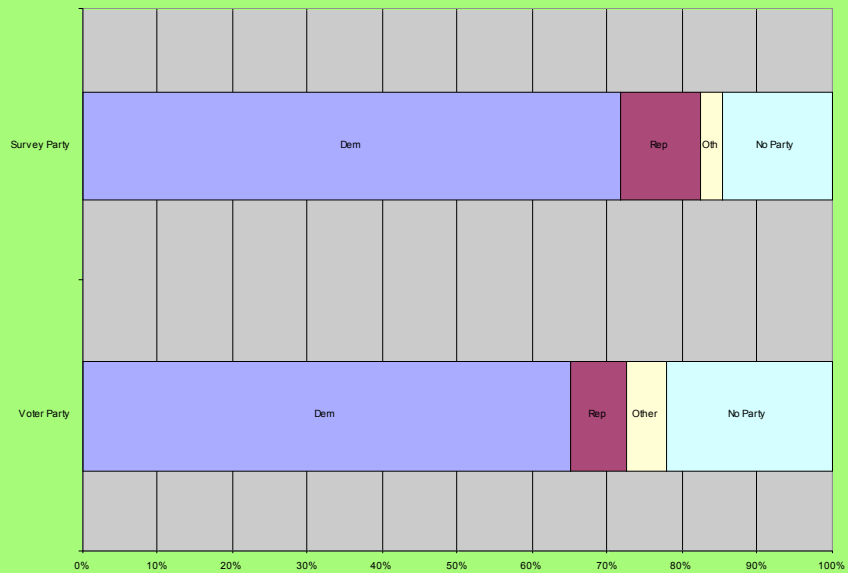
Sample compared w/ the voter population



Sample compared w/ the voter population

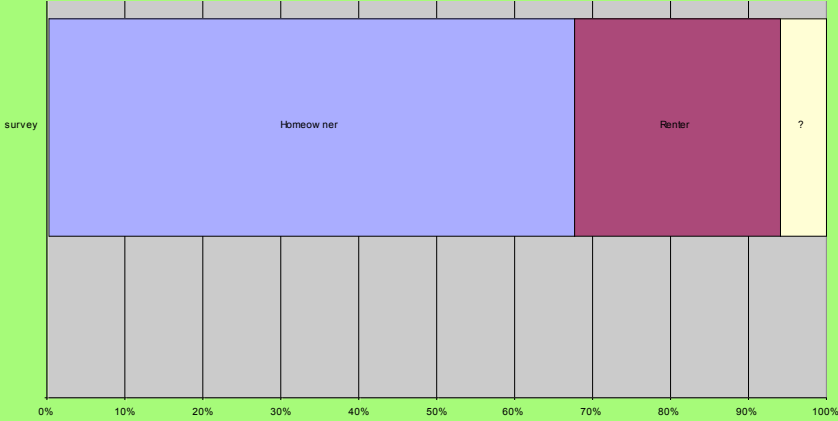


Sample compared w/ the voter population

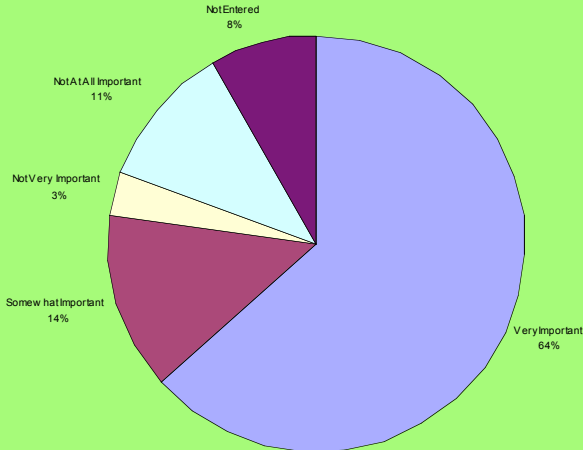


Half of all housing units in Albany are rentals*, but the number of likely voters who are renters is unknown. Our survey may be representative.

* 49.4% per 2000 Census

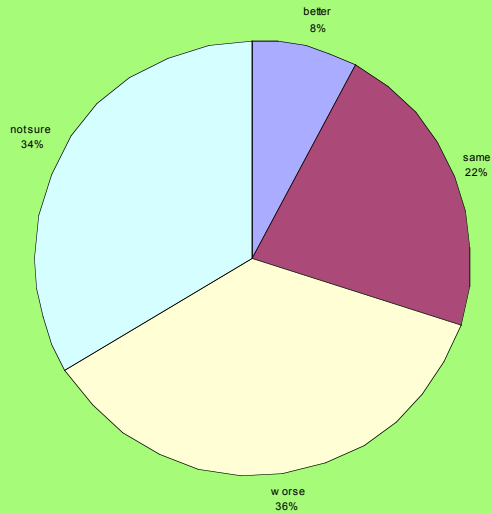


Albany residents come here for the schools...



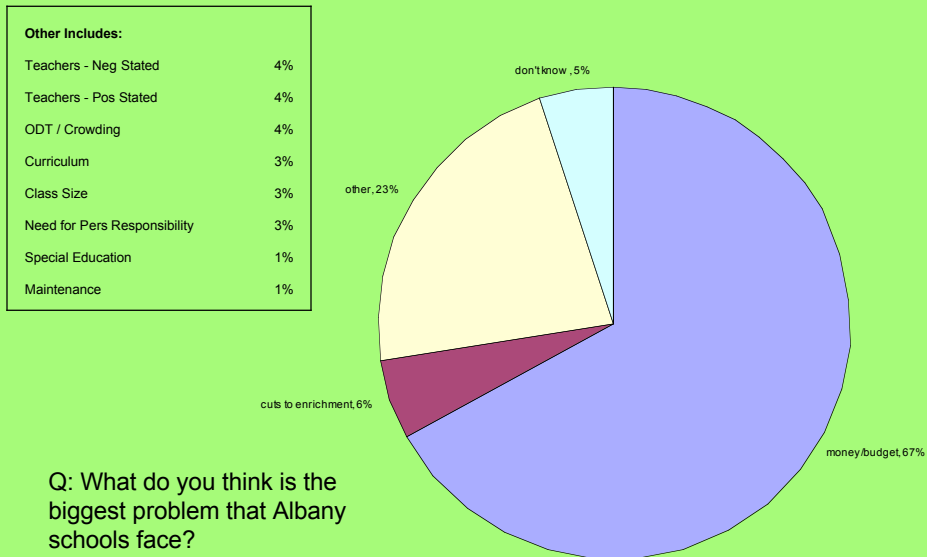
Q: How important were the schools in your decision to move/stay in Albany?

Some are worried about the future...others need more info.



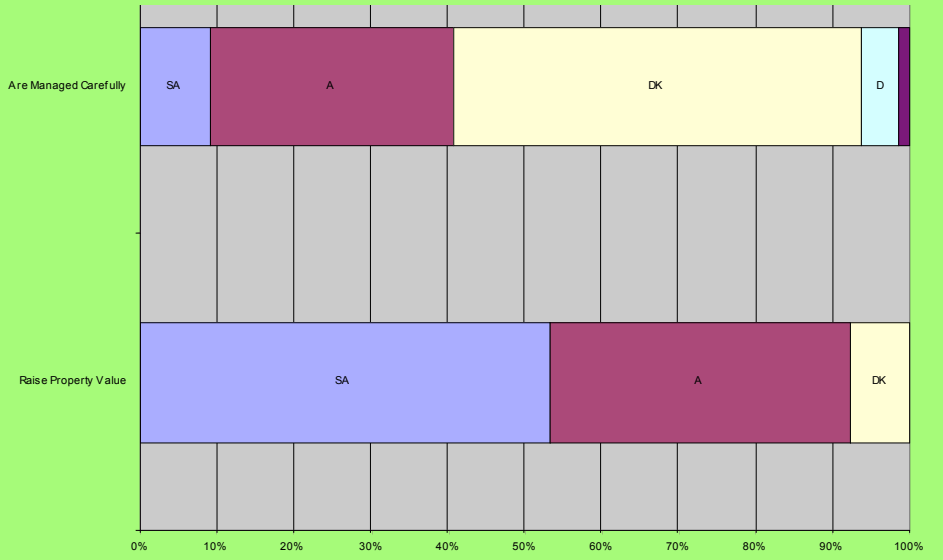
Q: In the next year, do you think the schools will get worse or better?

Voters say the biggest problem our schools face is lack of funds.

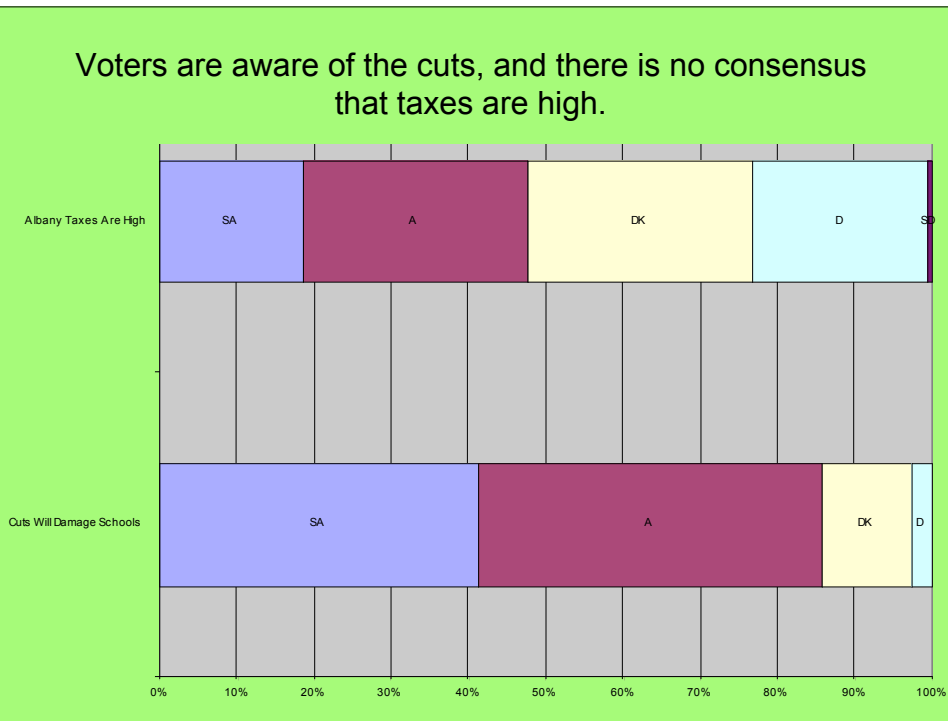


Q: What do you think is the biggest problem that Albany schools face?

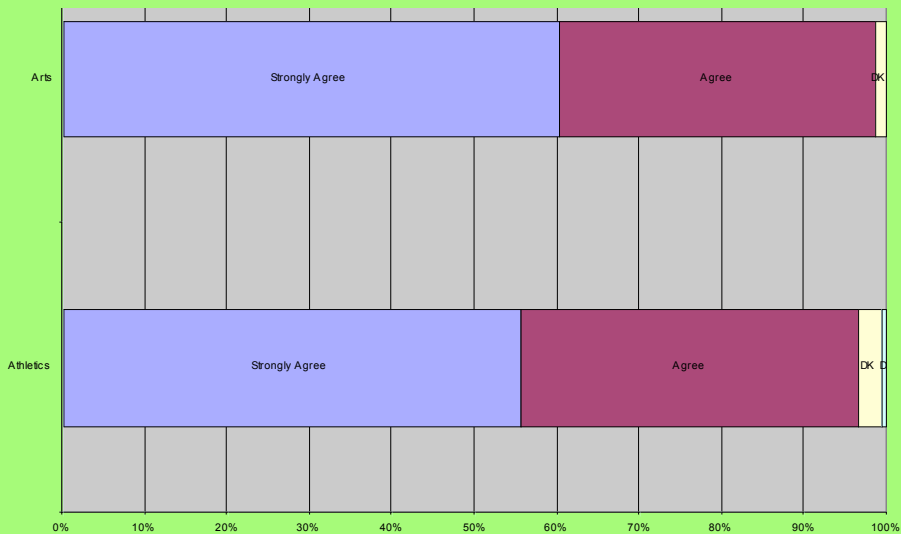
Albany recognizes the role that schools play in raising property values, but needs more info on management.



Voters are aware of the cuts, and there is no consensus that taxes are high.



Albany values arts and athletics

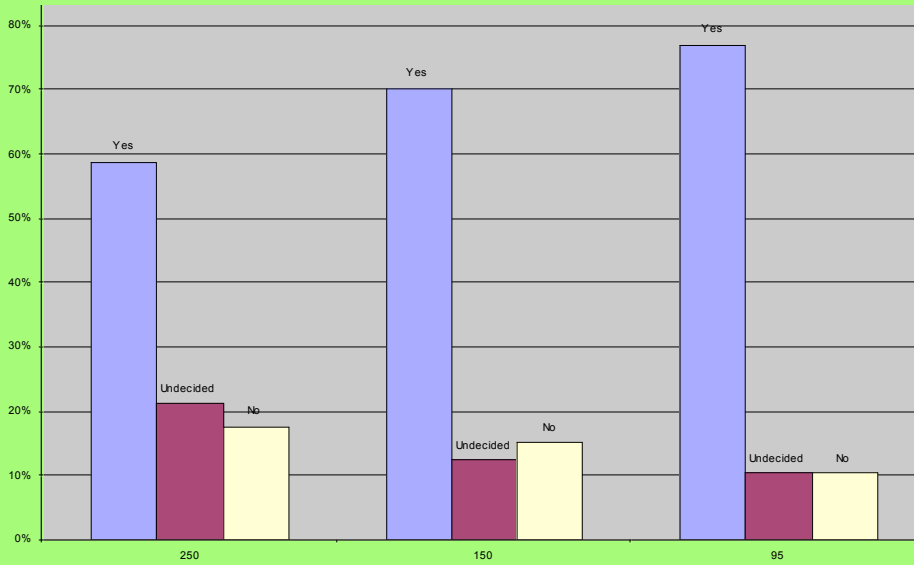


Q: Arts, Athletics are important to education...Agree, Disagree or DK

To get a sense of what voters feel they can afford to do to address the budget crisis, we asked this question:

The Albany Superintendent of Schools estimates that a new parcel tax of \$250 per year per parcel would be necessary to restore all the school program and services that are being cut for this next school year. Would you support an additional (\$250 / \$150 / \$95) per year parcel tax for the schools?

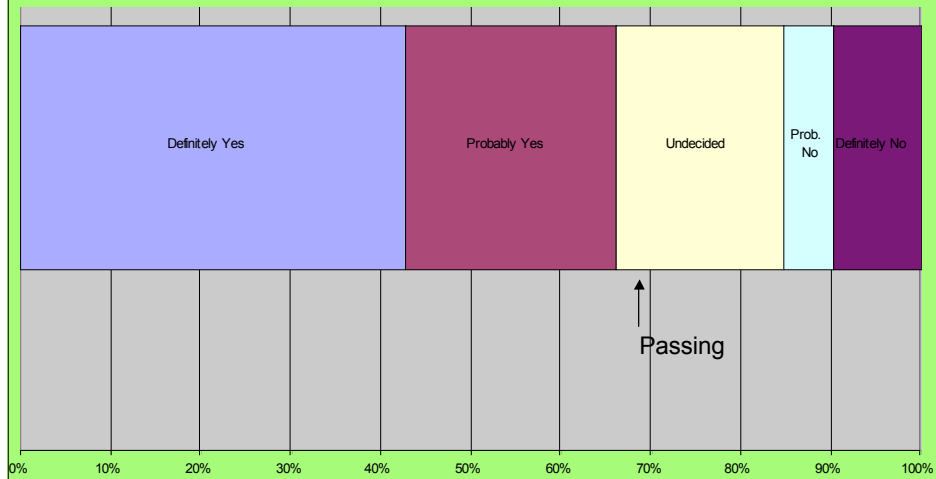
Support increases as the cost drops...



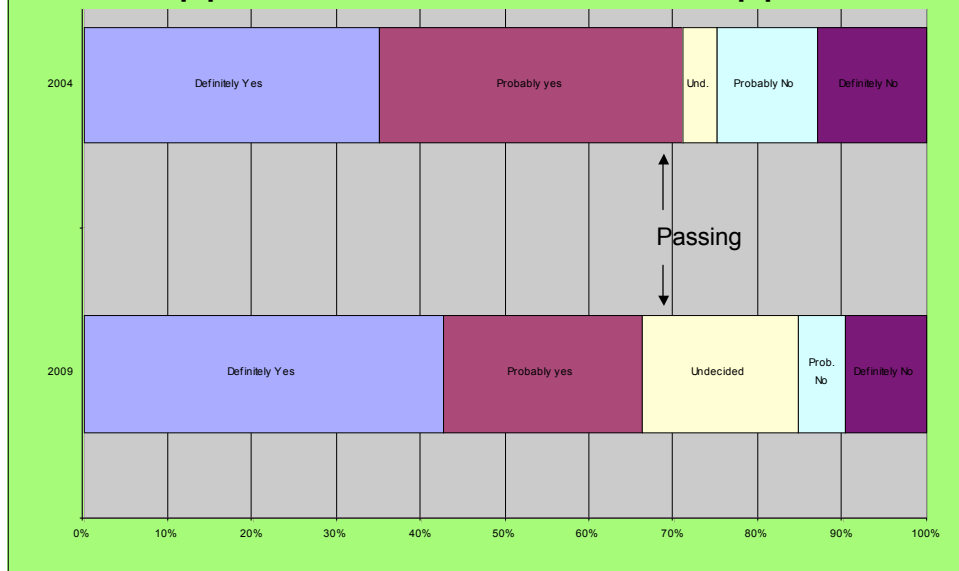
The “test language” used to gauge voter support in the survey:

To maintain and improve Albany public schools shall the Albany Unified School District renew the 2005 parcel tax and temporarily increase it by \$250 to a combined amount of \$500 dollars per parcel per year, until State funding for the schools is restored to last year’s level, exempting seniors and low income families and using the funds to keep class sizes small, maintain arts, science, technology and athletics programs and competitive teacher salaries and to provide mental health and library services at every school?

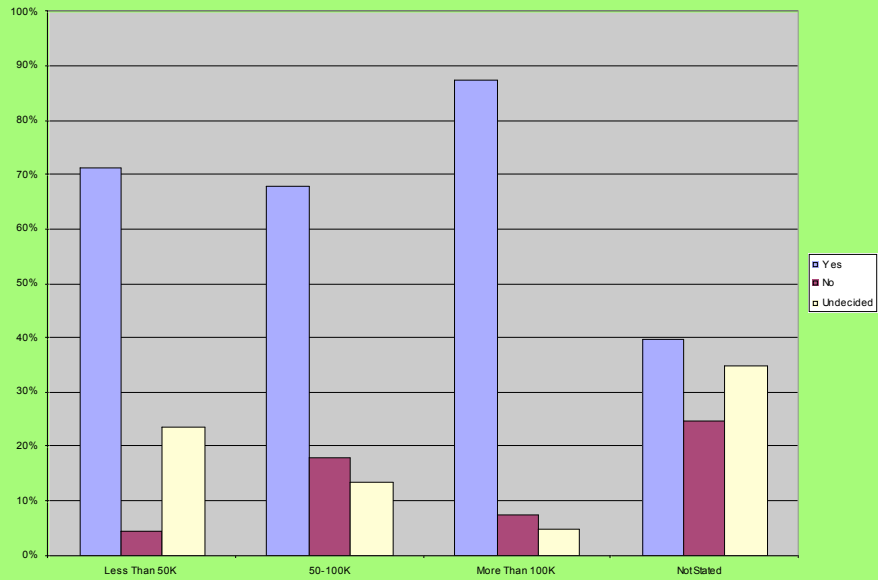
Our test proposal falls short of passing



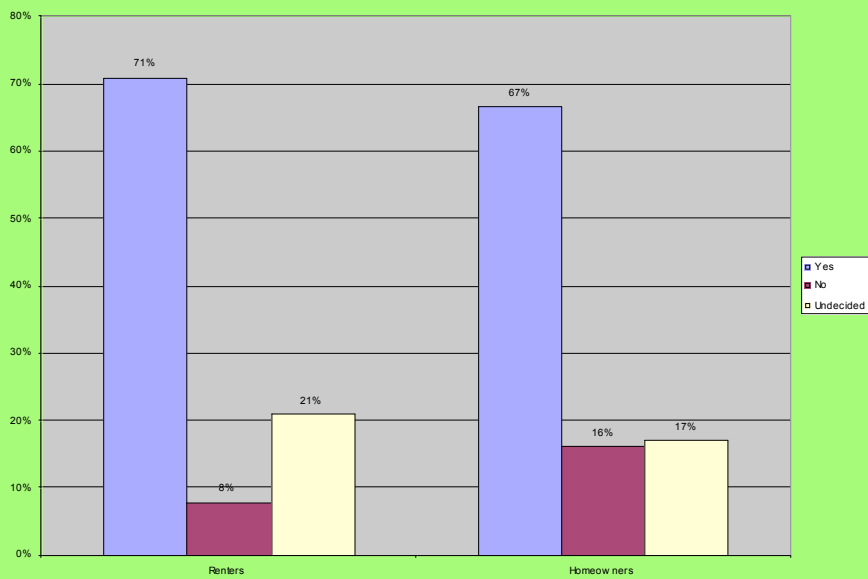
Compared to the 2004 poll, less support, but more intense support



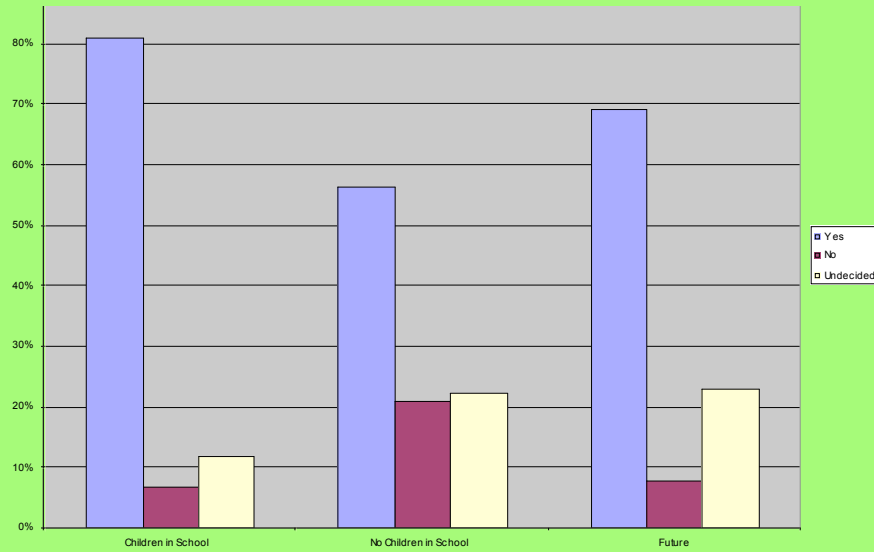
Voters' income not a big factor



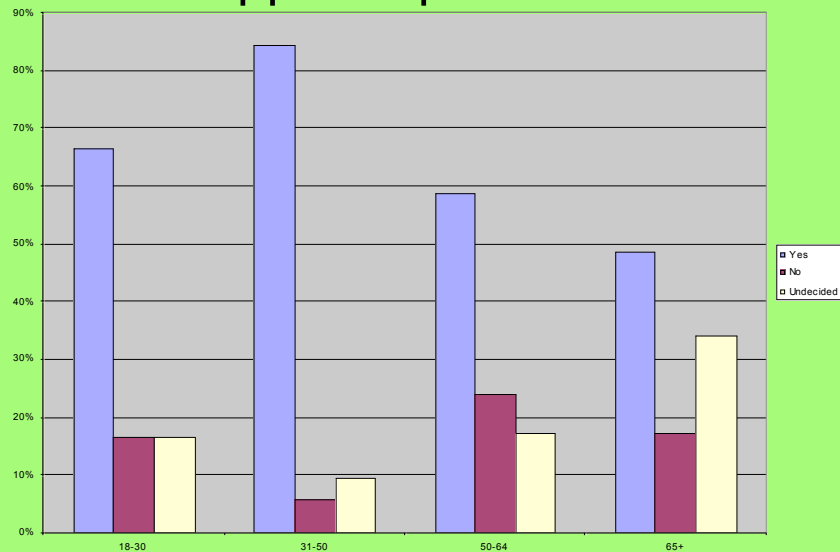
Homeownership not big a factor



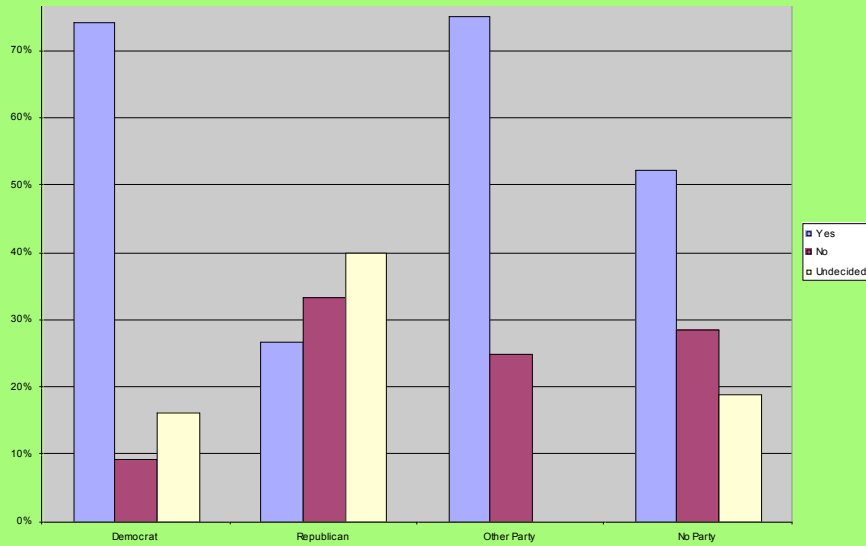
Voters w/children in school are more likely to support a parcel tax



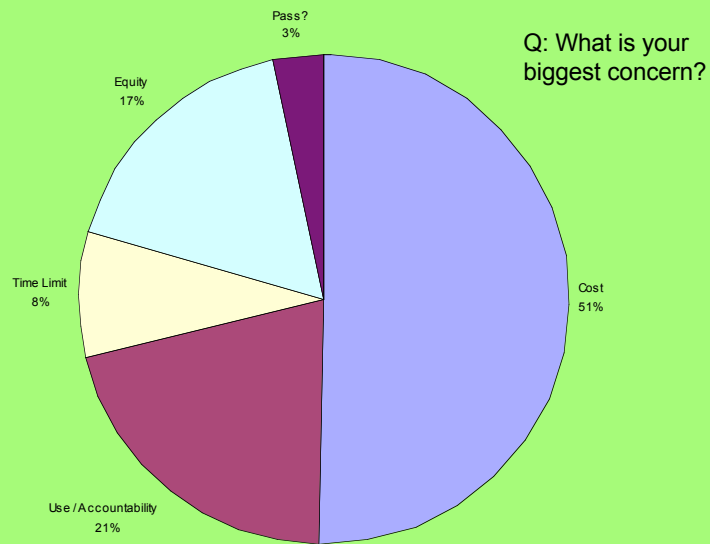
Voters over 51 are less likely to support a parcel tax.



Democrats are more likely to support a parcel tax. (test question)



The primary concern is cost..



Example Concern Comments:

- **Use/Accountability (21%):**

Make sure that it did make a difference...used for very tangible results.

Worried a little that money be spent the best possible way.

It would benefit people who don't pay for it.

- **Equity (17%):**

Tax base is shifting from corp. to individuals, this tax adds to that shift.

Feels guilty that he would be exempted.

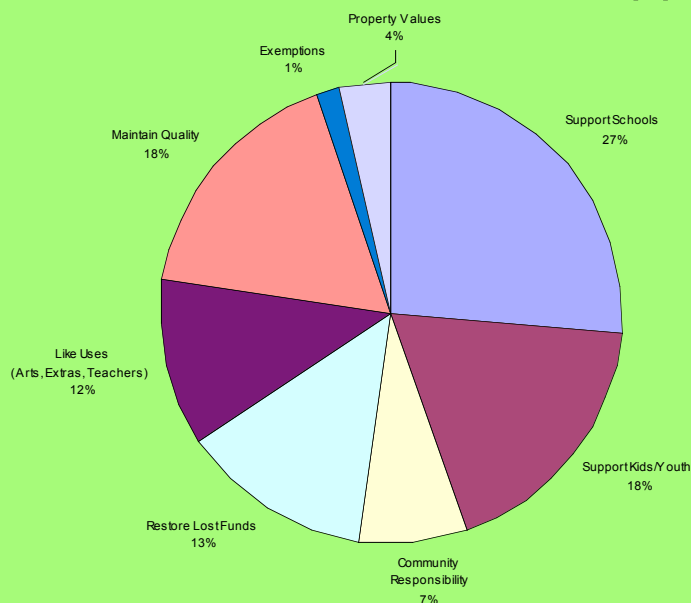
Make sure it exempts seniors.

- **Time Limit (8%)**

It's permanent.

That it wouldn't go away (ever).

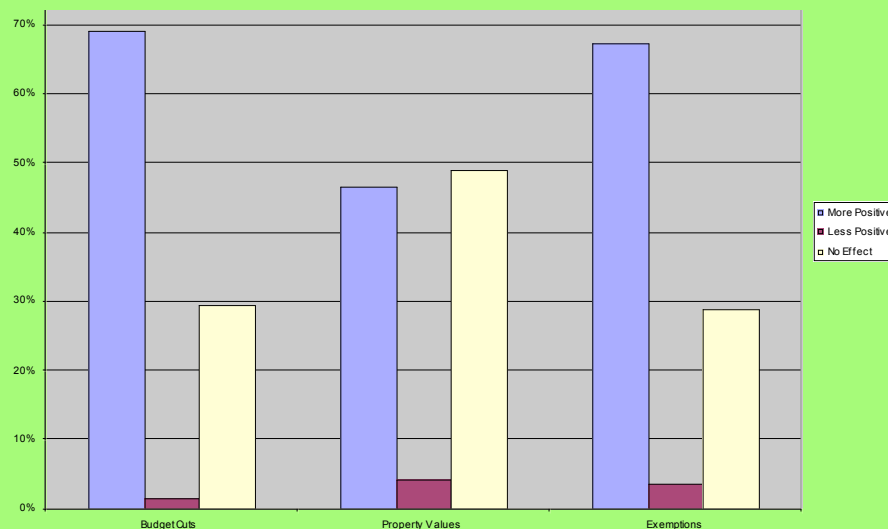
Some Words Used In Support



Test Positive Arguments

- State budget cuts have taken over 2.2 million dollars away from Albany public schools this year. Albany has already increased class sizes and cut music, arts and athletics programs for next year. We need local funds to maintain the quality of education in Albany
- Albany's property values have stayed high during the current recession largely because of our excellent schools. The state budget crisis could hurt our schools and bring down property values.
- Given the current economic crisis, it is good that the measure exempts seniors and low income families. And, if state funding returns to it's 2008 level, the parcel tax will also be returned to it's previous level.

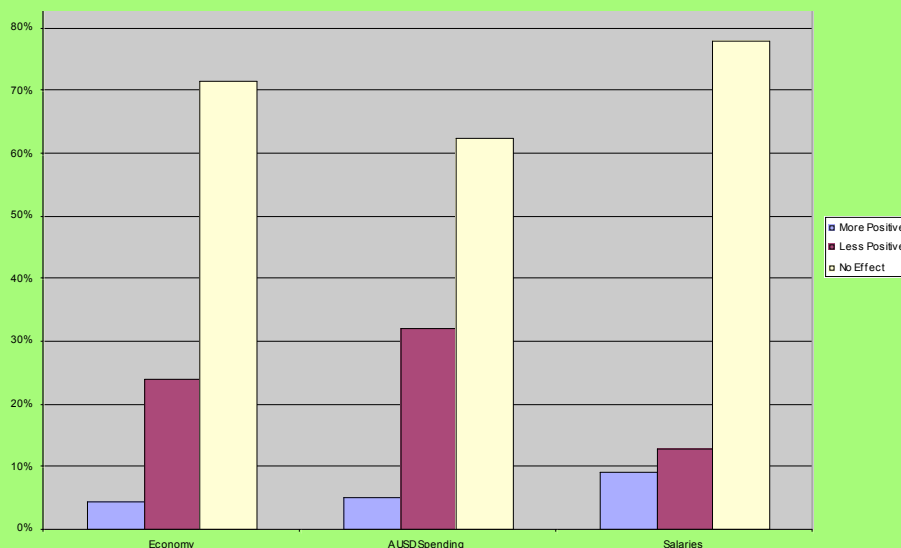
Voters care about budget cuts & like exemptions.
They don't feel strongly about property values.



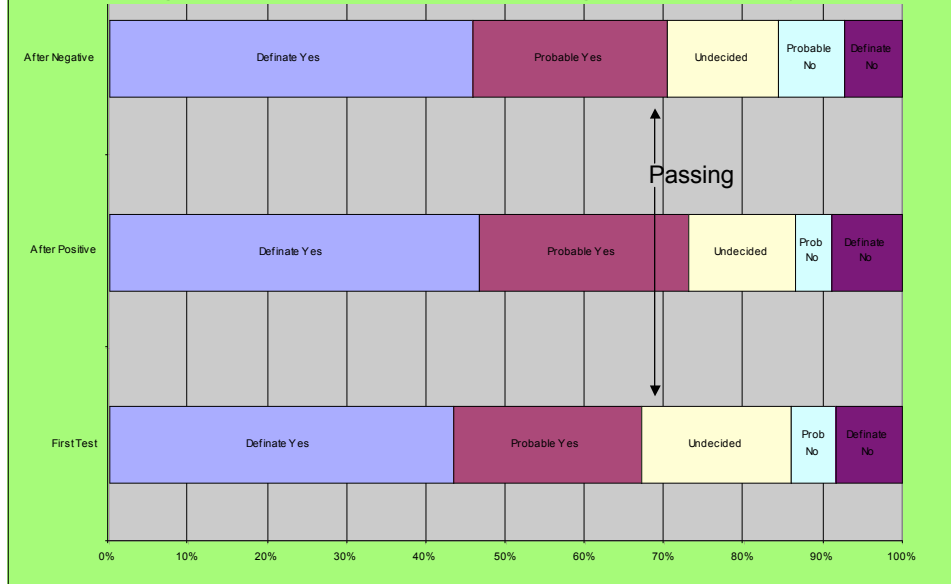
Test Negative Arguments

- In these hard economic times, Albany cannot afford to increase property taxes
- The Albany School district is engaged in an expensive pool project and previous parcel taxes might not have been spent as promised. We should not trust the school board with additional funds at this time.
- The Albany Unified School District spends too much money on teacher and administrator salaries. If salaries were kept under control, there would be no need for this tax measure.

Arguments about the economy and the district's spending had some resonance.



Our simulated “campaign” produced very little change in opinions – but enough to possibly “win”



Overall Observations..

- Voters are motivated to support the schools and are aware of budget cuts.
- Voters need to be educated about how Albany has been effected by cuts and how we manage the schools in general.
- The amount of the tax and the exemptions offered will probably be important to a successful campaign.
- Some voters may have said they were positive or undecided rather than opposed because they wished to “please” us.