

BOARD OF EDUCATION
CENTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #58
WORK SESSION
8701 Holmes Road
Kansas City, Missouri 64131

There will be a Work Session of the Board of Education of Center School District #58 in the Board Room at Boone Elementary School, 8817 Wornall, on Monday, November 19, 2018 at 6:00pm.



Dr. Sharon K. Nibbelink, Superintendent of Schools

I. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** – Board President

II. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - ACTION

III. **WORK SESSION TOPICS**

A. Patron Insight Survey Results

IV. **ADJOURNMENT** - ACTION

Center School District

2018 Community Telephone Survey Final Report



November 19, 2018

Center School District 2018 Community Telephone Survey Executive Summary November 12, 2018

In late October and early November 2018, a 10- to 12-minute telephone survey was conducted with 400 randomly selected, head-of-household (male or female), registered voters in the Center School District to determine their thoughts on the district's current performance and on some project and renovation ideas that the district is considering.

Calls were placed to landlines and cell phone numbers, and the completed interviews were divided into four equal groups of 100, based on the elementary school drawing area where the respondents lived. This means that the data in this report that represents the entire survey group has a Margin of Error of plus or minus 5%. (The Margin of Error within the cross-tabulation groups is larger, because the number of respondents in each group is smaller.)

Generally speaking, the typical residents who participated in this survey found favor with the district's performance in most areas and liked many of the ideas being considered, but they were cautious with their support of those ideas through a possible bond issue. Specifically:

Grading the district's performance

Respondents gave all 11 of 15 people, program, facility and district/patron relationship factors – plus the district's overall performance – a grade of “B” or better (or the statistical equivalent of a “B”) on the traditional A-F grading scale. The top four scores were given to “Safety of students in the district,” “The quality of the technology in the classroom,” “Performance of school principals” and “Quality of education.”

Patron Hot Buttons

Nine of the 15 graded factors also qualified as Patron Hot Buttons, meaning that at least 81% of the respondents were willing to offer a grade, rather than saying, “Don't know.” This is a somewhat average number of Hot Buttons. However, the good news is that seven of the nine Hot Buttons were also the top seven *graded* factors, meaning that – in those cases – the factors the average residents pay attention to were also seen in a positive light.

Strengths and areas needing improvement

In separate open-ended questions, respondents were asked to identify the district's strengths and areas where it could improve. This is the first sign in the survey results of a bit of disconnection, as “Don't know” was the top answer on both questions. The leading strengths that were identified were “Teachers,” “Academics” and “Facilities.” The clear top choice for an actual area needing improvement (after “Don't know”) was “Not enough money/funding.”

Ideas for a future potential ballot issue

Survey participants were presented with renovation, security, expansion and other ideas for each of the district's buildings. Those who said they would be "More likely to vote in favor" of a bond issue, if this particular project was included, were as follows (descriptions truncated; Indian Creek discussion follows below):

- Center Middle School – Security enhancements and interior renovations (including adding to the cafeteria) – 80% "More likely to vote in favor"
- Center Elementary – Security enhancements and interior renovations, including potentially, the part of the lower level that is not being used right now – 74%
- Center High School – Security enhancements and interior renovations – 73%
- Center High School – Athletic projects – 65%
- Red Bridge Elementary – Adding classrooms, a gym addition, converting the old gym into a cafeteria, enhancing security and office space – 63%
- Boone Elementary – Moving the Early Childhood Center to a new location to free up classroom space, along with security and traffic flow improvements – 58%
- Buying a building in the district near St. Joseph Health Center that could be renovated to become the district's Early Childhood Center – 58%

Four different ideas were presented for Indian Creek, and those "More likely to vote in favor" responses were as follows (again, descriptions truncated):

- Renovate the existing building – 75%
- Renovate the building to become the district's ECC and disperse the current students among the three other elementary schools – 52%
- Buy an existing building, renovate it to become a new Indian Creek and for other uses – 34%
- Tear it down, leaving green space, and disperse the students among the three other elementary schools in the district – 19%

Support for a ballot issue

When asked how they would feel about a bond issue that included the ideas that had been discussed in the survey that they like, 48% said they would either "Strongly favor" or "Favor" it, if the election were held today. This is well below the amount needed for passage, at this time, even if the Margin of Error went completely in the district's favor. When asked about a proposal that would result in no tax increase, support jumped to 65%.

Sources of district news

Respondents were presented with 18 potential sources of district news and asked which ones they consulted “frequently” for such updates.

One – “Friends and neighbors” – stood head and shoulders above the rest, at 85%. In a distant second place was *The Kansas City Star*, at 42%

The full report that follows contains a series of findings, discussion of each finding, and all the questions, answers and appropriate cross-tabs. A brief summary closes the report.

Center School District 2018 Community Telephone Survey Final Report November 12, 2018

Finding 1: Eleven of 15 different people, program, facility and district/patron relationship factors – plus the district’s overall performance – received a grade of “B” or better (or the statistical equivalent of a “B”) on the traditional A-F grading scale. Nine of the factors also qualified as “Patron Hot Buttons,” meaning that at least 81% of the respondents were willing to offer a grade, rather than saying, “Don’t know.”

In late October and early November 2018, a 10- to 12-minute telephone study was conducted for the Center School District with 400 randomly selected, heads-of-household (male or female), who knew they lived within the boundaries of the district and who were registered voters. The purpose of the survey was to determine the views of average residents on the district’s current performance, as well as secure their thoughts on some ideas that are under consideration.

Calls were placed to landlines and cell phone numbers, and the completed interviews were divided into four equal groups, based on the elementary school drawing areas. This produces results that have a Margin of Error of plus or minus 5%, at the 95% confidence level, which is the standard for surveys of this type. The Margin of Error is higher within the cross-tabulation groups, because the number of participants in each subgroup is smaller.

After the qualification questions had been successfully navigated, each respondent was asked to “grade” – A, B, C, D or F – 15 different people, program, facility and district/patron relationship factors, plus the district’s overall performance.

Easing respondents into a 12-minute survey with questions of this type allows them to become comfortable with the process (and with the interviewer), before the more complicated questions come up later in the survey. It also provides an opportunity to take a “snapshot” of current patron opinion on a variety of different aspects of the district’s performance.

All the grades for all the factors are displayed below. However, to simplify the analysis, a 5-point weighted scale has also been applied. In this scale, each grade of “A” is worth 5 points, down to each grade of “F” being worth 1 point. The point values are totaled and divided by the number of respondents willing to offer a grade (rather than saying, “Don’t know”).

Recognizing that securing an “A” in this exercise would require all those with an opinion to say, “A,” the dividing line between areas of strength and those that may need attention is usually considered a “B” (4.00). However, taking into account the Margin of Error, a score as low as 3.80 is still, statistically speaking, a “B.”

Eleven of the 15 factors – plus the district’s overall performance – scored a “B” (or the statistical equivalent of a “B”). Specifically, the grades at the top of the list were the following:

- Safety of students in the district – 4.33 on a 5.00 scale
- The quality of the technology in the classroom – 4.33
- Performance of school principals – 4.24
- Quality of education – 4.24
- Quality of the Center School District facilities – 4.21
- Performance of district teachers – 4.21
- Preparation of students to be college- and/or career-ready – 4.11

Eleven out of 15 (plus the district’s overall “grade”) scoring at a “B” or better constitutes an average score for this exercise. What is encouraging is that safety, technology, teachers, education and preparing students for their futures were among the top scoring factors.

What is disappointing is the high percentage of “Don’t know” responses. Later on in the survey, we learn that “Friends and neighbors” – by a wide margin – is the number one source of school district news. This would suggest a somewhat narrow window of topics that are of interest.

The four lowest scoring items had one that was practically 3.80, and three others that suggest a possible feeling of some disconnection with the school district.

- Efforts of the district to communicate with citizens – 3.79
- The performance of the district in fulfilling promises – 3.66
- The district’s responsiveness to citizen concerns – 3.59
- Efforts of the district to involve citizen in decision-making – 3.58

As is customary for Patron Insight, scores that do not reach 3.80 are subjected to a cross-tab analysis to determine if any demographic or geographic factors were influential in their score.

Because the Margin of Error is larger on cross-tabulations, it is best to look for trends, rather than to fixate on individual numbers. Particularly with smaller groups, a few differences of opinion on grades can have a much more significant impact on the overall score, making it important to look at the bigger picture by subgroup.

In the case of these factors:

- Respondents 55 or older had the lowest score on all four factors, although the difference was insignificant on the “communication” factor. It is common for this age group to have lower scores, so this was not a surprise.
- Newer residents also had the lowest scores, but there were only 69 respondents in this group, so it is important to remember the impact of smaller groups on their scores.
- Women and current student families had the highest scores on all four factors, as compared to the other subgroups in their category.
- The Red Bridge drawing area was the most positive on all four factors, with the differences being notable in several cases.

The other component of the grading exercise is the identification of Patron Hot Buttons. These are the factors that at least 81% of the survey respondents were willing to offer a grade on, rather than saying, “Don’t know.” In essence, Patron Hot Buttons are the factors that the respondents appear to consider first, when they think about the school district.

The Center School District had nine of 15 factors qualify as Hot Buttons, which is somewhat lower than average. However, what is encouraging is that the top seven factors, in terms of grades, were all also Hot Buttons. This means that seven factors that are among the first items thought of when Center comes to mind are also thought of positively.

Questions 1 to 3 confirmed head of household (male or female), registered voter status and awareness of living in the Center School District. A “yes” answer was required to participate. As such, these questions and answers are not displayed here. All percentages may add to more or less than 100%, due to rounding.

4. **To make certain that we have people from all parts of the district, can you tell me which elementary school in the Center School District that children in your neighborhood would typically attend? Is it...?** *Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below. Numbers specified by school district leadership as being generally representative of the population distribution.*

School	Number
Red Bridge	100
Boone	100
Center	100
Indian Creek	100

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. Based on your experience, the experience of your children, or things you have heard about the Center School District from others, please tell me what grade you would give the school district on each of the following items. Let's start with...
Questions 5 through 19 were rotated, to eliminate order bias.

5. Performance of district teachers

Response	Percentage
A	34%
B	45%
C	11%
D	2%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	8%

6. Quality of education

Response	Percentage
A	41%
B	43%
C	14%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	2%

7. Value received for the tax dollars spent

Response	Percentage
A	26%
B	49%
C	17%
D	3%
F	2%
Don't know (not read)	3%

8. The quality of the technology in the classroom

Response	Percentage
A	39%
B	32%
C	10%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	18%

9. Performance of school principals

Response	Percentage
A	32%
B	44%
C	8%
D	1%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	15%

10. Performance of the Center School District administration

Response	Percentage
A	18%
B	48%
C	13%
D	2%
F	2%
Don't know (not read)	17%

11. Performance of the Center School Board

Response	Percentage
A	17%
B	44%
C	16%
D	1%
F	2%
Don't know (not read)	20%

12. Efforts of the district to involve citizens in decision-making

Response	Percentage
A	12%
B	36%
C	19%
D	7%
F	4%
Don't know (not read)	22%

13. Efforts of the district to communicate with citizens

Response	Percentage
A	16%
B	35%
C	14%
D	5%
F	2%
Don't know (not read)	28%

14. Safety of students in the district

Response	Percentage
A	39%
B	48%
C	6%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	6%

15. Quality of the Center District school facilities

Response	Percentage
A	34%
B	53%
C	10%
D	1%
F	0%
Don't know (not read)	2%

16. Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom

Response	Percentage
A	25%
B	37%
C	14%
D	2%
F	1%
Don't know (not read)	21%

17. The district's responsiveness to citizen concerns

Response	Percentage
A	11%
B	26%
C	19%
D	6%
F	2%
Don't know (not read)	35%

18. Preparation of students to be college- and/or career-ready

Response	Percentage
A	27%
B	38%
C	14%
D	2%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	19%

19. The performance of the district on fulfilling promises

Response	Percentage
A	13%
B	31%
C	16%
D	3%
F	5%
Don't know (not read)	32%

20. Thinking now about everything you know or have heard about the district, what overall grade would you give the Center School District?

Response	Percentage
A	30%
B	51%
C	17%
D	1%
F	<1%
Don't know (not read)	1%

Cross-tabulation: 5-point weighted scale for each of the graded factors. Items in boldface type are Patron Hot Buttons, meaning that at least 81% of the survey respondents were willing to offer a grade on this factor, rather than saying, “Don’t know.” These are the items that typical patrons think of first, when they consider the school district’s performance.

Graded factor	5-point weighted scale rating
Safety of students in the district	4.33
The quality of the technology in the classroom	4.33
Performance of school principals	4.24
Quality of education	4.24
Quality of the Center School District facilities	4.21
Performance of district teachers	4.21
Preparation of students to be college- and/or career-ready	4.11
Overall grade	4.10
Class sizes, meaning the number of students in each classroom	4.05
Value received for the tax dollars spent	3.98
Performance of the Center School District administration	3.95
Performance of the Center School Board	3.91
Efforts of the district to communicate with citizens	3.79
The performance of the district in fulfilling promises	3.66
The district’s responsiveness to citizen concerns	3.59
Efforts of the district to involve citizens in decision-making	3.58

Cross-tabulation: Weighted 5-point scale score for the factors that were below 3.80 by age, length of time living in the district and gender. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group. “Age” will not square with “overall” score, because 17 respondents refused to answer this question.

Factor	Overall score	18-34 (n=74)	35-54 (n=179)	55 or older (n=130)	Up to 5 years (n=69)	5-15 years (n=120)	More than 15 years (n=211)	Female (n=221)	Male (n=179)
Efforts of the district to communicate with citizens	3.79	3.81	3.79	3.78	3.70	3.94	3.74	3.87	3.69
The performance of the district in fulfilling promises	3.66	3.75	3.70	3.53	3.49	3.77	3.66	3.71	3.60
The district's responsiveness to citizen concerns	3.59	3.64	3.63	3.49	3.28	3.57	3.69	3.64	3.60
Efforts of the district to involve citizens in decision-making	3.58	3.77	3.63	3.41	3.51	3.67	3.55	3.61	3.53

Cross-tabulation: Weighted 5-point scale score for the factors that were below 3.80 by location of the respondent's residence, and by the presence of a current district student in the household, a past student (but no current student) or no student ever in the household. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group.

Factor	Overall score	Red Bridge drawing area (n=100)	Boone drawing area (n=100)	Center Elem drawing area (n=100)	Indian Creek drawing area (n=100)	Student, yes (n=131)	Student, past (n=133)	Student, never (n=136)
Efforts of the district communicate with citizens	3.79	3.99	3.71	3.71	3.76	3.99	3.67	3.68
The performance of the district in fulfilling promises	3.66	3.93	3.48	3.57	3.66	3.81	3.60	3.53
The district's responsiveness to citizen concerns	3.59	3.85	3.43	3.49	3.59	3.94	3.52	3.11
Efforts of the district to involve citizens in decision-making	3.58	3.85	3.48	3.53	3.43	3.81	3.38	3.49

Finding 2: The sense of disconnection is felt again, as the most frequent answer to open-ended questions about the district’s strengths and areas needing improvement was “Don’t know.”

Recognizing that the grading questions may not cover all the topics that participants want to discuss, the next two questions provided open-ended opportunities for respondents to opine on the district’s strengths and areas where it can improve.

The responses were read and coded – meaning that common words, phrases and ideas were gathered together to provide a clearer picture of the most commonly held views.

In doing so, the “connection with the community” challenge became more evident.

In term of “Strengths,” the top answer was “Don’t know” (119 mentions), followed by “Teachers” (96 mentions) and “Academics” (82 mentions).

In terms of areas needing improvement, “Don’t know” (183 mentions) was also the most popular answer – which is typically a good sign, had it not also been number one on the strengths list. This was followed by “Not enough money/funding” (114 mentions) and “Poor communication (50 mentions).

Below each of the charts is a series of verbatim comments. These comments are either thoughts that were “one-off” in nature, had two ideas contained in the comment or had something else that made them an anomaly. In reviewing these statements, it is important to remember that each is a single statement by one person. Had they been indicative of a trend, they would have appeared in enough quantity to be displayed in the chart associated with the question.

21. What do you think are the district’s strengths? *Answers were coded, based on common words, phrases and ideas. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number
Don’t know	119
Teachers	96
Academics	82
Facilities	54
Technology	28
Other (see below)	21

Verbatim “other” comments

Not sure there is much to brag about.

Academics are good. Senior high prepares kids well for college.

They seem to do what they can with what they have to work with.

Good teachers and a challenging curriculum.

There are plenty of opportunities for students to get involved.

Administration seems to care for the well-being of the students.

Have never had children.

Have a better reputation than the KCMO School District.

Their programs for advanced students are good.

They do a pretty good job of preparing kids for college.

Teachers really do care about educating students and helping them to prepare for college. My daughter is getting a lot of help to prepare her for testing. She is encouraged to volunteer.

Some parents do a good job of getting involved.

A district with a lot of history.

Academics are emphasized and teachers are pretty good.

Good facility, curriculum and college prep courses.

Our community is pretty tight-knit. We watch out for each other.

Sports is pretty good.

I see children all the time. They are polite and speak correctly.

I graduated from Center. It was an excellent district. Today, maybe not so much, but still better than many others.

My children have graduated, but it was an excellent district.

I think they truly care about the students and what's best for them.

22. Where could the district improve? *Answers were coded, based on common words, phrases and ideas. Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number
Don't know	183
Not enough money/funding	114
Poor communication	50
Reduce class sizes	23
Improve facilities	18
Other (see below)	12

Verbatim "other" comments

Some teachers are concerned for their well-being. Students are out of control. Not much discipline at home.

The middle school teachers and principal did not care about students in 2017. My granddaughter was bullied, and he did nothing. We sent her to a different high school. I also don't like the district having a poster about bisexuality.

Teach the students life skills.

Too many students in a classroom and little help from administration to solve the problem.

Drugs and alcohol are a big problem and it is starting younger and younger.

Some buildings need updates.

Some of the buildings are pretty old, and with the way of the world today, safety always needs attention.

They rely too much on test scores.

More of a baby-sitting district. Not much is accomplished other than get through the day.

Many teachers work extra hours helping these kids who need the extra help. Many come to my house. We play games and I give them work puzzles and stories.

Bullying is a problem.

Lots of bad influences affecting too many kids.

Finding 3: Almost all the ideas being considered by the school district for a potential ballot issue found favor, with residents stating a rather strong preference for one of the four concepts for Indian Creek’s future.

The survey then turned to the project ideas that had been the subject of discussion within the district. This was a rather unique set of questions, starting with the Center High School and working down to the elementary schools, with one other mitigating factor for respondent consideration.

Each idea was read individually, after which the participant was asked if he or she would be “More likely to vote in favor” if that idea was on the ballot issue, “More likely to vote against” or would it “Make no difference” in his or her voting decision.

Leaving Indian Creek for later in the discussion in this report (because of the unique structure of the questions related to that school), the support was strong (descriptions truncated):

- Center Middle School – Security enhancements and interior renovations (including adding to the cafeteria) – 80% “More likely to vote in favor”
- Center Elementary – Security enhancements and interior renovations, including potentially the part of the lower level that is not being used right now – 74%
- Center High School – Security enhancements and interior renovations – 73%
- Center High School – Athletic projects – 65%
- Red Bridge Elementary – Adding classrooms, a gym addition, converting the old gym into a cafeteria, enhancing security and office space – 63%
- Boone Elementary – Moving the Early Childhood Center to a new location to free up classroom space, along with security and traffic flow improvements – 58%
- Buying a building in the district near St. Joseph Health Center that could be renovated to become the district’s Early Childhood Center – 58%

Interestingly, the range of people saying, “More likely to vote against” was only 1% to 10%, as the second most popular answer was always that it would “Make no difference” in the respondent’s voting decision.

On the subject of Indian Creek Elementary School, respondents were asked to follow the same approach in responding to each of four separate ideas. The percentages of those saying, “More likely to vote in favor,” if this was the district’s choice for Indian Creek were as follows (descriptions truncated):

- Renovating the existing building – 75%
- Renovating the building to become the Early Childhood Center and transferring the current students to other elementary schools in the district – 52%
- Buying a building and renovating it to become the new Indian Creek, and for other uses – 34%
- Tearing down Indian Creek, transferring students to other elementary schools in the district and leaving green space – 19%

After hearing all the ideas, respondents were asked to select their favorite and the clear choice was renovating the current building (71%), followed, at a distance, by renovating it to become the district's Early Childhood Center (23%).

While the cross-tabulations showed some modest variation on three of the four ideas for Indian Creek, the pattern was the same, in terms of support and opposition. The only difference was on the issue of buying a building and renovating it to become the new Indian Creek, and for other uses. In this case, some subgroups were more positive than negative and vice versa.

However, it is critical to note that none of the subgroup scores even approached 50% in favor of this idea. So, while some may be more positive than others, they cannot really be considered advocates.

The same could be said about the follow-up question asking about the possibility that the district could save money over the long term by consolidating from four elementary schools to three.

While the majority of the cross-tabulation subgroups had more support than opposition to this idea, it was not universal. Plus, where there was a score difference, most of the time it was inconsequential.

As you may know, the Center School District has been working for several months with a committee of residents and architects to identify options for renovating and improving the buildings throughout the district. Some or all of these ideas might be part of a bond issue at some point in the future.

I'm now going to read you a brief description of each of the ideas. After I do, please tell me if including that idea in a bond issue would make you more likely to vote in favor, more likely to vote against or would make no difference to you, if you were voting today.

- 23. Starting with Center High School, one of the ideas is to enhance the security, and to renovate some of the interior to allow for more collaborative spaces, which would provide greater classroom layout flexibility for teachers and students and enhanced academic opportunities. If these projects were part of a bond issue, would you be...?**
Choices were read on this question, but only reread on future questions, if requested.

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	73%
More likely to vote against	1%
It would make no difference to you	24%
Don't know (not read)	2%

- 24. Also, at Center High School, the committee has been discussing artificial turf at the athletic field, along with a building for upgraded locker rooms and concessions. The athletic ideas also include adding baseball fields and tennis courts. If these projects were part of a bond issue, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	65%
More likely to vote against	7%
It would make no difference to you	19%
Don't know (not read)	10%

- 25. At Center Middle School, the study group has recommended enhancing the security and renovating the collaborative spaces to provide a more secure entrance. In addition, the group has discussed adding to the cafeteria, which would then provide sufficient space for an entire grade. If these projects were part of a bond issue, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	80%
More likely to vote against	1%
It would make no difference to you	13%
Don't know (not read)	7%

- 26. For Center Elementary, the ideas include creating a secure entry and reworking the administrative spaces, creating more collaboration locations, and potentially renovating the part of the lower level that is currently not being used. If these projects were part of a bond issue, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	74%
More likely to vote against	2%
It would make no difference to you	18%
Don't know (not read)	6%

- 27. At Boone Elementary – which is also the home of the district's Early Childhood Center – the study group recommended considering moving Early Childhood to a different location, which would free up classroom and outdoor space for the elementary school. There has also been discussion about changes to the parking lot and traffic flow and upgrading security. If this was part of a bond issue, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	58%
More likely to vote against	4%
It would make no difference to you	22%
Don't know (not read)	15%

- 28. There are four different ideas for Indian Creek Elementary. The first is to renovate it to make additional classrooms larger, while creating a secure entry at the front of the building and moving the School Office to the front of the building with other offices. If this was the idea selected for Indian Creek, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	75%
More likely to vote against	4%
It would make no difference to you	20%
Don't know (not read)	2%

- 29. The second idea is to renovate the building and turn it into the district's Early Childhood Center. Students in the school now would be transferred to other elementary schools in the district, Boone, Red Bridge and Center Elementary. If this was the idea selected for Indian Creek, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	52%
More likely to vote against	10%
It would make no difference to you	31%
Don't know (not read)	7%

- 30. The third idea is to tear down the building, leaving green space for the community. Again, students currently attending the school would be transferred to other schools in the district, Boone, Red Bridge and Center Elementary. If this was the idea selected for Indian Creek, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	19%
More likely to vote against	42%
It would make no difference to you	27%
Don't know (not read)	11%

- 31. The fourth idea is to purchase a building within the district's boundaries that could be renovated to become a new Indian Creek Elementary, a new Central Office and a Culinary Arts Academy for high school students. If these projects were part of a bond issue, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	34%
More likely to vote against	28%
It would make no difference to you	21%
Don't know (not read)	17%

Cross-tabulation: “More likely to vote in favor” and “More likely to vote against” each idea for Indian Creek by age, length of time living in the district and gender. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group. “Age” will not square with “overall” score, because 17 respondents refused to answer this question.

Response	Overall score	18-34 (n=74)	35-54 (n=179)	55 or older (n=130)	Up to 5 years (n=69)	5-15 years (n=120)	More than 15 years (n=211)	Female (n=221)	Male (n=179)
1. Renovate existing building									
FAVOR	75%	82%	77%	68%	71%	77%	74%	77%	71%
AGAINST	4%	3%	3%	5%	4%	5%	3%	3%	4%
2. Renovate to become the district's ECC	52%	53%	54%	49%	46%	54%	53%	56%	48%
FAVOR									
AGAINST	10%	5%	9%	13%	10%	11%	9%	10%	9%
3. Tear down, leave green space	19%	20%	22%	15%	19%	19%	19%	21%	17%
FAVOR									
AGAINST	42%	41%	39%	48%	45%	38%	44%	40%	45%
4. Buy building, renovate to become new Indian Creek and other uses	34%	36%	35%	30%	30%	37%	33%	34%	32%
FAVOR									
AGAINST	28%	20%	28%	30%	30%	28%	27%	24%	30%

Cross-tabulation: “More likely to vote in favor” and “More likely to vote against” each idea for Indian Creek by location of the respondent’s residence, and by the presence of a current district student in the household, a past student (but no current student) or no student ever in the household. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group.

Response	Overall score
1. Renovate existing building	75%
FAVOR	
AGAINST	4%

Red Bridge drawing area (n=100)	Boone drawing area (n=100)	Center Elem drawing area (n=100)	Indian Creek drawing area (n=100)
79%	74%	77%	68%
4%	4%	2%	5%

Student, yes (n=131)	Student, past (n=133)	Student, never (n=136)
83%	71%	69%
2%	5%	4%

2. Renovate to become the district’s ECC	52%
FAVOR	
AGAINST	10%

55%	49%	55%	50%
9%	14%	9%	8%

60%	52%	46%
10%	13%	7%

3. Tear down, leave green space	19%
FAVOR	
AGAINST	42%

16%	24%	18%	19%
49%	35%	46%	39%

23%	18%	17%
39%	44%	44%

4. Buy building, renovate to become new Indian Creek and other uses	34%
FAVOR	
AGAINST	28%

28%	41%	36%	29%
34%	22%	29%	27%

39%	33%	29%
28%	27%	29%

32. Which of the four ideas for Indian Creek do you like best? *Choices were reread, in original question form, only if requested.*

Response	Percentage
Renovating the current building and keeping it an elementary school	71%
Renovating it to become the district's Early Childhood Center	23%
Tearing it own and leaving green space	0%
Buying a building in the district and converting it to a new Indian Creek Elementary, Central Office and Culinary Arts Academy for high school students	3%
Don't know (not read)	4%

33. If closing Indian Creek and consolidating from four to three elementary schools had the potential to save the district money over the long term, would you be...? *Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
More favorable to the idea of closing it	31%
Less favorable to the idea	27%
It would make no difference to you	36%
Don't know (not read)	6%

Cross-tabulation: Percentages for “More likely to be favorable to the idea of closing Indian Creek,” due to potential money savings and “Less favorable to the idea” by age, length of time living in the district and gender. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group. “Age” will not square with “overall” score, because 17 respondents refused to answer this question.

Response	Overall score
More favorable to the idea of closing Indian Creek	31%
Less favorable to the idea	27%

18-34 (n=74)	35-54 (n=179)	55 or older (n=130)
34%	32%	29%
28%	26%	28%

Up to 5 years (n=69)	5-15 years (n=120)	More than 15 years (n=211)
23%	33%	33%
29%	28%	27%

Female (n=221)	Male (n=179)
30%	33%
28%	27%

Cross-tabulation: Percentages for “More likely to be favorable to the idea of closing Indian Creek,” due to potential money savings and “Less favorable to the idea” by location of the respondent’s residence, and by the presence of a current district student in the household, a past student (but no current student) or no student ever in the household. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group.

Response	Overall score
More favorable to the idea of closing Indian Creek	31%
Less favorable to the idea	27%

Red Bridge drawing area (n=100)	Boone drawing area (n=100)	Center Elem drawing area (n=100)	Indian Creek drawing area (n=100)
27%	33%	29%	36%
28%	30%	27%	24%

Student, yes (n=131)	Student, past (n=133)	Student, never (n=136)
31%	28%	35%
31%	22%	29%

- 34. At Red Bridge Elementary, the group recommended adding additional classrooms and a gym addition, and converting the old gym into an extension of the cafeteria. The group also recommended enhancing the secure entry and the office space in the building. If these projects were part of a bond issue, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	63%
More likely to vote against	8%
It would make no difference to you	27%
Don't know (not read)	2%

- 35. The district may have the opportunity to purchase a different building in the district that is near St. Joseph Health Center and use it for the district's Early Childhood Center. If this project was part of a bond issue, would you be...?**

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	58%
More likely to vote against	10%
It would make no difference to you	19%
Don't know (not read)	14%

Finding 4: Even though they expressed support for many of the ideas being considered by the school district for a bond issue, fewer than 50% said they would either “Strongly favor it” or “Favor it,” if the election were held today. However, when asked how they would feel about an election today on a bond issue that had no tax increase, support grew to 65%.

Having now presented all the ideas – including the options for Indian Creek Elementary – respondents were asked how they would vote on a bond issue (if the election was today), if the school district selected the projects the respondents thought were a good idea. A total of 48% – short of the necessary four-seventh majority, even if the Margin of Error went in favor of the district – said they would either “Strongly favor it” or “Favor it.”

All respondents were then asked the same basic question, except in this case, there would be no tax increase. Support jumped to 65%, well clear of the Margin of Error, if it went to the *negative* side.

In studying this data, it is important to remember that it represents the opinion of patrons at the time this survey was taken. The district’s decisions about any final bond issue – projects, timing, etc. – and how it communicates those decisions will make the difference between passage and failure on Election Day.

36. What if the school district selected the projects we have been discussing that you think are a good idea and the bond issue election was today? Would you...? Choices, except where indicated, were read to respondents.

Response	Percentage
Strongly favor it	11%
Favor it	37%
Neither favor nor oppose it	9%
Oppose it	15%
Strongly oppose it	8%
Depends on what it costs (not read)	12%
Depends on the final project list (not read)	3%
Don’t know (not read)	5%

37. What if the bond issue resulted in NO tax increase? Would you...? *Choices, except where indicated, were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
Strongly favor it	16%
Favor it	49%
Neither favor nor oppose it	<1%
Oppose it	14%
Strongly oppose it	5%
Depends on the final project list (not read)	8%
Don't know (not read)	8%

Cross-tabulation: Combined “Strongly favor/Favor” percentages for the idea of a bond issue, based on the projects that had been discussed, and if it were a no-tax-increase proposal by age, length of time living in the district and gender. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group. “Age” will not square with “overall” score, because 17 respondents refused to answer this question.

Combined “Strongly favor/Favor” percentage	Overall score
Bond issue for projects discussed	48%
No-tax-increase bond issue	65%

18-34 (n=74)	35-54 (n=179)	55 or older (n=130)
54%	49%	44%
68%	66%	60%

Up to 5 years (n=69)	5-15 years (n=120)	More than 15 years (n=211)
41%	48%	51%
62%	66%	64%

Female (n=221)	Male (n=179)
49%	47%
64%	65%

Cross-tabulation: Combined “Strongly favor/Favor” percentages for the idea of a bond issue, based on the projects that had been discussed, and if it were a no-tax-increase proposal by location of the respondent’s residence, and by the presence of a current district student in the household, a past student (but no current student) or no student ever in the household. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group.

Combined “Strongly favor/Favor” percentage	Overall score
Bond issue for projects discussed	48%
No-tax-increase bond issue	65%

Red Bridge drawing area (n=100)	Boone drawing area (n=100)	Center Elem drawing area (n=100)	Indian Creek drawing area (n=100)
51%	48%	46%	48%
70%	64%	62%	61%

Student, yes (n=131)	Student, past (n=133)	Student, never (n=136)
53%	44%	48%
69%	59%	52%

Finding 5: Survey participants rely heavily on their “Friends and neighbors” for school district information, followed (at quite a distance) by *The Kansas City Star*.

As the survey was drawing to a close, respondents were presented with a list of 18 different potential sources of district news and asked which ones they consulted “frequently” for such updates.

While it is typically number one in this exercise, “Friends and neighbors” (85%) rarely has this much space between it and the second place source (in this case, *The Kansas City Star*, at 42%).

Four additional sources were in the 30s:

- Teachers in the district – 39%
- The School Board, either in person, or when a member of the Board is quoted in the news media – 36%
- Principals in the district – 34%
- The district’s administration, either in person, or when a member of the administration is quoted in the news media – 30%

After that, the scores drop off significantly. This pattern implies that a lot of what is shared about the district is word-of-mouth (among typical residents), making it all the more important to keep messages simple and repetitive, so that stories told from one person to another have a greater chance of being accurate.

38. Finally, I’m wondering who you turn to for information about the Center School District. For each of the people or organizations I mention, please say, “Yes,” if you consult this source frequently for school district news – beyond weather-related school closing information. If you consult the source every so often, or you don’t consult it at all, please say, “No.” *List was read and rotated.*

Response	Percentage
Friends and neighbors	85%
<i>The Kansas City Star</i>	42%
Teachers in the district	39%
The School Board, either in person, or when a member of the Board is quoted in the news media	36%
Principals in the district	34%
The district’s administration, either in person or when a member of the administration is quoted in the news media	30%

Individual school newsletters	28%
The district's website	25%
Other district employees, such as front office personnel in the schools or lunch room staff members	23%
Social networking sites sponsored by the district, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube	21%
The <i>Center E-News</i> newsletter, which is sent twice a month to subscribers	19%
Social networking sites NOT sponsored by the district, but where district news is often discussed	14%
Local radio stations	13%
Parent groups, such as the PTO or PTA	12%
<i>The Call</i>	9%
Local television stations	7%
<i>The Jackson County Advocate</i>	5%
<i>The Martin City Telegraph</i>	4%

Demographics

The final questions are on the demographics that, along with the elementary school drawing area question, provided the data points needed to create the cross-tabulations shown in this report. They are not subject to quota but are simply collected for this purpose.

What was discovered in these questions was that the survey group:

- Was somewhat mobile, with 53% living in the district more than 15 years, but 32% having been here 10 years or less.
- Had 62% between the ages of 25 and 54.
- Included 131 current student families, 133 past student families and 136 “never” student families.
- Was 55% female and 45% male.

My last few questions will help us divide our interviews into groups.

39. How long have you, yourself, lived within the boundaries of the Center School District? Is it...? *Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
Less than 2 years	8%
2 years to 5 years	10%
More than 5 years to 10 years	14%
More than 10 years to 15 years	16%
More than 15 years	43%
I’ve lived here all my life	10%

40. In what age group are you? Is it...? *Choices, except where indicated, were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
18 to 24	1%
25 to 34	17%
35 to 44	23%
45 to 54	22%
55 to 64	19%
65 or older	14%
Refused (not read)	4%

41. Do you have any children or grandchildren who attend school in the Center School District right now? *Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number
Yes, children	113
Yes, children and grandchildren	18
Yes, grandchildren	42
No	227

42. Do you have any children or grandchildren who previously were students in the district, but who have graduated? *Asked only of the 269 respondents who did not answer question 41 either “Yes, children” or “Yes, children and grandchildren.” Numbers, rather than percentages, are displayed below.*

Response	Number
Yes, children	118
Yes, children and grandchildren	15
Yes, grandchildren	12
No	124

43. RECORD GENDER

Response	Percentage
Female	55%
Male	45%

Summary

The fall 2018 survey of 400 randomly selected, head-of-household (male or female), registered voters who live in the Center School District revealed the presence of a community with rather average views about its school district, but one that thought well of most of the plans being considered.

For example:

- Eleven out of 15 people, program, facility and district/patron relationship factors – plus the district’s overall performance – received a “grade” of “B” or better (or the statistical equivalent of a “B”) on the traditional A-F grading scale. Nine of the 15 factors qualified as Patron Hot Buttons, meaning the items that typical residents would think of first, when the district’s name is mentioned. Both of these are average results for a district the size of Center and with its long-standing presence in the metropolitan area.
- The highest number of people couldn’t name either a strength of the district or an area needing improvement, and a strong percentage rely on “Friends and neighbors” for news about district updates.
- Renovations, security enhancements and expansions at all the buildings (except for Indian Creek) were met with favor.
- Of the four choices for Indian Creek, the one that generated the strongest support was renovating the current building. Even the idea that consolidating from four to three elementary schools could potentially save the district money over the long term was met with only tepid support.
- While they expressed support for most of the ideas (along with renovating Indian Creek), support for a bond issue – if the election were held today – was less than 50%. When asked the same question about a no-tax-increase bond issue, that support increased to 65%.

The biggest challenge appears to be finding a way to more deeply engage the community that does not have a student in the Center School District right now. While that is a common issue for all school districts, it appears more acute in this case, and the indications of that modest level of interest are scattered throughout the data.

No matter what the district decides, it will be essential to make a concerted effort to reach out even more actively to non-current parents. These individuals will make the difference on Election Day, whenever that comes. And it will truly need to be *reaching out*, as they show little interest in visiting the district’s website or other activities where they have to take the first step.

After the decision has been made about the bond issue – If one will be happening, what it will contain, if there will be a cost, when it will be run, etc. – it will be important to keep the messages to the community focused on the benefits to students, families and the community. People don't vote for school buildings. They vote for what the buildings mean for student growth and achievement.

Keep the messages few and repeat them often. If the district ever thinks it has said something often enough, the answer is always, "No. Say it again."