TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 2

Methodology 3

How to Read a Crosstabulation Table 5

Key Findings 7

Recommendations 8

Summary of Results 12

- Ballot Tests 12
- Analysis of the Tax Threshold 19
- Analysis of Overall Respondents 21
- Analysis of Key Demographic Groups 30
- Other Findings 37

Appendix A - Guide to Statistical Significance A-1

Appendix B - Questionnaire B-1

Appendix C - Crosstabulations C-1

INTRODUCTION

Godbe Research & Analysis is pleased to present the results of a public opinion research project conducted for the San Mateo County Community College District.

The Methodology section explains the methodology used to conduct this type of survey research.

How to Read a Crosstabulation Table explains how to use the detailed crosstabulation tables in the Appendix.

The Key Findings section gives an analysis of the overall responses on a question-by-question format.

The Recommendations section details our recommended course of action based on the key findings and survey results.

The Summary of Results section reviews the findings of the quantitative research on a thematic basis.

The Appendices include a guide to statistical significance, the questionnaire and the computer-generated crosstabs.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by interviewing registered voters in San Mateo County.

Specifics of the research design are as follows:

Telephone Survey	
Technique:	Telephone Interviewing
Universe:	Registered Voters
Field Dates:	Oct. 3, 1998-Oct. 9, 1998
Sample Size:	N=600
Sampling Method:	Stratified Cluster Sample
Language of Interview:	English

Understanding the 'Margin of Error' — All responses have a statistical margin of error between 2.39 percent and 3.99 percent. This means that for a given question answered by all 600 respondents, the percentage breakdowns of the sample population will vary by no more than 3.99 percent 95 out of 100 times. The percent margin of error applies to both sides of the answer so that for a question in which 50 percent of the respondents said 'yes', we would expect that 95 out of 100 times the actual percent of the population that would say 'yes' would be between 46 and 54 percent.

The margin of error for a given question in this survey actually moves between 2.39 percent and 3.99 percent as stated above. The 3.99 percent number refers to questions, such as a yes/no question, where opinions are evenly split in the sample with 50 percent of respondents saying yes and 50 percent saying no. If that same question receives a response in which 10 percent of respondents said yes and 90 percent said no, then the margin of error would be 2.39 percent.

Controlling for 'Position Bias' — In order to control for location bias (position bias), some of the items in the survey were rotated. Survey items 1, 8, 9, 10 and 11 were structured so that a different item within the set was chosen as the starting point for each respondent that was interviewed.

Sample Selection — Respondents for the telephone survey were selected using a sample of registered voters in San Mateo County. GRA completed 600 interviews among voters in this region and did not deem it necessary to oversample any specific demographic populations or geographic areas.

Understanding a 'Ranking' — For purposes of this summary, most results are discussed with respect to a descriptive ranking instead of the actual response percentages. The rank conveniently expresses the results of three, four and five option response categories in a single numeric figure, thereby making interpretation of the data considerably easier. Where particular insights can be obtained by using the actual response percentages, these percentages are analyzed; usually in a section following an analysis of the question with regard to the question's descriptive ranks.

Types of Analysis — Regardless of whether response percentages or rankings are chosen for analysis, the survey questions are presented with comments highlighting the important findings. Due to rounding, those tables and charts using response percentages may not round to 100 percent. Each table generally includes the total category percentage, or the rankings from the entire sample. These figures are followed by distributions from various subgroups identified by a descriptive label.

The following subgroups are referred to frequently in the substantive section of the report:

Gender	Male or Female.
Party Identification	Registered political party (Democrat, Republican and Other).
Age	18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-64, 65+.
CCD Affiliate	Self-reported alumni status at one of the three San Mateo County community colleges.
Ethnicity	Asian, African-American, Latino, Pacific Islander, White, Other.
Geography	Designated by precinct (North, Central, South).
Household Party Type	Number and type of partisans in household (a house with one Democrat is 'Dem 1', a house with two Republicans is 'Rep 2', and so on).

Reminder — As a matter of clarification, the questions discussed and analyzed on the following pages include only a subset of the various crosstabulations available for each question. Only those subgroups that are of particular interest or that illustrate a particular insight are included in the discussion on the following pages. Should readers wish to conduct a closer analysis of subgroups for a given question, the complete breakdowns appear in Appendix C.

HOW TO READ A CROSSTABULATION TABLE

The crosstabulation tables in Appendix C provide detailed information on the responses to each question in the survey document. Throughout this report, GRA will present information on the responses from respondents overall. However, the data in the crosstabulation tables allow the reader to examine the results from each question by specific demographic groups.

A typical crosstabulation table looks like this:

Q. 2 First Ballot Test — TABLE 10

Shall the San Mateo County Community College District increase taxes to raise $110 million to finance the maintenance, renovation and construction of community college facilities at Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College?

	TOTAL	GENDER		PARTY		
		MALE	FEM.	DEM.	REP.	OTHER
BASE - TOTAL SAMPLE	400	185	215	189	152	59
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
DEFINITELY YES	99	48	51	54	33	12
	25%	26%	24%	29%	22%	20%
PROBABLY YES	97	36	61	54	26	17
	24%	20%	28%	29%	17%	29%
PROBABLY NO	72	26	46	27	32	13
	18%	14%	21%	14%	21%	22%
DEFINITELY NO	88	52	36	32	46	10
	22%	28%	17%	17%	30%	17%
DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER	44	10	23	22	15	7
	11%	12%	10%	12%	10%	12%
MEAN	0.13	0.01	0.23	0.43	-0.23	0.15
ST. DEV.	1.6	1.69	1.51	1.54	1.64	1.5
ST. ERROR	0.08	0.13	0.11	0.12	0.14	0.21
Chi-Square		12.912			17.973	
Significance		0.0117			0.0214	

The wording of the question is in the upper left-hand corner, near the question number. The sample size (in this case, N=400) is presented in the first column of data under 'TOTAL'. The results to each possible answer choice from respondents overall are also presented in the first column of data under 'TOTAL'. The aggregate number of respondents in each answer category is presented as a whole number and the percentage of the entire sample this number represents is just below the whole number. For example, among overall respondents, 44 people answered 'Don't Know' to this question and 44 represents 11 percent of the total sample size of 400.

Next to the 'TOTAL' column are other columns representing the opinions of males, females, Democrats, Republicans and 'Other' partisans. The data from these columns is read in exactly the same fashion as the data in the 'TOTAL' column, although each demographic group makes up a smaller percentage of the entire sample.

Directly below the results to each answer choice are four statistics which are used to explain the ranking of individual items in a question set (Mean), the degree to which the total sample will fall within a range of values from the Mean (in Standard Deviations), the range of error expected under one variable (Standard Error) and the statistical significance of the crosstabulation(Chi Square).

The mean conveniently expresses the data from three and four point scales in a single numerical figure. Because of the difficulty involved with assessing statistics based on three and four point scales, the mean is used throughout this report to compare the impact of individual items within a question set (such as in Questions 4-8). For example, each of the questions which asked respondents to assess the impact of a feature or an argument for the community college bond measure were candidates for a ranking system. In these question sets, a four point scale was used (much more likely, somewhat more likely, somewhat less likely and much less likely). To simplify the data from these four point scales, the answers were collapsed into a single measure that is sensitive to the intensity and direction of opinion. This single number enables one to construct a relative ranking of each question with regard to the other questions. To derive the mean, all responses are aggregated from the four point scale using the following system: 2=much more likely, 1=somewhat more likely, -1=somewhat less likely and -2=much less likely. In all cases, a high positive rank corresponds to large numbers of respondents choosing the 'much more likely' response category for the given question.

The standard deviation and standard error figures are only reported when significant. The standard deviation figure represents the total sample's distance away from the mean. For example, if the mean age of respondents overall is 35 years and the standard deviation is 5, approximately 65 percent of the total sample should be between the ages of 30 and 40 and approximately 95 percent of the total sample should be between the ages of 25 and 45. Typically, one standard deviation (in this case, 5 years) accounts for approximately 65 percent of any sample and two standard deviations (in this case, 10 years) accounts for approximately 95 percent of any sample universe. The standard error is the range of error that can be assumed for any one question. For example, if a respondent reports that his/her age is 35 and there is a standard error of 1, the true age of this respondent is likely to be between 34 and 36.

The chi square statistic indicates whether the differences observed are actually significant or due to chance or sampling error.

KEY FINDINGS

After reviewing the research results, Godbe Research & Analysis has arrived at the following key findings:

- The most important issue to voters in San Mateo County is 'Maintaining a strong economy', followed by 'Reducing crime' and 'Preserving the environment'. Of the 12 issues we tested, 'Maintaining existing community college facilities' ranked 4th, with a ranking of 1.61 on a scale of +2 to -2. 'Improving the quality of education at local community colleges' was ranked 9th (1.36), 'Renovating existing community college facilities' was ranked 11th (0.88) and 'Building new community college facilities' was ranked 12th (0.28). Because the majority of questions in this particular survey focus on community colleges and higher education, we did not ask respondents how important it was to 'Improve the quality of education' in San Mateo County. This issue is usually ranked in the top-tier of issues when tested, but we did not see the need to test it in this survey questionnaire.

- Fifty-eight percent of voters in San Mateo County would vote yes on a bond measure to 'finance the maintenance, renovation and construction of community college facilities at Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College', 31 percent would vote no and 11 percent were undecided. In this first ballot test, the measure receives strong support among 18-29 year olds and Democrats.

- Sixty-five percent of respondents overall indicated that someone in their household has taken a course a one of the three community colleges in San Mateo County. Alumni status was more common among lower-income respondents, Latinos, African-Americans, 18-29 years olds and Democrats.

- Voters offered positive impressions of the quality of education provide by the three community colleges. More specifically, 19 percent of respondents answered 'Excellent' when asked about the quality of education, 48 percent of respondents answered 'Good' and nine percent of respondents answered 'Fair'. Only one percent of respondents answered 'Poor' and 23 percent of respondents were undecided. If the respondent was an alumni of the community colleges or if there was an alumni in the respondent's household, the respondent was much more likely to offer positive impressions of the quality of education (26 percent 'Excellent', 57 percent 'Good').

- Thirty percent of respondents were undecided when asked to rate the quality of community college facilities (compared to 23 percent that were undecided when asked to rate the quality of education provided by the colleges). Eight percent described the quality of community college facilities as 'Excellent' and 42 percent described them as 'Good'. The groups that were most likely to be undecided on this matter include Republicans and voters in the central part of San Mateo County.

- Respondents were somewhat positive on Question 6, which asked if the colleges effectively communicate with the general public on the needs, services and achievements of the community colleges. Fifty-seven percent of respondents said 'Yes' to this question, 30 percent said 'No' and 13 percent were undecided.

- Each of the five tax rates read to respondents in Question 7 achieved a positive ranking (0 to +2), indicating that the tax rates made voters overall more likely to support the proposed bond measure rather than less likely. The net gain statistics reveal that the measure received a 14 percentage point boost in support at the $8 per $100,000 tax rate. This increase in support pushes the level of overall support to the two-thirds level required for passage.

- Respondents countywide were more likely to support the proposed measure if 'some of the money would be spent at College of San Mateo'. This particular statement received a ranking of 0.88, while mention of spending some of the bond money at Canada College received a ranking of 0.46 and mention of spending some of the bond money at Skyline College received a ranking of 0.44.

- Of the projects tested in Question 9, 10 of them received rankings above 1.00 (on a scale of -2 to +2). If a feature receives a ranking above 1.00, we know that voters are at least 'somewhat more likely' to support the measure after hearing about that particular project. The projects that received these top-tier rankings include: improvements to leaky roofs, better programs to prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and universities, updated computer labs and improvements to job and technical programs.

- Almost all of the arguments tested in Question 10 made respondents overall more likely to support the proposed bond measure and received rankings above 1.00. Even so, only the top three or four arguments should be used repeatedly during the campaign preceding a county-wide election. In choosing which three or four arguments to use and refine, the campaign should consider the following: 'The San Mateo Community College District has produced a detailed plan' (1.32), 'The bond will fund the removal of asbestos, seismic retrofitting and make facilities accessible for the disabled' (1.29), 'The design of the new classrooms will ensure students are prepared for Silicon Valley jobs of the 21st century' (1.28) and 'None of the money raised by the measure will be used for administrator salaries' (also 1.28).

- Of the negative arguments tested in Question 11, only two resulted in negative rankings (indicating that respondents are less likely to support the measure after hearing the information). The strongest reason to oppose the bond measure was that 'None of the money raised by the bond would be spent on programs to improve the quality of education at the community colleges' which received a ranking of -0.35. The second strongest negative is that 'More than 10 percent of the students at the community colleges in San Mateo are residents of San Francisco, not San Mateo county' (-0.15).

- In the second ballot test, 67 percent of respondents indicated they would vote yes on the proposed measure to fund maintenance, renovation and construction of community college facilities in San Mateo. Twenty-five percent would vote no on the measure and eight percent of respondents were undecided.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At the outset of this project, GRA and the San Mateo County Community College District staff and Board of Trustees established the following research objectives:

- Determine the feasibility of a countywide funding measure to fund projects at Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College;
- Identify support from key demographic constituencies and
- Examine the appeal of features and benefits of the proposed measure among key demographic groups

Given the healthy state of the Bay Area economy and the partisan composition of San Mateo County, a funding measure to provide monies to the San Mateo County Community College District has a reasonable chance of passing on election day. However, the

campaign formed in the coming months will need to commit to raising a sizeable sum of money in order to effectively communicate with the 350,000 voters in San Mateo County before election day.

The facility needs of the three community colleges outweigh the need for programs and educational materials. As such, GRA recommends the San Mateo County Community College District proceed with a resolution to bring a general obligation bond measure before the voters. Based on the findings included in this report, we believe a bond amount of $110 million (or $8 per $100,000 of assessed valuation) will be considered affordable to the voters in San Mateo County and will ultimately increase support for the bond among voters who will have very little information about the measure before they vote on election day.

GRA does not recommend conducting three separate elections or creating school facilities improvement districts (SFIDs) within the county. If specific regions of the county were less supportive of a countywide measure than other regions, it would make sense to draw boundaries around regions that were likely to pass a measure for one or more of the three colleges. However, there was very little difference in the levels of support offered by voters in the north, central and south regions of the county. Furthermore, while voters in the central region were slightly less supportive of a countywide measure, any mention of funding for the College of San Mateo (the central county college) resulted in a boost in support for the entire district-wide measure.

The most supportive constituencies include non-white voters, respondents between 30-49 years of age, Democrats and south county residents. The least supportive constituencies include 18-29 year old voters, Republicans, respondents in the central county region and high propensity absentee and ballot box voters. The findings also suggest that community college alumni and voters between 18-29 are an unpredictable and soft source of support.

Improvements to roofs, computer labs and science labs were considered very appealing to the voters in our survey. In addition, voters were more likely to vote for the measure if there was money set aside to provide better programs to prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and universities, to improve job and technical programs and to improve facilities for nursing and health care programs. While General Obligation bond money can not fund programs, it can fund the construction of new facilities to house popular programs or renovate existing space to accommodate these programs.

When voters were told why they should vote for the measure, mention of the detailed plan produced by the District staff was the most compelling argument that encouraged one to vote 'yes' on the proposed bond. Voters were also impacted by mention of the removal of asbestos, building retrofits and making facilities accessible to disabled students, as well as mention of new state-of-the-art classrooms with improved computer infrastructure. The least compelling arguments included mention of a shuttle service between the colleges and the south region of the county, additional field space and the possibility that the District may have to sell open space on the Coast in order to pay for the improvements if the bond doesn't pass.

There were very few negative arguments that encourage initial supporters of the measure to oppose the measure by the second ballot test. Of the eight arguments tested, only two have any real potential to damage a future campaign. These included 'None of the money raised by the bond will be spent on programs to improve the quality of education at the community colleges' and 'More than 10 percent of the students at the community colleges are residents of San Francisco, not San Mateo County'. The other arguments tested actually increased support for the meaure instead of decreasing support.

In sum, the District's greatest challenges are 1) fundraising, 2) developing an effective and cost-efficient communications network and 3) convincing voters of the need for this measure. The negatives from opposing groups do not pose a large threat to the measure; however, this measure could easily fail on election day if voters are not offered compelling reasons to vote 'yes'.

General Obligation bonds offer voters a simple method of taxation that is familiar to them. In return, voters have passed 52 percent of General Obligation bond measures in the last 15 years (compared to 46 percent of parcel tax measures and 27 percent of advantageous to school districts for the following reasons: there is less time required to develop a financing plan and put before voters; there is lower cost financing (lower bond interest rates and bond issuance rates); if the District has a large commercial property tax base, a large portion of the tax burden could be borne by non-residential property and, if appropriate, school facilities improvement districts (SFIDs) can apply to limited territory for election and taxation.

Once the decision to move ahead with a General Obligation bond election is made, the election date will need to be set by the District Board of Trustees. The following paragraphs and tables outline the most viable options for the San Mateo County Community College District.

June 8, 1999

In order to be on the ballot in June 1999, the last day for the Board of Trustees to adopt a resolution calling for an election is February 4, 1999.

Advantages:

- The Bay area economy is considered to be strong.
- Traditionally, a higher percentage of tax and bond measures pass on non-state and non-federal election dates (51 percent compared to 46 percent).
- Off-year elections tend to produce a smaller turn-out which benefits measures that are supported by high propensity voters.
- Opposition groups are less likely to run a negative campaign during off-year elections because of the difficulty in recruiting opposition volunteers.

Disadvantages:

- The San Mateo High School District may be on the same ballot with another general obligation bond measure.
- Fundraising efforts will have to begin immediately, without much of a public education effort beforehand.
- It is more expensive to put a countywide measure on the ballot in June 1999.
- Low propensity voters are less likely to turn-out in an off-year election.

Any Tuesday, August 1999

Advantages:

- This election date avoids conflict with the San Mateo High School District bond and the re-election campaigns of the Board of Trustees.
- The overall cost of a mail ballot campaign is estimated to be three times less than a countywide precinct voting campaign.
- Low propensity absentee voters (having voted by absentee ballot at least once) are supportive of the measure.

Disadvantages:

- Special legislation is required to prevent precinct voting and conduct an all-mail ballot election.
- It will be expensive to provide absentee mail ballots to a universe of voters that have voted by absentee at least once.
- It will be expensive to do extensive phone banking for this type of campaign ($35,000-$40,000).
- It will be difficult to attract a pool of volunteers or paid phone bankers in the summer months.

November 2, 1999

In order to be on the ballot in November 1999, the last day for the Board of Trustees to adopt a resolution calling for an election is July 1, 1999.

Advantages:

- There is more time between now and the election date to build coalitions, fundraise and refine the features and benefits that tested well in the public opinion survey.
- Support from voters that cast a ballot in November 1993 (the most similar election to November 1999) is at 67 percent in the second ballot test.
- The Board of Trustees will have an issue on which to focus their campaign.
- It will cost less to put a countywide measure on the ballot in November 1999.
- Turn-out in a November election is likely to be higher than for a June election. This favors the measures with strong support from low-propensity voters that only cast a ballot in November elections or presidential primaries.

Disadvantages:

- Opposition groups will use the greater visibility of the November election environment to oppose the measure, oppose the Trustees running for re-election or both.
- It will cost more to communicate with voters in November than in June.

March 3, 2000

In order to be on the ballot in March 2000, the last day for the Board of Trustees to adopt a resolution calling for an election is October 30, 1999.

Advantages:

- There is more time between now and the election date to build coalitions, fundraise and refine the features and benefits that tested well in the public opinion survey.
- It will cost less to place a countywide measure on the March 2000 ballot.

Disadvantages:

- The economy (both national and local) could negatively impact the measure's chance of success by March 2000.
- It will cost more to communicate with voters during a presidential primary election.
- The amount of press attention given to the measure will be limited, due to the media's tendency to focus on the presidential primary and other legislative races.
- Passing the measure and the availability of bonds is almost 18 months away.
- Traditionally, a lower percentage of tax and bond measure elections pass on state or federal election dates (46 percent compared to 51 percent).

Based on the advantages and disadvantages presented above, GRA would recommend an all-mail ballot election in August 1999, followed by a November 1999 election date. Neither a March 2000 election date nor a June 1999 election date are recommended.

Ballot Tests

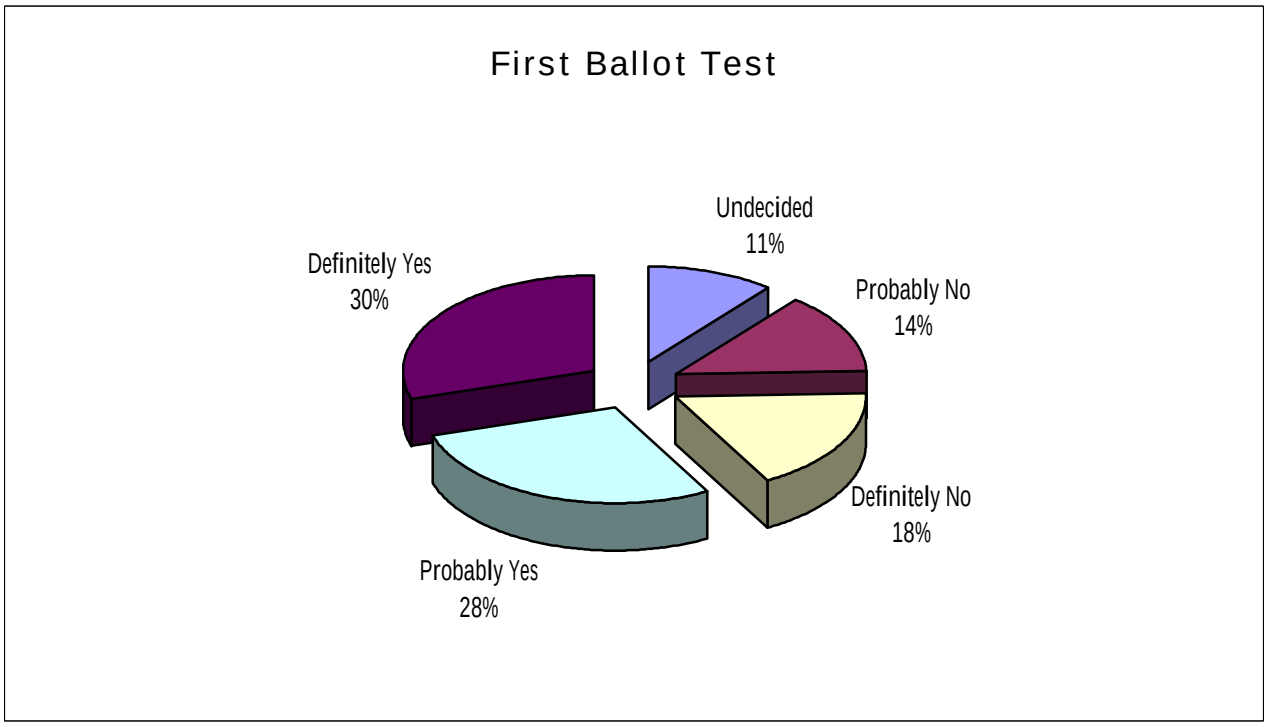
Question 2, First Ballot Test

The purpose of the first ballot test (worded below) is to take an early assessment of how voters react to the wording of the potential ballot question and perhaps more importantly, the specified dollar amount. In presenting voters with the ballot question early on in the survey instrument, we assume that survey respondents know very little about the ballot measure itself. Then, after the first ballot test has been taken, the survey instrument seeks to educate each respondent about the different features, benefits and costs of the measure. With each piece of information, respondents learn more about the measure and ultimately how a 'yes' or a 'no' vote will affect them on a personal basis.

In this case, we asked respondents the following question:

> Shall the San Mateo County Community College District increase taxes to raise $110 million to finance the maintenance, renovation and construction of community college facilities at Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College?

At the overall level, 58 percent of respondents indicated they would vote 'yes' on the proposed measure, 32 percent of respondents would vote 'no' on the measure and 11 percent were undecided as to how they would vote if the election were held today.



The tables below segment the results to the first ballot test question by a variety of demographic groups. One of the first and most important groups to look at is those respondents that have identified themselves as alumni of Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College.

While 58 percent of respondents overall would vote 'yes' on this measure, there is not a significant increase in support for the measure among alumni or even respondents with an alumni in their household. This finding is important in that the 'Yes' campaign will be better off focusing on maintaining the support and encouraging the turn-out of more supportive demographic groups.

	Total	CCD Affiliate		Gender	
		Yes	*No*	*Male*	*Female*
Definitely Yes	30%	29%	32%	32%	28%
Probably Yes	28%	29%	28%	28%	29%
Total Yes	58%	57%	60%	60%	57%
Probably No	14%	14%	14%	11%	16%
Definitely No	18%	17%	18%	19%	16%
Total No	31%	31%	32%	30%	32%
Undecided	11%	12%	9%	11%	11%

Voters between 18 and 29 years of age are supportive of the measure at the required two-thirds level (71 percent would vote 'yes' if the election were held today). Voters in the other age categories supported the measure at levels very similar to respondents overall. Voters between 30-39 and over 65 appear to be more likely to be undecided than voters in other age categories. By the second ballot test, we will take another look at the support offered by these two groups in order to examine the impact of the features, benefits and information on the tax rate.

Democrats and 'Other' partisans were more supportive of the measure than Republicans. This is an important finding because 57 percent of partisans in San Mateo County are either registered Democrats or members of third parties (such as the Green Party or the Natural Law Party). While Republicans make up approximately 30 percent of the voters in San Mateo County, the strength of their opposition to this measure (as evidenced by the 30 percent of Republicans that would 'Definitely' vote no on the measure) at the first ballot test could be an early indication of the damage this group and others could do to a 'Yes' campaign.

	Age					Party Identification		
	18-29	*30-39*	*40-49*	*50-64*	*65+*	*Dem*	*Rep*	*Oth*
Definitely Yes	32%	29%	31%	34%	30%	39%	13%	36%
Probably Yes	39%	28%	24%	28%	30%	28%	30%	28%
Total Yes	71%	56%	56%	62%	60%	67%	42%	64%
Probably No	13%	13%	14%	13%	9%	13%	16%	16%
Definitely No	9%	16%	22%	17%	16%	10%	30%	8%
Total No	22%	30%	36%	30%	24%	23%	46%	24%
Undecided	7%	14%	9%	8%	16%	10%	11%	12%

The table below (left) that segments the answers to the first ballot test question by Household Party Type is useful for direct mail

and other campaign targeting purposes. The Household Party Type specifies the composition of partisans in a respondent's household and is more useful than simple partisanship because a campaign can not predict which member of a household will receive campaign material in the mail. Over the years, we have found that households with one Democrat react to campaign material differently than households with two or more Democrats and conversely, households with one Republican react differently than households with two or more Republicans. The category, 'Household Party Type' was created to address this issue and provide campaigns with information to assist them in their targeting efforts.

In this case (and in almost all revenue-related feasibility studies), households with at least one Democrat are more supportive of the measure than households with at least one Republican. The differences between support from Dem 1 and Dem 2 households are small, but suggest that if a household has at least two Democrats, they are the most supportive household party type (of the nine that are used in this survey). Households with at least one Democrat and at least one Republican (a Dem/Rep) are reflective of the respondent pool overall and Rep 1 and Rep 2 households are considered to be the least supportive of the proposed measure.

Voters in the south part of San Mateo county are more supportive of a district-wide measure than voters in the north or central parts of San Mateo county.

	Household Party Type					Geography		
	Dem 1	*Dem 2*	*Rep 1*	*Rep 2*	*Dem/Rep*	*North*	*Central*	*South*
Definitely Yes	34%	44%	12%	13%	26%	35%	24%	31%
Probably Yes	31%	25%	29%	33%	29%	22%	32%	31%
Total Yes	65%	69%	41%	46%	55%	57%	56%	61%
Probably No	17%	13%	16%	18%	11%	17%	14%	10%
Definitely No	3%	10%	35%	27%	25%	19%	19%	15%
Total No	20%	23%	50%	45%	36%	36%	33%	25%
Undecided	15%	8%	9%	9%	9%	7%	11%	14%

In the first ballot test, the lowest propensity absentee voters are the most supportive of the measure and the highest propensity absentee voters are the least supportive of the measure. However, the largest percentage of undecided voters (15 percent) are high propensity absentee voters which suggests there is room to gain ground among this key group.

	Absentee Propensity				
	Voted 1-2	*Voted 3-5*	*Voted 6-7*	*At least 1*	*Voted Nov-93*
Definitely Yes	33%	33%	4%	29%	30%
Probably Yes	25%	21%	39%	26%	27%
Total Yes	58%	54%	43%	55%	57%
Probably No	17%	14%	4%	15%	12%
Definitely No	15%	17%	39%	19%	20%
Total No	32%	31%	43%	34%	32%
Undecided	10%	14%	15%	12%	12%

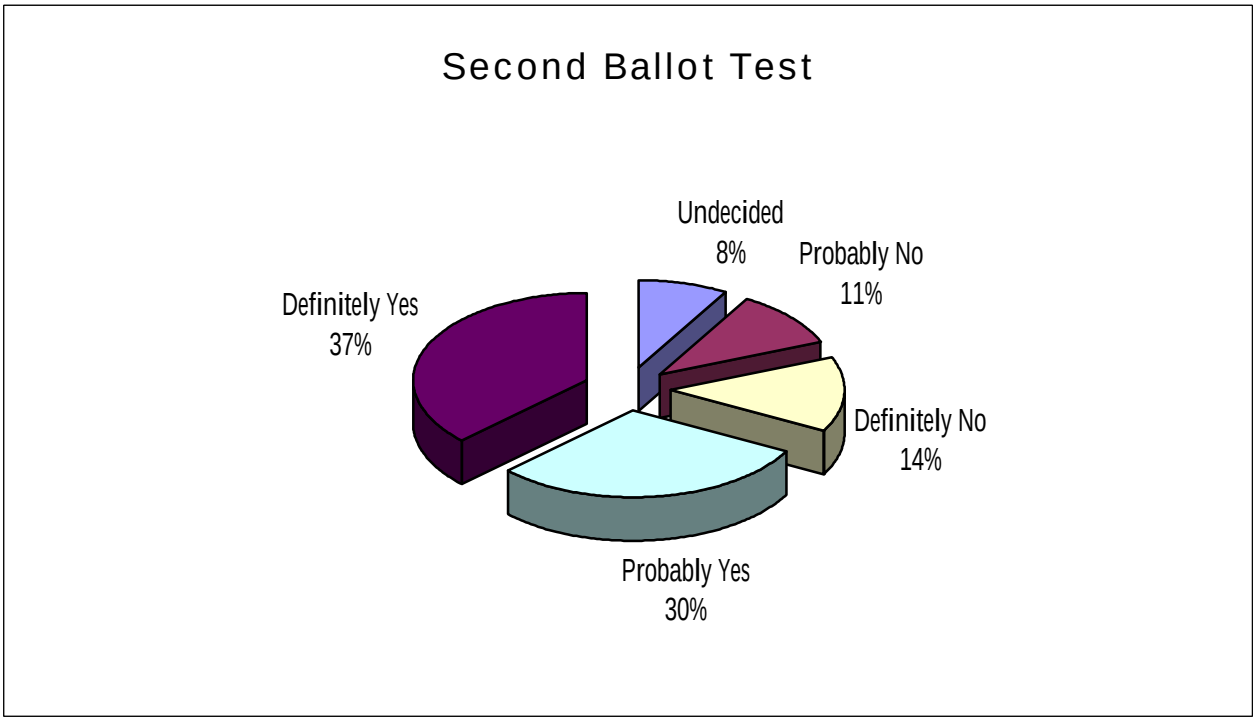
Question 12, Second Ballot Test

After information about the measure has been read to respondents, the interviewer repeats the same version of the ballot question that was tested in the first ballot test. This is done to examine the impact of the information that has been presented. In the course of the survey, GRA has simulated a campaign similar to what may happen if the measure was to be placed on the ballot in San Mateo County. In the survey, the voters were offered the following pieces of information:

The ballot question wording	Q. 2
How much the measure would cost	Q. 7
What the measure would fund	Q. 9
How the measure will make things better in San Mateo County	Q. 10
How the measure will make things worse in San Mateo County	Q. 11

By the second ballot test, 67 percent of voters have indicated they will vote 'yes' on a measure to maintain, renovate and construct community college facilities. Twenty-five percent of respondents would vote 'no' on this measure and eight percent of respondents are still undecided. The wording of the ballot question is presented below, along with a pie chart that segments the results to this question by the answer choices offered.

> Shall the San Mateo County Community College District increase taxes to raise $110 million to finance the maintenance, renovation and construction of community college facilities at Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College?



	Total	CCD Affiliate	
		Yes	*No*
Definitely Yes	37%	38%	37%
Probably Yes	30%	28%	33%
Total Yes	67%	66%	70%
Probably No	11%	12%	10%
Definitely No	14%	15%	12%
Total No	25%	26%	22%
Undecided	8%	8%	9%
Percentage Pt. Change	9%	9%	10%

Respondents with a former community college student in their household are slightly less supportive of the measure than respondents overall and respondents without an alumni connection to the community colleges (66 percent compared to 70 percent). However, what is more important is that respondents in both groups and respondents overall increased their level of support between ballot tests nine or 10 percentage points.

After information, Asian, African-American, Latino, Pacific Islander and 'white' respondents all offered enough support for the proposed measure for it to pass on election day. Latinos and Pacific Islanders were the most supportive of the measure (both at 75 percent) and respondents in 'Other' ethnic groups were the least supportive of the measure (58 percent). While many of the features and positive arguments tested in Questions 9-10 were focused on the benefits to members of all ethnic groups, it appears as if the Latino respondents were more positively impacted by this information than members of other ethnic groups.

There is no apparent gender gap between the males and females in the second ballot test.

	Ethnicity						Gender	
	Asian	*African-American*	*Latino*	*Pacific-Islander*	*White*	*Other*	*Male*	*Female*
Definitely Yes	44%	56%	36%	25%	38%	33%	38%	37%
Probably Yes	28%	16%	40%	50%	31%	25%	30%	30%
Total Yes	72%	72%	75%	75%	69%	58%	67%	67%
Probably No	17%	16%	6%	25%	9%	8%	12%	10%
Definitely No	9%	8%	11%	0%	12%	25%	13%	14%
Total No	26%	24%	17%	25%	22%	33%	25%	24%
DK/ No Answer	2%	4%	8%	0%	10%	10%	7%	9%
Percentage Pt. Change	5%	4%	13%	0%	9%	15%	7%	10%

The most interesting finding is the decrease in support among 18-29 year olds in San Mateo County. Traditionally, this group of voters is very support of tax measures because the respondents are disproportionately renters and exempt from a property tax increase. However, in this case, voters between 18-29 become less supportive of the measure after information about the tax rate, the features and the benefits are read. Of the five age categories listed below, respondents between 18-29 were the only group to offer less support in the first ballot test than the second ballot test.

It is also noteworthy that 67 percent of respondents over 65 support the measure, but 14 percent are still undecided as to how they will vote on this measure (down from 16 percent in the first ballot test).

There is a significant gap separating the level of support offered by Democrats compared to 'Other' partisans and Republicans. Seventy-five percent of Democrats would vote yes on the proposed measure (up from 67 percent in the first ballot test), but still only 54 percent of Republicans in San Mateo County would vote yes on the proposed measure (although this represents an increase of 12 percentage points since the first ballot test).

	Age					Party Identification		
	18-29	*30-39*	*40-49*	*50-64*	*65+*	*Dem*	*Rep*	*Oth*
Definitely Yes	35%	34%	41%	43%	43%	45%	25%	52%
Probably Yes	30%	36%	31%	26%	24%	31%	30%	12%
Total Yes	65%	71%	72%	69%	67%	75%	54%	64%
Probably No	25%	13%	5%	10%	10%	8%	12%	20%
Definitely No	7%	10%	16%	15%	9%	9%	25%	4%
Total No	32%	23%	22%	25%	19%	17%	37%	24%
DK/ No Answer	3%	7%	7%	7%	14%	8%	9%	12%
Percentage Pt. Change	-6%	15%	16%	7%	7%	8%	12%	0%

Respondents in Dem 2 and Dem 1 households are the most supportive of this measure, followed by households with one Republican and one Democrat (79 percent, 72 percent and 65 percent, respectively). Households with one Republican and two Republicans are less supportive of the measure, although offer support at the 50 percent level. With almost twice as many Dem 1 and Dem 2 households as Rep 1 and Rep 2 households in San Mateo County (41 percent compared to 23 percent), the gap in support between households with Democrats and households with Republicans will work in the District's favor.

Respondents in south San Mateo County are the only area to support the measure at the two-thirds level of support required. However, with the margin of error, it is possible respondents across the county could pass this measure, provided they are educated about the benefits of a 'yes' vote and turn out on election day. From the data below, it is impossible to determine why voters in the south part of the county are more supportive of the measure.

	Household Party Type					Geography		
	Dem 1	*Dem 2*	*Rep 1*	*Rep 2*	*Dem/Rep*	*North*	*Central*	*South*
Definitely Yes	41%	48%	17%	30%	41%	39%	33%	41%
Probably Yes	31%	31%	33%	26%	24%	27%	31%	32%
Total Yes	72%	79%	50%	55%	65%	66%	64%	72%
Probably No	14%	5%	9%	17%	7%	13%	13%	7%
Definitely No	8%	9%	28%	24%	15%	15%	13%	13%
Total No	22%	14%	36%	41%	21%	28%	26%	20%
DK/ No Answer	6%	7%	14%	4%	15%	6%	10%	8%
Percentage Pt. Change	7%	10%	9%	9%	10%	9%	8%	11%

After information about the measure, low propensity absentee voters are still the most supportive of the measure and would pass this bond if it were on the ballot today (68 percent). Medium propensity absentee voters (those having voted in 3-5 of the last 7 elections) offer support at the 60 percent support level and high propensity absentee voters offer support very near to the 60 percent level. The most encouraging finding is the shift between ballot tests among the highest propensity voters (from 43 percent to 58 percent).

	Absentee Propensity				
	Voted 1-2	*Voted 3-5*	*Voted 6-7*	*At least 1*	*Voted Nov-93*
Definitely Yes	38%	29%	35%	35%	40%
Probably Yes	30%	31%	23%	29%	27%
Total Yes	68%	60%	58%	64%	67%
Probably No	11%	12%	0%	10%	9%
Definitely No	14%	17%	31%	17%	18%
Total No	25%	29%	31%	27%	27%
Undecided	8%	12%	12%	9%	7%
Percentage Pt. Change	10%	6%	15%	11%	10%

Instead of trying to manipulate the opinions of this high propensity absentee voting group, it may be more advantageous to the District to work to increase the likelihood that low propensity absentee voters submit their absentee ballot.

Analysis of the Tax Threshold

Question 7, Tax Threshold and Net Gains

After reading the ballot language to each respondent in Question 2 and following a short series of questions on the quality of education and facilities at the colleges, Question 7 introduced the possible tax rates that would be applied to each residential household in San Mateo County. The tax rates tested ranged from $4 per $100,000 to $20 per $100,000. Each rate was read to respondents in descending order so the respondents do not know how low the tax rate could be. This technique, know as a 'Dutch Auction' is used to encourage the respondents to concentrate on the rates being read, rather than trying to figure out if the next rate read by the interviewer will be more or less than the last rate read.

After each possible tax rate is read to respondents, the interviewer asks if hearing the rate makes the respondent more or less likely to vote for the bond measure. A ranking system was used to compare the responses which are presented below. If a respondent answered that one of the five tax rates made them 'much more likely' to vote for the measure, this answer was ranked '+2'. If a respondent answered that one of the five tax rates made them 'much less likely' to vote for the measure, this answer was ranked '-2'. If a respondent was 'somewhat' more or less likely to vote for the measure, rankings of +1 and -1 were given to those answers. If a respondent answered that the tax rate had 'no effect' on their voting behavior, a ranking of '0' was recorded.

A $110 million bond in San Mateo County would extend annual property taxes approximately $8 per $100,000 for a period of 25 to 30 years. However, because the objective of this question is to maximize the tax rate and still pass the measure with the two-thirds level required, we tested tax rates above and below the $8 per $100,000 level.

The rankings below indicate that respondents are at least evenly split on the bond measure if the tax rate is $20 per $100,000. This rate received a ranking of 0.01 from respondents overall. There were no negative rankings recorded, which means none of the tax rates tested made respondents overall 'less likely' to vote for the measure. While all of the rates tested received positive rankings, thi finding does not automatically suggest that the District should increase the amount of the bond. In order to reach the two-thirds level of support, the campaign is responsible for not only choosing a tax rate that is affordable, but also communicating the features and benefits of the measure to the voters in San Mateo County who are likely to cast a ballot in a given election. Therefore, the campaign may want to keep the tax rate at a level that is perceived to be very affordable, in the hope that the net gain received from a tax increase of only $8 per $100,000 will offset the difficulties and expense of communicating with so many voters countywide.

The table below illustrates the rankings offered by respondents overall (from 0.01 to 0.83) and also from respondents in each of the geographic areas of the county. The average ranking from respondents in the North was 0.41, from respondents in the Central county it was 0.47 and from respondents in the South county it was 0.46.

	Total	Geography		
		North	*Central*	*South*
$20 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	0.01	-0.06	0.02	0.07
$16 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	0.21	0.15	0.26	0.22
$12 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	0.49	0.45	0.51	0.51
$8 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	0.70	0.70	0.72	0.69
$4 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	0.83	0.80	0.86	0.82

The table below introduces a new statistic that is used to calculate the percentage of respondents who are more likely to vote for the measure after hearing about the tax rate. This statistic is called a net gain. The percentage of gain (i.e. the percentage of respondents that become more likely to vote 'yes' after hearing about the tax rate often initially voting 'no') is found in the middle column of numbers and can be added to the first ballot test figure of 58 percent for respondents overall. We add the net gain to the first ballot test with a reasonable amount of confidence because it is not until Question 7 when respondents have a detailed amount of information about how much the measure will cost them on a per $100,000 basis. With this additional information, we predict overall support for the measure will either increase or decrease because affordability is often the strongest determinant of one's vote for or against a tax measure. In the table below, we see that the measure receives more than the necessary two-thirds level of support when the tax rate is set at $8 per $100,000. This rate translates into a $110 million bond (the exact rate that was tested in the first and second ballot tests).

	First Ballot Test	Net Gain	New Total
$20 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	58%	-3%	55%
$16 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	58%	1%	59%
$12 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	58%	8%	66%
$8 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	58%	14%	72%
$4 per $100,000 of assessed valuation	58%	16%	74%

Question 8, Preference for funding projects at each college

The type of campaign that is run to fund projects for College of San Mateo, Skyline College and Canada College could be district-wide or broken up into three separate campaigns for smaller bond amounts in each community or SFID (School Facilities Improvement District). Question 8 was asked to probe the appeal of this second option. We asked respondents if they would be more or less likely to vote for the measure if they knew 'some of the money will be spent at College of San Mateo, Canada College or Skyline College. In order to give respondents a placement for Canada College and Skyline College, respondents were also told the cities where each college is located.

At the overall level, respondents offered the highest rankings when told some of the money will be spent at College of San Mateo. This is easily explained by several factors: CSM has a central location within the County and is situated in between Highway 101 and Highway 280; CSM is the oldest of the three colleges, CSM has the largest student population of the three colleges and the largest campus and CSM has a greater name recognition because of its reference to 'San Mateo' city and county. Furthermore, voters in the central part of the county also offered the lowest ranking for 'the quality of higher education provided by Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College'. This means that if a pool of voters believe the quality of education to be 'poor' or even 'fair', that group of voters is more likely to support a funding measure to improve facilities (thereby improving the quality o education), providing the measure is affordable.

	Total
Some of the money will be spent at College of San Mateo	0.88
Some of the money will be spent at Cañada College in Redwood City	0.46
Some of the money will be spent at Skyline College in San Bruno	0.44

Question 9, Features of the Measure

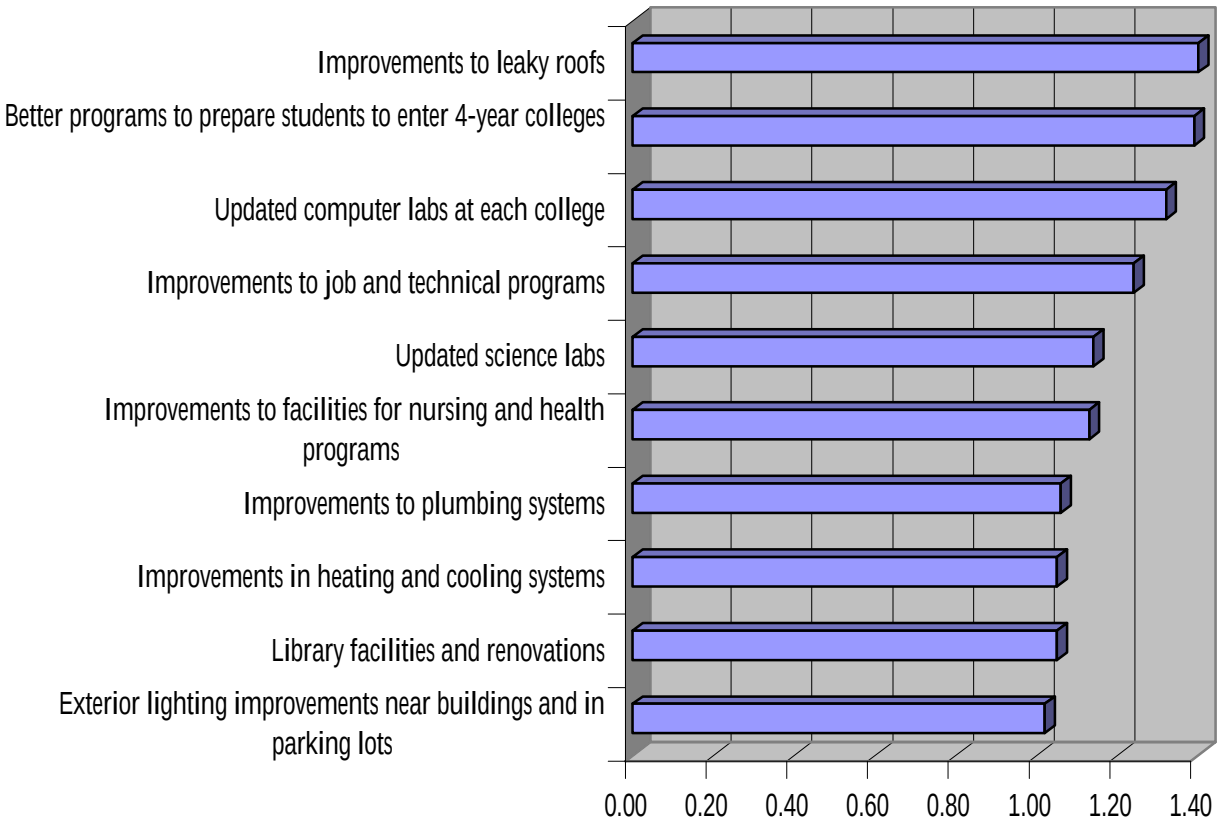
The features of the measure (i.e. neutral statements that describe to respondents what the money would be spent on) were introduced in Question 9. Twenty-one features or projects were tested for the degree to which respondents were more likely to support the measure based on the inclusion of each individual project.

The ranking system (with rankings ranging from +2 to -2) is especially useful in the presentation of these data because it allows the reader to view differences among each project rather than focus on the combined total percentages of 'much more likely' and 'somewhat more likely' responses.

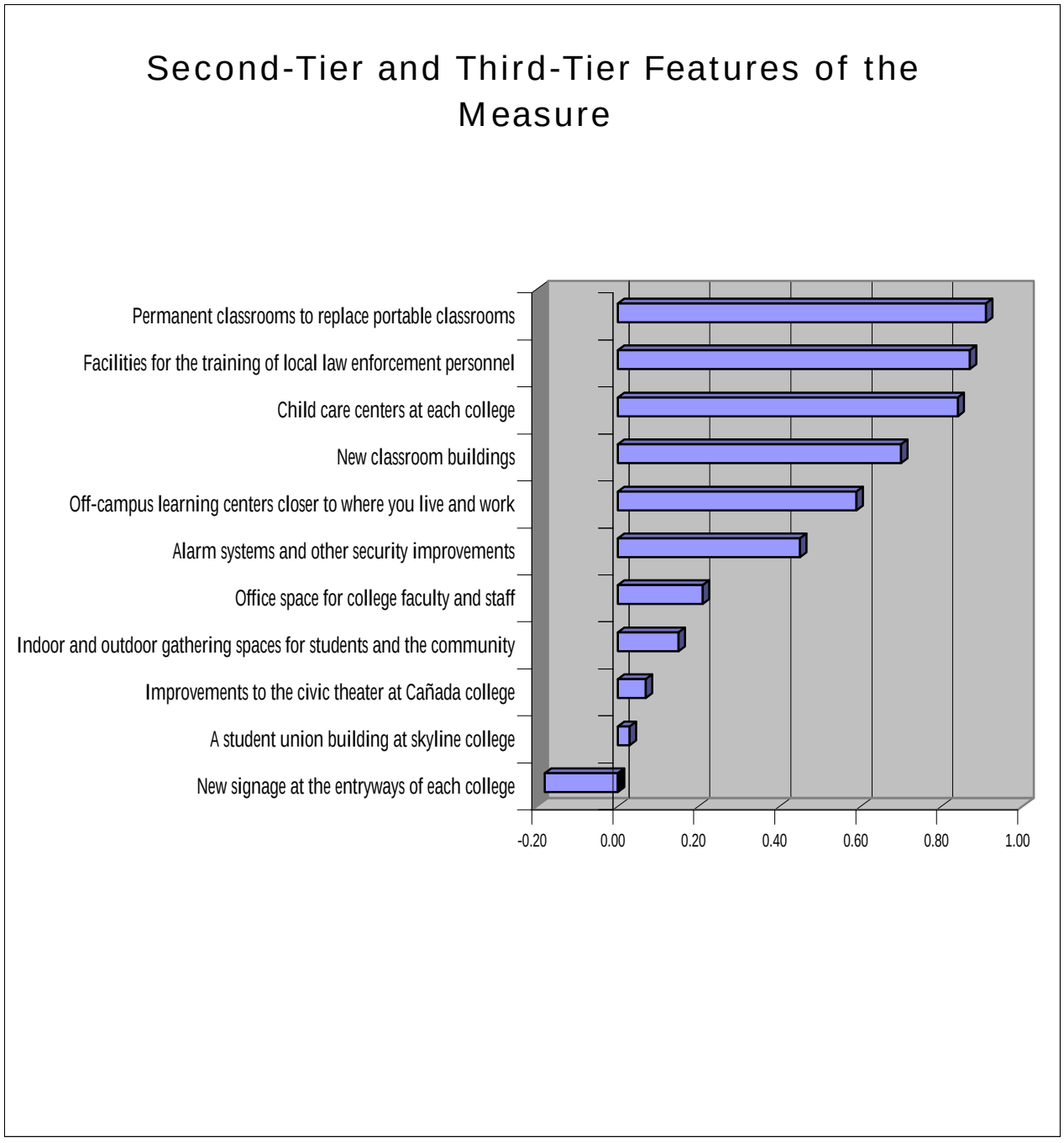
The large chart on the next page shows the top-tier features (i.e. features that received rankings above 1.00) of the measure and a second chart on the following page shows the second-tier and third-tier features.

In a countywide campaign to over 350,000 voters, repetition of the top-tier features is more important than the breadth of features that will be included in the bond package, particularly with rankings above 1.0.

Top-Tier Features of the Measure



The second-tier and third-tier features of the measure may not ever come out during the course of a public education campaign or a targeted GOTV campaign. These features received mostly positive rankings, but in comparison to those which appeared in the previous chart, the second and third-tier features were not as effective at increasing support for the measure. One interesting finding was that both mentions of site specific projects ('a civic theater at Canada College' and 'a student union building at Skyline College') were not popular with respondents overall (0.07 and 0.03, respectively). Mention of new signage at each college was also unpopular, even though the projects might increase the visibility of the colleges and the connection between the community and the three schools.



Respondents were more likely to vote for the measure after mention of 'Improvements to leaky roofs' (1.40), 'Better programs to prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and universities' (1.39) and 'Updated computer labs at each college' (1.32). While it is impossible to fund programs with bond money, new facilities to house the programs and the staff can be built. Respondents were also impacted by mention of 'Improvements to job and technical programs', which also can not be funded with bond money.

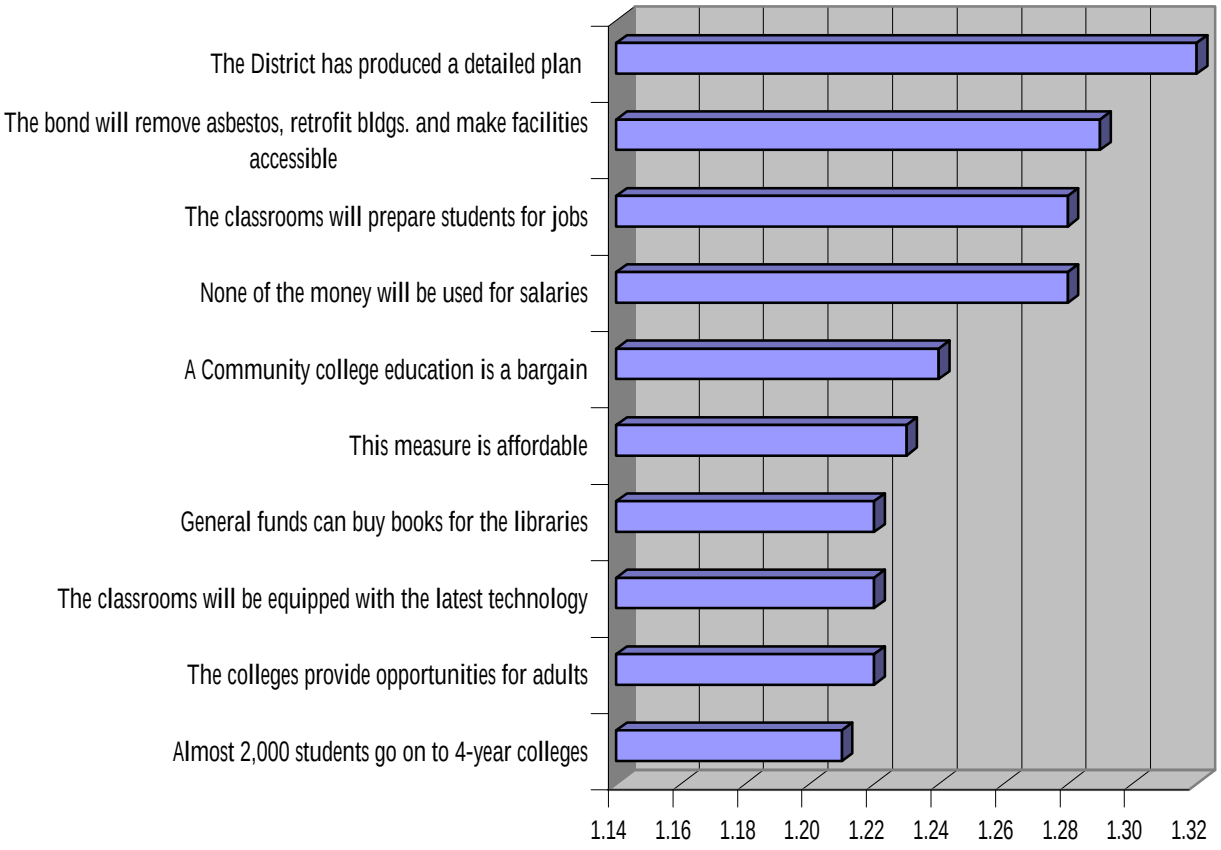
	Total
Improvements to leaky roofs	1.40
Better programs to prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and universities	1.39
Updated computer labs at each college	1.32
Improvements to job and technical programs	1.24
Updated science labs	1.14
Improvements to facilities for nursing and health care programs at each college	1.13
Improvements to plumbing systems	1.06
Library facilities and renovations	1.05
Improvements in heating and cooling systems in classrooms and buildings	1.05
Exterior lighting improvements near buildings and in parking lots	1.02
Permanent classrooms to replace portable classrooms	0.91
Facilities for the training of local law enforcement personnel	0.87
Child care centers at each college	0.84
New classroom buildings	0.70
Off-campus learning centers closer to where you live and work	0.59
Alarm systems and other security improvements	0.45
Office space for college faculty and staff	0.21
Indoor and outdoor gathering spaces for students and the community	0.15
Improvements to the civic theater at Cañada college	0.07
A student union building at skyline college	0.03
New signage at the entryways of each college	-0.18

Question 10, Arguments For the Measure

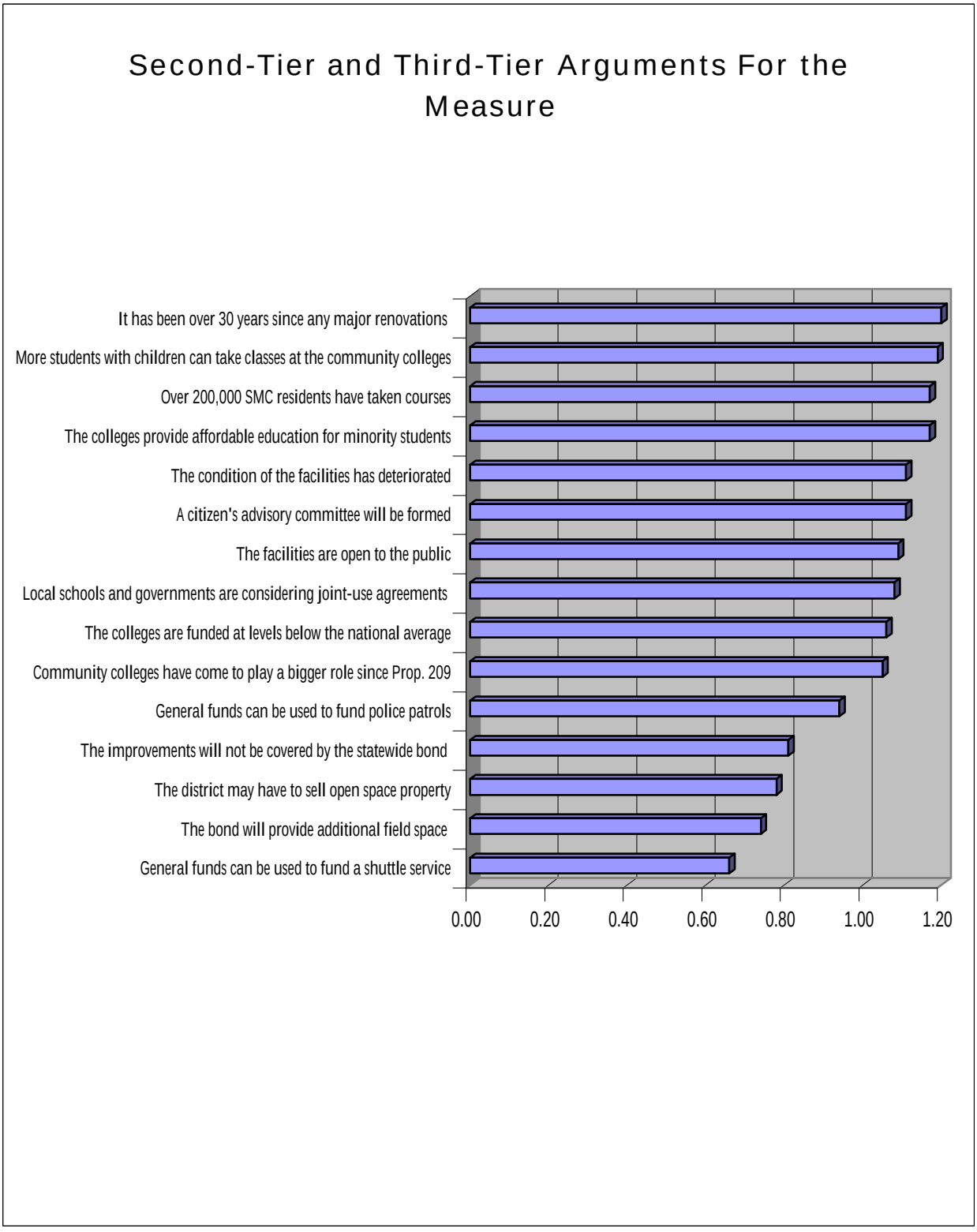
After respondents hear about what projects would be included in the bond, the survey begins to take a more aggressive tone by explaining how each of the projects will benefit the respondent, their household and their community. We term this series of benefits the 'arguments for the measure' not because they reference the specific projects, but offer respondents a compelling reason to support the overall measure based on each individual argument.

Twenty-five arguments were tested in Question 10 and a ranking system effectively captures the top-tier arguments that should be used repeatedly during a targeted campaign effort. At the top of the list was mention of a detailed plan by the District (1.32), followed by mention of removal of asbestos, seismic retrofitting and making facilities accessible (1.29) and mention of state-of-the-art classrooms to prepare students for Silicon Valley jobs (1.28).

Top-Tier Arguments For the Measure



Many of the second-tier and third-tier arguments make respondents more likely to support the measure, but the intensity of the rankings (0.66 to 1.20) is responsible for the argument's placement in the second or third tier categories.



A complete table with each argument and its respective ranking is presented below for respondents overall.

	Total
The San Mateo Community College district has produced a detailed plan	1.32
The bond will fund the removal of asbestos, seismic retrofitting and make facilities accessible	1.29
None of the money raised by the measure will be used for administrator salaries	1.28
The design of the new classrooms will prepare students for Silicon Valley jobs of the 21st century	1.28
A Community college education is one of the best bargains in the Bay Area	1.24
This measure is affordable because the costs will be distributed countywide	1.23
The three local community colleges provided opportunities for adults to upgrade their job skills	1.22
The new classrooms at each college will be equipped with the latest technology	1.22
Money from the general fund can be used to buy books and materials for the libraries at each college	1.22
Almost 2,000 students from the colleges go on to 4-year colleges and universities each year	1.21
It has been over 30 years since any major renovations	1.20
More students with children can take classes at the community colleges	1.19
The community colleges provide affordable educational opportunities for minority students	1.17
Over 200,000 residents have taken courses through the community college system	1.17
A citizen's advisory committee will be formed to monitor the money	1.11
The condition of the facilities at the three colleges has deteriorated	1.11
The facilities at Cañada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College are open to the public	1.09
Local schools and local governments are considering joint-use agreements	1.08
California's community colleges are funded at levels below the national average	1.06
Community colleges have come to play a bigger role since Prop. 209	1.05
Money from the general fund can be used to fund police patrols at each college	0.94
The improvements needed at the colleges will not be covered by the statewide bond	0.81
If the measure fails, the district will be forced to sell open space property on the coast	0.78
The bond will provide additional field space	0.74
Money from the general fund can be used to fund a shuttle service	0.66

Question 11, Arguments Against the Measure

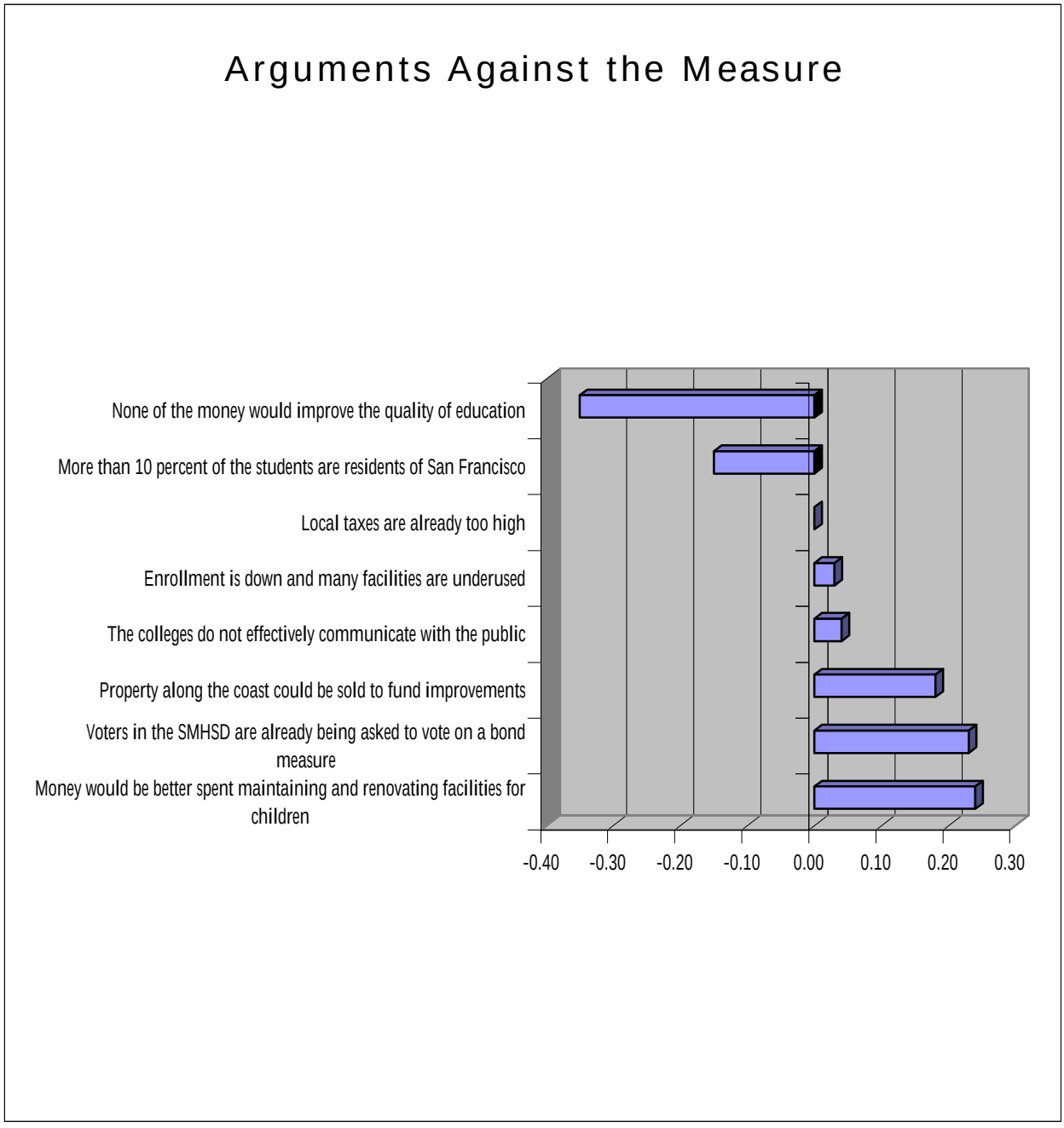
Eight arguments against the measure were rotated in Question 8 and read to respondents in order to determine which each of them negatively impact the measure's chance of passing on election day.

This technique is incorporated into all of GRA's feasibility studies to examine the following things:

- Which of the arguments against the measure is likely to do the most damage to a campaign,
- Whether the rankings offered to the negative arguments are stronger than the rankings offered to the positive arguments *and*
- How the combination of negative arguments will impact the second ballot test results.

Of the eight arguments tested, only two received a negative ranking from respondents overall. This is a highly unusual finding. The two arguments that resulted in negative rankings informed respondents that 'None of the money would be spent to improve the quality of education at the community colleges' (-0.35) and 'More than 10 percent of the students are residents of San Francisco' (-0.15). The remaining arguments against the measure actually made voters in San Mateo County more likely, rather than less likely, to support a bond for the Community College District.

What this means is that in order to get to the two-thirds level, the campaign will need to focus on offering voters strong reasons to support this measure rather than concern itself with fighting off attacks from an opposing campaign along these fronts.



Mention of local tax rates, declining enrollment at the colleges, alternative funding plans (i.e. selling property on the coast), competing tax measures in the county, the District's lack of communication with the public and possibly spending bond money at local elementary and high schools instead of for the community colleges all make respondents overall slightly more likely to support a facilities bond for the District. Therefore, there is no reason to fear an opposition group using these arguments during the campaign period, because the voters in San Mateo County are not negatively impacted by them. The two arguments that do negatively impact voters should be addressed if and when they are brought out by an opposing group but should not be overstated. The most negative of the two arguments can be refuted by making the connection between the quality of facilities at the three colleges and the quality of education being provided (I.e. By improving the quality of facilities, you improve the quality of education). While this is a sophisticated argument, GRA has tested it in other Bay Area communities and voters have been able to make the connection we are referring to.

	Total
None of the money raised by the bond would be spent on programs to improve the quality of education	-0.35
More than 10 percent of the students at the community colleges are residents of San Francisco	-0.15
Local taxes are already too high	0.00
Enrollment in the district is down and many facilities are underused	0.03
The community colleges do not effectively communicate with the general public	0.04
The community college district owns property along the San Mateo coast that could be sold	0.18
Voters in the SMHSD are already being asked to vote on a bond measure this year	0.23
Money would be better spent maintaining and renovating facilities for all children at local schools	0.24

Analysis of Key Demographic Groups

Godbe Research & Analysis has access to a variety of different types of demographic information through the California Voter File. Typically, this information is used by an independent expenditure campaign organization to target likely voters preceding a municipal election. There are other types of demographic information that this survey has collected (i.e. homeowner status, income and the presence of children in the household), but this information is difficult to obtain for the entire voter file or is more difficult to use when targeting voters. Because of this, we have chosen to discuss the most compelling data that can be used to target likely voters during a campaign in the tables below.

Party and Household Party Type

Partisan identification and Household Party Type are commonly used by campaigns to target likely voters. A respondent's partisan identification reflects their chosen political party affiliation (Democrat, Republican or a variety of traditional third parties such as the Green Party, the Peace & Freedom Party or the Libertarian Party) and a respondent's Household Party Type reflects the composition of partisans in their household. For example, a Dem 1 household refers to a household with one Democrat, a Rep 2 household refers to a household with at least two Republicans, and so on.

Because these two pieces of information are available on the Voter File for every voter in San Mateo County, it is very important to examine the appeal of features and benefits for each of the major partisan identifications and household party types before the campaign begins.

Democrats and 'Other' partisans offered much higher rankings than Republicans when told money would be spent at Skyline College and Canada College. However, when College of San Mateo was mentioned as a beneficiary of the bond money, the ranking offered by Republicans increased dramatically (from a 0.18 and 0.28 offered after mention of Skyline and Canada to a 0.80 after mention of College of San Mateo).

	Party Identification		
	Dem	*Rep*	*Oth*
Some of the money will be spent at Skyline College in San Bruno	0.59	0.18	0.50
Some of the money will be spent at Cañada College in Redwood City	0.52	0.28	0.62
Some of the money will be spent at College of San Mateo	0.98	0.80	0.57

The rankings from households with at least one Republican also favored College of San Mateo. There may be several explanations for this obvious preference to fund projects at CSM over Canada College and Skyline College: 1) voters may be reacting positively to the idea of funding projects at CSM because they are more familiar with it, its programs and its location, or 2) voters are not only more familiar with CSM, but also think the quality of facilities and education warrant more money from a district-wide bond.

	Household Party Type				
	Dem 1	*Dem 2*	*Rep 1*	*Rep 2*	*Dem/Rep*
Some of the money will be spent at Skyline College	0.69	0.66	0.43	0.09	0.30
Some of the money will be spent at Cañada College	0.47	0.52	0.14	0.41	0.71
Some of the money will be spent at College of San Mateo	0.89	1.01	0.84	0.82	1.09

The top-tier features are presented by partisanship and household party type in the tables below. There is some variation in the intensity of the rankings offered (with Democrats and 'Other' partisans offering higher rankings than Republicans), but the ordering of the features is more or less the same. Mention of leaky roofs, better programs to prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and universities and updated computer labs are successful at increasing support for the measure even though these top three features are very different types of projects. 'Improvements to leaky roofs' is a maintenance improvement, 'Better programs to prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and universities' can only be achieved by constructing new facilities to house these programs and 'Updated computer labs at each college' is a modernization improvement. The appeal of all three types of projects - maintenance, and modernization - is a sign that these words would test well in the actual ballot question.

	Party Identification		
	Dem	*Rep*	*Oth*
Better programs to prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and universities	1.53	1.08	1.30
Improvements to leaky roofs	1.51	1.23	1.46
Updated computer labs at each college	1.47	1.07	0.92
Improvements to job and technical programs	1.37	0.96	1.36
Updated science labs	1.27	0.93	0.96
Improvements to facilities for nursing and health care programs at each college	1.26	0.86	1.08
Exterior lighting improvements near buildings and in parking lots	1.23	0.63	1.30
Improvements in heating and cooling systems in classrooms and buildings	1.21	0.84	0.71

The features of the measure are more appealing to different Household Party Types than they were to different partisan groups. In the table below, we see that Rep 1 households find mention of improvements to job and technical programs, improvements to leaky roofs and updated science labs the most compelling projects of the bond package while households with at least one Democrat are more likely to support the measure if it includes money to better prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and updated computer labs.

	Household Party Type				
	Dem 1	*Dem 2*	*Rep 1*	*Rep 2*	*Dem/Rep*
Better programs to prepare students to enter college	1.57	1.54	1.07	1.05	1.32
Updated computer labs at each college	1.51	1.55	1.02	0.97	1.46
Improvements to job and technical programs	1.49	1.38	1.16	0.89	1.11
Improvements to leaky roofs	1.37	1.57	1.11	1.20	1.59
Improvements to facilities for nursing	1.36	1.30	1.02	0.67	1.14
Exterior lighting improvements	1.35	1.30	0.76	0.65	0.81
Improvements to plumbing systems	1.27	1.13	0.62	0.88	1.25
Updated science labs	1.25	1.37	1.15	0.90	0.97
Library facilities and renovations	1.22	1.12	0.98	0.67	1.01

A number of arguments received rankings above 1.30 and even above 1.40. In the past, GRA has used the 1.00 level to determine which arguments should be used during a campaign, and in most of our research, there are between four and five arguments that surpass the 1.00 ranking. Among Democrats in San Mateo County, however, 21 out of the 25 arguments tested received rankings above 1.00. We do not recommend using all 21 arguments during the campaign simply because they received a certain ranking, but it may be helpful to break the 21 arguments into broader categories to examine the appeal of each type of argument (i.e. Are arguments based on maintenance more compelling than arguments based on modernizations?).

The table below shows that Democrats and Republicans in San Mateo County were drawn to the same three arguments at the top-tier: 'The new classrooms will prepare students for Silicon Valley jobs', 'The bond will remove asbestos, retrofit buildings and make facilities accessible' and 'The District has produced a detailed plan'. Among 'Other' partisans, however, mention of the delay in renovating buildings at the colleges and the expanded child care centers were more compelling reasons to support the facilities bond.

	Party Identification		
	Dem	*Rep*	*Oth*
The new classrooms will prepare students for Silicon Valley jobs	1.47	0.91	0.91
The bond will remove asbestos, retrofit bldgs. and make facilities accessible	1.47	0.89	1.55
The District has produced a detailed plan	1.46	1.02	1.25
A Community college education is one of the best bargains in the Bay Area	1.45	0.84	1.13
The general fund can be used to buy books and materials for the libraries	1.42	0.84	1.00
It has been over 30 years since any major renovations have been made	1.39	0.79	1.62
Over 200,000 residents have taken courses at the colleges	1.38	0.68	1.24
More students with children can take classes at the community colleges	1.38	0.82	1.45
The colleges provide opportunities for adults to upgrade their job skills	1.38	0.98	1.00

The most compelling reason to support the bond across Household Party Type was 'The District has produced a detailed plan that explains how the money raised by the bond will be spent'. The ranking offered to this argument was in the top three for each of the five Household Party Types shown below. Other arguments that tested well included mention of removing asbestos, retrofitting the buildings and making facilities accessible; better preparation for students competing for Silicon Valley jobs (Dem 1), the value of a Community College education (Dem 2) and the increased access to computer technology in the classrooms (Dem/Rep). At lower rankings, but still in the top-three for at least one Household Party Type were: 'It's been over 30 years since any major renovations' (Rep 2), 'The measure is affordable because the costs will be distributed county-wide' (Rep 1) and 'Almost 2,000 students from Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College go on to 4-year colleges each year' (Rep 2).

	Household Party Type				
	Dem 1	*Dem 2*	*Rep 1*	*Rep 2*	*Dem/Rep*
The new classroom will prepare students for Silicon Valley jobs	1.58	1.42	0.89	0.78	1.25
The bond will remove asbestos, etc.	1.58	1.45	1.00	0.72	1.44
The District has produced a detailed plan	1.57	1.45	1.02	1.01	1.31
The colleges provide affordable education for minority students	1.53	1.34	0.68	0.48	1.19
The general fund can be used to buy library materials	1.50	1.42	0.89	0.72	1.16
A Community college educ. is a good bargain	1.49	1.45	0.82	0.81	1.20
The new classrooms will be equipped with the latest technology	1.48	1.43	0.82	0.66	1.26
More students with children can take classes	1.46	1.41	0.93	0.49	1.17
It has been over 30 years since any major renovations	1.45	1.27	0.69	0.96	1.17
This measure is affordable	1.44	1.28	1.08	0.78	1.24
Over 200,000 residents have taken courses through the colleges	1.43	1.39	0.48	0.76	1.09
Almost 2,000 students go on to 4-year colleges	1.43	1.45	0.73	0.94	1.10

Only two arguments against the measure escaped without a negative ranking from one of the partisan groups: 'The District owns property along the coast that could be sold to fund improvements without raising taxes' and 'Taxpayer money would be better spent maintaining and renovating facilities for all children at local elementary and high schools rather than at the community colleges'. The remaining arguments, most notably 'None of the money raised by the bond would be spent on programs to improve the quality of education at the community colleges', received negative rankings from one or all of the partisan groups, indicating that voters were less likely to support the measure after hearing that information.

	Party Identification		
	Dem	*Rep*	*Oth*
None of the money will improve the quality of education	-0.12	-0.61	-1.26
More than 10 percent of the students are residents of San Francisco	-0.03	-0.50	0.10
The colleges do not effectively communicate with the general public	0.18	-0.25	0.28
Local taxes are already too high	0.20	-0.40	-0.06
The District owns property along the San Mateo coast	0.23	0.04	0.09
Enrollment in the district is down and many facilities are underused	0.28	-0.49	0.00
Taxpayer money would be better spent at local schools	0.36	0.03	0.15
The SMHSD are already voting on a bond measure for the high school district	0.50	-0.22	-0.06

Republicans, shown above and households with at least one Republican (Rep 1, Rep 2 and Dem/Rep) offered more negative rankings than households with Democrats and stronger negative rankings than households with Democrats. This is a typical finding when a survey proposes a tax increase. The one argument that works against the measure across partisan lines and across Household Party Types is 'None of the money raised by the bond will be spent to improve the quality of education at the community colleges'. However, because of the small percentage of Republicans and Rep 1 and Rep 2 households in San Mateo County, the tables overestimate the impact of the negative arguments on these groups.

	Household Party Type				
	Dem 1	*Dem 2*	*Rep 1*	*Rep 2*	*Dem/Rep*
None of the money will improve the quality of education	-0.04	-0.03	-0.57	-0.37	-0.64
More than 10 % of the students are residents of San Francisco	0.14	0.02	-0.32	-0.63	-0.31
Enrollment in the district is down	0.16	0.48	-0.42	-0.32	-0.21
Local taxes are already too high	0.34	0.25	-0.43	-0.25	-0.22
The District owns property along the San Mateo coast	0.37	0.30	-0.15	0.21	0.05
The colleges do not effectively communicate with the general public	0.39	0.23	-0.49	-0.13	0.11
Taxpayer money would be better spent at local schools	0.39	0.48	0.02	0.02	0.33
Voters in the SMHSD are already voting on a bond for the hs district	0.40	0.69	-0.18	-0.20	0.08

Geography

Another demographic group by which we can target voters is 'geography', based on a respondent's city of residency or zip code. This information is available on the California Voter File and should be used to strategically drop direct mail pieces and organize GOTV efforts.

The geographic categories we use in the tables below collapse voters in San Mateo County into one of three groups:

North	Central	South
Brisbane	Belmont	Atherton
Daly City	Burlingame	East Palo Alto
Pacifica	Hillsborough	Menlo Park
San Bruno	Half Moon Bay	Portola Valley
South San Francisco	Millbrae	Redwood City
	San Mateo	San Carlos
	Foster City	Woodside

In segmenting the entire group, respondents in the North part of the San Mateo County favored projects at Skyline College, respondents in the Central part of San Mateo County favored projects at College of San Mateo and respondents in the South part of San Mateo County favored projects at Canada College. It is also interesting that respondents in North and South parts of the county offered fairly high rankings to projects at CSM, the most centrally located of the three community colleges. This suggests that respondents do not exclusively support projects at the college that is closest to their home; and in the case of the South county residents, a ranking of 0.95 after mention that money would be spent at College of San Mateo suggests that some of these voters may be attending CSM over their local community college in Redwood City.

	Geography		
	North	*Central*	*South*
Some of the money will be spent at Skyline College in San Bruno	1.06	0.17	0.00
Some of the money will be spent at Cañada College in Redwood City	0.01	0.26	1.11
Some of the money will be spent at College of San Mateo	0.52	1.14	0.95

There was no difference in the ordering of the features by the three geographic sub-groups, however the respondents did differ in the intensity of the rankings offered. In general, respondents in the North and South parts of the county offered the highest rankings (average: 0.84 for each), while respondents in Central San Mateo County (including residents of Belmont, Burlingame, Hillsborough, Half Moon Bay, Millbrae, San Mateo and Foster City) offered the lowest rankings (average: 0.68). The most compelling features of the measure included 'Better programs to prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and universities', 'Improvements to leaky roofs' and 'Updated computer labs at each college'.

	Geography		
	North	*Central*	*South*
Better programs to prepare students to enter 4-year colleges and universities	1.49	1.28	1.40
Improvements to leaky roofs	1.46	1.33	1.42
Updated computer labs at each college	1.35	1.23	1.38
Improvements to job and technical programs	1.28	1.22	1.23
Exterior lighting improvements near buildings and in parking lots	1.16	0.93	0.98
Improvements to plumbing systems	1.13	0.96	1.09
Improvements to facilities for nursing and health care programs at each college	1.13	1.10	1.16
Updated science labs	1.11	1.08	1.25
Improvements in heating and cooling systems in classrooms and buildings	1.09	0.97	1.10

Again, mention of 'a detailed plan' was a compelling argument for respondents throughout the county, just as it was for all partisans and all Household Party Types. North and South county residents tended to offer higher rankings than respondents in the Central part of the county to the arguments tested in Question 10, just as they had for the features tested in Question 9, but the arguments that were found to be compelling did differ in different areas (whereas geography was not a predictive variable in ranking the features of the measure). In the North, voters found the removal of asbestos, building retrofits and accessible facilities the most compelling argument. Voters in the Central part of the county favored 'a detailed plan' from the District and voters in the South county were persuaded to vote for the measure, if that meant money from the General Fund could be used to buy books and materials for the libraries at each college.

	Geography		
	North	*Central*	*South*
The bond will remove asbestos, retrofit bldgs. and make facilities accessible	1.47	1.16	1.26
Almost 2,000 students go on to 4-year colleges and universities each year	1.35	1.19	1.10
The new classrooms at each college will be equipped with the latest technology	1.32	1.18	1.17
The District has produced a detailed plan	1.32	1.25	1.41
The general fund can be used to buy books and materials for the libraries	1.28	1.06	1.35
The community colleges provide affordable education for minorities	1.27	0.94	1.34
Over 200,000 residents of SMC have taken courses through the colleges	1.26	1.07	1.20
This measure is affordable because the costs will be distributed countywide	1.26	1.19	1.25
None of the money raised by the measure will be used for administrator salaries	1.26	1.23	1.37
A Community college education is one of the best bargains in the Bay Area	1.25	1.18	1.31
The new classrooms will ensure students are prepared for Silicon Valley jobs	1.25	1.26	1.32
The colleges provided opportunities for adults to upgrade their job skills	1.22	1.24	1.19

Voters in Central San Mateo County offer the most and strongest negative rankings to the arguments against the measure. After the arguments against the measure were read, 64 percent of voters in this region indicated they would vote 'yes' for a facilities bond in San Mateo County (the lowest level of support from the three geographic sub-groups). There are a couple of different explanations for this low level of support from Central county voters and their tendency to react strongly when arguments against the measure are read. The most likely explanations are that voters in the Central region are older than respondents in the North and South regions (Mean Age: 48.5, compared to 47.2 in the South and 44.7 in the North) and more conservative (37 percent of Central county voters are Republicans, compared to 32 percent in the South and 23 percent in the North). The combination of these two factors, age and partisanship, often translate into lower levels of support for tax measures.

	Geography		
	North	*Central*	*South*
None of the money would improve the quality of education	-0.26	-0.66	-0.10
More than 10 percent of the students are residents of San Francisco	-0.02	-0.41	0.00
The colleges do not effectively communicate with the general public	0.01	-0.08	0.20
Local taxes are already too high	0.06	-0.14	0.09
Enrollment in the district is down and many facilities are underused	0.15	-0.15	0.10
The District owns property along the San Mateo coast that could be sold	0.24	0.02	0.30
Taxpayer money would be better spent at local schools	0.32	0.01	0.41
Voters in the SMHSD are already voting on a measure for the hs district	0.42	-0.03	0.32

Other Findings

One of the determinants of support for the bond measure may be the degree to which voters perceive the community college facilities being in need of repairs, maintenance or renovation. In Question 5, we asked respondents the following question:

> Overall, how would you rate the quality of facilities at Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College? Would you say the condition of the facilities is excellent, good, fair or poor?

Fifty percent of respondents overall believed the quality of facilities at the colleges was either 'excellent' or 'good'. Fifty-three percent of respondents in the Central region indicated the quality of facilities was 'excellent' or 'good', compared to 49 percent from respondents in the South region and 47 percent of respondents in the North region. It is difficult to determine if voters are more likely to support a tax measure such as this one if they believe the facilities are in good or excellent condition or if they believe the facilities are in poor condition. Some voters will support a tax increase to maintain what they perceive to be good or excellent; others will support a tax increase to repair what they perceive to be poor.

	Total	Geography		
		North	*Central*	*South*
Excellent	8%	9%	7%	8%
Good	42%	38%	46%	41%
Fair	18%	24%	12%	20%
Poor	2%	2%	1%	3%
DK/ No Answer	30%	27%	34%	28%

While general obligation bond funds can not be used to fund program improvements, teacher salaries or educational materials, many voters are able to support these bonds because they believe there is a connection between the quality of facilities and the quality of education provided by institutions with quality facilities. In order to examine this in more detail, we asked:

> Overall, how would you rate the quality of higher education provided by Canada College, College of San Mateo and Skyline College? Would you say the quality of education is excellent, good, fair or poor?

Two-thirds of respondents overall indicated the quality of education being provided by the three community colleges was either excellent or good. In the South and in the North, 68 percent of respondents thought the quality of education was either excellent or good; only two percentage points behind the Central region (66 percent). The fact that voters are able to articulate an opinion on the quality of education provided by the colleges, but less able to express an opinion on the quality of the facilities at the colleges confirms the gap that exists between the colleges and the community. If a respondent has heard about courses, teachers, staff and students at the colleges, they would be more likely to have an opinion on the quality of education. If a respondent has driven through a college campus or taken a class at one of the colleges, they would be able to offer their opinion on the quality of the facilities. The findings here suggest very few voters have physically been to the college campuses, but many may have heard about the education being provided from friends, neighbors, family members or news sources.

	Total	Geography		
		North	*Central*	*South*
Excellent	19%	18%	15%	26%
Good	48%	50%	51%	42%
Fair	9%	9%	11%	8%
Poor	1%	1%	1%	2%
DK/ No Answer	23%	23%	23%	23%

t

Undecided	11%
Probably N	14%
Definitely	18%
Probably Y	28%
Definitely	30%

'

Undecided	8%
Probably N	11%
Definitely	14%
Probably Y	30%
Definitely	37%

.

is

,

$20 per $1	0.01
$16 per $1	0.21
$12 per $1	0.49
$8 per $10	0.70
$4 per $10	0.83

f

Some of th	0.44
Some of th	0.46
Some of th	0.88

)f

Exterior lig	1.02
Library fac	1.05
Improvem	1.05
Improvem	1.06
Improvem	1.13
Updated sc	1.14
Improvem	1.24
Updated co	1.32
Better prog	1.39
Improvem	1.40

New signag	-0.18
A student u	0.03
Improvem	0.07
Indoor and	0.15
Office spac	0.21
Alarm syste	0.45
Off-campu	0.59
New classr	0.70
Child care	0.84
Facilities fo	0.87
Permanen	0.91

Almost 2,0	1.21
The colleg	1.22
The classr	1.22
General fu	1.22
This meas	1.23
A Commur	1.24
None of th	1.28
The classr	1.28
The bond v	1.29
The Distric	1.32

General fu	0.66
The bond v	0.74
The distric	0.78
The impro	0.81
General fu	0.94
Communit	1.05
The colleg	1.06
Local scho	1.08
The faciliti	1.09
A citizen's	1.11
The condit	1.11
The colleg	1.17
Over 200,0	1.17
More stude	1.19

It has beer	1.20

Money wou	0.24
Voters in th	0.23
Property al	0.18
The colleg	0.04
Enrollmen	0.03
Local taxes	0.00
More than	-0.15
None of th	-0.35

Poor	2%
Excellent	8%
Fair	18%
DK/ No An	30%
Good	42%