A Study of Factors Influencing Voter Attitude toward Schools and the Relationship of Those Factors to Voter Support of School Bond Proposals

Douglas B. Cole Jr.
Western Michigan University

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A STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING VOTER ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOLS AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF THOSE FACTORS TO VOTER SUPPORT OF SCHOOL BOND PROPOSALS

by

Douglas E. Cole, Jr.

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Doctor of Education

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
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I am also indebted to a widening circle of professional and personal friends that came as a result of my doctoral study at Western Michigan University. A special thanks is due my fellow Mott Interns for the professional inspiration that occurred as we shared the experience of a mid-career educational program.

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Douglas B. Cole, Jr.
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Background of the Problem

Many schools across the nation are facing a serious shortage of funds. In some geographical areas the shortage has manifest itself in severe cutbacks in the operation of programs, and in other places the lack of funds has caused serious shortages of classrooms and a general deterioration of existing facilities. Repeated failure on the part of school boards and administrations to pass millage or bond issue proposals has generally been attributed to a voter reaction against higher taxes. Such a charge of voter reaction has been directly leveled at the property tax, which forms the base for most local school funding. This reaction, on the part of the voters, has certainly had its effect upon the persons charged with policy making for schools.

The degree to which this dilemma is affecting the day-to-day education of young people was summarized by John J. Foley, President of the Nassau-Suffolk Board of Education Association in New York State. In a bulletin sent to the more than 125 school districts under his direction and reprinted in the June, 1971, issue of American School and University, Foley (1971) stated:

While the increasing defeat of school budgets can intellectually be attributed to the desperate plight of our taxpayers, it has also begun to produce an unfortunate emotional side effect of antagonism toward educators, school boards and
education in general. This has resulted in increasing timidity on the part of administrations and boards in the institution of new and expanding programs, no matter how much they may be needed by the children placed in their care. It is obvious that if we are to reverse this trend and to be effective in our fight to secure the funds necessary to carry on our Constitutional obligation as State officers, we must seek a broader base of support (p. 8).

In his message Foley recommended that local boards organize broadly based Citizens' Finance Committees, not for specific school budget projects but to act as pressure groups whose main interests would be to reduce local tax contributions. He envisioned such pressure groups working for the return of the responsibility for the support of public education to those bodies where the State Constitution places it, the legislature and the State Treasury.

Statements such as that made by Foley have raised an important question that has yet to be resolved. Just where does the responsibility for financing public education belong? Constitutionally the responsibility is squarely upon the states; however, this introduces another basic question. If the state does not fulfill its financial obligation to public education, then who will do it? Thus, one has a rationale for an examination of the present local-state-federal cooperative funding for schools.

It has become rather obvious that, with the generally negative feelings of voters toward increases in local property taxes and with the financial stress being felt in most school districts, some form of new revenue must be sought for financing schools.

For evidence that the problem of financing schools is receiving considerable national attention, one need only to look at the
voluminous work of the National Educational Finance Project, which was instituted on June 10, 1968. This project was funded by the United States Office of Education for a period of three years and is reported to be the first comprehensive study of school finance since 1933.

Johns and Thomas (1969), writing concerning the formidable task ahead for the staff of this project, said:

Throughout the nation's history, there has been a faith in the power of education to make possible a healthy economy, a democratic government, and a society in which the poor man's son could rise to a position of power and prestige. There is, however, more than ever before, an awareness of the problems involved in providing the fiscal, governmental, and educational machinery needed to implement these aspirations (p. 3).

One state teachers' association, recognizing the revolt of taxpayers against increased local property tax, initiated action to put the financing of schools on a sounder basis. In a work stoppage of Kentucky teachers, commencing on February 23, 1970, some 24,000 of the state's 28,500 teachers protested the failure of the governor and the 1970 General Assembly of Kentucky to respond positively to increased funding for schools. Aligning with what they called "voter reaction back home," the legislators did not meet the demands of the educational group. The Kentucky Education Association (KEA) subsequently called for a sanctions investigation by its parent organization, the National Education Association (NEA). The investigation was conducted by a special committee of the Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities of the National Education Association, and its findings are reported in Education in Kentucky: A Legacy of Unkept Promise (1971).
The foreword of this report, written by Hudson L. Barksdale, Chairman of NEA's Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities, expresses a hope that the report will enlighten public opinion and stimulate public debate concerning adequate support for Kentucky's schools. However, Barksdale charges that:

... members of the NEA Special Committee received the impression that many Kentucky citizens, including some legislators and leading civic officials, did not have a full enough awareness of the conditions and specific needs of the schools to ensure that knowledgeable and wise decisions could be made in the best educational interests of Kentucky's youth (p. vii).

Why were such responsible people apparently not informed about the schools? What has caused the apparent negative voter reaction to schools? Some observers contend that feelings of apathy and resentment are present at both the local polls and in the state legislatures. Can it be concluded that they are widespread and that they are serious challenges to public education? Have circumstances changed so significantly that voters are ready for an alternative to the property tax as a source of revenue for schools? Many authorities would say "yes"; the times are different, a shift to nonproperty tax sources is needed. To illustrate this point Dochterman and Beshoar (1970), speaking for a group concerned with improving state leadership in education, have said:

Millions of words have been written about school support, how money should be raised, how much should be provided, and how it should be spent and accounted for. Changing needs in education alter financial circumstances as well. Practically all local revenues for school support are derived from property taxes. This practice dates back to a time when real property constituted the major source of personal income. This is no longer the case. Nationally, less than 10 percent of the income of the people is derived from
property. But more than 50 percent of all revenue for support of schools still comes from property taxes. The result: serious inequities and personal burdens on taxpayers in school systems stranded on a narrow tax base, and indefensible inequalities in opportunities for students. Almost all states need to make greater effort to relate the sources of revenue for school support more closely to the sources of income. Creative new concepts of school finance must be designed (p. 33).

The opinions thus far presented would suggest that the high rate of failure at the polls of school funding proposals has not been specifically due to a dissatisfaction with education in general, but more a function of voter dissatisfaction with the property tax system. However, one need only to turn to the September 19, 1970 issue of Saturday Review to find a very different point of view. In a review of education in America during the 1960's, several authors presented viewpoints to the effect that the nation is experiencing a crisis of confidence in the schools.

Cass (1970), in attempting to explain this crisis of confidence, pointed to a new mood of questioning of the public school monopoly on the part of parents and to the considerable experimentation with alternatives to the system then prevalent. Also, he pointed to the lessening of the mystique whereby the schools were viewed as the foundation of a democratic society. Further, he said:

But during the sixties the schools were challenged increasingly not only for their contemporary failures, nor even for the fact that they have always failed the poor and the disposed, but because they were positively destructive influences for many of the children entrusted to their care (p. 61).

Woodring (1970) insisted that the problems facing educators have changed substantially since 1960. In speaking of attacks on education, he stated:
During the sixties a new group of critics—Goodman, Friedenberg, Holt, Kozol, et al.—reversed the direction of attack, insisting that the need is not for greater rigor or higher academic standards but rather for more individual freedom and more attention to the child's social and emotional needs (p. 66).

Clearly, it becomes evident that one can also build a case for suggesting that the financial plight of the public schools is related to a generally poor opinion, on the part of voters, of the kind of job the schools are doing.

Regardless of the cause-effect relationship between the criticism the schools have received during the past decade and the present financial negativism the schools are experiencing, one can hardly fail to recognize that the two occurred simultaneously. Figure 1, presented on page 7, depicts the decline in the percent of successful school bond elections over the past ten years. This chart, taken from the June, 1971 issue of School Management, is part of that magazine's 1971 Cost of Building Index (p. 15).

The educational implications of the reluctance on the part of voters to approve operational millage and bond issue proposals are many. The defeat of key proposals is resulting in school programs and construction being kept constant during a period of growth and at a time when educators seem to be willing to shake the structure of the past for a more workable system attuned to the times.

Few school districts have escaped the present financial dilemma. Increased student enrollments, pressure for improved curriculum, higher salary demands, and rising costs of material and labor have forced educators to seek new sources of revenue. New studies are
FIGURE 1

Success of Public School Bond Elections, 1960-70

Extracted from Paul Cuneo (Ed.), 1971 Cost of Building Index (CBI)
School Management, June 1971, p. 15.
being performed by state departments of education, independent consultant firms and university school service bureaus which generally reaffirm the facilities' needs as seen by the local boards of education and administrations. Moreover, repeated warnings of impending financial disaster by many groups have failed to achieve a response to a call for action from the general voting public.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine what effects opinions held by voters, either relative to taxation or to their general satisfaction with schools, are having on their willingness to tax themselves for support of schools.

In this investigation, "voter satisfaction with schools" means voter reaction to a selected set of variables that were arrived at by an extensive review of the literature relating to factors that are known to influence patrons' opinions of their schools.

Specifically, the research was designed to determine a voter's level of satisfaction with the schools in the district in which he is a voting resident and to compare this information with his responses to items relating to taxation and building proposals. The intent was to measure voters' perceptions of their schools in light of ten measures of school effectiveness and to collect data relative to their willingness to support a tax increase for schools as well as their opinions on matters concerning school building proposals.

Literature examined by the present writer appears to support the measures of school effectiveness that were used in this study. Among
the sources contributing to the development of these measures were: Haubrich (1971), Totten and Manley (1970), Friedenberg (1962, 1965), Gallup (1970), and Silberman (1970). The question of whether or not the factors are equal in weight is one that this writer did not attempt to resolve.

The ten measures used in the present study were:

1. Efforts put forth by the staff
2. Staff's willingness to change and to try new ideas
3. Performance of the professional staff
4. Degree of academic growth or acquisition of skills by students
5. Success of the staff in enhancing the self-concept of youth
6. Staff's communication and cooperation with the community
7. Efforts of the staff to provide equal opportunities for all youth
8. Staff's respect for students and parents
9. Student's enjoyment of school experiences
10. Discipline

Once a measure of school satisfaction was obtained, it was examined to determine what relationships might exist between the respondent's level of satisfaction and such factors as:

1. his perception of the urgency of school building needs;
2. his reaction to various alternatives for providing additional space for students;
3. his willingness to support a tax increase for additional school facilities;
4. his expressed preference for ways of providing additional school funds by means other than the property tax;
5. his willingness to support double sessions or a twelve-month school term as a means of providing more classroom space for students;
6. his expressed support for extending vocational and kindergarten education; and
7. his opinion as to why voters are turning down a higher percentage of school building proposals now than they did ten years ago.

Importance of the Study

School districts that have been confronted with the problem of inadequate facilities for students coupled with what seems to be increasing voter apathy toward additional support for schools are numerous.

School administrators experiencing the above-described dilemma have responded to their patrons in various ways. Probably the most damaging effects have resulted in those schools where the administrator has taken the voting public's apparent lack of concern for the financial plight of the schools as a personal defeat or as a vote of "no confidence" for his leadership. The literature suggests that this position by an administrator has often resulted in a politically unstable school district or one that is led by an administrator who is not of the mind to execute strongly his leadership position. Such resultant lack of administrative leadership
does not serve the interests of an ongoing, viable educational program.

It can be reasoned that the urgency of providing adequate funding for schools as perceived by the voters has determined the extent to which they have acted to solve the problem. Also, the willingness of voters to consider adequate financing for schools a top priority item may, somehow, be a function of the extent to which they are, or are not, satisfied with the school program in their district.

This study should be valuable for the following reasons:

1. The ten measures of school effectiveness have the potential, if thoroughly analyzed, to reveal the concerns of school patrons about various aspects of their school district's educational program.

2. Once information is available revealing the concerns of school patrons, steps can be taken to evaluate the validity of the expressed concerns and, where warranted, adjustments can be made in programs or practices to alleviate the concern.

3. The information obtained by eliciting opinions of school patrons regarding the perceived urgency of building needs may be valuable to officials of a school district seeking to set priorities for anticipated facility improvement.

4. Obtaining and weighing, especially in light of the cost factor, information concerning the public's feeling toward alternatives to new construction may help school
leaders to make prudent decisions concerning facilities' expansion.

5. Having documented information as to whether or not a voting public will support a tax increase could serve as an indicator of the level of intensity needed in a campaign for additional financial support.

6. When alternative ways of raising monies are available to schools, knowing the public's preference could help in choosing the option to be exercised.

7. Before an attempt is made to reorganize a school for the purpose of providing additional space for students, a sampling of patron opinion such as that used in the present study, would serve to alert school administrators and school boards to any possible public reactions that might prove disruptive to the system (such disruption as occurred in Covington, Kentucky, in September, 1971, which resulted in a court ruling that overturned a school board's decision to go on double sessions).

8. A knowledge of the public's attitudes concerning the implementation of new programs, such as vocational education or kindergarten, may help school administrators and school boards do planning that will result in meaningful programs.

9. A knowledge of the voting public's opinions as to why school building proposals are failing at the polls could result in meaningful exchange of information that will not
only help school boards get the funds needed for the schools but also will inform the public of the plight of the schools in their attempts to get the necessary funds for growth and modernization.

Assumption

The basic assumption of this study was: There is a meaningful relationship between opinions held by voters, both relative to taxation and to their general satisfaction with schools, and their willingness to tax themselves for support of schools.

Questions to Be Investigated

1. Is the general satisfaction level of the voting public concerning schools high, medium, or low?
2. Is there a perceived urgency of building needs on the part of the voting public?
3. Is there a preferred way of providing additional space for students? (Examples: new construction, temporary buildings or additions)
4. Is the voting public likely to support a tax increase to provide additional facilities?
5. Are there one or more communication channels that are likely to yield positive results for a school system trying to influence public opinion?
6. What is the preference of voters for raising funds by means other than the property tax?
7. What voter reaction is likely to occur should double sessions become necessary in order to provide classrooms for students?

8. What voter reaction is likely to occur should a twelve-month school term become necessary in order to provide classrooms for students?

9. What voter reaction is likely to occur when new programs, which obviously will cost more money, are proposed?

10. What is the voter reaction to the recent ruling in California which declared the property tax to be unconstitutional for financing of schools?

11. What are the opinions of respondents as to why voters are turning down a higher percentage of school building proposals now than they did ten years ago?
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature relating to the problem identified in Chapter I is reviewed under four major headings: 1) Introduction, 2) Goals and Purposes of Education, 3) Responsibility for Financing Education, and 4) The Property Tax.

Introduction

The literature that has been written regarding the financial plight of schools in America today is practically unquantifiable and the volumes continue to mount. Nevertheless, this subject is one that is very realistic and challenging for study. The present writer has attempted to present current material and to present background information that will satisfactorily serve two related purposes: first, to serve as a review and summary for the reader already aware of this problem; second, to serve as a brief source of information for the school board member, administrator, or layman not presently knowledgeable regarding the problems associated with school funding.

The year 1971 saw several events and conditions develop that are likely to have significant impact upon school funding for some time to come. Burdin (1972) attempted to recapitulate some of the events of the past year that might be categorized as either "extremely significant" or "very significant." He summarized
several events of national concern to illustrate their importance as follows:

A first-ever federal court ruling in Texas that dependence on local property taxes produces unconstitutional inequities in educational opportunities; administration study of a 3 percent federal sales tax to shift school financing from its present dependence on local property taxation; National Educational Finance Project proposal that federal share of school financing be raised from present average of 7 percent to 22 percent (p. 2).

Concerning the financial plight of schools, Burdin reported other events as follows:

Temporary closing of schools in Ohio, Missouri, Wisconsin, California, and Washington; proposal by Philadelphia school superintendent Dr. Mark R. Shedd that largest cities' schools be nationalized to prevent their collapse; significant decline in state support for higher education--public's growing disenchantment with educational costs (p. 2).

The recapping of the 1971 events, as enumerated above, tends to illustrate a concern shared by many that traditional financing of public education may no longer be adequate to meet the educational needs of our nation.

Major social and economic changes of the 1950's and the 1960's have brought many pressures upon our educational structure, the most obvious of which is the growth in numbers of people, both as to a total population and as to students in the classroom. Mushkin (1961), however, suggested that we must look at other than sheer numbers of people for answers to the problems surrounding public finance. He explained that public expenditures and tax loads have increased in greater proportion than the population has increased.

What then, if public education is to be adequately financed, is the answer to many of the problems caused by lack of adequate

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funds for schools? The most comprehensive attempt to get at some of the underlying causes of unsatisfactory levels of financing in the public schools has been done by the National Educational Finance Project. Chapter I made reference to this study and reported it to be the first comprehensive study of school finance since 1933.

Some writers give the casual reader the impression that nothing significant has been done in the field of educational finance since Mort (1933) laid the groundwork for our present system of calculating expenditures on a per classroom unit basis. Such writers have failed to take account of the fact that much has been said and written about this problem since 1933.

As the present writer surveyed the vast amount of literature, it has become increasingly clear that several factors heretofore not considered in their relationship to each other, are now getting attention. Although, as was pointed out by Pellegrin (1962), few of us will fault the principle that public education is the public's business, nevertheless, much controversy has developed as to who is responsible for financing education. Then, too, consideration must be given to the fact that our financial structure must support both the increased demands of public education and other governmental services.

That governmental structure and educational finances are closely related was amply stated by Johns and Thomas (1969). In this previously cited study they reported:

In this federal system of government, judgments are made about educational need at all these levels of government. On the basis of these judgments, each governmental level
makes decisions about the provision of services, and about the allocation of financial resources (p. 13).

Also, the past two decades saw considerable confusion arising over the goals and purposes of education in America. The problems arising from a lack of clearly defined goals and purposes for American education are further compounded by what is perceived by many writers as inequality of opportunity to enjoy the benefits of educational programs already provided.

Goals and Purposes of Education

How sure are Americans of the goals and purposes of education today? Not so sure according to Haubrich (1971); he stated, "The reality of today's schools beclouds the hopes, aspirations and dreams of many students and parents, and those of thousands of teachers and administrators who are searching for 'a better way' (p. 269)." In attempting to assess how we arrived at this disparity, he stated:

What we are confronted with in this over-bureaucratized, over-specialized, over-polluted, over-administered, and over-debilitated system of schooling is that the circumstances which have led to the creation of an unequal school system have also created the barriers and constraints now threatening the very life of the public school (p. 275).

Researchers Hickrod and Sabulao (1969) found that during the period 1950 to 1960 certain social and economic inequalities increased in the suburban school districts in several of our large metropolitan areas in the United States. The most revealing aspect of their study was summarized in the statement, "What we have determined is that suburbs are becoming less alike among themselves (p. 1)."
Furthermore, from their research can be drawn two other findings that are significantly related to the problem presented in the present paper. Hickrod and Sabula reported:

What we did not know was that dependency of expenditure upon resources was increasing with the passage of time. Toward the end of the decade this dependency was so great that we have concluded that an administrator's behavior has very little to do with the level of funding in a school district. The level of funding appears to be overwhelmingly determined by forces outside the control of the administrator. Secondly, we have uncovered evidence which suggests that attempts of many state grant-in-aid formulae to "equalize" expenditure levels and tax effort among local school districts have met with very little success. In fact, they have failed so badly in some areas that a situation of "aid to the wealthy" had developed by the end of the decade (p. 1).

The realization that has occurred concerning the inequality of educational opportunity has caused considerable review of the goals that we seek for our educational system. Wise and Manley-Casimir (1971), in attempting to define educational equality, said, "Equality of educational opportunity exists when a child's educational opportunity does not depend upon either his parents' economic circumstances or his location within the state (p. 63)."

We shall see later that equality of educational opportunity defined in this manner furnished the logic for several court rulings that are reported to be milestones in the area of financial support for schools.

Silberman (1970) also shed light in the arena of declining support for public schools. He suggested that schools fail to meet the goals and aspirations set for them by society, not because of malicious intent but because of "mindlessness." If "mindlessness"
is the lack of serious thought about educational purpose as Silberman suggests, then his suggestion has rather obvious implications for educational leaders. They must give much thought to their purpose and must find the "... ways [in] which techniques, content, and organization fulfill or alter purpose (p. 11)." He goes one step more by stating, "And we must persuade the general public to do the same (p. 11)."

The relationship between failure of people working in education to reach definable goals and a growing disenchantment with public education (with its resultant decline in financial support) has certainly not gone unnoticed by the entire profession. Many states, some under pressure from legislators, have instituted a form of state assessment, designed to provide data regarding the quality and progress of the state's educational system. In Michigan, for example, such a step was taken during the 1969-70 school year. Porter (1970) reported that 17.5 million dollars in State funds had been allocated to provide compensatory money to schools determined as having concentrations of children in low-achieving and low-socioeconomic status. He also expressed a belief that involvement of local citizens and educators benefited the second year's assessment plans. Other states, such as Kentucky, have taken steps in this same direction.

To say that complete agreement exists concerning the worthwhileness of state assessment to aid in reaching educational goals would be to disregard the available facts. Cansfield (1970), in referring to the Michigan Assessment of Education, stated, "The
assessment program is based on no educational goals, and therefore cannot give direction for educational improvement in the State (p. 14)."

Although state assessment programs, at least in their present forms, are not near perfection there can be little doubt that in the future the data gained through state assessment programs and their subsequent use in setting educational goals and objectives will be mandatory. This writer found that the literature supports the fact that the notion of educational output being an unmeasurable quantity is gone. The literature is becoming increasingly clear that school finance in the future will be closely tied to some form of assessment and assessment surely will be based upon cooperatively developed goals.

The necessity for assessment was exemplified by Alexander (1969). He stated that, "Adequate methods of finance must necessarily involve the assessment of the dimensions of educational need in order to determine what constitutes sufficiency and equality of funding (p. 207)."

The above-mentioned study (Alexander, 1969) pointed to examples that lead one to the conclusion that many of the failures of financial programs in the schools are a result of poor direction or goal setting. This inadequate goal setting, coupled with a lack of evaluation procedures, has doomed the programs either to failure or at best to only second rate success. Alexander said:

For example, in many state school districts consolidation is professed to be an important educational objective, yet state funds are provided which have the effect of rewarding school districts that do not consolidate (p. 211).
Although educators and the citizenry have not yet reached a succinct and clear understanding of the goals and purposes of education, much work is being done to help mold a manageable guide for today's educational leaders. One thing is clear, however, adequate funding for education will come only when the public can be assured that some reasonable means of achieving their educational aspirations is possible.

The literature suggests several, often repeated, educational needs that seem to reflect the present aspirations for public education.

Smith (1965), writing for the Council for Basic Education, indicated that in our sincere attempt to educate all the children of all the people we have apparently gotten away from the basic purpose of the schools. The Council's writings have emphasized that we fail to place proper priority on the basic subjects which underlie all other educational activities.

Weisbord (1970) considered that the schools have failed to preserve the "democratic ideal." He pointed to student unrest as a manifestation of this failure. Furthermore Weisbord said:

But students are not the only protesters. In many places, parents, too, dissatisfied with what they see as low-quality education, have organized to influence schools in ways other than through school board meetings. Taxpayers, reluctant to part with more money as student unrest and racial tensions increase, have voted down bond issues necessary to keep public schools operating (p. 2).

Thus far the writer has attempted to substantiate, from the literature, the obvious fact that a lack of relevant, meaningful goals for our schools has contributed to the reluctance on the part...
of voters to provide additional school funding. To go one step further, the literature offers indications that educators have somehow failed to comprehend those factors which voters use as measures of the job which their schools are doing.

There follows a discussion of the responsibility for financing education, which is closely tied to the public's apparent unwillingness to support schools at a level considered adequate by those responsible for administering them.

Responsibility for Financing Education

Gallup (1970), in the Second Annual Survey of "The Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools," conducted by Gallup International, reported a majority of the voters polled as saying that they would not be willing to raise taxes to provide more money for schools. Furthermore, they favored transferring the support for local schools from local real estate taxes to a taxing source of the state government.

Gallup's surveys in 1969 and 1970 revealed that the major problem facing the public schools—at least in the opinion of the American People—was discipline. However, public opinion changed. Gallup (1971) stated, "In 1971 finance—how to pay for the schools—is cited most often as the biggest problem with which the local public schools must deal (p. 35)." According to Gallup, in 1971 voters continued to express their reluctance to vote for school bond issues and reaffirmed their previously expressed preference for a shift from local financing to state government.
Several studies have been conducted to determine why voters react as they do when presented with bond issue proposals. The vast number and the extensiveness of such studies are reflections of the concern in educational circles about how to solve the problem of adequate financing for schools.

Davis (1970) investigated voters' opinions in an attempt to determine if their lack of support for a bond proposal was indicative of dissatisfaction with the school system. His survey revealed that a majority of school patrons felt satisfied with the schools in their community. Yet, less than a month prior to his investigation they had rejected a high school bond proposal. Davis commented that when patrons have favorable attitudes toward their schools but fail to support them financially, then the "why" of the matter should be investigated. He also gave some hint as to the cause of this phenomenon. In his study he found that homes without children presented special communications problems to boards of education. Davis continued by citing the failure of boards of education and administrations to consult public opinion regarding the preparation and implementation of policy as a major cause for the defeat of school bond proposals. As a means of helping school patrons to understand and appreciate the contributions of education, he called for school boards to develop adequate communications procedures for making school patrons more aware of educational needs and goals. He specifically recommended that additional studies be conducted to investigate the relationships between the opinions that voters have of their schools and their financial support for schools.
In a study in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Boozer (1969) investigated the voting publics of that city. The purpose of his study was to provide a basis for planning and conducting future millage elections in Grand Rapids. There, as in many other places, it was found that most citizens were of the opinion the local schools were doing a satisfactory job. Boozer also found that voter participation in school affairs increased the likelihood of a favorable response to a millage proposal. Also, a favorable vote can be expected for projects involving special education, adult remedial and trade programs, individualized instruction, smaller classes, extended use of buildings for all citizens and construction of new facilities.

Powell (1963), in attempting to identify the factors involved in the failure and subsequent success of a voted tax for school buildings, approached the problem of determining voter opinion by dividing voters into opponents and proponents. He concluded that the tabulation of ballots recorded a negative reaction from a sizeable minority of the voters in each of the five districts, but that no common pattern of opposition was observed in the successful campaigns.

The literature appears to support the view expressed in the previously-cited Davis study (1970) that the public wants more information about the schools and what the schools are trying to do. It appears, however, the job is not accomplished by school boards and administrators trying to sell their preconceived plans. Additional indications are that an outreach approach by school people is needed. That is, the situation seems to call for going
to the public, seeking their views concerning matters which will be
decided at the polls. Thus, it would seem that educators have at
least a limited responsibility for engendering financial support
for education.

In studies conducted in some of Ohio's most financially
troubled districts, Hoyle and Wiley (1971) concluded that moderate
to strong support for schools existed in most districts and the
people held the teachers in high regard. They summarized their
research as follows:

The schools are about as effective as the people want them
to be. Our assumption is that in Ohio, at least, levies
are failing because of excessive property taxes, not
because people are dissatisfied with schools (p. 50).

In attempting to understand something of the responsibility for
financing education, some idea of how the present system came into
being should prove helpful. Johns and Morphet (1964) described its
development in this manner, "... during the early history of
this country, even elementary schools were financed largely by
rates or fees paid chiefly by the patrons of the schools." And,
"Gradually the idea was accepted that all public schools should be
supported by public tax funds (p. 17)."

The publication cited above (Johns and Morphet, 1964) added
insight into the dimensions of involvement by educators in the
responsibility for financing education. They reported that in this
country educators cannot determine the amount of financial support
for schools; they can only make recommendations. The basic
decisions relative to financial support for schools are made
directly or indirectly by the citizens themselves--directly at
the polls, indirectly through an elected board of education.

Also attesting to the concept of citizen responsibility for education, Dochterman and Beshoar (1970) stated: "Under our system of government the primary responsibility rests with the citizens of each state." Continuing they said:

Implicit in the legal provisions to conduct an educational program at any level are two major concepts that should be kept in mind at all times: equality of adequate opportunities for learners and equity for taxpayers who must provide the necessary financial support (p. 6).

The concept of citizen control of education is well established; therefore, whether schools and educational institutions are to be adequately financed is, for the most part, outside the direct control of the profession. One must examine the financial structure of the various governmental units to arrive at some appreciation of the technical aspects of the problem of determining responsibility for adequately financing education.

The literature reveals that considerable discussion has taken place over the years as to the level of government that should be most responsible for the important task of educating young people to live in a free society. The main issue has been the proportion of the total bill for education that is assigned to the federal, state or local government, rather than whether or not education is being funded at a sufficient level.

Certain trends in school funding were apparent more than ten years ago. Stoops and Rafferty (1961) reported a trend toward more state financial support, accompanied by more federal money for education. Also, they reported a trend toward increased use of
public relations. The tendency is, they reported, to collect and evaluate public opinion as well as to interpret the school program, rather than to merely justify it.

The trends mentioned above have, over the past ten years, applied generally to every state and local school district throughout the nation. Perhaps it is significant to note that the literature indicates educators have become fully cognizant of the fact that interpretation of the school program to the citizens is a very necessary part of educational leadership. And, since congressmen, legislators and school board members are accountable to the citizens, the noticeable increase in public relations on the part of school administrators is by no means unassociated with the current roles of local, state, and federal governments in raising funds for schools.

There have been suggestions that reflect a point of view that financing education is a function of our national government. Hickman (November, 1971) reported that Philadelphia school superintendent Mark Shedd indicated, while witnessing before a committee of the United States Senate, that financial collapse of school systems in the nation's twenty-five biggest cities is a possibility, and that he gave testimony that these systems should be nationalized to save them. Shedd was reported to have said also that the, ". . . job of rescuing the nation's urban schools from disaster simply has become too big for the limited resources of the state and local governments (p. 35)."
Although the responsibility of the federal government in school funding is at present only partially defined, there is little doubt that the percentage of funding for schools coming from the federal level is far less than adequate when compared with the revenue raising ability of the federal government. According to Brazer (1970), the Federal Government's contributions to public school revenues has reached $2.5 billion, but this still accounts for less than seven percent of the total. The fact that this meager effort at the federal level has been scrutinized for some time was suggested by Sufrin (1962). He concluded a discussion of the acts relating to federal involvement in educational funding by stating, "Federal grants and assistance have been small compared to the educational burden borne by the states and local governments (p. 2)." The often expressed concern that federal funding will bring with it federal control was dealt with by Sufrin in his discussion of federal assistance to education having an implication for national standards. He assumed that the federal government must have some educational standards in mind that are in the national interest, "... else federal aid becomes merely an exercise in the redistri­bution of income among the states (p. 39)."

Two alternatives, general aid and categorical aid, have been used in the distribution of federal funds to the states to meet educational goals. Brazer (1970), cited above, expressed concern about the limiting factors of categorical aid. In addition, he voiced his preference for general aid over categorical aid. He expressed the view that categorical aid is limited to encouragement
for raising local educational goals to some level deemed to be in
the interest of the state or nation. Concerning the matter of
general federal aid, Brazer suggested a distribution of finances
in a manner that would assure each state aid in an amount that,
"... when added to the state-local tax effort, would provide the
same amount per pupil in all states (p. 258)."

The picture of the distribution of school revenues for the
nation as a whole is considerably different at the state level than
at the federal. It is quite evident that historical and constitu­
tional responsibilities have had some effect upon the states as they
decide what proportion of the educational dollar will be state
monies. In a study previously cited (Brazer, 1970) it was reported
that the proportions are approximately 7 percent federal, 40 percent
state, and 53 percent local. He found these proportions to be some­
what misleading when considering state financing for schools because
of wide variances in the extent to which the states contribute.
Brazer found examples of this variance as follows: ". . . from as
little as 8.5 and 13.6 per cent revenue receipts in New Hampshire and
South Dakota to 87.0 per cent in Hawaii and 71 per cent in Delaware
and North Carolina (p. 239)."

Conant (1959) expressed concern for the need to improve state
funding for education. He said:

Either our state taxing machinery will have to improve
dramatically in many states, or Congress will have to start
larger annual appropriations for public schools, or public
education in many states will deteriorate or, at best,
stand still at the present unsatisfactory level (p. 57).
More recently, recognition of the need for immediate state help in funding schools was given by Lindsay (1971). He observed that in the long run a similar commitment would be needed from the federal government. As mayor of New York he spoke with a special concern for urban education.

Lindman (1963) outlined five rather distinct purposes of state support. These purposes are: 1) To promote school improvements by offering state aid for the adoption of these improvements, 2) To compensate school districts for programs they could not otherwise afford, 3) To provide a foundation program which will assure a certain level of financial support per child, 4) To give incentive for increased local tax effort, and 5) To provide revenues derived from state administered taxes which in effect broadens the school tax base.

Kentucky is an example of what a so-called "Minimum Foundation Program" can accomplish in increasing the ratio of state to local funding for school support. The State Minimum Foundation, which was established in 1954 and fully funded in 1956, provided the means whereby the 1952-53 state aid of 38 cents per school dollar increased to over 58 cents by 1962-63. However, from the school year 1962-63 until 1970-71 the proportions of state funds increased only slightly. Louisiana, Delaware and North Carolina are generally considered to be providing state funding for schools at a fairly high level. This is especially true of North Carolina because of the 70 percent state support given to all educational financing in the state.
In a discussion of foundation programs, Johns and Morphet (1964) stated certain underlying concepts that have since become quite important because of recent court decisions concerning school funding practices. They stated:

In practical terms, the foundation program concept implies and involves a plan for financing schools that requires equity for taxpayers as well as equity and adequacy of opportunity for students. It means that the resources of each state—and, by implication, of the nation—must be used to provide the financial support required to meet basic educational needs. Thus, the most wealthy citizens and the people in the most wealthy communities should be expected to make as much financial effort to support the foundation program of education as the least wealthy (p. 263).

Recently courts in California, Minnesota, Texas, and New Jersey have ruled that "equality of opportunity"—a long accepted national goal—is related to school funding practices. More will be said later in this paper concerning equality of opportunity as it relates to the problem of providing needed funds for schools.

In an attempt to determine the latest developments with respect to state support for schools, Peck (1971) surveyed all 50 states. His data reflected percentage changes in state support from the 1969-70 school year to the 1971-72 school year. He found that only six states expected a decrease in state support, whereas, twenty-one states expected an increase. Twelve states forecasted no change in the percent of money for schools from the state level and the remaining eleven states reported that they were unable to make such an estimate.

Hecker (1970), speaking in support of a 100 percent state funding plan proposed for Michigan, made two basic points. First,
he expressed the belief that the state is wealthy enough to support a good educational system for all boys and girls; and second that, "Dependence upon unequal local tax bases, unequal local leadership and unequal local voter willingness to support equal educational opportunities is absurd (p. 56)." Also speaking for full state funding, Rudiger and Pollack (1971) struck the one recurring note being sounded by most writers. They said there are, "Arguments for and against the idea—but mostly for (p. 18)."

Matthis (1970) made several observations that were in opposition to plans for 100 percent state funding of education. He observed that the give and take within the school district is an important means of local participation, and having to sell the needs of education to the electorate has been productive for everyone concerned. He further observed that the principle of 100 percent state support is akin to the "let someone else do it" philosophy. Matthis also commented that an overhaul of the assessment procedures and dealing firmly with the matter of tax-exempt property would make an immeasurable improvement on the financial situation in the local district.

Matthis revealed a short lived reluctance to speak in opposition to an issue such as 100 percent state support for schools. He pointed to a "band wagon" like momentum that is developing against local support. Certainly his reluctance was not without validity; the evidence seems clear, taxpayers (including those with children in school), educators, and legislators are expressing opposition to further increases in local taxes. However, it seems essential to
point out that talk is about the only action that has been taken concerning this issue.

To concern oneself with the aspects of local responsibility for educational financing is in essence a discussion of the property tax structure. Since the subject of local responsibility will get a somewhat lengthy review under the next major heading of this paper, a short discussion will suffice at this point.

Norton (1966, Ed.) reported a very significant statement that gives immediate insight into the problem of financial responsibility at the local level. The statement was made for the Committee on Tax Education and School Finance of the National Education Association. In 1958 the Committee stated, "The entire fiscal structure of local government rests upon the general property tax (p. 100)."

It would seem, in fact, that the school district is in competition with other local governmental agencies for funds.

The literature reveals considerably more opposition to local school support than is revealed in its favor. This almost overwhelming opposition seems to have some relationship to the property tax which is the base for most local school support. Table 2-1 shows a comparison of local support for education with that of state and national support.

A previously cited bulletin by the Committee on Tax Education and School Finance (Norton, 1966, Ed.) urged schoolmen to work with laymen for reform of the property tax. The condemnation of the property tax by the Committee was based on these counts: 1) Equity—Distribution of the tax among taxpayers is not based upon current
TABLE 2-1
Primary and Secondary School Revenues, Source by Level of Government, Selected Years, 1959-60 to 1969-70*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Total Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Millions of Dollars)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Per Cent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959-60</td>
<td>14,747</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>5,768</td>
<td>8,327</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>25,357</td>
<td>1,997</td>
<td>9,920</td>
<td>13,439</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>31,092</td>
<td>2,472</td>
<td>12,232</td>
<td>16,388</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>38,476</td>
<td>2,545</td>
<td>15,645</td>
<td>20,286</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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equity because assessments are not current, 2) Productivity--
Inelastic tax rates and debt limits which are statutory or constitutional sometimes prohibit increased assessments, thereby causing the tax to fail in its ability to meet demands for increased funding, and 3) Measure of Local Fiscal Ability--Is not a measure of the relative fiscal capacity of local districts because of obsolete assessments, thereby making it invalid for purposes of equalization in the apportionment of state aid or for levying a state property tax (p. 105).

The so-called "taxpayers revolt" of the late 1960's certainly had its most noticeable effect at the local level of governmental financing. Buchanan (1970) said, "There is little question but that such a 'revolt' did emerge in the late 1960's (p. 277)." The literature appears to support this contention that a revolt did occur, however, the exact cause remains unclear. The cause of the
phenomenon may be wholesale price-level increases, or too much selectivity in public programs designed to benefit the general public. However, more specifically related to education, it may be the tying of racial issues to educational institutions, the lack of controls on disruptions by student radicals, or education's failure to fulfill its role as a transmitter of society's values. All of the above have been advanced as possible causes for lack of school support at the local level.

To deduce from the evidence available that the support for schools belongs at the local level and that taxpayers have abdicated this responsibility may be to speak in error. The financial plight of the public schools during the late 1960's and continuing into the 1970's may be a reflection, as the literature suggests, of the public's confused attitude toward all of the causes that have been advanced as possible explanations for this phenomenon. The tax-paying public may be saying that now is the time for setting educational goals.

The public has struck at the educational pocketbook through their votes against increased property taxes. These votes were cast close to home and they affected the schools close to home.

In an attempt to cope with negative voter reactions "campaigning"--for school elections--became a major function in many school districts. The National School Public Relations Association (1969), after summarizing many findings about the psychological attitudes of voters and nonvoters, concluded that campaign strategies are more sophisticated than in former years. This is a well known fact;
however, just how much educational talent and financing is needed in order to keep the campaign machinery going is not so adequately documented. In-depth studies designed to reveal the extent to which educational resources have been diverted away from the instruction of students for the purpose of promoting school elections are not readily available.

Many blueprints have appeared that are intended to help school boards and administrators to design special bond issue campaigns. Hanson (1969) proposed just such a blueprint. He urged school boards to invest some real money in courting the public and to continuously poll the community. To get that "yes" vote, he said, "The bond issue campaign should begin at least eight months in advance of the day voters will go to the polls (p. 68)." Thus, it would seem that school boards and administrators are more and more expected to be campaigners.

In sociological studies (Beal, Hartman, Lagomarcino and Price, 1967) in Iowa, it was found that voters criticized their schools "sometimes" or "fairly often." Yet, these researchers found that apparently more criticism existed in those districts that passed their bond issues than in those that had failures. Such behavior on the part of voters has complicated the work of school election campaigners.

In an earlier exploratory study (Bean, Lagomarcino and Hartman, 1966) other somewhat disturbing conclusions were reported. Analyses of economic variables produced no significant differences between the successful and unsuccessful districts in school bond campaigns.
It was found, however, that differences occurred in correlations between communications media usage and the outcome of the election. The study concluded that, "Most of the communications media were negatively related to election success (p. 28)."

As additional ammunition for the thorough, dedicated campaigner, Marlowe (1970) said, after studying voter behavior in Ohio school bond and tax elections, that, "The November general election remains the best opportunity for most Ohio districts to pass tax issues (p. 163)."

The examples cited above (Hanson, 1969; Beal, Hartman, Lagomarcino and Price, 1966, 1967; Marlowe, 1970) serve only to show the extensiveness of the campaign process and to give the reader cause to wonder if these resources could be better directed toward the education of children. However, the literature clearly indicates that for this ideal situation to exist, new and more efficient ways have to be found to finance schools. Allen (1971) referred to the general pattern of support for schools as very often being restrictive. He summarized the problem as follows, "Most attempts thus far to modernize our system of school finance have been of a piecemeal and patchwork variety. Fortunately, the call is now growing for a major overhaul (p. 15)."

Concluding this somewhat general discussion of the aspects relating to the present financial dilemma of schools, attention can now be directed to specific problems associated with the property tax.
The Property Tax

In a personal interview conducted by the present writer, Johns (1972), Director, National Educational Finance Project, stated: "The property tax is the most inequitable—that is to say, the most regressive—of any major tax levied."

Schwartz (1971) received a similar response when he asked U.S. Commissioner of Education Sidney P. Marland about the federal commitment to education. Commissioner Marland spoke of raising the present six to seven percent federal participation to a point at least 25 percent of the total cost of education. Furthermore, he stated: "Steadily increasing federal participation can offset the regressive nature of tax resources at the local level (p. 37)."

The indictments against the property tax as a revenue instrument for schools have been quite well documented. Claimants generally suggest that the tax is both wrong in theory and unworkable in practice. Shannon (1965) indicated, however, that the property tax could be made more effective and equitable. He discredited three of the sharpest criticisms of the tax as follows: 1) Poor revenue performance—it has been remarkable in that it produces about 90 percent of all local governmental tax revenue, 2) Unequal assessment—laws are on the books that provide for all taxable property to be assessed at an estimated market value but the property tax is a victim of maladministration, and 3) Regressive characteristics—these can be dealt with by gearing property tax relief programs to household income criteria.
Opponents and proponents of the property tax have made it increasingly clear that as a revenue source it has some advantages and some disadvantages. To deny its past and present importance for local governments would be to disregard the facts. Due (1970) reported that despite an expansion of local nonproperty taxes in recent years, local governments are still relying on the property tax for 86 percent of their revenue. He further stated: "... and the school districts received 99 percent of their tax revenue from this source (p. 294)."

In School Management's Cost of Education Index (Cuneo, 1972, Ed.) it was stated that the public is demanding more from its schools while demanding a smaller tax burden. The property tax as a revenue source has been almost exhausted in attempts to meet demands for services. The above-cited study (Cuneo, 1972, Ed.) further stated:

The situation has become so critical that some schools have been forced to close for short periods ... Parents in school districts with low property valuations have resorted to legal action to secure the equal protection of the Fourteenth Amendment (p. 26).

Hack and Woodard (1971) pointed out a much voiced criticism of the property tax by contrasting former times, when ownership of property was a measurement of the ability to pay taxes, and the present, where, "There is usually a very low correlation between the value of the real and personal property held and the holder's equity in this property (p. 256)."

In most discussions of the property tax two very dominant and basic issues seem to emerge. First, a definition of the property to be taxed, and second, the value to be placed on the property.
Jarvis, Gentry and Stephens (1967) reported these broad definitions of property:

**Real Property.** This type of property is usually thought of as land itself or items fixed to the land. Real property provides the major portion of the monies received from this tax.

**Tangible Personal Property.** This property is less easily located for taxing purposes because unlike "real property" it can be moved from one taxing district to another. Such items as automobiles, construction equipment and livestock are considered tangible personal property.

**Intangible Personal Property.** Property that can be classified under this grouping is the hardest to get on the tax books, as they are taxable only at the legal residence of the taxpayer. Because intangibles are difficult to locate, intangible personal properties are not a stable source of revenue. Generally, property falling into this category includes: "... stocks, bonds, accounts receivable, patent rights and insurance policies (p. 16)."

State and local laws are quite specific when it comes to defining the classifications of property that is to be taxable for local schools and governments. The real breakdown in the property tax system begins to appear in the mechanism used for the assessment of property. Recognition of the assessment problem was made by Hornbostel (1967). He said, "Much of our effort that goes into trying to foster and maintain a viable school district system is wasted where the property base remains on assessed valuation (p. 111)."
The problem of property assessment was viewed by Hack and Woodard (1971) in another way. They observed that:

The major determinate [sic] of taxable value is the selling price, and there are usually an insufficient number of sales of industrial and commercial property to enable the tax administrator to fix a value (p. 256).

Throughout the literature the weakness of the assessment function is attributed, to some degree at least, to weak and incompetent assessment personnel at the local level. Occasionally it is said that assessors, bowing to political pressure, are hindering a uniform, equitable assessment program. According to the Michigan Education Association (1970) this problem can be overcome because property valuation differences by the various local taxing units in Michigan can be adjusted. This is accomplished by the County Board of Supervisors acting as the County Equalization Board. Also, between-county differences can be adjusted by the State Tax Commission. The MEA further stated, however, that:

... making adjustments for differences in assessing practice (whether between local taxing units or between counties) does not eliminate inequalities between taxpayers within a single taxing unit if such inequalities exist in the original assessment (p. 7).

Another problem arises when assessment procedures at the local level keep the assessed value of property at a low percentage of its true value. Many districts must sell bonds in order to finance capital improvements, and low assessments do not yield sufficient bonding capacity to meet building needs. The above fact was reported in a joint study by the National Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities and the Idaho Education Association (1965).
McLure (1967) in a follow-up study found that attempts to readjust assessments in Idaho to a stated ratio of true cash value had other undesirable effects. He observed:

For example, the assessment values on public utilities will be reduced from somewhere around 31 percent on the average as estimated, to 20 percent. Those communities with a high proportion of utility property in relation to other property will be hit harder than those with little of this type of property. On the other hand, as properties of home owners and other individuals increase from present assessed value up to the 20 percent ratio there will be an increase in the tax base. The general effect of all of this shifting will be to increase the tax load on residential property and farm property, and to decrease the load on utilities (p. 8).

Thus far, the evidence available to this writer has shown that the system of property assessment for tax purposes is by no means perfect. To further complicate a somewhat inadequate arrangement of assessment, many school systems have found themselves hampered by lack of fiscal autonomy. In some school systems the school superintendent and school board prepare a budget and request the necessary funds from a city council, county court or other governmental agency. These bodies, with their control of tax levies and control of budgets, in effect, have control over the entire school program.

An investigation by the National Education Association Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Knoxville, Tennessee (1967) showed that the mayor and council not only made substantial budget cuts but even exercised item-by-item control of the budget. Furthermore, additional monies never reached the schools after the passage of a one-cent local sales tax that: "... was intended as a supplement to, rather than a mere replacement of, existing property tax support for schools (p. 19)." The
Investigation also revealed that subsequent budgets represented a slight dollar increase in local support for schools; but while the numbers of dollars went up, the percentage of local support declined.

A special study (National Education Association—School Finance in Arizona: A State-Local Partnership, 1970) reported several significant dissatisfactions of taxpayers about expenditures and support for education. The following statement from the above study appropriately applies to the present discussion, "School costs are increasing more rapidly than the tax base, particularly the property tax base (p. 14)." In addition, the study pointed to a practice that is somewhat common in the assessment of property for taxation. The study indicated that even when it is required by law, oftentimes property is not assessed at its true cash value. A 1963 Arizona court ruling upheld the charge that certain properties were being assessed at a ratio in excess of that applied to other properties. This decision of the court is said to have brought about a legislative reappraisal program which resulted in several major changes in the total tax structure in Arizona. One such change resulted in statewide application of assessment ratios for different property classes.

A similar study in Kansas (National Education Association, 1968) broadens the range of knowledge about problems associated with the property tax. It was reported that local schools in Kansas receive more funds from the property tax than any other governmental unit. This heavy dependence upon revenues from the
taxation of property has caused various problems. The study reported this to be a factor that caused long delay in the reorganization of local school districts. It was also stated in the previously mentioned study in Arizona that needs for education have out-distanced the expansion of the tax roll.

Rossmiller, Hale and Frohreich (1970) summarized recent findings by authorities in the field of educational finance. They alluded to recent recognition of the fact that it is important to consider the total tax levy and not just the tax levy for school purposes because the same tax base is used by schools and other local units of government. This base is the property tax. They also called attention to the increasing fiscal demands and declining tax bases of the central cities, while at the same time recognizing a concern for "... fiscal problems and difficulties encountered by municipalities and school districts which serve sparsely populated and/or impoverished rural areas (p. 2)."

One of the most theoretical and comprehensive discussions of the property tax and its related issues can be found in Benson (1968). Benson discussed the question "What is a good tax?" In answer to this question, he said, "There are four main criteria: equity, economic effects, cost of administration and compliance, and yield (p. 92)." When applying these criteria to the property tax it becomes increasingly clear that this tax falls somewhat short of perfection. In terms of equity it appears to be quite regressive—that is—the ratio of tax paid to income hits poor families harder than rich families. Benson also considers the
property tax inelastic in the way its yield responds to changes in income, therefore, because much of the local revenue comes from the property tax, the whole revenue system for financing schools is somewhat inelastic.

Many critics of the property tax have considered this inelasticity a serious factor in its inability to keep pace with the upward, changing costs of educational services. The inelasticity factor is especially operative in districts where there is little or no expansion of the property base, hence increases in the rate become necessary just to maintain current levels of educational services.

In Michigan, the Britton Committee (1969) described good taxes in a somewhat different way. The Committee said:

Insofar as possible they must be dependable, based on up-to-date and accurate data, applicable to the nature of the taxing unit, easy to collect and uniformly collectable, equitable, nonpreferential, not easily subject to abuse, relatively stable from year to year, and they must be adequate to accomplish the purposes for which they are authorized (p. 24).

In light of the above criteria the property tax meets well the tests of dependability and stability. It is also a high performer on the criterion of local administration. However, the Britton Committee readily points to certain defects on other measures, such as equity and inadequacy.

Hogan (1969) succinctly stated both the problem and a possible solution to the present property tax dilemma. He said:

Incorporation of property value increases into the tax base is a slow and unpopular process. State tax revenues . . . are more responsive than property taxes to changes in
income, hence are more reliable tax sources to meet their share of expenditure increases as they occur (p. 22).

Although Hogan was speaking specifically about state sales and income taxes, nevertheless, the basic idea of expanding local tax revenues to state tax revenues has picked up considerable momentum since the late 1960's. This writer found it quite interesting to watch the unfolding of the concept of expanding state tax revenues to meet local education costs. Especially significant in the documentation of the unfolding of this concept were the proceedings of the national conferences on school finance. These conferences have been held each year in locations across the nation, including New Orleans, Dallas and San Francisco.

Certainly, the idea of state administration of the property tax is not a new one. McLoone (1968) attempted to clarify the intent of an integrated state-local income-property-sales tax model that was at that time under consideration in Vermont. McLoone reported that, "The governor of Vermont does not propose state administration of the property tax, but he does propose state collection of the property tax receipts for the foundation program amount (p. 30)."

As reported, such a plan is designed to collect the available school tax money where it is, and distribute it through a state grant program (usually referred to as the foundation program) to the places where it is needed. Thus, the plan is said to accomplish two purposes, relieving some of the burden on the over-taxed and alleviating some of the educational inequalities associated with geographic location.
Throughout the literature, there appear references indicating that educational inequality (and social class difference) is somewhat supported by present school finance practices. In a recent study (Guthrie, Kleindorfer, Levin, & Stout, 1970) the question of whether the inequalities of public schools serve more to reinforce than to reduce certain social class distinctions was examined. The study presents evidence that children from privileged localities have good schools, while the less fortunate from poor localities have low quality schools. It was further reported that:

Consequently, at the end of the schooling process, initial social class differences are likely to have been magnified in a manner thereafter almost impossible to reduce. Moreover, contrary to conventional wisdom, evidence strongly suggests that present arrangements for financing public schools serve not to ameliorate, but rather encourage such inequalities (p. 94).

Rudiger and Pollack (1972) viewed the problem of inequality caused by school financing practices in the following manner. They stated, "... local property wealth has a direct relationship to school expenditures (and quality). State funds do relatively little to equalize opportunity (p. 20)."

Looking to the day-to-day, practical aspects of the apparent voter dissatisfaction with his rising taxes, it was reported (Furno & Doherty, 1970) that in 1969 less than half of the monies requested for school construction were approved by voters. Furthermore, 1969 saw bond approvals slip under 50% for the first time on record.

Indicating a worsening of the climate surrounding school bond issue problems, National School Boards Association (October 1970)
reported that, "Because of high interest costs, $417 million of the bonds offered between September 1968 and June 1969 were never sold (p. 12)."

A further setback for bond issues occurred when the United States Supreme Court recently upheld as constitutional state laws requiring more than a simple majority approval by voters. This decision on a West Virginia case also affected some twenty other states. In reporting this court ruling (Hickman, August 1971, Ed.), it was said that:

Each year, millions of dollars worth of bond issues are turned down after receiving more than 50 percent approval. Although nationwide statistics are not available, in West Virginia where the test case originated, seven recent issues lost by favorable votes ranging from 51.51 to 55.84 percent (p. 16).

Strangely, in the midst of the current period of negative voter reaction to school bond proposals, Gores (1971) has concluded that even though, as the decade begins, school construction bond issues are out of public favor this attitude will change by about 1973. Supporting the conclusion of Gores is Cuneo (June 1971, Ed.) in School Management's "1971 Cost of Building Index (CBI)." According to this report there seems to be a leveling off of the steady drop in approval of bond issues. This downward trend started in 1964.

Disenchanted voices speaking against the present system of financing education are coming through loud and clear. The literature and research found by the present writer supports the point of view that adequate funding for schools must be given high national priority. The National Education Association (1972), through NEA President Donald E. Morrison, recently criticized the President's
(Nixon) Commission on School Finance for failing to come to grips with the problems facing many of the school funding practices that have been challenged by the courts. Obviously he was referring to court rulings handed down in California, Minnesota, Texas and New Jersey declaring as unconstitutional certain practices associated with school funding. Basically, these rulings center around the contention that the property tax and some state aid formulas do not ensure an equal opportunity of education for all children.

Even though these decisions technically do not place a complete ban on the local property tax as a source of school support, they have already caused uneasy reactions among school leaders. One side effect has been reported by Henry (1972). He has said that:

Sales of school construction bonds across the nation are being hurt by recent court rulings that public school financing through property taxes is unconstitutional, investment bankers report.

And as a result of the court decisions, some school districts are having to pay slightly more interest to make their bonds more attractive to investors, they add (p. 10).

The California ruling (Serrano v. Priest, California Supreme Court, August 30, 1971) did not come as a surprise to persons having direct experience in educational finance. Governor McCall (1970) had said, "The courts are going to tell us soon and emphatically that we are denying some children a good education because of where they live (p. 16)." Even earlier (Wise, 1968) it had been suggested that large variances in expenditure levels among school districts could, in themselves, be in violation of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. Wise
further contended that "maximum-permissible-variance" in expenditures may, at some future date, be subject to guidelines set up by the courts.

In a review of the ruling by the seven justices of the California Supreme Court it was said (Resnick, 1972) that no legal blow was struck against the use of property taxes for financing education. The major assertion was made against the system of financing the schools mainly through local property taxes, not against the tax itself. This system, as was pointed out by the court, tends to discriminate against the poor. Wide variances in the tax bases of school districts produce a situation whereby educational opportunities afforded in a prosperous district are far better than those available in a poor district. Often conditions are such that affluent districts can provide a high quality educational program while paying lower taxes. Resnick's analysis of the application of the California ruling is that:

... at a given tax rate, a California school district must have an amount of wealth available to it which will produce the same per pupil expenditure as all other districts in the state which tax at that rate (p. 44).

Jordan (1972) has warned against premature interpretation of the California ruling as meaning eventual freedom from the ever-rising local property taxes. He stated, "The homely truth, however, is that property taxes are a convenient source of revenue, far too critical to the funding of various operations to be abandoned (p. 66)."

Whereas the California ruling was heralded to be both "revolutionary" and "a landmark school case," the decision handed down by
the United States District Court in San Antonio, Texas may have considerably more impact on the taxing structure that provides money for schools. Some observers are saying this because the Texas ruling came from a federal court and can therefore be appealed directly to a higher federal court.

In Demetrio P. Rodriguez, et al. v. San Antonio Independent School District, et al. (1971) it was ruled that:

This Court finds merit in plaintiffs' claim that the current method of state financing for public elementary and secondary education deprives their class of equal protection of the laws under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution (p. 1).

Judges Goldberg, Spears and Roberts directly struck the property taxation system. They said that:

This system assumes that the value of property within the various districts will be sufficiently equal to sustain comparable expenditures from one district to another. It makes education a function of the local property tax base (p. 2).

Furthermore, the Court heard expert testimony to the effect that state financial assistance in California does not serve to equalize the disparities among school districts. Also, it was pointed out that, "... the current system tends to subsidize the rich at the expense of the poor, rather than the other way around (p. 3)."

After similar rulings in California, Minnesota and Texas, New Jersey became the fourth state to have its system of school finance declared unconstitutional. In general, the New Jersey case substantiated the three previous rulings in that it declared as unconstitutional the wealth-connected inequities of that state's system for financing education. One example of this inequity was
cited to be that even the wealthiest districts were assured state aid under the state's minimum aid formula.

The aftermath of these court rulings quickened the attack on the system of school finance in many states. Over twenty states have subsequently had similar suits filed in their courts. Also, President Nixon has been reported to be considering a form of national sales tax to help finance public schools and to help reduce local property taxes. Burke (1971) reported a consequence of the so-called value-added tax. He said, "One consequence would be to narrow the educational gap between rich and poor school districts that stems from heavy reliance on local property taxes to finance public schools (p. 1)."

Webb (1971) gave recognition to the fact that the trend in school financing is away from heavy reliance on local property taxes and headed in the direction of increased state and federal support. He continued by offering seven improvements which would help local school boards to keep operating until financial help is forthcoming. Webb suggested: 1) the adoption of consistent assessment practices, 2) informing the public of the percentage of market value represented by local assessment, 3) seeking 100 percent market value assessments, 4) devising a method of payment of property taxes that does not hit the taxpayer one hard blow each year, 5) devising a way of protecting low-income families against tax overload, 6) elimination of the tax havens so that those capable of paying have to pay, and 7) consideration of a state-wide taxing district to decrease the inequities of resources among school districts (p. 31). Obviously

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several of these suggestions imply action from the legislatures of the states and are not within the powers of local boards of education.

The final volume of the five-volume report by the National Education Finance Project (Johns and Alexander, 1971) illustrated several finance models that make it possible to determine the degree of equity in a state's school finance program. These models were created by the NEFP researchers and represent a range of approaches. The model that illustrates extreme inequity among school districts is one relying completely upon local support to finance schools. Other, somewhat more promising, models that were set forth included a flat grant model that provides for each district to receive aid based solely upon a count of students, and a full state support model that would presumably eliminate local taxes for support of schools.

It seems appropriate to conclude this discussion of the property tax as a means of financial support for schools with mention of local nonproperty taxes. Moore (1971) discussed some of the factors associated with the increased utilization of nonproperty taxes. He said:

Some of these are the real or psychological burden of property taxes, possibility for higher yield, more direct relationship to "real" wealth, transfer of the tax burden to non-residents, advantage of special circumstances such as being a trade or industrial center, the economic impact of the tax, political and social pressures, and municipal overburden (p. 209).

Moore, cited above, considered the most important local non-property taxes levied for schools as being general sales, selective

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sales and income or payroll taxes. He also stated that, "Local sales taxes are generally regressive in effect." Moore continued, "Local income taxes are usually flat rate taxes on persons and/or business and tend to be proportional in effect rather than progressive (p. 211)."

The literature and related studies that were examined by the present writer seemed to support the following: 1) that a lack of relevant, meaningful goals for our schools has contributed to the reluctance on the part of voters to provide additional school funding; 2) that voter behavior in school finance elections appears to be related to the amount of information the public has about the school and the degree of public involvement in school matters; 3) that the financing of public education is in the hands of the citizenry; hence, professional educators should attempt to inform citizens about the schools and their needs; 4) that voters are expecting some plan of shared funding for schools to relieve them of part of the local responsibility; and 5) that the property tax, with its associated assessment problems, has fallen into serious public disfavor.

The available literature surrounding the problem presented in Chapter I has provided the conceptual framework for the design and methodology of the study. The following chapter is an attempt to make known to the reader the exact design and methods used in this investigation.
CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The design and methods used in this study are presented here under five major headings: 1) Review of the Problem, 2) The Sample, 3) Instrumentation, 4) Procedures, and 5) Limitations of the Study.

Review of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate voter attitudes toward providing additional financial support for schools. Specifically, the intent of the research was to determine what relationships might exist between opinions held by voters, both relative to taxation and to their general satisfaction with schools, and their willingness to tax themselves for support of schools.

The Sample

The Boyd County (Kentucky) School District was selected for this study because of the present investigator's knowledge and educational experience in that geographical area. Also, it was this investigator's belief that the study would complement other information, regarding public opinion, already available to the Boyd County Board of Education and its administrative staff. The Boyd County system has experienced considerable growth in recent years and this study could serve as a basis for planning a building program to meet expanding needs.
The 301 school patrons that were included in this sample were selected on the basis of the following criteria: 1) that the patron had residence in the Boyd County (Kentucky) School District; and 2) that the patron's name appeared on voter lists prepared by the Clerk of the Boyd County Court.

Since voter lists had been previously validated for residency by the Clerk of the Boyd County Court and since lists were current as of May 25, 1971, these lists were used to select the participants for this study.

In Boyd County there are four school districts with boundaries that are generally consistent with precinct boundaries. These districts are the Boyd County Public Schools, the Fairview Independent Schools, the Catlettsburg Independent Schools and the Ashland Independent Schools. Therefore, it became feasible to select the sample from only those precinct lists containing voters residing in the territory served by the Boyd County Public Schools. Only two precincts presented a special problem in selecting the sample. These two precincts were made up of voters served by both the Boyd County Public Schools and the adjacent Fairview Independent Schools. This problem was handled by isolating the names of those voters who were not intended to be part of the study; namely, those persons residing in the Fairview Independent School District.

It was determined that eleven voting precincts comprised the population from which a representative sample of 300 voters was to be drawn, and that the sample was to be proportional to the actual number of voters in each precinct. The sample drawn from each
precinct was calculated on the basis of an approximate ratio of 1 to 18 of the 5,382 registered voters whose names appeared on the precinct lists. This procedure yielded a study sample of 301 resident, registered to vote patrons of the Boyd County Public School District. A listing of the precincts, accompanied by the number of registered voters in each precinct and the total chosen for this study are shown in Table 3-1.

**TABLE 3-1**

Report of Sample Selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Precinct Number</th>
<th>Precinct Name</th>
<th>Registered Voters</th>
<th>Sample Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rockdale</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>England Hill</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Durbin</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>East Fork</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cannonsburg</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Princess</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Garner</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Hoods Creek</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Fairview</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Buckley</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5382</strong></td>
<td><strong>301</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instrumentation

The instrument that was used for this investigation was developed by the present investigator. Essentially, it consisted of three distinct parts: 1) Questions designed to yield information
of a demographic nature regarding the population sampled, 2) Statements designed to elicit from respondents their level of satisfaction concerning schools, and 3) Questions and statements constructed to elicit voter opinions about factors relative to bond issue proposals and taxation. The instrument asked for 52 possible responses from a respondent. The reader may acquaint himself with the instrument by referring to Appendix A.

A basic purpose for collecting the demographic data was to familiarize the reader with the personal characteristics of the respondents in this study. A second purpose was to stratify the sample by characteristics which would likely be related, in a meaningful way, to the responses given by the respondents in the rest of the questionnaire. Demographic data collected included:

1. Whether or not the participant had children in school
2. Whether or not the participant owned property in the Boyd County School District
3. Income level of the family
4. Whether or not the responses were prepared as an individual effort or a group effort

After providing the demographic data referred to above, each respondent was asked to indicate his satisfaction with the schools on ten factors relating to the school program. A rating scale of one to five was used for this purpose, with the lower number indicating unusual dissatisfaction and the higher number indicating unusual satisfaction with the schools.
The ten factors that made up the school satisfaction index were chosen with the intent of measuring voters' perceptions of school effectiveness. Although the complete questionnaire can be found in Appendix A, a brief statement about each factor should prove helpful to the reader at this point.

In an attempt to determine voters' attitudes toward their schools they were asked to rate the following:

1. Efforts put forth by the staff--Silberman (1970) spoke of the "mindlessness" of some educators

2. Staff's willingness to change and to try new ideas--Gallup (1970) includes change and innovation as a major item in an educational poll

3. Performance of the professional staff--Silberman (1970), Gallup (1970) found 67% of the people favored accountability

4. Degree of academic growth or acquisition of skills by students--Gallup (1970) found that 75% of the people favored some form of national testing to ascertain educational achievement of students


6. The staff's communication and cooperation with the community--Totten & Manley (1970)

7. The efforts of the staff to provide equal opportunities for all youth--ESEA Title Programs, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (1971) Yearbook
8. Staff's respect for students and parents—Friedenberg (1965), Silberman (1970)
10. Discipline—Gallup (1970) found discipline to be the greatest problem facing the schools

The purpose of the third section of the instrument was to elicit from the respondents opinions relating to taxation and the building needs of schools. Again, the reader may wish to refer to Appendix A for a full review of the questionnaire; however, the information requested in this part of the study was as follows:

1. A measure of the voters' perceptions of the urgency of school building needs

2. A measure of the voters' reactions to the various alternatives for providing additional classroom space for students

3. A measure of voters' willingness to support a tax increase for schools

4. A measure of voters' acceptance of the various means of communicating school information

5. A measure of voters' preferences for taxes other than the property tax for support of schools

6. A survey of the opinions of voters concerning the high percentage of failure of school building proposals

Prior to the initial mailing of the instrument three persons of diverse backgrounds were selected to react to it for clarity and completeness. Assisting this investigator in the above operation were two females and one male; a housewife, a secretary and a student.
Their report was such that no changes were deemed necessary in the questionnaire.

To introduce the study to those selected for the sample, a letter was written to accompany the instrument. This letter stated how the recipient came to be selected for the research project, the nature of the study and the anticipated value of the findings. Special care was taken to insure each respondent that confidentiality would be strictly observed. A copy of the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

The same letter that was used for the initial mailing of the questionnaire was also used for the follow-up mailing. However, the follow-up mailing included a personal note from the investigator urging the respondent to complete and return the questionnaire.

Procedures

The design of this study was based upon the principles of ex post facto inquiry. It was a field study aimed at discovering what relationships existed between opinions held by voters, either relative to taxation or to their general satisfaction with schools, and their willingness to tax themselves for support of schools.

The first mailing of the survey instrument (Voters' Opinion Questionnaire) went out to those selected for the sample in six precincts on November 18, 1971. This mailing totaled 129 questionnaires. Subsequent mailings on November 20, 21 and 22 contained 40, 60 and 72 questionnaires respectively and went to five different precincts.
Each questionnaire that was mailed was coded and a check list was utilized to record those that were returned. On the day following the first mailing, several questionnaires were returned to this investigator because the addressee could not be located. Once a questionnaire was returned to this investigator as being undeliverable, he immediately set about trying to locate the potential respondent by telephone or personal inquiry. As a result, questionnaires were delivered to all but twelve persons from the original sample.

Throughout the data collection period of this study the telephone was used extensively to contact persons from the sample to encourage them to participate. The reader can see by referring to Table 3-2 that this investigator's attempts at contacting non-respondents revealed thirty-one persons unwilling to participate in this project.

In Table 3-2 this writer has attempted to present a thorough report of the results of data collection efforts. The table does not indicate, however, that the collection period itself covered three and one-half months. The initial, mid-November mailing date for the questionnaire proved to be inopportune for many in the sample. The end of year holidays seemed to slow up several of those persons who would have otherwise returned their completed questionnaires promptly, thus extending the data collection period.

As each questionnaire was returned its code number was matched with the master list of names prepared by this investigator. The questionnaire was then checked for possible omission of responses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Precinct</th>
<th>Could Not Locate</th>
<th>Would Not Participate</th>
<th>Did Not Reply</th>
<th>Returned First Mailing</th>
<th>Returned Second Mailing</th>
<th>Total in Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
<td><strong>115</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
<td><strong>301</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>26.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>38.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>20.6</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to items, and it was reviewed for possible signs of misinterpretation of individual items. In a few cases it was necessary to return a respondent's questionnaire or to contact him for clarification of his responses to certain items. However, most respondents completed the questionnaires satisfactorily on the first return.

In order that the reader may familiarize himself with the distinctive traits of the respondents, the personal characteristics of the participants of this study can be found in Table 3-3.

The previously mentioned system of coding completed questionnaires provided for an arrangement whereby responses from each precinct could be quickly identified. This was considered vital to the tabulating and analysis procedures that were to follow.

After the collection period was ended the data were key punched on IBM cards and processed through the computer system at Western Michigan University. The resulting tabulations furnished the basis for the analyses of questions proposed in Chapter I, the results of which are discussed in the following chapter.

Limitations of the Study

This study had limitations that were known from its inception and others that became apparent as the study progressed. The sample size constituted a major limitation of the study, however, economic considerations on the part of this investigator prevented sampling a large number of voters.

Most researchers agree that any investigation limited to one school district does not permit generalizations to other schools.
TABLE 3-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Characteristics</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHILDREN IN BOYD COUNTY SCHOOLS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Currently In Schools</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children In Schools</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROPERTY OWNERSHIP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property owner in the Boyd County School District</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-property owner in the Boyd County School District</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCOME LEVEL OF FAMILY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 and up</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000 to $10,000</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $3,000</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPONDENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

except in those cases where such schools are comparable with respect to the areas under investigation. The fact that the present study was limited to one school district, therefore, constitutes a limitation of this study.

While a mailed questionnaire was considered to be the most efficient means of collecting data in this study, the mailed
questionnaire does not permit a follow-up of respondent's clues as in the case of the structured interview. The investigator in this study was limited to inferences based upon the respondent's written responses without benefit of oral follow-up.
CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter the findings are presented as they relate to the data obtained from the "Voters' Opinion Questionnaire." This chapter is a treatment of the questions that were the basis of this inquiry. As presented in Chapter I, these questions were:

1. Is the general satisfaction level of the voting public concerning schools high, medium or low?

2. Is there a perceived urgency of building needs on the part of the voting public?

3. Is there a preferred way of providing additional space for students? (Examples: New construction, temporary buildings or additions)

4. Is the voting public likely to support a tax increase to provide additional facilities?

5. Are there one or more communication channels that are likely to yield positive results for a school system trying to influence public opinion?

6. What is the preference of voters for raising funds by means other than the property tax?

7. What voter reaction is likely to occur should double sessions become necessary in order to provide classrooms for students?

8. What voter reaction is likely to occur should a twelve-month school term become necessary in order to provide
classrooms for students?

9. What voter reaction is likely to occur when new programs, which obviously will cost more money, are proposed?

10. What is the voter reaction to the recent ruling in California which declared the property tax to be unconstitutional for financing of schools?

11. What are the opinions of respondents as to why voters are turning down a higher percentage of school building proposals now than they did ten years ago?

The collection, organization, analysis and presentation of data pertaining to these questions were principally accomplished through descriptive, statistical methods. However, the chi square test of significance was applied to certain tax increase data following its organization into crossbreak tables.

The most frequently used statistic in this report was the percentage. In a few instances percentages do not total to 100 because of omissions by respondents on particular items. All percentage values have been rounded to the nearest tenth of a whole number. In cases where standard deviations are reported they are expressed to two places to the right of the decimal. In instances where raw scores are recorded, an explanation will be provided to give the reader some notion of their meaning.

Each table contains data relative to the questions presented for inquiry. However, in several instances it was necessary to use more than one table in order to give proper treatment to alternate ways of analyzing certain questions.
As the questionnaires were returned they were checked for omissions of items and a voter satisfaction score was computed. This score had a possible range of from 10 to 50. The reader may recall that 10 statements about schools were presented to the respondent and that to each of these he had the opportunity to respond on a one to five satisfaction scale. Table 4-1 is a presentation of these scores reported by precincts. Also, these scores were tallied and a mean computed for each of the eleven precincts. Shown in Table 4-1 is the fact that the Fairview Precinct had the lowest mean (33.0), while the Princess Precinct had the highest mean (40.4). It should be noted, however, that the Fairview Precinct also had the fewest participants in the study.

The frequency distribution of voter satisfaction scores presented in Table 4-2 is the sum of all satisfaction items combined. From this distribution a grand mean was calculated and found to be 37.08. A conversion of satisfaction scores to percentage scores can be accomplished by doubling any of the raw scores presented in Table 4-1 or Table 4-2.

Satisfaction scores and their frequency distribution were used to categorize respondents into high, medium and low satisfaction levels. By dividing the distribution into quartiles it was found that the high satisfaction quartile represented scores from 41 to 50. The low satisfaction quartile ranged from 10 to 34. The two middle quartiles corresponded to satisfaction scores between 35 and 40. Thus, the situation was created for analyzing voter responses by three levels of satisfaction: high, medium and low.
<table>
<thead>
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(continued)
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<th>Rockdale</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>33.0</td>
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</table>

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### TABLE 4-2

**Frequency Distribution of Voter Satisfaction Scores**

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<th>Raw Score</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Raw Score</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

Grand Mean = 37.08

One of the important outcomes of analyzing the data by satisfaction levels lies in the fact that any variable or question represented in this study can be examined in a detailed manner for differences in opinion of respondents. Also, as presented in
Table 4-3, the satisfaction levels of participants can be related to subgroups differing in personal characteristics.

TABLE 4-3

Representation in Voter Satisfaction Levels by Personal Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Characteristics</th>
<th>Satisfaction Levels</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High (N=44)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHILDREN IN BOYD COUNTY SCHOOLS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Currently in Schools</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children in Schools</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROPERTY OWNERSHIP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Owner in the Boyd County School District</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-property Owner in the Boyd County School District</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCOME LEVEL OF FAMILY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 and up</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000 to $10,000</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $3,000</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPONDENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Effort</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 4-3 it can be found, for instance, that both the non-property owners and the $3,000 or less income group tend to be over represented under the high satisfaction level. Concerning the income level of the respondents, the table shows that of those with a $3,000 or less income, smaller percentages were in the low satisfaction groups. Another observation made apparent by Table 4-3

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is that when the questionnaire was completed as a family effort only a small percentage were likely to appear in the group labeled as low satisfaction.

Question 1: Is the general satisfaction level of the voting public concerning schools high, medium or low?

To answer question 1 each satisfaction variable was analyzed in three ways. First, mean scores were computed for each personal characteristic. An inspection of these scores can be performed by referring to Table 4-4. Second, each variable was considered individually and a percentage calculated for each cell on the one to five scale. This information is displayed in Table 4-5. Third, using the one to five scale, a mean score was calculated for each satisfaction variable. Contained in Table 4-6 are the mean scores obtained for each variable. In addition to individual mean scores a grand mean is reported in Table 4-6.

An examination of these analyses indicated the satisfaction level of the voting public concerning schools was medium to high. Voters indicated the greatest satisfaction with the cooperation that they received from the school staff, the students' enjoyment of school experiences and the respect shown by the staff for students and parents. Both Tables 4-5 and 4-6 verify the above information.

The voting public in this study substantiated a fact reported by Gallup (1970) that discipline in the schools is the major cause of dissatisfaction. Of the remaining nine facets investigated, two
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Characteristics</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHILDREN IN BOYD COUNTY SCHOOLS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Currently in Schools</td>
<td>37.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Children in Schools</td>
<td>36.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROPERTY OWNERSHIP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property Owner in the Boyd County School District</td>
<td>37.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-property Owner in the Boyd County School District</td>
<td>36.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCOME LEVEL OF FAMILY</td>
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<tr>
<td>$10,000 and up</td>
<td>36.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>$3,000 to $10,000</td>
<td>36.85</td>
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<td>RESPONDENT</td>
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<td>Male</td>
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<td>Family Effort</td>
<td>38.08</td>
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</table>

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>No Response</th>
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<tr>
<td>Effort (hard work) by staff members</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of instruction by staff</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting instruction by staff</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and skill development</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of student self-concept</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation from staff</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal opportunity for each student</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect shown students and parents</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of school experiences</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 4-6
Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Voters' Responses
to Satisfaction Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effort (hard work) by staff members</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of instruction by staff</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting instruction by staff</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and skill development</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of student self-concept</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation from staff</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal opportunity for each student</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect shown students and parents</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of school experiences</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Mean</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

others seemed to cause dissatisfaction among the respondents. They indicated that more attention should be given to the development of both the student self-concept and the development of knowledge and skills among students.

Question 2: Is there a perceived urgency of building needs on the part of the voting public?

In response to question 2 the data showed that a high degree of perceived urgency of building needs existed for regular classrooms, both in secondary and elementary schools. In addition, voters were of the opinion that vocational training classrooms were very much needed.
Table 4-7 reveals by percentage the manner in which respondents indicated their perceptions of building needs. A more detailed analysis is reported in Table 4-8 where responses to this question were categorized by satisfaction levels. In an attempt to reflect these same data in another manner, Table 4-9 reports mean scores that were computed for each of the ten building needs variables under consideration.

### TABLE 4-7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Needs</th>
<th>Not Needed</th>
<th>Some Need But Not Critical</th>
<th>Very Much Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular classrooms (high school)</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>74.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular classrooms (elementary)</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>62.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational training rooms (high school)</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational training rooms (elementary)</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New gym and physical education facilities (high school)</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of physical education facilities (elementary)</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New dressing rooms and restrooms for the football stadium</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental music facilities (band room)</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choral music facilities</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art facilities</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Each row will reflect less than a 100 percent total because of nonresponses to items.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Needs</th>
<th>High (N=44)</th>
<th>Medium (N=91)</th>
<th>Low (N=40)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>REGULAR CLASSROOMS (HIGH SCHOOL)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REGULAR CLASSROOMS (ELEMENTARY)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VOCATIONAL TRAINING ROOMS (HIGH SCHOOL)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VOCATIONAL TRAINING ROOMS (ELEMENTARY)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEW GYM AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION FACILITIES (HIGH SCHOOL)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IMPROVEMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION FACILITIES (ELEMENTARY)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEW DRESSING ROOMS AND RESTROOMS FOR THE FOOTBALL STADIUM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC FACILITIES (BAND ROOM)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>52.3%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
### TABLE 4-8 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Needs</th>
<th>Level of Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHORAL MUSIC FACILITIES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART FACILITIES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Needed</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Need But Not Critical</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much Needed</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 4-9

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Voters' Perceptions of Building Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Needs</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular classrooms (high school)</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular classrooms (elementary)</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational training rooms (high school)</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational training rooms (elementary)</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New gym and physical education facilities (high school)</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of physical education facilities (elementary)</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New dressing rooms and restrooms for the football stadium</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental music facilities (band room)</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choral music facilities</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art facilities</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Detailed inquiry into the information contained in Tables 4-7, 4-8 and 4-9 discloses that agreement exists concerning the need for
regular secondary and elementary classrooms and vocational training rooms in the secondary school. Tables 4-7 and 4-9 indicate that the voters participating in this study saw the least need for vocational training rooms in the elementary schools, improvement of physical education facilities at either the secondary or elementary schools, and choral music facilities.

An inspection of Table 4-8 gives evidence that differences of opinion concerning building needs existed between respondents in the various satisfaction level categories. Low satisfaction participants tended to indicate that less need existed for music and art facilities than did the high and medium satisfaction participants. Another fact revealed by Table 4-8 was that high satisfaction respondents indicated a much greater need for new dressing rooms and restrooms for the football stadium than did either medium or low satisfaction respondents.

The evidence analyzed concerning the perceived urgency of building needs by school patrons revealed that they are more concerned about facilities to support the basic instructional program than they are about other types of facilities.

Question 3: Is there a preferred way of providing additional space for students? (Examples: new construction, temporary buildings or additions)

In attempting to answer question 3, a table representing responses to three alternatives presented to participants of this study was prepared. Table 4-10 indicates that voters are very much in favor of additions to and modernization of existing buildings.
Voters are only mildly interested in the construction of new schools in a new location, and they least favor temporary or relocatable buildings near existing buildings.

**TABLE 4-10**

Voters' Preferences to Alternatives for Providing Additional Classroom Space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Percent in favor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additions to and modernization of existing buildings</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of new schools in a new location</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary or relocatable building near existing buildings</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-11 offers an opportunity to view the same data that were presented in Table 4-10 in another manner. In table 4-11 the data are separated by satisfaction levels of school patrons. It indicates that agreement exists between the various satisfaction groups on each of the alternatives for providing classroom space. However, it also points out that high and low satisfaction respondents agree more with each other than they do with medium satisfaction respondents in regard to the construction of new schools.

Question 4: Is the voting public likely to support a tax increase to provide additional facilities?

The analysis of the data pertaining to question 4 represents the most exhaustive attempt of this study.
TABLE 4-11
Percentage of Voters' Preferences to Alternatives for Providing Additional Classroom Space by Satisfaction Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Level of Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction of new schools in a new location</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary or relocatable building near existing buildings</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additions to and modernization of existing buildings</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 4-12 can be found a percentage tabulation of the responses obtained from the participants. The table shows that approximately 45 percent of the respondents reported a favorable response concerning voters' willingness to support a tax increase for schools. However, one-third of those responding indicated that they were uncertain about their support on this matter. It is believed by this investigator that the option "Uncertain" presented to the respondent insured increased validity for the other options that were available to a would-be voter.

TABLE 4-12
Voters' Willingness to Support a Tax Increase for School Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage of Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A more detailed investigation of the data presented in Table 4-12 can be made in terms of a comparison among the three categories of high, medium and low satisfaction levels. Table 4-13 involves this kind of a partitioning of the data.

### TABLE 4-13

Voters' Willingness to Support a Tax Increase for School Facilities by Satisfaction Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Satisfaction</th>
<th>Alternative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>42.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote for a tax increase</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote against a tax increase</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An investigation of Table 4-13 discloses only slight percentage differences among the various satisfaction levels with respect to a favorable vote concerning a tax increase for school facilities. Further investigation reveals that the low satisfaction voter is more likely to vote against a tax increase than the medium or high satisfaction voter. Also, the high satisfaction voter is least likely to vote no on a tax increase for schools. These are not unsuspected findings. However, an examination of the high, medium and low satisfaction groups on this question suggests in general that no important differential exists between the degree of satisfaction with the school system and willingness to support a tax increase. This finding was also supported in Table 4-14 where a crossbreak was used to perform a chi square test on the data.
The obtained chi square score did not prove significant at the 0.05 level.

### TABLE 4-14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction Level</th>
<th>Tax Increase Yes</th>
<th>Tax Increase No</th>
<th>Tax Increase Uncertain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>19 (19.61)</td>
<td>6 (9.55)</td>
<td>19 (14.83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>42 (40.56)</td>
<td>20 (19.76)</td>
<td>29 (30.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>17 (17.83)</td>
<td>12 (8.69)</td>
<td>11 (13.49)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 4.4099  
Degrees of freedom = 4  
The chi square value at the 0.05 level = 9.488  
Expected frequencies in parentheses

In an attempt to examine systematically the data available concerning the willingness of voters to support a tax increase, the above mentioned crossbreak and three others were employed. Contained in tables that follow are reports of the chi square tests that were applied to the crossbreak data. The chi square computation procedures were obtained from Kerlinger (1964) and Popham (1967).

Table 4-15 is a report of an examination of data to determine if a relationship exists between voters who have children in school and those that do not and propensity to favor or reject a tax increase for school facilities. The obtained chi square score proved to be significant at the 0.05 level. There is, therefore, a relationship suggesting that voters with no children are less
TABLE 4-15

Chi Square Analysis of Voters' Willingness to Support a Tax Increase by Children in School or Not

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children in School</th>
<th>Tax Increase Yes</th>
<th>Tax Increase No</th>
<th>Tax Increase Uncertain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>42 (40.56)</td>
<td>12 (19.76)</td>
<td>37 (30.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>36 (37.44)</td>
<td>26 (18.24)</td>
<td>22 (28.32)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 9.168
Degrees of freedom = 2
The chi square value at the 0.05 level = 5.991
Expected frequencies in parentheses

likely to vote for a tax increase for school facilities than are voters with children in school. This finding may or may not be of importance because it merely reinforces what one might logically suspect concerning this relationship. It could become important though, if knowledge of this relationship were used as basis for improving communication with voters having no children in school.

Another relationship concerning a tax increase is reviewed in Table 4-16. The attempt here was to explore the possibility of a relationship between the attitudes of voters who are property owners and those who are not relative to a tax increase for school facilities.

Using the same basic procedure as was outlined for computing the chi square reported in Table 4-15, another chi square value was found for the data in Table 4-16. This, however, was not significant at the 0.05 level. An inspection of Table 4-16 reveals that very
small differences existed between the frequencies observed and the frequencies expected.

**TABLE 4-16**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property Owner</th>
<th>Tax Increase Yes</th>
<th>Tax Increase No</th>
<th>Tax Increase Uncertain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>57 (61.51)</td>
<td>33 (29.97)</td>
<td>48 (46.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>21 (16.49)</td>
<td>5 (8.03)</td>
<td>11 (12.47)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 3.234  
Degrees of freedom = 2  
The chi square value at the 0.05 level = 5.991  
Expected frequencies in parentheses

While the basic question under consideration pertained to the likelihood of the voting public's support of a tax increase, another somewhat related question arises: Is there a difference in the opinions of voters from different income levels and their willingness to support a tax increase for school facilities? The information contained in Table 4-17 provides assistance in answering this question. The chi square test was again applied to the available data. In this case it was found to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Close observation of each cell in the crossbreak table reveals that the nature of this relationship is that voters with income of $3,000 to $10,000 are least likely to vote for a tax increase for school facilities. This is an important finding because it was shown in Table 3-3 that this group accounted for approximately 45 percent of the total respondents.
### Table 4-17

Chi Square Analysis of Voters' Willingness to Support a Tax Increase by Income Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Tax Increase Yes</th>
<th>Tax Increase No</th>
<th>Tax Increase Uncertain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 and up</td>
<td>40 (32.23)</td>
<td>7 (15.91)</td>
<td>25 (23.86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000 to $10,000</td>
<td>30 (35.37)</td>
<td>23 (17.45)</td>
<td>26 (26.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000 or less</td>
<td>7 (9.40)</td>
<td>8 (4.64)</td>
<td>6 (6.96)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 12.678  
Degrees of freedom = 4  
The chi square value at the 0.05 level = 9.488  
Expected frequencies in parentheses

As additional help for answering question 4, voters were queried as to their opinions of their neighbors' willingness to support a tax increase for school facilities. In Table 4-18 can be found the percentage responses to this question. This investigator considers noteworthy the over 30 percent negative reaction generated by this item. A considerable number of people seem to have expressed their opinions to others concerning the matter of a tax increase for school facilities.

Question 5: Are there one or more communication channels that are likely to yield positive results for a school system trying to influence public opinion?

Table 4-19 shows that, in answer to question 5, considerable difference exists in the extent to which various media seem to exert influence over opinions on school affairs. The almost 60 percent
response to the local newspaper as an agent influencing voters' opinions makes it apparent that this medium is frequently viewed by school patrons. The respondents in this study consider radio and television ineffective in influencing their opinions on school matters.

TABLE 4-19
Communication Modes that Influence Voters' Opinions Concerning Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Communication</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCMI Radio</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTCR Radio</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIRO Radio</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashland Daily Independent</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings at School</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' behavior</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' behavior</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel 3 Television</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel 8 Television</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel 13 Television</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speeches by school officials</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks with neighbors</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks with fellow workers</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks with school officials</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Question 6: What is the preference of voters for raising funds by means other than the property tax?

The indication given by voters in answer to question 6 is that they favor an increase in the cigarette tax as a means of raising funds for school purposes. Table 4-20 displays the frequencies obtained when voters were asked to rank order four revenue raising alternatives other than the property tax. It is very possible that the item concerning the removal of the federal income tax deductibility provision was the least understood by the respondents, and this in itself may have accounted for voter disfavor. However, the frequencies on both the income tax item and the tax on utilities item leave little doubt as to their lack of acceptance by voters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Frequency of Assigned Rank Orders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase in the cigarette tax</td>
<td>1st  2nd  3rd  4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on gross income from extracted minerals (severance tax)</td>
<td>52    78   33   5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal of the federal income tax deductibility provision from individual and corporate income taxes paid in Kentucky</td>
<td>22    28   39   79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on public utilities (electric, gas, water, telephone)</td>
<td>10    19   63   74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Question 7: What voter reaction is likely to occur should double sessions become necessary in order to provide classrooms for students?

Question 8: What voter reaction is likely to occur should a twelve-month school term become necessary in order to provide classrooms for students?

The answers to questions 7 and 8 are found in Table 4-21. The percentage of responses recorded concerning these two alternatives for providing additional classroom space gave a clear picture of voters' opposition to them. It seems overwhelmingly evident that either of these choices would raise considerable public confrontation with school people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percent of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DOUBLE SESSIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much support</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some support</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TWELVE-MONTH SCHOOL TERM</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much support</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some support</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 9: What voter reaction is likely to occur when new programs, which obviously will cost more money, are proposed?

In an attempt to answer question 9 the participants were presented with two programs that are receiving statewide attention in Kentucky. Their responses to programs both in vocational and career education and kindergarten education are available for inspection in Table 4-22. While each of these programs received considerable support from respondents, the vocational and career education programs were viewed in very high favor when compared with a kindergarten program. This study did not attempt to obtain from voters their opinions as to how these programs should be financed.

TABLE 4-22

Voters' Responses to Two Suggested Program Expansions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Expansion</th>
<th>Percent of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VOCATIONAL AND CAREER EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much support</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some support</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KINDERGARTEN</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much support</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some support</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 10: What is the voter reaction to the recent ruling in California which declared the property tax to be unconstitutional for financing of schools?

In response to question 10 voters expressed a high degree of uncertainty concerning the California decision. Table 4-23 contains percentage scores that reflect the responses to this question. This investigator would assume that the approximate 45 percent response under "Uncertain" on this question is an indication of the lack of voters' understanding or knowledge concerning this court decision.

### TABLE 4-23

Voters' Reactions to the California Supreme Court Property Tax Ruling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Court Ruling</th>
<th>Percent of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regarding the decision that the property tax is unconstitutional for financing schools:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much support</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some support</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>45.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 11: What are the opinions of respondents as to why voters are turning down a higher percentage of school building proposals now than they did ten years ago?

This writer's tabulation of voter responses to the above open-ended question produced the various response items that are contained in Tables 4-24 and 4-25. In Table 4-24 the responses are reported...
### TABLE 4-24

Voters' Opinions as to the Reasons for the High Percentage of Failure of School Bond Proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number (N=175)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters consider taxes too high</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters not informed about the needs of the schools</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwise use of available money</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters aren't concerned about youth</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility gap between voters and the school board</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of the economy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote against disrespect for property shown by youth</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwise use of present facilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of concern by school faculty</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School board has not involved the people</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries too high, money should be spent to improve buildings</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

by percentage. Voter high, medium and low satisfaction categories were then employed in Table 4-25 to further analyze the responses. A review of these two tables will show that voters consider high taxes as the primary reason for the present high rate of bond proposal failures. A lack of information about the needs of the schools was also cited as being a cause for the defeat of bond proposals. High, medium and low satisfaction voters were in agreement concerning their opinions relative to high taxes being the major cause for bond proposal failures. One difference among the

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TABLE 4-25

Voters' Opinions as to the Reasons for the High Percentage of Failure of School Bond Proposals by Satisfaction Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Level of Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters consider taxes too high</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters not informed about the needs of the schools</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwise use of available money</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters aren't concerned about youth</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility gap between voters and the school board</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of the economy</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote against disrespect for property shown by youth</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwise use of present facilities</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of concern by school faculty</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School board has not involved the people</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries too high, money should be spent to improve buildings</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

categories that seems worthy of mention is related to the respondents' opinions about unwise use of present school facilities. Ten percent of the low satisfaction voters saw this as cause for the defeat of bond proposals, whereas none of the high satisfaction respondents, and only a very small percent of the medium satisfaction voters reported this to be a factor in school bond election failure. Table 4-25 also shows that medium and low satisfaction voters were more reluctant to comment on this item than were the high satisfaction voters.
These data suggest that the concern of voters about high taxes is real and that school people must somehow learn to work under or around this handicap. Also suggested is the fact that new ways must be found to inform voters about the needs of the schools. Furthermore, low satisfaction voters must be identified and made aware of the ways in which the schools are presently being used.

Based upon the data and findings presented in this chapter, which must, by necessity, be tempered by the known limitations of this study, several conclusions can be drawn. The following chapter contains conclusions, along with a summary of the study, implications of the findings, and certain recommendations for further study. In addition to Chapter V, Appendix B has been provided to give the reader some notion of the manner in which most respondents expressed themselves about the failures of bond proposals. A detailed examination of Appendix B will reveal that the responses were not only verbally rich but were indicative of considerable insight by school patrons into school problems.
CHAPTER V

OVERVIEW, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final chapter the study is summarized and the results are discussed under four major headings: 1) An Overview of the Study, 2) Conclusions, 3) Implications, and 4) Recommendations.

An Overview of the Study

It was the purpose of this study to investigate voter attitudes toward providing additional financial support for schools. Specifically, the intent of the research was to determine what relationships might exist between opinions held by voters, both relative to taxation and to their general satisfaction with schools, and their willingness to tax themselves for support of schools.

The instrument used was developed by this investigator and had as its function the solicitation from voters of information concerning the following: 1) demographic or background variables, 2) level of voter satisfaction with schools, and 3) voter opinion regarding bond issue proposals and taxation.

The discussion of the literature deemed pertinent to this study was reviewed as follows: 1) Goals and Purposes of Education, 2) Responsibility for Financing Education, and 3) The Property Tax.

The sample selected for this inquiry was 301 resident, registered to vote patrons of the Boyd County (Kentucky) School District. One hundred seventy-seven persons (approximately 60% of those sampled)
elected to take part in this study. Those participating completed
the instrument (Voters' Opinion Questionnaire) between
November 22, 1971 and March 1, 1972.

Upon return of a respondent's questionnaire a voter satis-
faction score was calculated. This score was used in three ways.
First, the score was used as a means of separating respondents into
levels of high, medium and low satisfaction. Second, the score was
used as a means of reporting data by various satisfaction levels.
And third, the score was used as a means of identifying relationships
between the opinions held by voters in the three satisfaction levels.

In most cases, the data obtained from the "Voters' Opinion
Questionnaire" were primarily reported in terms of percentages.
However, the chi square test of significance was applied to certain
tax increase data following its organization into crossbreak tables.
In three instances the respondents' willingness to support a tax
increase for school facilities was examined in light of three
demographic characteristics. In a fourth analysis the respondents' satisfaction level scores served as the basis for systematically
examining the data available concerning the willingness of voters
to support a tax for school facilities.

The findings of this study are as follows:

1. The satisfaction level of voters in the Boyd County School
   District was from medium to high. Considerably more than
   three-fourths of the respondents obtained a score of 35 or
   more on a satisfaction scale of 10 to 50. The mean was
   37.08.
2. All except one of the precincts reported similar levels of satisfaction.

3. Non-property owners with incomes of $3,000 or less reported the highest voter satisfaction.

4. The voters expressed greater satisfaction with cooperation from staff, respect shown students and parents, and students' enjoyment of school experiences than with students' knowledge and skill development, development of student self-concept, and student discipline.

5. Discipline was reported most frequently as a cause of voter dissatisfaction.

6. Regular classrooms were perceived as the most urgent building need in the Boyd County Schools.

7. The respondents perceived vocational training rooms for elementary schools, and new gym and physical education facilities for high school as being the least urgent building needs in the Boyd County Schools.

8. The voters preferred additions to and modernization of existing buildings as a way of providing additional space for students. Only a third of the voters reported that they would support construction of new schools.

9. Fewer than half (45%) of the voters expressed a willingness to support a tax increase for school facilities. Approximately a third of the voters were uncertain about this matter at the time of their reporting.
10. Voter satisfaction levels did not prove to be a significant factor when considering voters' willingness to support a tax increase for school facilities.

11. Voters with children in school were more likely to support a tax increase for school facilities than those who have no children in school.

12. Property owners and nonproperty owners expressed only slight differences in their willingness to support a tax increase for school facilities.

13. Voters with incomes of $3,000 to $10,000 were less likely to support a tax increase than those in income levels of either $10,000 or more or less than $3,000.

14. Only 20 percent of the respondents reported that their neighbors would be willing to support a tax increase for school facilities.

15. Sixty percent of the voters in the Boyd County system reported that the local newspaper was an agent influencing voters' opinions.

16. A majority of voters in the Boyd County School District indicated no interest in raising money for schools by means of a tax on public utilities.

17. An increase in the tax on cigarettes was reported by voters to be their first preference for raising additional school funds.

18. Double sessions and a twelve-month school term were strongly opposed by school patrons.
19. Vocational and career education for students was strongly supported by the patrons of the Boyd County Schools.

20. Although somewhat less responsive to kindergarten programs than vocational and career education programs, well over half the respondents indicated support for kindergarten education.

21. Voters reported high taxes as a cause for school bond proposal failures with considerably greater frequency than they reported other causes.

Conclusions

1. Since the satisfaction level of voters in the Boyd County School District was found to be reasonably high (a grand mean of 37.08 out of a possible 50) and generally uniform throughout the district, it seems reasonable to conclude that the school personnel are discharging their duties in a manner that is acceptable to most voters. However, this finding should not be taken as an indication that increased efforts are not needed to improve the educational opportunities of the students in the district. It would seem to this writer that the present feeling of satisfaction with the schools should serve to facilitate further improvement of the Boyd County Schools by school personnel.

2. The writer has no explanation for the variation between the mean satisfaction level for Fairview Precinct (33.0) and that of all precincts combined (37.08). It is a fact,
however, that the Fairview Precinct includes voters from two school districts which inevitably results in confusion regarding the district to which the voter belongs. Such confusion may have had a negative affect upon the satisfaction level of some voters in the Fairview Precinct.

3. Even though non-property owners with income of $3,000 or less reported the highest voter satisfaction, it does not necessarily follow that this segment of the population will substantially alter the results of a vote to increase funds for school facilities because traditionally they have not been known for turning out to vote during school elections. Hence, this finding may not be of significant value to school personnel in planning for school elections unless a special effort is made to get these voters out to vote.

4. By virtue of the fact that participants expressed greater satisfaction with cooperation from staff, respect shown students and parents, and students' enjoyment of school experiences than with students' knowledge and skill development, development of student self-concept, and student discipline; it would seem reasonable that the variables receiving the lesser support from participants should be given priority for improvement.

Following a concerted effort to improve those areas of low satisfaction (knowledge and skill development, development of self-concept and student discipline), the Boyd County
Schools may wish to reassess the satisfaction level of the voting public.

5. In view of the fact that discipline was reported most frequently as a cause for voter dissatisfaction, and since this finding supports an earlier report by Gallup (1970), it would appear that school personnel should continue to place this item in high priority for improving school-community relations.

This writer's experience and observation have led him to believe that the patrons of the Boyd County School System expect school personnel to continually seek improvement in the area of discipline. It should be noted, however, that attempts by school personnel to improve discipline should be paralleled with attempts reasonably to exercise their authority.

6. By reason of voters' perceptions that the most urgent building need in the Boyd County Schools is regular classrooms, school personnel should seek to statistically verify this finding by conducting a facilities survey. Following such a survey the professional staff should then make the appropriate recommendation to the Boyd County Board of Education concerning future plans for improvement of facilities in the district.

7. Inasmuch as the respondents perceived vocational training rooms for elementary schools, and new gym and physical education facilities for high school as being the least
urgent building needs in the district, it would appear that voter support for these projects would not be forthcoming. However, school personnel should attempt to verify this finding by examination of data obtained from a facilities survey.

Should this finding be sustained, school personnel should then resist any pressure from special interest groups to include these facilities in a building program.

8. By reason of the fact that a majority of the voters preferred additions to and modernization of existing buildings over new schools or temporary buildings, it seems logical to conclude that renovation projects would have a better chance for voter approval than would other alternatives. However, a facilities survey would verify whether or not renovation would be the most feasible alternative for providing additional classroom space.

Following a facilities survey, school officials would be in a more favorable position with respect to making a sound recommendation for improvement of facilities to the Boyd County Board of Education.

9. This writer believes, based upon the sizable number (33%) of uncertain responses reported in this study, coupled with the sizable number (45%) expressing a favorable response, that a bond proposal could be passed in the Boyd County School District.
However, since fewer than half of the voters expressed a willingness to support a tax increase for school facilities, and since a third of the voters were uncertain about this matter, it seems that any attempt to gain passage of a school bond proposal in the Boyd County School District would require an intensive campaign.

To pass such a proposal would not only require an intensive campaign but would, by necessity, require special effort on the part of school personnel to reach those voters who remain uncertain about voting for a school bond proposal.

10. Inasmuch as voter satisfaction levels did not prove to be a significant factor when considering voters' willingness to support a tax increase for school facilities, one can only conclude that school personnel in Boyd County, when faced with a need to provide additional facilities, must look to other factors affecting willingness of voters to support a tax increase. For example, such factors as the amount of information available to the voter regarding a particular bond proposal and beliefs about taxation generally may affect the willingness of voters to support a tax increase. In fact, there is some evidence from the present study to suggest that voter attitude regarding taxes may be an important factor in the failure of school bond proposals.

11. In view of the fact that voters with children in school were more likely to support a tax increase for school
facilities than were those who have no children in school, it appears that a reasonable approach to gaining support for a tax increase should be through those parents having children in school. However, at the same time new and better ways must be found to communicate with those voters who have no children in school. The Boyd County Schools could elect to provide programs and activities in the evening and on Saturday that will draw these citizens into the schools, therefore, establishing a line of communication with voters having no children in school.

12. Since it was found that only slight differences were expressed by property owners and nonproperty owners relative to their willingness to support a tax increase for school facilities, it does not appear feasible to make intensive efforts to direct a campaign toward either group. It seems more reasonable to plan campaign strategy that focuses upon progressive school programs and concepts rather than upon trying to win the favor of either property owners or nonproperty owners. It should be pointed out, however, that property owners comprised nearly 80% of the respondents in this study, therefore, all findings are subject to known overloading with reference to this demographic characteristic.

13. Considering the fact that middle income ($3,000 to $10,000) voters were found to be less likely to support a tax increase for school facilities than were voters in other
income groups, it seems imperative that campaign strategy be directed toward reaching those voters. Since this group accounted for approximately 45 percent of the respondents in this study, it seems logical to conclude that chances for passage of a bond proposal in the Boyd County School District would to a large degree depend upon the support of voters in the income level of $3,000 to $10,000. Furthermore, it seems feasible to conclude that a study could be made to determine the extent to which the opinions of medium income voters differ from low and high income voters. In view of the findings of this present study, the Boyd County Schools may find it beneficial to undertake such an investigation.

14. It can be reasoned, since 31 percent of the voters indicated that their neighbors would not support a tax increase for school facilities, that considerable negativism is present relative to this issue. This writer's speculation has led him to assume that responses on this item are a reasonably true measure of the respondent's own feelings about a support for a tax increase for school facilities. However, almost 62 percent of the respondents reported uncertainty relative to this matter, which, in itself, opens the possibility of influencing a sizeable number of voters toward voting favorably on a tax increase for school facilities.
Following several months of study relative to this question of voter support for a facilities' improvement program in the Boyd County Schools, this writer has concluded that there is presently a sizable body of voters (mostly comprised of parents with children in school) who would vote favorably on a school bond proposal. However, this segment of voters could not carry an election by itself; therefore, it seems logical to conclude that the key factor is to influence voter opinion in that segment of the community that this study has identified as being "Uncertain" concerning its willingness to support a tax increase for school facilities.

15. Inasmuch as 60 percent of the respondents reported the local newspaper as exerting considerable influence on voter opinion about schools, it seems reasonable to conclude that school personnel should continue to utilize this media in an attempt to influence voter opinion. However, one must bear in mind that the Boyd County Schools have not utilized radio and television to the degree that the local newspaper has been used to mold voter opinion. Hence, one may deduce that failure to report radio and television as influential media may relate more to lack of exposure than to lack of influence. Following increased attempts to influence voter opinion by radio and television, the Boyd County Schools may wish again
to measure the relative impact of each of the media as they affect voter opinion.

16. Confronted with the fact that a sizable majority of voters in the Boyd County School District indicated no interest in raising money for schools by means of a tax on public utilities, one can assume that school officials would be faced with considerable public opposition if this method of financing school facilities should be implemented.

17. It has been established that a majority of the voters in this study favor an increase in the tax on cigarettes as their first preference for raising additional school funds. Whether there is an actual awareness on the part of voters concerning other, somewhat more complicated, proposals designed to raise money for school facilities is not clearly understood. For this reason increased efforts should be made to inform voters of the several options that are available on a state-wide basis for financing school facilities.

18. Findings related to vocational and career education strongly suggest that voters in the Boyd County School District desire this kind of program, therefore, it seems logical that they would support such a program. However, evidence should be sought to determine if a need exists for such a program. The Boyd County Schools may wish not only to undertake a needs survey but to also collect data that will enable school personnel to establish guidelines for a
vocational and career education program should such a program be needed.

19. Inasmuch as over 45% of the respondents reported high taxes as the major cause of failure of school bond proposals, it can be concluded that in Boyd County, at least, a bond proposal would be subjected to considerable public disfavor, not because people are dissatisfied with the schools but because of what they consider to be excessive property taxes. However, one must be mindful of the fact that the Boyd County School District enjoys a favorable tax rate as compared to surrounding districts, therefore, it may be that an attempt should be made to design an effective plan for communicating tax rate information to the voters in the district.

The implications that are a result of these conclusions are presented in the following section.

Implications

Voter attitudes toward schools have, in recent years, caused increased concern on the part of school leaders. Most school systems have provided themselves with little data which would be helpful in assessing the attitudes of those persons whom they must depend upon for support of schools. The school-community communication process has been largely a practice of dissemination, by school personnel, rather than a meaningful communicative process.
The reasons for non-communication between schools and communities are numerous. The feeling in many school systems is that obtaining information relative to voter opinions is too costly to be practical. Others have assumed that heretofore, unsystematic approaches to gathering this type of information are sufficient to get the job accomplished. Still other school systems have followed the policy that such information is not necessary nor have they solicited voter (patron) feedback.

Whatever the approaches individual school systems have taken in the past for communicating with their patrons they have not been especially noteworthy; however, the course of action for the future is clear. It is possible to get systematic feedback from school patrons and the present study suggests one means for securing such feedback. This writer believes that much can be learned about voter attitudes toward schools by systematizing the responses from open-ended questions. Furthermore, by employing several of the many methods available, systematic collecting, recording and analyses of attitudes can be processed into meaningful data for use by school personnel.

The responses of the participants in this study indicated that school patrons have something to say about schools, when given the opportunity. Just how much this feedback should modify decisions and practices by school people was not within the scope of this study. However, this writer has found no evidence to suggest that educational objectives and practices based upon community opinion, tempered with educational expertise, are less effective than those
arrived at by school people working in isolation from the community.

The findings of this study indicate that while the community feeling toward the schools was generally at a high level, the school personnel are expected to continue to keep order and to upgrade basic classroom programs. It would seem appropriate for the personnel in the Boyd County School District to continue present practices and policies that have engendered the current feeling of good will toward the schools. Furthermore, the school personnel should attempt to improve the image of the schools by continuing to strengthen the discipline in the schools and by improving the regular classroom environment of the students.

Since the findings of this study indicate that voters favor additions to and modernization of existing school facilities, it would seem reasonable to explore the feasibility of this approach for providing additional space to house a growing student population. Furthermore, the local newspaper should be utilized as the means of keeping the school patrons informed concerning the facilities' planning by school officials. Additionally, school officials should exercise a means other than a tax on public utilities to raise additional monies for school facilities.

The results of this study strongly imply that a program of vocational and career education is presently desired for the Boyd County Schools and that a high priority should be given this matter if a need exists.
Responses from participants in this study indicate that they welcome information about their schools and that they are willing to express themselves on matters relating to schools. The role of the school officials should be to make information about schools available to interested patrons and to provide a means whereby they can make comments and suggestions about the schools. It would seem appropriate to make regular reports to the people about current school matters and to seek ways of allowing them to become part of the district's planning.

The recommendations that follow are based upon the findings and implications of this study, as well as this writer's subjective evaluations after having spent several months studying the results of the data that were collected for this project.

Recommendations

This study and others like it represent one of the most neglected aspects of community-school relations, that is, getting information from the people. However, the topics which lend themselves to system-wide sampling of school patrons' opinions are countless. During the course of the present investigation several observations were made by this writer. Those that seem to hold the greatest possibility for further inquiry are as follows:

1. Replicate the present study without limiting it to one school district. This would permit generalizations that are cross-district in nature.
2. Enlarge the sample size—seeking always to insure representativeness of the sample—of the replicated study in order to achieve greater accuracy in the computed statistics.

3. Design a follow-up study that will permit enough latitude to use a structured interview on a sample of the non-respondents to the mailed questionnaire.

4. Set up a method whereby the systematic collecting, recording and analyses of voters' opinions about schools can become an ongoing function of the system-wide planning operation.

5. Design a companion study that would solicit from students and staff the same information as the present study.

6. Design a follow-up study that would precisely identify the various publics (interest groups) within the school district. A study of this nature should also seek to reveal the most efficient way of communicating with these various groups.

7. Based upon the findings of the present study, the Boyd County School District should design an effective plan for communicating tax rate information to the voters in the district. This information should draw comparisons between the rates of the Boyd County System and the surrounding systems.

8. School officials of the Boyd County Schools should review carefully the opinions expressed by voters concerning the reasons for the failure of such a high percentage of school bond proposals. These responses are indicative of
considerable insight on the part of school patrons into school problems. More importantly, however, they reveal some misinformation relative to school finance practices, school programs and personnel policies. Some reasonable effort should be made to correct any misleading information about the Boyd County Schools. It is the belief of this writer that recommendations 4 through 7, above, represent effective means by which an individual school system can combat the forces that generate misinformation about schools.

In this study the main purpose was to investigate voter attitudes toward providing additional support for schools. However, the design of the study permitted disclosure of voter attitudes concerning many other aspects of the Boyd County Schools. It is the hope of this writer that those responsible for the improvement of the Boyd County School System will accept the findings of this study as an additional tool available for improving voter attitudes toward the schools, thereby improving voters' financial support for facilities and instructional improvement in the Boyd County School District.

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Dear Voter:

Will you please help me? Your name was selected from a list of registered voters in Boyd County for a study that I am conducting in connection with graduate work at Western Michigan University. This research project is the last step toward an advanced degree, so your help will be greatly appreciated. It will require only minutes of your time.

In this project I am attempting to determine voters' opinions about school building problems. Since I am financing this project from my personal funds and using week ends to complete it, lost questionnaires and lost time are of real concern to me. Please return the questionnaire promptly.

I anticipate that my findings will be of value to the Boyd County Schools, therefore, please give your best and most honest response to each question. A report of my findings will be available for use by the schools but I have taken special steps to be sure that your responses to questions are seen only by me.

I would like to urge you to return the questionnaire promptly and in addition express my appreciation for your help. Should you desire further information about the project, please feel free to call my home (928-6114).

Sincerely,

Douglas Cole
Route #2, Box 340
Ashland, Kentucky 41101
VOTERS' OPINION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please check the item below that best describes your present situation.

1. Do you currently have children in the Boyd County Schools? Yes____ No____
2. Do you presently own property located in the Boyd County School District? Yes____ No____
3. Which of the following income levels best describes your family? $10,000 & up ____ $3,000 - $10,000 ____ $3,000 or less____
4. This questionnaire completed by: Man____ Woman____ Family Effort____

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the Boyd County Schools by placing a check in one of the five boxes beside each statement.

1. The effort (hard work) put forth by the staff members.
2. The willingness of the staff to change outdated programs -- to try new ideas for improving instruction.
3. The attempts of the staff to prepare interesting lessons and to instruct in an interesting manner.
4. The ability of the staff to help students to grow in knowledge and skills.
5. The success of the staff in helping students to think well of themselves and the world in which they live.
6. The amount of cooperation that you receive from the staff.
7. The efforts of the staff to provide equal opportunities for learning and advancement for all youth in school.
8. The respect shown by the staff for students and parents.
9. The students' enjoyment of school experiences.
10. The discipline in the schools.
Please answer the following questions concerning the building needs of the Boyd County Schools.

1. Listed below are several possible school building improvements. Please indicate how much you feel each is needed by placing a 1, 2, or 3 beside the item.

   1 - not needed
   2 - some need but not critical
   3 - very much needed

   ____ Regular classrooms (high school)
   ____ Regular classrooms (elementary)
   ____ Vocational training rooms (high school)
   ____ Vocational training rooms (elementary)
   ____ New gym and physical education facilities (high school)
   ____ Improvement of physical education facilities (elementary)
   ____ New dressing rooms and restrooms for the football stadium
   ____ Instrumental music facilities (band room)
   ____ Choral music facilities
   ____ Art facilities

2. Listed below are three ways a school system can provide additional space for students. Please check the one you prefer.

   ____ Construction of new schools in a new location
   ____ Temporary or relocatable building near existing buildings
   ____ Additions to and modernization of existing buildings

3. Would you be willing to support a tax increase to provide additional facilities for the students of the Boyd County Schools?

   ____ Yes  ____ No  ____ Uncertain

4. Do you think that your neighbors would be willing to support a tax increase for schools?

   ____ Yes  ____ No  ____ Uncertain

5. Listed below are several factors that have been known to influence the opinions that voters hold concerning their schools. Please place a check beside those that influence you.

   ____ WCMI Radio  ____ WTCR Radio  ____ WIRO Radio
   ____ Channel 3 Television  ____ Channel 8 Television  ____ Channel 13 Television
   ____ Ashland Daily Independent  ____ Speeches by school officials
   ____ Meetings at school  ____ Talks with neighbors
   ____ Students' behavior  ____ Talks with fellow workers
   ____ Teachers' behavior  ____ Talks with school officials
6. In recent years considerable discussion has taken place concerning ways of providing additional school funds by means other than the property tax. Several of the different ways are listed below. Please rank each in order of your preference. Start with (1) beside your first and continue through your fourth preference.

   ______ Tax on public utilities (electric, gas, water, telephone)
   ______ Increase in the cigarette tax
   ______ Tax on gross income from extracted minerals (severance tax)
   ______ Removal of the federal income tax deductibility provision from individual and corporate income taxes paid in Kentucky

7. Some school districts have had to go to double sessions in order to provide classrooms for students. Under the plan of double sessions students are split into those who attend school in the early morning and afternoon and those who attend early afternoon and evening. What are your feelings concerning this?

   ______ Opposed  ______ Much Support  ______ Some Support  ______ Uncertain

8. There is a movement underway in some school districts to encourage a twelve-month school term as a means of providing more classroom space for students. Under this plan about one fourth of the students would be having their vacations at any given time. What are your feelings concerning this?

   ______ Opposed  ______ Much Support  ______ Some Support  ______ Uncertain

9. There is presently a strong movement in the schools toward vocational and career education. What are your feelings concerning this?

   ______ Opposed  ______ Much Support  ______ Some Support  ______ Uncertain

10. There is presently a statewide movement to have kindergarten as part of the regular school program. What are your feelings concerning this?

    ______ Opposed  ______ Much Support  ______ Some Support  ______ Uncertain

11. A recent court ruling in California has declared that the property tax is unconstitutional for financing of schools because it does not provide equal opportunity of education for all children. The court reported that its findings were based upon the fact that the districts with high property values spend many more dollars per child than do the ones of low property values. What are your feelings concerning this?

    ______ Opposed  ______ Much Support  ______ Some Support  ______ Uncertain

12. Statistics show that voters are turning down a higher percentage of school building proposals now than they did ten years ago. Please give your opinion as to why this is true.

   ____________________________________________________________

13. Remarks: __________________________________________________

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APPENDIX B

VOTERS' OPINIONS AS TO THE REASONS FOR THE HIGH PERCENTAGE OF FAILURE OF SCHOOL BOND PROPOSALS


Introduction

This appendix serves as a record of the comments made by those persons who generously gave of their time in order to answer an open-ended question concerning reasons for the high percentage of failures of school bond proposals. It also preserves the richness of expression of those who participated in this investigation. The writer feels that many of the responses presented in this appendix tend to demonstrate considerable insight on the part of school patrons into school problems.

In presenting these responses special care was taken to preserve each respondent's wording and to paraphrase the respondent's opinions only where necessary for clarity.
Voters' Opinions

ROCKDALE

My remarks and opinion is that the Boyd Co. School System and schools should be fixed up and there should be more classrooms for the students and the whole school should be furnished with more equipment and classrooms and etc. But of course it will cost money and you can't just add more taxes on the people to get it. And there are other ways in which you could get the money to improve the schools but I won't name them and it is a fact that if you don't get more classrooms because when you have a school that is equipped to handle six or seven hundred students and there are 1500 hundred enrolled well you just can't handle them all. So is my opinion about the school and so any other statement about this paper that you want to make I will be behind you 100%.

They should take these proposals in more consideration. The voters that don't care or have no children in school are self-centered and aren't thinking of the youth and how important education is.

Credibility gap among voters and school board-Not being informed in detail where the money will go and how much. We have four children enrolled at Summit Elem. grades 2 through 7. Therefore, have become acquainted with a majority of the teachers. All have been satisfactory with a few being very dedicated. I do not support blanket raises for teachers, but am in favor of the merit system. I also
believe that all teachers should have a better pension plan and insurance.

Money not used wisely. We would like a Jr. High on the prison property we wonder when and why it isn't started yet.

Why spend money on new schools? Why not remodel and add on to what we have already invested in.

Because our taxes are as high as we can afford to pay.

What is done with the money they received? If everyone knew I believe they would vote accordingly. I think the poor should be treated same as the rich. When I went to school I was middle class the rich were first the middle class second the poor last. America is not to be run that way.

Because of the very high and unfair tax system. In most cases building proposals would mean increased taxes. We are familiar with Boyd Co. High and Summit Schools only. In my opinion the fairest and most acceptable way of obtaining needed money for our schools would be for each family to pay their fair share according to the number of children they may have attending school.

Because of the amount of taxes we already pay. One number 11 (California court ruling) I don't fully understand and know enough about it.

The school boards are wasting too much tax money on temporary buildings when they could have added permanent classrooms for
slightly more money. They don't have the dedicated teachers we had several years ago.

The last vote we had in the county for school bond the voters weren't told where the school would be, how big it would be, how much it would cost. All the people was told was the board wanted so much money. Our school system has PE. teachers teaching math, old senile teachers from W. Va. teaching that should be retired. When we lose a math teacher does the board look for a math teacher or just anyone to fill the vacancy?

Most voters feel that any building proposal would raise taxes.

I would rather pay taxes on a new school than on old one.

Most programs are financed by payroll, county or property taxes. I have one 14 year old boy in Boyd Co. High which is all I have in school the others are grown. But speaking for myself we can't give our children too much education. One thing should be improved is the dress and hair code. Lots of our school students remind me of the New Guina natives, this includes some teachers and staff members.

Regardless of cost I think we need a new and better school system, I think our school board members should be better qualified.

RICE

I think most parents have lost contact with schools and do not know the needs of the school.
People are tired of being taxed and not getting much back. Especially those who do not have children in school.

Taxes are already so high, the people that have no children in school doesn't want it or need the schools. But there will always be children as long as the world stands. They need all the opportunity they can get so a full rich life can be had by all.

I think that a valid reason could be that the average home owning family is beset with a myriad of taxes. Cost of upkeep on home etc. is worthy. I also think that every avenue should be explored thoroughly as to more efficient operation in every department of school activity. This questionnaire has been answered the best of my ability based upon my limited experience with the Boyd County system.

Although federal taxes have been reduced in the last few years and will be reduced this year, city and local taxes have risen and probably will continue to rise. Most raises are based on real-property assessments and citizens feel they are taxed to death.

Because of the increased amounts and types of taxes being imposed, people tend to reject new taxes. We feel that the Boyd County Education system would be furthered by a new high school (grades 10, 11, 12) letting the present high school building be used as a Jr. High (grades 7, 8, 9). This in return would alleviate the over crowding in the elementary schools (grades 1-6).
I think in Boyd Co. most voters feel like we have enough school buildings. But myself I feel like we should have good school buildings for all children and safe ones and good teachers.

I believe that we have got better schools than we had ten years ago.

Many large sums of money are paid out as salaries before any thought is given to the construction of schools, or concern for students. Also we as taxpayers know there are chances the federal or State government will take on the money burdens for new schools. And therefore, quite possibly be easier on us as individuals.

I believe it is because of the taxes as people are taxed to the limit.

Because of heavy State and Federal taxes. More available tax money should be spent for schools.

Because the school board tried to ram this down people throats without complete hearing and the fine print that people can't read and understand.

Because of over tax. I think the American people are burdened enough with taxes already being paid.

Because the people are paying almost half their salary now for taxes. Look at the mess at least at _____ Elem. I think being in authority has gone to some heads. They have their own favorite
group who gets all benefits and credit for all school happenings. If you are not in this group you and your child are left out in everything.

Tax for everything and government not doing its share. Expect voter to pay for everything.

ENGLAND HILL

I do not understand why or how this is true but since it is I would imagine it is because of higher taxes. From the outside our schools look fine but one has to be a student to understand how badly in need our schools are and from the outward looks the parents might be hesitant to back new school building proposals for fear of higher taxes because after all they are pretty high now. Not even one child should suffer because of his parents' financial state. I would be willing to pay more taxes to send a poor child to school and be educated identically to any other child.

They feel the students don't appreciate any thing the older voters do for them. Not courtesy, mannerly and respect for the older folks they had 10 years ago. Some are taught respect for their elders, most aren't.

Most people don't realize that good schools go with business expansion and new industries. I think Boyd County Schools are being run real good for the amount of money available and I commend them for doing a real good job.
People are unaware of the need for more and better classrooms. Also older people feel that what was good enough for them is good enough for their children and grandchildren.

Taxes so high on property and people with no children in school and on set incomes can not support any added burdens. I would not vote for any raise in my taxes for any school buildings in the country. I know a lot of others who must live as I do on set incomes can't and won't support any thing to raise taxes further.

They already feel overburdened with taxes. Many times the voters do not clearly understand the need of the schools.

We have too many different kinds of taxes.

The people are already taxed to the breaking point.

Taxes are higher on everything. I think if people think anywhere they can cut taxes they will.

I think most voters think money (bonds) being appropriated for school use is being misused. Mr. ------ and I pay school taxes and do not complain. Could there be a way in which everyone having children in school (whether they own property or not) pay poll taxes?

Too much taxes on property. Property owners are taxed too high. They must find some other way to find money to help our schools. Many people express themselves, it is cheaper to rent than own property.
Inflation and maintaining a standard of living have left consumers resenting any additional tax burden. Any dissatisfaction with Boyd County Schools concerns facilities and programs available, not the staff and their efforts or abilities.

Apparently, people who once paid for improvements and additions to school feel that their money was either poorly used or not used at all for the intended purpose. This form may not be valid where I am concerned, since I have been studying outside of the county for two years, and have experienced school only as a student and not a parent or a tax payer.

They think there is enough room at the present time and that it will raise taxes.

I think that voters are so poorly informed on the thing is one reason and don't really know what they are voting for. And people who don't have children in school just won't vote for anything that they think will cost them more taxes. I think maybe they are right after they pay for years to educate their children I think they should be free from all this for a few years at least, just a thought.

The officials do not present a workable or acceptable plan before voting. The last bond issue that passed by the voters was faulty. Schools were crowded when first opened. The High School could not be added to as was promised. The people are afraid this type of thing will occur again. They will pass no bond issue until we are assured of the results.
The need should be less because the population should decrease unless we have a major war or catastrophe. I am not familiar in any way with the Boyd County School system. My opinion that quality should prevail over quantity in all schools and this includes teachers, equipment, and facilities.

DURBIN

School buildings in Boyd County are above average and school system is satisfactory. The government and State of Kentucky should be complemented on the high standard of the school lunch and good programs.

Seems that people are taxed to death and that would be the only objection I would have. Doug #11 I just can't answer as I feel it is in California and we have such a small income to live on not that it would be hard for me to make a decision.

When a bond issue comes up for vote the public aren't informed enough on the subject. In other words voters don't understand what they're voting for. All they can think of is getting their taxes raised and no one is for that. I think voters should be more informed on bond issues.

I think they are putting too much tax on the older people and think they younger parents are not as much concerned as the older ones were as they have too much other interesting things to do as there are over half of the mothers work and don't have the time.
I am sorry to say your letter has shown me how ignorant I am about our school system. But I have answered this questionnaire as best I can and maybe I'll be able to look at the subject on hand more intently.

People are opposed because of taxes continuing to go up.

Because there are too many taxes now and the middle class had all they can handle. Even though we need new and better schools the public just can't support them.

People are not interested in school as much as they were ten years ago. There should be a way to get people interested in school like a adult classes with the students if they want to go. And should be encouraged to do so.

Because their other taxes are too high.

High cost of living.

Taxes are already too high.

The tax load from other sources. The lack of confidence in the way school money is used. The people on retirement—which are increasing steadily—feels they can't go higher taxes. And welfare people has more children but don't intend to pay tax.

They don't trust the officials to spend their money wisely.

People feel overtaxed now and see no reason to add to that burden. However, they seem to fail to realize that schools are
victims of inflation, higher labor cost etc. just the same as themselves. Many people don't feel that teachers' salaries should be raised, but I do. When a teacher goes to the store to buy a loaf of bread it costs her just as much as it does me, and personally for all the headaches good teachers (not the Friday night paycheckers) put up with I wouldn't have the job if I were working for the money it pays.

Many proposals in past were good, only the money seems to have been channeled to other places besides education. I feel corporations should bare more of the cost. Also, education should not depend on the area you live in. One part of the state should have the same money available as other parts. A student from a small school should be able to transfer to another school in some other part of the state and be on the same level of learning or teaching. There needs to be a strong emphasis on quality not quantity of education especially in grade school. If a poor student reaches high school and can't read well how can he do well there? He usually causes discipline problems because he feels so inadequate. The slow student needs help but the good students need every opportunity too. Basic subjects. Also fewer activities during school hours such as FFA, FHA, BETA etc. The need for a great deal of material to be covered should be reserved for the better students.

EAST FORK

Many are opposed to higher taxes and therefore are opposed to those things that will raise them. Many persons are not aware of
the need for better schools. I think there should be more publicity as to how the situation really is and also the ways to improve the situation.

I think one main reason is that people lose contact between their schools, school personnel and the needs of the schools in relation to their children. Some of my answers are based on my own personal opinion more than actual fact probably as I do not have children in school and do not have contact with the school as to their needs.

Everybody afraid that their taxes will be raised.

Because taxes are already too high and too much of our money has been wasted.

Because people are afraid of higher taxes.

Taxpayers not getting their monies' worth. Too many architects getting rich from designing buildings that leak. I will pay nearly 10% of my net income from farming in school tax, spend it very carefully.

Because the taxes we pay for school improvement often are not used for this purpose. If all the taxes we pay for school improvement were used correctly there would be little or no use for increased taxes.
Because of the tax burden. I am a widow and I don't know much about the school programs so I couldn't do justice to this questionnaire sorry.

Because lack of trust in board members and the taxes would just keep going higher.

Because there is so little done with appropriated funds. More space for students can be obtained by turning the present high school into a junior high school and construct a new high school in another location.

CANNONSBURG

Fixed income. Taxes are too much for them.

High cost of living (more outgo than income). I feel that Boyd County should be capable of providing students with as good of facilities as those in surrounding areas. This would stimulate interest and pride by students in both school and community as well as raise property values for adults.

It hasn't been explained properly to the property owners.

I think it is because it will increase property taxes. Some people who don't have children in school are opposed to any increase in taxes. For good schools and for a child to get a good education we must have funds to build better and larger schools.
People are paying more taxes than ever before in history. They are rebelling against taxes. Due to inflation we have many people who are having difficulty in meeting financial obligations. People on fixed incomes do not want any new or increased taxes.

I feel that people are not informed about school tax proposals enough.

Taxes are already high. Most people are opposed to any raise in taxes for any purpose.

The people who don't have any children or the people who have children already out of school don't like to pay for the other children in school.

Most do not want additional taxes. Those who have already educated their children get out and vote against proposals, others are disinterested. Some questions I would have liked to have answered with more explanation. I understood the questions and was sorry to have to answer a few with uncertain.

Tax, Tax, Tax. The fear of increased taxes. I cannot truly speak for anyone but myself concerning how things are in the schools, but I'm sure we need more facilities to take care of our growing population. Property owners do resent having to shoulder the greater load of school taxes but until something else is worked out we must do our share.

High tax and high cost of living.
I feel that if I support a building program then I will have to pay more taxes. I also feel that each parent should pay school tax according to the number of children enrolled in school rather than all taxes being received from property owners.

In past years many people felt that a great deal of education was necessary in order to achieve success in life, lately however many people realize that higher education (college training) is not necessary or desirable for all people in all walks of life. Unfortunately they may feel that in the cutting down of finances for high schools that they are helping to achieve this. They should realize however that our population is growing daily and that everyone should have a high school education, in order to get him or her ready for his purpose in life, whether to go on to college, vocational training or to go into the job market fresh out of high school.

They are against more taxes.

People do not understand the amount of increase or where it is going (how it is being spent).

Because there is so many old people that don't draw much income and have to do so much and taxes are so high. 35 years or so ago children almost starved for water at Boyd Co. High School they have improved very much since then.

Because the school taxes are high enough and most people can't afford to pay more.
The people are afraid of a property tax raise. We need school buildings in the worst way. I have talked to a few students of Boyd Co. High School and they feel the need of a new teaching staff is much greater than new buildings.

To me there are 3 aspects (1) the young (children) couples that support our athletic department but not our educatable department. (2) the elderly that do not understand how this would benefit our community, and (3) the illiterate that do not care about their childrens' education.

Most voters are not aware of the conditions of schools. Taxation on land along with other properties are high and take a great deal of the voters' income.

The cost of living has gone up or increased and people cannot afford as much. Taxes are something that people don't want no matter what it is for.

We feel politicians are using our tax dollars in a very inefficient way and trying to line their pockets in the majority of cases and these votes are one of the few ways we can show our disgust. The tighter the budget the less they can siphon to their own business interest.

The cost of material is so high and little people have taxes to pay for building them. If all people were equal the rich too would pay taxes and more schools would be built.
Because like I said if the money would go for the school instead on the less important things I could see paying taxes and not caring one bit, but it doesn't.

These "hilljacks" think that schooling is not any different than when they attended school, because they probably hated school and quit in high school, therefore, they will influence their children into thinking what the parents, the "hilljacks" believe.

**PRINCESS**

Because of taxes. People feel they are really burdened down with taxes. I suppose that is what most people seem to express to me.

Because of higher taxes.

State of the economy.

Because of the great waste in our system. One for instance is more money should be spent on education than sports.

Lack of interest.

They do not want no more taxes put on them.

I feel that many of the taxes for new schools ten years ago were not used to build schools for future use and expansion, therefore, people feel that more taxes for schools might not be used wisely.

I believe the faculty should become more involved locally in civic improvements other than schools which involve the family unit,
such as playgrounds, activities, creative projects that stimulate the student and encourage parents to participate more.

GARNER

Because of already paying too many taxes. The middle income American is taxed to the limit.

Most voters tend to be unaware of existing situations and how the school system could benefit from better facilities. Voters are more concerned with their personal financial position. They dislike having to pay for proposals that would greatly add to the community. They hate to part with their money. The result; a lot of complainers, but not one willing to sacrifice a little to improve conditions.

The buying power of the dollar has decreased and by further taxation on the net income of the average taxpayer has decreased. He feels that he is over taxed and must find a way to meet the cost of living. Also, on the double session, the buildings are sitting for 16 hours inactive whenever the double and triple session could make this asset provide as much use then building a new building. Also, taxpayers are wondering about the finished product of the schools, are we training our youth for the world of work or to avoid work. Discipline has also declined and order should be brought back into the schools. Students should respect their instructors and their opportunity.

Most people feel like they are taxed enough. Also, miss management of tax money voted in. I think Catlettsburg should be
encouraged to merge with Boyd County using their present high school for a Jr. High and building a Jr. high and grade school at Summit on school property. I also think people would support a tax increase if a limit was put on how much money is needed also how long it would take to be paid (number of years).

Because they think they now have modern schools and they don't need as many proposals as they did ten years ago.

Most people feel they are paying too much tax already.

I believe since taxes have increased so much already and too a lot of people are on fixed incomes and really could not afford it.

Misrepresentation, mishandling of funds and the fact that some use the school issue for political and personal gain. We believe that a school bond issue is needed critically and that if properly presented to the voters that it would pass.

People are not well enough informed as to how the money will be spent. Buildings are not built for future use and become obsolete. Boyd County definitely needs a jr. high school. The government property should be utilized soon for a new high school or jr. high, we also need better bus service.

It will cause higher taxes and taxes are high enough now.

The program proposed by the Boyd Co. Board of Education was for a new high school and one junior high. I believe our High School is modern enough and large enough to support the number of students.
in the last 3 years of high school. What we need is 2 junior highs. Another item was a 3 million dollar bond issue which the interest on that amount of money in approximately 5 years would pay for 1 junior high. If another bond issue is forth-coming for the construction of 2 new junior highs, keep the cost down to minimum for the very necessities then add on additional rooms as needed.

Because of the extreme high taxation today as opposed to ten years ago. People are reluctant to have additional taxation imposed on them. Reference to your first (4) group of questions, my salary has no bearing on this questionnaire as such.

Rise in cost of living or inflation if you prefer, also the "Blank Check" aspect of so many proposals not actually specifying how money is to be spent or in what school etc. Example building new gyms and other sports facilities while classrooms, cafeterias and even rest rooms are neglected.

Filled out as well as possible, I feel that I am too young to really know about school bond issues.

People are now turning down the school building proposals because in this generation they are not having as many children as they did ten years ago, so it stands to reason that people who do not have children are not for the school building proposals.

People with no children (or none in school) are not always in favor of a tax. Many renters have children in school and pay no
tax except car and hidden. Many people are just not concerned enough with our education system. Many couples buy expensive homes and cars and furniture at the start. Things such as taxes, medical bills and living expenses come as a big shock. I think we need a class to prepare young adults to face life.

It seems to me that people are afraid to vote for more taxes for schools for the simple reason that if they do they never seem to get anything for their money. The taxes seem to go for something else.

Afraid of higher taxes.

Because when a new school is proposed and constructed planning has been poor and the school is inadequate when finished. We realize schools are very important for our children and I feel everyone wants to do his part in making schools better but are tired of being taxed every time someone has made a mistake in planning a school (new) for his area. For if a school is built to house 1100 students and in three years it is inadequate as it now houses 1400 students. Plan ahead at least ten years or more if necessary. It costs less to close a room down when student enrollment drops, than it does to build when student enrollment increases.

The teachers were wrong and in some cases arrogant when they "struck". They destroyed or harmed their image. We have always supported all school efforts in the past.
Everytime that new school buildings are mentioned the school government says they have to have more taxes.

Most people think that they are over taxed.

Because they feel the money is being misused and mismanaged. The whole school system needs to be reevaluated, especially high school, the senior year is a complete waste under present conditions each student should be trained in his or her personal abilities.

Dissatisfied with the present school system. People also don't want to pay higher taxes.

HOODS CREEK

Many people seem to feel that the schools they attended are good enough for their children - not realizing the advances in science, etc. in the last few years.

I think people in this county are afraid of taxes or bonds. I know for I have been involved in such a thing. People do not realize the importance of a better education. The last time the bond issue was up I worked to get the bond passed. Ironville district is the only one who carried the vote. I am for better buildings, schools etc. if it means better education for my boys, belive me I am all for it.

Bond levies have been denied primarily because community parents are not involved and aware enough of what transpires in the school

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programs. Also, teachers should have more input into school decisions pertaining to curriculum and other matters.

There are more drains on their money now.

The lack of respect shown for present property. Why build new when the old is not taken care of. Misplaced public emphasis on and support for athletic programs and disregard for academic needs.

Inflation in the economy. People just don't have enough money, especially the working class.

Too many taxes and hardly any improvement.

People are not realizing the importance of up-to-date school facilities. They think other things are more important.

I believe most proposals are voted down because most people feel that taxes will be increased. I believe that some of the tax money used toward foreign aid and other projects to help other countries should be used in this country to build better schools and homes and things that are needed to better all whom are concerned.

In one word taxes, and it seems the added taxes does not go for the added school improvements we need. I am for the twelve month school because I think it would save time and money and to give our teachers a raise.

I think that people have too many taxes. We can't hardly make it and they keep adding taxes. I have been layed off for six months
and some guy wants to add tax on me to raise his salary. I will vote no to any tax increase.

Too much money has gone for non-education services. Also, it is commonly reported among men I work with that money here to fore voted for educational purposes has disappeared with no knowledge as to where it went. We need at the very least two new jr. high school buildings in Boyd County. I will, therefore, vote for the new tax money for their construction and for sufficient funds for the staff to run them.

I feel it is simply the voters who have no children in school, therefore, they have little concern. One area in which our schools are failing is to inspire a feeling of patriotism for our country. Overall I feel our schools are doing a wonderful job considering the amount of finances they have to operate with.

The public seems to be less concerned with education facilities when it comes to spending some of their own money.

More emphasis is placed upon federal aid to schools. The feeling that we are now paying enough taxes to support our schools handsomely if it would just be channeled in the right direction.

As you know taxes are unpopular, schools are taken for granted. Many feel that since they have no children in school they are unwilling to vote additional school taxes. Taxes on cigarettes, whiskey, gasoline, automobiles and many intangible items, while unpopular, are accepted because most of us are directly concerned.
They have abandoned good buildings that should be put back in use.

Because of so many other high taxes.

Taxes. The average working man is over-taxed and over-worked. Any other proposal would be looked upon as just another burden, and who needs that.

Lack of knowledge concerning exactly what they are voting on and are thereby categorically opposed to any additional taxation. If the Boyd County School system would propose or put forth an open ended tax increase bill that could become a monstrosity.

FAIRVIEW

Because we seemingly are paying high taxes already without receiving high enough benefits to show for them.

BUCKLEY

Because of rise in taxes.

One associates school building proposals with increased taxes and approximately one fourth of our income go to hidden taxes.

Taxes are higher and people do not want to raise them anymore.