

Durham County Government



Bond Referenda Survey Summary Presentation

Delivered to the Board of County Commissioners

by Mark Wm. Hertzog, Ph.D.

21 May 2007





Executive Summary

- About half of Durham County voters would support a school bond issue for either \$195 million or \$150 million, with about one-third opposed and the remaining one-sixth undecided at either amount.
- The most surprising finding is that most voters take identical stands on a school bond regardless of the dollar amount.
 - ❖ Those who think it too expensive at \$195 million also think it too expensive at \$150 million.
 - ❖ Likewise, those who think it worth the money at \$150 million also think it worth the money at \$195 million.
- Among those who said they opposed the bond, the most frequent reasons voters cited were :
 - ❖ The cost to taxpayers,
 - ❖ A lack of confidence the funds would be spent wisely, and
 - ❖ The fact that some voters don't have children enrolled in the Durham Public Schools.



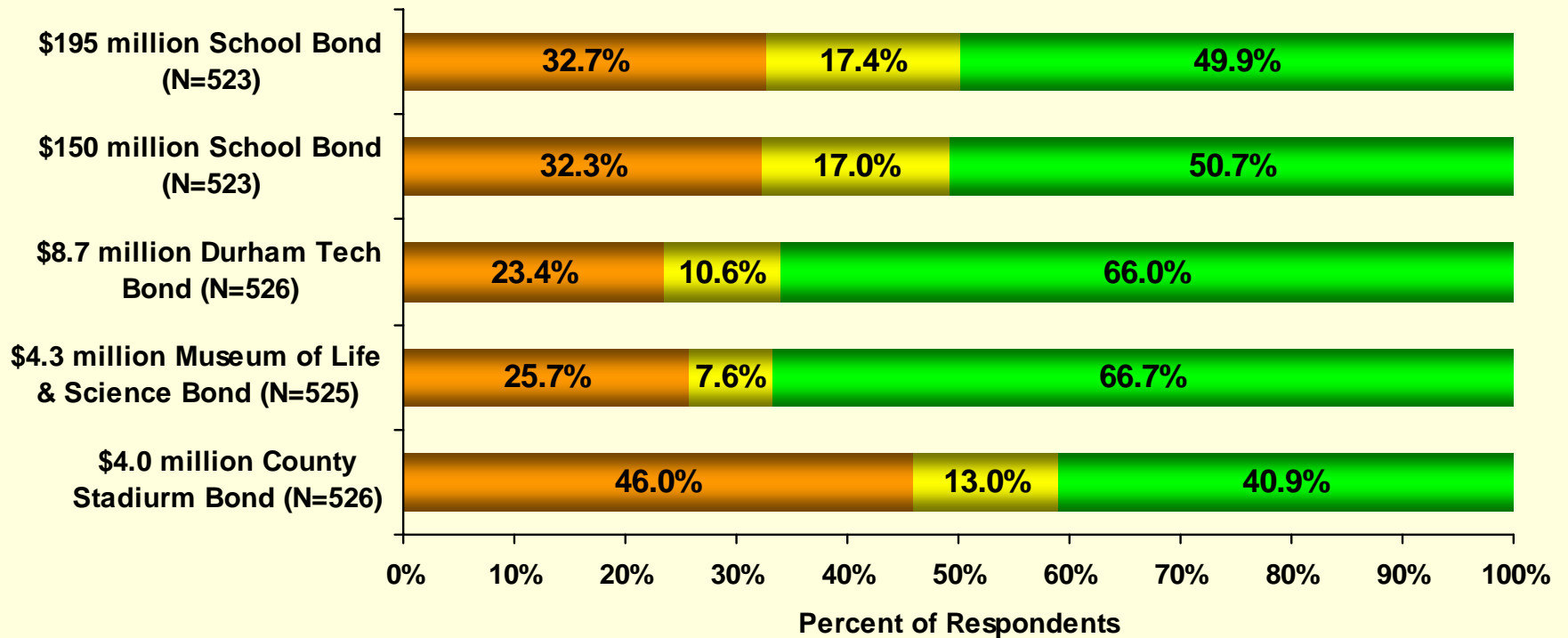
Executive Summary

- Smaller bond issues of \$8.7 million for Durham Tech, and \$4.3 million for the Museum of Life and Science, would likely pass easily.
- A \$4 million bond issue to upgrade the County Stadium, on the other hand, faces significant voter skepticism.
- Questioned about alternative means for funding bond issues:
 - ❖ A majority of those polled would support a 1% prepared-meals tax on restaurant food.
 - ❖ However, a 1% land-transfer tax, paid by the seller at the time real estate is sold, would prove unpopular.
 - ❖ About 29% said that they would be more likely to support the bond issues if they were paid for largely by prepared-meals and/or land-transfer taxes, in lieu of property tax increases. Just over half said it would make no difference in their votes; 13% said they would be less likely to support a bond funded by alternative taxes; and the remainder were undecided.
- The telephone poll of 526 likely voters countywide was conducted from April 28 to May 5, and has a sampling error of $\pm 4.3\%$.



Executive Summary

Projected Vote on All Bond Proposals



Q3, Q4, Q6, Q7, Q8

■ No ■ Not Sure ■ Yes

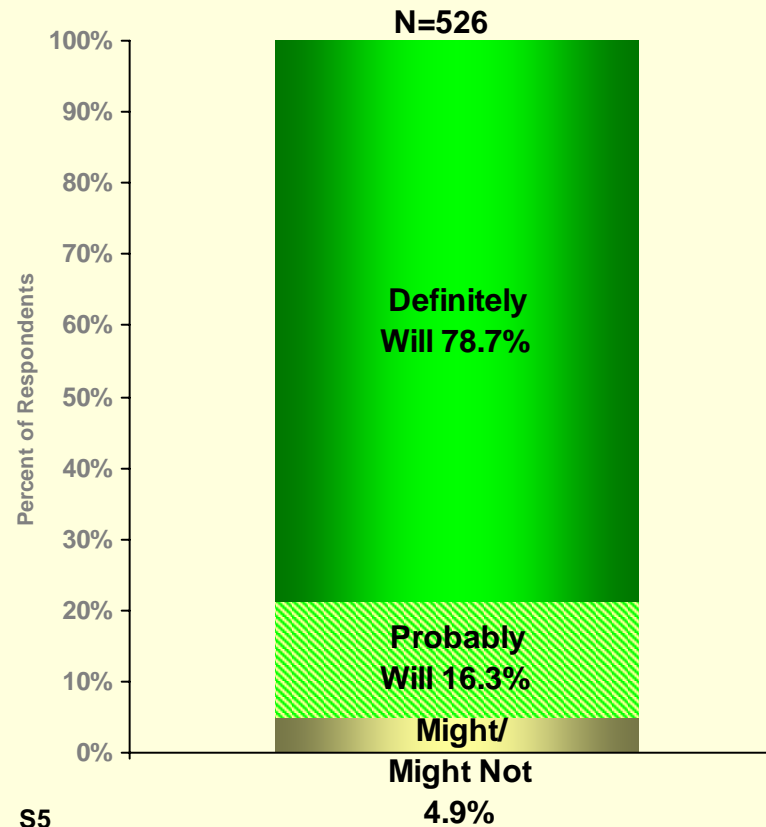


Intention to Vote

S5: Intention to vote

- Those 45 and older are significantly more likely to say they'll definitely vote in November, compared with those ages 25 to 34, who more often say they probably will vote, or might or might not vote.
- A disproportion of those saying only that they'll probably will vote, or might or might not vote, are found in zip code 27704. Meantime, the strongest vote intention is found in zip code 27707.

Intention to Vote in Fall 2007



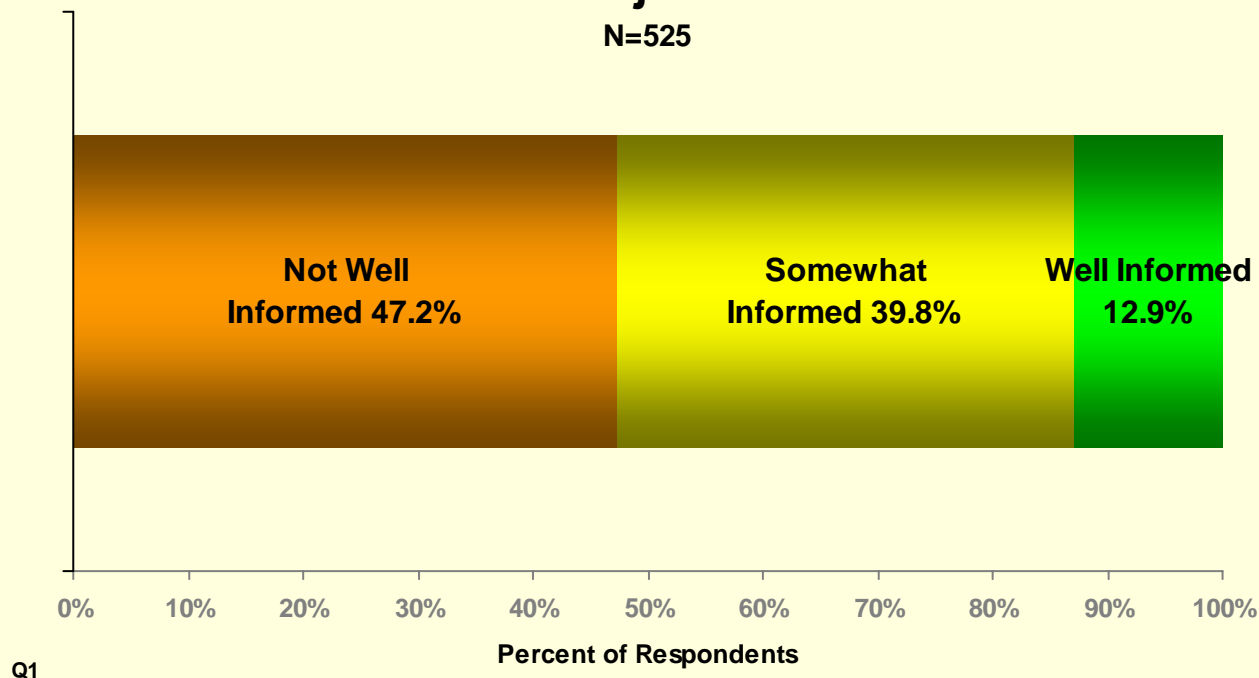


Durham Public Schools: Project Knowledge

Q1. How informed would you say you are about school construction projects proposed for the Durham Public School System? Would you say you are Well informed, Somewhat informed, or Not well informed?

How Informed about DPS Construction Projects

N=525





Durham Public Schools: Project Knowledge

Q1: How informed about DPS construction projects

- Black respondents said they were somewhat informed more often than white or other-race respondents. Three-fifths of other-race respondents said they were not well informed, as did almost half of whites, but only three-eighths of blacks.
- Black men particularly considered themselves better informed about DPS construction projects than did white men.
- No one below age 35 considered him- or herself well informed. Those considering themselves best informed were the 35-54 age block, and, interestingly, those 65 or older.
- Parents or guardians of DPS students considered themselves better informed than did non-parents.
- Respondents in zip codes 27701, 27705, and 27707 were more likely to say they were well informed than respondents in zip code 27713.
- Those who said they definitely will vote said they were better informed than did those less likely to vote.

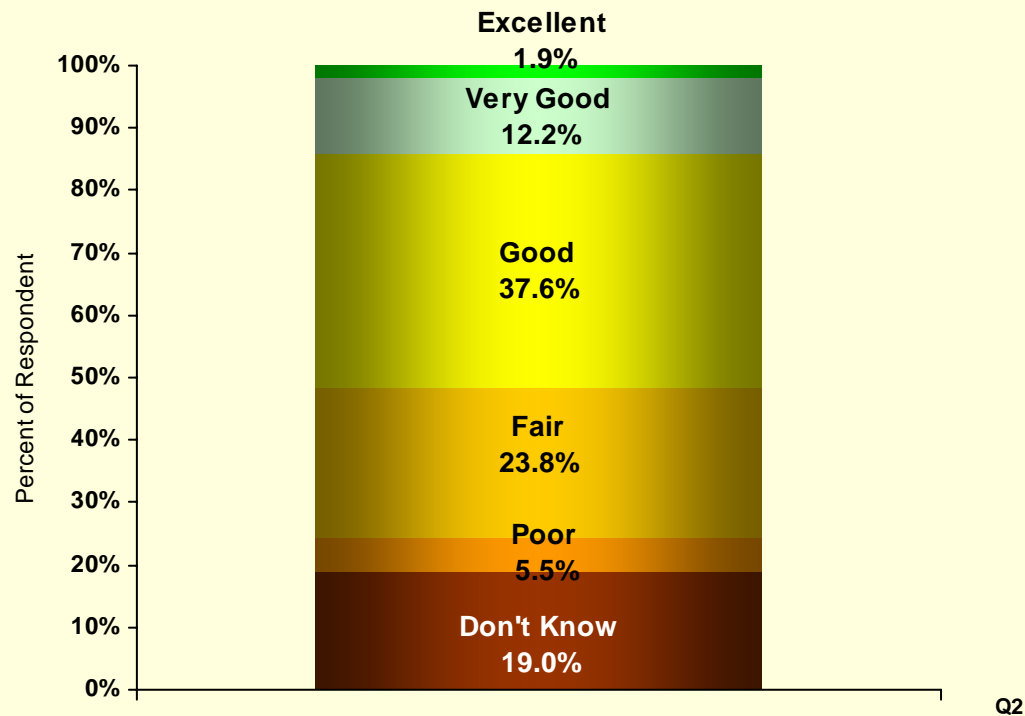


Durham Public Schools: Perceived Conditions

Q2. Overall, how would you describe the Durham Public School buildings and grounds? Would you say they are Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, or Poor?

Perception of Durham Public Schools Building/Grounds Condition

N=526





Durham Public Schools: Perceived Conditions

Q2: Perception of DPS buildings and grounds condition

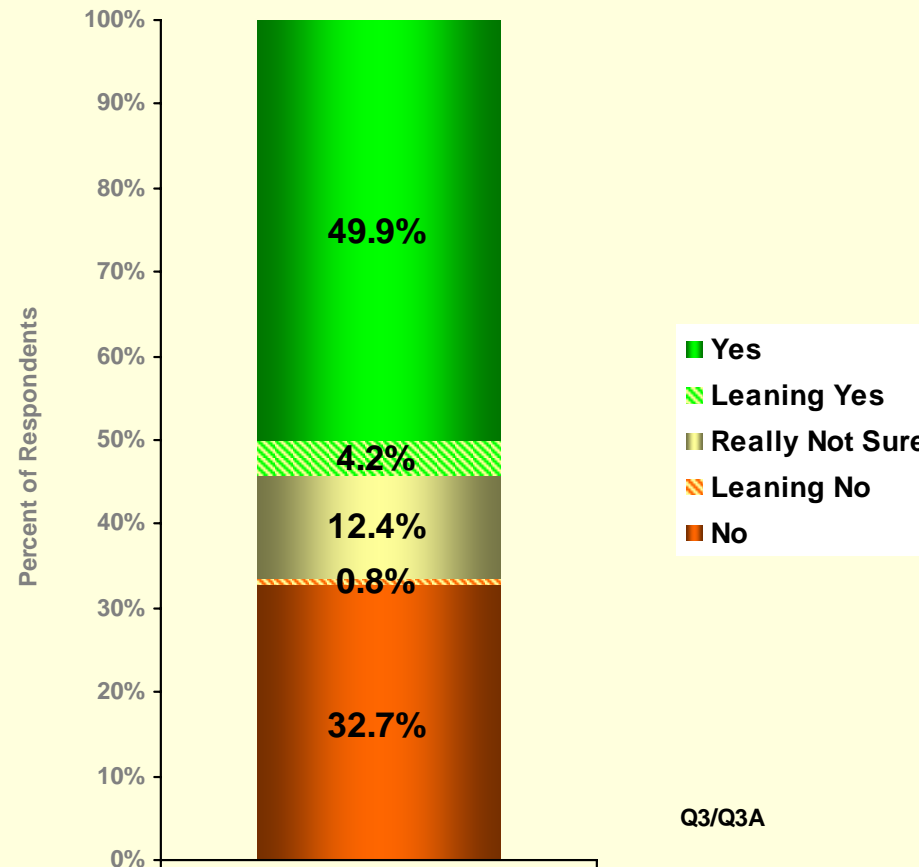
- Black respondents were significantly more likely than other-race respondents to say the school buildings and grounds were in good condition; other-race respondents are most likely to say they're only fair. White respondents are more likely than black or other-race respondents to give "don't know" responses.
- Respondents age 65 or older also were more likely than younger ones to give "don't know" responses.
- Those in zip codes 27701, 27703, and 27713 are more likely to give "fair" or "poor" ratings to school facilities, while those in zip 27704, 27705, and 27712 are more likely to give "excellent" or "very good" ratings.
- Those who call themselves well informed are more likely than others to give "excellent" or "very good" ratings; those who call themselves somewhat informed are more likely than others to give "good" ratings; and those who call themselves not well informed are more likely than others to "don't know" responses.



Durham Public Schools: \$195 Million Bond

Projected Vote on \$195 Million School Bond Issue

N=523





Durham Public Schools: \$195 Million Bond

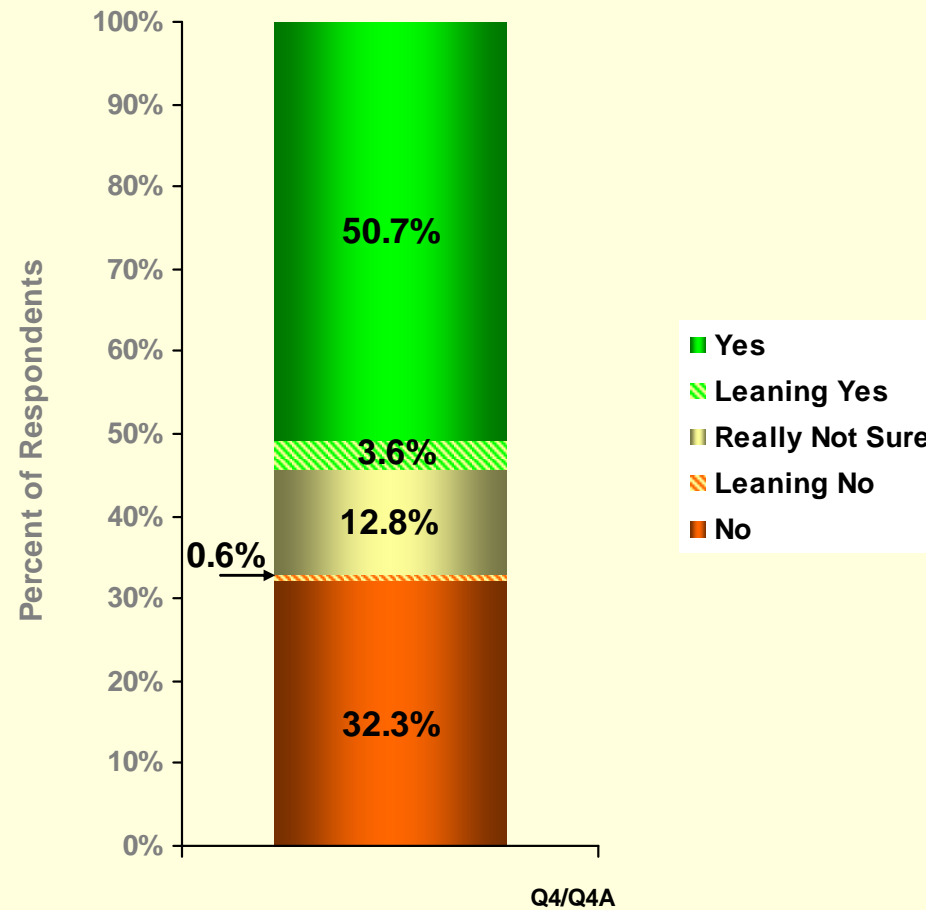
Q3: School bond at \$195 million

- Black men are significantly more likely than black women, or whites of either sex, to vote “no.”
- As age increases, likelihood to vote for the bond decreases: the “yes” vote diminishes from 85% among those 18 to 24, down to 38% among those 65 or older.
- Those with children under 18 at home are significantly more likely to vote “yes.”
- Those with children enrolled in the DPS system are significantly more likely to vote “yes.”
- Voters in zip 27701 were most likely to vote “yes,” while those in zip 27703 were most likely to vote “no.”
- Those who said they definitely will vote were less likely to be undecided than were those who said they just probably will vote.
- Those who said they are well informed about DPS construction projects were split evenly between yes and no voters, while those who said they were somewhat informed supported the bonds two-to-one.



Durham Public Schools: \$150 Million Bond

Projected Vote on \$150 Million School Bond Issue
N=523





Durham Public Schools: \$150 Million Bond

Q4: School bond at \$150 million

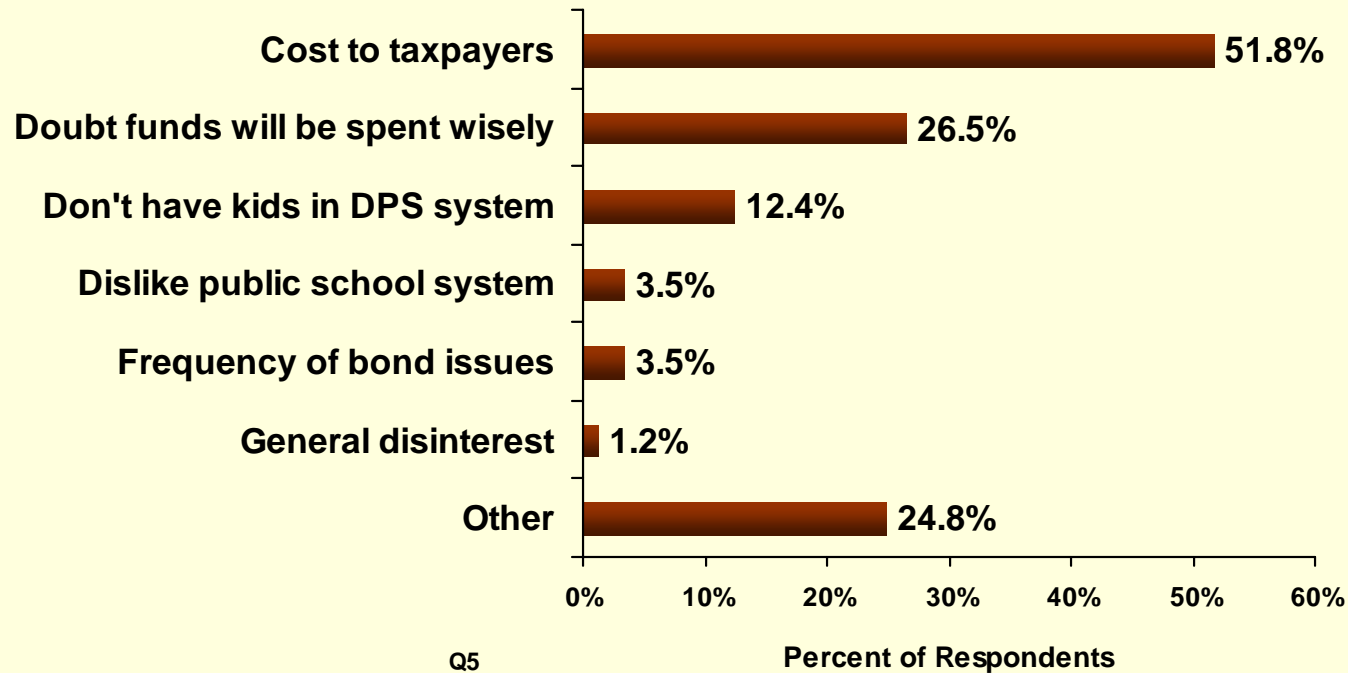
- Whites were somewhat more likely than blacks to give “don’t know” responses.
- As age increases, likelihood to vote for the bond decreases: the “yes” vote diminishes from 77% among those 25 to 34, down to 38% among those 65 or older.
- Those with children under 18 at home are significantly more likely to vote “yes.”
- Those with children enrolled in the DPS system are significantly more likely to vote “yes.”
- Those who said they definitely will vote were less likely to be undecided than were those who said they just probably will vote.
- A plurality of those who said they are well informed about DPS construction projects were no voters, while those who said they were somewhat informed supported the bonds nearly two-to-one.



Durham Public Schools: “No” Vote Reasons

Reasons For 'No' Vote on School Bonds

Multiple responses allowed -- N=170



Q5. Reasons for responses of “no” or “lean no” on school bond

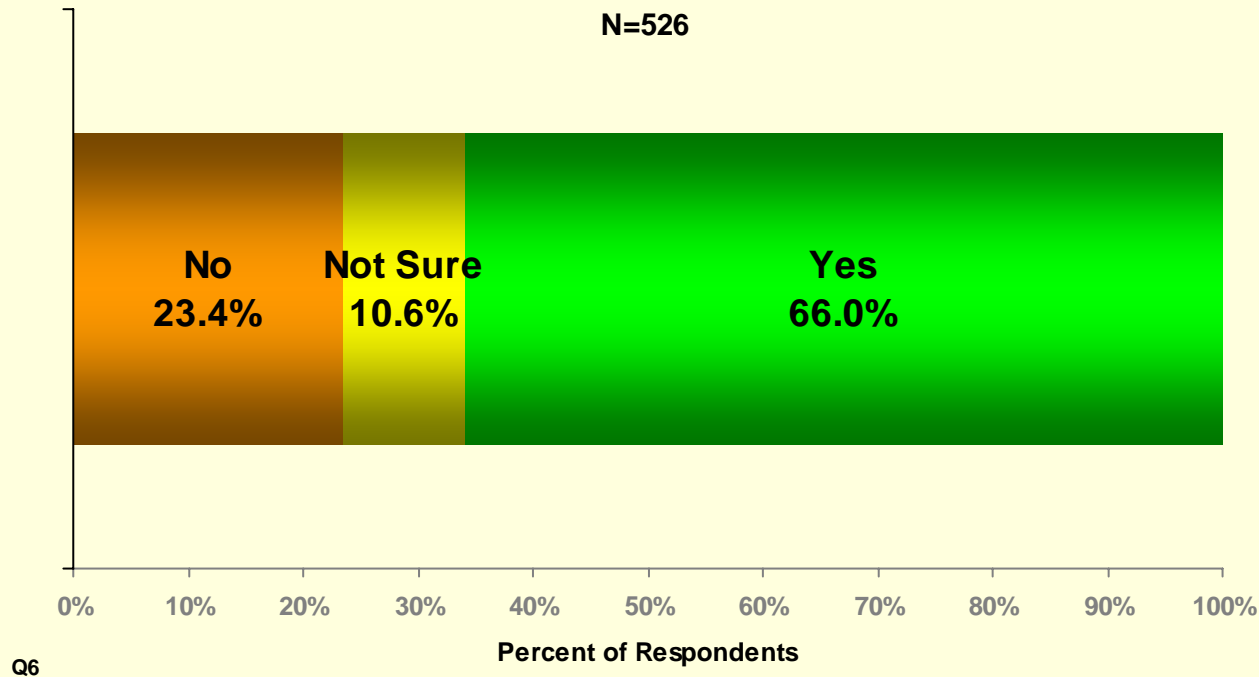
- White women were more likely than other groups to cite the fact that they did not have children in the Durham Public Schools as a reason for voting no.
- Those who said they were somewhat informed about DPS construction projects were more likely to cite the cost to taxpayers than were either those who said they were well informed, or those who said they were not well informed.



Durham Technical Community College Bond

Projected Vote on \$8.7 Million Durham Tech Bond Issue

N=526



Q6. Durham Tech bond

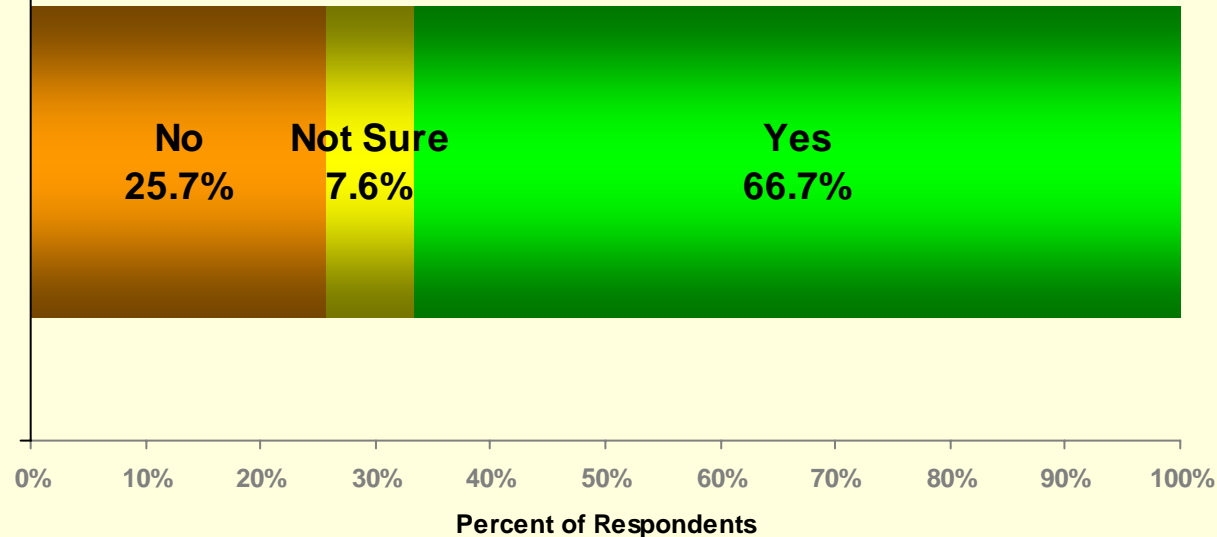
- The only group among whom support significantly lagged was voters age 65 or older; they had the highest shares both of “no” and “don’t know” responses.
- Geographically, those in zip codes 27705 and 27707 supported the Durham Tech bond most strongly, significantly more than those in zips 27703, 27704, 27712, and 27713



N.C. Museum of Life & Science Bond

Projected Vote on \$4.2 Million Bond for Museum of Life & Science

N=525



Q7. Museum of Life & Science bond

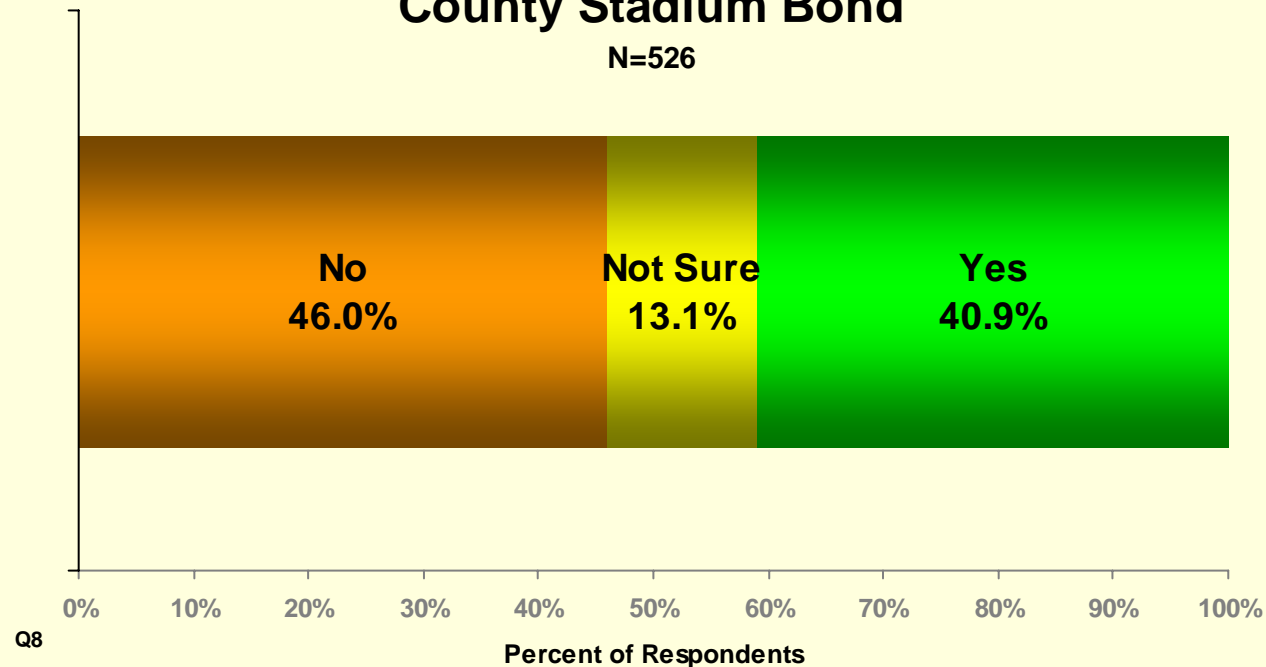
- Support was significantly stronger among whites than among the other-races respondents (Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, multiracial, etc.).
- Voters aged 25 to 34 were significantly more likely to support the museum bond than were those age 55 or older.
- Those with children under 18 living at home also were more likely to support the museum bond.
- Support was strongest in zip codes 27701, 27705, 27707, and 27712, significantly higher than in zips 27703 and 27713.



Durham County Stadium Bond

Projected Vote on \$4.0 Million Durham County Stadium Bond

N=526



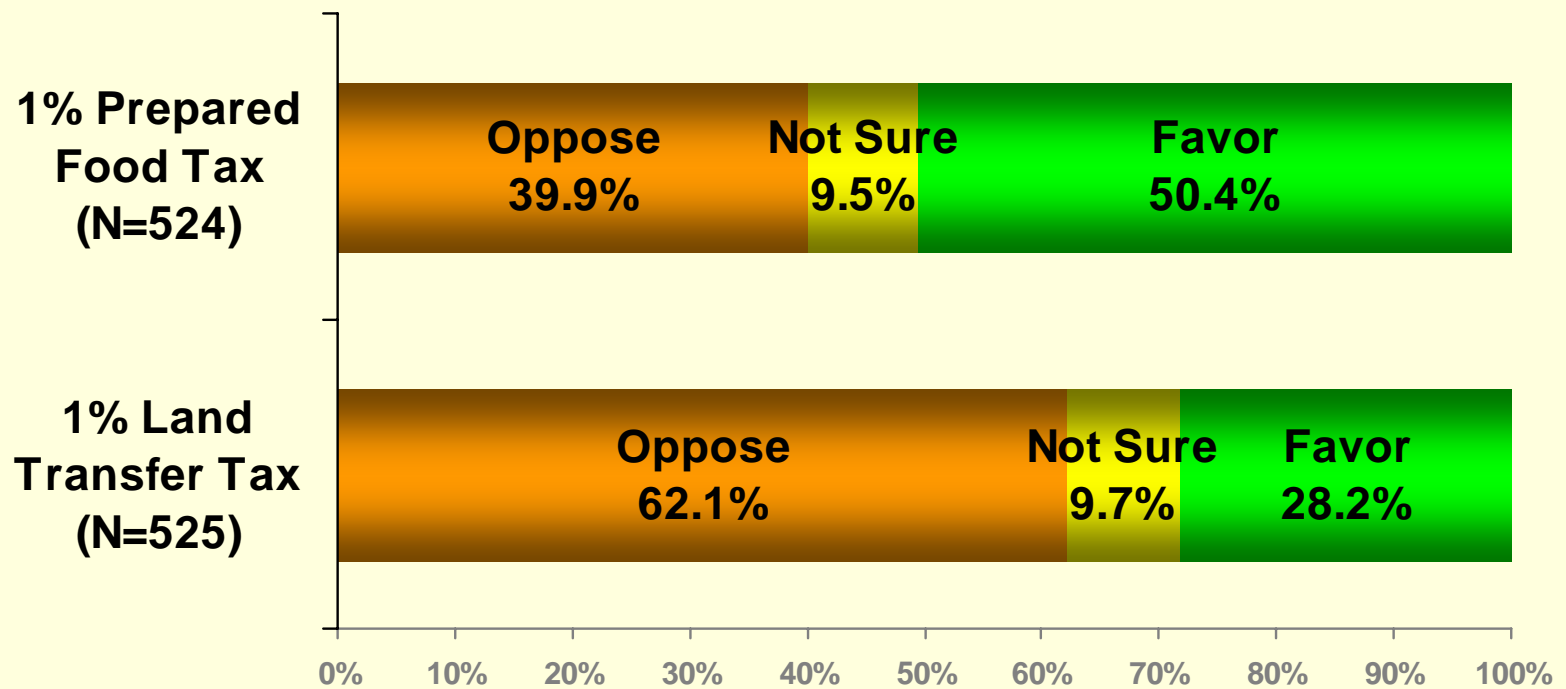
Q8. Stadium bond

- Interestingly, black women are more likely to support the Stadium bond than are white men.
- Those 25 to 34 years old are more likely to support it than those ages 35 to 44.
- The least support is in zip codes 27703, 27705, and 27713; there is significantly more support in zips 27701, 27704, 27707, and 27712.



Alternative Tax Proposals

Support for Alternative Tax Proposals



Q9, Q10

Percent of Respondents



Alternative Tax Proposals

Q9: Prepared food tax

- Majorities of black and white voters support the proposed tax, while a majority of the other-races respondents oppose it.
- Support is strongest in zip codes 27703 and 27705, and weakest in zips 27712 and 27713; while the “don’t know” share is significant in zips 27701 and 27707.

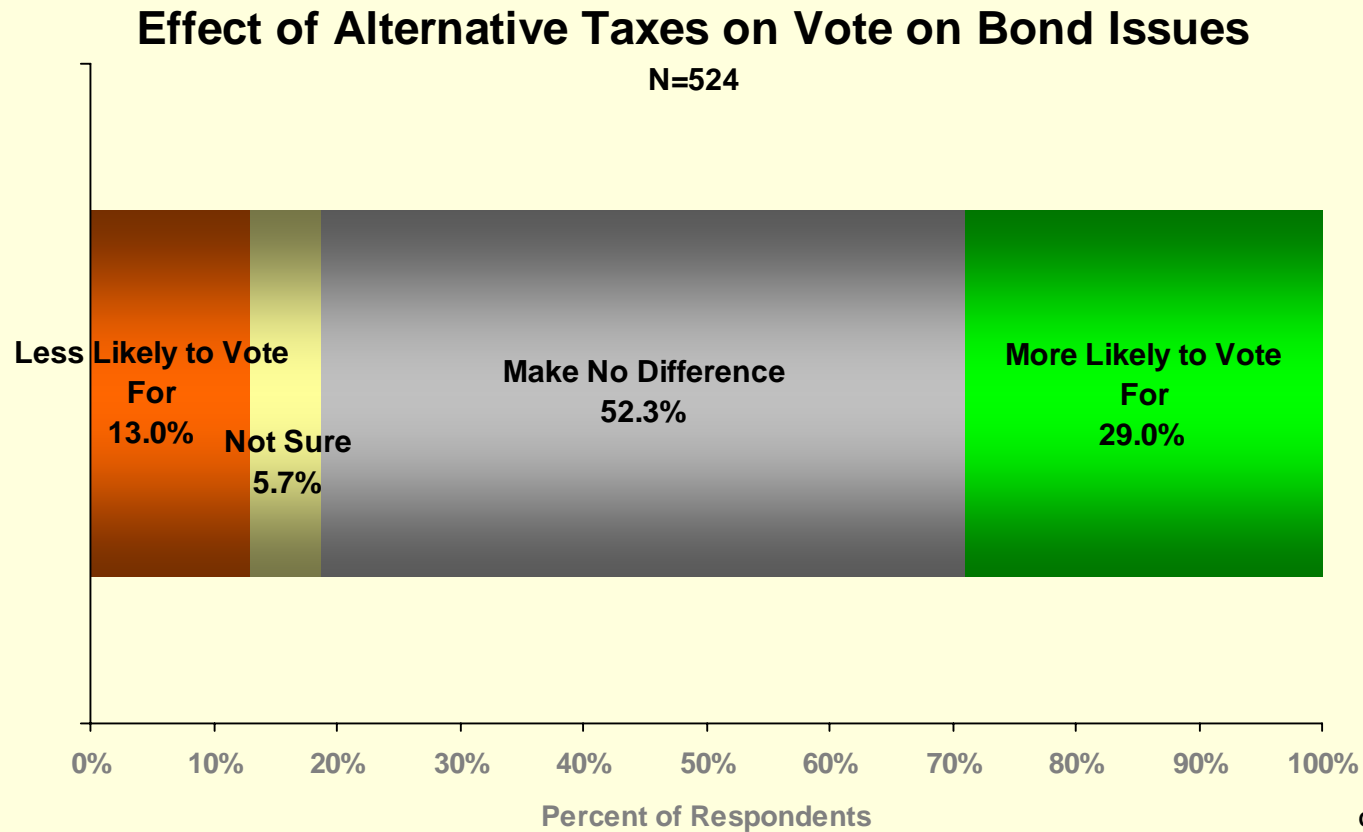
Q10: Land transfer tax

- Homeowners and renters differ drastically. Homeowners, the huge majority of respondents, oppose a land transfer tax by 25%-66%, with 9% undecided. Most renters favor the land transfer tax, 56%-31%, with 13% undecided. (In contrast, views on the prepared food tax were almost identical among both homeowners and renters.)
- African-Americans are significantly more likely to support the tax than are whites and other-race respondents. This appears to be directly related to the higher share of home renters among black respondents compared with white and other-race respondents.
- Support is weakest in zip code 27713, where 17% are in favor, 65% opposed, and 18% not sure. The smallest share of “no” votes is in zip 27701, where 32% are in favor, 48% opposed, and 19% not sure.



Alternative Tax Proposals

Q11. Now let's suppose the bond issues we've discussed were financed largely by a prepared food tax, or a land transfer tax, or both, rather than higher property taxes. Would this make you more likely, or less likely, to vote for the bond issues, or would it make no difference in your vote?



Methodology and Demographics

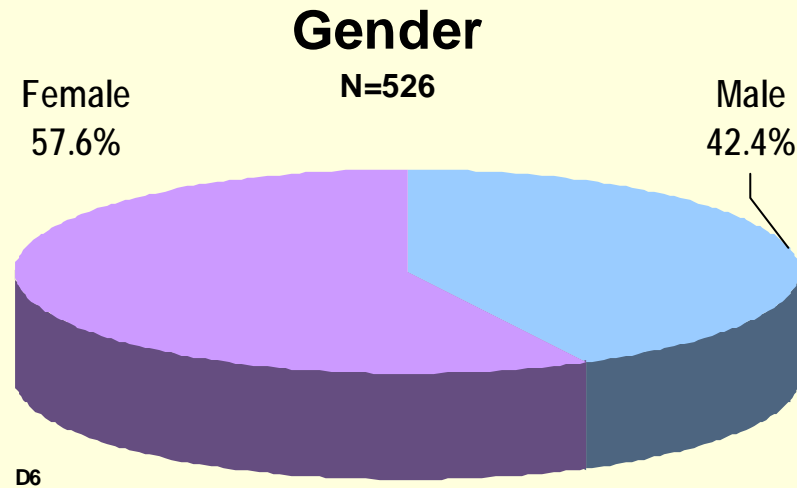


Methodology

- The questionnaire was developed by Hertzog Research in conjunction with the Durham County Manager's Office and members of the Board of County Commissioners. It was based on a format developed for a similar survey in 2003 by another vendor, but was significantly modified to meet current needs.
- Telephone interviewing was conducted by Hertzog Research's fielding partner, FGI Research of Chapel Hill, N.C., from its interviewing facility in Virginia Beach, Va.
- The county's current voter registration list was purchased from the Durham County Board of Elections. From this comprehensive list, a randomized sample of names was drawn and matched with listed telephone numbers. From this sub-sample the respondents were contacted.
- Respondents were screened to assure that they still live in Durham County, and that they at least might vote in the November 2007 general election. Those who said they no longer live in the county, or that they probably or definitely would not be voting in November 2007, were excluded.
- Completions were monitored to assure that the total sample closely reflected voter turnout in the November 2006 general election by gender, race, age group, and geography.
- The county initially contracted for 400 completed interviews. However, owing to a program error that resulted in a disproportion of white respondents being interviewed, we interviewed an additional 126 respondents after correcting this error, for 526 total, to assure that all racial groups were fairly represented. This was done at no charge whatsoever to the county.
- The sampling error for this survey is $\pm 4.3\%$.
- Results were tabulated by FGI Research. Further analysis was performed by Hertzog Research using SPSS software.



Demographics: Gender

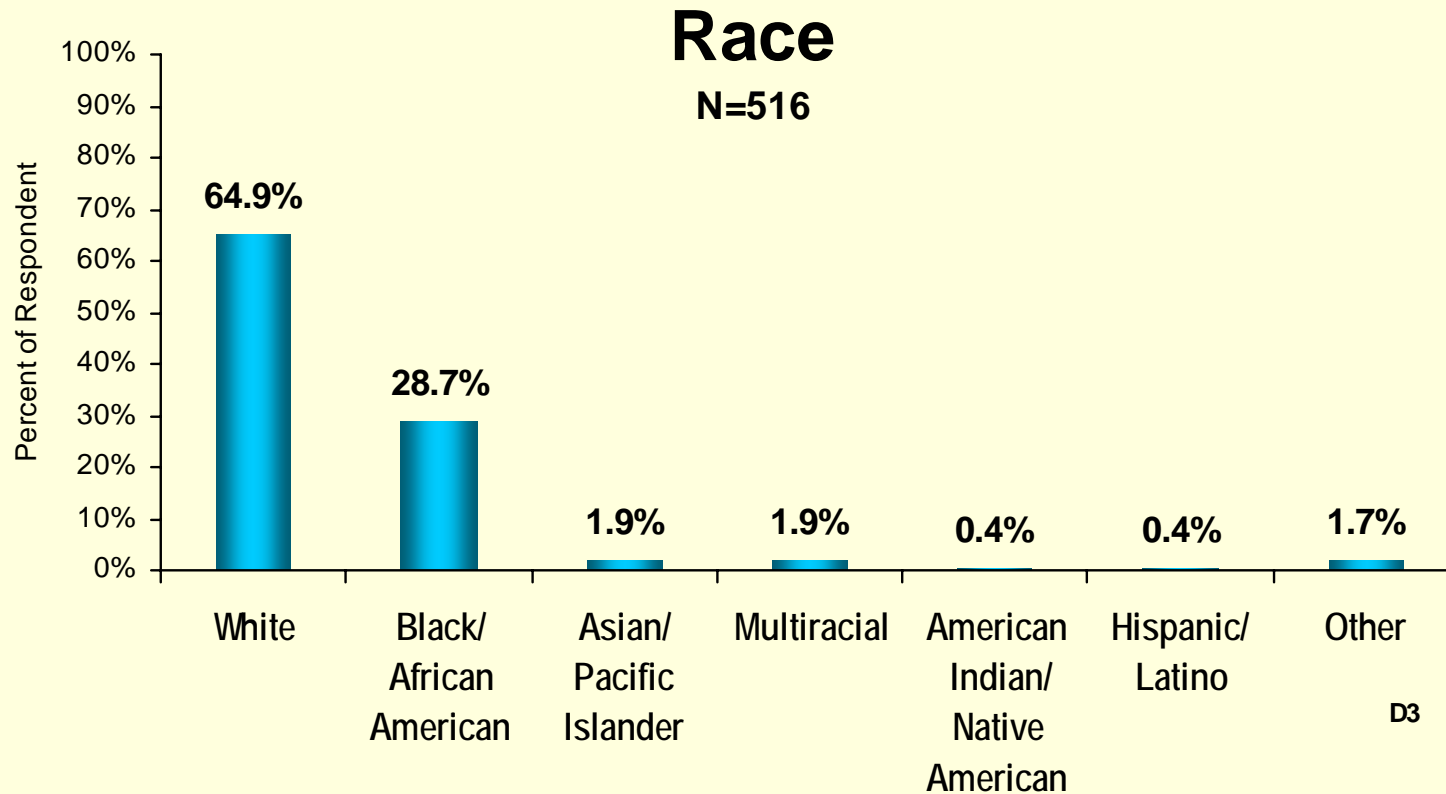


This table compares the survey respondents to the turnout by gender in Durham County in the November 2006 general election, and to the Durham County voter registration rolls as of 18 April 2007.

Gender	Respondents %	2006 Turnout %	2007 Regist. %
Women	57.60	55.51	56.38
Men	42.40	43.91	42.74
Gender not recorded	(n/a)	0.58	0.88
	100.00	100.00	100.00



Demographics: Race





Demographics: Race

*This table compares the **self-categorization by race** of survey respondents to the **turnout by race** in Durham County in the November 2006 general election, and to the Durham County voter registration rolls as of 18 April 2007.*

Race	Respondents %	2006 Turnout %	2007 Registr. %
White	64.92	64.44	56.73
Black	28.68	31.66	37.60
All other racial categories	6.40	3.90	5.67
	100.00	100.00	100.00

NOTE: About 3% of all voters, who are classified in voter registration records as black, categorize themselves otherwise in the survey, most often "multiracial" or "some other race." If voter registration records are used, rather than self-categorization, then 31.6% of respondents are black, and just 3.6% belong to "all other racial categories."



Demographics: Race

*This table compares the **self-categorization by race** of survey respondents to the turnout by race in Durham County in the November 2006 general election, and to the Durham County voter registration rolls as of 18 April 2007.*

Race by gender	Respondents %	2006 Turnout %	2007 Regist. %
White women	35.55	33.95	(not available)
White men	28.14	30.27	(not available)
Black women	17.49	19.61	(not available)
Black men	10.65	11.89	(not available)
All other women	4.56	1.95	(not available)
All other men	3.61	1.75	(not available)
Gender not recorded (all race)	(n/a)	0.58	(not available)
	100.00	100.00	

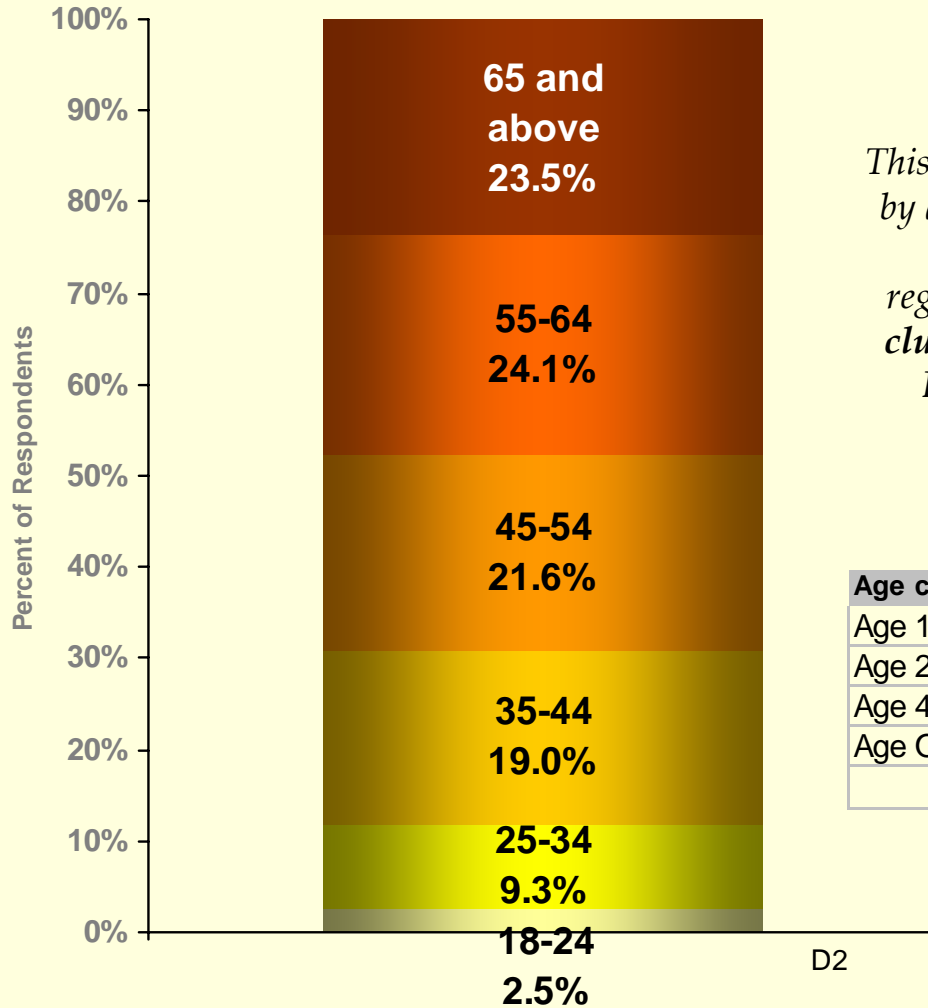
*NOTE: About 3% of all voters, who are classified in voter registration records as black, categorize themselves otherwise in the survey, most often "multiracial" or "some other race."
If voter registration records are used, rather than self-categorization, then 31.6% of respondents are black, and just 3.6% belong to "all other racial categories."*



Demographics: Age Categories

Ages

N=515

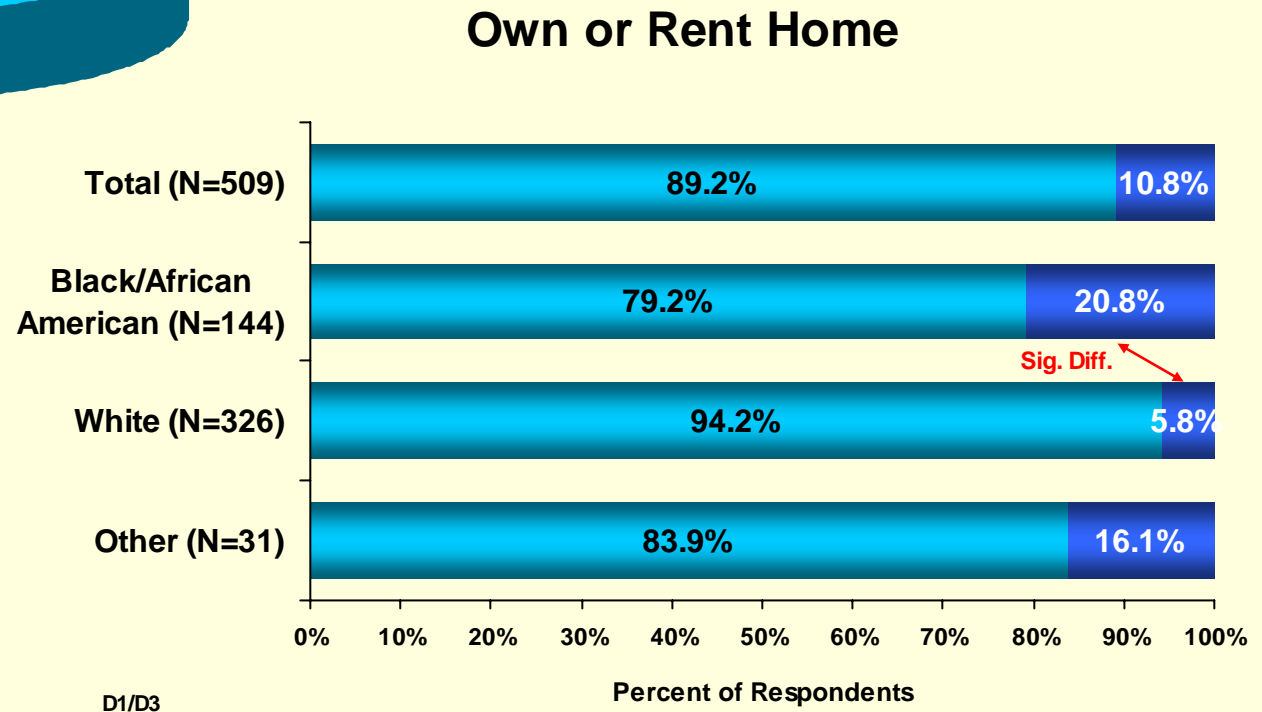
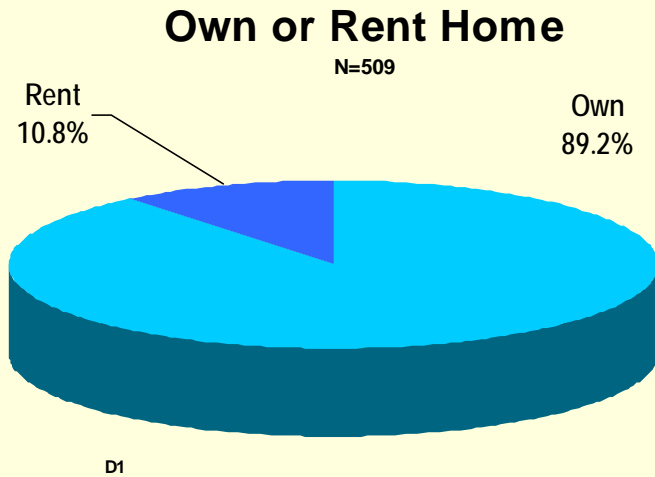


This table compares the survey respondents to the turnout by age cluster in Durham County in the November 2006 general election, and to the Durham County voter registration rolls as of 18 April 2007. NOTE: The four clusters below are those used by the State Board of Elections to report the November 2006 turnout figures.

Age cluster	Respondents %	2006 Turnout %	2007 Regist. %
Age 18 - 25	4.90	5.23	12.60
Age 26 - 40	21.30	23.75	32.34
Age 41 - 65	53.60	52.69	41.55
Age Over 65	20.20	18.33	13.52
	100.00	100.00	100.00



Demographics: Home Owned or Rented

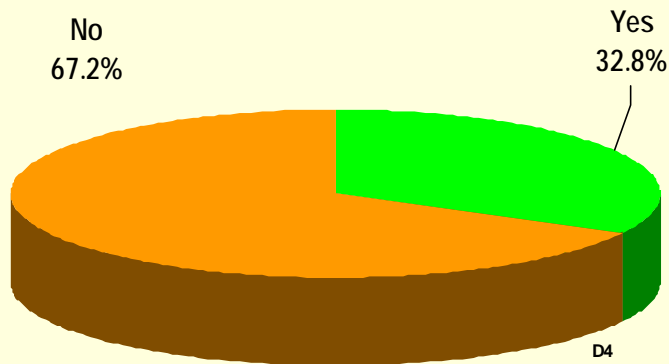




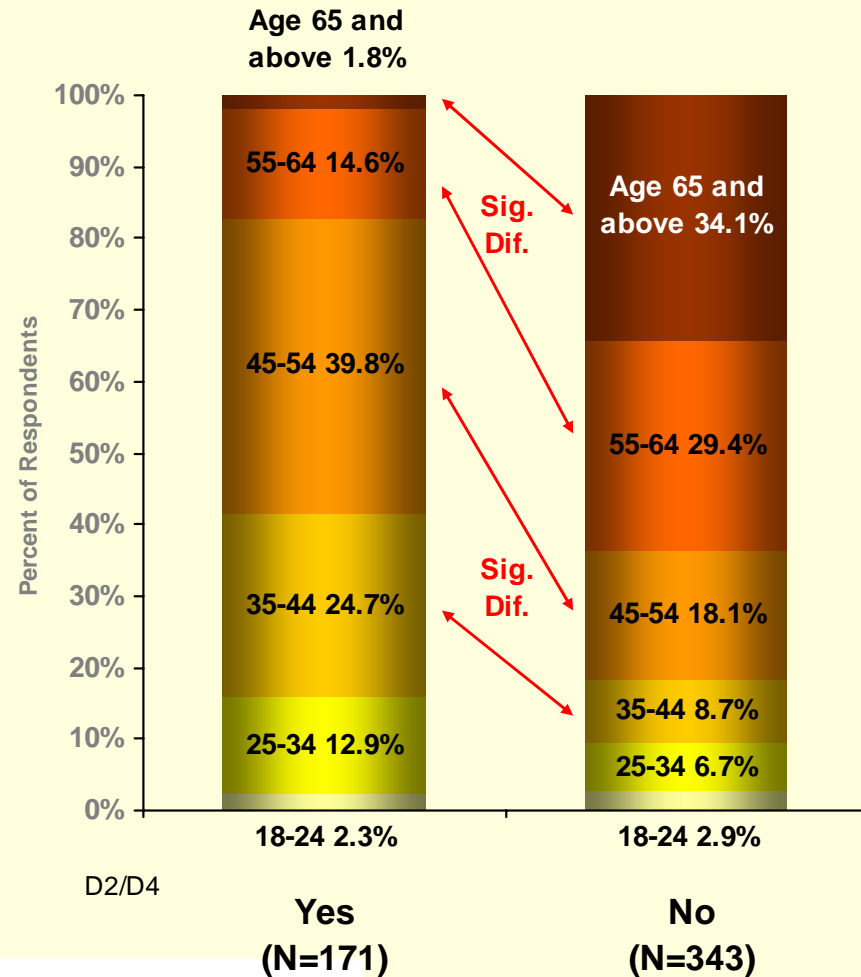
Demographics: Children in Home

Have Child Under 18 in Household

N=524



Have Child under 18 in Household

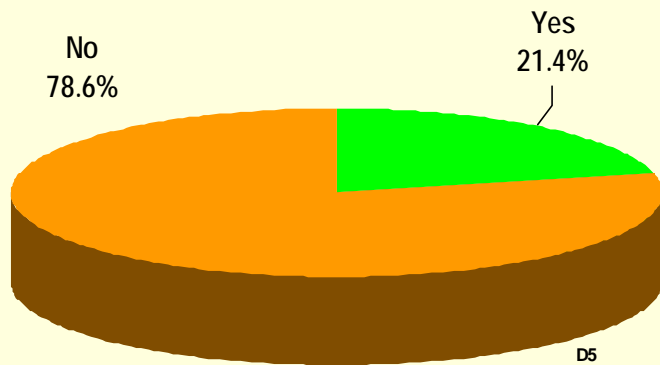




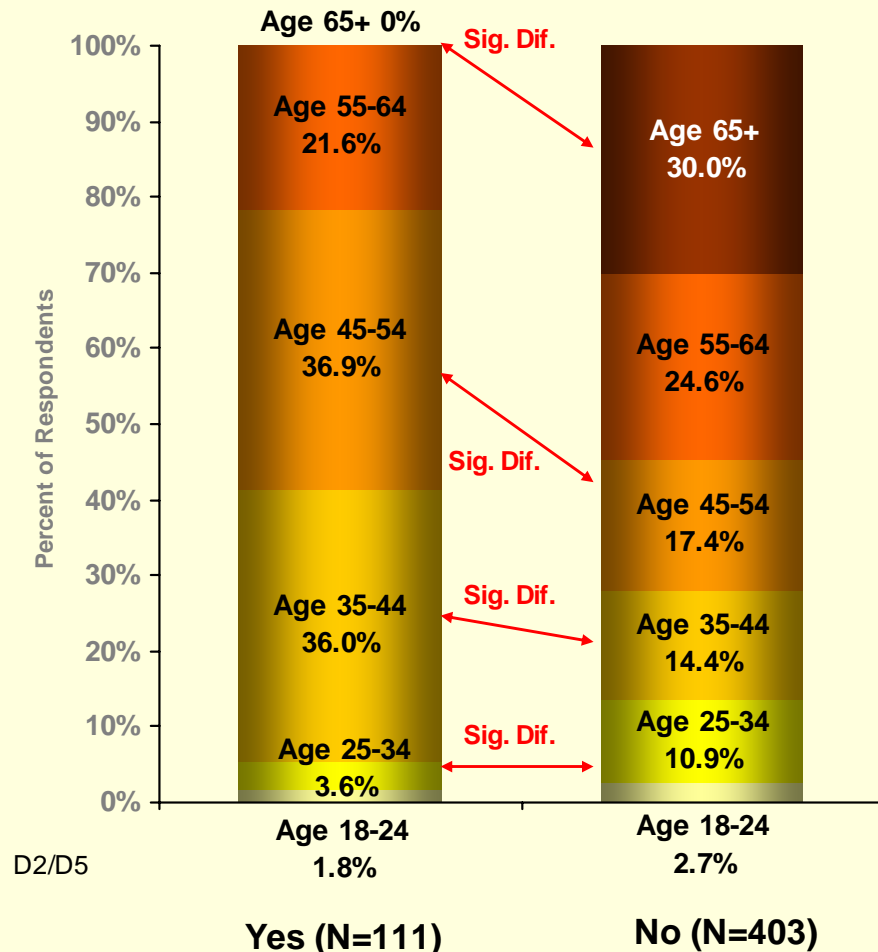
Demographics: Children in DPS System

Have Child in Durham Public School System

N=524



Have Child in Durham Public School System

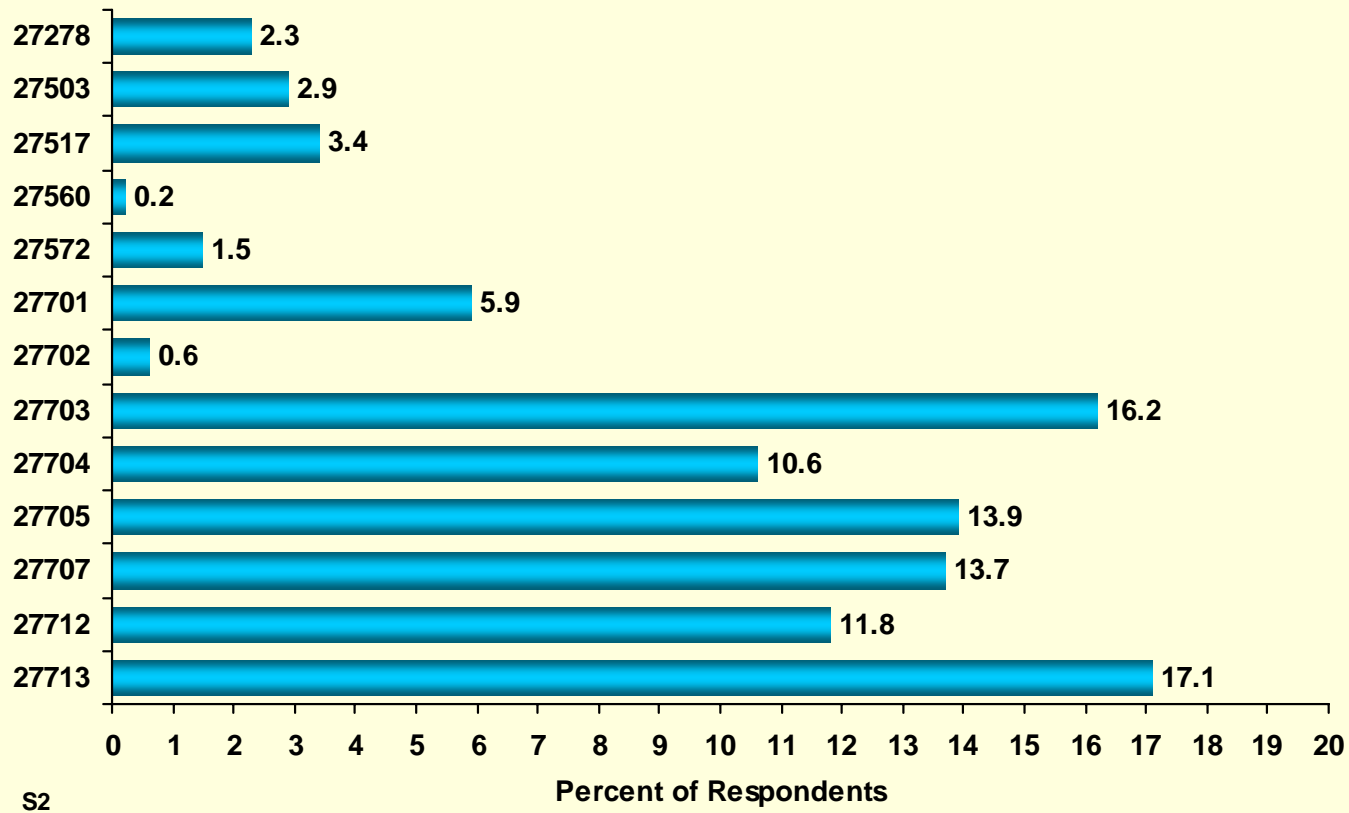




Demographics: Zip Code

Respondents by Zip Code

N=526





Conclusion

- Questions and comments regarding this survey may be directed to:

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