

August 22, 2018

To: North Shore School District 112

From: Dave Fako & Sandy Kim, Fako Research & Strategies, Inc.
Brett Clark, CEC

Re: Summary of Key Findings for School Building LRP Options Assessment Survey

The following is a summary of key findings of the School Building LRP options assessment survey conducted for North Shore School District 112.

Methodology: North Shore School District 112 commissioned the survey. Fako Research & Strategies, Inc. (FR&S) of Lemont, Illinois conducted the survey by telephone on August 7 – 11, 2018 using professional interviewers. FR&S interviewed a random sample of n=302 adult (age 18+) residents of School District 112. A strict screening process was used to ensure that only adult (age 18+) residents of the District vote participated in the survey. The interviews lasted an average of 12 minutes. Scientific sampling techniques using a listing of households with at least one registered voter were used to give all residents within this group living in a telephone-equipped household, or with a listed cell phone number, an equal chance of being interviewed. Cellular phones were included within the sample and accounted for 28% of all weighted interviews (85 Completed Interviews). The survey was also translated and programmed in Spanish, and bi-lingual interviewers were available to conduct interviews in Spanish if accepted when offered to the respondent when Spanish language barriers were encountered. A total of seven (7) attempted interviews encountered Spanish language barriers and all of these respondents declined the option to proceed with the interview in Spanish. The interviews were conducted in proportion to gender and regional shares of the population based on known demographics. Weighting was applied to Age and Gender to bring these groups into closer proportion to known demographics. The survey has an overall margin of error of +/- 5.60% at the 95% level of confidence. This means that if the survey were replicated the results would be consistent for 95 out of 100 cases. The margin of error is higher among the various sub-groups.

Glossary

Throughout this report references are made to several regional and middle school groupings. The following is the definition of these groups.

Middle School Groupings (Based on 2018 – 2019 School Year Attendance Boundaries)

- **Edgewood (66% of Sample)** = Respondents residing within the attendance boundaries of the following elementary schools: Braeside, Ravinia, Indian Trail, and Sherwood.
- **Northwood (34% of Sample)** = Respondents residing within the attendance boundaries of the following elementary schools: Oak Terrace, Wayne Thomas, and Red Oak.

Geographic Regions

- **Moraine North (34% of Sample)** = The following precincts: Moraine Township 204 – 210.
- **Moraine South (53% of Sample)** = The following precincts: Moraine Township 211 – 224.
- **West Deerfield Township (13% of Sample)** = The following precincts: West Deerfield Township 387, 389, and 397.

Perceptions of School District 112

Residents view the quality of **North Shore School District 112** favorably with 70% rating it to be “Above Average,” comprised of 26% rating the District “Excellent” and 44% rating it to be “Very Good.” Fifteen percent (15%) rate the District to be “Average” and 7% rate it to be “Below Average,” which is a combination of “Only Fair” and “Poor” ratings. For comparison, in 2016, the District was viewed to be 83% “Above Average,” 12% “Average,” and 2% “Below Average.”

- Those living in West Deerfield Township are more likely to rate the quality of SD 112 to be “Average” (62% Above Average / 23% Average) while residents of the Moraine Township regions rate the District comparably to the total population.
- Residents of the Edgewood Middle School grouping view the District more favorably (72% Above Average / 13% Average / 6% Below Average) than those living in the Northwood Middle School grouping (65% / 18% / 7%).
- Men (76% Above Average) rate the District more favorably than women (64%). Residents under the age of 50 (60%) lean towards higher “Average” ratings for the District while those over the age of 50 (75%) feel more positively about the District.
- Those with students currently attending schools in the District feel slightly more favorably about the District (74% Above Average) than those without children currently attending a District school (69%), though both groups are generally in alignment with the total population.

The **Administration of SD 112** is viewed to be “Above Average” by 31% (8% Excellent, 23% Very Good), “Average” by 28%, and “Below Average” by 20% (9% Only Fair, 11% Poor) of respondents. A fifth of respondents (21% Don’t Know) are unsure how to rate the quality of the District’s administration.

- Residents of the Moraine North region (39% Above Average) rate the District Administration more favorably than residents in either the Moraine South (27%) or West Deerfield (28%) regions.
- Those living in the Northwood Middle School grouping (38% Above Average) rate the District’s administration significantly more favorably than those living in the Edgewood Middle School grouping (27%).
- Men (36% Above Average) rate the District’s administration more positively than women (27%). Those under the age of 50 (39% Above Average / 35% Average / 19% Below Average) rate the District’s administration much more favorably than those over the age of 50 (27% / 24% / 20%).
- Those without current students in a District school (29% Above Average) rate the District Administration similarly to the general population while those currently with students in a District school (43%) offer elevated “Above Average” ratings.

The **School Board of SD 112** is rated “Above Average” by 28% of District residents (3% Excellent, 25% Very Good). A similar proportion of residents (27%) rate the SD 112 School Board to be “Average” and another 25% of residents rate the School Board to be “Below Average” (11% Only Fair, 14% Poor).

- Residents in Moraine North (35% Above Average) rate the School Board more favorably than those living in the Moraine South (25%) or West Deerfield (25%) regions.
- Those residing in the Northwood Middle School grouping (36% Above Average) view the School Board more favorably than those in the Edgewood Middle School group (24%).
- Residents under the age of 50 (33% Above Average / 36% Average / 19% Below Average) tend to rate the School Board more favorably than those over the age of 50 (26% / 22% / 28%).
- Respondents with children currently in a District school (37% Above Average / 35% Average / 16% Below Average) view the School Board more favorably than those not living with a current District student (26% / 26% / 26%), which is similar to the general population.

The **Teachers and Faculty of SD 112** are rated favorably with 71% of respondents rating them “Above Average” (27% Excellent, 44% Very Good). One-tenth (11%) offer an “Average” rating and just 5% rate the District’s teachers and faculty to be “Below Average.”

- Residents of West Deerfield Township (63% Above Average / 16% Average / 13% Below Average) are more critical of the District’s teachers and faculty than those living in the Moraine regions, who are in alignment with the total population.
- Men (79% Above Average / 8% Average / 6% Below Average) rate the teachers and faculty of SD 112 considerably more favorably than women (64% / 14% / 4%).
- Those with students currently attending a District school (77% Above Average) view the teachers and faculty of SD 112 more favorably than those without a current student (71%).

Opinions of the Administration and Board of Education’s ability to make good decisions were assessed by asking if respondents agree or disagree with the following statement: **“I trust the Administration and the Board of Education to make good decisions about School District 112’s overall direction.”** A majority of District residents (50%) agree with the statement (22% Strongly Agree, 28% Somewhat Agree) while 43% of residents disagree with the sentiment (22% Somewhat Disagree, 21% Somewhat Disagree).

- Residents of Moraine North (54% NET Total Agree / 43% NET Total Disagree) indicate stronger levels of agreement with the statement than those living in Moraine South (48% / 44%) or in West Deerfield (45% / 40%).
- Those living within the Northwood Middle School grouping (53% NET Total Agree / 39% NET Total Disagree) are in stronger agreement with the statement than those living in the Edgewood Middle School group (48% / 45%).

- Those under the age of 50 (58% NET Total Agree / 40% NET Total Disagree) are in stronger agreement with the statement than those over the age of 50 (46% / 45%).
- Respondents with a student currently attending a District school (61% NET Total Agree / 38% NET Total Disagree) are among those most strongly agreeing with this statement.

Volunteered Educational Issue Concerns

Respondents were asked to volunteer what they consider to be the most important issue concern facing SD 112 in an open-ended response, without provided options, in order to evaluate their own unsolicited views. Their responses were then coded into logical categories.

The top issue concern of the District is consolidation / reconfiguration, including the closing of schools and overcrowding at remaining ones, offered by 29% of respondents.

The next issue concern is the quality of education and the curriculum, including focusing on students and educating children, offered by 22% of the District.

Table 1
Most Important Education Issue by Current SD Student Status & Other Subgroups

Most Important Education Issue RE SD 112	Overall (2018 %) / (2016 %)	Current SD 112 Parents / Families	Not Current SD 112 Household	Other Sub-Groups
Consolidation / Reconfiguration / School Closings / Overcrowding	29 / 25	34	27	Ages 50-64 (37%) Women 50+ (36%) Parents of Graduates (36%)
Quality of Education / Curriculum / Students / Educating Children	22 / 11	26	23	Ages 35-49 (30%) Women <50 (33%) Kids at Home (33%)
Board Leadership / District & School Administration / Stability / Things Are in Flux	13 / 12	10	13	
Funding / Property Taxes / Education Costs / Spending / Affecting Property Values	11 / 21	2	14	Ages 50-64 (17%)
Facilities / Infrastructure / Maintenance / Technology	6 / 15	13	5	
Teachers & Staff / Teacher Pay & Quality	6 / 2	8	5	
Equality between Schools / Diversity / Dual-Language	6 / NA	10	5	

Opinions of the Value of School District 112 / Schools to the Community

Respondents were asked to indicate how important a factor the local elementary schools in SD 112 were in their decision to move to, or continue to live in, the District. Three-quarters of the District’s residents (77%) indicate the District’s elementary schools were an “Important” factor in their decision (58% Very Important, 19% Somewhat Important) while a fifth of the District (18%) states it was “Not Important” in their decision.

- Those more likely to state the District’s elementary schools were an important factor in their residency decision include residents between the ages of 35 and 49 (83% NET Important), women under the age of 50 (86%), and those with children at home (88%).
- Residents of Moraine North (73% NET Important) are less likely to indicate the importance of the District’s elementary schools in their residency decision than those living in Moraine South (78%) or West Deerfield Township (80%).
- Those belonging to the Edgewood Middle School group (80% NET Important) are more likely to indicate the importance of the District’s elementary schools as a factor than those who belong to the Northwood Middle School group (71%).

Table 2
Opinions of Importance of Schools in Residency Decision by Child Attendance Status

Opinion	All Residents	Current	Graduate	May Enroll	Never / No Student	Non-Current
NET Important	77	86	88	80	58	75
Very Important	58	68	72	58	38	57
Not Important	18	9	9	11	35	20

The 77% of respondents indicating that the District’s elementary schools were an important factor in their decision to move to, or continue to stay in, the District were asked a follow-up question. Respondents were asked the following open-ended question to gauge their unprompted opinions about their residency decision: ***“And what specifically about North Shore School District 112 schools influenced your decision to move to, or stay in, District 112?”*** Once again, their responses were coded into logical thematic categories.

- The top factor provided by two-fifths of respondents (38%) is the education quality, the good District and schools, good reputation, rankings, and academic excellence of the District’s schools. Some other factors provided by respondents include:
 - The teachers and excellent teaching (10%)
 - School locations (close to home), the neighborhood schools, and property values (10%)
 - The fact that respondents grew up in the District, perhaps even attended school there themselves, or had just been there a long time (9%)

This unprompted response in this open-ended question corresponds with respondents' level of agreement with the following statement: ***"The quality of our public schools is the most important factor protecting property values in District 112."*** A large majority of respondents (86%) agrees with the statement, with over half (54%) in **strong** agreement with it and a third (32%) indicating they **somewhat** agree with it. Only 12% of respondents disagrees with the statement.

Familiarity and General Opinions of Consolidation Plans

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of familiarity with the various issues discussed and proposed in North Shore School District 112 regarding school buildings and facilities and finances. Eight in ten respondents (79%) indicate they are **familiar** with the discussion (31% Very Familiar, 48% Somewhat Familiar) while a fifth of respondents (18%) indicate they are **unfamiliar** with the issues (12% Somewhat Unfamiliar, 6% Very Unfamiliar).

Table 2
Familiarity with Issues by Current SD Student Status & Other Subgroups

Level of Familiarity	All Residents	Current SD 112 Household	Not Current SD 112 Household	Other Sub-Groups
NET Familiar	79	87	77	Ages 35-49 (88%) Kids at Home (86%)
NET Unfamiliar	18	11	19	Ages <35 (25%) No Students (27%)

Table 3
Familiarity with Issues by Support / Opposition for Various Plans

Level of Familiarity (TTL Support / TTL Oppose)	10-9 School	8 School	7 School
NET Familiar	60 / 31	51 / 35	42 / 44
NET Unfamiliar	72 / 12	46 / 26	47 / 32

Respondents were asked whether they feel reorganizing and consolidating the District into fewer schools has a positive or negative impact on the quality of education in the District and the community, or whether they felt it made no difference. Nearly half of the District (46%) feels reorganization and consolidation has had a **positive** impact on the quality of education (21% Very Positive, 25% Somewhat Positive). Just under a third of residents (28%) feels it has had a negative impact on education quality (17% Somewhat Negative, 11% Very Negative) and a fifth of the District (17%) feels it has made no difference on the quality of education.

Table 4
Opinions of Importance of Schools in Residency Decision by Child Attendance Status

Opinion	All Residents	Parent of Current SD 112 Student	Parent of an SD 112 Graduate	May Enroll Student in SD 112	No Student in SD 112 Ever
NET Positive	46	46	50	65	34
NET Negative	28	28	24	12	41
No Difference	17	15	16	11	18

This sentiment is reinforced by respondents' level of agreement with two statements specifically concerning consolidation and its impact on education and finances.

- When asked about whether they agree or disagree with the following statement – ***“Reconfiguring North Shore School District 112 into few school buildings would benefit the students and community”*** – more than half (56%) of the District **agrees** (35% Strongly Agree, 21% Somewhat Agree). A third of the population (35%) **disagrees** with the statement (17% Somewhat Disagree, 18% strongly Disagree).
 - Those residing in Moraine North (62% NET Total Agree) and West Deerfield Township (71%) are more in agreement with the statement than those living in Moraine South (49%).
 - Residents of the Northwood Middle School grouping (66% NET Total Agree) are more in agreement with the statement than those living within the Edgewood Middle School group (51%).
 - Those with students currently in a District school (60% NET Total Agree) show slightly higher levels of agreement while those without a current District student (55%) correspond with the feelings of the total population.
- When asked whether they agree or disagree with this statement – ***“Reconfiguring North Shore School District 112 into fewer school buildings would benefit the District’s finances”*** – three-quarters of respondents (75%) **agree** with the statement (45% Strongly Agree, 30% Somewhat Agree) while just 15% of respondents **disagree** with it.
 - Again, those living in Moraine North (80% NET Total Agree) and in West Deerfield Township (80%) indicate higher levels of agreement with the statement than those living in Moraine South (71%).
 - Residents of the Northwood Middle School group (81% NET Total Agree) agree more with the statement than those in the Edgewood Middle School grouping (72%).
 - Those with current District students (80% NET Total Agree) agree in greater proportions with the statement than those without a current District student (74%).

Opinions of LRP Building Option Plans

Opinions of the “10-9 School Plan”:

Figure 1

Implement the current planned reorganization for the long term, which at the start of the 2018-2019 school year, the District will have 10 school buildings in operation with plans to close the Green Bay Early Child Center and District office at end of the school year. This configuration keeps the district at nine (9) schools over the long term with renovation and maintenance work at each school site.

Three-fifths of the District (62%) **support** the current planned reorganization (28% Strong Support, 34% Somewhat Support). A quarter of residents (27%) **oppose** the current plan for reorganization (11% Somewhat Oppose, 16% Strongly Oppose) while a tenth of the District (11%) is unsure of their position on the “10-9 School Plan.” Opinions on this current reconfiguration are generally similar across both Middle School groupings and student status within the District.

Opinions of the “8 School Plan”:

Figure 2

After the 2018 – 2019 school year, reconfigure the District into eight (8) schools. This configuration combines Sherwood and Wayne Thomas Elementary Schools at one site, either as the sole school at the current Northwood / Wayne Thomas site or at the current Shorewood site. Northwood would be moved to the Sherwood site, or be the sole school at the current Northwood / Wayne Thomas site. Possible expansions and boundary changes would be utilized to manage student populations at combined schools. There would also be renovation and maintenance work at all eight school sites.

Moving into a reconfiguration plan that would reorganize the District into 8 schools, half of the District (50%) **supports** this iteration (18% Strongly Support, 32% Somewhat Support), slipping 12 points from the “10-9 School Plan.” Opposition increases 6 points to 33% of residents **opposing** this configuration and 16% indicate they are unsure of their position on this plan.

Graph 1
Opinions of “8 School Plan” by Middle School Grouping

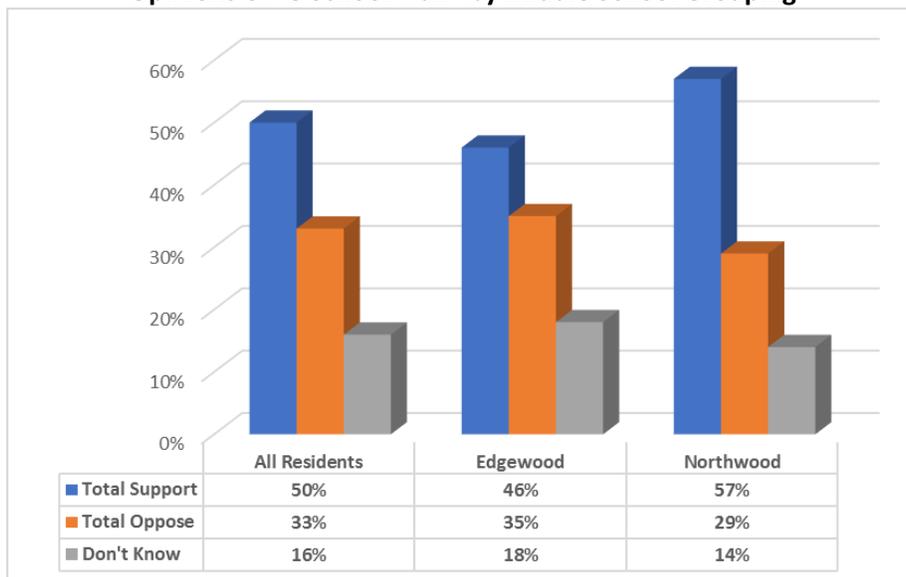


Table 5
Opinions on “8 School Plan” by Current SD Student Status & Other Subgroups

Opinion	All Residents	Current SD 112 Household	Not Current SD 112 Household	Other Sub-Groups
NET Total Support	50	56	48	Men (57%) Ages 35-49 (71%) Men <50 (68%)
NET Total Oppose	33	36	33	West Deerfield (43%) Ages 50-64 (44%) Women 50+ (41%)
Don't Know	16	8	18	Ages 65+ (26%) Women 50+ (22%) No / Never Student (22%)

Opinions of the “7 School Plan”:

Figure 3

After the 2018 – 2019 school year, reconfigure the District into seven (7) schools. This configuration combines Ravinia and Braeside Elementary Schools at one of the two sites. It also combines Sherwood and Wayne Thomas at one site either as the sole school at the current Northwood / Wayne Thomas site or at the current Sherwood site. Northwood would be moved to the Sherwood site, or be the sole school at the current Northwood / Wayne Thomas site. Possible expansions and boundary changes would be utilized to manage student populations at combined schools. There would also be renovation and maintenance work at all seven (7) school sites.

When presented with a reconfiguration plan that would result in 7 schools, support slips further to 44% (19% Strongly Support, 25% Somewhat Support). A near even proportion of respondents (41%) oppose the “7 School Plan” while 14% is unsure of their position on this plan.

Graph 2
Opinions of “7 School Plan” by Middle School Grouping

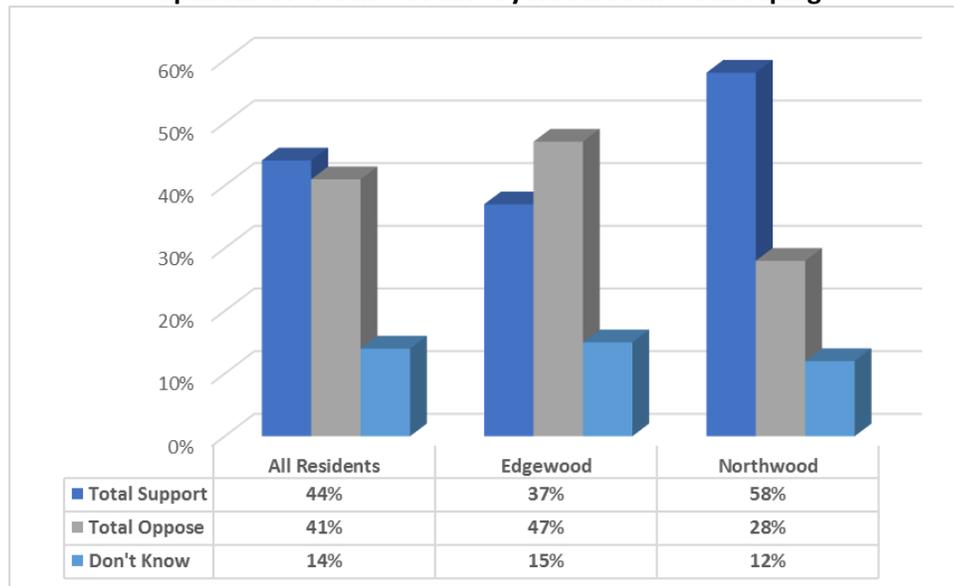


Table 6
Opinions on “7 School Plan” by Current SD Student Status & Other Subgroups

Opinion	All Residents	Current SD 112 Household	Not Current SD 112 Household	Other Sub-Groups
NET Total Support	44	50	41	Moraine North (63%) Ages <50 (61%) Men <50 (63%)
NET Total Oppose	41	43	43	Moraine South (49%) West Deerfield (48%) Ages 50-64 (51%) No / Never Student (47%)
Don't Know	14	8	15	Women 50+ (22%)

Observations of Plan Opinions:

- A fifth of the District (21%) **always supports** each iteration of the plan. A tenth of the District (11%) **always opposes** each plan, and 5% of respondents are always **unsure** of their opinion on these plans.

Table 7
Opinions of School Plans by Middle School Grouping

Plan (NET Total Support / NET Total Oppose / Don't Know)	All Residents	Edgewood	Northwood
10-9 School	62 / 27 / 11	62 / 28 / 10	60 / 25 / 13
8 School	50 / 33 / 16	46 / 35 / 18	57 / 29 / 14
7 School	44 / 41 / 14	37 / 47 / 15	58 / 28 / 12

Opinions of Messages Regarding Consolidation, Taxes, and Neighborhood Schools

The following statements in the broad areas of taxes, use of resources, and neighborhood schools were read to respondents to gauge their level of agreement with each of them.

Table 8
Opinions of Messages by Middle School Grouping

Statement (NET Total Agree / NET Total Disagree)	All Residents	Edgewood	Northwood
I would pay higher taxes to keep <u>all</u> current neighborhood schools in District 112 open. ¹	35 / 62	38 / 58	29 / 68
I would pay higher taxes to keep <u>my</u> neighborhood public school open. ²	45 / 50	47 / 48	42 / 55
I favor further consolidation of District 112 schools so that more resources can be shared among a smaller group of schools.	58 / 30	55 / 35	62 / 21
Keeping neighborhood schools open so students can stay as close to their neighborhood as possible will strengthen our communities.	70 / 27	75 / 22	60 / 37
Neighborhood schools are why people move to Highland Park and why many families remain in the town.	74 / 18	77 / 15	70 / 23
Keeping neighborhood schools open is a good goal because of the long history of neighborhood schools in Highland Park.	68 / 29	73 / 24	59 / 39

Table 9
Opinions of Messages by Current Student Status

Statement (NET Total Agree / NET Total Disagree)	All Residents	Current SD 112 Student	Non-Current SD 112 Student
I would pay higher taxes to keep <u>all</u> current neighborhood schools in District 112 open.	35 / 62	36 / 60	34 / 63
I would pay higher taxes to keep <u>my</u> neighborhood public school open.	45 / 50	56 / 40	42 / 53
I favor further consolidation of District 112 schools so that more resources can be shared among a smaller group of schools.	58 / 30	68 / 25	54 / 32
Keeping neighborhood schools open so students can stay as close to their neighborhood as possible will strengthen our communities.	70 / 27	63 / 37	71 / 25
Neighborhood schools are why people move to Highland Park and why many families remain in the town.	74 / 18	66 / 28	76 / 16
Keeping neighborhood schools open is a good goal because of the long history of neighborhood schools in Highland Park.	68 / 29	59 / 41	70 / 27

¹ The figures for the same question in 2016: Overall – 41 / 53.

² The figures for the same question in 2016: Overall – 52 / 42.

Conclusions & Assessment

Assessment of Opinions of SD 112 & Its Value to the Community

North Shore School District 112 continues to earn strong quality ratings, as we observed in 2016. These solid ratings continue to be expressed about the Teachers in the District, who also earn solid quality ratings from the residents. However, the quality ratings of the District as a whole are somewhat suppressed from their ratings two years ago. This is likely a reflection of the continued and high-profile consolidation issues and expressed concerns about the District's administration and Board leadership, both of which are prominent volunteered issue concerns in relation to SD 112.

Generally, the Administration of the District and the Board earn lower "Above Average" quality grades and higher "Average" and "Below Average" grades than the District as a whole or the Teachers. Although this is a common difference when rating different aspects of a School District, these sentiments can impact the community's views of issues advocated by the leadership. This is observed in a divided feeling about trusting the administration and the board to make good decisions about the District's overall direction, where half hold a favorable opinion and more than two-fifths (43%) have a less favorable view on this variable. There are observable differences in this factor among those who have a current student in the District, who are more likely to trust the leadership, than those who don't have a student currently attending the schools holding less favorable views.

The leadership is not poorly rated or viscerally disliked, but some rebuilding of trust with the community is needed. The positive feelings toward the District as a whole are a foundation for moving forward. As long as there are some doubts about the leadership, it can create an undertow on perceptions of policies and plans advocated by the Administration, even if the underlying plan may have support.

The residents value the schools on multiple levels on various factors. Nearly eight out of ten say the schools were an important factor for moving to, or staying in, the community, with nearly six tenths saying it was a very important factor. This sentiment is confirmed with 86% agreeing that strong schools protect property values, showing the practical views of the value of schools to the community. When assessing opinion of reasons why the residents moved to, or stayed in, the community in relation to the schools, a range of quality, reputation, and academic topics were the most prominently mentioned.

The neighborhood school model was significant enough to be noted when asked why the residents moved to or stayed in the area and confirmed with significant agreement as a factor to why many families remain in the community. There are also significant favorable views of neighborhood schools from a perspective of strengthening our communities and to a lesser degree, on the history of neighborhood schools in the District. It is noteworthy that views of the neighborhood school concepts are generally more positive among those without a current student in SD 112 than families with a current student in the District. This may be reflective of

some older, longer-term residents' connection to the school model that they saw or experienced with their children, while current District families have more direct and frequent information on the various plans and models and less connection to the former neighborhood school models.

Respondents' opinions on fiscal and tax issues show why the financial impact of consolidation drives some of their views on the positive financial impacts of consolidation. The residents express little agreement with raising taxes to keep *all* neighborhood schools open, with nearly two-thirds opposed to this concept and only one-third in agreement. They are only somewhat more favorable when this concept is localized to *their* neighborhood school, with 45% in agreement and half opposed. However, to a degree, those in Edgewood and families with current SD 112 students, are more favorable to paying higher taxes for their school. The bottom line is there is minimal to marginal support for raising taxes to keep some schools open, even the localized school, and this helps drive the practical understanding of the financial impacts of consolidation.

This shows that the residents have a multi-tiered positive value view of the schools – on the quality aspects and the practical (financial) implications. ***This diverse projection of the value in both quality and practical terms, and the general view of value in neighborhood schools, explains some of the conflicting views on consolidation.***

Assessment of Consolidation Options

Unsurprisingly, there is significant familiarity with the consolidation issues. This is also reflected in their volunteered concerns regarding the District, where consolidation issues top their list of concerns, as it did in 2016. This indicates that this subject is the consuming issue concern about the District, as it has been for a long time.

There is a modest lean in feeling that consolidation would have a positive impact on quality, with nearly half expressing that view, and only one-fourth saying it would have a negative impact. As we have observed on other topics, families with a current student have a more favorable view of the impact of consolidation than those without a current student in the District's schools.

This general philosophical lean in favor of consolidation gets confirmed on more substantive terms. Nearly six out of ten (56%) feel consolidation would benefit the students and community and only one-third hold an opposing view. This sentiment is similar among those with and without students attending the District's schools. There is significant agreement that consolidation would benefit the District's finances, with three-fourths holding this view and similar opinions among households with and without students in the District's schools. This reaffirms their practical understanding of the benefits of consolidation. SD 112's residents clearly see the value benefits of consolidation, from both quality and practical perspectives.

The philosophical and substantive support for consolidation based on quality and practical financial reasons builds the foundation for their views on the options.

There is near uniform support for the current “10 to 9” school plan being implemented in the 2018 – 2019 school year. This opinion is similar across most sub-groups, including both middle school areas and among households with and without students in the schools.

The next step plan to an eight (8) school option earns support from half, although differences are observed depending on their middle school area (Northwood = more supportive; Edgewood = less supportive). Opposition to this option increases, notably among older residents, which is consistent with their philosophical views. This plan earns more support from current District families versus those without kids in the school system, again consistent with other factors that we have observed. This option appears to be the cut-off point for public support for consolidation.

Once the option of a seven (7) school model is presented, support drops to 44%, opposition increases to a near even 41%, with those in the Edgewood area significantly less favorable than Northwood, which maintains majority support.

The multi-tiered views of the community, which is highly engaged and familiar with the consolidation issues, creates opportunities and challenges to address this concern. They value the schools as a community asset and hold favorable views of the historic neighborhood school models, but also understand the positive impacts and benefits of consolidation from a philosophical and substantive (quality / financial) perspective. This lays the foundation of support for the current plan and a possible next step, and these options should be the focus of the District’s planning from a public opinion perspective.