



**Camdenton R-3 School District  
2012 Patron Survey  
Final Report  
December 3, 2012**

**Introduction**

In November 2012, a five-minute telephone study was conducted with 400 randomly selected, head-of-household patrons living in the Camdenton R-3 School District who are registered to vote locally.

The survey presented the district's current thinking regarding a potential ballot issue that would fund the replacement of Osage Beach Elementary and the renovation of Hurricane Deck Elementary at no tax increase to residents.

The results show that there has been meaningful, sometimes dramatic, growth in the level of support since the January 2011 survey. Given that extremely high levels of support always recede as Election Day draws near and voters are asked to make their final choice, these results should not suggest to the district that its efforts to communicate about this proposal can be more limited.

On the contrary, contained within these results are two pieces of data that suggest more work needs to be done between now and Election Day (if this is the final proposal by the district to its patrons), to make certain that voters clearly understand this proposal's details, so that they can make an informed voting decision.

Specifically:

- While the projects themselves generate much more support than opposition, there is a very significant percentage of individuals who said that including one or both in a proposal would "make no difference" in their voting decision.

This level of apathy puts the good voting projections at risk, because individuals who find favor with the proposal in general – but who are not overly stimulated by one or both of the projects – may bypass the opportunity to vote, assuming that others will take care of that responsibility.

- There is also a small (less than 10%) group that says that they won't vote for the proposal, and their concerns are mostly financial worries. In fact, many of them distrust the district's pledge that the proposal would not require a tax increase, distrust the growth numbers that are driving a portion of this plan, or don't feel a connection to the schools.

While some of these individuals will never move from their stated position, the issue here is to make certain that information presented by the district about such key components as the no-tax-increase aspect of the proposal, and the data on the growth in student population are clearly and repetitively stated. Again, not everyone will come to understand and believe these details, but it will be critical to make a strategic effort to get this information out repeatedly for those who will be open to hearing such information.

The survey report that follows presents the data by topic area, with brief written analysis following each heading, and all the questions, answers and appropriate cross-tabulations.

## Topic: Location of respondents' residences

In an effort to accurately reflect the general population pattern in the district, completed calls were divided as described in the chart below.

The three questions that preceded this geography question confirmed that the individual was a head of household, registered to vote locally, and aware that he or she lived within the boundaries of the school district.

A "yes" answer was required on these three questions for the interview to continue. Even though the randomly generated list of landlines and cell phones was of people who would qualify in these three areas, a verbal confirmation was still required. As such, these three questions and answers are not displayed in the report.

- 4. To make certain that we have people from all parts of the district participating in this survey, which of the following best describes where you live?** *List of choices was read to respondents. Numbers, rather than percentages, displayed below. Number of respondents in each segment identified by the district as being representative of the general population pattern.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
In the general Camdenton area, for example, Linn Creek, Montreal, Camdenton or Greenview	260
In the area east of KK, for example, Osage Beach	100
In the area north of the Hurricane Deck Bridge, for example, the Sunrise Beach or Hurricane Deck areas	40

## **Topic: Support or opposition to the projects being considered**

The two project ideas – building a replacement for Osage Beach Elementary and renovating Hurricane Deck Elementary – were presented in individual questions, with enough background to explain the general thinking behind these project ideas.

After each one was read, respondents were asked if including this project in a final proposal would make them “more likely to vote in favor,” “more likely to vote against” or would it “make no difference” in their voting decision on a proposal.

For the replacement of Osage Beach Elementary, 48% said it would make them “more likely to vote in favor,” while 10% said “more likely to vote against” and 36% said it would “make no difference.” In the January 2011 study, 54% said they would be “more likely to vote in favor” of a proposal that included this project, while 19% said “more likely to vote against” and 21% said “make no difference.”

This suggests that support has softened somewhat (in that the 6% difference is more than the 5% Margin of Error for this study) and apathy has grown.

In terms of the Hurricane Deck renovations, 53% said “more likely to vote in favor,” while 11% said “more likely to vote against” and 28% said it would “make no difference.” In this case, the level of support has increased at a statistically significant level since January 2011 (when it was 46%) and the level of opposition has decreased (it had been 18%). This could be, perhaps, a result of the decision being made to renovate Hurricane Deck, rather than replace it – an option that had been presented as an alternative in 2011, and which drew less support than renovation.

The level of “don’t know” respondents was identical on the Osage Beach Elementary replacement, and was down slightly on the Hurricane Deck renovations (although not at a statistically significant level). Neither of these two “don’t know” percentages is particularly dramatic, which would suggest that there is not much room to grow among the undecided voters. The issue here, quite clearly, is the notably high level of apathy that must be managed, in terms of getting out key information that can help inform patrons.

Cross-tabulations were completed by age, length of time living in the district, student status, gender and location of residence. While there are some interesting numbers (such as more saying “make no difference” on the Osage Beach Elementary replacement among Camdenton residents than saying “more likely to vote in favor”), the overall tone remains mostly positive, with lack of interest in a solid second place in almost every group.

As you may know, the Camdenton R-3 School District is considering asking voters to approve a bond issue in April 2013 for building and renovation projects. I'm now going to share with you the specific ideas being discussed for the Osage Beach and Hurricane Deck Elementary Schools that could be included in this proposal.

*Question 5 and 6 were rotated.*

5. The bond issue could include funds that would be used to build a school that would replace Osage Beach Elementary. That school is already at capacity and will soon become overcrowded, based on the growth that is expected in the Osage Beach area in the next several years. There is no room to expand the current school, and it lacks some amenities typically found in elementary schools, such as a suitable gymnasium or a library. A new school would be on land that would have to be purchased, and the goal would be to have the new school be as close as possible to Osage Beach. If this project were included, would you be more likely to vote in favor of the bond issue, more likely to vote against, or would it make no difference to you?

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	48%
More likely to vote against	10%
Make no difference	36%
Don't know (not read)	6%

6. The bond issue could include funds that would be used to renovate and upgrade Hurricane Deck Elementary School by adding facilities, such as a gymnasium, a library and classrooms. If the proposal included funds to renovate and upgrade Hurricane Deck Elementary School would you be more likely to vote in favor of the bond issue, more likely to vote against, or would it make no difference to you?

Response	Percentage
More likely to vote in favor	53%
More likely to vote against	11%
Make no difference	28%
Don't know (not read)	9%

**Cross-tabulation: “More likely to vote in favor,” “More likely to vote against” and “Make no difference” percentages on the two project ideas by age, length of time living in the district, and presence of a current district student, past district student or no district student ever in the household. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group, and “age” will not square with “overall” score, because three respondents refused to answer this question.**

Project and response	Overall score	18-34 (n=77)	35-54 (n=162)	55 or older (n=158)	Up to 5 years (n=37)	5-15 years (n=132)	More than 15 years (n=231)	Student, yes (n=124)	Student, past (n=114)	Student, never (n=162)
New Osage Beach Elementary/Favor	<b>48%</b>	51%	51%	44%	43%	45%	51%	52%	49%	44%
New Osage Beach Elementary/Against	<b>10%</b>	13%	6%	11%	11%	11%	8%	5%	7%	15%
New Osage Beach Elementary/Make no difference	<b>36%</b>	30%	37%	38%	38%	39%	34%	37%	39%	34%
Hurricane Deck renovations/Favor	<b>53%</b>	52%	56%	49%	54%	51%	53%	59%	53%	48%
Hurricane Deck renovations/Against	<b>11%</b>	12%	6%	15%	14%	11%	10%	7%	11%	14%
Hurricane Deck renovations/Make no difference	<b>28%</b>	14%	28%	30%	22%	31%	28%	26%	31%	28%

**Cross-tabulation: “More likely to vote in favor,” “More likely to vote against” and “Make no difference” percentages on the two project ideas by location of the respondent’s residence and gender. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group.**

Project and response	Overall score	N of Hurr Deck Bridge (n=40)	E of KK (n=100)	Camdenton area (n=260)	Female (n=224)	Male (n=176)
New Osage Beach Elementary/Favor	<b>48%</b>	65%	62%	40%	48%	49%
New Osage Beach Elementary/Against	<b>10%</b>	8%	5%	12%	9%	10%
New Osage Beach Elementary/Make no difference	<b>36%</b>	25%	27%	42%	39%	33%
Hurricane Deck renovations/Favor	<b>53%</b>	48%	68%	47%	50%	55%
Hurricane Deck renovations/Against	<b>11%</b>	3%	6%	14%	10%	11%
Hurricane Deck renovations/Make no difference	<b>28%</b>	38%	21%	30%	30%	26%

## **Topic: Level of support for the ballot issue before and after learning it would not require a tax increase**

Having shared their thoughts on the specific project ideas, the survey then asked respondents to state their level of support or opposition to a ballot issue – first in general, and then after hearing that the proposal would not require a tax increase.

Support was very strong for the proposal in general, with 71% saying they would either “strongly favor” or “favor” a proposal that contained those projects. This is an increase from 55% on the January 2011 survey, which suggests a steady diet of information and discussion from the district about these ideas, and the decision to renovate – rather than replace – Hurricane Deck has made an impact.

When informed that the proposal would not require a tax increase, support jumped to an almost unheard of 85%, up from 73% in January 2011.

In 20 years of school district research, only one other time has the support level on a no-tax-increase ballot issue been in the 80s. On Election Day, the final tally was in the high 60s, indicating just how much such unusually high support can and will recede as the district makes its case and naysayers have the chance to weigh in as well.

Yet, with both numbers (general and no-tax-increase) growing meaningfully over, essentially, two years, the trend line is consistent and notable. It is simply safe to assume that the lower end of the 5% Margin of Error is the most accurate way to view these results, and that they will pull back some from that on Election Day.

All of this caution is simply to reinforce the importance of keeping up a steady stream of the messages of fiscal prudence and sensible projects from the time after the ballot issue is authorized right up until Election Day.

7. **Now that you have heard the plans being considered by the Camdenon School District, how do you think you would likely vote, if the election were held today? Would you strongly favor it, favor it, oppose it, or strongly oppose it?** *“Lean favor,” “Lean oppose,” “Don’t know” and “Would depend on what it costs” were not read but were noted if mentioned – unaided – by the respondent.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly favor	17%
Favor	54%
Lean favor (not read)	1%
Lean oppose (not read)	0%
Oppose	14%
Strongly oppose	2%
Would depend on what it costs (not read)	5%
Don’t know (not read)	8%

8. **What if the proposal resulted in NO tax increase? Would you strongly favor this proposal, favor it, oppose it, or strongly oppose it, if the election were held today?** *“Lean favor,” “Lean oppose” and “Don’t know” were not read but were noted if mentioned – unaided – by the respondent.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly favor	28%
Favor	57%
Lean favor (not read)	3%
Lean oppose (not read)	0%
Oppose	8%
Strongly oppose	1%
Don’t know (not read)	4%

9. **Why do you believe you would oppose the proposal, if the election were held today?** *Asked only of the 34 respondents who answered question 8 either “oppose” or “strongly oppose.” All verbatim comments displayed below.*

Prefer renovation to building new.

Don’t believe the “no tax increase” message.

We can’t afford any more taxes.

I’m old and don’t have kids in school, so I really don’t want to pay for it.



What growth? Where are those figures coming from?

They could well use buildings in Camdenton. Some will ride the bus if they have to. We worked in the district and know how things get done.

Until a location is determined, I would vote against.

My kids go to private school, and I don't want to pay more taxes for something they won't use.

My kids are no longer in school, and we can't afford more taxes.

Not convinced the district would spend the money appropriately.

Based on growth projections? Until that actually happens, don't build on a guess.

Show me the growth first.

My taxes are high as it is, and they have a new school in Camdenton already.

I can't afford any more tax increases.

Schools are fine as is.

Eventually my taxes would be raised to fund these projects, and I don't need that right now.

Kids could be bused even farther.

I would like to know where they plan to build the new elementary school, before I agree.

I certainly don't believe the taxes would not be increased, and I don't need that to happen.

I think it would be more economical to renovate both schools and not build new.

Don't really trust the district to spend the money correctly. There will be too much waste.

I don't have kids in the district.

I want to know what they will do for Climax Springs.

I wish I could believe it would be a no tax increase.

I personally don't see that much growth to warrant a new elementary school.

Just an overall bad economy to be spending money on building schools.

I would probably be in favor, if I really thought there would not be a tax increase.

Don't want my taxes raised, and they would be.

I'm not convinced it is truly needed.

Find the money to build these schools elsewhere, not from me.

I have no interest in the district, because I have no kids.

If you can renovate Hurricane Deck Elementary, why not Osage?

These schools are not really close to me, so it doesn't affect me.

Don't trust the administration to properly handle the money needed for these projects.

**Cross-tabulation: Combined “Strongly favor/favor” percentage on general ballot issue question, and after the “no tax increase” aspect was presented by age, length of time living in the district, and presence of a current district student, past district student or no district student ever in the household. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group, and “age” will not square with “overall” score, because three respondents refused to answer this question.**

Combined “Strongly favor/favor” percentage	Overall score	18-34 (n=77)	35-54 (n=162)	55 or older (n=158)	Up to 5 years (n=37)	5-15 years (n=132)	More than 15 years (n=231)	Student, yes (n=124)	Student, past (n=114)	Student, never (n=162)
General ballot issue question	<b>71%</b>	66%	77%	65%	73%	67%	72%	77%	71%	65%
After learning it would be “no tax increase”	<b>85%</b>	81%	91%	82%	86%	82%	87%	89%	87%	81%

**Cross-tabulation: Combined “Strongly favor/favor” percentage on general ballot issue question, and after the “no tax increase” aspect was presented by location of the respondent’s residence and gender. Note: “n” equals the number of respondents in each group.**

Combined “Strongly favor/favor” percentage	Overall score	N of Hurr Deck Bridge (n=40)	E of KK (n=100)	Camdenton area (n=260)	Female (n=224)	Male (n=176)
General ballot issue question	<b>71%</b>	80%	86%	63%	71%	69%
After learning it would be “no tax increase”	<b>85%</b>	95%	95%	80%	88%	81%

## Topic: Demographics

The demographic questions show a survey group that tends to be mostly long-term residents, that has a good spread of ages (with 57% between 25 and 54) and that has a good mix of current student, past student and so-called “never student” families included.

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

**10. How long have you, yourself, lived within the boundaries of Camdenton R-3? Is it...***Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
Less than 2 years	2%
2 years to 5 years	7%
More than 5 years to 10 years	15%
More than 10 years to 15 years	18%
More than 15 years	46%
I've lived here all my life	12%

**11. In what age group are you? Is it...***Choices were read to respondents.*

Response	Percentage
18 to 24	2%
25 to 34	17%
35 to 44	19%
45 to 54	21%
55 to 64	24%
65 or older	15%
Refused (not read)	1%

**12. Do you have any children or grandchildren who attend school in the Camdenton R-3 School District right now? Numbers, rather than percentages, displayed below.**

Response	Number
Yes, children	112
Yes, children and grandchildren	12
Yes, grandchildren	67
No	209

**13. Do you have any children or grandchildren who previously were students in the district, but who have graduated?** *Asked only of the 276 respondents who answered question 12 either “yes, grandchildren,” or “no.” Numbers, rather than percentages, displayed.*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
Yes, children	101
Yes, children and grandchildren	13
Yes, grandchildren	9
No	153

14. RECORD GENDER

<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Female	56%
Male	44%