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Portola Valley School District: 2013 Parcel Tax Feasibility Survey

January 2013

Overview and Research Objectives



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Portola Valley School District commissioned Godbe Research and TBWB Strategies to conduct a survey of local voters with the following research objectives:

- Gauge the public's perception of the District;
- Assess potential voter support for a measure that extends the expiring parcel tax and increases it to protect quality education with funding that cannot be taken by the State;
- Identify the optimum tax amount at which voters will support the measure;
- Prioritize projects and programs to be funded with the proceeds;
- Test the influence of supporting and opposing arguments on potential voter support; and
- Identify any differences in voter support due to demographic and/or voter behavioral characteristics.

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Methodology Overview

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- Data Collection Telephone Interviewing
- Universe 3,834 likely November 2014 voters in the Portola Valley School District, with substantial subsample of the Likely 2013 Mail Ballot voter universe (2,150 voters)
- Fielding Dates January 7 through January 14, 2013
- Interview Length 18 minutes
- Sample Size 202 likely November 2014 voters
149 likely Mail Ballot 2013 voters
- Margin of Error $\pm 6.7\%$ likely November 2014 voters
 $\pm 7.7\%$ likely Mail Ballot 2013 voters

Note: The data have been weighted to reflect the actual population characteristics of likely voters in the Portola Valley School District in terms of their gender, age, and political party type.

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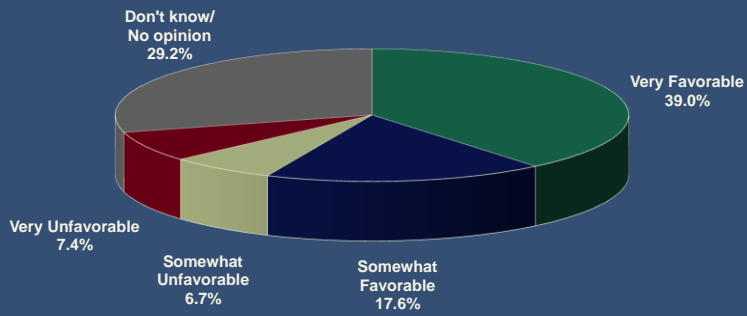


Key Findings

Opinion on Whether PVSD is Providing a Quality Education (n=202)

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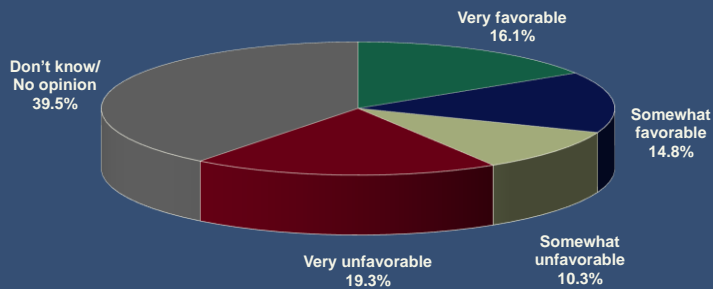


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Opinion on Whether PVSD is Effectively Managing Public Funds (n=202)

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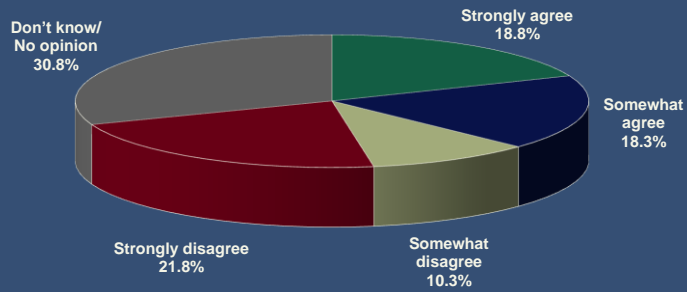


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Opinion on Whether PVSD Needs Additional Funding (n=202)



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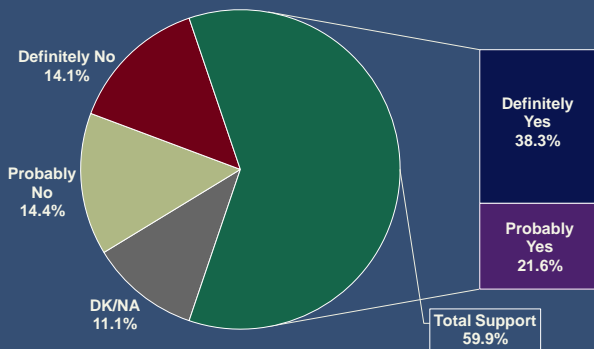


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Uninformed Support Likely Mail Ballot 2013 (n=149)



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To maintain academic excellence, with funds that cannot be taken by the State, shall the Portola Valley Elementary School District:

- maintain quality science, math, reading and writing instruction;
 - retain qualified and experienced teachers;
 - minimize class size increases; and
 - support arts and music programs;
- by extending the expiring parcel taxes and increasing it by \$198 per year, for eight years, with senior exemptions, independent citizen oversight and audits, no money for administrator salaries, and all funds staying in Portola Valley for local schools?

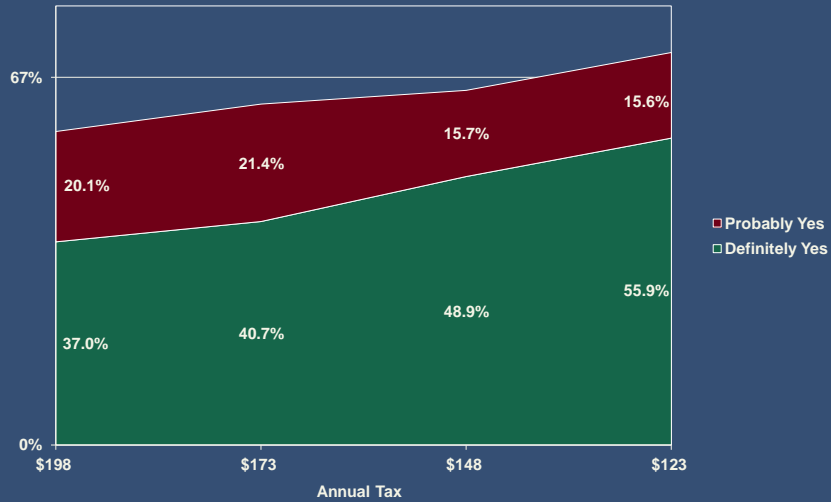
Likely Nov 2014
- Yes 54%
- No 36%
- DK 10%

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Support for Different Rates Likely Mail Ballot 2013 (n=149)

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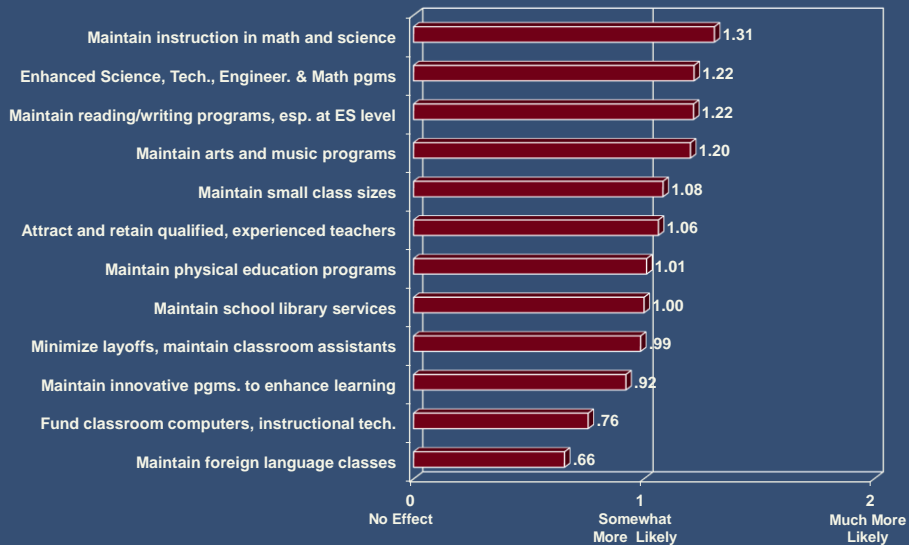


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Features of the Measure Likely Mail Ballot 2013 (n=149)

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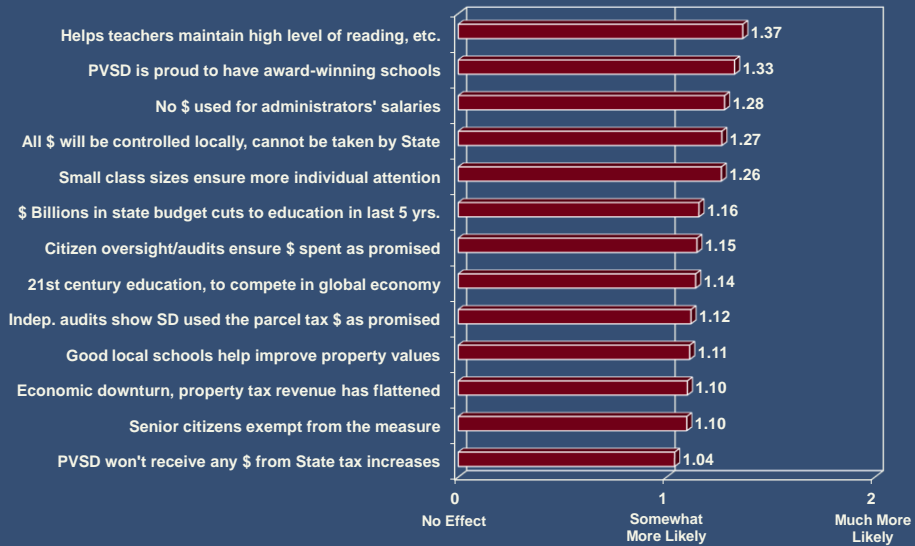
Note: The above rating questions have been abbreviated for charting purposes, and responses were recoded to calculate mean scores: "Much More Likely" = +2, "Somewhat More Likely" = +1, "No Effect" = 0, "Somewhat Less Likely" = -1, and "Much Less Likely" = -2.

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Influence of Supporting Statements Likely Mail Ballot 2013 (n=149)

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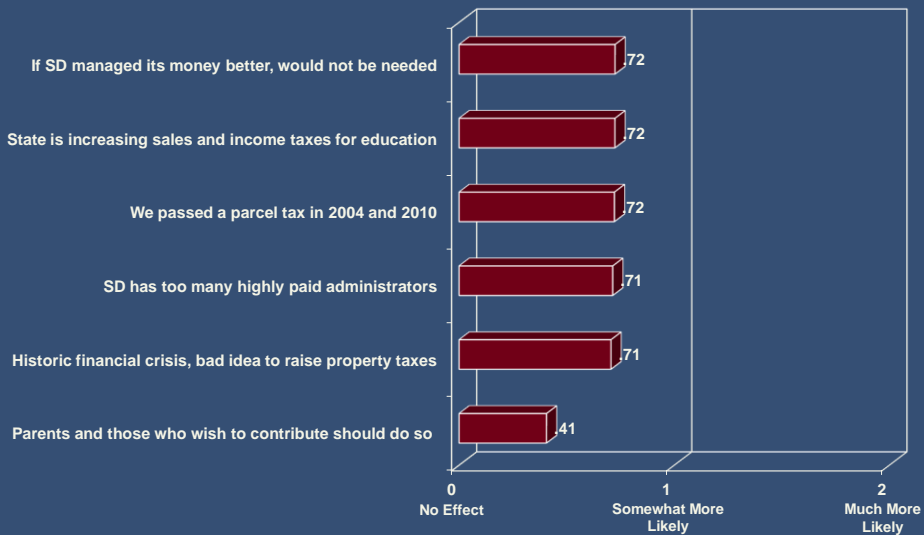
Note: The above rating questions have been abbreviated for charting purposes, and responses were recoded to calculate mean scores: "Much More Likely" = +2, "Somewhat More Likely" = +1, and "No Effect" = 0.

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Potential Opposition Statements Likely Mail Ballot 2013 (n=149)

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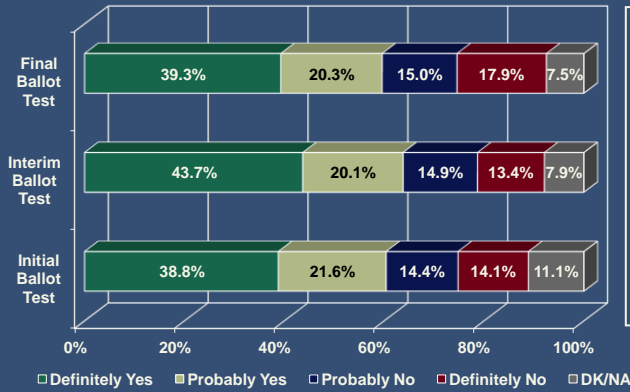
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Informed, Interim and Uninformed Support Likely Mail Ballot 2013 (n=149)

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To maintain academic excellence, with funds that cannot be taken by the State, shall the Portola Valley Elementary School District:

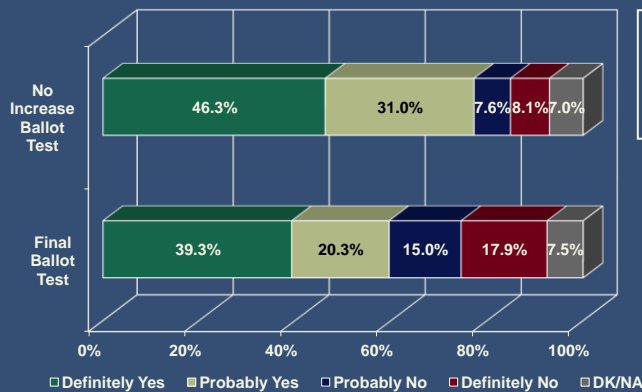
- maintain quality science, math, reading and writing instruction;
 - retain qualified and experienced teachers;
 - minimize class size increases; and
 - support arts and music programs;
- by extending the expiring parcel taxes and increasing it by \$198 per year, for eight years, with senior exemptions, independent citizen oversight and audits, no money for administrator salaries, and all funds staying in Portola Valley for local schools?

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Comparison of Support for No Increase Measure Likely Mail Ballot 2013 (n=149)

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Instead of the measure we have been discussing that would increase taxes, if the measure only extended the existing parcel taxes for eight years, without any increase, would you vote yes or no? Would that be definitely [yes/no] or probably [yes/no]?

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Summary and Recommendations

Summary and Recommendations

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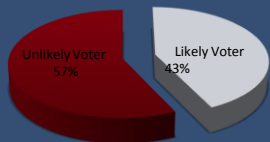
- The survey revealed a base of voter support for a parcel tax increase, and Godbe Research and TBWB Strategies recommend that the Portola Valley School District consider preparing a measure for the May 2013 mail ballot.
- The survey results indicate potential voter support for an affordable parcel tax renewal and increase measure at a moderate rate.
 - Specifically, support for the measure was 72% for a \$123 increase, while it was 65% when likely mail ballot voters were provided with the \$148 rate.
 - Since the tax rate question was presented in four, \$25 increments, it is possible that the level of support shown at the \$123 rate could extend into the \$127 to \$129 range.
- Key features of a successful measure are:
 - Maintaining instruction in math and science.
 - Developing an enhanced STEM program for all grades.
 - Maintaining reading at writing programs at the elementary school level.
 - Maintaining arts and music.
- The survey results indicate the Portola Valley School District should:
 - Begin the necessary steps to place a parcel tax renewal and increase measure on the ballot.
 - Begin community outreach to inform the public about the measure the board is considering.
 - Be prepared to head off issues about Proposition 30, the current economic climate and the District's financial management.

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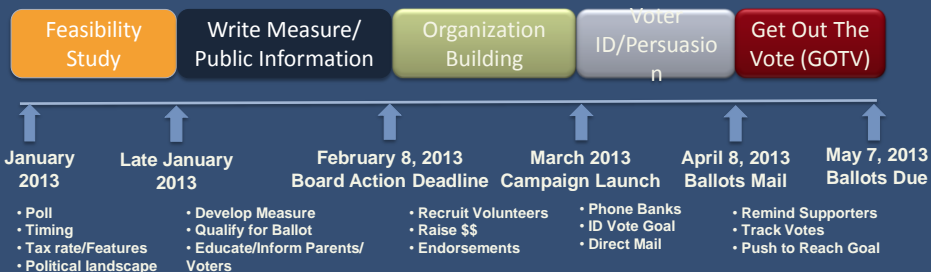
Strategic Approach to a May 2013 Mail Ballot Election

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Portola Valley SD Registered Voters: 4,994
 Expected Voter Turnout: 2,150 (43%)
 Votes Needed to Win: 1,561 (66.7%)



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Key Dates for May 7, 2013 All Mail Ballot Election

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- **Friday, February 8, 2013:** Resolution Due to County Registrar of Voters
- **Tuesday, February 12, 2013:** Ballot Argument
- **Tuesday, February 19, 2013:** Rebuttal Argument Due
- **Monday, April 8, 2013:** Ballots Mail to All Registered Voters in District
- **Monday, April 22, 2013:** Last Day to Register to Vote in May 7, 2013 Election
- **Tuesday, May 7, 2013:** All Ballots Due to Registrar of Voter by 8 p.m.

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