

# WESTPORT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT VOLUNTARY VOTER EXIT SURVEY

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To: **Board of Education and Interested Others**

From: A. Paul Scott, Interim Superintendent of Schools

Date: May 17, 2018

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The Westport Central School District conducted a Board-approved voluntary exit poll survey of district residents who participated in the May 15, 2018 annual budget vote and election.

**146 of the 295 voters** who voted at the polls that evening (**49.5%**) participated in the voluntary exit poll survey. Such broad participation with the voluntary exit survey was valued. Also valued was the volunteer service provided by members of the high school's graduating class of 2018, who administered the survey on behalf of the school board. Each of those students will receive public recognition for their volunteer service at the school board's June 2018 regular monthly meeting. The schedule of volunteer service by those graduating 12<sup>th</sup> graders was coordinated by social studies teacher Tom Smith.

Westport's May 15, 2018 survey was modeled after the voter exit survey used years ago at Niskayuna Central School District and subsequently re-vamped and put to use at other school districts in recent years, such as at Peru CSD, Northeastern Clinton CSD and Mayfield CSD.

The intent of the school board's exit survey was to collect information about perceptions of residents who voted, why they voted as they did, where they obtained information on the budget proposal, and their perceptions regarding the school district's instructional programs, support operations, focus on achievement and conduct, and the school district's newsletters to residents this year.

**Highlights** of survey results are featured on the **next** page.

Thank you!

## **Survey Results – Not All Voters Completed Each Section**

Many voters who participated in the exit survey completed each section of the single-sheet survey. However, as is normal with exit surveys, not every voter completed each section.

### **Where Voters Obtained Information**

The **Sun Community News** weekly newspaper and the **Westport CSD newsletter** were mentioned by the largest percent of survey participants with 55% mentioning the weekly newspaper and 54% mentioning the Westport CSD newsletter as a source of information regarding the budget. Other most frequently indicated sources of information were: **friends, neighbors and family** [41%] and the **Press-Republican Daily Newspaper** [23%]. The **Westport CSD Web site** was mentioned by 15% of those who indicated where they obtained information.

### **Support for Schools Most Frequently Voiced**

**68** [47%] of the 146 voters who completed the exit survey indicated they voted **in favor** of the school board's budget proposal. Of those who did so, the most frequently indicated reasons for doing so were: belief in **supporting the schools** [87%] and being pleased with the **quality of education here** [51%]. In contrast, **57** [39%] of the 146 voters who completed the exit survey indicated they voted **against** the school board's budget proposal. Of those who did so, the most frequently indicated reasons for doing so were belief the **tax increase was unreasonable** [81%]; the **budget does not address all program needs** [26%] and the **proposed budget is unsound** [25%].

### **Most Voters Pleased with Focus on Achievement and Conduct**

**73%** of voters who completed the survey indicated they are generally pleased with Westport CSD's focus on achievement and conduct. **71%** of voters who completed the survey indicated they are generally pleased with the district newsletters mailed this school year. **68%** of voters who completed the survey indicated they are generally pleased with support operations at Westport CSD, and **67%** of voters who completed the survey indicated they are generally pleased with instructional programs at Westport CSD.

The school board is slated to discuss the survey results at its June 2018 regular monthly meeting. **Thanks** to all who participated in the school board's voluntary voter exit survey!

**Additional details** regarding the survey results are provided on the **next** page.

**Where did you get your information about the budget proposal for 2018-19?**

Item	Percent
Sun Community News Weekly Newspaper	55%
Press-Republican Daily Newspaper	23%
TV	3%
Social Media	10%
Westport CSD Newsletter	54%
Westport CSD Web Site	15%
Board of Education Meetings	15%
Westport CSD Employees	18%
Westport CSD Students	9%
Friends and Neighbors and Family	41%
Athletics Events	3%
Parent Association Representatives	10%

**I'm a Westport CSD voter who is also a [check all boxes that apply for you]:**

Item	Percent
Student	3%
Parent	36%
School Employee	9%
Retired School Employee	7%
Resident Neither Employed at Nor Retired From Westport CSD	45%

**How did you vote on school board's proposed 2018-19 budget today?**

Item	Percent
Yes	47%
No	39%

**I voted "Yes" on the budget because:**

Item	Percent
I believe the proposed budget is sound	44%
I believe the tax increase is reasonable	28%
I believe in supporting the schools	87%
I have confidence in the Board and staff	44%
I am pleased with the quality of education here	51%
Other	13%

**I voted "No" on the budget because:**

Item	Percent
I believe the proposed budget is unsound	25%
I believe the tax increase is unreasonable	81%
I do not have confidence in the Board and staff	9%
I am not pleased with the quality of education here	5%
I believe the budget does not address all program needs for our students	26%
Other	9%

**General Survey Questions for Spring 2018**

Item	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	
I'm generally pleased with the instructional programs at Westport CSD	67%
I'm generally pleased with support operations at Westport CSD	68%
I'm generally pleased with Westport CSD's focus on achievement and conduct	73%
I'm generally pleased with the district newsletters mailed to me this school year	71%
<b>Not Sure</b>	
I'm generally pleased with the instructional programs at Westport CSD	18%
I'm generally pleased with support operations at Westport CSD	22%
I'm generally pleased with Westport CSD's focus on achievement and conduct	12%
I'm generally pleased with the district newsletters mailed to me this school year	15%
<b>Disagree</b>	
I'm generally pleased with the instructional programs at Westport CSD	5%
I'm generally pleased with support operations at Westport CSD	1%
I'm generally pleased with Westport CSD's focus on achievement and conduct	5%
I'm generally pleased with the district newsletters mailed to me this school year	5%
Percentage of the 295 voters who voted at the polls who participated with the May 15th voluntary voter exit survey	49.5%