

Unified School District 407  
School Bond Survey  
2018



Prepared For  
**Unified School District 407 Board and Administrators**

Prepared By  
**The Docking Institute of Public Affairs  
Fort Hays State University**

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Mission:

To Facilitate Effective Public Policy Decision-Making.

The staff of the Docking Institute of Public Affairs and its University Center for Survey Research are dedicated to serving the people of Kansas and surrounding states.

# USD 407 School Bond Survey 2018

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## **Prepared For:**

USD 407 Board and Administrators

In pursuit of  
The Docking Institute's Public Affairs Mission

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## Executive Summary

- Of the respondents who would support a bond of some size, assuming it contained projects of which they approved, 55.2% indicated that they could support a bond as high as \$10 million, while 39.1% indicated that they could support a bond as high as \$15 million.
- Ratings of support for the various improvement projects were significantly lower for respondents indicating they would not support a bond of any size (bond opponents). However, the relative priorities of those indicating they could vote for at least a \$10 million bond (bond supporters) were somewhat similar to bond opponents.
- Ratings of support for proposed improvement projects were higher among female respondents than male respondents. Female respondents were also more likely to support a bond of some size than male respondents.
- Ratings of support for proposed improvement projects were generally higher among those younger than 45 years and thus more likely to have school-age children. People who were 45 years or older were also less likely to support a bond of some size.
- The most popular improvement projects among both supporters and opponents of a bond include updating electrical system, replacing heating system, adding air conditioning, and replacing plumbing lines & fixtures.
- The least popular improvement project among supporters and opponents was replacing elevator at the central office, followed by construction of a new Pre-K through 5 building.
- Among supporters of a bond, less than 50% indicated support for traffic flow and management at the elementary and middle schools, building a new Pre-K through 5 building, and updating heating and air conditioning and replacing elevator at the central office.
- Among supporters of a bond, between 50% and 60% said they would support adding storm protected rooms at Bickerdyke Elementary School, Ruppenthal Middle School and Russell High School, and repaving parking lots at Russell High School. Including too many of these projects could threaten the likelihood of gleaning a majority of voter support.

## **Methodology**

In May of 2018, the Docking Institute of Public Affairs at Fort Hays State University contracted with Unified School District 407 to conduct a study to measure District voter support for a variety of prospective improvement projects identified as high-need by District administrators, as well as the size of school bond they would be inclined to support. The purpose of the study is to provide valid data to assist administrators in authoring a bond proposal that will best meet the educational needs of students in the District and have a high probability of passing in a bond election. The opinions and preferences for the various proposed improvement projects among registered voters residing within the District were measured using a self-administered survey delivered to respondents' mailing addresses of record via U.S. Postal Service.

The cover letter (Appendix A) and survey instrument (Appendix B) were constructed in cooperation with District administrators and designed to measure respondents' level of support for each individual improvement project and the size of school bond they would be willing to support. A Project Information Sheet (Appendix A) was also prepared to describe each project and each project's individual cost to allow respondents to make informed decisions.

The sample data were obtained from the Russell County Clerks, which included the most current official list of registered voters in the District with their home mailing addresses. The Institute had the Post Office update the file to include recent moves, leaving a sample of 3,226 registered voters. Surveys were mailed to each registered voter on July 12, 2018. Data collection was terminated on August 8, at which time 1,000 completed surveys had been returned for a response rate of 31%. Because there was no random sampling and all members of the target population were sent the survey, there is no margin of error. However, because not all of the 3,226 registered voters responded, there may be a potential for response bias. The survey data were entered into an SPSS data file for analysis.

## Responses to Survey Questions

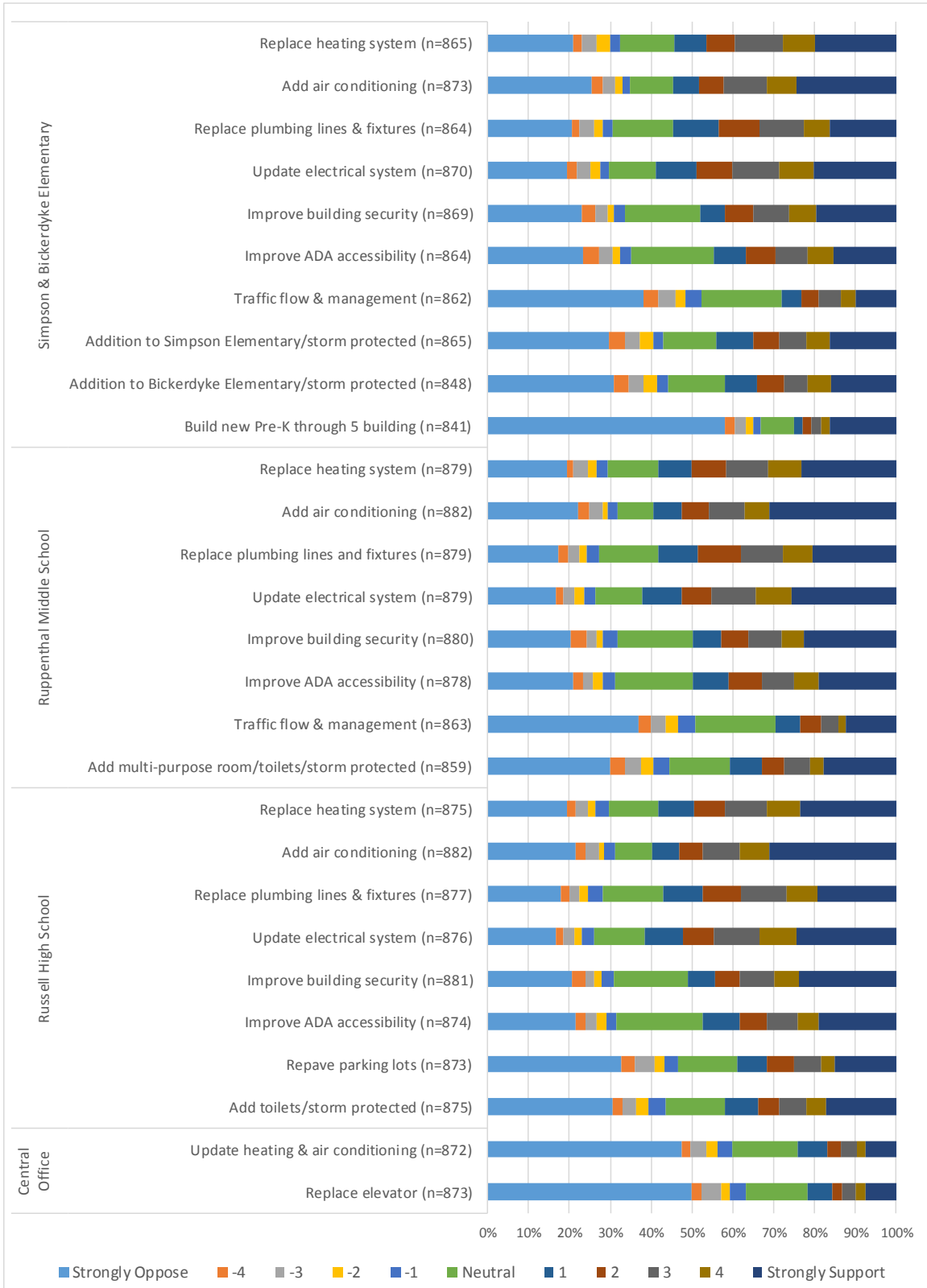
The survey first asked respondents about their support or opposition level for a list of 28 proposed improvement projects, using an 11-point scale with -5 indicating “strongly oppose”, 0 indicating “neutral”, and +5 indicating “strongly support.” Figure 1 shows the proportional breakdown of ratings for those improvement projects. In all the schools, a greater number of respondents gave positive ratings than negative ratings for improvements of the heating system, air conditioning, plumbing, and electric system. For example, 58.3% of respondents selected a rating higher than 0 for the item “replace heating system” at Ruppenthal Middle School. The proportional distribution is reflected by the mean ratings in Figure 2. The mean ratings for improvements of heating system, air conditioning, plumbing, and electric system were higher than those for other improvements. “Updating electrical system” received the highest support in all schools, with the highest mean being 1.13 at Ruppenthal Middle School. “Replacing elevator” at the central office received least support with a mean rating score of -2.14, followed by “Build new Pre-K through 5 building” receiving a mean rating score of -2.1.

The survey continued by asking respondents “Assuming that a proposed bond contained projects you rated highly, what is the largest school bond you would consider voting for?” To facilitate respondents’ decision making, estimated property tax increases were provided for different types of properties. Figure 3 shows that the highest and lowest bond options (\$42 million and \$10 million) were more popular than those bond options falling between \$10 million and \$42 million. More than 40 percent (44.8%) of respondents said they would not support a bond of any amount.

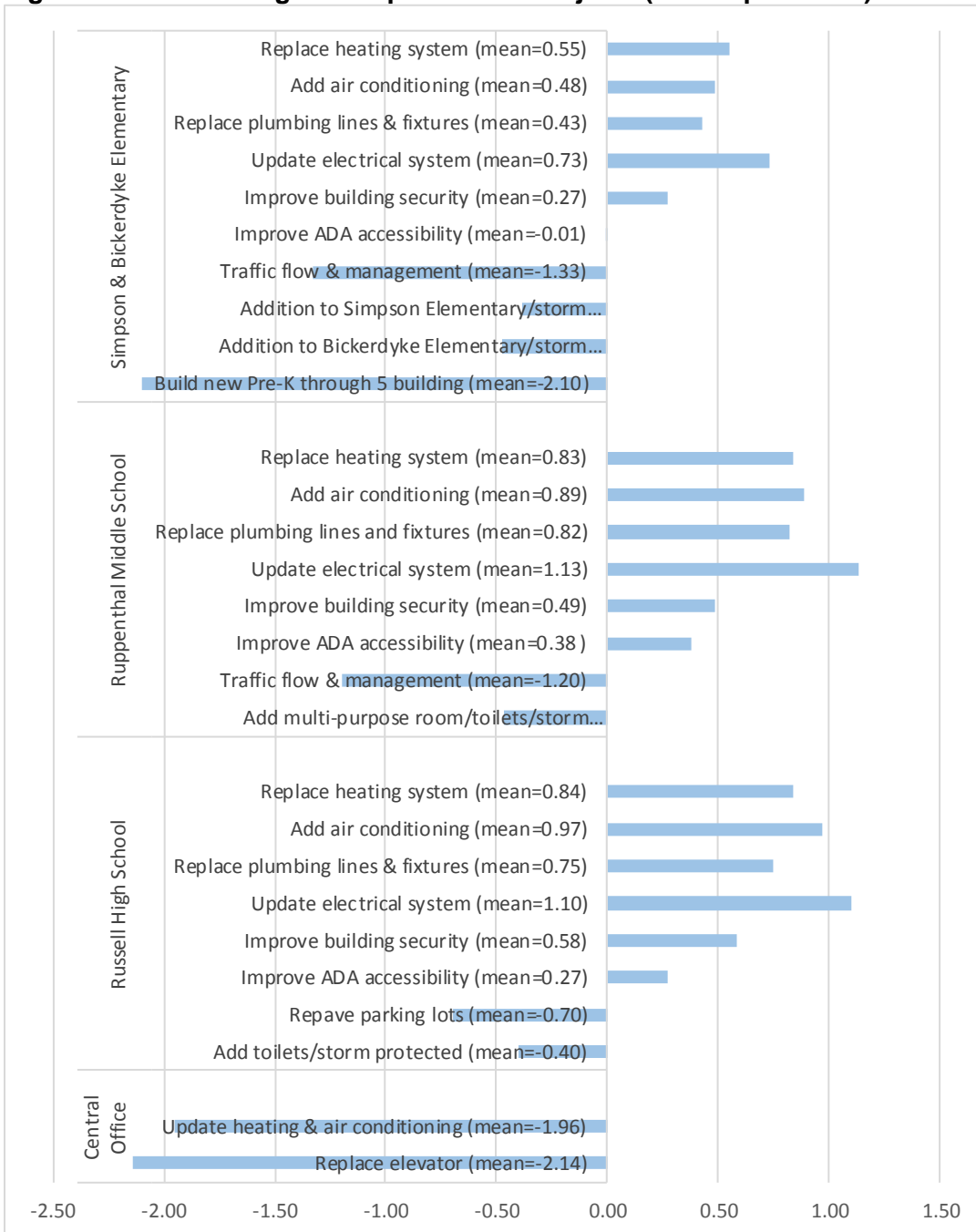
Figure 4 shows the percentage of respondents that “should” vote for school bonds of varying size, assuming that respondents would vote for school bonds that were equal to or smaller than the maximum bond they indicated they would vote for. The results suggest that 55.2% of voters would support a bond of \$10 million, but 39.1% would support a bond of \$15 million. Since over 50% is required for a bond to pass, these results suggest that a bond of at least \$10 million, but not approaching \$15 million, should pass in a bond election, assuming the bond did not include any of the projects with high negative mean ratings among likely supporters.



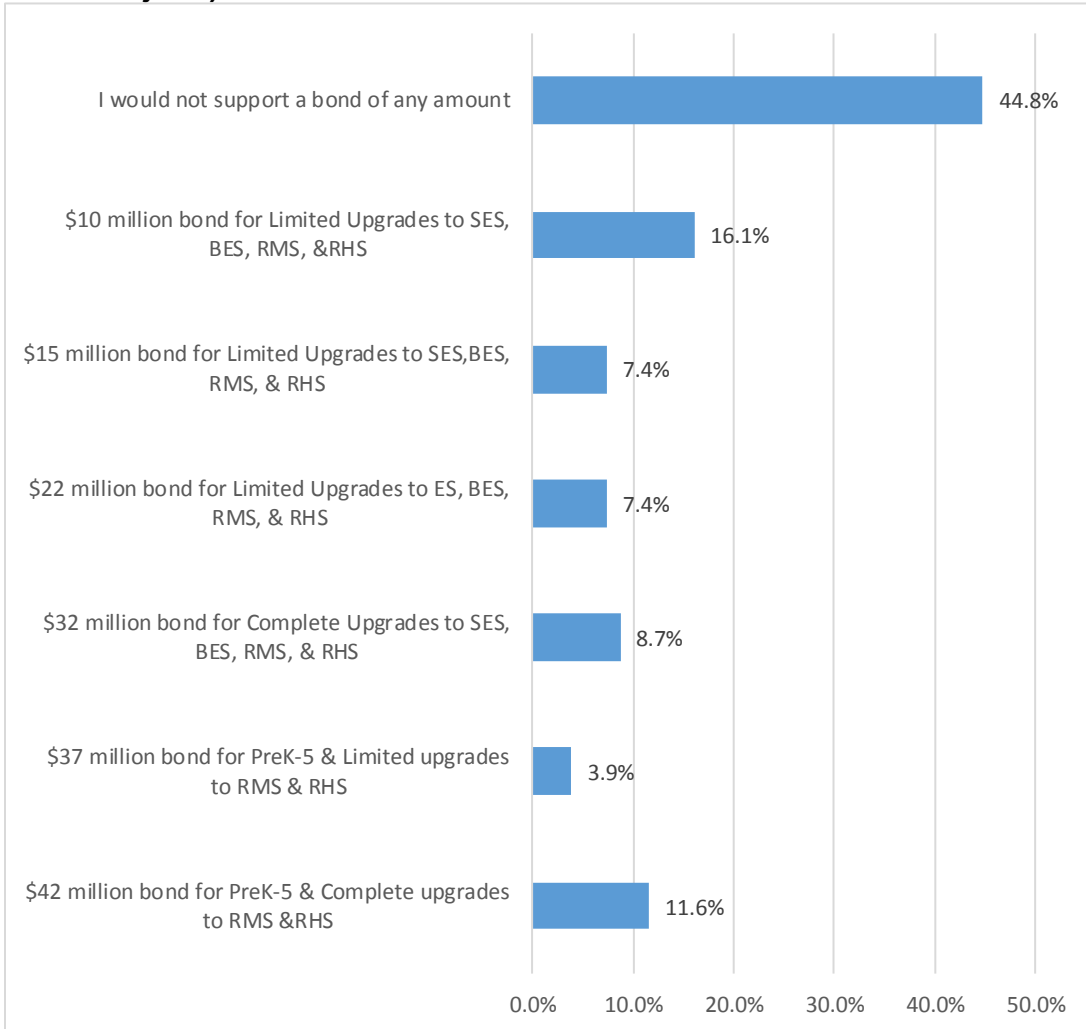
**Figure 1: Rating Distributions of Proposed Improvement Projects (All Respondents)**



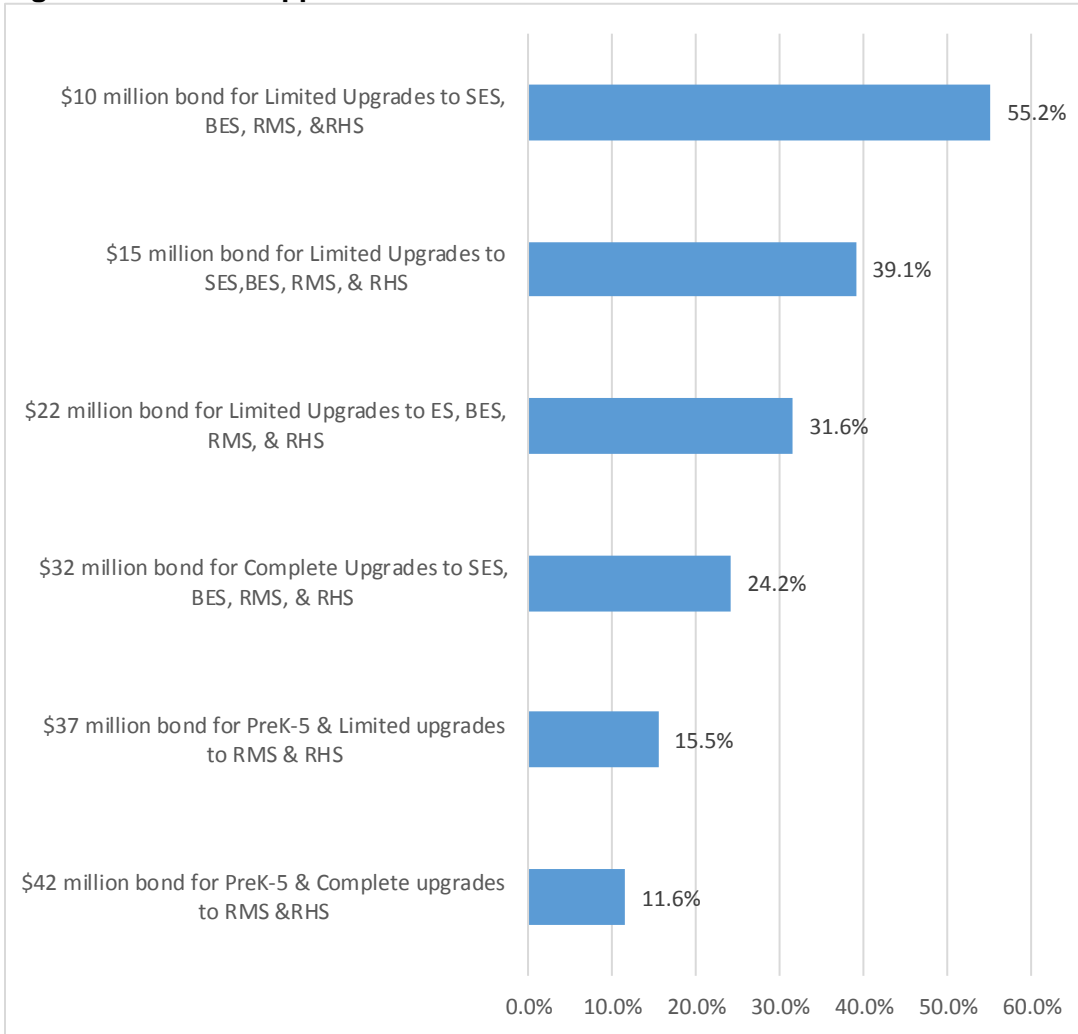
**Figure 2: Mean Ratings for Improvement Projects (All Respondents)**



**Figure 3: Largest School Bond Respondent Would Support (Assuming Highly Rated Projects)**



**Figure 4: Overall Support for Various Bond Sizes**

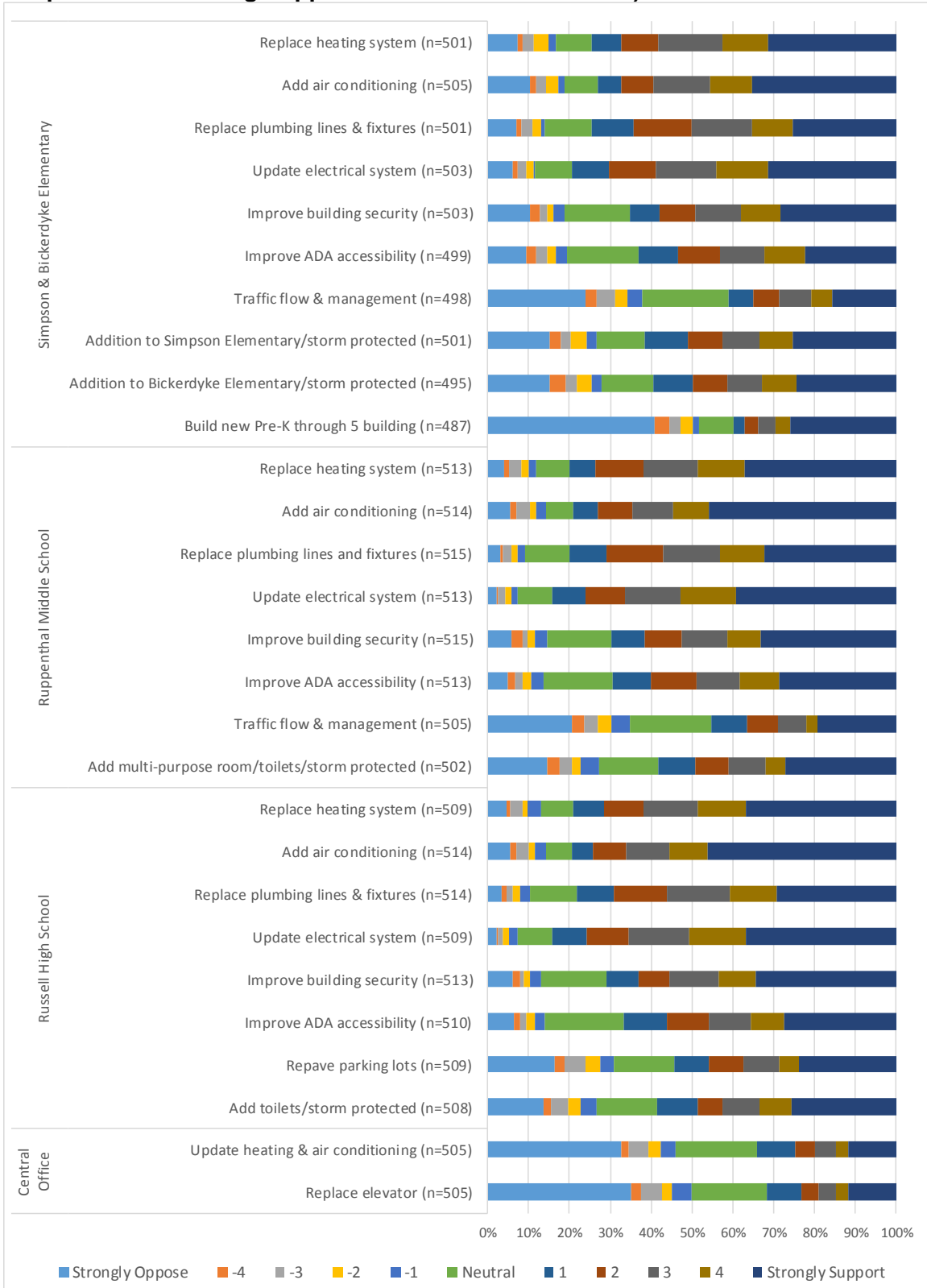


In order to get a better idea of project priorities for only those respondents would tend to support a bond of at least \$10 million, the previous analysis was replicated for only those indicating support for a bond of some size. The results are shown in Figures 5 and 6.

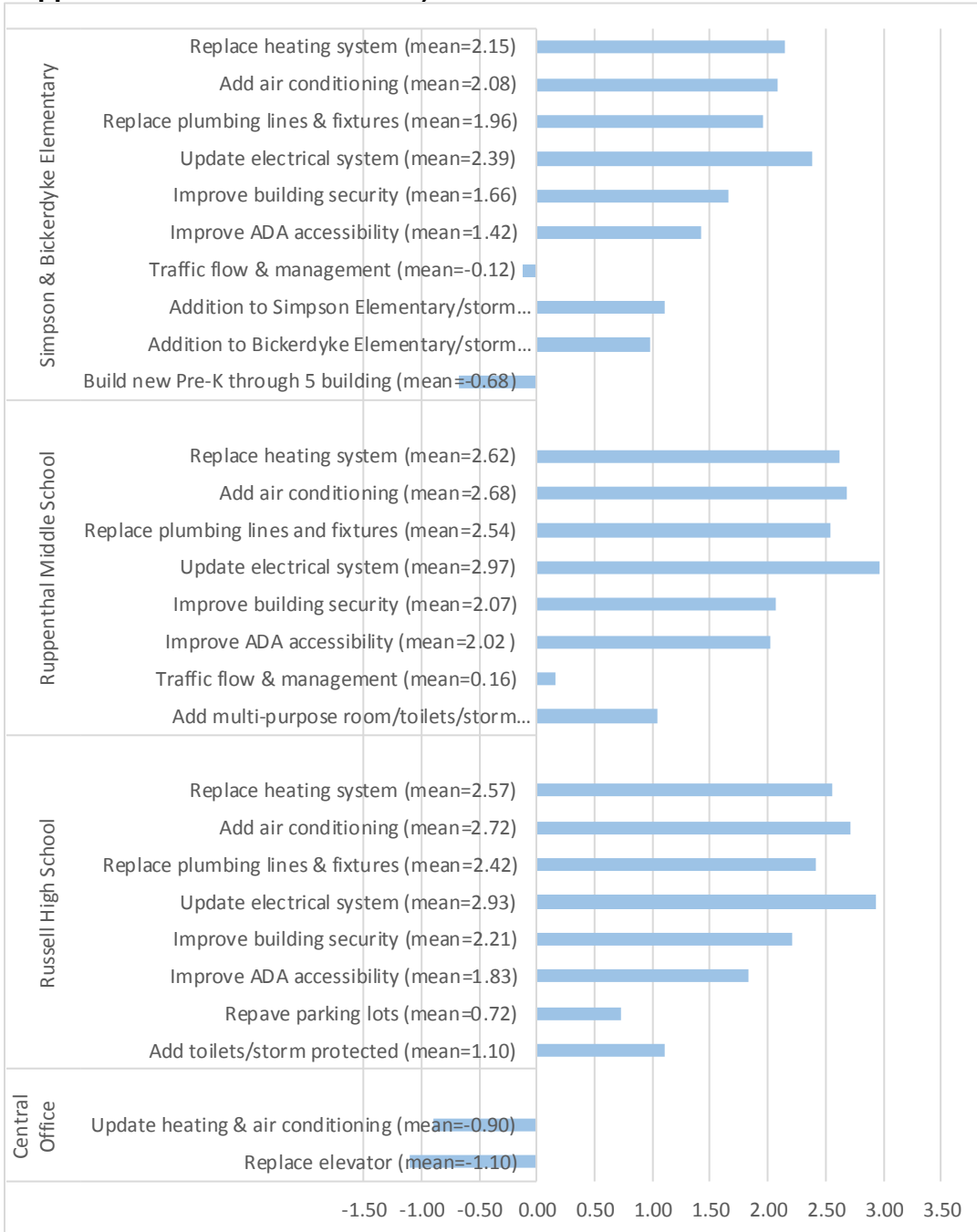
One striking comparison to Figures 1 and 2 are the decreases in the proportions of negative ratings for all the proposed projects and increases in the mean scores. For example, 74.5% of respondents who would support a bond of some size selected a score higher than 0 for the item “replace heating system” at Simpson and Bickerdyke Elementary schools (Figure 5), while only 54.3% of respondents selected a positive rating for that item in Figure 1. The mean score for that item increased from 0.55 in Figure 1 to 2.15 in Figure 6. This suggests that those indicating they would not support a bond of any size were also highly likely to rate the projects with extreme negative values. The dramatic shift from negative to positive means results from exclusion of the extreme negative scores of those opposing any school bond.

Although the mean scores of all respondents and only of supporters are quite different, the resultant priorities do not change. “Updating electrical system”, “replacing heating system”, “adding air conditioning”, and “replacing plumbing lines & fixtures” remain the highest four priorities. The lowest priorities of the bond supporters are similar to those who would not support a school bond of any size.

**Figure 5: Rating Distributions of Proposed Improvement Projects (Only Respondent Indicating Support for a Bond of Some Size)**



**Figure 6: Mean Ratings for Improvement Projects (Only Respondent Indicating Support for a Bond of Some Size)**



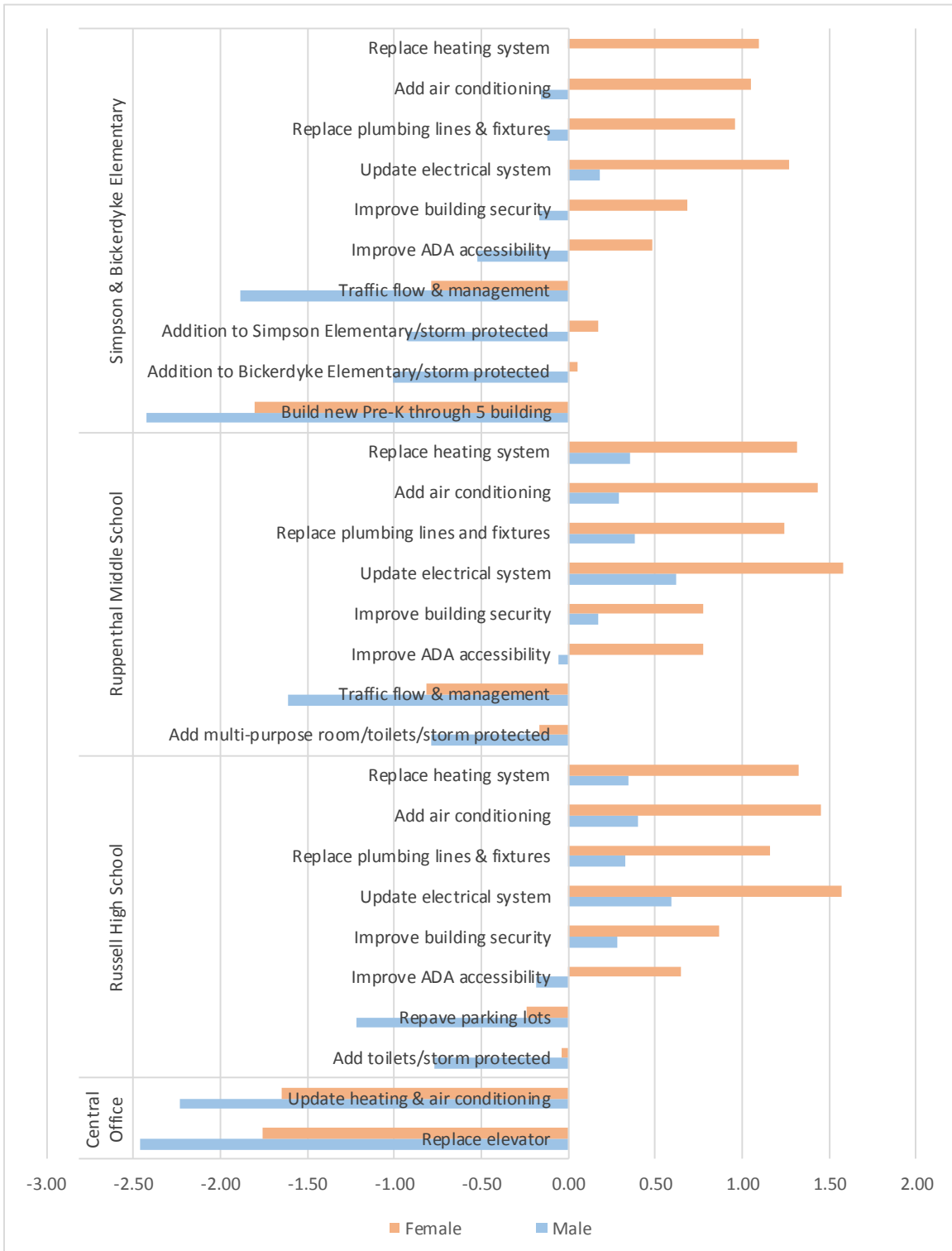
The survey lastly asked about respondent's gender and age. Among those registered voters who responded to the survey, 45.6% were male and 54.4% were female; a little more than one third of respondents were older than 64 years (Appendix C). These two demographic characteristics closely resemble those of the population (all registered voters living in the areas served by USD 407).

T-test analysis demonstrates that female respondents were more supportive of all the proposed projects than male respondents. As Figure 7 shows, the mean scores of female respondents were all higher than those of male respondents. The largest differences exist between the mean scores for "adding air conditioning" at the elementary and middle schools. Male respondents and female respondents differed the least with regard to "updating heating & air conditioning" at the central office and "improving building security" at Russell High School.

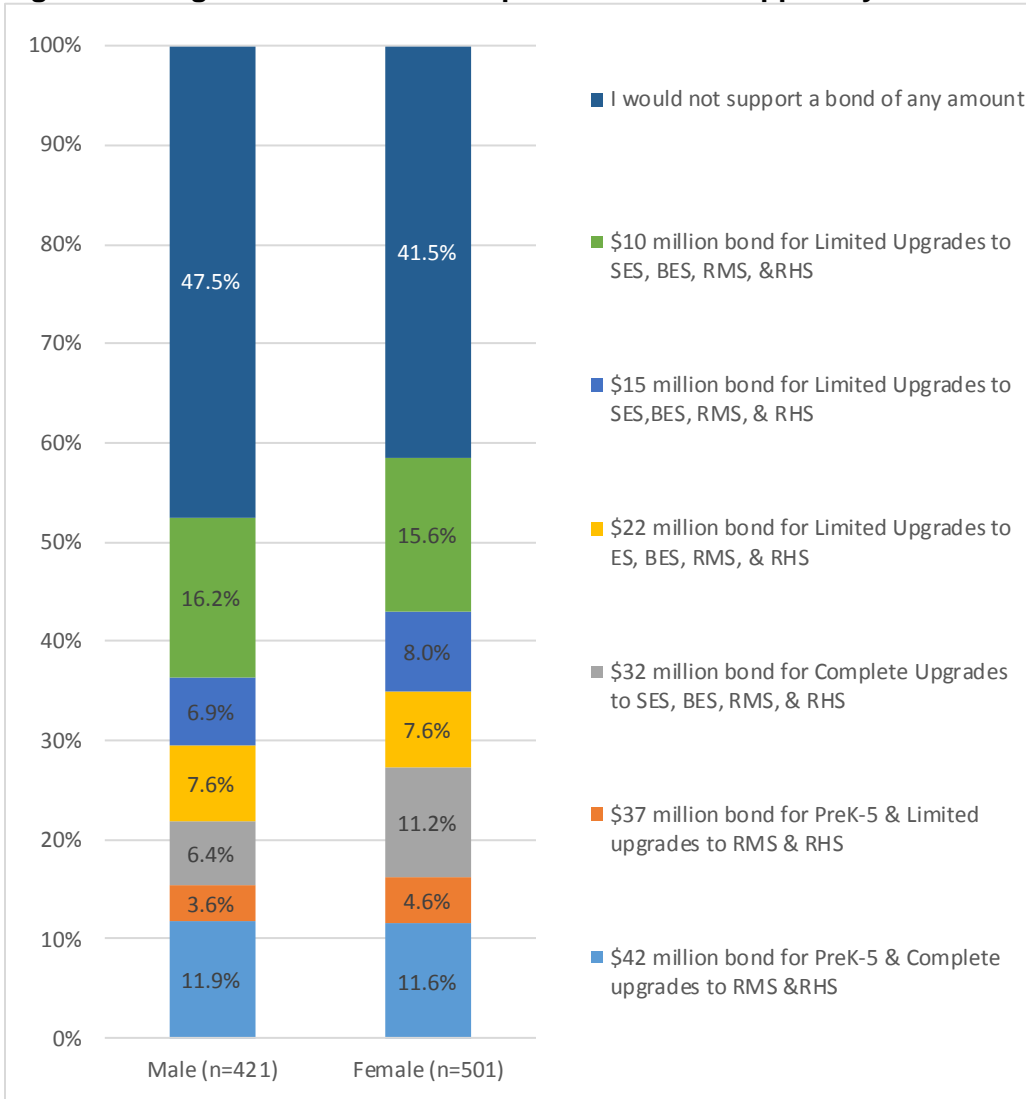
Female respondents were also more likely to support a bond of some size than male respondents (Figure 8). Almost half (47.5%) of male respondents said they would not support a bond of any amount, whereas 41.5% of female said so. The \$42 million and \$10 million bond options were still the most popular ones among both male and female respondents who supported a bond of some size. About 12% of male and female respondents indicated that \$42 million was the maximum size of bond they would support, and about 16% of them indicated \$10 million was the maximum size of bond they would support.



**Figure 7: Mean Ratings for Improvement Projects by Gender**



**Figure 8: Largest School Bond Respondent Would Support by Gender**

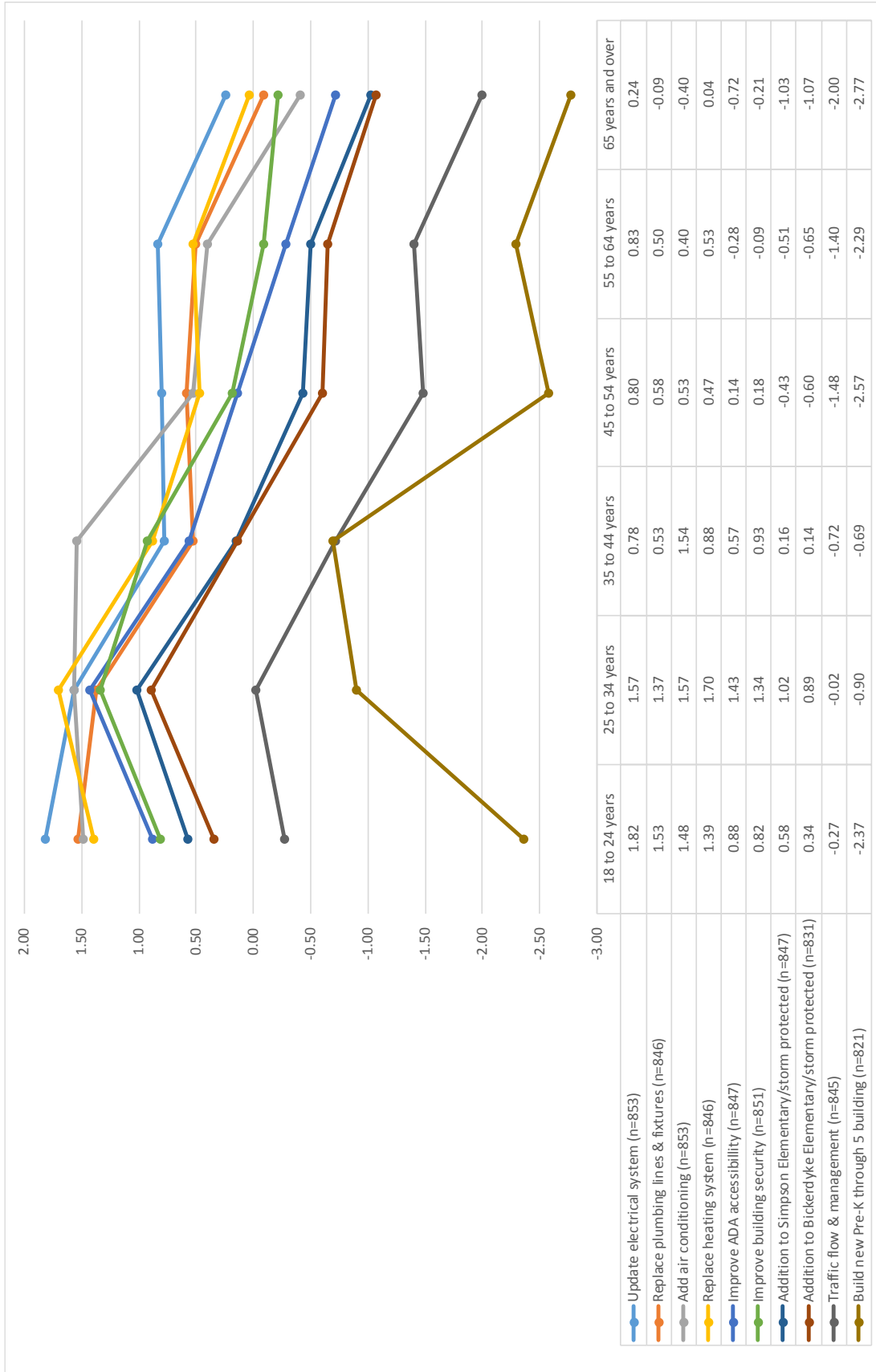


ANOVA analyses were conducted to compare the mean scores of different age groups. In general, the means scores were lower among those older than 44 years for all the proposed projects. For all but two proposed projects at Simpson and Bickerdyke elementary schools, the mean scores were highest among people 25 to 34 years old (Figure 9). The second highest scores were found in the age group 18 to 24 years. “Building new Pre-K through 5 buildings” received the highest support among those 35 to 44 years old.

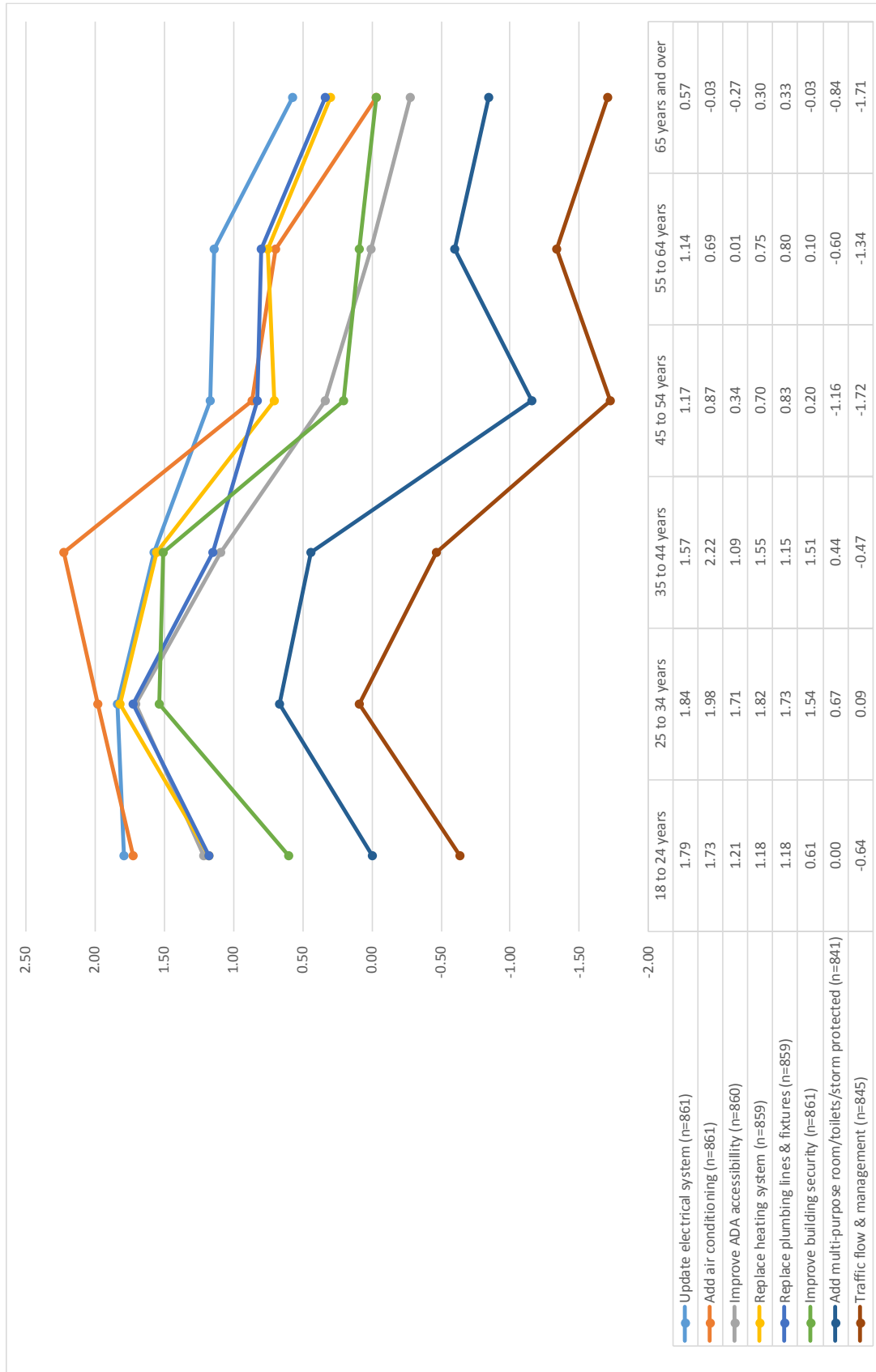
The mean scores were highest in the age group 25 to 34 years for all the proposed projects at Ruppenthal Middle School except for “adding air conditioning” and “improving building security” (Figure 10). For those proposed projects at Russell High School, the highest mean scores can be found among either age group 25 to 34 years or age group 35 to 44 years (Figure 11). The mean scores were highest in the age group 25 to 34 years for those two proposed projects at the central office (Figure 12).

Figure 12 shows the support for bond options among different age groups. People who were 45 years or older were more likely to say they would not support a bond of any amount. People who were more likely to have school-age children tended to be more supportive of a bond of some size. Among those who were 35 to 44 years old, 22.5% said \$42 million was the maximum bond size they would support, and a total of 72.5% said they would support a bond of at least \$10 million.

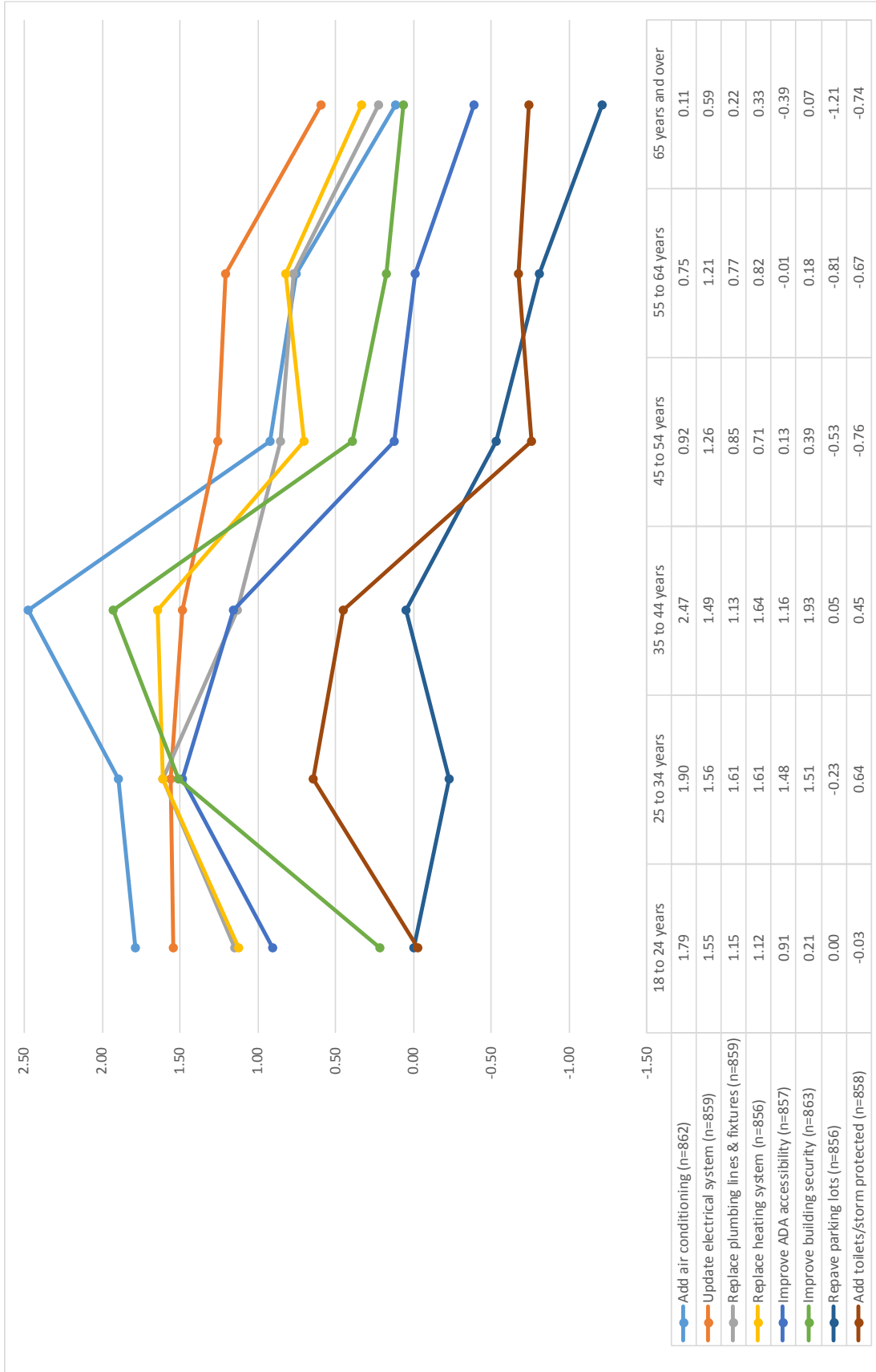
**Figure 9: Mean Ratings for Improvement Projects by Age-Simpson & Bickerdyke Elementary**



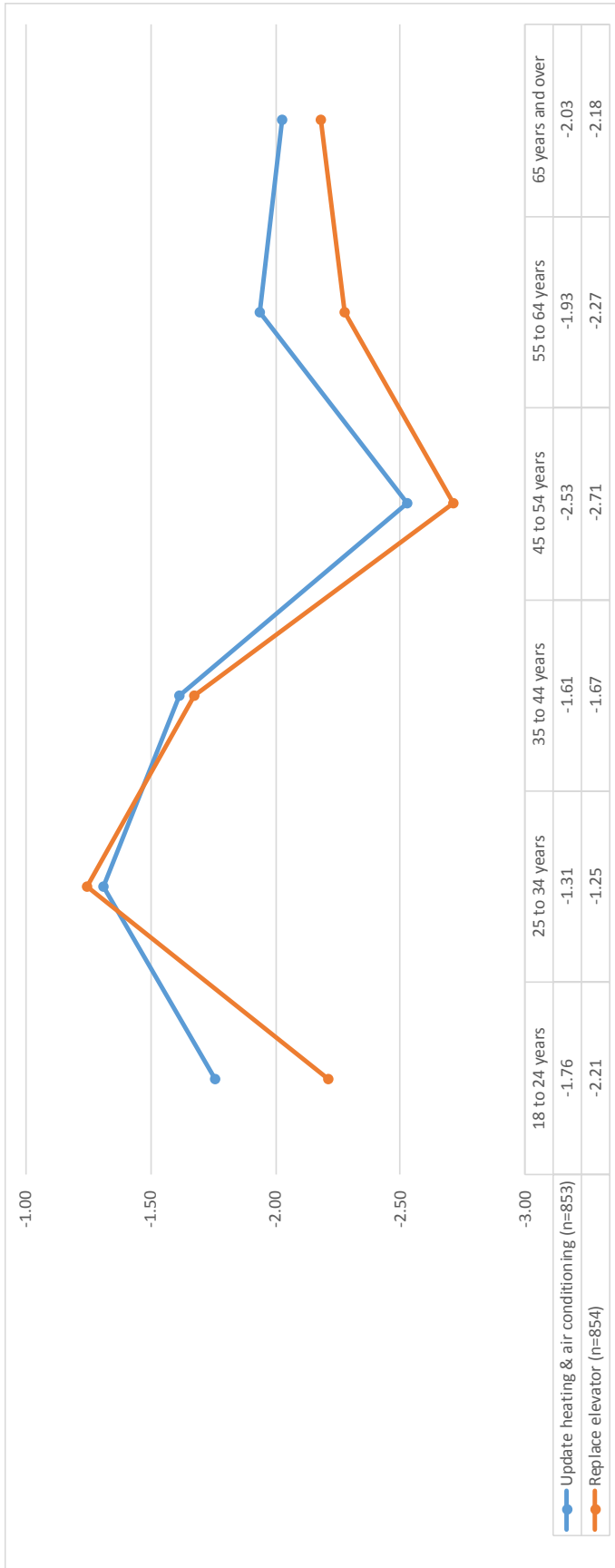
**Figure 10: Mean Ratings for Improvement Projects by Age- Ruppenthal Middle School**



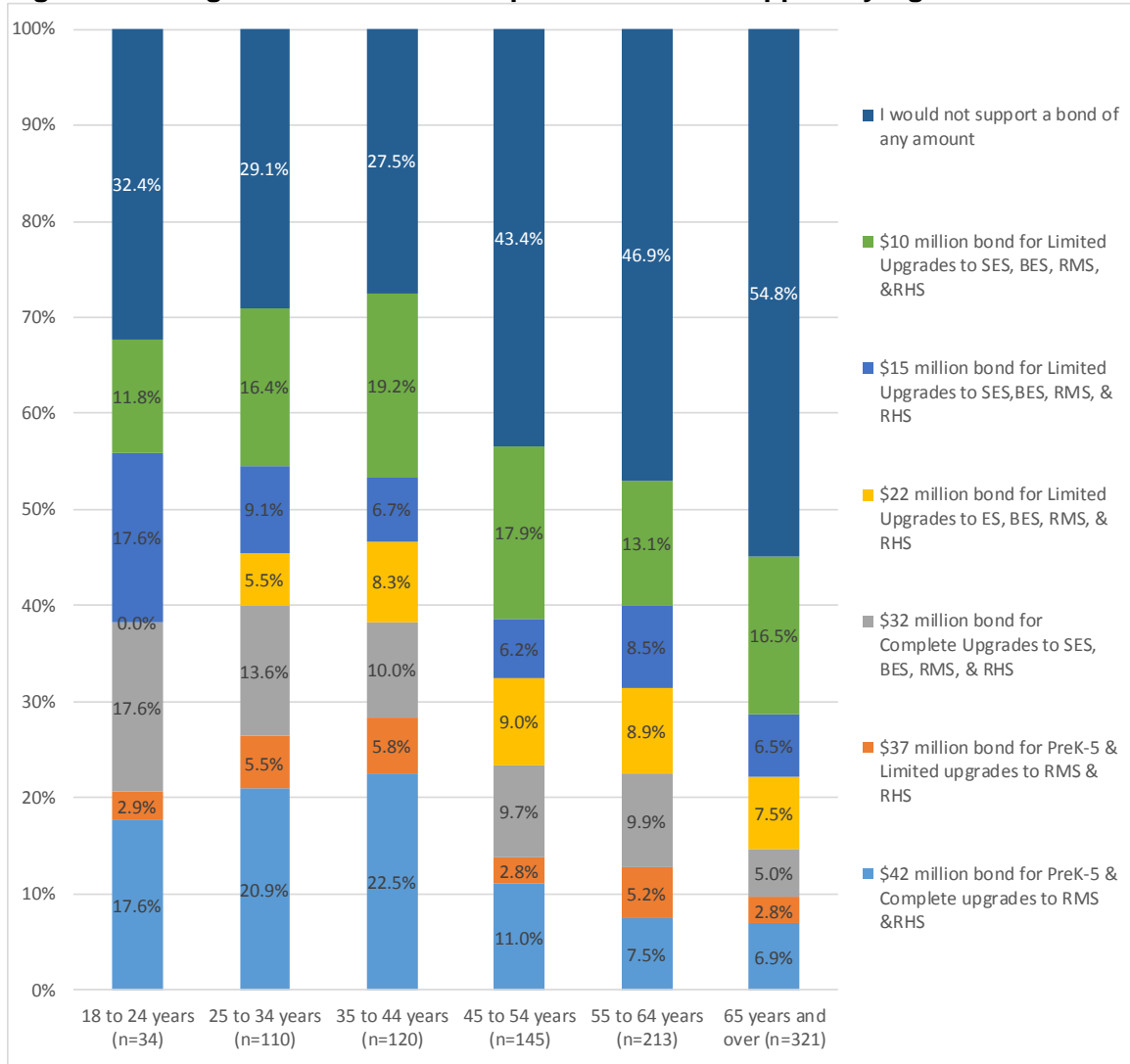
**Figure 11: Mean Ratings for Improvement Projects by Age- Russell High School**



**Figure 12: Mean Ratings for Improvement Projects by Age-Central Office**



**Figure 13: Largest School Bond Respondent Would Support by Age**





## Analysis of Comments

Some respondents wrote narrative comments on the questionnaire (Appendix D). Institute researchers categorized the various comments and quantified the most commonly cited issues (Figure 14). The most common comments expressed opinions of better use of current funds or facilities, that taxes were too high already, and that the existing buildings shall be rearranged or remodeled. A number of respondents also expressed that the repayment of the bond shall not be assumed by just property owners, and some proposed to raise sales tax too.

**Figure 14: Topics Addressed in Comments (n=123)**

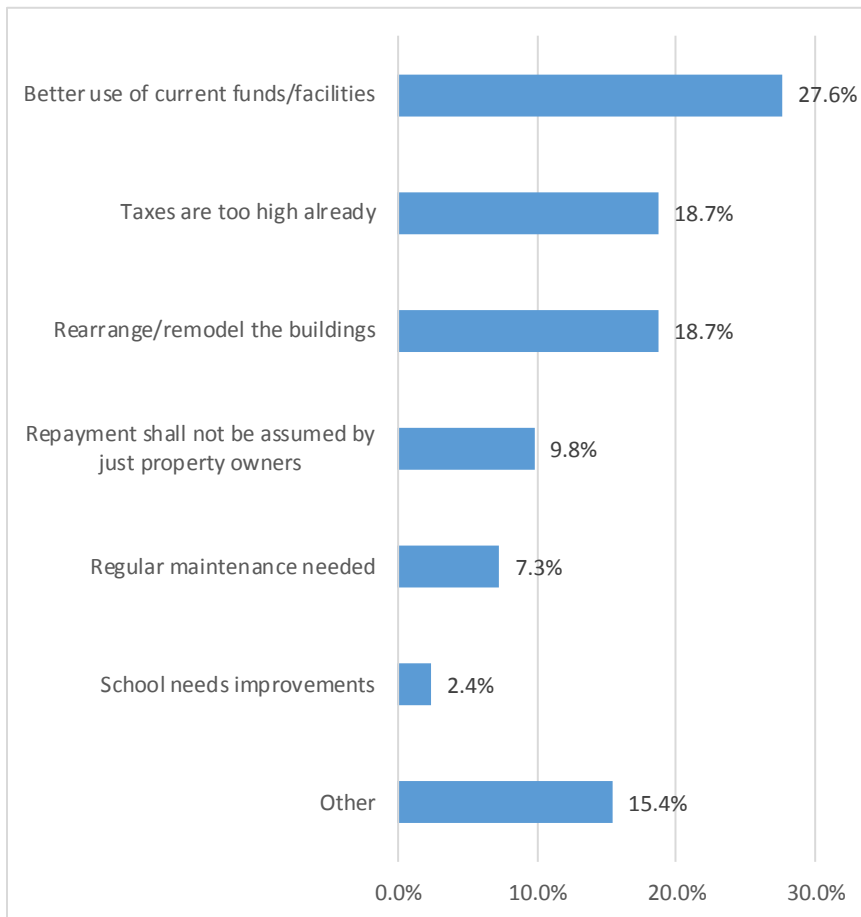
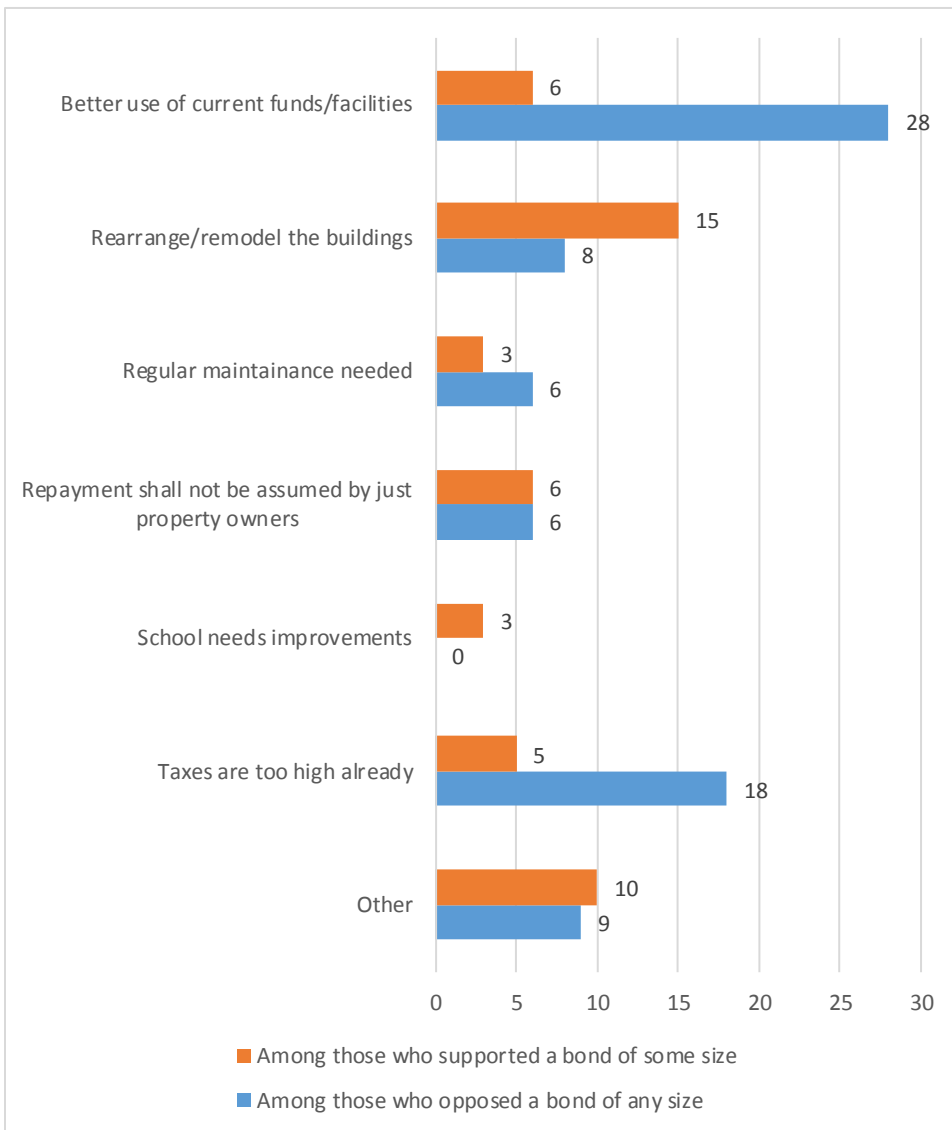


Figure 15 shows the topic differences between those respondents who supported a bond of some size and those who opposed a bond of any size. Those who opposed a bond of any size tended to propose better use of current funds/facilities and state that taxes were too high, while those who supported a bond of some size were more likely to propose rearranging or remodeling buildings. Most common to both groups were the sentiments regarding who shall assume the repayment burden.

**Figure 15: Topics Addressed in Comments: Those Who Supported a Bond vs. Those Who Opposed Any Bond**



## Conclusions

The study has found majority voter support for a \$10 million school bond among a sample of registered voters residing within the boundaries of USD 407. A bond of at least \$10 million, but not approaching \$15 million should pass in a bond election. Although highly rated improvement projects can be readily included in a bond proposal, a successful bond initiative would likely not include projects that rated most negatively among bond supporters. These include, for example, the projects associated with the central office, construction of a new Pre-K through 5 building and traffic flow & management projects at elementary and middle schools. It is impossible to say which combination of projects will or will not garner majority voter support, but it is safe to assume that the more negatively rated projects included in the bond, the less chance that it will pass.

## Appendix A: Cover Letter/Project Description Sheet



**FORT HAYS STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

*Forward thinking. World ready.*

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THE DOCKING INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Dear USD 407 Registered Voter and Patron,

As a registered voting member of the community, Russell County Unified School District 407 earnestly seeks your opinions about the current and future needs of our public-school facilities.

USD 407 Board of Education members understand that voters will ultimately decide what resources will be appropriated for public education. As such, USD 407 would like your help in prioritizing future improvements to ensure that the district provides a vibrant, safe, and efficient school system for current and future children.

The Board hopes to address three broad primary goals with a bond: improved safety, enhanced instruction, and critically needed updates/upgrades to facilities. Improved safety could include the provision of storm shelters, controlled entry to buildings to prevent unauthorized access, and traffic flow and management during drop-off and pick-up. Updated heating and air conditioning (AC), roofs, windows, and parking lots, as well as upgrades to interior and exterior features will enhance instruction, extend the life of school buildings, and improve ADA accessibility. **For a tour of the facilities, please call 785-483-2173.**

The Docking Institute of Public Affairs at Fort Hays State University is conducting a survey to assess the opinions of the local voters. The Institute is a nonprofit and nonbiased research organization with vast school bond survey research experience. Please visit the Institute's web site for more information: [www.fhsu.edu/docking/](http://www.fhsu.edu/docking/).

This survey is voluntary and anonymous. Nothing on the survey form nor on the return envelope identifies you. Only grouped data will be analyzed and presented to the USD 407 Board to help them develop a plan based upon the will of the voters.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about our study. Otherwise, please use the Explanations, Descriptions and Clarifications sheet on the back of this cover letter to complete the enclosed survey form and return it to the Docking Institute in the business reply envelope provided by **August 1, 2018**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jian Sun".

Jian Sun, Ph.D.

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## DEFINITIONS, EXPLANATIONS, AND CLARIFICATIONS

### **Simpson Elementary School (SES) & Bickerdyke Elementary School (BES): (\$13,093,963 Total)**

- Replace heating system (\$2,519,797)
- Add air conditioning (\$466,628)
- Replace and update plumbing lines & fixtures (\$1,663,308)
- Update electrical system – Replace lighting and accommodate increased use of technology (\$994,217)
- Improve building security – Controlled access to buildings to prevent unauthorized entry (\$530,334)
- Improve ADA<sup>1</sup> accessibility – Interior and exterior handicapped-accessible routes may include restrooms, corridors, floors, ramps, elevators, and lifts (\$888,599)
- Traffic flow & management – Improve the design of parking, drop-off, and pick-up areas (\$722,501)
- Simpson Elementary: Addition of 8 handicapped-accessible/storm protected classrooms, student and staff toilets and demolition of existing 1990 building portion (\$3,946,302)
- Bickerdyke Elementary: Addition of Special Education handicapped-accessible classrooms/storm protected (\$1,362,277)

### **Build New Elementary (Pre-K through 5th grade) and Demolish Simpson & Bickerdyke (\$22,509,451)**

#### **Ruppenthal Middle School (RMS): (\$6,497,397 Total)**

- Replace heating system (\$2,358,139)
- Add air conditioning (\$436,693)
- Replace and update plumbing lines & fixtures (\$289,800)
- Update electrical system – Replace lighting and accommodate increased use of technology (\$1,226,789)
- Improve building security – Controlled access to buildings to prevent unauthorized entry (\$265,167)
- Improve ADA<sup>1</sup> accessibility – Interior and exterior handicapped-accessible routes may include restrooms, locker rooms, corridors, floors, ramps, elevators, and lifts (\$663,642)
- Traffic flow & management – Improve the design of parking, drop-off, and pick-up areas (\$583,135)
- Addition of Multi-purpose room/ toilets/storm protected (\$674,032)

#### **Russell High School (RHS): (\$11,636,374 total)**

- Replace heating system (\$4,870,892)
- Add air conditioning (\$902,017)
- Replace and update plumbing lines & fixtures (\$852,737)
- Update electrical system – Replace lighting and accommodate increased use of technology (\$1,159,809)
- Improve building security – Controlled access to buildings to prevent unauthorized entry (\$366,017)
- Improve ADA<sup>1</sup> accessibility – Interior and exterior handicapped-accessible routes may include restrooms, locker rooms, corridors, floors, ramps, elevators, and lifts (\$834,624)
- Repave parking lots (\$1,451,376)
- Additions for toilets/storm protected (\$1,198,902)

**COMPLETE UPGRADES (\$31,227,734):** Includes all renovations, improvements, and additions listed above to Simpson and Bickerdyke Elementary Schools, Ruppenthal Middle School, and Russell High School. ***Does not include new elementary building.***

**LIMITED UPGRADES:** Includes a limited number of listed renovations and improvements based upon available funding to Simpson and Bickerdyke Elementary Schools, Ruppenthal Middle School, and Russell High School. ***Limited Upgrades do not include storm protected additions, paving of parking lots, or a new elementary building.***

#### **Central Office:**

- Update heating and air conditioning (\$474,962)
- Replace elevator (\$277,200)

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<sup>1</sup> Americans with Disabilities Act, which provides mandates/standards for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. For more, go to [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)

# Appendix B: Survey Instrument

## USD 407 VOTER PREFERENCE SURVEY

Next to each item listed, please indicate by **circling the number** on the scale indicating your personal level of support or opposition for each of the proposed projects. Definitions, clarifications and/or brief explanations are included on the back of the cover letter. **Please review the Definitions, Explanations, and Clarification BEFORE completing this section.**

	Strongly Oppose				Neutral			Strongly Support			
<b>Simpson &amp; Bickerdyke Elementary</b>											
Replace heating system	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Add air conditioning	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Replace plumbing lines & fixtures	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Update electrical system	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Improve building security	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Improve ADA <sup>1</sup> accessibility	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Traffic flow & management	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Addition to Simpson Elementary/ storm protected											
Addition to Bickerdyke Elementary/ storm protected	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
<b>New Pre-K through 5 Building</b>											
<b>Ruppenthal Middle School</b>											
Replace heating system	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Add air conditioning	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Replace plumbing lines & fixtures	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Update electrical system	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Improve building security	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Improve ADA <sup>1</sup> accessibility	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Traffic flow & management	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Add multi-purpose room/ toilets/ storm protected	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
<b>Russell High School</b>											
Replace heating system	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Add air conditioning	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Replace plumbing lines & fixtures	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Update electrical system	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Improve building security	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Improve ADA <sup>1</sup> accessibility	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Repave parking lots	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Add toilets/storm protected	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
<b>Central Office</b>											
Update heating & air conditioning	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5
Replace elevator	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5

<sup>1</sup> Americans with Disabilities Act, which provides mandates/standards for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. For more, go to [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)

Assuming that a proposed bond contained projects you rated highly, what is the largest school bond you would consider voting for? A successful bond issue would be paid for by the residents and property owners within the USD 407 service area. Estimates of the changes in residential, commercial, and agricultural property taxes are provided below for each bond amount, based on the current property valuations, which are updated every July.

Please check **one (1)** bond amount that you would support and vote for in a bond election.

<b>Est. Property Tax Increase per Year:</b>	<b>\$100,000 House</b>	<b>\$100,000 Commercial</b>	<b>160 Acre Cropland</b>	<b>160 Acre Grassland</b>	<b>Length of Bond</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$42 million bond for PreK-5 &amp; Complete upgrades to RMS &amp; RHS</b>	\$431	\$936	\$446	\$70	20 years
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$37 million bond for PreK-5 &amp; Limited upgrades to RMS &amp; RHS</b>	\$377	\$819	\$390	\$61	20 years
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$32 million bond for Complete Upgrades to SES, BES, RMS, &amp; RHS</b>	\$323	\$702	\$334	\$53	20 years
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$22 million bond for Limited Upgrades to SES, BES, RMS, &amp; RHS</b>	\$215	\$468	\$223	\$35	20 years
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$15 million bond for Limited Upgrades to SES, BES, RMS, &amp; RHS</b>	\$194	\$422	\$201	\$32	15 years
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$10 million bond for Limited Upgrades to SES, BES, RMS, &amp; RHS</b>	\$176	\$382	\$182	\$29	10 years
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>I would not support a bond of any amount</b> (Bond interest rates and property valuation will affect tax rates.)					

**What is your gender?**  Male  Female

**What is your age?**

- 18 to 24 years       25 to 34 years       35 to 44 years  
 45 to 54 years       55 to 64 years       65 years and over

**Thank you for completing the survey. Please place the questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope provided and drop it in any US Post Office mailbox.**

## Appendix C: Demographic Characteristics

	Respondents in the Bond Survey	All Registered Voters*
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	46%	48%
Female	54%	52%
<b>Age</b>		
18 to 24 years	4%	6%
25 to 34 years	11%	13%
35 to 44 years	13%	13%
45 to 54 years	15%	16%
55 to 64 years	23%	20%
65 years and over	34%	32%

\* Source: Russell County Clerks Office



## Appendix D: Comments from Those Who Supported a Bond of Some Size

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Better use of current funds/facilities	Should've paved parking lot before adding artificial turf to football field. Move central office to high school.
Better use of current funds/facilities	You had us vote on the importance of remodeling the C.O, but that is not included in any of the possible bond packages. How will it be paid for? The new Pre-k building is the absolute first priority!
Better use of current funds/facilities	Where the hell was my survey when you decided to spend \$800,000 on a football field?? Could've paid for a lot of things with that money.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Russell always thinks they need the best of everything except the students are the ones that are hurting, why all those unnecessary sports?
Better use of current funds/facilities	In support to pay to play sports and focusing on school rather cutting subjects and what costs do we continue to waste on outside surveys?
Better use of current funds/facilities	I think that a small bound would be okay, but I think council needs to put some of this in the budget. What are the biggest necessities?
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Why not abandon central office buildings and move to one to one building Pre-5- Would that save money?
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	I would approve this only if we won't vote to build a new elementary building. Can't we add central office to the new building? It seems like a waste of a HUGE building for so few people/offices.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	First you get a new football field, then a new track, then new tennis courts. I am for no bond period. Redo the schools that you have and stop this foolish spending.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	New Pre-k with central offices.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Will not support any of these. Would like to see cost associated with upgrades to high school. A new complex built to house the central office- middle school and elementary schools. I feel this plan put forth only applies band-aids to very old facilities.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Move central office to new pre-k building.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	I would support all remodel/additions to SES/BES-
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Move elementary to junior high building. Improve only if the middle school becomes an elementary building. Combine the high school and junior high buildings. Eliminate central office and move offices to high school. Combine administration to eliminate excess personal. I support no bond.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Close both Simpson & Bickerdyke Elementary schools. Close and relocate the central office to RMS or RHS, or combine pre-K-12 at RHS and build on section for Prek-6 to the west or back behind cafeteria lots of small town that goes this route.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Fix the high school and central office. My first advice would be to build a new facility for K-5. It would be cheaper than all their upgrades.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Move central office into one of the existing buildings.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Have central office on main floor of a building- no need for elevator. \$474,962 for heating/air? May have to think about moving the central office.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Move central office into a school building. Build a new- 7-12th facility and move elementary students to the high school after improvements have been made at the current high school facility. Close SES/BES and RMS.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Need to look into building a new 7-12 building and moving pre-k-6 into the high school building that exists! Then close simson, BES and RMS. Build east of existing high school and share sports facilities. Move central office into one of the school buildings.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Move the central office into an unused high school room. The old home economics room perhaps?

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Regular maintenance needed	Why didn't you upgrade 1 school every 10 years, not all at once? You don't let a home go unattended 50 years so why schools-What a school board!!
Regular maintenance needed	Why have the schools not be upgraded in 55 years? What did they use the money for? Are wasting the tax payer's money?
Regular maintenance needed	Just wondering on which one of these bonds the central office upgrades fall into?
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	As long as renters have to pay also. Homeowners should not be the only ones paying. Every person in town should pay. A new building should come with everything that it needs.
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	Also need sales tax added.
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	Just a thought. Using bonds and sales tax would be better.
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	These numbers seem very inflated and need to be bid on from some area contractors. I agree something needs to be done, but maybe a partial increase in sales tax also, so the property owners aren't the only ones that are paying for these renovations. These schools use to hold more than double the amount of students that there are now.
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	I feel that a county tax, or city tax, would be a better alternative, instead of it all falling on the property owners. I don't see how that's not an option anywhere on here. Hopefully it has been talked about.
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	You're not helping the schools if you don't have property? How about a sales tax like the hospital had?
School needs improvements	This is where nothing needs done. You have a/c and the kids don't. You should be able to work in the same heat as they do. Disconnect the a/c.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comments</b>
School needs improvements	The high school parking lot needs fixed and they need air and heat pronto.
School needs improvements	By spending this much money, we need to be able to have better teachers. School board needs to hire administration that will live in Russell and have the backbone to dismiss poor teachers. Most importantly, the district needs to improve test scores.
Taxes are too high already	I understand the reasons for wanting to upgrade the school systems, but going to this extent and raising taxes AGAIN is not the way to grow a population in Russell. In the past 10 years. I have watched my taxes go up. NEVER, one time, have I seen them drop and benefit me once. Every year Russell adds a new building or vehicles or walking paths or whatever which cost us more and more every year. The cost of everything goes up yearly to live. Housing, fuel, food, taxes, and the one thing that doesn't follow as rapidly as these cost, is pay raises. So now let's tax people even more and that person that is struggling to get by will struggle even more. Regardless of what happens with this I plan on leaving town and know for a fact that many others will too if the taxes are raised again.
Taxes are too high already	This is providing there is a county sales tax increase. It is a punishment for commercial and property owners.
Taxes are too high already	Taxes are too high already!
Taxes are too high already	Kansas already has the 15th highest property taxes in the US
Taxes are too high already	Other taxing units will need to reduce to absorb this increase. Tax levy plenty high.
Other	No help!
Other	Rebid Heating and a/c. your numbers are off electrical.
Other	Only Pre K-5 bond. Wait on other improvements.

Topics	Comments
Other	Let the central office suffer like the students. Maybe then we will get air conditioning in our schools.
Other	Own no property, so could go ALL or NOTHING
Other	Where in is the 7 million difference?
Other	I appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion!
Other	Thanks for allowing us to express our priorities before this shows up on an election ballot!
Other	I have not paid attention to building needs; I do not have any children in school. Therefore, I do not feel comfortable filling out the other side of this sheet. Big question in mind- The lottery was supposed to take the financial burden off of schools, where has that money gone these 30ish years?
Other	There are more than two genders. i think you meant "what is your sex?" then there are three choices. Get with it.

## Appendix E: Comments from Those Who Opposed a Bond of Any Size

Topics	Comments
Better use of current funds/facilities	They should have used their maintenance money more wisely.
Better use of current funds/facilities	I would approve their air conditioning only-but that is not an option. Football/track field money should be spent more wisely.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Once all board members whom voted for turf on the football field at a cost of 103 billion over 10 years, are off the board, I would consider.
Better use of current funds/facilities	They should have done repairs instead of fixing the football field. Fix the school system first. Teachers and staff don't care. 407 is a joke unless you have money. Make the oil families pay for it. None of the rest of us can afford these increase proposals. Kids should get first improvements. Superintendent should sweat until kids are taken care of.
Better use of current funds/facilities	They need to quit wasting money and make due with the funds they have.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Show use of money wasted on football field.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Put your/our (money) towards education not accommodations
Better use of current funds/facilities	The amount of money wasted on the HS track and football field last year should have been used for air conditioning. The priorities should be examined.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Make more economic use of budget. Do fundraiser. Do community pleas.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Didn't need to spend all that money on new track and football field. Have 4 or 5 football games per season. Schools should of been kept up then would not have this expense. With lower enrollment no new school is needed. Stop wasting money on things that are not important.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Make use of current funds.
Better use of current funds/facilities	My house taxes have went up a 130% since I have lived here. I cannot afford anymore. They let things get this bad everytime. You put in a million dollar football field we did not need. It might be time for new people in charge.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Better use of current funds/facilities	You spend a million dollars on a football field that was uncalled for. You should have maybe spent on the necessity of the schools.
Better use of current funds/facilities	How do we know any of these items need replacing? Too bad the money spent of football and baseball fields was not better spent. We suck at baseball and football, so spend on the kid's supplies.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Need to ask if those supporting a bond are employed. Suggestion: grants, donations, capital outlay etc. Concern-Focus on education and paying teachers. Recruit educators who are qualified instead of focus on sports.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Education is more important than all the sports you have. All that running around wasting on fuel cost is getting higher to buy. How about considering no school on Fridays. Make one game a week instead of 2 times a week. Cut out track, baseball and tennis. Bring back home economics instead.
Better use of current funds/facilities	All that money wasted on the football field could have gone towards education and upkeep.
Better use of current funds/facilities	According to my sources, the money is already there for any and all improvements needed for all locations.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Should have used the money spent on sport fields!
Better use of current funds/facilities	NO!! Should have thought about this before redoing the sports complexes and fields.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Use funds available to fix stuff as needed.
Better use of current funds/facilities	6 years ago this school district was talking about how we needed to get rid of a building and move in fewer children because we couldn't afford all the buildings USD 407 had. Now, we're told the buildings are falling apart, we need more room and we need to raise our property taxes to build a new school. We have plenty of room in our facilities, if we use them efficiently. Our buildings are still in good shape and we do not need more empty buildings in this town and WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BUILD ANYTHING! We have plenty of room in the high school. Move 7th and 8th grade there and use other buildings for the other grades. Many schools in our area have already done this to cut costs and it has helped them tremendously. We do not need air conditioning; we would use it 2 weeks out of the year. Why would we spend over a million dollars on something we use for 2 weeks? You are raising the teacher's health insurance and reducing their checks and throwing away good employees and teachers.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Better use of current funds/facilities	I am a taxpayer and as I recall my tax money should contribute to maintaining our school district not the sports facilities.
Better use of current funds/facilities	Get rid of central office and use money for other buildings.
Better use of current funds/facilities	I am a lifelong Russell citizen and graduated from RHS. I've seen many improvements and never once was air conditioning a factor. We even had a "heat schedule" why would we put in a brand new sign at the middle school when that could go towards better security at least?
Better use of current funds/facilities	Don't need all parking.
Better use of current funds/facilities	How about doing a little bit at a time with the capital outlay!
Better use of current funds/facilities	How much was just spent on the track/football field?
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Close the central office and put back on the tax rolls. Build c/o on the store corner of RMS or part of the parking lot at the high school for \$800,000. Would not need an elevator.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Sell the central office.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Sell the central office.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Oppose to use of central office building- Sell and use funds for schools.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	There are obvious needs in USD 407 facilities. BUT, before the board addresses those needs, they should establish trust with the community. Many examples exist of the board spending money in ways patrons don't approve, for example, the football field and track. Also, creating staff positions to accommodate hiring of a coach or coaches. The central office building should be closed. A new building could be built for not much more cost that the cost of the proposed elevator. The existing building should be sold or returned to the previous owner.



<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Close one of the grade schools and combine the high school with the middle school. Move administrative office to high school and reduce the staff.
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Sell central office building- They can move to RHS
Rearrange/remodel the buildings	Sell the central office. More window air. Property tax is too high now.
Regular maintenance needed	All items should've been taken care of at the time of need.
Regular maintenance needed	I urgently need upgrades on our new home/farm. Have not shown profit on farm since 2014. Schools need to bite the bullet too. Maintenance goes a long way. Throwing millions after millions is not going to help educate our youth any better.
Regular maintenance needed	It is a possibility that more than 2 can be started. For example, put in electric wires and leave until next year, or put in water lines and fixtures and finish the next year.
Regular maintenance needed	From what I have seen the older building is built of the best material and is in the best shape. Upkeep is necessary, but this is out of bounds.
Regular maintenance needed	Lack of normal upkeep and maintenance has put the district in this mess.
Regular maintenance needed	Normal maintenance would take care of the buildings.
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	Should put it on sales tax not real estate owners.
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	Add a sales tax for all to pay not just home and property owners.
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	I would support a sales tax!!!
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	If they would add a 1% sales tax, I would support. But not for the property owners to pay for all of this.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	Add a sales tax of 1%, so that everybody in Russell city would pay for it. Not just the property owners. This makes us want to make to sell and move out of Russell county.
Repayment shall not be assumed by just property owners	I think sales tax would be a fair tax. Should research this possibility. Survey was not complete due to storm protection, should be separate from bathrooms. Survey was a lot to take in.
Taxes are too high already	Using the architect they selected, I would not support any bond amounts. It's obvious they care only about lining their pockets and not the community. We're taxed to death already!
Taxes are too high already	We pay enough taxes now.
Taxes are too high already	If you increase taxes in this dying town, even more small businesses and farms are going to be eliminated. Then, you aren't going to have students and teachers to benefit from these upgrades. Start school later after labor day.
Taxes are too high already	My taxes are too high right now! Cannot support increasing them for the next 10-20 years. Reorganize use of building space within district and move out of the current building.
Taxes are too high already	Why do landowners and homeowners do all the paying for things we do not need? Taxes are already too high.
Taxes are too high already	Russell is a WELFARE and retirement community no help to taxpayers
Taxes are too high already	I will not support any bond issue so long as the school districts are asking the taxpayers for more money.
Taxes are too high already	We are taxed to death already!
Taxes are too high already	We do not need a new school in a town that is dying due to poor leaders in the past. I do not support raising taxes. Our taxes here are over the top. Welfare people will have to get to vote, but they should not be allowed. We have tremendous welfare here. They take for free services, find another source to raise money.
Taxes are too high already	My taxes on land have doubled in 5 years! This is crazy with prices of wheat and milo. I will sell out of Russell county if this passes. Not a happy tax payer.

Topics	Comments
Taxes are too high already	Russell county is already one of the highest taxed counties in the state. I would support a school bond issue if savings could've been found in other departments to result in tax neutrality.
Taxes are too high already	People are leaving Russell now. I know I can't live in my house much longer if taxes keep going up.
Taxes are too high already	Why did you not address these issues when oil was good? New addition to the courthouse with wasted space! Hays county commission laugh because we trade Russell county equipment every 2 years. I pay a fortune in taxes and this is ridiculous. SAD!!
Taxes are too high already	If we can raise money for the hospital without raising taxes, why can't we do the same for our schools?
Taxes are too high already	I would (support a bond) if the county mill levy wasn't so high.
Taxes are too high already	I would like to see all the improvements to the schools, I had children and now grandchildren in the system. BUT, as a community we are already so very heavily taxed. This would equate to well over \$11,000.00 in additional taxes to our household and we (my husband and myself) already have multiple jobs. That money needs to go into our retirement. If we invested the same money into a modest retirement it would generate about \$29,500.00 at the end of the 20 years.
Taxes are too high already	Our taxes are high enough as it is.
Taxes are too high already	I pay taxes in 2 counties- Russell and Lincoln. Lincoln Co. just pulled this same crap on their voters-storm shelters, AC/heating- electrical \$5 mil bond-voted down. It's the economy stupid.
Other	How much would state and federal pay towards real costs of ADA.
Other	All these welfare kids have computers but aren't smart enough to sharpen a pencil or read and write. How about the parents pay for their offsprings. My parents did and so did I. No free breakfast, lunch and afternoons. Snacks were given to my kids.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Other	Need more info.
Other	What about people of low income??
Other	Can't answer. Not enough information.
Other	Please publish results!
Other	Declining Russell population, declining student enrollment and the powers that be want to build a new school. Unbelievable.
Other	No longer keep good knowledge of the Russell school system.
Other	NO!