

Final
1/12/06
Job #06-2320

BUTLER COUNTY H. B. 920 SURVEY

Responses shown in percent

		<u>%</u>	
1.	How well informed would you say you are about the public school district you live in? Would you say you are very well informed, somewhat well informed, not very well informed or not well informed at all?	37	Very Informed
		46	Somewhat Informed
		12	Not Very Informed
		5	Not Informed At All
		1	Not Sure
2.	Overall, how would you rate the quality of education in your school district? Would you say it is excellent, good, only fair or poor?	32	Excellent
		47	Good
		13	Only Fair
		3	Poor
		6	Not Sure
3.	And would you say that some school districts in Butler County are better than others or are they pretty much all about the same?	67	Some Better
		20	All Same
		14	Not Sure
4.	How would you rate the job that your school district does of spending the tax money it now receives? Would you say your school district does an excellent, good, only fair or poor job of spending the tax money it now receives?	12	Excellent
		32	Good
		32	Only Fair
		17	Poor
		8	Not Sure
5.	From what you've seen and heard, are there people or things that your school district should definitely spend a lot more money or a lot less money on than they are spending now?	47	Yes (Go to Q6)
		27	No (Skip to Q7)
		26	Not Sure (Skip to Q7)
6a.	(If yes) What sorts of people or things should your school district spend a lot more money on?		
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6b.	(If yes) And what sorts of people or things should your school district spend a lot less money on?		
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7.	What is more important to you -- having an excellent school system even if that means you have to pay higher taxes, or paying less in taxes even if that means the schools in your community are good but not excellent?	62	Excellent/Higher
		23	Lower/Good
		10	In Between (Vol.)
		6	Not Sure

8.	Right now almost all of the local tax money school districts in Butler County get comes from property tax levies. Would you say that you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose using property tax increases as a way to provide local tax money to the schools?	10	Strongly Favor
		28	Somewhat Favor
		27	Somewhat Oppose
		30	Strongly Oppose
		5	Not Sure
9.	Some of the money school districts get comes from local tax levies that must be approved by the voters in that district and some money for the schools comes from state taxes approved by the state legislature. Which is the better way to fund school districts, through locally voted levies or through state approved taxes?	31	Local
		48	State
		11	Same (Vol.)
		3	Neither (Vol.)
		7	Not Sure
10.	What if you had to pay a hundred dollars more in school taxes, would you prefer to pay that money through a local levy or through an increase in your state taxes?	46	Local Levy
		35	State Taxes
		13	Neither (Vol.)
		7	Not Sure
11.	Are you aware that there is a state law that freezes the amount of money that school districts get each year from locally voted property taxes?	37	Yes
		62	No
		1	Not Sure

If the respondent asks if you are talking about House Bill 920, say yes.

12.	Because of this state law, the total amount of money that each school district gets from its property tax levies stays about the same from year-to-year regardless of inflation. Do you think that is a good idea or a bad idea?	24	Good Idea
		59	Bad Idea
		7	Mixed (Vol.)
		10	Not Sure
13.	Every year a school district's costs for things like teachers' salaries, textbooks and heat for the buildings go up. But because the state law does not allow taxes to increase with inflation, the schools don't get any more money from their levies. Would you favor or oppose changing the state law to allow the amount of property taxes you pay the schools to increase each year based on inflation?	51	Favor
		39	Oppose
		11	Not Sure
14.	What if a cap was set so property taxes could only rise by a limited amount each year. Would you favor or oppose changing the state law to allow the amount of property taxes you pay the schools to increase each year based on inflation if there was a cap on the increase?	58	Favor
		30	Oppose
		6	Depends (Vol.)
		7	Not Sure
15.	What if elderly adults who received the Homestead Exemption did not have to pay the increase based on inflation? Would that make you more likely or less likely to favor allowing the amount of property taxes you pay to the schools to increase each year based on inflation?	60	More Likely
		18	Less Likely
		15	No Difference (Vol.)
		7	Not Sure

16. What if you knew that if property taxes increased with inflation, school districts would not have to put new tax levies on the ballot very often. Knowing that, are you more likely or less likely to favor allowing the amount of property taxes you pay to the schools to increase each year based on inflation?	55 30 9 7	More Likely Less Likely No Difference (Vol.) Not Sure
17. What if you knew that if property taxes had been allowed to increase with inflation over the last twenty years most people would be paying about the same amount in school taxes without so many levies on the ballot. Knowing that, are you more likely or less likely to favor allowing the amount of property taxes you pay to the schools to increase each year based on inflation?	55 28 9 2 6	More Likely Less Likely No Difference (Vol.) Don't Believe (Vol.) Not Sure
18. Do you think it is a good thing or a bad thing for school districts to have to ask voters for a tax increase every three to five years?	31 56 10 4	Good Bad Mixed (Vol.) Not Sure
19. Do you think having to ask voters for more school operating money every three to five years helps or hurt the quality of education or doesn't it make any difference?	16 34 44 6	Helps Hurt No Difference Not Sure
20. If the state law is changed and it allowed property taxes to go up with inflation, your property taxes could go up even if you had no additional income and you couldn't vote to stop it. Knowing that, would you favor or oppose changing the state law so it could increase with inflation?	27 62 11	Favor Oppose Not Sure
21. What if your school district asked voters to approve an income tax? Would an income tax be a better way to provide local tax money to the schools than a property tax, would an income tax be the same as a property tax or would an income tax be worse than a property tax?	44 17 26 14	Better Same Worse Not Sure
22. As you may know, businesses don't pay income taxes, which means that to raise the same amount of money for schools, residents have to pay more with an income tax than they would pay for a property tax. Knowing that, are you more likely or less likely to favor an income tax for your school district or doesn't that make any difference to you?	19 43 30 9	More Likely Less Likely No Difference Not Sure

23. Now I'm going to read you some ways that school districts could cut costs. The first one is... **(read and ask)** Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose that?

	<u>Strongly Favor</u>	<u>Somewhat Favor</u>	<u>Somewhat Oppose</u>	<u>Strongly Oppose</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
a. Combining your school district with a neighboring school district to cut district administrative expenses.	19	20	21	35	6
b. Joining with other districts to buy supplies in larger quantities to reduce the price.	66	24	4	5	2
c. Sharing certain non-teaching services like psychologists and school bus maintenance with other school districts.	52	27	9	9	3
d. Sharing certain teaching specialties like foreign language teachers with other school districts.	42	30	12	14	3

24. Next I'd like to read you a series of statements. For each one, I'd like you to tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. The first one is... **(Read Statement, Repeat Choices As Needed)** Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with that? **(Randomize)**

	<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
a. If property taxes in my community go any higher it will make homes here unaffordable.	20	27	38	12	3
b. Voters in my community believe what our school board tells them about school finances.	10	33	33	18	6
c. My school district has asked voters for too much money over the past few years.	29	27	31	11	3
d. The time has come to vote against all tax increases.	17	19	38	23	3

25. When your school district has property tax levies on the ballot would you say that you vote for most school levies, vote for some school levies or only occasionally vote for school levies?

44	Most
21	Some
30	Occasionally
6	Not Sure

The following questions are for classification purposes only.

26. Into which of the following age groups do you fall? Are you...

10	18 to 34 years
30	35 to 49 years
37	50 to 64 years
23	65 and over
1	Refused (Do not read)

27. What is the highest level of education you have completed? Have you completed...**(READ RESPONSES)**

3	Elementary or Jr. High
30	High School
3	Technical training after high school
23	Some College
42	College Graduate
<1	Refused (Do not read)

28.	Do you have any school-aged children living at home with you?	28	Yes (Go to Q29)
		72	No (Skip to Q31)
		<1	Not Sure (Skip to Q31)
29.	Are any of your children attending public school this year?	23	Yes
		5	No
		<1	Don't Know/Refused
		72	No School-Aged Kids
30.	Are any of your children attending private, parochial or charter schools or are they being home schooled this year?	6	Yes
		22	No
		--	Don't Know/Refused
		72	No School-Aged Kids
31.	How many years have you lived in your community?	23	Less than 10 years
		26	10 to 20 years
		51	More than 20 years
		--	Don't Know/Refused
32.	Regardless of how you vote, do you consider yourself to be a Democrat or Republican?	26	Democrat
		49	Republican
		19	Independent (Vol.)
		6	Don't Know/Refused
Was the respondent Male or Female?		49	Male
		51	Female