



Poudre School District Survey Key Findings

June 2024

Methodology

New Bridge Strategy conducted a survey among N=400 Poudre School District voters likely to participate in a 2024 election from June 7-12, 2024.

Interviews were conducted via live telephone interviews (both cell phones and landlines) and online via email and text-to-web invitations. Interviews were distributed proportionally throughout the District. Quotas were set for key demographic sub-groups, such as gender and age.

The margin of error is $\pm 4.9\%$ for the overall sample. The margin of error will vary for sub-groups.



Potential Ballot Measure

What we did.

We provided the following ballot language to respondents and tested two different tax amounts; \$37,000,000 asked of Sample A (N=200) and \$49,000,000 asked of Sample B (N=200).

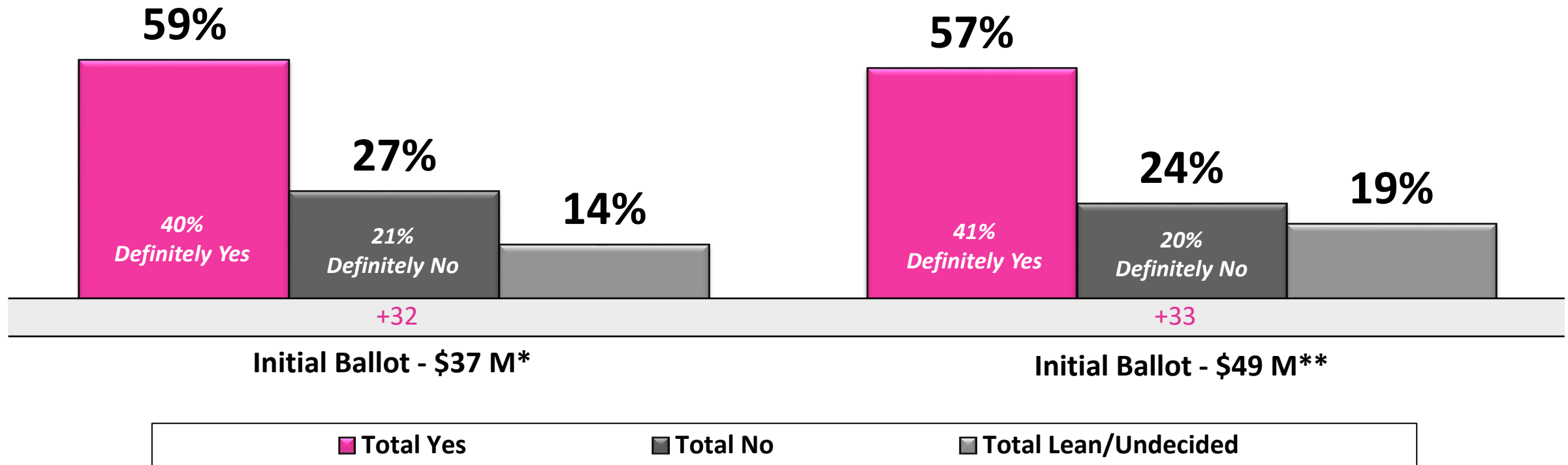
Now, there could be a question on the ballot sometime in the future regarding Poudre School District, so please indicate if the election were being held today and the following proposal is on the ballot, would you vote Yes or No on it. It would read as follows...

In order to make more general fund revenues available for the purposes set forth below, shall Poudre School District R-1 taxes be increased by up to \$37,000,000 annually commencing in tax collection year 2025 for the purposes authorized and in accordance with section 22-54-108.7, C.R.S., (the Debt Free Schools Act), with the effect that more general fund revenue will be available to improve and maintain the quality education including but not limited to:

- Attracting and retaining the best teachers and school support staff by maintaining competitive salaries and providing necessary classroom materials*
- Maintaining and improving school buildings and facilities used by teachers, students, librarians and other staff to ensure a secure, adequate and comprehensive learning environments, including replacing outdated electrical, plumbing, HVAC systems, and addressing other repairs and renovations to extend the useful life of buildings and reduce emergency repairs*
- Providing the education that today's students will need for tomorrow's jobs and careers, including expanding classrooms for career, technology, and skilled trades classes that provide students with real world job skills and providing the books, technology, and other library materials and facilities needed for students to develop these skills for the future*
- Providing arts, music, and physical education supplies and facilities so students receive a well-rounded education*
- Ensuring that students have the individual attention and the greater sense of community they need to learn and thrive by keeping small, neighborhood schools open*

And shall such additional revenue from this tax be deposited into the supplemental capital construction, technology and maintenance fund and used for ongoing cash funding for capital construction, new technology upgrades, and maintenance needs of the District; and provided that expenditures will be subject to an annual audit and citizen oversight; and shall the District be authorized to collect, retain and spend all revenues from such taxes as a voter approved revenue change?

A majority of voters are in favor of the ballot measure regardless of the tax increase amount they saw.



*Asked of Sample A (N=200) **Asked of Sample B (N=200)

Support for public education and a desire to improve teacher pay are the top two reasons why voters say they would vote yes on either measure.

	# of mentions
Believe in supporting public education/education is underfunded	84
Better teacher pay for recruiting/retaining/supporting best teachers	59
PSD needs more funding to become/stay competitive	25
Have relatives as students/teachers in district	25
Improve facilities/materials for students	21
Avoid school closures/keep neighborhood schools open	20
Funding for athletics/arts/music/home economics/woodworking	7
The funding proposals in the ballot measure are needed	6
Want funding for career readiness programs	5
Increase equity between schools in the district	4
Keep small class sizes/improve quality of education	4

What are the one or two main reasons why you would vote
(Yes in favor of /No against) this proposal?
COMBINED RESPONSES

“Teachers and paraprofessionals are very underpaid for what they do for our children. A teacher cannot live on their salary alone. That is ridiculous.”

Male, Age 45-54, Republican

“The education of all children should be a top priority. We need to attract and retain great teachers and provide all students with safe buildings and up-to-date books and technology.”

Female, Age 55-64, Else/Ind

“Our district needs more money if it wants to stay competitive. It is a highly rated district, but that sort of rating needs funding to survive.”

Male, Age 35-44, Democrat

No voters say they believe the District should reallocate existing resources and are generally opposed to tax increases.

	# of mentions
District has mismanaged funds/should adjust to live within a budget	61
Taxes are already too high/opposed to increasing taxes	30
Concerns about PSD pushing a social/political agenda	16
Concerns about school quality	4
Don't have children in the district/don't care about public education	4
Concerns/questions how the money will be used	3

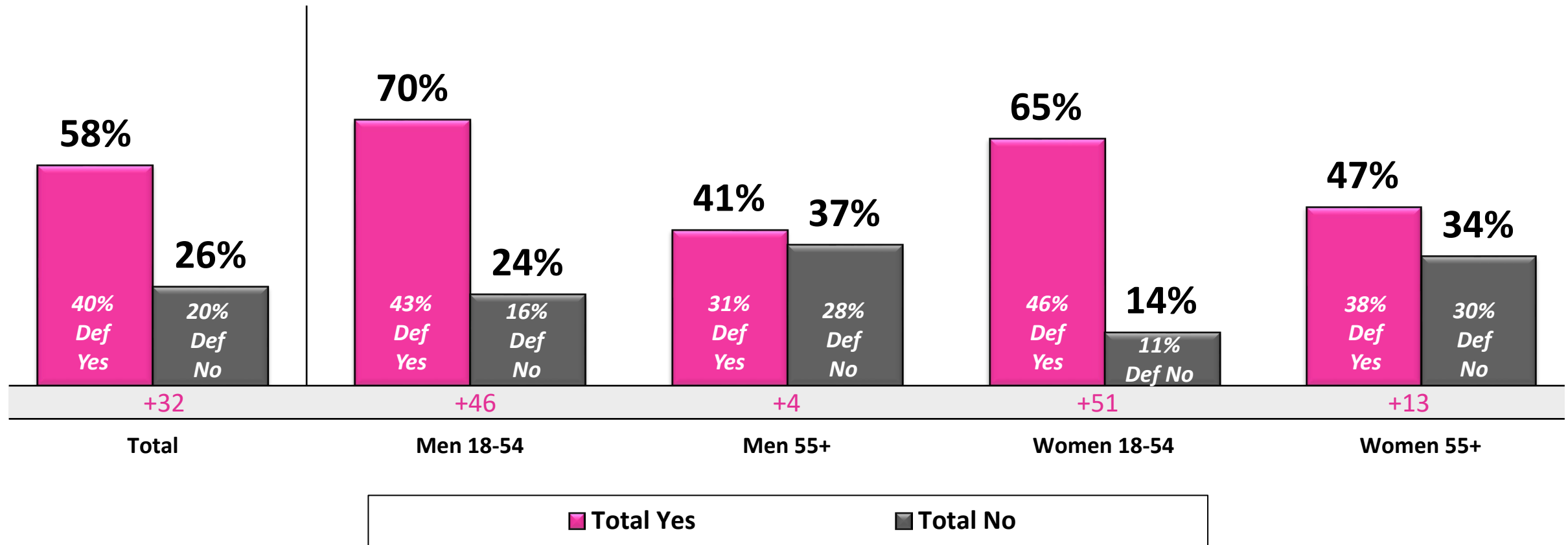
What are the one or two main reasons why you would vote
(Yes in favor of /No against) this proposal?
COMBINED RESPONSES

“Paying additional taxes to prop up inefficiency in under-enrolled schools is not a sustainable approach to managing the district.”
Male, Age 18-34, Else/Independent

“I don't care to support an ultra-liberal school system.”
Female, Age 65+, Republican

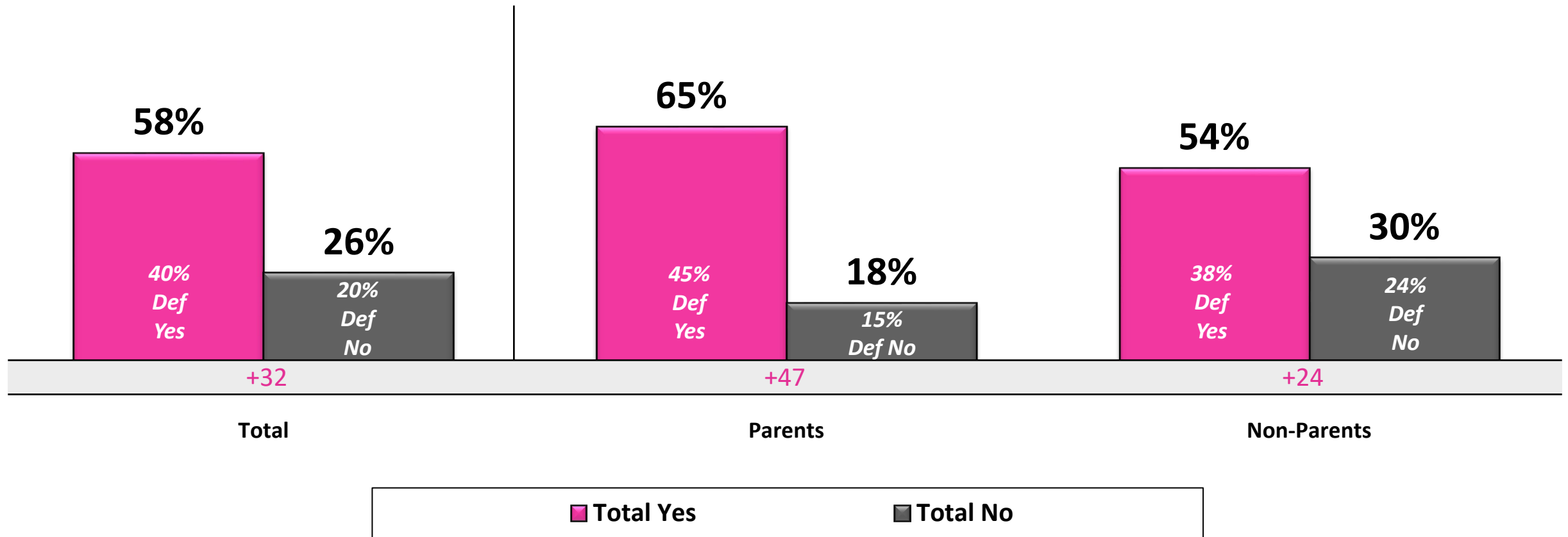
“You have sufficient tax revenue coming in. I don't believe your problems are due to lack of tax funding.”
Female, Age 35-44, Democrat

We combined the two variations of the proposal to have greater confidence in sub-groups. Younger voters tend to be most supportive of the potential tax measure.



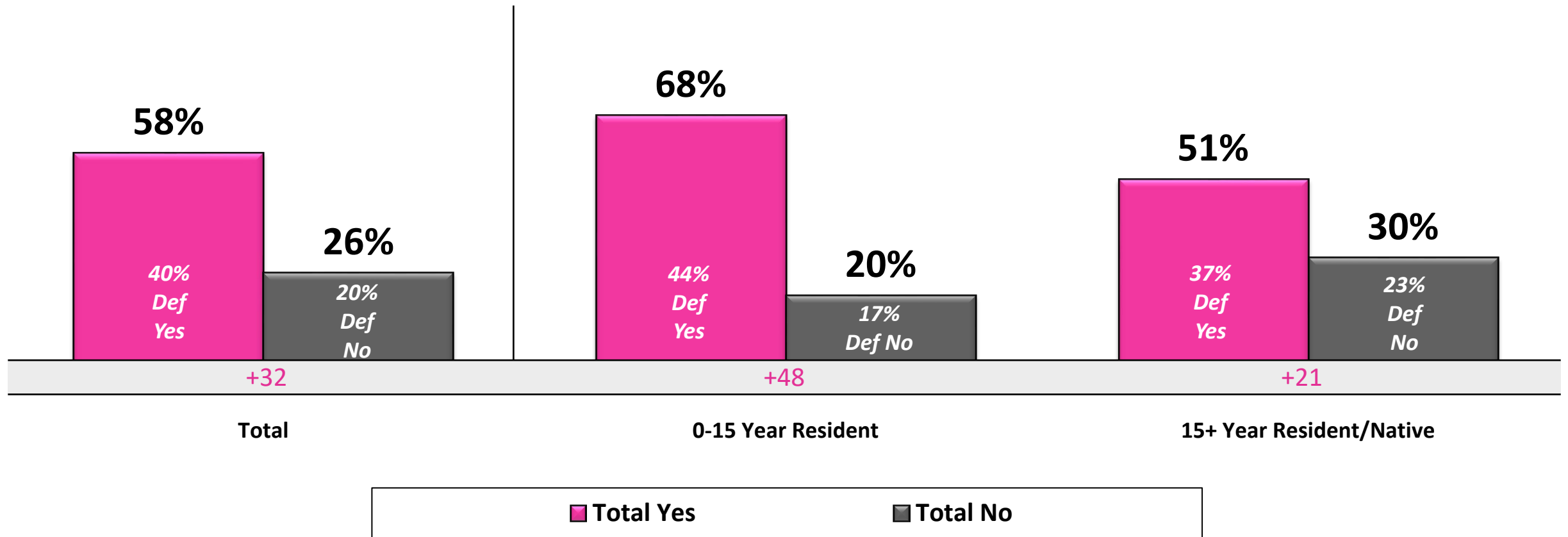
Initial Ballot - COMBINED

Parents are more supportive than non-parents, with nearly two-thirds saying they would vote yes.



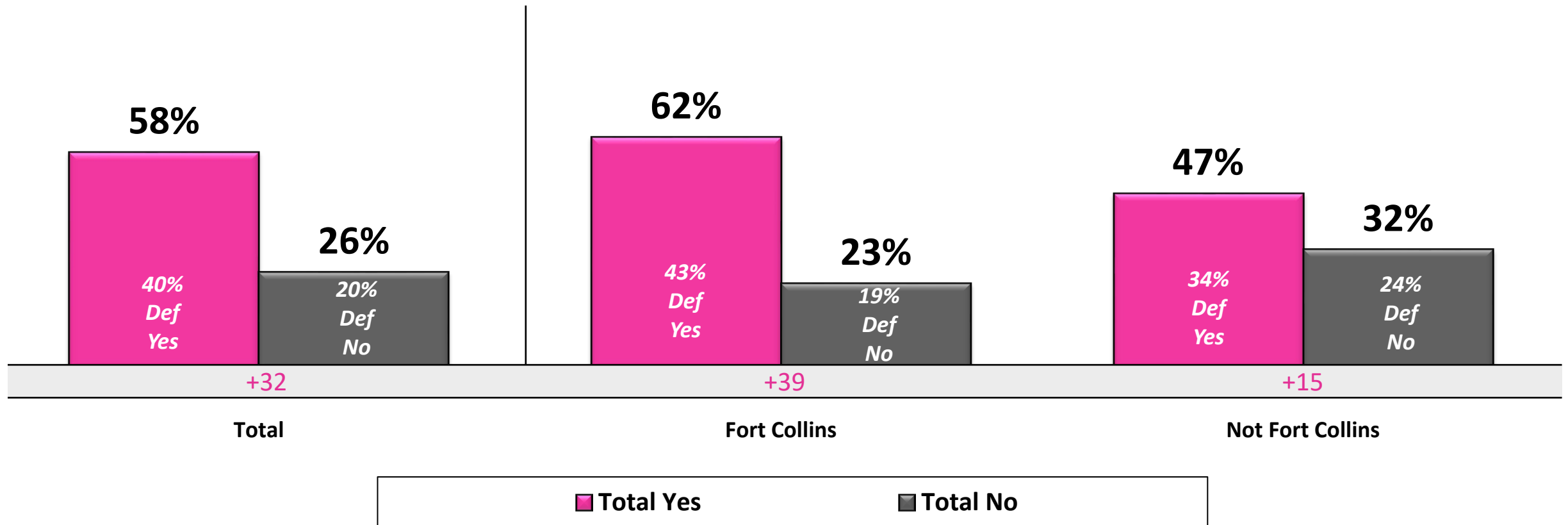
Initial Ballot - COMBINED

Longer-term residents are less supportive, though a bare majority still said they would vote yes.



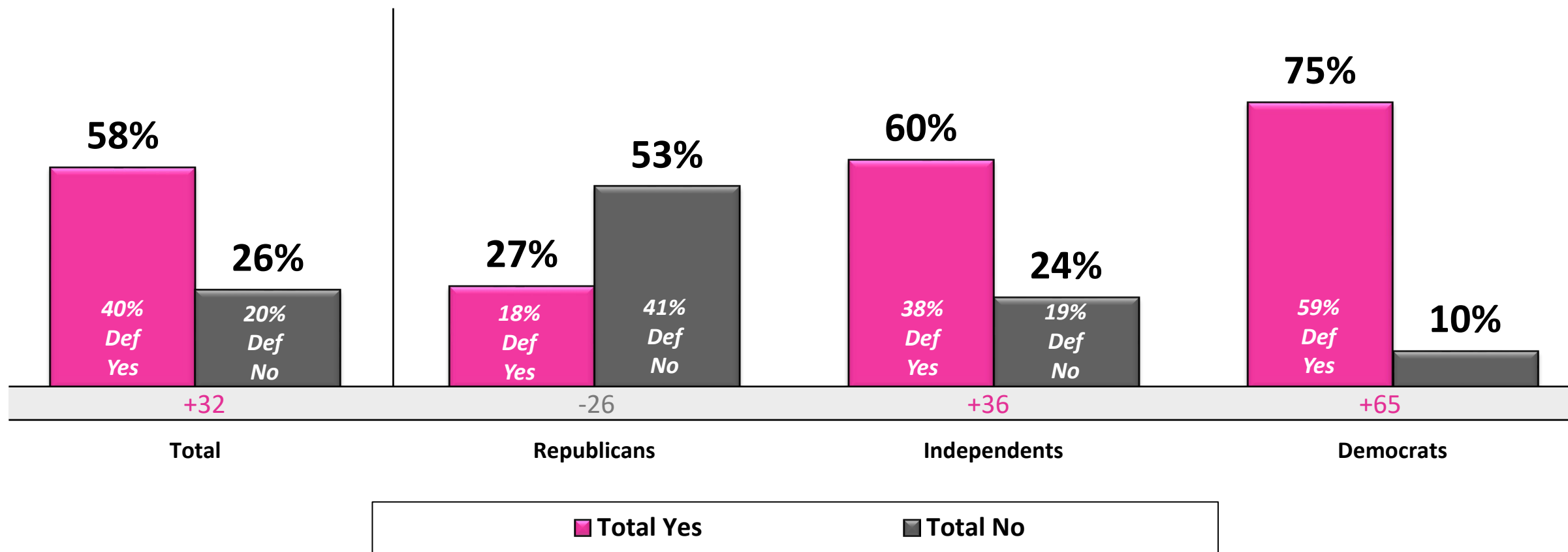
Initial Ballot - COMBINED

Fort Collins voters tend to be more likely to vote yes than voters in other parts of the District.



Initial Ballot - COMBINED

Support for the measure falls along party lines, with Independents and Democrats most likely to say they would vote yes.



Initial Ballot - COMBINED

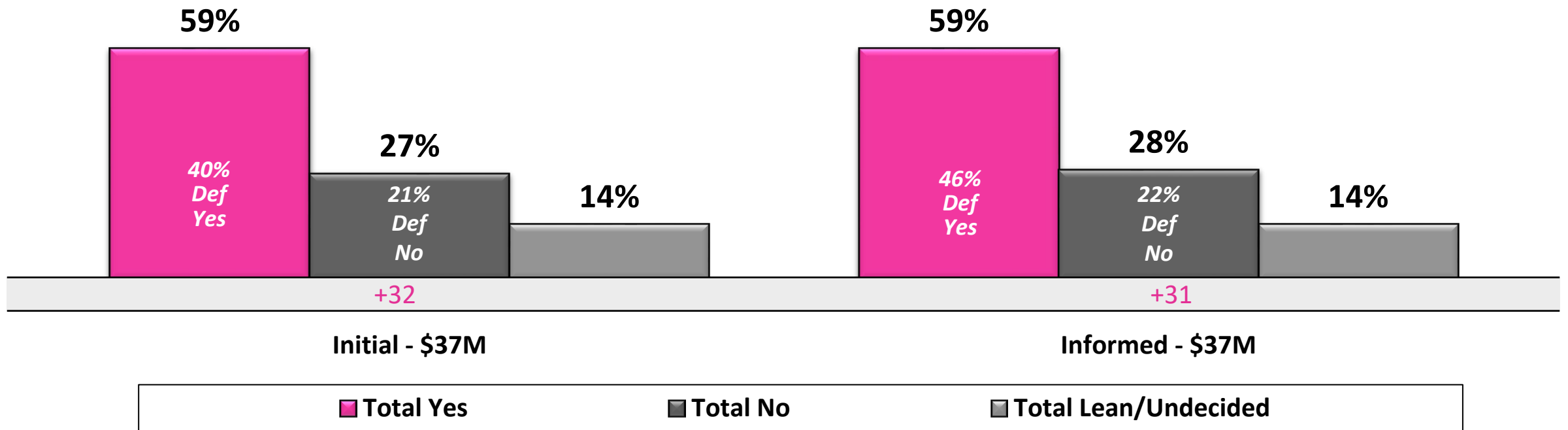
Of note, we see a drop-off in support among a key subgroup, older male voters, when the potential ballot measure comes with a tax increase.

Showing % Total Yes

	Men 18-54	Men 55+	Women 18-54	Women 55+	Parents	Non-Parents	0-15 Years Resident	15+ Years Resident	Fort Collins	Not Fort Collins	GOP	IND	DEM
May 2024 Combined Ballot – No Tax Increase	57%	51%	69%	44%	52%	59%	62%	53%	63%	43%	25%	57%	79%
June 2024 Combined Ballot – Tax Increase	70%	41%	65%	47%	65%	54%	68%	51%	62%	47%	27%	60%	75%

When voters learn about the personal financial implications of the lower tax increase amount, support holds. In fact, the number saying they would definitely vote yes increases slightly.

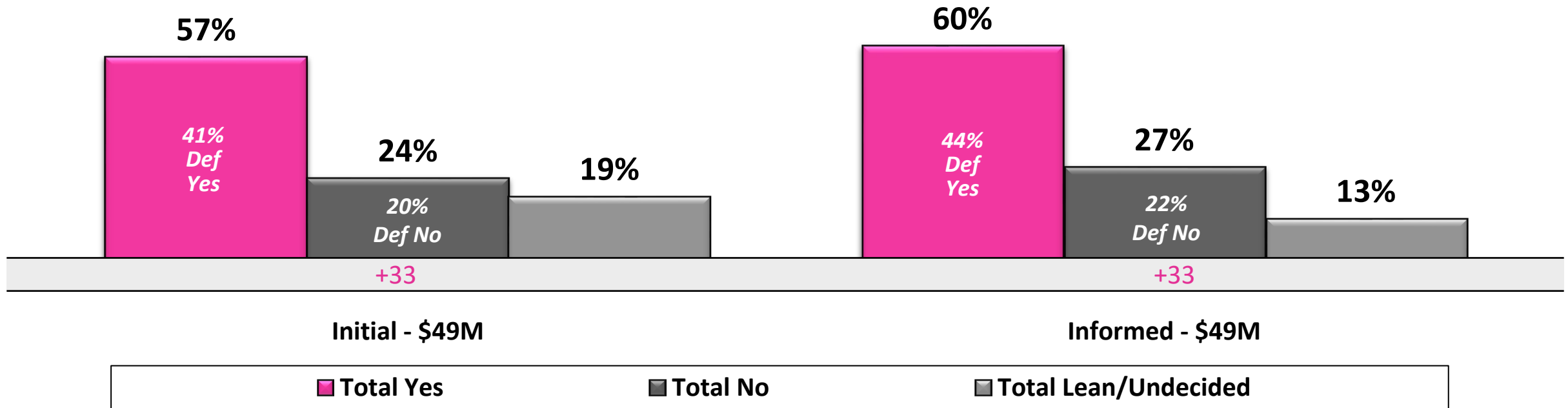
If voters approve this proposal, it would raise taxes by approximately \$10.15 per \$100,000 in home value. Knowing that, would you then vote Yes in support of the proposal or vote No against it?



*Knowing that, would you then vote Yes in support of the proposal or vote No against it?
Asked of Sample A (N=200)*

The same was true for those who saw the ballot with the higher tax amount. Those who said they would vote yes pops up slightly, but not beyond the margin of error.

If voters approve this proposal, it would raise taxes by approximately \$25.40 per \$100,000 in home value. Knowing that, would you then vote Yes in support of the proposal or vote No against it?



*Knowing that, would you then vote Yes in support of the proposal or vote No against it?
 Asked of Sample B (N=200)*



Communicating About the Potential Ballot Measure

The funding purposes in the ballot language are all deemed to be extremely or very important to voters. Attracting and retaining teachers rises to the top.

Funding Proposals Ranked by Total Extremely/Very Important

	Extremely Important	Ext/Very Important
Attracting and retaining the best teachers and school support staff by maintaining competitive salaries and providing necessary classroom materials.	57%	88%
Providing the education that today's students will need for tomorrow's jobs and careers, including expanding classrooms for career, technology, and skilled trades classes that provide students with real world job skills and providing the books, technology, and other library materials and facilities needed for students to develop these skills for the future.	48%	83%
Providing arts, music and physical education supplies and facilities so students receive a well-rounded education.	42%	76%
Maintaining and improving school buildings and facilities used by teachers, students, librarians and other staff to ensure secure, adequate and comprehensive learning environments, including replacing outdated electrical, plumbing, HVAC systems, and addressing other repairs and renovations to extend the useful life of buildings and reduce emergency repairs.	38%	74%
Ensuring that students have the individual attention and the greater sense of community they need to learn and thrive by keeping small, neighborhood schools open.	44%	70%

The following are some specific things which MIGHT be funded if a proposal is placed on the ballot. Keeping in mind that it is difficult for everything to be equally important, please indicate how important each one of these is to you personally. Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not very important to ensure funding is dedicated to that purpose?

Attracting and retaining teachers is a top priority across age and gender.

Men 18-34	Men 55+	Women 18-54	Women 55+
Attract/retain teachers & support staff 52%	Provide education today for tomorrow 48%	Attract/retain teachers & support staff 69%	Attract/retain teachers & support staff 57%
Ensure adequate/comprehensive learning environment 48%	Attract/retain teachers & support staff 46%	Provide arts/music/P.E. supplies 50%	Provide education today for tomorrow 54%
Provide education today for tomorrow 47%	Ensure adequate/comprehensive learning environment 28%	Ensure adequate/comprehensive learning environment 47%	Ensure adequate/comprehensive learning environment 50%
Provide arts/music/P.E. supplies 40%	Maintain/improve buildings & facilities 26%	Provide education today for tomorrow 47%	Provide arts/music/P.E. supplies 46%
Maintain/improve buildings & facilities 39%	Provide arts/music/P.E. supplies 26%	Maintain/improve buildings & facilities 44%	Maintain/improve buildings & facilities 40%

Showing % Extremely Important

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Parents and non-parents have similar funding priorities.

Parents	Non-Parents
Attract/retain teachers & support staff 57%	Attract/retain teachers & support staff 57%
Ensure adequate/comprehensive learning environment 47%	Provide education today for tomorrow 53%
Provide education today for tomorrow 41%	Provide arts/music/P.E. supplies 43%
Provide arts/music/P.E. supplies 40%	Ensure adequate/comprehensive learning environment 42%
Maintain/improve buildings & facilities 34%	Maintain/improve buildings & facilities 41%

Showing % Extremely Important

The following are some specific things which MIGHT be funded if a proposal is placed on the ballot. Keeping in mind that it is difficult for everything to be equally important, please indicate how important each one of these is to you personally. Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not very important to ensure funding is dedicated to that purpose?

The funding priorities resonate across party lines, though a much larger share of Democrats rate them as extremely important.

GOP
Provide education today for tomorrow 42%
Attract/retain teachers & support staff 36%
Provide arts/music/P.E. supplies 28%
Maintain/improve buildings & facilities 26%
Ensure adequate/comprehensive learning environment 24%

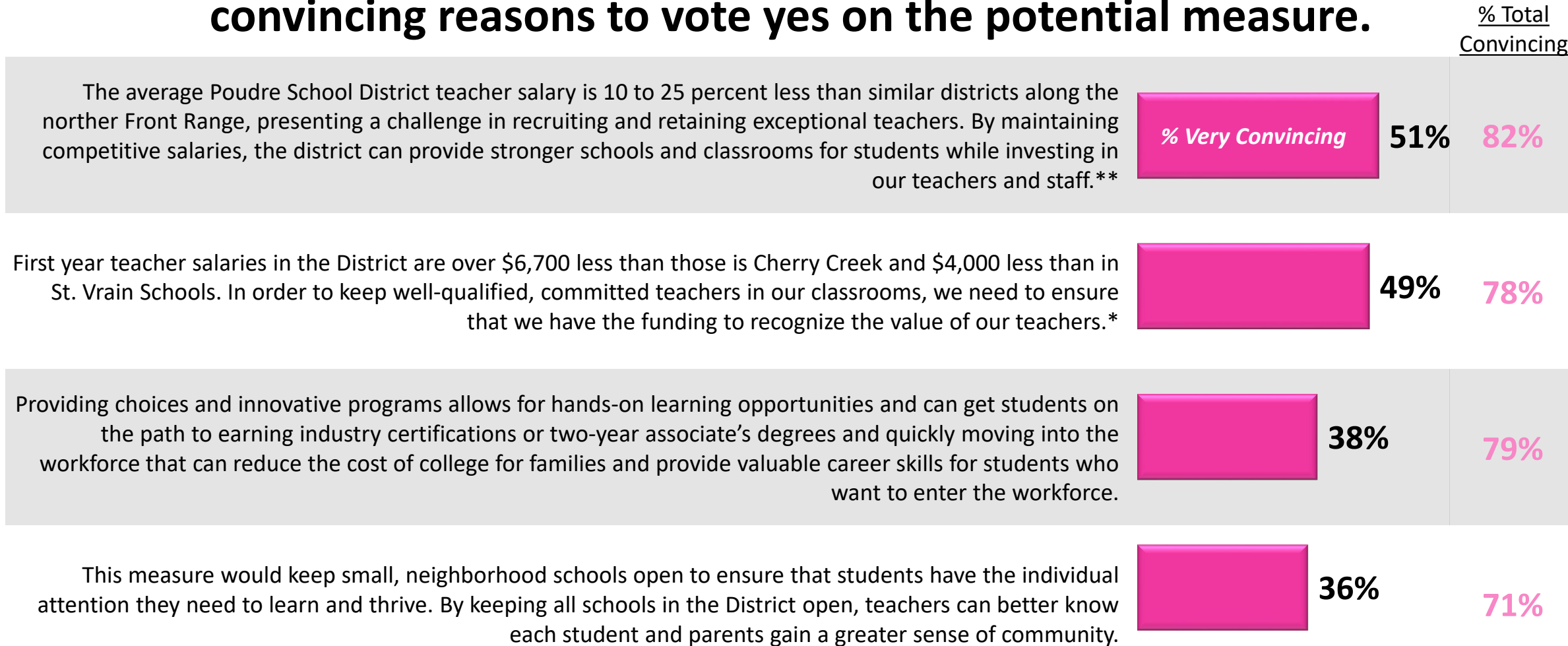
IND
Attract/retain teachers & support staff 55%
Provide education today for tomorrow 44%
Ensure adequate/comprehensive learning environment 41%
Provide arts/music/P.E. supplies 41%
Maintain/improve buildings & facilities 39%

DEM
Attract/retain teachers & support staff 75%
Ensure adequate/comprehensive learning environment 62%
Provide education today for tomorrow 59%
Provide arts/music/P.E. supplies 52%
Maintain/improve buildings & facilities 46%

Showing % Extremely Important

The following are some specific things which MIGHT be funded if a proposal is placed on the ballot. Keeping in mind that it is difficult for everything to be equally important, please indicate how important each one of these is to you personally. Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not very important to ensure funding is dedicated to that purpose?

Half find the support statements emphasizing teacher salaries to be very convincing reasons to vote yes on the potential measure.



The following are some statements that people have made IN FAVOR OF the school funding measure. After each one, please indicate whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote YES, IN FAVOR OF this school funding measure...

*Sample A, N=200 **Sample B, N=200

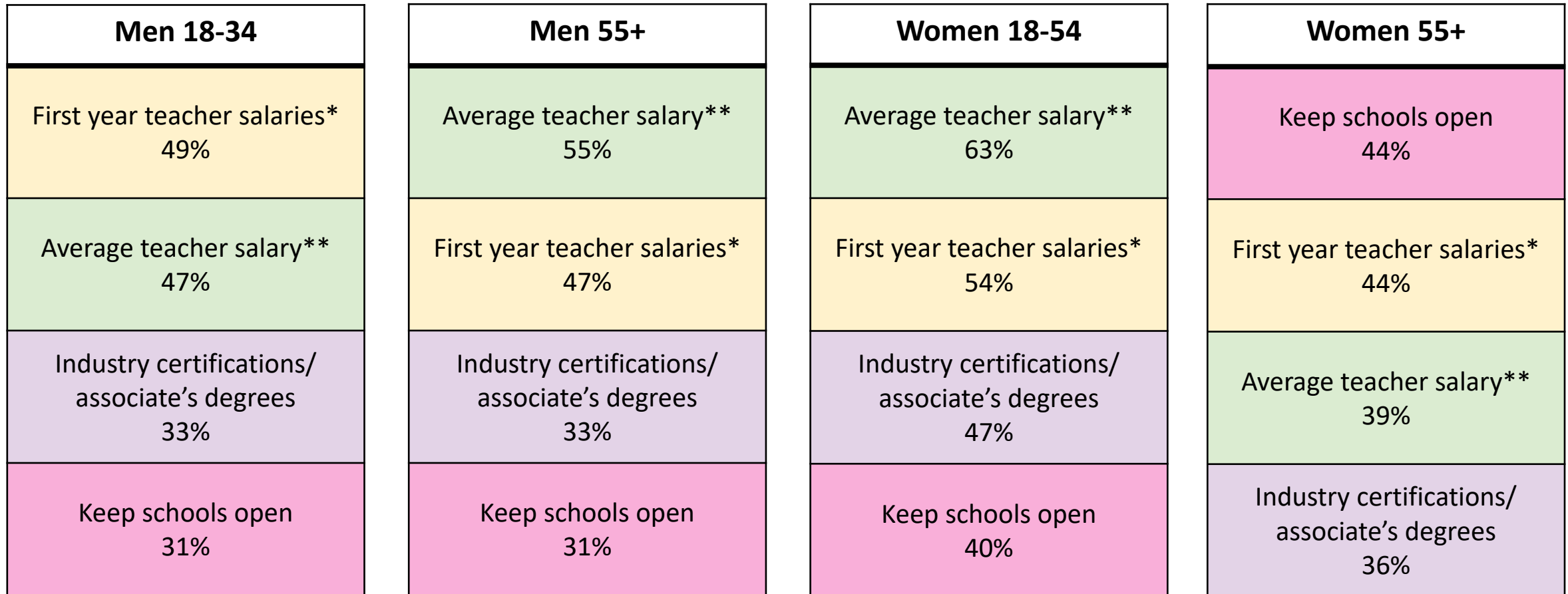
Two statements we tested in May continue to be rated as very compelling.

	Very Convincing		Total Convincing	
	May 2024	June 2024	May 2024	June 2024
First year teacher salaries in the District are over \$6,700 less than those in Cherry Creek and \$4,000 less than in St. Vrain Schools. In order to keep well-qualified, committed teachers in our classrooms, we need to ensure that we have the funding to recognize the value of our teachers.*	52%	49%	79%	78%
Providing choices and innovative programs allows for hands-on learning opportunities and can get students on the path to earning industry certifications or two-year associate's degrees and quickly moving into the workforce that can reduce the cost of college for families and provide valuable career skills for students who want to enter the workforce.	41%	38%	84%	79%

The following are some statements that people have made IN FAVOR OF the school funding measure. After each one, please indicate whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote YES, IN FAVOR OF this school funding measure...

*Sample A, N=200

The statements about teacher salaries resonate regardless of gender and age.



Showing % Very Convincing

The following are some statements that people have made IN FAVOR OF the school funding measure. After each one, please indicate whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote YES, IN FAVOR OF this school funding measure...

*Sample A, N=200 **Sample B, N=200

Parents are a bit more likely than non-parents to say the teacher salary statements are very convincing.

Parents	Non-parents
Average teacher salary** 58%	First year teacher salaries* 47%
First year teacher salaries* 51%	Average teacher salary** 46%
Industry certifications/ associate's degrees 38%	Industry certifications/ associate's degrees 38%
Keep schools open 37%	Keep schools open 36%

Showing % Very Convincing

The following are some statements that people have made IN FAVOR OF the school funding measure. After each one, please indicate whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote YES, IN FAVOR OF this school funding measure...

*Sample A, N=200 **Sample B, N=200

The statement comparing average teacher salary to peer districts was much less convincing for Republican voters than the one comparing first year teacher salaries.

GOP
First year teacher salaries* 40%
Keep schools open 28%
Industry certifications/associate's degrees 21%
Average teacher salary** 21%

IND
Average teacher salary** 54%
First year teacher salaries* 43%
Industry certifications/associate's degrees 37%
Keep schools open 30%

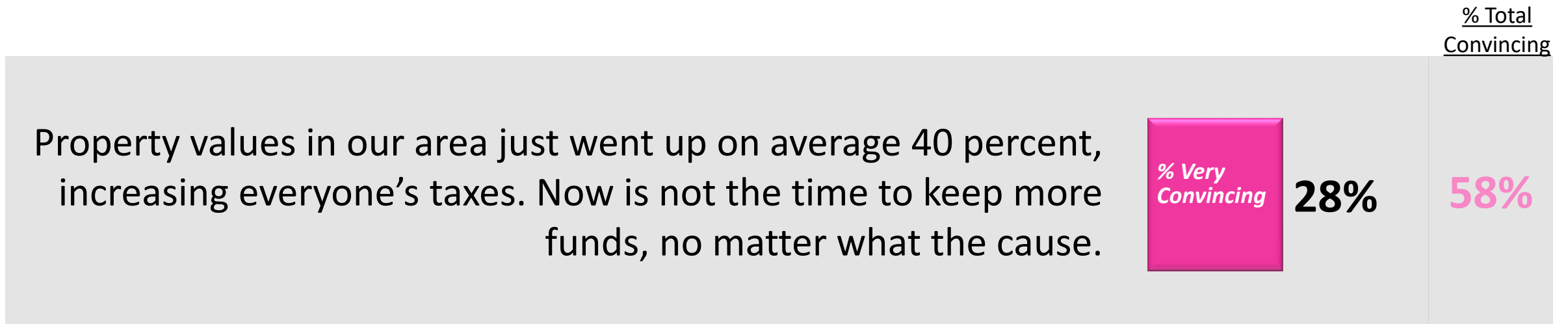
DEM
Average teacher salary** 65%
First year teacher salaries* 63%
Keep schools open 53%
Industry certifications/associate's degrees 51%

Showing % Very Convincing

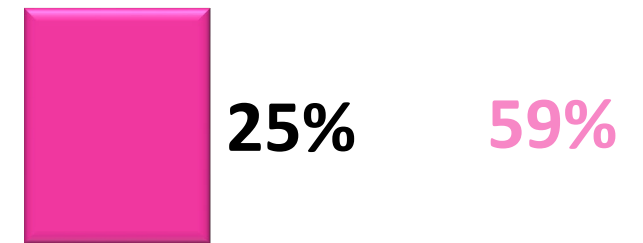
The following are some statements that people have made IN FAVOR OF the school funding measure. After each one, please indicate whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote YES, IN FAVOR OF this school funding measure...

*Sample A, N=200 **Sample B, N=200

The opposition statements aren't very compelling to voters as reasons to vote against the potential measure.



Schools in the District should be consolidated. There are not enough students to keep all schools in the District open, so the cost to keep them open on a per student basis increases dramatically, draining resources from other students. We have schools less than a mile apart where students could attend.



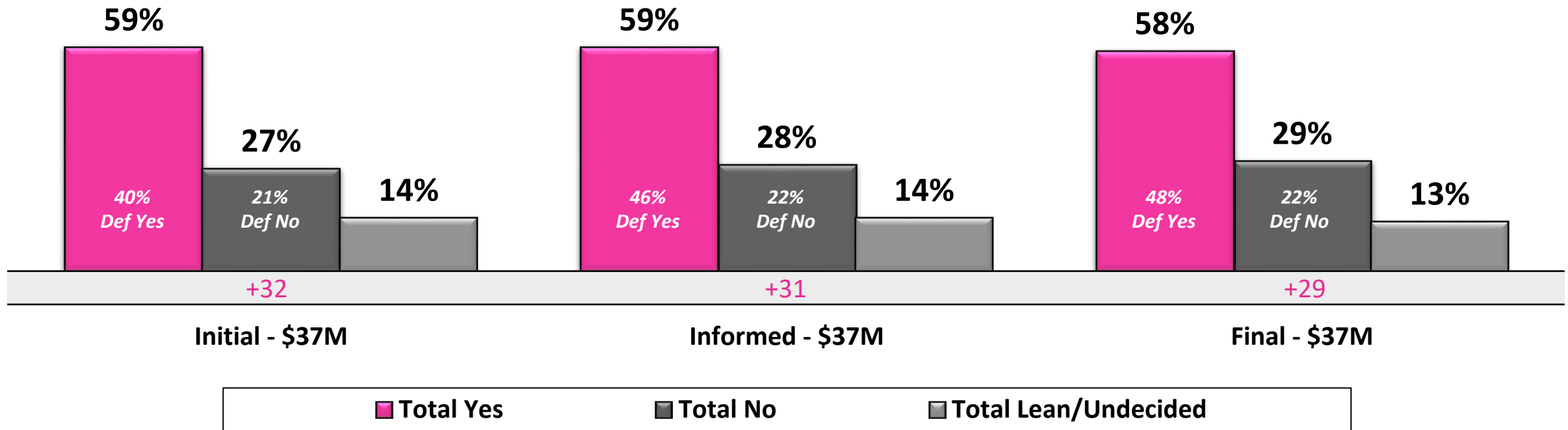
The following are some statements that people have made AGAINST this school funding proposal. After each one, please tell me whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote NO, AGAINST the measure...

There was virtually no change in voters viewed the property tax measure we tested again from May.

	Very Convincing		Total Convincing	
	May 2024	June 2024	May 2024	June 2024
Property values in our area just went up on average 40 percent, increasing everyone's taxes. Now is not the time to keep more funds, no matter what the cause.	30%	28%	55%	58%

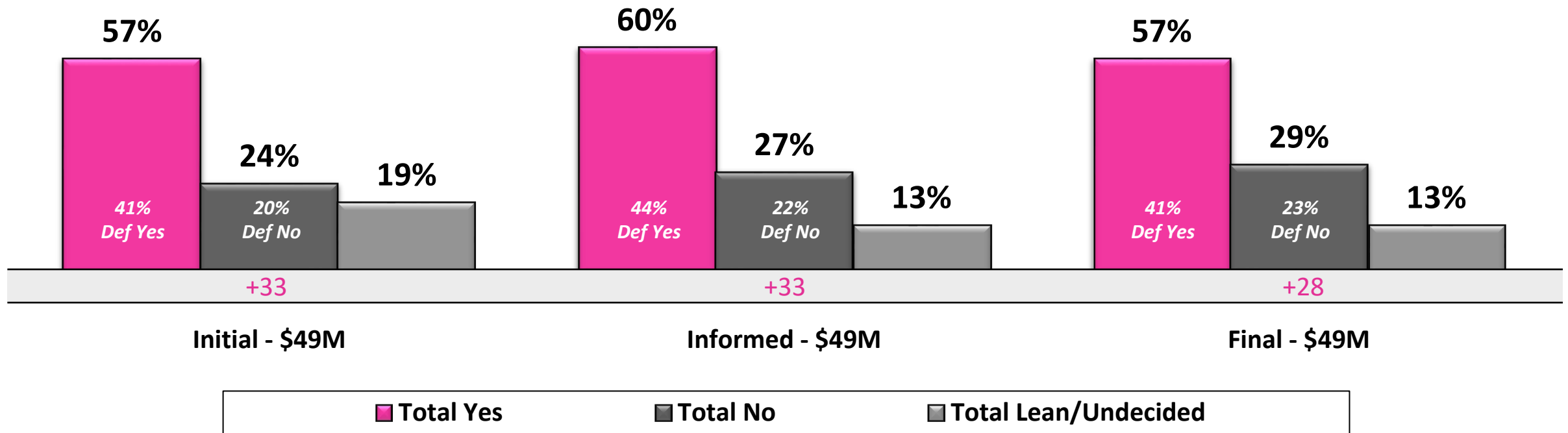
The following are some statements that people have made AGAINST this school funding proposal. After each one, please tell me whether that statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not too convincing or not at all convincing as a reason to vote NO, AGAINST the measure...

After learning more, voter support for the potential measure for \$37M remains unchanged.



*Having heard all of this, please tell me again if the election were being held today and this proposal was on the ballot, would you vote Yes or No on the following question...
 Asked of Sample A (N=200)*

The same is true of the potential measure for the higher (\$49M) amount. After learning more, voter support remains solidly in the upper 50's.



*Having heard all of this, please tell me again if the election were being held today and this proposal was on the ballot, would you vote Yes or No on the following question..
 Asked of Sample B (N=200)*



The Bottom Line

The Bottom Line

- There is a margin of error difference between how voters say they would vote on a potential measure to increase taxes in the District by \$37M or \$49M. Support for public education in general and also for better teacher pay and retention rise to the top as reasons voters say they would support either measure. Hearing about the personal financial implications of the potential tax increase does not sway voters away from the measure, but it doesn't push a significant number towards voting for the measure. However, we do see a bit lower support among key sub-groups with a tax increase versus the no tax increase language we tested in May.
- All of the ballot measure funding purposes are seen as extremely or very important to fund by voters. As we saw in May, the funding item related to attracting and retaining teachers rises to the top. These purposes and the way they are worded are pivotal in garnering the support we do on the potential ballot measure.
- Statements in support of the measure we tested are effective, with almost two-in-five saying that each is a very compelling reason to vote yes for the measure. Again, the statements that highlight teacher salaries and retention resonate best with the electorate, regardless of gender, age, party or parent status.
- The statements we tested in opposition of the measure are not as intensely compelling as the support statements we tested. As we saw in May, the statement about property taxes increases is the most compelling argument against voting for the measure, with just under one-in-three saying it is very convincing.
- After learning more, support for both potential measures stays consistent with almost six-in-ten saying they would vote yes.



Lori Weigel
Principal

lori@newbridgestrategy.com

303.324.7655

Kathryn Hahne
Director

kathryn@newbridgestrategy.com

703.888.9295