



Platte County R-3 School District

Community Survey Executive Summary

November 9, 2023

In October-November 2023, Creative Entourage conducted a phone survey of residents in Platte County R-3 School District. The purpose of the survey was to better understand area residents' perceptions of and priorities for the District. Three hundred (300) respondents completed the survey.

Perceptions of Platte County R-3 School District

Two in five (41.3%) respondents gave public schools in Missouri an "A" (11.0%) or "B" (31.3%) grade, while fewer than one in five (18.3%) give Missouri schools a grade of "D" or "Fail."

More than three in five (64.7%) rated Platte County R-3 School District an "A" (27.7%) or "B" (37.0%), and fewer than one in ten (8.0%) rated the District "D" or "Fail."

Respondents were also asked to rate the performance of the District in several areas. In every case, majorities rated the District as excellent or good. Keeping up with growing enrollment (81.7%, excellent/good) and maintaining safe and secure schools (81.3%) were most likely to receive high marks.

Respondents were least likely to give excellent/good ratings to providing competitive salaries/benefits to staff (54.3%), though almost one in six (14.7%) answered "other, don't know" to this question.

Statements about public education

Respondents were presented with several statements “that people might make about their local public schools” and asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each. Respondents were most likely to agree with statements that touched on teacher compensation and the role of schools in the community.

- Our district must pay teachers a competitive salary when compared to other districts in the area. (90.7%, strongly/somewhat agree)
- People move into our district because of its great quality. For our community to continue to grow and be successful, we must support our schools. (85.0%)
- Supporting Platte County School District is the best thing we can do to protect our property values. (75.0%)

In one case, fewer than half agreed with a statement in this section: “our schools are fine the way they are. They don't need additional financial support from the community” (41.7%)

Possible improvements to District facilities

Respondents asked to assume that, “assume Platte County School District had additional funds, but not enough to meet all needs” and to indicate how much priority the District should place on several possible improvements. In every case, majorities said that these possible improvements should be high priorities (5-7 on a seven-point scale). Respondents were most likely to place high priorities on three staff-related items.

- Providing competitive salaries and benefits when compared to close-by districts (79.3%, 5-7 on a seven-point scale)
- Hiring additional resource staff to help students with special needs (78.3%)
- Improving teacher retention programs (76.7%)

Possible Proposition C rollback proposal

Respondents were told that, “while no decision has been made, Platte County School District is considering asking voters to approve an election to waive what is called the Prop C rollback” and noted that “approving this proposal adds about 31 cents to the tax rate collected by the district.” In response, fewer than half (46.3%) of respondents said they would favor this proposal, while 37.3% were opposed.

Those who did not indicate they favored a Proposition C rollback were asked a follow up question about an option under consideration by the District to “reduce its tax rate collected to

retire bond debt by 31 cents to offset the Prop C rollback amount,” which would keep the overall tax rate the same as it is today. A majority (52.8%) favored the proposal after hearing this information, while a quarter (27.3%) were opposed. The probe resulted in more than 70% of the total sample supporting the Prop C rollback proposal.

Near the end of the survey, respondents were again asked about a possible proposal, and three in five (62.0%) said they were in favor of it. Three in ten (30.0%) were opposed.

Again, respondents who were not in favor of the proposal were told about the option being considered, in which retiring bond debt would offset the Proposition C rollback amount. In this case, about half (48.2%) indicated they would favor the proposal, while a third (34.2%) was opposed. In this case, the probe resulted is approximately 80% supporting the proposal.

Statements about a possible proposal

Respondents were presented with several statements “that people might make about the Prop C rollback election” and asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each. Majorities agreed with all but one statement in this section, and respondents were most likely to agree with statements about providing needed resources.

- Our kids need the same educational opportunities as those in neighboring districts. It is important that we provide our educators with the resources they need. (92.0%, strongly, somewhat agree)
- Great schools are a source of pride for our community - we must provide them with necessary funding. (88.3%)
- With the cost of everything going up, it only makes sense that our district needs more funding to keep up with salaries and programs. (78.0%)

Respondents were least likely to agree with a negative statement about a possible proposal: “with all the uncertainty in the economy, now is just not a good time to place a proposal on the ballot” (54.3%).