School Bond Survey Report

Final Report and Analysis

Cache County School District
March 6 – 16, 2013
Overview

Cache County School District held 10 public meetings to discuss school district needs pertinent to pending bond proposals, with over 1,000 patrons attending. To gather input, the District surveyed parents and community members on two proposals that would create classroom space for an expanding student population, address substantial seismic issues at six schools and school safety.

The survey was open from March 6 - 16, 2013. Participants for whom the district had email addresses were emailed unique URL links. The survey was promoted by sending out postcards to all registered voters that reside in the boundary of the school district.
The majority of respondents accessed the survey using the public link provided on the mailed postcards. Of those who received email invitations, 29% participated in the survey. Together, the 29% and the additional 1,300 responses are considered to be a strong response for an invitational census survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responding Group</th>
<th>Number of Responses from Email Invitations</th>
<th>Total Number of Delivered Email Invitations</th>
<th>Response Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>1,032</td>
<td>3,568</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responding Group</th>
<th>Number of Responses from Postcard Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent or Community Member</td>
<td>1,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Response (Email Invite and Postcard URL Access)</td>
<td>2,408</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There was a wide distribution of respondents across all communities. Almost 50% were from the communities of Smithfield, North Logan and Providence. The response rates by community are representative of the primary residence centers based on population demographics.

**Please indicate the closest community to where you reside.**

- **Lewiston and surrounding area:** 5%
- **Richmond and surrounding area:** 3%
- **Smithfield and surrounding area:** 17%
- **Hyde Park:** 8%
- **North Logan:** 19%
- **Mendon and surrounding area:** 5%
- **Wellsville and surrounding area:** 7%
- **River Heights:** 2%
- **Providence:** 13%
- **Millville:** 5%
- **Nibley:** 8%
- **Hyrum and surrounding area:** 9%
Participation By District Attendance

A large majority (84%) of survey participants are parents who either have children attending school in the district or will in the future.

Do you have children who currently attend, or will attend in the future, any school in Cache County School District?

- Yes: 84%
- No: 16%
Participation in Elections

Overwhelmingly, survey respondents participate in elections. Almost three out of four responded they always participate.

How often do you participate in elections?

- **Always**: 72%
- **Usually**: 21%
- **Sometimes**: 6%
- **Never**: 1%
- **Always**: 1%

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Level of Support for Proposals

Proposal 1 - Build One Single Larger High School:
Cache County School District would have a total of three high schools. Each of them would be larger than those projected in Proposal 2 and each would be in the 4A classification. There would be three 7-8 centers, located at North Cache, South Cache and North Logan. They would feed the three high schools.

Proposal 2 - Build Two Smaller High Schools:
The school district would have a total of four high schools. Each of them would be smaller than in Proposal 1 and each would be in the 3A classification. There would be three 7-8 centers, located at North Cache, South Cache and Spring Creek.

Please indicate your level of support for each of the above proposed plans.
School Configurations

Please read each proposed change below and indicate your level of support and whether or not the change in school configuration influences your support of the overall bond proposals.

Add 6th grade students to our current K-5 elementary schools. (n=2,260)

- Strongly Support: 57%
- Somewhat Support: 30%
- Do Not Support: 10%
- Need More Information: 3%

Change the configuration of our current 8-9 Centers to 7-8 schools. (n=2,383)

- Strongly Support: 53%
- Somewhat Support: 35%
- Do Not Support: 9%
- Need More Information: 4%

Add 9th grade students to our current 10-12 high school configuration. (n=2,365)

- Strongly Support: 46%
- Somewhat Support: 34%
- Do Not Support: 18%
- Need More Information: 2%
Level of Support for Bond Issues

Please indicate the degree to which you support the following actions in relationship to your support of the bond.


- Strongly Support: 10%
- Somewhat Support: 28%
- Do Not Support: 60%
- Need More Information: 2%

Construct two new smaller high schools located in Millville and North Logan (Proposal 2) Capacity: Millville 1640, North Logan 1450, Sky View 1788, and Mountain Crest 1778. (n=2,383)

- Strongly Support: 68%
- Somewhat Support: 19%
- Do Not Support: 12%
- Need More Information: 2%

Address the major seismic issues as identified in both bond proposals. (n=2,365)

- Strongly Support: 70%
- Somewhat Support: 22%
- Do Not Support: 5%
- Need More Information: 4%

Provide the needed school building security hardware as identified in our school safety plans. (n=2,366)

- Strongly Support: 65%
- Somewhat Support: 22%
- Do Not Support: 5%
- Need More Information: 8%

If needed, provide increased tax levy revenues in order to operate the new proposed schools. (n=2,360)

- Strongly Support: 41%
- Somewhat Support: 36%
- Do Not Support: 13%
- Need More Information: 10%
Transportation for Grades 7 and 8

Please indicate the degree to which you support the transportation, by bus, of some 7-8 students through Logan to attend school. The net effect of this action would reduce the size of the 7-8 centers in both proposals.

7th and 8th Grade Transportation Issue
(n=2,381)

- **21%** Strongly Support
- **39%** Somewhat Support
- **33%** Do Not Support
- **6%** Need More Information
The overall size of the bond proposal is between $99,600,000 and $120,144,000. Based upon current tax projections, in order to fund the Single High School Proposal (Proposal 1), the average additional tax on a $200,000 home would be approximately $85 per year or about $7.00 per month. The cost for Proposal 2 would be about $102 per year or $8.50 per month. Please indicate which of the options you would support in order to meet the needs of Cache County students.
Modes of Communication

What is your preferred method of communication?

- Email: 85%
- Electronic Newsletter: 6%
- Facebook: 8%
- Mail: 18%
- Local Newspaper: 11%
- School Messenger (Automated Calls): 5%
- SMS Messaging (Text): 7%
- Twitter: 0%
- District Website: 5%
- Written Communication from Local Schools: 11%

Note: Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.
Public Meetings

More than 1,000 people attended the public meetings. While 28% of respondents indicated they attended a public meeting, 72% of survey respondents did not. Those results add to the bond proposal conversation.

Did you attend any of the previous 10 public meetings held by the Cache County School District regarding the bond proposal?

- Yes: 28%
- No: 72%
Responses to Open-Ended Questions

What modifications would need to be made to either proposal in order to increase your level of support for the bond?

Themes from Comments*

Some participants stated students should attend the school to which they live closest.

Some survey participants would like to merge the Logan and Cache school districts.

Those respondents who support Proposal 2 feel it is a long-term solution.

There is some concern regarding unnecessary busing/driving to get to school.

Note: *Themes are representative of some respondents and should not be generalized across all survey takers.
Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Please share any comments or suggestions regarding the proposed school configurations.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Some survey participants stated they are concerned that 9th graders are not socially ready or mature enough for high school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some respondents are concerned that older, more mature students may have a negative influence on younger students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some parents believe that high school gives 9th graders more academic and extracurricular opportunities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Themes are representative of some respondents and should not be generalized across all survey takers.
Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Please share what you believe are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the bond proposals.

Themes from Comments*

Some participants voiced concern with the transportation of students through Logan because it may increase congestion and air pollution.

Some respondents stated they prefer smaller schools with smaller student populations.

Some participants indicated they prefer busing 7th-8th grade students through Logan as opposed to high school students driving through Logan.

Note: *Themes are representative of some respondents and should not be generalized across all survey takers.
The survey received a relatively strong community response, with more than 2,400 people participating. The email notifications received a 29% response rate, and 18,000 postcards were distributed to registered voters.

The survey’s response rate represents the demographic patterns of the communities within Cache Valley. The percentage of survey responses mirrored the size of the respective communities in relationship to the overall population size of the district.

88% of respondents identified levels of support for Option 2 – the proposal to build two smaller high schools.

Approximately 77% indicated a level of support to provide additional funds to operate the new schools.

72% of the respondents were new voices who were not heard during the previous 10 public meetings. This extended the input received from the 1,000 people who attended those meetings and validated the overall public support of Option 2.
Transportation through Logan was one of the primary concerns mentioned in the survey’s comments section. More people preferred the transportation of 7th and 8th graders, rather than high school students, through Logan.

More than 80% of respondents indicated a level of support for the proposed grade configurations (K-6 elementary, 7-8 middle and 9-12 high school).

93% of respondents usually or always vote in elections. It is likely that the majority of survey participants will vote on the bond issue.

Some survey participants would like to study the consequences of merging the Logan and Cache school districts.

Some participants voiced concern with the transportation of students through Logan because it may increase congestion and air pollution.
Next Steps

- The School Board will review the survey Summary Report in an open public meeting.

- Survey results will be posted on the district website.

- Survey results will also be sent to every participant who provided an email address.

- The School Board will make a determination regarding a potential bond election to be scheduled for either June or November 2013. This will be a people’s choice election.

- An implementation timeline for construction will be designed after the results of the election are known.

- The district will conduct an additional survey to determine if Cache County School District patrons will support a study to determine the effects of consolidation on the district. This would include analyzing combined tax rates and identifying the differences in state funding allocations, as well as the impact of assuming another school district’s bonded indebtedness on our patrons.

- Option 2 was prepared to address the transportation concerns about high school students traveling through Logan.

- A news release for general media will take place prior to the election date. The district will pursue widespread communication about the election to encourage high voter turn-out.