



A **LEGENCE** Company

# New York Mills School

## School Board Meeting

April Community Open House Survey Results  
April 27, 2026



# Community Open House Survey

## Approximately 100 community members attended the open house 74 Survey Returned



### NEW YORK MILLS PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITY PLANNING OPEN HOUSE SURVEY

**Directions:** Please provide feedback on the following questions as you interact with the information at each booth. This will help guide the school board before making any final decisions. All feedback is welcome!

#### PROCESS OVERVIEW

Did you participate in the stakeholder listening/input sessions?  Yes  No

#### THE NEED

Do you agree the district needs to invest in the current facility?  Yes  No

#### PROPOSED FACILITY IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS

*The proposed tax impact is based on an average residential property in the district valued at \$250,000.*

##### QUESTION ONE

Do you agree the projects identified in Q1 are a good investment?  Yes  No

The estimated tax impact for Q1 on an average home is \$41/month. Do you support this level of tax impact for these projects?  Yes  No

If 'No' to either question above, please provide an explanation to help the board better refine the plan.

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##### QUESTION TWO

Do you agree the projects identified in Q2 are a good investment?  Yes  No

In addition to Q1, the estimated tax impact on the average home is \$5.33/month. Do you support this level of tax impact for these projects?  Yes  No

If 'No' to either question above, please provide an explanation to help the board better refine the plan.

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##### QUESTION THREE

Do you agree the projects identified in Q3 are a good investment?  Yes  No

In addition to Q1 and Q2, the estimated tax impact is \$11.33/month. Do you support this level of tax impact for these projects?  Yes  No

If 'No' to either question above, please provide an explanation to help the board better refine the plan.

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#### NOVEMBER REFERENDUM

If the district moves forward with a November referendum, would you support it based on the information you heard today?

Yes for all questions  Yes for Question 1 and 2  Yes for Question 1 Only  No

If 'No' to the question above, why?

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What other questions and/or comments do you have about the district needs?

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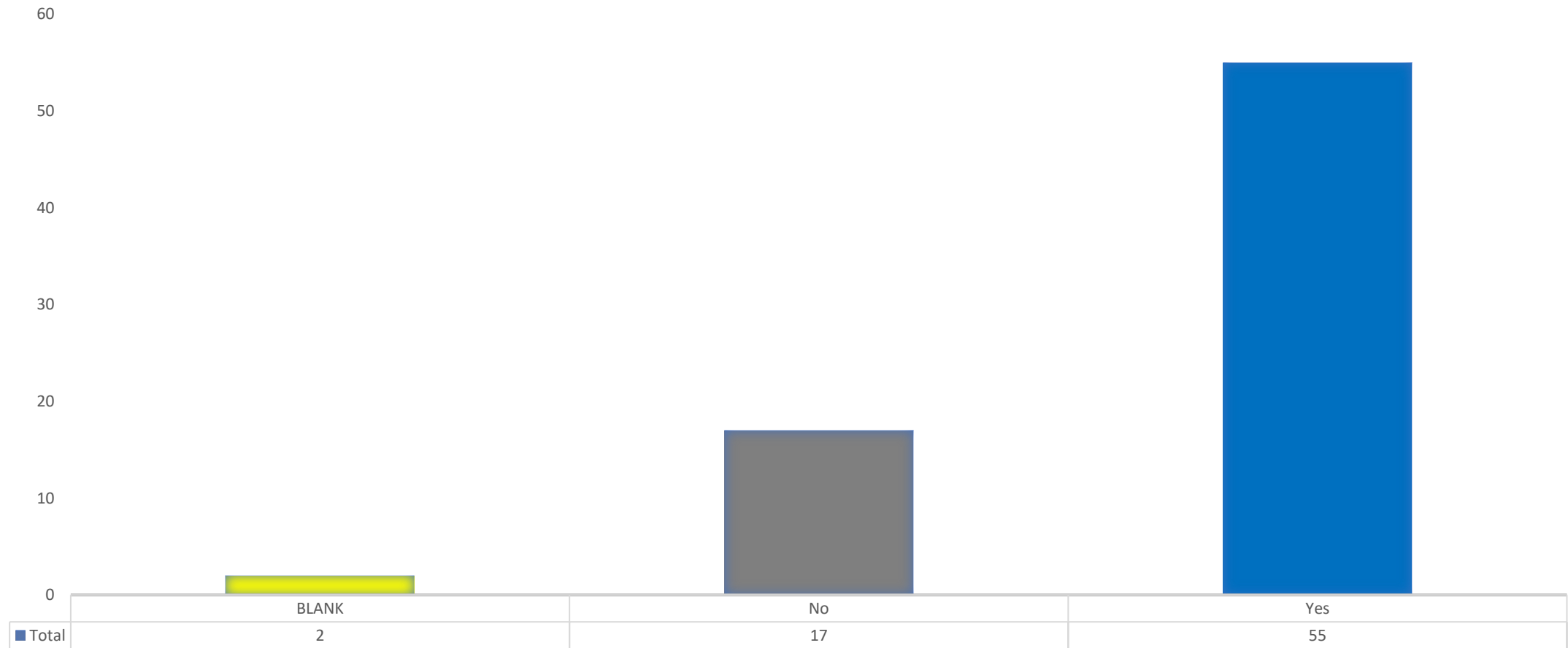
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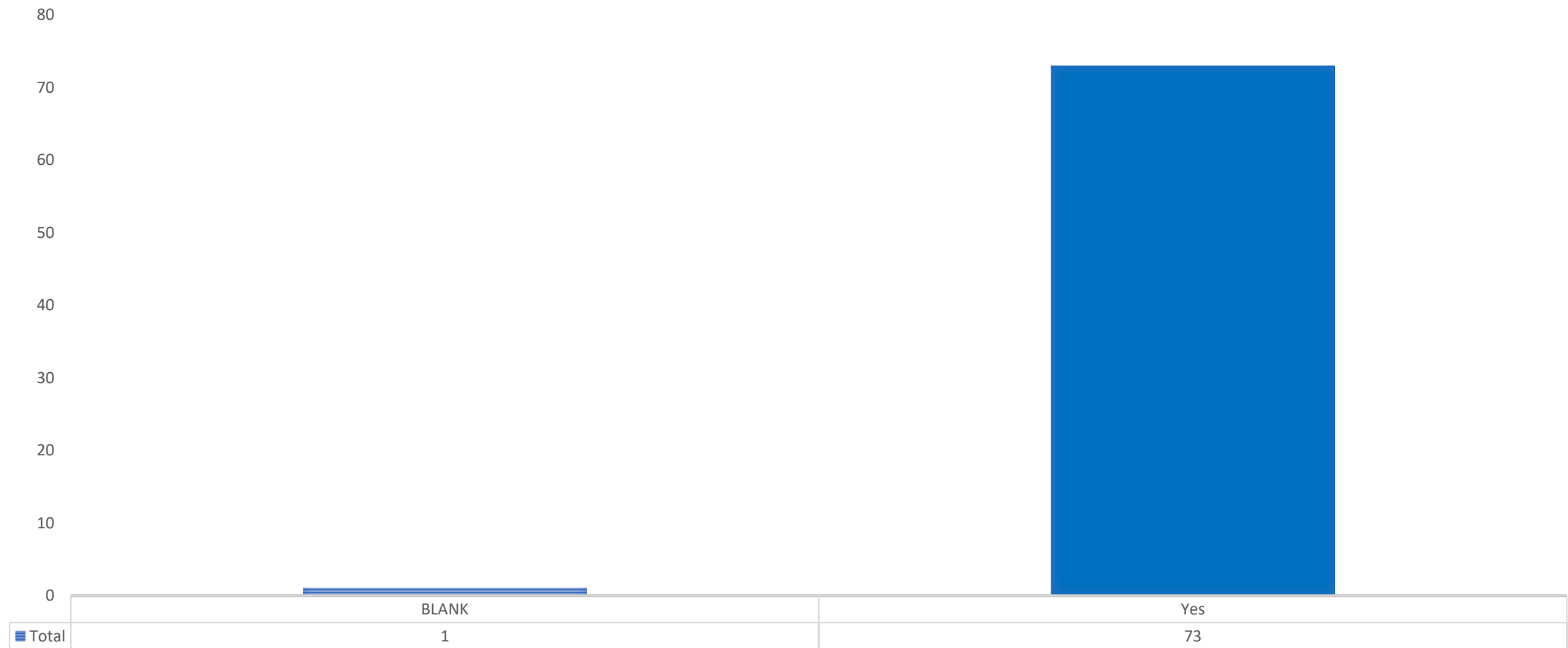
# Process Overview

Did you participate in the stakeholder listening/input sessions?



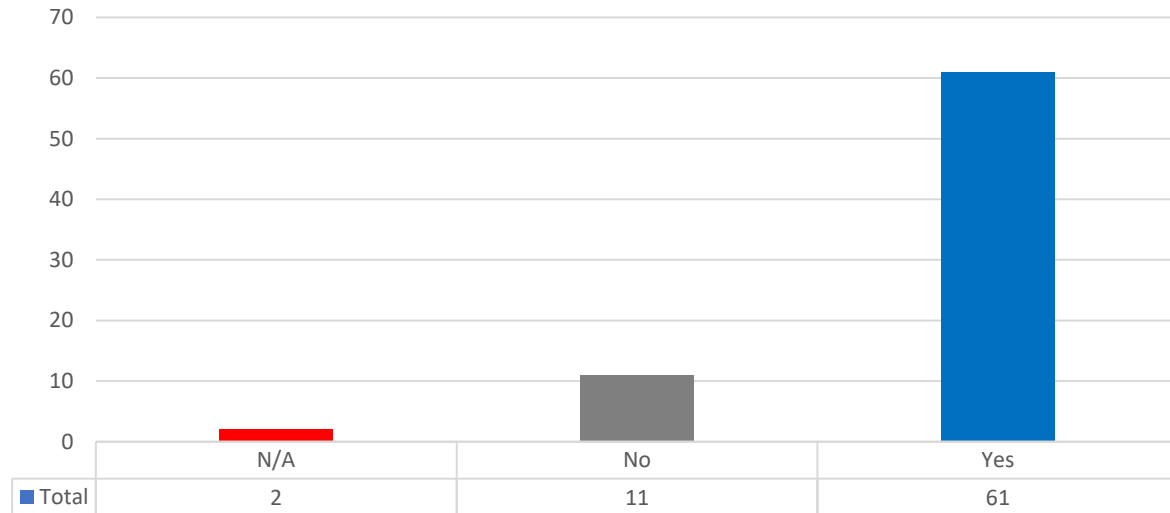
# The Need

Do you agree the district needs to invest in the current facility?

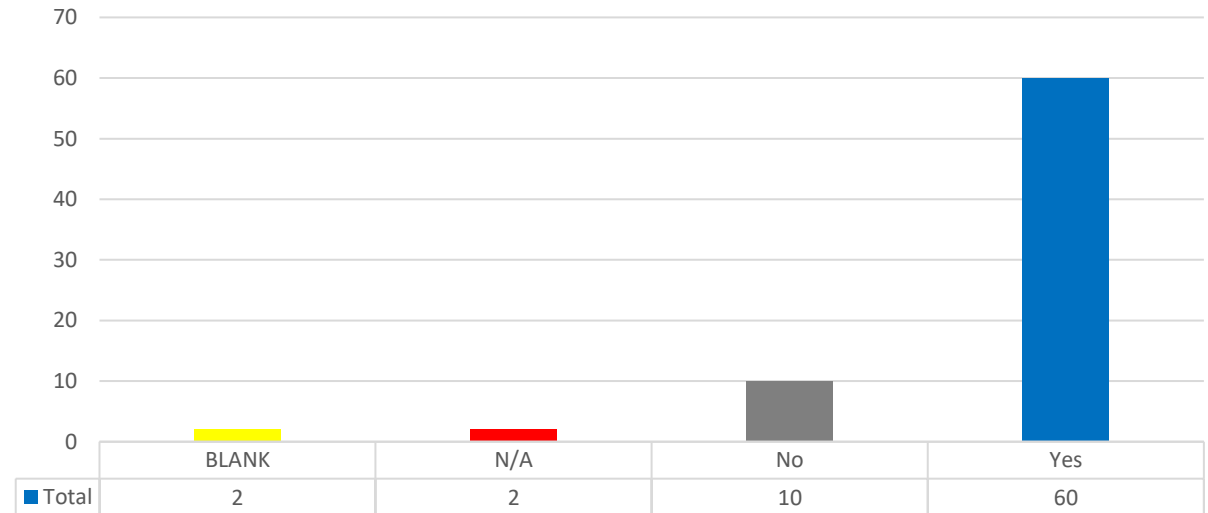


# Proposed Facility Improvements Options – Question 1

Projects in Q1 are a Good Investment



Support the Tax Impact for Q1



## Comments:

- Respondents who responded “No” are not universally opposed to investment, but they want a more focused, affordable plan centered on core academic needs, with clearer justification for non-essential elements and design choices.
- These respondents are partially supportive—they back essential, education-focused and facility improvement items, but are hesitant about cost, scope, and inclusion of non-essential or athletic-related features.

# Proposed Facility Improvements Options – Question 1

## All Comments

### No Response:

- The school is very old and should be torn and started fresh rather than remodeling again. Also, I noticed you never made a storage for SACC.
- Asking to much from the community
- Classroom and facility should be main focus not wrestling rooms and batting cages. A school is meant for education so that should be the main focus not pointless sports. My taxes are not funding that.
- Some is not a good investment, a lot for many people.
- Separate the wrestling rooms into a different phase. Lets focus more on the academics and CTE stuff.
- I feel right now most people don't have extra money for their property tax to go up.
- Segregating the SPED rooms is TERRIBLE! Please do not do it to the LD kids for sure. Some of it is great such as band/choir and safe entry was but too much wrestling in not a need. Education for every student should Trump every sport and should be separate on the note. Elem playground not addressed.
- I think Q1 should be smaller-Covering only the thigs we need not the things we want. Do only the education related items- the science labs, the CT rooms. Also include building needs like windows. The wrestling center seems like extra. Why do we need a Pre-K wing? Pre-k is decreasing not growing. Why is SPED rooms in a wing? Is that necessary?

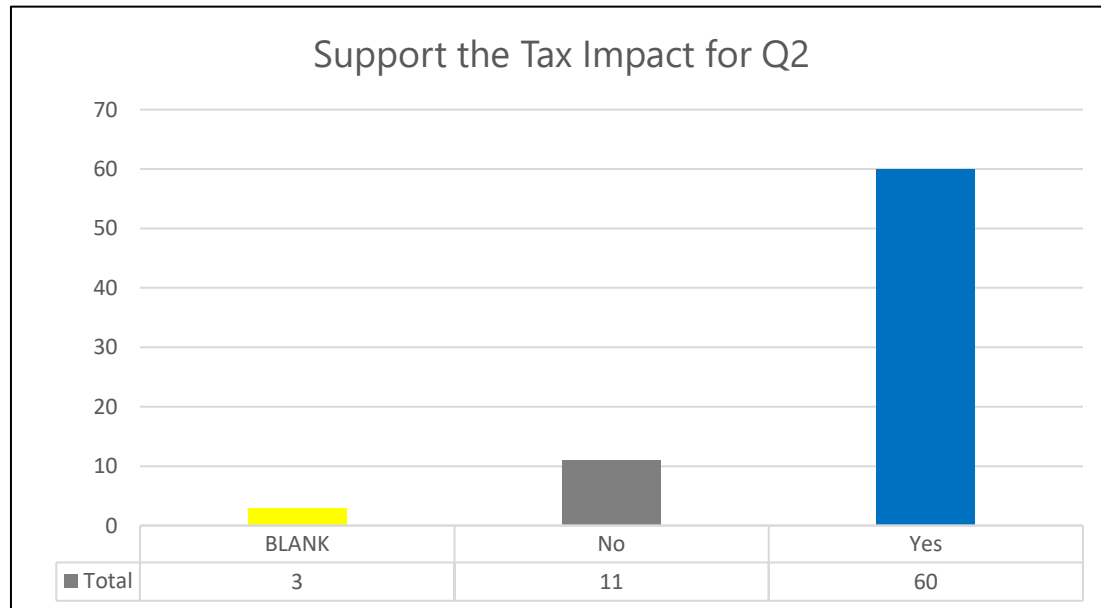
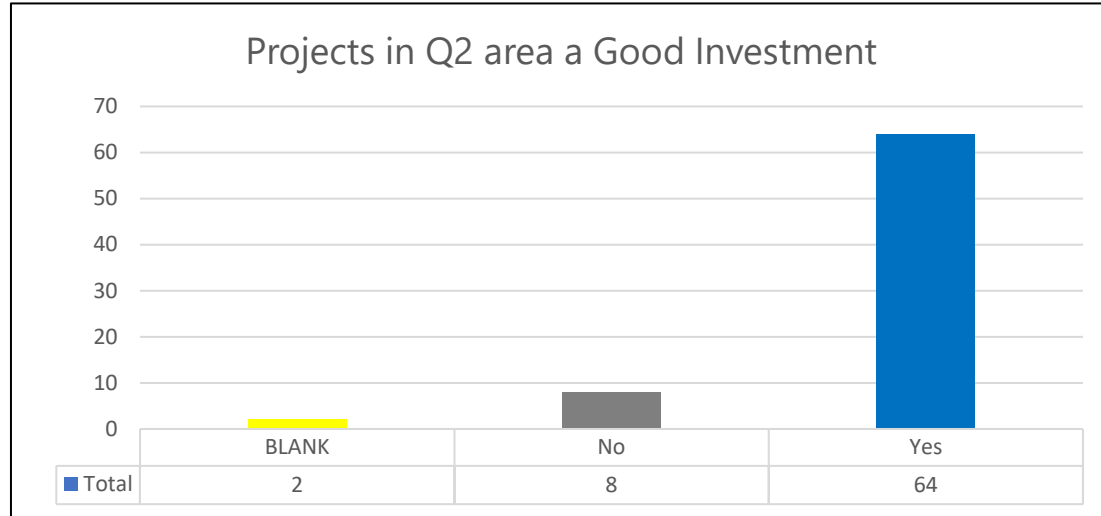
### Yes and No Response:

- There are parts of Q1 I agree with and parts I am not sure if I agree with, I agree with the SPED rooms, security to building, storage, replacing windows, upgrading bathrooms. I don't agree with wrestling, not sure about technology and arts upgrades, not sure about the learning commons area.
- Not all-wrestling rooms and weight room seem excessive also-indoor batting cages unnecessary.
- Some proposed items not needed- example- larger concession storage, school store. Need to replace gym floor.
- Don't think we can afford the tax increase.
- A lot of money for the district people.

### Yes Response:

- Yes-but there's no limit to what I would pay for healthy, cooked (not warmed-up) food for the kids to eat.

# Proposed Facility Improvements Options – Question 2



## All Comments

### No Response:

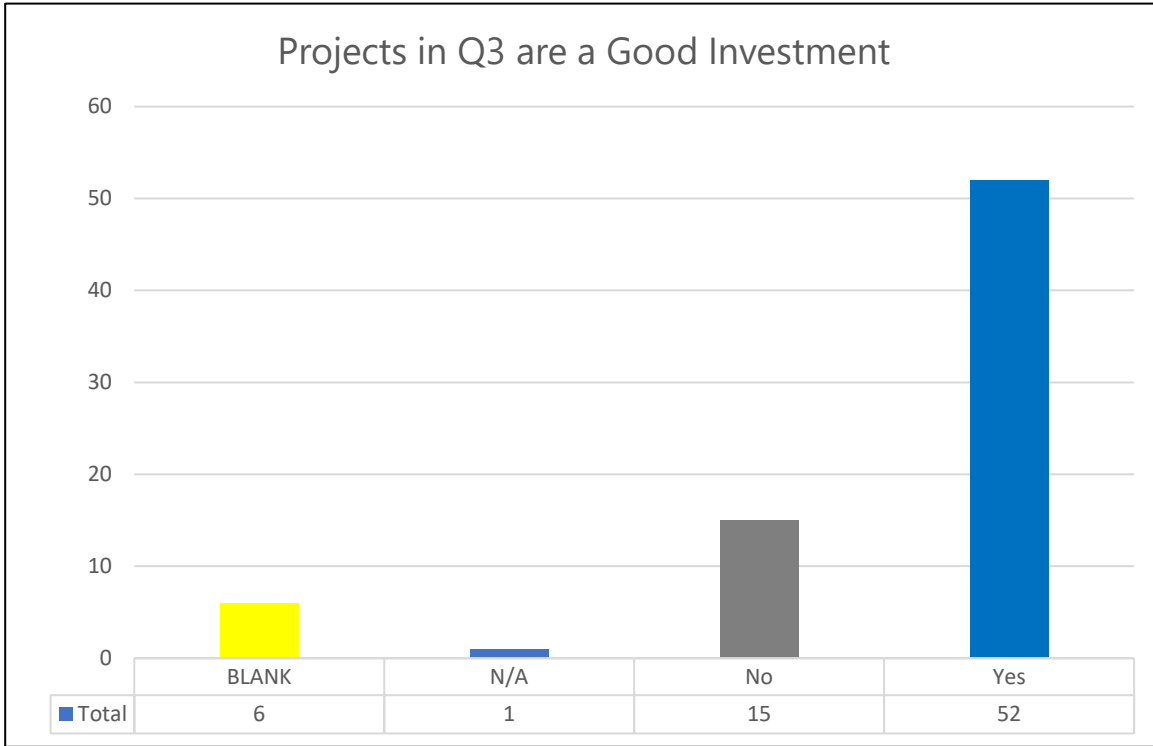
- I maybe be biased due to my least amount of care for the trades.
- Not added to Q1
- Taxes are high enough
- Back to property taxes.

### Yes Response:

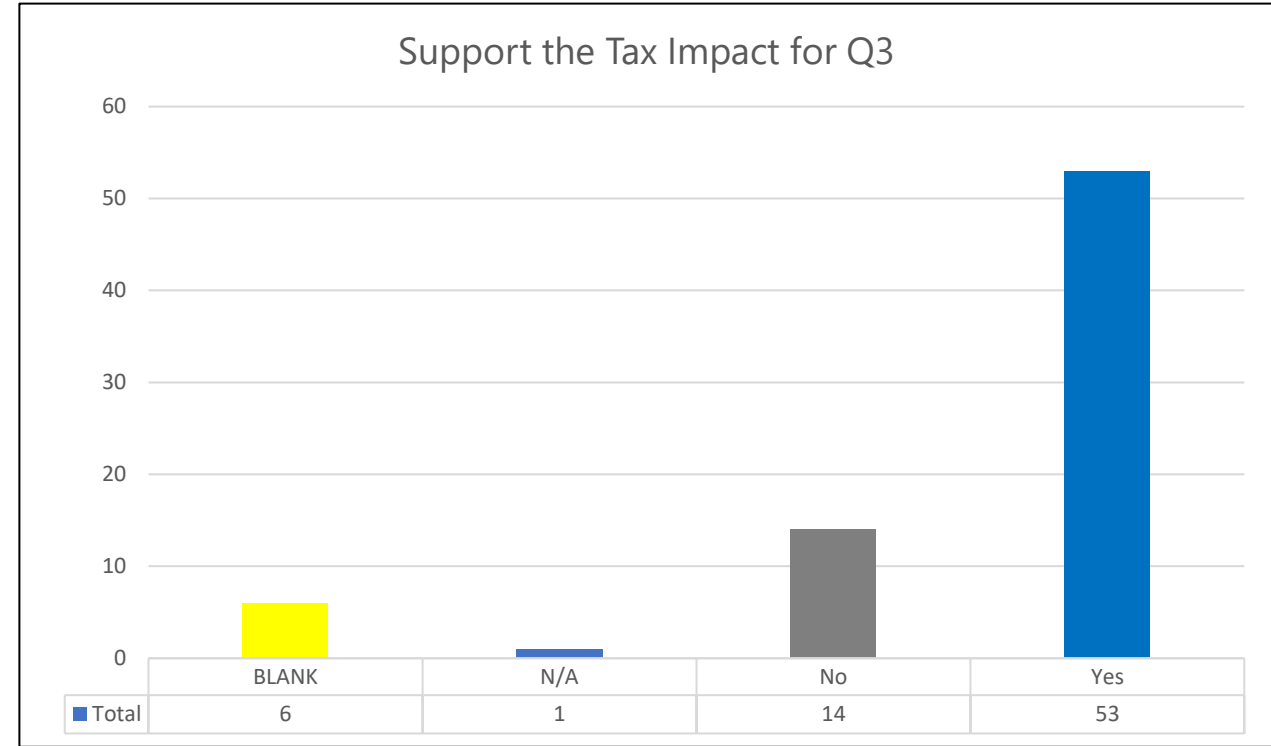
- But I do have some concerns about how the space (media center) will be designed to grow and change for the future.
- This is reasonable and should be question 1.
- We need to keep the building we have in good shape before adding on.

# Proposed Facility Improvements Options – Question 3

Projects in Q3 are a Good Investment



Support the Tax Impact for Q3



## Comments

Feedback on Q3 shows limited and conditional support, with the biggest barriers being cost, perceived low priority compared to academics, and unclear value of relocating facilities. Respondents are more open if benefits are clearly communicated and costs are justified, but many feel this question represents "wants" rather than "needs."

# Proposed Facility Improvements Options – Question 3

## All Comments

### Yes Response:

- Let people know not three wrestling rooms only two. Old one made new.
- Yes to both. In my opinion our track is a joke. It's basically a glorified gravel road.

### Yes and No Response:

- I don't attend the football games or track events, therefore I am not sure if I agree on relocation them. Don't know the benefits to have them relocated. I probably makes sense to have them closer to the school.

### No Response:

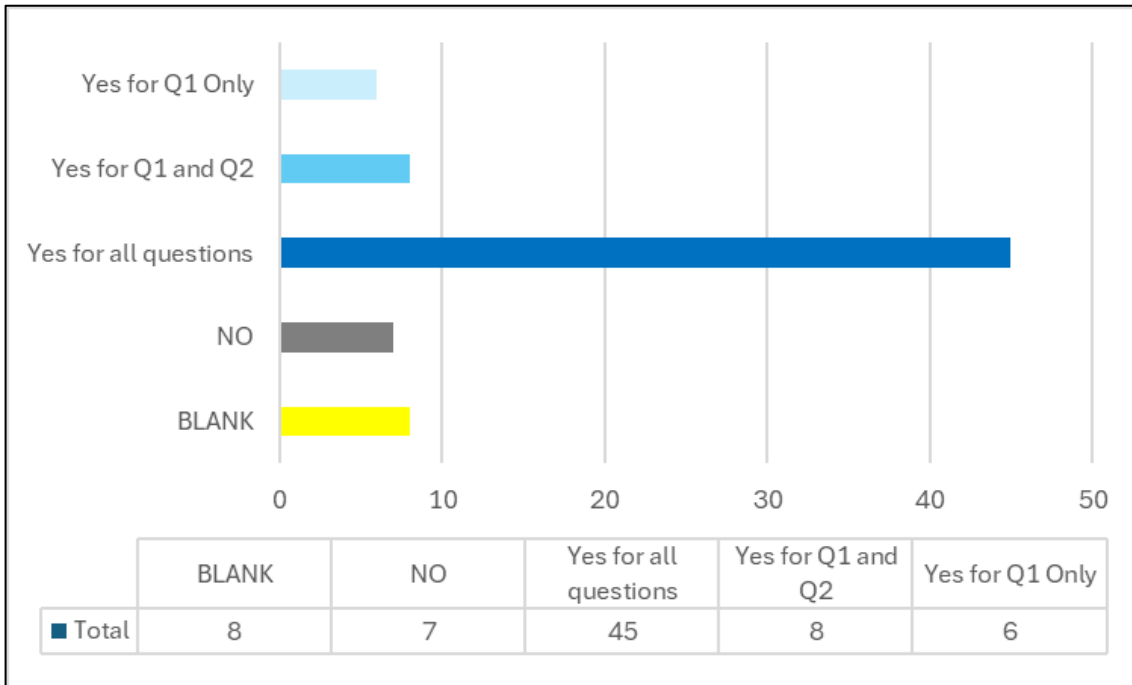
- Asking to much from the community
- Not added to Q1
- It does not feel like a good use of funds to effectively move 4 sporting fields to gain a trade. Can we find another area to build a new track(even if purchasing land would be needed?)
- Seems unnecessary to move that stuff around when it doesn't help students learning real world stuff.
- The proposed taxes are very expensive. I went to school here and live here and our population can not afford it.
- Track is very low attendance.
- Not needed
- We are lucky to already have what we do.
- Wrestling etc. should be part of question #3
- It would be awesome- but we obviously have bigger things we need.
- I do agree moving the football field to the school grounds would help with parking and accessibility for everyone. Unsure if People would vote for an expense when economy is so bad these last few years

### Blank Response:

- I believe to school is a good investment, but not all of it.

# November Referendum

If the district moves forward with a November referendum, would you support it based on the information you heard today?



## 1. Majority Support, but Not Universal

- A solid majority supports the full plan
- However, nearly 40% are either partial, opposed, or undecided, indicating room for improvement

## 2. Strongest Support for Question 1

- Additional 14 respondents support Q1 (alone or with Q2)
- Reinforces that core facility and academic improvements are the highest priority

## 3. Drop-Off in Support for Question 3

- Many partial supporters drop off before supporting all three questions
- Aligns with comments that Q3 (athletic/field-related items) is viewed as lower priority or unnecessary

## 4. Cost & Affordability Remain the Biggest Barrier

- Consistent concern across “No” and “Undecided” responses
- Perception that the plan may be too expensive for the community

## 5. Desire for Refinement & Clarity

- Undecided respondents want:
  - More information
  - Clearer breakdown of costs and benefits
  - Potential phasing or scaling back of the plan

Overall, the plan has a strong foundation of support, especially around Question 1, but gaining broader approval will likely depend on:

- Addressing cost concerns
- Re-evaluating or clearly justifying Question 3
- Continuing to communicate value and prioritize educational needs

# November Referendum

## All Comments

### Blank Response:

- I am not 100% sure if I support all three questions. How will students forward if doesn't pass. What is necessary to create better leaders for tomorrow at a reasonable cost?
- Have to have more time before deciding.
- Undecided
- I don't know. I would like it divided up even more.
- How much money would the state put in?

### No Response:

- Parts worthy - some could be done a different way.
- The plan is too excessive. You will put excessive costs and pressures on low income families and households.
- I feel that we need to find a better solution. I don't believe we have looked at all options.
- Way too much money. There are many people who cannot afford. They were not able to attend tonight and wanted me to express their concerns about how this will impact already challenged personal budgets.
- Classroom and facility should be main focus not wrestling rooms and batting cages. A school is meant for education so that should be the main focus not pointless sports. My taxes are not funding that. Education should be the main focus not useless space for wrestling and batting cages. That's what we have gyms and baseball fields for. You want that stuff make the teams raise money for it!
- Question 1 needs some revision on sports. Love CTE addition.

### Yes Response to at least one question:

- I think we need to weigh the cost to move and rebuild three working fields(F,SB<BB) to gain a track. I think we can find a better solution to create a track elsewhere.
- Q3 is pointless
- Unsure about Question 2

# Overall Take Aways

## 1. General Support for Investing in the School

- Many respondents expressed strong support for improving the school, recognizing its importance to:
  - Student success
  - Community strength and growth
  - Attracting new families
- Appreciation for the planning effort and transparency throughout the process
- Belief that delaying improvements will increase costs in the future

## 2. Priority on Education & Student Experience

- Strong emphasis that investments should focus on:
  - Core academics (classrooms, science labs, CTE)
  - Special Education support, with recognition of the district's strong reputation
  - Arts and music programs as part of a well-rounded education
- Interest in improving student daily experience, including:
  - Food quality (fresh, cooked meals)
  - Collaborative and flexible learning spaces

## 3. Support for Safety & Facility Improvements

- Broad agreement on the need for:
  - Secure entrances and safety upgrades
  - Updating aging infrastructure (windows, bathrooms, existing spaces)
- Recognition that elementary spaces and overall building conditions need attention

## 4. Concerns About Cost & Tax Impact

- One of the most consistent concerns across all responses:
  - The plan represents a significant financial ask
  - Worries about impact on families and local businesses
- Some support the plan in concept but want a more affordable or phased approach

## 5. Mixed Views on Scope & Priorities

- Ongoing tension between "needs vs. wants":
  - Support for essential improvements
  - Hesitation or opposition to items seen as lower priority (e.g., some athletic spaces, school store)
- Questioning whether the plan is too large or trying to do too much at once

## 6. Special Education & Inclusivity Concerns

- Mixed feedback on creating a dedicated SPED wing:
  - Some support improved facilities
  - Others worry about segregation and lack of inclusivity
- Desire to ensure all students feel integrated and supported throughout the building

## 7. Questions About Design & Implementation

- Requests for more clarity around:
  - Classroom sizes (especially Pre-K and Kindergarten)
  - Use of flexible and multi-purpose spaces
  - Construction timing, phasing, and impact on students/activities
- Interest in ensuring spaces are efficient, adaptable, and future-focused

## 8. Community Identity & Facility Changes

- Some concern about changes impacting traditions and community feel
  - Especially related to relocating athletic fields and outdoor spaces
- Desire to preserve elements that contribute to the small-town identity

## 9. Opportunities to Strengthen the Plan

- Break the plan into smaller, clearer components
- Provide more detail on:
  - Costs, benefits, and alternatives considered
  - Long-term value and return on investment
- Continue engaging both residents and business owners in the conversation

***Overall, the community shows meaningful support for investing in the school, especially around education, safety, and essential facility needs. However, support is tempered by concerns about cost, scope, and prioritization. Strengthening alignment around core educational benefits, affordability, and inclusive design will be key to building broader confidence and support.***

# Other Questions or Comments

## Yes for at least one question:

- Some questions on Special Ed wing away from the remainder of building. Concerned for non-athletic families, seeing value in facility improvements.
- I appreciate your work-a small community is only as good as its education system.
- More opportunities to advance the arts! We have such talented students who are missing out on chances to showcase their talents and from community. A well rounded school includes improvements made to facilities that benefit to facilities that benefit all types of students.
- Equal opportunity for the athletics and arts. More safety and security for students and staff. Large impact for generations!
- Family bathroom by sports center
- I think the boards did a great job of identifying the needs and the plans are fiscally responsible and conservative. I hope the community can see the benefit of implementing the referendum now. Things will only get more expensive later on. We need to make our school appealing to new families. I've heard of a family considering moving to our district but saw the size of our weight room, which turned them off. I fully support investing in our school and district. Without a school, we don't have a community. Thank you for all the hard work for this.
- Were you planning on closing the school to do remodeling? Depending on if it passes where will you practice while the fields are being made, how long will we pay extra taxes 1 year or longer? If all plans are approved do you plan on doing all 3 projects simultaneously.
- After attending the meeting I will vote yes, because you cannot put a price on education, I am a firm believer in education especially special ed and I do believe NYM is not in this area of the region when there is students coming from different districts to attend NYM school, the school is doing something right and that is a quality education. I hope this passes because it will bring everything up to code and make the school more ready for years to come to give the town, community and the kids of the NYM area the quality ed they need to go out in the work force. Please bring back the good old home cooked meals back into the school.

## Yes for at least one question Cont.:

- As of right now not sure about the question 3 with all the sports upgrades. I would love to see a shower area and a laundry area in the sped section of the elementary. Currently those needs are met by bringing elementary students to high school-not good!
- NYM mills needs updates/changes to school- it is best for students, families, staff and community. \_Yes to secure entrances.- yes to auditorium/sports center sound!- Love music changes. - do not agree with kindergarten going to all small rooms. These 3 rooms are all approx. 800 sq ft-1 of the current kindergarten rooms is 1400 sq ft and the other 2 are 800 sq ft. Recommendation from ICS is 1000 sq ft preschool/1500 sq ft kindergarten. This recommendation does not match current floor plan proposal. If ICS recommends kindergarten more space, why would pre k get larger rooms? Pre k and kindergarten need space for kids to play and learn. -Early childhood should be by a main entrance due to evening classes-secure building/don't want people wondering halls.
- Consider part of question 1 regarding moving special ed rooms to "sped wing" and adding new early childhood wing. Can that part be taken out. We have adequate Sp ed rooms throughout building and early childhood/pre k space currently. I don't want the message that we need to isolate our students or confine them to one area. Believe in the importance of being more inclusive and welcoming to all throughout the building.
- I felt you guys did a fine job with the information.
- Bigger Kindergarten Classrooms
- Very much needed upgrades, very well thought out plans. Looking forward to seeing the end results.
- A lot of money asked of the community at once. Maybe in a distant future focus on the new field part, but understand of trying to get it done all at once.
- Need to look at new gym floor. Two wrestling rooms with lower varsity participation??? There is a community fitness room uptown. Can NYM support 2? Should we build a school store before we know if we have a program or if it will be used and long term?
- Tell state to get rid transgender push in schools.
- Keep boys out of girls locker rooms!

# Other Questions or Comments

## Yes Response Continued:

- I feel there is a great need to also add to the school, NYM school has a great repour for special ed and also for Vo-tech learning. Also NYM is starting to grow and more and more families are sending their kids to Mills school it is because of the quality of education they receive.
- It's time for all the above improvements.
- Would like to see more info on current conditions, class sizes, etc. Elementary is in need of updating. Are funds included to renovate existing space? Would like to see more options for #3. Smith park and the football field are iconic to NYM.
- I would love to see ovens added to kitchen and an increase in the quality of food.
- If the football field was moved, how would summer Rec programs spaces be altered? Does the practice football field get a new location? What other grassy areas does HS Phy Ed use for their classes? How does the additional help the Elementary School Playground, is there enough outdoor space for recess times when all ages outside?
- I think it would be cool to have a student accessible upstairs area. The auditorium should be moved to Q1.
- Keep the elementary improvements coming also.
- How are we thinking about making spaces multi-purpose? Can the wrestling room be extended to become batting cage space in the off season when we gym use is maxed out? What will all the small build out rooms by the auditorium be used for? Now labeled "flex space"? How can we create more collaborative break out space in the elementary? Has there been a thought to creating an entrance after hours for games into the gyms during tournaments etc.? Is there worry that moving the track, football field, softball fields and baseball takes away our small town quaint feel for football and removes "newest" ball diamonds o an area that you'd have to remove a lot of trees? Could the concession stand move to where the "table storage" is and create a team store in that area to better utilize the cafeteria? Then the current concessions area could become a lounge/breakout space for elementary.

## Unsure:

- I feel the NYM school district and all school districts around the state of MN should only bus kids to their district school- no open enrollment busing if kids from one district wanted to attend school in another district, parents provide the transportation, not the taxpayers. Maybe question 1 needs to e a little more broken up and add more into Q2? Security to building does need to be improved!
- Remember that the school's number one concern should be educating our children. Invest in classrooms (science labs & CTE ). And do we need to double the Pre-k wig when we have so few Pre-K kids.
- It seems apparent that the district has put significant thought into the process as a whole. -I wish there was more engagement from the populace but that is no fault of their own. Mostly a lack of interest in involvement. -Obviously I am worried about the tax increase from a commercial side. Businesses are being stressed currently, and any additional cash outputs need to be considered. -Overall, this seems to hopefully be the right time. I am hoping the next six months are filled with ample discussion with not only residents but business owners.

## No Response:

- Pretty knowledgeable
- Please come up with a different plan-one that won't cost so much money. After taking the tour - yes I see the problems- but that is a lot of money.
- Why are academics not prioritized? \*How come maintenance is not before the bigger wants plan? \* Please do not make SPED feel even more different than they do already. \*Playground should have been included instead of wrestling as evenly student uses that. \* More and more are choosing home school or other districts because they want learning to be the top priority of a school and its not here. \*Thank you for being so informational. \*Class sizes are getting smaller why change PreK & K?

# Next Steps

MAY 2026



Further define the scope of work to be included in a building bond referendum based on work sessions and community input

JUNE 2026



School Board approval calling for a November 2026 election

JULY 2026



Submit Review and Comment to Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) for approval

AUGUST 2026 –  
NOVEMBER 2026



Referendum communication campaign

NOVEMBER 3,  
2026



ELECTION DAY!





**QUESTIONS?**