

## **You Spoke, We Listened: Next Steps for Eastmont School Facilities**

In the election of November 2022, the Board of Directors placed before the voters a \$185m. bond measure to improve schools and add safety features, update athletic facilities, and replace the transportation center. Although a majority of the voters supported the bond measure, it did not reach the 60% supermajority as required by state law.

A community is known by the schools it keeps, and we take seriously our duties of providing our students safe and effective learning environments. Therefore, we needed to gather broad community input about our facilities and your priorities for the District. We asked, and more importantly - we listened.

Thank you to the nearly 900 of you who answered our survey, shared your thoughts, and reviewed and rated the thoughts of others. I cannot think of a time when we have had an in person meeting with 900 attendees! Key takeaways from your input were:

- Cascade, Kenroy and Lee elementaries are most in need of rebuilding, along with some improvements at Rock Island Elementary.
- The athletic facilities are in need of updating, but increasing tax rates is not the way to do so.
- The transportation center is a 'nice to have', not a 'need to have'.
- In times of economic uncertainty, total cost is a priority factor.

For those interested, a more detailed list of responses is available on our website under the 'Letter to Community: Facilities' headline.

Based on this information, these are steps we have taken:

1. We have created a comprehensive list of immediate facilities needs and prioritized that list. We have shifted budget capacity to address many of these critical needs originally included in the 2022 bond.
2. We have created a Facilities Dashboard at [www.eastmont206.org](http://www.eastmont206.org) that is live on our website. With a click of your mouse you will be able to see the capacity of each of our schools, when they were built and remodeled, and how efficiently they are operating. This kind of transparency and accountability is the way we do business in Eastmont.
3. Some of our athletic facilities at the high school are in need of such repair that they pose risks of injury to our students. The Board of Directors approved the spending of carryover funds from the COVID closures, (when we did not have sports), along with some reserve funds from this year, (that were made possible by adjusting spending in our budget, and by welcoming more students than we budgeted for) to address the most immediate safety concerns.

4. We have been given permission to use one time federal grant monies for upgrading some of our electronic equipment that helps us keep students safe. Examples include upgrading bus cameras and radios, and replacing or repairing some school intercom systems so that they are reliable in the case of an emergency situation. Once the new schools are remodeled, all facilities will have up to date systems to use in case of emergencies.
5. We have asked our financial advisors to create options for a greatly reduced bond measure, perhaps this February. This scenario would be to generate enough funds to remodel Cascade, Lee, and Kenroy Elementary Schools and make some improvements at Rock Island Elementary School. We are hoping to accomplish this *without* raising your tax rate if at all possible.

We appreciate your engagement with our district, and your views about the future. Our Board of Directors will be deliberating next steps, and will make the ultimate decision on whether to put a bond measure on a future ballot. Please come to a Board meeting to share your comments, or contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

SPANISH

### **Usted habló, nosotros escuchamos: Próximos pasos para las instalaciones escolares de Eastmont**

En la elección de noviembre de 2022, la Junta Directiva colocó ante los votantes \$185 millones para la medida de bonos para mejorar las escuelas y agregar características de seguridad, actualizar las instalaciones deportivas y reemplazar el centro de transporte. Aunque la mayoría de los votantes apoyó la medida de bonos, no alcanzó la mayoría calificada del 60% como lo requiere la ley estatal.

Una comunidad es conocida por las escuelas que mantiene, y nos tomamos en serio nuestro deber de brindar a nuestros estudiantes entornos de aprendizaje seguros y efectivos. Por lo tanto, necesitábamos recopilar una amplia opinión de la comunidad sobre nuestras instalaciones y sus prioridades para el Distrito. Preguntamos y, lo que es más importante, escuchamos.

Gracias a los casi 900 de ustedes que respondieron nuestra encuesta, compartieron sus pensamientos y revisaron y calificaron los pensamientos de los demás. ¡No puedo pensar en un momento en el que hayamos tenido una reunión en persona con 900 asistentes! Los puntos clave de su aporte fueron:

- Las primarias Cascade, Kenroy y Lee son las que más necesitan reconstrucción, junto con algunas mejoras en la primaria Rock Island.
- Las instalaciones deportivas necesitan ser actualizadas, pero aumentar las tasas impositivas no es la forma de hacerlo.

- El centro de transporte es un 'bueno tener', no una 'necesidad de tener'.
- En tiempos de incertidumbre económica, el costo total es un factor prioritario.

Para aquellos interesados, una lista más detallada de respuestas está disponible en nuestro sitio web bajo el título "Carta a la comunidad: Instalaciones".

Con base en esta información, estos son los pasos que hemos tomado:

1. Hemos creado una lista completa de las necesidades inmediatas de las instalaciones y priorizamos esa lista. Hemos modificado la capacidad presupuestaria para abordar muchas de estas necesidades críticas incluidas originalmente en el bono de 2022.
2. Hemos creado un Tablero de Instalaciones en <http://www.eastmont206.org> que esta activo en nuestro sitio web. Con un clic de su mouse podrá ver la capacidad de cada una de nuestras escuelas, cuándo fueron construidas y remodeladas, y qué tan eficientemente están operando. Este tipo de transparencia y responsabilidad es la forma en que hacemos negocios en Eastmont.
3. Algunas de nuestras instalaciones deportivas en la escuela secundaria necesitan tal reparación que presentan riesgos de lesiones para nuestros estudiantes. La Junta Directiva aprobó el gasto de los fondos remanentes de los cierres de COVID (cuando no teníamos deportes), junto con algunos fondos de reserva de este año (que fueron posibles al ajustar el gasto en nuestro presupuesto y al dar la bienvenida a más estudiantes). de lo presupuestado) para abordar las preocupaciones de seguridad más inmediatas.
4. Se nos ha dado permiso para usar dinero de una subvención federal única para actualizar algunos de nuestros equipos electrónicos que nos ayudan a mantener seguros a los estudiantes. Los ejemplos incluyen actualizar las cámaras y radios de los autobuses y reemplazar o reparar algunos sistemas de intercomunicación escolares para que sean confiables en caso de una situación de emergencia. Una vez que las nuevas escuelas estén remodeladas, todas las instalaciones tendrán sistemas actualizados para usar en caso de emergencias.
5. Hemos pedido a nuestros asesores financieros que creen opciones para una medida de bonos muy reducida, quizás esté febrero. Este escenario sería generar suficientes fondos para remodelar las Escuelas Primarias Cascade, Lee y Kenroy y hacer algunas mejoras en la Escuela Primaria Rock Island. Esperamos lograr esto sin aumentar su tasa impositiva si es posible.

Agradecemos su compromiso con nuestro distrito y sus puntos de vista sobre el futuro. Nuestra Junta Directiva deliberará sobre los próximos pasos y tomará la decisión final sobre si incluir una medida de bonos en una boleta electoral futura. Venga a una reunión de la Junta para compartir sus comentarios o contáctenos con cualquier pregunta o inquietud que pueda tener.

# Exchange Summary

Becky Berg, Eastmont School District  
February 1, 2023

What are some important things we can learn from the outcome of our recent bond election, in November of 2022, and what could we do differently in preparation for future elections?



## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



**868**

Participants



**569**

Thoughts



**19,121**

Ratings

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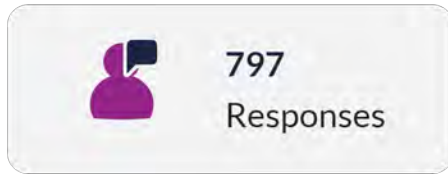


## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



Which of the following methods would you prefer to receive information regarding future elections?



%		Answer (Multi-select)
74%	(590)	Direct mailer
15%	(123)	In person meeting
19%	(151)	Online meeting
27%	(219)	Via social media
5%	(40)	Word of mouth
10%	(81)	Other




## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



Which of the following roles best describes you as you participate in this exchange?



%		Answer (Multi-select)
59%	(464)	Parent/Guardian
36%	(282)	Staff
24%	(187)	Community member



## PARTICIPATION

### Breakdown of Participation



Where did you receive or find information for the recent election?



%		Answer (Multi-select)
40%	(313)	Direct mailer
42%	(326)	Voter's pamphlet
19%	(148)	In person meeting
4%	(30)	Online meeting
23%	(179)	Social media
21%	(163)	Word of mouth
11%	(88)	I didn't receive any information





WORDCLOUD  
Top Rated











## THOUGHTS

### Key Thoughts



**Better explain why the things you want are worth being the top priority over other needs in the district, and why it is worth raising taxes.** People's incomes are strained. They need a very good reason to pay more in taxes. **4.3**  (44 )  
Ranked #1 of 569

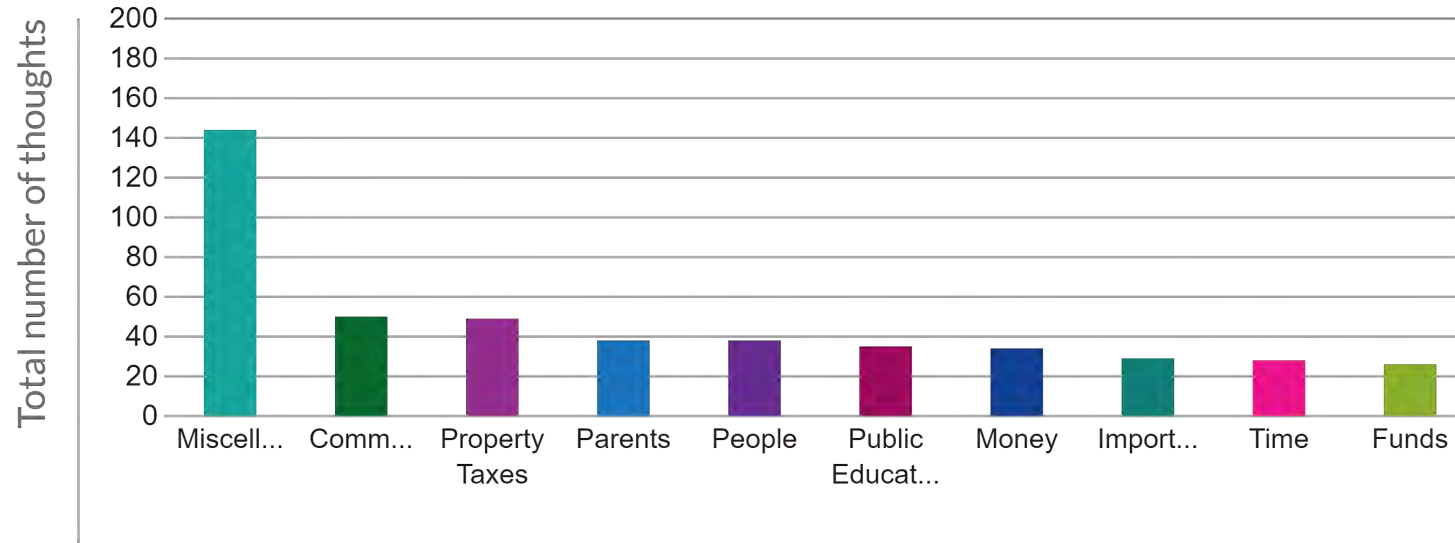
**Be extremely transparent.** The community wants to know how their tax dollars are being spent. **4.3**  (38 )  
Ranked #2 of 569

**Be completely transparent** Voters want to know exactly what's what **4.2**  (47 )  
Ranked #3 of 569



## KEYWORD THEMES

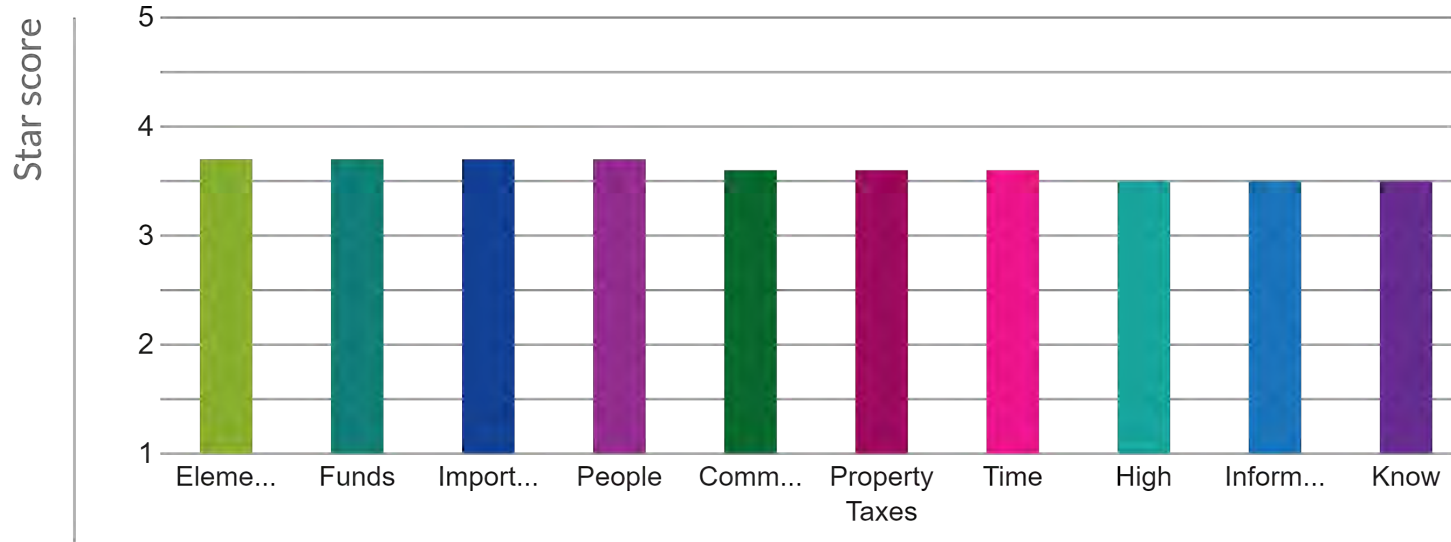
Top Themes by total thoughts





# KEYWORD THEMES

## Top Themes by star score





## THOUGHTS Elementary



**Maybe focus on 1 or 2 schools and the most important issues - structural safety, and protection.** As a parent, I want the schools to be harder to access, quicker to alert for danger, and easier to lock down in an emergency.

3.9  (44 )

**I feel like we went too far, we should have just started with the necessities like the elementary schools that have never been updated.** It's important for children and staff safety

3.9  (42 )



**I voted for the levy, but thought that there was too much on the Levy to pass it. I felt that asking for \$180 million was too much to convince voters.** I think it will be more successful to have the schools updated, and to focus on safety for our students.



3.9  (19 )





## THOUGHTS Funds



**Need better information about the use of the funds.** The bond issue has a large impact on taxes. 4.1  (26 )

**Need to let the community know exactly what/where the money is going and what is being funded.** In a conservative area the voting populace has their minds made up that taxes are evil. Need be specific in the needs to swing a few of these voters. 4.1  (26 )

**The definition of how money was to be spent was poorly defined.** When I am paying for a product I expect to trust that those providing the product are being responsible with those funds. I had no assurance of this. 4.0  (38 )



## THOUGHTS Important



**I think it's important to keep community informed and transparency as far as what bond will be used for&at what cost to taxpayers** It is important to educate community so they're able to make informed decisions as to what they are voting on. Perhaps hold a fun event w/ open q&a

4.1  (44 )

**Communication is key and in all honesty, if you want the public's vote, be bluntly honest in what it is you want to do.** Certain areas were vague, it's important to be specific and to the point.

4.1  (21 )

**Coming off of Covid years a lot of families have been in a financial struggle and with inflation and the cost of everything else it was hard to vote y** This is important because some families are struggling with daily living

4.0  (47 )



## THOUGHTS People



**The amount was probably too large for many people to swallow.** District patrons will support levy/bond issues, but there is a limit. One hundred million was clearly beyond that limit for many people.

4.1  (37 )

**Make it transparent and easy for people to see your financial statements** So people can see if you are fiscally sound and transparent

4.0  (47 )

**More explanations about the benefits to the students and the community** I think a lot of people don't understand the need



4.0  (46 )









## THOUGHTS Community



**It would go a long way to have a better break down of how the issues within the bond will be implemented** Speaking in generalities such as safety or sports isn't enough, when you are talking about taxes. The community members deserve implementation data **4.2**  ( 14  )

**It's frustrating and disappointing that the bond didn't pass. Student safety and elementary building updates should be top priority for our community** Even before I was a parent I voted yes for bonds that were necessary, explain how everyone benefits and get the vote out, we need this to pass. **4.0**  ( 15  )



**Highlight the specific needs of the bond more clearly (safety/health concerns, outdated equipment, etc.)** Saturate the community with information, WAY more publicity! Community member PSAs would be a great campaign option **3.9**  ( 45  )







## THOUGHTS

### Property Taxes



**Better explain why the things you want are worth being the top priority over other needs in the district, and why it is worth raising taxes.** People's incomes are strained. They need a very good reason to pay more in taxes. 4.3  (44 )

**Allocation of funds was very vague and not the most of important issues.** If you are going to raise my property taxes for schools then I want to know where it directly going. 4.0  (46 )

**The timing of tax revaluation right before the election was unfortunate. No one wants to vote for more taxes when their property value just went up.** There is only so much money in the personal budget. Property value went up 37%. That will raise my taxes enough without the bond also. 4.0  (44 )



## THOUGHTS Time



**Consider timing. And the amount. It was a heavy lift when families are feeling stretched financially.** This is one of the only things people had a 'voice' regarding rising prices

4.0  (38 )

**Information needs to be out early. Very little info was easily available to the public early, that did improve closer to the vote.** Not everyone has children in the schools. They don't attend school board meetings. As stakeholders they deserve time to ask questions and get informed

4.0  (37 )

**I think that the timing of the election, during an economic down turn, impacted the results.** I think that voters who would normally vote yes on a bond election, chose to vote no due to their personal economic concerns.

3.9  (44 )



## THOUGHTS High



**My taxes were raised for the bond that built the new Jr high, and with re-districting my kids don't get to go there. Schools are doing the best they** Can. My kids attend the most run-down, least secure elementary campuses and Jr high compared to the rest of the district. These kids deserve better.

4.0  (12 )

**People are worried about having to pay more when other expenses are currently so high from inflation.** We are on a fixed income. When the money is gone it is gone.

3.9  (41 )

**Not much to learn except property taxes went up all taxes went up food prices are extremely high and gas prices high. Wages are not going up.** Now is not the time to ask for huge amounts of money people are tapped out.

3.8  (37 )





## THOUGHTS Information



**Share information earlier and more specific details of projects** Transparency and getting information into public's hands 4.0  (28 )



**Get information in every voters hands** 3.9  (44 )



**In spite of your efforts, there probably was not enough information about building needs, beneficial cost match, and actual tax impact.** People need good information to make good decisions. 3.9  (28 )



## THOUGHTS Know



**Be extremely transparent.** The community wants to know how their tax dollars are being spent. 4.3  (38 )

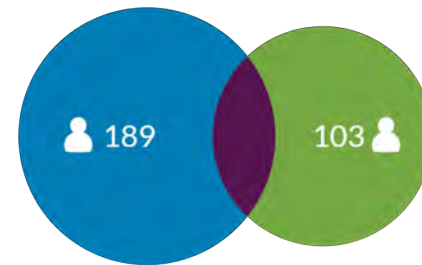
**Be completely transparent** Voters want to know exactly what's what 4.2  (47 )

**Be transparent.** 4.1  (36 )



## DIFFERENCES

People | Taxes and Money [189 | 103]



### Side A

The community should take tours of the schools that are falling apart and have issues. Seeing the issues with their own eyes could have great impact on how things truly do need fixing and updating.

★ 4.5   ★ 1.7

People don't actually know how bad the buildings are, pictures do not do them justice.

★ 4.8   ★ 1.6

### Side A/B Common (high)

Better explain why the things you want are worth being the top priority over other needs in the district, and why it is worth raising taxes. People's incomes are strained. They need a very good reason to pay more in taxes.

★ 4.5   ★ 4.2

Be completely transparent Voters want to know exactly what's what

★ 4.4   ★ 4.3

### Side B

I don't have a high regard for school bonds in general as I feel school administrators have no common sense in spending the money they receive. Stop focusing on woke liberal agendas and focus on teaching kids to be ready for the workforce to and how to contribute to society not sponge off it.

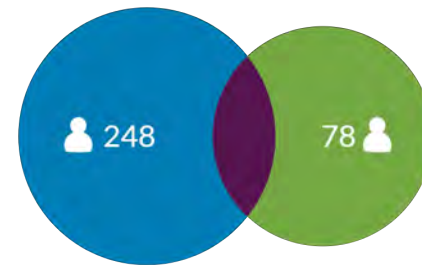
★ 1.3   ★ 4.9

I feel the money isn't spent wisely, we are still paying on other school bonds, and I don't approve of the curriculum that is being taught.



## DIFFERENCES

Taxes and People | Bond and Community [248 | 78]



### Side A

It's hard to vote yes to a school that buys up land for further schools, and then asks parents to supply pencils in the same week. Where does the per Student funding go?

★ 4.4   ★ 1.5

**Bad timing. Middle of huge inflation people don't want to spend more**

Because people are broke.

Inflation is all over in the news and they don't want to pay more in taxes.

★ 4.5   ★ 2.3

### Side A/B Common (high)

**Better explain why the things you want are worth being the top priority over other needs in the district, and why it is worth raising taxes.** People's incomes are strained. They need a very good reason to pay more in taxes.

★ 4.5   ★ 4.1

**Be completely transparent** Voters want to know exactly what's what

★ 4.7   ★ 3.8

### Side B

**Ask county and city officials to vocalize support for the bond.** Those who look to local leaders in the community would have some guidance

★ 1.9   ★ 4.7

**Share more**

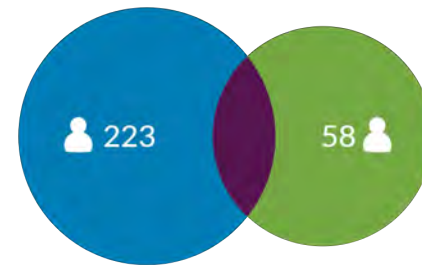
★ 2.0   ★ 4.7





## DIFFERENCES

Information [223 | 58]



### Side A

Community members did not fully understand what the money was needed for. If I didn't work at the school, I think I would have been **hesitant as well**. Lack of clear and concise information leaves room for hearsay and too many unanswered questions for voters to feel confident voting yes.

★ 4.4   ★ 2.2

I also believe that the political divisions in our community, and negative posts on social media regarding public education, impacted the results. Due to

### Side A/B Common (high)

**Better explain why the things you want are worth being the top priority over other needs in the district, and why it is worth raising taxes.** People's incomes are strained. They need a very good reason to pay more in taxes.

★ 4.5   ★ 4.0

**Be completely transparent** Voters want to know exactly what's what

★ 4.7   ★ 3.8

### Side B

*This group of participants rated Side A thoughts low. Review the common interest section to see thoughts that both groups rated high.*



## WRAP UP Next Steps



### Thanks for participating

We'll be carefully considering what we learned and sharing our actions back with you.