

**1994 SURVEY OF REGISTERED VOTERS IN  
SCHOOL DISTRICT USD 497**

Survey by

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## Introduction

The Telephone Survey Research Laboratory at the University of Kansas conducted a household survey of registered voters living within the USD 497 school district. Interviewers called afternoons and evenings between March 28, 1994 and April 15, 1994. Four hundred and seventy one registered voters answered the questions developed by the Lawrence School Board.

The primary purpose of this survey was to assess the opinions of registered voters about the building of a second high school and the bond issue that would be necessary to pay for it. In addition, registered voters were polled about their preferred location of the new school and its configuration, their willingness to support renovations of existing schools, and their general attitudes about local schools and safety in the schools. We also asked questions about the respondents' backgrounds and their personal experiences with Lawrence schools so that we could better understand their attitudes.

It is important to stress that this sample drawn in April 1994 does, within the bounds of sampling and measurement error, accurately reflect the views of current registered voters living within the Lawrence school district. It does not reflect the views of citizens in general nor of previous registered voters. In addition, because such a large percentage of Lawrence residents are university students, we tried to exclude "traditional students" from our sample. We defined traditional students as full-time students whose primary place of residence was somewhere other than Lawrence.

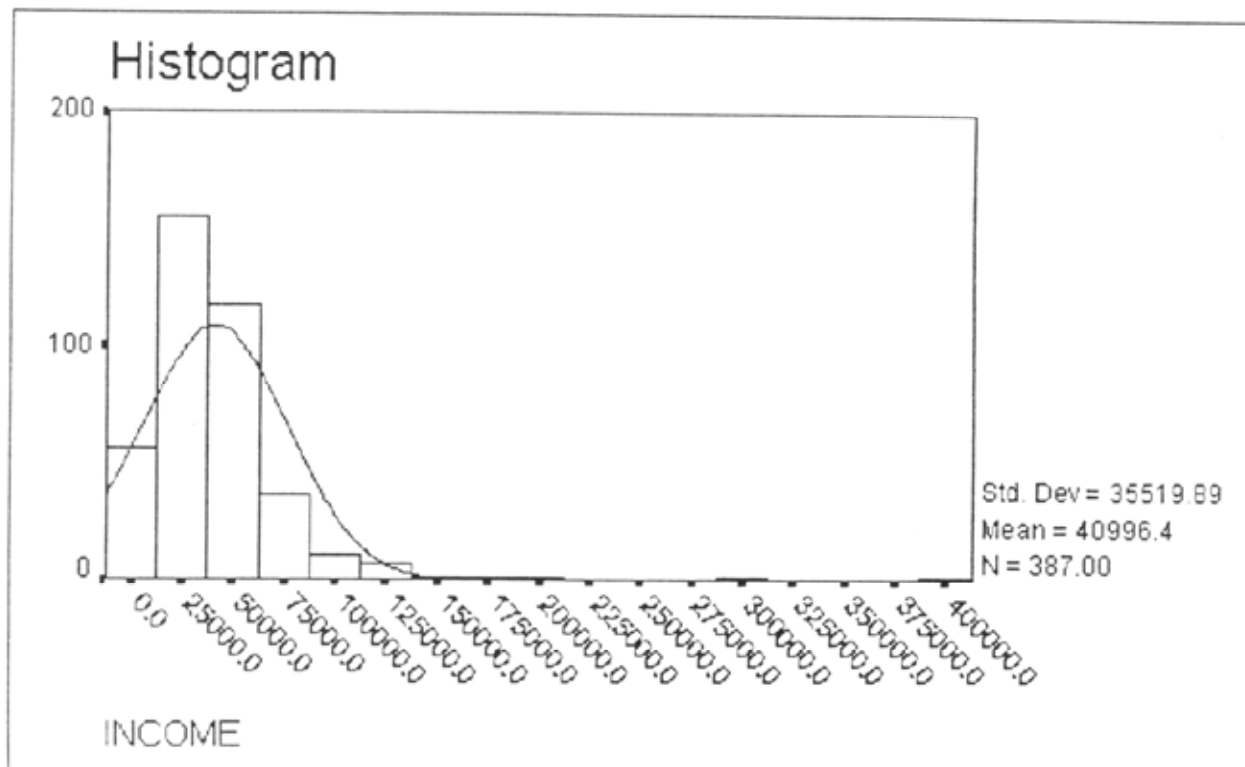
Although there was considerable variation, the median income in the sample households was \$35,000 (Figure 1). The median age was 37 (Figure 2). Ninety-three percent

of the respondents identified themselves as "white" (Table 1). Forty-five percent of the respondents had earned bachelor's, graduate, or professional degrees, and 38 percent had an associate degree or had completed some college work (Table 2). Clearly, survey respondents were a highly educated group. The household composition of the respondents is described in Table 3: 30 percent of the households included the respondent and his or her spouse, and 26 percent included the spouse and at least one child. Most respondents, 87 percent, have moved to Lawrence from another community, with the median length of residency only eight years (Table 4 and Figure 3). (The mean length of residence is 14.5 years, nearly double the median because of the few older respondents who have lived in Lawrence all their lives.)

### **Support for Bond Issue and Second High School**

The first question we asked respondents was: "A bond issue of approximately \$25 to \$30 million for constructing and equipping a new high school will be presented to the voters in the Fall of 1994. If the election for that bond issue were held today, would you vote for or against it, or are you not sure?" This question was asked first so that responses would not be contaminated by other questions. As shown on Table 5, 64 percent of the sample of registered voters indicated that they currently supported the bond issue, 15 percent were not sure, and 21 percent were against. (Many of the tables report two columns of frequencies.

**Figure 1.** Histogram of the Question: "About how much do you anticipate your household's TOTAL INCOME BEFORE TAXES will be for all of 1992? Please include your total income before taxes, money from all sources FOR ALL PERSONS LIVING IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD. Remember this information will remain confidential and will

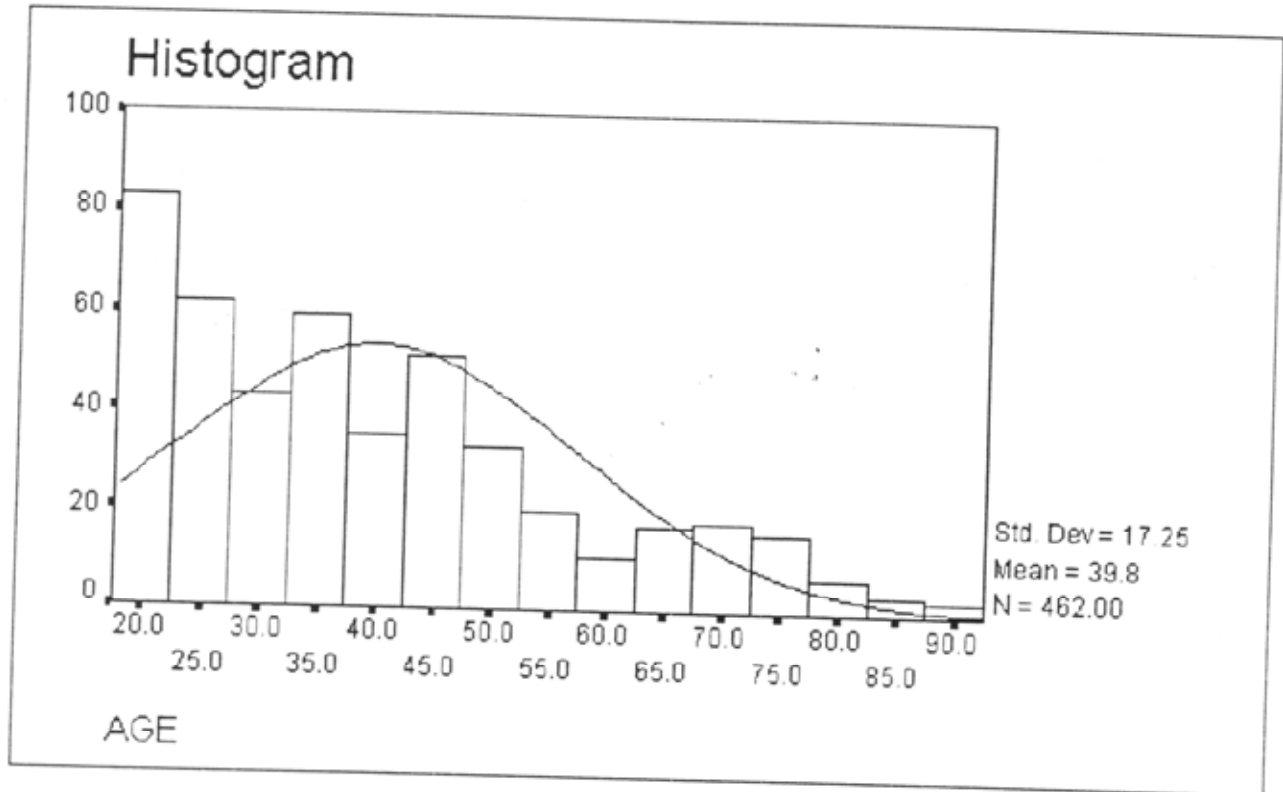


NEVER be reported for individual households. [ \$\_\_\_\_000.00]" (Q38)

Mean \$40,996.382 Median \$35,000.000 Std dev \$35,519.891



Figure 2. Histogram of the Question: "What is your current age?" (Q34)



Mean 39.848    Median 37.000    Std dev 17.254

**Table 1.** Frequencies for Question: "Do you identify yourself as: 1: WHITE; 2: BLACK or AFRICAN-AMERICAN; 3: ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER; 4: NATIVE AMERICAN, ESKIMO; 5: OTHER?" (Q35)

| Racial / Ethnic Identity  | Percent |
|---------------------------|---------|
| White                     | 93%     |
| Black or African-American | 2       |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 0       |
| Native American or Eskimo | 1       |
| Other                     | 4       |
| total                     | 100%    |
| cases                     | (462)   |

**Table 2.** Frequencies for Question: "What is your level of formal education?" (Q34)

| Level of Education               | Percent |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Less than High School            | 2%      |
| High School Graduate             | 13      |
| Associate degree or some college | 38      |
| Bachelor's degree                | 29      |
| Graduate or professional degree  | 18      |
| total                            | 100%    |
| cases                            | (462)   |

**Table 3.** Frequencies for Question: "What best describes your household? For example, do you live alone, are a single parent, and so on?" (Q33)

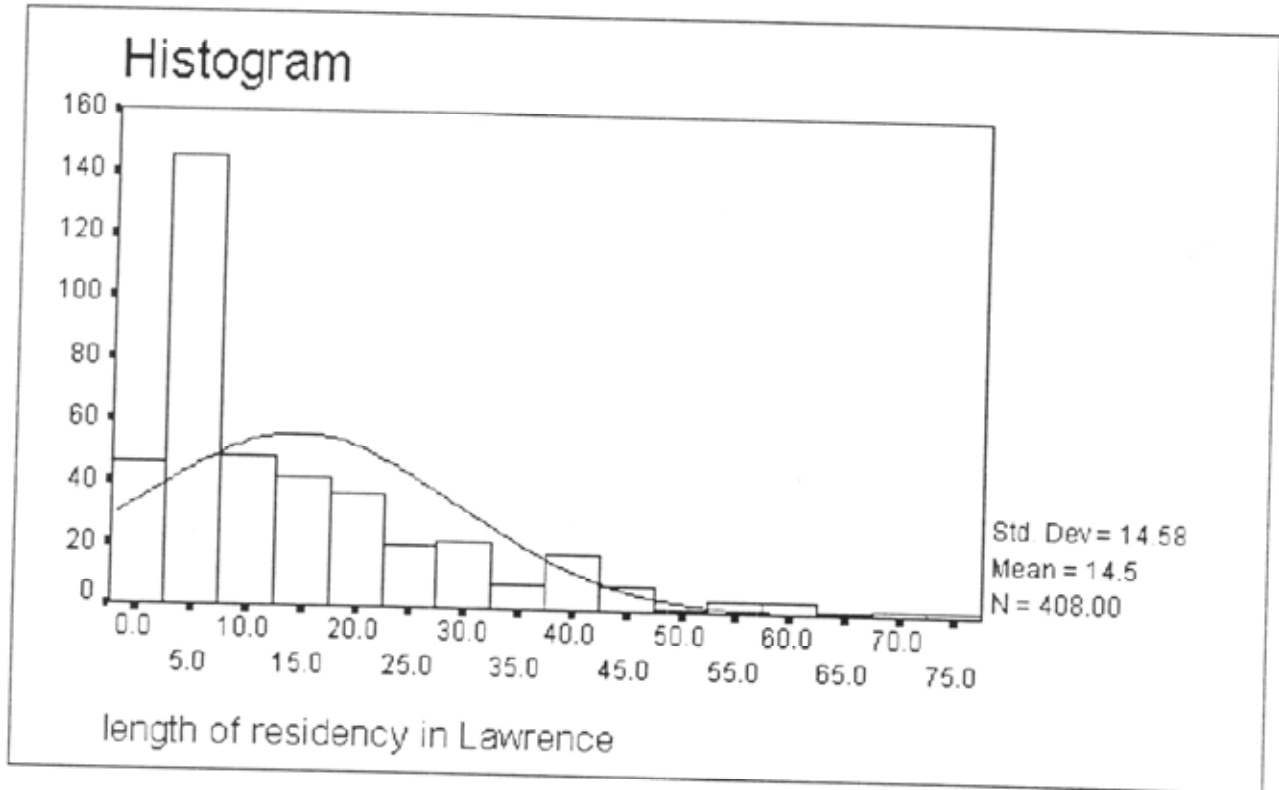
| Type of household                            | Percent |
|--|---------|
| Live alone                                   | 17%     |
| You and spouse live alone                    | 30      |
| You, spouse, and at least one child          | 26      |
| You, child, no other adults                  | 4       |
| You and non-relative adult                   | 20      |
| Two related adults, but not husband and wife | 2       |
| other  | 2       |
| total  | 101%    |
| cases  | (466)   |

**Table 4.** Frequencies for Question: " Were you born in Lawrence?" (Q31)

| Born in Lawrence | Percent |
|------------------|---------|
| No               | 87%     |
| Yes              | 13      |
| total            | 100%    |
| cases            | (465)   |

**Figure 3.** Distribution of Length of Residency (derived from Q31a)

Mean      14.532      Median      8.000      Std dev      14.579



**Table 5.** Frequencies for Question: "A bond issue of approximately \$25 to \$30 million for constructing and equipping a new high school will be presented to the voters in the fall of 1994. If the election for that bond issue were held today, would you vote for or against it, or are you not sure?" (Q2)

|             | Percent | Percent |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| Against     | 20%     | 21%     |
| For         | 63      | 64      |
| Not Sure    | 15      | 15      |
| No Answer   | 2       | * * *   |
| total       | 100%    | 100%    |
| valid cases | (471)   | (461)   |

The first column includes all the cases and provides percentages for those who gave no answer and the second excludes the "no answer" response. Unless otherwise stated, we report percentages that exclude the "no answer" responses.) Of those who were against the bond issue, two-thirds identified cost as a significant reason.

Since cost is a major factor in deciding about bond issues, we asked respondents, separate from the funding question, if they favored building a second high school; 76 percent said "yes" (Table 6). We followed that question with one asking for the reasons for their answer: of those opposed to the second high school, 64 percent gave cost as their most important reason, but only 17 percent offered the reason that it would divide the community (Table 7). Supporters gave very different reasons. The most frequently mentioned was the quality of education; 84 percent of supporters gave this reason, but equity, the second most frequently mentioned response, received only 6 percent (Table 8).

Another indicator of support or opposition to the second high school is the open-ended question: "With 1,848 students in grades 10 through 12, Lawrence High School is currently at capacity. What, in your view, is the **one** best option to meet expected enrollment increases?" As shown in Table 9, 56 percent suggested building a second high school for grades ten through twelve. The next most frequent response (28 percent) was to expand the current high school. Five percent suggested two grades, nine through twelve high schools,

**Table 6.** Frequencies for the Question: "Do you support building a second high school in Lawrence?" (Q9)

|             | Percent | Percent |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| No          | 23%     | 24%     |
| Yes         | 72      | 76      |
| No answer   | 5       | * * *   |
| total       | 100%    | 100%    |
| valid cases | (471)   | (448)   |

**Table 7.** If "NO" above, "What is your most important reason?" (Q10a)

| Reason               | Percent |
|----------------------|---------|
| Cost                 | 64%     |
| Divide the Community | 17      |
| Quality of Education | 7       |
| Equity               | 6       |
| Location             | 2       |
| Sports               | 2       |
| Academics            | 2       |
| total                | 100%    |
| Valid Responses      | 101     |



**Table 8.** If "YES" above, "What is your most important reason?" (Q10b)

| Reason               | Percent |
|----------------------|---------|
| Cost                 | 2%      |
| Divide the Community | 1       |
| Quality of Education | 84      |
| Equity               | 6       |
| Location             | 0       |
| Sports               | 1       |
| Academics            | 4       |
| Grade configuration  | 1       |
| total                | 99%     |
| Valid Responses      | 338     |

**Table 9.** Frequencies for the Question: " With 1,848 students in grades 10 through 12, Lawrence High School is currently at capacity. What, in your view, is the **one** best option to meet expected enrollment increases. [Ask open use following code]" (Q8)

|   | Percent |
|---|---------|
| Expand the present high school for grades 10-12   | 28%     |
| Provide for two schools by building a second high school for grades 10-12                     | 56      |
| Provide for two schools by building a second high school for grades 9-12                      | 5       |
| Expand the present high school to establish separate schools for 9-10 and 11-12<br>(1 campus) | 6       |
| Build a new school to establish separate grades for 9-10 and 11-12 (2 campuses)               | 5       |
| Build a second and third school of equal size   | 1       |
| total   | 101%    |
| valid cases   | (423)   |

**Table 10.** Frequencies for Question: "On [date], voters were asked to approve a bond issue to pay for a second high school. Did you vote in that election?" (Q29a)

| Vote in last election | Percent |
|-----------------------|---------|
| No                    | 41%     |
| Yes                   | 59      |
| total                 | 100%    |
| cases                 | (461)   |

**Table 11.** Frequencies for Follow-up Question: "[If yes] Did you vote for or against that bond issue?" (Q29b)

| Vote for bond issue | Percent |
|---------------------|---------|
| Against             | 43%     |
| For                 | 57      |
| total               | 100%    |
| cases               | (263)   |

and 6 percent suggested separating the age groups into two schools: one for ninth and tenth grades, the other for eleventh and twelfth grades.

We also asked respondents if they voted in the previous bond election, and if they had we asked if they voted for or against the attempt to fund the building of a second high school. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents said they voted in the previous election: of those, 47 percent claimed that they voted for that bond issue (Tables 10 and 11). Since the previous bond issue was defeated in the polls, these figures raise questions about the predictive value of the current findings. First, opinions do commonly change as election day nears, and polls taken in April cannot predict the outcome of elections in November except on those rare candidates or issues about whom opinions are highly formed and stable. (Prior to the 1990 bond election, a survey of registered voters taken the previous Spring for the *Lawrence World Journal* indicated that 54 percent were opposed, and 13 percent were undecided.) Second, respondents reports of if and how they voted are not entirely accurate. National polls taken shortly after elections commonly indicate a ten percent inflation in those who claim to have voted; that is, if 40 percent actually voted, 50 percent of those polled will say they voted. Respondents also commonly give what they conceive as the "socially desirable" response even if such responses conflict with actual behavior. Voting, for example, is considered a good thing to do, so many will claim to have voted even though they did not. Third, when individuals change their minds, they often change their memories of past views

in order to be consistent. As demonstrated in Table 12, there is a clear pattern of shift towards support for the planned bond issue. Of those who claimed to have voted against the previous bond issue, 24 percent favor the planned bond issue; therefore, if current views can influence recollections of previous views, the pull would be in the direction of support.

It is, however, possible that the sample of registered voters who completed the interview is biased in favor of the bond issue and the second high school. To the extent that the sample includes a disproportionate number of individuals who voted for the previous bond issue, the support for the planned issue may be inflated. It is impossible to identify which, if any, reason explains the discrepancy between the actual 1990 vote and the respondents' reporting of their previous vote; most likely it is a mixture of all four explanations. It is important, therefore, to interpret the findings about support with caution.

To further interpret voter attitudes about the bond issue and second high school, we examined several respondent characteristics to measure any differences among those who support and oppose these initiatives. These analyses are summarized in Tables 13 through 16. Tables 13 and 14 examine the support for the bond issue, and Tables 15 and 16 examine support for the second high school.<sup>1</sup> Both sets of tables reveal similar patterns. One would expect that families with higher income might be more favorable to the bond issue and an expensive

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<sup>1</sup> Two forms of statistical analysis are used because of the nature of the variables. When the criterion variable was continuous or interval, such as income, we used the more powerful analysis of variance. When the criterion variable was discrete, such as whether or not they were born in Lawrence, we used contingency table analysis and the Chi square statistic.

second high school than those with lower incomes. No such differences were found: lower income Lawrence voters had the same levels of support and opposition to the bond issue and the second high school as did their wealthier neighbors. One might also expect that respondents who themselves had attended smaller high schools would be more inclined to build and pay for a second high school, since this would result in two smaller high schools. Again no such differences exist. Although families with school age children are slightly more likely to support the bond issue and the second high school, having children attend the Lawrence public schools made no difference in support for the bond issue and only modest difference in support for the second high school; those with children in the public schools are more likely to support the issues by a margin of 81 to 62 percent ( $\chi^2 = 4.45$ ,  $p = .03$ ).

These tables do, however, identify several areas that distinguish supporters and opponents of these initiatives. Individuals who claim they have a generally higher level of knowledge of the Lawrence public schools are much more likely to be for the bond issue and the second high school. Those who have lived in Lawrence the longest and those who were born in Lawrence are, in contrast, much more likely to be opposed to the bond issue and second high school than more recent residents. The average lengths of residence of those against the bond issue and those opposed to the second high schools are 27 and 26 years;

**Table 12.** Contingency Table of Vote for Planned Bond Issue and Vote for Previous Bond issue.

| Vote on the <b>Planned</b> Bond Election | Vote on the <b>Previous</b> Bond Election |                             |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
|  | <b>Against</b> (Column Percent)           | <b>For</b> (Column Percent) |
| <b>Against</b>                           | 64%                                       | 4%*                         |
| <b>For</b>                               | 24*                                       | 87                          |
| <b>Not Sure</b>                          | 12  | 9                           |
| total                                    | 100%                                      | 100%                        |
| (number)                                 | (110)                                     | (151)                       |

Chi square = 118.88;  $p < .0000$   
Gamma = .69

\* These numbers represent a percent change from the Previous to the Planned vote.

**Table 13.** Comparison of Question "A bond issue of approximately \$25 to \$30 million for constructing and equipping a new high school will be presented to the voters in the fall of 1994. If the election for that bond issue were held today, would you vote for or against it, or are you not sure?" and Selected Demographics<sup>2</sup>

| Comparison Question                              | Statistical Significance | Nature of Difference   |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| Size of Respondent's High school                 | F = 1.09; p = .339       | No difference  |
| Level of Knowledge about Lawrence Public Schools | F = 15.69; p < .0000     | Strong difference with those supporting the bond issue claiming greater knowledge than those against. Those "not sure" claim the least knowledge.  |
| Length of residence in Lawrence                  | F = 32.86; p < .0000     | Strong difference. Those against the bond issue have the longest residence (mean = 27 years) whereas those for the bond issue and not sure have been in Lawrence a much shorter time (mean = 12 years for both). |
| Household Income                                 | F = .08; p = .9220       | No Difference  |
| Respondent's Age                                 | F = 19.56; p < .0000     | Strong difference. Those against the bond issue are older (mean age = 49 years) than those for or not sure (mean age = 37 and 38 years, respectively)  |

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<sup>2</sup> Analysis of Variance with vote forming the groups and demographics the criterion variable.



**Table 14.** Comparison of Vote on Planned Bond Issue and Selected Respondent Characteristics.<sup>3</sup>

| Comparison Question                         | Statistical Significance    | Nature of Difference  |
|---|-----------------------------|---|
| School age children live in household       | $\chi^2 = 10.83; p = .0045$ | Moderate difference. Households with school age children are more likely to be for the bond issue than those with out school age children by 72% to 61%. However, approximately 20% of both groups are against the bond issue. Households without school age children are much more likely to say they are "not sure" (19%) than those with school age children (6%). |
| Children attend Lawrence Public Schools     | $\chi^2 = 1.37; p = .50$    | No difference   |
| Respondent born in Lawrence                 | $\chi^2 = 25.79; p < .0000$ | Strong difference. Those born in Lawrence are much more likely to state they are against the bond issue (46% against) than those not born in Lawrence (17% against). Conversely, most (67%) of those not born in Lawrence are for the bond issue, whereas less than half (44%) of those born here are for it.   |
| Respondent attended Lawrence public schools | $\chi^2 = 31.44; p < .0000$ | Strong difference. Those who attended Lawrence public schools are split on the bond issue: 45% against, 48% for. Those who did not attend local schools are strongly in favor: 67% are for the bond issue.  |

<sup>3</sup> Based on Contingency Table analysis.

**Table 15.** Comparison of Question "Do you support building a second high school in Lawrence? [Yes/No]" and Selected Demographics<sup>4</sup>

| Comparison Question                              | Statistical Significance | Nature of Difference  |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| Size of Respondent's High school                 | F = 2.27 p = 0.132       | No difference   |
| Level of Knowledge about Lawrence Public Schools | F = 6.71; p = .0099      | Strong difference, with those for second high school claiming greater knowledge.  |
| Length of residence in Lawrence                  | F = 70.96; p < .0000     | Strong difference between those against the high school and living in Lawrence much longer (mean = 26 years) than those for the high school (mean = 12 years) |
| Household Income                                 | F = 1.13; p = .2894      | No difference   |
| Respondent's Age                                 | F = 46.40; p < .0000     | Strong difference: those against the high school were older (mean age = 49 years) than those for it (mean age = 37 years).                                    |

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<sup>4</sup> Analysis of Variance with support for second high school forming the groups and demographics the criterion variable.

**Table 16.** Comparison of Support for Second High School and Selected Respondent Characteristics.<sup>5</sup>

| Comparison Question                         | Statistical Significance        | Nature of Difference   |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| School age children live in household       | $\chi^2 = 1.09$ ; $p = .30$     | No difference  |
| Children attend Lawrence Public Schools     | $\chi^2 = 4.45$ ; $p = .03$     | Modest difference. In families with school age children, 81% of those with children in Lawrence public schools favor a second high school. If their children do not attend Lawrence public schools, 62% favor the second high school   |
| Respondent born in Lawrence                 | $\chi^2 = 17.88$ ; $p = .00002$ | Strong difference. Those born in Lawrence are much more likely to state they are against the second high school (45% against) than those not born in Lawrence (21% against). Conversely, most (79%) of those not born in Lawrence are for the second high school, whereas 55% of those born here are for it. |
| Respondent attended Lawrence public schools | $\chi^2 = 16.93$ ; $p = .00004$ | Strong difference. Those who attended Lawrence public schools are split on the second high school: 47% against, 53% for. Those who did not attend local schools are strongly in favor: 79% are for the second high school, 21% are opposed.  |

<sup>5</sup> Based on Contingency Table analysis.

supporters of the bond issue and the second high school have, in contrast, lived in Lawrence on average only 12 years. Respondents who attended Lawrence public schools are evenly split on the bond issue, 45 percent for and 48 percent against, but 67 percent of those who did not attend Lawrence schools favor the bond issue. This pattern holds in regard to support for the second high school: a slight majority, 53 percent, of those who attended Lawrence public schools favor the second high school, whereas a strong majority, 79 percent, of those who went to school somewhere else favor the second high school.

### **Support for Renovations**

The bond issue is expected to include money to renovate other schools and for enhancing school technology. Most respondents, 62 percent, support adding money to the bond issue to pay for renovations of other schools in the district (Table 17); a slightly higher percent, 66 percent, feel that money should be added to the bond issue to address the school district's technology needs (Table 18). Both of these issues are of moderate importance to voters: they rate the importance on average at 3.6 and 3.5 respectively, on a five-point scale (Figures 4 and 5).

We also asked respondents if they would prefer a single ballot for all the proposed expenditures or to have a separate ballot to pay for the second high school and the other

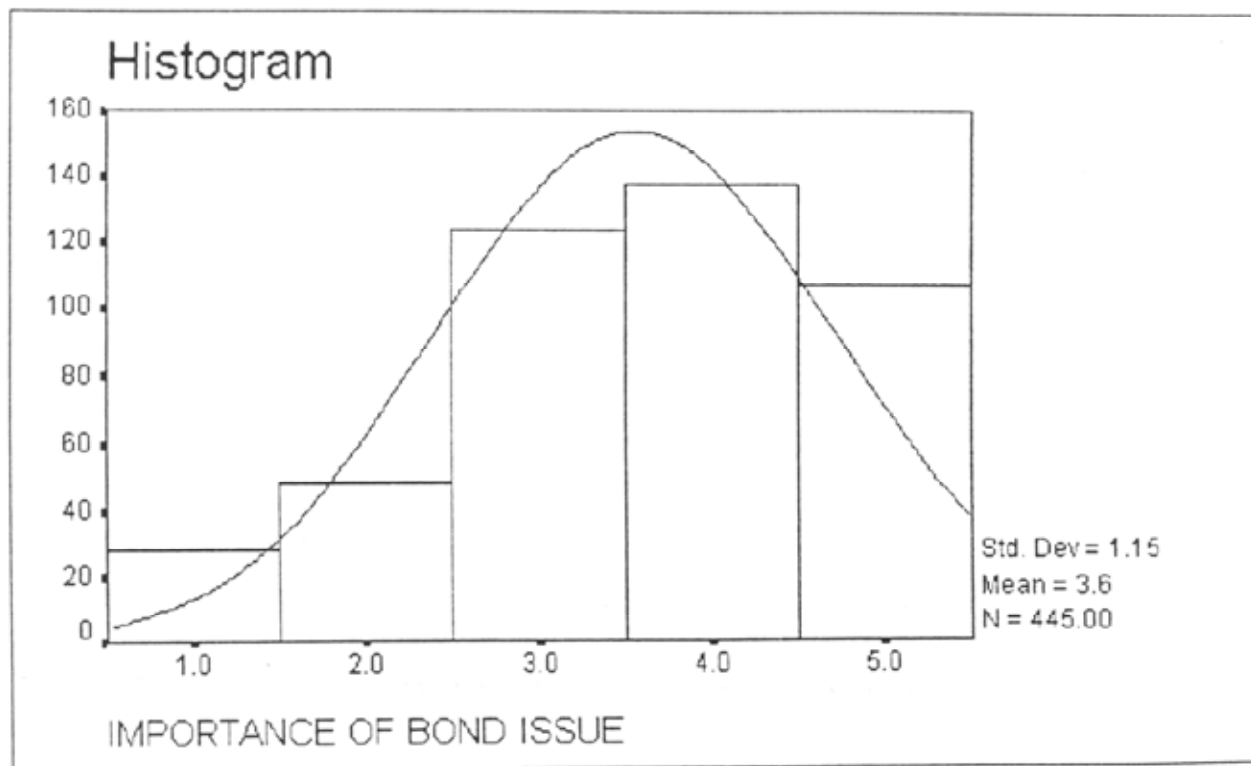
**Table 17.** Frequencies for Question: "Should money be added to the bond issue to renovate other schools? (Q3)

|             | Percent | Percent |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| No          | 34%     | 38%     |
| Yes         | 57      | 62      |
| No answer   | 9       | * * *   |
| total       | 100%    | 100%    |
| valid cases | (471)   | (427)   |

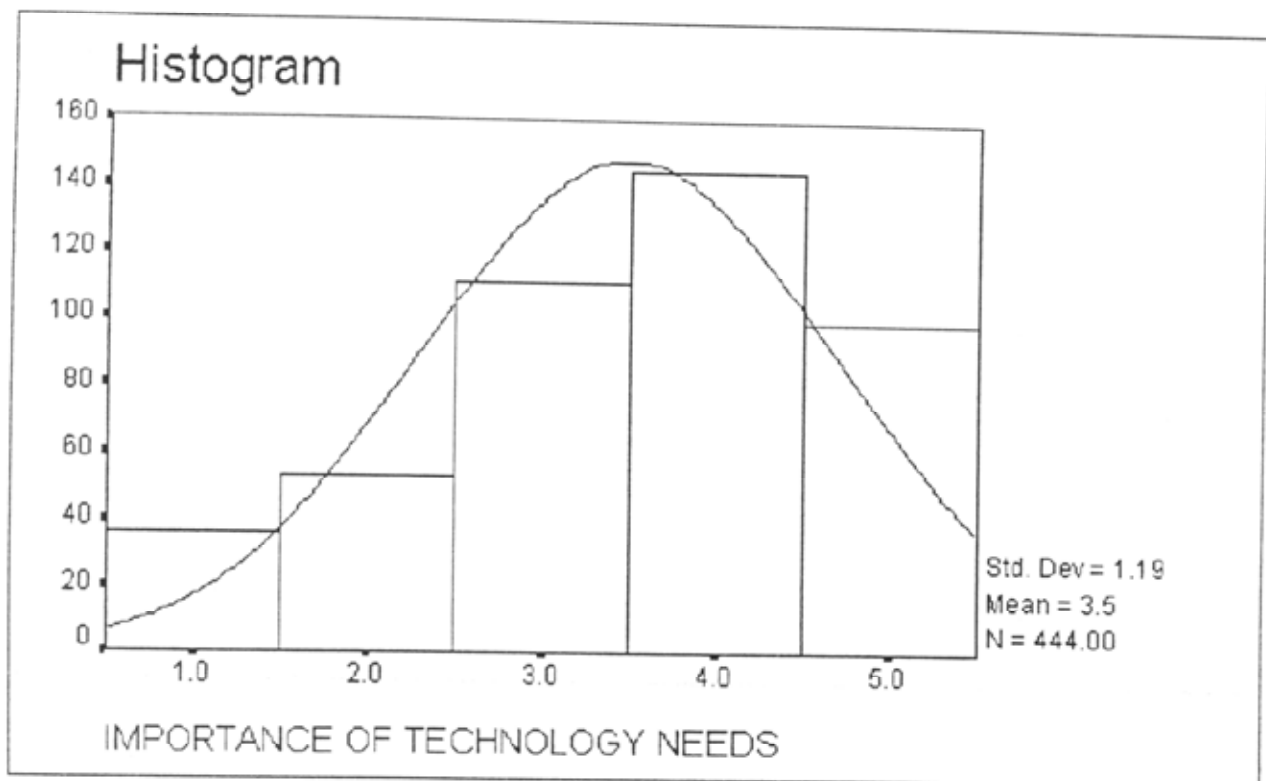
**Table 18.** Frequencies for Question: "Should money be added to the bond issue to address the technology needs of the district?" (Q5)

|             | Percent | Percent |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| No          | 31%     | 34%     |
| Yes         | 60      | 66      |
| No answer   | 9       | * * *   |
| total       | 100%    | 100%    |
| valid cases | (471)   | (428)   |

**Figure 4.** Histogram of Follow-Up: "How important is this issue to you? Please rate the importance on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning of no importance and 5 meaning very important to you." (Q4)



**Figure 5.** Histogram of Follow-Up: "How important is this issue to you? Please rate the importance on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning of no importance and 5 meaning very important to you." (Q6)



initiatives. Lawrence voters overwhelmingly, by 81 to 19 percent, prefer separate questions (Table 19).

### **Community Views About the Configuration and Location of the Schools**

Currently, in the Lawrence public schools ninth graders attend junior high school. One proposal under consideration is moving the ninth graders into four-year high schools and creating a middle school encompassing sixth through eighth grades. Most of Lawrence registered voters, 60 percent, prefer the current ten through twelve grades arrangement of the high school (Table 20). The respondents are, however, evenly split on the question of moving sixth graders in with seventh and eighth graders (Table 21), although clearly such a move is not possible without creating four-year high schools.

If Lawrence builds a second high school, over three quarters of Lawrence registered voters would like to see that the two schools are as similar as possible (Table 22). As shown in Table 23, 68 percent of those who think that the schools could be different would accept academic differences.

Sixty-two percent of Lawrence registered voters think that if a second high school is to be built, it should be west of town (Table 24). The next most commonly suggested location was south of town, which was mentioned by 16 percent of voters. These findings are only rough indications of general location, since we were unable to precisely divide the



community into distinct regions. Tables 25 and 26 show that 60 percent of voters are not willing to pay extra so that the school could be built at their preferred location and 65

**Table 19.** Frequencies for the Question: "Would you prefer separate ballot questions on the issues of building a second high school, renovations for existing schools, and technology enhancements or would you prefer a single ballot question covering all the issues? (Q7)

|                           | Percent |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Separate ballot questions | 81%     |
| Single ballot question    | 19      |
| total                     | 100%    |
| valid cases               | (464)   |

**Table 20.** Frequencies for the Question: "If Lawrence were to build a second high school building, would you prefer that **both** schools include grades: (1) 10 through 12 or (2) 9 through 12?" (Q12)

|              | Percent | Percent |
|--------------|---------|---------|
| Grades 10-12 | 55%     | 60%     |
| Grades 9-12  | 37      | 40      |
| No answer    | 8       | * * *   |
| total        | 100%    | 100%    |
| valid cases  | (471)   | (437)   |

**Table 21.** Frequencies for Follow-Up Question: " [If yes] In your opinion should sixth-graders be grouped with seventh and eighth graders?"

|             | Percent |
|-------------|---------|
| No          | 49%     |
| Yes         | 51      |
| total       | 100%    |
| valid cases | (201)   |

**Table 22.** Frequencies for the Question: " If Lawrence builds a second high school, do you think that it should try to make the schools as similar as possible in terms of programs and students or allow the schools to be different?" (Q19)

|             | Percent | Percent |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| Similar     | 74%     | 77%     |
| Different   | 22      | 23      |
| No answer   | 4       | ***     |
| total       | 100%    | 100%    |
| valid cases | (471)   | (452)   |

**Table 23.** Multiple Responses for Follow-up Question: "[If Different] In what ways do you think the schools should be different?" (Q20)

| Reasons                               | Percent of Responses |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Differ academically                   | 68%                  |
| Differ in extra curricular activities | 13                   |
| Sports and other facilities           | 8                    |
| Differ in number of students          | 11                   |
| total                                 | 100%                 |
| number of responses                   | (79)                 |

**Table 24.** Frequencies for Question: "If Lawrence decides to build a second high school, where should it be built? [West of town; East of town; North of town; South of town; Near the current high school]"

| Location                     | Percent |
|------------------------------|---------|
| West of town                 | 62%     |
| East of town                 | 5       |
| North of town                | 6       |
| South of town                | 16      |
| Near the current high school | 11      |
| total                        | 100%    |
| valid number                 | (302)   |

**Table 25.** Frequencies for Question: "Would you be willing to pay an additional amount for your preferred location?" (Q15)

|             | Percent | Percent |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| No          | 56%     | 60%     |
| Yes         | 36      | 40      |
| No answer   | 8       | * * *   |
| total       | 100%    | 100%    |
| valid cases | (471)   | (434)   |

**Table 26.** Frequencies for Question: "Would you be willing to condemn property to obtain land for your preferred location?" (Q16)

|             | Percent | Percent |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| No          | 59%     | 65%     |
| Yes         | 32      | 35      |
|             | 9       | * * *   |
| total       | 100%    | 100%    |
| valid cases | (471)   | (430)   |

percent do not think that the school board should condemn property to get the land for their preferred location.

### Other Issues

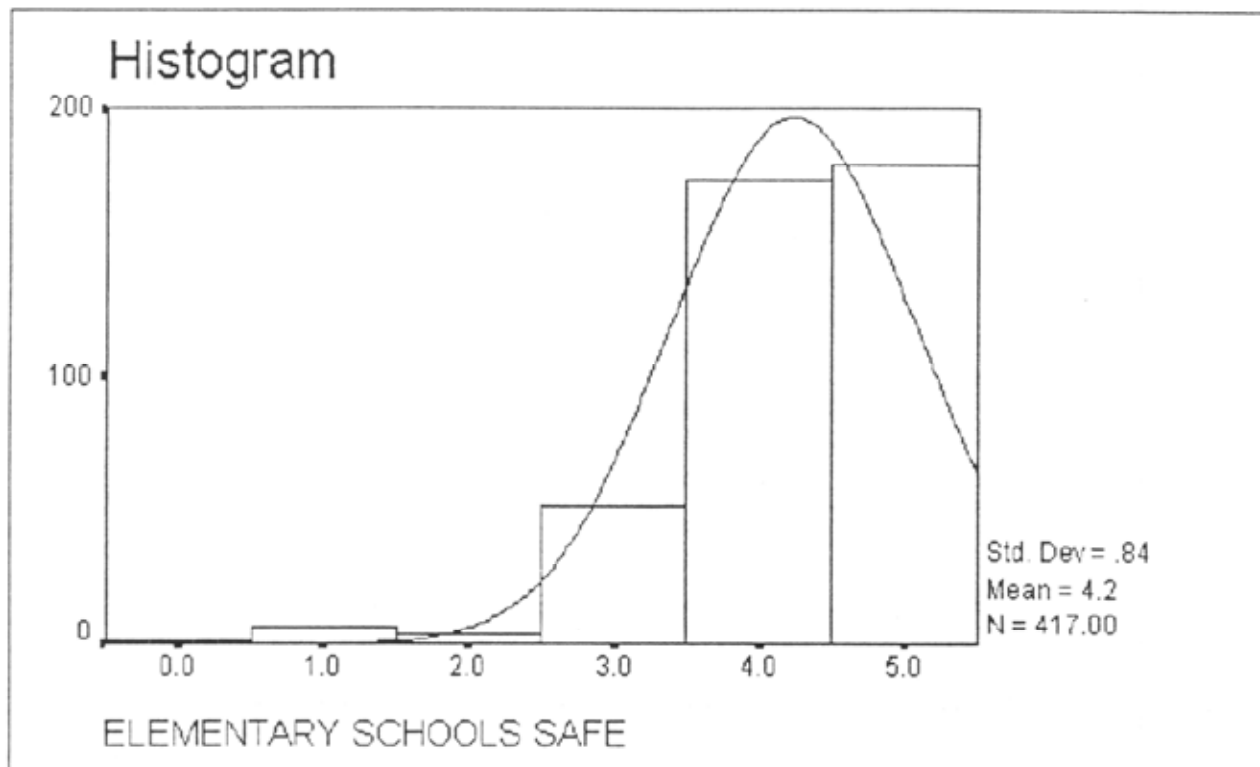
We also asked respondents several general questions about Lawrence public schools. In general, Lawrence voters have positive views of the schools. Thirteen percent gave the public schools the grade of "A," and 51 percent gave the schools a "B" (Table 27). Thus, 84 percent gave the schools above average grades, whereas only six percent graded the schools "D" or "F."

Increasingly, the public and educators are becoming concerned about the safety of the schools. We asked respondents to rate on a five-point scale the safety of students and staff in elementary, junior high, and high schools in Lawrence. The results are displayed in Figures 6 through 8. Most respondents felt that the elementary schools are safe; the mean was 4.2 on the 5-point scale with "5" meaning "very safe." The mean perceived safety declines to 3.6 for the junior highs and to 2.9, or approximately the scale middle, for the high school.

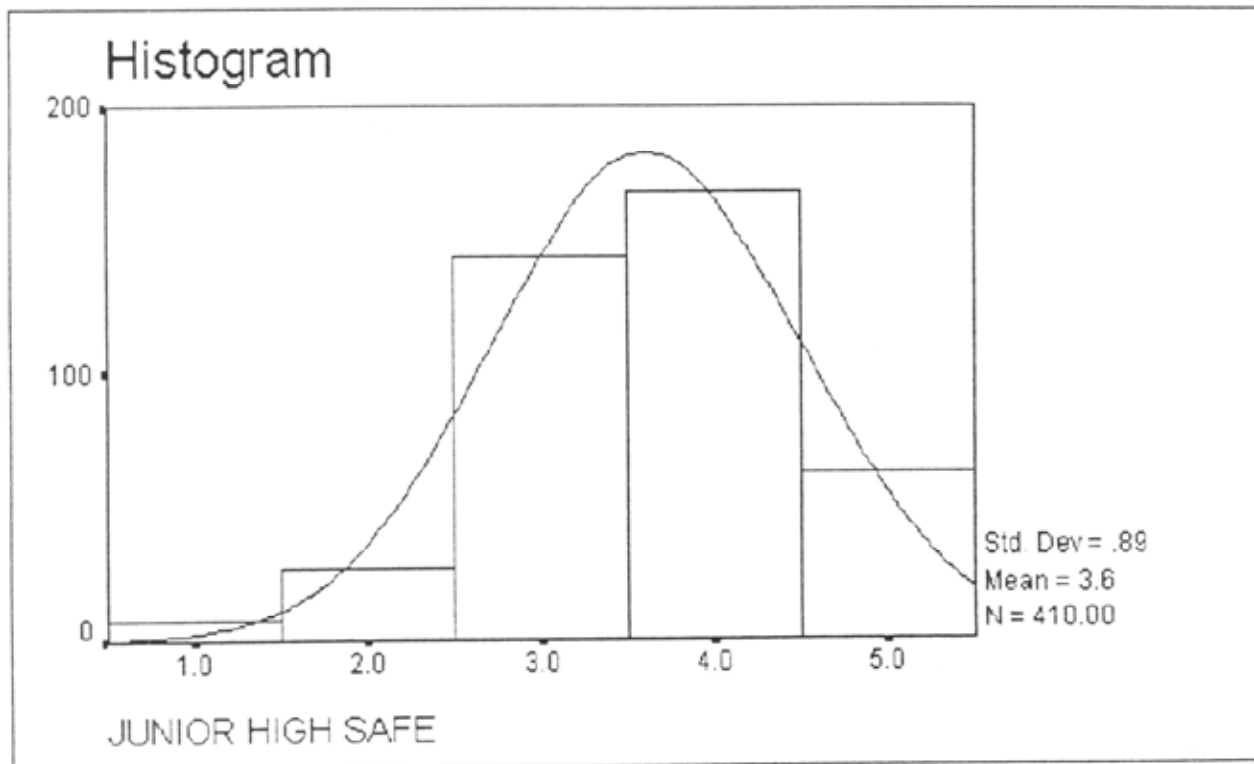
**Table 27.** Frequencies for Question: "Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and FAIL to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the *public* schools themselves, in this community, were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools here -- A, B, C, D, or FAIL?" (Q21)

| Grade       | Percent |
|-------------|---------|
| A           | 13%     |
| B           | 51      |
| C           | 30      |
| D           | 4       |
| F           | 2       |
| total       | 100%    |
| valid cases | (430)   |

**Figure 6.** Histogram for Questions: " Do you think that Lawrence elementary schools are safe places for students and staff? Please rate the safety on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning very unsafe and 5 meaning very safe." (Q22)

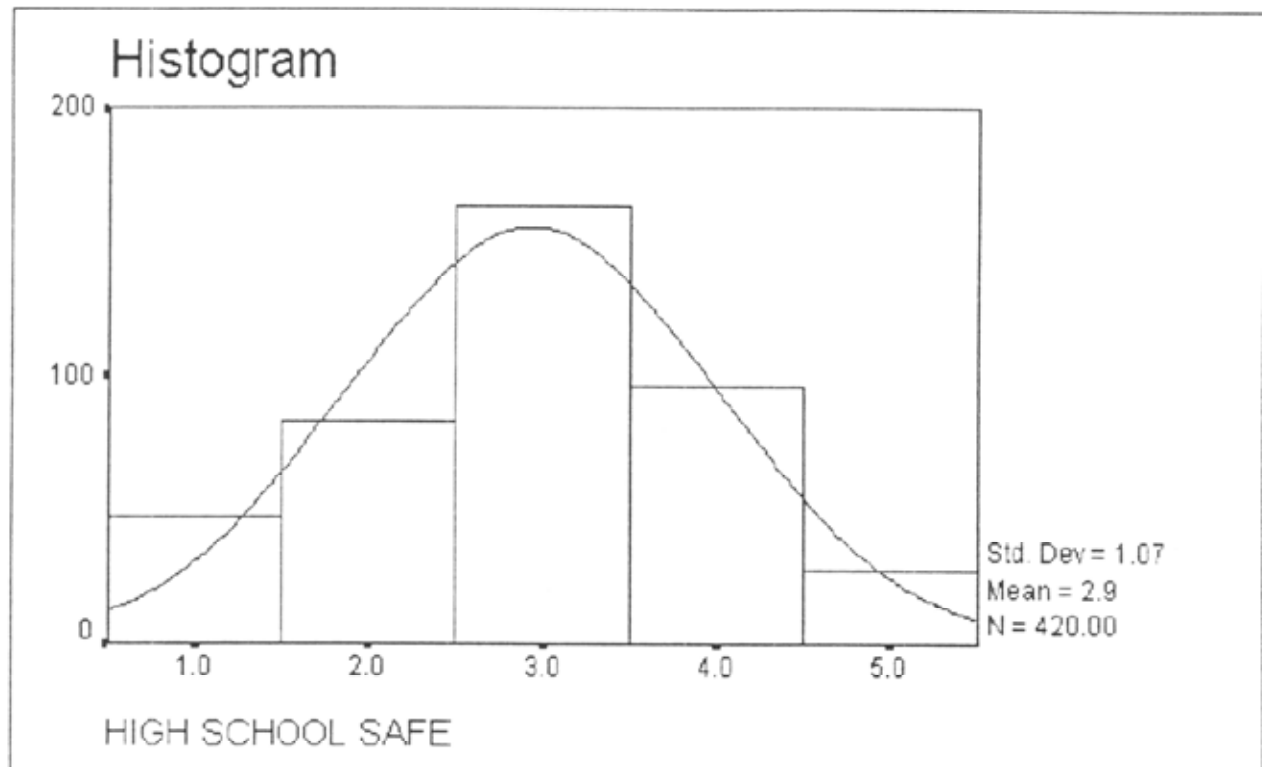


**Figure 7.** Histogram for Questions: "Do you think that Lawrence junior high schools are safe places for students and staff? Please rate the safety on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning very unsafe and 5 meaning very safe." (Q23)





**Figure 8.** Histogram for Questions: "Do you think that the Lawrence high school is a safe place for students and staff? Please rate the safety on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning very unsafe and 5 meaning very safe." (Q24)



### Appendix A: Survey Methodology

The Telephone Survey Research Laboratory at the University of Kansas conducted a household survey of registered voters living within the USD 497 school district. Interviewers called afternoons and evenings between March 28, 1994 and April 15, 1994. Four hundred and seventy one registered voters answered the questions developed by the Lawrence School Board. Sampling error in this survey is plus or minus five percent at the 95 percent confidence level. That is, we are 95 percent certain that the true value for the findings in the population of registered voters in USD 497 is within five percentage points of the values found in the sample survey. As with all survey research, this study also includes other forms of measurement error that cannot be precisely defined.

Households were randomly selected from the voter registration lists for USD 497. Households were selected by a proportionate, systematic random sampling procedure. Individual voters are listed by name and address but not by phone number. Phone numbers were looked up in the local directories, but if they were unlisted, households were not contacted. Also any households with registered voters but no telephone were not included in the sample. A large number of individuals identified on the voter registration lists no longer live in the Lawrence school district since names are maintained on voter registration lists for people who voted once over the past two elections. Households with more than one registered voter were given the same chance of selection as those with only one registered voter, and if the individual sampled was not at home, interviewers asked if another registered voter who lived in the household was currently at home.

Interviewers called sampled households up to five different times over different days and different times of the day. No further attempts were made after five such call-backs. If interviewers encountered an answering machine, they introduced themselves, explained the survey, and told the machine that they would call back. Everyone contacted was explained the survey and told that responses would be anonymous and participation was voluntary. If a registered voter refused to participate, no effort was made to induce participation but was merely thanked. Depending on the method of calculation, the response rate ranged from 72 to 87 percent. The 87 percent response rate is based on the total completions divided by completions plus refusals. In other words, only 13 percent of those contacted refused to participate. The most common reasons given were not have enough time or did not know enough about the issues to answer the questions. The more conservative 72 percent response rate includes in the denominator those households with disconnected phones, that could not be contacted after five call-backs, households who's status was pending at the time data collection ended, and other such practical reasons for no contact. The 87 percent response

rate figure more accurately reflects the community participation in the survey, since many of the incidental noncontacts most likely should have been deleted from the sampling frame. (There were 471 completed, unable interviews; 70 refusals; and 141 miscellaneous noncontacts.)

### Appendix B: Interview Questions

Q: Are you currently a student? [Yes/No]

Q: [If yes] Are you a full or part-time student?

Q: [If full-time] Is your primary place of residence Lawrence or some other place? [If "some other place," terminate interview.]

Q: A bond issue of approximately \$25 to \$30 million for constructing and equipping a new high school will be presented to the voters in the fall of 1994. If the election for that bond issue were held today, would you vote for or against it, or are you not sure?

Q: [If no] Was the cost of the bond issue a significant reason? [Yes/No]

Q: Should money be added to the bond issue to renovate other schools? [Yes/No]

Q: How important is this issue to you? Please rate the importance on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning of no importance and 5 meaning very important to you.

Q: Should money be added to the bond issue to address the technology needs of the district? [Yes/No]

Q: How important is this issue to you? Please rate the importance on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning of no importance and 5 meaning very important to you.

Q: Would you prefer separate ballot questions on the issues of building a second high school, renovations for existing schools, and technology enhancements or would you prefer a single ballot question covering all the issues? [Separate ballot questions/Single ballot question]

Q: With 1,848 students in grades 10 through 12, Lawrence High School is currently at capacity. What, in your view, is the **one** best option to meet expected enrollment increases: [Ask open use following code]

- Expand the present high school for grades 10-12
- Provide for two schools by building a second high school for grades 10-12;

- Provide for two schools by building a second high school for grades 9-12;
- Expand the present high school to establish separate schools for 9-10 and 11-12 (1 campus)
- Build a new school to establish separate grades for 9-10 and 11-12 (2 campuses)
- Build a second and third school of equal size
- Build a second and third school of unequal size (one or two smaller, 5A or 4A, schools)

Q: Do you support building a second high school in Lawrence? [Yes/No]

Q: [If yes or no] What is your most important reason? [Ask open, use following code]

- Cost
- Divide community
- Quality of education
- Equity
- Proposed location
- Sports
- Academics
- Grade configuration

Q: [If yes or no] What is your second most important reason? [Ask open, use following code]

- Cost
- Divide community
- Quality of education
- Equity
- Proposed location
- Sports
- Academics
- Grade configuration

- Q: If Lawrence were to build a second high school building, would you prefer that **both** schools include grades: (1) 10 through 12 or (2) 9 through 12?
- Q: If Lawrence decides to build a second high school, is location important to you? Please rate the importance on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning of no importance and 5 meaning very important to you.
- Q: If Lawrence decides to build a second high school, where should it be built? [West of town; East of town; North of town; South of town; Near the current high school]
- Q: Would you be willing to pay an additional amount for your preferred location? [Yes/No]
- Q: Would you be willing to condemn property to obtain land for your preferred location? [Yes/No]
- Q: In your opinion should ninth graders be moved to high school?
- Q: [If yes] In your opinion should sixth-graders be grouped with seventh and eighth graders?
- Q: How important is this issue to you? Please rate the importance on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning of no importance and 5 meaning very important to you.
- Q: If Lawrence builds a second high school, do you think that it should try to make the schools as similar as possible in terms of programs and students or allow the schools to be different? [Similar/Different]
- Q: [If Different] In what ways do you think the schools should be different? [Ask open, use following codes]
- Academic programs
  - Extracurricular and after school activities, including sports.
  - Sports and other facilities.
  - Number of students.

- Q: Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and FAIL to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the *public* schools themselves, in this community, were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools here -- A, B, C, D, or FAIL?
- Q: Do you think that Lawrence elementary schools are safe places for students and staff? Please rate the safety on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning very unsafe and 5 meaning very safe.
- Q: Do you think that Lawrence junior high schools are safe places for students and staff? Please rate the safety on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning very unsafe and 5 meaning very safe.
- Q: Do you think that the Lawrence high school is a safe place for students and staff? Please rate the safety on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning very unsafe and 5 meaning very safe.
- Q: How many children between the ages of six and eighteen currently live in this household?  
Q: [If have school age children] Do they attend Lawrence Public Schools?
- Q: Did you attend Lawrence Public Schools? [Yes/No]
- Q: How large was the high school you attended? [ \_\_\_\_\_ Approximate number of students.]
- Q: Are you registered to vote? [Yes/No]
- Q: In November 1990, voters were asked to approve a bond issue to pay for a second high school.
- Q: Did you vote in that election? [Yes/No]  
Q: [If yes] Did you vote for or against that bond issue? [For/Against]
- Q: In general, how well-informed are you about Lawrence Public Schools? Please rate the how well you are informed on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning not informed and 5 meaning very informed about Lawrence Public Schools.
- Q: Were you born in Lawrence? [Yes/No]  
Q: [If no] In what year did you move to Lawrence? [Year]

- Q:** What best describes your household? For example, do you live alone, are a single parent, and so on? [Ask open, use the code below. If respondent has trouble answering, you should read the categories.]: 1 Live alone; 2 You and spouse alone; 3 You and your spouse and at least one child; 4 You and at least one child but no other adults; 5 You and adults who are not related to you; 6 At least two adults who are related but they are not husband or wife (e.g. adult child and parent, adult siblings or cousins living together); 7 OTHER
- Q:** What is your level of formal education: 1: 0 TO 11 YEARS, NO DIPLOMA; 2: HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE; 3: SOME COLLEGE or ASSOCIATES DEGREE; 4: BACHELORS DEGREE; 5: GRADUATE or PROFESSIONAL DEGREE
- Q:** What is your current age? \_\_\_ years.
- Q:** Do you identify yourself as: 1: WHITE; 2: BLACK or AFRICAN-AMERICAN; 3: ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER; 4: NATIVE AMERICAN, ESKIMO; 5: OTHER.
- Q:** Do you consider yourself HISPANIC or of SPANISH ORIGIN? [Yes/No]
- Q:** About how much do you anticipate your household's TOTAL INCOME BEFORE TAXES will be for all of 1992? Please include your total income before taxes, money from all sources FOR ALL PERSONS LIVING IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD. Remember this information will remain confidential and will NEVER be reported for individual households. [ \$\_\_\_000.00]



**Appendix C: Tables and Figures Not Discussed in the Body of the Report**

**Table 28.** Frequencies for the Question: " In your opinion should ninth graders be moved to high school?" (Q17)

|             | Percent | Percent |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| No          | 55%     | 52%     |
| Yes         | 38      | 48      |
| No answer   | 7       | * * *   |
| total       | 100%    | 100%    |
| valid cases | (471)   | (331)   |

**Table 29.** Frequencies for Question: "How many children between the ages of six and eighteen currently live in this household?" (Q25)

| Number of Children | Percent | Percent |
|--------------------|---------|---------|
| 0                  | 72.4%   | 73.5%   |
| 1                  | 8.9     | 9.1     |
| 2                  | 10.8    | 11.0    |
| 3                  | 5.7     | 5.8     |
| 4                  | 0.4     | 0.4     |
| 5                  | 0       | 0       |
| 6                  | 0.2     | 0.2     |
| no answer          | 1.5     | * * *   |
| total              | 99.90%  | 100.00% |
| cases              |         |         |

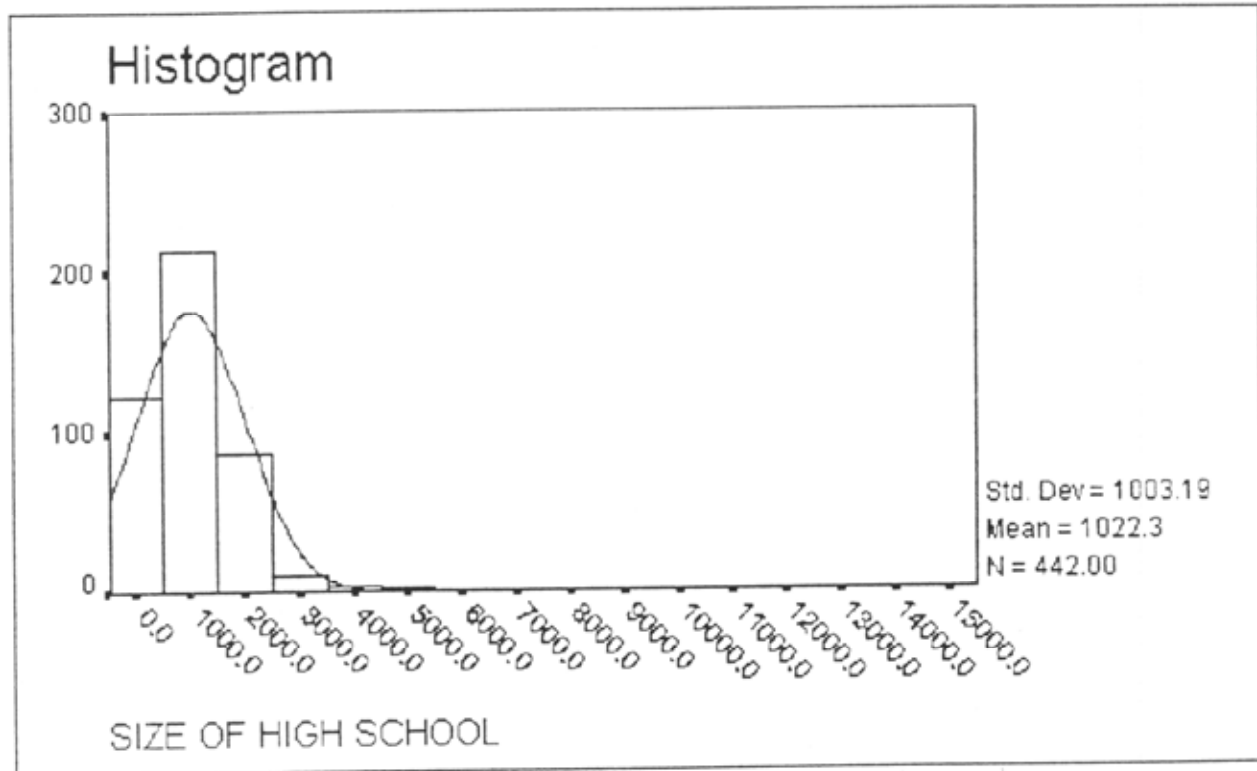
**Table 30.** Frequencies for Follow-up Question: "[If have school age children] Do they attend Lawrence Public Schools?" (Q25a)

| Attend Lawrence Public Schools | Percent |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| No                             | 20%     |
| Yes                            | 80      |
| total                          | 100%    |
| cases                          | (137)   |

**Table 31.** Frequencies for Question: "Did you attend Lawrence Public Schools?" (Q26).

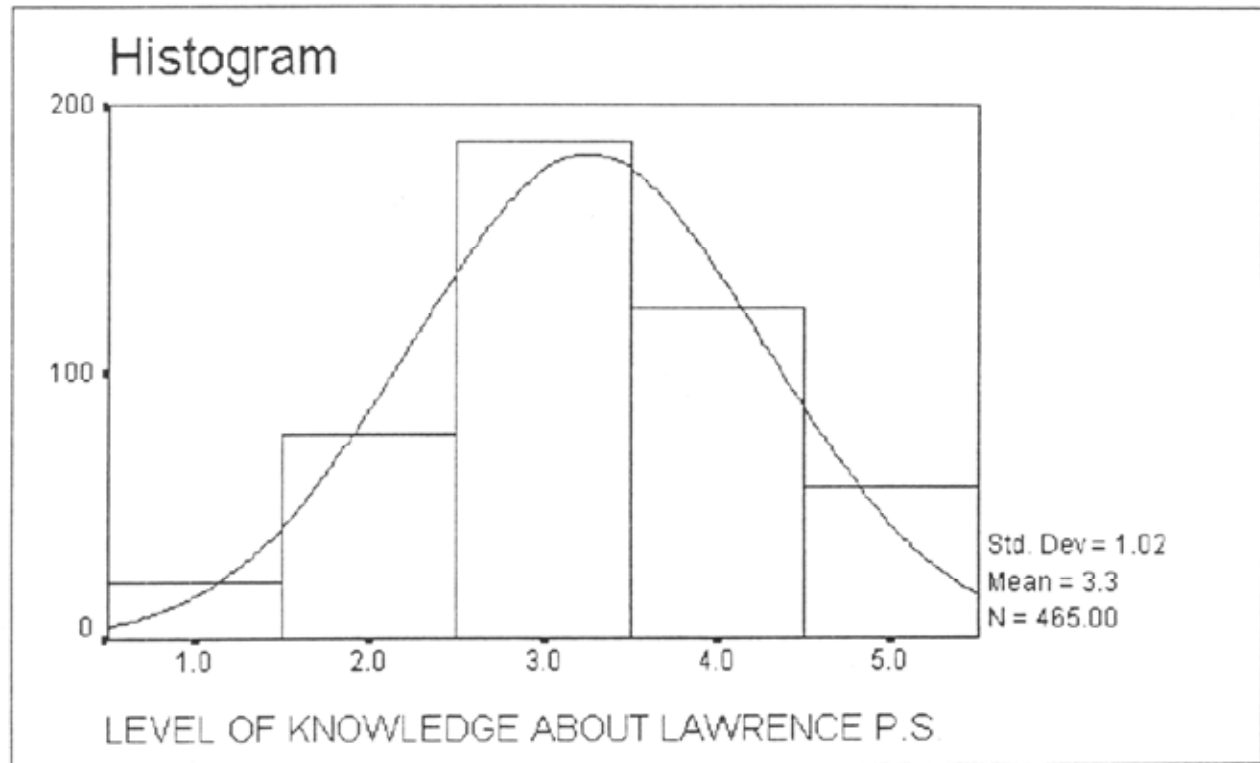
| Attend Lawrence Public Schools | Percent |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| No                             | 84%     |
| Yes                            | 16      |
| total                          | 100%    |
| cases                          | (467)   |

**Figure 9.** Distribution for Question: "How large was the high school you attended? [ \_\_\_\_\_ Approximate number of students.]" (Q27)



Mean 1022.344 Median 850.000 Std dev 1003.187

**Figure 10.** Histogram for Question: "In general, how well-informed are you about Lawrence Public Schools? Please rate the how well you are informed on a 5-point scale with 1 meaning not informed and 5 meaning very informed about Lawrence Public Schools." (Q30)



Mean      3.256      Median      3.000      Std dev      1.020

**Table 32.** Frequencies for Question: "Do you consider yourself HISPANIC or of SPANISH ORIGIN?" (Q36)

| Hispanic or Spanish | Percent |
|---------------------|---------|
| No                  | 98.6%   |
| Yes                 | 1.4     |
| total               | 100%    |
| cases               | (438)   |