

Exit Poll Highlights, May 16, 2006

The exit surveys were distributed by high school social studies students. They were tabulated by Bryan Aho, Travis Barnett, Kyle Goyette, Ashley Keatly, Kathleen Landry, Ken Mars, Lucas Muller, Garrett Rasmuson, Rachel Smith, Jared Swider and Ashley Visco. Academic Head for Social Studies Peter Sheridan arranged for the tabulation. Robert Hanlon compiled the comments and analysis.

- ▶ **The number of people who completed polls is about the same:** 461 this year versus 467 in 2005, 421 in 2004, 613 in 2003, 699 in 2002 and 740 in 2001. That means that 17.0% of those who voted completed a survey, compared with 16.1% last year.
- ▶ **Parents with school-age children:** 48.7% of “yes” voters were parents with school-age children, an increase from last year’s 45.4% but still below 2001’s 62%. The percentage of “no” voters with “school age” children was 39.2, a dramatic drop from last year’s 61.0%.

Overall, 77.1% of “yes” voters and 69.0% of “no” voters said they were parents with children from ages pre-school to older than high school.

- ▶ **Parents with “pre-school age” children:** The results show that 16.5% of parents with “pre-school age” children supported the budget, about the same as last year’s 17%. The number of “no” parents with “pre-school age” children was 13.5%, down from last year’s 20%.
- ▶ **Among age groups, large number of voters identified themselves as being 30-44 and 45-60.** Among yes voters, 37.4% of those completing the exit poll were in the 30-44 age group and 34.8% were in the 45-60 age group. Among no voters, 33.3% were in the 30-44 age group and 35.6% were in the 45-60 age group. Among the 18-29 age group, 12.1% were “yes” voters while 5.6% were “no” voters.
- ▶ **Voters over age 61:** 15.7% of “yes” voters were over age 61, down from last year’s 23.1%, while 25.6% of the “no” voters were in that age group, down from last year’s 27.4%.
- ▶ **School identifications:** the highest percentage of “yes” voters had children at the high school, middle school, Sacandaga and Glen-Worden, in that order. Among “no” voters, the highest percentages came from the high school, middle school, Glendaal and Lincoln, in that order. That is the exact same proportions as last year.
- ▶ **Under “WHY did you vote as you did...”:**
 - Large percentages of “yes” voters, 74% and 74.6%, voted as they did because “S-G schools are worth the cost” and “I believe in supporting the schools.” These were also the top two categories in last year’s survey and really demonstrates support for the schools.
 - 35% of “yes” voters said they have “confidence/trust in the Board of Education” while 38.3% of “no” voters said they had “little confidence/trust” in the BOE.
 - 62.6% of “no” voters cited an “unreasonably high” property tax increase as a reason for voting against the budget; last year, 87.7% cited that reason.
- ▶ **Under “What were your MAJOR SOURCES of information...”:**
 - The *Tartan Report* was listed as the major source of information for most voters: 70.9% of “yes” voters and 56.1% of “no” voters. The second most influential source of information for “yes” voters was the *Daily Gazette* (36.7%) and *Spotlight* (29.4%) while the second most influential source of information for “no” voters was the *Daily Gazette* (43%).
 - 15.8% of “yes” voters and 15.9% of “no” voters cited the website, ScotiaGlenvilleSchools.org. Those were significant increases from last year and may indicated the continued popularity of the website.
 - A significant source of information for “yes” voters (28.2%) and “no” voters (40.2%) was “school newsletters/staff members” followed by “friends/neighbors” (14.1% of “yes” voters and 26.2% of “no” voters).
 - 2.8% of “yes” voters and 9.3% of “no” voters said they “didn’t feel well informed.”

Exit Poll analysis: May 16, 2006

“YES” voters on the 2006-07 Budget

Overview (figure in parenthesis and underlined is last year's exit poll results)

- **354 (309) “yes” voters completed the poll , 107 (153) “no” voters completed the poll. That is a ratio of yes-no of 76.8% (66.2%) to 23.2% (32.8%). There were five polls that were incomplete.**

ACTUAL May 16, 2006 vote: 1,539 to 1,168 (57% to 43%) (LAST YEAR: 1,562 to 1,324 (54% to 46%).

Among 354 (309) “yes” voters:

- **98.0% live in Scotia or Glenville; 2.0% live in Amsterdam; 0% live in Charlton**
- **77.1% (80.0%) have children; 22.9% (20.0%) do not have children.**
- **Of those with children (duplicate answers, some have children at different levels):**
 - 16.5% (17.1%) have **pre-school age** children;
 - 48.7% (45.4%) have **school-age** children;
 - 38.8% (42.1%) have **children older than high school**
- **Which school do your “school-age” children attend? (Some had multiple answers.)**
 - **Glendaal: 19.5 (11.4%)** • **Glen-Worden: 24.8 (28.7%)** • **Lincoln: 7.5% (10.1%)**
 - **Sacandaga: 26.3 (32.1%)** • **Middle School: 42.8% (30.2%)** • **High School: 50.4% (38.5%)**
- **Among age groups:**
 - 12.1% (11.4%) were ages **18-29** • 34.8% (36.7%) were ages **45-60**
 - 37.4% (28.7%) were ages **30-44** • 15.7% (23.1%) were ages **61+**
- **WHY did you vote as you did on the proposed 2006-07 budget?**
(Totals exceed 100% because of multiple answers.)
 - 74.0% (74.7%) voted “yes” because “the quality of S-G schools are worth the cost.”
 - 35.0% (37.2%) voted “yes” because “I have confidence/trust in the Board of Education.”
 - 37.3% (35.9%) voted “yes” because “The proposed property tax increase is reasonable.”
 - 74.6% (81.8%) voted “yes” because “I believe in supporting the schools.”
- **What were your MAJOR sources of information about the budget and proposition?**
(Totals exceed 100% because of multiple answers.)
 - 70.9% (69.9%) cited district newsletters/*Tartan Report*
 - 15.8% (9.1%) cited the ScotiaGlenvilleSchools.org website
 - 29.4% (30.7%) cited the Scotia-Glenville *Spotlight*
 - 36.7% (30.7%) cited the *Daily Gazette*
 - 4.2% (Not asked) cited the *Times Union*
 - 14.1% (18.1%) cited friends/neighbors
 - 28.2% (23.0%) cited school newsletters/school staff members
 - 9.3% (11.6%) cited public/PTA budget presentations
 - 2.8% (3.6%) said they didn't feel well informed about the budget

“NO” voters on the 2006-07 Budget

Overview (figure in parenthesis and underlined is last year’s exit poll results)

- **354 (309) “yes” voters completed the poll , 107 (153) “no” voters completed the poll. That is a ratio of yes-no of 76.8% (66.2%) to 23.2% (32.8%). There were five polls that were incomplete.**

ACTUAL May 16, 2006 vote: 1,539 to 1,168 (57% to 43%) (LAST YEAR: 1,562 to 1,324 (54% to 46%).

Among 107 (153) “no” voters:

- **100% live in Scotia or Glenville; 0% live in Amsterdam; 0% live in Charlton**
- **69.0% (72.4%) have children; 31.0% (27.5%) do not have children**
- **Of those with children (*duplicate answers, some have children at different levels*):**
 - 13.5% (20.0%) have **pre-school age** children;
 - 39.2% (61.0%) have **school-age** children;
 - 42.0% (42.9%) have **children older than high school**
- **Which school do your “school-age” children attend? (*Some had multiple answers.*)**
 - **Glendaal: 20.7% (20.3%)** • **Glen-Worden: 10.3% (7.8%)** • **Lincoln: 17.2% (10.9%)**
 - **Sacandaga: 13.8% (6.25%)** • **Middle School: 41.4% (20.3%)** • **High School: 55.2% (21.8%)**
- **Among age groups:**
 - 5.6% (8.9%) were ages **18-29**; • 33.3% (31.5%) were ages **30-44**;
 - 35.6% (31.5%) were ages **45-60**; • 25.6% (27.4%) were ages **61+**
- **WHY did you vote as you did on the proposed 2006-07 budget?**
(*Totals exceed 100% because of multiple answers.*)
 - 46.7% (49.7%) voted “no” because “I am unhappy with the quality/cost of the schools.”
 - 38.3% (33.6%) voted “no” because “I have little confidence/trust in the Board of Education.”
 - 62.6% (87.7%) voted “no” because “The proposed property tax increase is unreasonably high.”
 - 4.7% (6.2%) voted “no” because “the plan is too low to provide adequate programs.”
- **What were your MAJOR sources of information about the budget and proposition?**
(*Totals exceed 100% because of multiple answers.*)
 - 56.1% (57.5%) cited district newsletters/*Tartan Report*
 - 15.9% (11.1%) cited the ScotiaGlenvilleSchools.org website
 - 29.0% (22.2%) cited the Scotia-Glenville *Spotlight*
 - 43.0% (39.9%) cited the *Daily Gazette*
 - 7.5% (Not asked) cited the *Times Union*
 - 26.2% (27.4%) cited friends/neighbors
 - 40.2% (35.6%) cited school newsletters/school staff members
 - 9.3% (14.4%) cited public/PTA budget presentations
 - 9.3% (17.1%) said they didn’t feel well informed about the budget



Comments from May 16, 2006 School Budget Vote Exit Poll:

Yes voters responded...

- Movement toward gifted learner options - this has been sorely lacking.
- Teachers' Association newsletter (*written under "Major Sources" for info*).
- I am a teacher myself, in another district. Voting is important.
- It is important to do (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- Increase in AEP offerings (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- Proposed enrichment (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- Wanted teachers' opinions (*under the "Major Sources" area. Also indicated they did not feel well informed about the budget*).
- Please, please continue the major programs/curriculums that support the development of well-rounded students: library, art, music, pe, social work (small group initiatives) as well as all other academic subjects.
- Have confidence in Bd. of Ed and district administration (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- Some older persons paid taxes to help educate my sons. I want to do it for other children.
- I have raised 6 college grads (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- Enrichment programs (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- Need to come up with better method to do assessments (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- The school super and administrators need to cut back on their yearly pay increases. This does not put the school needs and \$ where it belongs.
- My wife is an ex school board members so I have to (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- This is the first time in a long time that the district has proposed a reasonable tax increase. 3% is reasonable. In the past years, proposed increases have been undreasonable (6% and higher).
Also, this is the first year in which we have not been "threatened." In the past, the "spin" has been that if we didn't vote yes on the budget, all of our "beloved" (not mandatory programs would be taken away (kindergarten, sports, field trips, bussing, etc.)
Personally, I did not like that tactic and was relieve this year when it did not happen. Thank you, Dr. Swartz, for bringing a reasonable budget and professionalism to S-G.
- An ignorant populace speeds the demise of democracy (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- The value of my house is in part directly related to the reputation of the school district (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- Good PR (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).
- Wonderful teachers (*under the "I voted Yes because:" area*).

- The seniors in Scotia-Glenville are being forced to sell their homes because of the taxes.
Every private company asks their employees to pay part of their health care costs and contribute to 401ks - the teachers union needs to wake up to the fact that taxpayers cannot subsidize their health and pension costs.
- I feel too much \$ is spent on staff training/conference costs and salaries of the superintendent and principals. I also feel that the entire community should not pay for buses when their kids cannot even take them because they live too close - 1 mile in pouring rain or wind chills of -10 to -20??? Would you want to?? I need to leave early from work to pick them up if it gets too cold or severe storms are brewing.
- Enough spending already! (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- I see 5 buses go by my house every morning (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- I did not get a raise that beat inflation in recent years! Why must the schools always beat inflation? (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Too many administ. costs! (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Rate per student is too high. High teacher salaries. Worthless vote anyway since all increases are already done (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- I have driven him to school every day, why don't we get a bus? Beacon St. Even as a kid on Beacon we walked. Why?? (*under the "I voted No because:" area - Beacon Street is located off South Holmes below Mohawk Avenue. Elementary and MS students are bused; HS students are not. This person said he or she had both a Sacandaga student and an HS student*).
- Exceed cost of living (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- NYS should provide the majority of funding, not taxpayers (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Taxes are already too high (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Unions serve no currently needed purpose other than to serve their own needs (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Benefits too high - pension, health care (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Wages and benefits!! Costs are too high for public employees. Both my husband and I have had our pensions frozen but yet we continue to have to pay for everyone else! We need to save for ourselves. (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Don't like to vote for something I am uninformed about (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- I refuse to pay more taxes (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- High school auditorium (*under the "I voted No because:" area - person underlined quality in the sentence " I am unhappy with the cost/quality of schools."*)
- Assessment is already high as well (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Former employer - management stinks (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- When is the sham and spin going to stop. Few teachers would quit because their jobs are too hard. Where else do you get the summers off? The teachers jobs are clean, they don't have to come in when it snows, the pay is great, so stop the spin about losing teaching positions! Other people have to live also, we just can't be having our taxes raised so you can have a better life, the rest of us would like to have a life also. Stop the waste, or the taxpaying public may wake up some day!
- Buses don't need repair (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Don't need buses (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Don't need 5 new buses (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
- Learn to budget = not be greedy (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).



Page 6 • Teachers retirement and health (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).
 • Education seems low priority. See dropout rates and test scores (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).

• Other websites (*under the "Major Sources of information" area*).

• In 12 years, school taxes up 70%

Total propoerty taxes up 85% in 12 years.

Our healthcare insurance is up 95%.

Our GE pension after 38 years of service - up 7/10 of 1% over a period of 15 years (came in 3 small increases).

Easy to see why folks are leaving NY State as fast as possible.

• Voted no as usual because the budget is a teacher/administrator benevolent budget - not for the good of the students. The district teachers, etc. feel more \$ to teachers and administrators equal better education for students - not the case.

- Why do other states and countries have a longer school year - pay less to their teachers and provide a better education? Our teachers and administrators are fat and spoiled and the budget passes because the school district is the largest "block" employer - time to cut teachers \$ and create longer school year. "Break the Block."

• We don't need to provide retirement medical insurance for teachers. There is a lot of the cost (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).

• Tired of rising taxes (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).

• Don't think NYS Regent testing is necessary (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).

• No. We shouldn't take it out on the children! So why do you highly paid people refuse to take a cut in salary? Your union won't let you?

It's where the big money is. My husband and I are elderly - on a fixed income - and can't afford more taxes, but every year, it's the same song.

SHAME - shame on the lot of you - Including the board. I hope you can sleep well at nite - and I hope I can keep a roof over my head.

And your TV commercials are disgusting. We are not all stupid.

V.G. Peck

• Too much of a % raise for the teachers - not in line with the cost of living (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).

• Something "creative" needs to be done to "hold the line!"

• We have been promised things such as out of school field trips and my kids have been given no chance to go.

Teachers are paid too much! (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).

• Already taxes are too high this year (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).

• Always increasing (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).

• Still room to make a few cuts (*under the "I voted No because:" area*).

• Spending has got to be cut. I saw no evidence of willingness to do this as gas/oil prices increased and benefits in the private employment is cut. How dare you go and even consider spending \$5,000 on hockey. Benefits need to reflect better the private sector...public employees have sacrificed nothing and they need to.