Methodology

- Telephone survey of San Ramon Valley Unified School District likely voters
- Conducted July 7-13, 2014
- 600 total interviews
- Margin of error of ± 4.0 percentage points overall
- Split sample methodology used to test different tax rates
  - 300 interviews in each sample, MoE= ± 5.66 percentage points
- Where applicable, results compared to recent polling in San Ramon Valley Unified School District:
  - September 18-20, 2012; n=404, MoE ± 4.9%
  - January 11-15, 2012; n=600, MoE ± 4.0%
  - December 1-7, 2008; n=603, MoE ± 4.0%
  - May 18-20, 2003; n=429, MoE ± 4.73%
  - May 26-30, 2002; n=400, MoE ± 4.9%

Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.
Key Findings

- Voters are feeling optimistic, think the district is doing a good job providing quality education, and trust the district’s ability to manage tax dollars.

- While voters understand the importance of using taxes to fund schools and believe the district needs funding, they are hesitant to increase their taxes.

- A continuation of the existing tax with no increase is initially supported by over 70% of likely voters in the district, which holds up even in the face of negative messaging.

- An increase would be a much tougher task, with support at 64% to start, and never getting comfortably above two-thirds.
Right Direction/Wrong Track

Voter optimism is up since 2012.

Q5: Do you think things in your area are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel that things are pretty seriously off on the wrong track?
**District Need for Money**

62% of voters think that the district has a need for money, although with lower intensity than in recent surveys.

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**Q6:** As you may know, you live in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District. Would you say that public schools in San Ramon Valley Unified School District have a great need for money, some need for money, only a little need or no real need for money?
District Ratings

Confidence in the quality of the district’s education is at an all-time high.

The overall quality of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Only Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2014</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2008</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2003</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2002</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10. Regardless of whether or not you have children in school, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, please rate the following areas relating to the San Ramon Valley Unified School District:
District Ratings

District financial management is viewed positively by 52% of voters, higher than ever previously recorded.

Q7-13. Regardless of whether or not you have children in school, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, please rate the following areas relating to the San Ramon Valley Unified School District.
District Ratings

Voters also rate student academic achievement very well.

- **Student academic achievement and test scores**
  - Excellent: 42%
  - Good: 38%
  - Don't Know: 11%
  - Only Fair: 7%
  - Poor: 2%

- **The high schools**
  - Excellent: 38%
  - Good: 43%
  - Don't Know: 9%
  - Only Fair: 7%
  - Poor: 3%

- **The elementary schools**
  - Excellent: 37%
  - Good: 43%
  - Don't Know: 13%
  - Only Fair: 6%
  - Poor: 2%

- **The middle schools**
  - Excellent: 32%
  - Good: 46%
  - Don't Know: 11%
  - Only Fair: 8%
  - Poor: 2%

- **The job teachers are doing**
  - Excellent: 32%
  - Good: 48%
  - Don't Know: 7%
  - Only Fair: 11%
  - Poor: 3%

Q7-13. Regardless of whether or not you have children in school, using a scale of excellent, good, only fair, or poor, please rate the following areas relating to the San Ramon Valley Unified School District.
Initial Vote

On the initial ask, 73% of voters support a $144 renewal, while a $216 renewal does not clear the 66% threshold.

(SAMPLE A ONLY): Without increasing taxes, to support academic excellence, retain qualified and experienced teachers, and prepare students for 21st century college and careers with strong math, science and literacy education, shall San Ramon Valley Unified School District renew its expiring education tax at $144 per parcel for 7 years, with citizen oversight, annual audits, no funds for administrative salaries, an available exemption for persons 65 and older, and all funds spent to support local schools?

(SAMPLE B ONLY): To support academic excellence, retain qualified and experienced teachers, and prepare students for 21st century college and careers with strong math, science and literacy education, shall San Ramon Valley Unified School District renew its expiring education tax at $216 per parcel for 7 years, with citizen oversight, annual audits, no funds for administrative salaries, an available exemption for persons 65 and older, and all funds spent to support local schools?

Sample A: $144

- Yes, approve: 73%
- Und, Lean Yes: 26%
- Und, Lean No: 1%
- No, reject: 1%
- Und/DK: 3%

Sample B: $216

- Yes, approve: 64%
- Und, Lean Yes: 61%
- Und, Lean No: 32%
- No, reject: 2%
- Und/DK: 4%

Q14. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve this measure or no to reject it?
Initial Vote By Subgroup

Both parents and non-parents show good support for a $144 renewal, while the $216 tax is particularly unpopular among non-parents.

Bubble size corresponds to representation in sample; % who would vote to approve the measure shown.
Initial Vote By Subgroup

A $144 parcel tax renewal is supported by over two-thirds of all age groups and all geographies, while a $216 tax is not as well supported.

**Bubble size corresponds to representation in sample; % who would vote to approve the measure shown**
Historically, polling for district ballot measures has reflected eventual election outcomes closely.

Q14. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve this measure or no to reject it?
Vote after Current Tax Information

Reminding them of the current tax amount and explicitly pointing out that there would be no increase increases support for a straight renewal by 5 points; support drops 4 points for those who are asked about replacing the current tax with a higher one.

As you may know, property owners in San Ramon Valley Unified School District currently pay a parcel tax of $144 per year to support local schools. That tax expires in June, 2016....

Sample A: $144

...This measure just continues that tax at the same rate with no increase

Vote 1: Initial

- Yes: 73%
- Undecided: 1%
- No: 26%

Vote 2: After Current Tax Info

- Yes: 78%
- Undecided: 1%
- No: 21%

Sample B: $216

...This measure would replace the old tax with this new school parcel tax of $216

Vote 1: Initial

- Yes: 32%
- Undecided: 4%
- No: 64%

Vote 2: After Current Tax Info

- Yes: 60%
- Undecided: 3%
- No: 37%

Q15. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve this measure or no to reject it?
District Voter Attitudes

Although three-quarters believe high quality schools are worth increased taxes, two in five say they would vote against any tax increases.

It is crucial to have high quality public schools, even if it means raising taxes.

- Strongly Agree: 46%
- Somewhat Agree: 29%
- (Don't know): 1%
- Somewhat Disagree: 13%
- Strongly Disagree: 11%

The San Ramon Valley Unified School District can be trusted to properly manage tax dollars.

- Strongly Agree: 22%
- Somewhat Agree: 47%
- (Don't know): 7%
- Somewhat Disagree: 13%
- Strongly Disagree: 11%

The schools already have enough money, it is just mismanaged.

- Strongly Agree: 20%
- Somewhat Agree: 25%
- (Don't know): 5%
- Somewhat Disagree: 30%
- Strongly Disagree: 19%

Taxes are already too high, I would never vote for a tax increase no matter how it might be used.

- Strongly Agree: 21%
- Somewhat Agree: 18%
- (Don't know): 1%
- Somewhat Disagree: 25%
- Strongly Disagree: 35%

Q16-19. For each of the following statements please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.
District Voter Attitudes

Voter attitudes about taxes are consistent with recent polling, but have grown more conservative over the decade.

**Q19. It is crucial to have high quality public schools, even if it means raising taxes.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2014</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q16. Taxes are already too high, I would never vote for a tax increase no matter how it might be used.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2014</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2008</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2003</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2002</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure Components</td>
<td>7 - Very important</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Total Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining core academic programs in reading, writing, math and science</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving students at all schools access to the same quality of education</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing students for 21st century college and careers</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruiting and retaining qualified and experienced teachers</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the district’s math and science programs</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving student academic achievement</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining technical and career training courses</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the district’s engineering and technology programs</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding increases in class sizes</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining quality arts and music programs</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q20-29. On a scale of one to seven, where one is not important at all and seven is very important, please tell me how important each item is to you.
Positive Messages

*Strong schools = strong community; accountability measures are also important.*

Good schools are part of what makes our community a desirable place to live. By keeping our schools strong, we keep the community strong.

- **7 - Very compelling:** 53%
- **6:** 16%
- **5:** 14%
- **Total Compelling:** 83%

The measure will include citizen oversight, annual audits, and an annual public report to ensure the money is used efficiently and effectively, and no funds will be used for administrator salaries.

- **7 - Very compelling:** 48%
- **6:** 17%
- **5:** 14%
- **Total Compelling:** 79%

By maintaining high quality public schools in our neighborhoods, we protect our local property values.

- **7 - Very compelling:** 43%
- **6:** 20%
- **5:** 14%
- **Total Compelling:** 78%

This measure shields our schools from the instability of the state budget situation by securing a stable local funding source that the district can count on every year — money that will stay local and...

- **7 - Very compelling:** 42%
- **6:** 17%
- **5:** 16%
- **Total Compelling:** 74%

(SAMPLE A ONLY, n=300) This measure will not increase taxes, it just keeps the current school parcel tax from expiring.

- **7 - Very compelling:** 41%
- **6:** 13%
- **5:** 17%
- **Total Compelling:** 70%

The measure would include an exemption for property owners age 65 and older and people with disabilities.

- **7 - Very compelling:** 41%
- **6:** 12%
- **5:** 16%
- **Total Compelling:** 69%

Q30-41. After each piece of information, please tell me how compelling that is as a reason to support the parcel tax measure. Please use a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is not at all compelling and 7 is a very compelling reason to vote for the parcel tax measure.
Positive Messages

This measure allows the District to continue to retain skilled, experienced, and dedicated teachers — and provide them with ongoing training to maintain high-quality education in our schools.

This measure is NOT a new tax. It continues an existing voter-approved parcel tax to maintain vital funding for public schools.

The measure will help maintain high test scores and ensure that our district remains one of the highest performing school districts in the state.

This measure will enable the district to maintain quality career tech classes to give students exposure to future careers.

If this measure does not pass, the district will be forced to make cuts to educational programs.

Even though the economy and state budget outlook are improving, the district still needs local support to maintain current programs.

Q30-41. After each piece of information, please tell me how compelling that is as a reason to support the parcel tax measure. Please use a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is not at all compelling and 7 is a very compelling reason to vote for the parcel tax measure.
Positive Messages

Over three-quarters (79%) of voters 65+ find the homeowner exemption to be a compelling reason to vote for the measure.

The measure would include an exemption for property owners age 65 and older and people with disabilities.

Q30-41. After each piece of information, please tell me how compelling that is as a reason to support the parcel tax measure. Please use a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is not at all compelling and 7 is a very compelling reason to vote for the parcel tax measure.
Q42. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve this measure or no to reject it?

After one-sided positive messaging, 79% say they would vote for a continuation with no increase, but a $216 tax just barely reaches two-thirds level.
Negative Messages

Negative messages overall are not as compelling to voters, but saying the money will go to pensions and union benefits does resonate with some.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Total Compelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This money doesn't go to the classroom or help students, it goes to pay pensions and inflated benefits for union members.</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The economy is still recovering. Rather than asking taxpayers for more money, the district should live within its means.</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes in this area are already too high, and we just approved a funding measure for our local community college. Enough is enough.</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The economy has improved and the state has more money for education. We simply don't need this measure.</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q43-46. After each piece of information, please tell me how compelling that is as a reason to oppose the parcel tax measure. Please use a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is not at all compelling and 7 is a very compelling reason to vote against the parcel tax measure.
Parcel Tax Vote: After Negative Messages

After voters hear both negative and positive information about the parcel tax, support for a continuation with no increase is at 75%, while a $216 tax is well below the two-thirds threshold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample A: $144</th>
<th>Sample B: $216</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote 1: Initial</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vote 1: Initial</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes: 26%</td>
<td>Yes: 32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided: 1%</td>
<td>Undecided: 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No: 73%</td>
<td>No: 64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote 2: After Current Tax Info</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vote 2: After Current Tax Info</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes: 21%</td>
<td>Yes: 37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided: 1%</td>
<td>Undecided: 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No: 78%</td>
<td>No: 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote 3: After Positive Messages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vote 3: After Positive Messages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes: 20%</td>
<td>Yes: 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided: 1%</td>
<td>Undecided: 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No: 79%</td>
<td>No: 67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vote 4: After Negative Messages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Vote 4: After Negative Messages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes: 23%</td>
<td>Yes: 37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided: 1%</td>
<td>Undecided: 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No: 75%</td>
<td>No: 61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q47. If the election were held today, would you vote yes to approve this measure or no to reject it?
Conclusions/Recommendations

- Polling indicates strong viability for a parcel tax renewal at the current tax rate.

- Although a strong majority of voters are willing to support a higher amount, reaching the two thirds threshold with an increased parcel tax rate would be difficult.

- We recommend continuing to move forward with planning for a special election next spring.
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