

COMMUNITY EDUCATION STUDY 2006

Ludlow Town School District and Black River Union 39
School District

November 2006

Statement of Confidentiality and Ownership

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As required by the Code of Ethics of the National Council on Public Polls and the United States Privacy Act of 1974, The Center for Research & Public Policy maintains the anonymity of respondents to surveys the firm conducts. No information will be released that might, in any way, reveal the identity of the respondent.

Moreover, no information regarding these findings will be released without the written consent of an authorized representative of Ludlow, Vermont.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Center for Research & Public Policy (CRPP) is pleased to present the results to a Community Education Survey among Ludlow and Mount Holly residents as well as vacation homeowners in both communities.

The survey was designed to provide resident and vacation homeowner input on education issues both communities currently face.

The research study included a comprehensive telephone survey. Interviews were conducted among 280 residents of Ludlow (183) and Mount Holly (97) by telephone. CRPP, working together with Ludlow, Vermont officials, designed the survey instrument to be used when calling Ludlow, Vermont residents.

This report summarizes information collected from telephone surveys conducted September 27 – October 3, 2006.

The survey instrument employed in the Community Education Study included the following areas for investigation:

Ludlow and Mount Holly Residents

- ✓ Quality of life;
- ✓ Awareness of local and state education issues;
- ✓ Support for unification or combining of local school boards;
- ✓ Support for Black River renovations, tuitioning, or privatization;
- ✓ Rating the local school system;
- ✓ Impressions of local school spending;
- ✓ Willingness to financially support Black River renovations;
- ✓ Support for combining two Supervisory Unions; and
- ✓ Demographics

Vacation Homeowners

- ✓ Okemo region quality of life;
- ✓ Awareness of state and local education issues;
- ✓ Willingness to financially support Black River;
- ✓ Demographics

Section II of this report discusses the Methodology used in the study, while Section III is a Summary of Findings for the residential telephone surveys - a narrative account of the data.

Section IV is an Appendix to the report containing a copy of the survey instrument and the composite aggregate data.

METHODOLOGY

Using a quantitative research design, CRPP completed 280 interviews among residents of Ludlow and Mount Holly as well as 100 surveys among owners of vacation homes in the two communities.

All telephone interviews were conducted in September 27 - October 3, 2006. Residents were contacted between 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. weekdays and 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on the weekend.

Survey input was provided by a survey work committee representing school boards in the two towns.

Survey design at CRPP is a careful, deliberative process to ensure fair, objective and balanced surveys. Staff members, with years of survey design experience, edit out any bias. Further, all scales used by CRPP (either numeric, such as one through ten, or wording such as strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree) are balanced evenly. And, placement of questions is carefully accomplished so that order has minimal impact.

All population-based surveys conducted by CRPP are proportional to population contributions within States, towns, and known census tract, group blocks and blocks. This distribution ensures truly representative results without significant under or over representation of various geographic or demographic groups within a sampling frame.

CRPP utilized a “super random digit” sampling procedure, which derives a working telephone sample of both listed and unlisted telephone numbers. This method of sample selection eliminates any bias toward only listed telephone numbers. Additionally, this process allows randomization of numbers, which equalizes the probability of qualified respondents being included in the sampling frame.

One survey instrument was utilized to elicit information from all Ludlow and Mount Holly residents. Respondents qualified for the survey if they confirmed to be one of the heads of their household, at least eighteen years of age and were current residents of either community.

A second survey instrument was employed by researchers when interviewing vacation homeowners. These respondents confirmed they currently owned property or property and a home in either Ludlow or Mount Holly.

Training of telephone researchers and pre-test of the survey instrument occurred on September 26, 2006.

All facets of the study were completed by CRPP's senior staff and researchers. These aspects include: survey design, pre-test, computer programming, fielding, coding, editing, data entry, verification, validation and logic checks, computer analysis, analysis, and report writing.

Completion rates are a critical aspect of any telephone survey research. Because one group of people might be easier to reach than another group, it is important that concentrated efforts are made to reach all groups to an equal degree. A high completion rate means that a high percentage of the respondents within the original sample were actually contacted, and the resulting sample is not biased toward one potential audience. CRPP maintained a 77% completion rate on all calls made during this 2006 Community Education Survey. And, a high completion rate, many times indicates an interest in the topic.

Statistically, a sample of 280 surveys represents a margin for error of +/-6.0% at a 95% confidence level while the vacation homeowner sample (100) represents a margin for error of +/-9.0 at a 95% confidence level.

In theory, a sample of Ludlow/Mount Holly residents will differ no more than +/-6.0% than if all Ludlow/Mout Holly residents were contacted and included in the survey. That is, if random probability sampling procedures were reiterated over and over again, sample results may be expected to approximate the larger population values within plus or minus 6.0% -- 95 out of 100 times.

Readers of this report should note that any survey is analogous to a snapshot in time and results are only reflective of the time period in which the survey was undertaken. Should concerted public relations or information campaigns be undertaken during or shortly after the fielding of the survey, the results contained herein may be expected to change and should be, therefore, carefully interpreted and extrapolated.

Furthermore, it is important to note that all surveys contain some component of "sampling error." Error that is attributable to systematic bias has been significantly reduced by utilizing strict random probability procedures. This sample was strictly random in that selection of each potential respondent was an independent event, based on known probabilities.

Each qualified household within the Ludlow and Mount Holly had an equal chance for participating in the study. Statistical random error, however, can never be eliminated but may be significantly reduced by increasing sample size.

HIGHLIGHTS

Community Resident Survey

On Quality of Life...

- Ludlow and Mount Holly residents provided impressive ratings for their quality of life in their respective communities. On a composite basis, 93.9% described their quality of life as very good or good.
- The factors that survey respondents described as contributing most to a positive quality of life included: friendly people, closeness of community, great place to live, nice town atmosphere, small environment, rural, beautiful mountains, family, no traffic and the slow pace.
- A large percent, 92.2%, indicated that their overall standard of living was good or good but declining.
- And, nearly two thirds, 60.7%, said that local schools have a strong impact on a positive sense of community in Ludlow and Mount Holly.

On Awareness...

- Resident respondents, in large numbers, appear aware that “school enrollment has been declining in Vermont for years (82.5% very and somewhat aware). Large numbers of respondents were also aware of “State education issues such as Act 60/Act 68” (83.9%), “Local community education issues” (83.6%), and “When enrollment drops the result is an increase in per pupil costs (84.3%).
- Still significant, but fewer respondents were aware of: “The income sensitivity provision under Act 68” (67.9%), “The current governance of the school boards in Ludlow and Mount Holly” (71.8%) and “School enrollment in both Ludlow and Mount Holly is declining” (79.3%).

On Governance / Unification...

- Nearly half of all respondents, 48.9%, suggest that the four school boards overseeing student activities in Ludlow and Mount Holly be combined into one. Another 31.8% favor keeping them separate and 19.3% are unsure. When “don’t know” respondents are removed from the data, 60.6% favor combining the boards and 39.4% favor keeping them as they are.

- Interestingly, among only Mount Holly respondents, 46.4% support keeping the boards as they are now while 28.9% favor combining the boards. Among only Ludlow respondents, those favoring combining the boards is 59.6% and those in favor of keeping them as four boards is 24.0%.
- A majority of respondents, 56.4%, believe savings would occur if the local boards are unified into one and 47.9% believe more money would become available for students and school buildings if the boards were unified into one.

On the Black River Middle / High School...

- After respondents offered advantages and disadvantages to each of three options presented by researchers for the Black River Middle / High School, researchers asked each if they preferred keeping Black River open with renovations, tuitioning students to other schools or privatization.
- While 10.3% preferred privatization of the schools and 27.7% favored tuitioning students to other schools, 59.5% supported keeping Black River open with renovations. Support for keeping Black River open was similar in both Ludlow (58.5%) and Mount Holly (61.4%).
- If “tuitioning of students to other schools” is, eventually, the selected option for the school system, 55.7% suggested that the local elementary schools should be reconfigured to accept middle school students in grades 7 and 8 instead of tuitioning these students to other schools along with the High School students.

On School System Ratings...

- Researchers asked respondents to rate the local school system on seven different characteristics such as quality of education, facilities, and overall quality. The system received only fair ratings in each of the areas. The average overall positive rating across all seven characteristics was 50.6%. Among Ludlow residents the average was 49.8% and among Mount Holly residents, the average was 54.7%.
- The highest rating was recorded among Mount Holly residents for the quality of education at the elementary schools (82.9%). And the lowest rating was 29.8% for the middle school facility among Mount Holly residents.

On School Spending...

- More than one quarter of all residents surveyed, 26.5%, considered spending on the arts to be too little while 32.5% suggested too little was being spent on course offerings. When “don’t know” respondents are removed from the data, these percentages move to 40.0% (arts) 50.3% (course offerings).
- When “don’t know” respondents are removed, majorities see spending as “about right” for school building administration, the arts, and sports programming – 50.6%, 55.1%, and 63.2% respectively.

On Black River Renovation...

- Over one third of Ludlow respondents, 35.0% said they were very or somewhat willing to pay an average of \$750.00 more in annual taxes to support a local bond for Black River renovations. This percent grew to 39.3% when the average was lowered to \$500.00 and grew further to 45.8% when the average was lowered to a \$300.00 increase.
- Similar support was found in Mount Holly at different rates. One third, 34.0%, indicated they were very or somewhat willing to support the same bond if this meant an average of \$500.00 more per household in new annual taxes. This percent grew to 39.0% at \$400.00 and 40.8% at \$350.00.

On Supervisory Unions...

- Nearly two thirds, 63.5% suggested that the Rutland Windsor Supervisory Union should be combined with the Windsor Southwest Supervisory Union. Another 36.5% supported keeping each separate.
- Support was stronger for combining the boards among Ludlow residents (68.8%) than among Mount Holly residents (53.4%).

Vacation Homeowner Community

On Okemo Region Quality of Life...

- A large majority of vacation property owners, 94.0% report their quality of life in the Okemo Valley as very good or good.
- The most frequently cited reasons for selecting the Okemo Valley included skiing, beautiful town, mountains, inherited property, close enough, nice people, quiet/peaceful, and family oriented.
- Two fifths (43.0%) suggested the impact of local schools on a positive sense of community is strong while 19.0% suggest minimal or no impact.

On Awareness of Education Issues...

- Half of vacation property owners, 50.0%, indicated they were very or somewhat aware of State education issues such as Act 60 or Act 68. Another 34.0% were aware that student enrollment in both Ludlow and Mount Holly was declining and 44.0% were very or somewhat aware that school enrollment throughout Vermont was declining.

On Supporting the Local Schools...

- All vacation property owners surveyed were asked how willing they would be to voluntarily contribute \$750.00 to an education fund on an annual basis for local school renovations and infrastructure improvements “outside the tax base.”
- At \$750.00, 13.0% of those surveyed indicated they were very or somewhat willing. At \$500.00 this percent moved to 16.0% and it grew to 24.0% at \$300.00 annually.
- Extrapolated on the total population of vacation homeowners, these can become significant contributions.
- Instead of an annual commitment, respondents were asked how willing they might be to make a one time, \$1000.00 contribution. Over one tenth, 11.0% suggested they would be very or somewhat willing.

On the Okemo Valley Experience...

- Just under half of all respondents, 45.0%, said they have considered moving to the Valley full-time. Having a job elsewhere was the largest reason (25.5%) offered for not making the move.
- And, one quarter of all vacation homeowners (27.0%) have children living at home under eighteen years of age.

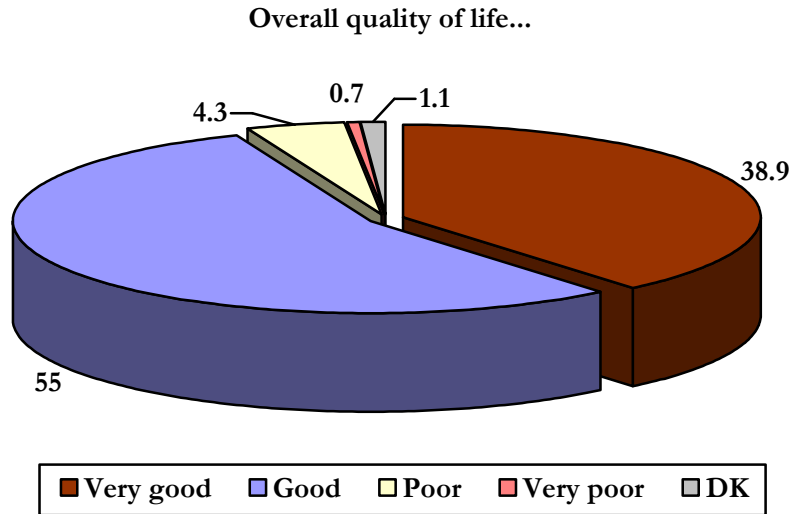
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

COMMUNITY RESIDENT SURVEY

Readers are reminded that the following section summarizes statistics collected from surveys among 280 residents of Ludlow and Mount Holly, Vermont. The text throughout refers to the composite aggregate data (all 280 cases). Some tables will show results on a composite basis as well as results from Ludlow and Mount Holly respondents separately for comparison purposes.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Impressively, 93.9% of all respondents suggest their quality of life in Ludlow/Mount Holly is very good (38.9%) or good (55.0%).



Among Ludlow residents, 94.5% suggest their quality of life is very good or good while 92.8% of Mount Holly residents report the same.

In an open end format question, researchers asked respondents what contributes most to a positive quality of life in their communities.

The top ten are presented in the following table.

Contributions to Positive Quality of Life	Composite
Friendly people	25.4
Closeness of community	15.0
Great place to live	13.9
Nice town atmosphere	11.8
Small environment	11.4
Rural	8.6
Beautiful mountains	8.6
Family	7.5
No traffic	7.5
Slow pace	6.4

A large majority of respondents, 92.2%, suggested that their overall standard of living was good (81.1%) or good but declining (11.1%).

The following table depicts the results as collected.

Standard of Living	Composite	Ludlow	Mount Holly
Good	81.1	79.8	83.5
Poor but improving	4.6	5.5	3.1
Good but declining	11.1	10.9	11.3
Poor	2.1	2.7	1.0
Don't know / unsure	1.1	1.1	1.0

Nearly two thirds of all respondents, 60.7%, indicated that local schools have a strong impact on a positive sense of community in Ludlow and Mount Holly.

Researchers asked respondents to report on the impact using a scale of one to ten where one meant local schools have a strong impact on a positive sense of community while ten meant had no impact at all.

The following table present results on a composite basis as well as separately for Ludlow and Mount Holly.

The cumulative totals for rating of one to four are included as “strong.”

Impact of local schools on sense of community	Composite	Ludlow	Mount Holly
Strong (1-4 ratings)	60.7	58.6	65.1

AWARENESS

Researchers read the following to respondents: “Some people follow education issues more closely than others. Please tell me if you are very aware, somewhat aware, somewhat unaware or not at all aware of each of the following...”

The following table presents the cumulative totals for those suggesting they were very or somewhat aware of each education issue.

Education Issues	Composite	Ludlow	Mount Holly
School enrollment throughout Vermont has been declining for years	82.5	85.8	76.3
State education issues such as Act 60/Act 68	83.9	85.8	80.4
The income sensitivity provision under Act 68	67.9	69.4	64.9
Local community education issues	83.6	85.8	79.4
The current governance or the way school boards in Ludlow and Mount Holly are organized	71.8	74.9	66.0
Student enrollment in both Ludlow and Mount Holly is declining	79.3	84.7	69.1
When enrollment drops the result is an increase in per pupil cost	84.3	86.3	80.4

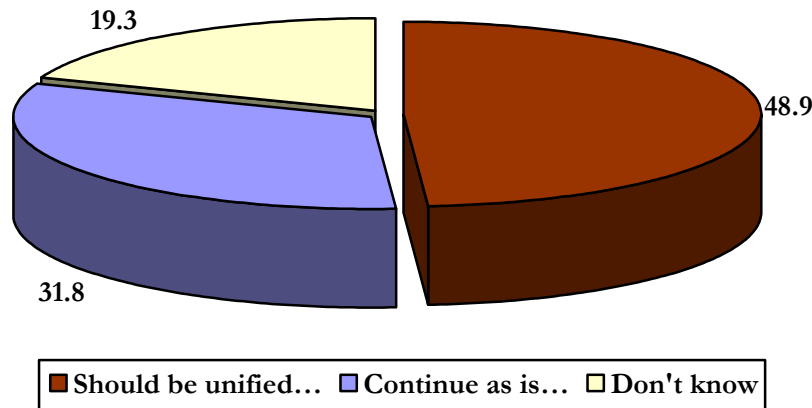
GOVERNANCE / UNIFICATION

Researchers read the following to respondents: “Today, four school boards oversee student activities in Mount Holly and Ludlow. A number of people see advantages such as financial efficiencies in combining the local school boards into one while others see advantages such as better local control with the current boards.”

Each respondent was asked which of the two they preferred. The results are presented here.

Governance / Unification	Composite	Ludlow	Mount Holly
The multiple school boards should be unified into one to oversee student activities in the two communities	48.9	59.6	28.9
The current, separate boards should continue as they are today	31.8	24.0	46.4
Don't know / unsure	19.3	16.4	24.7

Governance/Unification



And, despite their views on unification, each was asked if they believed the following would result:

Savings?	Composite: Yes	Ludlow: Yes	Mount Holly: Yes
Savings would occur if the local boards were unified into one	56.4	64.5	41.2
More money would become available for students and school buildings if the boards were unified into one	47.9	54.1	36.1

THE BLACK RIVER MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL

Respondents were asked to think about three different options for the shared Black River Middle / High School. The three options included: keeping Black River open with needed renovations, “tuitioning” which includes closing Black River and paying to send students to other schools or privatizing Black River which involves turning the operations over to a private board of directors.

Researchers asked respondents, in open end format questions to report what they see to be both advantages and disadvantages to each of the three options. The following tables present the most frequently mentioned advantages and disadvantages to each.

Keeping Black River open with renovations

Advantages	Percent
Need bigger/better school	21.1
Local tradition	20.0
Sense of community	13.6
Keeps kids together	13.2
Less money than new building	9.6
Keeps local control	6.8
Kids safer in town	5.7
Convenience	5.7

Disadvantages	Percent
Would bring high taxes	35.0
Not enough students	8.9
Waste of money	8.2
Too old for a school	3.9
Limited curriculum	2.9
Poor quality education	2.9

Tuitioning

Advantages	Percent
Save money in town	19.3
Might have more options	15.7
Better school system	13.6
Being able to choose / choice	7.1
More kids	4.3

Disadvantages	Percent
Travel too long	27.9
Lose cost control	19.6
Less sense of community / identity	15.0
Cost of transportation	7.5
Children would be too far from home	6.4
Kids will be lost in a crowd	4.3

Privatizing

Advantages	Percent
More controlled cost	7.1
More efficiently run	6.4
More enrollment	3.2
Tax dollars	3.2
More leadership	3.2

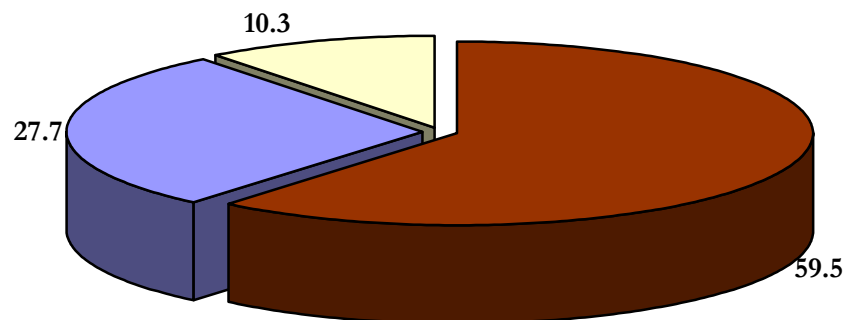
Note: 76.4% saw no advantages to privatization

Disadvantages	Percent
Cost	16.4
Less control over students	7.9
Discussions out of town control	3.9
Decline in quality of education	3.2

In a summary question, all respondents were asked which of the three options they supported. The following table presents the results as collected. “Don’t know” respondents have been removed from the data.

Support for three options	Composite	Ludlow	Mount Holly
Keep Black River open with renovations	59.5	58.5	61.4
Tuition students to other schools	27.7	26.4	30.1
Privitization	10.3	12.6	6.0

Support for three options



■ Keep open with renovations...
 ■ Tuition students...
 ■ Privatization

Respondents who said they supported “tuitioning” (27.7%) were asked to think hypothetically when asked: “If tuitioning does occur and students are sent to other town schools, which of the following best reflects their view?”

The table presents results after removing “don’t know” respondents.

In tuitioning...	Composite	Ludlow	Mount Holly
The local elementary schools should be reconfigured to accept middle school students in grades 7 and 8	55.7	67.3	33.3
Middle school, students in grades 7 and 8, should be tuitioned along with the high school students	44.3	32.7	66.7

RATINGS

All respondents were asked to rate seven different characteristics of the local school system. Each was asked to use a scale of one to ten where one was very good and ten was very poor. The following table presents the cumulative totals for positive ratings of one through four. Don’t know respondents were removed from the data.

School System	Composite	Ludlow	Mount Holly
The quality of education in your elementary school	74.0	69.2	82.9
The elementary school facility	67.4	61.4	78.9
The quality of the middle school education	45.4	47.7	39.6
The middle school facility	36.7	39.6	29.8
The quality of education at the high school	46.7	49.3	41.2
The high school facility	31.5	31.8	52.3
Overall, the quality of education provided to students	52.2	49.4	57.9
Average	50.6	49.8	54.7

SCHOOL SPENDING

All respondents were asked if school spending, in a number of areas, was too much, too little, or about right. The following table presents those respondents believing spending is too little in each area.

Spending on...	Composite: Too little	Ludlow: Too little	Mount Holly: Too Little
Sports programming	16.1	15.3	17.5
Per pupil spending	9.3	10.4	7.2
Supervisory Union Budget	3.9	3.8	4.1
Course offerings	32.5	35.5	26.8
The arts	26.5	26.2	26.8
School building administration	11.8	14.8	6.2

BLACK RIVER RENOVATION

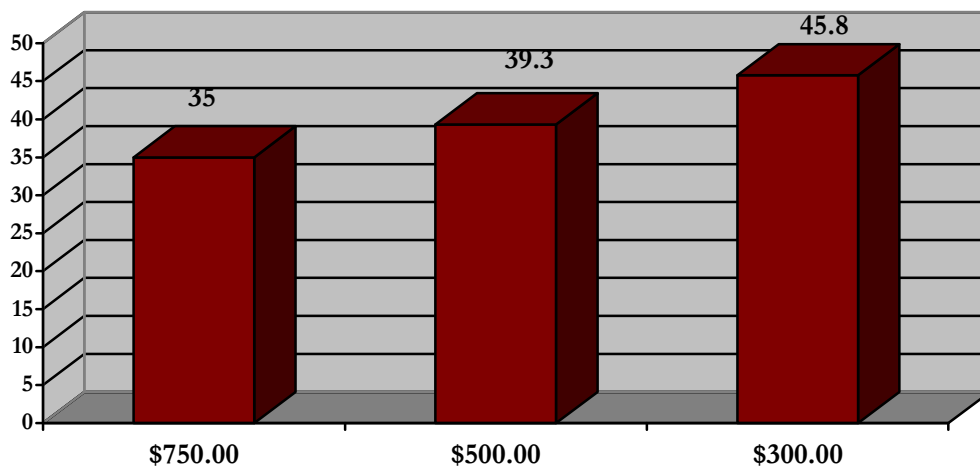
Ludlow resident respondents were asked how willing they would be to support a local bond, for Black River renovations if it is to remain open, that costs each household, on average, \$750.00 more in annual taxes.

Over one third, 35.0%, suggested they would be very or somewhat willing to pay the increased amount.

This moved to 39.3% very or somewhat willing at \$500.00 more annually.

And, it moved further to 45.8% very or somewhat willing at \$300.00 annually.

Very/Somewhat willing to pay annually... (Ludlow)

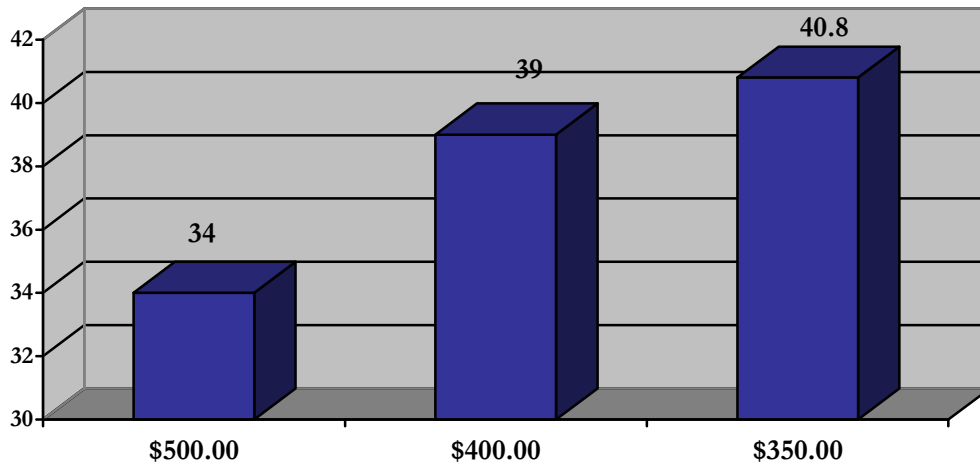


Among Mount Holly respondents, 34.0% suggested they were very or somewhat willing to support the same bond for renovations if this meant, on average, \$500.00 more per household in new taxes annually.

This moved to 39.0% very or somewhat willing at \$400.00 annually.

And, it moved further to 40.8% at \$350.00 annually.

Very/Somewhat willing to pay annually... (Mount Holly)



SUPERVISORY UNIONS

On a composite basis, nearly two thirds of respondents, 63.5%, suggested that the Rutland Windsor Supervisory Union should be combined with the Windsor Southwest Supervisory Union while 36.5% indicated they would prefer the two Union School Boards remain separate. “Don’t know” respondents were removed from the data.

Among Ludlow residents, 68.8% support the combining of the two Boards while 53.4% of Mount Holly residents believe the same.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Registered to vote	Percent
Yes	89.6
No	9.3
Refused	1.1

Voted in November 2004 election	Percent
Yes	83.2
No	15.4
Don't know	0.4
Refused	1.1

Did you attend public school in...	Percent
Yes	32.5
No	66.1
Refused	1.4

How many children...	Percent
None	21.8
One	14.6
Two	36.4
Three	15.0
Four	6.8
Five	2.1
Six	0.4
Eight	0.4
Nine	0.4
Refused	2.1

Did/do children attend public schools in...	Percent
Yes, currently	21.9
Yes, did	37.9
No	40.2

How many years lived in...	Percent
Less than 10 years	22.3
10 or more years	75.2
Refused	2.5

Education	Percent
8 th grade or less	0.7
Some high school	3.9
High school graduate	23.2
Some technical school	1.4
Technical school graduate	1.1
Some college	15.4
College graduate	30.7
Post graduate	20.0

Refused	3.6
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Income	Percent
Under \$19,999	4.3
\$20,000 < \$35,000	8.2
\$35,000 < \$50,000	8.9
\$50,000 < \$65,000	8.6
\$65,000 < \$80,000	11.1
\$80,000 < \$95,000	4.6
\$95,000 or more	7.1
Don't know	5.0
Refused	42.1

Age	Percent
18 to 25	1.4
26 to 35	5.0
36 to 45	14.6
46 to 55	21.1
56 to 65	27.1
66 to 75	15.4
76 or older	9.3
Refused	6.1

Gender	Percent
Male	41.4
Female	58.6

5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

VACATION HOMEOWNER COMMUNITY

OKEMO REGION QUALITY OF LIFE

Vacation homeowners were asked to rate their quality of life as a property owner in the Okemo Valley as very good, good, poor or very poor. A large majority, 94.0%, suggested their quality of life in the Valley was very good (46.0%) or good (48.0%).

The most frequently cited reasons for selecting the Okemo Valley included: skiing (55.0%), beautiful town (21.0%), mountains (16.0%), inherited property (14.0%), close enough (10.0%), nice people (6.0%), quiet/peaceful (5.0%), family oriented (4.0%).

Using a scale to describe how much impact local schools have on a positive sense of community, 43.0% indicated schools have a strong impact while 19.0% suggested minimal impact or not at all and 25.0% said they were unsure.

AWARENESS OF EDUCATION ISSUES

Half, 50%, of vacation homeowner respondents said they were very or somewhat aware of State education issues such as Act 60 or Act 68. Another 34.0% were aware that student enrollment in both Ludlow and Mount Holly was declining and 44.0% said they were very or somewhat aware that school enrollment throughout Vermont has been declining for years.

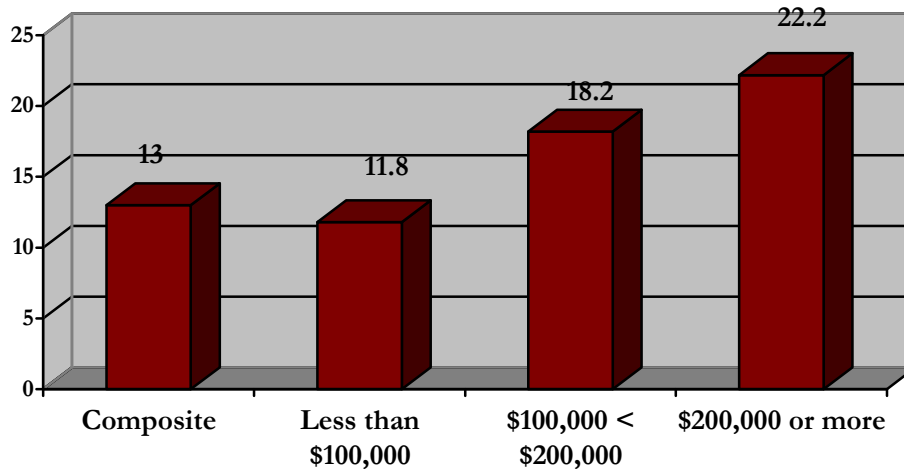
SUPPORTING THE SCHOOLS

All vacation homeowner respondents were asked how willing they would be to voluntarily contribute \$750.00 to an education fund on an annual basis for local school renovations and infrastructure improvements “outside the tax base.”

At \$750.00, 13.0% indicated they were very or somewhat willing. At \$500.00 the percent willing moved to 16.0% and it grew to 24.0% cumulative total at \$300.00 annually.

The following graph presents results on a composite basis and by three different income levels.

At \$750,000 annually...



Instead of an annual commitment, researchers asked how willing the respondent would be to make a one time, \$1000.00 commitment. Just over one tenth, 11.0%, indicated they would be very or somewhat willing to make such a one time commitment.

THE OKEMO VALLEY EXPERIENCE

Just over half of all respondents, 52.0% said they have not considered moving to the Okemo Valley area full-time. Another 45.0% have considered moving to the Valley.

Reasons for not moving to the Valley included: having a job elsewhere (25.5%), family elsewhere (9.1%), great schools at home (9.1%), and prefer their first home (9.1%).

The average number of days these respondents spend in the Okemo Valley is 55.86.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Education	Percent
Some high school	1.0
High school graduate	9.0
Technical school graduate	2.0
Some college	6.0
College graduate	43.0
Post graduate	35.0
Refused	4.0

Years owned property in Okemo Valley	Percent
Under 10 years	37.0
10 or more years	62.0
Refused	1.0

Currently have children under 18	Percent
Yes	27.0
No	72.0
Refused	1.0

How many children under 18	Percent
One	37.0
Two	48.1
Three	14.8

Income	Percent
Under \$50,000	3.0
\$50,000 < \$100,000	14.0
\$100,000 < \$200,000	22.0
\$200,000 or more	18.0
Refused	43.0

Gender	Percent
Male	39.0
Female	61.0

6 APPENDIX

INTERPRETATION OF AGGREGATE RESULTS

The computer processed data for this survey is presented in the following frequency distributions. It is important to note that the wordings of the variable labels and value labels in the computer-processed data are largely abbreviated descriptions of the Questionnaire items and available response categories.

The frequency distributions include the category or response for the question items. Responses deemed not appropriate for classification have been grouped together under the “Other” code.

The “NA” category label refers to “No Answer” or “Not Applicable”. This code is also used to classify ambiguous responses. In addition, the “DK/RF” category includes those respondents who did not know their answer to a question or declined to answer it. In many of the tables, a group of responses may be tagged as “Missing” – occasionally, certain individual’s responses may not be required to specific questions and thus are excluded. Although when this category of response is used, the computations of percentages are presented in two (2) ways in the frequency distributions: 1) with their inclusion (as a proportion of the total sample), and 2) their exclusion (as a proportion of a sample subgroup).

Each frequency distribution includes the absolute observed occurrence of each response (i.e. the total number of cases in each category). Immediately adjacent to the right of the column of absolute frequencies is the column of relative frequencies. These are the percentages of cases falling in each category response, including those cases designated as missing data. To the right of the relative frequency column is the adjusted frequency distribution column that contains the relative frequencies based on the legitimate (i.e. non-missing) cases. That is, the total base for the adjusted frequency distribution excludes the missing data. For many Questionnaire items, the relative frequencies and the adjusted frequencies will be nearly the same. However, some items that elicit a sizable number of missing data will produce quite substantial percentage differences between the two columns of frequencies. The careful analyst will cautiously consider both distributions.

The last column of data within the frequency distribution is the cumulative frequency distribution (Cum Freq.). This column is simply an adjusted frequency distribution of the sum of all previous categories of response and the current category of response. Its primary usefulness is to gauge some ordered or ranked meaning.