



Community Listening Survey

From the School District of Beloit Board of Education Planning for the Future – Together

The Board of Education is responsible for ensuring our schools remain financially stable, safe, and able to meet the needs of all students. In Wisconsin, when a school district needs funding beyond what the state allocates, it must ask local voters for approval through a referendum, a ballot question to raise local taxes to fund schools. Referenda help cover needs like staff retention, facility upkeep, safety upgrades, and student programming.

This survey is part of an early information-gathering effort. Before any formal referendum proposal is considered, we are seeking broad community input. Whether you're a parent, educator, business owner, resident, grandparent, child care provider, organizational leader, or student, your perspective will help us better understand community priorities.

Please send your completed survey to:

*KOLAK EDUCATION CENTER
1500 4th Street
Beloit, WI 53511
Attn: Michelle Shope*

This survey takes 6–10 minutes to complete, and responses will be collected through Sept. 30, 2025, at 5 p.m. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Responses are anonymous unless you choose to share your name in an open comment. This survey is intended for listening and learning purposes only. It is not designed to influence voting or to advocate for or against any potential ballot question(s). Responses may be subject to disclosure under Wisconsin's Public Records Law.

Confidentiality Notice: SECTION 1: Your Perspective

Did you know? The School Board seeks input from parents, staff, business leaders, and community members, even those without children currently in schools. Community surveys like this one are a common first step before any referendum proposal is considered.

1. What is your relationship to the School District?

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Parent/guardian of a current student
- ☐ Parent/guardian of a graduate
- ☐ Staff or educator in the district
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Community member (no children currently enrolled)

- ☐ *Business or civic leader*
- ☐ *Other: _____*

2. How long have you lived in the community?

- ☐ *Less than 2 years*
- ☐ *2–5 years*
- ☐ *6–10 years*
- ☐ *More than 10 years*
- ☐ *I do not live here*

3. Do you currently have students enrolled in K–12 schools in the District?

- ☐ *Yes*
- ☐ *No*

4. What do you believe is the single most important challenge facing the District today?
(Open response)

5. In the past, have you voted on a School District referendum?

- ☐ *Yes, and I voted in favor*
- ☐ *Yes, and I voted against*
- ☐ *I don't recall*
- ☐ *I have not voted on a referendum*
- ☐ *I am not an eligible voter*

6. How confident are you in your understanding of how school referenda work in Wisconsin?

- ☐ *Very confident*
- ☐ *Somewhat confident*
- ☐ *Not very confident*
- ☐ *Not at all confident*
- ☐ *I've never really understood the process*

7. What questions do you have about the referendum process or school funding?
(Open response)

SECTION 2: Priorities and Needs

Did you know? Wisconsin school districts must operate within state-imposed revenue limits. Revenue limits shape the level of resources available, and school communities often face trade-offs between class sizes, staff salaries, safety, and programming. When resources are limited, local boards must decide which priorities should come first.

8. How important are the following to you when it comes to your public schools?

(Very important / Somewhat important / Not important / Not sure)

- ☐ Maintaining manageable class sizes
- ☐ Providing competitive pay to retain staff and educators
- ☐ Improving building safety and security (physical security and health/safety upgrades)
- ☐ Raising student achievement outcomes (e.g., test scores, graduation rates, readiness)
- ☐ Ensuring clean, safe, updated school facilities
- ☐ Supporting special education and behavioral health services
- ☐ Offering career & technical education pathways
- ☐ Maintaining extracurriculars, sports, and arts programs

9. If resources are limited, which 3 of the above should be the highest priorities?

(Select up to 3)

10. What are your expectations when it comes to how the District communicates with you?

(Select up to 3)

- ☐ Regular updates on decisions and changes
- ☐ Clear and easy-to-understand communication
- ☐ Opportunities to give feedback or ask questions
- ☐ Transparency about how and why decisions are made
- ☐ Timely responses to community concerns
- ☐ Communication available in multiple languages
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

11. How would you prefer to receive information from the District?

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Email
- ☐ Social media (e.g., Facebook)
- ☐ District website
- ☐ Newsletters (print or digital)
- ☐ Public meetings
- ☐ School-based communication (e.g., through principals or teachers)
- ☐ Local media (e.g., newspapers, radio)
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

SECTION 3: Funding and Fiscal Perception

Did you know? In Wisconsin, school funding comes from a combination of state aid, federal funds, and local property taxes. The Board of Education is responsible for overseeing the budget of this mixed funding, while administrators manage day-to-day spending. State aid formulas consider property values: districts with lower property wealth may receive more aid, but also have less local capacity to generate revenue.

12. In your opinion, how responsibly does the Board of Education provide oversight of taxpayer dollars?

- ☐ Very responsibly
- ☐ Somewhat responsibly
- ☐ Not very responsibly
- ☐ Unsure/I don't have enough information

13. What would increase your confidence in how the District manages its budget?

(Open response)

14. Which statement best reflects your perspective today?

- ☐ I would consider supporting a future referendum if the plan is clearly explained and justified.
- ☐ I am undecided and need more information.
- ☐ I would likely not support a future referendum.
- ☐ I do not support referenda under any circumstances.

15. What types of investments (if any) would make you more open to supporting a referendum?

(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Staff retention and competitive wages
- ☐ Classroom safety, student behavior, and security upgrades
- ☐ Modernizing learning spaces
- ☐ Reducing class sizes
- ☐ Basic facility maintenance and infrastructure repair
- ☐ I would not support any of these
- ☐ Other: _____

16. What is the maximum annual property tax impact you would find acceptable for a school funding referendum?

- ☐ Less than \$50/year
- ☐ \$51–100/year
- ☐ \$101–200/year
- ☐ More than \$200/year
- ☐ More than \$400/year
- ☐ I do not support any tax increase
- ☐ Unsure

SECTION 4: Looking Ahead – Board Engagement

Did you know? The Board of Education is an elected body responsible for setting policy, overseeing budgets, and engaging the community in decision-making. Many Wisconsin school boards hold listening sessions and community forums before putting a referendum question on the ballot.

17. How much trust do you have in the Board of Education to represent public interests in community engagement and oversight of a referendum resolution?

- ☐ A great deal of trust
- ☐ Some trust
- ☐ Little trust
- ☐ No trust
- ☐ Unsure/I don't have enough information

18. Would you like to see the Board of Education lead public forums in a fact-sharing or listening capacity as it relates to a referendum initiative?

(Open response)

19. How do you stay informed or engaged with Board of Education oversight as it relates to referendum opportunities?

(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Board of Education meetings
- ☐ Community forums or listening sessions
- ☐ Board of Education website updates
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Third-party groups
- ☐ I do not receive updates

20. Would you like to be invited to future referendum listening sessions or conversations?

- ☐ Yes (enter email)
- ☐ No

21. Is there anything else you want the Board of Education to know as it relates to future referendum opportunities?

(Open response)