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A Documented Chronology and Analysis of the Factors That Influenced Referendum Success of Harvard Community Unit School District #50 from 1987 to 1993

Richard Donald Crosby
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A Documented Chronology and Analysis
of the Factors that
Influenced Referendum Success of
Harvard Community Unit School District #50
from 1987 to 1993

by

Richard Donald Crosby

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the School of
Education of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education
March 1996

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by

Richard D. Crosby

March, 1996

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ABSTRACT

**A DOCUMENTED CHRONOLOGY AND ANALYSIS
OF THE FACTORS THAT
INFLUENCED REFERENDUM SUCCESS OF
HARVARD COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 50
FROM 1987 to 1993**

The purpose of this dissertation was to ascertain the contributing factors that influenced voting constituents in building bond and tax rate referendums in Harvard Community Unit School District #50 from November 8, 1988 to April 20, 1993. The potential benefits of the study is a documented chronology and an analysis of the referendum results which is intended to be a basis for future decisions pertaining to physical and financial issues of the District.

This study investigated the growth of the District from both the financial and student population aspects. The space needs addressed by committees and studies conducted are an important component of the research. Analysis of referendum results were investigated as to referendum questions presented; key issues prior to voting, voter patterns by township and wards; effect of budget cuts; closure to Collective Bargaining Agreements; placement on the State's Financial Watch List; public relation strategies; staff, students and community involvement in planning and carrying out

referendums; effect of the Board vote on the outcome of the referendum; and the development of a District Vision and Mission Statement.

The investigator used qualitative methodology for gathering data for this documentary research. In addition to primary sources used to create a documented chronology, the investigator surveyed twenty-one selected staff, parents, former and present board members, administrators and community members within Harvard Community School District #50. The survey consisted of a combination of yes/no questions with an open-ended format which provided crucial feedback to the investigator in completing this study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

This dissertation evolved from an assumption that Harvard Community Unit School District #50 would eventually have to solicit the public for an increase in working fund rates and/or building bond referendums. This assumption was based on the fact that the successful April 20, 1993 Building Referendum for additions was based only on meeting classroom space needs through the 1996-97 school year. And from this investigator's experience, the fewer referendums a taxing body conducts, the better because of cost, time commitment, and the public's perception of fiscal responsibility by the governing Board of Education. During the tenure of this investigator as Superintendent of Schools from 1987 through 1995 and continuing, the District had attempted six referendums with a total of eight questions on the ballot. For the dissertation, the investigator combines a factual chronology of the District and identified contributing factors that influenced voting constituents from 1987 through April 20, 1993. This investigator's premise was that the results of this dissertation would be very beneficial in preparing for future referendums. The study investigated three areas. The first area was the history of the Harvard Schools. The second area studied was the chronology of events and results of the four referendums that were

unsuccessful from November 8, 1988 through March 20, 1990. The third area comprised the events and results of the two successful referendums of November 6, 1990 and April 20, 1993.

The first four referendums, which were defeated, consisted of six questions.

The referendum questions were presented on each ballot as follows:

Referendum #1: November 8, 1988. Reconstruct, alter, repair, and equip Jefferson, Junior High and High Schools. Purchase and improve a new site with a new school. Sell bonds in the amount of \$5,950,000.

Referendum #2: April 4, 1989. Reconstruct, alter, repair, and equip Junior High and High Schools. Purchase and improve a new site with a new school. Sell bonds in the amount of \$6,200,000.

Referendum #3: November 7, 1989. Reconstruct, alter, repair, and equip Junior High and High Schools. Sell bonds in the amount of \$5,600,000.

Increase Operations, Building and Maintenance tax rate to .625% (a .125% increase).

Referendum #4: March 20, 1990. Increase Education Fund tax rate to 3.65% (a 1.00% increase).

Increase Operations and Maintenance tax rate to .625% (a .125% increase).

The two subsequent referendums were successful. These referendum questions appeared on the ballot as follows:

Referendum #5: November 6, 1990. Increase Education Fund tax rate to 3.23% (a .59% increase).

Referendum #6: April 20, 1993. Reconstruct, alter, repair, and equip Central Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, and Junior High and High Schools. Sell bonds in the amount of \$5,900,000.

Background of the District

Harvard is a semirural, suburban school community with a population of about 11,000 inhabitants. The town of Harvard is located five miles south of the Illinois/Wisconsin state line on U.S. Route 14, sixty miles northwest of Chicago, thirty miles northeast of Rockford, and sixty-five miles south of Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin. The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad has sixteen daily commuter passenger trains to and from Chicago. U.S. Route 14 and Illinois Routes 23 and 173 intersect in Harvard. The Northwest Tollway (Interstate 90) is conveniently accessible.

The Harvard Community Unit School District #50 encompasses a service area of 106.5 square miles. The McHenry County school district consists of all of Chemung and Dunham townships, parts of Alden and Hartland townships, and the eastern part of LeRoy township in Boone County. All of these townships are in the rural sector of the school district with the exception of Chemung township. Chemung township is divided into five precincts, four of them located within the city limits of Harvard.

Many large and small industries in Harvard employ over 2,000 people. Two industrial parks totaling 260 acres are being developed. The central business district has many two-story brick structures built around the turn of the century. A large portion of the structures are still retail stores. The upper levels are often used for residences and offices, and purposes other than storage. The rural areas include mostly agricultural activities, although recent years have seen the beginning of

residential developments.

The district operates six attendance centers:

Elementary: Ayer Street Annex (closed in 1995)
Washington Elementary School
Central Elementary School
Jefferson Elementary School
Junior High: Harvard Junior High School
High School: Harvard High School

Because 97% of the district is in the rural area, approximately 1,200 students are bused to school. The district owns and operates a fleet of eighteen buses with thirteen regular routes and four kindergarten routes.

Harvard Junior High (constructed in 1962) is the newest school in the district. An addition was added to this building in 1994. Washington Elementary School was built in 1953, and Jefferson Elementary School in 1953. An addition was added to Jefferson School in 1994. The High School was built in 1921 and remodeled in 1952. An addition was added to the High School in 1994. The oldest school in the District is Central Elementary School, which was built in 1888 and remodeled in 1942. Handicap accessibility work was completed on Central School in 1994.

Harvard Community Unit School District #50 offers a variety of programs from preschool through high school. The Harvard school system offers a comprehensive curricula in language arts, mathematics, physical science, social science, fine arts and physical education. The Harvard Schools take pride in their facilities and staff. The school district is comprised of six buildings that serve over 2,100 students. The facilities are clean, well-maintained and allow for handicap

accessibility. There are approximately 200 certified and educational support personnel employees.

The teachers have a reputation for being outstanding, caring, and dedicated individuals. The administration is well-qualified in their field and continue to update their knowledge through the Illinois Administrator's Academy and by enrolling in graduate school programs. Harvard is known throughout McHenry County for its excellence in education. The Harvard Schools are recognized for their quality educational program as outlined in the State's Yearly Report Card and the State Quality Review Report.

Parent involvement is a vital part of the schools in District #50. Volunteers are used in helping with classroom projects, fund-raisers, dental fluoride treatment, computer labs, VIVA (Volunteers In Visual Arts), paired readers, learning centers, and libraries. Active parental involvement is encouraged through parent workshops, parent-teacher groups and the Booster Club.

Harvard Community Unit School District #50 believes firmly in maintaining good school-community relations. They periodically distribute newsletters to parents from each school to keep them updated on what's happening in each building. The administrators and Board of Education use local newspapers and radio to inform the public of events and changes occurring in the school system.

Educating for excellence is the goal. Early intervention and grant programs provide services that meet individual needs and allow children to reach their potential in a changing technological society. Harvard takes pride in its educational system and encourages the cooperation and commitment of local businesses.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this dissertation was to ascertain the contributing factors that influenced voting constituents in building bond and tax rate referendums in Harvard Community Unit School District #50 from November 8, 1988 to April 20, 1993. The potential benefits of the study are a documented chronology and an analysis of the referendum results which is intended to be a basis for future decisions pertaining to physical and financial issues of the District.

This study investigated the growth of the District from both the financial and student population aspects. The space needs addressed by committees and studies conducted, are an important component of the research. Analysis of referendum results were investigated as to referendum questions presented; key issues prior to voting; voter patterns by township and precincts; effect of budget cuts; closure to Collective Bargaining Agreements; placement on the State's Financial Watch List; public relation strategies; staff, students and community involvement in planning and carrying out referendums; effect of the Board of Education vote on the outcome of the referendum; and the development of a District vision and mission statement.

Definition of Terms

Financial Watch List. The financial monitoring for Illinois school districts by the Illinois State Board of Education. Districts identified for the Financial Watch List are those exhibiting a ratio of operating fund balances to operating revenues of 5% or less. For purposes of this ratio, the fund balances and revenues of the Educational,

Operations and Maintenance, Transportation and Working Cash Funds are considered.

Fund accounting. The maintenance of revenue and expenditures by fund. The Education Fund consists of certified staff and support staff salaries and benefits. Also included in the Education Fund are expenditures for contracting of services, classroom supplies and capital outlay items. Tuition paid for Special Education students is also taken from the Education Fund. The Operations and Maintenance Fund reflects the expenditures for custodial salaries, benefits and building purchased services and supplies.

Northfield property. An eight acre parcel of land purchased by Harvard Community Unit School District #50 in 1970 with the intended future use as a school site.

Referendum. The submission of a public question of policy to the tax paying community for vote.

Tax cap. The established limitation on the increase of property taxes.

Unit School District. A school district organized with grades Kindergarten through Twelve.

Validation of the Study

The data collected in this study pertained to voter, community and staff reaction over a six-year period (1988 through 1993) of school bond and rate referendums in Harvard Community Unit School District #50 in Harvard, Illinois. Even though the scope was limited to voter behavior in Harvard Community Unit

School District #50, the study has merit in determining the factors that contributed to the defeat of six straight referendum questions and the success of the last two referendum questions. The results will be interpreted and used as a basis for future decisions pertaining to physical and financial issues facing the District.

Organization of the Study

Chapter II provides a detailed history of Harvard Community Unit School District #50. The investigator used qualitative methodology for gathering data for this documentary research. Primary sources used to create a documented chronology concentrated on: articles presented by the local news media; school board meeting minutes; The Harvard Educator; informational referendum flyers; newspaper advertisements; and materials developed by special interest groups.

Another primary source of information consisted of surveying selected staff, parents, former and present board members, administrators and community members within Harvard Community Unit School District #50. The investigator used a combination of yes/no questions with an open-ended survey which provided more opportunity to motivate the respondent to supply accurate and complete information.

The Referendum Survey was developed by the investigator during the study of the chronology of events from 1987 to 1993. The instrument was designed to determine the participants' attitudes, knowledge of the issues and pre-conceived assumptions of the referendum process. The participants' confidentiality was safeguarded on the consent form with the following sentences: "Your name will not be identified in this dissertation. In other words, you will have complete anonymity in

the dissertation and the results." The combination of retrospective primary sources and an open-ended survey provided the researcher with data necessary to produce a detailed and descriptive account of each referendum.

Each of the defeated referendum were studied and detailed information is presented in Chapter III as to the following issues that may or may not have had an effect on the defeat: key issues prior to voting; voter patterns by township and precincts; effect of budget cuts; closure to Collective Bargaining Agreements; placement on the State's Financial Watch List; public relations strategies; staff, student and community involvement in planning and carrying out referendum; effect of Board vote on the outcome of the referendum; and the development of a District vision and mission statement.

Chapter IV studies the same criteria for the two successful referendums held:

- A. Referendum #5: November 6, 1990
Increase Education Fund tax rate to 3.23% (a .59% increase)
For = 1,714 Against = 1,476

- B. Referendum #6: April 20, 1993
Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Central, Jefferson, Junior High and High Schools. Sell Bonds = \$5,900,000
For = 1,519 Against = 1,255

Chapter V summarizes the contributing factors that influenced voting constituents in building bond and tax rate referendums in Harvard Community Unit School District #50 from November 8, 1988 to April 20, 1993. The chronology of events and analysis of the results for each referendum will be used as a basis for future decisions pertaining to physical and financial issues of the District.

Chapter VI presents conclusions arrived from the study.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF HARVARD COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 50

The people of Harvard have always looked vigilantly after educational interests. Even in pioneer times, when everyone was struggling against adverse conditions, they sought to give their children what opportunities they could for school training. The present Harvard School District services students from the surrounding rural villages of Chemung, Lawrence, and portions of Sharon, Marengo, and Woodstock.

The Beginnings

The first school of record in the rural areas of the present Harvard School District was the Dunham Township School opened in rural Chemung in 1839. The school was actually a log cabin used for many years as a school, church, and a place for political meetings. The first official school building was in Chemung and was built in 1840. This log cabin school was used until 1859 when the first school was held in the village of Harvard, in a store building. The first building in Harvard to be utilized solely as a school was built in 1860. In 1888 Central School was built and served the town as both a grade school and high school for many years. This school is still in use today as an elementary facility. In 1907 Washington School was built in Harvard. This facility was torn down and replaced in 1952.¹

The one-room schoolhouse for many years was the only formal education place where children received for the most part, a grade school education. Those students fortunate to continue past grade school were able to receive an additional two years of high school education in one of the academies formed in the nearby communities of Lawrence, Marengo and Crystal Lake.² In 1918, the State Legislature passed a bill establishing and regulating high school districts throughout the state. Within time high schools began to grow and four years of high school became available to the students of the Harvard area. On November 27, 1919 the County Superintendent of Schools certified the establishment of the Harvard Community High School District.³

The rural one-room country schoolhouses continued to flourish, but eventually became a part of history—victims of the consolidation trend. State Legislature passed another bill in 1947 which permitted the consolidation of schools commonly known today as "Unit" School Districts. The first McHenry County "Unit" School District to be voted in was in the Harvard area in 1949.⁴ With the establishment of the Unit School District, came the formation of school government and the involvement of elected officials known as Board of Education members.

The Harvard Board of Education transferred seventh and eighth grade pupils from the rural schools to the high school building constructed in 1920. Elementary students continued to use the country schools of Dunham, Big Foot, White Oak, Oak Grove, and Carmack. The country schools of Delanty, Manley, King, Cash, Island Stone, Barrows, Dunham, and Burr Oak were closed because of their poor physical condition, and the buildings were put up for sale in 1950.⁵

The First Referendums

The need to spend large sums of money in repairing the remaining country schools was evident and the most likely solution to the problem seemed to bring the rural students into the Harvard schools where facilities were better and the cost less. This program met with much opposition on the part of the rural dwellers who did not want their children on busses and did not want the lack of convenience the rural schools offered them. Consequently much animosity developed and opposition became evident in the number of referendums that had to be held in order to carry the plan to completion.⁶

The first school referendum held for the Harvard Schools was in March 1951. This referendum went to the voters with an eight-phase proposal consisting of selecting and purchasing a high school site, building an addition to the present high school and issuing bonds for same, selecting a grade school site, and issuing bonds to design and construct a grade school building. With the defeat of this referendum, the Board went back to the voters in April, 1952 with the same proposition. The canvass of this election showed that while voters approved the idea of building the new schools, they refused to give the Board the necessary funds to do it. The Board returned to the voters in May, 1952 with three plans for building and issuing bonds for two elementary schools and an addition to the high school. With the help of the educational program conducted by the Board, the PTA, the local newspaper and interested citizens, this referendum was successful.⁷ In 1953 Washington Elementary and Jefferson Elementary Schools were built in Harvard. The new addition to the high

school was also completed in 1954. By April, 1954 the remaining country schools were closed and incorporated into the schools of Harvard and the final sale of all rural school buildings was completed.

By 1960 the number of students in the school system had again over-taxed the room space. The Board went to the voters in December 1961 with the proposition to build a new junior high school. The voters decisively voted yes to a \$650,000 bond issue for the school. Unfortunately, the rising cost of construction left the project short of funds to complete the building. Two referendums seeking additional funds to complete the project were defeated. For the first time in the Harvard School District history, the Board was forced to go into deficit financing. The building project was finished out of building funds which resulted in a deficit, and the introduction of tax anticipation warrants.⁸

Expansion Studies

Three major studies were conducted by the City of Harvard and School District #50 in the sixties and seventies. In 1966 the City conducted a Comprehensive Planning Study. One of the components consisted of Community Facilities of which schools were a consideration. The findings of the study recommended that three schools be constructed on a phase-in program to meet the present and future needs of the District.

In 1968 a Citizens' Advisory Council consisting of thirty-nine community members was appointed by the Board of Education to assist them in assessing the growing need for additional facilities to provide the proper educational program for

the boys and girls of the School District. In June, 1969 after more than a year of countless hours in gathering facts, the Council recommended:

1. That the School District construct the necessary additional classrooms at the Junior High School building to permit the movement of all fifth-grade students into this building. The building should also be of proper size to accommodate the expected enrollment by the 1972-73 school year. The addition should also include necessary space for proper music facilities and adequate library facilities.
2. That additional space should be provided at the High School building to allow for the increase of 100 students by 1973. Also adequate facilities to provide for a larger cafeteria and library and to upgrade the science and music department facilities. More space is needed to expand the High School curriculum.
3. That the Board of Education take this recommendation to the residents of the School District and hold a referendum as soon as possible.
4. That the members of the Citizens' Advisory Council stand ready to support the Board of Education in implementing these recommendations and in informing the voters of the District of the facts concerning this project.

From June, 1969 through January 23, 1971 the Board discussed the recommendation of the Citizens' Advisory Committee. There were public forums to discuss the direction in which the school district should focus their building energy. The consensus for a building bond referendum was to construct and equip an eighteen-classroom elementary school, add four science classrooms on to the high school, remodel the high school cafeteria, and convert the bus garage into classrooms. The estimated cost to complete the proposal was \$1.675 million. The January 23, 1971 referendum results were 469 yes votes to 588 no votes.

After the January 23, 1971 defeat, the Board asked for more input and arrived at another plan to be placed before the public on December 4, 1971. This plan called

for constructing and equipping a new elementary school and adding four new classrooms to the high school. The estimated cost of this proposal was \$1.825 million. The results of this referendum was 586 yes votes to 1,130 no votes.

In 1977, District #50 had a total student enrollment of 1,994. A decrease in enrollment was noted in 1985 to 1,742 students. The trend from 1985 has been upward to a 1995-96 student enrollment of 2,133.⁹ A demographic study completed in January 1992 estimates that the District will have a 1996-97 student population of 2,246.¹⁰

Individual School Histories

Central School

Central School, located in the center of Harvard, is a beautiful architectural structure that has been used continually as a school for over one hundred years. Central School students, staff, and the community celebrated the building's one hundredth anniversary during the 1988-89 school year. Life Safety Bonds issued in 1987 provided funds for new windows throughout the building in 1987 and a new roof in 1991.

The fate of Central School as an educational facility was at stake during the November 8, 1988 referendum. While unique in its own way, this three-story facility has been quite controversial and labeled by some as a "white elephant." The cost effectiveness of maintaining this building as a school facility has been studied numerous times. Central School houses only eight classrooms. Each room is very large with high ceilings and a cloakroom area. In addition, substantial funds have

been expended to eliminate the building's bat population over the years. Each attempt in ridding the building of bats has proved to be only a temporary fix, as the population of bats has always found their way back into the attic. Even though proof has been presented to the community regarding this building's inadequacies as a school facility, it has become obvious that the charm and sentiment that this facility holds for many community members, far surpasses the acceptance of the financial negatives.

Realizing that any referendum eliminating the use of Central School was not going to be successful, the District was mandated to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991. This Act mandated that the building be made handicap accessible. This costly venture was taken to the public as one part of the 1993 referendum. As a result of this successful referendum, Central School was equipped with an elevator in 1995.

Harvard High School

Built in 1920, the High School's basic structure has changed little. An addition in 1956 was approved by the taxpayers at \$480,000. This addition was to the east and south side of the building and provided a gymnasium, an agricultural shop, a woodshop, metals shop, drafting room, home economics rooms, and three business classrooms.¹¹

The Harvard Booster Club has been very supportive of academic and co-curricular activities. In 1979 the Booster Club undertook a project to build a regulation asphalt track and to reshape the football field, in addition to moving the

grandstand to the west side of the field. In the winter of 1983 the organization raised \$20,000 to purchase new band uniforms for the Junior High School. The Booster Club continually remains active in their fund raising activities and has purchased other items such as scoreboards, athletic equipment, and athletic field lighting and sponsors a monthly breakfast for Harvard High School Honor Roll students and their parents.

All the windows in the High School were replaced with energy efficient, aluminum windows in 1988 with Life Safety Bonds issued in 1987. The swimming pool donated in the early 1930's became inoperable because of the deterioration of pipes buried in concrete, and of the need of a filtration system and new decking to meet County and State regulations. The pool was filled in and two new classrooms for art and chorus were constructed in 1988. Mixed emotions came forth from community members when advised of the pool's demise. No one could, however, rationalize the additional expense of approximately \$300,000 to maintain operation of the swimming pool when classroom space was so badly needed.

The old chorus room on the northwest end, lower level was remodeled into two classrooms in 1989. These two classrooms, somewhat secluded from the rest of the high school facility, housed two fifth-grade classrooms for the 1989-90 school year. The outside restrooms nearby assured that the fifth-grade students would not have a need to mix with the high school students during the school day. The fifth-grade students walked down the hill to Jefferson School, approximately 200 yards for lunch and recess. Additional classrooms added to Jefferson School in 1993 allowed for continued use of these two classrooms by the high school.

A much needed boost in technology was provided with the addition of a 25-station IBM computer lab in 1992, supported in large part by local businesses. A new wing primarily for science was completed during the 1994-95 school year.

Washington School

The first Washington School was built in 1907. This building was torn down in 1952 after voters approved the expenditure of \$242,000 to construct a new school on the same site.¹² In 1971, due to crowded classrooms and shortage of classroom space, three mobile classrooms were set up on the Washington School grounds. The intent was to utilize the mobile classrooms for five years. The mobile classrooms must be inspected by a certified architect and notification of the certification and use of mobiles filed with the Illinois State Board of Education each year. Repairs were designated annually to provide for the continued use of the much needed mobiles. These mobile classrooms were still in use in 1996.

Washington School has always housed elementary school children. In 1985, the state of Illinois formally adopted a policy supporting early childhood education for at-risk three-, and four-year-old children.¹³ District #50 applied for grant funds from the State of Illinois to operate a Pre-Kindergarten-At-Risk program. The first year of this program required one classroom space for fifteen children. The need to continue this program was very evident. Each year the grant was written for additional funding, and additional students were allowed into the program. With the rising enrollments of the Pre-Kindergarten-At-Risk Program, Washington School was soon unable to provide sufficient housing. During the 1988-89 school year the pre-

kindergarten program was moved to the United Methodist Church where two classrooms were rented. The church was again rented for the first semester of the 1989-90 school year.

Over the years, kindergarten classes have found their home throughout District #50 at Central School, Washington School, Harvard Junior High, and the Ayer Street Annex. When the Junior High was built in 1963, it housed two sections of kindergarten classes. These classes moved to Central School in 1978. In 1985 two sections of kindergarten were again reestablished at the Junior High. In 1986 State regulations regarding multi-level facilities¹⁴ eliminated Central School as a home for kindergarten and/or first-grade students. In 1987 all kindergarten classes were moved back to Washington School. In January, 1990 the District began the rental of the Ayer Street Annex as the kindergarten facility.

Due to the continuing "space crunch" throughout the District, additional classroom space was sought. In addition to searching the community for business rentals suitable for classrooms, the Board also checked into unused school facilities in nearby communities. A new building in the business district on Ayer Street was built by local businessman Jack Stahl. This building became known as the "Ayer Street Annex" and the kindergarten and pre-kindergarten classrooms were moved to this building in January, 1990. Initially there appeared to be some controversy throughout the community in having three-, to five-year-old students in the business district. In addition, taxpayers who were unaware of the District's space needs were against the \$45,000+ per year price tag for rental of the building. However, during the District's

six years of renting this facility, both staff and community realized that the Ayer Street Annex had been a very pleasant site for the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students of Harvard. In addition, two-fifths of the rent was paid for through the Pre-Kindergarten Grant.

Jefferson School

The construction of Jefferson School in 1953 allowed for the closing of the remaining rural schools.¹⁵ Jefferson School has always housed elementary children. Located on the high school grounds, Jefferson School students have always had plenty of playground space as they shared the tennis court and athletic fields with the high school students.

In 1967 the Board of Education rejected the plans from a Citizens' Advisory Group to build a four-classroom addition to Jefferson School, ten classrooms to Harvard Junior High, and eight classrooms to the High School.

Three much needed classrooms were finally added to the school in 1993. Payment for these classrooms was acquired from Developer Impact Fees, which consists of a County and Municipality mandated fee to school districts as part of the regular building permit.

The stage area at Jefferson School was used for many years to present music programs and as a classroom area for general music. In 1988 the stage was converted into a small classroom.

A 1993 referendum passed by the community provided for a new multipurpose room and ten additional classrooms that were in use for the 1994-95 school year. The

old gymnasium was converted into a learning center. The referendum also provided a complete renovation of the kitchen area. The 1995-96 school year welcomed all District first-, and fourth-grade students and part of the second-, and third-grade students.

Harvard Junior High School

The Junior High School is at present the district's newest facility built in 1962. The academic program at Harvard Junior High consists of math, science, language arts, reading, social studies, and physical education. In addition to these required classes, students may elect to take art, chorus and/or band. Spanish was taught to seventh-, and eighth-graders in the 1960's but was dropped in 1970 to expand the language arts/reading program. Because of budget cuts in 1985, the home economics and industrial arts classes that had been a part of the curriculum since 1963 were dropped.

Until 1978, all District special education students were bussed out-of-district to SEDOM (Special Education District of McHenry County). That year the first special education class was placed in the Junior High building. Currently there are three special education classes and two resource teachers at the Junior High School.

Although Harvard Junior High normally housed grades six, seven, and eight, kindergarten classes have been housed in the building off and on since 1962. The Junior High has undergone only a few minor changes to its physical structure such as room partitions and window replacements. In 1994 construction of a new wing of ten classrooms, an additional gymnasium, and a new learning center were constructed.

The fifth-grade classes from Jefferson School were moved to the Junior High School for the 1995-96 school year. A retention pond also had to be constructed because of the increased roof and asphalt area. The water drainage is still a problem at Harvard High because of the watershed area south and east of the Junior High School.

St. Joseph's Parochial School

The Harvard community has one parochial school, St. Joseph's School, which was opened in July, 1916. The school has been in continuous operation for the past eighty years. While the present enrollment is around 130 students, it has housed as many as 250 students.

History of Administration

Harvard has been extremely fortunate to have the leadership of many inspirational superintendents. Meeting the demands of the entire tax-paying public requires visionary school boards and visionary superintendents working in tandem to provide a quality educational program. The following superintendents have provided leadership to the Harvard Schools since consolidation of the Harvard Schools in 1949.

Superintendents

Floyd King: 1949-64. Floyd King was noted as an ardent Business Manager and a man who had extensive knowledge in school finance. Mr. King was the catalyst in consolidating the rural schools into what is known today as the Harvard Community Unit School District #50.¹⁶

W. Kent Robinson: 1964–67. W. Kent Robinson served District #50 as Superintendent for a short term of only three years. Information on Mr. Robinson's involvement during his tenure has not been found.

*Loren C. Lemmon: 1967–75.*¹⁷ In 1967, Loren Lemmon, Sr. arrived in Harvard from Beardstown, Illinois. He served as Superintendent until his retirement in 1975. Between the years of 1967 and 1975 the enrollments in the schools increased from 1,971 to 2,140. Mr. Lemmon was instrumental in establishing three mobile classrooms at Washington School in 1970. These classrooms were still in use in 1996. A relocatable classroom was erected on the Jefferson School site in January, 1970. This classroom allowed the District to meet the needs of our special education students locally as opposed to transporting them out of the District. This relocatable classroom was purchased by SEDOM and relocated to their Woodstock facility in 1975.

Due to increasing enrollments, Mr. Lemmon increased the teaching staff from 97 in 1967 to 124 in 1975. Staff increases included one additional Principal, an Assistant Principal, and three Guidance Counselors at the High School, an Athletic Director, and a District Curriculum Coordinator.

During his administration Mr. Lemmon was influential in getting the School District out of a deficit-spending track. He assisted in a successful referendum to increase the educational tax rate from \$1.65 in 1967 to \$1.85 in 1975.

*Howard Hastings: 1975–82.*¹⁸ Howard Hastings formerly of Ottawa, Illinois filled the superintendency of the District from 1975 until his retirement in December,

1982. The District continued in a positive financial track due to the financial expertise of this administration. Mr. Hastings was very involved in monitoring the market and recommending the sale of Working Cash Bonds in 1980. These funds were used to place new roofs on all the district buildings.

*Robert T. Cassidy: 1983–87.*¹⁹ Dr. Robert Cassidy was recruited from Warren, Illinois to serve as Superintendent from 1983 through 1987. During his tenure with the District, we witnessed the results of the 1985 Reform Act implemented by Illinois Legislature. The intent of the Reform Act was to enhance the entire State of Illinois educational programs. While the Act was positive in nature, it has been recognized as being extremely influential to the financial crisis many school districts experienced in the late 1980's and 1990's.

Some of the mandates that Dr. Cassidy was forced to initiate without funding consisted of Criminal History Background Checks; implementing policies for Child Abuse Acknowledgement by staff; assisting district-staff in writing grants for the Pre-School-at-Risk, Reading Improvement, Staff Development, and Learner Objective Grants. Foreseeing the future decline of funds from the State and realizing the need to seek other funding of our educational programs, Dr. Cassidy was very instrumental in coaching the staff to write for grant money whenever available. Today, Harvard schools receive in excess of \$800,000 in grant funding every year.

In 1985 a much needed "face lift" in the manner of tuck-pointing and sandblasting were completed at the District's two oldest buildings—Harvard High School and Central School. This was the beginning of the administration asking the

community to take a constructive look at the maintenance work needed in individual buildings.

*Richard D. Crosby: 1987-96 and Continuing.*²⁰ In 1987 this investigator, a fifteen-year staff member, was asked to continue the leadership of the District by stepping into the role of Superintendent. The records show that he was active in the Harvard school system as an Elementary Principal for five years at Central and Jefferson Schools and nine years as Harvard Junior High School Principal.

The records also indicate that he relies on the expertise of the community as he delegates committees to assist with the vast amount of research necessary to project the future needs of the District. In addition to his visionary goals for educational excellence, he also initiated the addressing of extensive Life Safety concerns of all District school buildings.

Throughout this investigator's tenure as District Superintendent, the District has been in a growth mode. Although the in-town population of Harvard has not noted a drastic increase, the rural areas have had significant residential development and several subdivisions have been platted. Referendum committees worked tirelessly with the Board of Education and Administration to provide space for the District's students in addition to seeking sufficient funding for the educational programs. For five years (1988-93) referendums tailgated one after the other as numerous staff and citizens sought the much needed taxpayer approval of their plans.

For the most part citizens believe that taxes are already too high. This investigator has found from experience that it is a real challenge to generate "grass

root" citizens to work on referendum passage the first time around, let alone generate energy and enthusiasm for them to devote time to a second attempt. Therefore, the use of information that has been gathered on previous referendum demographics, community involvement, strategies, voter results by townships, and analysis of other contributing factors to the referendum outcome augments the success ratio.

Consequently, this led to the focus of this study.

As of this writing in 1996, construction of new classroom additions have been completed at Jefferson Elementary, Harvard Junior High and High School.

In 1991 this investigator was instrumental in establishing a "Goal Setting Committee" to establish the future vision and mission of Harvard Schools by asking "Where is District #50 in 1991?" and "What Could/Should District #50 be in 1995-2000?" Along with many goals this committee established the future Vision of Harvard District #50 Schools to, "Be the BEST TODAY and BETTER TOMORROW." The mission statement established by the committee was "To provide an educational partnership with the community which meets the diverse needs of the students for their futures."

ENDNOTES

¹ Joseph A. Grimm, Chapter VII Education, in *McHenry County History 1832-1968*, (McHenry County, Ill., 1969), 250.

² Ibid., 240.

³
Ibid., 251.

⁴
Ibid., 241.

⁵
The Harvard Area 1829-1976, (Harvard, Ill.: Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 20.

⁶
Ibid., 20.

⁷
Ibid., 20.

⁸
Ibid., 21.

⁹
Illinois State Board of Education Form #ISBE 87-02, Public District Fall Enrollment/Housing Reports, 1977-1994.

¹⁰
Demographic Study for Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, Enrollment Projections 1991-92/1996-97 (Naperville, Ill.: Illinois Consulting Service), Table 10, 35.

¹¹
Joseph A. Grimm, Chapter VII Education, in *McHenry County History 1832-1968*, (McHenry County, Ill., 1968), 253.

¹²
Ibid., 254.

¹³
The School Code of Illinois and Related Laws As Amended through 1993 Regular Session, (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Co., 1994).

¹⁴
Ibid., 49.

¹⁵
The Harvard Area 1829-1976, (Harvard, Ill.: Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 21.

- 16
Joseph A. Grimm, Chapter VII Education, in *McHenry County History 1832-1968*, (McHenry County, Ill., 1968), 252.
- 17
Personnel File for Loren C. Lemmon, Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50.
- 18
Personnel File for Howard Hastings, Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50.
- 19
Personnel File for Robert T. Cassidy, Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50.
- 20
Personnel File for Richard D. Crosby, Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50.
- 21
Canvass of November 8, 1988 Referendum, Abstract of Votes, for Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, McHenry and Boone Counties, State of Illinois.
- 22
Canvass of April 4, 1989 Referendum, Abstract of Votes, for Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, McHenry and Boone Counties, State of Illinois.
- 23
Canvass of November 7, 1989 Referendum, Abstract of Votes, for Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, McHenry and Boone Counties, State of Illinois.
- 24
Canvass of March 20, 1990 Referendum, Abstract of Votes, for Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, McHenry and Boone Counties, State of Illinois.
- 25
Canvass of March 20, 1990 Referendum, Abstract of Votes, for Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, McHenry and Boone Counties, State of Illinois.

26

Canvass of March 20, 1990 Referendum, Abstract of Votes, for Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, McHenry and Boone Counties, State of Illinois.

27

Canvass of November 6, 1990 Referendum, Abstract of Votes, for Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, McHenry and Boone Counties, State of Illinois.

28

Canvass of April 20, 1993 Referendum, Abstract of Votes, for Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, McHenry and Boone Counties, State of Illinois.

CHAPTER III

DEFEATED REFERENDUMS

Every six months for two years, the Harvard School Board attempted to ameliorate the building conditions and space needs of the district. This chapter outlines the efforts of the Board to develop a satisfactory plan, educate the public about the District's needs and the Board's proposals and solicit community input.

The details leading up to each defeated referendum consist primarily of summaries of community meetings, surveys and referendum plans.

Referendum #1: November 8, 1988

This referendum requested authority to build additions on to Jefferson School, the Junior High School and the High School. In addition, the referendum asked to purchase land for a new school and to sell bonds to complete all of the above for \$5,950,000. The vote: 1,209 For 2,078 Against.

Chronology of Events between June, 1970 and November 8, 1988

April 4, 1970. The Board of Education purchased 8.99 acres of property on Northfield Avenue for \$20,000. The funds to purchase the land were from the proceeds of three Building Trades homes. The intent of the purchase was to build a small neighborhood school some day. In referendums where the District requested

authorization to purchase a new school site, the community always reminded the Board that the Northfield Avenue site had been purchased as a future school site. The Board's rationale for not using the Northfield property related to the guidelines for new school facilities as recommended by the Illinois State Board of Education of five acres plus one acre for each 100 students.

Minimum acreage required for District #50:

Elementary facility - 15 acres

Junior High facility - 20-25 acres

High School facility - 40-50 acres

August 1, 1987. A Life Safety Committee was formed to identify life safety issues throughout the District that needed attention. Sixteen community members assisted the Board of Education and administrators in a thorough review of each District facility. During the review it was discovered that not only were the buildings in need of serious repair, but that there was a critical housing need for District students. A community meeting was held with 75 residents present. The Board and Life Safety Committee explained options for raising money to fix the immediate needs of the buildings. The Board of Education recommend selling Life Safety Bonds which did not require a referendum vote.

September/December, 1987. The Utilization of Space for Education Committee (USE) was formed to review the building needs listed in the architect's four-year plan. This four-year plan outlined the present facilities with options for further building

expansions. The committee was comprised of a staff representative from each building to assist the administration in surveying each school and identifying educational space needs. At that time the administration believed that the staff who also worked in each building would be excellent resource people to assess facility needs for a quality educational program. The USE Committee visited each building and gathered needed information, which was brought back for discussion of the group as a whole. The educational space needs were matched up with the facilities and a five-year projection for educational space needs was prepared.

A controversial decision of the Board of Education during this time period, was the authorization of tax abatements to the LaFrenz SuperValu/Walmart complex of 95% for three years and Vulcan Manufacturing at 95% for two years. The community questioned the validity of "giving money away," when the Board of Education would eventually come back to the taxpayers for a tax rate increase.

November 1, 1987. An article in the quarterly *Harvard Educator* (District #50's newsletter), "Become Involved," encouraged community involvement in addressing the space needs of the District. This publication was sent to all postal patrons within the School District. From the feedback received by Board Members, administrators, district staff, and the Life Safety Committee, the communication had reached the public.

January 13, 1988. The USE Committee presented their proposals to the Life Safety Committee comprised of fifteen local constituents. The Life Safety Committee concurred with the USE Committee's assessment of the classroom needs because they

had also spent the last four months reviewing life safety needs in the schools. These findings were shared with the Board of Education and the general public on January 16, 1988.

February 16, 1988. The USE Committee held a public meeting to present their recommendation for meeting a five-year projected educational space needs study of the District. Four plans were presented to the Board of Education and a standing room only audience at Central School. A brain-storming session was conducted in five smaller groups to encourage questions and suggestions from the citizens in attendance. A recording secretary was appointed in each group with all comments and questions written down. When the small groups came back to the large group, these questions were addressed. The plans presented were as follows:

Plan One: Washington - Remove mobiles, construct two-story addition
Central - No changes
Jefferson - Ten-classroom addition
Junior High - No changes
High School - Construct science wing, convert pool to classrooms

Plan Two: Washington - Remove mobiles, construct one-story addition
Central - Close as an attendance center
Jefferson - No changes
Junior High - No changes
High School - Construct science wing
Northfield Property - Build a new school here

Plan Three: Washington - Remove mobiles, construct one-story addition
Central - Close as an attendance center
Jefferson - No changes
Junior High - Convert to elementary school
High School - Convert to junior high, purchase a new site, and build a new high school

Plan Four:

Washington - Remove mobiles, construct one-story addition
Central - No changes
Jefferson - Construct four-six classroom addition
Junior High - Construct one-story addition for fifth grades
High School - Construct science wing

A fifth plan was added by the committee.

Plan Five:

Washington School - Remove mobiles, construct addition
Central School - Close as an attendance center, build a new elementary school
Jefferson School - No changes
Junior High - No changes
High School - Construct two-story addition, completely renovate older section of school.

Summary of General Group Questions and Comments

Many questions dealt with the continued use of Central School as an attendance center. Suggestions and comments were offered for selling the building, using it for administrative offices, or allowing the city to use it as a municipal facility.

Concern was noted over the projected costs for building construction and renovation (\$100,000 per classroom). Would additional costs be built into a referendum for staff, supplies, and equipment?

Most of the plans submitted would meet only the immediate needs of the District—what about five years down the road?

The cost effectiveness of restoring the pool at the high school for use versus the need for classroom space was studied.

March 3, 1988. The information generated from this group meeting was used as the basis for a four-page Building Survey on school expansion, which was sent to 4,400 postal patrons living in the school district, in addition to all district personnel and Chamber of Commerce members. The Building Survey listed five plans and left room

for the public to fill in a sixth plan of their own. 596 responses were received and summarized as follows.

Plan One: 55 Responses of Agreement

Plan Two: 23 Responses of Agreement

Plan Three: 90 Responses of Agreement

Plan Four: 52 Responses of Agreement

Plan Five: 47 Responses of Agreement

Number of Responses of Agreement to Specific Questions

1. Keep Central School open as a school. 278
2. Sell Central School and use the proceeds to help build another school. 162
3. Convert Central School to a community facility. 127
4. Rent facilities for additional classroom space. 57
5. Build an elementary school on Northfield Avenue. 73
6. Sell Northfield Avenue property and purchase a larger tract of land in order to build a new school. 132
7. Build an addition on to Washington School and remove the mobiles. 334
8. Build a new high school. 170
9. Building a new elementary school. 76
10. Solve the space need by building additions to and renovations of present facilities. 293

Summary of Survey Responses

- Numerous responses requested that other funding avenues other than property taxes be sought.
- Many respondents commented on being misled on the use of funds from the 1985 referendum.
- The response to building a new school versus putting additions on to the buildings already in place were mixed.
- Many responses promoted the sale of the Northfield property.
- Opinions on the closing of Central School were mixed.

Over the next seven months the Board of Education explored various ways to address the USE Committees findings and community input for additional space.

April, May, June, 1988. The Board of Education studied the results of the March Survey to the public and were focusing in on a \$5.3 million plan that called for building a twenty-one-classroom elementary school on Northfield Avenue, closing Central School, adding two classrooms at both Jefferson and Harvard Junior High Schools and a seven-room addition to the High School. The major concern was the size of the Northfield Avenue property at only eight acres. This small acreage did not meet the State Board of Education recommendations.

July, August, 1988. The possibility of closing Central School was meeting with much opposition, since it had been built in 1888 and the majority of Harvard citizens had attended the four-story structure. The School Board yielded to this concern when they voted to attempt a referendum for the November 8, 1988 election. The referendum

was established at \$5.95 million to put additions on to Jefferson School, Harvard Junior High and High Schools, and to purchase land and build a new school. The Board continued discussion with various property owners regarding land acquisition.

Several community members confused the designated use of the successful November 5, 1985 \$.25 increase in the Operations, Buildings and Maintenance Fund. Many people did not realize that these monies could not be used to construct additions, and that teachers' salaries can only come from the Education Fund. The Board noted that time had to be allotted to educate the community of this "fund accounting" financial situation.

The Board of Education requested Harris Bank of Chicago to assist with educating the public on voting for the November referendum. In addition, a referendum committee of local community members was formed. The citizens referendum committee was known as the SOS Committee (Short of Space).

October 1, 1988. A "fact" sheet was prepared for distribution throughout the community. The sheet included the referendum question as it would appear on the official voting ballot. The sheet contained enrollment history and projections, history of operating expenditures per pupil, grant program information, budget breakdown information, explanation of the November 5, 1985 Operations, Building and Maintenance tax rate referendum, and cost of the proposed referendum to the individual tax payer.

October 25, 1988. The SOS Committee sponsored an Open Forum to respond to public questions regarding the referendum. A video depicting the space problems in each District facility was prepared. Questions responded to were as follows:

1. Upon successful passage of the referendum will the money be used for salary increases? Clarification of a "building bond" referendum was given.
2. Where will the proposed new elementary building be built? The District owned eight acres on Northfield Avenue. Consideration was being given to sell this site to provide additional money for the purchase of a larger site. Serious consideration for land was not going to be addressed until after the referendum passed.
3. Will the proposed construction meet our needs for five to ten years? No—steady growth was projected to continue.
4. What if the proposed Building Bond Referendum failed? Class sizes would increase, the District would continue to look for rental space, future referendums would require more funding.
5. If Central School closed as an attendance center, what are some possible uses? District administrative offices, support staff office space, District storage, governmental office center, historical museum.

November 7, 1988. The headlines in the *Northwest Herald* just prior to voting day, offered bleak hope that the proposed referendum would be successful. The headlines read as follows: "School referendum may face light turnout, School board members learned that less than 40% of some classroom parents are registered voters."

REFERENDUM: NOVEMBER 8, 1988

Shall the Board of Education of Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, reconstruct, alter, repair and equip the Jefferson Elementary, Harvard Junior High and Harvard High Schools and improve their respective sites; and purchase and

improve a school site and build and equip a new school building thereon; and to pay the cost thereof issue bonds to the aggregate amount of \$5.95 million?

YES = 1,209

NO = 2,078

F A I L E D

Referendum #2: April 4, 1989

This referendum requested authority to put additions on to the Junior High and High Schools. In addition, the referendum asked to purchase land for a new school and to sell bonds to complete all of the above for \$6,200,000. The vote: 963 For 1,859 Against.

Chronology of Events between November 8, 1988 and April 4, 1989

With the unsuccessful November 8, 1988 referendum the Administration and Board of Education re-evaluated the results and geared up to place another proposition on the April 4, 1989 ballot.

December 1, 1988. The Board of Education determined that the Northfield Avenue property was not large enough for a school site. The Northfield property was put up for public sale. A Building Committee and the Board of Education looked at several parcels of land for possible school sites. Possible school sites included: 60 acres (Hartmann) north of Harvard on Route 14; 129 acres (Hansow) on Harvard Hills Road; 26 acres (Woodvard) north of the Junior High School; 40 acres (Stricker) listed with realtor on East Route 173; 103 acres (Diggins) West Route 173; 79.55 acres (King) Harvard Hills Road; 19.2 acres (Voss/Lenhart), North of the High School football field.

December 21, 1988. Life Safety Bonds issued: \$1,415,000. These dollars were used to replace windows in all District #50 schools and to begin work on asbestos removal.

Working Cash Bonds issued: \$450,000. These monies were used for deficit spending in both the Operations and Maintenance and Education Funds.

February 14, 1989. The Board of Education entered into an option agreement to purchase 103 acres on Illinois Route 173 for \$363,755. With a successful referendum, this land would be used for an elementary school site. The Board of Education sent 300 invitations for a public meeting to local business, Chamber of Commerce members, City Council members and churches. Only twelve members from the general public attended. A video depicting the shortage of space in the schools had been prepared and the model of a new elementary school was unveiled. The concern of building an elementary school instead of a high school was addressed.

March 9, 1989. The Board of Education heard from the Farm Bureau about their "CHIEF" tax plan (Change How Illinois Education is Financed). The Board of Education went on record in support of the CHIEF concept.

March 26, 1989. City of Harvard and District #50 endorsed tax abatements. This issue caused great community concern. Another distressing issue to some community members was the location of the 103 acres on Route 173 as a proposed elementary school site. Many comments were heard about the site being immediately south of the local Dacy Airport. A citizen prepared a flyer depicting these concerns, which was mass delivered to several households the night before the referendum.

REFERENDUM: APRIL 4, 1989

Shall the Board of Education of Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, reconstruct, alter, repair and equip the Harvard Junior High and Harvard High Schools and improve their respective sites; and purchase and improve a school site and build and equip a new school building thereon; and to pay the cost thereof issue bonds to the aggregate amount of \$6,200,000? (New site = 103 acres of Diggins property on East Route 173.)

FOR = 963 AGAINST = 1,859
F A I L E D

Referendum #3: November 7, 1989

This referendum requested authority to build additions to Harvard Junior High and the High School. The referendum requested \$5,600,000 to complete the above. The vote: 914 For 1,219 Against.

Chronology of Events between April 5, 1989 and November 7, 1989

April 11, 1989. The defeat of the second referendum caused the Board to look into revised scheduling options to meet the classroom space needs of the District. Studies were completed on year-round school and productivity scheduling where some students would attend school from 6:30 A.M. to noon and a second group would start their school day at 12:30 P.M. and go until 6:00 P.M. These options were made a part of a post-referendum questionnaire that was distributed throughout the community.

Responses to the survey were as follows:

1. Do you feel you have enough information about the Building Referendum?
Yes = 80 No = 37

2. Do you feel there is a problem with shortage of space in the schools?
Yes = 108 No = 9
3. Did the referendum in 1985 have a negative effect on this referendum?
Yes = 60 No = 38
4. Did you like the location of the proposed school across from the Moose Lodge? Yes = 37 No = 72
5. Would you support a smaller school on the Northfield property?
Yes = 46 No = 61
6. Did the safety factor of planes and crop dusting over the proposed school have a negative effect on your vote? Yes = 50 No = 64
7. Would you like to see additions to existing schools? Yes = 82 No = 21
8. Would you like the District to rent/buy more mobile classrooms?
Yes = 14 No = 98
9. Would you like your child to go to school year round? Yes = 6 No = 101
10. Do you favor split shifts for your child? Yes = 6 No = 102
11. Do you have any children or relatives attending the Harvard Schools?
Yes = 98 No = 20
12. Are you willing to raise your taxes for the school district? Yes = 86 No = 23
13. Would you like to see more state aid for funding the schools?
Yes = 106 No = 2
14. Would you be willing to lobby for more state aid? Yes = 68 No = 34

Summary of survey comments:

The consensus of many respondents was to build a new high school and put additions on to the other schools.

Many respondents favored additions (wings) on to the Junior High School. Many believed that the original design of the school intended for this concept with future additions.

The suggestion was offered to build houses on the Northfield Avenue property. This would generate annual tax dollars to the District.

May 10, 1989. Area legislators Senator Jack Schaffer and Representative Ron Waite visited District #50 schools to see "first hand" how serious the classroom overcrowding conditions really were. Legislators commented that a third building referendum try for District #50 may be the quickest way to relieve the overcrowded classrooms. The School Organization and Facilities Division of the Illinois State Board of Education was asked to assist the District with a demographic study and space utilization study.

May-August, 1989. District and community committees grouped together to study year-round schools, split-shift, modified day/productivity scheduling, and revised legislation for funding various District building programs.

August 15, 1989. The Board of Education voted to run the third consecutive referendum in November. The Northfield Avenue property was listed for public sale a second time.

September 26, 1989. The School Board approved an option agreement to buy the Tom King acreage north of the city. Parcel 1 = 39.55 acres at \$197,500 Parcel 2 = 40 acres at \$160,000. In addition the Board made arrangements to rent the newly remodeled building on Ayer Street owned by Jack Stahl. Kindergarten students began to attend school in this new facility in January, 1990. There were many controversial

discussions regarding an elementary school being located in the business district of downtown Harvard.

October 13, 1989. David Grover, a consultant from Utah, was invited to District 50 to discuss modified scheduling. More than 100 residents heard how elementary-level teaching procedures could be altered to relieve overcrowding in District 50. The School Organization and Facilities reports completed by the Illinois State Board of Education were also shared with the community at this meeting. The study provided demographic information and the utilization of the District facilities. The usage percentages were as follows: Central School = 105%, Washington School = 132%, Jefferson School = 115%, Junior High School = 176% and the High School = 68%.

REFERENDUM: NOVEMBER 7, 1989

Shall the Board of Education of Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, reconstruct, alter, repair and equip the Junior High and High School and improve their respective sites; and to pay the cost thereof issue bonds to the aggregate amount of \$5,600,000?

FOR = 914 AGAINST = 1,219

F A I L E D

Shall the Board of Education of Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, increase the Operations and Maintenance Tax rate to .750% a .125% increase?

FOR = 822 AGAINST = 1,309

F A I L E D

Referendum #4: March 20, 1990

This referendum question did not deal with land, a new school or additions to present facilities. The referendum strictly asked for tax rate increases to the Education and Operations and Maintenance Funds as follows:

Education Fund - Increase the tax rate to 3.65% (a 1.00% increase). The vote: 1,100 For 1,717 Against.

Operations and Maintenance Fund - Increase tax rate to .750% (a .125% increase). The vote: 1,092 For 1,710 Against.

Chronology of Events between November 7, 1989 and March 20, 1990

November–December, 1989. In addition to the ongoing space problem, District #50 also needed to address the financial needs of the Education Fund and the Operations and Maintenance Fund. Program and staff cuts became a point of many discussions.

January 25, 1990. District #50 receives news from the Illinois State Board of Education that they were placed on the State's Financial Watch List. The criteria was based on the audited Annual Financial Report for the 1988-89 school year. The Board of Education was forced to take a serious look at either passing tax rate referendums or making drastic cuts to District programs and staff.

The Board of Education determined to seek two tax rate referendums for the March 20, 1990 election. The referendums were planned to ask for a \$1.00 increase to the Education Fund tax rate and a \$.125 increase to the Operations and Maintenance tax rate.

February 4, 1990. The Board of Education advised the community of the cuts that

would be implemented in regards to the budgets for the Education Fund, Operations and Maintenance Fund and the Transportation Fund. These cuts included the elimination of elementary Music and Art programs; elimination of the District newsletter; staff cuts by not replacing retiring staff; Freshman Sports programs; some student extra-curricular activities; reduction in the number of custodial staff; and revisions to the Transportation Bus Fleet replacement schedule. The aggregate total of projected budget cuts was approximately \$450,000.

March 18, 1990. The Board continued to indicate that the proposed budget cuts would be implemented if the referendums failed. Students rallied in a protest and march through downtown Harvard to encourage residents to vote yes so that sports and extra-curricular activities could stay intact. A supportive and active parent wrote an article to the editor in the March 18, 1990 *Northwest Herald* newspaper asking the public, "Don't Punish the Kids," with a No vote on March 20, 1990.

REFERENDUM: MARCH 20, 1990

Shall the Board of Education of Harvard Community Unit School District No 50, increase the Education Fund tax rate to \$3.64%, a \$1.00% increase?

FOR = 1,100 AGAINST = 1,717

F A I L E D

Shall the Board of Education of Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50, increase the Operations and Maintenance Tax rate to .750% a .125% increase?

FOR = 1,092 AGAINST = 1,710

F A I L E D

CHAPTER IV

SUCCESSFUL REFERENDUMS

After two years of unsuccessful attempts to get referendums passed to provide for expansion, the District prevailed in two subsequent referendums. Chapter IV reviews the details leading up to each successful referendum by means of summaries of community meetings, surveys and referendum plans.

Referendum #5: November 6, 1990

This referendum requested authorization to increase the Education Fund tax rate to 3.23% (a .59% increase). The vote: For = 1,714; Against = 1,476.

Chronology of Events from March 20, 1990 to November 6, 1990

March 21, 1990. The Board of Education immediately followed through with the budget cuts that had been proposed if the March 20, 1990 referendum failed. The cuts were necessary steps toward getting District #50 removed from the State's Financial Watch List.

April 30, 1990. The Board of Education requested that Mr. Pat Toomey, Manager of the Illinois State Board of Education Finance Department, visit District #50 to assess financial problems.

May 16, 1990. The District continued to face a two-fold crisis. Extensive efforts were

made to be removed from the Financial Watch List, while the students remained in crowded classroom situations.

The District received an offer for a trade of the Northfield Avenue property (eight acres) for thirty-seven acres west of town, presented by the partnership of Stricker and Stahl. Various conditions applied to the offer including the expense of access roads.

The McHenry County Board established Developer Impact Fees. Prior to issuance of any county building permits for new construction, the developer must pay the Impact Fee to the respective school district. The Impact Fee for District #50 was established at \$1,979.24. The impact fees can only be used for the acquisition or improvement of land.

The Board of Education made arrangements to sell \$500,000 in working cash bonds to assist with the ongoing financial difficulties. In addition, the Board increased the student book fees for the 1990-91 school year.

June–July, 1990. The Board of Education contracted the services of retired Superintendent/Business Manager (Dr. Paul Schilling) to advise the District and offer solutions to solve deficit spending. Dr. Schilling realized that the Board of Education had already made many "bare bone" cuts to programs and staff. He suggested that the Board "pass the peace pipe" to the voters in an attempt to seek their input to a solution to this fiscal dilemma. A separate recommendation included the hiring of a business manager to monitor the finances of the District.

The present contract with District #50 teachers was scheduled to expire in

August. Negotiations had been ongoing since April 1, 1990 for a new contract. The Board of Education placed a freeze on all District #50 wages.

August 21, 1990. Board of Education discussions continued regarding what type of referendum to hold in November: tax rate increases, building bonds, or a combination of both. The resignation of a board member delayed discussions while the Board sought an individual to appoint to the Board. The Board eventually decided to run a referendum specifically for an Education Fund tax rate increase of \$.59.

District #50 teachers started the school year without a contract. Negotiations continued into the school year.

The Board of Education authorized the posting of a position for an Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs.

September 9, 1990. Due to a breakdown of communications between the Board negotiating team and the Harvard Education Association, a mediator was asked to assist with negotiations. Teachers commented on boycotting Open Houses to protest lack of progress. The Board directed the teachers to attend Open Houses.

The Board of Education began to project additional program and staff cuts in the event the November 6, referendum was defeated. Additional sports and extracurricular programs were scheduled to be cut, in addition to music programs.

October 26, 1990. Negotiations with the teachers continued with the hopes that a contract could be settled prior to the November 6, referendum.

The Board of Education was aware of a lot of support for the November 6,

referendum. Positive endorsements were given by the City Council, the Northwest Herald and a group of citizens that rallied to seek endorsements from community members.

November 1, 1990. The Board of Education Negotiating Team and the Harvard Education Association reach a contract settlement—six days before election.

REFERENDUM: NOVEMBER 6, 1990

Shall the Board of Education of Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50 increase the Education Fund tax rate to 3.23%, a .59% increase?

YES = 1,714 No = 1,476

P A S S E D

Referendum #6: April 20, 1993

Approximately two and a half years passed before the Board made the decision to run another referendum. This referendum (and the passage of time) further documented the need for classroom space. The referendum requested authority to put additions on to Jefferson School, Harvard Junior High, and Harvard High School and to install handicap accessibility elevators and bathrooms at Central School. The vote: For = 1,519 Against = 1,255.

Chronology of Events from November 7, 1990 to April 20, 1993

December 13, 1990. The Board of Education authorized a third attempt at public sale of the Northfield Property, and at the same time continued to negotiate for the King Property.

February 27, 1991. The Illinois State Board of Education notifies District #50 that they had been removed from the Financial Watch List based on figures from the 1989-90 Annual Financial Report.

Throughout the winter, spring, and summer of 1991, District #50 explored numerous parcels of property to address the space crunch. These parcels ranged from individual city lots to eighty acre tracts of land.

March 19, 1991. A joint Board of Education/City Council meeting was held to introduce the concept of a site plan and future development of the King Property. This concept was discussed over the next six months, culminating in a meeting in October.

October 22, 1991. The second joint Board of Education/City Council meeting was held. The areas represented by attendees included: City Council, Board of Education, Library Board, Park Board, Chamber of Commerce, School Architects, Independent Engineers, Press, and Citizens of Harvard. The meeting generated a lot of discussion and unanswered questions. Although geotechnical engineering reports indicated that the property was buildable, this was overshadowed by many perceptions about the School District becoming involved in such a venture.

During the next year it appeared that only a handful of people were interested in pursuing a community development. During this period of a year the Board of Education directed the Superintendent and a Board Committee to continue negotiations for selling Northfield and acquiring the King Property. Many citizens claimed that the

King Property was in a flood plain; "was a swamp"; "machinery had sunk out of site on that property." They were also concerned about access to the isolated property: this could not be accomplished without going across wetlands, which necessitated Environmental Protection Agency approval. Another factor that was problematic was that the property needed to be annexed to the City in order to have access to utilities and for construction and maintenance of streets. Citizens also questioned the need for more land since the student enrollment was less than it was in 1974.

Most of these concerns were valid, barring the argument regarding the soil quality of the property. The farmer who had owned and farmed this land for over thirty years negated the public's misapprehensions about the drainage problem, and on-site observations by District personnel confirmed the farmer's statements.

January 21, 1992. These concerns fueled by misconceptions about the property generated a petition containing 621 signatures of citizens opposed to the purchase of the King property. The petition listed four reasons for the opposition: (1) no evaluation had been done of the King property as a wet low land; (2) other adjacent property to present schools should be evaluated; (3) construction costs for utilities at a new location should be determined; (4) more technical information should be presented to the Board and the public before any decision is made.

The Superintendent and Board Committee diligently addressed these issues over the next nine months.

June 9, 1992. A survey entitled "Where Are We Heading?" had been conducted. One

of the questions asked if the citizens were satisfied with the way the School District was managing their tax dollars—most of the responses were negative. Consequently, the Finance Committee composed of citizens, Board Members, staff, and administrators developed a District #50 Finance Education/Awareness Day. The agenda was established and included legal requirements, tax cycles, legislative impact, budgeting, grants, property, facilities, and alternative funding. County and State experts addressed each of these areas. Attendance of citizens was very low, but the information was exceptional.

August 11, 1992. The student enrollments continued to increase, which impacted already existing large class sizes of thirty to thirty-four students in a class. A publicized meeting to reinitiate discussion of crowded conditions in District #50 was held in the Central School gymnasium. The sole purpose of the work of the committee, and hence of the meeting, was not to develop plans for a building referendum but to explore existing community facilities to consider for housing students. The committee had advertised, toured, studied and developed cost estimates on a dozen local business facilities. In addition, the committee also studied present District #50 facilities.

September 15, 1992. The Board of Education passed a motion to allow the option on the King property to expire. Uncertainties regarding access, and the continuing expenditure of dollars with no definite closure predictable in the near future were reasons for taking such action.

November 16, 1992. The Facilities Committee formed on August 11, 1992, recommended to the Board of Education that they proceed to build a three-classroom addition to Jefferson School using impact fees collected since May 10, 1990. Voter approval was not needed since tax dollars were not required to pay for this addition. The Facilities Committee had accomplished their task without promoting a building referendum. The majority of the committee members opted to remain on the committee because they believed the Board of Education had finally heard their concerns, particularly since the Board had decided to abandon the King property. They also realized that nearly thirty classrooms were needed to address the overcrowding.

December 11, 1992. The Facilities Committee recommended that the Board of Education seek an April 20, 1993 Building Referendum to build additions to present facilities.

January 20, 1993. The Harvard Board of Education passed a resolution to seek voter approval for additions. From this time until April 20, 1993, a "Grass Roots" Referendum Committee met weekly to plan public relation strategies of getting the message out to District #50 constituents.

Their efforts paid off with voter approval of \$5.9 million for additions to the present school buildings. In addition to the three impact-fee classrooms, Jefferson School received the equivalent of seven classrooms, a multipurpose room, the renovation of the old gymnasium to a learning center, and the installation of a new kitchen. The Junior High saw the addition of twelve new classrooms, a new learning

center, a new multipurpose room, installation of its first complete kitchen and renovation of five existing rooms. Considerable site work along with the construction of a retention pond were also part of the plan. The High School received an eight classroom addition to house the Science Department and a computer laboratory. The new addition is capable of having a second story built upon it, if future growth and District plans require it.

The referendum also provided funds to install an elevator in Central School, to meet American Disabilities Act requirements.

REFERENDUM #6: APRIL 20, 1993

Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Central, Jefferson, Junior High and High Schools. Sell bonds = \$5,900,000

YES = 1,519 NO = 1,255

P A S S E D

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter summarizes the contributing factors that influenced voting constituents in building bond and tax rate referendums in Harvard Community Unit School District #50 from August 1, 1987 to April 20, 1993. These contributing factors were the basis of a documented chronology garnered from articles presented by local news media; school board meeting minutes; the Harvard Educator; informational referendum flyers; newspaper advertisement; and materials developed by special interest groups. Another primary source of information consisted of surveying twenty-one selected staff, parents, former and present board members, administrators, and community members within Harvard Community Unit School District #50.

District #50 encompasses all or parts of four McHenry County townships and part of one township in Boone County. The twenty-one respondents to the survey represented the five precincts of Chemung Township, Dunham Township, Alden Township, Hartland Township, LeRoy Township, and Other representing employees living outside of the School District.

The survey contained a demographic section for each respondent to complete in addition to questions pertaining to each of the six referendums. Further the

instrument was designed to determine the participants' attitudes, knowledge of the issues, and preconceived assumptions of the referendum process. The combination of a yes/no format along with an open-ended survey, produced a detailed and descriptive account of each referendum. This was the basis for the summary and implications of this study. Quotations in the narrative attempted to capture the respondents' overall consensus of particular questions asked of them in the survey. The responses to the survey were listed in their entirety as verbatim from the individual surveys.

*Demographic Information Gathered
from Selected Respondents to Survey
(See next page.)*

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Table #1

DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS
(Y = Yes N = No)

	Chemung Ward #1					Chemung Ward #2	Chemung Ward #3		Chemung Ward #4	Chemung Ward #5		Dunham Township			Alden Township	Hartland Township	LeRoy Township	Non Resident
Live in District #50	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Not Applicable
Number of years you have lived in District #50	18	25	40	54	9	45	8	11	12	53	20	77	21	26	57	10	33	Not Applicable
Did you vote in the following referendums?																		
November 8, 1988	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Not Applicable
April 4, 1989	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Not Applicable
November 7, 1989	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Not Applicable
March 20, 1990	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Not Applicable
November 6, 1990	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Not Applicable
April 1993	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Not Applicable
Are you a business owner in Harvard (District #50)?	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N N N N
Do you have children in Harvard schools?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N N N N
Do you have grandchildren in Harvard schools?	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N N N N
During the referendums, did you have children in the elementary grades?	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N N N N
During the referendums, did you have children in the Junior High?	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N N N N
During the referendums, did you have children in the High School?	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N N N N

	Chemung Ward #1	Chemung Ward #2	Chemung Ward #3	Chemung Ward #4	Chemung Ward #5	Dunham Township	Alden Township	Hartland Township	LeRoy Township	Non Resident
Were you involved with the Booster Club?	N Y N Y N	Y	N Y	Y	Y Y	N N Y	N	N	N	Y N N N
Were you involved with a Parent Teacher Group?	N N N N N	Y	N N	N	N Y	N N Y	N	N	N	Y Y Y N
Did you work on a Referendum Committee?	Y Y Y N Y	Y	Y Y	N	Y Y	N Y N	N	Y	N	Y Y Y Y
Have you been a school volunteer? (VIVA, Reading)	N Y N N N	N	N N	Y	N Y	Y N N	N	N	N	N N N N
Were you involved in any Civic Organizations?	Y N Y N N	Y	Y N	N	Y Y	N Y N	N	N	N	Y N N N
Were you on the Chamber of Commerce?	Y N Y Y N	N	Y N	N	N N	N N N	N	N	N	N N N N
Were you on the Citizens' Advisory Committee?	Y N N Y Y	Y	Y N	N	Y Y	N N N	Y	Y	N	Y N Y Y
Have you been a School Board Member?	N N Y N N	N	N N	Y	N N	Y N N	N	Y	N	N N N N
Do you believe that Co- curricula activities are as important as the 3 R's?	Y Y N N N	Y	Y N	Y	Y Y	N N Y	Y	Y	Y	Y Y Y N
Do you believe the Lottery monies are additional funds for Schools?	N N N N N	N	N N	N	N N	Y N N	N	N	N	N N N N

	Chemung Ward #1	Chemung Ward #2	Chemung Ward #3	Chemung Ward #4	Chemung Ward #5	Dunham Township	Alden Township	Hartland Township	LeRoy Township	Non Resident
Did you support District #50's attempt at a lawsuit to change financial legislation?	Y Y Y Y Y	Y	Y Y	Y	Y Y	Y Y Y	Y	Y	Y	Y Y Y Y
Do you believe local property taxes should be the main resource for school funding?	N N ? N N	N	N N	N	N N	N N ?	N	Y	Y	N N N N
How do you receive school information?										
Notes home with children	Y Y Y N Y	Y	N Y	N	N Y	N Y N	N	Y	Y	N N N N
Radio Communication	Y Y Y N Y	Y	Y N	Y	N Y	N Y Y	N	Y	N	N N N N
Telephone Trees	Y Y N N N	N	N N	N	N Y	N N N	N	N	N	N N N N
Word of mouth	Y Y Y Y N	Y	Y N	Y	Y Y	Y Y Y	Y	Y	Y	N Y N N
Speaker's Bureau	Y N N Y N	Y	N Y	N	N N	N N N	N	N	N	N Y N N
Videos	Y N Y N Y	Y	N Y	N	Y N	N N N	N	N	N	N N N N
Newspapers	Y Y Y Y Y	Y	Y Y	Y	Y Y	Y N Y	Y	Y	Y	N Y N N
The Harvard Educator	N Y Y N Y	Y	Y Y	Y	Y Y	N Y Y	Y	N	N	N Y Y N

Harvard Community Unit School District encompasses 106 square miles. Seventeen of the twenty-one respondents to this investigator's survey covered all nine voting precincts within its boundaries, consisting of Chemung Township Precincts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, Dunham Township, Alden Township, Hartland Township, and LeRoy Township. Four of the respondents lived outside of the District. All respondents had familiarity with all six referendums. Sixteen of the seventeen residents of the survey voted in the majority of the six referendums. Eight of the respondents were local business owners and sixteen had children and/or grandchildren who attended the Harvard Schools. During the six referendums, seventy-one percent of the seventeen in-District respondents had children attending elementary, junior high and/or high school.

Seventy-one percent of the twenty-one respondents were involved with either the Booster Club or the Parent/Teacher organizations. Fifteen of the twenty-one respondents worked on referendum committees. Four have been active in volunteering weekly time to assist with the Volunteers In The Visual Arts and the Reading Pairs program. Four respondents have been involved with the local Chamber of Commerce and twelve have served on Board of Education Citizens' Advisory Committees. Four have also served with distinction as Board of Education members. Fourteen of the twenty-one respondents believe that co-curricula activities are as important as the basic academic skills.

Twenty of the twenty-one respondents did not believe the Illinois State Lottery monies were additional funds for schools. There was one-hundred percent agreement

in District #50's attempt at a lawsuit to change how schools are funded, while on the other hand two still had questions when asked if they believed that local property taxes should be the main resource for school funding.

The last section of the demographic information asked how the respondents received school information. The top three mediums were newspapers, word of mouth, and the *Harvard Educator*, which is the District newsletter sent to all postal patrons three times a year. The three least used channels of communicating with constituents were telephone trees, speakers bureau, and use of videos. This is not to say that these could not be effective if promoted on a more regular basis.

Analysis of Survey Results

Referendum #1: November 8, 1988

Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Jefferson, Junior High and High Schools. Purchase and improve a new site with a new school. Sell Bonds = \$5,950,000.

Beginning on August 25, 1987 the District had formed a Life Safety Committee that was comprised of community members, Board of Education members, staff members, and administrators. This committee was responsible for reviewing the life safety projects and making recommendations to the Board of Education for proposed work to be completed through life safety funds. The Board of Education approved the committee's specific recommendations, then charged the Life Safety Committee with seeking bids and monitoring the work and expenditure of funds. All of the District #50 facilities were brought up to life safety standards. Many repair

items were addressed, but the most visible was the installation of new windows to all facilities.

Concurrent with this committee was the Utilization of Space for Education Committee (USE) composed of staff representatives from each school. There were not any Board Members or community members on this committee. These two committees met once on January 13, 1988 to discuss space needs before a public meeting was held on February 16, 1988. At this meeting subgroups generated four plans to meet the immediate space needs of the District. The USE Committee added one additional plan. The administration and Board of Education developed a Building Use Survey that was sent to 4,400 postal patrons that included the five plans for meeting the District's space needs.

The November 8, 1988 referendum called for reconstructing, altering, repairing, and equipping Jefferson, Harvard Junior High and High School; and purchasing a new site for building a new school. All plans and responses to specific questions called for the removal of the mobiles at Washington School, which did not show up on the referendum question. The plan that most closely represented what was eventually passed in 1993 called for the removal of mobile classrooms at Washington and to construct a one-story addition; no change at Central School; construct four to six classrooms at Jefferson; construct a one-story addition at the Junior High for the fifth grade and construct a science wing at the High School.

On October 25, 1988, the Short of Space (SOS) Referendum Committee held an Open Forum to respond to public questions regarding the referendum. Two

questions that seemed to be important to people were; what was the location of the proposed elementary school, and why weren't the eight acres the district owned on Northfield Avenue going to be the building site?

The Board of Education was using the Illinois State Board of Education's acreage guidelines for facilities and the minimum size for school construction was fifteen acres plus one acre for each one hundred students. The Northfield parcel was only eight acres. The consensus of the survey indicated that the citizens did not respect outside sources giving them constraints.

Based on the individual preferences for the five individual plans, no definitive direction was given to the Board of Education. These various plans possibly should have been studied in greater detail by a citizens' committee.

The selected responses to the survey indicates that community input to surveys must be responded to if public support is going to be asked for at a later time. This was evidenced by the referendum question of November 8, 1988 which did not designate a parcel of land to build a future school.

The survey of postal patrons indicated that the District should solve the space needs by building additions to present facilities. The survey respondents spoke against the purchase of land or the building of a new school. The referendum question of November 8, 1988, however, asked for both the building of additions to present facilities and the authorization to purchase land for a new school.

Seventy-nine percent of the selected population responding to the survey believed that the part of the referendum question referring to the purchase of land and

building a new school had a negative effect on the outcome of the referendum.

Twenty-one percent of the respondents to the question believed that the negative referendum vote was strictly a money issue. Many comments were made in the survey regarding the publics' lack of knowledge about school district fund accounting.

A 1985 referendum had authorized an increase in the tax rate for the Operations, Building and Maintenance Fund (OBM). In 1988, voters questioned why the money from the 1985 referendum had not been used to build additions or new facilities. One must keep in mind that District #50 had not had additions or construction of new facilities since 1962. The majority of the community were not aware that building bonds were the required resource of funding construction projects.

The postal patron survey questioned the future of Central School. Central School, which was constructed in 1888, is a three-story facility that houses only eight classrooms. The question asked whether Central School should remain open as a school or should the facility be sold. The response to the survey was split with 46 percent wanting Central to remain open as a school while 48 percent suggested selling the building.

Since the November 8, 1988 referendum question did not indicate the sale of Central School, one might speculate that many of the voters who may have been yes voters might possibly have voted no because Central School was scheduled to remain open as an attendance center.

The campaign for the November 8, 1988 referendum was coupled with news media coverage on the failure to start the 1988-89 school year with a teacher contract. The contract that should have been settled by August 21, 1988 was not settled until October 10, 1988. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents believed that the late contract settlement had an effect on the negative referendum vote. Respondents claimed that the majority of the voting public believed the approved referendum dollars would go toward teacher salaries instead of the building projects. This validates the need to provide an educational program for the community regarding "fund" accounting in a school district.

Also on the November 8, 1988 election ballot was a Building Bond question for McHenry County College and a 911 surtax proposition for the City of Harvard. The respondents were split on the effect each question had on the District #50 results. But the generalization drawn was that multiple issues equate to more dollars from the taxpayers.

Prior to this referendum, the District had approved a three-year tax abatement to the developers of the LaFrenz SuperValu/Walmart complex. Harvard District #50's tax base was comprised primarily of farmland and residential properties. Very little commercial and industrial base was available to help shoulder the tax burden. Therefore, tax supported entities had a significant impact on the single-family homeowners and farmers. Harvard had lost two major commercial resources in the closing of the Admiral and Starline plants. Salaries were depressed and families were moving to other communities to make a living. The Board of Education knew that if

they were to improve upon a good school district, other financial resources would be needed to win voter approval in subsequent referendums.

The Board of Education understood the ramifications of an abatement, but they took the position that they were looking to the future for additional revenue. New commercial and industrial companies would eventually lessen the tax burden to the individual taxpayer. The respondents to this investigator's survey indicated that they did not believe the abatements had an effect on the referendum results. But, their comments ranged from agreement for tax abatements to, "For a business like Walmart, which was owned by the richest American, to even ask for a tax abatement was very hard for other business owners to accept."

A point that was brought out in the survey by more than one respondent, was that any person not in favor of a referendum will find any reason for a no vote. The survey also indicated that the respondents were split on the Board vote of solidarity for the resolution for a referendum. This investigator believes that while a unanimous vote of the Board may be ideal, the support the dissenting Board members give to the passage of the referendum will generate more votes one way or another.

Individual Responses to Survey

Referendum Committee: SOS (Short of Space—Save Our Schools)

Referendum: November 8, 1988

Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Jefferson, Junior High and High Schools.

Purchase and improve new site with a new school. Sell Bonds = \$5,950,000

For = 1,209 Against = 2,078

Survey Question #1 - Additions to Washington School - Remove Mobiles

A survey was distributed to the community, requesting their input for the best usage of present District buildings and the need for new facilities. The survey requested community response to the possibilities of closing Central School, selling the Northfield Avenue property, renting business facilities for classroom space, and removing the mobile classrooms at Washington School.

Of the 596 respondents, 334 suggested that an addition be built on to Washington School and the mobile classrooms removed. This option did not become a part of the referendum question. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes Yes No Yes

Comments:

- When input is asked for, it must be responded to.
- But a small effect. I think the biggest reason was public indecision and lack of unity on part of the school board. Board members spoke to many people and gave less than a unified stance.
- Not for me because I had no problem with mobiles.
- Mobiles should be used as a "temporary" measure. They are now 25+ and we are still using them for classrooms. There isn't a person I've spoken with that feels this issue shouldn't be addressed.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

- I think money was the issue.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes No

Comment:

- Respondents felt the school board ignored their input, so they voted against the district proposal.
- Overall, I'd say this issue had little effect on the outcome of the election.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comments:

- People seemed very opposed to the mobile classrooms and could not understand why an addition in their place was not included.
- I think this would have been a great idea but probably didn't change outcome.

Dunham Township Yes No No

Comments:

- A great number of taxpayers wanted the mobiles removed from District #50.
- The emotional issue at closing Central School had more to do with the outcome. The fact that the majority desires of those responding was a very small factor. There were 334 want this, 2078 votes against.
- I feel at that point in time not much could have been done to get a yes vote regardless of the plan.

Alden Township No

Comment:

- I think the new site and location were some of the reasons. Not knowing where.

Hartland Township No

Comment:

- People were anti-referendum. The tax base was poor. Voters were thinking their "wallets" vs. their children.

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents No No No No

Comments:

- I felt the community wanted #50 to continue using what it had, possibly add but, not close Central or add a new school. —I believe the public voted against the referendum because they did not want their taxes raised.
- At the time money seemed to be the stumbling block and the misunderstanding of the earlier education referendum.

Survey Question #2 - Additions Only - No New School

The second highest response in the survey suggested that the District not build a new school, but rather build additions and renovate present facilities. The referendum question included not only additions and renovations, but also a new building on a new site to be purchased. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- When input is asked for, it must be responded to.
- Additions, I think would have passed, but not additions and new building.
- Space should be considered on a Band Aid Basis-What is needed now, future needs to be handled in the future.

—Maybe there was "too much" at stake at one time for people.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

—Perhaps some, but money was a bigger issue.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Comment:

—People voted against the cost of the project.

—People were not yet convinced that space was needed.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Comment:

—I think most people see additions as the most economic and cheapest way to provide more space.

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comments:

—Citizens felt a new school was unnecessary-that additions would meet the needs.

—Community not "ready" for school idea.

Dunham Township Yes Yes No

Comments:

—The voters were not ready for a new High School and were not ready to close Central.

—There seemed to be a strong desire not to increase taxes that would fund any new construction.

—I feel at that point in time not much could have been done to get a yes vote regardless of the plan.

Alden Township Yes

Hartland Township No

Comment:

—I'm not sure voters were engaged in the process. It was someone else's plan, easy to vote No.

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Possibly in hindsight a new school was not wanted.

- The public seemed to be against building on a new site when the district had existing land.
- Community wasn't ready for the new school concept.

Survey Question #3 - Tax Abatements

Prior to this referendum, the District had approved a 3-year tax abatement to the developers of the LaFrenz SuperValu/Walmart complex. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No No

Comment:

- The community had a strong desire for these businesses. However, I feel the School District should give abatements if at all on businesses such as these that don't use the resources of the schools.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

- I think most people were in favor of this move.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Comment:

- People recognized the long-term benefit of the abatement.
- The public did not understand this issue. Many thought Walmart and LaFrenz cut a "sweet deal" and that the District lost money when in fact the district actually benefited by the abatement.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

- For a business like Walmart which was owned by the richest American to even ask for tax abatement was very hard for other business owners to accept. What made it worse was that it was granted.

Dunham Township No No No

Comments:

- A lot of people were not aware of this at the time.
- This had strong support.
- Personal experience did not indicate this was a problem.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township No

Comment:

—Price of doing business.

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents No No No No

—Possibly some negativity toward tax abatement but more so to a new school, and increased taxes.

—I think most people felt this abatement was necessary to secure the developers. However some felt 3 years was too long.

Survey Question #4 - Operations, Building & Maintenance Fund

In 1985, the community had passed a tax rate referendum increase to the Operations, Building & Maintenance Fund. Although the referendum was never promoted as funding to building a new school, many in the community interpreted that this money was to be used to build a new school. How wide spread was this assumption? Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Very widespread. Then and now the public does not understand the difference in the funds.

—I don't know if it did or not, but it proves specific explanations must be given clearly.

—There are a lot of erroneous information that spreads quickly in a small town.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

—I don't think it was a major factor.

Chemung Ward #3 No

Comment:

—The assumption was held by a small percentage of uninformed people.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

—Not aware of this assumption.

Dunham Township No No

Comments:

- I was not aware of this.
- It did increase the no votes though.
- Do not remember enough details to be knowledgeable to answer. (Strongly held perception.)

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

- In general people don't understand the different funds. They see increased taxes.

Hartland Township

Comment:

- Don't know.

LeRoy Township Yes

Comment:

- It had an affect on the vote but not a large affect.

Non-Residents No Yes

Comments:

- I was not part of the district until 1987.
- Somewhere the wrong idea was given and this seemed to cause the community to distrust in the Board of Education.

Survey Question #5 - Teacher Contract

1988 was a negotiations year with the teachers. Ideally the contract should have been settled by August 15, 1988. The contract was actually settled October 10, 1988. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes No Yes

Comments:

- Probably.
- Very widespread. Then and now, the public does not understand the difference in the funds.
- However, I understood the situation, others did not, and also there are others who foolishly feel no raises should ever come. But, they can't be reasoned with.
- There may have been mixed messages and confusion.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

—Perhaps—some may have had questions about the business operations of the district.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

—Publicity on the teachers hold out for more money and benefits, while the district was asking for more money hurt.
—There was a great deal of uncertainty and unrest at the time. Teachers were focused on this issue and not fully behind the referendum issue.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Comment:

—Many people think teachers and administrators are over-paid. I don't!

Chemung Ward #5 No

Comments:

—People were able to separate contract talks from referendum question.
—Possibly. I did hear comments, as always about teacher and administrative raises. "If there is \$ for raises, they don't need more."

Dunham Township Yes Yes

Comments:

—Any time a teachers contract is not settled, voters do not want to vote yes on a referendum.
—I really don't know the answer to this question. Often people key on any reason to vote No.
—I would imagine this had an effect on the referendum process as teachers salaries are always important issues.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

—More taxes.

Hartland Township No

LeRoy Township Yes

Comment:

—Many older voters feel that teachers make a lot of money. They remember pay scales of the 30's & 40's.

Non-Residents Yes Yes No

Comments:

- This may have been used as a reason to vote no, but again a new school was not wanted.
- The public felt that the money would go directly to the teachers.
- The negative flier the night before the election was a "holler".

Survey Question #6 - McHenry County College Referendum

McHenry County College also had a question on this election ballot for building bonds. This involved all District #50 taxpayers. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No Yes —

Comments:

- Not for me.
- I feel that the Junior Colleges are providing a great service for high school graduates but the state dollars and local taxpayer dollars need to be prioritized so that there are funds to educate students K-12 first.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- Some may have felt it was too much at one time.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Comment:

- Most people who pay property taxes realize these are separate entities and both need funding.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

- We needed both. The only way many can attend college is by going to a local community college. Important to many, but these people also know the need of good education for all children in District #50.

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

- These two issues were kept separate. McHenry County College is funded by many more people.

Dunham Township Yes No No

Comments:

- Anytime more than one tax referendum is up for a vote it is easier to say no.
- This was a slight increase, but again anything will justify a No vote.
- I feel at that point in time not much could have been done to get a yes vote regardless of the plan.

Alden Township No

Comment:

- District #50 voters rejected college vote.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

- When people add up all the taxing bodies and what they want, education sometimes takes the lowest priority vs. fire district etc.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents Yes Yes _

Comments:

- Given an opportunity to vote no to a tax increase many will vote no especially with a double list.
- Some people may have voted for the college thinking that more would benefit from its use, and then voted No for District #50.
- Maybe for some but not the majority—This was not a good time for Harvard money wise as a community.

Survey Question #7 - City of Harvard 911 Referendum

The City of Harvard also had a question on this election ballot for a telecommunications surtax—911. This involved only District #50 taxpayers within the city limits of Harvard. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No Yes No

Comment:

- Too much tax at once.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

- I don't think it was a big issue.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Comment:

—Totally unrelated to school situation.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

—Only for those who are against all tax increases. However, some can see 911 as a possible need for themselves, and they have already been educated.

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

—The two issues were totally separate.

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Again its easier to say No.

—This was an issue spoke about in the press and may have had an impact.

—Possibly from in town voters of which we were not.

Alden Township No

Comment:

—Minimal increase.

Hartland Township _

Comment:

—Don't know.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No Yes Yes

Comments:

—Possibly to some extent as in #7 above but I believe this was a minor surtax so not much effect.

—People who voted yes for 911 surtax would have voted no for District #50 due to additional taxes they would be assessed.

Survey Question #8 - Board Member Vote

The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the November 1988 referendum was: 5 yes, 1 no, 1 absent. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes No Yes No Yes

Comments:

- This was one of the biggest reasons for defeat.
- Some differences of opinion should exist.
- Boards are made up of individuals that are independent thinkers. When they aren't unanimous on issues concerning referendums it doesn't show a very solid position.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

- I don't think people are real concerned unless it's a 4-3 split.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Comment:

- The board members aren't aware of needs, how can the general public be aware?
- This had a major impact on the referendum. The public perceived a split vote on the Board meant that even board members weren't behind the issue, that board members weren't convinced of the need.

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

- A unanimous vote is important to get taxpayer's support.

Dunham Township Yes Yes No

Comments:

- Any referendum needs 100% thinking the same way or the voter is not sure its what is needed.
- This is a possibility. It helps (but does not guarantee success) to have all vote yes.
- I feel at that point in time not much could have been done to get a yes vote regardless of the plan.

Alden Township No

Comment:

- 5 to 1 or 3 to 2 is a vote to increase taxes.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

- Unless you have complete support, it's chances of surviving decrease.

LeRoy Township No

Comment:

—Only a few voters read the minutes of school meetings.

Non-Residents Yes No Yes

—If people want to find a reason to vote no its easy to say, even the school board doesn't want it.

—When a Board is not unified the community seems to think there is something they do not know.

TABLE 2

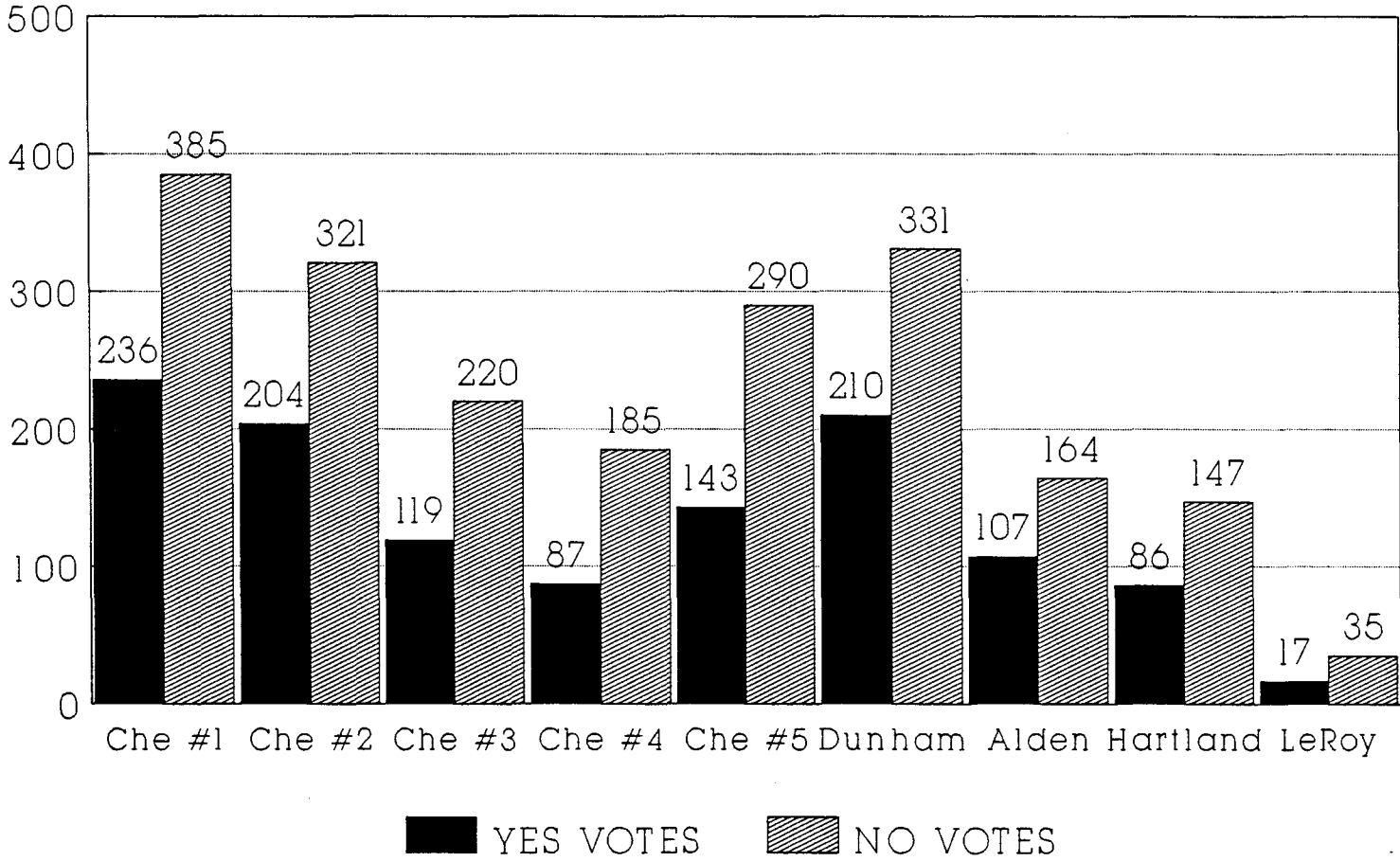
NUMERICAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES
REFERENDUM #1 - NOVEMBER 8, 1988

Key: Ch1 = Chemung Precinct #1 Dun = Dunham Township
 Ch2 = Chemung Precinct #2 Ald = Alden Township
 Ch3 = Chemung Precinct #3 Hart= Hartland Township
 Ch4 = Chemung Precinct #4 LeR = LeRoy Township
 Ch5 = Chemung Precinct #5 Oth = Non-Residents

DID THE FOLLOWING ISSUES HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE REFERENDUM?
 (Refer to survey on preceding pages.)

		Ch1	Ch2	Ch3	Ch4	Ch5	Dun	Ald	Hart	LeR	Oth	Tot
Survey Question #1	Yes	3		1		1	1			1		
Addition to Washington	No	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1			4
Remove Mobiles	Undecided											
Survey Question #2	Yes	5		1	1	2	2	1		1		4
Additions only	No		1	1			1		1			
No New School	Undecided											
Survey Question #3	Yes			1		1					1	
Tax Abatements	No	5	1	1	1	1	3	1	1			4
	Undecided											
Survey Question #4	Yes	3						1		1		1
Operations, Building	No	1	1	1	1	2	2					1
& Maintenance Fund	Undecided	1		1			1		1			2
Survey Question #5	Yes	3		2	1		2	1		1		2
Teacher Contract	No	1	1			1			1			1
	Undecided	1				1	1					1
Survey Question #6	Yes	1	1	1			1		1			2
McHenry County College	No	4		1	1	2	2	1		1		
Referendum	Undecided											2
Survey Question #7	Yes	1		1			3					2
City of Harvard	No	4	1	1	1	2		1		1		1
911 Referendum	Undecided								1			1
Survey Question #8	Yes	3		1	1	1	2		1			2
Board Member Vote	No	2	1	1		1	1	1		1		1
	Undecided											1

Figure #1
BUILDING BOND REFERENDUM - \$5,950,000
November 8, 1988



Yes = 1,209 No = 2,078

Analysis of Survey Results

Referendum #2: April 4, 1989

Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Junior High and High Schools. Purchase and improve new site with a new school. Sell Bonds = \$5,950,000.

After the defeat of the November 8, 1988 referendum, the Board and Administration believed that the message was clear that a site for building a new school had to be determined before another referendum was attempted. Since the Board and Administration believed that the Northfield Property was too small to build a school on, the Board placed the property up for sale. The premise was that the revenue generated from the sale would go toward the purchase of another site believed to be large enough to build one or two schools. No one submitted a bid on Northfield which was set at a minimum of \$195,000.

In February 1989, the Board entered into a contract for the purchase of 103 acres between Airport Road and Route 173. This property was located north of a small family owned airport and southeast of Harvard's sewage treatment pond.

This April 4, 1989 referendum committee coined a new slogan, "Give Us Room to Grow" and developed a logo of a tree. The proposed April 4, 1989 referendum was almost identical to the November 8, 1988 referendum. While the establishment of a proposed building site were met, the overall consensus of the people was that they feared the airport and sewage pond. In addition, many people believed the Board should build on existing property and they did not favor an additional \$250,000 price tag over the November 8, 1988 referendum.

During this same time period the District Building Committee had recommended \$1,415,000 to replace windows in all District #50 buildings, upgrade the present heating plants and remove asbestos. The Board also sold \$450,000 in working cash bonds in order to keep a cash flow. While the majority of this investigator's respondents indicated this did not have an adverse effect on the April 4 referendum, the investigator believes other voters already saw this positive step as enough of a tax increase for one year.

Another issue prevalent during this time period was a taxpayers revolt. Taxes were high enough and alternative means of funding schools were being explored by grass root organizations. One such group was the Illinois Farm Bureau and their position was known as CHIEF (Change How Illinois Education is Financed). CHIEF dealt with changing the taxing base for governmental entities from real estate to income. The Harvard Board of Education passed a resolution in support of CHIEF, particularly since we are situated in a rural area. The majority of the respondents to this investigator's questionnaire did not believe that this influenced the outcome of the referendum.

The City of Harvard also had a question on the ballot dealing with the establishment of a Park District. The Park District's tax base would have been developed from all District #50 residents and not just the residents living within the municipality of Harvard. The Park District question was resoundingly defeated. The generalization drawn from the questionnaire was that both issues influenced the negative outcome of the vote and that more than one issue on a ballot confuses many people.

Individual Responses to Survey

Referendum Committee: Give Us Room to Grow

Referendum: April 4, 1989

Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Junior High and High Schools. Purchase and improve new site with a new school. Sell Bonds = \$6,200,000

For = 963 Against = 1,859

Survey Question #1 - Additional Costs - Site Specified

This referendum was identical to the previous (November 8, 1988) referendum question with the exception of the cost. This referendum would have cost \$250,000 more. In addition, a site for a new school had been designated in this referendum attempt (located between Airport Road and Route 173). Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes No Yes Yes No

Comments:

- Fear of airport. Also, people felt board was pushing them.
- People didn't want to be told we had to purchase all this land. Look at situation in Woodstock today because of land purchase.
- People still didn't seem convinced and were voting their pocket books.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- Opponents raised issues that scared people away.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

- School site was rejected in defeat.
- Again, people were concerned that it was too close to the airport—concerned for the safety of children.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Comment:

- Scare tactics worked to give many a reason to vote no. Sounds better than saying, "What was good enough for me is good enough for children today!" However many think this!

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comment:

- Anytime you ask for \$250,000 more for a previously defeated referendum there will be problems.

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- Not sure the site was the best for a school.
- The higher cost plus the opposition from the Airport (Dave Dacy) that some used to justify what they wanted to do anyway.
- The attitude generally again was anti-tax-now more money than before plus a site that was not well accepted.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

- Location and I believe \$200,00 to \$250,000 a year increase in taxes was the reason.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

- Increase \$250,000 yes. Airport Road—don't know.

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents No Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- Again the community did not want a new school and wanted taxes held down.
- Many people questioned the integrity of the Board and many did not like the location.
- The site was still a conflict.

Survey Question #2 - Location of Site

The referendum question included the purchase of land located between Airport Road and Route 173 as a site to build a new school. At the time of the referendum, a site had not been designated. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- Taxpayers want to know what they are purchasing and who might profit from deal.
- This had a big impact. Many people feared the airport.
- Taxpayer's want a specific program for their tax money, not be asked to trust someone on generalities.
- There were many people that did not want that location so it became a real issue.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—I think some scare tactics caused some people to vote no; they wanted to know where the site was.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

—Voters opposed the location of the proposed land purchase by the district, regardless of No designated site for a school.

—This had the greatest impact on the failure of the referendum in my opinion. People were concerned about the safety issue. Also, people weren't convinced that more space was needed.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

—People expect to have answers to their questions-obviously, a very important one did not have an answer.

Dunham Township Yes No Yes

Comments:

—A lot of people did not like the Airport and Treatment plant so close to the children of District #50.

—I don't believe the lack of a site alone was a factor. The increase in taxes was primary.

—Definitely as there was negative response to this option—mainly airport, sewage plant, and chemical spray.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

—Location

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Seemed to have a negative impact-Not real sure how much though.

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents No Yes Yes Yes

Comments

—The unknown site might have been a factor but again I feel a new school was not wanted.

—A lot of people were against the rumors of the location near Airport Rd.

—Too many opposed the site because of potential danger.

Survey Question #3 - Proposed Sale of Northfield

In December, 1988, the Northfield Avenue property was advertised for sale. This was a result of the State Board guidelines for an elementary school site of 5 acres minimum plus 1 acre for each 100 students. However, none of District #50's current facilities are on property that falls within the State guidelines. Do you believe the Board's desire to sell the Northfield property had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes No No

Comments:

- Not sure.
- Probably.
- Not with the public, but with some board members it did.
- If it wasn't going to be used it should be sold.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- There were some who said Northfield should be used.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

- Community members did not fully understand why the Northfield site wouldn't work—not enough publicity.
- Many saw the Northfield site as a good location for a school and did not understand the guidelines put out by the State. There was also a group who recalled when the site was purchased that they were specifically told that the land would be used for a school site.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 No Yes

Comments:

- It was a good idea to sell if it could be sold at "fair market value."
- Some people still wanted to keep land to build school no matter what school board told them.

Dunham Township Yes No No

Comments:

- A few did not want to sell but not enough to pass a referendum.
- I am not sure about this. The issue was not, as I recall, tied to the referendum.
- The attitude generally again was anti-tax. Now more money than before plus a site that was not well accepted.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township No

Comment:

—No one cared.

LeRoy Township No

Comment:

—At that time the value of the property was not that significant.

Non-Residents No Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Community did not want a new school no matter where you put it.

—Many people felt that this was a bad mistake by the Board regardless of the State Board Guidelines.

—Past Board members not in favor of selling Northfield and some vocal in the community.

Survey Question #4 - Contract to Purchase 103 Acres

In February 1989, the Board entered into a contract for the purchase of 103 acres on Airport Road and Route 173 known as the Diggins property. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Some felt this wasn't a good choice.

—Very large effect-Fear of airport.

—People didn't want it. District was fortunate Board didn't proceed as legally could have—witness Woodstock today.

—Some people felt the land was not buildable and it became the issue.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—It both gained and lost votes depending on how people felt about that property.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

—Again it was a site the community rejected for a school.

—The public was very skeptical of this site. I think they saw the board acting behind their backs. They were not pleased.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comments:

- It was too far from existing schools and too close to the airport. It was hard to convince people otherwise.
- The community was very negative verbally about this land—airport and pond too close to school.

Dunham Township Yes Yes No

Comment:

- They didn't like the site and did not want to spend money for the land.
- Please see 1. The vote against was a greater percentage of the total than the previous referendum.
- I don't feel that the site was ever well accepted.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

- No referendum no money.

Hartland Township

Comment:

- I don't know.

LeRoy Township Yes

Comment:

- Everyone always has a better location for one reason or another.

Non-Residents No Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- Even if we had the property I don't feel it would have passed. People wanted to hold the line on taxes.
- People felt that the District should use existing property.

Survey Question #5 - Life Safety & Working Cash Bonds

The Board of Education issued life safety bonds in the amount of \$1,415,000 to replace the windows in all District #50 buildings, upgrade the present heating plants and remove asbestos. In addition a working cash bond issue was sold for \$450,000. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No No

Comments:

- People understood it was necessary.
- It was very much needed and had excellent community participation.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- I think some felt that taxes were going to go up enough.

Chemung Ward #3 No No

- While there were some who were opposed, most people saw the need to complete this work.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Comment:

- Why close Central when a lot of the above was spent there?

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

- These were necessary improvements to keep the buildings usable.

Dunham Township No Yes Yes

Comments:

- Most people knew windows were needed in most schools.
- Anything that makes taxes go up hurts a referendum.
- It gave the appearance there was monies available without a referendum.

Alden Township No

Comment:

- Two separate funds.

Hartland Township No

Comment:

- Most people don't understand Life Safety.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No No No Yes

Comments:

- I believe this was seen as a positive aspect, use and improve what you have to meet your needs.
- The buildings were beginning to look better and people noted this.

Survey Question #6 - Tax Abatements

Discussions continued between the City and the School District regarding the issuance of tax abatements to encourage industrial and commercial growth in the community. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No Yes No

Comment:

—Some people feel there should be no abatements-some feel there could be some on business properties.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

—No major moves took place.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Comment:

—Tax abatements are a long-term issue-adding money to the district down the road. The city and district win long-term, with increased taxes later.

—The public does not understand this issue. They perceive it as a give-away.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

—Few pay any attention to this. Again, some who are going to vote no on any tax increase will use this as an excuse.

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

—Everyone would like a tax abatement. Those who have been here a long time have a hard time giving a bonus to a newcomer who might not even stay.

Dunham Township No No No

Comments:

—Most people thought it would increase the tax base.

—The attitude generally again was anti-tax. Now, more money than before plus a site that was not well accepted.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township No

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents No No No Yes

Comments:

—Some negativity seen but in the long run needed to bring business to Harvard. Not an overall effect.

—Most people realize you do give in order to get even though some do not like this.

Survey Question #7 - Farm Bureau C.H.I.E.F.

The Board of Education supported the Illinois Farm Bureau's position known as CHIEF (Change How Illinois Education is Financed). CHIEF dealt with changing the taxing base for governmental entities from real estate to income. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No Yes

Comments:

—It should have shown that the Board had citizen concerns at heart.

—They were pretty organized in their position.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—People realized that the Board was sympathetic to the idea.

Chemung Ward #3 No No

Comment:

—I don't feel enough Harvard residents knew the district's stance on the issue.

—The board gained some farm support, but not enough to swing the decision in favor.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

—Changing education tax from real estate to income is a fairer tax.

Dunham Township No No

Comment:

—The attitude generally again was anti-tax. Now more money than before plus a site that was not well accepted.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

—If passed it would be no need for referendum.

Hartland Township No

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No No Yes Yes

Comments:

- Good idea, but it didn't effect the present referendum.
- However, I believe the public as a whole, is in favor of this change.
- Some as the Bureau was very vocal and did give people the idea something might change with their help - Nothing did!

Survey Question #8 - Site Near Airport

The designated site for a new school (on Route 173 West) was near the Dacy Airport. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes Yes No Yes

Comments:

- Except the idea of that much purchase for undermined uses wasn't received well.
- Many people were looking for excuses that provided reasons "why" they shouldn't support it.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- Opponents raised fears for student safety.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

- Safety was the perceived issue.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

- Dacy's scare tactic worked as a good excuse.

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comment:

- Location was too far from existing schools.
- Comments made by Dacy's worried people. They thought planes would be crashing into the school!!

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- Because of the way it was portrayed.

—The site was, in my opinion, never accepted as an option.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

—Safety

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—People don't like schools near airports-assumed safety hazard.

LeRoy Township Yes

Comment:

—Everyone always has a better location for one reason or another.

Non-Residents No Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Some may have used it as an excuse to vote no, but it was still a new school and No to tax increases.

—The public wanted the District to use existing property.

Survey Question #9 - Park District Referendum

The City of Harvard had a question on the ballot dealing with the establishment of a Park District. The Park District's tax base would be developed from all School District #50 residents. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Yes-large impact on both questions. Doomed both to failure.

—Too much at once.

—More than one issue on a ballot confuses many people.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—There may have been some people who felt it was too much at one time.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Comment:

—Since voters turned down both issues, neither affected the other.

—This helped split voters who were concerned about their pocketbooks.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

—Those who just didn't want to pay more taxes voted no on both.

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

—The school referendum probably had more of a negative effect on the Park District question than the other way around.

Dunham Township No

Comments:

—Maybe, but don't know.

—I don't know.

—My experience was there was not a problem keeping two issues separate.

Alden Township No

Comment:

—Two taxes.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Too many people asking for even fewer \$\$\$ from the voters.

LeRoy Township Yes

Comment:

—No one in Boone County would want to be taxed for a park district in Harvard.

Non-Residents No Yes Yes

Comments:

—This would be a minimum tax increase.

—While I believe the public would like a Park District, they see the Park District as another "open pit" for the money.

Survey Question #10 - Board Member Vote

The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the April 4, 1989 referendum was: 6 yes, 1 absent. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No No

Comment:

—Some dissension shows a good thought process.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

-Was not a 4-3 split.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

—Again, the public perceived the absent vote as a split of the Board on the issue.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comment:

—Again-unanimous vote is important.

—As I recall many people were unhappy with some very verbal members of school board and distrusting.

Dunham Township Yes Yes No

Comments:

—I believe it takes 100% vote of the Board.

—When the previous vote was 2 to 1 against, you really need all to support it.

—The attitude generally again was anti-tax. Now more money than before plus a site that not well accepted.

Alden Township No

Comment:

—6 to 1 or 3 to 2 is still a tax increase referendum.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Why the absenteeism on both votes-November, 1988 and April, 1989?

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No No Yes No

Comments:

—Unless the one absentee was privately against the referendum, it would be much better to have 7 yes votes.

—The Board member absent visible in the Community!

Table 3

NUMERICAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES
REFERENDUM #2 - APRIL 4, 1989

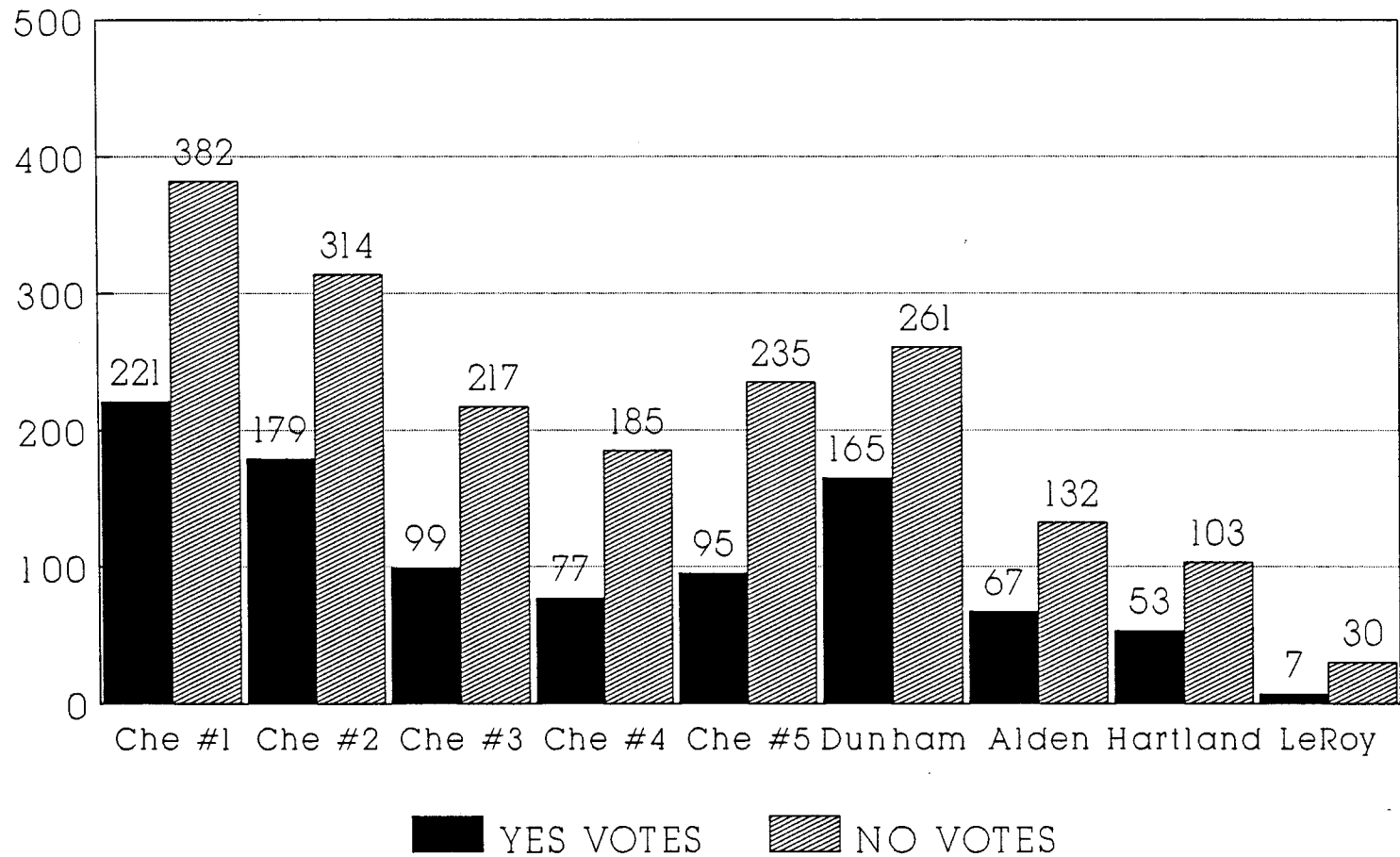
Key: Ch1 = Chemung Precinct #1 Dun = Dunham Township
 Ch2 = Chemung Precinct #2 Ald = Alden Township
 Ch3 = Chemung Precinct #3 Hart= Hartland Township
 Ch4 = Chemung Precinct #4 LeR = LeRoy Township
 Ch5 = Chemung Precinct #5 Oth = Non-Residents

DID THE FOLLOWING ISSUES HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE REFERENDUM?
(Refer to survey on preceding pages.)

		Ch1	Ch2	Ch3	Ch4	Ch5	Dun	Ald	Hart	LeR	Oth	Total
Survey Question #1 Additional Costs Site Specified	Yes	3	1	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	3	18
	No	2									1	3
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #2 Location of Site	Yes	4	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	17
	No	1				1	1				1	4
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #3 Proposed Sale of Northfield	Yes	1	1	2	1	1	1				3	10
	No	2				1	2	1	1	1	1	9
	Undecided	2										2
Survey Question #4 Contract to Purchase 103 Acres	Yes	4	1	2	1	2	2	1		1	3	17
	No	1					1				1	3
	Undecided								1			1
Survey Question #5 Life Safety & Working Cash Bonds	Yes				1		2				1	4
	No	5	1	2		2	1	1	1	1	3	17
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #6 Tax Abatements	Yes	1		1		1				1	1	5
	No	4	1	1	1	1	3	1	1		3	16
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #7 Farm Bureau C.H.I.E.F.	Yes	1	1					1			2	5
	No	4		2	1	2	2		1	1	2	15
	Undecided						1					1
Survey Question #8 Site Near Airport	Yes	4	1	2		2	3	1	1	1	3	18
	No	1			1						1	3
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #9 Park District Referendum	Yes	3	1	1					1	1	2	9
	No	2		1	1	2	1	1			1	9
	Undecided						2				1	3
Survey Question #10 Board Member Vote	Yes			1	1	2	2		1		1	8
	No	5	1	1			1	1		1	3	13
	Undecided											0

Figure #2
BUILDING BOND REFERENDUM - \$6,200,000
April 4, 1989

86



Yes = 963 No = 1,859

Analysis of Survey Results

Referendum #3: November 7, 1989

**Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Junior High and High Schools.
Sell Bonds = \$5,600,000.**

**Increase Operations, Building & Maintenance tax rate to .625%
(a .125% increase).**

The April 4, 1989 referendum defeat still left the District with overcrowded classrooms and students being taught in hallways and converted closets. Many decisions affecting the District transpired between April 4, 1989 and the next referendum on November 7, 1989.

On May 10, 1989 legislators Senator Jack Schaffer and Representative Ron Waite visited and toured District #50 to see "first hand" how serious the classroom overcrowding conditions really were. In a press conference held at the High School after their tour, they gave full support to a third building referendum attempt.

On May 24, 1989 District #50 sold \$1.9 million in working cash bonds to financially survive another year. This was the second time within a year that the Board sold working cash bonds to meet day to day operations. Our short term borrowing was beginning to require long term repayment schedules.

Also during May, the Board of Education authorized the creation of four citizen advisory subcommittees to address the feasibility of year-round schools, split-shift/modified day, legislation for funding and planning and building assessment to explore other classroom options. The various subcommittees met throughout the summer months and reported their recommendations to the Board of Education. The

subcommittee for the year-round school concept believed that their cost analysis to air-condition all facilities was cost prohibitive. Romeoville, Illinois had instituted such an approach fifteen years ago but had since gone back to the traditional nine month schooling.

As far as split shifts, this committee contacted the State Board of Education and their contact could not recall any elementary school in Illinois that had implemented a split shift approach. Many factors such as State Aid formulas, attendance variances, reimbursements, and so forth, would had to have been addressed before the split shift approach would have been considered for approval by the State Board of Education.

The legislation for funding subcommittee believed that other sources of funding schools other than real estate had to be explored with our legislators if future referendums were to be successful. The committee eventually dissolved because of the lack of someone to lead the charge and the feeling of hopelessness in dealing with the legislature.

The subcommittee for Program/Building Assessment for other classroom options explored local and neighboring communities for available classroom space. In addition the committee recommended not leasing or purchasing mobile classrooms, nor did they want to transport students out of district. They did however, suggest that two fifth-grade sections be housed in the two High School classrooms converted from the old choral room and the Jefferson stage be renovated to a classroom. These two recommendations were implemented for the fall of 1989. The committee also

recommended a sixteen classroom addition to the Junior High and a seven room addition to the High School.

The Split Shift\Modified Scheduling Committee, in an attempt to reduce overcrowding in the elementary classrooms, contacted a Utah consultant to speak with the staff, community and the Board of Education on October 13, 1989. The majority of elementary schools in the state of Utah use a modified scheduling approach where applicable. The concept of modified scheduling allows smaller class sizes in the areas of reading, math, language, science and social studies. Consequently, larger class sizes are required in art, music and physical education which would require additional aides but would reduce class sizes in the core subjects. Over one hundred residents in addition to staff members were in attendance to listen to the presentation and to ask questions.

In the final analysis, regular class sizes were already maxed out at thirty to thirty-five students per classroom. This concept would have required non-core classes to have enrollments of fifty or more students and this virtually was not possible.

During May, 1989 the Board of Education had contacted the Illinois State Board of Education's School Organization and Facilities Section to assist the District with a demographic study, enrollment trends, a space utilization survey of present facilities, subdivision analysis and a financial review of the District. Their analysis indicated that District #50 was more than maximizing their space. They recommended eliminating two elementary buildings because of their small number of classrooms and to promote a building referendum to house more students in one

building. The respondents to this investigator's survey shared that enough studies had been conducted but perhaps not by, "down to earth people." Another said, "Studies alone don't motivate voters, they need to be engaged totally - ideas, consequences, not just their front porch."

On August 24, 1989 the Board of Education passed a resolution to attempt a third building referendum asking for additions to the High School and Junior High. The Board of Education also asked for a rate increase in the Operations, Building and Maintenance Fund. While neither proposition passed, the building referendum had a higher yes percentage than previous referendums. The respondents to the survey indicated that proposing only additions to present facilities was better accepted by the voting constituents, because no purchase of land or construction of a new school were being proposed. They also commented that the largest student enrollments were at the elementary level and no additions were recommended to Washington, Central or Jefferson Schools. Another commented that, "Why are they asking for so much less than they have the last two referendums?"

The second proposition on the ballot asked for an increase to the Operations, Building and Maintenance Fund. The respondents conveyed that the District should have only placed one proposition on the ballot, particularly since they had done a poor job of communicating with the community the need for the increase in this fund. Again there was a perception that the increase in Operations, Building & Maintenance in the 1985 referendum had gone to pay for teacher raises.

In order to create still additional classroom space, the Board voted on August 24, 1989 to rent space on Ayer Street which would house all pre-kindergartners and kindergartners. Occupancy of this new facility took place on January 1, 1990 and was operational for these programs through June 15, 1995. This facility freed up three classrooms at Harvard Junior High which housed the kindergartners and took four sections of pre-kindergartners from the rented rooms in the Methodist Church. Many people did not like the kindergartners housed in the business district or the amount of rent the District was paying. The going rate for commercial space was \$12 per square foot, District #50 was paying \$8 per square foot.

On September 26, 1989 the Board of Education entered into an option agreement to purchase 79.55 acres from Tom King. The November 7, 1989 referendum question did not deal with the purchase of land nor the construction of a new school. The respondents were almost unanimous in their belief that this option agreement had a very detrimental effect on the outcome of both propositions on the ballot. Many people had the question, "Why was more land needed at this time?" Many people were very leery about this site. The impression to many people was that the Board was, "Grasping at anything at this point." One respondent said, "A lot of rumors were spread and people believed this was a 'shady' deal." This particular parcel of land was discussed for over four years until the Board of Education did not renew the option agreement on September 15, 1992.

The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the November 7, 1989 referendum was: 6 yes, and 1 absent. The respondents did not believe this had an effect on the outcome of the election.

Individual Responses to Survey

Referendum Committee: Give Us Room to Grow

Referendum: November 7, 1989

Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Junior High and High Schools. Sell Bonds
= \$5,600,000

For = 914 Against = 1,219

Increase Operations, Building & Maintenance tax rate to .625% (a .125%
increase)

For = 822 Against = 1,306

Survey Question #1 - Pt. 1 - Additions Only

This referendum listed two propositions. The building issue changed the previous question significantly. This question dealt with additions only to the Junior High and High School. No new site or no school were involved. Do you think this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes Yes Yes

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Alden Township Yes

Hartland Township Yes

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents No Yes No

Survey Question #1 - Pt. 2 - Operations & Maintenance Tax Rate Increase

In addition, a second question regarding an increase to the Operations, Building & Maintenance tax rate was included on the ballot. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- I really don't know**
- Must run on one increase at a time.**
- People were more comfortable with additions. Second question became a point of too much at once.**
- There was a division between High School, Junior High and Elementary.**

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- People saw the Board was being responsive to their concerns. Some thought it was too much money.**

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

- The District did a very poor job communicating with the community the need for the increase in the OBM taxes.**
- These issues confused the public. Why do they now need so much less than what they previously asked for?**

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Comment:

- Space was needed at lower grades at the time, and yet building was to take place at other levels.**

Chemung Ward #5 Yes

Comment:

- A step in the right direction, but something needed to be done at the elementary level.**

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- Just too much at one time.**
- The positive vote percentage improved, but the opposition to Building and Maintenance was higher.**
- #1 in a positive way there appeared to be work with what we have and improve. #2 in a negative way as if I recall the perception was that teachers raises came from the 1st increase in OBM monies.**

Alden Township No

Comment:

—Tax increase of \$200,000 to \$225,000. Taxes going up \$300,000 to \$400,000 a year without referendum.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—As many of the more active parents are at the elementary levels K-5—you shut them out—OBM is hard for folks to understand.

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents No No Yes

Comments:

—Although taking the new school off of the referendum was good, a very strong anti-tax movement was very big.

—I think the community attitude was negative and the King Option the "clincher".

Survey Question #2 - Rent Ayer Street Annex

In August, 1989 the Board decided to rent the Ayer Street Annex with an occupancy date of January 1, 1990. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No Yes Yes No

Comments:

—It showed the public that there really was overcrowding. That helped. It also helped to solve the overcrowding. That hurt.

—Many people saw there was a need, but would prefer another approach rather than Big Plan for the future. Fact that there were more yes votes showed more faith in ideas presented and some old mistrusts were fading.

—It caused a lot of controversy in the community, though as the perception was that it was too costly and we should have built our own as the Annex was more than paid for when District #50 left it.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—Some thought it clearly showed the crowding issue; others thought a school shouldn't be on Ayer Street and were angry.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes No

Comment:

- Voters did not oppose renting space short-term. They were protesting the price and location.
- The public saw this as a viable alternative. Ultimately, it did help pass a referendum, but not this one.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comments:

- A huge expenditure to an unpopular business person did not set well with anyone-also it was a poor location.
- Very unpopular with community. They didn't want 5 year olds taught "downtown".

Dunham Township No No

Comments:

- Don't know. Some thought rent was too much.
- If any it was negative because it showed some problems could be solved without a referendum being successful.
- My perception of voters is that the Board did what it had to do.

Alden Township No

Comment:

- Need the space.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

- Both "+" = wise move (business wise) and "-" = Why are you putting school kids in a business building, in the middle of the business district, next to a funeral home, with no playground?

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents No No Yes Yes

Comments:

- Mainly anti-tax increase.
- Difficult for parents to see young students on main street, but it worked.

Survey Question #3 - Various Studies

In August, 1989, the Illinois State Board of Education was requested to complete a study on various facets of District #50, primarily enrollment trends, subdivision analysis, facility utilization and a financial review. In addition, Senator Jack Schaffer and Representative Ron Waite visited the District and concurred with the space problems. Numerous committees studied the usage of District buildings. Do you believe enough studies were completed to determine the need for classroom space?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Enough studies, but not enough to convince the general public. To many, 34 in a class is not overcrowded.

—Maybe too many. Most people realized need for space. Just wanted to be conservative and don't like paying for it with Real Estate taxes.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—The key issue continued to be money.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comment:

—More down to earth (not politicians) needed to look into this. There were a lot more ways to use classrooms especially at the Junior High.

Dunham Township Yes Yes

Comments:

—Don't know for sure.

—It helped somewhat.

—I don't put a lot of faith in Government "studies."

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

—I don't remember any committee studies.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—But studies alone don't motivate voters—they need to be engaged totally—ideas, consequences—not just their "front" porch.

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

—Enough was done, but unless one is personally affected why should I pay more taxes.

Survey Question #4 - King Land Option

On September 26, 1989 the Board entered into an option agreement with Tom King for 79.55 acres. The November 7, 1989 referendum question did not deal with the purchase of land nor the construction of a new school. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

—Extremely poor timing. Should have waited until after vote.

—Probably--some people thought it was not a good site but that was based on rumor and still some mistrust of the building ideas.

—Some people in the community did not like this deal.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—Some felt this was a bad move.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

—Too many assumptions from uninformed people.

—People were very leery about this site. They saw it as too far out and as a wetland.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Comment:

—Again, many thought the land was in the wrong place.

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comments:

—Very few people were in favor of King property.

—Too much opposition to this land-too wet!! Too much arguing between community and school board. This land "killed" the referendum!!

Dunham Township Yes Yes

Comments:

- Why was more land needed at this time.
- This is hard to answer. The initial reaction was positive. The opposition came later. The district seemed to be grasping at anything at this point.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

- Swamp land, wet land.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

- Some animosity toward Mr. King. The property had a tendency to flood.

LeRoy Township Yes

Comment:

- Even if it was not part of the question, voters felt Tom King had enough money.

Non-Residents Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- Many people felt it was too low and wet to build on, another excuse to say No to taxes.
- A lot of rumors were spread and people felt this was a "shady" deal.

Survey Question #5 - Board Member Vote

The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the November 7, 1989 referendum was: 6 yes, 1 absent. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No No

Comment:

- Some dissension is good. Shows independence.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

- It was not a 4-3 split.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

- Again, perceived as a split board.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

—Same as others.

Dunham Township Yes Yes No

Comments:

—One more referendum without 100% Board support.

—It helped to not have No votes.

—I don't recall any discussions about how the Board voted.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Once again—1 absentee -- Why?

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No No Yes No

Comments:

—Unless the one absentee was privately against the referendum, however it would be much better to be 7 yes votes.

—The Board member who was absent was really a no and this was known.

Table 4

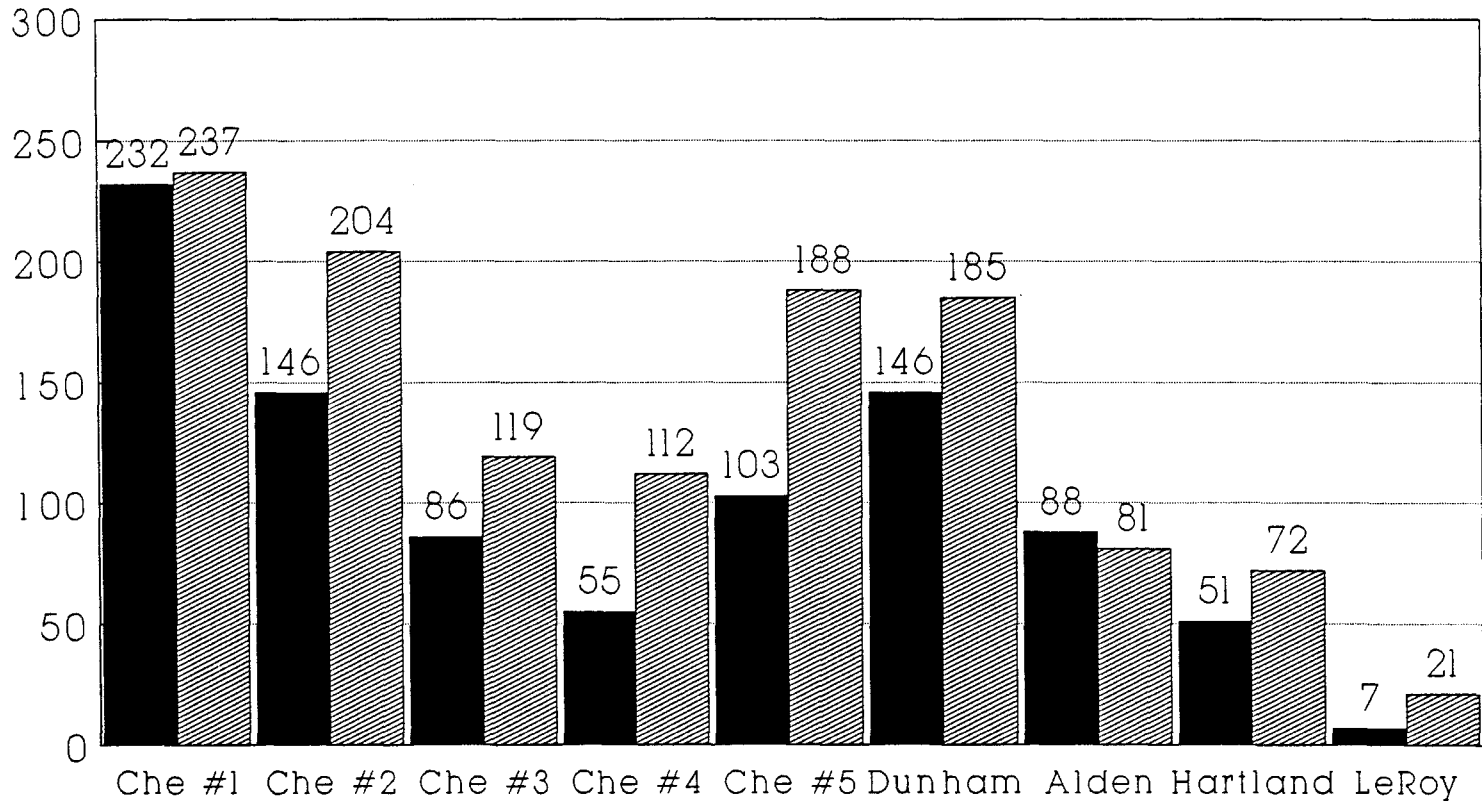
NUMERICAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES
REFERENDUM #3 - NOVEMBER 7, 1989

Key: Ch1 = Chemung Precinct #1 Dun = Dunham Township
 Ch2 = Chemung Precinct #2 Ald = Alden Township
 Ch3 = Chemung Precinct #3 Hart= Hartland Township
 Ch4 = Chemung Precinct #4 LeR = LeRoy Township
 Ch5 = Chemung Precinct #5 Oth = Non-Residents

DID THE FOLLOWING ISSUES HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE REFERENDUM?
 (Refer to survey on preceding pages.)

		Ch1	Ch2	Ch3	Ch4	Ch5	Dun	Ald	Hart	LeR	Oth	Total
Survey Question #1 - Pt.1 Additions Only	Yes	4	1	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	17
	No										2	2
	Undecided	1									1	2
Survey Question #1 - Pt.2 Operations & Maintenance Tax Rate Increase	Yes	3	1	2	1	1	3		1	1	1	14
	No	1						1			2	4
	Undecided	1				1					1	3
Survey Question #2 Rent Ayer Street Annex	Yes	2	1	1		2			1	1	2	10
	No	3		1	1		2	1			2	10
	Undecided						1					1
Survey Question #3 Various Studies	Yes	5	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	4	20
	No											0
	Undecided						1					1
Survey Question #4 King Land Option	Yes	5	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	4	20
	No											0
	Undecided						1					1
Survey Question #5 Board Member Vote	Yes			1	1		2		1		1	6
	No	5	1	1		2	1	1		1	3	15
	Undecided											0

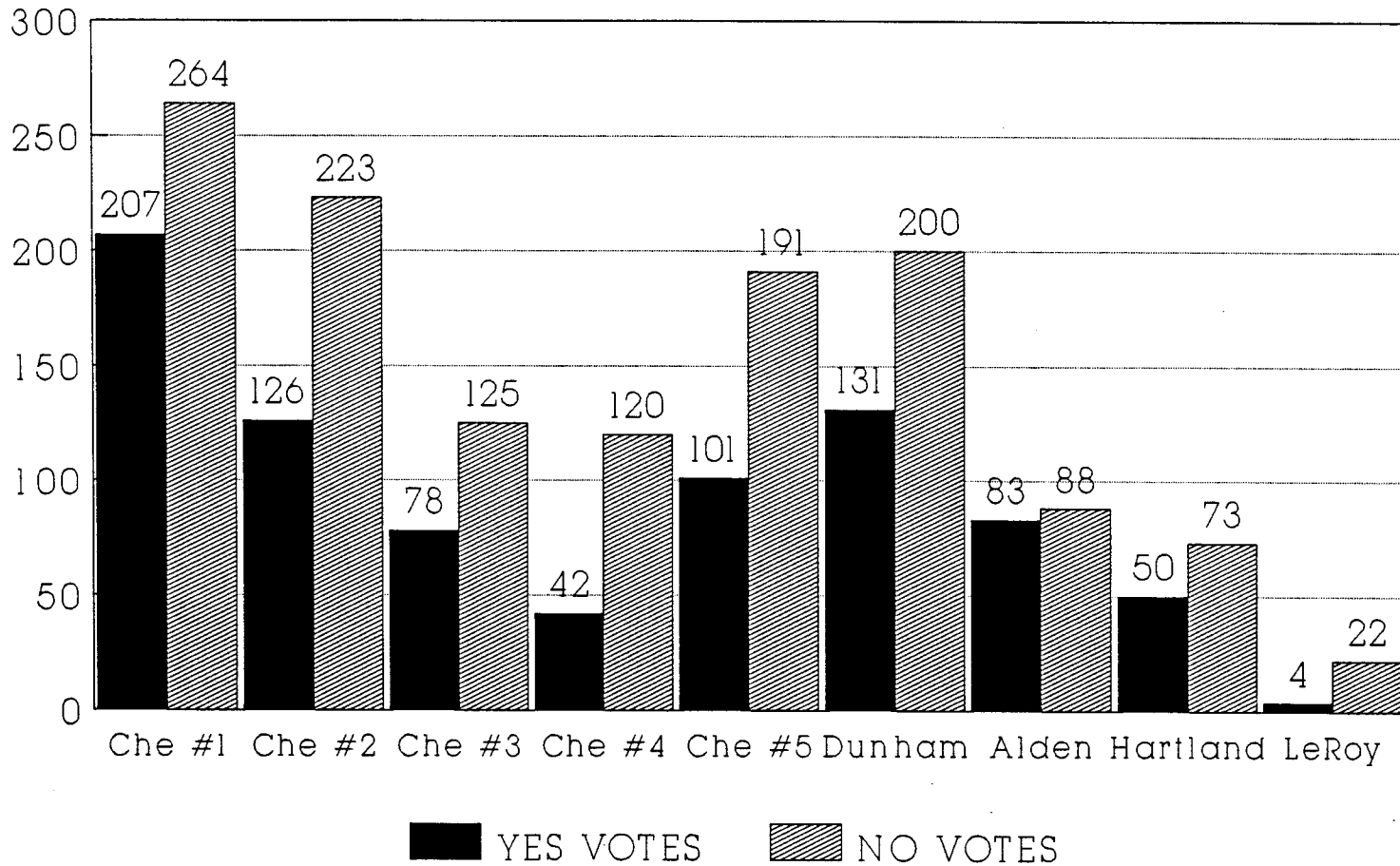
Figure #3
BUILDING BOND REFERENDUM - \$5,600,000
November 7, 1989



YES VOTES
 NO VOTES

Yes = 914 No = 1,219

Figure #4
TAX RATE REFERENDUM - O, B & M
November 7, 1989



Yes = 822 No = 1,306

Analysis of Survey Results

Referendum #4: March 20, 1990

Increase Education Fund tax rate to 3.65% (a 1.00% increase).

Increase Operations & Maintenance tax rate to .750% (a .125% increase).

With the defeat of the November 7, 1989 referendum for additional classroom space, the administration and Board of Education continued to struggle with the dilemma of the ongoing space problem. Three additional classrooms had been created for the beginning of the 1989-90 school year with two fifth-grade sections housed in the lower level of Harvard High School and the stage at Jefferson School was converted into a classroom. Five more classrooms were rented in the downtown business district on January 1, 1990. This facility known as the Ayer Street Annex housed kindergarten and pre-kindergarten students. These eight additional classrooms actually represented only half of the classrooms needed to reduce class size to a preferred twenty-five students per class.

One issue that had been questioned during previous building referendums was the concern of having enough money in the Education Fund and Operations and Maintenance Fund to cover the additional expenditures of new classroom areas. A Board of Education Finance Committee and the administration took a serious look at this issue and determined that both the Education Fund and Operations and Maintenance Fund were lacking in the generation of funds for the current budget year, let alone any increased expenditures that would be noticed from a construction program.

In November 1989, the administration and Board Finance Committee developed a list of programs and positions that would need to be cut from the budget in order to bring the District's spending in line with the amount of revenue being generated. On January 9, 1990 the Finance Committee presented a report of \$500,000 in budget cuts to the full Board of Education. The first recommendation of this committee was to get District finances in better shape before going to the public with another building project question. The second recommendation of the committee was to place two questions of public policy on the March 20, 1990 election ballot, asking the voters to approve a \$1.00 increase to the Education Fund tax rate and a \$.125 increase to the Operations and Maintenance Fund tax rate. The recommendation included the notification to the community of the proposed budget cuts that would be acted upon if the March 20, 1990 referendum was unsuccessful.

This investigator's survey questioned whether notifying the public of these budget cuts had an effect of the negative outcome of this referendum. Sixty-two percent of the survey respondents commented that the budget cuts had a negative effect on the referendum attempt. Survey responses show an obvious mistrust in the Board of Education during this time period. The cuts were viewed by survey respondents as "dictatorial," "threats," "a bluff," "scare-tactics," and "confusing."

Confirming the Board's concern of the District's poor financial health, was the notification received January 25, 1990 from the Illinois State Board of Education, placing Harvard District #50 on the Financial Watch List. This first notice of a two-tiered approach, served as a warning device that indicated serious emerging financial

problems for District #50. After receiving this notice from the State, the Board of Education was pleased with the foresight presented by the Finance Committee of the emerging financial problems. This put additional validation to the March 20, 1990 referendum questions.

When asked if this State notification to District #50 had an effect on the negative outcome of the March 20, 1990 referendum, 57% of the respondents reported that this had no effect. Two comments received from the survey were that, "Anti-referendum voters pay little attention to such things, as long as children have some place to attend school each day," and "Most in the community didn't feel this was anything to worry about — there would still be school!" Many respondents commented that school finance issues were very confusing and that many of the voting public are unaware of school finance programs.

Showing significant concern for the District's ailing finances, the Board of Education enlisted the help of the Illinois State Board of Education's Finance Division. State finance facilitator Mr. Pat Toomey and financial consultant Dr. Paul Schilling reviewed the District's financial operation in great detail. Their recommendations in part included the computerization of the business office, employment of a business manager, long-range plans for physical facilities, reducing educational and athletic staff assignments, adopting a pay-as-you-go debt program, modifying the employee benefit package, contracting for cafeteria and transportation services and increasing class sizes.

When asked if this assistance had an effect on the outcome of the March 20, 1990 referendum, over 50% of the survey participants responded no. The comments presented by the survey participants have been interpreted by this investigator as very negative. Several comments did not agree with bringing in "outsiders" to deal with District #50 problems. Although, there was some mistrust of the local Board of Education at this time, one survey participant commented, "People/voters, pay very little attention to these "experts". You need local leadership experts to do the "sale and create the need."

Prior to each referendum, the local Northwest Herald writes editorials regarding the area referendums. In the editorial they take a stance and either endorse or not endorse specific referendums. The *Northwest Herald* did not endorse District #50's March 20, 1990 referendum. The demographics of survey participants relate that 81% of the respondents receive information about the schools from the *Northwest Herald*. However, when asked if the *Northwest Herald's* non-endorsement of the referendum had an effect on the votes cast, only 52% felt that the Herald had a negative impact on the outcome of the referendum. The Board of Education had noticed and had made occasional comments of a history of negative reporting from the *Northwest Herald*. This concern was supported by one survey participant's response of, "The Herald had already built a history of negative coverage of District #50 issues. Instead of being a positive factor in the community, it was negative." Another participant commented, "Unfortunately, the media has influence on the misinformed."

This referendum carried full Board support with all Board members unanimously voting "yes" to put the questions on the ballot. As with the past two referendums, survey participants did not believe that the Board votes had a significant impact on the outcome of the referendum. Only 24% believed that the Board's full support was a positive gesture toward a successful passage of the referendum.

During the November 7, 1989 Referendum Campaign the question kept coming up that if we, the voters, pass a Referendum for additions to facilities, is the District going to have enough money to pay for staff? The answer to this question was no, according to our cash flow charts. The District's expenditures were exceeding revenue.

The administration and the Board of Education were struggling with the dilemma of the ongoing space problem and the pressing need to address the financial needs of the Educational Fund and the Operations and Maintenance Fund. Three additional classrooms had been created for the beginning of the 1989-90 school year with two fifth-grade sections housed in the lower level of the High School and the stage at Jefferson School converted to a classroom. Five more classrooms became available January 1, 1990 for housing kindergartners and pre-school classes. In actuality, these eight classrooms represented half of what was needed to reduce class size to twenty-five students per class.

On November 24, 1989 District #50 took the initiative to develop a list of programs and positions that would need to be cut to begin bringing District spending in line with revenue. A Board Committee made their recommendation on January 9, 1990 to cut \$500,000 in staff and programs.

This investigator's survey generated the following responses: It's hard to pass referendums of \$1 per \$100 of assessed valuation; no money, you have to cut; the community took these proposed cuts as threats; there was still some spending that people felt was unnecessary; it was the first step in making the voters feel engaged; it proved to all that the board was serious and the problem was real; still some mistrust of the Board to be so dictatorial, people do not like being told what they are going to have to do; it brought a lot more participation, awareness and talk; and helped pass later referendums, but not until the cuts were made and effected a lot of voters' children.

Individual Responses to Survey

Referendum Committee: Citizens Supporting the Children of Harvard

Referendum: March 20, 1990

Increase Education Fund tax rate to 3.65% (a 1.00% increase)

For = 1,100 Against = 1,717

Increase Operations & Maintenance tax rate to .750% (a .125% increase)

For = 1,092 Against = 1,710

Survey Question #1 - \$500,000 Budget Cuts

In November 1989 District #50 had taken the initiative to develop a list of programs and positions which would need to be cut to begin bringing District spending in line with revenue. A Board committee made their recommendation on January 9, 1990 to cut \$500,000 in staff and programs. Do you believe these cuts had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Don't know.

—This had the biggest impact. It proved to all that the board was serious and that the problem was real.

—Still some mistrust of the Board to be so dictatorial. People don't like being told what they are going to have to do.

—It brought a lot more participation, awareness and talk.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—People saw the Board was trying to be frugal and yet there still was not enough money.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

-Public opinion was that this was only a scare-tactic and would not be initiated.

—Picked up a few supporters. However, some voted against the issue because they thought the Board was pressing them.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

—Helped pass later referendum, but not until the cuts were made and effected a lot of voters' children.

Chemung Ward #5 No Yes

Comment:

—There was still some spending that people felt was unnecessary.

Dunham Township Yes No Yes

Comments:

—It's very hard to pass referendum of 1.00%

—The positive percentage of the vote went down.

—I felt the community took this as a threat and at this point the District appeared to be confused and again grasping.

Alden Township No

Comment:

—No money, you have to cut.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—It was the first step in making the voters feel engaged-however, to some it was viewed as a threat.

LeRoy Township Yes

Comment:

—The possibility of cuts narrowed the margin of defeat.

Non-Residents No No Yes No

Comments:

- I believe they should of had an impact but this list itself doesn't seem to have made a difference.
- I think the public saw this as a bluff.

Survey Question #2 - Financial Watch List

On January 25, 1990 District #50 was notified that they had been placed on the State's Financial Watch List. Through a two-tiered approach, the State Board of Education attempts to assist districts to avoid financial crisis. This first notice to District #50 was a warning device that indicated emerging problems. The second and more serious step is certifying a district as being in financial difficulty. Do you believe the District being placed on the "watch list" had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- Further proof that the problem was real.
- It seemed to be a period of distrust and some people felt the board was more interested in monuments rather than a sound district.
- It became much more serious of a matter that people couldn't ignore or dismiss.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- It supported the Board's position that more funds were needed.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

- Public was beginning to believe that problems existed in the District. Very concerned about the Watch List and what it meant. You gained a few votes, but not enough to pass.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

- Anti-referendum voters pay little attention to such things as long as children have some place to attend each school day.

Chemung Ward #5 No Yes

Comment:

- If it had an effect, the referendum would have passed.
- Most in community didn't feel this was anything to worry about-there would still be school!!

Dunham Township Yes No No

Comment:

- May draw in our belts a notch or two before we get more money.
- This may have caused the voters to believe we needed to do more.
- I felt the community took this as a threat and at this point the District appeared to be confused and again grasping.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township No

Comment:

- Unfortunately people (1,710) still did not get it.

LeRoy Township No

Comment:

- Rural voters were not too familiar with the State's concern.

Non-Residents No No Yes No

Comments:

- District #50 had done a good job with what it had, it should continue. Do not over spend, stay within budget watch list or not.
- Many people welcomed the State to come in and "clean house".
- For some-not all understood this at the time.

Survey Question #3 - Financial Consultant Recommendations

The Board of Education decided to enlist the help of the State Board of Education's Finance Division. The State Board of Education's Finance facilitator was Mr. Pat Toomey. He recommended the District employ a financial consultant by the name of Dr. Paul Schilling. The District contacted Dr. Schilling who conducted a Financial Status Study. This study included a review of 1) the District's Annual Financial Reports, Audit Reports, Fall Housing Reports, current financial reports and other selected official reports of the District; 2) on site visitations to each building with Mr. Toomey and the District Superintendent; 3) tentative FY91 High School schedules, and 4) oral conversations with the District Superintendent, the secretary to the superintendent, the bookkeeper, and the High School Principal. Dr. Schilling's recommendations included: convert to computerization of the business office; employment of a full-time business manager; development of sound operational fiscal policies; adopt a feasible long-range plan for physical facilities; reduce non-teaching assignments of certified staff; adopt a pay-as-you-go bond

retirement schedule; consider contracting for food, custodial and transportation services; reduce the athletic/co-curricular programs; modify employee benefits package and increase class sizes.

Do you believe the above issues had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

- Adverse effect. Toomey suggested larger class size when the Board was telling public classes were already too large. Problem of conflicting goals—smaller classes at the same time of lower expenditures.
- Undecided-maybe long term. There was a feeling of distrust of outsiders telling us to have a perfect system when none others exist.
- Again, there was a lot of talk and community awareness.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- The report gave ideas to the school yet also showed that basically the District was doing things well.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes

Comment:

- I think it had a positive effect in the community, with the district showing better financial responsibility to voters.
- Not familiar with this report.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comments:

- Too many outside services tend to increase costs.
- Hard for people to see that spending money will save money.

Dunham Township No No No

Comments:

- Only after work in the direction recommended was started did it have impact.
- I felt the community took this as a threat and at this point the District appeared to be confused and again grasping.

Alden Township No

Comment:

- This is what the District was thinking.

Hartland Township No

Comment:

—Just another outsider - consultant. People, voters, pay very little attention to these "experts". You need local leaders-experts to do the "sale"-create the need.

LeRoy Township Yes

Comment:

—Again, it cut the margin of defeat

Non-Residents No No

—I thought they would but again only a list, no real action.

—The amount of the tax increase was a concern.

Survey Question #4 - No Endorsement from Northwest Herald

The *Northwest Herald* did not endorse either proposition of this referendum. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Very damaging.

—Some effect, but I am not sure of how much. I believe the effort was not large.

—Definitely

—Gave people encouragement to vote no. I don't feel it is any business of the N.W. Herald what we do in our own District.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—The Herald had already built a history of negative coverage of District #50 issues. Instead of being a positive factor in the community, it was negative.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

—To some degree, the newspaper has influence. It's better to have the paper's endorsement than not.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 No Yes

Comment:

—A newspaper endorsement is not going to sway 50% of the vote. When your local paper doesn't back you it always makes it more difficult to pass a referendum.

Dunham Township No No No

Comments:

- Not that many people get the paper
- I believe the Herald's "No" vote did not hurt much, but a "Yes" vote to endorse would help.
- I felt the community took this as a threat and at this point the District appeared to be confused and again grasping.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

- Unfortunately, the media has influence on the misinformed.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents Yes Yes Yes No

Comment:

- If someone or something of influence gives a reason to vote no, that's all some people need.
- The lack of the endorsement just helped people make-up their minds to vote "No", with some sense of credibility.
- Any negative press hurts because people listen to the negative more than positive!

Survey Question #5 - Board Member Vote

The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the March 20, 1990 referendum was: 7 yes. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No Yes

Comment:

- Finally there was a full board consensus reached.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- Unanimity is best.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

- Beginning to look like this school is faced with a serious situation when all Board members favor the issue.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Dunham Township Yes No

Comments:

—Don't know. This was all a money issue.

—This helped, but not enough.

—I felt the community took this as threat and at this point the district appeared to be confused and again grasping.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—It was the next positive step in getting the referendum \$ of the future.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No No No No

Comment:

—The yes votes increased but the overall outcome of the referendum was not affected. Good to see full board support.

TABLE 5

NUMERICAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES
REFERENDUM #4 - MARCH 20, 1990

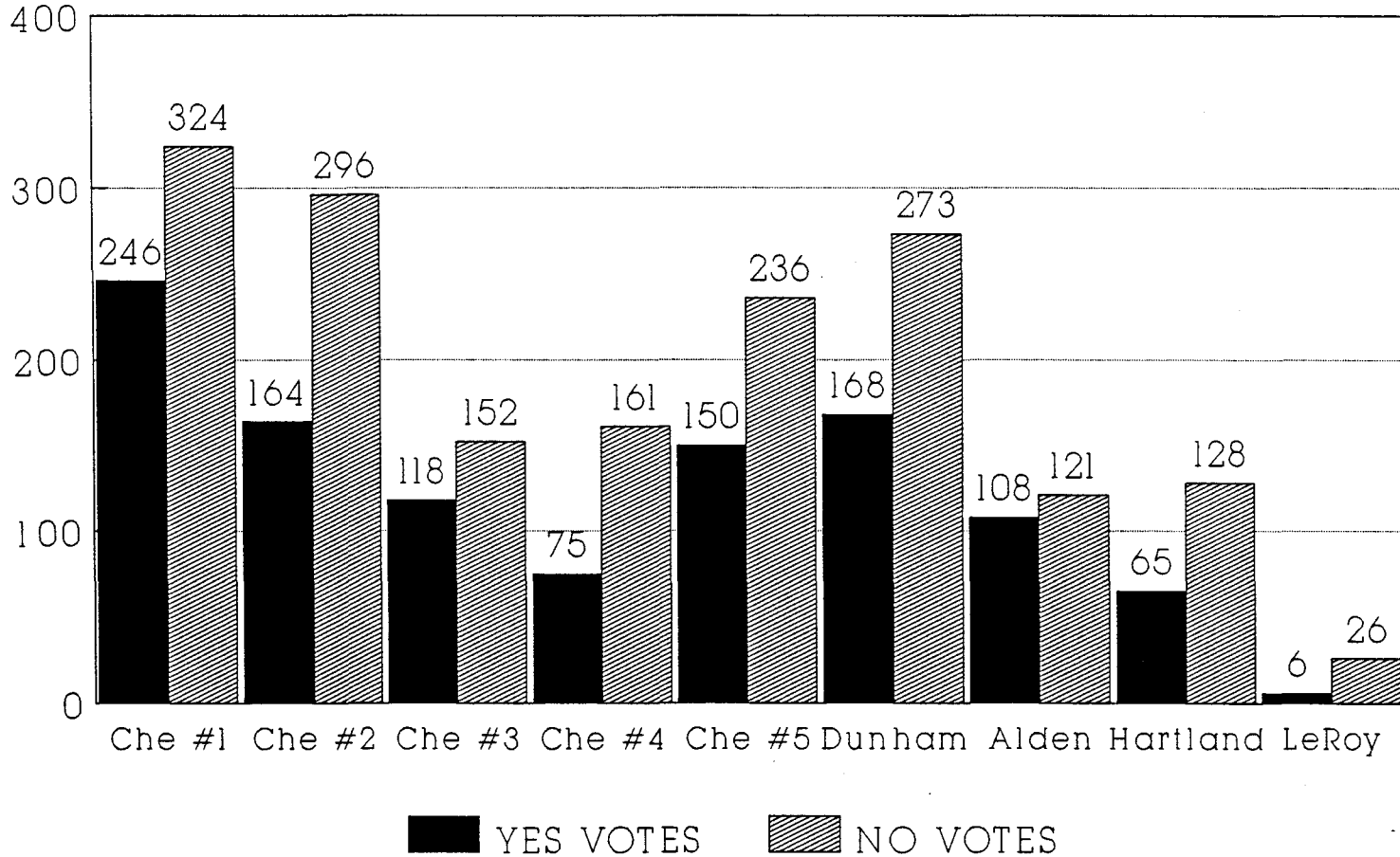
Key: Ch1 = Chemung Precinct #1 Dun = Dunham Township
 Ch2 = Chemung Precinct #2 Ald = Alden Township
 Ch3 = Chemung Precinct #3 Hart= Hartland Township
 Ch4 = Chemung Precinct #4 LeR = LeRoy Township
 Ch5 = Chemung Precinct #5 Oth = Non-Residents

DID THE FOLLOWING ISSUES HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE REFERENDUM?
 (Refer to survey on preceding pages.)

		Ch1	Ch2	Ch3	Ch4	Ch5	Dun	Ald	Hart	LeR	Oth	Total
Survey Question #1	Yes	4	1	2		1	2		1	1	1	13
\$500,000 Budget Cuts	No				1	1	1	1			3	7
	Undecided	1										1
Survey Question #2	Yes	4	1	1		1	1				1	9
Financial Watch List	No	1		1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	12
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #3	Yes	3	1	1		2				1		8
Financial Consultant	No	1			1		3	1	1		4	11
Recommendations	Undecided	1		1								2
Survey Question #4	Yes	3	1	1	1	1			1		3	11
No Endorsement from	No	2		1		1	3	1		1	1	10
Northwest Herald	Undecided											0
Survey Question #5	Yes	1	1	1			1		1			5
Board Member Vote	No	4		1	1	2	1	1		1	4	15
	Undecided						1					1

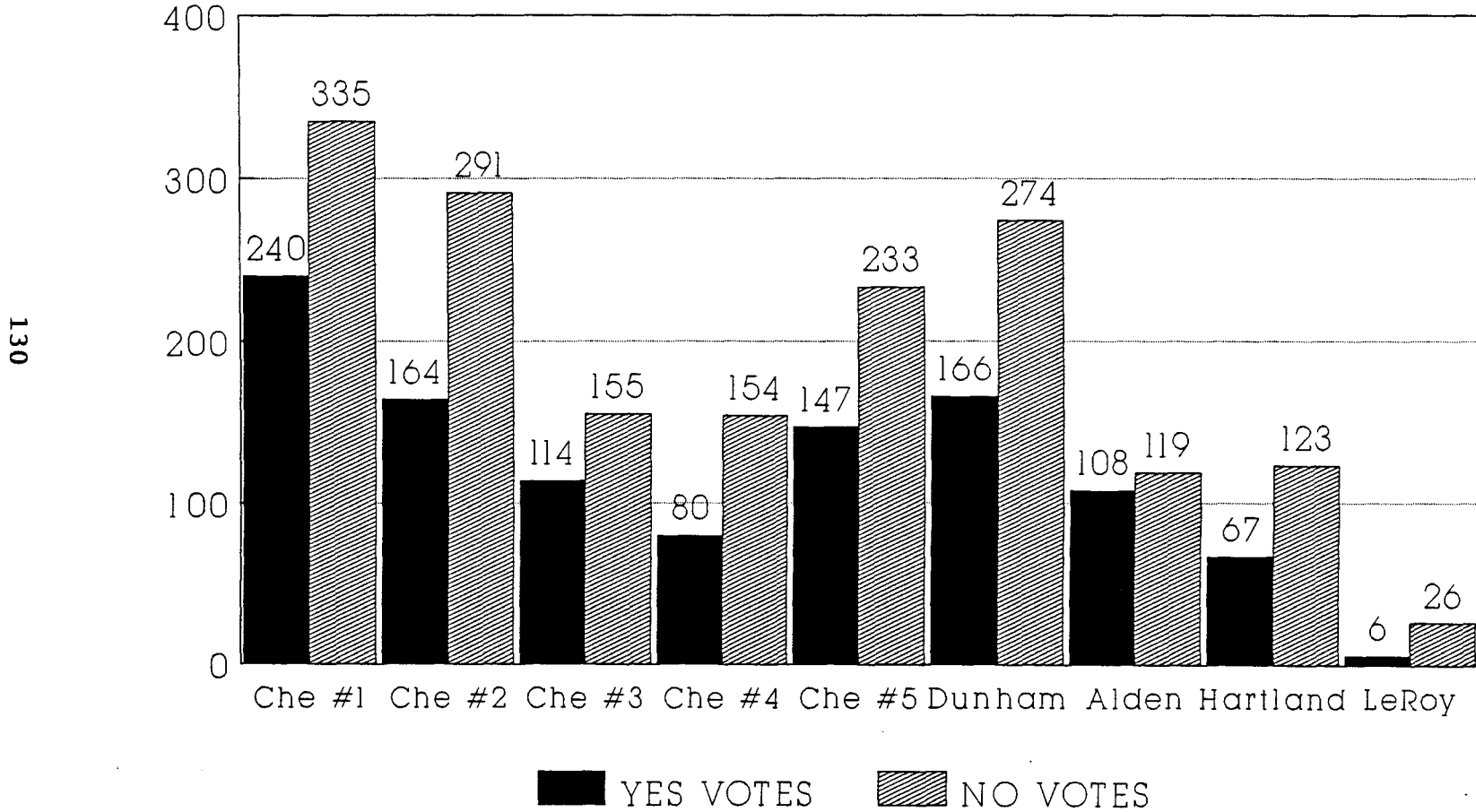
Figure #5
TAX RATE REFERENDUM - EDUCATION
March 20, 1990

129



Yes = 1,100 No = 1,717

Figure #6
TAX RATE REFERENDUM - O & M
March 20, 1990



Yes = 1,092 No = 1,710

Analysis of Survey Results

Referendum #5: November 6, 1990

Increase Education Fund Tax rate to 3.23% (a .59% increase)

The defeat of the March 20, 1990 referendum requesting an increase in both Education and Operations and Maintenance Fund tax rates left the District in a financially disastrous situation. The Board of Education made the decision to ask only one question of the public in the November 6, 1990 election. That question would request a \$.59 increase per hundred dollars of assessed valuation, in the Education Fund tax rate.

Coming to the aid of the Operations and Maintenance Fund was the May 15, 1990 McHenry County Board establishment of Developer Impact Fees. The impact fee, set at \$1,979.24 per single family residence built in District #50, was to be paid to the District by individual developers. Survey respondents were split almost 50/50 as to whether this had an effect on the passage of the referendum. Some looked at the impact fees as a search for other avenues for funding schools instead of through property taxes. Others did not believe the impact fees would account for enough funding to finance construction projects.

On July 25, 1990, the Board of Education reported budget cuts in the amount of \$500,000. Budget cuts were made in each operating fund of the District. The Education Fund cuts included elementary Art and Music, teaching positions, increased class sizes, supply purchase reductions, and elimination of the *Harvard Educator*. Operations and Maintenance Fund cuts included less custodial positions and reduced

supply purchases. A one year delay in the Transportation Fleet Schedule eliminated \$75,000 in expenditures for new buses. One hundred percent of the survey respondents commented that this had a significant positive effect on the passage of the November 6, 1990 referendum. Survey respondents reported on the credibility given to the Board for following through with the plans that had been established for a defeated March 20, 1990 referendum.

While the November 6, 1990 referendum only requested permission to increase the Education Fund tax rate, this was certainly not an indicator that the "space woes" of District #50 were gone. District #50 would not receive word from the Illinois State Board of Education regarding their status in the Financial Watch List formula until after the referendum. The Board maintained the financial concerns of the District as a priority over new construction for additional classroom space.

On May 1, 1990, local developers Stricker and Stahl offered an exchange of thirty-seven acres of land west of town for the Northfield property. The future development of this area had not been fully determined by the County in regards to access roads from State Highway Route 173 west to Ramer Road and State Highway Route 14 north and west on Diggins Street. The Board of Education did not accept the exchange offer. Most survey respondents did not believe that the Board's decision had an effect on the passage of this referendum, because this referendum was a money issue only, not a land issue.

In July, 1990, the small community of Harvard, Illinois was highlighted on the front page of the *Chicago Tribune* with an article regarding a racial dispute that had

resulted in the arrest of area juveniles. With a 21% hispanic population, Harvard was being tagged as a prime target for gang activity. Incidentally, race and gang activity was not a causal relationship. Survey participants were asked if this issue had an effect on the positive passage of the November 6, 1990 referendum. The majority response was that this racial incident had nothing to do with the school system and that the referendum was not impacted by this incident.

District #50 teachers started the 1990-91 school year in August without a contract. Negotiation teams were able to settle a contract with the teachers on November 1, 1990, just six days prior to the referendum. Fifty-seven percent of the survey respondents believed this pre-referendum contract passage had an effect on the successful outcome of the referendum. These respondents commented that the teachers assisted the financial credibility of the Board by settling before the referendum, making it apparent that the referendum dollars would not be obligated solely for teacher salaries, but for the entire educational program.

Just prior to the August 16, 1990 election filing date for questions of public policy, a Board member resigned. The remaining six board members were unanimous in their vote to hold a November 6, 1990 referendum for an increased Education Fund tax rate. The majority of the survey respondents did not believe these two issues had any effect on the passage of the referendum.

Individual Responses to Survey

Referendum Committee: Concerned Parents for Education

Referendum: November 6, 1990

Increase Education Fund tax rate to 3.23% (a .59% increase)

For = 1,714 Against = 1,476

Survey Question #1 - Land Exchange Offer

On May 1, 1990, local developers Stricker and Stahl offered an exchange of 37 acres of land west of town for the Northfield property. Although the acquisition of land does not specifically relate to an Education tax rate referendum, do you believe this issue had an effect on the outcome of this referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No

Comment:

—I don't remember this, but it surely would have been a poor trade.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

—People did not see this as an issue.

Chemung Ward #3 No No

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

—Property was not an issue for this referendum.

Dunham Township No No

Comment:

—I do not recall this situation.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Northfield as an asset.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No Yes No Yes

Comments:

- Building was not in the referendum nor land acquisition.
- I don't believe most of the public really understands the different funds, but the local developers have long standing respect and credibility in the community.

Survey Question #2 - Developer Impact Fees

On May 15, 1990, the county established Developer Impact Fees payable directly to the school district for each new home constructed. Do you believe this action had an effect on the outcome of this referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes No Yes No

Comment:

- Encourages taxpayers that there is a search for school monies rather than just from the same old pocket books.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

- People realized this would not bring in much money.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Comment:

- Impact fees are a bonus to a district, but cannot be depended upon for sustained support.
- To some degree, the people believed that new growth would help support new building issues.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

- This was a positive move and possibly made the public feel better.

Dunham Township No Yes Yes

Comment:

- It showed the financial problems were not of the districts own doing.
- Tax payers perceived that they would get some help other than their own pockets.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

- More money coming in, no referendum.

Hartland Township No

Comment:

—Impact fees are a joke—and most people know that the \$\$\$ from impact fees pay for less than 1/2 the expense of one child.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—This was very positive for school districts but probably did not affect this referendum.

—Tax payers could see new construction would be paying something towards the schools.

Survey Question #3 - \$500,000 Budget Cuts

On July 25, 1990, the Board of Education told of \$500,000 savings for the 1990-91 school year accomplished with significant budget cuts. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—Extremely large effect.

—Created trust in the management and showed an interest in living day to day rather than building monuments.

—People were impressed that the budget cuts happened and were not just threats.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—People saw the Board was serious about keeping costs down.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

—Tax payers liked seeing better use of their monies.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Comment:

—Some wanted cuts restored and thought this would happen. Others knew more cuts might have to be made. Some of the cuts needed to be made anyway.

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comment:

—It showed people the District was being more responsible.

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

—This showed better money management.

—Actions speak louder than words.

—It gave the appearance of responsible management.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

—More money, no referendum.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Helped to give the appearance that we were as lean and mean as we could get—"Were business decisions being made?"

LeRoy Township Yes

Comment:

—The cuts had a more impressive impact on parents and grandparents.

Non-Residents Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—It seems people don't feel you're serious about needs and or cuts until you do cut and it affects them personally.

—This may have earned the district respect and trust by the public. Showing that the district could "tighten their belts" as promised.

—Until the cuts actually happen people tend to think its just a threat. It's a shame that what makes school fun needs to be eliminated before people spend the money. Professional sports shows money no object!

Survey Question #4 - Racial Issues

In July, 1990, Harvard made headlines in the Chicago Tribune. The issue was tagged "racial violence", and "tales of racism". Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No No

Comment:

—Don't feel it had anything to do with schools, but may have made some voters realize we needed a better school system.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

—It was not a referendum issue.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

—These articles concerned everyone. Needed to address the issue and quickly.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

—Separate issues

Dunham Township No Yes No

Comment:

—I don't feel voters tied the two together.

Alden Township No

Comment:

—Two different issues.

Hartland Township No

Comment:

—Blank newspaper-Who Cares?

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No No No No

Comment:

—Although negative for Harvard I don't feel it affected the referendum.

Survey Question #5 - Teacher Contract Settlement

The teachers started the school year without a contract. Negotiations settled with the teacher and a contract was acquired November 1, 1990, just six days prior to the referendum. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No No

Comment:

—Helped

—Reason prevailed on all sides. Teachers made a point to say they gave some things up.

—Communications were strained.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—People knew the whole financial picture.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

—Any time there is tension between the Board and teachers it has a negative impact in the community.

—Had the issue gone unsettled by election time, the voters might have perceived that the dollars from the referendum go directly to salary increases.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

—It showed everyone was finally working together.

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

—It helps to have money matters in line at voting day.

—This is a tough call. The contract can cut both ways, gave them too much etc.

—There was some improvement in community moral and this same issue was perceived a different way because of positive communication.

Alden Township Yes

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Teachers showed (once again) that they would sacrifice for the benefit of the district-unfortunately the taxpayer doesn't know how much they've sacrificed.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents Yes No Yes Yes

Comment:

—Strike talk was out there and this would certainly affect students, families and voters.

—I believe the public, for the most part, had already made up it's mind how they were going to vote. Some were upset that the contract was not settled earlier.

Survey Question #6 - Board Member Resignation

In August 16, 1990, just prior to the required date for filing a question for the November ballot, a Board member resigned. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes No No No

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

—I don't think voters felt it was a reflection on the finances.

Chemung Ward #3 No No

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

—Board members over estimate their importance. Few even bother to run for the Board. Many are important only in their own minds.

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

—That Board member's views were too limited.

Dunham Township No No No

Alden Township No

Hartland Township No

Comment:

—Board members resign all the time.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No No No Yes

Comment:

—Minor if any, issues covered in questions #3 and 5 were the key.

Survey Question #7 - Board Member Vote

The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the November 7, 1990 referendum was: 6 yes 1 vacancy on the Board. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes No No No

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—Unanimity is best.

Chemung Ward #3 No No

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

—Unity is important.

Dunham Township Yes Yes No

Comment:

—Asked for a more reasonable amount of tax money. Fifty nine cents is better to take than \$1.00.

—Again, I don't feel voters paid much attention to this issue.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Another step toward unanimous-"one" board-all going in the same direction.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No No Yes No

Comments:

—As stated above in #6. However, a unified board would be much better.

—It was presented as an unified Board.

Table 6

NUMERICAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES
REFERENDUM #5 - NOVEMBER 6, 1990

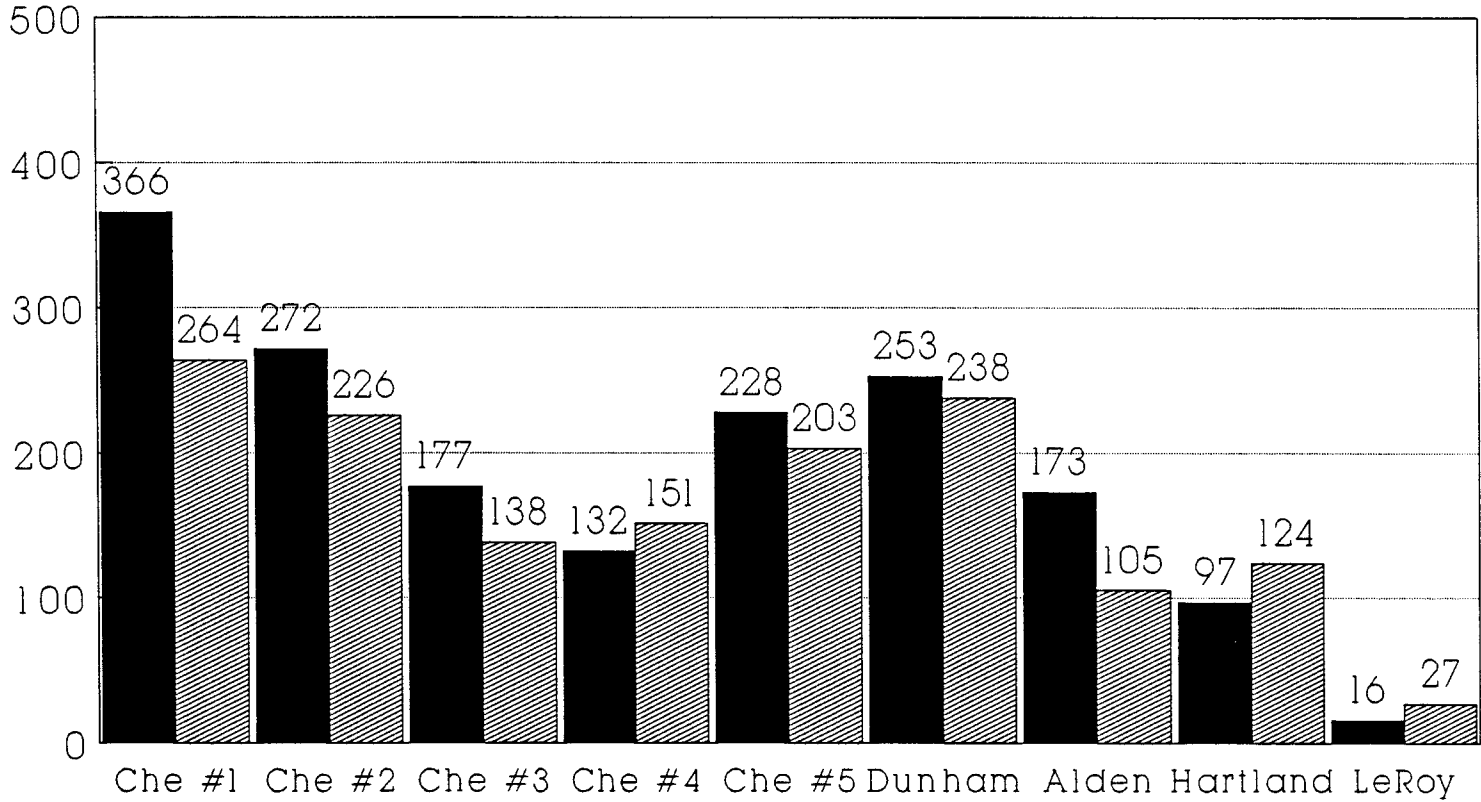
Key: Ch1 = Chemung Precinct #1 Dun = Dunham Township
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 Ch3 = Chemung Precinct #3 Hart= Hartland Township
 Ch4 = Chemung Precinct #4 LeR = LeRoy Township
 Ch5 = Chemung Precinct #5 Oth = Non-Residents

DID THE FOLLOWING ISSUES HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE REFERENDUM?
(Refer to survey on preceding pages.)

		Ch1	Ch2	Ch3	Ch4	Ch5	Dun	Ald	Hart	LeR	Oth	Total
Survey Question #1	Yes								1		2	3
Land Exchange Offer	No	4	1	2	1	2	2	1		1	2	16
	Undecided	1					1					2
Survey Question #2	Yes	2		1		1	2	1			4	11
Developer Impact Fees	No	3	1	1	1	1	1		1	1		10
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #3	Yes	5	1	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	4	21
\$500,000 'Budget Cuts	No											0
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #4	Yes			1			1					2
Racial Issues	No	5	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	4	19
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #5	Yes		1	2		1	3	1	1		3	12
Teacher Contract Settlement	No	5			1	1				1	1	9
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #6	Yes	1				1					1	3
Board Member Resignation	No	4	1	2	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	18
	Undecided											0
Survey Question #7	Yes	1	1			1	2		1		1	7
Board Member Vote	No	4		2	1	1	1	1		1	3	14
	Undecided											0

Figure #7
TAX RATE REFERENDUM - EDUCATION
November 6, 1990

143



YES VOTES
 NO VOTES

Yes = 1,714 No = 1,476

Analysis of Survey Results

Referendum #6: April 20, 1993

Additions to Jefferson School, Junior High School and High School, handicap accessibility at Central School

Approximately two and a half years passed between the November 7, 1990 referendum and the April 20, 1993 referendum. On December 18, 1990 the Board of Education employed Thomas Kelly as Associate Superintendent for Business Affairs. He served the District well in this position until his retirement on August 31, 1994. Also, on February 27, 1991 District 50 was removed from the Financial Watch List based on the 1989-90 school year. Most of the respondents to this investigator's Survey believed that the time between January, 1991 and April 20, 1993 was too long of a time to determine if these two factors had an effect on the referendum. The respondents commented that, "It showed the importance the District felt for getting and keeping financial matters in order, but I am sure some felt it was a waste." Another conveyed that, "District residents saw the Board trying to be fiscally responsible as it pertained to the Watch List." This investigator believes that these factors helped to begin a base for focusing on long range facility needs of the District.

In 1990 both McHenry County and the City of Harvard provided for Developer Donation Impact fees payable to District #50. Sufficient fees were collected between 1990 and 1993 to allow the District to build a three-room addition onto Jefferson School without going to the taxpayers with a referendum. The November 6, 1990 referendum committee had not been able to show the citizens any appreciable

amount that had been collected through impact fees since the program had only been passed by the County Board on May 15, 1990. Survey respondents indicated that even though the impact fee per building permit was only half of what it cost to educate one student for one year, the impact fee mechanism was very positive because homeowners saw that new growth was helping with financing schools.

After the successful November 6, 1990 referendum for a tax rate increase in the Education Fund, the Board of Education authorized the employment Dr. Thomas Crowell, a retired Illinois Superintendent, through the Illinois Administrators' Academy to work with the District to develop a long-range facility program. Dr. Crowell worked with the District from April 18, 1991 through May 21, 1991. The data collected from this study was used as the basis of a focus group which met on June 13, 1991 at McHenry County Junior College.

The Goal Setting session held on June 13, 1991 was facilitated by Dr. Robert Blazier and attended by community members, business people, board members, District staff, students, and parents. The focus groups concentrated on the three areas of Curriculum and Program Development; Parent and Community Involvement and Facility needs. The whole group addressed the development of a Vision and Mission Statement for the District. The respondents to this investigator's survey indicated that this approach was very well received by the community. Feedback included statements such as, "Showed inclination to seek ideas from community rather than decide independently how to spend taxpayers money;" and, "Positive attitudes and repetitive positive encounters with the District."

The Vision and Mission Statements have guided District 50 since June 13, 1991. The Vision statement is: *Be the Best Today and Better Tomorrow*. The Mission statement established is: *To Provide an Educational Partnership with the Community Which Meets the Diverse Needs of the Students for Their Futures*. This investigator believes that without vision a district has no direction.

On July 18, 1991, the Illinois General Assembly approved the Property Tax Extension Limitation Act for taxing bodies in the five Counties of Lake, DuPage, Will, Kane and McHenry. The full impact of this legislation was not fully realized until late 1993 and early 1994. While some people knew that this "cap" existed and that it was intended to hold taxes down, very few including many school officials knew its devastations to school districts until the Consumer Price Index dropped to 2.7% in 1994.

The District had studied the Facility needs as they existed but needed to have a demographic study completed to forecast enrollment projections. Dr. Marlin Meyer, of the Illinois Schools Consulting Service worked with the District in developing enrollment projections through the 1996-97 school year. His findings were presented to the Board of Education on January 21, 1992. As it has turned out, the actual enrollments through the 1995-96 school have been comfortably below the projections.

On June 9, 1992, as a result of a survey to parents and community, the District sponsored a Financial Awareness Day in an attempt to educate the community in school finance issues. The respondents concurred that while the turnout was very low, "The education of school finances should always continue regardless of who or

how many show up," and "This was one more effort to open up the district."

One area that was not remedied during this two and a half years was the increasing space problem in District #50 schools. Emphasizing the "crunch" was the Board's direction that all mini-class areas, computer learning centers, and equipment were to be removed from the hallways and put back into the respective classrooms. Elementary classrooms became extremely crowded with class sizes reaching thirty-six in the elementary grades.

On August 11, 1992 a publicized meeting was held at Central School. The intent of this meeting was to establish a Facilities Committee. The number one priority of this committee was to explore existing school and community facilities with space available for housing students. The Committee advertised, toured, studied, and developed cost estimates on a dozen local business facilities in addition to present schools and the bus garage. The Committee determined that the costs were too prohibitive and that a three room addition should be pursued for Jefferson School and paid with available impact fees.

The Board of Education spent an inordinate amount of time from September 26, 1989 to September 15, 1992 researching, negotiating, having various studies done, and discussing a planned community development on the King Property consisting of 79.55 acres. On September 15, 1992 the Board of Education passed a motion to allow the option of the King property to expire. The respondents to this investigator's survey shared that for whatever reason a large number of citizens believed that this idea and particularly this parcel of land was a big mistake from the

beginning. As one commented, "Most were happy to see it go and upset money was ever spent on it." A minority of other people thought otherwise, but referendums need approval of at least a simple majority of voters.

With the King property out of the equation, citizens came forward to be on the Facilities Committee. The Committee continued to work with the Architect to develop new building addition scenarios to be approved by the Board of Education and ultimately taken to the voters in the April 20, 1993 election. This committee, using the demographic study as a tool, recognized a great need to provide additional classroom space immediately. Their recommendation to the Board of Education did not include land acquisition or the building of a new school. On December 11, 1992 the Facilities Committee recommended that the Board of Education seek an April 20, 1993 Building Referendum which included classroom additions to Jefferson School, a new multi-purpose room and renovation of the present cafeteria; classroom additions and a new gymnasium to Harvard Junior High School; a science wing to the High School and handicap accessibility work including an elevator at Central School.

On October 29, 1992 citizens of Harvard held a Racial Rally to take a stand on racial issues that had come to the forefront in recent months. The survey respondents indicated that this issue, "Was more a community problem, and should not reflect solely on the school." Another said, "Coming together by a community for a positive reason helps unify people and more people feel positive about themselves and schools, etc.," while the consensus of the respondents indicated this did not have an effect on the referendum. While this may be true, this investigator believes that

many of the long held hostilities of many Harvard people were at least brought to a conscious level for self-introspection.

On January 20, 1993 the Harvard Board of Education passed a resolution to seek voter approval for additions as recommended by the Facilities Committee. That same night a Referendum Committee was formed which eventually became known as Harvard's Educational Leap for Progress (HELP). This "grass roots" committee took an aggressive stance to insure the passage of the April 20, 1993 referendum. The Committee was comprised of a good balanced continuum of people born and raised in the Harvard area to people who had just moved to the area. These committee members represented agriculture as well as local business interests. They met weekly to plan and strategize their public relations program. Their public relations program included speaking to service organizations, holding block party teas, asking for the City Council's support, developing informational fliers, buying newspaper and radio spots, encouraging people to write letters to the newspaper editors, meeting with newspaper staffs to explain the referendum request and asking for their endorsements, conducting voter registration opportunities, making sure that the District #50 staff understood the proposed program, and having an informational booth at the Harvard Expo on April 17-18, 1993.

On January 29, 1993 citizen Doug Cartland notified the community of plans for a May 5, 1993 "Rally on Springfield" to voice concern to legislators on constantly changing legislation regarding financing public schools. Survey responses ranged from, "People appreciated the idea, but knew it would not help the district in the

short term," to, "This generated more community involvement and the radio helped bring out the awareness level of issues facing the schools."

The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the April 20, 1993 referendum was unanimous. The respondents commented that there were many factors that influenced the vote. Responses given for the successful passage were, "It seemed like everyone was finally working together for a real need — children," "United we stand — divided we fall," and summing it up was, "The main reason this referendum passed was that there were no new schools, only additions to already standing buildings, plus getting rid of the King Land."

Individual Responses to Survey

Referendum Committee: Harvard's Educational Leap for Progress (Help)

Referendum #6: April 20, 1993

Additions to Jefferson School, Junior High School and High School, handicap accessibility at Central School

For = 1,519 Against = 1,255

Approximately two and a half years passed between the November 7, 1990 referendum and this referendum. The District remained in a space crunch situation. Several Board actions were taken in this period of time. Some may or may not have had an effect on the April 1993 referendum.

Survey Question #1 - Associate Superintendent for Business Hired

Prior to the November 7, 1990 referendum, District #50 was placed on the State's Financial Watch List for schools in financial crisis. Based on the 1989-90 school year financial records, the District was removed from the Financial Watch List. In December, 1990 an Associate Superintendent for Business Affairs was hired by the District. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—I don't know

—In the beginning the hiring hurt, but later people began to understand the need. It takes time to change people's opinions.

—People realized there was a need, it had been put off too long

—There was genuine concern on part of the Board to manage better.

—People may have complained but a Business Manager that is certified needs to be hired for a district and budget the size of Harvard District #50.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—I don't know if it helped or hurt. People were on both sides of the question.

Chemung Ward #3 No

Comment:

—Too much time elapsed between the hiring and the referendum. People didn't remember that as an advantage to the district.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

-If anything it had negative effect.

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

—It was a plus for the district and perhaps the business manager set guidelines for the future.

Dunham Township

Comment:

—It showed the importance the district felt for getting and keeping financial matters in order, but I am sure some felt it was a waste.

—The perception was that there was responsible and focused management in place.

Alden Township No

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Getting our finances in order helped - part of "getting our act together".

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents Yes Yes No

Comments:

- District residents saw the board trying to be fiscally responsible as it pertained to the Watch List.
- The public felt the District was on the right track and hiring a Business Affairs person was even better.

Survey Question #2 - 3 Room Addition to Jefferson School

In 1990 both McHenry County and the City of Harvard provided for increased developer donation "impact" fees payable to District #50. Sufficient fees were collected between 1990 and 1993 to allow the District to build a 3-room addition onto Jefferson School without going to taxpayers with a referendum. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

- But probably limited impact. Many people don't get these details straight.
- I think everyone agrees that growth needs to pay for itself.
- Very positive. There were many good comments about the foresight to go ahead and so this and the community, overall, was proud.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- It showed how desperate the need for any space was.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

- Voters saw this as proactive.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

- It was like getting something for nothing.

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

- We are now spending our monies more in line with what we have on hand.
- Part of an overall understanding that the problem was real and the taxpayers weren't alone in paying for it.
- The perception was that there was responsible and focused management in place.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

—Money was used wisely.

Hartland Township Yes

—Let development share the burden of increased growth.

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

—Again the district was being fiscally responsible and within budget. Also the public was seeing the need with large class sizes that affected their children and/or grandchildren.

—The District was trying without hitting the taxpayers. Made the problem more believable for some.

Survey Question #3 - Northfield Listed For Sale

It was determined many times that the 8 acres owned by the District known as the Northfield property was not conducive as a potential school site. The property was offered for public sale two times prior to the previous referendum. The property was again listed for public sale in 1991. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes No Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

—Should be resolved on the Board's part to come up with internal money rather than sitting on an asset.

—It has every referendum to some people.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—People saw that the site truly was not usable.

Chemung Ward #3 No

—I think the public was beginning to believe that a school would not be put on this property.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

—Had no bearing on the referendum. I don't feel this was an issue.

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Alden Township Yes

Hartland Township No

Comment:

—Who cares about Northfield? Unfortunately not viewed as an asset (again).

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents Yes No No

Comment:

—The public was not backing a new building, but rather make do with additions, hence a successful referendum.

Survey Question #4 - Vision & Mission Statements

Several members of the District community and businesses gathered with District staff, students and administrators to establish future goals for District #50. A vision and mission statement were developed by this committee. Vision: Be the Best Today and Better Tomorrow. Mission: To provide an educational partnership with the community which meets the diverse needs of the students for their futures. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes No Yes Yes

Comments:

—Maybe some, but not sure

—Not specifically or of itself, but the general change of opening up the District to community input and volunteerism helps spotlight needs.

—Showed inclination to seek ideas from community rather than decide independently how to spend taxpayers money.

—We were being proactive and headed in the right direction.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

—It clarified what the district was about.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes No

Comment:

—But it was not a high priority to most voters when approving the referendum.

—Not directly, the majority of people did not become aware of these statements or the work behind them.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Comment:

—This is a joke. Today's children are the first to have less instead of more opportunities than their parents. Not just in Harvard, but in many places. Who is selfish?

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comment:

—Involving the community creates a positive reaction.

Dunham Township Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

—Voters need to know if we have goals for the future of students.

—I believe the inclusion of community and businesses into the situation was a very positive factor.

—Positive attitudes and repetitive positive encounters with the District.

Alden Township No

Comment:

—This is vision and mission for education, not money and buildings.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—Another piece of the "getting our act together" — a plan.

LeRoy Township Yes

Non-Residents Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

—Getting Harvard residents involved has been very successful. This committee was a part of that success.

—This may have set the tone for a coming together of the community and School District in a more positive means.

—Community knowledge always helps and communications was positive at this time.

Survey Question #5 - King Property

In March, 1991, the District held planning meetings with the City Council and community regarding the development of the 80 acres of the Tom King property. Expenditures were approved for preliminary site development research (i.e. soil borings, soil and water conservation studies, natural resource studies, etc.). The Board of Education and City discussed joint use of the land with the District using 40 acres of the land for school use and providing the other 40 acres to the City for park use, a library, community center, Fire/Rescue facilities, day care/preschool facilities, etc. A petition signed by 621 local citizens voiced opposition to the District's purchase of the King property. Do you believe any of these factors regarding the King property had an effect on the outcome of this referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes Yes Yes

Comment:

- The King property was a thorn for many people.
- Petition billed this idea.
- Undecided.
- Some people were dissatisfied with this move from the beginning.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- It certainly cost some votes.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

- Indirectly, community members felt the district was now ready to listen to their opinions and dropping the property boosted public respect for the board.
- I think the opposition group was successful in raising questions about the feasibility of the land as a school site.

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 Yes Yes

Comment:

- Too much time and money was spent on such a poor location only to appease one board member.
- People were getting tired of the King Property. Most were happy to see it "go" and upset \$ was ever spent on it.

Dunham Township No No Yes

Comment:

—As I recall the King Property was no longer an issue when the April 1993 vote was taken.

—Many voters perceived that a joint effort would be good and would be accountable to each other for doing it right.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

—When the Board dropped option on wet land property.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—The City was not fully supportive of this and the 621 were Vocal Opponents.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents Yes Yes Yes

Comments:

—The public felt the property was too low and wet so unusable as a school site. However, I feel the overriding feeling was don't build, but add on.

—The public seemed uneasy and very uncertain about the King Property dealings.

—People were not for the land purchase so additions were the best option.

Survey Question #6 - Property Extension Limitation Act

In 1991, the Illinois General Assembly approved the Property Tax Extension Limitation Act. This act set significant limitations on the amount of property taxes that can be extended for taxing districts. The act limited the assessed valuation and amount of taxes that can be generated on property to the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the consumer price index for the calendar year preceding the levy year. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No Yes Yes

Comment:

—Very few members of the general public understand the "cap". The few that do understand it, like it.

—Voters felt they would have more of a say in the future.

—It might have made it more affordable for some citizens.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

-People felt there should be some property tax relief.

Chemung Ward #3 Yes Yes

Comment:

—Residents knew the "tax cap" would hold down the escalation of their property taxes.

—To some degree, but people were seeing benefits of the tax cap. They saw their tax rates going up slightly in comparison to previous years.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Dunham Township Yes Yes No

Comment:

—I think this helped a bit, but not very much. It did tend to limit the amount of annual increases.

Alden Township No

Comment:

—Taxes still go up 12 to 15%.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

—People would know that from now on there would be a "cap." This made the 59 cents easier to swallow.

LeRoy Township No

Non-Residents No Yes Yes

Comment:

—People saw the need, but wanted additions. They felt cuts in academics and extracurriculars so they backed the referendum.

—The public was thrilled.

—Information as to how much the school did not receive was made public.

Survey Question #7 - Financial Awareness Day

On June 9, 1992, the District sponsored a Financial Awareness Day in an attempt to educate the community in school finance issues. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes No No

Comment:

—Yes-although the turn out was not so great as hoped, this was one more effort to open up the district.

—Again people were involved meaningfully and not just put through the motions.

—It helped people understand but probably didn't hit the "No" vote.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

—Turn-out was poor.

Chemung Ward #3 No

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

—Financial matters of this size can not be absorbed in one day session.

Dunham Township Yes Yes

Comment:

—It is essential to fully educate the community before a vote.

—I don't recall this issue.

Alden Township Yes

Comment:

—Some awareness of different funds.

Hartland Township No

Comment:

—Unfortunately, only 20 people showed. However, the "education" of school finances should always continue regardless of who or how many show up.

LeRoy Township

Non-Residents Yes No No

Comments:

—I feel this is helpful and needed but the main factors were mentioned in #6.

—Attendance was poor for the size of the District.

Survey Question #8 - Racial Rally

On October 29, 1992, citizens of Harvard held a racial rally to take a stand on racial issues that had come to the forefront in recent months. Do you think this issue had an effect on the outcome of this referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No No No No

Comment:

—Was more community problem. Shouldn't reflect on the school structure.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

—The racial issue was not on the ballot.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Comment:

—Racial situations have not affected building schools.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 No

Comment:

—Possibly. Coming together by a community for a positive reason helps unify people, and more people feel positive about themselves and schools, etc.

Dunham Township No No No

Comment:

—My perception is these were two separate issues considered by voters and know the district did not view it as such.

Alden Township No

Comment:

—Not referendum issue.

Hartland Township No

LeRoy Township

Non-Residents No Yes Yes No

Comment:

—The rally was positive and had some good results, but I don't think it affected the referendum.

—Appeared to "semi-unite" Harvard community and put education issues as a priority for a few more people.

Survey Question #9 - Rally on Springfield

On January 29, 1993, citizen Doug Cartland notified the community of plans for a May 5, 1993 "Rally on Springfield." The intent of the rally was to voice concern to legislators on the constantly changing legislation regarding financing public school districts. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 No Yes No Yes Yes

Comment:

- Probably in that the time was between Rally and Referendum was short enough for the funding issue still to be in people's minds.
- There was a feeling someone was listening-rather than a closed minded school board pursuing a grandiose building program.
- More community involvement and the radio helped bring out the awareness level.

Chemung Ward #2 No

Comment:

- People appreciated the idea, but knew it would not help the district in the short term.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Comment:

- Not enough participation in rally to effect anyone.
- Raised awareness of issues facing schools.

Chemung Ward #4 No

Chemung Ward #5 No No

Comment:

- Rally was not large enough.

Dunham Township No Yes No

Comment:

- This helped Focus on the need of assistance.

Alden Township No

Comment:

- At voting time no one remembers.

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

- In a small way unfortunately.

LeRoy Township

Non-Residents No Yes

Comments:

- A positive step but people realize each district is left by itself to solve its own problems. If the law changes it won't be soon.
- The publicity for the above probably created an awareness for some.

Survey Question #10 - Board Member Vote

The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the April 20, 1993 referendum was: 7 yes. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Chemung Ward #1 Yes Yes No Yes

Comments:

- Not necessarily.
- It seemed like everyone was finally working together for a real need — the children.

Chemung Ward #2 Yes

Comment:

- Unanimity is best.

Chemung Ward #3 No Yes

Chemung Ward #4 Yes

Chemung Ward #5 Yes No

Comment:

- United we stand-divided we fall. Same answer as before.
- I believe the main reason this referendum passed was that there were no new schools only additions to already standing buildings. Plus getting rid of the King Land.

Dunham Township Yes Yes No

Alden Township No

Hartland Township Yes

Comment:

- See previous comments about all members speaking as "1".

LeRoy Township

Non-Residents No No Yes

Comments:

—Good to see the Board together but the major factors were additions only referendum, program cuts, class size and no space for programs like music and P.E.

—The importance of all the Board together is extremely beneficial.

Table 7

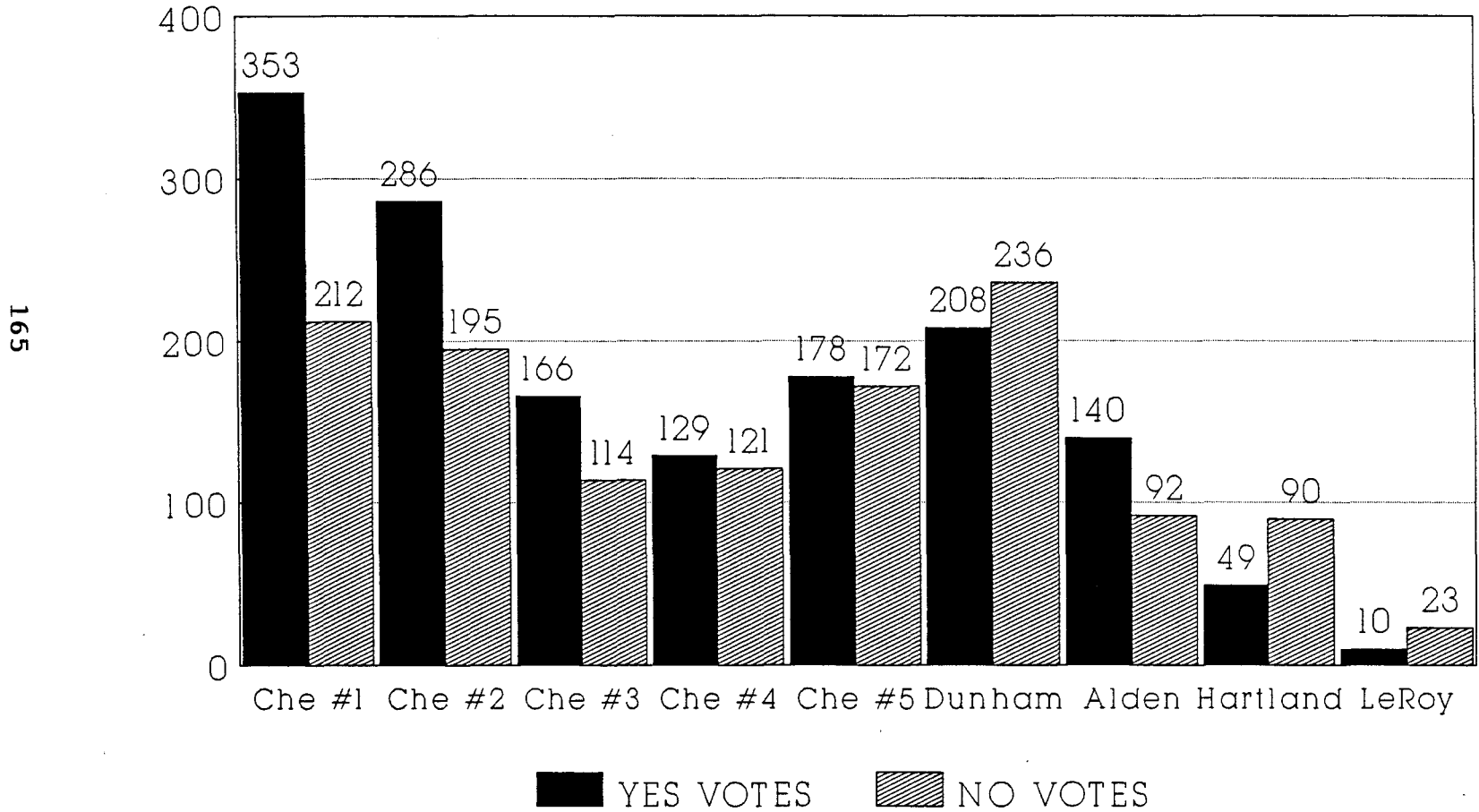
NUMERICAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES
REFERENDUM #6 - APRIL 20, 1993

Key: Ch1 = Chemung Precinct #1 Dun = Dunham Township
 Ch2 = Chemung Precinct #2 Ald = Alden Township
 Ch3 = Chemung Precinct #3 Hart = Hartland Township
 Ch4 = Chemung Precinct #4 LeR = LeRoy Township
 Ch5 = Chemung Precinct #5 Oth = Non-Residents

DID THE FOLLOWING ISSUES HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE REFERENDUM?
 (Refer to survey on preceding pages.)

		Ch1	Ch2	Ch3	Ch4	Ch5	Dun	Ald	Hart	LeR	Oth	Total
Survey Question #1	Yes	4	1				2		1	1	2	11
Assoc. Superintendent	No			1	1	2		1			1	6
for Business Hired	Undecided	1		1			1				1	4
Survey Question #2	Yes	4	1	2	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	18
3 Room Addition to	No	1				1						2
Jefferson School	Undecided										1	1
Survey Question #3	Yes	4	1		1	1	3	1			1	12
Northfield Listed	No	1		1		1			1	1	2	7
For Sale	Undecided			1							1	2
Survey Question #4	Yes	3	1	1		2	3		1	1	3	15
Vision & Mission	No	1		1	1			1				4
Statements	Undecided	1									1	2
Survey Question #5	Yes	4	1	2	1	2	1	1	1		3	16
King Property	No						2			1		3
	Undecided	1									1	2
Survey Question #6	Yes	2	1	2		1	2		1		2	11
Property Tax Extension	No	3			1	1	1	1		1	1	9
Limitation Act	Undecided										1	1
Survey Question #7	Yes	3			1		2	1			1	8
Financial Awareness	No	2	1	1		2			1		2	9
Day	Undecided			1			1			1	1	4
Survey Question #8	Yes			1							2	3
Racial Rally	No	4	1	1	1	1	3	1	1		2	15
	Undecided	1				1				1		3
Survey Question #9	Yes	3		1			1		1		1	7
Rally on Springfield	No	2	1	1	1	2	2	1			1	11
	Undecided									1	2	3
Survey Question #10	Yes	3	1	1	1	1	2		1		1	11
Board Member Vote	No	1		1		1	1	1			2	7
	Undecided	1								1	1	3

Figure #8
BUILDING BOND REFERENDUM - \$5,900,000
April 20, 1993



Yes = 1,519 No = 1,255

Table 8

SUMMARY OF VOTES BY PRECINCT

		Che 1 = Chemung Precinct #1 Che 2 = Chemung Precinct #2 Che 3 = Chemung Precinct #3 Che 4 = Chemung Precinct #4 Che 5 = Chemung Precinct #5					Dun = Dunham Township Ald = Alden Township Hart = Hartland Township LeR = LeRoy Township					Total
		Che 1	Che 2	Che 3	Che 4	Che 5	Dun	Ald	Hart	LeR	Votes Cast	
D = Defeated S = Successful	Referendum #1 - D											
	November 8, 1988											
	Building Bonds	Yes	236	204	119	87	143	210	107	86	17	1,209
		No	385	321	220	185	290	331	164	147	35	2,078
	Referendum #2 - D											
	April 4, 1989											
	Building Bonds	Yes	221	179	99	77	95	165	67	53	7	963
		No	382	314	217	185	235	261	132	103	30	1,859
	Referendum #3 - D											
	November 7, 1989											
	O.B.M. Tax Rate	Yes	207	126	78	42	101	131	83	50	4	822
		No	264	223	125	120	191	200	88	73	22	1,306
196	Referendum #3 - D											
	November 7, 1989											
	Building Bonds	Yes	232	146	86	55	103	146	88	51	7	914
		No	237	204	119	112	188	185	81	72	21	1,219
	Referendum #4 - D											
	March 20, 1990											
	Education Tax Rate	Yes	246	164	118	75	150	168	108	65	6	1,100
		No	324	296	152	161	236	273	121	128	26	1,717
	Referendum #4 - D											
	March 20, 1990											
	O.B.M. Tax Rate	Yes	240	164	114	80	147	166	108	67	6	1,092
		No	335	291	155	154	233	274	119	123	26	1,710
	Referendum #5 - S											
	November 6, 1990											
	Education Tax Rate	Yes	366	272	177	132	228	253	173	97	16	1,714
		No	264	226	138	151	203	238	105	124	27	1,476
	Referendum #6 - S											
	April 10, 1993											
	Building Bonds	Yes	353	286	166	129	178	208	140	49	10	1,519
		No	212	195	114	121	172	236	92	90	23	1,255

Summary of Votes by Precinct

Voter Patterns

The summary of voter results by precinct is yet another piece of the puzzle which can be used in analyzing referendum results. In reviewing the voter patterns of the inclusive referendums of this dissertation, one can ascertain that:

Chemung Township

Because of its density of population, Chemung Township consists of five precincts. The entire land area of all five precincts in Chemung Township are within the Harvard School District #50 boundaries.

Precinct #1

Voters in Chemung Township - Precinct #1 consistently opposed the four defeated referendums with an average of 60% voting "No." On the contrary, the successful referendums of November 6, 1990 and April 20, 1993 were both won with 60% of the voters saying "Yes."

Precinct #2

Voters in Chemung Township - Precinct #2 were also consistent in opposing the four defeated referendums with an average 63% voting "No." Precinct #2 approved the successful referendums with average "Yes" votes being 57% of the total voters.

Precinct #3

Precinct #3 voters consistently voted against the defeated referendums with 63% of the voters saying "No." The successful referendums were

approved by Precinct #3 voters with an average of 58% in agreement.

Precinct #4

Sixty-nine percent of the Precinct #4 voters consistently voted "No" in the defeated referendums. Voters in this precinct also opposed the successful November 6, 1990 Education tax rate referendum with 53% of the voters being against the increase. Only 52% of the voters voted "yes" in the successful April 20, 1993 building bond referendum.

Precinct #5

Precinct #5 voters provided an average of 65% of the "No" votes in the defeated referendums. This group approved the two successful referendums with average "Yes" votes of 52%.

Dunham Township

The entire land areas of Dunham Township are within the Harvard School District #50 boundaries. There is no precinct breakdown in Dunham Township.

Dunham Township voters consistently defeated the first four referendums with an average of 62% of the voters saying "No." Fifty-two percent of the average voter count in Dunham Township agreed to the November 6, 1990 Education tax rate referendum increase. Dunham is one of three townships that opposed the April 20, 1993 building bond referendum with 53% of the Dunham voters casting "No" votes.

Alden Township

Only a portion of Alden Township is within the District #50 boundaries. Alden voters opposed three of the four failed referendums with average "No" votes at 57%.

This group of Alden voters collectively voted yes for the failed November 7, 1989 referendum for \$5.6 million building bonds, with 52% of the voters agreeing to the project. Alden voters also approved the two successful referendums with an average of 61% of the voters casting "Yes" votes.

Hartland Township

Only a portion of Hartland Township lies within the District #50 boundaries. Voters in Hartland Township opposed every referendum held during the framework of this dissertation. An average of 62% of the voters voted "No" in all six referendums.

LeRoy Township

The boundaries of District #50 lie mainly within McHenry County. However, a small corner of Boone County lies within the rural boundaries of District #50. This Boone County Township is referred to as LeRoy Township. As in Hartland Township, LeRoy Township voters opposed all six referendums. An average of 70% of the voters in LeRoy Township voted "No" in all six referendums.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions for this dissertation were based on the results of the data analysis, and the recommendations were derived from the conclusions. For this study, the investigator combined a chronology of events of the District from 1987 through 1993 and identified contributing factors that influenced voting constituents for referendums held from 1988 through 1993. The contributing factors identified and studied included: referendum questions presented; key issues prior to voting; voter patterns by township and precincts; effects of budget cuts; closure to Collective Bargaining Agreements; placement on the State's Financial Watch List; public relation strategies; staff, students and community involvement in planning and carrying out referendums; effect of the Board of Education vote on the outcome of the referendum; and the development of a District Vision and Mission Statement.

The conclusions drawn from this study as they pertain to identified contributing factors are as follows:

Conclusion #1 - Referendum questions presented: When considering future referendum campaigns, analyze strategies and data pertaining to previous referendums. More than one question on a ballot tends to confuse voters, resulting in a no vote or non-participation in the process. After conducting a survey and sorting

out feedback from constituents, make it a priority to clarify any unanswered questions so that the pulse of the community is reflected in the referendum. Broad-based community involvement is crucial from the start of assessing the District's needs and then actively involving them in selling the program to the public.

Conclusion #2 - Key Issues Prior to Voting: The referendum committee needs to be sensitive and responsive to questions and concerns of constituents. The effect side-issues have on the success of bond and tax rate referendums should not be underestimated. Personal and informative contact with the voters has far-reaching results.

Conclusion #3 - Voter patterns by township and precinct: Analysis of voter patterns in previously held referendums by township and precincts, assists referendum committees in ascertaining voter response. Referendum committees need to place greater emphasis on personally targeting constituents by townships and precincts.

Conclusion #4 - Effect of budget cuts: Budget cuts show the public that the District is making every effort to keep expenditures below revenue. Subscribing to and adhering to zero-base budgeting is recommended so that program and staff reductions are not required.

Conclusion #5 - Closure to Collective Bargaining Agreements: Voting constituents tend to look more favorably to voting yes on a referendum if collective bargaining is completed before election day. Staff contracts settled before a

referendum have a positive impact because tax payers then have a better understanding of where the new dollars will be going.

Conclusion #6 - Placement on the State's Financial Watch List: An issue such as this tests the credibility of the Board and Administration. Credibility of the School Board and Administration needs to be cultivated and nurtured on a continuous basis with employees, parents, community members and students.

Conclusion #7 - Public relation strategies: Public relations needs to be a year-round strategy. Public relations with constituents needs to be positive, honest and ongoing.

Conclusion #8 - Staff, students and community involvement in planning and carrying out referendums: Broad-based involvement is crucial for successful passage of referendums. Referendum steering committees need to be comprised of voters from all geographic, social and educational levels. Referendum speaker's bureau must be comprised of constituents explaining the District's message.

Conclusion #9 - Effect of the Board of Education vote on the outcome of the referendum: An unanimous board vote for a resolution to be placed on a referendum may be ideal, but not necessarily crucial. The unity of the Board of Education is demonstrated in the preparatory work accomplished before a resolution vote and then their solidarity to support the decision regardless of a split-vote.

Conclusion #10 - Development of a District Vision and Mission Statement:

Community-based development of a District Vision and Mission Statement is paramount for organizational decision-making. An active District Vision and Mission Statement is essential so that the District and the community have a sense of direction.

APPENDIX

DEMOGRAPHICS

and

REFERENDUM SURVEYS

This is a confidential survey. Responses will be utilized in my dissertation entitled "A Documented Chronology and Analysis of the Contributing Factors Which Influenced Referendum Success of Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50 from 1987 to 1993." Your name will not be identified — you will have complete anonymity in the dissertation and the results of this survey.

You may return your completed booklet in the enclosed envelope. If at all possible, I would like to have all booklets returned to me by October 20, 1995. If this timeline is too short for you, please contact me.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in this project. If you have questions, please call me at the Board of Education Office 943-4022 or my home 943-7567.

Richard D. Crosby

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

This is a confidential survey. Responses will be utilized in my dissertation entitled "A Documented Chronology and Analysis of the Contributing Factors Which Influenced Referendum Success of Harvard Community Unit School District No. 50 from 1987 to 1993." Your name will not be identified in the dissertation — you will have complete anonymity in the dissertation and the results of this survey. Thank you. Richard Crosby

Instructions: The responses to the referendum survey will provide categorization detail for documenting the responses to the attached surveys. It may be helpful for you to page through the surveys before you begin answering any questions.

Demographic Information

1. Do you live in District #50? Yes No

If yes, how long? ____

2. Are you a District #50 employee? Yes No

3. As far as you can recall, which referendum did you vote on?

(Please check all that apply.)

November 8, 1988

April 4, 1989

November 7, 1989

March 20, 1990

November 6, 1990

April 20, 1993

4. Are you a business owner in the community? Yes No

5. Have you had children go through Harvard schools? Yes No

6. Do you have grandchildren in Harvard schools? Yes No

7. Were you directly affected by any of the referendum (i.e. did you have children or grandchildren in the school during the period of 1987-1993?)
- Elementary School Yes No
- Junior High School Yes No
- High School Yes No
8. Have you been involved in any of the following? (Check any that apply.)
- Booster Club
- PTG
- Referendum committee
- School Volunteer (reading pair, VIVA, tutor, etc.)
- Civic organizations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Citizens' Advisory Committee
- Other _____
9. Where do you vote?
- Chemung Ward #1—Fire and Rescue Station
- Chemung Ward #2—Township Building, 8th and McKinley St.
- Chemung Ward #3—Chamber of Commerce Building
- Chemung Ward #4—Seegers Grain
- Chemung Ward #5—Chemung Methodist Church
- Dunham Township—Township Garage—Airport Rd.
- Alden Township—Alden Fire Station

Hartland Township—Township Garage—Nelson Rd.

 LeRoy Township—Blaine Church

 Other_____

10. Please rank your priorities (where 1 = most and 3 = least important) in terms of providing money for the following:

 Construction of new facilities

 Operation and maintenance of facilities

 Education Fund

11. Do you believe the co-curricula (i.e. athletics, music, drama, clubs and organizations) are as important as the three R's (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic)? Yes No

12. Do you believe that the increased lottery monies are additional money for the schools? Yes No

13. Were you in support of the District's 1988 attempt (lawsuit) to get the legislature to relax mandates unless they were funded? Yes No

14. Should local property taxes be the main resource for school funding? Yes No

Comment:_____

15. What was your way of receiving information on the referendums? (Please check any that apply.)

 Notes home with children

 Speaker's Bureau

 Radio

 Videos

 Telephone trees

 Newspapers

 Word of mouth

 The Harvard Educator

 Other _____

SURVEY

REFERENDUM #1 - NOVEMBER 8, 1988

REFERENDUM COMMITTEE:

SOS (SHORT OF SPACE—SAVE OUR SCHOOLS)

Referendum: November 8, 1988

Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Jefferson, Junior High and High Schools. Purchase and improve new site with a new school. Sell Bonds = \$5,950,000

For = 1,209 Against = 2,078

1. A survey was distributed to the community, requesting their input for the best usage of present District buildings and the need for new facilities. The survey requested community response to the possibilities of closing Central School, selling the Northfield Avenue property, renting business facilities for classroom space, and removing the mobile classrooms at Washington School.

Of the 596 respondents, 334 suggested that an addition be built on to Washington School and the mobile classrooms removed. This option did not become a part of the referendum question. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? __Yes __No

Comment: _____

2. The second highest response in the survey suggested that the District not build a new school, but rather build additions and renovate present facilities. The

referendum question included not only additions and renovations, but also a new building on a new site to be purchased. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

3. Prior to this referendum, the District had approved a 3-year tax abatement to the developers of the LaFrenz SuperValu/Walmart complex. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

4. In 1985, the community had passed a tax rate referendum increase to the Operations, Building and Maintenance Fund. Although the referendum was never promoted as funding to building a new school, many in the community interpreted that this money was to be used to build a new school. How wide spread was this assumption? Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

5. 1988 was a negotiations year with the teachers. Ideally the contract should have been settled by August 1988. The contract was actually settled October 10, 1988. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

6. McHenry County College also had a question on this election ballot for building bonds. This involved all District #50 taxpayers. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

7. The City of Harvard also had a question on this election ballot for a telecommunications surtax—911. This involved only District #50 taxpayers within the city limits of Harvard. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

8. The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the November 8, 1988 referendum was: 5 yes, 1 no, 1 absent. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

SURVEY

REFERENDUM #2 - APRIL 4, 1989

REFERENDUM COMMITTEE: GIVE US ROOM TO GROW

Referendum: April 4, 1989

**Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Junior High and High Schools.
Purchase and improve new site with a new school. Sell Bonds =
\$6,200,000**

For = 963 Against = 1,859

1. This referendum was identical to the previous (November 8, 1988) referendum question with the exception of the cost. This referendum would have cost \$250,000 more. In addition, a site for a new school had been designated in this referendum attempt (located between Airport Road and Route 173).

Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

2. The referendum question included the purchase of land located between Airport Road and Route 173 as a site to build a new school. At the time of the referendum, a site had not been designated. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

3. In December 1988, the Northfield Avenue property was advertised for sale. This was a result of the State Board guidelines for an elementary school site of 5 acres

minimum plus 1 acre for each 100 students. However, none of District #50's current facilities are on property that falls within the State guidelines. Do you believe the Board's desire to sell the Northfield property had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

4. In February 1989, the Board entered into a contract for the purchase of 103 acres on Airport Road and Route 173 known as the Diggins property. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

5. On December 21, 1988, the Board of Education issued life safety bonds in the amount of \$1,415,000 to replace the windows in all District #50 buildings, upgrade the present heating plants and remove asbestos. In addition a working cash bond issue was sold for \$450,000. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

6. Discussions continued between the City and the School District regarding the issuance of tax abatements to encourage industrial and commercial growth in the community. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

7. The Board of Education supported the Illinois Farm Bureau's position known as CHIEF (Change How Illinois Education is Financed). CHIEF dealt with changing the taxing base for governmental entities from real estate to income. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

8. The designated site for a new school (on Route 173 West) was near the Dacy Airport. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

9. The City of Harvard had a question on the ballot dealing with the establishment of a Park District. The Park District's tax base would be developed from all School District #50 residents. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

10. The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the April 4, 1989 referendum was: 6 yes, 1 absent. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

SURVEY

REFERENDUM #3 - NOVEMBER 7, 1989

REFERENDUM COMMITTEE: GIVE US ROOM TO GROW

Referendum: November 7, 1989

**Reconstruct, alter, repair and equip Junior High and High Schools. Sell
Bonds = \$5,600,000**

For = 914 Against = 1,219

**Increase Operations, Building and Maintenance tax rate to .625% (a
.125% increase)**

For = 822 Against = 1,306

1. This referendum listed two propositions. The building issue changed the previous question significantly. This question dealt with additions only to the Junior High and High School. No new site or new school were involved. Do you think this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

In addition, a second question regarding an increase to the Operations, Building and Maintenance tax rate was included on the ballot. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

2. In August, 1989 the Board decided to rent the Ayer Street Annex with an occupancy date of January 1, 1990. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

3. In August, 1989, the Illinois State Board of Education was requested to complete a study on various facets of District #50, primarily enrollment trends, subdivision analysis, facility utilization and a financial review. In addition, Senator Jack Schaffer and Representative Ron Waite visited the District and concurred with the space problems. Numerous committees studied the usage of District buildings. Do you believe enough studies were completed to determine the need for classroom space? Yes No

Comment: _____

4. On September 26, 1989 the Board entered into an option agreement with Tom King for 79.55 acres. The November 7, 1989 referendum question did not deal with the purchase of land nor the construction of a new school. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

5. The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the November 7, 1989 referendum was: 6 yes, 1 absent. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

REFERENDUM #4 - MARCH 20, 1990

REFERENDUM COMMITTEE:

CITIZENS SUPPORTING THE CHILDREN OF HARVARD

Referendum: March 20, 1990

Increase Education Fund tax rate to 3.65% (a 1.00% increase)

For = 1,100 Against = 1,717

Increase Operations and Maintenance tax rate to .750% (a .125% increase)

For = 1,092 Against = 1,710

1. In November 1989 District #50 had taken the initiative to develop a list of programs and positions which would need to be cut to begin bringing District spending in line with revenue. A Board committee made their recommendation on January 9, 1990 to cut \$500,000 in staff and programs. Do you believe these cuts had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

2. On January 25, 1990 District #50 was notified that they had been placed on the State's Financial Watch List. Through a two-tiered approach, the State Board of Education attempts to assist districts to avoid financial crisis. This first notice to District #50 was a warning device that indicated emerging problems. The second and more serious step is certifying a district as being in financial difficulty. Do you believe the District being placed on the "watch list" had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

3. The Board of Education decided to enlist the help of the State Board of Education's Finance Division. The State Board of Education's Finance facilitator was Mr. Pat Toomey. He recommended the District employ a financial consultant by the name of Dr. Paul Schilling. The District contacted Dr. Schilling who conducted a Financial Status Study. This study included a review of 1) the District's Annual Financial Reports, Audit Reports, Fall Housing Reports, Current Financial Reports and other selected official reports of the District; 2) on site visitations to each building with Mr. Toomey and the District Superintendent; 3) tentative FY91 High School schedules, and 4) oral conversations with the District Superintendent, the Secretary to the Superintendent, the Bookkeeper, and the High School Principal. Dr. Schilling's recommendations included: convert to computerization of the business office; employment of a full-time business manager; development of sound operational fiscal policies; adopt a feasible long-range plan for physical facilities; reduce non-teaching assignments of certified staff; adopt a pay-as-you-go bond retirement schedule; consider contracting for food, custodial and transportation services; reduce the athletic/co-curricular programs; modify employee benefits package; increase class sizes.

Do you believe the above issues had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

4. The Northwest Herald did not endorse either proposition of this referendum. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

5. The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the March 20, 1990 referendum was: 7 yes. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

SURVEY

REFERENDUM #5 - NOVEMBER 6, 1990

REFERENDUM COMMITTEE: CONCERNED PARENTS FOR EDUCATION

Referendum: November 6, 1990

Increase Education Fund tax rate to 3.23% (a .59% increase)

For = 1,714 Against = 1,476

1. On May 1, 1990, local developers Stricker and Stahl offered an exchange of 37 acres of land west of town for the Northfield property. Although the acquisition of land does not specifically relate to an Education tax rate referendum, do you believe this issue had an effect on the outcome of this referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

2. On May 15, 1990, the county established Impact Fees payable directly to the school district for each new home constructed. Do you believe this action had an effect on the outcome of this referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

3. On July 25, 1990, the Board of Education told of \$500,000 savings for the 1990-91 school year accomplished with significant budget cuts. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

4. In July, 1990, Harvard made headlines in the Chicago Tribune. The issue was tagged "racial violence", and "tales of racism." Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

5. The teachers started the school year without a contract. Negotiations settled with the teacher and a contract was acquired November 1, 1990, just six days prior to the referendum. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

6. On August 16, 1990, just prior to the required date for filing a question for the November ballot, a Board member resigned. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

7. The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the November 7, 1990 referendum was: 6 yes 1 vacancy on the Board. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

SURVEY

REFERENDUM #6 - APRIL 20, 1993

REFERENDUM COMMITTEE:

HARVARD'S EDUCATIONAL LEAP FOR PROGRESS (HELP)

Referendum: April 20, 1993

**Additions to Jefferson School, Junior High School and
High School, handicap accessibility at Central School**

For = 1,519 Against = 1,255

Approximately 2 1/2 years passed between the November 7, 1990 referendum and this referendum. The District remained in a space crunch situation. Several Board actions were taken in this period of time. Some may or may not have had an effect on the April 1993 referendum.

1. Prior to the November 7, 1990 referendum, District #50 was placed on the State's Financial Watch List for schools in financial crisis. Based on the 1989-90 school year financial records, the District was removed from the Financial Watch List. In December 1990 an Associate Superintendent for Business Affairs was hired by the District. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

2. In 1990 both McHenry County and the City of Harvard provided for increased developer donation "impact" fees payable to District #50. Sufficient fees were collected between 1990 and 1993 to allow the District to build a 3-room addition

onto Jefferson School without going to taxpayers with a referendum. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

3. It was determined many times that the 8 acres owned by the District known as the Northfield property was not conducive as a potential school site. The property was offered for public sale two times prior to the previous referendum. The property was again listed for public sale in 1991. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

4. Several members of the District community and businesses gathered with District staff, students and administrators to establish future goals for District #50. A vision and mission statement were developed by this committee. Vision: Be the Best Today and Better Tomorrow. Mission: To provide an educational partnership with the community which meets the diverse needs of the students for their futures. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum?

Yes No

Comment: _____

5. In March, 1991, the District held planning meetings with the City Council and community regarding the development of the 80 acres of the Tom King property. Expenditures were approved for preliminary site development research (i.e. soil borings, soil and water conservation studies, natural resource studies, etc.). The Board of Education and City discussed joint use of the land with the District using 40 acres of the land for school use and providing the other 40 acres to the City for park use, a library, community center, Fire/Rescue facilities, daycare/preschool facilities, etc.. A petition signed by 621 local citizens voiced opposition to the District's purchase of the King property. Do you believe any of these factors regarding the King property had an effect on the outcome of this referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

6. In 1991, the Illinois General Assembly approved the Property Tax Extension Limitation Act. This act set significant limitations on the amount of property taxes that can be extended for taxing districts. The act limited the assessed valuation and amount of taxes that can be generated on property to the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the consumer price index for the calendar year preceding the levy year. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

7. On June 9, 1992, the District sponsored a Financial Awareness Day in an attempt to educate the community in school finance issues. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of this referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

8. On October 29, 1992, citizens of Harvard held a racial rally to take a stand on racial issues that had come to the forefront in recent months. Do you think this issue had an effect on the outcome of this referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

9. On January 29, 1993, citizen Doug Cartland notified the community of plans for a May 5, 1993 "Rally on Springfield." The intent of the rally was to voice concern to legislators on the constantly changing legislation regarding financing public school districts. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

10. The Board of Education member vote on the resolution to hold the April 20, 1993 referendum was: 7 yes. Do you believe this had an effect on the outcome of the referendum? Yes No

Comment: _____

T H E E N D

**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR
PARTICIPATION!**

VITA

The author, Richard Donald Crosby, is the son of Dorothy Marie and Donald Elton Crosby and the oldest of five brothers. He was born on August 11, 1944, in Kewanee, Illinois.

His elementary education was obtained at Sacred Heart School in Annawan, Illinois. His secondary education was received at Annawan High School.

In 1966 he married Jacklyn Lee Rambo and in 1968 he received the degree of Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, 1970 the degree of Master of Science in Educational Administration and in 1973 the degree of Educational Specialist, all from Western Illinois University. Michelle, his daughter was born in 1968 and Brian, his son was born in 1970. Granddaughters Jordan and Ashley were born in 1989 and 1992 respectively.

The author began his teaching career in Macomb Community Unit School District 185 as an elementary teacher in 1968. In 1971 he was chosen to be the Assistant Junior High Principal at Parkland School in McHenry, Illinois. In 1973 he was selected as the Elementary Principal of Central and Jefferson Schools in Harvard, Illinois. Then in 1978 he assumed the Harvard Junior High principalship, a position he held until 1987 when he was appointed Superintendent of Harvard Community Unit School District #50.

APPROVAL SHEET

This dissertation submitted by Richard Donald Crosby has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. L. Arthur Safer, Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and Associate Dean

Dr. Janis Fine, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

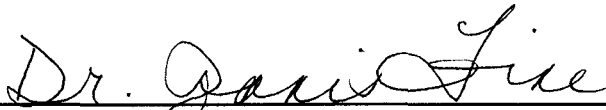
Dr. Max A. Bailey, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and Chairperson

The final copies have been examined by the members of the committee and the signatures which appear below verify the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

This dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education (Ed.D.).



Co-Director - Dr. L. Arthur Safer



Co-Director - Dr. Janis Fine

April 8, 1996
Date