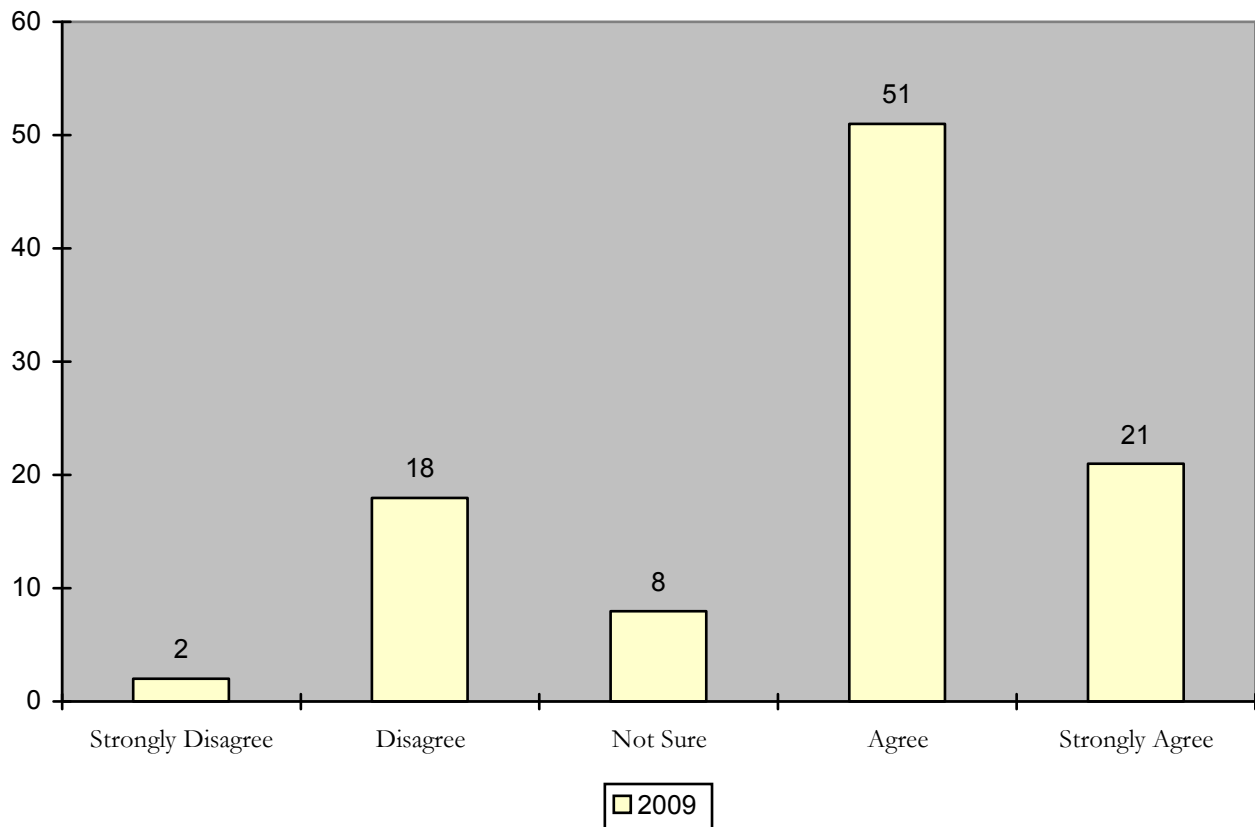


What Urban Boards Want for Kids 2009

- The majority (72%) of board members agreed or strongly agreed that the students in their district were capable of high performance on standardized tests
- A fifth (20%) of board members disagreed or strongly disagreed that the students in their district were
- *Our Board Members focus should be on academic achievement.* [sic]
- **While we have had an improvement on standardized test scores and our graduation rate has risen, African American kids are not going to 4 year colleges at the same rate as Anglo kids. Minorities are not graduating with honors at the same rate.**
- **I wouldn't say we are performing at a high level, but we know that we need highly qualified teachers and smaller class sizes in order to change this.**

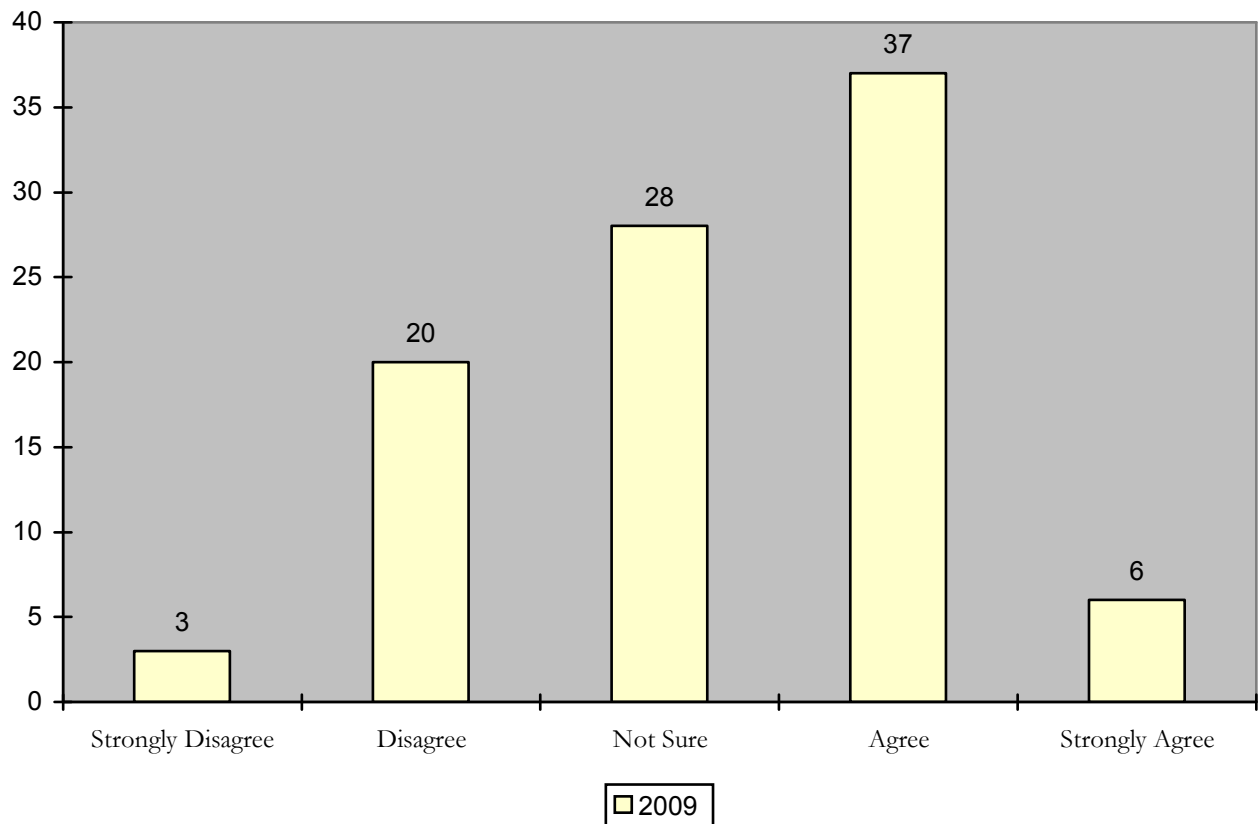
Most children in my district are capable of high performance on the standardized exams given at the schools.



What Urban Boards Want for Kids 2009

- Less than half (43%) of board members were optimistic that they would eliminate the achievement gap in their district within the next five years
- Over a quarter (28%) of board members were not sure if they were optimistic about eliminating the achievement gap within the next five years in their district
- *Need professional development & research on how to address achievement gap*
- *The achievement gap will be hard to close. Nonetheless, urban school kids can learn. If there were a tutor/mentor for every needy urban school district child, the gap would close significantly. Whether that sort of commitment is realistic is the question, but I don't have another idea to address the problem.*
- *My number 1 priority is equity and excellence - we need to address both the achievement gap and provide engaging, challenging educational experiences for all students. Access is not enough.*
- **I am optimistic that we can close the achievement gap but we need to work on teacher accountability. We need teachers who want to teach and if we create a better environment for our students, we can close the gap.**
- **Our district has done a good job of closing the achievement gap; however African Americans are still on the bottom of the test scores.**
- **We are not going to close the achievement gap in the next five years, but we are going to narrow it. I have demanded that the superintendent place talented teachers where they are needed the most.**

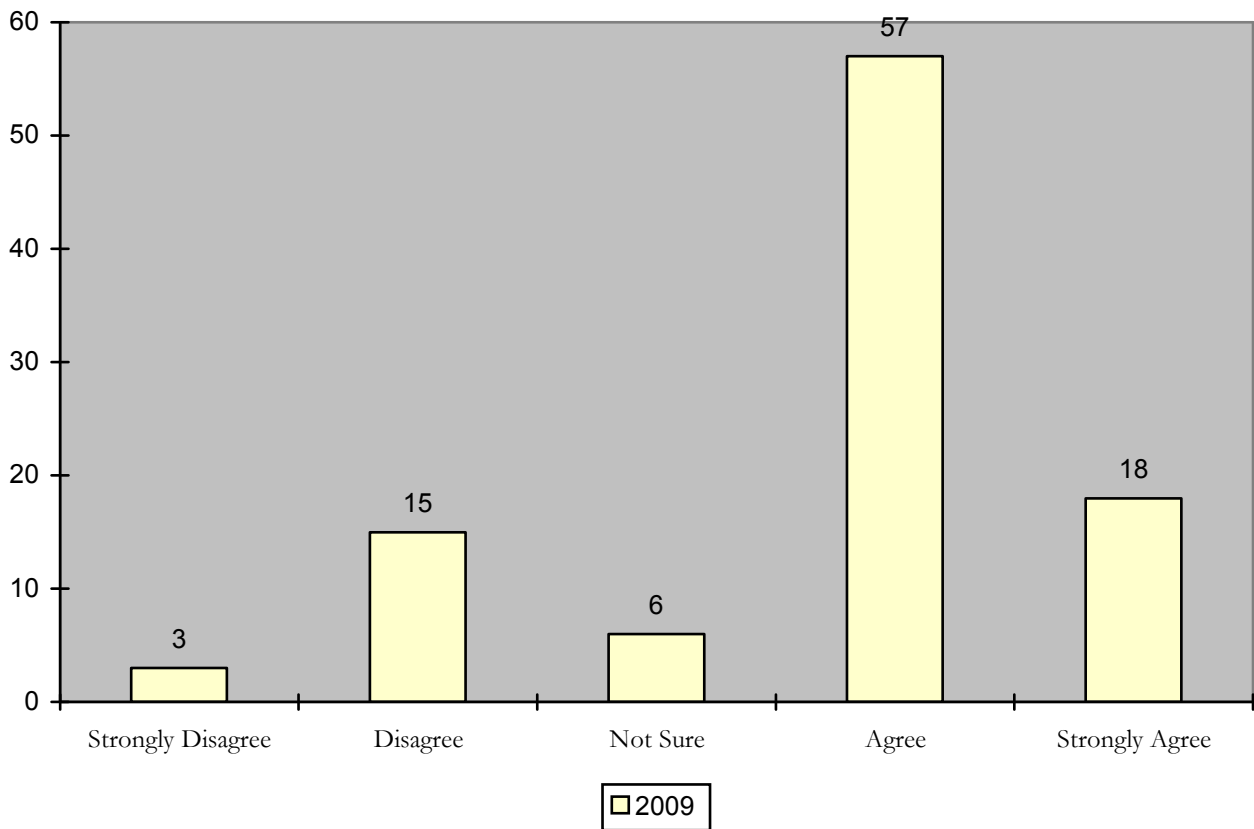
I am optimistic that we will eliminate the student achievement gaps in my district within the next five (5) years.



What Urban Boards Want for Kids 2009

- Three quarters (75%) of school board members agreed or strongly agreed that there were violent crimes in the past six months near schools within their district
- Less than one-fifth (18%) of school board members disagreed or strongly disagreed that violent crimes happened near district schools within the past six months
- *Our district is so under-performing and unsafe that it is difficult to know where to start.*
- **Safety is a constant issue within our district. Some it is due to the size of the high school (5000 students). That many students can easily make an unsafe environment. It is also due in part to the lack of parent and community involvement, but we have to change the culture. These are our kids and we know them, so we have to deal with these problems to make a safer environment.**

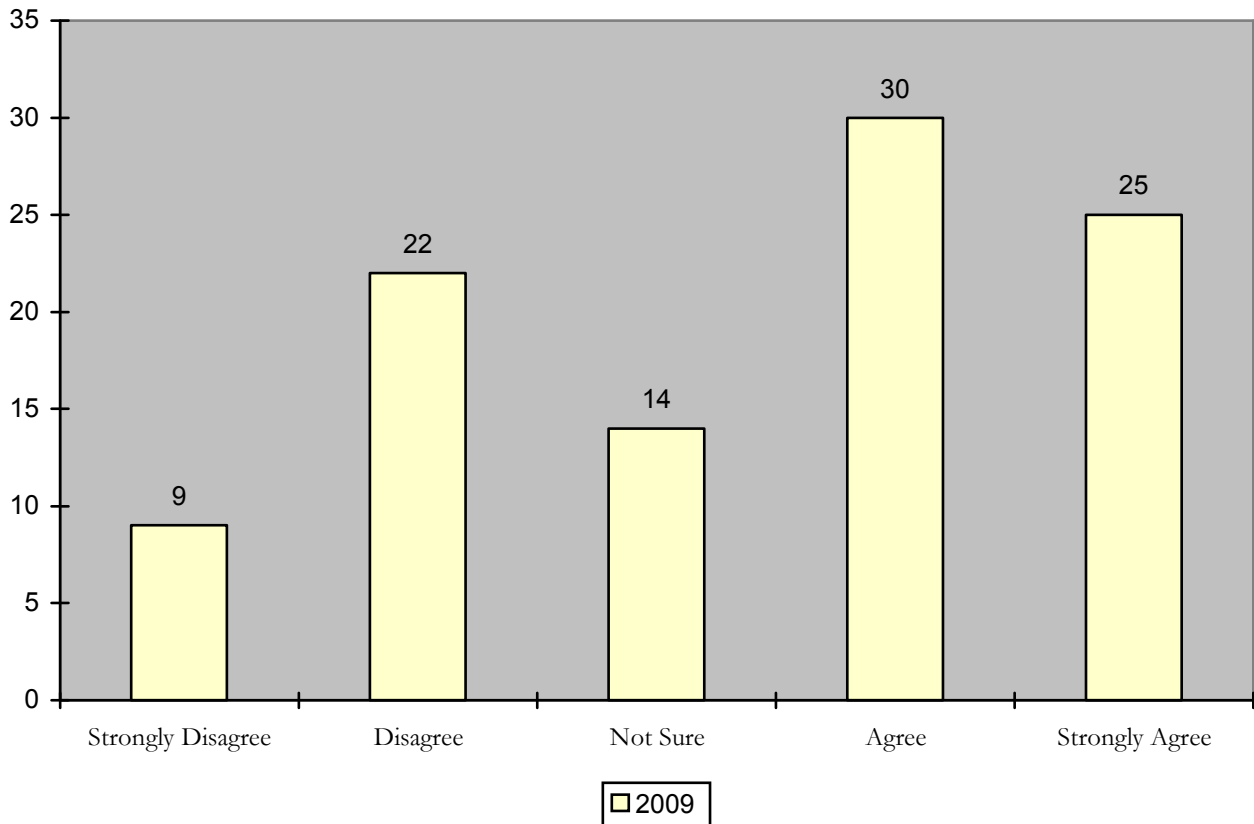
In the past six months, there have been violent crimes near schools within the district.



What Urban Boards Want for Kids 2009

- Over half (55%) of board members expressed that they agreed or strongly agreed that charter schools are a threat to public urban education
- Close to a third (31%) of board members disagreed or strongly disagreed that charter schools were a threat to urban public education
- *I am a Republican, an attorney, and a charter school supporting board member in a large urban school district with half of our schools chartered and vouchers so that some qualifying children can attend private schools in the district. I see our biggest challeng [sic] as maintaining balance between charters and traditional schools so that even our most disadvantaged students are not left behind or left out.*
- **I do not see charter schools as a threat, but rather as a complement to our public schools. Some parents want choices and once given the choice, they feel better about their school.**
- **Charter schools are not accepted here. I believe we need to educate everybody and only public schools can do it. Education money should go to the public schools; it's less of a gamble.**
- **I believe charter schools are a threat to urban education because they will take our best and brightest students.**
- **I do not see the charter school movement as threat but as an enhancement in our district. The charter schools took children that the district was giving up on they graduated from the charter school.**

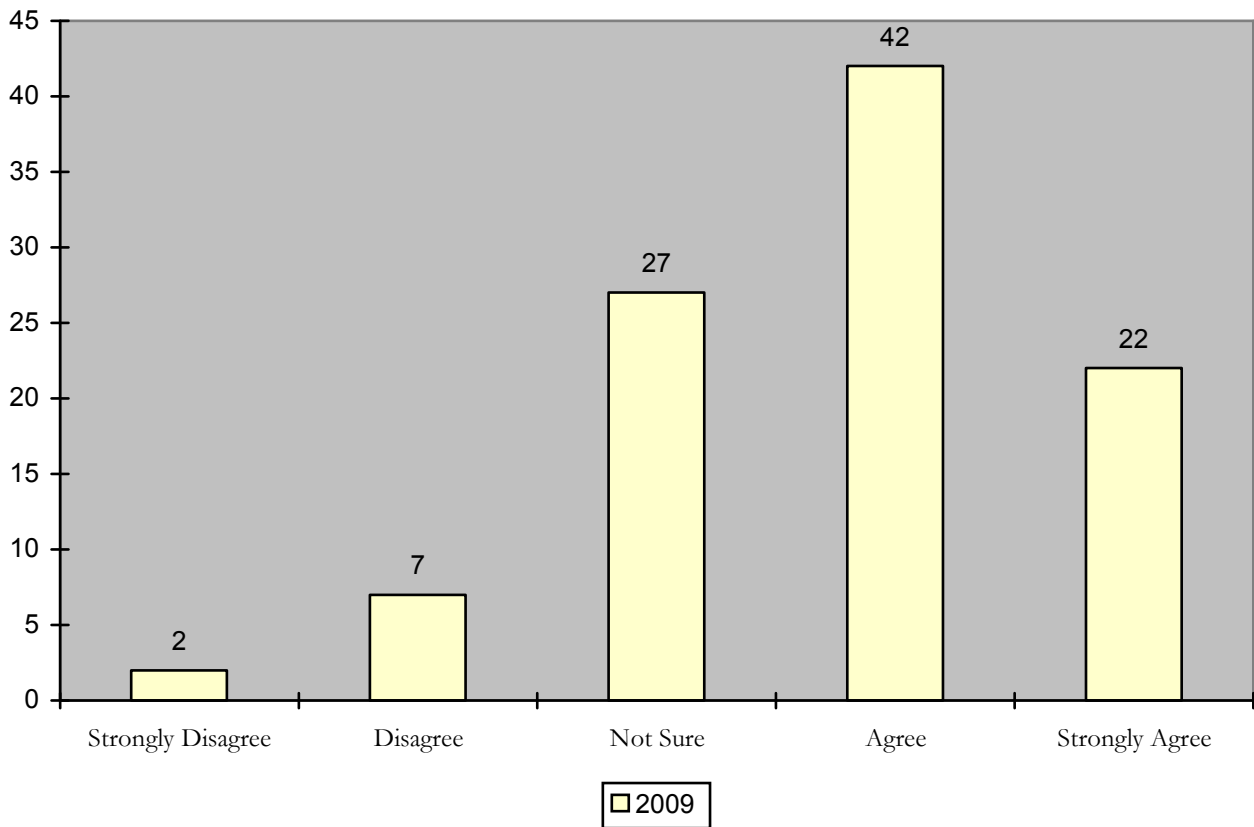
The charter school movement is a threat to public urban education.



What Urban Boards Want for Kids 2009

- The majority (64%) of board members agreed or strongly agreed that they were optimistic about funding initiatives put forth by the Obama administration
- Over a quarter (27%) of board members were unsure if they were optimistic about funding initiatives put forth by the Obama administration

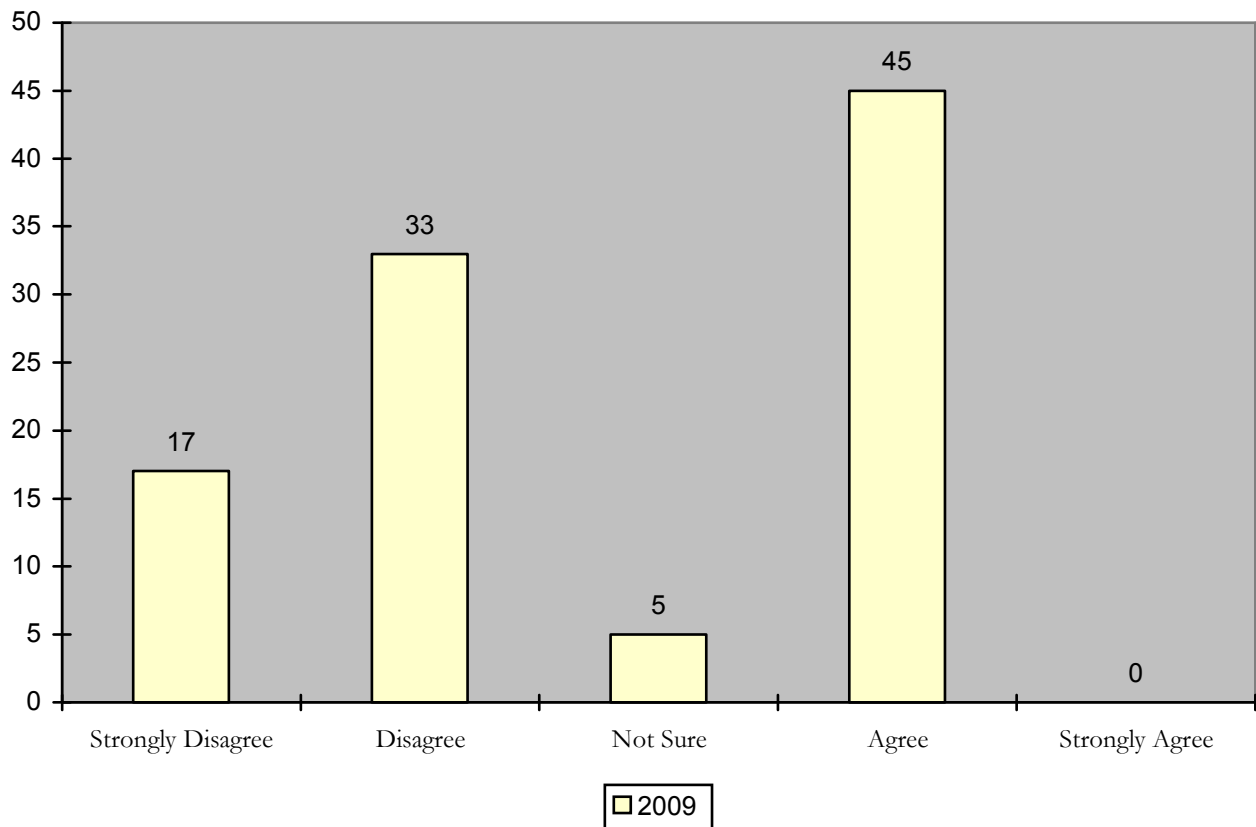
I am optimistic that the recent funding initiatives by the Obama administration will make a positive difference in our district.



What Urban Boards Want for Kids 2009

- Half (50%) of board members disagreed or strongly disagreed that their local media was fair in their coverage of the district
- Slightly less than half (45%) agreed that the local media was fair in their coverage of the district
- **We receive mixed coverage in the media with the conservative newspaper finding a lot of fault while the more progressive paper reflects more positively on our efforts.**
- **The media has very negative coverage of our district and it influences how the community views us as a district.**
- **There is mixed coverage in the media with one paper always choosing to cover the negative, but we get some positive press as well.**

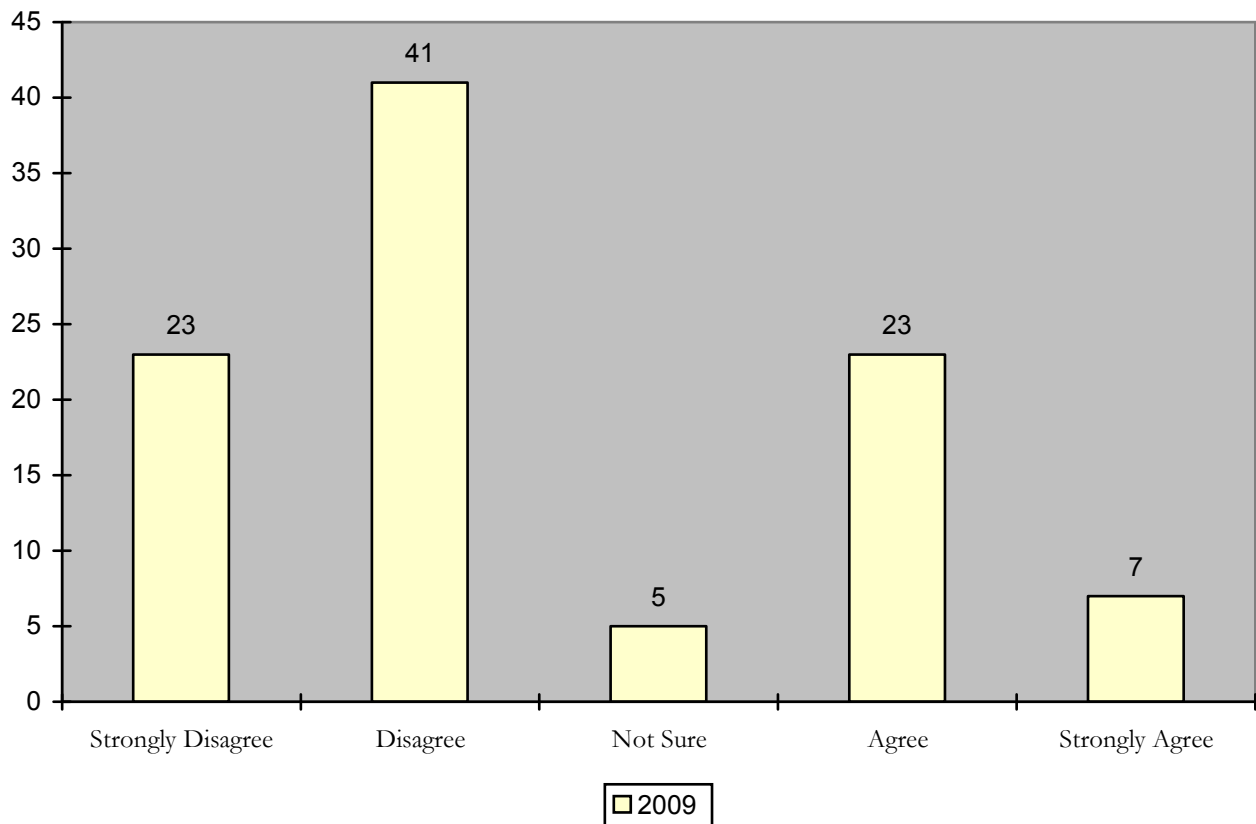
The local news media (newsprint, tv and radio) has been fair in the coverage about our district.



What Urban Boards Want for Kids 2009

- A clear majority (64%) of board members do not feel that community support for their district is sufficient
- Less than a third (30%) of board members agree or strongly agree that the community sufficiently supports their district
- **There is a lack of community support and they only get involved when there is a critical issue, like safety, taking music and art out of the schools, or taxes.**
- **Our community is very supportive and only 13% have children in school. The population is very educated and supportive of the schools.**
- **I cannot say for sure that the community is supportive of the district, but they are not hostile towards us.**
- **Our community does support the district and board and we have a strong alliance with PTA as well as some in the business community.**

The community support for the school district is sufficient.



What Urban Boards Want for Kids 2009

- The majority (76%) of board members agree or strongly agree that there are sufficient opportunities for them to receive training relevant to urban districts
- A small percentage (13%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that there were sufficient opportunities for training relevant to urban districts, however when added to the twelve percent (12%) that were unsure, a quarter (25%) were in disagreement over training opportunities
- *The new travel policy in NJ is horrible. The way that it currently stands, it is so hard to go to National Conferences for the training that you need to do a good job as a board member.*
- **Our school board is very resistant to training. We have an elected board with no set criteria for a person to run for a school board seat. The board does not represent the community as a whole.**
- **Overall our board is not well trained on urban issues. I have fought for us to join CUBE, especially since we have a 71% minority population in our schools, but the board resists this.**
- **Our board does not engage in any training regarding urban district issues. The only training people do is on an individual basis by going to conferences.**

There are sufficient opportunities for Board of Education members to receive training and information relevant to urban districts.

