



# General Public Survey 2016 Budget Reaction

June 28<sup>th</sup> 2016

# Research Objectives and Methodology

- ❑ The main purpose of this research was to survey the general public, with an additional focus on parents, on issues related to Budget 2016 and gauge awareness and understanding of the potential impact of the budget on the quality of the education system.
- ❑ A telephone survey of the general public, with an additional focus on parents.
  - ❑ General Public = 412 completed surveys
  - ❑ Parents = 150 completed surveys
- ❑ The survey was conducted between June 2<sup>nd</sup> and June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016.
- ❑ Overall margin of error is:
  - ❑ General Public = +/- 4.8%, 19 out of 20 times, or at the 95% confidence level
  - ❑ Parents = +/- 8.0% , 19 out of 20 times, or at the 95% confidence level
- ❑ A profile of the survey respondents is provided in the following table.

# Profile of Respondents

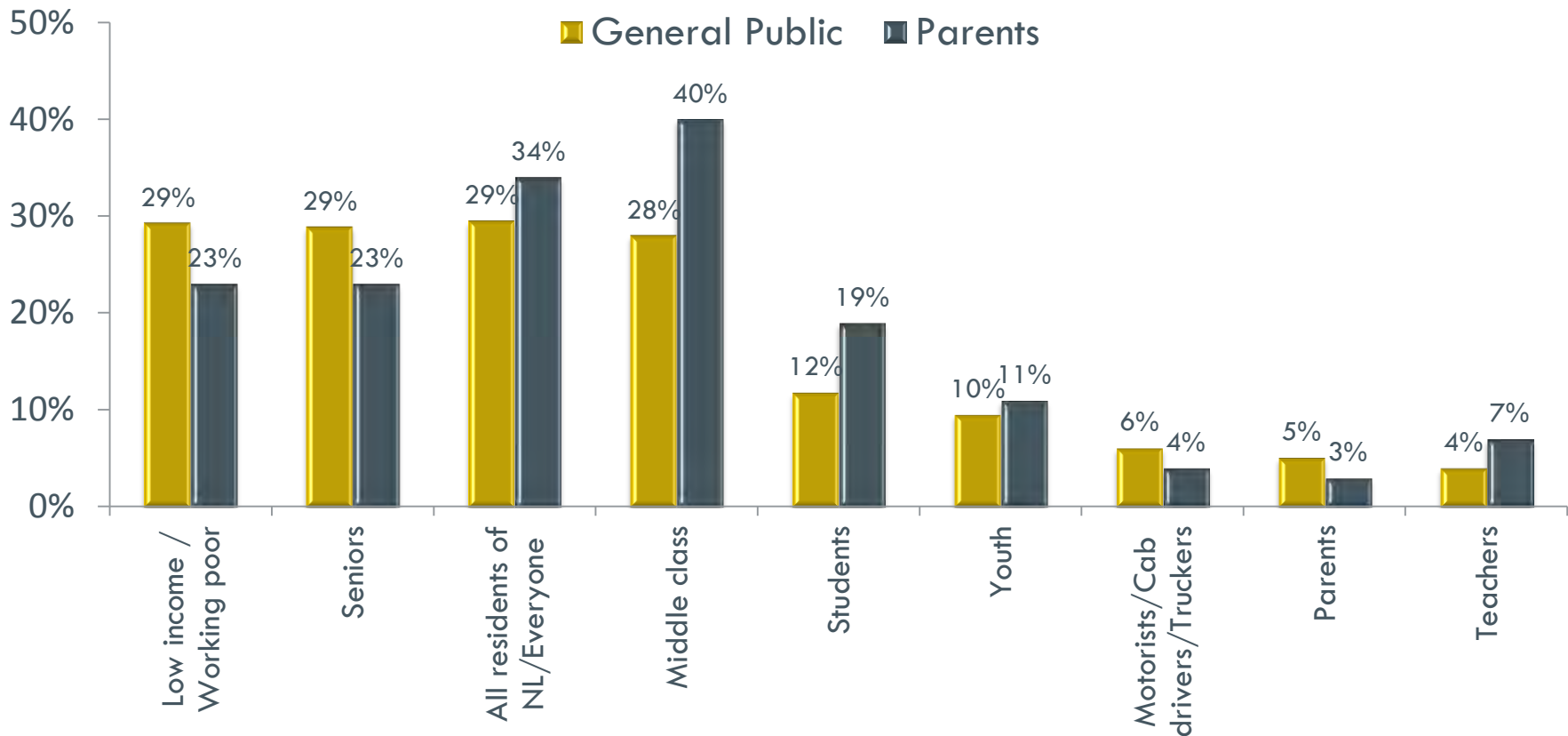
Demographics	General Public (n=412)	Parents (n=150)
<b>Area of Residence</b>		
St. John's Metro Area	41%	51%
Other Eastern NL	23%	23%
Western NL	17%	10%
Central NL	14%	9%
Labrador	5%	7%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	52%	53%
Male	48%	47%
<b>Age</b>		
18 - 34	24%	14%
35 - 54	37%	86%
55 or older	39%	1%
<b>Level of Education</b>		
High school or less	23%	13%
Some post-secondary	9%	5%
College/university certificate	43%	54%
Bachelor's degree	19%	23%
Degree above bachelor's	7%	6%
<b>Household Income</b>		
\$30,000 or less	18%	8%
\$30,001 - \$60,000	24%	9%
\$60,001 - \$90,000	20%	21%
More than \$90,000	38%	62%

# Section 1: Overall Reactions

The public think *low income, seniors, and all residents* will be most affected by the budget, while parents think the *middle class* and *all residents* will be most affected.

## Which groups do you think will be most affected by the budget?\*

Unaided Responses



General public (n= 412)

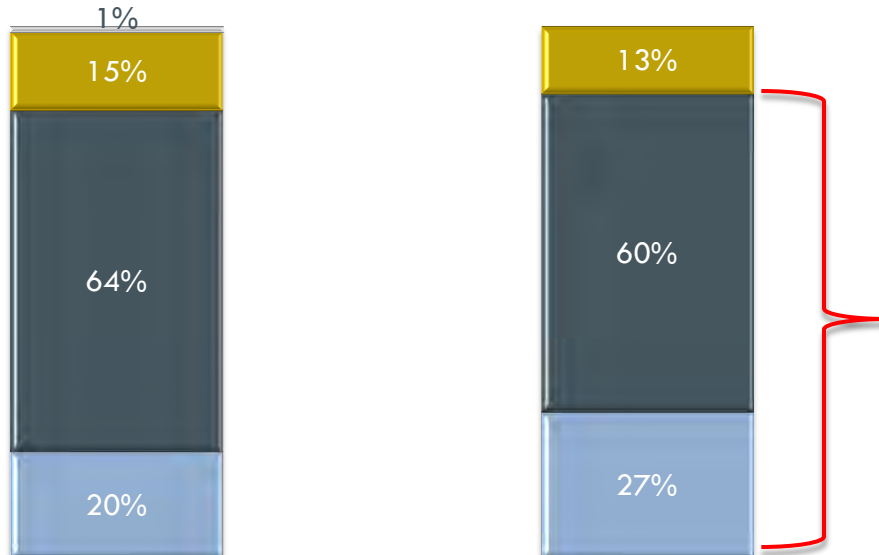
Parents (n=150)

\*Top groups mentioned

Awareness was consistent among the public and parents, with the majority reporting they are *somewhat aware* of the impact to the education system.

## How aware are you of the impact the budget will have on the education system in Newfoundland and Labrador?

■ Don't know 
 ■ Unaware 
 ■ Somewhat aware 
 ■ Very aware



General Public

Parents

General public (n= 412)

Parents (n=150)

Awareness of the Impacts on the Education System*	Public (n=345)	Parents (n=141)
Loss of teachers	32%	38%
Implementation of full-day kindergarten	32%	33%
Increased class sizes	28%	31%
Multi-grading: combining multiple grades (grades 1-6) in the same classroom	23%	31%
Library closures/ cutbacks to libraries	23%	14%
Combined classrooms: combining two grades together in the same classroom	23%	27%
Reduction in programming such as Intensive Core French	10%	18%
Don't know	10%	6%

SUBSET: Those who are very/somewhat aware of the impact of the budget on the education system.

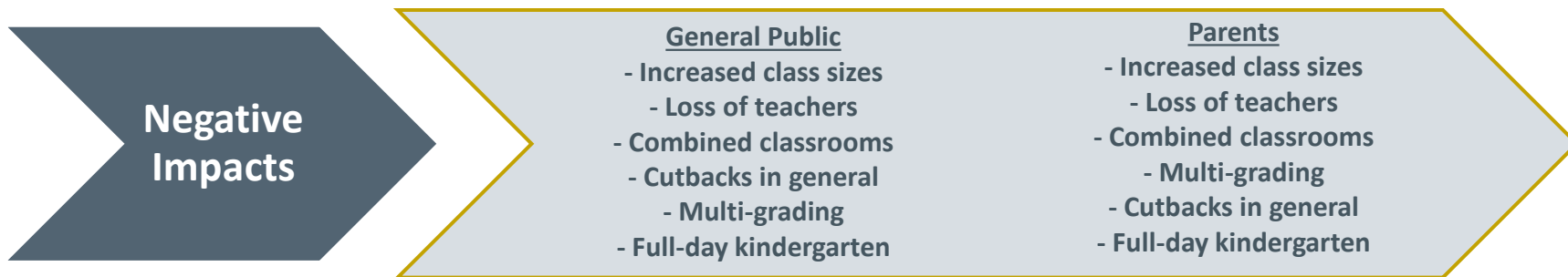
\*Top impacts mentioned

Both the general public and parents feel the budget will have a negative impact on the overall quality of education delivered in the province. In particular, *increased class sizes* and *loss of teachers* were seen as having the most negative impact on education.

## What impact will the current provincial budget have on the overall quality of education delivered in the province?

SUBSET: Those who are very/somewhat aware of the impact of the budget on the education system

■ Significantly / Somewhat positive  
 ■ Somewhat negative  
 ■ Significantly negative  
 ■ No impact  
 ■ Don't know



General Public (n=292)

Parents (n=122)

The majority of both the general public and parents felt all budget issues listed would have a negative impact on the quality education in the province; however, parents were slightly more likely to feel this way.

## What will be the impact of each of the following items on the quality of education in the province?

% Negative Impact (1-3 out of 10; 1 = very negative, 10= very positive)

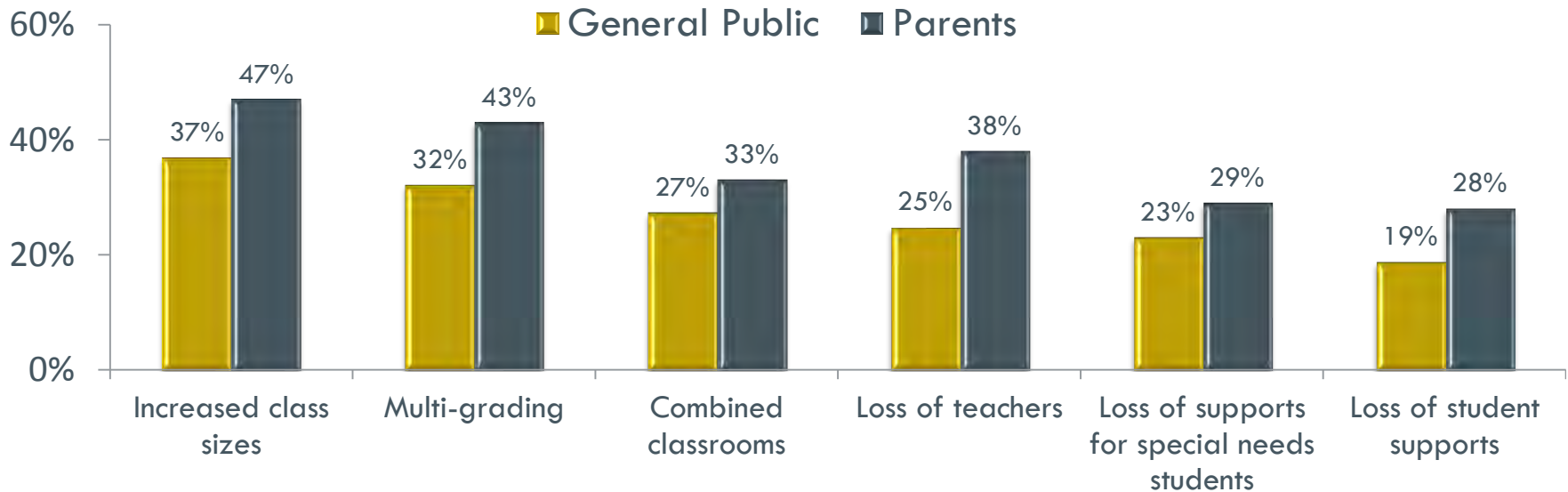
	General Public (n=412)	Parents (n=150)
Loss of supports for special needs students	82%	87%
Loss of teachers	79%	85%
Reduction of physical space/overcrowding	77%	85%
Loss of student supports such as Student Assistants	76%	83%
Multi-grading: combining multiple grades (grades 1-6) in the same classroom	76%	81%
Increased class sizes	73%	83%
Combined classrooms: combining two grades together in the same classroom	70%	77%
Reduction of supports for the Inclusive Education Initiative	67%	78%
Reduction to substitute teacher funding	66%	73%
Reduction in programming such as Intensive Core French	63%	76%



Most parents and the general public believe that teachers or the association should be fighting to repeal increased class sizes and multi-grading.

## Thinking about all of the issues just mentioned, are there any that you feel teachers or the teachers association should be fighting to repeal?

Unaided responses\*



General public (n=412)

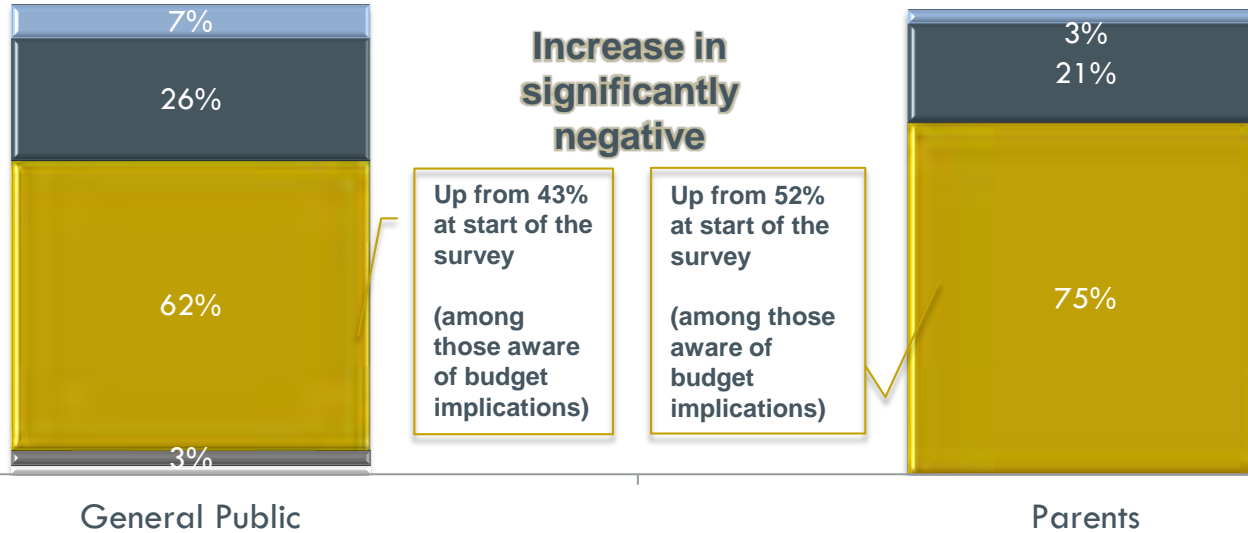
Parents (n=150)

\*Top mentions

Having heard more about the specific issues, opinions about the impact of the budget on the quality of education have shifted - both parents and the general public have become more significantly negative.

## Now that you have heard more about the specific issues - in your view, what impact will the budget have on the overall quality of education delivered in the province?

■ Significantly / Somewhat positive ■ Somewhat negative ■ Significantly negative ■ No impact ■ Don't know



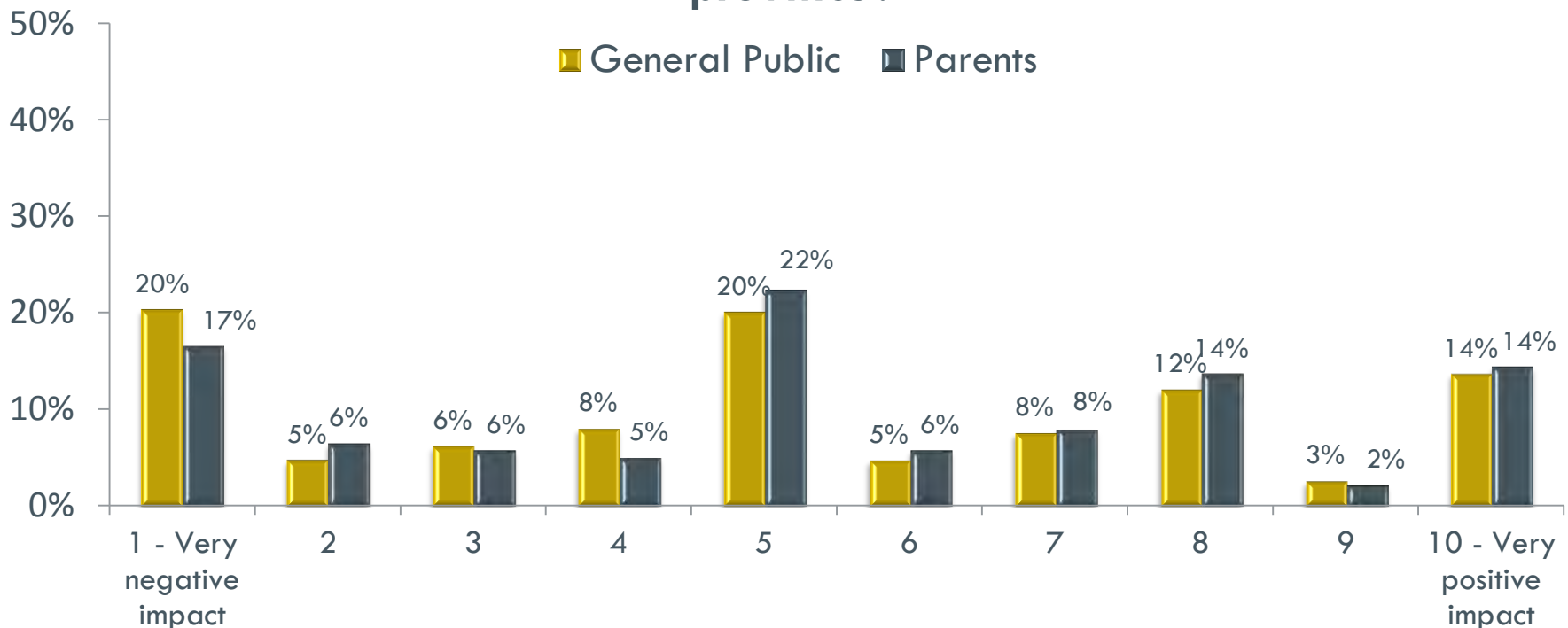
General Public (n=412)

Parents (n=150)

# Section 2: Understanding of the Issues

Both parents and the general public are conflicted about the impact of full-day kindergarten – some believe it will have a *very negative impact*, some believe it will have a *very positive impact*, and many reported the impact will be relatively neutral.

## What impact do you think the implementation of full-day kindergarten will have on the quality of education in the province?



General public (n= 345)

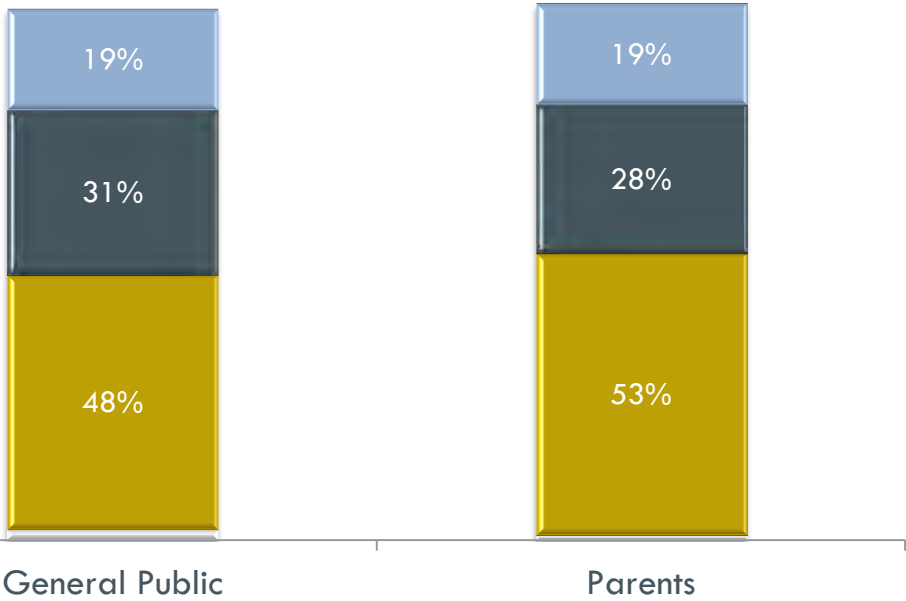
Parents (n=131)

\*Don't knows excluded

Both parents and the general public are split on the importance of implementing full-day kindergarten – among both groups of respondents about half reported it was *very/somewhat important* and the other half reported that it was *not important*.

## At this time, how important do you think it is for the Province to implement full-day kindergarten?

Very important   Somewhat important   Not important   Don't know



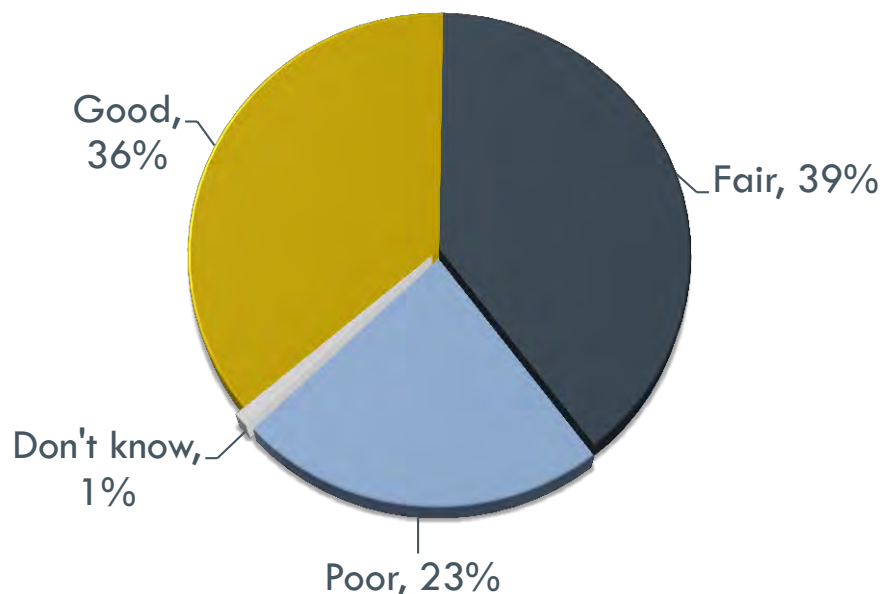
General public (n= 412)  
Parents (n=150)

Reasons you feel that way about implementing full-day kindergarten	General Public	Parents
<b>Top Reasons it is Important</b>	(n=202)	(n=70)
Teach children more / Improve education	47%	47%
Help children adjust to going to school	26%	49%
It will offset daycare cost/ unburden parents	21%	26%
<b>Top Reasons it is Not Important</b>	(n=204)	(n=79)
Financial reasons/Can't afford it	43%	56%
Children not ready for full day/ need to be at home	24%	16%
Not the right time/Not ready to implement it	23%	25%
Lack of evidence on the benefits of full-day kindergarten	20%	20%
There are higher priorities	17%	15%

\*Top reasons mentioned

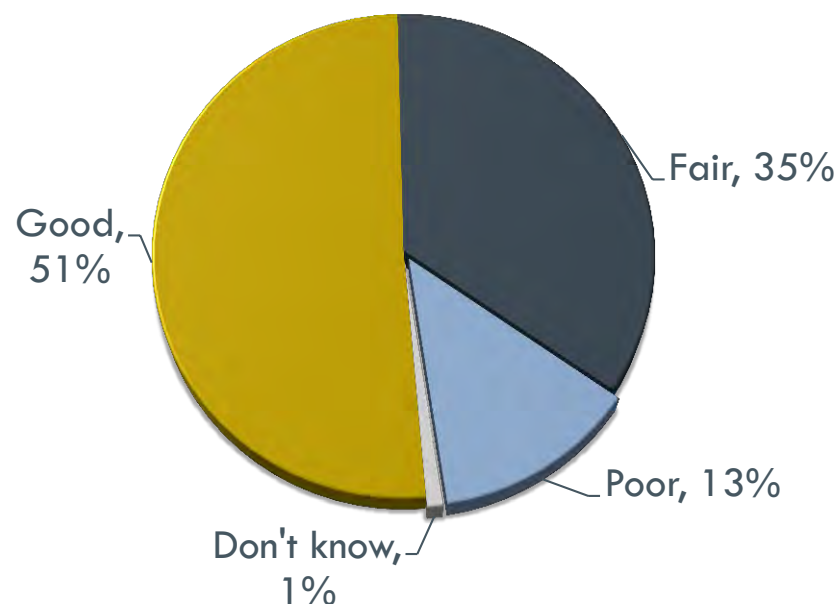
The majority of both the general public and parents felt that they had a *good* or *fair* understanding of multi-grading; however, parents were slightly more likely to feel this way.

### Do you feel you have a good, fair, or poor understanding of multi-grading?



General Public (n=412)

### Do you feel you have a good, fair, or poor understanding of multi-grading?

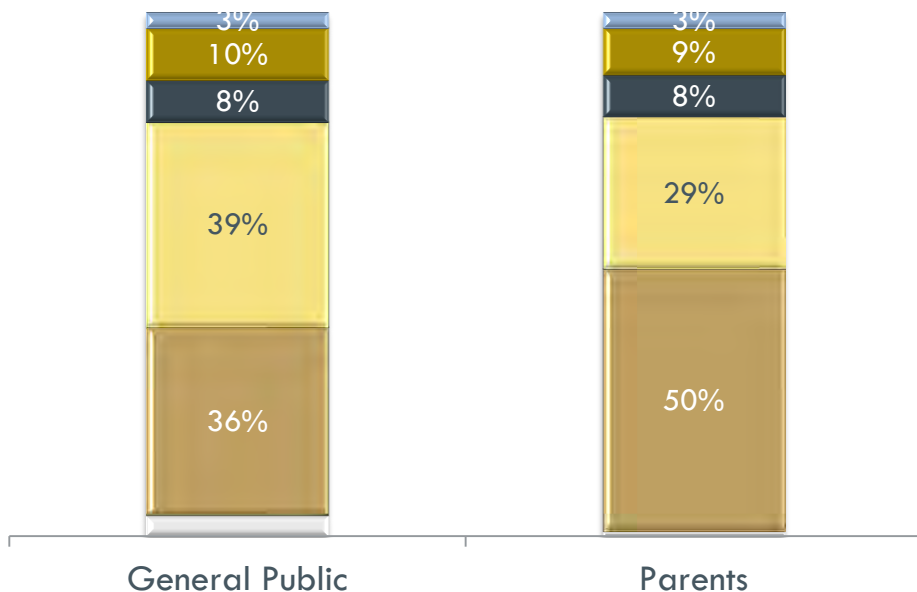


Parents (n=150)

The majority of both the general public and parents disagreed with the budget decision to increase the number of multi-grading classrooms. Parents tend to hold stronger views as shown by a higher proportion who *completely disagree*.

## Please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with the budget decision to increase the number of multi-grading classrooms.

■ Completely agree    
 ■ Agree    
 ■ Neither  
■ Disagree    
 ■ Completely disagree    
 ■ Don't know



General public (n= 412)  
Parents (n=150)

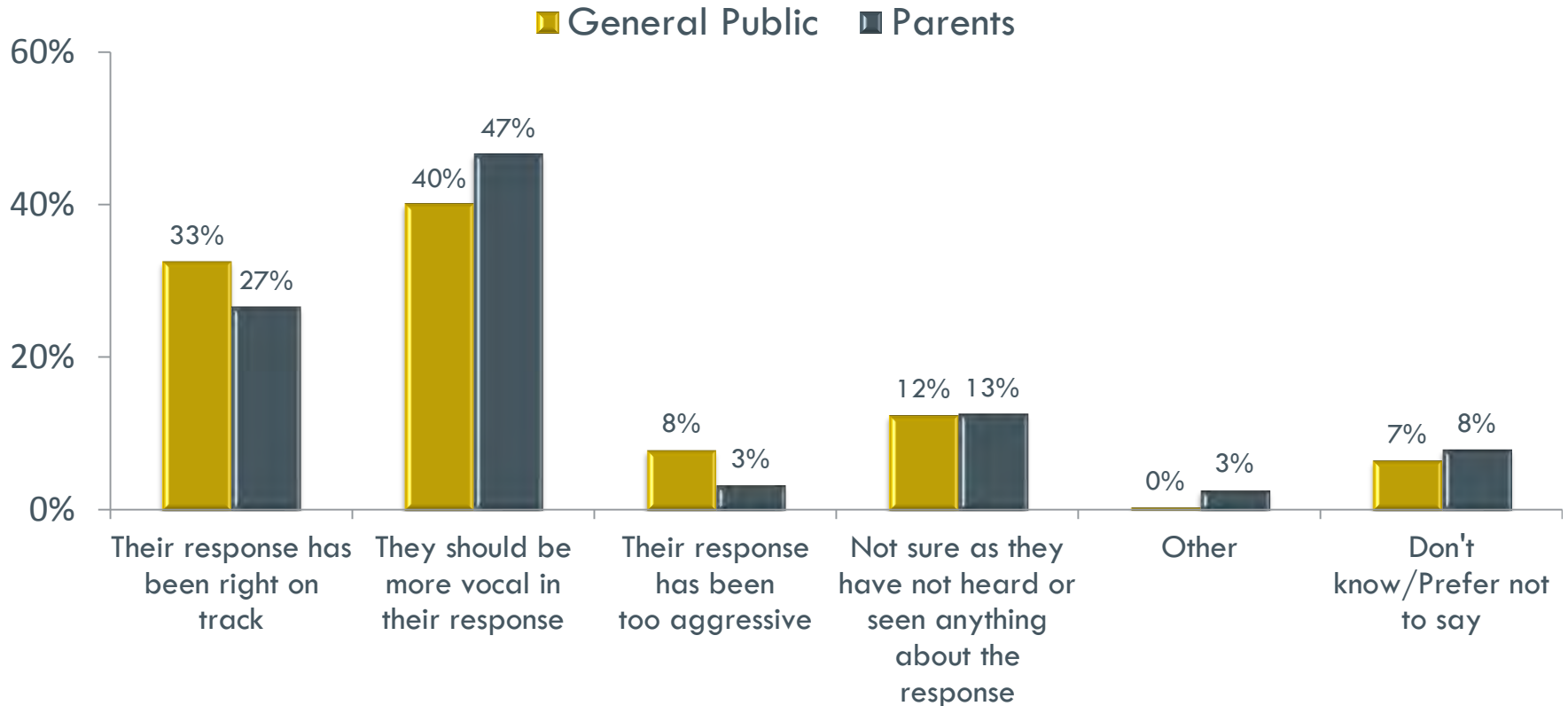
Reasons why they agree or disagree with multi-grading	General Public	Parents
<b>Top Reasons they Disagree*</b>	(n=294)	(n=118)
Education of children will suffer	57%	65%
Students will not get enough attention	48%	54%
Teachers are not trained for multi-grading	22%	20%
Increased distraction for students	17%	16%
<b>Top Reasons they Agree*</b>	(n=63)	(n=18)**
Past experience / Use was positive	26%	39%
Good exposure / Well rounded students	23%	39%
Positive perception of multi-grading / Does not anticipate negative impacts	17%	6%
Possible positive social aspects	15%	17%
Financial reasons	10%	11%
Necessity / Practical with smaller number of students	7%	11%

\*Top reasons mentioned

\*\*Please interpret results with caution due to small sample size.

The majority of both the general public and parents felt that teacher's and their association's response to the budget *has been right on track* or *they should be more vocal in their response*.

## Based on what you have heard or seen, how do you feel about teacher's and their association's response to the current budget?



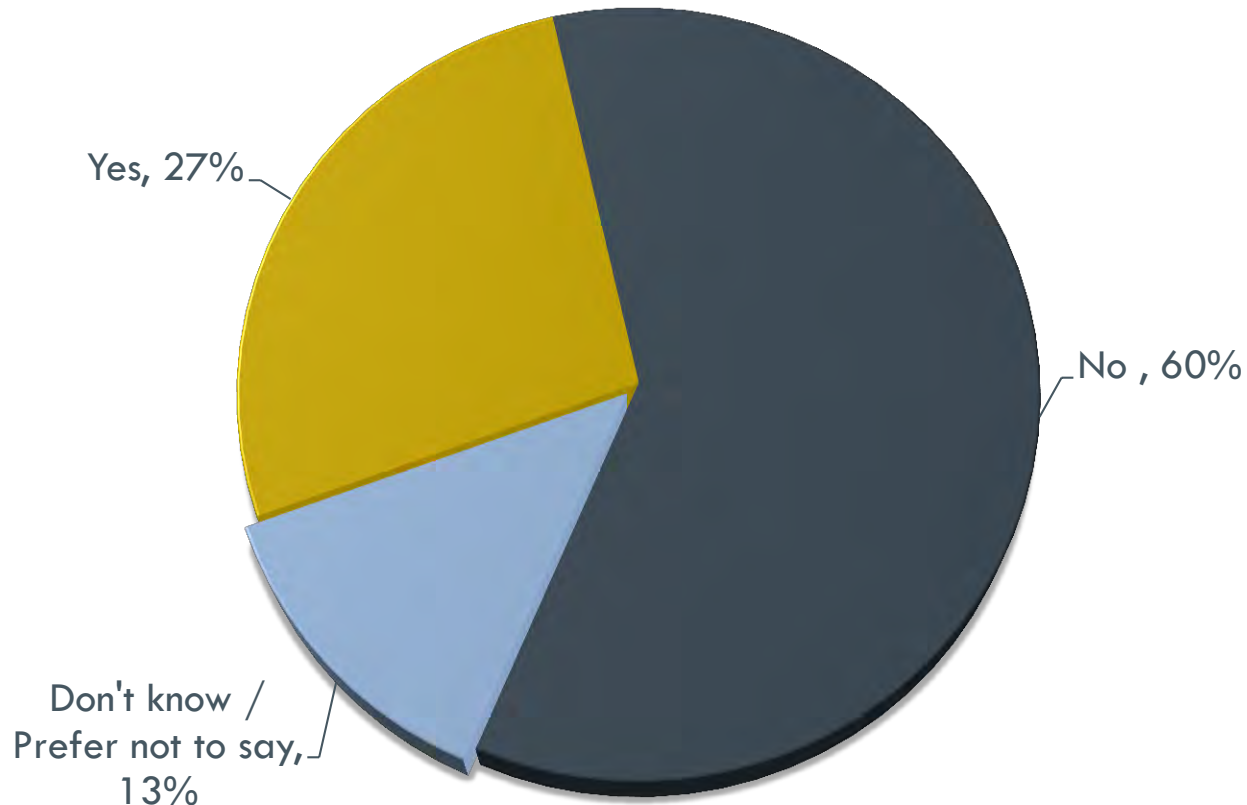
General public (n=412)  
Parents (n=150)



# Section 3: Parents' Attitudes

The majority of parents do not feel there are currently enough teachers allocated to teach the required curriculum.

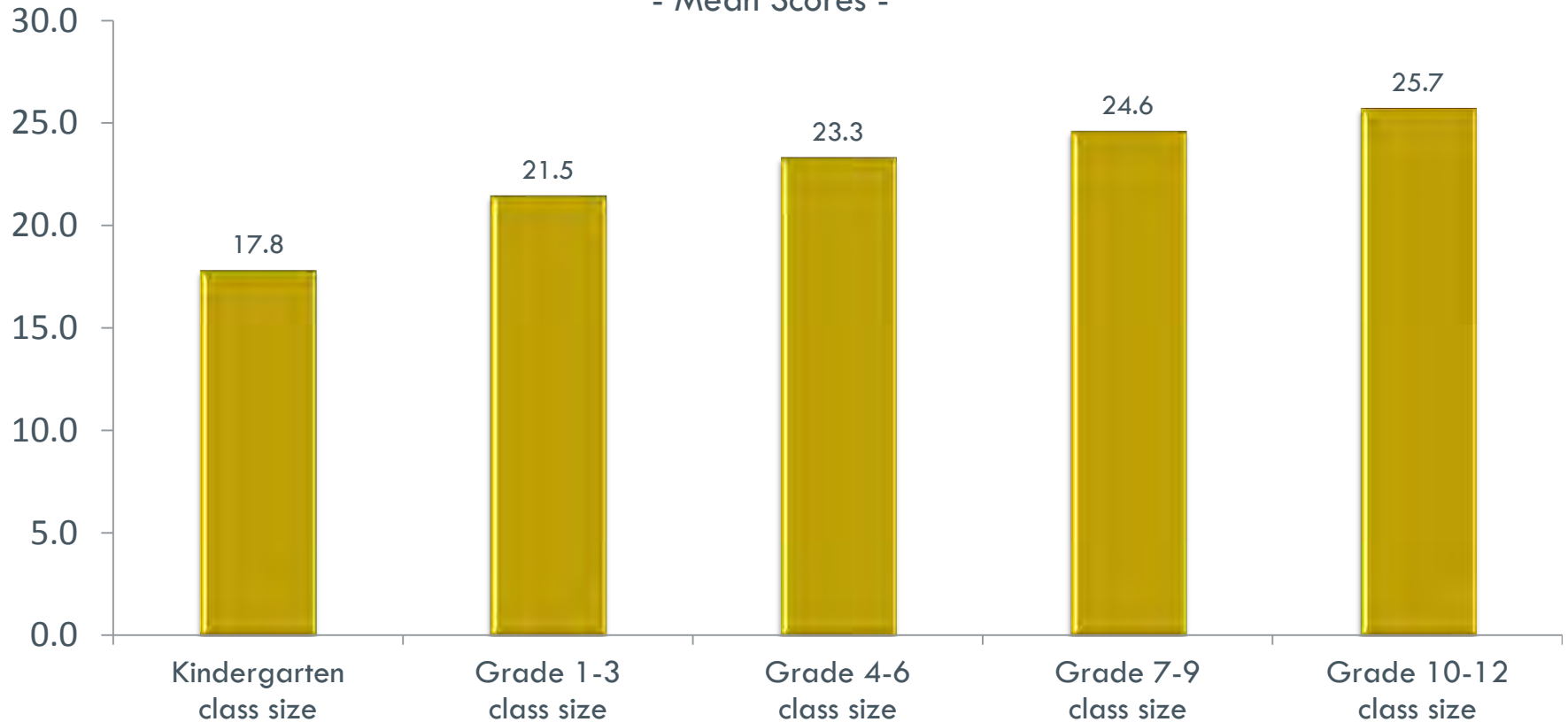
## Do you feel there are currently enough teachers allocated to teach the required curriculum?



Parents think the ideal number of allowable students per class should gradually increase by grade - Kindergarten should have an average of 18 students, while Grade 10-12 should have an average of 26 students per class.

## Thinking of the maximum allowable students per class, what do you feel would be the ideal?

- Mean Scores -

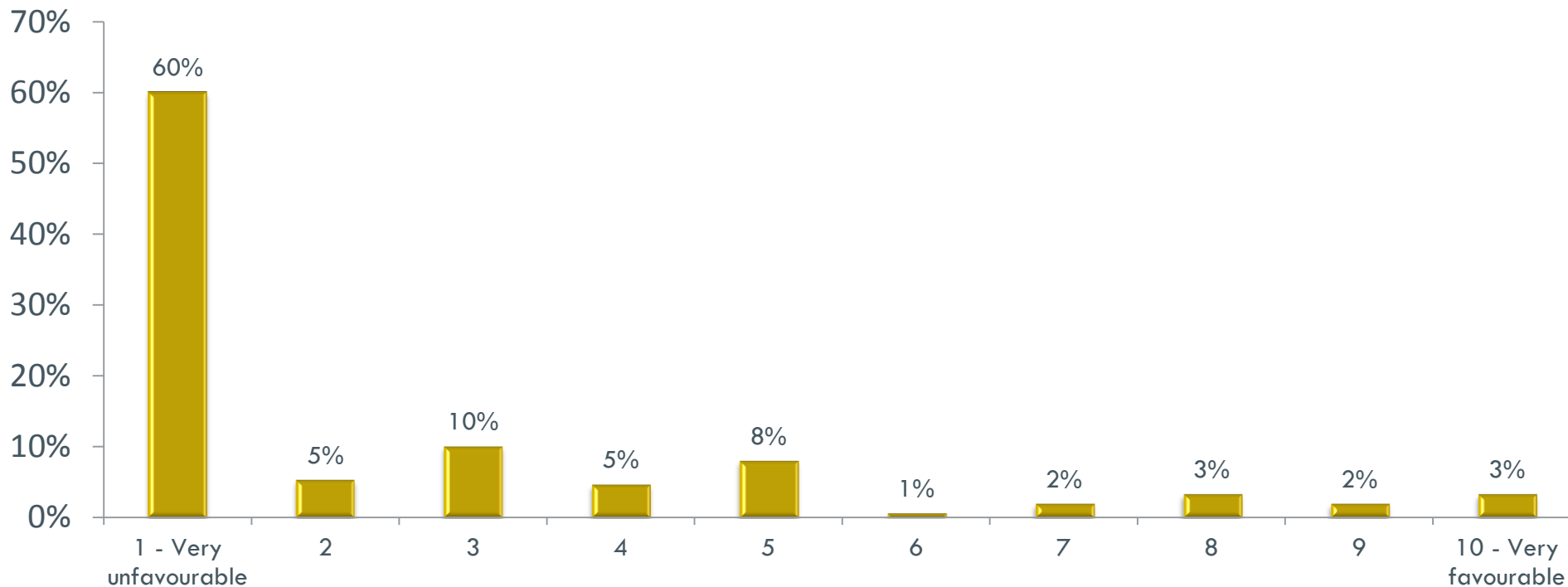


Parents only (n=150)

\*Mean scores

The vast majority of parents had an unfavourable attitude toward their child being placed in a combined or multi-graded classroom.

## How would you rate your attitude toward your child being placed in a combined or multi-graded classroom?



Parents only (n=148)  
\*Don't knows excluded

# Key Findings

1. Awareness of the impact of the budget to the education system was consistent among the general public and parents - the majority reported they are *somewhat aware* of the impact of the budget on education.
2. Impact of the 2016 Budget on Education
  - Both the general public and parents agree that the budget will have a negative impact on the quality of education in the province.
  - Negative impacts most often mentioned were *increased class sizes* and *loss of teachers*.
  - When asked to rate the impact of the budget on a series of items related to the education system, over 75% of the general public and 85% of parents reported a negative impact resulting from:
    - Loss of supports for special needs students;
    - Loss of teachers; and
    - Reduction of physical space/overcrowding.

# Key Findings

## 2. Impact of the 2016 Budget on Education (cont'd)

- Both parents and the general public are split about the impact of full-day kindergarten and the importance of implementing it.
- The majority of both the general public and parents disagreed with the budget decision to increase the number of multi-grading classrooms and parents tended to hold stronger views on multi-grading.

## 3. Parent's Attitudes

- The majority of parents do not feel there are currently enough teachers allocated to teach the required curriculum.
- The vast majority of parents had an unfavorable attitude toward their child being placed in a combined or multi-graded classroom.

# Key Findings

## 4. NLTA's Response to the 2016 Budget

- Both the general public and parents feel that teacher's and their association's response to the budget is on track or could be more vocal.
- Most parents and the general public believe that teachers and their association should be fighting to repeal increased class sizes and multi-grading.

# Conclusions

**The NLTA is on the right track and should continue to fight to repeal key Budget 2016 decisions impacting the quality of education in NL: increased class sizes, loss of teachers, and multi-grading/combined classrooms.**