

Friday, November 22, 2019

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Survey Shows Support for CVTC, Facility Projects

Board will make decision on referendum next month

Eau Claire, WI – A community survey shows strong support for major facilities projects at Chippewa Valley Technical College and high satisfaction with CVTC and its role in the community.

The CVTC Board of Trustees reviewed results of the survey, sent to 20,000 households in CVTC's 11-county district by the consulting firm CVTC, at its Thursday, Nov. 21 meeting. The survey explored support for proposed facilities projects and a possible spring referendum. The board is taking the community feedback into consideration and will make a decision next month. If the board decides to move forward, an intent resolution would be presented at a special meeting on Dec. 5.

"We greatly appreciate the participation of community members throughout the district to provide their valuable input," said Paul Bauer, chairman of the CVTC board. "We will be examining the results very carefully as we consider whether to move forward. We are especially pleased by the survey results that show 88 percent of the respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the work that CVTC does."

School Perceptions LLC received 2,657 responses to the survey and reported a margin of error on survey results of +/- 1.9 percent.

"Community sentiment suggested a resounding need to address the existing labor shortage," said CVTC President Bruce Barker. "This theme is addressed in the various building projects under consideration and will be highly regarded as the board prioritizes a plan moving forward."

Results showed the strongest support for funding an update to classrooms and labs to address regional workforce needs, with 76 percent reporting they would be likely to support the project. Remodeling and expanding the Emergency Services Education Center in Eau Claire and purchase of land for a future first responder training center in River Falls received 68 percent support.

Construction of a Transportation Education Center received 63 percent support, with another 63 percent supporting a series of projects to improve operational efficiencies and infrastructure needs. Construction of an affordable student housing project received 49 percent support.

The survey also asked how much of a property tax increase would be supported to fund the projects, with amounts ranging from \$12 per year on \$100,000 of property for a referendum amount of \$45 million, up to a \$21 per year increase on \$100,000 of property for a \$75 million referendum.

School Perceptions LLC reported that based on the data, a \$55 million bond, or something slightly lower, would be the amount most likely to have success. Fourteen percent of respondents indicated they would not support any referendum and 12 percent said they were unsure.

With over 155 programs offered both online and on-campus, Chippewa Valley Technical College delivers superior, progressive technical education which improves the lives of students, meets the workforce needs of the region, and strengthens the community. CVTC programs are designed with input of business and industry to prepare graduates for today's jobs, with 95 percent employed within six months of graduation and associate degree graduates earning an average annual salary of \$46,816.

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