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2008 Northeast Ohio Barometer of Economic Attitudes

Kathryn W. Hexter
Cleveland State University, k.hexter@csuohio.edu

Molly Schnoke
Cleveland State University, m.s.schnoke@csuohio.edu

John F. Brennan

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Prepared by:
Kathryn Wertheim Hexter
Molly Schnoke
John Brennan

Conducted by:
Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs
Cleveland State University

In partnership with:
Wright State University Center for Urban and Public
Affairs

Prepared for:
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2008
Northeast
Ohio
Barometer of
Economic
Attitudes

2121 Euclid Avenue Cleveland, Ohio
44115
<http://urban.csuohio.edu>



2008 Northeast Ohio Barometer of Economic Attitudes

Detailed Summary Report

Background

The Northeast Ohio Barometer of Economic Attitudes (NEO Barometer) is an annual opinion survey of residents in Northeast Ohio. Since 2004, it has been tracking the public's perception of the region's general economic development progress, as well as opinions on regionalism and economic development initiatives. The 2008 survey added a new section that begins to track public perceptions about the importance of education, to inform strategies for addressing the persistently low levels of educational attainment of NEO residents.

The 2008 survey was done by the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University for the Fund for our Economic Future. Wright State University's Center for Urban and Public Affairs' survey research center conducted 2,304 telephone surveys of residents of 16 counties (see list below) in July, August and September 2008. Approximately 100-200 surveys were conducted in each of 16 counties in the region. Additional interviews were conducted among residents of the cities of Cleveland and Akron. The data were weighted to reflect U.S. Census estimates for the region, based on county of residence, gender, age.

The primary goal of the NEO Barometer is to provide meaningful information about what the public knows and perceives about the region. The Barometer is designed to provide a reliable and objective opinion-gauge of the people in Northeast Ohio.

Some questions were asked consistently across all four years of the survey. For this core group of questions, the Barometer provides reliable trend data about people's changing attitudes and perceptions about the NEO economy. However, over the years, new questions have been added, older questions have been eliminated or reworded, and the number of counties included in the survey has changed to reflect the regional definition used by the Fund for our Economic Future. As a result, precise comparisons of results across all four surveys are not always possible.

2004: 2,015 interviews conducted by Gallup, December 2003, 8 counties.

2005: 2,205 surveys conducted by Gallup, January 2005, 15 counties.

2006: 2,140 surveys conducted by Gallup, March 6-April 9, 2006, 15 counties.

2008: 2,304 surveys conducted by Wright State University, August-September, 2008

	Counties Surveyed by Year			
	2004	2005	2006	2008
Cuyahoga	x	x	x	x
Geauga	x	x	x	x
Lorain	x	x	x	x
Medina	x	x	x	x
Portage	x	x	x	x
Stark	x	x	x	x
Summit	x	x	x	x
Ashland		x	x	x
Ashtabula		x	x	x
Carroll		x	x	x
Columbiana		x	x	x
Lake		x	x	x
Mahoning		x	x	x
Trumbull		x	x	x
Wayne		x	x	x
Richland				x

Methodology

The 2008 Northeast Ohio Economic Barometer Survey was conducted by Wright State University's Center for Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA) as a telephone survey of 2,300 individuals living within 16 counties in Northeast Ohio. These counties include:

- Ashland County (100 respondents)
- Ashtabula County (100 respondents)
- Carroll County (50 respondents)
- Columbiana County (100 respondents)
- Cuyahoga County (300 respondents)
- Geauga County (100 respondents)
- Lake County (150 respondents)
- Lorain County (150 respondents)
- Mahoning County (200 respondents)
- Medina County (150 respondents)
- Portage County (100 respondents)
- Richland County (100 respondents)
- Stark County (200 respondents)
- Summit County (300 respondents)
- Trumbull County (100 respondents)
- Wayne County (100 respondents)

Questionnaire Design. The questionnaire for the study was based on the questionnaire used in a previous iteration of the survey conducted by Cleveland State University and the Gallop Organization. Staff from Cleveland State University provided the final 2008 survey instrument to Wright State University's Center for Urban and Public Affairs for

deployment. The final survey questionnaire contained 48 questions, many with multiple sections.

Sampling Design. The study identifies citizens' perceptions at the region and county level. A quota sampling method was used that allowed researchers to collect the specified number of completed surveys from each county in the sample. In Cuyahoga and Summit Counties, responses have also been broken out by the center city versus the remainder of the county (i.e. Cuyahoga broken into Cleveland and the rest of the county). The sample size in the remaining counties does not allow for this level of analysis with a high degree of confidence.

The sample was selected utilizing random digit dial telephone numbers generated by Marketing Systems Group, a professional sampling firm which draws RDD samples for many survey research organizations. In an RDD study, Marketing Systems Group takes the three digit telephone prefixes from a given geography (in this case, each of the 16 counties) and randomly generates the four digit portion of the telephone number. After these telephone numbers have been generated, the numbers are compared to a business database to remove any listed commercial telephone numbers. Therefore, RDD studies are considered to be superior to listed telephone studies in that a resident does not need to have listed a telephone number in order to be contacted.

The sampling error is +/-2% (at 95% confidence) for the region as a whole, while the sampling error at the county level varies by county.

Survey Implementation. Interviews were conducted by trained telephone interviewers using a Windows Computer Automated Telephone Interviewing (WinCATI) system. The questionnaire is read directly off the computer screen and allows the interviewer to enter the response directly into the computer. Such a system helps minimize errors in gathering data. Interviews were conducted from Saturday, July 26, 2008 through Sunday, September 14, 2008. Respondents were usually interviewed between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, on Saturdays from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sundays from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Some additional telephoning was completed during weekdays as requested by survey respondents. Each potential respondent was re-called up to twelve times or until an interview was completed.

Weighting. The sample was weighted to reflect the actual distribution of the region's population so that the data present more accurate citizen perceptions. The weighting procedure involves applying a factor to each case to increase or decrease its relative importance to the total sample.

Researchers utilized two weighting procedures. First, to calculate results for the region overall, the data were weighted by county for the merged data file. Therefore, the sample as a whole is adjusted to represent the actual proportion that each county contributes to the region. Second, the population within each county was adjusted to make the age and gender distribution within each county reflect the actual gender distribution of that county.

Limitations. The survey has several limitations. As with every telephone survey, the primary limitation is that it excludes households that do not have landline telephones. It is estimated that about ten to twelve percent of households nationally do not have telephones, and these households are more likely to be poor or young, mobile populations.

A second limitation of the study is that it is based on self-reported economic information. Attempts were made to include more than one question on important topics to test for internal consistency.

Detailed Findings

Major Themes

- Residents of NEO understand that they are part of a bigger region. This understanding is stronger and more inclusive than in previous surveys. 2008 residents overwhelmingly self-identify as being part of a region called Northeast Ohio. 98 % consider their county to be part of Northeast Ohio. Residents of Richland County, which was added to the survey in 2008, display the least strength in their association with Northeast Ohio.
- People are planning to stay. 85% of residents said they are likely to continue living in NEO, a significant increase over previous surveys. 69% said they would recommend NEO as a place to live.
- There is little enthusiasm about the economy, but people are more optimistic about the future than they have been since 2004.
- The public's support of regional approaches to economic development continues to increase. Residents favor collaboration over consolidation for specific service areas.
- Education is important to NEO residents and people are working to ensure that their children have access to higher education.
- Residents identified attracting and retaining jobs as the two biggest challenges facing the region.

Major Categories of Questions

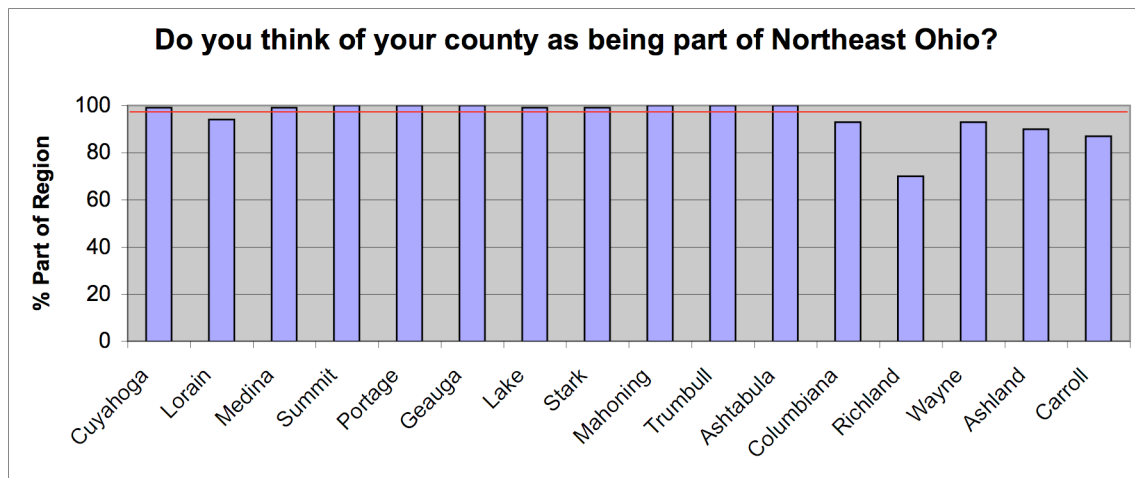
1. Regional Identity, Connection and Satisfaction (trend data)
2. Outlook on Regional Economy
3. Regionalism (inter-governmental collaboration and consolidation)
4. Education (2008 only)

Section 1. Regional Identity, Connection and Satisfaction (Trend Data)

(When looking at this trend data, it is important to note that the 2004 survey included only eight counties—Cuyahoga, Summit, Portage, Lake, Geauga, Lorain, Medina and Stark)

Regional identity. Overall, 98 % of NEO residents think of their home county as being part of Northeast Ohio. This overall percentage has not changed significantly since the question was first asked in 2005. Residents of Richland County (added to the survey in 2008) show the lowest identity (70%) with the region, followed by Carroll with 87%. In 2005, Ashland (79%) and Carroll (82%) counties had the lowest identity with the region. Since then Ashland has increased to 90% and Carroll has increased to 87% in 2008.

Chart 1.1 Do you think of your county as being part of Northeast Ohio?



Residents were then presented with a list of cities and were asked if they considered each of them to be part of Northeast Ohio. There was a high level of consensus among NEO residents that Cleveland (96 %), Mentor (87%) Ashtabula (84 %) and Akron (83 %) are part of the region. There was less consensus about Wooster (51 %) and Mansfield (39%).

Chart 1.2 Do you think of these cities as being part of Northeast Ohio? 2005-2008

Percent of all NEO residents who say these cities are part of Northeast Ohio			
	2005	2006	2008
Cleveland	95	94	96
Mentor	84	83	87
Ashtabula	84	85	84
Akron	72	74	83
Canton	62	63	75
Medina	62	64	74
Lorain	68	68	73
Warren	59	NA	73
Youngstown	NA	NA	71
Wooster	NA	NA	51
Mansfield	36	NA	39

The trend data indicate that while high percentages of NEO residents consistently considered Cleveland, Mentor and Ashtabula to be part of the region, the percentage of residents who consider Akron, Canton, Medina and Lorain to be part of Northeast Ohio has increased by 7-10 percentage points since 2005, signaling a trend toward a more inclusive understanding of the region.

In general, distance affects identity. The farther people live from one another, the less they identify with one another. Only 39% of all NEO residents think of Mansfield as being part of the region. However, it is interesting to note that high percentages of Cleveland residents identify Mentor (82%), Ashtabula (77%) and Lorain (75%) as part of the region while lower percentages identify Akron (70%) and Canton (63%) as part of the region, even though Ashtabula is 20 miles farther than Akron is from Cleveland. On the other hand, 97% of Akron residents identify Cleveland as part of the region. In this case, perception of distance may be playing a role. High percentages of Akron residents also identify Canton (90%), Mentor (89%) and Ashtabula (81%) as part of the region.

Chart 1.3 Do you think of these cities as being part of Northeast Ohio? Cleveland and Akron

Percent of all Cleveland and Akron residents who say these cities are part of Northeast Ohio (2008 only)		
	Cleveland	Akron
Cleveland	100	97
Mentor	82	89
Ashtabula	77	81
Akron	70	98
Canton	63	90
Medina	72	80
Lorain	75	74
Warren	66	76
Youngstown	56	75
Wooster	48	53
Mansfield	43	40

Satisfaction with the region as a place to live. This question was asked consistently in all four years of the survey. As the chart below shows, the relatively small percentages (22-24 %) of residents who say they are extremely satisfied has remained consistent since 2005¹. Using a broader definition that includes those who said they were extremely satisfied as well as those who said they were satisfied, the percentage of all residents satisfied with NEO as a place to live increased significantly to its highest level (76%) in 2008. Satisfaction was lowest in 2006 at 55%.

Chart 1.4 Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with Northeast Ohio as a place to live? 2004-2008

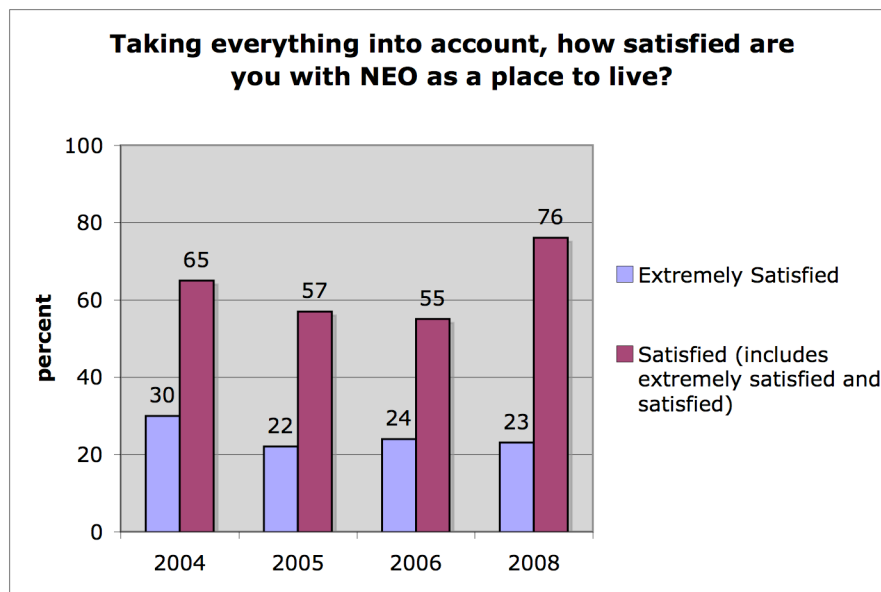


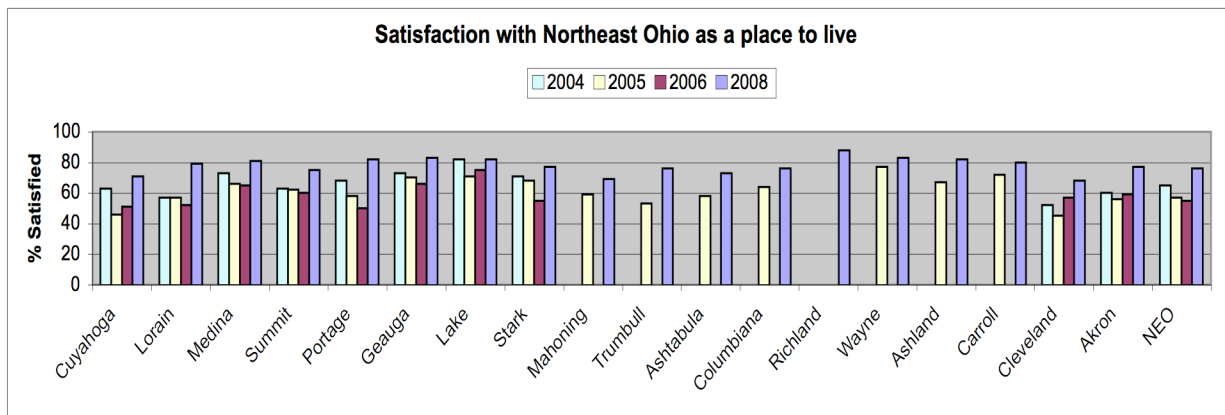
Chart 1.4a Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with Northeast Ohio as a place to live? 2004-2008

Residents satisfaction with Northeast Ohio as a place to live, 2004-2008				
	2004	2005	2006	2008
Extremely Satisfied	30%	22%	24%	28%
Satisfied	35%	35%	31%	49%
Neutral	27%	29%	28%	16%
Dissatisfied	5%	8%	10%	5%
Not at all Satisfied	3%	6%	7%	3%

¹ This percentage was higher in 2004 (30 %) when the number of counties surveyed was much smaller and did not include Ashland, Ashtabula, Carroll, Columbiana, Mahoning, Trumbull, Wayne or Richland counties.

In 2008, the percentages of those satisfied (includes extremely satisfied) with Northeast Ohio as a place to live increased consistently across all counties and cities, as illustrated in the chart below. Satisfaction was highest in Richland County (88%) and lowest in Mahoning (69%). Satisfaction was also low in Cleveland (68%).

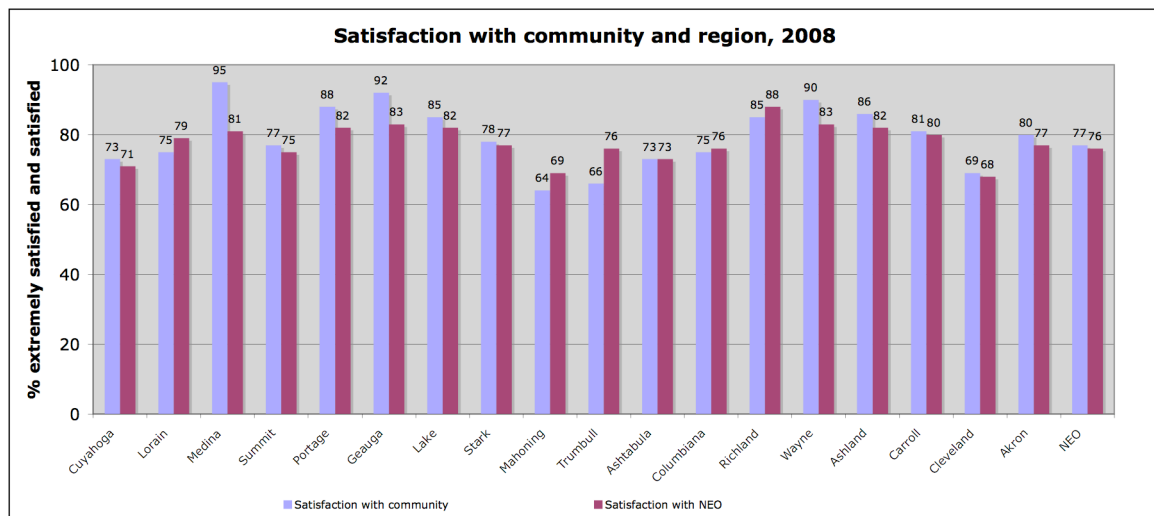
Chart 1.5 Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with Northeast Ohio as a place to live? Includes satisfied and extremely satisfied. By County, 2004-2008



Satisfaction with community. In 2008, a new question was added that asked residents how satisfied they are with their community as a place to live, as a way of better understanding perceptions of community in relation to perceptions of the region. Looking at the region as a whole, there is very little difference between residents' satisfaction with their community (77%) and their satisfaction with the region as a whole (76%).

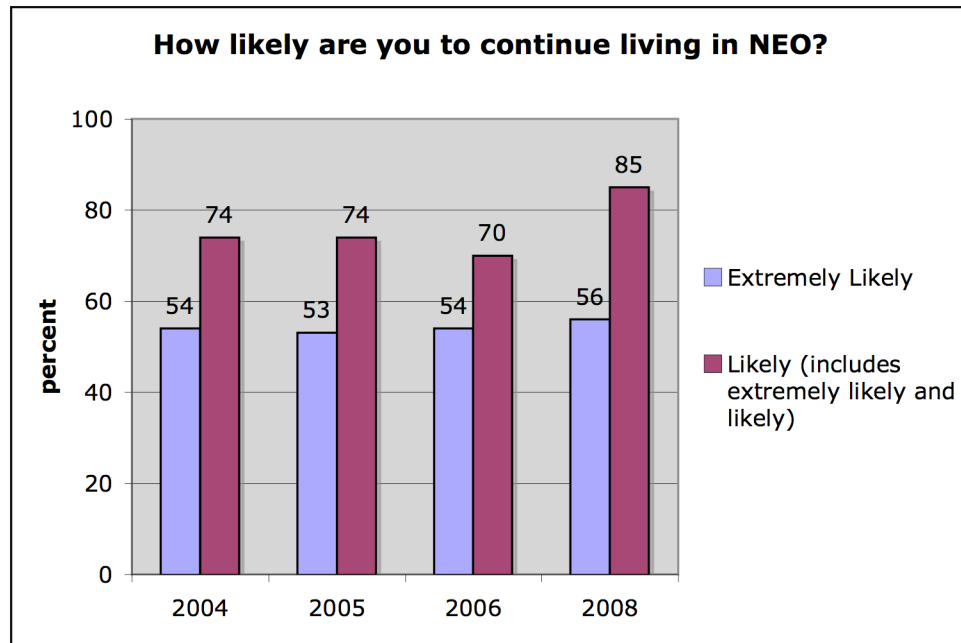
But there are some interesting variations across counties and cities. People were least satisfied with their communities in Mahoning (64%) and Trumbull (66%) counties and in the city of Cleveland (69%). In Mahoning, Trumbull, Richland, Columbiana and Lorain counties residents' satisfaction with the region was higher than their satisfaction with their own community. City of Cleveland residents were more satisfied with their community even though their satisfaction with both community and region was among the lowest. Medina and Geauga county residents were more satisfied with their communities than with the region, by at least nine percentage points.

Chart 1.6 Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with your community as a place to live? 2008 by County



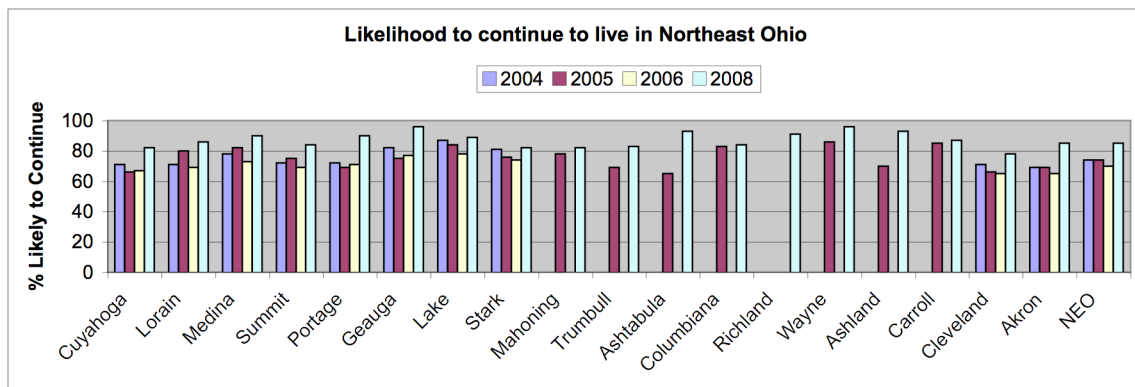
Planning to Stay. In 2008, 85% of NEO residents said they were likely or very likely to continue living in the region. Much like the responses to the satisfaction question above, the percentage of residents who said they were extremely likely to continue living in NEO remained fairly constant, ranging from 53% in 2005 to 56% in 2008. However, looking more broadly, the percentage that said they were likely to continue living here (which includes those who are extremely likely) increased by 15% from the low of 70% in 2006.

Chart 1.7 How likely are you to continue living in Northeast Ohio? 2004-2008



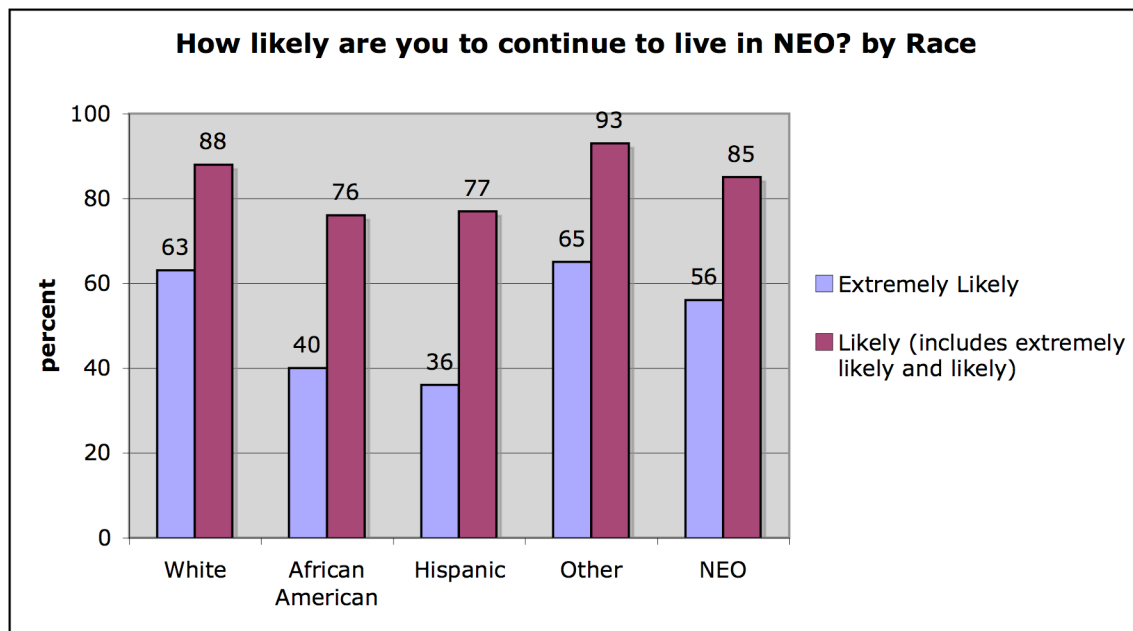
These percentages showed increases across all counties and in the cities of Cleveland and Akron. Cleveland residents showed the lowest likelihood of continuing to live in NEO with 78%.

Chart 1.8 How likely are you to continue living in Northeast Ohio? 2004-2008, by County



There were differences by race, especially among those extremely likely to continue living in NEO. Hispanic residents (36%) said they were the least likely to stay, followed closely by African American residents (40%), both well below the 56% of all NEO residents who said they are extremely likely to continue living in the region.

Chart 1.9 How likely are you to continue living in Northeast Ohio? 2008, by Race



Residents are more likely than in the past to recommend the region to others as a place to live. Another measure of residents' perceptions about the region as a place to live is whether they would recommend NEO to others. This question was also asked consistently in all four years. In 2008, the percentage of residents (69%) who said they would recommend NEO as a place to live increased by over 20 percentage points from 2006 and is the highest by 10 percentage points since the survey began in 2004.

Chart 1.10 How likely are you to recommend Northeast Ohio to a friend as a place to live? 2004-2008

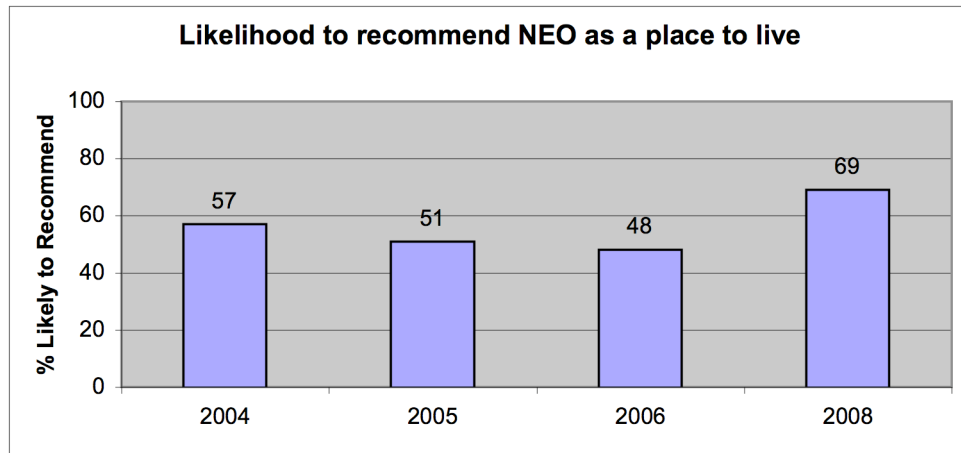
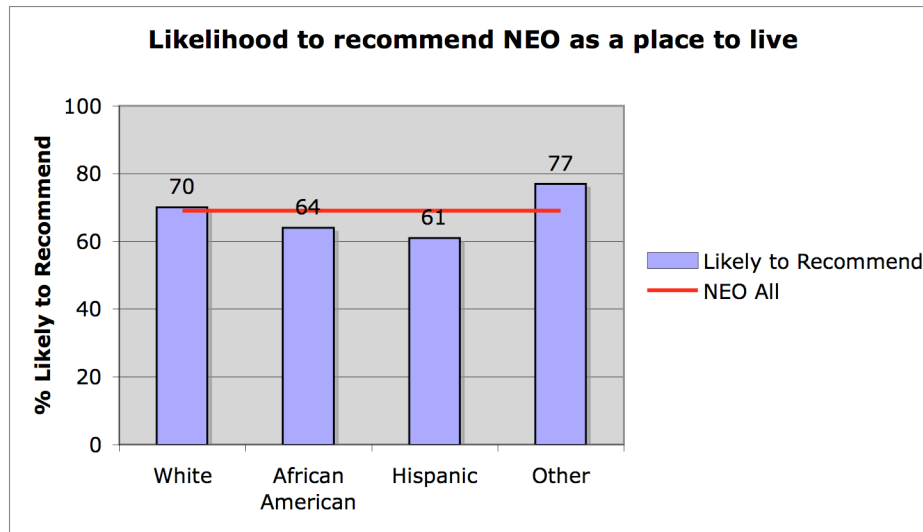


Chart 1.10 How likely are you to recommend Northeast Ohio to a friend as a place to live? 2004-2008

Likelihood to recommend Northeast Ohio as a place to live, 2004-2008				
	2004	2005	2006	2008
Extremely Likely	31	27	24	29
Somewhat Likely	26	24	24	39
Neutral	25	25	25	16
Somewhat Unlikely	9	12	10	6
Extremely Unlikely	9	13	17	9

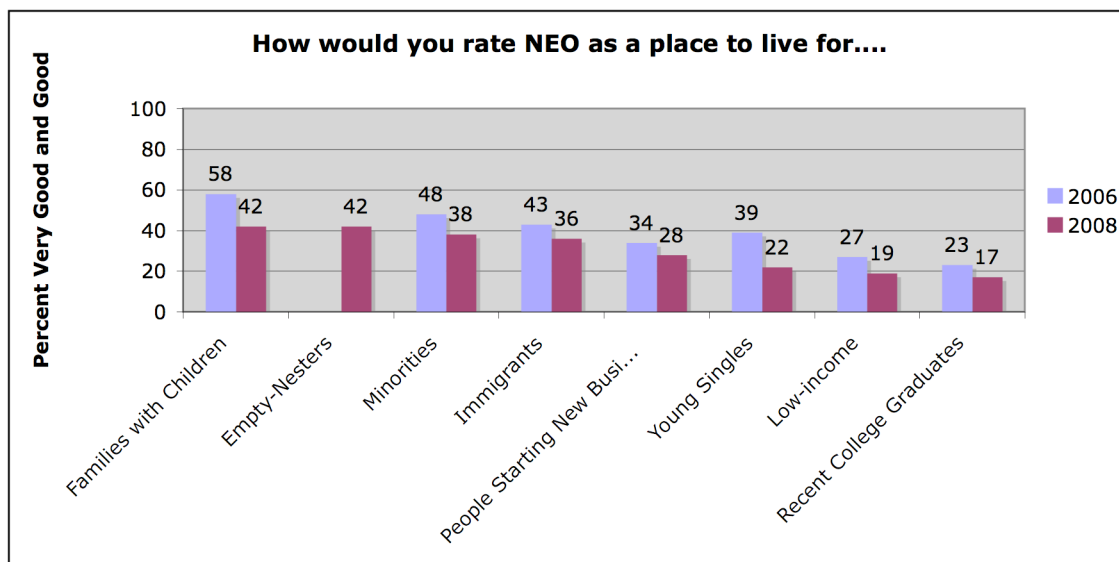
There are some slight variations by race, with African American and Hispanic residents less likely than others to recommend NEO as a place to live. This is consistent with their lower levels of satisfaction.

Chart 1.11 How likely are you to recommend Northeast Ohio to a friend as a place to live? 2008, By Race



Rating Northeast Ohio as a Place to Live. This question was asked for the first time in 2006. The highest percentages of Northeast Ohio residents believe that the region is a very good and good place to live for families with children, the lowest percentages believe it is a good place to live for recent college graduates. In 2008 62% of Geauga County residents rated Northeast Ohio good and very good for families with children, which was the highest of any county. Lake County had the highest percentage (50%) of residents who rated it good and very good for immigrants, followed by Medina County (45%) and Cuyahoga County (42%). For every category, the ratings of very good and good declined from 2006 to 2008, in almost every case by 10% or more. (Note: Empty nesters were not included as a category in 2006.)

Chart 1.12 How would you rate Northeast Ohio as a place to live for the following kinds of people? 2006 and 2008



Section 2. Outlook on Regional Economy

(When looking at this trend data, it is important to note that the 2004 survey included only eight counties—Cuyahoga, Summit, Portage, Lake, Geauga, Lorain, Medina and Stark)

Economic Conditions. Despite residents' overall high levels of satisfaction with NEO as a place to live, perceptions of the region's economy in 2008 are the weakest since the first survey in 2004, yet they are more optimistic about the future.

Chart 2.1 How would you rate economic conditions in Northeast Ohio today? 2004-2008

How would you rate economic conditions in Northeast Ohio today?					
	Very Good	Good	Neutral	Bad	Very Bad
2004	5%	14%	45%	22%	14%
2005	3%	12%	41%	25%	19%
2006	3%	10%	40%	28%	18%
2008	3%	8%	33%	35%	21%

The percentage of Northeast Ohio residents who think the economy is worse today than it was five years ago increased by 10% since 2006, the biggest jump since 2004, yet the percentage who think it is better stayed the same. In 2008, African American residents were slightly more positive, with 11% saying they think the economy is better, and Hispanics are the most positive, with 17% saying they think the economy is better.

Chart 2.2 Compared to five years ago, would you say that the economy in Northeast Ohio is better, worse or about the same as it is today? 2004-2008

Compared to five years ago, would you say that the economy in Northeast Ohio is better, worse, or about the same?			
	Better	Worse	About the Same
2004	10%	59%	31%
2005	9%	60%	31%
2006	10%	58%	32%
2008	9%	68%	23%

NEO residents are more optimistic about the future than they have been since 2004. There is a marked increase in optimism about the future, with 41% of NEO residents saying they think the economy will be better in five years, an increase of more than 20% over 2006. Race impacts this outlook. While 24% of Caucasian residents felt the economy would be worse in five years, 32% of African Americans and 31% of Hispanics felt that way.

Chart 2.3 Five years from now, do you think that the economy in Northeast Ohio will be better, worse or about the same as it is today? 2004-2008

Five years from now, do you think the economy in Northeast Ohio will be better, worse, or about the same?			
	Better	Worse	About the Same
2004	44%	17%	39%
2005	36%	21%	42%
2006	26%	26%	48%
2008	41%	28%	31%

A small percentage (10%) of Northeast Ohio residents have a great deal of awareness of Northeast Ohio's efforts to attract and help businesses and to create and keep jobs. Almost half (47%) have some awareness of these efforts. These levels have not changed since the question was first asked in 2005.

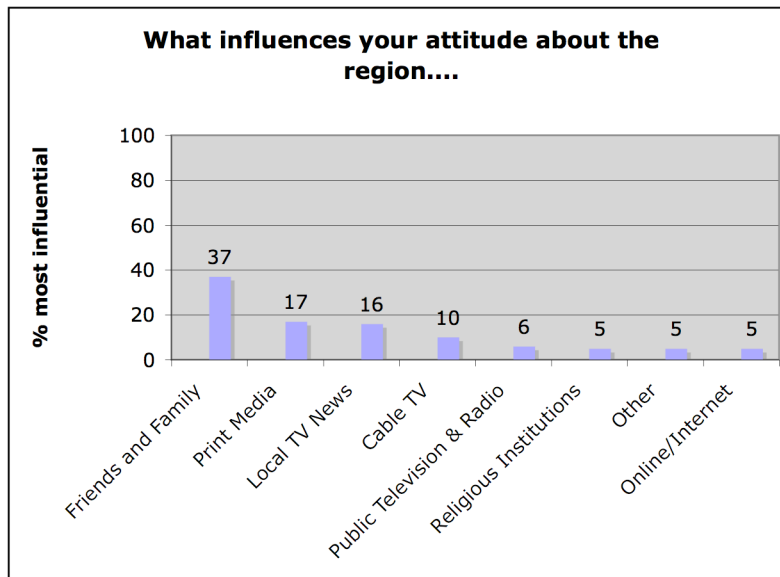
Northeast Ohio residents know something about the region's efforts to attract and help businesses and to create and keep jobs. This question was asked in 2005, 2006 and 2008 but the responses were not reported in 2006. Awareness levels have remained the same since 2005. Slightly more than half of respondents reported knowing at least something about these efforts.

Chart 2.4 How much do you know about Northeast Ohio's efforts to attract and help businesses, and to create and keep jobs? 2005-2008

How much do you know about these efforts?			
	2005	2006	2008
Great Deal	10	NA	10
Some	46	NA	47
Not too much	36	NA	33
Nothing at all	7	NA	10

Family and friends have the most influence on attitudes about the region. For the first time in 2008, the survey asked residents what influences their attitudes about the region. The most influential by 20 percentage points, is family and friends (37%), followed by print media (17%) and local television news (16%). Family and friends were less influential for residents of the City of Cleveland (32%) and online/internet was more influential for those residents (10%). Similarly, 24% of African American residents identified family and friends as being most influential, 7% identified online/internet.

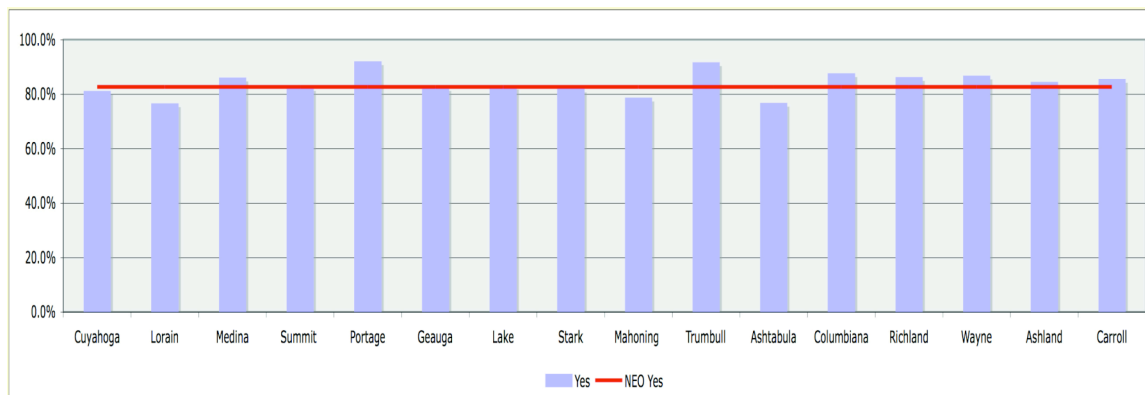
Chart 2.5? Thinking about what influences your attitude about the region, please indicate from most to least influential, which of the following impacts your attitude. 2008



Section 3: Regionalism, Intergovernmental Collaboration and Consolidation

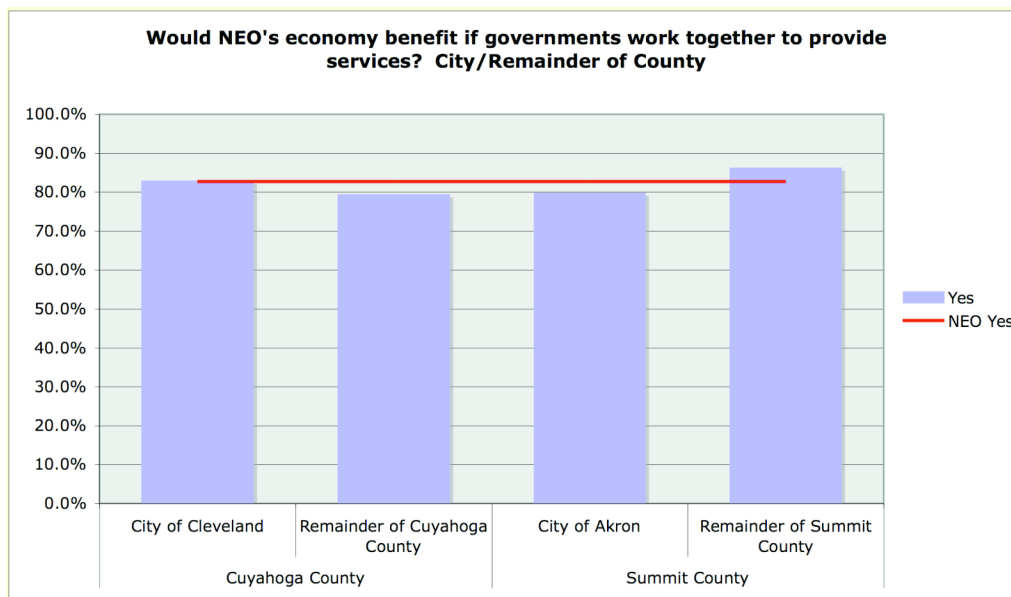
Government Collaboration by County. 82% of NEO residents favor governments working together, with the highest favorability in Trumbull County (91.7%) and the lowest in Ashtabula (76.9%) and Lorain.

Chart 3.1 Do you believe NEO's economy would benefit if governments worked together to provide services? By County, 2008



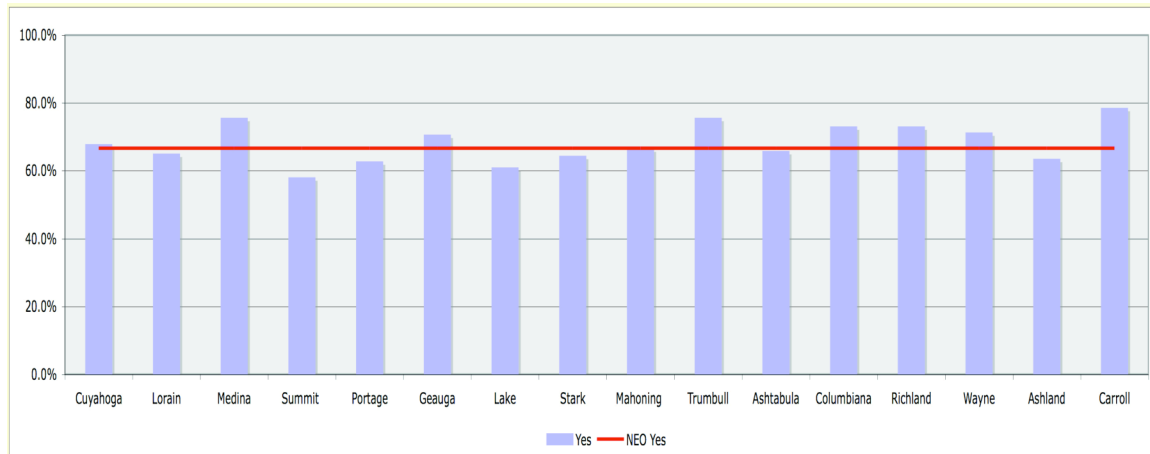
Summit County's suburban residents (86.3%) have the highest favorability to collaboration, followed by Cleveland residents (83.0%).

Chart 3.2 Do you believe NEO's economy would benefit if governments worked together to provide services? By City/Remainder of County, 2008



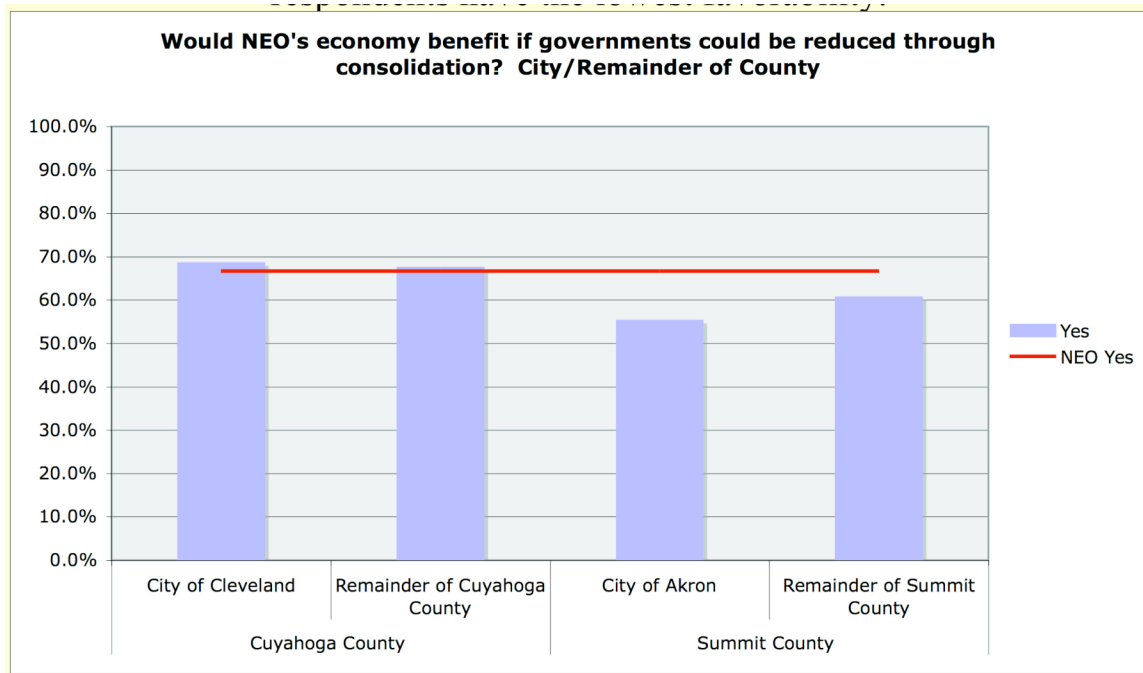
Government Consolidation, by County. 66.7% of NEO residents favor government consolidation, with the highest favorability in Carroll County (78.6%) and the lowest in Summit County (58.1%).

Chart 3.3 Do you believe Northeast Ohio's economy would benefit if the number of governments could be reduced through government consolidation? By County, 2008



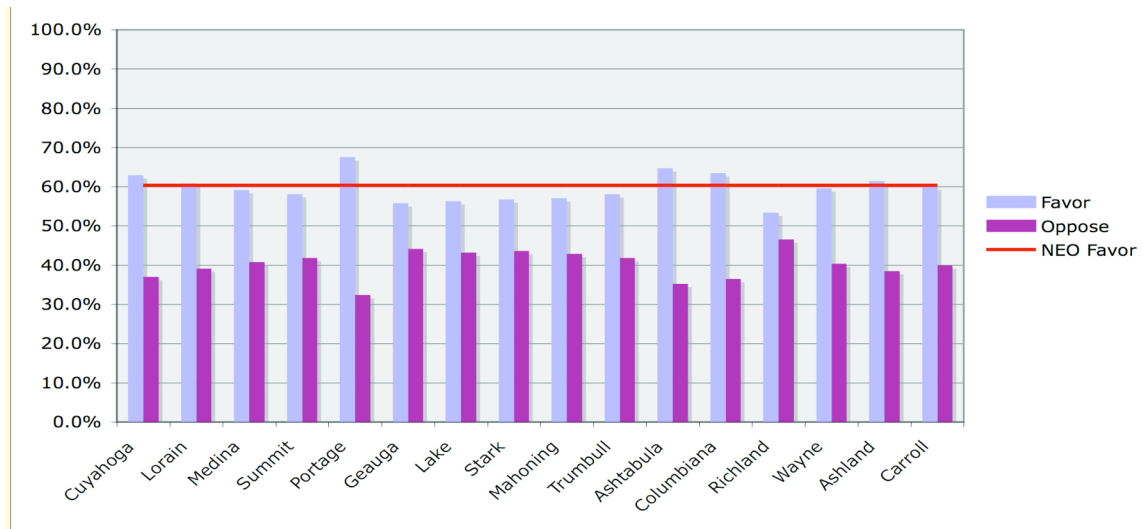
Government Consolidation, Central City/Remainder of County. Suburban Cuyahoga County (67.7%) residents have a higher overall favorability to consolidation than suburban Summit County residents. Cleveland (68.7%) residents have the highest favorability and Akron (55.5%) residents have the lowest favorability.

Chart 3.4 Do you believe Northeast Ohio's economy would benefit if the number of governments could be reduced through government consolidation? By City/Remainder of County 2008



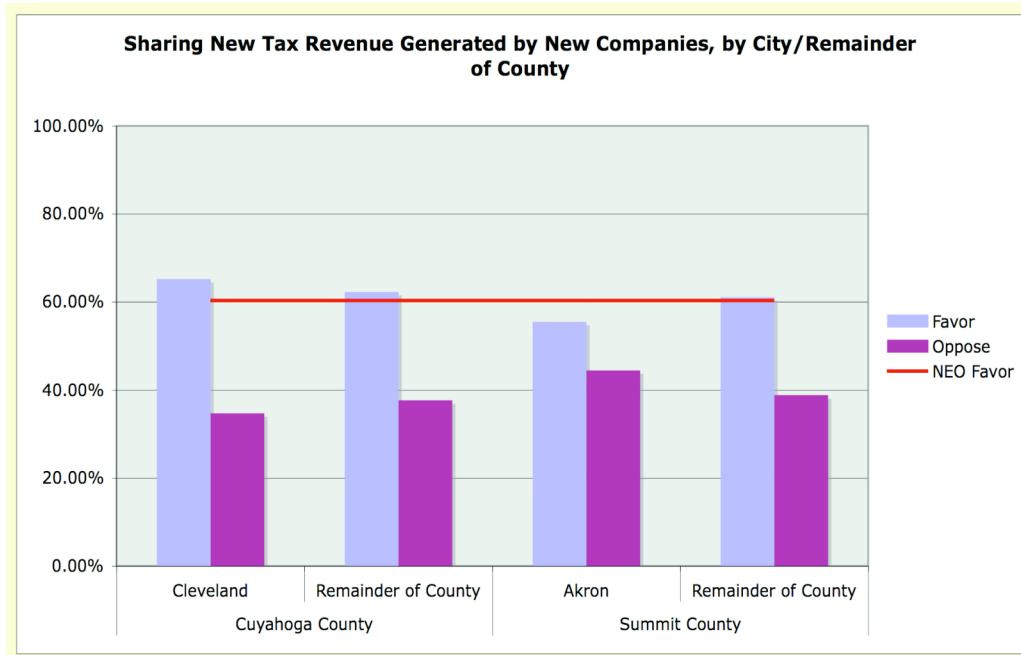
Tax Sharing, by County. 60.3% of all NEO residents favor tax sharing, with Portage (67.6%) and Ashtabula (64.7%) having the highest percentages in favor and Richland (53.4%) having the lowest.

**Chart 3.5 Would you favor or oppose your county sharing a portion of new tax revenue generated by new companies in your community with other communities in the region?
By County, 2008**



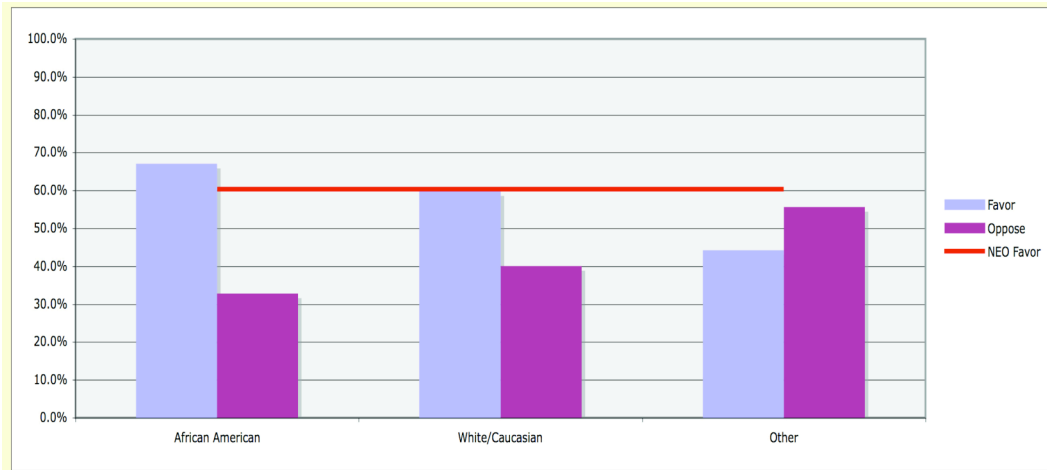
Tax Sharing, by Central City/Remainder of County. Cleveland (65.3%) has the highest favorability to tax sharing, Akron (55.5%) has the lowest. Suburban Cuyahoga County (62.3%) and suburban Summit County (61.1%) are both slightly higher than all NEO residents.

Chart 3.6 Would you favor or oppose your county sharing a portion of new tax revenue generated by new companies in your community with other communities in the region? Central City/Remainder of County, 2008



A higher percentage of African Americans (67.2%) favor tax sharing.

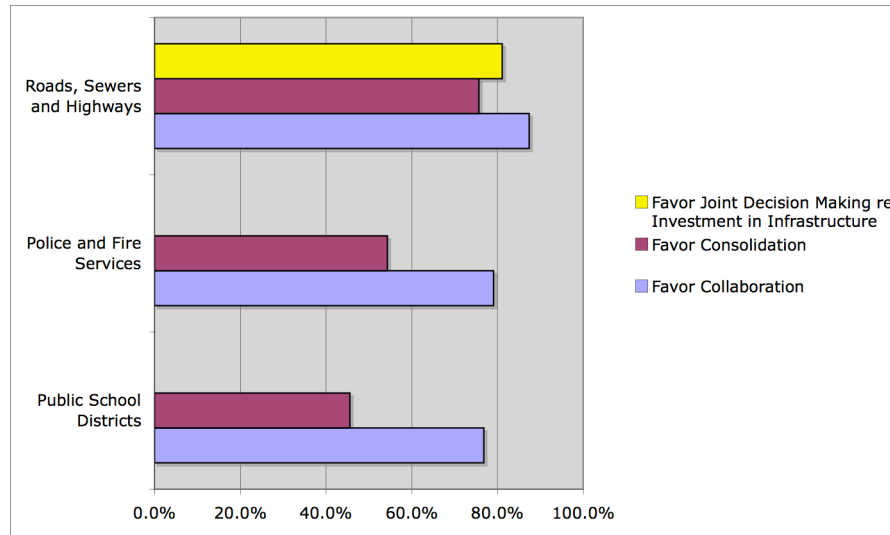
**Chart 3.7 Would you favor or oppose your county sharing a portion of new tax revenue generated by new companies in your community with other communities in the region?
By Race, 2008**



Collaboration and Consolidation: Specific Service Areas

Residents favor collaboration over consolidation for all service areas, but are most in favor of jointly deciding how to invest in infrastructure to accelerate economic growth (81.5%) and communities combining services for roads, sewer and highways (75.6%).

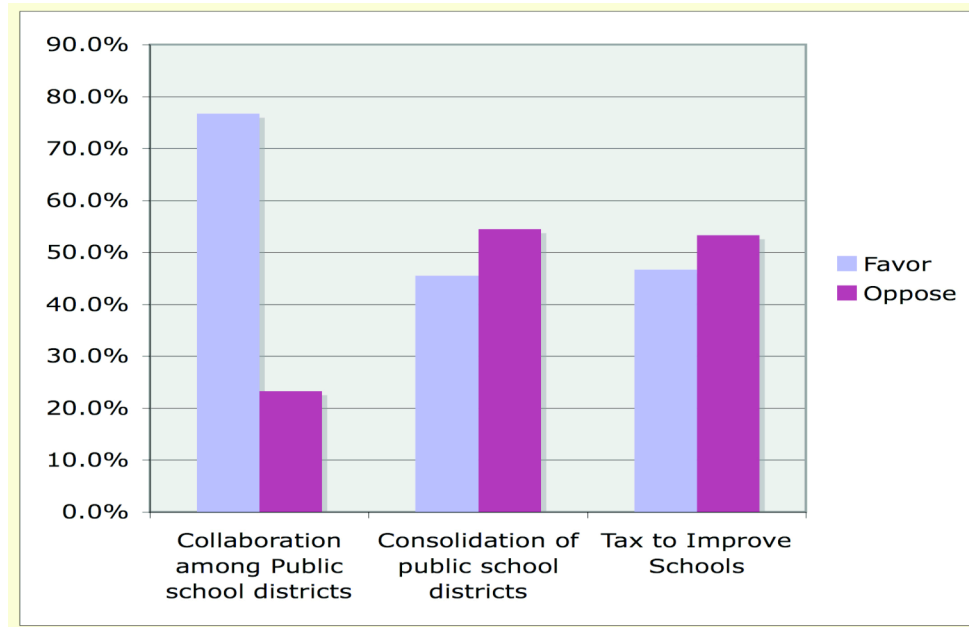
Chart 3.8 Do you favor or oppose collaboration/consolidation in these areas? 2008



Public Schools

76.7% of residents favor collaboration among public school districts, 45.5% favor consolidation, 46.7% favor a region-wide supplemental tax to improve public schools.

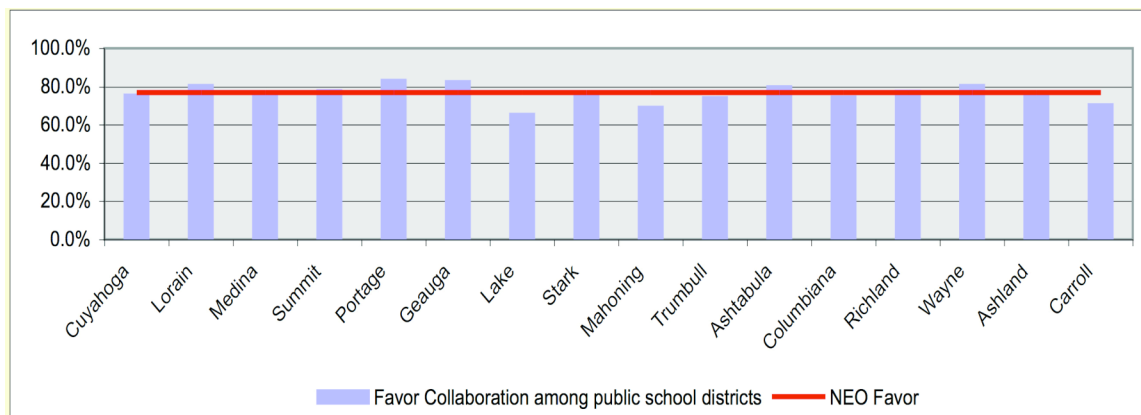
Chart 3.9 Would you favor or oppose collaboration among school districts? 2008



Collaboration among public school districts, by County

76.7% of all NEO residents favor collaboration among public school districts, with the highest favorability in Portage County (84.2%) and the lowest in Lake County (66.4%).

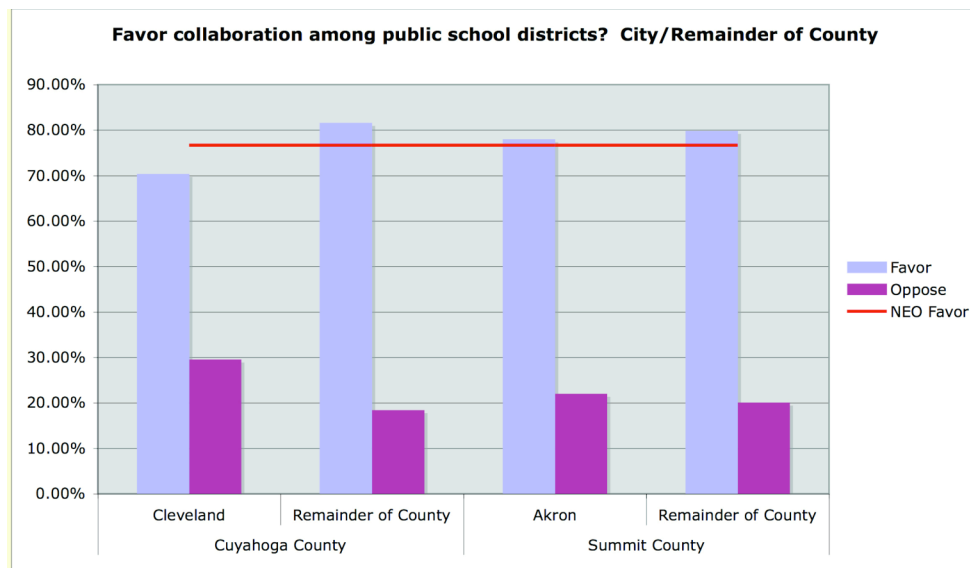
Chart 3.10 Would you favor or oppose collaboration among school districts? By County 2008



Collaboration among Public Schools, by Central City/Remainder of County

Cleveland (70.4%) residents had the lowest favorability to collaboration among public school districts while suburban residents in Cuyahoga (81.6%) and Summit (79.9%) Counties and Akron (78.0%) residents were more favorable than NEO residents overall.

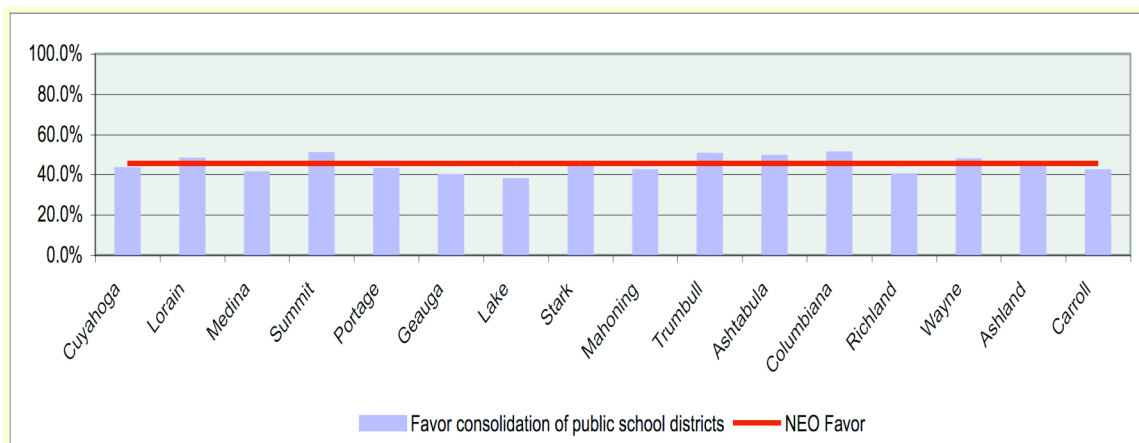
Chart 3.11 Would you favor or oppose collaboration among school districts? City/Remainder of County 2008



Consolidation of public school districts, by County

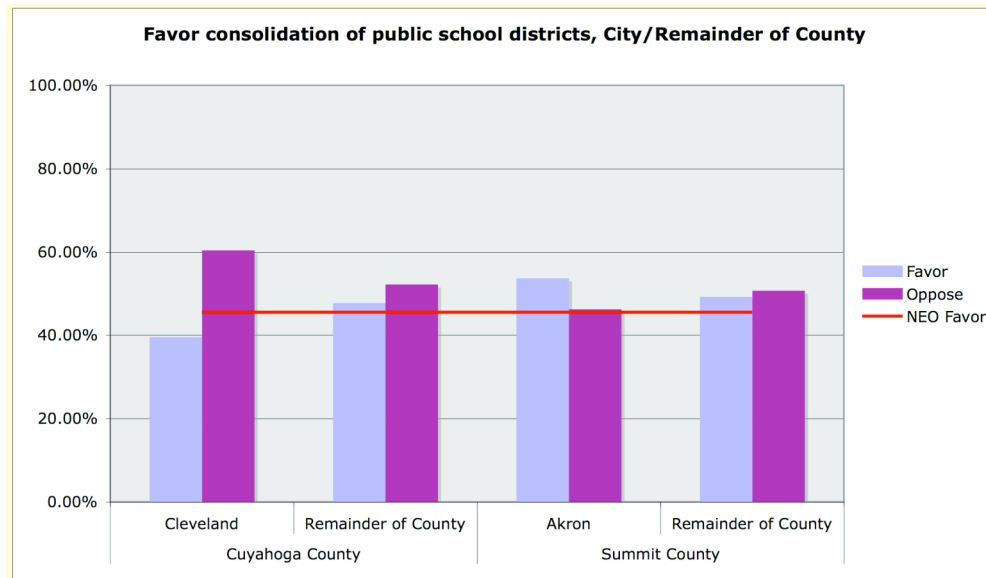
45.5% of all NEO residents favor consolidation of public school districts, with the highest favorability in Columbiana County (51.8%) and the lowest in Geauga (40.5%) and Richland (40.7%) Counties.

Chart 3.12 Would you favor or oppose consolidation among school districts? By County, 2008



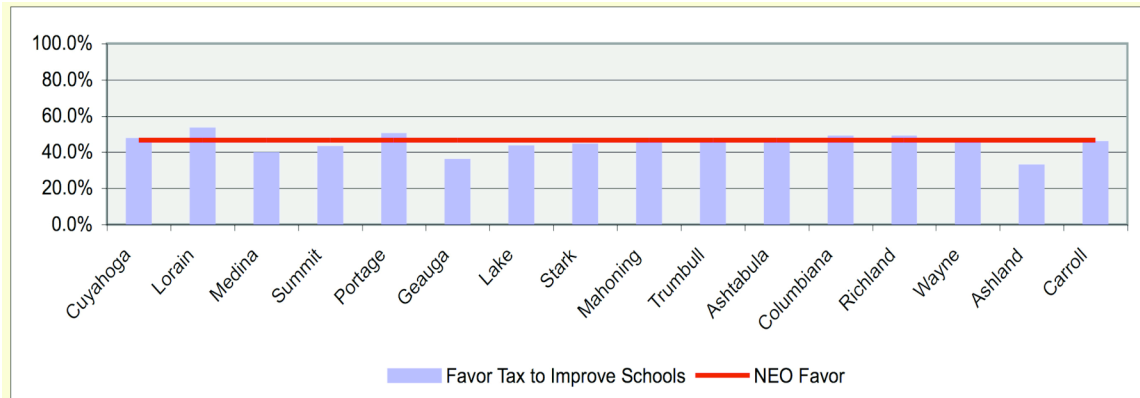
Consolidation of Public School Districts, by Central City/Remainder of County
Akron residents (53.7%) had the highest favorability to consolidation of public school districts, Cleveland residents (39.6%) had the lowest.

**Chart 3.13 Would you favor or oppose consolidation among school districts?
City/Remainder of County 2008**



Region-wide supplemental tax to improve public schools, by County. 46.7% of all NEO residents favor a supplemental tax to improve public schools, with the highest favorability in Lorain County (53.9%) and the lowest in Ashland County (33.3%).

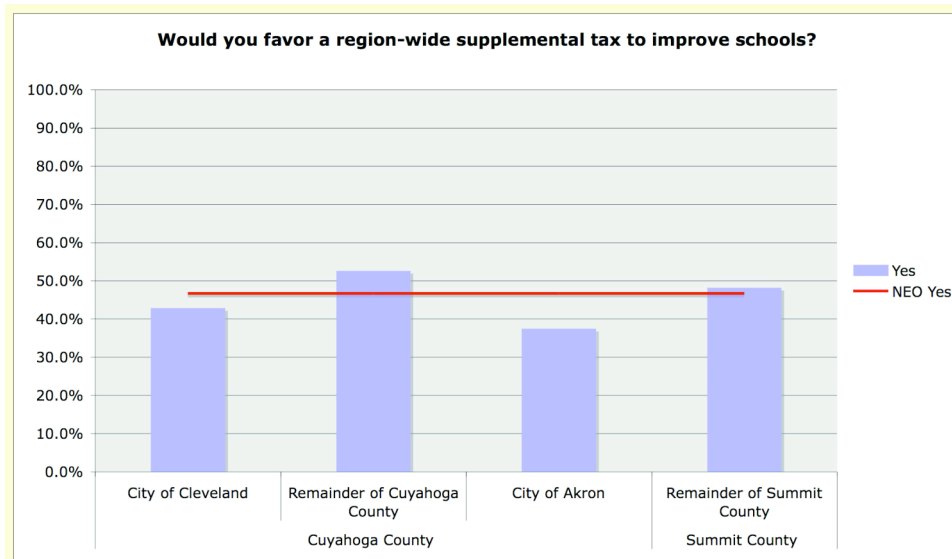
Chart 3.14 Would you favor or oppose a region-wide supplemental tax to improve schools? By County 2008



Region-wide supplemental tax to improve public schools, Central City/Remainder of County

Residents in suburban Cuyahoga County (52.6%) had the highest favorability to a region-wide supplemental tax, City of Akron (37.5%) residents had the lowest.

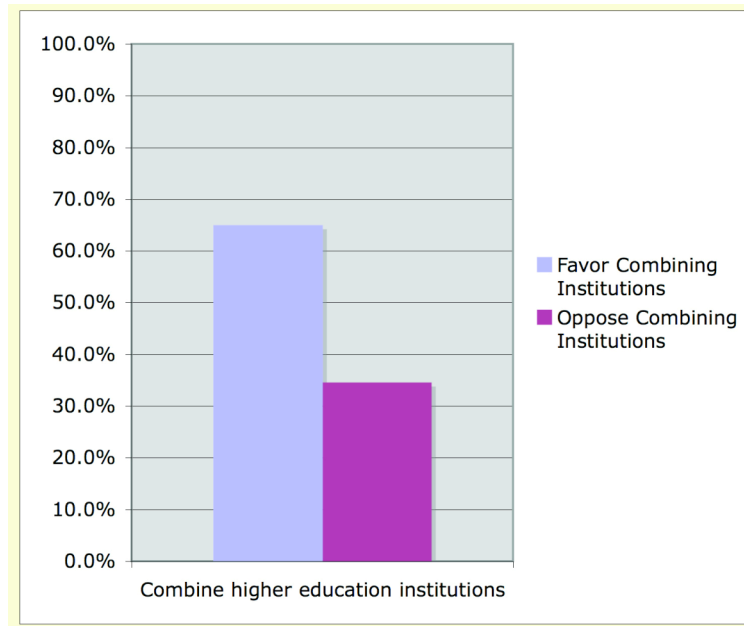
Chart 3.15 Would you favor or oppose a region-wide supplemental tax to improve schools? By City/Remainder of County 2008



Higher Education

65.4% of NEO residents favor combining institutions of higher education

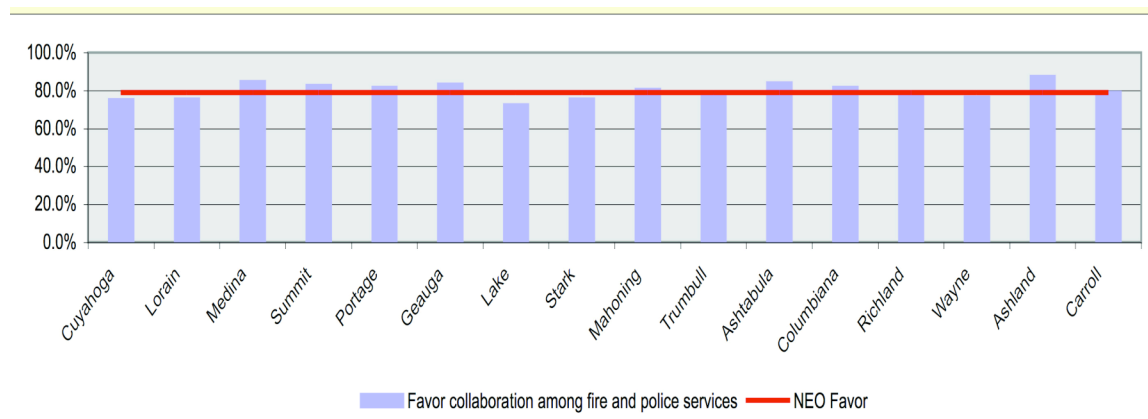
Chart 3.16 Would you favor or oppose efforts to combine institutions of higher education? 2008



Collaboration among fire or police services across jurisdictions, by County

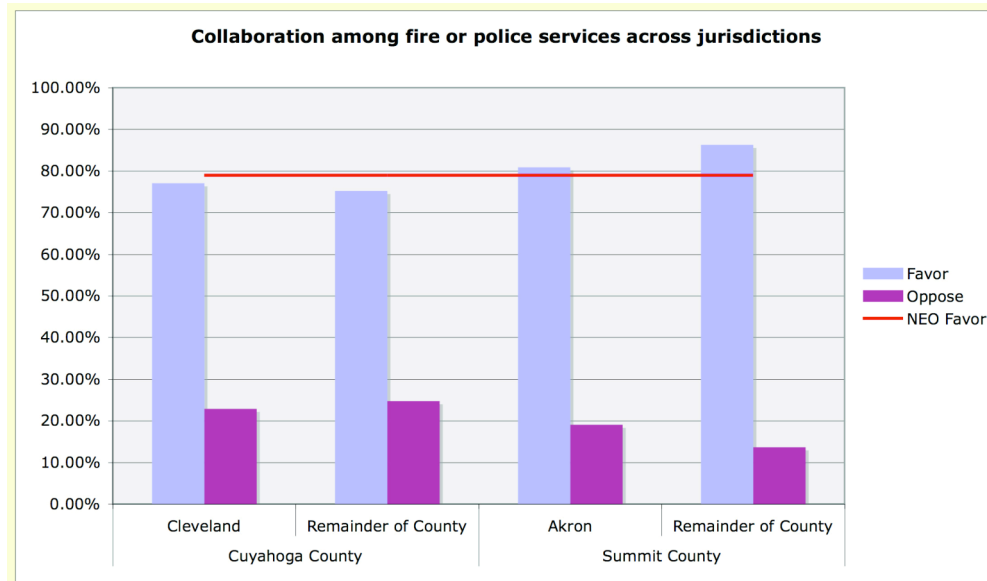
79.0% of all NEO residents favor collaboration among fire or police services across jurisdictions, with the highest favorability in Ashland County (88.5%) and the lowest in Lake County (73.6%).

Chart 3.17 Would you favor or oppose collaboration among fire or police services across jurisdictions? By County 2008



Collaboration among fire or police services, by Central City/Remainder of County
 Suburban Summit County (86.3%) and Akron (80.9%) residents had higher favorability to collaboration of fire/police services.

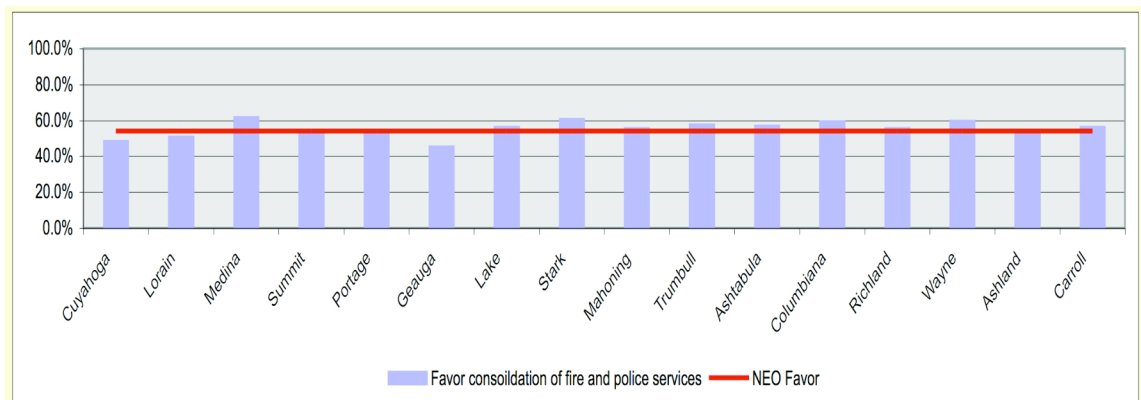
Chart 3.18 Would you favor or oppose collaboration among fire or police services across jurisdictions? By City/Remainder of County 2008



Consolidation of fire or police services across jurisdictions, by County

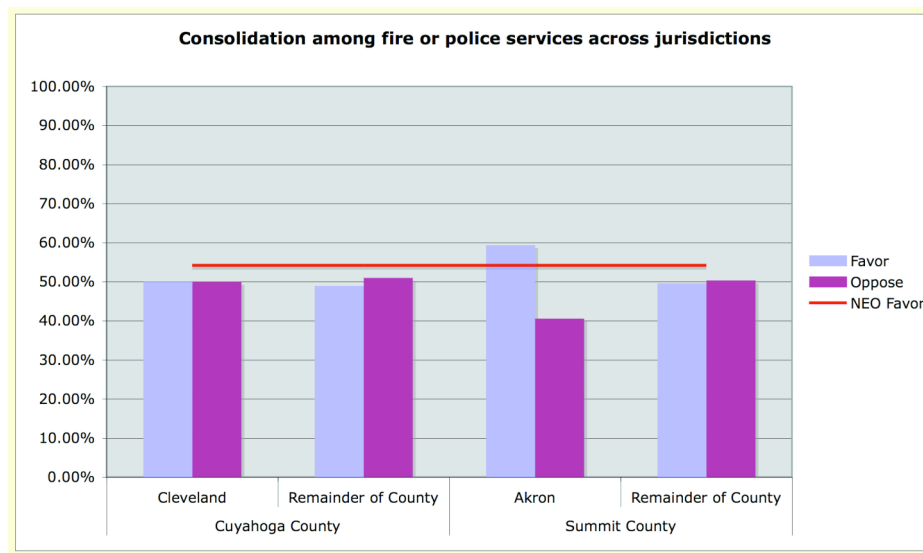
54.2% of all NEO residents favor consolidation of fire or police services across jurisdictions, with the highest favorability in Medina County (62.7%) and the lowest in Geauga County (46.3%).

Chart 3.19 Would you favor or oppose consolidation among fire or police services across jurisdictions? By County 2008



Consolidation of fire or police services, by Central City/Remainder of County
City of Akron (59.4%) residents had the highest favorability to consolidation of these services.

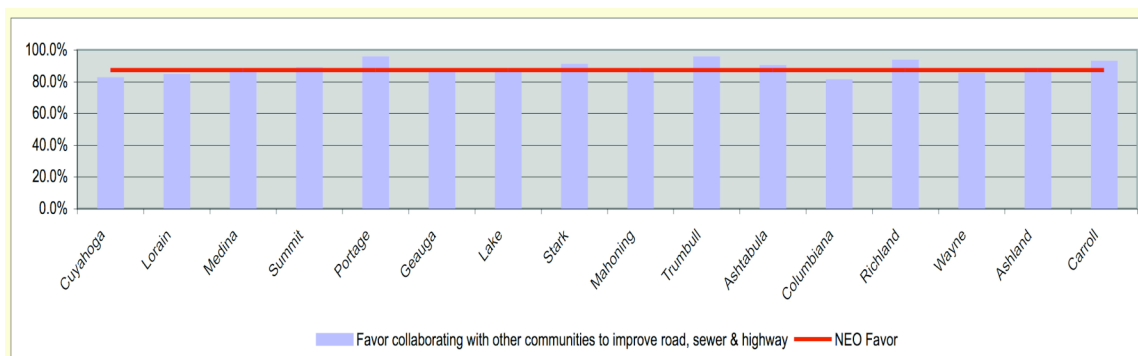
Chart 3.20 Would you favor or oppose consolidation among fire or police services across jurisdictions? By City/Remainder of County 2008



Collaborating with other communities to improve road, sewer, and highway conditions, by County

87.3% of all NEO residents favor collaborating to improve road, sewer and highway conditions with the highest favorability in Portage (96.1%) and Trumbull (95.9%) and the lowest in Cuyahoga County (83.0%).

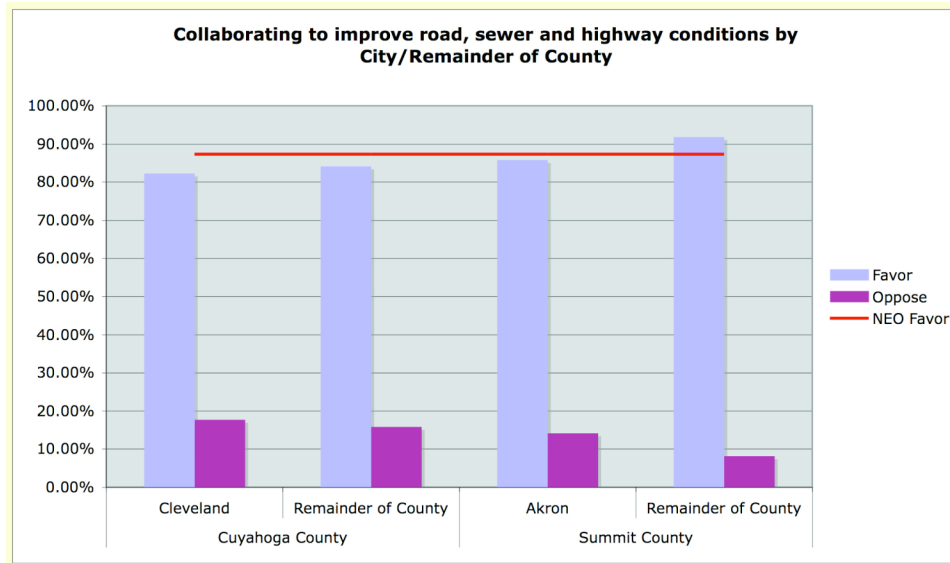
Chart 3.21 Would you favor or oppose collaborating with other communities to improve road, sewer and highway conditions? By County 2008



Collaborating to improve road, sewer, and highway conditions, by Central City/Remainder of County

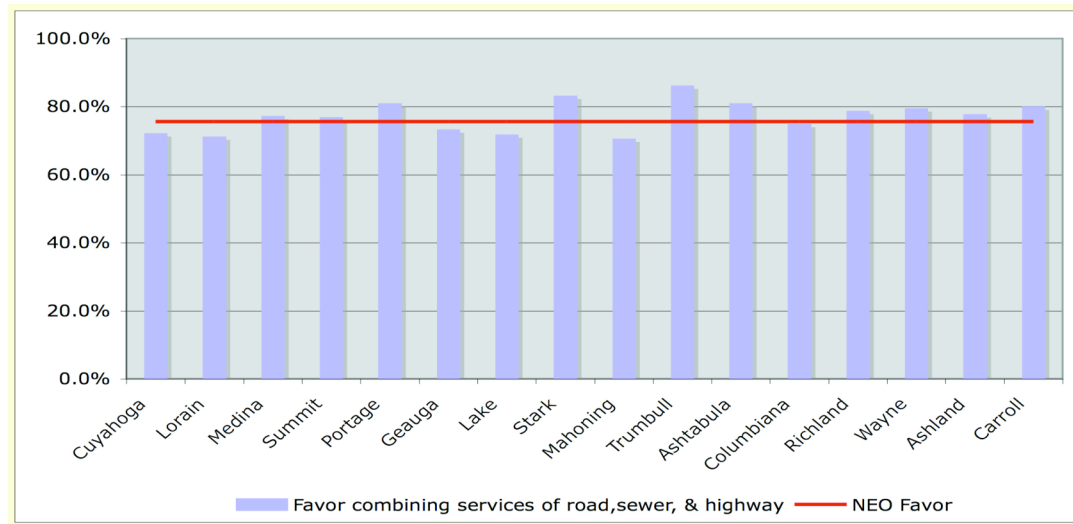
Suburban Summit County (91.8%) and Akron (85.8%) residents had high favorability to collaborating to improve infrastructure.

Chart 3.22 Would you favor or oppose collaborating with other communities to improve road, sewer and highway conditions? By City/Remainder of County 2008



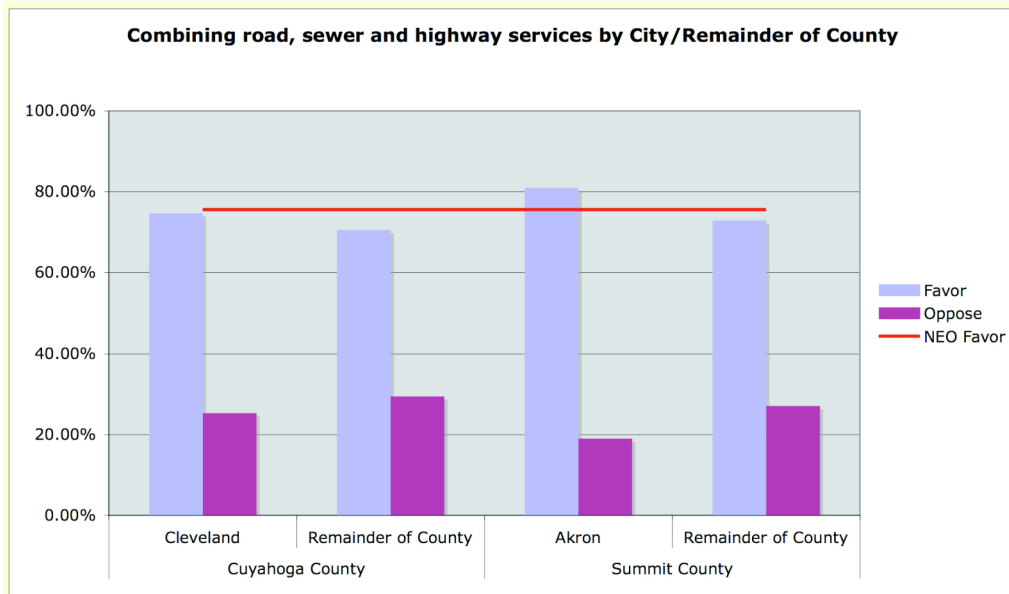
Combining services with other community's roads, sewer and highway services, by County. 75.6% of all NEO residents favor combining road, sewer and highway services, with Trumbull County (86.2%) having the highest favorability and Mahoning County having the lowest (70.6%).

Chart 3.23 Would you favor or oppose your community combining services with other community's road, sewer and highway services? By County 2008



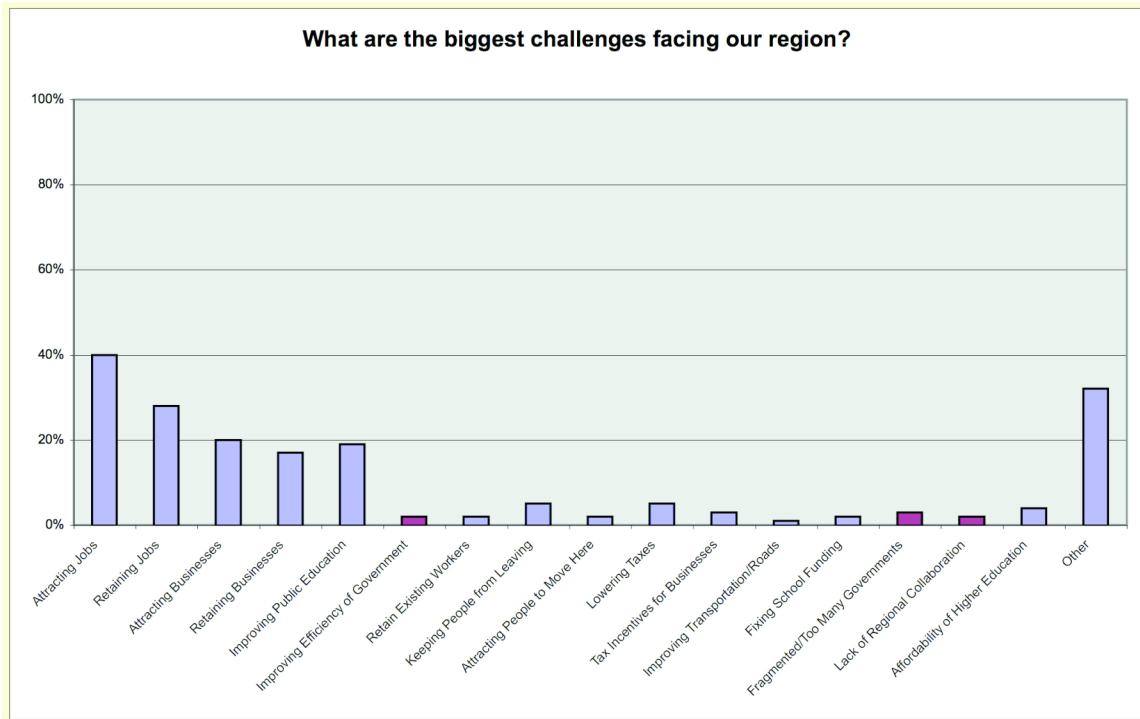
Central City/Remainder of County. City of Akron (81.0%) residents had the highest favorability to consolidation of these services.

Chart 3.24 Would you favor or oppose your community combining services with other community's road, sewer and highway services? By City/Remainder of County 2008



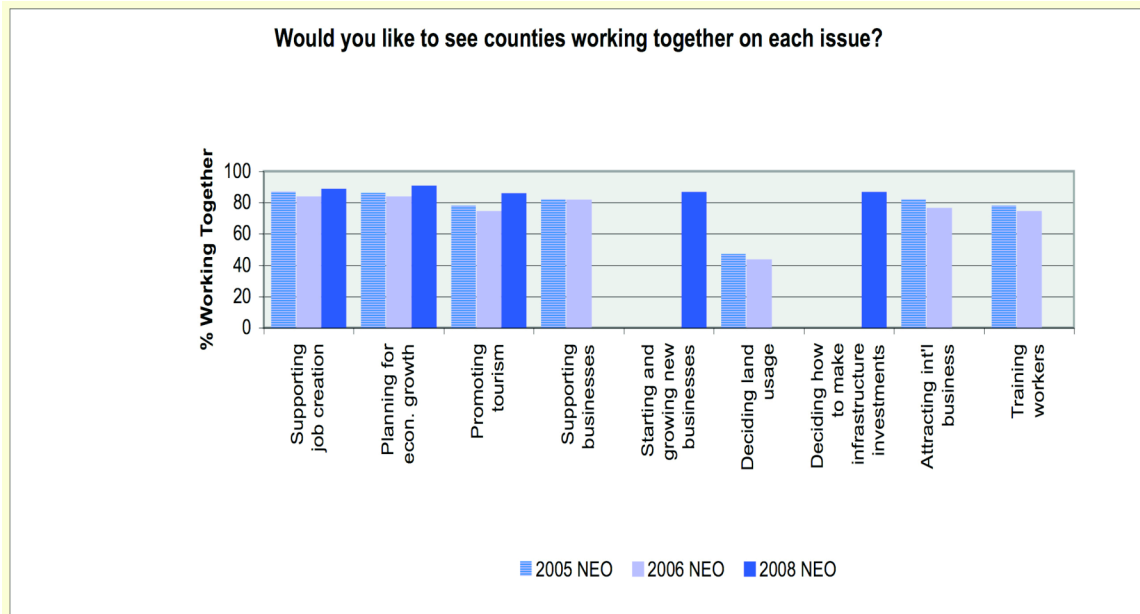
Regional Challenges. Respondents were asked a final, open-ended question, “Finally, thinking about everything we have talked about, what do you think are the biggest challenges our region faces in improving its economic situation?” Government efficiency, fragmentation and regional collaboration were low priorities compared with jobs, business and education.

Chart 3.25 Finally, thinking about everything we have talked about, what do you think are the biggest challenges our region faces in improving its economic situation? 2008



Trend Data, 2005-2008, Counties working together on issues. Support for counties working together was higher in 2008 across all issue areas than in 2005 and 2006. (note: some of the issue areas changed in 2008)

Chart 3.26 Would you like to see counties working together on each issue? 2005-2008



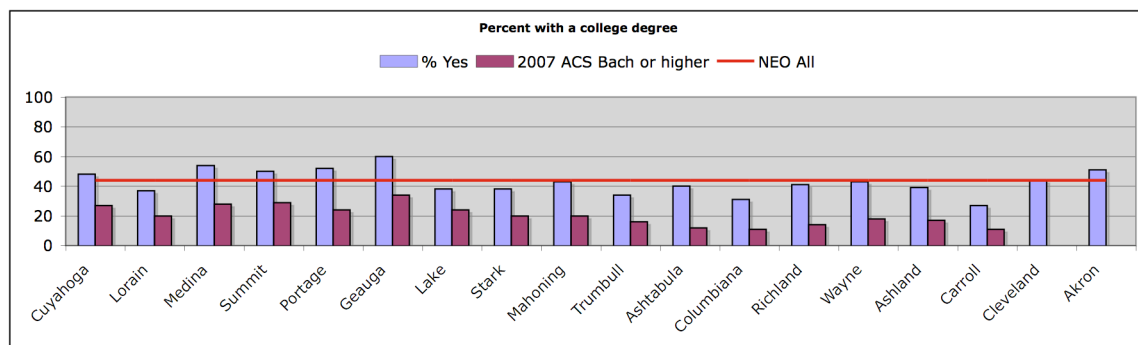
Section 4. Education (2008 only)

In 2008, a set of questions was added to the NEO Barometer to gauge the public's attitudes toward the importance of education to economic success. In general, residents understand the importance of raising the educational attainment level of residents and, to a lesser extent, the importance of a college education in preparing people for jobs. Residents were then asked a set of more personal questions about the importance of education. They were asked to rate the quality of education in specific subject areas in public schools in their communities. This data was analyzed for those who said they had a child age 18 or under and those who did not. In addition, those with children overwhelmingly agreed that their children need a college education to succeed in today's economy and are engaged in a number of activities to prepare their children for college.

Educational Attainment. 44% of all NEO Barometer Survey respondents said they have a college degree. It is important to note that survey respondents have much higher levels of educational attainment than the overall population, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2007 American Community Survey (ACS). According to the census data for the 16 counties, the average percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher is 20%.

The chart below shows the differences by county between educational attainment of NEO Barometer respondents and all county residents (ACS data). It also shows how the percentage of respondents with college degrees varies across counties. Geauga County (60%) has the highest attainment, followed by Medina County (54%)..

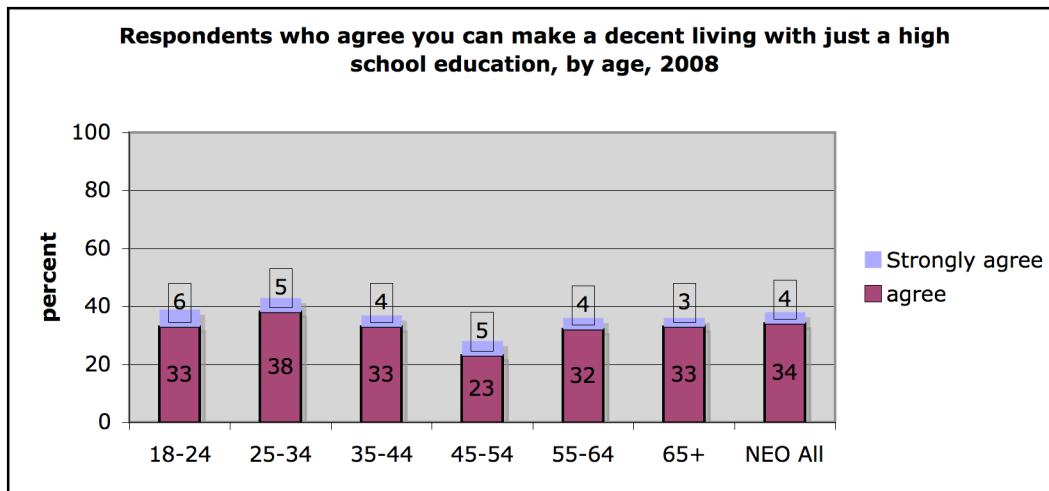
Chart 4.1 Do you currently have a college degree? By County 2008



Those without college degrees were asked if they were currently seeking one. Only 8% of respondents said they were currently seeking a college degree. The biggest factors for not seeking a college degree were cost (225 people), not relevant to my career path (214 people), age (85 people), not enough time (56 people), family obligations (55 people), don't think it will improve economic/job opportunity (54 people), and not wanted/not needed (46 people).

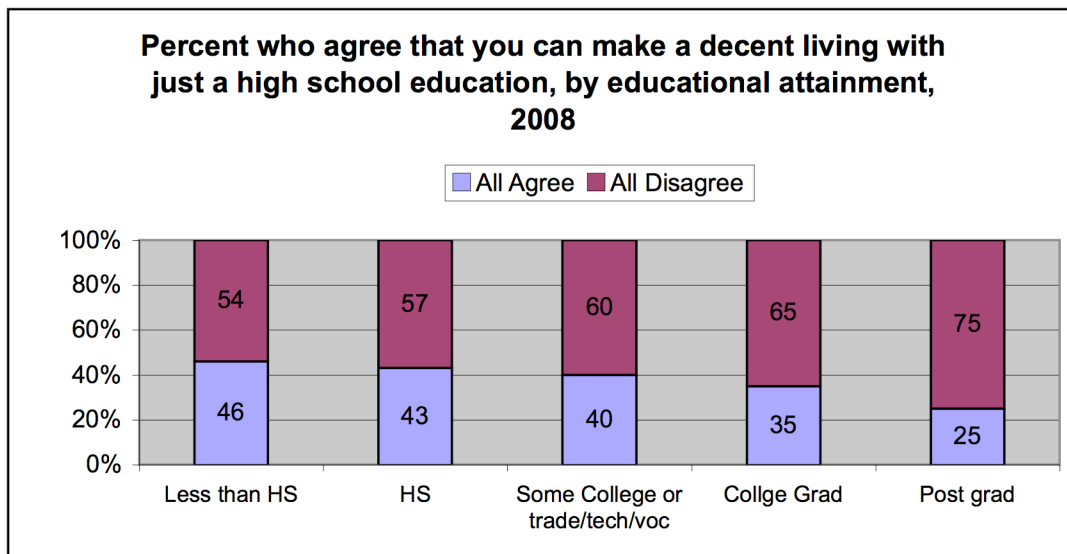
NEO residents recognize the importance of a college education. Only 4% of all NEO residents strongly agree and 34% agree (total agreement=38%) that you can make a decent living with just a high school education. The two youngest age groups have the highest level of agreement with this statement.

Chart 4.2 Do you agree that you can make a decent living with just a high school education? By Age 2008



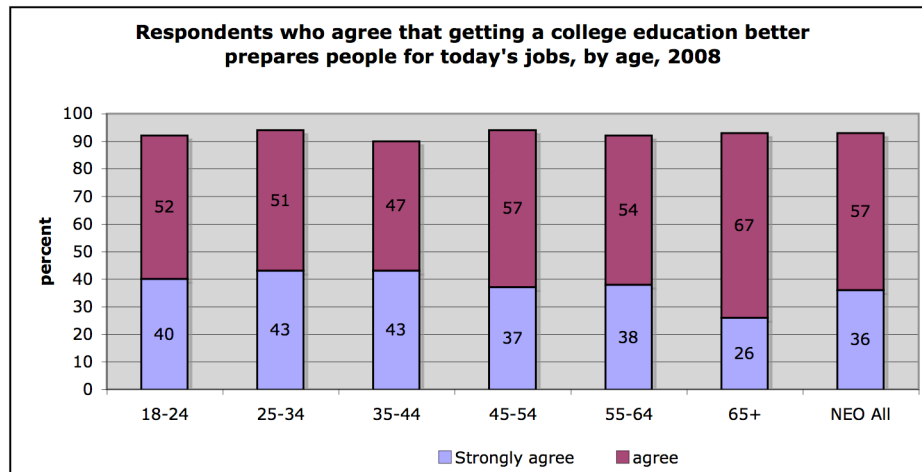
As levels of educational attainment increase, the percentage of NEO respondents who agree that one can make a decent living with just a high school education decreases.

Chart 4.3 Do you agree that you can make a decent living with just a high school education? By Age 2008



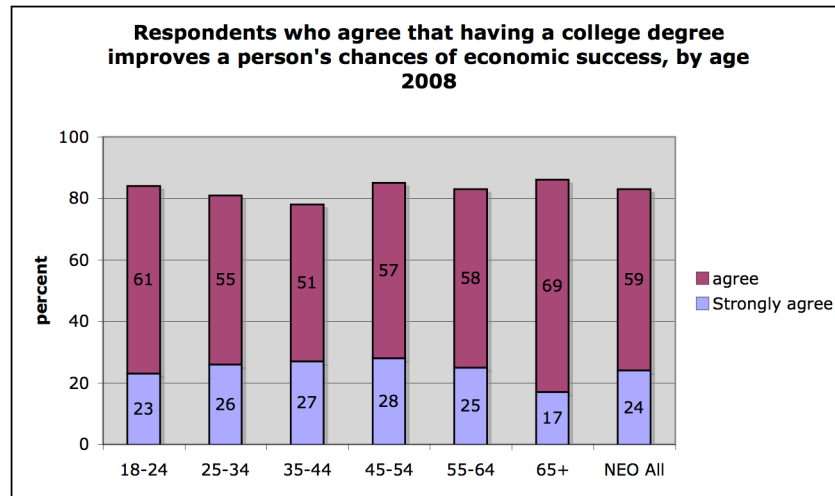
36% of all NEO residents strongly agree and 57% agree (total agree=93%) that getting a college education better prepares people for today's jobs. Those 65 and older have the lowest percentage that strongly agree with the statement, otherwise there is very little variation across age groups.

Chart 4.4 Do you agree that getting a college education better prepares people for today's jobs? By Age 2008



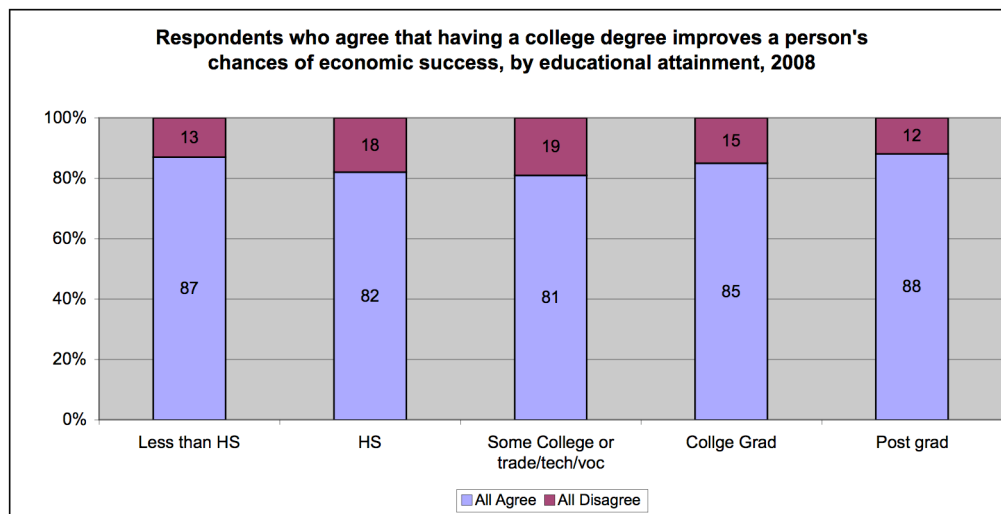
24% of NEO residents strongly agree and 59% agree (total agreement = 83%) that having a college education improves a person's chances of economic success. Again, the 65 and older age group has the lowest percentage of those who strongly agree, but overall, across all age groups, there is widespread agreement with this statement.

Chart 4.5 Do you agree that having a college education improves a person's chances of economic success? By Age 2008



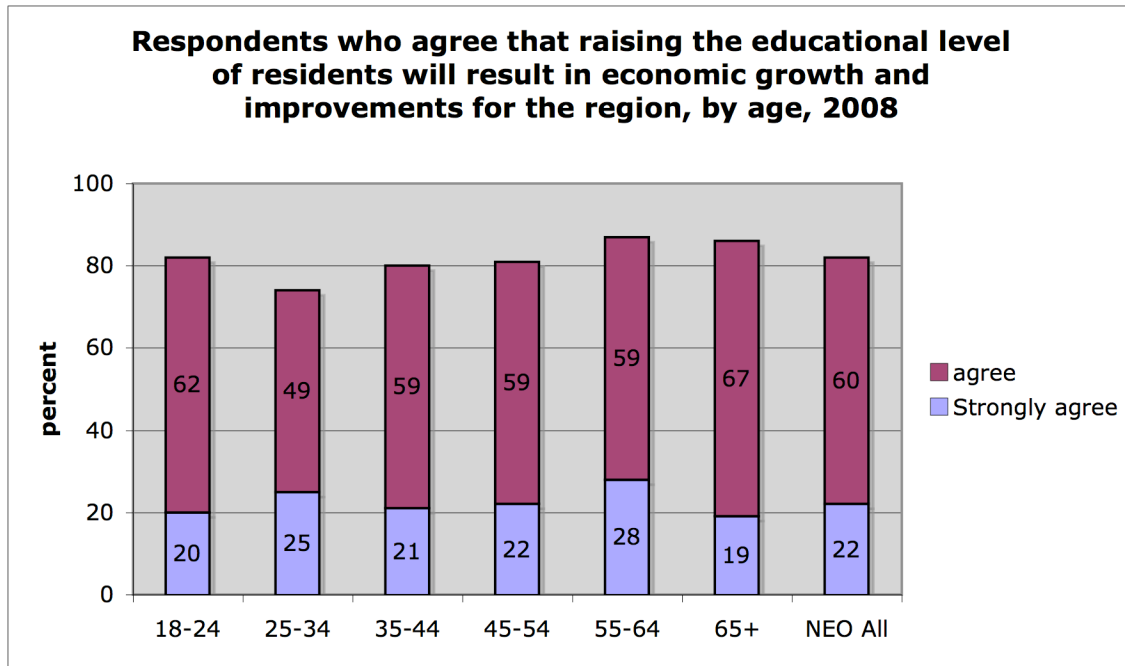
Respondents with less than a high school degree and those with post graduate degrees had the highest percentage agreement with the statement that having a college degree improves one's chances of economic success.

Chart 4.6 Do you agree that having a college education improves a person's chances of economic success? By educational attainment, 2008



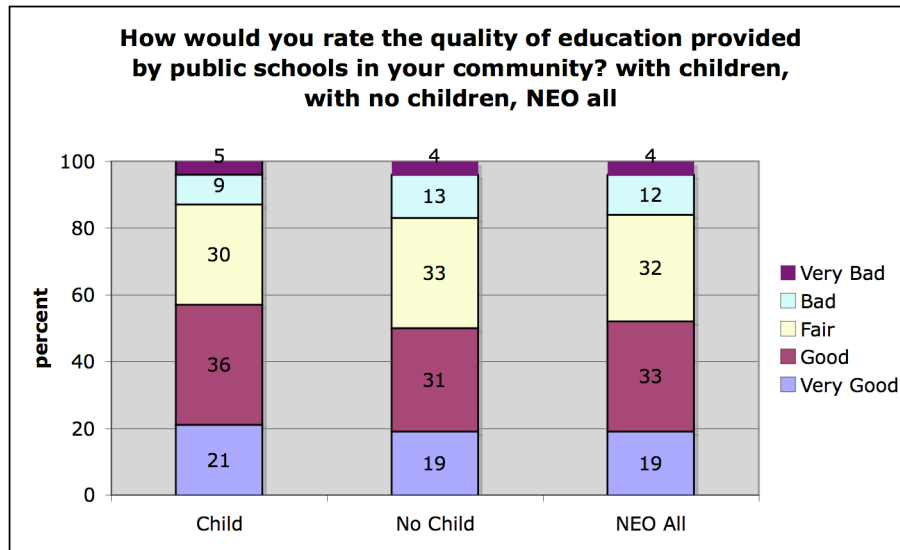
22% of all NEO residents strongly agree and 60% agree (total agreement=82%) with the statement that raising the educational level of residents will result in economic growth and improvement for the region.

Chart 4.7 Do you agree that raising the educational level of residents will result in economic growth and improvements for the region? By Age 2008



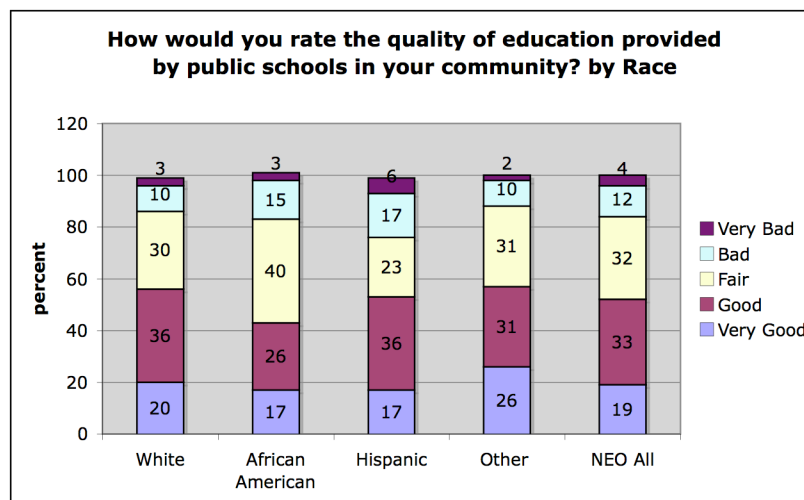
Quality of public schools. 19% of all NEO residents view the overall quality of public schools in their county as very good, 33% view them as good. Those with children have a slightly better view of the quality of their public schools than those without children.

Chart 4.8 How would you rate the quality of education provided by public schools in your community? By those with children, those without children, 2008



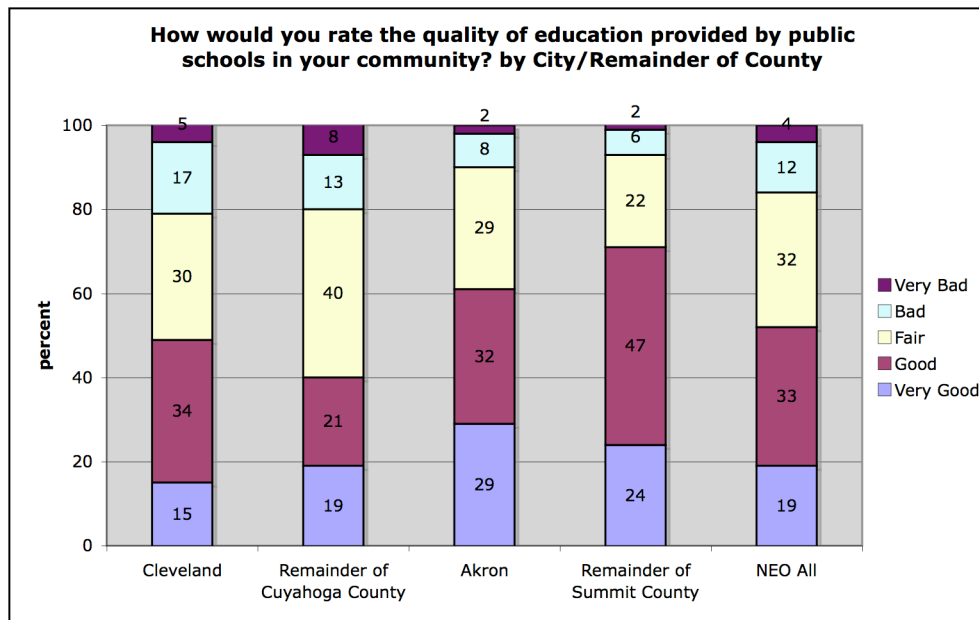
There are significant differences in residents' perceptions of their public schools by race, as illustrated in the chart below. A higher percentage of African American residents (40%) rate their public schools as fair than any other racial group and NEO residents overall, with the difference close to 10 percentage points.

Chart 4.9 How would you rate the quality of education provided by public schools in your community? By race, 2008



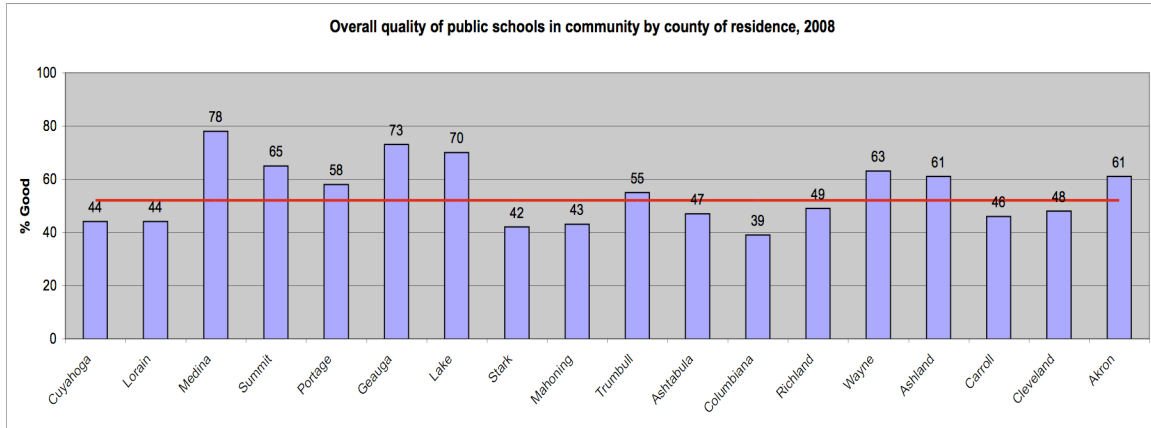
There are also some interesting differences in how Cleveland and Akron residents view the quality of their public schools, when compared with suburban residents. In Cuyahoga County, a higher percentage (34%) of city residents rated their schools more as good than suburban Cuyahoga County residents (21%). The largest percentage of suburban Cuyahoga County residents rated their schools as fair (40%). Residents of Summit County showed the opposite pattern, with 29% of the City of Akron rating their schools good, compared with 47% of suburban Summit County residents. Akron residents had the highest percentage rating their schools very good (29%), 10 percentage points higher than all Northeast Ohio residents and 14 percentage points higher than City of Cleveland residents.

Chart 4.10 How would you rate the quality of education provided by public schools in your community? By City/Remainder of county, 2008



Perceptions of school quality also vary widely across counties. The chart below shows the percentage who rated their public schools as good and very good. Perceptions of quality range from a high of 78% good in Medina County to a low of 39% good in Columbiana County.

Chart 4.11 How would you rate the quality of education provided by public schools in your community? By county, 2008



Quality of teaching in subject areas. Residents were asked to rate how well the public schools in their community are teaching critical thinking, problem solving, communication, global awareness, technology, reading, writing and math, all skills that have been identified as part of an education that prepares students for success. The responses varied widely by subject and county and are presented below. In general, the basic skills of technology, reading, writing and math received the highest ratings, while the more complex skills of critical thinking, problem solving, communication and global awareness received more mixed ratings. Further analysis can be done with this data by, for example, county, race and those with children and those without children.

Chart 4.12 How well are the public schools in your community teaching critical thinking? By county, 2008

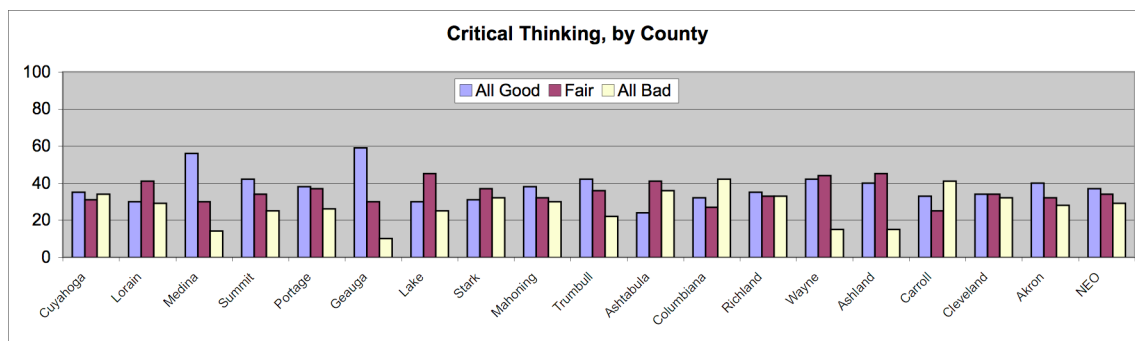


Chart 4.13 How well are the public schools in your community teaching problem solving? By county, 2008

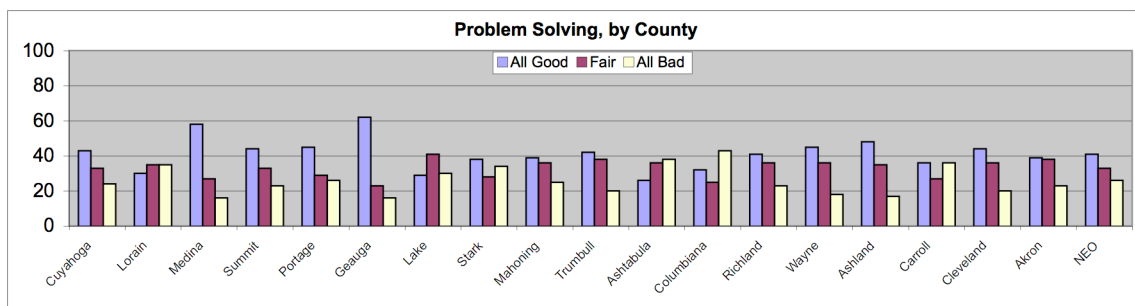


Chart 4.14 How well are the public schools in your community teaching communication? By county, 2008

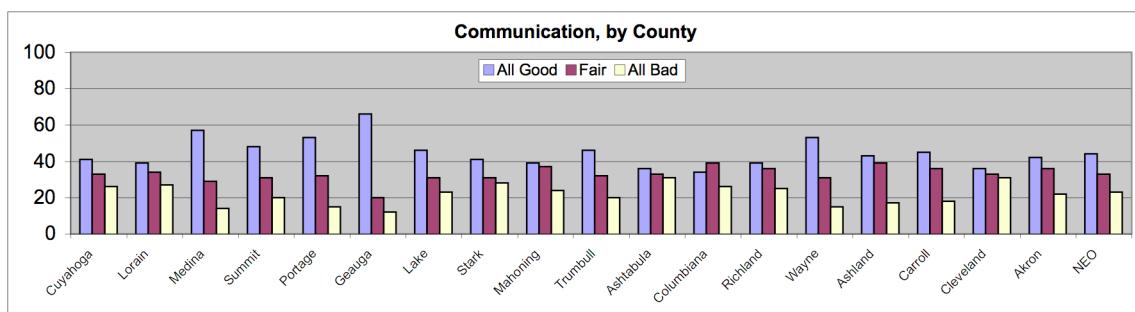


Chart 4.15 How well are the public schools in your community teaching global awareness? By county, 2008

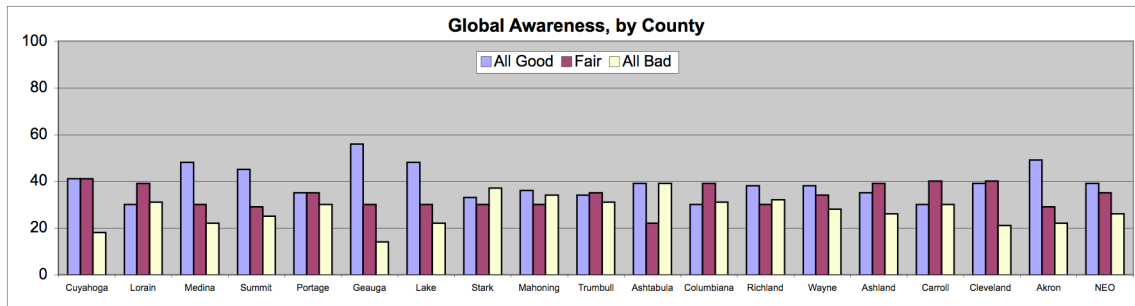


Chart 4.16 How well are the public schools in your community teaching technology? By county, 2008

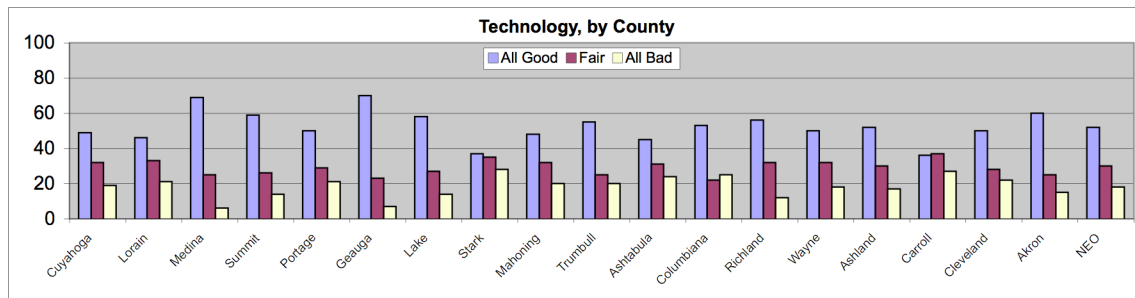


Chart 4.17 How well are the public schools in your community teaching reading? By county, 2008

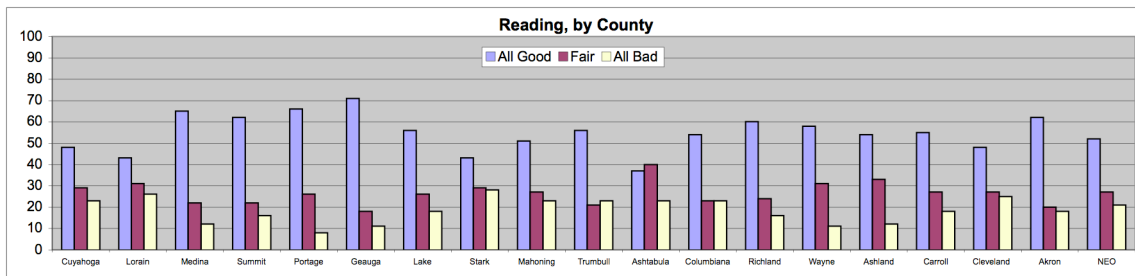


Chart 4.18 How well are the public schools in your community teaching writing? By county, 2008

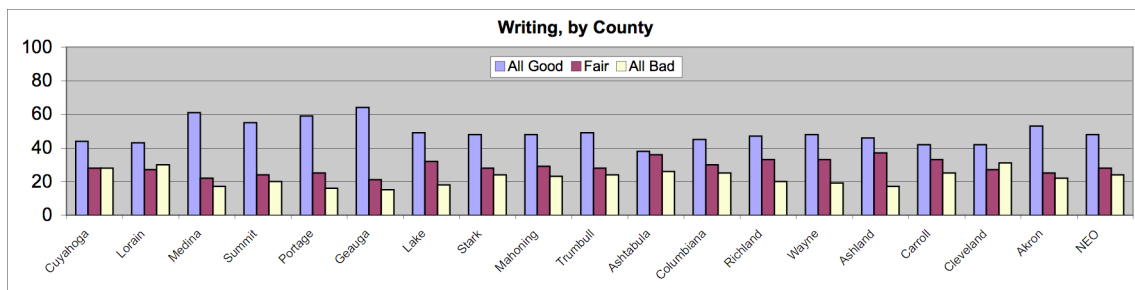
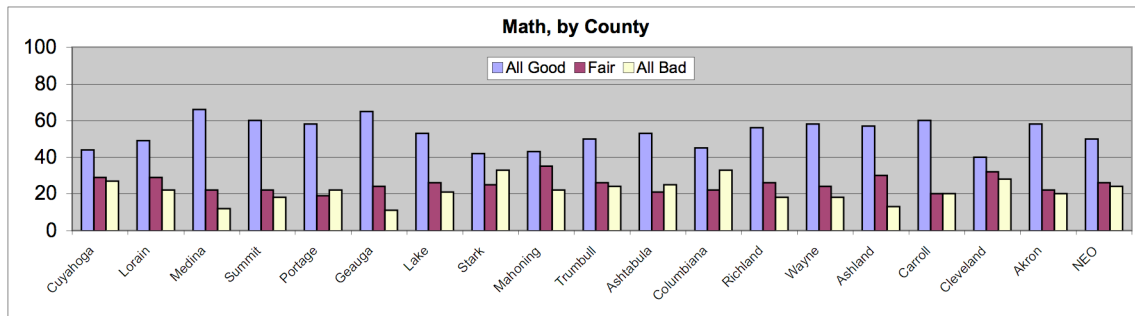
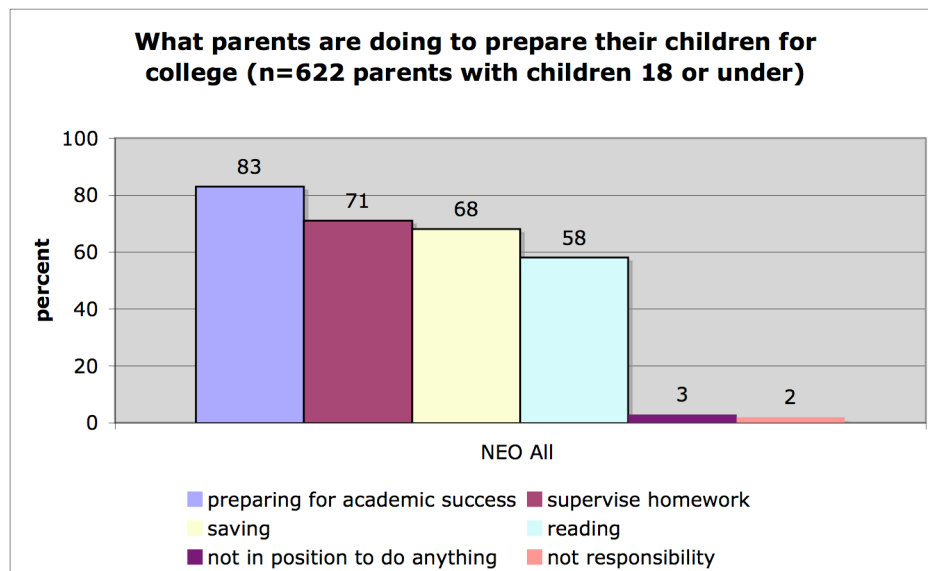


Chart 4.19 How well are the public schools in your community teaching math? By county, 2008



Preparing children for college. 27% of all NEO respondents have children under age 18 and 90% of them think their children need a college education to succeed in today's economy. This percentage is fairly consistent across counties. When asked what they were doing to prepare their child/children for college, the majority said they were preparing them for academic success.

Chart 4.20 What are you doing to prepare your child/children for college? 2008



Finally, residents were asked whether they had heard of each of the following economic development organizations in Northeast Ohio. For those they had heard of, they were asked if their image of that organization was positive or negative. Similar responses were found in previous surveys when this question was asked. While Jumpstart appears to have relatively high recognition among residents, there is reason to believe that some

people may be confusing it with Headstart (the early education program for young children and parents).

Chart 4.21 Have you heard of the following regional economic development organizations? 2008

Have you heard of the following regional economic development organizations?			
	Yes	No	If yes, positive image
Fund for our Economic Future	10%	90%	88%
Team Northeast Ohio	26%	74%	89%
NorTech	24%	76%	91%
Jumpstart	47%	53%	92%
BioEnterprise	15%	85%	94%
Magnet	17%	83%	90%