

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE INDIANA K–12 & SCHOOL CHOICE SURVEY

**1,002 phone interviews with registered voters**

**Conducted November 11 to December 1, 2015**

**Released January 20, 2016**

### VIEWES ON K–12 EDUCATION IN INDIANA

- One out of five Hoosier voters (21%) pointed to “education” as the state’s highest priority. Only “economy and jobs” (30%) garnered a higher proportion of responses.
- Indiana voters are more likely to say K–12 education has gotten off on the “wrong track” (54%), compared with those who said it is going in the “right direction” (33%).
- More than half of voters gave negative ratings to the state’s public school system (42% said “good” or “excellent” vs. 54% “fair” or “poor”).
- Hoosiers are more likely to express a negative view toward Indiana’s K–12 policies (38% positive vs. 49% negative). The intensity (-14 points) on this question is also negative (8% “strongly positive” vs. 22% “strongly negative”).
- A plurality say that K–12 education in Indiana is “worse off” than it was three years ago (26% “better off” vs. 38% “worse off”).

### GRADING AREA SCHOOLS

- Of those respondents giving a grade, people were more likely to give an A or B to private schools (80%) in their local areas, compared to nearby public district schools (49%) and public charter schools (50%). Higher proportions did not express a view toward charter schools (38%) and private schools (29%).

### PREFERENCE FOR SCHOOL TYPE

- Indiana’s voters have a wide range of schooling preferences: 41 percent would choose a private school; 37 percent prefer a regular public school; 10 percent said a public charter school; 10 percent would like to homeschool.
- Those personal preferences signal an eye-opening disconnect with actual school enrollment patterns in Indiana. About 84 percent of K–12 students attend public district schools across the state. Nearly 10 percent of students enroll in private schools. Almost 4 percent of students currently go to public charter schools. Estimates indicate approximately 3 percent of the state’s students are homeschooled.

### CHARTER SCHOOLS

- We asked two questions about charter schools in the Indiana context. Fifty-five percent of respondents favored the formation of charter schools in Indiana (vs. 30% oppose). Likewise, 55 percent said they favored a proposal “to ensure the total per-student funding for public charter schools is about equal with the total per-student funding for corresponding nearby school districts” (vs. 31% oppose).

## SCHOOL VOUCHERS

- Nearly seven out of 10 Indiana voters (69%) say they support the Choice Scholarship Program, compared with 26 percent who said they opposed it. The margin of support is very large (+43 points). The net intensity was high and in the positive direction (+29 points; 43% “strongly favor” vs. 14% “strongly oppose”). In answer to a preceding question that did not offer any description or context about the program (i.e. Choice Scholarship baseline), Hoosiers still supported Choice Scholarships by a greater than two-to-one margin (54% favor vs. 24% oppose).
- Which demographic subgroups stand out?

### Most likely to favor:

82%	Age 18-34
80%	< \$40,000
78%	Indianapolis Metro
75%	Urban
73%	Independents
73%	Small Town

### Most likely to oppose:

34%	Democrats
33%	Rural
33%	\$40,000 to < \$80,000
31%	Age 55+

A majority of the supporters (54%) signaled having “opportunities/choices” mattered heavily in their support. Opponents most often cited “harms public schools/diverts funding” (28%) for their primary reason.

## EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)

- Nearly two out of three Hoosiers (64%) say they support an “education savings account” system (“ESA”), and 28 percent said they oppose ESAs. Respondents were twice as likely to have an intensely favorable view toward ESAs (35% “strongly favor” vs. 17% “strongly oppose”).
- If a Hoosier has a particular view on ESAs, she or he is more likely to vote for the pro-ESA candidate (33% “more likely” vs. 16% “less likely”). Forty-five percent of voters signaled that a candidate’s ESA position would not make or break her/his vote, by responding “no difference.”

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

- One-third (33%) of Hoosiers said policymakers should prioritize test results for determining school quality.
- Forty-eight percent said the amount of time spent on standardized testing is “too high,” compared with just 12% who said “too low.”

## STATE SUPERINTENDENT

- Thirty-nine percent of voters said they approve of the way State Superintendent Glenda Ritz is handling her job, compared with 24 percent who said they disapprove.
- When asked about the coming election in 2016, we observed a statistical tie between Glenda Ritz (23%) and a generic Republican challenger (21%). More than half of voters (51%) were still unsure at the end of 2015.

# SURVEY PROFILE

<b>Title:</b>	Indiana K–12 & School Choice Survey
<b>Survey Sponsor &amp; Developer:</b>	The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice
<b>Survey Data Collection &amp; Quality Control:</b>	Braun Research, Inc.
<b>Interview Dates:</b>	November 11 to December 1, 2015
<b>Interview Method:</b>	Live Telephone   50% landline and 50% cell phone
<b>Interview Length:</b>	17 minutes (average)
<b>Language(s):</b>	English
<b>Sample Frame &amp; Method:</b>	Dual Frame; Probability Sampling; Random Digit Dial (RDD)
<b>Population Sample:</b>	Statewide sample of registered voters in Indiana
<b>Sample Size:</b>	Total Sample, N = 1,845 Indiana (Statewide), N = 1,002
<b>Margin of Error:</b>	Indiana (Statewide) = $\pm$ 3.1 percentage points
<b>Response Rates (RR) using AAPOR RR3:</b>	Landline = 9.4%; Cell Phone = 9.2%
<b>Weighting?</b>	Yes (Landline/Cell, Age, Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Census Division)
<b>Oversampling?</b>	Yes – 843 additional interviews in order to achieve: Indianapolis Metro (n = 400); NE Indiana (n = 403); NW Indiana (n = 301); SE Indiana (n = 300); SW Indiana (n = 300)

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