

MAINE

K-12 & SCHOOL CHOICE SURVEY

What do voters say about
K-12 education?

Polling Paper No. 12

Paul **DiPerna**

MARCH 2013

With questions on state performance, education spending, grades and preferences for different types of schools, charter schools, tax-credit scholarships, education savings accounts, and school vouchers

The Friedman Foundation
for Educational Choice
edchoice.org 

THE
**MAINE HERITAGE
POLICY CENTER**
We the people of Maine...

Survey Project & Profile

Title:	Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey
Survey Organization:	Braun Research, Inc. (BRI)
Survey Sponsor:	The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice
Release Partner:	Maine Heritage Policy Center
Interview Dates:	January 30 to February 6, 2013
Interview Method:	Live Telephone 68% landline and 32% cell phone
Interview Length:	12 minutes (average)
Language(s):	English
Sample Frame:	Registered Voters
Sampling Method:	Dual Frame; Probability Sampling; Random Digit Dial (RDD)
Sample Sizes:	MAINE = 604
Split Sample Sizes:	“Split A” = 302; “Split B” = 302
Margin of Error:	MAINE = ± 4.0 percentage points
Response Rates:	Landline (LL) = 14.4% Cell Phone = 11.5%
Weighting?	Yes (Age, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Region)
Oversampling?	No

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The author is responsible for overall polling design; question wording and ordering; this paper’s analysis, charts, and writing; and any unintentional errors or misrepresentations.

Survey Demographics

Percent (%) of State Sample	
K-12 Parent	28
Democrat	28
Republican	26
Independent	38
Urban	9
Suburban	14
Small Town	41
Rural	35
18 - 24	11
25 - 34	14
35 - 44	16
45 - 54	20
55 - 64	18
65 & Over	20
Hispanic	1
Not Hispanic	99
Asian	1
Black	1
Mixed Race	1
Native American	1
White	95
Catholic	23
Jewish	1
Mormon	0
Muslim	1
Protestant	37
None	26
Under \$20,000	13
\$20,000 - \$39,999	18
\$40,000 - \$59,999	20
\$60,000 - \$79,999	16
\$80,000 - \$99,999	9
\$100,000 - \$149,999	10
\$150,000 or more	5
< HS Graduate	2
HS Graduate	28
Tech, Trade, Vocational	4
Some College	22
≥ College	44
Male	48
Female	52

March 6, 2013

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Maine's K-12 Profile

Average State Rank on NAEP ¹	14
High School Graduation Rate ²	82.8%
# Regular Public School Students ³	184,830
# Charter School Students ⁴	NA
# Private School Students ⁵	16,124
# Home School Students ⁶	4,730
% Regular Public School Students ⁷	89.9%
% Charter School Students ⁷	NA
% Private School Students ⁷	7.8%
% Home School Students ⁷	2.3%
# School Districts ⁸	235
# Regular Public Schools ⁸	657
# Charter Schools ⁹	2
# Private Schools ⁵	145
Online Learning Climate ¹⁰	Weak
% Free and Reduced-Price Lunch ⁸	43%
% Individualized Education Program (IEP) ⁸	16%
% English Language Learners (ELL) ⁸	2%
\$ Revenue Per Student ¹¹	\$13,950
\$ "Total" Per Student Spending ¹¹	\$13,839
\$ "Current" Per Student Spending ¹¹	\$12,452

Maine Profile Notes

1. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Average of four rankings (rounded upward to nearest single digit) based on 2011 state scale scores for fourth-grade reading (#22); fourth-grade math (#13); eighth-grade reading (#9); eighth-grade math (#12).
URL: nationsreportcard.gov/data_tools.asp
2. Reported high school graduation rates, determined by the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR) on the National Center for Education Statistics section on the U.S. Department of Education website. Data for 2009-2010 school year.
URL: nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013309/tables/table_03.asp
3. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD). Data for the 2010-2011 school year.
URL: nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch
4. Maine enacted a charter school law in 2011. The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools reports that at least two charter schools opened by the 2012-13 school year. The enrollment counts for these schools are not yet available at the time of this writing.
URL: www.publiccharters.org
5. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Private School Universe Survey (PSS). Data for 2009–2010 school year. This count excludes schools with less than 5 students.
URL: nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss/privateschoolsearch
6. Home school registration count for the 2011-12 school year. Maine Department of Education website.
URL: www.maine.gov/doe/homeinstruction/faq.html
7. Percentages are meant for general impressions only. Due to rounding, percentage totals may be slightly greater or less than 100%.
8. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD). Data for the 2010-2011 school year.
URL: nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states
9. Estimate provided by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools for the 2012-13 school year.
URL: www.publiccharters.org
10. Author rating (Weak, Moderate, or Strong), based on John Watson, Amy Murin, Lauren Vashaw, Butch Gemin, and Chris Rapp, *Keeping Pace with K-12 Online Learning: An Annual Review of State-Level Policy and Practice*, (Evergreen Education Group, 2012), Table 1, p. 15.
URL: <http://kpk12.com/cms/wp-content/uploads/KeepingPace2012.pdf>
11. Stephen Q. Cornman, Jumaane Young, and Kenneth C. Herrell, *Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2009–10 (Fiscal Year 2010)* (NCES 2013-305). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics (November 2012).
URL: nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013305.pdf

Overview

The “Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey” project, commissioned by the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice and conducted by Braun Research, Inc. (BRI), measures Maine registered voters’ familiarity and views on a range of K-12 education topics and school choice reforms. We report response *levels* and *differences* (often using the terms “net” or “spread”) of voter opinion, and the *intensity* of those responses.

Where do Mainers stand on important issues and policy proposals in K-12 education? We try to provide some brief observations and insights in this memo.

A randomly selected and statistically representative sample of Maine voters recently responded to 19 substantive questions and 12 demographic questions. A total of 604 telephone interviews were conducted in English from January 30 to February 6, 2013, by means of both landline and cell phone. Statistical results were weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for the statewide sample is ± 4.0 percentage points.

In this project we also included one split-sample experiment. A split-sample design is a systematic way of comparing the effects of two or more alternative wordings for a given question. The purpose is to see if providing a new piece of information about education spending can significantly influence opinion on that topic — a salient issue in Maine’s state politics and representing an undercurrent in education policy discussions.

Our polling paper has four sections. The first section summarizes key findings. We call the second section “Survey Snapshots,” which offers charts highlighting the core findings of the project. The third section describes the survey’s methodology, summarizes response statistics, and presents additional technical information on call dispositions for landline and cell phone interviews. The fourth section displays the questionnaire and results (“topline numbers”), allowing the reader to follow the actual interview as it was conducted, with respect to question wording and ordering.

Key Findings

- ▶ **More than three out of four registered voters in Maine (77%) are paying attention to issues in K-12 education. About one-fifth of voters (22%) said they pay “very little” or no attention.**

See Question 1

Voters who said they pay “a lot” of attention (39%) to K-12 education issues outnumber those who said they pay no attention (6%) by nearly seven-to-one.

Parents of school-age children are clearly engaged.¹ Six out of ten (60%) in the survey said they pay “a lot” of attention to education issues, a figure that is twice as large as the proportion of non-parents (31%) giving the same response.

Middle-age and older voters (ages 35 to 54, and 55 and older, respectively) clearly pay closer attention to these issues than younger voters (age 18 to 34). About 42% of middle-age and older voters are engaged on K-12 education issues, saying they pay “a lot” of attention. By comparison, less than three out of ten younger voters (28%) said the same.

- ▶ **Mainers are more likely to think that K-12 education is on the “wrong track” (50%) compared to heading in the “right direction” (31%).**

See Question 2

Those living in Cumberland County are relatively less pessimistic than the state as a whole. About two out of five Cumberland voters (40%) said things are on the “wrong track,” whereas half of the state sample gives that same response.

¹ For this paper, the term “Parents” refers to those respondents who said they have one or more children in preschool through high school. “Non-Parents” may have children, but none are in this specific grade range.

Pluralities of most demographic subgroups see K-12 education on the wrong track. Levels of disapproval range from 43% (suburban and high-income voters) to 58% (low-income voters). Conservatives (57%) are significantly more likely than Liberals (45%) and Moderates (46%) to see K-12 education on the wrong track. Low-income voters are much more pessimistic (58%) than middle-income (47%) and high-income (43%) voters.²

► **Half of voters give positive marks to the state’s public school system (50% said “good” or “excellent”; 45% said “fair” or “poor”).**

See Question 3

Counter to the statewide averages, Parents (50%) are more likely than non-parents (43%) to say the system is “fair” or “poor.”

Suburbanites are more likely to express positive ratings (57%), compared to urban voters.

Republican responses are significantly different than both Democrats and Independents. Greater than half of Democrats (54%) and Independents (57%) gave positive ratings to the state’s system for public schools, greater than the proportion of Republicans (42%) saying the same. Conversely, 40% of Democrats and 38% of Independents described the public school system as “fair” or “poor.” But nearly six out of ten Republicans (56%) offered negative ratings.

In terms of ideology, liberal responses differ from conservatives and moderates. Almost six out of ten liberals (59%) gave positive ratings, greater than the proportions of conservatives (46%) and moderates (49%) saying the same. Conversely, 36% of liberals described the public school system as “fair” or “poor.”

² For this paper, “low-income” refers to respondents with annual household incomes less than \$40,000; “middle-income” refers to respondents with annual household incomes at least equal to \$40,000 but less than \$80,000; “high-income” refers to respondents with annual household incomes at least equal to or greater than \$80,000.

But significantly higher proportions of conservatives (51%) and moderates (45%) offered negative ratings.

A couple other demographics stand out. Younger voters (54%) are more likely to have a negative view of the public school system, compared to older voters (39%). Middle-age voters (51%) and older voters (54%) are significantly more likely to give positive ratings. Just two-fifths of younger voters (41%) give positive ratings.

Low-income voters have a significantly different opinion compared to middle-income and high-income voters. More than half of low-income voters (55%) give negative ratings for the public school system. However, more than half of middle-income voters (56%) and high-income voters (55%) give positive ratings. Two-fifths of low-income voters (41%) are positive about the state's public schools.

► **Based on survey responses, Maine voters do not know how much is spent per student in public schools. There is an awareness gap.**

See Question 4

Approximately \$12,452 is spent on each student in Maine's public schools, and only 7% of respondents could estimate the correct per-student spending range for the state (this dollar figure reflects "current expenditures" per student). About 39% of respondents thought that less than \$8,000 is being spent per student in the state's public schools. Another 30% of voters said they "don't know" and did not offer a spending number.

When considering "total expenditures" per student (\$13,839 in 2009-2010), which is another definition for educational spending, voter estimates appear even more dramatically off-target.³

³ "Current Expenditures" data include dollars spent on instruction, instruction-related support services, and other elementary/secondary current expenditures, but exclude expenditures on long-term debt service, facilities and construction, and other programs. "Total Expenditures" includes the latter categories.

Approximately 85% of respondents either underestimated educational spending per student (for either definition), or they could not give an answer or guess. No matter how one defines expenditures (per student), voters are poorly uninformed about how money is spent in K-12 education.

- ▶ **When given the latest per-student spending information, voters are significantly less likely to say public school funding is at a level that is “too low,” compared to answering without having such information.**

See Questions 5A and 5B

In an experiment, we asked two slightly different questions about the level of public school funding in Maine. On version 5A, 52% of voters said that public school funding is “too low.” However, on version 5B, which included a sentence referring to data on per-student funding in Maine (\$12,452), the proportion of voters saying “too low” shrank by 14 percentage points to 38%, effectively a 26% reduction.

It seems that voters are likely to change their views on public school funding—at least for those who believe it is “too low”—if given accurate per-student spending information. This implication that opinion can turn on a single piece of data is important when considering political sound bites that focus on aggregate levels of public spending rather than how the money is allocated and spent per student.

- ▶ **Voters are more likely to give grades A or B to private/parochial schools in their areas, compared to other types of schools.**

See Questions 6A, 6B, and 6C

See Stephen Q. Cornman, Jumaane Young, and Kenneth C. Herrell, *Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2009–10 (Fiscal Year 2010)* (NCES 2013-305). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics (November 2012). URL: nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013305.pdf

Approximately 60% of voters give an A or B to private schools, 45% give an A or B to regular public schools, and 27% give an A or B to charter schools. Only 12% of voters give a D or F grade to their local public schools. Even fewer give low grades to charter schools (6%) and private/parochial schools (3%).

Voters are more than twice as likely to give an A to private/parochial schools (23%) when compared to the proportion of responses giving an A to public schools (10%).

- ▶ **When asked for a preferred school type, Mainers would choose a private school (42%) first. A regular public school option is the second-most frequently cited preference (36%). As a result, there is a major disconnect between voters' school preferences and actual enrollment patterns in the state.**

See Questions 7 and 8

Approximately 8% of Maine's K-12 student population attend private schools, but in our survey interviews, 42% of respondents would select a private school as a first option. Nearly 90% of the state's students attend regular public schools, but a substantially lower percentage of voters (36%) would choose a regular public school as a first choice. A sizeable proportion of Maine voters (9%) would like to send their child to a public charter school. About 10% of voters said he/she would opt to homeschool their child. Currently about 2% of Maine students homeschool.

In a follow-up question, respondents in our survey prioritize a "better education" (14%) and "individual attention" (13%) as the key attributes they are looking for in the selection of their preferred school. The third-most important attribute, as suggested by about 8% of all respondents, is "socialization/peers."

Some caution. These characteristics appear to be a higher priority over others on the list. However, any of these qualities may or may not attract more urgency as a second or third priority, which we do not explore in our survey.

- ▶ **Maine voters are much more likely to favor charter schools (62%), rather than oppose such schools (20%). The net support for charter schools is very large (+42 percentage points). Approximately 35% of voters say they are familiar with charter schools.**

See Questions 9 and 10

Maine registered a large positive net support (+42 net) favoring charter schools. The enthusiasm is also very positive (+15 points). In other words, voters are more likely to say they “strongly favor” charter schools (24%) compared to those who said they “strongly oppose” (9%) such schools.

Charter schools enjoy majority support across all examined demographic groups. However, some relative differences emerge depending on a respondent’s political party or ideology. Republicans significantly differ from Democrats and Independents, although all three groups overwhelmingly support charter schools (73%, 53%, and 62%, respectively). Similarly like a mirror image, conservatives significantly differ from liberals and moderates, but all three groups still support charter schools (73%, 53%, and 60%, respectively).

Intensity of support for charters is greatest among parents, Republicans, conservatives, young voters, and low-income voters. There is relatively weaker intensity (but still positive) among Democrats, and liberals.

About 18% of voters did not express an opinion regarding charter schools.

- ▶ **Mainers say they are not that familiar with virtual schools (64% unfamiliar), and at least for now, they are less likely to be supportive of these schools (37% favor vs. 50% oppose).**

See Questions 11 and 12

The strongly held negative views exceed the strongly positive views by 19 percentage points, and so intensity for now is clearly negative. This is understandable though, possibly pointing to a skepticism of the unknown.

Party identification and political ideology seem to matter, at least on the surface. Republicans (46%) are significantly more likely to favor virtual schools, compared to Democrats (33%) and Independents (35%). Likewise, conservatives (46%) are more likely to support virtual schools than liberals (30%). Conversely, those who self-identify as Democrats, Independents, and liberals are much more likely to oppose virtual schools.

Approximately 13% of voters did not have an opinion about virtual schools.

- ▶ **Voters strongly support “tax-credit scholarships.” The percentage of those who favor (62%) is more than double the number of people who said they oppose such a school choice policy (24%).**

See Question 13

The net support is considerable, roughly +38 percentage points. Similarly, the intensity of support is strong. Nearly twice as many respondents (26%) say they “strongly favor” tax-credit scholarships, compared to those who “strongly oppose” (14%). The observed demographic groups who are most likely to favor the policy include parents (69%), rural voters (67%), Republicans (72%), conservatives (72%), as well as younger and middle age voters (76% and 62%, respectively). Those groups most likely to oppose include liberals (31%), older voters (34%), and high-income voters (30%).

Nearly 14% of voters statewide did not express an opinion.

- ▶ **Maine voters support an “education savings account” system (called an “ESA”). The percentage of those who favor ESAs (57%) is considerably**

greater than the proportion who say they oppose (32%) the policy. The net support is large (+25 net) with some intensity (+10 points).

See Question 14

Among the examined demographic groups, net support is highest among parents (+40 net), rural voters (+35 net), Republicans (+40 net), conservatives (+42 net), young voters (+51 net), middle-age voters (+34 net), and low-income voters (+36 net). By far, older voters show the greatest net opposition to ESAs (44% favor vs. 45% oppose).

The intensity of support for ESAs is highest among parents (+19 points), urban voters (+22 points), Republicans (+22 points), conservatives (+23 points), younger voters (+24 points), and low-income voters (+20 points). Two groups show the most intense opposition: liberals (-5 points) and older voters (-3 points).

Ten percent of respondents did not share an opinion on ESAs.

- ▶ **A majority of Mainers (55%) said they support school vouchers, compared to 38% of voters who said they oppose such a school choice system. The margin of support is more than four times the survey's margin of error: +17 percentage points. About 45% of respondents said they were familiar with school vouchers.**

See Questions 15, 16, and 17

Since 1873, Maine has had a voucher system for school districts that do not have public high schools. This could explain why Maine is a little more familiar with vouchers than most other states where we have polled.⁴

The levels of support for vouchers vary quite a bit among demographic groups. Vouchers appear most attractive to parents (+38 net), Republicans (+42 net), conservatives (+44 net), younger voters (+30 net), middle-age voters (+25 net),

⁴ To browse the Friedman Foundation's archive of state polls, go to: www.edchoice.org/research

and low-income voters (+33 net). Despite general positive support, there are two groups that are significantly more inclined to oppose vouchers, including self-identified Democrats (-9 net) and liberals (-13 net). Voters in Cumberland County also show a significantly different view of vouchers, compared to the state average (45% favor vs. 48% oppose).

Positive intensity for vouchers is highest among parents (+16 points), Republicans (+26 points), conservatives (+24 points), younger voters (+10 points), middle-age voters (+11 points), and low-income voters (+15 points). Negative intensity is greatest among Cumberland voters (-13 points), Democrats (-15 points), and liberals (-18 points).

In a follow-up and open-ended question, we asked for the reason why a respondent chose his/her view regarding school vouchers. Most frequently, he/she said some combination of “choice,” “freedom,” or “flexibility.” Nearly one-third of the respondents (32%) mentioned one or more of these terms.

Close to 7% of Maine voters had no opinion on school vouchers.

► **Voters clearly prefer universal access to school vouchers, compared to eligibility that is based solely on financial need.**

See Questions 18 and 19

Two out of three voters (67%) said they agree with the statement that “school vouchers should be available to all families, regardless of incomes and special needs.” About 4 of 10 respondents (44%) “strongly agree” with this statement. Almost three out of ten (29%) disagree with this statement; 19% said they “strongly disagree.”

Only 29% of Maine voters said they agree with the statement that “school vouchers should only be available to families based on financial need.” Only 13% of all

respondents “strongly agree” with this statement. Well more than half (67%) said they disagree with means-testing school vouchers, and 47% said they “strongly disagree.”

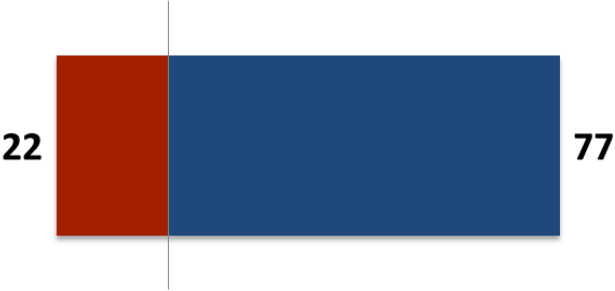


Survey Snapshots

Q1. How much attention do you pay to issues involving K-12 education?

■ Very Little/None ■ Some/A Lot

MAINE



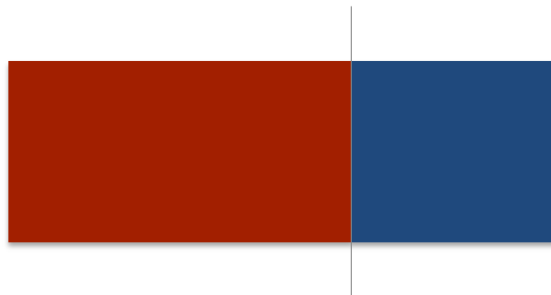
FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q1.

Q2. Do you feel things in Maine's K-12 education system are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have generally gotten off on the wrong track?

■ **Wrong Track** ■ **Right Direction**

MAINE

50



31

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey, Q2.*

Q2. Do you feel things in Maine's K-12 education system are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have generally gotten off on the wrong track?

	Right Direction %	Wrong Track %	Net	N=
ALL RESPONDENTS	31	50	- 19	604
Parent	37	50	- 13	170
Non-Parent	29	49	- 20	430
COMMUNITY				
Urban	27	48	- 21	57
Suburban	37	43	- 6	83
Small Town	31	52	- 21	249
Rural	29	50	- 21	210
PARTY ID				
Democrat	33	45	- 12	166
Republican	29	55	- 26	155
Independent	35	45	- 10	231
IDEOLOGY				
Liberal	35	45	- 10	161
Conservative	27	57	- 30	188
Moderate	33	46	- 23	215
AGE GROUP				
18 to 34	27	49	- 22	149
35 to 54	33	52	- 19	221
55 & Over	32	49	- 17	229
HOUSEHOLD INCOME				
Under \$40,000	26	58	- 32	187
\$40,000 to \$79,999	34	47	- 13	215
\$80,000 & Over	39	43	- 4	142

NOTE: Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its registered voter population size in the state and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes.

SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q2.

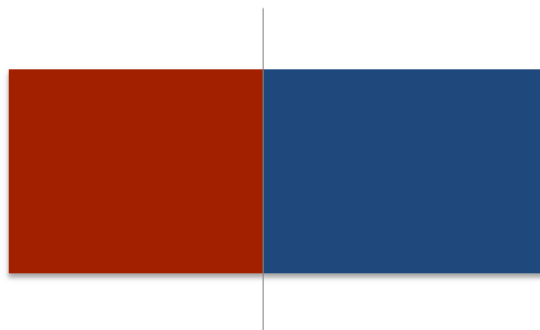
Q3. How would you rate Maine's public school system?

■ Fair/Poor

■ Good/Excellent

MAINE

45



50

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q3.

Q3. How would you rate Maine's public school system?

	Good/Excellent %	Fair/Poor %	Net	Intensity	N=
ALL RESPONDENTS	50	45	+ 5	- 1	604
Parent	49	50	- 1	- 3	170
Non-Parent	51	43	+ 8	even	430
COMMUNITY					
Urban	42	52	- 10	- 1	57
Suburban	57	41	+ 16	+ 6	83
Small Town	51	43	+ 8	- 1	249
Rural	48	48	even	- 4	210
PARTY ID					
Democrat	54	40	+ 14	+ 5	166
Republican	42	56	- 14	- 9	155
Independent	57	38	+ 19	+ 2	231
IDEOLOGY					
Liberal	59	36	+ 23	+ 8	161
Conservative	46	51	- 5	- 6	188
Moderate	49	45	+ 4	- 2	215
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	41	54	- 13	- 3	149
35 to 54	51	46	+ 5	+ 2	221
55 & Over	54	39	+ 15	- 3	229
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under \$40,000	41	55	- 14	- 5	187
\$40,000 to \$79,999	56	41	+ 15	+ 2	215
\$80,000 & Over	55	39	+ 16	even	142

NOTE: Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its registered voter population size in the state and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. Based on Gallup's "Positive Intensity Score," Intensity is measured by subtracting the combined percentages of "fair" and "poor" responses from the combined percentages of "good" and "excellent" responses. The difference indicates the enthusiasm behind the positive or negative ratings.

SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q3.

Q4. How much do you think is spent per year on each student in Maine's public schools? Your estimate (to the nearest thousand dollars) will represent the combined expenditures of local, state, and federal governments.

- Less Than \$4,000
- \$4,001 - \$8,000
- \$8,001 - \$12,000
- \$12,001 - \$16,000
- Over \$16,000



FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey, Q4.*

Q5. (Split A) Do you believe that public school funding in Maine is at a level that is:

- Too High
- About Right
- Too Low



FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey, Q5A.*

Q5. (Split B) According to the most recent information available, in Maine \$12,452 is being spent each year per student attending public schools. Do you believe that public school funding in Maine is at a level that is:

- Too High
- About Right
- Too Low

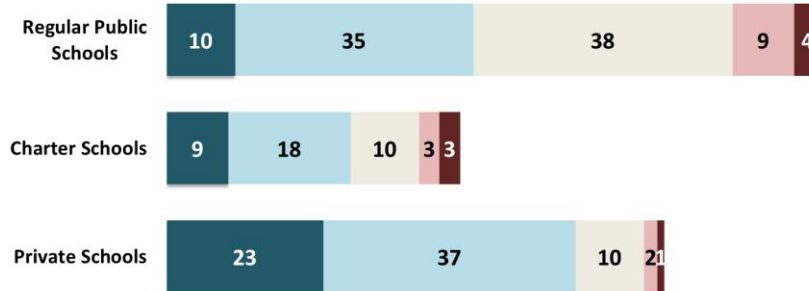


FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey, Q5B.*

Q6. In thinking about the schools in your area,
what grade would you give...

■ A ■ B ■ C ■ D ■ F

(% of all responses)

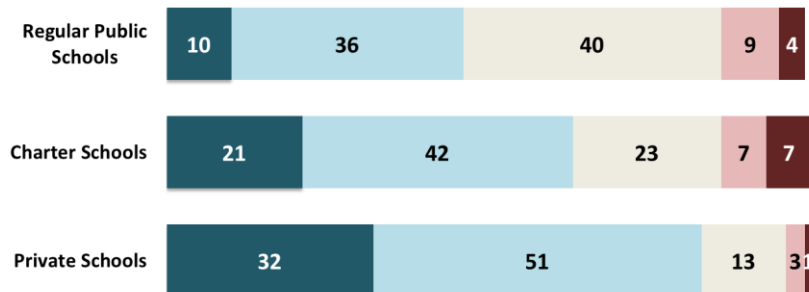


FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q6.

Q6. In thinking about the schools in your area,
what grade would you give...

■ A ■ B ■ C ■ D ■ F

(% of only responses giving grades)



FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q6.

Q7. If it were your decision and you could select any type of school, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child?

- Regular Public School
- Charter School
- Private School
- Homeschool

Survey Respondents



Actual Enrollments



FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q7.

Q8. What is the most important characteristic or attribute that would cause you to choose a [INSERT SCHOOL TYPE FROM PREVIOUS QUESTION] for your child? Please use one word, or a very short phrase.

Top 13 | Specific impressions offered by respondents in the statewide sample. Numbers represent counts (n), not percentages.

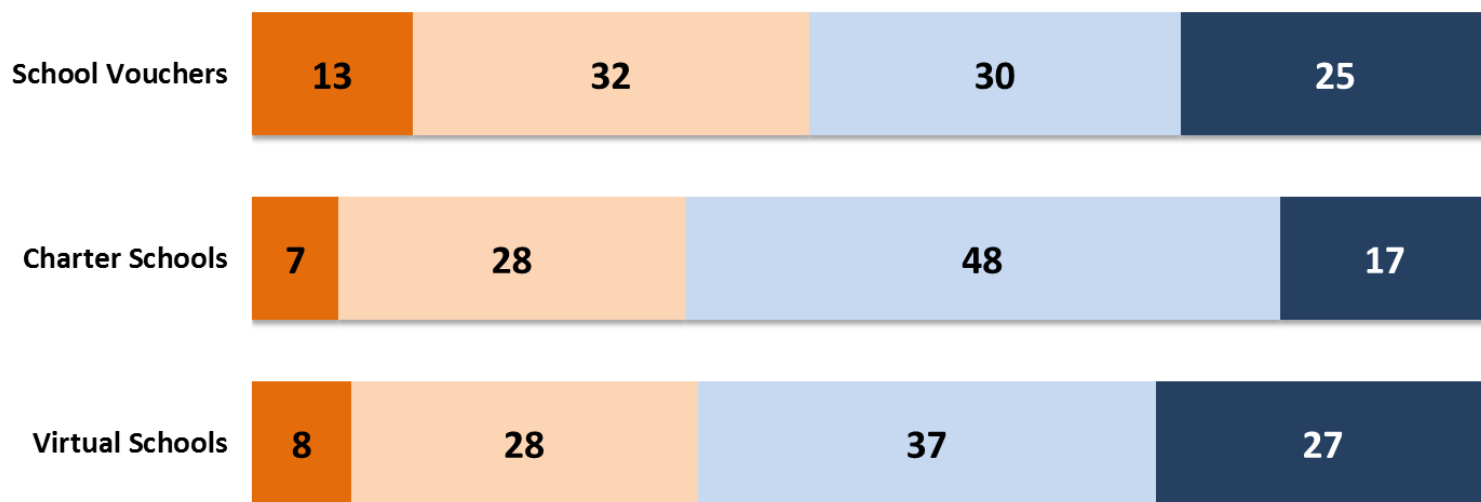
BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	93
INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION / ONE-ON-ONE	74
BETTER TEACHERS / TEACHERS / TEACHING	50
SOCIALIZATION / PEERS / OTHER KIDS	48
DIVERSITY / VARIETY	34
CLASS SIZE / STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO	32
ENVIRONMENT / CULTURE / COMMUNITY	31
ACADEMICS / CURRICULUM	30
PARENTS / PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	21
ALMA MATER / SOCIAL NETWORK	20
MORALS / VALUES / ETHICS	16
COST / TUITION / AFFORDABILITY	15
SAFETY / LESS DRUGS, VIOLENCE, BULLYING	14
MORALS / VALUES / ETHICS	15
RESOURCES / FUNDING	13

SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q8.

Q9 Q11 Q15.

How familiar are you with [Charter Schools / Virtual Schools / School Vouchers] in K-12 Education?

- Very Familiar
- Somewhat Familiar
- Not That Familiar
- Never Heard Of / Don't Know



FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q9, Q11, Q15.

Q10. Charter schools are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations. In general, do you favor or oppose charter schools?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

MAINE

20



62

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q10.

Q10. Charter schools are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations. In general, do you favor or oppose charter schools?

	Favor %	Oppose %	Net	Intensity	N=
ALL RESPONDENTS	62	20	+ 44	+ 16	604
Parent	66	20	+ 46	+ 21	170
Non-Parent	60	21	+ 39	+ 14	430
COMMUNITY					
Urban	66	26	+ 40	+ 15	57
Suburban	63	18	+ 45	+ 16	83
Small Town	63	19	+ 44	+ 17	249
Rural	59	21	+ 38	+ 16	210
PARTY ID					
Democrat	53	30	+ 23	+ 5	166
Republican	73	11	+ 62	+ 32	155
Independent	62	20	+ 42	+ 13	231
IDEOLOGY					
Liberal	53	31	+ 22	+ 4	161
Conservative	73	12	+ 61	+ 26	188
Moderate	60	19	+ 41	+ 16	215
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	68	17	+ 51	+ 19	149
35 to 54	59	23	+ 36	+ 13	221
55 & Over	61	20	+41	+ 15	229
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under \$40,000	65	13	+ 52	+ 20	187
\$40,000 to \$79,999	62	23	+ 39	+ 15	215
\$80,000 & Over	64	23	+ 41	+ 15	142

NOTE: Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its registered voter population size in the state and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. Based on Gallup's "Positive Intensity Score," Intensity is measured by subtracting the percentage of "strongly oppose" responses from the percentage of "strongly favor" responses. The difference indicates enthusiasm behind the support or opposition for a given policy or proposal.

SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q10.

Q12. Virtual schools can be run publicly or privately, allowing students to work with their curriculum and teachers over the internet – in combination with, or in place of, traditional classroom learning. In general, do you favor or oppose virtual schools?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

MAINE

50



37

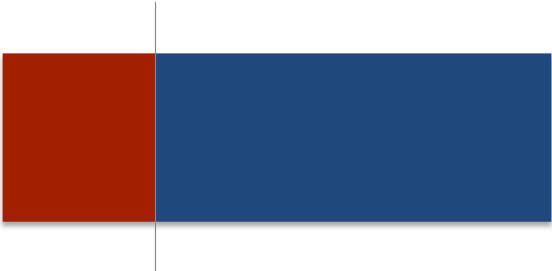
FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q12.

Q13. Some states give tax credits to individuals and businesses if they contribute money to nonprofit organizations that distribute private school scholarships. This policy supports a “tax-credit scholarship system.” In general, do you favor or oppose a tax-credit scholarship system?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

MAINE

24



62

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q13.

Q14. An "education savings account" -- often called an "ESA" -- allows parents to withdraw their child from a public district or charter school, and receive a payment into a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple uses. Parents can then use these funds to pay for private school tuition, virtual education programs, private tutoring or saving for future college expenses. In general, do you favor or oppose this kind of "savings account system"?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

MAINE

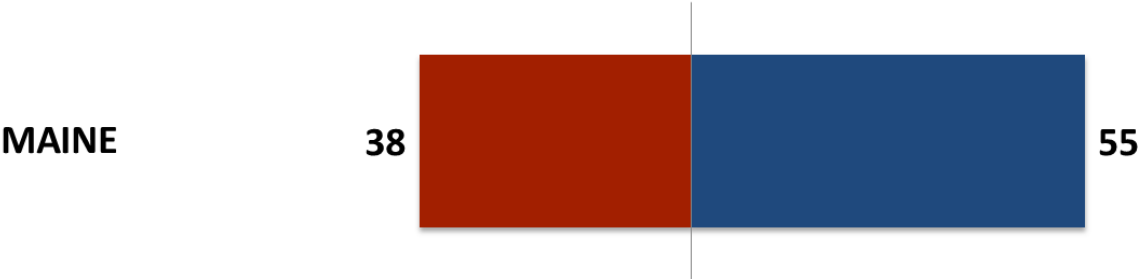
32



57

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q14.

Q16. A school voucher system allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. If this policy were adopted, tax dollars currently allocated to a school district would be allocated to parents in the form of a “school voucher” to pay partial or full tuition for their child’s school. In general, do you favor or oppose a school voucher system?



FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q16.

Q16. A school voucher system allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. If this policy were adopted, tax dollars currently allocated to a school district would be allocated to parents in the form of a “school voucher” to pay partial or full tuition for their child’s school. In general, do you favor or oppose a school voucher system?

	Favor %	Oppose %	Net	Intensity	N=
ALL RESPONDENTS	55	38	+ 17	+ 3	604
Parent	65	27	+ 38	+ 16	170
Non-Parent	51	43	+ 8	- 3	430
COMMUNITY					
Urban	49	40	+ 9	- 2	57
Suburban	57	41	+ 16	+ 2	83
Small Town	56	37	+ 19	+ 4	249
Rural	55	39	+ 16	+ 3	210
PARTY ID					
Democrat	41	50	- 9	- 15	166
Republican	69	27	+ 42	+ 27	155
Independent	55	38	+ 17	even	231
IDEOLOGY					
Liberal	39	53	- 14	- 18	161
Conservative	70	26	+ 44	+ 24	188
Moderate	53	42	+ 11	- 1	215
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	61	31	+ 30	+ 10	149
35 to 54	59	34	+ 25	+ 14	221
55 & Over	49	47	+ 2	- 8	229
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under \$40,000	62	29	+ 33	+ 15	187
\$40,000 to \$79,999	56	37	+ 19	+ 2	215
\$80,000 & Over	52	45	+ 7	- 1	142

NOTE: Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its registered voter population size in the state and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. Based on Gallup's "Positive Intensity Score," Intensity is measured by subtracting the percentage of "strongly oppose" responses from the percentage of "strongly favor" responses. The difference indicates the enthusiasm behind the support or opposition for a given policy or proposal.

SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey* , Q16.

Q17. What is the most important reason that would cause you to choose your previous response relating to school vouchers? Please use a few words, or a very short phrase.

Top 10 | Specific impressions offered by respondents in the statewide sample. Numbers represent counts (n), not percentages.

CHOICE / FLEXIBILITY / FREEDOM	181
HURTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS	86
BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	29
COST / TUITION / AFFORDABILITY	25
ABUSE / FRAUD	20
FUNDS / RESOURCES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS ONLY	16
BAD USE OF TAX MONEY	14
HELPS CHILDREN	12
PUBLIC SCHOOL: NEGATIVE MENTIONS	11
SHOULD PAY OUT OF POCKET	11
FAIR / EQUALITY	11
SHOULD PAY OUT OF POCKET	11

SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q17.

Q18. Some people believe that school vouchers *should be available to all families, regardless of incomes and special needs*. Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

■ Disagree ■ Agree

Q19. Some people believe that school vouchers *should only be available to families based on financial need*. Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

MAINE (Q18)

29



67

MAINE (Q19)

67



29

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q18 and Q19.

Methods Summary

The “Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey” project, commissioned by the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice and conducted by Braun Research, Inc. (BRI), interviewed a statistically representative sample of registered voters in the state of Maine. Methodology included probability sampling and random-digit dial. The statewide sample includes a total of **604** telephone interviews completed in English from January 30 to February 6, 2013 by means of both landline and cell phone.

The margin of sampling error for the statewide sample is ± 4.0 percentage points.

BRI’s live callers conducted all phone interviews. For this entire project, a total of **7,387** calls were made in Maine. Of these calls, **2,108** were unusable phone numbers (disconnected, fax, busy, non-residential, or non-answers, etc.); **3,678** were usable numbers but eligibility unknown (including refusals and voicemail); **58** cell phone numbers were usable but not eligible for this survey; **33** people did not complete the survey. The average response rate of the landline interviews was **14.4%**. The average response rate of the cell phone interviews was **11.5%**.

Details on call dispositions, landline and cell phone response rates, and weighting are discussed in following sections.

Sample Design

A combination of landline and cellular random-digit-dial (RDD) samples was used to represent registered voters in Maine who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to BRI specifications.

SSI starts with a database of all listed telephone numbers, updated on a four- to six-week rolling basis, 25 percent of the listings at a time. All active blocks—contiguous groups of 100 phone numbers for which more than one residential number is listed—are added to this database. Blocks and exchanges that include only listed business numbers are excluded.

Numbers for the landline sample were drawn with equal probabilities from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

Contact Procedures

Interviews were conducted from January 30 to February 6, 2013. As many as eight attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. The sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential respondents. Each phone number received at least one daytime call.

We have noticed over the last several years response rates have been declining for consumer polls. Generally, running surveys over a longer period of time will boost these response rates. However, lower response rates do not lead to lower reliability of the data. For example, polls with a sample size of 1,200 respondents run over a two-day period with response rates of 3% or 4% have been acceptable for public release.

The survey's margin of error is the largest 95% Confidence Interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample—the one around 50%. The overall margin of error for this survey is ± 4.0 percent. This means that in 95 of every 100 samples drawn using the same methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 4.0 percentage points away from their true values in the population.

It is critical to note that the margin of sampling error (MSE) is higher when considering the number of respondents for a given demographic subgroup. For example, the MSE for a subgroup of 150 respondents is ± 8.0 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, question wording, ordering, and other practical difficulties when conducting surveys may introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion research.

Call Dispositions and Response Rates

Maine Statewide Call Dispositions				
<u>SUMMARY</u>			<u>DETAIL</u>	
Landline	Cell Phone		Landline	Cell Phone
6,000	2,964	Total	1,146	870
4,423	2,964	Released	12	3
1577	0	Unreleased	56	17
3,206	2,073	Usable	-	1
1,271	891	Unusable	3	-
2,909	1,602	Qualified	1,217	891
65.8%	70.0%	Est. Usability	779	36
100.0%	77.4%	Est. Eligibility	89	2
14.4%	11.5%	Est. Response	868	38
			420	184
			18	15
			438	199
			856	573
			13	8
			548	771
			359	359
			121	67
			3	0
			1,900	1,778
			-	-
			-	-
			-	58
			0	58
			14.4%	11.5%
			Response Rate	

Weighting Procedures and Analysis

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to compensate for sample designs and patterns of non-response that might bias results. In this study, the sample demographics were balanced to population parameters. Using weighting targets, the sample was balanced to reflect the targeted population representation by Age, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Region. The weighted and unweighted results are available on request.

All weighting measures are based on 2010 Census Bureau statistics for the state of Maine.

Special note: We calculated age distributions from date-of-birth information on file from the state's respective registered voter database, as supplied by Aristotle International.

About the Author

Paul DiPerna (paul@edchoice.org) is Research Director for the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice in Indianapolis. He joined the foundation in September 2006. DiPerna's research interests include surveys and polling on K-12 education and school choice policies. His other responsibilities include directing and managing all research projects commissioned by the foundation. DiPerna has traveled to 25 states for his work, making numerous presentations on survey findings and to discuss school choice policies for audiences including public officials, policy professionals, the media, academics, and advocates.

Previously, DiPerna served as the assistant director for the Brown Center on Education Policy at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. His six years at Brookings included projects evaluating the federal Blue Ribbon Schools Program and analyzing student achievement in charter schools. DiPerna was a research analyst for the first five issues of the Brown Center Report on American Education (2000-2004). He also managed and coordinated the activities of the National Working Commission on Choice in K-12 Education (2001-2005).

A native of Pittsburgh, DiPerna earned an M.A. in political science from the University of Illinois (2000) and B.A. from the University of Dayton (1996).

Acknowledgements

A number of people made significant contributions during the course of this survey project. Our release partners at the Maine Heritage Policy Center gave us invaluable insights and context at the local/state level. Amanda Clark and Scott Moody provided critical input and feedback. We would like to thank the team at Braun Research who assisted in project development, and for their excellent work in conducting the interviews and collecting the data. I appreciate the time and commitments from Paul Braun, Cynthia Miller, and Dave Oshman. Finally, we are of course grateful to the respondents who generously agreed to participate in our survey interviews.

About the Survey Organization

Braun Research, Inc. (BRI)

The Braun Research network of companies, founded in 1995, combined employ 47 full-time and more than 375 part-time employees engaged in data collection via telephone, and internet for various survey research firms, government and advertising agencies, local community organizations, local and national business groups, foundations, universities and academic entities, as well as religious organizations. In 18 years, Braun Research has conducted more than 8,800 research projects by telephone, internet, and mail worldwide.

Nationally-known research firms have hired Braun Research, including the Gallup Organization, the Pew Research Center, the Eagleton Poll, Mathematica Policy Research, and *The Washington Post*. Braun Research has worked for the New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services, as well as other government agencies including the United States Departments of the Treasury and Defense, and the Center for Disease Control.

Braun Research is a well-respected firm employing techniques and standards approved by various survey research academic organizations and other affiliations including those with whom Braun is an active member, including AAPOR (American Association for Public Opinion Research), MRA/CMOR (Market Research Association/Council on Marketing and Opinion Research), and CASRO (Council on American Survey Research Organizations).

Braun's services on behalf of other research firms are up to standards required by various professional associations where Braun enjoys membership, and in some cases, participates actively. Paul Braun is a member of the MRA/CMOR committees on response rate improvement and in launching a seal of quality for the industry. Paul Braun is recognized as a leader in the field by colleagues who asked him to serve on these committees. He has served as President of the New Jersey Chapter of AAPOR.

About the Survey Sponsor

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and nonpartisan organization, solely dedicated to advancing Milton and Rose Friedman's vision of school choice for all children. First established as the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation in 1996, the Foundation continues to promote school choice as the most effective and equitable way to improve the quality of K-12 education in America. The Foundation is dedicated to research, education, and outreach on the vital issues and implications related to choice and competition in K-12 education.

Commitment to Methods & Transparency

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice is committed to research that adheres to high scientific standards, and matters of methodology and transparency are taken seriously at all levels of our organization. We are dedicated to providing high-quality information in a transparent and efficient manner.

All individuals have opinions, and many organizations (like our own) have specific missions or philosophical orientations. Scientific methods, if used correctly and followed closely in well-designed studies, should neutralize these opinions and orientations. Research rules and methods minimize bias. We believe rigorous procedural rules of science prevent a researcher's motives, and an organization's particular orientation, from pre-determining results. If research adheres to proper scientific and methodological standards, its findings can be relied upon no matter who has conducted it. If rules and methods are neither specified nor followed, then the biases of the researcher or an organization may become relevant, because a lack of rigor opens the door for those biases to affect the results.

Our authors take full responsibility for research design, analysis, charts, and any unintentional errors or misrepresentations. They welcome any and all questions related to methods and findings.

About the Survey Release Partner

The Maine Heritage Policy Center (MHPC)

The Maine Heritage Policy Center is a research and educational organization whose mission is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise; limited, constitutional government; individual freedom; and traditional American values—all for the purpose of providing public policy solutions that benefit the people of Maine.

MHPC's staff pursues this mission by undertaking accurate and timely research and marketing these findings to its primary audience: the Maine Legislature, nonpartisan Legislative staff, the executive branch, the state's media, and the broad policy community. MHPC's products include publications, articles, conferences, and policy briefings.

The Maine Heritage Policy Center researches and formulates innovative and proven conservative public policy solutions for Maine in five key areas:

- ▶ Economy/Taxation – The Jackson Center for Prosperity
- ▶ Education – The Center for Education Excellence
- ▶ Health Care – The Center for Health Reform Initiatives
- ▶ Transparency & Open Government – The Center for Open Government
- ▶ Constitutional Government – The Center for Constitutional Government

Governed by an independent Board of Directors, The Maine Heritage Policy Center is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization. MHPC relies on the generous support from individuals, corporations, and foundations, and does not accept government funds or perform contract work.

Maine K-12 & School Choice Survey Questions & Results

Interview Dates:	January 30 to February 6, 2013
Sample Frame:	Registered Voters
Sample Sizes:	MAINE = 604
Split Sample Sizes:	“Split A” = 302; “Split B” = 302
Margins of Error:	MAINE = ± 4.0 percentage points Split Sample = ± 5.6 percentage points

Displayed numbers in tables are percentages, unless otherwise noted.

Due to rounding, percentage totals for a given question may be slightly greater or less than 100%.

“For this brief interview, if you are completely unsure about your answer or have no feelings for an answer, you can say ‘I Don’t Know.’” [ENTER AS “DK”]

1. How much attention do you pay to issues involving K-12 education?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	A Lot	Some	Very Little	None	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	39	38	16	6	< 1

2. Do you feel things in Maine's K-12 education system are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have generally gotten off on the wrong track?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS "DK"]

	Right Direction	Wrong Track	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	31	50	20

3. How would you rate Maine's public school system?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS "DK"]

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	7	43	37	8	5

4. How much do you think is spent per year on each student in Maine's public schools? Your estimate (to the nearest thousand dollars) will represent the combined expenditures of local, state, and federal governments.

[OPEN-END. BASED ON RESPONSE, SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE, OFFERING RANGE CATEGORIES. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS "DK"]

	Less than \$4,000	\$4,001 – \$8,000	\$8,001 – \$12,000	\$12,001 – \$16,000	Over \$16,000	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	17	22	17	7	7	31

5. (*Split A*) Do you believe that public school funding in Maine is at a level that is:

[ROTATE "TOO HIGH" AND "TOO LOW"]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS "DK"]

	Too High	About Right	Too Low	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	12	27	52	9

5. (*Split B*) According to the most recent information available, in Maine \$12,452 is being spent each year per student attending public schools. Do you believe that public school funding in Maine is at a level that is:

[ROTATE “TOO HIGH” AND “TOO LOW”]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Too High	About Right	Too Low	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	14	27	50	9

6. In thinking about the schools in your area, what grade would you give...

[GRADE OPTIONS: A, B, C, D, or F]

[RANDOMIZE “REGULAR PUBLIC SCHOOLS,” “CHARTER SCHOOLS,” “PRIVATE OR PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS”]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	A	B	C	D	F	DK/Ref (VOL.)
Regular Public Schools	10	35	38	9	4	4
Charter Schools	9	18	10	3	3	56
Private Schools	23	37	10	2	1	28

7. If it were your decision and you could select any type of school, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child?

[RANDOMIZE RESPONSES TO AVOID BIAS]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Charter School	Homeschool	Private School	Regular Public School	Virtual School	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	9	10	42	36	< 1	4

8. What is the most important characteristic or attribute that would cause you to choose a **[INSERT SCHOOL TYPE FROM PREVIOUS QUESTION]** for your child? Please use one word, or a very short phrase.

[OPEN-END. IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

Top 13 | Specific impressions offered by respondents in the statewide sample. Numbers represent counts (n), not percentages.

MAINE	
BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	93
INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION / ONE-ON-ONE	74
BETTER TEACHERS / TEACHERS / TEACHING	50
SOCIALIZATION / PEERS / OTHER KIDS	48
DIVERSITY / VARIETY	34
CLASS SIZE / STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO	32
ENVIRONMENT / CULTURE / COMMUNITY	31
ACADEMICS / CURRICULUM	30
PARENTS / PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	21
ALMA MATER / SOCIAL NETWORK	20
MORALS / VALUES / ETHICS	16
COST / TUITION / AFFORDABILITY	15
SAFETY / LESS DRUGS, VIOLENCE, BULLYING	14
OTHER RESPONSES	38
DK / NO RESPONSE / REFUSED	18

“For the remainder of this interview, if you are completely unsure about your answer or have no feelings for an answer, feel free to say ‘I Don’t Know.’” [ENTER AS “DK”]

9. How familiar are you with “charter schools” in K-12 education?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not That Familiar	I Have Never Heard of “Charter Schools”	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	7	28	48	15	2

10. Charter schools are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations. In general, do you favor or oppose charter schools? **[PROBE:]**
Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	24	37	11	9	18

11. How familiar are you with “virtual schools” in K-12 education? These schools are sometimes called "cyber schools" and "online schools."

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not That Familiar	I Have Never Heard of “Virtual Schools”	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	8	28	37	26	1

12. Virtual schools can be run publicly or privately, allowing students to work with their curriculum and teachers over the internet – in combination with, or in place of, traditional classroom learning. In general, do you favor or oppose virtual schools? **[PROBE:]** Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	9	29	21	28	13

13. Some states give tax credits to individuals and businesses if they contribute money to nonprofit organizations that distribute private school scholarships. This policy supports a “tax-credit scholarship system.” In general, do you favor or oppose a tax-credit scholarship system? **[PROBE:]** Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	26	36	11	14	14

14. An "education savings account" – often called an ESA – allows parents to withdraw their child from a public district or charter school, and receive a payment into a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple uses. Parents can then use these funds to pay for private school tuition, online education programs, private tutoring or saving for future college expenses. In general, do you favor or oppose this kind of “savings account system”? **[PROBE:]** Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	31	26	12	21	10

15. How familiar are you with “school vouchers” in K-12 education?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not That Familiar	I Have Never Heard of “School Vouchers”	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	13	32	30	25	< 1

16. A school voucher system allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools.

If this policy were adopted, tax dollars currently allocated to a school district would be allocated to parents in the form of a “school voucher” to pay partial or full tuition for their child’s school. In general, do you favor or oppose a school voucher system? **[PROBE:]** Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	30	25	11	27	7

17. What is the most important reason that would cause you to choose your previous response relating to school vouchers? Please use one word, or a very short phrase.

[OPEN-END. IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

Top 10 | Specific impressions offered by respondents in the statewide sample. Numbers represent counts (n), not percentages.

MAINE	
CHOICE / FLEXIBILITY / FREEDOM	181
HURTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS	86
BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	29
COST / TUITION / AFFORDABILITY	25
ABUSE / FRAUD	20
FUNDS / RESOURCES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS ONLY	16
BAD USE OF TAX MONEY	14
HELPS CHILDREN	12
PUBLIC SCHOOL: NEGATIVE MENTIONS	11
SHOULD PAY OUT OF POCKET	11
NOT FAMILIAR / NEED MORE INFORMATION	13
OTHER RESPONSES	56
DK / NO RESPONSE / REFUSED	25

18. Some people believe that school vouchers should be available to all families, regardless of incomes and special needs. Do you agree or disagree with that statement? **[PROBE:]** Would you say strongly or somewhat agree/disagree?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	44	23	10	19	5

19. Some people believe that school vouchers should only be available to families based on financial need. Do you agree or disagree with that statement? **[PROBE:]** Would you say strongly or somewhat agree/disagree?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	13	16	20	47	4

“Now the following questions should be pretty quick, and for statistical purposes only....”

20. Are you currently the parent or guardian of a child who lives with you, and who is in any grade from preschool through high school?

[IF NEEDED: IF CHILD IS CURRENTLY ENROLLED OR ENTERING PRESCHOOL IN THE UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR, ENTER "YES"]

[IF NEEDED: IF YOUNGEST CHILD JUST GRADUATED IN 2012, ENTER "NO"]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Yes	No <PS	No >HS	No Children	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	28	4	39	27	1

21. Generally speaking, do you usually consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or something else?

[Code for Democrat, Republican, Independent, Libertarian, Other, or “DK”]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other	Libertarian (VOL.)	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	28	26	38	5	< 1	3

22. How would you describe your views on most political matters? Generally, do you think of yourself as liberal (or progressive), moderate, or conservative? [Rotate Liberal and Conservative]

[Code only for Liberal (or Progressive), Moderate, Conservative, or “DK”]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Liberal or Progressive	Moderate	Conservative	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	27	36	31	7

23. How would you best describe where you live?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Urban	Suburban	Small Town	Rural	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	9	14	41	35	1

24. Which of the following age categories do you fall in?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	18 to 34	35 to 54	55 & Over	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	25	37	38	1

25. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin or descent, or not?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Hispanic	Not Hispanic	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	1	99	< 1

26. Which of the following best describes your race?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	American Indian, Native American	Asian, Pacific Islander, Asian American	Black, African American	Mixed Race	White	Other	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	1	1	1	1	95	< 1	1

27. Which of the following best describes you?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Single / Never Married	Single / With Partner	Married	Divorced	Widowed	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	16	8	61	10	5	< 1

28. What is your religion, if any? **[DO NOT READ CATEGORIES]**

[IF GIVEN SPECIFIC PROTESTANT DENOMINATION, SIMPLY CODE PROTESTANT]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Catholic	Jewish	Mormon	Muslim	Protestant	Other	None	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	23	1	< 1	< 1	37	8	26	5

29. What is the last grade or class that you completed in school? [DO NOT READ CATEGORIES]

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

- None (Grades 1-8)
- High School Incomplete (Grades 9-11)
- High school Graduate (Grade 12 or GED Certificate)
- Technical, Trade, or Vocational School (AFTER High School)
- Some College (Associate’s Degree, No 4-Yr Degree)
- College Graduate (Bachelor’s Degree or Other 4-Yr Degree)
- Post-Graduate Training or Professional Schooling After College (Toward a Master's Degree, Ph.D.; Law, Medical School)

	Grades 1 to 8	Grades 9 to 11	HS Graduate	Technical/ Vocational	Some College	College Graduate	Post- Graduate	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	< 1	2	28	4	22	25	19	< 1

30. Please stop me when I read the category that best describes your current annual household income, before taxes?

[IF DEPENDS, PROBE ONCE. IF STILL DEPENDS, ENTER AS “DK”]

	Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 & Over	DK/Ref (VOL.)
MAINE	31	36	24	10

31. **[CODE GENDER OF RESPONDENT; DO NOT ASK, UNLESS GENDER IS IN QUESTION]**

	Male	Female
MAINE	48	52

[PLEASE MAKE THE FOLLOWING TEXT AVAILABLE TO INTERVIEWERS ANYTIME A RESPONDENT ASKS ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE SURVEY SPONSOR OR FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION]

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