

WASHINGTON

K-12 & SCHOOL CHOICE SURVEY

What do voters say about
K-12 education?

Polling Paper No. 6

Paul **DiPerna**

MARCH **2012**

With questions on state performance, education taxes and spending, charter schools, virtual schools, tax-credit scholarships, education savings accounts, and school vouchers

The Friedman Foundation
for Educational Choice
edchoice.org



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Survey Project & Profile

Title:	Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey
Survey Organization:	Braun Research Incorporated (BRI)
Sponsor:	The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice
Interview Dates:	February 9 to 20, 2012
Interview Method:	Live Telephone 70% landline and 30% cell phone
Interview Length:	12 minutes
Language(s):	English
Sample Frame:	Registered Voters
Sampling Method:	Dual Frame; Probability Sampling; Random Digit Dial (RDD)
Split Sample Sizes:	“Split A”= 301 ; “Split B”= 301
Sample Sizes:	WASHINGTON (statewide)= 602
Margin of Error:	± 4.0 percentage points for the statewide sample; ± 5.7 percentage points for “Split A” and “Split B” samples
Response Rates:	Landline=19.3%; Cell Phone=18.1%
Weighting?	Yes (Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Age, and Income)
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

	STATE %
K-12 Parent	34
Democrat	31
Republican	25
Independent	34
Urban	23
Suburban	32
Small Town	24
Rural	20
18 - 29	15
30 - 39	17
40 - 49	20
50 - 64	29
65 & Over	18
Hispanic	7
Not Hispanic	91
Asian	7
Black	3
Other	5
White	82
Catholic	17
Jewish	1
Mormon	3
Muslim	0
Protestant	47
None	23
Under \$25,000	13
\$25,000 - \$49,999	21
\$50,000 - \$74,999	19
\$75,000 - \$124,999	19
\$125,000 - \$200,000	9
Over \$200,000	2
< HS Graduate	4
HS Graduate	19
Tech, Trade, Vocational	3
Some College	26
≥ College	47
Male	49
Female	51

March 13, 2012

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Washington's K-12 Profile

Average State Rank on NAEP ¹	21
High School Graduation Rate ²	74%
# Regular Public School Students ³	1,035,347
# Charter School Students ⁴	None
# Private School Students ⁵	72,612
% Regular Public School Students ⁶	93.4%
% Charter School Students ⁶	None
% Private School Students ⁶	6.6%
# School Districts ³	295
# Regular Public Schools ³	2,368
# Charter Schools ³	None
# Private Schools ⁵	577
Online Learning Climate ⁷	Strong
% Free and Reduced-Price Lunch ³	41%
% Individualized Education Program (IEP) ³	12%
% English Language Learners (ELL) ³	6%
\$ Revenue Per Student ⁸	\$11,601
\$ Per Student Spending ⁸	\$9,688

Washington 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 4th grade reading (#29); 4th grade math (#19); 8th grade reading (#19); 8th grade math (#16).
URL: nationsreportcard.gov/data_tools.asp
2. Reported high school graduation rates, determined by the Average Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR) on the National Center for Education Statistics section on the U.S. Department of Education website. Data for 2008-2009 school year.
URL: nces.ed.gov/ccd
3. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD). Data for the 2009-2010 school year.
URL: nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states
4. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD). Data for the 2009-2010 school year.
URL: nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch
5. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Private School Universe Survey (PSS). Data for 2009–2010 school year. Includes schools with K-12 enrollments ≥ 5 students.
URL: nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss/index.asp
6. Percentages are meant for general impressions only. State-level data on home-school students are generally unreliable, and this subpopulation of students could not be included in this table. Due to rounding, percentage totals may be slightly greater or less than 100%.
7. 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, 2011), Table 2.
URL: kpk12.com/cms/wp-content/uploads/KeepingPace2011.pdf
8. Frank Johnson, Lei Zhou, and Nanae Nakamoto, *Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2008–09 (Fiscal Year 2009)* (NCES 2011-329). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics (June 2011).
URL: nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011329.pdf
“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.

Overview

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

Where do Washington’s voters stand on important issues and policy proposals in K-12 education? We attempt to provide some observations and insights in this paper.

A randomly selected and statistically representative sample of Washington voters recently responded to 17 substantive questions and 11 demographic questions (see pages 48 – 76). The next section summarizes our key findings.

A total of 602 telephone interviews were conducted in English from February 9 to 20, 2012, 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 included four split-sample experiments. 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 particular wording, or providing a new piece of information, can significantly influence opinion on a given topic. For this survey, we were particularly interested in how wording can affect responses to questions on taxes, education spending, and digital learning—all salient issues in Washington state politics and 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 presents our questionnaire and results (“topline numbers”), essentially allowing the reader to follow

the actual interview as it was conducted, with respect to question wording and ordering. We set out to give a straight-forward analysis, going light on editorial commentary, and letting the numbers and charts communicate the major findings.

Key Findings

- ▶ **The vast majority of Washington’s voters (79%) are paying attention to issues in K-12 education. Only 5% of voters say they pay no attention.**

See Question 1

In the state, Washingtonians who say they pay “a lot” of attention to K-12 education issues outnumber those who say they pay no attention by a 9-to-1 ratio.

Age matters. Middle-age (age 30 to 49) and older voters (age 50+) definitely pay closer attention to educational matters, compared to younger voters (age 18 to 29).

Voters living in households earning \$25,000 to \$49,999 and \$75,000 to \$124,999 appear to be more tuned in than other income groups (43% and 49%, respectively, say they pay “a lot” of attention). Low-income earners (less than \$25,000), possibly due to constrained discretionary time, are significantly paying less attention.

- ▶ **Washingtonians are much less likely to think that K-12 education is heading in the “right direction” (31%) compared to being on the “wrong track” (52%). The statewide sample produces a negative net score (-21 net), suggesting major discontent among voters.**

See Question 2

Rural voters (63%) are more likely to say than other communities that K-12 education is on the “wrong track.” The rural net score (-36 net) is the most negative of all examined demographic groups. Urban (53%), suburban (48%), and

small town (47%) voters are less pessimistic about educational progress, but overall, they are still producing net negative impressions.

The overall sentiment is net negative across all three political parties, and much more so among Republicans (-29 net) and Independents (-26 net). Democrats (38%) are more likely to say the state is on the “right direction.” Less optimistic, Republicans and Independents share similar views on this question (28% say “right direction”).

Low-income earners (< \$25,000) tend to be more positive and less negative than other income groups (40% say “right direction”; 31% say “wrong track”).

- **Washington voters tend to be positive in the way they rate the state’s public school system (52% say “good” or “excellent”; 44% say “fair” or “poor”). In lay terms, the electorate is saying the schools are pretty good, but in light of the previous question, voters are saying they are not content with the pace of improvements.**

See Question 3

Urban voters are more likely to rate the public school system negatively, compared to voters in other communities. More than half (54%) say the school system is “fair” or “poor.” More than half of small town voters (55%) and 6 of 10 rural voters (60%) give positive ratings “good” or “excellent.”

There are statistically significant differences between political parties. More than 6 of 10 Democrats (61%) rates the public schools as “good” or “excellent.” The Democrats’ net positive is striking (+26 net) compared to Republicans (-6 net) and Independents (+2 net). The latter two groups are a lot less positive (45% and 49%, respectively).

Although income groups tend to give positive ratings, and net scores are favorable for all but middle-income households, the intensity of these positions is weak. The intensity scores are negative for all groups except high-income earners (\geq \$125,000,000).

- ▶ **Generally speaking, Washington voters do not know how much is spent in the public schools. There is a yawning information gap.**

See Question 4

Almost one-fifth of respondents (19%) could estimate the correct per-student spending range in Washington. The state spent \$9,688 (in 2008-09) for each student in the public schools, but nearly half of those interviewed (46%) thought that the state spent \$8,000 or less per student.

Although Washington does a little better than other states (average is typically 10% to 20% correct), voters are still off the mark. Public officials and staffers should be cautious. A policy focus on school funding may be misguided. Better-informed voters could have very different reactions to proposals for increased or decreased education funding. The next split-sample experiment should give pause to populist urges to boost school funding.

- ▶ **When given the latest per-student spending information, voters are 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

We asked two slightly different questions about the level of public school funding in Washington. On version 5A, 56% of voters said that public school funding is “too low”. However on version 5B, which included a sentence offering the most recent data on per-student funding in Washington (\$9,688 in 2008-09), the proportion of voters saying “too low” shrank by 14 percentage points, effectively a 25% reduction.

It appears Washingtonians are likely to change their views on public school funding – at least when initially saying it is “too low” – if given accurate per-student spending information. The implication that opinion can turn on a single

piece of data is important for political sound bites that focus on the levels of public spending rather than how the money is allocated and spent.

Democrat and rural voters appear to be most affected by the new information provided in question 5B. The proportion of Democrats that say funding is “too low” goes down from 74% (5A) to 52% (5B), a drop of 22 percentage points. The drop (34 percentage points) is even more substantial for rural voters. But some caution must be stressed for any interpretations because sample sizes for most subgroups are pretty small ($n < 100$), and margins of error are relatively high.

- **In a split-sample experiment, it appears voters are more likely to want tax increases to fund public schools at the state level (47%), rather than increases at the local level (30%). A plurality of voters would like an increase at the state level, compared to keeping taxes “about the same” (36%) or a decrease (13%). On the other hand, a plurality of voters would like local taxes to “stay about the same” (45%), compared to those wanting an increase (30%) or decrease (19%) in local taxes.**

See Questions 6A and 6B

It is pretty clear that the majority of voters do not want to start lowering taxes anytime soon. In the aftermath of the economic recession and subsequent drama for state and local budgets, keeping the status quo on taxation seems most palatable to voters. Except among Democrats (65% want increased state taxes), no clear majority opinion wants change one way or the other.

Republicans and Independents share similar views on the *state taxes* question. Democrats and Independents share similar views on the *local taxes* question.

Nearly 2 of 3 Democrats (65%) would like to see an increase in state taxes, while 23% want taxes to “stay about the same,” and 8% want a decrease. A much smaller percentage of Democrats (35%) want to see a tax increase at the local

level. A larger plurality (48%) would like local taxes to “stay about the same,” and 11% want to see a decrease.

Less than 1 of 3 Republicans (27%) would like to see an increase in state taxes, while 46% want taxes to “stay about the same,” and 22% want a decrease. An even smaller percentage of Republicans (19%) want to see a tax increase at the local level. A larger plurality (47%) would like local taxes to “stay about the same,” and 28% want to see a decrease.

Less than 4 of 10 Independents (38%) would like to see an increase in state taxes, while 46% want taxes to “stay about the same,” and 13% want a decrease. A similar percentage of Independents (36%) want to see a tax increase at the local level. A plurality (43%) would like local taxes to “stay about the same,” and 14% want to see a decrease.

Urban and suburban voters differ with small town and rural voters in a couple ways: more likely to want a decrease in state taxes (though still at pretty low levels) and more likely to want an increase in local taxes (still less than 50%).

- **When asked for a preferred school type, Washington voters demonstrate a serious disconnect between their preferred school types and actual enrollment patterns in the state.**

See Question 7

Less than 7% of Washington’s K-12 student population attend private schools, but in our survey interviews, more than a third of voters (35%) would select a private school as a first option. Approximately 93% of the state’s students attend regular public schools, but a much lower percentage of voters (40%) would choose a regular public school as their first choice. No students in the state can enroll in a charter school because they do not exist, but 14% of Washington voters would like to send their child to a charter school. Based on recent state government figures, more than

15,000 students (about 1%) receive their instruction at home, but 7% of voters said he/she would opt to homeschool their child. Collectively, these results suggest the capability to choose a desired school type is very limited in Washington.

Certain school types appear to resonate with specific constituencies. Suburban (18%) and Independent (18%) voters are more likely to say they would choose a charter school. Homeschooling is more popular among voters in rural areas (13%), Republicans (15%), and those who are in the middle-age group (12%). Private schools are most popular with small-town voters (41%), which differs a bit when compared to residents living in other community types. Half of Democrats (50%) say they would first choose a regular public school, which is a significantly different result compared to Republicans (30%) and Independents (37%). More than half of low-income respondents (54%) say they would also first select a regular public school, a substantially higher percentage than other income groups. Generally speaking, families with the least financial resources also tend to have the least access to different school types.

- ▶ **About 15% of voters in our survey prioritize a “better education” as the key attribute they are looking for in the selection of a school. The second most important attribute, as suggested by 11% of all voters, is “individual attention.”**

See Question 8

Some caution. These five characteristics are clearly a priority over others on the list (see page 29). However, any of these qualities may or may not garner more urgency as a second or third priority, which we do not explore in our survey.

- ▶ **Washington voters are much more likely to favor charter schools (60%), rather than oppose such schools (23%). More than 4 of 10 voters (46%) say they are at least somewhat familiar with charter schools, which is similar awareness compared to what we have seen in other states.**

See Questions 9 and 10

Washington registered a very large positive net score (+37 net) supporting charter schools. The enthusiasm is also quite positive (+14 intensity). Voters are more likely to say they “strongly favor” charter schools (25%) compared to those who say they “strongly oppose” (11%).

Generations also differ. Younger and middle-age voters overwhelmingly support charter schools (+57 net and +40 net, respectively) compared to older voters (+30 net), which is still favorable but relatively a bit more muted. More than 7 of 10 young voters (71%) favor charter schools, compared to 55% of voters age 50 and older. More than 6 of 10 middle-age voters support charters.

Republicans (70%) and Independents (65%) are more likely to favor charter schools than Democrats (51%). There is considerable enthusiasm among Republicans (+26 intensity) and Independents (+22 intensity), too.

There may be opportunity to grow support for charter schools. Although less than half of voters say they are familiar with charters (46%), the potential voter support for a “charter school” could probably expand if better understood. The association between charter school familiarity and favorability is positive in direction and moderate in size ($r=.249, p < .01$).

- **Depending on terminology, voters appear to shift their lightly-held views on virtual/online schools. In a split-sample experiment, we asked identical questions, but alternated the terms “virtual school” and “online school.”**

See Questions 11, 12A, 12B

When using “virtual school” in question 12A, a slight plurality opposes the concept (46% oppose; -4 net). On the other hand, when using the term “online school,” a similar plurality supports the concept (47% favor; +3 net).

Though there is caution for virtual/online school advocates. On either question more than 1 of 5 voters hold strongly negative views on virtual/online schools, as defined in this questionnaire (12A: 31% “strongly oppose”; 12B: 39% “strongly oppose”). The intensity on either split question is currently negative (-7 intensity for 12A; -8 intensity for 12B).

There may be opportunity to grow support for “virtual schools.” Approximately 44% of voters say they are at least “somewhat familiar” with virtual schools. The association between virtual school familiarity and favorability is positive in direction and moderate in size ($r=.306, p < .01$). We did not detect a statistically significant correlation between “online school” familiarity and favorability.

- **Washington voters clearly support “tax-credit scholarships.” The percentage of those who favor (59% or 66%, depending on the question version) is more than double the number of people who say they oppose the policy (25% and 21%). No matter the wording of the question, we measure very positive reactions (+34 net and +45 net).**

See Questions 13A, 13B, and 14

Some clear differences emerge when examining demographic subgroups. Independents are more likely to favor tax-credit scholarships than Democrats. Approximately 7 of 10 Independents and Republicans express support on either question. Democrats show least support on question 13A (47%), but increased to majority support for question 13B (58%). Additional context and definition appear to affect, and boost, Democratic support. On either question, Democrats are significantly more likely than Republicans or Independents to oppose tax-credit scholarships.

On either version of the question, overwhelming majorities of younger and middle-age voters support tax-credit scholarships. With additional context and definition, favorability jumps for older voters (13A: 48% favor; 13B: 61% favor).

In a follow-up and open-ended question, we asked for the reason why a respondent chose his/her view regarding tax-credit scholarships. Most frequently, it prompted the respondent to say “choice,” “freedom,” or “flexibility.” Approximately 15% of voters offered one of these similar terms.

- **Washington voters support an “education savings account” system (also called “ESA”). The percentage of those who favor ESAs (57%) is much larger than the proportion who say they oppose (31%) the policy. The net score is large (+26 net) with some enthusiasm (+7 intensity).**

See Question 15

Majorities support ESAs across nearly all major demographics. Rural voters show a larger net positive (63% favor vs. 26% oppose; +37 net) and intensity is greater in these areas (+16 intensity). Republicans are more likely than Democrats and Republicans to show higher favorability. Two of three Republicans (67%) favor an ESA policy. Slightly lower majorities of Democrats (55%) and Independents (57%) support ESAs. There is a stark difference in opinion between generations of voters. Support is strong among younger voters (65%) and middle-age voters (63%). Both of these age groups are more likely than older voters to have enthusiasm for ESAs.

- **Washington voters give solid support for school vouchers, 55% say they favor the school choice policy compared to 35% who say they oppose such a system. About one-third of voters (35%) say they are at least somewhat familiar with school vouchers, which is a bit lower awareness compared to what we have seen in other states.**

See Questions 16 and 17

Levels of support vary among demographics, but net scores are positive for nearly all subgroups. Urban (61%) and small town (58%) voters are more likely than suburbanites (47%) to say they favor school vouchers. Opposition is largest

among Democrats (48%), and negative intensity does exist (-16 intensity). Large majorities of Republicans (69%) and Independents (60%) say they support school vouchers. Intensity is very strong among Republicans (+27 intensity). Younger voters (65%) clearly differ from older voters (50%) in terms of their support for vouchers. The positive enthusiasm of younger voters (+17 intensity) matches the negative convictions among Democrats. All income groups support vouchers, but favorability most palpable among those households earning between \$25,000 and \$75,000 (about 60% support; intensity is positive).

Compared to other K-12 policy innovations like charter schools and virtual schools, fewer people in Washington say they are familiar with school vouchers (only 35% saying they are at least “somewhat familiar” with vouchers). So there is potential to broaden awareness and possibly expand support for school vouchers. The association between school voucher familiarity and favorability is positive in direction, though modest in size ($r=.147, p < .01$).



Survey Snapshots

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

■ Very Little/None ■ Some/A Lot

WASHINGTON

21

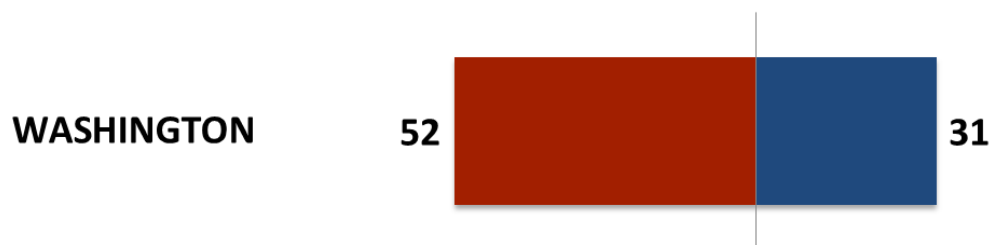


79

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

Q2. Do you feel things in Washington'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



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

Q2. Do you feel things in Washington'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 VOTERS	31	52	- 21	602
COMMUNITY				
Urban	30	53	- 23	139
Suburban	32	48	- 16	191
Small Town	35	47	- 12	147
Rural	27	63	- 36	118
PARTY ID				
Democrat	38	45	- 7	186
Republican	28	57	- 29	150
Independent	28	54	- 26	203
AGE GROUP				
18 – 29	39	42	- 3	88
30 – 49	33	54	- 21	225
50 & Over	27	53	- 26	281
HOUSEHOLD INCOME				
Under \$25,000	40	31	+ 9	75
\$25,000 - \$49,999	28	56	- 28	124
\$50,000 - \$74,999	27	57	- 30	115
\$75,000 - \$124,999	30	55	- 25	114
\$125,000 & Over	38	47	- 9	68
RACE/ETHNICITY				
Asian	53	29	+ 24	41
Black	47	34	+ 13	15
Hispanic	24	62	- 38	44
White	30	53	- 23	473

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. Reference to Whites refers to the non-Hispanic component of the self-identified white population. Reference to Blacks includes both Hispanic and non-Hispanic components of the self-identified black population. Reference to Hispanics includes self-identification as "Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin or descent."

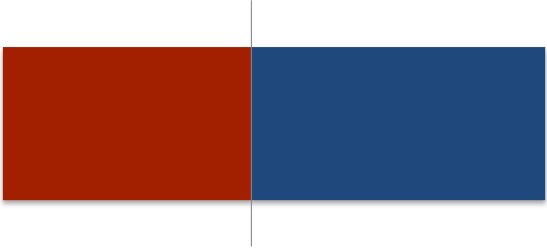
SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q2.

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

■ Fair/Poor ■ Good/Excellent

WASHINGTON

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52

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

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

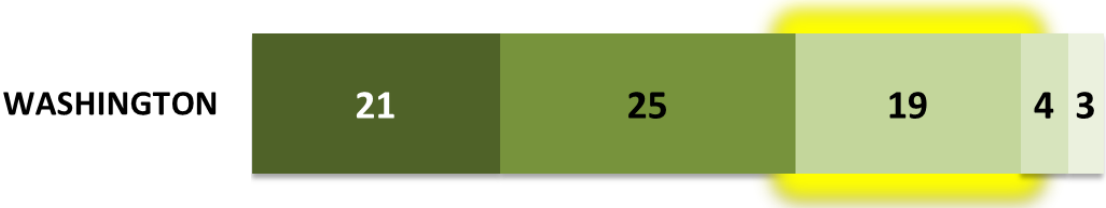
	Good/Excellent %	Fair/Poor %	Net	Intensity	N=
ALL VOTERS	52	44	+ 8	- 3	602
COMMUNITY					
Urban	43	54	- 11	- 9	139
Suburban	50	44	+ 6	- 2	191
Small Town	55	42	+ 13	+ 2	147
Rural	60	38	+ 22	- 4	118
PARTY ID					
Democrat	61	35	+ 26	+ 3	186
Republican	45	51	- 6	- 2	150
Independent	49	47	+ 2	- 2	203
AGE GROUP					
18 – 29	47	49	- 2	- 1	88
30 – 49	51	45	+ 6	- 3	225
50 & Over	54	42	+ 12	- 3	281
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under \$25,000	53	44	+ 9	- 4	75
\$25,000 - \$49,999	55	43	+ 12	- 1	124
\$50,000 - \$74,999	42	51	- 9	- 5	115
\$75,000 - \$124,999	57	41	+ 16	- 9	114
\$125,000 & Over	54	43	+ 11	+ 9	68
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	61	33	+ 28	+ 14	41
Black	40	53	- 13	+ 1	15
Hispanic	56	41	+ 15	- 15	44
White	52	44	+ 8	- 4	473

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. Reference to Whites refers to the non-Hispanic component of the self-identified white population. Reference to Blacks includes both Hispanic and non-Hispanic components of the self-identified black population. Reference to Hispanics includes self-identification as "Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin or descent." 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 passion behind the positive or negative ratings.

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

Q4. How much do you think is currently spent on each student in Washington'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



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

- Too High
- About Right
- Too Low



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

Q5. (Split B) According to the most recent information available, in Washington \$9,688 is being spent each year per student attending public schools. Do you believe that public school funding in Washington is at a level that is:

- Too High
- About Right
- Too Low



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

Q6. (Split A) Do you think that state taxes to fund public schools in Washington should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

- Decrease
- Stay About The Same
- Increase



FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q6A.

Q6. (Split B) Do you think that local taxes to fund public schools in your school district should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

- Decrease
- Stay About The Same
- Increase

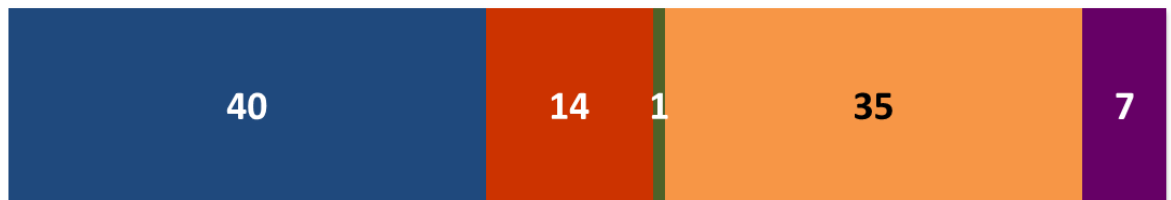


FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q6B.

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**
- **Virtual School**
- **Private School**
- **Homeschool**

WASHINGTON



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

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?

	Charter School	Homeschool	Private School	Regular Public School	N=
	%	%	%	%	
ALL VOTERS	14	7	35	40	602
COMMUNITY					
Urban	13	7	36	40	139
Suburban	18	6	33	38	191
Small Town	8	6	41	42	147
Rural	14	13	29	41	118
PARTY ID					
Democrat	10	2	35	50	186
Republican	14	15	38	30	150
Independent	18	7	34	37	203
AGE GROUP					
18 – 29	13	6	30	47	88
30 – 49	13	12	33	38	225
50 & Over	15	4	38	40	281
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under \$25,000	7	9	28	54	75
\$25,000 - \$49,999	15	10	37	31	124
\$50,000 - \$74,999	17	7	34	37	115
\$75,000 - \$124,999	14	7	34	43	114
\$125,000 & Over	21	2	36	39	68
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	11	4	36	49	41
Black	19	8	31	38	15
Hispanic	22	2	45	28	44
White	13	8	34	41	473

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. Reference to Whites refers to the non-Hispanic component of the self-identified white population. Reference to Blacks includes both Hispanic and non-Hispanic components of the self-identified black population. Reference to Hispanics includes self-identification as “Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin or descent.”

SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Washington 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 15 | Specific impressions offered by respondents in the statewide sample. Numbers represent counts (n), not percentages.

BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	95
INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION / ONE-ON-ONE	62
BETTER TEACHERS / TEACHERS / TEACHING	59
CLASS SIZE / STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO	43
SOCIALIZATION / PEERS / OTHER KIDS	39
CURRICULUM / ACADEMICS	38
DIVERSITY	29
ALMA MATER / SOCIAL NETWORK	26
PUBLIC SCHOOL: POSITIVE MENTIONS	23
COST / TUITION / AFFORDABILITY	20
DISCIPLINE / STRUCTURE	18
PARENTS / PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	17
OUTCOMES / RESULTS / GRADUATION RATE	16
ENVIRONMENT / CULTURE / COMMUNITY	13
PRIVATE SCHOOL: POSITIVE MENTIONS	12
RELIGION / RELIGIOUS REASONS	12
RESOURCES / FUNDING	12

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

Q9 Q11 Q16.

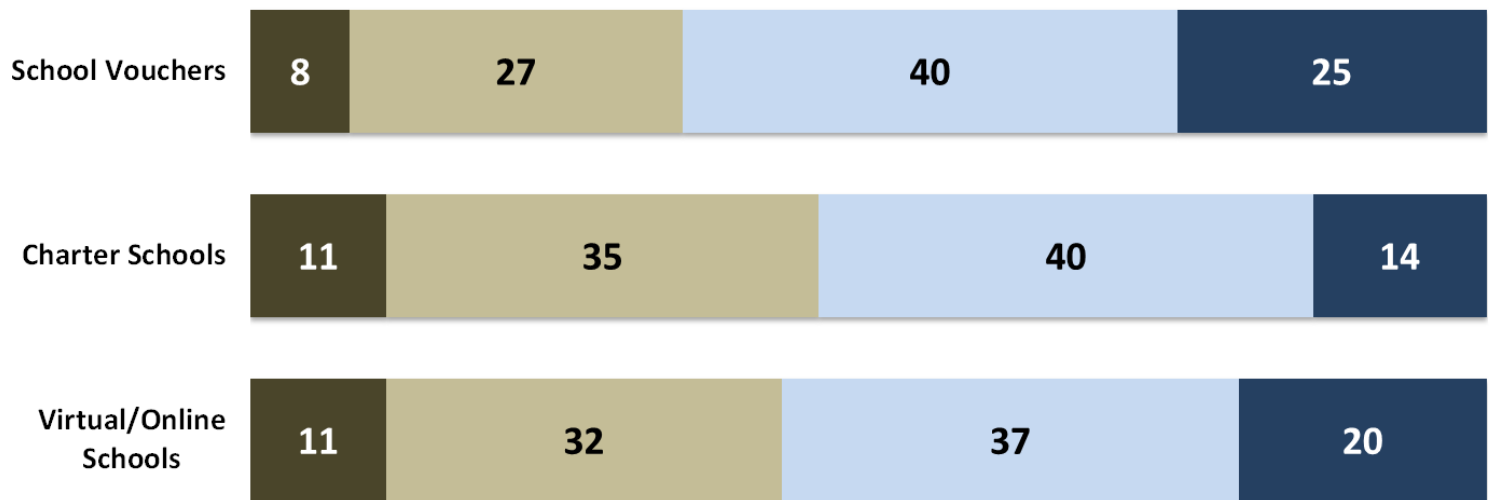
How familiar are you with [Charter Schools /
Virtual or Online Schools / School Vouchers]
in K-12 Education?

■ Very Familiar

■ Somewhat Familiar

■ Not That Familiar

■ Never Heard Of / Don't Know



FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q9, Q11, Q16.

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? [PROBE:] Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

WASHINGTON

23



60

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Washington 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? [PROBE:] Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

	Favor %	Oppose %	Net	Intensity	N=
ALL VOTERS	60	23	+ 37	+ 14	602
COMMUNITY					
Urban	59	28	+ 31	+ 14	139
Suburban	60	23	+ 37	+ 17	191
Small Town	61	18	+ 43	+ 10	147
Rural	61	23	+ 38	+ 15	118
PARTY ID					
Democrat	51	29	+ 22	- 1	203
Republican	70	12	+ 58	+ 26	186
Independent	65	25	+ 40	+ 22	150
AGE GROUP					
18 – 29	71	14	+ 57	+ 22	88
30 – 49	63	23	+ 40	+ 17	225
50 & Over	55	25	+ 30	+ 9	281
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under \$25,000	52	26	+ 26	+ 2	75
\$25,000 - \$49,999	67	18	+ 39	+ 27	124
\$50,000 - \$74,999	57	20	+ 37	+ 14	115
\$75,000 - \$124,999	64	26	+ 38	+ 14	114
\$125,000 & Over	74	14	+ 60	+ 19	68
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	62	30	+ 32	+ 13	41
Black	86	11	+ 75	+ 29	15
Hispanic	76	7	+ 69	+ 23	44
White	59	24	+ 35	+ 14	473

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. Reference to Whites refers to the non-Hispanic component of the self-identified white population. Reference to Blacks includes both Hispanic and non-Hispanic components of the self-identified black population. Reference to Hispanics includes self-identification as "Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin or descent." 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 how passionate the support or opposition is for a given policy or proposal.

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

Q12. *(Split A)* 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?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

WASHINGTON

45



42

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q12A.

Q12. *(Split B)* Online 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 online schools? [PROBE:] Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

WASHINGTON

44



47

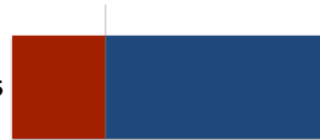
FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q12B.

Q13. (Split A) 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?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

WASHINGTON

25



59

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q13A.

Q13. (Split B) A “tax credit” allows an individual or business to reduce the final amount of a tax owed to government. Some states give tax credits to individuals and businesses if they contribute money to nonprofit organizations that distribute private school scholarships. A “tax-credit scholarship 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. In general, do you favor or oppose a tax-credit scholarship system? [PROBE:] Would you say strongly or somewhat favor/oppose?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

WASHINGTON

21



66

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q13B.

Q14. What is the most important reason that would cause you to choose your previous response relating to tax-credit scholarships? Please use a few words, or a very short phrase.

Top 15 | Specific impressions offered by respondents in the statewide sample. Numbers represent counts (n), not percentages.

CHOICE / FLEXIBILITY / FREEDOM	90
BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	31
HELPS LESS FORTUNATE	26
HELPS CHILDREN	23
BENEFITS BUSINESS	20
HURTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS	19
GOOD IDEA	16
OPPORTUNITIES	15
BAD IDEA	14
GOOD USE OF TAX MONEY	14
SCHOLARSHIPS: POSITIVE MENTIONS	13
ABUSE / FRAUD	12
GOVERNMENT: NEGATIVE MENTIONS	11
UNFAIR	11
FAIR / EQUALITY	9

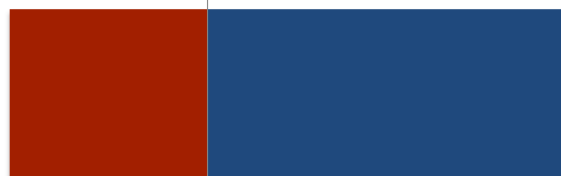
SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q14.

Q15. An "education savings account" 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?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

WASHINGTON

31



57

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

Q15. An "education savings account" 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?

	Favor %	Oppose %	Net	Intensity	N=
ALL VOTERS	57	31	+ 26	+ 7	602
COMMUNITY					
Urban	56	32	+ 24	+ 8	139
Suburban	55	33	+ 22	+ 3	191
Small Town	56	29	+ 27	+ 5	147
Rural	63	26	+ 37	+ 16	118
PARTY ID					
Democrat	55	32	+ 23	+ 3	203
Republican	67	25	+ 42	+ 18	186
Independent	57	33	+ 24	+ 9	150
AGE GROUP					
18 – 29	65	17	+ 48	+ 16	88
30 – 49	63	27	+ 36	+ 14	225
50 & Over	50	38	+ 12	- 1	281
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under \$25,000	56	36	+ 20	- 4	75
\$25,000 - \$49,999	59	25	+ 34	+ 18	124
\$50,000 - \$74,999	58	33	+ 25	+ 4	115
\$75,000 - \$124,999	55	33	+ 22	+ 10	114
\$125,000 & Over	69	26	+ 43	+ 6	68
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	62	26	+ 36	+ 6	41
Black	69	18	+ 41	+ 22	15
Hispanic	78	14	+ 54	+ 16	44
White	55	33	+ 22	+ 6	473

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. Reference to Whites refers to the non-Hispanic component of the self-identified white population. Reference to Blacks includes both Hispanic and non-Hispanic components of the self-identified black population. Reference to Hispanics includes self-identification as "Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin or descent." 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 how passionate the support or opposition is for a given policy or proposal.

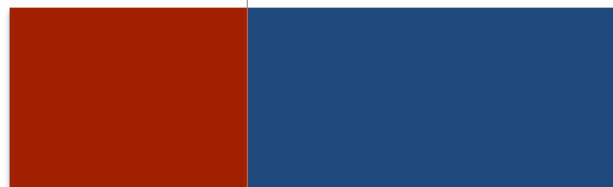
SOURCE: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q15.

Q17. 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?

■ Oppose ■ Favor

WASHINGTON

35



55

FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE, *Washington K-12 & School Choice Survey*, Q17.

Q17. 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?

	Favor %	Oppose %	Net	Intensity	N=
ALL VOTERS	55	35	+ 20	+ 4	602
COMMUNITY					
Urban	61	32	+ 29	+ 2	139
Suburban	47	39	+ 8	+ 5	191
Small Town	58	34	+ 24	+ 4	147
Rural	57	33	+ 24	+ 7	118
PARTY ID					
Democrat	40	48	- 8	- 16	203
Republican	69	24	+ 45	+ 27	186
Independent	60	33	+ 27	+ 9	150
AGE GROUP					
18 – 29	65	29	+ 36	+ 17	88
30 – 49	56	33	+ 23	+ 9	225
50 & Over	50	39	+ 11	- 3	281
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under \$25,000	57	32	+ 25	- 3	75
\$25,000 - \$49,999	62	30	+ 32	+ 9	124
\$50,000 - \$74,999	58	30	+ 28	+ 16	115
\$75,000 - \$124,999	54	39	+ 15	- 1	114
\$125,000 & Over	55	38	+ 17	+ 7	68
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	48	31	+ 17	- 7	41
Black	73	18	+ 55	+ 20	15
Hispanic	87	13	+ 74	+ 22	44
White	53	38	+ 15	+ 4	473

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. Reference to Whites refers to the non-Hispanic component of the self-identified white population. Reference to Blacks includes both Hispanic and non-Hispanic components of the self-identified black population. Reference to Hispanics includes self-identification as “Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin or descent.” 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 how passionate the support or opposition is for a given policy or proposal.

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

Methods Summary

The “K-12 & School Choice Survey” project, commissioned by the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice and conducted by Braun Research Incorporated (BRI), interviewed **602** registered voters in Washington. The telephone interviews were conducted in English from February 9 to 20, 2012, 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 survey is ± 4.0 percentage points.

BRI’s live callers conducted all phone interviews. For this entire project, a total of **6,256** calls were made in Washington. Of these calls **1,754** were unusable phone numbers (disconnected, fax, busy, non-residential, or non-answers, etc.); **2,914** were usable numbers but eligibility unknown (including refusals and voicemail); **133** cell phone numbers were usable but not eligible for this survey; **39** people did not complete the survey. The average response rate of the statewide landline interviews was **19.3%**. The average response rate of the statewide cell phone interviews was **18.1%**.

Details on the statewide sample 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 Washington 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 February 9 to 20, 2012. As many as eight attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. 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 percentage points away from their true values in the population.

It is critical to note that the 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

Full statewide call dispositions and response rates for sampled landline and cell phone numbers are located below.

Washington Call Dispositions					
<u>SUMMARY</u>			<u>DETAIL</u>		
Landline	Cell Phone		Landline	Cell Phone	
4,296	1,960	Total	1,257	294	Disconnected
4,296	1,960	Released	66	1	Fax
0	0	Unreleased	133	3	Government/Business
2,840	1,662	Usable	-	0	Non Cell Phone
1,456	298	Unusable	0	-	Non Landline
2,192	995	Qualified	1,456	298	Unusable
59.45%	84.65%	Est. Usability	624	16	No Answer
83.02%	59.57%	Est. Eligibility	81	2	Busy
19.25%	18.10%	Est. Response	705	18	Usability Unknown
			422	180	Complete
			23	16	Break-Off
			445	196	Usable/Eligible
			646	411	Refused
			15	5	Language Barrier
			527	561	Voice Mail
			313	287	Call Back-Retired
			96	51	Strong Refusal
			2	0	Privacy Manager
			1,599	1,315	Usable/Eligible Unknown
			-	81	Under 18
			91	52	Not Registered in State
			91	133	Usable/Ineligible
			19.3%	18.1%	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. The sample was balanced to reflect the targeted population representation by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Age, and Income. The weighted and unweighted results are available on request.

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

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. DiPerna joined the Foundation in September 2006, and his research includes surveys and polling on K-12 education issues. He also manages and edits all other research projects commissioned by the Foundation. DiPerna previously served as assistant director for the Brown Center on Education Policy at the Brookings Institution, working there for more than six years. He was a research analyst for the first five issues of the *Brown Center Report on American Education* (2000-2004), and managed the activities of the National Working Commission on Choice in K-12 Education (2001-2005). DiPerna has presented research at the American Sociological Association annual meeting, and he has written or co-authored articles for *Education Week*, *The Huffington Post*, *Washington Examiner*, *First Monday*, and *Education Next*. In 2008, he authored a textbook chapter in the *Handbook of Research on Web Log Analysis*.

A native of Pittsburgh, DiPerna attended the University of Dayton as an undergraduate and received an M.A. in political science from the University of Illinois.

Acknowledgements

Paul DiPerna would like to thank a number of people who provided invaluable time, comments, and assistance throughout the course of this survey project. This would not have been possible without the opportunities provided by Robert Enlow, Leslie Hiner, and Carey Folco. Our release partners at the Freedom Foundation gave us invaluable insights and context at the local/state level. Jonathan Bechtle, Diana Moore, and Jami Lund provided critical input and feedback at various stages of this project. We would also 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, Richard Kuchinsky, and Julie Mowka. Jeff Reed, our lead editor (among his other responsibilities), offered useful edits and suggestions. We are very grateful to the citizens of Washington, 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 40 full-time and more than 500 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 17 years, Braun Research has conducted more than 8,300 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 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 Freedom Foundation

The Freedom Foundation's mission is to advance individual liberty, free enterprise, and limited, accountable government. The Freedom Foundation envisions a day when opportunity, responsible self-governance and free markets flourish in Washington State because its citizens understand and cherish the principles from which freedom is derived.

The Freedom Foundation's mission springs from our firm belief in three fundamental principles.

Liberty: The foundations of a free society are human liberty and personal responsibility. To sustain liberty, the people must choose to understand it, recognize threats to it and protect it.

Free Enterprise: Human needs are best met in a competitive marketplace where creativity is unleashed, property rights are protected and contracts are enforced.

Accountable Government: Human liberty and free enterprise can be sustained only when government's power is limited to its constitutionally defined role and is accountable to the people it serves.

Washington K-12 Survey, Questionnaire & Topline Results

Interview Dates:	February 9 to 20, 2012
Sample Frame:	Registered Voters
Sample Sizes:	WASHINGTON (statewide)=602
Split Sample Sizes:	“Split A”=301; “Split B”=301
Margin of Error:	± 4.0 percentage points for the statewide sample; ± 5.7 percentage points for “Split A” and “Split B” samples

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%.

[INTRODUCTION]

Hello, I am _____ calling for Braun Research Inc. in Princeton, New Jersey. We are conducting a telephone opinion survey and would like to know your opinions on some important issues. We are not selling anything or asking for donations. May I please speak to someone who is registered to vote and is at home right now?

[IF ASKED FOR TIME:]

The survey should take approximately 8 to 12 minutes.

“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.)
WASHINGTON	42	37	16	5	< 1

2. Do you feel things in Washington'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.)
WASHINGTON	31	52	17

3. How would you rate Washington’s public school system?

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

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	7	45	34	10	4

4. How much do you think is currently spent on each student in Washington'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. 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.)
WASHINGTON	21	25	19	4	3	28

5. (*Split A*) Do you believe that public school funding in Washington 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.)
WASHINGTON	11	26	56	7

5. (*Split B*) According to the most recent information available, in Washington \$9,688 is being spent each year per student attending public schools. Do you believe that public school funding in Washington 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.)
WASHINGTON	16	42	32	10

6. **(Split A)** Do you think that state taxes to fund public schools in Washington should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

[ROTATE BY REVERSE TO AVOID BIAS]

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

	Increase A Lot	Increase	Stay About The Same	Decrease	Decrease A Lot	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	10	37	36	9	4	5

6. **(Split B)** Do you think that local taxes to fund public schools in your school district should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

[ROTATE BY REVERSE TO AVOID BIAS]

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

	Increase A Lot	Increase	Stay About The Same	Decrease	Decrease A Lot	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	4	26	45	15	4	7

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.)
WASHINGTON	14	7	35	40	< 1	3

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

WASHINGTON

BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	95
INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION / ONE-ON-ONE	62
BETTER TEACHERS / TEACHERS / TEACHING	59
CLASS SIZE / STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO	43
SOCIALIZATION / PEERS / OTHER KIDS	39
CURRICULUM / ACADEMICS	38
DIVERSITY	29
ALMA MATER / SOCIAL NETWORK	26
PUBLIC SCHOOL: POSITIVE MENTIONS	23
COST / TUITION / AFFORDABILITY	20
DISCIPLINE / STRUCTURE	18
PARENTS / PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	17
OUTCOMES / RESULTS / GRADUATION RATE	16
ENVIRONMENT / CULTURE / COMMUNITY	13
PRIVATE SCHOOL: POSITIVE MENTIONS	12
RELIGION / RELIGIOUS REASONS	12
RESOURCES / FUNDING	12

OTHER RESPONSES	69
DK / NO RESPONSE / REFUSED	14

“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.)
WASHINGTON	11	35	40	12	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.)
WASHINGTON	25	35	12	11	17

11. **(Split A)** 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.)
WASHINGTON	13	31	35	20	1

11. **(Split B)** How familiar are you with “online schools” in K-12 education? These schools are sometimes called “cyber schools” and “virtual schools.”

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

	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not That Familiar	I Have Never Heard of “Online Schools”	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	8	33	39	18	2

12. **(Split A)** 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.)
WASHINGTON	12	30	25	19	14

12. **(Split B)** Online 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 online 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.)
WASHINGTON	16	31	21	24	9

13. **(Split A)** 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.)
WASHINGTON	24	36	11	14	16

13. **(Split B)** A “tax credit” allows an individual or business to reduce the final amount of a tax owed to government. Some states give tax credits to individuals and businesses if they contribute money to nonprofit organizations that distribute private school scholarships. A “tax-credit scholarship 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. 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.)
WASHINGTON	30	36	10	11	13

14. What is the most important reason that would cause you to choose your previous response relating to tax-credit scholarships? Please use one word, or a very short phrase.

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

Top 20 | Specific impressions offered by respondents in the statewide sample. Numbers represent counts (n), not percentages.

WASHINGTON	
CHOICE / FLEXIBILITY / FREEDOM	90
BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	31
HELPS LESS FORTUNATE	26
HELPS CHILDREN	23
BENEFITS BUSINESS	20
HURTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS	19
GOOD IDEA	16
OPPORTUNITIES	15
BAD IDEA	14
GOOD USE OF TAX MONEY	14
SCHOLARSHIPS: POSITIVE MENTIONS	13
ABUSE / FRAUD	12
GOVERNMENT: NEGATIVE MENTIONS	11
UNFAIR	11
FAIR / EQUALITY	9
NOT FAMILIAR / NEED MORE INFORMATION	47
OTHER RESPONSES	76
DK / NO RESPONSE / REFUSED	116

15. An “education savings account” 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.)
WASHINGTON	26	31	12	19	12

16. 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.)
WASHINGTON	8	27	40	24	< 1

17. 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.)
WASHINGTON	25	30	15	20	10

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

18. Are you currently the parent or guardian of a child who lives with you, and who is in any grade from Pre-School through High School?

[IF NEEDED: IF CHILD IS GOING INTO PRESCHOOL IN THE UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR, ENTER “YES”]

[IF NEEDED: IF CHILD JUST GRADUATED IN 2011, ENTER “NO”]

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

	Yes	No	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	34	66	< 1

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

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

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

	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other	Libertarian (VOL.)	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	31	25	34	3	1	6

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

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

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

	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Other	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	28	30	30	2	10

20. **(Split B)** How would you describe your views on most political matters? Generally, do you think of yourself as progressive, moderate, or conservative? **[Rotate Progressive and Conservative]**

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

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

	Progressive	Moderate	Conservative	Other	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	19	37	36	2	6

21.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.)
WASHINGTON	23	32	24	20	1

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

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

	18 – 29	30 –39	40 – 49	50 – 64	65 & Over	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	15	17	20	29	18	1

23. 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.)
WASHINGTON	7	91	2

24. Which of the following 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.)
WASHINGTON	2	7	3	3	82	3	1

25. 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.)
WASHINGTON	17	< 1	3	< 1	47	4	23	5

26. 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.)
WASHINGTON	< 1	3	19	3	26	28	19	< 1

27. Would you tell me into which of the following categories your total family income falls?

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

	Under \$25,000	\$25,000 – \$49,999	\$50,000 – \$74,999	\$75,000 – \$124,999	\$125,000 – \$200,000	Over \$200,000	DK/Ref (VOL.)
WASHINGTON	13	21	19	19	9	2	18

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

	Male	Female
WASHINGTON	49	51

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

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization that studies attitudes toward K-12 education issues facing the states and the country. The Foundation has no connection to the government, political parties, or any campaigns. Reports about its surveys are made available free of charge on their website EdChoice *dot* ORG.