

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DELAWARE K-12 & SCHOOL CHOICE SURVEY

600 phone interviews with registered voters in the state of Delaware

Conducted August 16 to 26, 2014 | Released October 8, 2014

K-12 EDUCATION AS A PRIORITY

Delaware voters pointed to the “economy and jobs” (35%) as the state’s highest priority. Following the economy, nearly equal proportions pointed to “crime” (17%) and “education” (14%) as priorities.

DIRECTION OF K-12 EDUCATION

Delawareans are significantly more likely to say K-12 education has gotten off on the “wrong track” (50%), compared to the 35% of respondents who say it is heading in the “right direction.”

RATING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

More than half of voters gave negative ratings to the state’s public school system. (39% said “good” or “excellent”; 54% said “fair” or “poor”)

SPENDING ON K-12 EDUCATION

Nearly nine out of 10 respondents (86%) either underestimate educational spending per student, or they could not guess. When given actual spending information, voters are significantly less likely to say funding is at a level that is “too low,” compared to answering without having such information.

GRADING AREA SCHOOLS

Of those respondents giving a grade, Delawareans are much more likely to give an A or B to private schools in their local areas, compared to nearby district schools and public charter schools.

SCHOOLING PREFERENCE

Delaware’s voters have a wide range of schooling preferences: 22% would choose a public school; 44% prefer private school; 20% say public charter school; 10% would like to homeschool.

EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)

- Six out of 10 voters support having education savings accounts (ESAs) in K-12 education. (59% favor vs. 32% oppose)
- The demographics most favorable toward ESAs are rural voters (63%), 18-to34 year olds (68%), low-income earners (63%), middle-income earners (63%), African Americans (68%), and women (64%). Seniors (54%) and men (54%) are the groups least likely to support ESAs.
- There is higher support for ESAs with universal eligibility (69%), compared to the proportion supporting means-testing (34%).
- If a voter has an opinion on this policy idea, he or she is two times more likely to vote for the pro-school choice candidate, rather than oppose. (32% “more likely” vs. 15% “less likely”)

OTHER K-12 EDUCATION REFORMS

- 63% of voters say they support charter schools; and given a definition, support jumps to 72%.
- 45% of voters say they support school vouchers; and given a definition, support jumps to 70%.
- 64% of voters support tax-credit scholarships, when defined – significantly greater than the proportion opposed (24%).

SURVEY PROFILE

Title:	Delaware K-12 & School Choice Survey
Survey Organization:	Braun Research, Inc. (BRI)
Survey Sponsor:	Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice
Interview Dates:	August 16 to 26, 2014
Interview Method:	Live Telephone 70% landline and 30% cell phone
Interview Length:	14 minutes (average)
Language(s):	English
Sample Frame:	Registered Voters
Sampling Method:	Dual Frame; Probability Sampling; RDD
Population Samples:	DELAWARE (statewide) = 600 New Castle County = 360
Margins of Error:	DELAWARE = \pm 4.0 percentage points New Castle County = \pm 5.2 percentage points
Response Rates:	Landline (LL) = 12.6% Cell Phone = 12.3%
Weighting?	Yes (Landline/Cell, Age, Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Region)
Oversampling?	No

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