

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MINNESOTA K-12 & SCHOOL CHOICE SURVEY

606 phone interviews with registered voters in the state of Minnesota

Conducted February 7 to 24, 2015 | Released April 15, 2015

K-12 EDUCATION AS A PRIORITY

Minnesota voters pointed to “education” (20%) as the state’s highest priority. The “economy and jobs” response was a close second (19%).

DIRECTION OF K-12 EDUCATION

Minnesotans are more likely to say K-12 education is heading in the “right direction” (52%), compared with more than one-third of voters (36%) who say it has gotten off on the “wrong track.”

RATING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Nearly two out of three Minnesota voters gave positive ratings to the state’s public school system (65% said “good” or “excellent”; 33% said “fair” or “poor”).

SPENDING ON K-12 EDUCATION

Seven out of 10 respondents (69%) 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, Minnesotans are 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

Minnesota’s voters have a wide range of schooling preferences: 45% would choose a public school; 36% prefer private school; 8% say public charter school; 7% would like to homeschool.

TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS

- Minnesota Voters are more than twice as likely to support a tax-credit scholarship system than they are to oppose one. (65% favor vs. 25% oppose)
- Highest margins of support are among young voters (+62 points), low-income earners (+60 points), and Republicans (+58 points). On the other end of the range, the lowest margins are exhibited by older voters (+22 points), high-income earners (+22 points), and Independents (+28 points).
- The most common reasons for support are “more freedom and flexibility for parents” (36%) and “access to schools having better academic outcomes” (27%). The most common reasons for opposition are “divert funding away from public schools” (49%) and that such a program would “benefit business and wealthy individuals” (17%).

EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)

- 59% of voters support ESAs – significantly greater than the proportion opposed (32%).
- 80% support ESAs for students with physical disabilities or diagnosed with other special needs.

SURVEY PROFILE

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| Title: | Minnesota K-12 & School Choice Survey |
| Survey Sponsor & Developer: | The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice |
| Survey Data Collection & Quality Control: | Braun Research, Inc. (BRI) |
| Interview Dates: | February 7 to 24, 2015 |
| Interview Method: | Live Telephone 60% landline and 40% cell phone |
| Interview Length: | 14 minutes (average) |
| Language(s): | English |
| Sample Frame: | Registered Voters |
| Sampling Method: | Dual Frame; Probability Sampling; Random Digit Dial (RDD) |
| Population Sample: | MINNESOTA (statewide) = 606 |
| Margins of Error: | MINNESOTA = ± 4.0 percentage points Twin Cities = ± 5.5 percentage points |
| Response Rates: | Landline (LL) = 14.2% Cell Phone = 13.7% |
| Weighting? | Yes (Landline/Cell, Age, Race, Ethnicity, Gender, 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.