FRIEDMAN FOUNDATION
FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

TENNESSEE

K-12 & SCHOOL CHOICE SURVEY

What Do Voters Say About K-12 Education?

Interview Dates:	February 11 to 21, 2012
Sample Frame:	Registered Voters
Sample Size:	TENNESSEE = 606
Split Sample Sizes:	"Split A" = 303; "Split B" = 303
Margin of Error:	TENNESSEE = ± 4.0 percentage points
	Each 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.)
TENNESSEE	**44**	**30**	**17**	**9**	**< 1**

2. Do you feel things in TENNESSEE'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.)
TENNESSEE	**36**	**50**	**14**

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

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

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	DK/Ref (VOL.)
TENNESSEE	**7**	**40**	**36**	**13**	**4**

4. How much do you think is currently spent on each student in TENNESSEE'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.)
TENNESSEE	**31**	**25**	**9**	**2**	**5**	**28**

5. ***(Split A)*** Do you believe that public school funding in TENNESSEE 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.)
TENNESSEE	**7**	**32**	**55**	**6**

5. ***(Split B)*** According to the most recent information available, in TENNESSEE $7,992 is being spent each year per student attending public schools. Do you believe that public school funding in TENNESSEE 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.)
TENNESSEE	**7**	**41**	**41**	**11**

6. **(Split A)** Do you think that state taxes to fund public schools in TENNESSEE 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.)
TENNESSEE	**4**	**31**	**42**	**12**	**4**	**7**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**4**	**34**	**46**	**8**	**2**	**6**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**9**	**8**	**40**	**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.

	TENNESSEE
BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	72
INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION / ONE-ON-ONE	69
SOCIALIZATION / PEERS / OTHER KIDS	58
CLASS SIZE / STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO	47
BETTER TEACHERS / TEACHERS / TEACHING	39
CURRICULUM / ACADEMICS	36
RELIGION / RELIGIOUS REASONS	35
ALMA MATER / SOCIAL NETWORK	26
DIVERSITY	24
ENVIRONMENT / CULTURE / COMMUNITY	23
PUBLIC SCHOOL: POSITIVE MENTIONS	19
DISCIPLINE / STRUCTURE	18
SAFETY / LESS DRUGS, VIOLENCE, BULLYING	18
COST / TUITION / AFFORDABILITY	15
PARENTS / PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	13
OTHER RESPONSES	64
DK / NO RESPONSE / REFUSED	25

"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.)
TENNESSEE	**8**	**25**	**45**	**18**	**4**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**22**	**39**	**10**	**8**	**21**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**7**	**23**	**42**	**27**	**2**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**8**	**22**	**45**	**22**	**3**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**10**	**23**	**27**	**29**	**11**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**14**	**23**	**24**	**27**	**12**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**23**	**38**	**17**	**9**	**14**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**35**	**34**	**11**	**9**	**11**

14. 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.)
TENNESSEE	**29**	**27**	**14**	**17**	**13**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**8**	**30**	**34**	**27**	**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.)
TENNESSEE	**30**	**29**	**12**	**19**	**10**

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.

	TENNESSEE
CHOICE / FLEXIBILITY / FREEDOM	142
ABUSE / FRAUD	30
GOOD IDEA	26
HELPS LESS FORTUNATE	24
HURTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS	23
BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	22
GOVERNMENT: NEGATIVE MENTIONS	15
UNFAIR	14
COST / TUITION / AFFORDABILITY	13
FUNDS / RESOURCES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS ONLY	13
NOT FAMILIAR / NEED MORE INFORMATION	23
OTHER RESPONSES	111
DK / NO RESPONSE / REFUSED	97

“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.)
TENNESSEE	**33**	**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.)
TENNESSEE	**31**	**33**	**27**	**2**	**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.)
TENNESSEE	**14**	**31**	**45**	**< 1**	**9**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**11**	**33**	**46**	**1**	**9**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**15**	**22**	**33**	**28**	**2**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**17**	**17**	**19**	**27**	**20**	**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.)
TENNESSEE	**2**	**98**	**< 1**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**< 1**	**< 1**	**17**	**1**	**80**	**< 1**	**< 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.)
TENNESSEE	**9**	**< 1**	**< 1**	**0**	**78**	**1**	**8**	**4**

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.)
TENNESSEE	**3**	**6**	**33**	**4**	**21**	**22**	**10**	**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.)
TENNESSEE	**17**	**24**	**20**	**15**	**5**	**2**	**18**

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

	Male	Female
TENNESSEE	**47**	**53**

[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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