



# Californians & Education

Mark Baldassare Dean Bonner David Kordus Lunna Lopes

## CONTENTS

Press Release	3
Perceptions and Attitudes	6
Funding and Policy Preferences	13
Regional Map	21
Methodology	22
Questionnaire and Results	24

*Supported with funding from the Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell Foundation, the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the Silver Giving Foundation, and the Stuart Foundation.*



The PPIC Statewide Survey provides a voice for the public and likely voters—informing policymakers, encouraging discussion, and raising awareness on critical issues of the day.

© 2017 Public Policy Institute of California

The Public Policy Institute of California is dedicated to informing and improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

PPIC is a public charity. It does not take or support positions on any ballot measures or on any local, state, or federal legislation, nor does it endorse, support, or oppose any political parties or candidates for public office.

Short sections of text, not to exceed three paragraphs, may be quoted without written permission provided that full attribution is given to the source.

Research publications reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of our funders or of the staff, officers, advisory councils, or board of directors of the Public Policy Institute of California.

## CONTACT

Linda Strean 415-291-4412  
Serina Correa 415-291-4417

## News Release

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PDT on Wednesday, April 19, 2017.

Para ver este comunicado de prensa en español, por favor visite nuestra página de internet:  
[www.ppic.org/main/pressreleaseindex.asp](http://www.ppic.org/main/pressreleaseindex.asp)

### PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND EDUCATION

## Most Favor Vouchers, Yet Most Give Local Schools Good Grades

### MAJORITIES ALSO SUPPORT DESIGNATING THEIR DISTRICTS AS “SANCTUARY SAFE ZONES”

SAN FRANCISCO, April, 19, 2017—A solid majority of Californians favor providing parents with tax-funded vouchers to send their children to any school they choose. At the same time, most give their local public schools good grades. These are among the key findings of a statewide survey on education released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC).

On the issue of tax-funded vouchers, 60 percent of adults and slightly more public school parents—66 percent—favor providing them to parents for use at any public, private, or parochial school. Republicans (67%) are more likely than independents (56%) and far more likely than Democrats (46%) to be in favor. While majorities across racial/ethnic groups are in favor, African Americans (73%) and Latinos (69%) are more likely than Asian Americans (56%) or whites (51%) to support vouchers.

Asked about school quality, a majority of adults (54%) give their local schools A (22%) or B (32%) grades (24% C, 11% D, 7% F). Most public school parents also grade their schools positively (33% A, 29% B, 20% C, 9% D, 7% F). African Americans are less likely to give A and B grades to local schools (37%) than are other racial/ethnic groups (62% Latinos, 58% Asian Americans, 51% whites). Regardless of the grades they give their local schools, majorities favor vouchers (65% D or F, 61% C, 57% B, 58% A).

Most adults (64%), likely voters (66%), and public school parents (69%) say the current level of state funding for their local public schools is inadequate. Democrats (77%) and independents (69%) are more likely than Republicans (51%) to say funding is inadequate.

What is the best way to improve the quality of K–12 schools: increase state funding, use existing funds more wisely, or a combination of the two? About half of adults and likely voters (49% each) say a combination is needed. A third of adults (33%) and 39 percent of likely voters prefer wiser use of existing funds, while far fewer prefer increasing state funding alone (14% adults, 9% likely voters).

“Most Californians give passing grades to their local public schools,” said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO. “But many believe that the state isn’t spending enough money on K–12 education and should also spend what it has more wisely. In this context, many are willing to raise their local taxes and consider a voucher system.”

Asked about options for increasing local school revenues, 68 percent of adults and 58 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes if their local school district had a bond on the ballot to pay for construction projects, which would require 55 percent approval. Majorities of adults (59%) and likely voters (52%) say they would vote yes on a local parcel tax to fund public schools; this level of support falls short of the two-thirds vote necessary for passage. When asked about reducing the vote threshold for passage of local

parcel taxes for schools to 55 percent, adults are divided: 46 percent say this is a good idea and 43 percent say it is a bad idea. Half of likely voters (49%) say it is a bad idea (42% good idea).

## Majorities Concerned about Impact of Immigration Enforcement

As the federal government steps up immigration enforcement, 46 percent of adults are very concerned about the impact on their school's undocumented students and families. A quarter (24%) are somewhat concerned (12% not too concerned, 16% not at all concerned). Views of public school parents are similar (51% very concerned, 27% somewhat, 12% not too, 10% not at all). Most Latinos (59%) are very concerned, compared to half of Asian Americans (50%) and fewer African Americans (42%) and whites (36%).

As the legislature considers a bill to make California a "sanctuary state," Tom Torlakson, the state superintendent of public instruction, has encouraged public school districts to declare themselves safe havens. The survey asks Californians if they favor or oppose their local district designating itself a "sanctuary safe zone" to indicate that it will protect its undocumented students and their families from federal immigration enforcement efforts. Large majorities of adults (65%) and public school parents (74%) are in favor. Californians are deeply divided across parties on this question: 79 percent of Democrats and 58 percent of independents are in favor, and 70 percent of Republicans are opposed. Majorities across regions are in favor. Across racial/ethnic groups, Asian Americans (81%), Latinos (80%), and African Americans (65%) are much more likely than whites (50%) to be in favor.

When asked if local public schools should require staff to keep information about the immigration status of students and their family members completely confidential, 73 percent of Californians and 81 percent of public school parents are in favor. Support is higher among Democrats (83%) than among independents (69%) and Republicans (51%).

Baldassare summed up: "Many Californians are concerned about the impact of increased federal immigration efforts on undocumented students and families and, in response, most favor designating their public school district as a sanctuary safe zone."

## Resources Seen as Inadequate for Students with Disabilities, Low Incomes

The survey asks about the adequacy of resources to serve low-income students, English language learners, and students with disabilities:

- **Low-income students.** Slightly more than half (52% adults, 54% public school parents) say their local public schools have inadequate resources for these students. African Americans (75%) are more likely than Latinos (58%), Asian Americans (47%), and whites (47%) to express this view.
- **Students with disabilities.** Just over half (52% adults, 52% public school parents) say their local schools lack adequate resources for these students, with African Americans (75%) far more likely than other racial/ethnic groups to say so (55% Latinos, 52% whites, 42% Asian Americans).
- **English language learners.** Adults are divided: 39 percent say schools have just enough resources and 39 percent say not enough (16% more than enough). Among public school parents, 44 percent say local schools have just enough resources (35% not enough, 14% more than enough).

Most residents (71%) and public school parents (66%) say they have heard nothing about the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which gives districts flexibility in spending state money and provides additional funding to districts that have more English language learners and low-income students. Although awareness of the LCFF is low, majorities (65% adults, 64% public school parents) favor it when they are read a brief description. Asked whether they are confident that districts receiving additional funding will use it to provide additional support for English language learners and lower-income students, 53 percent of adults say they are very confident (11%) or somewhat confident (42%). This is a 12 point decline since last April, when 65 percent expressed confidence that the funds would benefit these students. Confidence is also lower among public school parents: 57 percent are very or

somewhat confident, down from 73 percent in April 2016. Nevertheless, 68 percent of adults and 75 percent of public school parents say LCFF implementation will improve the academic achievement of English language learners and lower-income students at least somewhat.

LCFF requires school districts to develop, adopt, and annually update three-year Local Control and Accountability Plans. Districts are required to reach out to parents and encouraged to seek input from parents of lower-income and English language learner students. Fewer than half of public school parents (46%) say they were provided with information about how to get involved in this process. Similar shares of parents with household incomes below and above \$40,000 (48% and 45%, respectively) say they were given information. Latino parents (55%) are far more likely than white parents (34%) to say so. When parents are asked whether they are likely to participate in revising and updating their local accountability plans, 25 percent say they are very likely to do so and 47 percent are somewhat likely.

## Political Divide over Common Core Standards

Seven years after California joined many other states in adopting the Common Core State Standards, just 24 percent of state residents say they have heard a lot about them (41% adults a little, 34% nothing at all). Public school parents are somewhat more likely to be aware (31% heard a lot, 41% a little, 27% nothing at all). Republicans (41%) are much more likely than Democrats (25%) and independents (23%) to say they have heard a lot about the standards. When read a brief description, 43 percent of adults and 54 percent of public school parents favor Common Core. The partisan divide on this question is sharp: Democrats (48%) and independents (44%) are much more likely than Republicans (23%) to be in favor.

Baldassare said: "Most Californians rally around the state government's Local Control Funding Formula plan to provide more resources to the neediest students, while they are conflicted and divided along party lines when it comes to the Common Core education standards."

## Job Approval Ratings: Brown, Legislature in a Tie

About half of Californians (49% adults, 52% likely voters) approve of the way Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor. Slightly fewer approve of his handling of the state's K–12 public education system (41% adults, 37% likely voters), and 30 percent don't know. The legislature's approval rating is 49 percent among adults and 44 percent among likely voters. Approval of the legislature's handling of public education is lower: 42 percent among adults and 35 percent among likely voters.

"The California legislature's and Governor Brown's approval ratings are tied at 49 percent, representing a remarkable turnaround from the legislature's 16 percent approval rating in 2010," Baldassare said.

## More Concerned about Teacher Shortage than Teacher Quality

The survey also asks about three education issues that are the focus of debate:

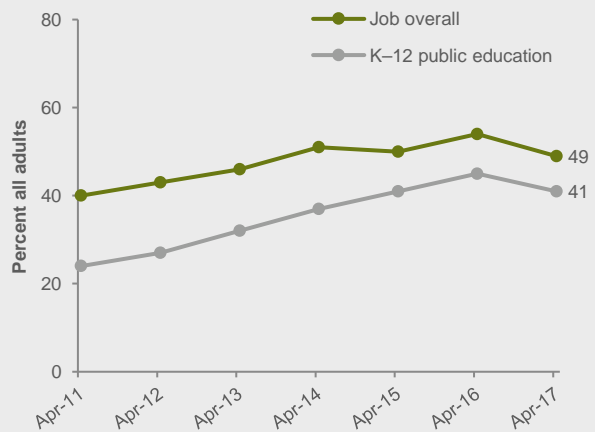
- **Teachers.** Just 25 percent of adults and 23 percent of public school parents say teacher quality is a big problem in the state's public schools. They are much more likely to see a teacher shortage as a big problem (50% adults, 52% public school parents).
- **Charter schools.** Should charter schools meet the same educational standards as other public schools or set their own? Most Californians (61%) and public school parents (65%) say charter schools should meet the same standards. Most Democrats (70%) and independents (60%) agree, while Republicans are divided (47% same standards, 47% set own standards).
- **Preschool.** Most adults (69%) and likely voters (66%) say preschool is very important to a student's success from kindergarten through high school. Majorities across racial/ethnic groups and parties agree. Should state government fund voluntary preschool programs for four-year-olds? Overwhelming majorities (75% adults, 71% likely voters) say yes.

# Perceptions and Attitudes

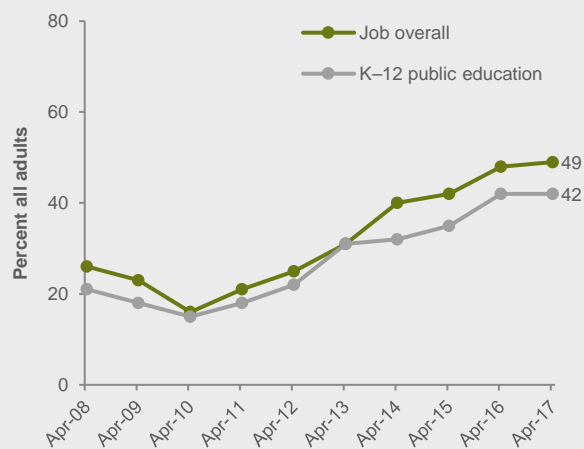
## Key Findings

- Forty-nine percent of Californians approve of Governor Jerry Brown and 49 percent approve of the California Legislature. Approval of the governor’s and legislature’s handling of K–12 education is slightly lower, with Californians somewhat more likely to say they don’t know. *(page 7)*
- A majority of Californians (54%) give their local public schools a positive grade of A or B. Fifty-eight percent say their local public schools are doing an excellent or good job preparing students for college, while fewer (46%) say their local schools are doing an excellent or good job preparing students for jobs and the workforce. *(page 8)*
- Half of Californians (50%) say a shortage of teachers is a big problem in the state, while half as many (25%) say that teacher quality is a big problem. *(page 9)*
- Seven in ten Californians are concerned (46% very, 24% somewhat) that increased federal immigration enforcement may impact students in their local public schools. Almost two-thirds favor their local public school district designating itself a “sanctuary safe zone.” *(page 10)*
- Solid majorities of Californians (60%) and public school parents (66%) favor providing parents with tax-funded vouchers to send their children to any school they choose. Six in ten California adults (61%) and public school parents (65%) say charter schools should have to meet the same educational standards as other public schools. *(page 11)*
- Strong majorities of California adults and public school parents have heard at least a little about the Common Core State Standards. Based on what they have read and heard, 43 percent of adults and 54 percent of public school parents favor the standards. *(page 12)*

Approval ratings of Governor Brown



Approval ratings of the California Legislature



Support for local school district designating itself as a "sanctuary safe zone"



## Approval Ratings for State Elected Officials

Forty-nine percent of adults and 52 percent of likely voters approve of the way Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor. Approval was somewhat higher in March (58% adults, 61% likely voters) and similar last April (54% adults, 56% likely voters). Today, Democrats (70%) are far more likely than independents (47%) and Republicans (24%) to approve. Approval is somewhat higher in Los Angeles (57%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (55%) than in other regions (47% Orange/San Diego, 43% Inland Empire, 42% Central Valley), and also among African Americans (60%), Asian Americans (54%), and Latinos (54%) than among whites (44%).

Slightly fewer adults approve of Governor Brown’s handling of the state’s K–12 public education system (41% adults, 37% likely voters), while about three in ten Californians say they don’t know. Approval ratings were similar in last April’s survey (45% adults, 36% likely voters). Today, Democrats (49%) are more likely than independents (40%) and Republicans (17%) to say they approve. A majority of public school parents (55%) approve of the governor’s handling of K–12 education.

### “Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Jerry Brown is handling...?”

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
His job as governor of California	Approve	49%	70%	24%	47%	52%
	Disapprove	30	16	66	35	38
	Don't know	21	15	10	18	10
The state's K–12 public education system	Approve	41	49	17	40	37
	Disapprove	29	23	60	28	36
	Don't know	30	28	23	32	28

Forty-nine percent of adults and 44 percent of likely voters approve of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job. Current approval of the legislature is similar to that in March (51% adults, 48% likely voters) and last April (48% adults, 40% likely voters). Today, Democrats (60%) are much more likely to approve than independents (43%) and Republicans (21%). Approval of the legislature is slightly higher in Los Angeles (54%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (51%) than in other regions (46% Inland Empire, 45% Central Valley, 45% Orange/San Diego). Once again, Latinos (59%), Asian Americans (57%), and African Americans (49%) are somewhat more likely to approve than whites (40%).

Approval of the legislature’s handling of the K–12 public education system is lower (42% adults, 35% likely voters), with about one in four saying they don’t know. Approval was similar for adults and likely voters last April (42% adults, 29% likely voters). Today, approval is higher among Democrats (45%) and independents (38%) than among Republicans (20%). A majority of public school parents (55%) approve.

### “Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling...?”

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
Its job	Approve	49%	60%	21%	43%	44%
	Disapprove	36	26	71	39	45
	Don't know	15	14	8	18	11
The state's K–12 public education system	Approve	42	45	20	38	35
	Disapprove	35	32	62	38	42
	Don't know	23	23	18	24	23

## Local Public Schools

Most adults and public school parents give positive responses when asked to rate the quality of public schools in their neighborhood. A majority of adults give local schools grades of A (22%) or B (32%), while 24 percent say C, 11 percent say D, and 7 percent say F. At least half have said A or B since 2005. Today, majorities give an A or B across regions, while the shares of those giving an A or B are much lower for African Americans (37%) than for other racial/ethnic groups (62% Latinos, 58% Asian Americans, 51% whites). The grades for local public schools in our survey are similar to those of adults nationwide in the latest Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research survey (13% A, 35% B, 28% C, 10% D, 7% Fail in May 2016).

**“Overall, how would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today? If you had to give your local public schools a grade, would it be A, B, C, D, or F?”**

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
A	22%	10%	34%	30%	14%	33%
B	32	27	24	32	37	29
C	24	36	19	19	27	20
D	11	15	15	7	11	9
F	7	9	4	8	6	7
Don't know	5	3	4	5	5	2

When asked about how their local public schools are doing in preparing students for college, almost six in ten adults (14% excellent, 44% good) and seven in ten public school parents (24% excellent, 46% good) give positive ratings. At least half have rated their schools positively since April 2013. Today, majorities across the state’s regions have a positive perception. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (65%) are the most likely to have this view about college preparation (56% whites, 55% Asian Americans, 51% African Americans). When asked about how their public schools are doing in preparing students for jobs and the workforce, fewer than half of adults (10% excellent, 36% good) and six in ten public school parents (21% excellent, 37% good) express positive opinions. Whites (38%) and African Americans (42%) are less likely than Asian Americans (54%) and Latinos (58%) to hold a positive view.

**“Are your local public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in...?”**

		All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
			African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Preparing students for college	Excellent	14%	11%	21%	18%	9%	24%
	Good	44	40	34	47	47	46
	Not so good	20	24	20	20	18	15
	Poor	15	22	13	12	15	12
	Don't know	8	4	12	4	10	3
Preparing students for jobs and the workforce	Excellent	10	9	16	15	5	21
	Good	36	33	38	43	33	37
	Not so good	28	23	23	26	32	26
	Poor	18	31	15	12	19	12
	Don't know	8	4	7	4	11	5



## School Teachers

In the context of a tightening labor market and high housing costs in California, about half of adults (50%) and public school parents (52%) say a teacher shortage is a big problem in California’s K–12 public schools today. Fewer than one in five (19% adults and public school parents) say this is not really a problem. Last April, the perception that a shortage of teachers is a big problem was similar (53% adults, 55% public school parents). Today, more adults hold this view in the San Francisco Bay Area (57%), the Inland Empire (52%), Los Angeles (50%), and Orange/San Diego (49%) than in the Central Valley (41%). African Americans (66%) are much more likely than Latinos (52%), whites (48%), and Asian Americans (46%) to say a shortage of teachers is a big problem. The perception that a teacher shortage is a big problem is slightly less prevalent among more-affluent Californians (44% \$80,000 or more). Democrats (57%) and independents (52%) are more likely than Republicans (40%) to say this is a big problem.

**“I’m going to read you a list of issues people have mentioned when talking about California’s K–12 public schools today. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not really a problem. How about a shortage of teachers?”**

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Big problem	50%	41%	52%	50%	49%	57%	52%
Somewhat of a problem	27	34	26	30	22	24	27
Not really a problem	19	21	21	16	25	16	19
Don’t know	4	5	2	4	4	4	2

By contrast, about one in four adults (25%) and public school parents (23%) say that teacher quality is a big problem in California’s K–12 public schools. Our findings were similar last April (30% adults, 29% public school parents) and have been similar in most years since the question was first asked in April 2006. Today, more Californians say that teacher quality is not really a problem (33% adults, 41% public school parents) than say that it is a big problem. Across regions, Orange/San Diego (18%) and Central Valley (22%) residents are the least likely to say teacher quality is a big problem (29% Inland Empire, 28% Los Angeles, 28% San Francisco Bay Area). Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (19%) are the least likely to say that teacher quality is a big problem (33% African Americans, 30% Asian Americans, 25% whites). Fewer than a third across age, education, and income groups say teacher quality is a big problem. Democrats (23%) are slightly less likely than Republicans (30%) or independents (33%) to say that teacher quality is a big problem in California’s K–12 public schools today.

**“I’m going to read you a list of issues people have mentioned when talking about California’s K–12 public schools today. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not really a problem. How about teacher quality?”**

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Big problem	25%	22%	29%	28%	18%	28%	23%
Somewhat of a problem	37	40	29	36	35	39	33
Not really a problem	33	32	40	31	43	26	41
Don’t know	5	6	1	6	4	7	4

## Federal Immigration Policy

Amid increased federal immigration enforcement efforts, 46 percent of Californians are very concerned that these efforts will impact undocumented students and families in their local public schools. Another 24 percent of Californians are somewhat concerned, while three in ten are not too (12%) or not at all concerned (16%). Views of public school parents are similar (51% very concerned, 27% somewhat, 12% not too, 10% not at all). Six in ten Latinos (59%) are very concerned compared to half of Asian Americans (50%) and fewer African Americans (42%) and whites (36%). This perception is more common among Democrats (59%) than independents (37%) and Republicans (23%). Residents in Los Angeles (55%) are the most likely to be very concerned followed by those in the Inland Empire (49%), the San Francisco Bay Area (46%), Orange/San Diego (41%), and the Central Valley (36%).

### “How concerned are you that increased federal immigration enforcement efforts will impact undocumented students and their families in your local public schools?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Very concerned	46%	42%	50%	59%	36%	51%
Somewhat concerned	24	31	22	24	25	27
Not too concerned	12	8	16	7	15	12
Not at all concerned	16	18	11	9	22	10
Don't know	1	2	2	1	2	1

As the legislature considers a bill that would make California a “sanctuary state,” some—including state superintendent of public instruction Tom Torlakson—have encouraged public school districts to designate themselves as “sanctuary safe zones” or “safe havens.” When asked whether their local school district should declare itself a “sanctuary safe zone” to indicate that it will protect its undocumented students and their families from federal immigration enforcement efforts, two in three Californians (65%) and three in four public school parents (74%) are in favor. Partisans are deeply divided, with most Democrats (79%) and independents (58%) in favor and most Republicans (70%) opposed. Majorities across regions are in favor, with residents in Los Angeles (73%), the San Francisco Bay Area (69%), and the Inland Empire (65%) more likely than residents in Orange/San Diego (58%) and the Central Valley (58%) to hold this view. Half or more across racial/ethnic groups are in favor, though Asian Americans (81%), Latinos (80%), and African Americans (65%) are much more likely than whites (50%) to express support.

### “Do you favor or oppose your public school district designating itself as a ‘sanctuary safe zone’ to indicate it will protect its undocumented students and their families from federal immigration enforcement efforts?”

	All adults	Party			Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	65%	79%	26%	58%	74%
Oppose	31	18	70	39	23
Don't know	4	4	4	3	3

When asked if local public schools should require staff to keep information about the immigration status of students and their family members completely confidential, 73 percent of Californians and 81 percent of public school parents are in favor. Support is higher among Democrats (83%) than independents (69%) and Republicans (51%); it is above 70 percent in all regions except the Central Valley (59%). More than six in ten across demographic groups are in favor, including more than three in four Latinos (81%), African Americans (79%), and Asian Americans (77%).

## Vouchers and Charter Schools

Given the changing federal policy landscape under new US secretary of education Betsy DeVos, some education experts and political pundits are speculating that federal efforts to encourage states to promote school choice programs like vouchers and charter schools may be on the horizon. On the issue of vouchers, most Californians (60%) and slightly more public school parents (66%) are in favor of providing parents with tax-funded vouchers to send their children to any public, private, or parochial school they choose. Support was similar in May 1998 (58% adults, 67% public school parents).

Republicans (67%) are more likely than independents (56%) and far more likely than Democrats (46%) to be in favor. With majorities in favor across regions, support is highest in the Central Valley (66%) and the Inland Empire (64%) followed by the San Francisco Bay Area (59%), Los Angeles (58%), and Orange/San Diego (56%). Majorities across racial/ethnic groups are also in favor, though African Americans (73%) and Latinos (69%) are more likely than Asian Americans (56%) and whites (51%) to support vouchers. Support declines as age, education, and income levels increase (51% 55 and older, 48% college graduates, 48% \$80,000 or more). Among those who rate the quality of their local public schools as D or F, majorities favor vouchers (65%); support is similar among those who give their local schools higher grades (58% A, 57% B, 61% C).

**“Do you favor or oppose providing parents with tax-funded vouchers to send their children to any public, private, or parochial school they choose?”**

	All adults	Party			Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	60%	46%	67%	56%	66%
Oppose	37	50	29	39	32
Don't know	4	4	4	5	2

According to the California Charter School Association, one in every eleven public school students in California attended a charter school last year. Charter schools are public schools operated independently and they are free from some of the regulations that apply to school districts. When asked if charter schools should meet the same educational standards as other public schools, six in ten Californians (61%) and two in three public school parents (65%) say they should, while one in three Californians and three in ten public school parents say they should be able to set their own standards.

Solid majorities of Democrats (70%) and independents (60%) think charter schools should meet the same standards, while Republicans are divided (47% meet same standards, 47% set own standards). Majorities across regions and demographic groups say charter schools should meet the same standards. Nationwide, adults were divided on this question in a May 2016 Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research poll: 48 percent said charters should meet the same standards and 46 percent said they should be allowed to set their own standards.

**“Charter schools are public schools that are run without many of the state regulations placed on other public schools. Do you think it’s better for charter schools to meet the same educational standards as other public schools, or to set their own educational standards?”**

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Meet the same standards	61%	65%	67%	63%	59%	65%
Set their own standards	34	33	28	32	36	28
Don't know	5	2	5	6	5	7

## Common Core State Standards

Seven years after California joined a number of other states in adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), just one in four Californians (24%) have heard a lot about them, while another 41 percent have heard a little. One in three (34%) have heard nothing at all. Public school parents (31% a lot, 41% a little) are somewhat more likely to have heard about it than adults overall. Awareness of CCSS was similar last April (25% a lot, 41% a little for adults; 34% a lot, 41% a little for public school parents), but it has increased 9 points among adults since 2014 (19% a lot, 37% a little).

Partisan divisions are present today, with Republicans (41%) much more likely than Democrats (25%) and independents (23%) to say they have heard a lot about CCSS. Across racial/ethnic groups, whites are the most likely to have heard a lot (32%) about CCSS, compared to African Americans (18%), Asian Americans (18%), and Latinos (17%). Awareness increases along with educational attainment and household income.

**“How much, if anything, have you heard about the Common Core State Standards, a new set of English and math standards that the state began implementing in recent years? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?”**

	All adults	Household income			Public school parents
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	
A lot	24%	15%	28%	34%	31%
A little	41	42	41	41	41
Nothing at all	34	42	31	25	27
Don't know	1	1	–	–	–

When read a brief description, 43 percent of California adults are supportive of the Common Core standards, while 35 percent are opposed and 22 percent are unsure. Public school parents are more supportive (54% favor, 27% oppose), while 19 percent are unsure. Last April, a similar 43 percent of adults and 51 percent of public school parents were in favor.

There is a sharp partisan divide, however, with Democrats (48%) and independents (44%) much more likely than Republicans (23%) to be in favor. Support is slightly higher in Los Angeles (48%) than in other regions (44% San Francisco Bay Area, 41% Inland Empire, 41% Orange/San Diego, 38% Central Valley). Across racial/ethnic groups, support is highest among Latinos (56%) followed by African Americans (47%), Asian Americans (43%), and whites (35%). Support is highest among those with less education (51% high school degree or less, 37% some college, 39% college graduates) and lower incomes (49% under \$40,000, 44% \$40,000 to under \$80,000, 38% \$80,000 or more).

Among those who have heard at least a little about Common Core, 44 percent are in favor and 44 percent are opposed to the standards.

**“The Common Core State Standards are a single set of K–12 English language arts and math standards that most states, including California, have voluntarily adopted. From what you’ve read and heard, do you favor or oppose the Common Core education standards?”**

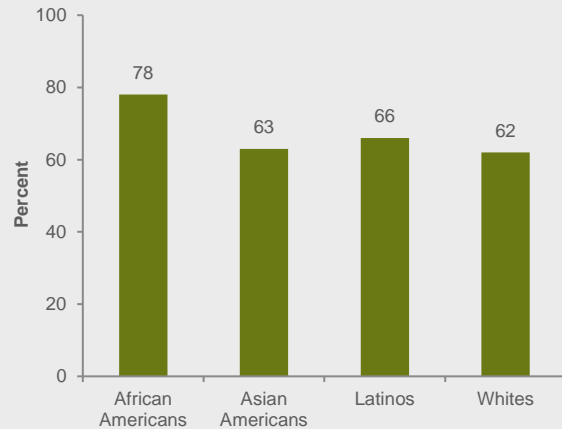
	All adults	Party			Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	43%	48%	23%	44%	54%
Oppose	35	32	60	38	27
Don't know	22	20	17	18	19

# Funding and Policy Preferences

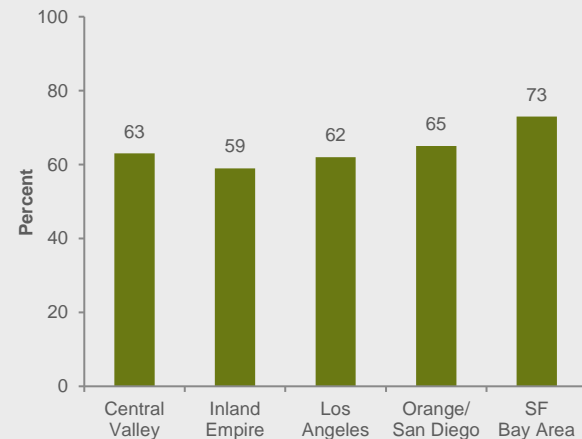
## Key Findings

- Solid majorities of adults (64%) and likely voters (66%) say the current level of state funding for their local public schools is not enough. Nearly half of adults say both better use of funds and more state funding are needed to improve schools. *(page 14)*
- Majorities of adults (68%) and likely voters (58%) would vote yes on a local bond measure for school construction. Support for a potential local parcel tax for public schools is slightly lower (59% adults, 52% likely voters). *(page 15)*
- Half of Californians say their local schools do not have enough resources for low-income students and for students with disabilities, while fewer (37%) say there are not enough resources for English language learners. *(page 16)*
- Seven in ten Californians have heard nothing at all about the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). However, after being read a brief description, more than six in ten favor the LCFF. *(page 17)*
- A majority of adults (53%) are confident that districts receiving additional LCFF funding will spend it on English language learners and lower-income students. Two-thirds of Californians expect that the academic achievement of these students will improve as the state implements the LCFF. *(page 18)*
- Forty-six percent of public school parents have received information about becoming involved in their school’s accountability plan, and a quarter (25%) say they are very likely to participate. *(page 19)*
- More than seven in ten adults and likely voters say the state should fund voluntary preschool for four-year-olds. At least two in three adults and likely voters say preschool is very important to K–12 success. *(page 20)*

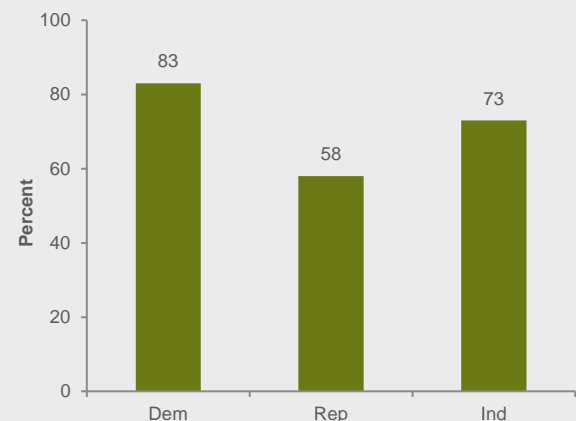
View of state funding for public schools as inadequate



Support for the Local Control Funding Formula



Support for the state funding voluntary preschool for all four-year-olds



## Adequacy of State Funding

Solid majorities of adults (64%) and likely voters (66%) say the current level of state funding for their local public schools is not enough. Public school parents have similar views (69% not enough). Responses were also similar last April (61% adults, 60% likely voters, 66% public school parents).

Today, Democrats (77%) and independents (69%) are much more likely than Republicans (51%) to say their local schools do not get enough state funding. Majorities across racial/ethnic groups hold this view, with African Americans (78%) more likely than Latinos (66%), Asian Americans (63%), or whites (62%) to do so. At least six in ten across income and education groups, and majorities across the state's regions, say the current level of state funding is not enough (57% Central Valley, 63% San Francisco Bay Area, 65% Orange/San Diego, 66% Inland Empire, 68% Los Angeles). Californians age 18–54 (68%) are more likely than older adults (58%) to say state funding is not enough. Whether Californians grade the quality of their local public schools as A, B, C, D, or F, majorities of each group say their local schools do not get enough funding. Those who give their schools a C are the most likely to express this opinion (75%).

**“Do you think the current level of state funding for your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?”**

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
More than enough	9%	2%	16%	11%	10%
Just enough	21	17	28	16	20
Not enough	64	77	51	69	66
Don't know	6	4	5	4	4

What is the best way to improve the quality of K–12 public schools: increase state funding, use existing funds more wisely, or a combination of the two? About half of adults and likely voters (49% each) say both approaches are needed. A third of adults and 39 percent of likely voters prefer wiser use of existing funds alone, while far fewer prefer increased funding alone (14% adults, 9% likely voters). In April 2015, adults held similar opinions (49% both, 38% wiser use, 9% increase funds), but likely voters were more evenly divided (45% both, 44% wiser use, 9% increase funds). Today, there are wide partisan differences, with 55 percent of Republicans preferring better use of existing funds, and 61 percent of Democrats preferring both more funding and wiser use of existing funds. Across regions, residents of the San Francisco Bay Area (55%) and Orange/San Diego (54%) are the most likely to say both are needed (46% Los Angeles, 45% Central Valley, 39% Inland Empire). A combination of more funds and wiser use of existing funds is the most common response across racial/ethnic, age, education, and income groups and also among public school parents (46% both, 30% wiser use, 21% increase funds).

**“To significantly improve the quality of California’s K–12 public schools, which of the following statements do you agree with the most? We need to use existing state funds more wisely, we need to increase the amount of state funding, or we need to use existing state funds more wisely and increase the amount of state funding?”**

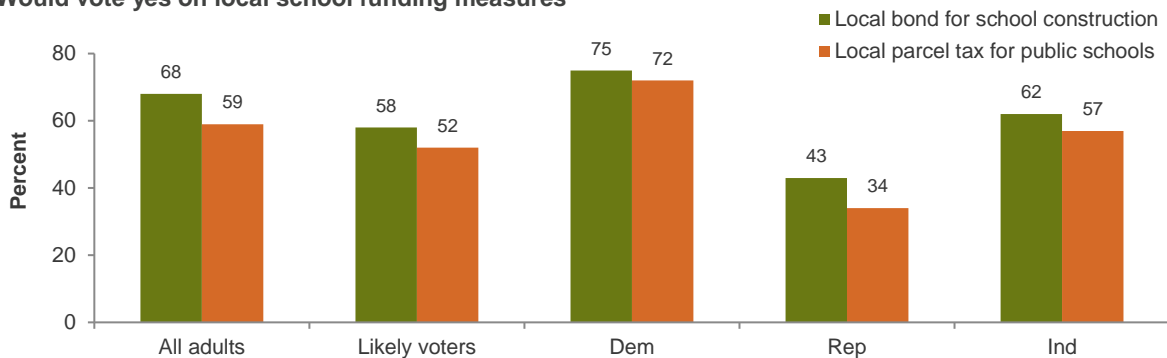
	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Use existing funds more wisely	33%	22%	55%	37%	39%
Increase amount of state funding	14	15	5	9	9
Both	49	61	38	52	49
Don't know	3	2	2	2	2

## Increasing Local School Revenues

In 2016, Californians passed more than 200 local school bond measures and one statewide bond measure—Proposition 51 (55.2% yes)—to fund school construction. Today, two in three adults (68%) and a majority of likely voters (58%) say they would vote yes if their local school district had a bond measure on the ballot to pay for construction projects (local school bonds require a 55% majority to pass). Support was similar last year (74% adults, 62% likely voters). In fact, since 1999, at least six in ten adults and majorities of likely voters have said they would vote yes on a local school bond. Today, at least six in ten across regions would vote yes. Majorities of Democrats (75%) and independents (62%) would vote yes, but a slight majority of Republicans (51%) would vote no. Majorities across age, education, and income groups would vote yes, but support declines as age, education, and income levels increase. Across racial/ethnic groups, support ranges from 60 percent among whites to 80 percent among Latinos (66% Asian Americans, 75% African Americans).

Majorities of adults (59%) and likely voters (52%) say they would vote yes on a local parcel tax to fund public schools (local parcel taxes require a two-thirds majority to pass). Support for a local parcel tax has been similar since 2009. Today, two-thirds of Los Angeles residents (66%) would vote yes, and smaller majorities would vote yes in other regions (60% Central Valley, 60% San Francisco Bay Area, 54% Orange/San Diego, 51% Inland Empire). As with a local bond, majorities of Democrats (72%) and independents (57%) would vote yes for a parcel tax; a solid majority of Republicans (64%) would vote no. Asian Americans (71%), African Americans (68%), and Latinos (64%) are more likely than whites (51%) to say they would vote yes. Renters (65%) are more likely than homeowners (50%) to say they would vote yes on a parcel tax measure.

### Would vote yes on local school funding measures



When asked if the two-thirds majority threshold for local parcel taxes to fund public schools should be lowered to 55 percent, adults are divided on whether this is a good idea (46%) or a bad idea (43%). Last April, a majority (53%) said it was a good idea (40% bad). Today, half of likely voters (49%) say this is a bad idea (42% good); our findings a year ago were similar (49% bad, 44% good). A majority of Republicans (54%) and nearly half of independents (48%) say lowering the threshold is a bad idea, while half of Democrats (49%) say it is a good idea. Among those who would vote yes on a local parcel tax, 58 percent say lowering the threshold is a good idea and 30 percent say it is a bad idea.

### “Do you think it’s a good idea or a bad idea to replace the two-thirds vote requirement with a 55 percent majority vote for voters to pass local parcel taxes for the local public schools?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Good idea	46%	49%	38%	40%	42%
Bad idea	43	41	54	48	49
Don't know	11	9	8	11	9

## Adequacy of Resources for Students

When it comes to serving low-income students, English language learners, and students with disabilities, do Californians think their local public schools have enough resources?

Majorities of adults (52%) and public school parents (54%) say local public schools do not have enough resources for low-income students. Six in ten Californians with household incomes under \$40,000 express this opinion, and the likelihood of holding this view decreases as income rises. Majorities in Los Angeles (55%), the San Francisco Bay Area (54%), and the Inland Empire (53%) say their local public schools do not have enough resources, and pluralities in other regions say the same. Across racial/ethnic groups, African Americans (76%) are more likely than Latinos (58%), Asian Americans (47%), and whites (47%) to say schools do not have enough resources for low-income students.

**“Do you think the current level of resources for low-income students in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?”**

	All adults	Household income			Public school parents
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	
More than enough	11%	8%	10%	18%	10%
Just enough	30	29	28	29	31
Not enough	52	60	53	44	54
Don't know	7	4	9	9	5

Majorities of adults (52%) and public school parents (52%) also say local public schools do not have enough resources for students with disabilities. Majorities in the San Francisco Bay Area (57%) and Inland Empire (53%) say this, as do about half in other regions. African Americans (75%) are far more likely than Latinos (55%), whites (52%), and Asian Americans (42%) to hold this view.

**“Do you think the current level of resources for students with disabilities in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?”**

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
More than enough	8%	3%	6%	7%	8%	7%
Just enough	29	19	38	28	29	28
Not enough	52	75	42	55	52	52
Don't know	11	3	14	11	12	13

When asked about English language learners, adults are split on whether their local public schools have just enough (39%) or not enough (37%) resources. A plurality of public school parents say just enough (44%). Across racial/ethnic groups, pluralities of Latinos (44%) and Asian Americans (43%) say schools have just enough resources for these students. Pluralities in Orange/San Diego (43%), Los Angeles (41%), and the Central Valley (41%) say the same. Fewer than half in any region, age, education, or income group say schools do not have enough resources for English language learners.

There are partisan differences in perceptions about resources for students. Democrats are the most likely to say schools do not have enough resources to serve these students, followed by independents and Republicans. There are larger differences when asking about low-income students (63% Democrats, 33% Republicans saying not enough) and English language learners (50% Democrats, 22% Republicans saying not enough), compared to students with disabilities (61% Democrats, 42% Republicans saying not enough).



## Local Control Funding Formula

Nearly four years since it was signed into law, most Californians (71%) and public school parents (66%) say they have heard nothing at all about the Local Control Funding Formula; 28% of adults and 33% parents say they have heard a lot or a little. More than two-thirds of adults have said they have heard nothing at all since we first began asking this question in April 2014. Indeed, today more than six in ten Californians across regions, age, education, income, and racial/ethnic groups say they have heard nothing at all about the LCFF.

**“Next, how much, if anything, have you heard about the Local Control Funding Formula, a policy enacted in recent years that changes the way K–12 public school districts are funded in California?”**

	All adults	Party			Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A lot	4%	3%	4%	5%	4%
A little	24	26	23	22	29
Nothing at all	71	69	72	72	66
Don't know	1	1	–	–	1

The Local Control Funding Formula provides local school districts with increased control over spending decisions and gives additional funding to school districts that have more English language learners and lower-income students. Though awareness of the LCFF is low, after being read a brief description of the policy, nearly two-thirds of adults (65%) and public school parents (64%) favor it. Support for the LCFF was somewhat higher in 2016, when 76 percent of adults and 77 percent of public school parents favored it, though the level of support today is similar to our findings in 2015 and 2014. Across parties, Democrats (73%) and independents (65%) are more likely than Republicans (53%) to favor the LCFF. Regionally, support is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (73%) and lowest in the Inland Empire (59%). Though majorities across all demographic groups favor the LCFF, support is higher among adults age 18–34 (71%) than among those 55 and older (60%). Renters (70%) are also more likely to support the policy than are homeowners (60%).

**“The Local Control Funding Formula provides additional funding to school districts that have more English language learners and lower-income students and gives flexibility over how state funding is spent. Do you favor or oppose this policy?”**

	All adults	Party			Public school parents	Heard about LCFF
		Dem	Rep	Ind		
Favor	65%	73%	53%	65%	64%	68%
Oppose	25	20	39	27	25	25
Don't know	10	8	9	9	12	7

Do Californians think school districts that receive additional funding will use those funds to provide more support for English language learners and lower-income students? Today, 53 percent of adults say they are very confident (11%) or somewhat confident (42%) that this additional funding will be spent on these students. This marks a 12 point decrease since last April, when 65 percent expressed confidence that the funds would benefit these students. There has also been a decline in confidence among public school parents—57 percent are very or somewhat confident, down from 73 percent in April 2016.

Across racial/ethnic groups, African Americans (41%) are the least likely to express confidence that the additional funding will go to English language learners and lower-income students, compared to whites

(50%), Latinos (57%), and Asian Americans (59%). Confidence is somewhat higher among Democrats (56%) than among independents (48%) and Republicans (47%). Among those who favor the LCFF, 63 percent are very or somewhat confident school districts will spend additional funds on English language learners and lower-income students. Among those who oppose the LCFF, only 30 percent express confidence. About half of Californians across regions say they are very or somewhat confident that districts will spend additional funds on programs and support for these students (53% Los Angeles, 52% San Francisco Bay Area, 51% Central Valley, 51% Orange/San Diego, 49% Inland Empire).

**“As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, how confident are you that local school districts which receive additional funding will spend that money on programs and support for English language learners and lower-income students?”**

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Very confident	11%	8%	13%	14%	8%	14%
Somewhat confident	42	33	46	43	42	43
Not too confident	29	33	26	27	31	27
Not at all confident	16	24	14	15	16	14
Don't know	2	2	1	1	3	2

Two-thirds of Californians think the implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula will improve the academic achievement of English language learners and lower-income students (21% a lot, 47% somewhat). Public school parents are even more likely to think academic achievement will improve a lot (32%, 43% somewhat). Among all adults, the expectation that academic achievement will improve was similar in 2014 (16% a lot, 50% somewhat) and in 2015 (19% a lot, 49% somewhat), but was somewhat higher last April (28% a lot, 48% somewhat). Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (81%) and Asian Americans (74%) are more likely than African Americans (64%) and whites (57%) to expect improvement. Majorities across regions and demographic groups expect at least some improvement, though the expectation of academic improvement decreases as age and income rise.

**“As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, do you think the academic achievement of English language learners and lower-income students will or will not improve?” (If it will improve: “Do you think it will improve a lot or somewhat?”)**

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Improve a lot	21%	19%	17%	36%	11%	32%
Improve somewhat	47	45	57	45	46	43
Will not improve	24	30	12	16	33	18
Don't know	8	6	14	4	10	7

## Parental Involvement

The LCFF requires school districts to develop, adopt, and annually update three-year Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs). As part of the LCAP process, districts are required to reach out to parents and are encouraged to seek input from parents of lower-income and English language learner students. Forty-six percent of public school parents say that they were provided with information about how to get involved. Similar shares of public school parents with household incomes below and above \$40,000 (48% and 45%, respectively) say they were provided with information. Latino public school parents (55%) are far more likely than white public school parents (34%) to have received information. Mothers (47%) and fathers (46%) are about equally likely to have received information.

**“The Local Control Funding Formula requires school districts to seek input from parents in developing their accountability plans for how to allocate resources. Did your child’s school or school district provide you with information?”**

<i>Public school parents only</i>	All public school parents	Household income		Race/Ethnicity	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 or more	Latinos	Whites
Yes	46%	48%	45%	55%	34%
No	49	50	50	42	61
Don’t know	5	2	5	3	5

In our April 2015 survey, 82 percent of public school parents said they were not involved in the development of their local school district’s accountability plan. Yet today, when asked about the likelihood that they would participate in the process of revising and updating their district’s accountability plan, a strong majority say they are very (25%) or somewhat (47%) likely to participate. Public school parents with a household income below \$40,000 (77%) are somewhat more likely than those with higher incomes (69%) to say they are at least somewhat likely to participate. Latino public school parents (79%) are much more likely than white public school parents (60%) to say they are likely to participate in the process of revising and updating their local school district’s accountability plan.

**“How likely are you to participate in the process of revising and updating your local school district’s accountability plan? Are you very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?”**

<i>Public school parents only</i>	All public school parents	Household income		Gender	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 or more	Men	Women
Very likely	25%	27%	28%	27%	24%
Somewhat likely	47	50	41	43	50
Not too likely	18	14	22	15	20
Not at all likely	9	8	6	13	6
Don’t know	1	–	2	2	–

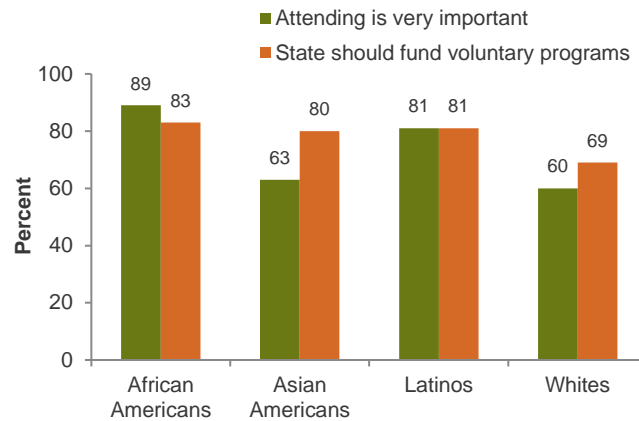
As local school districts seek parental input on how to allocate resources, most parents have high expectations for their children’s education. Fifty-one percent of parents say they would like their youngest child to earn a graduate degree, while an additional 34 percent say they hope their child earns a four-year college degree. Since we began asking this question in 2005, at least eight in ten parents have expressed hope that their child will obtain at least a four-year college degree. Strong majorities of parents across all demographic groups hope their child obtains a four-year college or graduate degree. The hope that their child obtains a graduate degree is higher among younger parents (60% age 18–34) than among parents age 35 or older (47%).

## Early Childhood Education

Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon has launched a commission on early childhood education to review existing state policies and issue policy recommendations. Today, seven in ten California adults and two in three likely voters say that attending preschool is very important to a student’s success in kindergarten through grade 12. Responses were similar a year ago (68% adults, 62% likely voters).

Today, overwhelming majorities of African Americans (89%) and Latinos (81%) say preschool is very important, as do solid majorities of Asian Americans (63%) and whites (60%). At least six in ten across regions say the same, ranging from 63 percent in Orange/San Diego to 77 percent in the Inland Empire. Majorities across parties agree, with Democrats (77%) more likely than independents (62%) or Republicans (54%) to say preschool is very important. At least six in ten across education and income groups express this opinion, though the likelihood of saying so decreases as education and income levels rise. Public school parents (81%) are more likely than other adults (65%) to say preschool is very important.

Opinions on preschool education



### “How important is attending preschool to a student's success in kindergarten through grade 12?”

	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Very important	69%	64%	77%	73%	63%	69%	66%
Somewhat important	20	26	14	17	23	21	22
Not too important	5	4	4	3	8	6	6
Not at all important	5	5	5	7	4	3	5
Don't know	1	1	1	–	2	1	1

Seven in ten (75% adults, 71% likely voters) say the state government should fund voluntary preschool programs for all four-year-olds. Views were similar last year (76% adults, 67% likely voters). Eight in ten African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans say the state should fund voluntary preschool, as do 69 percent of whites. Seven in ten across regions, two in three across age, education, and income groups, and majorities across parties agree (83% Democrats, 73% independents, 58% Republicans).

### “Do you think that the state government should or should not fund voluntary preschool programs for all four-year-olds in California?”

	All adults	Region					Likely voters
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Should	75%	73%	77%	78%	71%	76%	71%
Should not	21	22	21	20	26	19	26
Don't know	4	5	2	2	4	5	3

# Regional Map



# Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, president and CEO and survey director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance from survey research associate Lunna Lopes, project manager for this survey, associate survey director Dean Bonner, and survey research associate David Kordus. This survey on *Californians and Education* is supported with funding from the Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell Foundation, the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the Silver Giving Foundation, and the Stuart Foundation. It is the 13th annual PPIC Statewide Survey on K–12 education since 2005. The PPIC Statewide Survey invites input, comments, and suggestions from policy and public opinion experts and from its own advisory committee, but survey methods, questions, and content are determined solely by PPIC’s survey team.

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 1,705 California adult residents, including 1,109 interviewed on cell phones and 596 interviewed on landline telephones. Interviews took an average of 17 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights from April 2–11, 2017.

Cell phone interviews were conducted using a computer-generated random sample of cell phone numbers. All cell phone numbers with California area codes were eligible for selection. Once a cell phone user was reached, it was verified that this person was age 18 or older, a resident of California, and in a safe place to continue the survey (e.g., not driving). Cell phone respondents were offered a small reimbursement to help defray the cost of the call. Cell phone interviews were conducted with adults who have cell phone service only and with those who have both cell phone and landline service in the household.

Landline interviews were conducted using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured that both listed and unlisted numbers were called. All landline telephone exchanges in California were eligible for selection. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (age 18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender.

For both cell phones and landlines, telephone numbers were called as many as eight times. When no contact with an individual was made, calls to a number were limited to six. Also, to increase our ability to interview Asian American adults, we made up to three additional calls to phone numbers estimated by Survey Sampling International as likely to be associated with Asian American individuals.

Live landline and cell phone interviews were conducted by Abt Associates in English and Spanish, according to respondents’ preferences. Accent on Languages, Inc., translated new survey questions into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever.

Abt Associates uses the US Census Bureau’s 2011–2015 American Community Survey’s (ACS) Public Use Microdata Series for California (with regional coding information from the University of Minnesota’s Integrated Public Use Microdata Series for California) to compare certain demographic characteristics of the survey sample—region, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education—with the characteristics of California’s adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the ACS figures. To estimate landline and cell phone service in California, Abt Associates used 2015 state-level estimates released by the National Center for Health Statistics—which used data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and the ACS—and 2016 estimates for the West Census Region in the latest NHIS report. The estimates for California were then compared against landline and cell phone service reported in this survey. We also used voter registration data from the California Secretary of State to compare the party registration of registered voters in our sample to party registration statewide. The landline and cell phone samples were then integrated using a frame integration weight,

while sample balancing adjusted for differences across regional, age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, telephone service, and party registration groups.

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is  $\pm 3.2$  percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,705 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,380 registered voters, it is  $\pm 3.5$  percent; for the 1,036 likely voters, it is  $\pm 4.1$  percent; for the 529 parents, it is  $\pm 5.5$  percent; for the 411 public school parents, it is  $\pm 6.2$  percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

We present results for five geographic regions, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population. "Central Valley" includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. "San Francisco Bay Area" includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. "Los Angeles" refers to Los Angeles County, "Inland Empire" refers to Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and "Orange/San Diego" refers to Orange and San Diego Counties. Residents of other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes for these less populous areas are not large enough to report separately.

We present specific results for non-Hispanic whites, who account for 43 percent of the state's adult population, and also for Latinos, who account for about a third of the state's adult population and constitute one of the fastest-growing voter groups. We also present results for non-Hispanic Asian Americans, who make up about 15 percent of the state's adult population, and non-Hispanic African Americans, who comprise about 6 percent. Results for other racial/ethnic groups—such as Native Americans—are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes are not large enough for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of those who report they are registered Democrats, registered Republicans, and decline-to-state or independent voters; the results for those who say they are registered to vote in other parties are not large enough for separate analysis. We also analyze the responses of likely voters—so designated per their responses to survey questions about voter registration, previous election participation, and current interest in politics.

The percentages presented in the report tables and in the questionnaire may not add to 100 due to rounding.

We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those in a national survey by Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research. Additional details about our methodology can be found at [www.ppic.org/content/other/SurveyMethodology.pdf](http://www.ppic.org/content/other/SurveyMethodology.pdf) and are available upon request through [surveys@ppic.org](mailto:surveys@ppic.org).

# Questionnaire and Results

## CALIFORNIANS AND EDUCATION

April 2–11, 2017

1,705 California Adult Residents:  
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR  $\pm 3.2\%$  AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE  
PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

1. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor of California?

49% approve  
30 disapprove  
21 don't know

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Brown is handling the state's kindergarten through 12th grade public education system?

41% approve  
29 disapprove  
30 don't know

3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?

49% approve  
36 disapprove  
15 don't know

4. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling the state's kindergarten through 12th grade public education system?

42% approve  
35 disapprove  
23 don't know

5. Next, how much, if anything, have you heard about the Common Core State Standards, a new set of English and math standards that the state began implementing in recent years? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

24% a lot  
41 a little  
34 nothing at all  
1 don't know

6. The Common Core State Standards are a single set of K–12 English language arts and math standards that most states, including California, have voluntarily adopted. From what you've read and heard, do you favor or oppose the Common Core education standards?

43% favor  
35 oppose  
22 don't know

7. Next, overall, how would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today? If you had to give your local public schools a grade, would it be A, B, C, D, or F? *[if necessary, read: Think of grades A to F as a scale where A is the best and F is failing.]*

22% A  
32 B  
24 C  
11 D  
7 F  
5 don't know

*[rotate questions 8 and 9]*



- 8. Are your local public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in preparing students for college?**

14% excellent  
44 good  
20 not so good  
15 poor  
8 don't know

- 9. Are your local public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in preparing students for jobs and the workforce?**

10% excellent  
36 good  
28 not so good  
18 poor  
8 don't know

Next, I'm going to read you a list of issues people have mentioned when talking about California's K–12 public schools today. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not really a problem.

*[rotate questions 10 and 11]*

- 10. How about teacher quality?**

25% big problem  
37 somewhat of a problem  
33 not really a problem  
5 don't know

- 11. How about a shortage of teachers?**

50% big problem  
27 somewhat of a problem  
19 not really a problem  
5 don't know

On another topic,

- 12. Do you think the current level of state funding for your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?**

9% more than enough  
21 just enough  
64 not enough  
6 don't know

- 13. To significantly improve the quality of California's K–12 public schools, which of the following statements do you agree with the most? [rotate responses 1 and 2] (1) We need to use existing state funds more wisely, [or] (2) We need to increase the amount of state funding, [or] (3) We need to use existing state funds more wisely and increase the amount of state funding.**

33% use funds more wisely  
14 increase state funding  
49 use funds more wisely and increase funding  
3 don't know

*[rotate questions 14 and 15]*

- 14. If your local school district had a bond measure on the ballot to pay for school construction projects, would you vote yes or no?**

68% yes  
26 no  
6 don't know

- 15. What if there was a measure on your local ballot to increase local parcel taxes to provide more funds for the local public schools? Would you vote yes or no?**

59% yes  
38 no  
4 don't know

- 16. Do you think it's a good idea or a bad idea to replace the two-thirds vote requirement with a 55 percent majority vote for voters to pass local parcel taxes for the local public schools?**

46% good idea  
43 bad idea  
11 don't know

Next,

*[rotate questions 17 to 19]*

**17. Do you think the current level of resources for low-income students in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?**

- 11% more than enough
- 30 just enough
- 52 not enough
- 7 don't know

**18. Do you think the current level of resources for English language learners in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?**

- 16% more than enough
- 39 just enough
- 37 not enough
- 8 don't know

**19. Do you think the current level of resources for students with disabilities in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?**

- 8% more than enough
- 29 just enough
- 52 not enough
- 11 don't know

**20. Next, how much, if anything, have you heard about the Local Control Funding Formula, a policy enacted last year that changes the way K–12 public school districts are funded in California? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?**

- 4% a lot
- 24 a little
- 71 nothing at all
- 1 don't know

**21. The Local Control Funding Formula provides additional funding to school districts that have more *[rotate]* [English language learners] *[and]* [lower-income students] and gives local school districts more flexibility over how state funding is spent. In general, do you favor or oppose this policy?**

- 65% favor
- 25 oppose
- 10 don't know

**22. As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, how confident are you that local school districts which receive additional funding will spend that money on programs and support for *[rotate in same order as Q21]* [English language learners] *[and]* [lower-income students]? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?**

- 11% very confident
- 42 somewhat confident
- 29 not too confident
- 16 not at all confident
- 2 don't know

**23. As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, do you think the academic achievement of *[rotate in same order as Q21]* [English language learners] *[and]* [lower-income students] will or will not improve? (if it will, ask: Do you think it will improve a lot or somewhat?)**

- 21% improve a lot
- 47 improve somewhat
- 24 will not improve
- 8 don't know

**24. *[public school parents only]* The Local Control Funding Formula requires school districts to seek input from parents in developing and revising their accountability plans for how to allocate resources. Has your child's school or school district provided you with information about how to become involved, or not?**

- 46% yes
- 49 no
- 5 don't know

**24a. *[public school parents only]* And how likely are you to participate in the process of revising and updating your local school district's accountability plan? Are you very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?**

- 25% very likely
- 47 somewhat likely
- 18 not too likely
- 9 not at all likely
- 1 don't know

On another topic,

**25. Do you favor or oppose providing parents with tax-funded vouchers to send their children to any public, private, or parochial school they choose?**

- 60% favor
- 37 oppose
- 4 don't know

Next,

**26. Charter schools are public schools that are run without many of the state regulations placed on other public schools. Do you think it's better for charter schools [rotate] (1) to meet the same educational standards as other public schools, [or] (2) to set their own educational standards?**

- 61% meet same standards
- 34 set their own standards
- 5 don't know

Changing topics,

**27. How concerned are you that increased federal immigration enforcement efforts will impact undocumented students and their families in your local public schools? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?**

- 46% very concerned
- 24 somewhat concerned
- 12 not too concerned
- 16 not at all concerned
- 1 don't know

*[rotate questions 28 and 28a]*

**28. Do you favor or oppose your public school district designating itself as a "sanctuary safe zone" to indicate it will protect its undocumented students and their families from federal immigration enforcement efforts?**

- 65% favor
- 31 oppose
- 4 don't know

**28a. Do you favor or oppose your local public schools requiring staff to keep information about the immigration status of students and their family members completely confidential?**

- 73% favor
- 24 oppose
- 3 don't know

**29. On another topic, do you think that the state government should or should not fund voluntary preschool programs for all four-year-olds in California?**

- 75% should
- 21 should not
- 4 don't know

**30. How important is attending preschool to a student's success in kindergarten through grade 12—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?**

- 69% very important
- 20 somewhat important
- 5 not too important
- 5 not at all important
- 1 don't know

**31. [parents only] What do you hope will be the highest grade level that your youngest child will achieve: some high school; high school graduate; two-year community college graduate or career technical training; four-year college graduate; or a graduate degree after college?**

- some high school
- 4% high school graduate
- 7 two-year community college graduate or career technical training
- 34 four-year college graduate
- 51 a graduate degree after college
- 3 don't know

**32. Next, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote in California?**

- 70% yes [ask Q32a]
- 30 no [skip to Q33b]

**32a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?**

- 45% Democrat *[ask Q33]*
- 25 Republican *[skip to Q33a]*
- 5 another party (*specify*) *[skip to Q34]*
- 25 independent *[skip to Q33b]*

**33. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?**

- 61% strong
- 37 not very strong
- 3 don't know

*[skip to Q34]*

**33a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?**

- 55% strong
- 44 not very strong
- 1 don't know

*[skip to Q34]*

**33b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?**

- 21% Republican Party
- 44 Democratic Party
- 25 neither (*volunteered*)
- 10 don't know

**34. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically: *[read list, rotate order from top to bottom]***

- 14% very liberal
- 19 somewhat liberal
- 27 middle-of-the-road
- 22 somewhat conservative
- 12 very conservative
- 5 don't know

**35. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics—a great deal, a fair amount, only a little, or none?**

- 29% great deal
- 32 fair amount
- 29 only a little
- 10 none
- don't know

*[d1 to d13: demographic questions]*

PPIC STATEWIDE  
SURVEY ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE

**Ruben Barrales**  
President and CEO  
GROW Elect

**Angela Glover Blackwell**  
President and CEO  
PolicyLink

**Mollyann Brodie**  
Senior Vice President  
Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation

**Bruce E. Cain**  
Director  
Bill Lane Center for the American West  
Stanford University

**Jon Cohen**  
Vice President of Survey Research  
SurveyMonkey

**Joshua J. Dyck**  
Co-Director  
Center for Public Opinion  
University of Massachusetts, Lowell

**Russell Hancock**  
President and CEO  
Joint Venture Silicon Valley

**Sherry Bebitch Jeffe**  
Professor  
Sol Price School of Public Policy  
University of Southern California

**Robert Lapsley**  
President  
California Business Roundtable

**Carol S. Larson**  
President and CEO  
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

**Donna Lucas**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Lucas Public Affairs

**Sonja Petek**  
Fiscal and Policy Analyst  
California Legislative Analyst's Office

**Lisa Pitney**  
Vice President of Government Relations  
The Walt Disney Company

**Mindy Romero**  
Founder and Director  
California Civic Engagement Project  
at the UC Davis Center for Regional Change

**Robert K. Ross, MD**  
President and CEO  
The California Endowment

**Most Reverend Jaime Soto**  
Bishop of Sacramento  
Roman Catholic Diocese of Sacramento

**Carol Whiteside**  
Principal  
California Strategies

PPIC BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS

**Mas Masumoto, Chair**  
Author and Farmer

**Mark Baldassare**  
President and CEO  
Public Policy Institute of California

**Ruben Barrales**  
President and CEO  
GROW Elect

**María Blanco**  
Executive Director  
Undocumented Student Legal  
Services Center  
University of California Office  
of the President

**Louise Henry Bryson**  
Chair Emerita, Board of Trustees  
J. Paul Getty Trust

**A. Marisa Chun**  
Partner  
McDermott Will & Emery LLP

**Chet Hewitt**  
President and CEO  
Sierra Health Foundation

**Phil Isenberg**  
Former Chair  
Delta Stewardship Council

**Donna Lucas**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Lucas Public Affairs

**Steven A. Merksamer**  
Senior Partner  
Nielsen, Merksamer, Parrinello,  
Gross & Leoni, LLP

**Gerald L. Parsky**  
Chairman  
Aurora Capital Group

**Kim Polese**  
Chairman  
ClearStreet, Inc.

**Gaddi H. Vasquez**  
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs  
Edison International  
Southern California Edison



Public Policy Institute of California  
500 Washington Street, Suite 600  
San Francisco, CA 94111  
T: 415.291.4400  
F: 415.291.4401  
**PPIC.ORG**

PPIC Sacramento Center  
Senator Office Building  
1121 L Street, Suite 801  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
T: 916.440.1120  
F: 916.440.1121



**PPIC**

**PUBLIC POLICY  
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA**