



**PPIC**  
**STATEWIDE**  
**SURVEY**

**OCTOBER 2002**

**Californians and  
Their Government**

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The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) is a private operating foundation established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. The Institute is dedicated to improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

PPIC's research agenda focuses on three program areas: population, economy, and governance and public finance. Studies within these programs are examining the underlying forces shaping California's future, cutting across a wide range of public policy concerns, including education, health care, immigration, income distribution, welfare, urban growth, and state and local finance.

PPIC was created because three concerned citizens – William R. Hewlett, Roger W. Heyns, and Arjay Miller – recognized the need for linking objective research to the realities of California public policy. Their goal was to help the state's leaders better understand the intricacies and implications of contemporary issues and make informed public policy decisions when confronted with challenges in the future. PPIC does not take or support positions on any ballot measure or state and federal legislation nor does it endorse or support any political parties or candidates for public office.

David W. Lyon is founding President and Chief Executive Officer of PPIC. Raymond L. Watson is Chairman of the Board of Directors.

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## Preface

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The PPIC Statewide Survey series is designed to provide policymakers, the media, and the general public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. Started in April 1998, the survey series has generated a database that includes the responses of more than 58,000 Californians.

The current survey is the twelfth in our *Californians and Their Government* series, which is being conducted on a periodic basis throughout the 2002 election cycle. The series is focusing on the social, economic, and political trends and public policy preferences that underlie ballot choices in statewide races and citizens' initiatives. This report presents the responses of 2,007 adult residents throughout the state on a wide range of issues:

- The California election in 2002, including voter preferences in the governor's race, satisfaction with the choice of candidates for governor and with the candidates' attention to the issues, the issues that the voters would most like to hear the gubernatorial candidates talk about before the election, voters' attention to news and political advertising, voters' reactions to the gubernatorial debate and political advertising, and support for a state school bond measure and an initiative on the November ballot that would provide additional funding for before and after school programs.
- Californians' attitudes toward schools, including their perceptions of the seriousness of the problem and improvements in the state's quality of education over time, their perceptions of where California's public schools rank in student test scores and per pupil spending compared to other states, their ratings of the governor's handling of schools, their satisfaction with specific efforts under way to improve California's public schools, their perceptions of the quality of their local public schools, and their willingness to support local school bonds.
- Political trends, including approval ratings of Governor Davis, President Bush, the U.S. Congress, California's two U.S. Senators, and district members of the House of Representatives; attitudes toward the Bush Administration's handling of the situation with Iraq and Saddam Hussein.
- How growing regions and groups such as the Central Valley, Latinos, and independent voters affect overall statewide trends in ballot choices and policy preferences.

This report presents the results of the twenty-ninth PPIC Statewide Survey. The surveys include a number of special editions focusing on particular regions and themes:

- The Central Valley (11/99, 3/01, 4/02)
- San Diego County (7/02)
- Orange County (9/01)
- U.S.-Japan Relations (9/01)
- Population Growth (5/01)
- Land Use (11/01)
- The Environment (6/00, 6/02)

Copies of this report may be ordered by e-mail ([order@ppic.org](mailto:order@ppic.org)) or phone (415-291-4400). Copies of this and earlier reports are posted on the publications page of the PPIC web site ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)). For questions about the survey, please contact [survey@ppic.org](mailto:survey@ppic.org).



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## Press Release

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### GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES GET AN EDUCATION IN VOTERS' PRIORITIES

#### Voters Want More Talk, More Action on Schools; Strong Support for Education Initiatives on Statewide Ballot

SAN FRANCISCO, California, October 22, 2002 — Will the candidates ever learn? California voters continue to clamor for a substantive discussion of education and other important issues facing the state, according to a new survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC). While they give the self-mandated “education governor” some credit for recent progress, residents still see much room for improvement in the state’s schools.

Among likely voters, Governor Gray Davis leads Republican challenger Bill Simon by 10 points (41% to 31%), with no third-party candidate receiving more than 4 percent of the vote. The race has changed little since September, when Davis led Simon 40 percent to 32 percent. Davis continues to receive strong support from Latinos, women, and independent voters. He leads Simon in the San Francisco Bay Area (50% to 19%) and Los Angeles (47% to 25%), while Simon is ahead in the other Southern California counties (41% to 34%) and the Central Valley (41% to 33%).

Voters remain more engaged in the campaign today than they were four years ago: 75 percent are closely following news about the candidates compared to 67 percent in October 1998. But despite their attentiveness, voters continue to be unsatisfied with the choice of candidates for governor (57%) and with the amount of attention the candidates are paying to the issues that matter to them (66%). Did the debate make a dent? Fifty-nine percent of voters say the single debate between major-party candidates helped them little or not at all in deciding who to support in the governor’s race, while 21 percent were unaware that a debate took place.

As in September, likely voters continue to prefer Davis over Simon on education (53% to 29%), the state budget and taxes (43% to 39%), and maintaining high ethical standards in government (41% to 29%). They are split over which candidate would do a better job on the economy, preferring Davis slightly (42% to 39%), and select Simon over Davis on electricity and energy policy (42% to 36%).

“Voters are deciding the election based on their read of the issues rather than sensational revelations or rumors,” says survey director Mark Baldassare. “Right now, a majority prefer Davis over Simon on their top issue — education. This fact goes a long way toward explaining the overall standings.”

#### **Education: Bringing the Candidates Back to Basics**

When asked which one issue they would most like to hear the candidates for governor talk about during the campaign, voters name education (21%), followed by jobs and the economy (14%), the state budget (7%), taxes (7%), and electricity (6%). Schools are the top concern across all regions of the state, political parties, and racial and ethnic groups. Indeed, 54 percent of likely voters rate the quality of public schools as a big problem today. Among California residents generally, 85 percent say that the quality of K-12 public schools is a big problem (48%) or somewhat of a problem (37%). These numbers have changed little since May 1998.

Many Californians also remain discontented with the handling of recent educational reforms. More residents are dissatisfied than satisfied with school spending (57% to 30%), the repair and construction of school facilities (49% to 42%), and school accountability for student test scores (47% to 41%). They are split

over efforts to improve teacher quality (46% unsatisfied to 44% satisfied) and to reduce class sizes (45% to 46%) but express satisfaction with school safety efforts (54% satisfied to 39% unsatisfied). Some good news: Satisfaction levels on most measures (all but class size reduction) are up from February 2002, including teacher quality (+7 points), school safety (+6), school repair (+5), school accountability (+3), and school spending (+2). And although nearly half of Californians still believe that state test scores are below the national average, 51 percent now say that state per-pupil spending is average or above average.

Despite lingering concerns, Californians have seen progress and rate the quality of their schools more highly than they did two years ago: 49 percent give their local schools an “A” (14%) or “B” (35%), compared to 39 percent in August 2000. In January 2000, only 22 percent of residents believed there had been improvement in school quality statewide, while 39 percent thought the quality had worsened and 34 percent said it was unchanged. Today, 29 percent of Californians say the quality of education in K-12 schools has improved, while 28 percent think it has gotten worse and 36 percent believe it remains the same.

Residents with school-aged children living at home are far more positive about the quality of local schools and the statewide system, as well as the pace of reforms: Fifty-five percent give their local public schools an “A” or “B,” and 37 percent say school quality has improved statewide. Residents with children in their households are also far more likely than those without to say that children attending schools in their neighborhoods are getting a better education than they themselves did (52% to 34%).

Since 1998, Governor Davis has invested significant political capital in his efforts to improve public education in California and even asked voters to judge him on the issue at the ballot box. Today, Davis receives his highest marks in nearly two years on the issue. Currently, 50 percent of Californians approve of his handling of the state’s K-12 public education system, compared to 39 percent in January 2002 and 45 percent in January 2001. Residents with children at home are more likely than those without to approve of his performance on this issue (58% to 45%). Among likely voters, 46 percent approve of Davis on education, while 40 percent disapprove. Fifty-two percent of Californians — and 45 percent of likely voters — approve of Davis’ overall performance as governor.

### **Support Swells for Education Initiatives**

Proposition 47 — a bond measure that would provide funding for kindergarten through university public education facilities — is currently supported by 63 percent of likely voters, up from 59 percent in September. The measure is favored by majorities of Democrats (74%) and independents (79%), while Republicans are divided (44% to 43%). Support for the initiative has grown substantially among independents since September (from 62% to 79%). Proposition 47 is strongly supported (76%) by voters who think their local public schools are not receiving adequate state funding. “Such solid support for a bond measure in an uncertain economy reveals the depth of concern about education in this state,” says Baldassare.

Support for Proposition 49 — a measure that would increase state funding for before and after school programs — is also strong: 64 percent of likely voters support the measure, an increase of 5 points since August. The initiative, which has been promoted by GOP activist Arnold Schwarzenegger, receives its strongest support from Democrats (73%) and independents (72%), but more Republicans today support the measure than oppose it (50% to 39%). Seventy-three percent of voters — up from 67 percent in August — say that Proposition 49 will improve safety for children and 55 percent believe it will help raise test scores.

### **Post-9/11 Approval Ratings: What Goes Up Must Come Down**

Today, 60 percent of Californians approve of President Bush’s overall performance in office. His approval rating has slipped significantly since January (80%) and now looks similar to pre-September 11<sup>th</sup> ratings (57% in May 2001). As was the case prior to September 11<sup>th</sup>, there are now strong partisan differences in



support for the president, with 86 percent of Republicans approving of his performance and 55 percent of Democrats disapproving.

High approval ratings for the U.S. Congress are also a thing of the past. Today, 38 percent of Californians say that the Congress is doing an excellent or good job — down from 59 percent in December 2001 and similar to October 2000 ratings. Individual members of Congress have also seen their performance ratings slip back to pre-September 11<sup>th</sup> levels: 41 percent of state residents say their local representative is doing an excellent or good job, compared to 52 percent in December 2001 and 44 percent in October 2000.

Currently, 49 percent of Californians approve of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein's job performance, down from 57 percent in February 2002. U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer's approval rating (48%) has changed little since February 2002 (52%). Among likely voters, 54 percent approve of Feinstein's performance and 49 percent support Boxer's handling of her job.

### **Californians Conflicted About Iraq Policy**

Currently, 51 percent of all Californians approve of President Bush's handling of the situation with Iraq—considerably less than approve of his overall performance. Support for the president on Iraq has declined slightly since September (from 55% to 51%). The decline is most evident among Democrats (from 39% to 32%), while his support among Republicans (from 77% to 76%) and independents (from 51% to 48%) remains relatively consistent. Residents in the Central Valley (59%) and Southern California counties outside of Los Angeles (60%) are far more likely to support the president on this issue than are residents in Los Angeles (46%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (39%). There is less support in California than in the nation as a whole for the president's handling of Iraq (51% to 58%).

Like Americans in general, Californians are divided over whether the Bush administration has done enough to explain to the public why the U.S. might take military action against Iraq. Fifty percent of Americans and 49 percent of Californians say the administration has not done enough, while 47 percent of both Americans and Californians say they have. Republicans (69%) are much more likely than Democrats (38%) or independents (45%) to say the administration has made its case.

### **About the survey**

The purpose of the PPIC Statewide Survey is to develop an in-depth profile of the social, economic, and political forces affecting California elections and public policy preferences. PPIC has conducted large-scale public opinion surveys on a regular basis leading up to the November 2002 election. Findings of this final pre-election survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,007 California adult residents interviewed from October 7 to October 15, 2002. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. The sampling error for the 1,538 registered voters is +/- 2.5% and for the 1,000 likely voters is +/- 3%. For more information on survey methodology, see page 19.

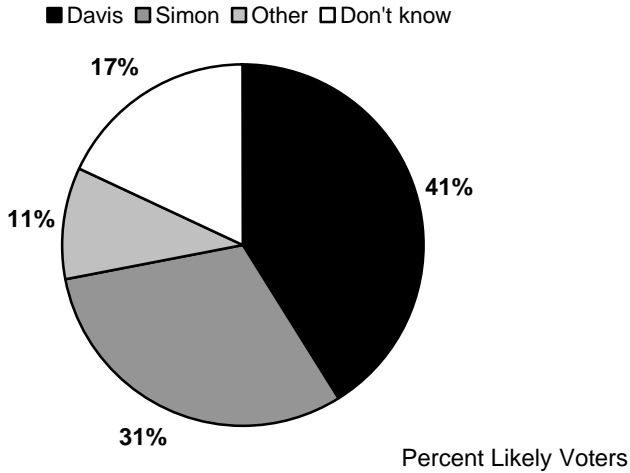
Mark Baldassare is research director at PPIC, where he holds the Arjay and Frances Fearing Miller Chair in Public Policy. He is founder of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has directed since 1998. His most recent book, *A California State of Mind: The Conflicted Voter in a Changing World*, is available at [www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org).

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving public policy through objective, nonpartisan research on the economic, social, and political issues that affect Californians. The Institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. PPIC does not take or support positions on any ballot measure or state and federal legislation nor does it endorse or support any political parties or candidates for public office.

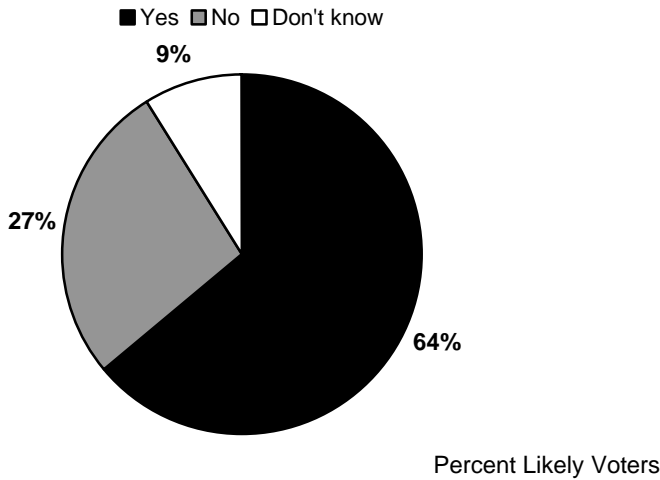
This report will appear on PPIC's website ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)) on October 22. See graphics next page.

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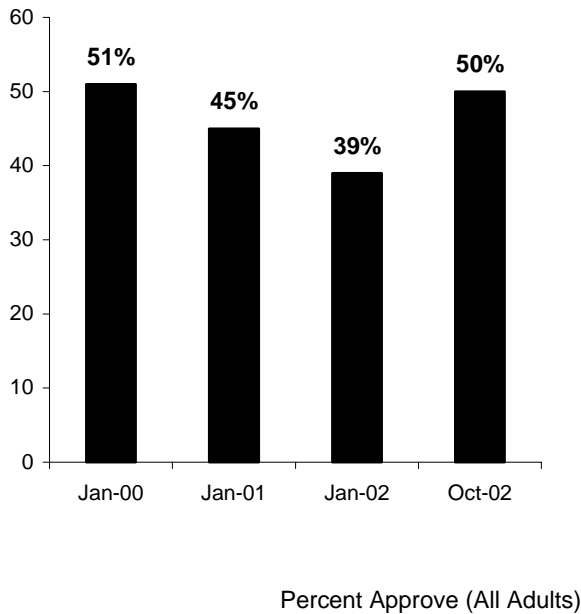
**If the election for governor were being held today, would you vote for...?**



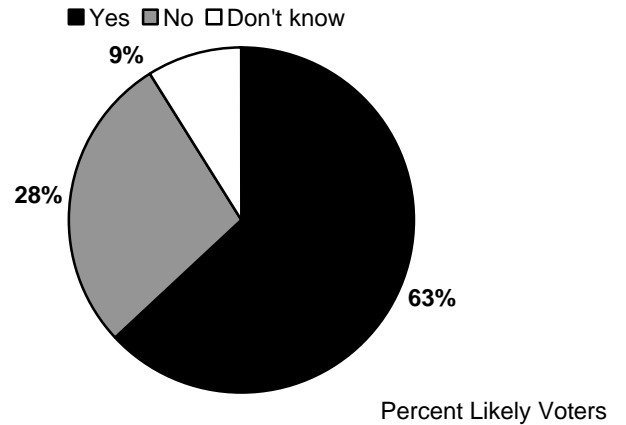
**Would you vote yes or no on Prop 49, the Before and After School Initiative?**



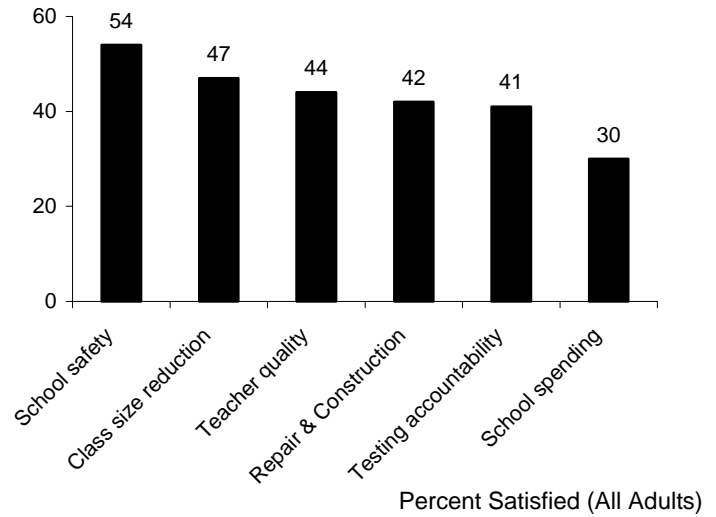
**Approval Ratings of Governor Davis on Education**



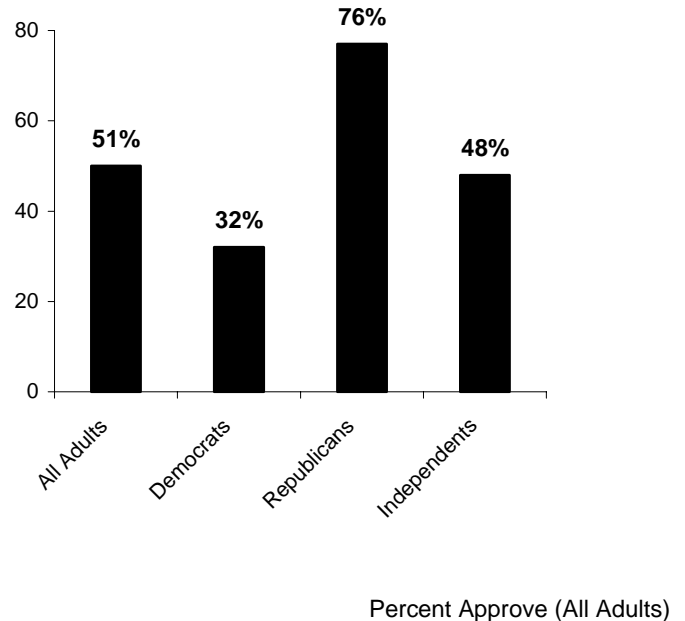
**Would you vote yes or no on Prop 47, the Kindergarten-University Facilities Bond Act of 2002?**



**Are you satisfied with efforts to improve education in California's public schools?**



**Approval Ratings of President Bush on Iraq and Saddam Hussein**



## California 2002 Elections

### Governor's Race

With the California governor's race now in the final stretch, incumbent Democrat Gray Davis leads Republican challenger Bill Simon by 10 points. Among likely voters, 41 percent would vote for Davis, 31 percent for Simon. Almost three in 10 voters are not opting for either major party candidate—17 percent are undecided; and 11 percent name other candidates, including Green Party candidate Peter Camejo (4%), Libertarian Party candidate Gary Copeland (2%), American Independent Party candidate Reinhold Gulke (1%), and "someone else" (4%).

Results of the PPIC Statewide Surveys during the gubernatorial campaign indicate that the race has been relatively stable. Davis led Simon by 11 points (41% to 30%) in August, by 8 points in mid-September (40% to 32%), and by 10 points in mid-October (41% to 31%).

Davis has a double-digit lead at this stage of the campaign largely because he is strongly favored over Simon in the state's two most populous regions—the San Francisco Bay Area (50% to 19%) and Los Angeles County (47% to 25%). Together, these two regions account for roughly half the state's electorate. Simon is ahead of Davis in the two other major regions—41 percent to 34 percent in the rest of Southern California and 41 percent to 33 percent in the Central Valley.

Davis' support among women and Latinos also helps explain his lead over Simon. Davis leads Simon by a 13-point margin among women (42% to 29%), compared to a 7-point margin among men (41% to 34%). Davis leads Simon by a 39-point margin among Latinos (58% to 19%) but trails Simon by 2 points among non-Hispanic whites (34% to 36%).

Among independent and other voters, Davis leads Simon by a 17-point margin (38% to 21%), but 21 percent support other candidates and 20 percent are undecided. Davis and Simon have similar support within their respective political parties, while few Republicans support Davis (11%) and even fewer Democrats support Simon (9%). Most liberals support Davis (63% to 10%), most conservatives back Simon (57% to 18%), and moderates tend to favor Davis (47% to 22%).

**"If the election for governor were being held today, would you vote for...?"**

	All Likely Voters	Likely Voters							
		Party			Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind/ Other*	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Latino
<b>Gray Davis</b>	41%	67%	11%	38%	33%	50%	47%	34%	58%
<b>Bill Simon</b>	31	9	64	21	41	19	25	41	19
<b>Peter Miguel Camejo</b>	4	4	1	12	4	7	3	3	4
<b>Gary Copeland</b>	2	1	2	4	2	1	2	2	0
<b>Reinhold Gulke</b>	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	0	3
<b>Someone else</b>	4	1	4	4	0	2	4	4	1
<b>Don't know</b>	17	17	17	20	18	19	18	16	15

\*In this table, Californians registered to vote as independents ("decline-to-state") and those registered with "minor parties" are combined. In all other tables, independents are reported separately. Party affiliations for the candidates are as follows: Davis (Democrat), Simon (Republican), Camejo (Green), Copeland (Libertarian), and Gulke (American Independent).

**Voters and Issues**

A majority of California’s voters (57%) say they are not satisfied with the candidate choices in the governor’s race. They also say that the October 7<sup>th</sup> televised debate did not help much in deciding their vote and that the gubernatorial candidates are not paying enough attention to the issues that matter to them.

The single television debate, to date, between Simon and Davis appears to have had little effect on voters. When asked if the debate helped them decide how to vote, only 5 percent of voters said it helped a great deal, 15 percent said it helped somewhat, but 59 percent said the debate was of very little or no help in deciding how to vote, and 21 percent were unaware of it.

**"Did the debate help you a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all in deciding who to vote for in the governor’s race?"**

	All Likely Voters	Likely Voters			
		Democrat	Republican	Independent	Latino
<b>A great deal</b>	5%	5%	5%	6%	10%
<b>Somewhat</b>	15	17	12	14	28
<b>Very little</b>	19	18	19	22	17
<b>Not at all</b>	40	37	43	37	27
<b>Haven’t seen, heard, or read about debate</b>	21	23	21	21	18

Voters in October (66%) are as likely as they were in September (64%) to say that the candidates are not paying enough attention to the issues most important to them. Nearly seven in 10 Democratic (65%), Republican (66%), and independent (69%) voters are unsatisfied with the attention the candidates are paying to these issues. Voter dissatisfaction on this point is consistent across the major regions of the state, racial and ethnic groups, and all major demographic categories.

**"Would you say that you are satisfied or not satisfied with the amount of attention that the candidates for governor are spending on the issues most important to you?"**

	All Likely Voters	Likely Voters			
		Democrat	Republican	Independent	Latino
<b>Satisfied</b>	24%	26%	24%	25%	32%
<b>Not satisfied</b>	66	65	66	69	60
<b>Don’t know</b>	10	9	10	6	8

Nearly nine in 10 voters do have an issue they most want to hear the candidates talk about before the November 5<sup>th</sup> election. California’s schools (21%) and the economy (14%) top the list of concerns. A wide range of other issues are mentioned by fewer than 10 percent of the voters, including the state budget (7%), taxes (7%), electricity and energy (6%), health care (4%), the environment (3%), campaign ethics (3%), immigration (2%), crime and gangs (2%), housing (2%), terrorism (2%), and poverty (2%).

In the August 2002 PPIC Statewide Survey, voters also expressed interest in hearing the candidates talk about education, the economy, the state budget and taxes, and electricity. However, in the past two months, they have become somewhat more likely to mention education (17% to 21%) and less likely to mention electricity and energy (11% to 6%).

Although California’s schools are a major concern across all regions, political parties, and racial and ethnic groups, concern over other issues varies. The economy is more on the minds of residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (20%) than in other regions. Republicans (12%) are more interested in taxes, while Democrats (25%) are more focused on schools, than other voters. Latinos are more concerned than non-Hispanic whites about schools (30% to 20%), while non-Hispanic white voters are more interested in jobs and the economy (15% to 9%).

**"Which one issue would you most like to hear the gubernatorial candidate’s talk about before the November 5<sup>th</sup> election?"**

	All Likely Voters	Likely Voters							
		Party			Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Latino
Schools / education	21%	25%	16%	23%	17%	21%	25%	21%	30%
Jobs and the economy	14	14	15	17	9	20	16	12	9
State budget	7	5	10	8	11	8	5	7	8
Taxes	7	3	12	6	10	5	7	7	5
Electricity cost and supply / energy	6	4	8	5	7	5	5	7	4
Health care	4	5	3	5	4	4	5	5	3
Environment	3	3	2	2	5	4	3	2	2
Campaign money / ethics	3	3	3	1	2	3	2	3	3
Immigration	2	1	3	4	2	1	2	4	3
Crime and gangs	2	2	2	2	4	0	2	2	1
Housing	2	3	1	0	1	2	1	2	0
Terrorism and security	2	3	1	3	1	3	3	1	3
Poverty	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1
Traffic and transportation	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	0
Population growth	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2
Abortion / women’s rights	1	1	1	2	1	2	0	1	1
Other	8	10	7	7	8	4	8	7	6
Don’t know	14	14	13	11	14	13	12	16	19

**Candidate Qualifications**

Who would do a better job—Davis or Simon—of handling the issues important to voters and of maintaining high ethical standards in government? In the current survey, likely voters perceive that Davis would be better than Simon at handling their top issue, education (53% to 29%). They are more divided about who would do a better job on the state budget and taxes (43% for Davis to 39% for Simon) and the economy (42% to 39%), while they favor Simon over Davis on energy issues (36% to 42%). On maintaining high ethical standards, they continue to perceive that Davis would do a better job than Simon (41% to 29%).

These perceptions have been fairly steady over the past few months. Democratic voters continue to think that Davis would do a better job, and Republicans continue to think that Simon would do a better job, on all five issues. In this survey, independents see Davis as better able than Simon to handle education (52% to 28%), the economy (42% to 36%), and the budget and taxes (46% to 32%) and to maintain high ethical standards in government (42% to 26%). They are evenly divided about who would do a better job on electricity and energy policy (36% for Davis to 37% for Simon).

**"Regardless of your choice for governor, which of these candidates would do a better job on each of these issues...?"**

<u>Likely Voters</u>	<b>August 2002</b>	<b>September 2002</b>	<b>October 2002</b>
<b><i>Education</i></b>			
<b>Gray Davis</b>	50%	53%	<b>53%</b>
<b>Bill Simon</b>	29	29	<b>29</b>
<b><i>Economy</i></b>			
<b>Gray Davis</b>	40%	40%	<b>42%</b>
<b>Bill Simon</b>	40	42	<b>39</b>
<b><i>Electricity and energy policy</i></b>			
<b>Gray Davis</b>	34%	38%	<b>36%</b>
<b>Bill Simon</b>	43	44	<b>42</b>
<b><i>State budget and taxes</i></b>			
<b>Gray Davis</b>	42%	43%	<b>43%</b>
<b>Bill Simon</b>	39	38	<b>39</b>
<b><i>Maintaining high ethical standards in government</i></b>			
<b>Gray Davis</b>	43%	45%	<b>41%</b>
<b>Bill Simon</b>	28	31	<b>29</b>

The voters' assessments of the candidates' ability to handle these issues vary across regions and ethnic groups, as well. In the heavily Democratic San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles, voters believe Davis is better able to handle all five issues areas. In the Central Valley and Other Southern California, voters rank Simon over Davis on electricity and energy policy, economic issues, and the state budget, favor Davis over Simon on education, and are divided about which of the two candidates would do a better job on the issue of maintaining high ethical standards. Latinos favor Davis over Simon on all five dimensions. Non-Hispanic whites favor Davis over Simon on education

but give Simon the nod on the economy, energy, and the state budget and taxes. Both Latinos and non-Hispanic whites believe Davis would do a better job of maintaining ethical standards; however, Latinos hold this perspective by a larger margin.

**"Regardless of your choice for governor, which of these candidates would do a better job on each of these issues?"**

<u>Likely Voters</u>	All Likely Voters	<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Latino
<b><i>Education</i></b>									
Gray Davis	53%	76%	27%	52%	50%	56%	57%	51%	69%
Bill Simon	29	7	55	28	30	21	25	35	16
Other/Neither	8	9	6	7	7	12	9	5	7
Don't know	10	8	12	13	13	11	9	9	8
<b><i>The Economy</i></b>									
Gray Davis	42%	65%	15%	42%	33%	48%	47%	39%	55%
Bill Simon	39	17	68	36	47	30	36	48	28
Other/Neither	9	8	8	12	9	12	8	7	8
Don't know	10	10	9	10	11	10	9	6	9
<b><i>Electricity and energy policy</i></b>									
Gray Davis	36%	56%	12%	36%	28%	41%	40%	33%	47%
Bill Simon	42	20	70	37	52	32	37	49	32
Other/Neither	10	11	8	14	10	14	11	10	9
Don't know	12	13	10	13	10	13	12	8	12
<b><i>State budget and taxes</i></b>									
Gray Davis	43%	67%	15%	46%	35%	48%	50%	39%	56%
Bill Simon	39	15	70	32	45	31	34	46	25
Other/Neither	8	8	6	12	8	11	6	8	8
Don't know	10	10	9	10	12	10	10	7	11
<b><i>Maintaining high ethical standards in government</i></b>									
Gray Davis	41%	61%	18%	42%	35%	41%	48%	40%	56%
Bill Simon	29	9	54	26	32	20	25	36	18
Other/Neither	20	19	17	25	19	29	16	18	16
Don't know	10	11	11	7	14	10	11	6	10

**Campaign Awareness: News and Advertising**

Among likely voters, attention to the 2002 gubernatorial race continues to be high, and higher than it was at this time in the 1998 race. In this survey, 75 percent say they are very closely or fairly closely following the news about candidates in the election, a similar percentage as in August (74%) and September (80%). In October 1998, 67 percent reported closely following the election news.

Latinos are just as likely as non-Hispanic whites to closely follow the election, and there are no differences across political parties. However, women (70%) are less likely than men (80%) to closely follow news about the governor’s election. Attention to the election news increases with education, income, and age: For example, voters aged 55 and older are more likely than voters under 35 to be very closely following news about the election (30% to 14%).

**"How closely do you follow news about candidates for the 2002 governor’s election?"**

Likely Voters	Aug 02	Sept 02	Oct 02
Very closely	22%	28%	22%
Fairly closely	52	52	53
Not too closely	22	16	20
Not at all closely	4	4	5

Current awareness of paid political commercials has also increased over the last several months and is higher than it was at this time in 1998. Seventy-nine percent of voters say they have seen television advertising by the candidates for governor (in the past month), compared to 71 percent in August and 75 percent in September. In October 1998, 64 percent had seen advertisements by the candidates for governor. Awareness of political commercials by the gubernatorial candidates is high in all regions of the state; political groups; racial and ethnic groups; and age, education, and income categories. Voters also continue to remember seeing more ads (in the past month) by Davis than by Simon (49% to 23%). This recall of Davis ads is much higher than the 29 percent who said they had seen Davis ads in October 1998.

Despite this high awareness, only three in 10 voters describe the commercials as helpful, while seven in 10 voters say the commercials are not too helpful or not at all helpful in deciding how to vote. These results are similar to those in the September survey. Latinos, younger voters, and lower-income and less-educated voters are more likely than others to say that the commercials have helped them decide how to vote in the governor’s race.

**"In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for governor?"  
(if yes: "Whose ads have you seen the most?")**

Likely Voters	Aug 02	Sept 02	Oct 02
Yes, Davis	54%	55%	49%
Yes, Simon	14	17	23
Yes, other	3	3	7
No	29	25	21



**Proposition 47: The Kindergarten to University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2002**

Proposition 47 on the November ballot would provide \$13.05 billion in state bonds for schools. If the election were held today, 63 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes, 28 percent would vote no, and 9 percent are undecided. Support for Proposition 47 has risen since the September survey when 59 percent of likely voters said they would vote yes, and 32 percent said they would vote no.

Support for the school bonds measure is highest among Democrats (74%) and independents (79%) and lowest among Republicans (44%). Among regions, support varies from a low of 55 percent in the Central Valley to a high of 70 percent in the San Francisco Bay Area. Latinos (78%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (60%), and women (67%) more likely than men (59%), to support the measure. There is little difference in voter support for the school bonds among those with children at home (66%) and those with no children at home (61%). There are also no significant differences across income and education levels. However, support for Proposition 47 is higher among those younger than 35 (81%) than among those 35 to 55 (62%) and those 55 and older (55%).

**"If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 47?"**

	All Likely Voters	Likely Voters							
		Party			Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Latino
<b>Yes</b>	63%	74%	44%	79%	55%	70%	63%	63%	78%
<b>No</b>	28	18	43	17	36	20	27	30	13
<b>Don't know</b>	9	8	13	4	9	10	10	7	9

Despite an increase in state funding for K-12 public schools, 63 percent of voters say that the current level of funding is not enough—the same percentage as in September 1998. Across groups, women are more likely than men (69% to 57%), Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (71% to 61%), and Democrats (74%) and independents (66%) are more likely than Republicans (49%) to say that local schools do not receive enough state funds. Across regions, this perception is higher in Los Angeles (67%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (72%) than in the Central Valley (54%) and Other Southern California (59%). Proposition 47 has particularly strong support among those who think their schools are not receiving enough state funding (76% to 17%).

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

	Likely Voters			
	Sept 98	Sept 99	Aug 00	Oct 02
<b>More than enough</b>	10%	10%	10%	10%
<b>Just enough</b>	21	21	23	21
<b>Not enough</b>	63	65	62	63
<b>Don't know</b>	6	4	5	6

**Proposition 49: The Before and After School Programs Initiative**

Proposition 49 would increase state funds for before and after school programs. Movie actor and GOP activist Arnold Schwarzenegger has been campaigning in support of this citizen’s initiative. This ballot measure currently has better than two-to-one support, with 64 percent saying they would vote yes, 27 percent saying they would vote no, and 9 percent undecided. In the August survey, 59 percent said they would vote yes, 31 percent no, and 10 percent were undecided.

Although support is high across parties, regions, and groups, there are variations worth noting: More Democrats (73%) and independents (72%) than Republicans (50%) would vote yes on Proposition 49; liberals (74%) and moderates (65%) are more positive than conservatives (53%). While majorities of voters in every region of the state favor Proposition 49, Los Angeles voters (70%) are the most supportive and Central Valley voters (55%) the least supportive. Latinos (83%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (57%), and women (67%) are more likely than men (60%), to say they would vote yes. Support for Proposition 49 is higher among those with children at home (70%) than among those without children at home (60%).

**"If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 49?"**

	All Likely Voters	Likely Voters							
		Party			Region				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Latino
<b>Yes</b>	64%	73%	50%	72%	55%	61%	70%	68%	83%
<b>No</b>	27	19	39	20	37	26	26	23	13
<b>Don't know</b>	9	8	11	8	8	13	4	9	4

If passed, would Proposition 49 raise test scores or improve student safety? Californians are as likely today (55%) as they were in August (54%) to think it would raise student test scores, but they are more likely to believe it will improve student safety (73% to 67%). More than two-thirds of voters across the regions of the state, political party lines, racial and ethnic groups, and other demographic categories believe that Proposition 49 would improve children’s safety from crime. Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic white voters to expect that Proposition 49 will both raise student test scores (73% to 51%) and improve children’s safety (89% to 70%). Support for this proposition is particularly strong among those who believe it will increase student test scores (87% to 7%) and improve children’s safety (79% to 15%).

**"If Prop 49 passes, do you think it would...?"**

Likely Voters	Raise test scores		Improve student safety	
	Aug 02	Oct 02	Aug 02	Oct 02
<b>Will</b>	54%	55%	67%	73%
<b>Will not</b>	33	34	25	21
<b>Don't know</b>	13	11	8	6

## California's Public Schools

### A Serious Problem

One of the reasons that Californians want the candidates for governor to talk about education—more than any other issue—is because an overwhelming 85 percent think that the quality of the state's K-12 public schools is a big problem (48%) or somewhat of a problem (37%). The percentage of Californians who rate the quality of the educational system as a problem has changed little from when we began asking this question in May 1998, when 46 percent said that the quality of public education was a big problem and another 33 percent said that it was somewhat of a problem.

Most Californians across age, income, education, and racial and ethnic categories, as well as political parties and ideologies, consider the quality of public education a problem. Parents are as likely as other adults to say that the quality of public education is a big problem (48% to 47%). Those with household incomes of \$40,000 or more (51%) are more likely than those with incomes under \$40,000 (41%) to rate the quality of public schools as a big problem in California. Similarly, the college-educated (54%) are more likely than those with only a high school diploma or less education (35%)—and non-Hispanic whites (53%) are more likely than Latinos (34%)—to say that the quality of education in California's K-12 public schools is a big problem. Importantly, likely voters (54%) say that the quality of the schools is a big problem more often than do those not likely to vote in November (41%).

**"How much of a problem is the quality of education in California's kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade public schools today?"**

All Adults	May 98	Jan 00	Jan 01	July 01	Dec 01	Oct 02
<b>Big problem</b>	46%	53%	52%	49%	51%	48%
<b>Somewhat of a problem</b>	33	30	32	30	32	37
<b>Not much of a problem</b>	14	13	10	12	13	10
<b>Don't know</b>	7	4	6	9	4	5

	All Adults	Child at Home		Household Income		Latino
		Yes	No	< \$40,000	> \$40,000	
<b>Big problem</b>	48%	47%	48%	41%	51%	34%
<b>Somewhat of a problem</b>	37	39	36	39	38	44
<b>Not much of a problem</b>	10	12	9	14	8	16
<b>Don't know</b>	5	2	7	6	3	6

**Perceived Trends in California's Public Schools**

While the vast majority of Californians think that the quality of education in their schools is a problem, three in 10 (29%) think that the quality of education has improved over the past few years. An almost equal share (28%) think it has grown worse, and a narrow plurality say it has remained the same. Notably, those most likely to have direct experience with the public school system—those with children at home—are more likely to say that the quality of education in the public schools has improved (37%). Latinos are also relatively positive in their assessment of school improvements, and lower-income residents are more likely than higher-income residents to perceive improvement. Results today are similar to our findings in January, July, and December 2001, but they show considerable improvement from January 2000, when 22 percent of residents said that schools had improved, 39 percent said they had gotten worse, and 34 percent said conditions had not changed.

**"In the past few years, do you think that the quality of education in California's K to 12 public schools has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same?"**

	All Adults	Child at home		Household Income		Latino
		Yes	No	< \$40,000	> \$40,000	
Improved	29%	37%	24%	33%	27%	43%
Gotten worse	28	23	31	25	29	18
Stayed the same	36	36	36	36	37	35
Don't know	7	4	9	6	7	4

Californians have grown increasingly confident over time that the state's school spending ranks favorably with that of other states, a perception that may at least partially reflect the significant increases in California's school spending in recent years. Today, 37 percent of residents believe that California's spending on education is below average, compared to 47 percent in April 1998. Residents with household incomes under \$40,000 and those without children living at home are somewhat more likely to believe that state spending on education is above average. In contrast, college graduates (15%) are less likely to perceive that state spending is above average than are those with less education (24%).

**"Where do you think California currently ranks in per-pupil spending for K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade public schools?"**

All Adults	Apr 98	Feb 00	Jan 02	Oct 02
Near the top / Above average	14%	16%	15%	20%
Average	28	24	24	31
Below average / Near the bottom	47	51	48	37
Don't know	11	9	13	12

California residents are much less positive about the state's ranking in student test scores for K-12 public schools. Only about one in 10 residents believe that state test scores are above average or higher, while nearly half believe they are below average. Residents in households with incomes under \$40,000 are nearly twice as likely to believe that test scores are above average or better (15%) than those from households with incomes of \$40,000 or higher (8%). There has been no significant change over time in perception of student test score performance relative to other states. (How do these opinions compare to actual state rankings on these measures? Recent state reports indicate both increased spending and improved test scores. However, according to a report earlier this year, *Education Week: "Quality Counts 2002,"* California ranks near the bottom among all states in per-pupil spending and student achievement.)

**The Report Card for Local Public Schools**

In the light of recently released test scores, Californians rate the quality of their local schools more highly than they did two years ago. Today, 14 percent give their schools an “A,” a small but significant increase from the 10 percent who graded their local schools this highly in August 2000. Nearly half of this month’s survey respondents gave their local schools at least a “B,” compared to fewer than 40 percent of respondents in August 2000. Over this time period, the percentage of residents giving their local schools a failing grade has dropped by half, from 8 percent to 4 percent. Latinos are significantly more likely than non-Hispanic whites to give their local schools at least a “B” (60% to 46%), and Central Valley residents are more likely than San Francisco Bay Area residents to give at least a “B” (55% to 42%). There are no significant differences across education, income, age, or years of residence on the grade that residents give their local public schools. However, respondents with children living at home give their local public schools higher grades than respondents without children—55% compared to 44% give at least a “B” grade.

**"How would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today?"**

	Aug 2000	Oct 2002
<b>A</b>	10%	14%
<b>B</b>	29	35
<b>C</b>	30	31
<b>D</b>	15	10
<b>F</b>	8	4
<b>Don't know</b>	8	6

	All Adults	Region				Child at Home		Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Yes	No	
<b>A &amp; B</b>	49%	55%	42%	45%	55%	55%	44%	60%
<b>C</b>	31	29	35	32	27	28	32	27
<b>D</b>	10	9	8	11	10	10	10	7
<b>F</b>	4	3	6	5	3	4	4	3
<b>Don't know</b>	6	4	9	7	5	3	10	3

Asked to look back to their own education, California residents are split over whether children in their neighborhoods get better or worse educations than they themselves received. Forty-one percent of residents believe that children today are getting a better education than they did, while 45 percent believe that children are receiving a worse education. Latinos are far more likely than non-Hispanic whites to believe that today's children are receiving a better education (60% to 35%). Similarly, half of residents from households with incomes under \$40,000 (51%) believe that the education children are receiving today is better than theirs was, compared to only 36 percent of residents with higher incomes.

Nearly six in 10 respondents with a high school degree or less (59%) believe that children today are receiving a better education than they did, while only three in 10 college graduates (30%) believe this to be so. Those with children in their households are also much more likely than those without

children at home to say that children attending schools in their neighborhoods get a better education than they themselves did (52% to 34%).

**"As you look back at your own education, is it your impression that children attending local public schools in your neighborhood today get a better or worse education than you did?"**

	All Adults	Region				Child at Home		Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Yes	No	
<b>Better</b>	41%	47%	35%	38%	45%	52%	34%	60%
<b>Worse</b>	45	42	47	48	41	38	49	29
<b>Same</b>	7	7	6	6	9	5	8	6
<b>Don't know</b>	7	4	12	8	5	5	9	5

### Public School Reforms

Many Californians continue to be dissatisfied with several of the educational reforms that the governor and legislature have highlighted over the past few years. More Californians are dissatisfied than are satisfied with school accountability for student test scores (47% vs. 41%), the repair and construction of school facilities (49% vs. 42%), and school spending (57% vs. 30%). By contrast, Californians tend to approve of how school safety is being handled (54% to 39%) and are split on the effect of efforts to reduce class size (46% to 45%) and to improve teacher quality, including recruitment and training (44% to 46%). Satisfaction levels on five of these six measures (all but class size reduction) are higher than they were in February 2002: teacher quality (+7 percentage points), school safety (+6), school repair (+5), school accountability (+3), school spending (+2).

Across all six of these reform efforts, respondents with school-aged children in the home are more satisfied than those without children in the home: class size reduction (51% to 42%), teacher quality (50% to 40%), school repair and construction (48% to 38%), accountability for test scores (51% to 34%), spending (37% to 26%), and even safety (56% to 52%). At the same time, slim majorities at best of those with children at home express satisfaction with these reform efforts. This changes somewhat when we consider opinions on class size reduction among Californians with children attending a K-8 public elementary school: 59 percent of the parents are satisfied with efforts to reduce class size in these schools.

By large margins, Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to be satisfied with school repair and construction (56% to 37%), spending (42% to 26%), accountability (54% to 36%), teacher quality (56% to 40%), and class size reduction (55% to 43%). By contrast, 45 percent of Latinos are dissatisfied with reforms geared toward school safety, compared to only 34 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

"Are you satisfied or not satisfied with the way each of these efforts to improve education in California's public schools is being handled?"

	All Adults	Child at Home		Household Income		Latino
		Yes	No	< \$40,000	> \$40,000	
<i>How about school safety?</i>						
Satisfied	54%	56%	52%	51%	56%	51%
Not satisfied	39	41	37	43	36	45
Don't know	7	3	11	6	8	4
<i>How about reducing class sizes?</i>						
Satisfied	46%	51%	42%	51%	43%	55%
Not satisfied	45	45	45	41	48	40
Don't know	9	4	13	8	9	5
<i>How about teacher quality, including recruitment and training?</i>						
Satisfied	44%	50%	40%	49%	41%	56%
Not satisfied	46	44	47	42	49	38
Don't know	10	6	13	9	10	6
<i>How about repair and construction of school facilities?</i>						
Satisfied	42%	48%	38%	47%	39%	56%
Not satisfied	49	47	51	45	53	40
Don't know	9	5	11	8	8	4
<i>How about school accountability for student test scores?</i>						
Satisfied	41%	51%	34%	44%	40%	54%
Not satisfied	47	42	51	42	50	36
Don't know	12	7	15	14	10	10
<i>How about school spending?</i>						
Satisfied	30%	37%	26%	38%	26%	42%
Not satisfied	57	55	59	51	61	49
Don't know	13	8	15	11	13	9

**Grading Governor Davis on Schools**

Since his election in 1998, Governor Davis has invested a significant amount of attention and political capital in the state's educational system—a fact that he has used as a centerpiece in his bid for re-election this November. And today, despite their ongoing dissatisfaction with the educational system, Californians are less likely than they were at the beginning of the year to disapprove of the governor's handling of education issues. In January 2002, only 39 percent of Californians approved of the way Davis was handling the state's K-12 public education system, while 40 percent disapproved. By contrast, today 50 percent approve of his handling of the system, and 33 percent disapprove. Residents with children at home are more likely than those without children at home to approve of Davis' performance on schools (58% to 45%).

<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Davis is handling the state's K to 12 public education system?</i>	<u>All Adults</u>			
	Jan 00	Jan 01	Jan 02	Oct 02
<b>Approve</b>	51%	45%	39%	50%
<b>Disapprove</b>	28	32	40	33
<b>Don't know</b>	21	23	21	17

The approval rating for the governor on the education issue is somewhat lower among likely voters (46%) than among all adults (50%). Fifty-seven percent of Democratic likely voters approve of Davis on education, as do 52 percent of independent voters. By contrast, a majority of Republican likely voters (52%) disapprove. Counter to their generally Democratic-leaning positions, voters in the San Francisco Bay Area are the least approving of Davis' handling of the public education system (39%); even in the more Republican Central Valley and Other Southern California regions, pluralities of voters approve of Davis on education. Latinos (59%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (43%) to approve of Davis' handling of education.

**"Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Davis is handling the state's K to 12 public education system?"**

	<b>All Likely Voters</b>	<u>Likely Voters</u>							
		<u>Party</u>			<u>Region</u>				
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	Latino
<b>Approve</b>	46%	57%	33%	52%	47%	39%	52%	45%	59%
<b>Disapprove</b>	40	31	52	32	36	44	38	43	35
<b>Don't know</b>	14	12	15	16	17	17	10	12	6



## Political Trends

### Approval Ratings

In the final weeks of the election campaign, 52 percent of Californians say they approve of Governor Davis' overall performance in office, and 43 percent disapprove. Davis' approval rating among all adults has been steady throughout the last three months of the election campaign. However, it is slightly higher among likely voters than it was in September (45% to 42%). His ratings continue to vary across party lines, and approval of his performance is still higher among Latinos (69%) than among non-Hispanic whites (42%). It is slightly higher in Los Angeles (56%) than it is in the San Francisco Bay Area (52%), the Central Valley (50%) and Other Southern California (50%). Davis' overall approval ratings are also higher among younger, less educated, and lower-income adults.

Today, 60 percent of Californians approve of President Bush's overall performance in office. This rating is similar to the 61 percent national approval rate found in a recent *Newsweek* poll. The president's approval rating has slipped significantly among Californians over the past few months and is close to his pre-September 11, 2001, rating. As was the case before September 11<sup>th</sup>, there is now a strong partisan difference in approval of his overall performance in office. Bush's support among likely California voters has also declined, from 62 percent in September to 58 percent today. Support for Bush is higher among residents in the Central Valley (71%) and Other Southern California (68%) than it is in the San Francisco Bay Area (47%) and Los Angeles (55%).

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Democrat	Republican	Independent	
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling his job as governor of California?</i>					
Approve	52%	67%	29%	55%	45%
Disapprove	43	29	67	42	52
Don't know	5	4	4	3	3
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president of the United States?</i>					
Approve	60%	40%	86%	57%	58%
Disapprove	36	55	12	39	38
Don't know	4	5	2	4	4

**"Do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president of the United States?"**

	All Adults									
	May 01	Jul 01	Nov 01	Dec 01	Jan 02	Feb 02	Jun 02	Aug 02	Sep 02	Oct 02
Approve	57%	47%	80%	79%	80%	76%	65%	64%	64%	60%
Disapprove	36	43	16	18	17	22	30	32	32	36
Don't know	7	10	4	3	3	2	5	4	4	4

**Iraq and Saddam Hussein**

Half of all Californians approve of the way President Bush is handling the situation with Iraq and Saddam Hussein, and 44 percent disapprove. Bush gets lower ratings for handling this situation than he does for his overall performance (51% to 60%), and this differential is consistent across party lines. Californians also give the president lower approval ratings on his handling of Iraq than the 58 percent he received in a recent national *Newsweek* poll. In California, support for Bush's handling of Iraq has declined slightly from 55 percent in September to 51 percent today. The decline is larger for Democrats (39% to 32%) than for independents (51% to 48%), and there has been virtually no decline among Republicans (77% to 76%). Bush receives approval for his handling of Iraq from roughly six in 10 residents in the Central Valley (59%) and Other Southern California (60%), from fewer than half in Los Angeles (46%), and from less than four in 10 in the San Francisco Bay Area (39%).

Californians are divided over whether the Bush administration has done enough (49%) or has not done enough (47%) to explain to the public why the U.S. might take military action to remove Saddam Hussein from power. On this item, Californians' opinions are in line with national opinion when we compare these PPIC Statewide Survey results to a recent Gallup survey. Non-Hispanic whites (53%) are more likely than Latinos (43%) to believe that the Bush administration has done enough. Majorities of residents in the Central Valley (57%) and Other Southern California (53%) feel that he has done enough, and residents of Los Angeles are almost evenly divided; but a majority of San Francisco Bay Area residents (58%) say that the Bush administration has not done enough to explain why the U.S. might take military action against Iraq. Republicans (69%) are much more likely than Democrats (38%) and independent voters (45%) to believe that the Bush administration has done enough to explain this issue to the public.

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Democrat	Republican	Independent	
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the situation with Iraq and Saddam Hussein?</i>					
Approve	51%	32%	76%	48%	50%
Disapprove	44	62	19	47	45
Don't know	5	6	5	5	5

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Democrat	Republican	Independent	
<i>Do you think that the Bush administration has or has not done enough to explain to the American public why the U.S. might take military action to remove Saddam Hussein from power?</i>					
Has done enough	49%	38%	69%	45%	51%
Has not done enough	47	58	29	53	46
Don't know	4	4	2	2	3

**California's U.S. Senators' Ratings**

Forty-nine percent of residents approve of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as a U.S. Senator, 25 percent disapprove, and 26 percent are undecided. As in the past, Feinstein gets more favorable reviews from Democrats (66%) than from independents (48%) and Republicans (37%) and more favorable ratings from liberals (60%) and moderates (52%) than from conservatives (39%). Her current approval rating is lower than in February 2002 (57%), February 2000 (59%), and December 1999 (58%). However, the recent drop in Feinstein's approval rating is a result of increasing "don't know" responses, rather than higher disapproval. As in previous surveys, Feinstein has stronger support in the San Francisco Bay Area (58%) than in Los Angeles (51%), Other Southern California (45%), and the Central Valley (46%). She enjoys roughly equal support among non-Hispanic whites (47%) and Latinos (50%), and among men (48%) and women (51%). Support for Feinstein increases with age, education, and income, and her approval rating is highest among residents 55 and older (55%), college graduates (53%), and those making over \$80,000 per year (55%). Among likely voters today, 54 percent approve of Feinstein's performance, 30 percent disapprove, and 16 percent are undecided.

Forty-eight percent of all Californians approve of the job that Barbara Boxer is doing as a U.S. Senator, 25 percent disapprove, and 27 percent are undecided. Boxer's approval rating is virtually unchanged since February 2002 (52%). Approval of Boxer varies strongly by party: 68 percent of Democrats, 47 percent of independents, and 27 percent of Republicans approve of her performance in office. As with Senator Feinstein, liberal (66%) and moderate (51%) residents are more supportive of Senator Boxer than are conservative (30%) residents. Boxer is more popular with Latinos (54%) than with non-Hispanic whites (43%) and has roughly equal levels of approval among men (47%) and women (49%). She draws more support in the San Francisco Bay Area (55%) and Los Angeles (51%) than in the Central Valley (42%) and Other Southern California (42%). Support for Boxer is consistent across age, income, and education levels. Among likely voters today, 49 percent approve of her performance, 33 percent disapprove, and 18 percent are undecided.

	All Adults	Party Registration			Likely Voters
		Democrat	Republican	Independent	
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as a U.S. Senator?</i>					
Approve	49%	66%	37%	48%	54%
Disapprove	25	15	43	24	30
Don't know	26	19	20	28	16
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barbara Boxer is handling her job as a U.S. Senator?</i>					
Approve	48%	68%	27%	47%	49%
Disapprove	25	11	51	26	33
Don't know	27	21	22	27	18

**U.S. Congress' Ratings**

The high approval ratings enjoyed by the U.S. Congress after the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks have disappeared. Today, 38 percent of Californians say that Congress is doing an excellent or good job. This is down significantly from December 2001, when 59 percent of Californians gave Congress an excellent or good rating. Today's ratings are similar to those found before September 11, 2001: In October 2000, for example, 38 percent rated Congress' performance as excellent or good. The decline in overall congressional ratings since December 2001 is consistent across party lines—Republican (65% to 42%), Democrat (57% to 36%), and independent (49% to 35%). Likely voters (37%) and all adults (38%) give similar ratings to the U.S. Congress.

Individual members of Congress have also seen their performance ratings slip back to pre-September 11<sup>th</sup> levels. Today, only 41 percent of Californians believe that their own representative in the House of Representatives is doing an excellent or good job, compared to 52 percent in December 2001. Today's individual representatives' approval ratings are similar to, but somewhat lower than, the ratings in October 2000 (44%) and August 2000 (46%). The decline since December 2001 in the percentage who approve of the job their representative is doing is also evident across party lines—Democrat (53% to 41%), Republican (60% to 46%), and independent (50% to 39%). There is no regional difference in the ratings that Californians give to their district representative's performance.

Latinos (44%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (37%) to say that Congress as a whole is doing an excellent or good job, but Latinos and non-Hispanic whites give similar ratings to the job performance of their own representatives (44% and 41%). Individual representatives receive higher ratings than Congress as a whole among likely voters (45% to 37%) and all adults (41% to 38%),

**"How do you rate the job performance of the U.S. Congress at this time – excellent, good, fair, or poor?"**

	<u>All Adults</u>							
	Oct 98	Dec 98	Sep 99	Dec 99	Aug 00	Oct 00	Dec 01	Oct 02
<b>Excellent</b>	5%	4%	2%	5%	4%	5%	13%	<b>4%</b>
<b>Good</b>	34	29	24	30	34	33	46	<b>34</b>
<b>Fair</b>	40	42	48	44	45	46	31	<b>46</b>
<b>Poor</b>	19	22	21	18	14	13	8	<b>13</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	2	3	5	3	3	3	2	<b>3</b>

**"What about the representative to the U.S. House of Representatives from your congressional district:  
How do you rate his or her performance at this time – excellent, good, fair, or poor?"**

	<u>All Adults</u>			
	Aug 00	Oct 00	Dec 01	Oct 02
<b>Excellent</b>	7%	8%	10%	<b>6%</b>
<b>Good</b>	39	36	42	<b>35</b>
<b>Fair</b>	31	36	28	<b>36</b>
<b>Poor</b>	8	7	7	<b>7</b>
<b>Don't know</b>	15	13	13	<b>16</b>

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## Survey Methodology

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The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, research director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance in research and writing from Jon Cohen, survey research manager, and Dorie Apollonio, Lisa Cole, and Eliana Kaimowitz, survey research associates.

The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,007 California adult residents interviewed between October 7 and October 15, 2002. Interviewing took place on weekday nights and weekend days, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers that ensured that both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to ten times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing by using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 18 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. Casa Hispana translated the survey into Spanish.

We used recent U.S. Census and state figures to compare the demographic characteristics of the survey sample with characteristics of California’s adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the census and state figures. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any demographic differences.

The sampling error for the total sample of 2,007 adults is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. The sampling error for the 1,538 registered voters is +/- 2.5 percent. The sampling error for the 1,000 likely voters is +/- 3 percent. Sampling error is just 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.

Throughout the report, we refer to four geographic regions. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “SF 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, and “Other Southern California” includes the mostly suburban regions of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. These four regions were chosen for analysis because they are the major population centers of the state, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population; moreover, the growth of the Central Valley and “Other Southern California” regions have given them increasing political significance.

We present specific results for Latinos because they account for about 28 percent of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. The sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups are not large enough for separate statistical analysis. We do contrast the opinions of registered Democrats, Republicans, and independents. The “independents” category, except where noted, includes only those who are registered to vote as “decline to state.”

In some cases, we compare PPIC Statewide Survey responses to responses recorded in national surveys conducted by *Newsweek*; *CNN/USA Today*/Gallup; NPR/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University Kennedy School of Government Education Survey; and *Education Week*: “Quality Counts 2002” (<http://www.edweek.org/sreports/qc02/>). We used earlier PPIC Statewide Surveys to analyze trends over time in California.



**PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT**  
**OCTOBER 7—OCTOBER 15, 2002**  
**2,007 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH**  
**MARGIN OF ERROR +/- 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE**

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***[Responses recorded for questions 1-19 are from likely voters only. All other responses are from all adults.]***

1. If the election for governor were being held today, would you vote for *[rotate names]* (1) Gray Davis, the Democrat; (2) Bill Simon, the Republican; (3) Gary Copeland, the Libertarian; (4) Reinhold Gulke, the American Independent; (5) Peter Miguel Camejo, the Green; or someone else?

41% Gray Davis  
 31 Bill Simon  
 4 Peter Miguel Camejo  
 2 Gary Copeland  
 1 Reinhold Gulke  
 4 someone else (*specify*)  
 17 don't know

2. Would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with the choices of candidates in the election for governor on November 5th?

38% satisfied  
 57 not satisfied  
 5 don't know

3. The Democratic and Republican candidates for governor recently had a debate. Some people learn about debates from news reports as well as seeing or hearing them. Did the debate help you a great deal, somewhat, very little, or not at all in deciding who to vote for in the governor's race?

5% great deal  
 15 somewhat  
 19 very little  
 40 not at all  
 21 haven't seen, read, or heard about debate (*volunteered*)

4. Which one issue would you most like to hear the gubernatorial candidates talk about before the November 5<sup>th</sup> election?

21% schools, education  
 14 jobs, the economy  
 7 state budget  
 7 taxes  
 6 electricity and energy  
 4 health care  
 3 environment  
 3 campaign money and ethics  
 2 immigration  
 2 crime and gangs  
 2 housing  
 2 terrorism and security  
 2 poverty  
 1 traffic and transportation  
 1 population growth  
 1 abortion, women's rights  
 8 other  
 14 don't know

5. Would you say that you are satisfied or not satisfied with the amount of attention that the candidates for governor are spending on the issues most important to you?

24% satisfied  
 66 not satisfied  
 10 don't know

Regardless of your choice for governor, which of these candidates would do a better job on each of these issues—Gray Davis or Bill Simon? (*rotate questions 6 through 10*)

6. How about education?

53% Gray Davis  
 29 Bill Simon  
 8 other/neither (*volunteered*)  
 10 don't know

7. How about the economy?

42% Gray Davis  
 39 Bill Simon  
 9 other/neither (*volunteered*)  
 10 don't know

8. How about electricity and energy policy?

36% Gray Davis  
42 Bill Simon  
10 other/neither (*volunteered*)  
12 don't know

9. How about the state budget and taxes?

43% Gray Davis  
39 Bill Simon  
8 other/neither (*volunteered*)  
10 don't know

10. How about maintaining high ethical standards in government?

41% Gray Davis  
29 Bill Simon  
20 other/neither (*volunteered*)  
10 don't know

11. How closely do you follow news about candidates for the 2002 governor's election—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

22% very closely  
53 fairly closely  
20 not too closely  
5 not at all closely

12. In the past month, have you seen any television advertisements by the candidates for governor? (*if yes: Whose ads have you seen the most?*)

49% yes, Gray Davis  
23 yes, Bill Simon  
7 yes, other answer [*specify*]  
21 no [*skip to q.14*]

13. [*Asked of those who have seen ads*] So far, have the television advertisements you have seen been very helpful, somewhat helpful, not too helpful, or not at all helpful to you in deciding which candidate to vote for?

10% very helpful  
19 somewhat helpful  
25 not too helpful  
46 not at all helpful

14. Also on the November ballot is Proposition 47, the "Kindergarten to University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2002." This \$13.05 billion bond issue will provide funding for necessary education facilities to relieve overcrowding and to repair older schools. The funds will be targeted to areas of greatest need. Funds will also be used to upgrade and build new classrooms in California community colleges, California State University, and the University of California. The projected fiscal impact includes state costs of about \$26.2 billion over 30 years to pay off the bonds, with payments of about \$873 million annually. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 47?

63% yes  
28 no  
9 don't know

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

10% more than enough  
21 just enough  
63 not enough  
6 don't know

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

70% yes  
25 no  
5 don't know

17. Also on the November ballot is Proposition 49, the "Before and After School Programs Initiative." Proposition 49 increases state grant funds available for before and after school programs, providing tutoring, homework assistance, and educational enrichment. It requires that, beginning in 2004-05, new grants will not be taken from the education funds guaranteed under Proposition 98. The fiscal impact of the measure is projected to be additional annual state costs for before and after school programs of up to \$455 million, beginning in 2004-05. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 49?

64% yes  
27 no  
9 don't know



18. Do you think that the additional funding in Proposition 49 for before and after school programs will or will not raise student test scores?
- 55% will
  - 34 will not
  - 11 don't know
19. Do you think that the additional funding in Proposition 49 for before and after school programs will or will not improve children's safety from crime?
- 73% will
  - 21 will not
  - 6 don't know
20. On another topic, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote? *(If yes: Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?)*
- 35% yes, Democrat *(skip to q.22)*
  - 27 yes, Republican *(skip to q.23)*
  - 4 yes, other party *(skip to q.24)*
  - 12 yes, independent *(ask q.21)*
  - 22 no, not registered *(ask q.21)*
21. *(if independent, not registered, don't know on q.20)* Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican party or Democratic party?
- 27% Republican party *(skip to q.24)*
  - 43 Democratic party *(skip to q.24)*
  - 21 neither *(volunteered)* *(skip to q.24)*
  - 9 don't know *(skip to q.24)*
22. *(if Democrat on q. 20)* Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?
- 52% strong *(skip to q.24)*
  - 46 not very strong *(skip to q.24)*
  - 2 don't know *(skip to q.24)*
23. *(if Republican on q.20)* Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?
- 52% strong *(ask q.24)*
  - 46 not very strong *(ask q.24)*
  - 2 don't know *(ask q.24)*
24. On another topic, do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?
- 46% right direction
  - 45 wrong direction
  - 9 don't know
25. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?
- 38% good times
  - 51 bad times
  - 11 don't know
26. Would you say that your region is in an economic recession or not? *(if yes: Do you think it is in a serious, a moderate, or a mild recession?)*
- 15% yes, serious recession
  - 27 yes, moderate recession
  - 14 yes, mild recession
  - 40 no
  - 4 don't know
27. On another topic— overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president of the United States?
- 60% approve
  - 36 disapprove
  - 4 don't know
28. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the situation with Iraq and Saddam Hussein?
- 51% approve
  - 44 disapprove
  - 5 don't know
29. Do you think that the Bush administration has or has not done enough to explain to the American public why the U.S. might take military action to remove Saddam Hussein from power?
- 49% has done enough
  - 47 has not done enough
  - 4 don't know
30. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Dianne Feinstein is handling her job as a U.S. Senator?
- 49% approve
  - 25 disapprove
  - 26 don't know
31. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Barbara Boxer is handling her job as a U.S. Senator?
- 48% approve
  - 25 disapprove
  - 27 don't know

32. Overall, how do you rate the job performance of the U.S. Congress at this time—excellent, good, fair, or poor?

4% excellent  
34 good  
46 fair  
13 poor  
3 don't know

33. What about the representative to the U.S. House of Representatives from your congressional district? How do you rate his or her job performance at this time: excellent, good, fair, or poor?

6% excellent  
35 good  
36 fair  
7 poor  
16 don't know

34. Turning to the state—overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling his job as governor of California?

52% approve  
43 disapprove  
5 don't know

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

50% approve  
33 disapprove  
17 don't know

36. How much of a problem is the quality of education in California's kindergarten through 12th grade public schools today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

48% big problem  
37 somewhat of a problem  
10 not much of a problem  
5 don't know

37. In the past few years, do you think that the quality of education in California's K to 12 public schools has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same?

29% improved  
28 gotten worse  
36 stayed the same  
7 don't know

Please tell me whether you are satisfied or not satisfied with the way each of the following efforts to improve education in California's public schools is being handled. (rotate questions 38 to 43)

38. How about school spending?

30% satisfied  
57 not satisfied  
13 don't know

39. How about school safety?

54% satisfied  
39 not satisfied  
7 don't know

40. How about repair and construction of school facilities?

42% satisfied  
49 not satisfied  
9 don't know

41. How about teacher quality, including recruitment and training?

44 satisfied  
46 not satisfied  
10 don't know

42. How about school accountability for student test scores?

41% satisfied  
47 not satisfied  
12 don't know

43. How about reducing class sizes?

46% satisfied  
45 not satisfied  
9 don't know

44. On a related topic, where do you think California currently ranks in per-pupil spending for K to 12th grade public schools? Compared to other states, is California's spending near the top, above average, average, below average, or near the bottom?

9% near the top  
11 above average  
31 average  
23 below average  
14 near the bottom  
12 don't know

45. Where do you think California currently ranks in student test scores for K to 12 public schools? Compared to other states, are California's student test scores near the top, above average, average, below average, or near the bottom?

- 3% near the top
- 8 above average
- 33 average
- 36 below average
- 13 near the bottom
- 7 don't know

46. 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?

- 14% A
- 35 B
- 31 C
- 10 D
- 4 F
- 6 don't know

47. Is the grade you just gave to your local public schools based mainly on your own experiences, on what you've learned from friends and family, or on what you have seen or heard on television or radio, in newspapers, or other things you have read?

- 45% own experience
- 27 family or friends
- 20 seen or heard in media
- 2 other (*volunteered*)
- 6 don't know

48. As you look back at your own education, is it your impression that children attending local public schools in your neighborhood today get a better or worse education than you did?

- 41% better
- 45 worse
- 7 same (*volunteered*)
- 7 don't know

49. On another topic, would you consider yourself to be politically very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?

- 10% very liberal
- 22 somewhat liberal
- 29 middle-of-the-road
- 26 somewhat conservative
- 10 very conservative
- 3 don't know

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

- 20% great deal
- 45 fair amount
- 29 only a little
- 6 none

51. How often would you say you vote—always, nearly always, part of the time, seldom, or never?

- 52% always
- 22 nearly always
- 9 part of the time
- 6 seldom
- 11 never

52. Some people who plan to vote can't always get around to it. With your own personal schedule in mind, are you absolutely certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances about 50-50, less than 50-50, or don't you think you will vote in the November election?

- 62% absolutely certain (*ask q.53*)
- 13 probably (*ask q.53*)
- 10 about 50-50 (*ask q.53*)
- 2 less than 50-50 (*ask q.53*)
- 11 will not vote (*skip q.53*)
- 2 don't know (*skip q.53*)

53. Do you plan to vote at your local polling place or by absentee ballot?

- 74% local polling place
- 24 absentee ballot
- 2 don't know

The next set of questions is about activities in the last year. For each of the following, please tell me if you have or have not done any of the following in the past 12 months. (*rotate questions 54 to 60*)

54. Have you written or e-mailed a local, state, or federal elected official?

- 27% yes
- 73 no

55. Have you attended a political rally or speech?

- 15% yes
- 85 no

56. Have you attended a meeting on local or school affairs?

- 39% yes
- 61 no

57. Have you signed a petition, such as the signatures gathered for local or state initiatives?

36% yes

64 no

58. Have you worked for a political party, candidate, or initiative campaign?

7% yes

93 no

59. Have you given money to a political party, candidate, or initiative campaign?

21% yes

79 no

60. Have you been a member of any group that is working toward better government or political reform?

16% yes

84 no

*[61-72: demographic questions]*

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