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# Californians & higher education



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in collaboration with  
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**PPIC**

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# ABOUT THE SURVEY

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The PPIC Statewide Survey provides policymakers, the media, and the general public with objective, advocacy-free information on the perceptions, opinions, and public policy preferences of California residents. Inaugurated in April 1998, this is the 102nd PPIC Statewide Survey in a series that has generated a database that includes the responses of more than 218,000 Californians. This survey is part of a PPIC Statewide Survey series on K–12 and higher education, environment, and population issues, funded by The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. This is the third PPIC Statewide Survey focusing on higher education.

The series seeks to inform state policymakers, encourage discussion, and raise public awareness about issues affecting higher education, which is the third-largest spending area of the state budget—about \$12.2 billion. Higher education is guided by a 1960 master plan that calls for making a college education available to every qualified California high school graduate. Currently, about 3.6 million students use publicly funded higher education, according to data from the three higher education systems, the California Community College (CCC), California State University (CSU), and University of California (UC). Higher education faces immediate challenges—including significant state budget cuts, the rising costs of a college education, and continued weakness in the state and national economies. It also faces long-term challenges: projections of increased need for college-educated workers in the state and rapid population growth.

This report presents the responses of 2,502 California adult residents, including 1,488 likely voters and 973 parents of children 18 or younger, on these specific topics:

- Perceptions of California’s higher education system, including the most important issues; concerns about the affordability and quality of higher education; concern about state budget cuts and related proposals such as increasing student fees, admitting fewer students, limiting classes, and reducing pay and hours of faculty and staff; whether changes are needed to improve higher education; approval ratings of the governor and legislature on their handling of higher education; perceptions of the adequacy and efficiency of higher education funding; performance ratings of the UC, CSU, and CCC systems; and perceptions across different economic and racial/ethnic groups about the necessity of a college education, opportunities for getting a college education, and the importance of economic and racial/ethnic diversity.
- Attitudes and policy preferences, including support for increasing state and federal funding to make California’s higher education system more affordable; preferences for making up state budget cuts; attitudes toward a hypothetical bond measure for higher education construction projects; importance of higher education to the state’s quality of life and economic well-being over the next 20 years, including the perceived need for college-educated workers; importance of investment in higher education and confidence in the state’s ability to plan for its future; and parents’ hopes and concerns for their children achieving a college education.
- Time trends, national comparisons, and variations in perceptions, attitudes, and preferences regarding public colleges and universities across five major regions of the state (Central Valley, San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles County, Inland Empire, and Orange/San Diego Counties), among Asians, blacks, Latinos, and non-Hispanic whites, across socioeconomic and political groups, and among parents of children age 18 or younger.

This report may be downloaded free of charge from our website ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)). For questions about the survey, please contact [survey@ppic.org](mailto:survey@ppic.org). View our searchable PPIC Statewide Survey database online at <http://www.ppic.org/main/survAdvancedSearch.asp>.

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PST on Wednesday, November 11, 2009

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### **PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

## **Californians Give Public Colleges High Grades But See Budget Cuts, Fee Hikes as Big Problems**

GOVERNOR, LEGISLATURE GET RECORD-LOW RATINGS FOR HANDLING HIGHER EDUCATION

SAN FRANCISCO, California, November 11, 2009—Californians give high grades to their public higher education systems, but they are worried about college costs and the impact of state budget cuts. These are the findings of a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) with funding from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

While strong majorities believe state budget cuts (70%) and overall affordability (57%) are big problems, far fewer (21%) characterize the quality of California public colleges and universities the same way. Despite significant budget cuts in higher education, at least six in 10 Californians give good to excellent marks to the California Community College (13% excellent, 52% good), California State University (9% excellent, 52% good) and University of California (13% excellent, 49% good) systems. These grades are nearly as high as they were in 2007 and 2008, when about two in three Californians gave positive ratings to the three branches. Today, parents of California college students, current students, and alumni give the state's higher education institutions similarly high grades.

But residents have little confidence in the state elected officials who have authority over California colleges and universities. Californians give Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger a 28 percent overall approval rating that matches his record low in July 2009. They give the legislature an overall approval rating of 18 percent, near its record low (17%) from July. State leaders get even lower ratings for their handling of higher education: 21 percent for Schwarzenegger and 16 percent for the legislature. Both are new lows. And most Californians have very little (37%) or no (20%) confidence in state government's ability to plan for the future of the higher education system (8% have a great deal of confidence, 33% only some).

"Californians hold their colleges and universities in high esteem," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO. "But they're worried about what's going to happen next. They're struggling with a crisis in the economy and a crisis of confidence in their leaders."

### **A COLLEGE DEGREE VIEWED AS ESSENTIAL BUT HARDER TO GET**

Californians place more importance on a college education than do adults nationwide. In a national survey conducted last December by Public Agenda and the National Center for Policy and Higher Education, 55 percent say college is necessary for a person's success, while 43 percent say there are many ways to succeed without a college education. By comparison, 66 percent of Californians in the PPIC survey view college as necessary. Just 31 percent say there are many other ways to succeed.

But many Californians see a college degree as increasingly difficult to attain: 65 percent say that getting a college education is more difficult than it was 10 years ago, a 9-point increase from 2007 (56%). More than two-thirds of residents (68%) say that many qualified people lack the opportunity to go to college.

### **OPPOSED TO RAISING TAXES OR STUDENT FEES**

In the context of the state budget situation, most Californians place a very high (26%) or high (33%) priority on spending for public higher education, which at \$12.2 billion is the third-largest area of spending in the budget. But residents split along partisan lines, with 67 percent of Democrats and 61 percent of independents putting a very high or high priority on spending in this area, compared to 42 percent of Republicans. The same percentage of Republicans (42%) puts a medium priority on higher education spending.

Given the high value that most Californians place on spending for higher education, what would they be willing to do to offset state spending cuts?

- **68 percent are unwilling to increase student fees.** Solid majorities across parties, regions, and demographic groups concur.
- **56 percent are unwilling to pay higher taxes.** Although 56 percent of Democrats are willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, 58 percent of independents and 74 percent of Republicans are not.
- **53 percent would support a higher education construction bond measure on the 2010 ballot.** But support is lower among likely voters (46% yes, 47% no) for this hypothetical bond measure and would fall short of the simple majority threshold needed to pass such a measure. Here, too, a partisan split emerges, with 61 percent of Democrats and 51 percent of independents saying they would vote yes on a bond and 55 percent of Republicans saying they would vote no.

Half (50%) of Californians believe that major changes are needed in the higher education system—a 10-point increase from last year—and 39 percent say minor changes are needed. When asked the best method for significantly improving California’s higher education system, about half (52%) say a combination of better use of existing state funds and increased funding is the answer. Just 7 percent say increased funding alone is the key and 38 percent say just using existing funds more wisely is best.

### **MOST BACK SLIDING SCALE FOR TUITION, MORE FUNDS FOR GRANTS, WORK-STUDY**

Should the state spend more money to keep fees and tuition costs down even if this means less funding for other programs? Despite Californians’ concerns about higher tuition and student fees, they are divided (49% favor, 43% oppose) on this question. A majority of Democrats (56%) are in favor, a majority of Republicans (55%) are opposed, and independents are split (48% favor, 46% oppose).

However, a strong majority of Californians (67%) support the idea of a sliding scale for tuition and fees so that students pay according to income, with majorities across all parties in favor (74% Democrats, 66% independents, 53% Republicans). Californians also favor increasing government funding for work-study opportunities so that students can earn money while in college (85% favor, 13% oppose) and for scholarships or grants for students (80% favor, 18% oppose).

### **TUITION, FEE HIKES ARE BIGGEST CONCERN**

Colleges and universities have taken a range of actions to offset cuts in higher education. How concerned are Californians about the specifics?

- **Tuition and fee increases:** Echoing their unwillingness to increase student fees, most Californians (62%) are very concerned and 27 percent are somewhat concerned about increasing tuition or fees, which all three branches of higher education have done. Majorities across political parties, regions, and demographic groups are very concerned.

- **Enrollment cuts:** A majority (57%) are very concerned and 29 percent somewhat concerned about the idea of reducing the number of students admitted to offset budget cuts—actions taken by both the CSU and UC systems. Democrats (68%) and independents (59%) are more likely than Republicans (49%) to be very concerned about fewer students being admitted.
- **Fewer classes:** A majority (57%) are very concerned and 29 percent somewhat concerned about cuts in course offerings. All three branches have cut classes. Again, Democrats (67%) and independents (58%) are more likely than Republicans (49%) to be very concerned.
- **Reduced pay and hours for faculty, staff:** Nearly half of Californians (48%) are very concerned and 32 percent are somewhat concerned about cuts in this area. Most Democrats (57%) are very concerned compared to fewer independents (48%) and Republicans (38%).

## PARENTS HAVE HIGH HOPES—BUT FEARS FOR THE FUTURE

Parents express high expectations for their children’s educational futures and their concern about being able to afford a college education for their youngest child is increasing. An overwhelming majority (89%) of parents with children 18 years old or younger say they hope their youngest child will get a bachelor’s or graduate degree. At the same time, half (50%) of parents are very worried about being able to afford a college education. Latino parents (67%) are far more likely than white parents (38%) to be very worried, although concern among white parents has increased 9 points since last year. Even at the highest income level of \$80,000 or more, 30 percent are very worried and 35 percent are somewhat worried about being able to afford college.

When asked about the progress they have made in saving for college, 62 percent of parents say they are behind, 28 percent saying they are just where they should be, and just 6 percent saying they are ahead. Among Latino parents, 73 percent say they are behind, a 10-point increase from last year. A majority of white parents (56%) say they are behind, 6 points higher than last year.

## MORE KEY FINDINGS

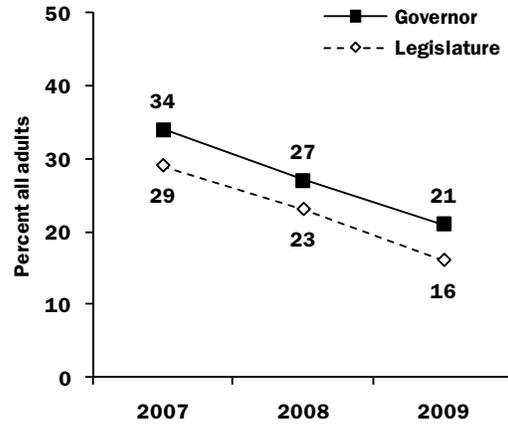
- **Do students from ethnic or racial minorities lack opportunity? Californians are split—page 18**  
While 60 percent of Californians believe that qualified low-income students have less opportunity to get a college education than others, they are divided in their views about the opportunities of qualified students who are ethnic or racial minorities: 40 percent say these students have about the same opportunity as others, 37 percent less opportunity, 20 percent more opportunity.
- **Economic, racial diversity on campus seen as important—page 19**  
The vast majority of Californians say it is very (54%) or somewhat (26%) important for public colleges and universities to have an economically diverse student body. Their views of the value of racial diversity are similar: 54 percent say it is very important and 23 percent say it is somewhat important.
- **Many parents lack financial aid information—page 20**  
A plurality (46%) of parents say they do not have enough financial aid information, 38 percent say they have just enough, and 13 percent say they have more than enough.
- **Higher education and the 2010 governor’s race—page 33**  
How important are the candidates’ positions on higher education? A strong majority of registered voters say very important (53%) or somewhat important (37%).

# PERCEPTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

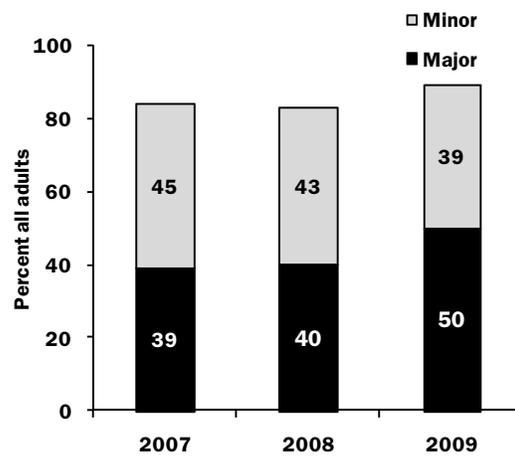
## KEY FINDINGS

- Job approval ratings of the governor and legislature remain low, and ratings of their handling of the state's higher education system have fallen to record lows. (page 6)
- Strong majorities believe state budget cuts (70%) and overall affordability (57%) are big problems in California's public colleges and universities; far fewer say quality (21%) is a big problem. (page 7)
- Solid majorities of Californians say they are very concerned about increasing student fees, admitting fewer students, and limiting classes to deal with state budget cuts; nearly half express the same high level of concern about reducing the pay and hours of faculty and staff. (pages 8, 9)
- Solid majorities of residents across most regional, demographic, and political groups continue to give excellent or good ratings to the state's three higher education systems. (page 10)
- A rising percentage of Californians say the state's public higher education system is in need of major changes. Residents are more likely to say that a combination of increased funding and wiser spending is needed to significantly improve the quality of higher education—rather than increased funding alone or wiser spending alone. (page 11)
- Most Californians—more so than adults nationwide—believe that a college education is necessary to be successful. And most Californians and adults nationwide agree that many qualified people do not have the opportunity to go to college. (page 12)

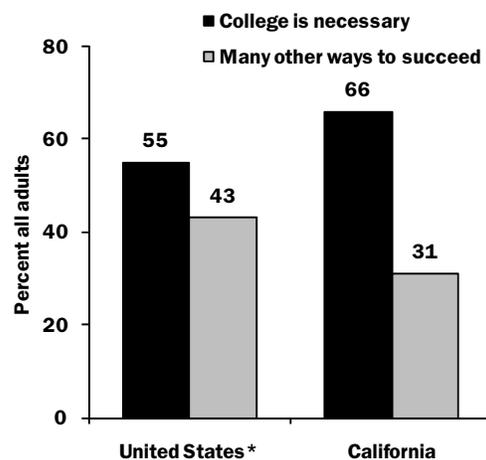
**Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials' Handling of Higher Education**



**Changes Needed to Higher Education?**



**Is a College Education Necessary?**



\*Public Agenda/National Center, 2009

## APPROVAL RATINGS OF THE STATE'S ELECTED OFFICIALS

Californians' ratings of the overall direction of the state, its economic condition, and its elected officials remain extremely negative. Today, three in four Californians say the state is headed in the wrong direction, and seven in 10 say they expect bad economic times during the next year. At least two in three Californians have expressed these negative opinions about the direction of the state and its economic outlook since June 2008, and majorities have expressed this dissatisfaction since December 2007.

California's elected officials continue to receive low approval ratings as well. Governor Schwarzenegger's current approval ratings (28%) match his record low reached this past July, and are similar to September's (30%). His approval ratings are about the same among likely voters (27%). At least half of the state's residents across regional, political, and most demographic groups disapprove of the governor's performance. When they are asked about his handling of the state's public college and university systems, his approval ratings drop to a record low (21%). Approval of his performance in this area has declined 6 points since November 2008 and 13 points since October 2007. Today, 61 percent of all residents and 63 percent of likely voters disapprove of his handling of the state's higher education systems. Across party lines, more disapprove than approve of his performance on this dimension.

### "Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that..."

		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>...Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?</i>	Approve	28%	20%	38%	33%	27%
	Disapprove	60	70	52	56	64
	Don't know	12	10	10	11	9
<i>...Governor Schwarzenegger is handling California's public college and university system?</i>	Approve	21	12	32	25	19
	Disapprove	61	76	43	57	63
	Don't know	18	12	25	18	18

Approval ratings of the California Legislature (18%) nearly match its all-time low reached this past July (17%). Approval ratings are even lower among likely voters: Just one in 10 approve of the legislature's performance today, marking a 6-point retrenchment since September and matching its low point in July. At least half of all residents across regional, political, and demographic groups disapprove of the legislature's overall performance. When asked about how well this governing body is handling higher education, approval ratings drop to a record low (16%), declining from higher ratings in October 2007 (29%) and November 2008 (23%). Today, 66 percent of the state's residents and 75 percent of its likely voters disapprove of the way the legislature is handling California's higher education systems.

### "Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the..."

		All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
<i>...California Legislature is handling its job?</i>	Approve	18%	17%	11%	18%	10%
	Disapprove	68	67	79	68	80
	Don't know	14	16	10	14	10
<i>...California Legislature is handling California's public college and university system?</i>	Approve	16	14	13	18	8
	Disapprove	66	71	69	64	75
	Don't know	18	15	18	18	17

## OVERALL CONDITIONS

Most Californians consider the overall affordability of higher education and the state's recent budget cuts in education as big problems. They are much less likely to view the quality of higher education as a big problem. Seven in 10 say state budget cuts are a big problem and nearly six in 10 view affordability as a big problem, but only two in 10 express the same level of concern about the quality of education. The percentage saying that affordability is a big problem has increased by 5 points since November 2008 (52%); the views on quality are about the same. This is the first time we have asked about budget cuts.

### “How about the overall \_\_\_\_\_ in California’s public colleges and universities today?”

	Quality of Education	Affordability of Education for Students	State Budget Cuts
<b>Big problem</b>	21%	57%	70%
<b>Somewhat of a problem</b>	37	29	21
<b>Not much of a problem</b>	37	12	7
<b>Don't know</b>	5	2	2

Strong majorities across regions, parties, and demographic groups consider the budget cuts in higher education a big problem, with those who disapprove of the way the governor and legislature are handling higher education even more likely to agree. A strong majority (83%) of those who are currently attending a California public college or university call budget cuts a big problem. At least half of the state's residents across regions, parties, and demographic groups also consider affordability a big problem, while only two in 10 say the quality of higher education is a big problem. Californians are far more critical of quality in the state's K–12 public schools (51% called K–12 quality a big problem in our April 2009 survey).

### “How about the overall \_\_\_\_\_ in California’s public colleges and universities today?”

<i>Percent saying big problem</i>		Quality of Education	Affordability of Education for Students	State Budget Cuts
<b>All Adults</b>		21%	57%	70%
<b>Likely Voters</b>		22	57	71
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Asian</b>	20	58	67
	<b>Black</b>	23	67	84
	<b>Latino</b>	24	55	73
	<b>White</b>	19	57	67
<b>Region</b>	<b>Central Valley</b>	22	61	69
	<b>San Francisco Bay Area</b>	24	64	79
	<b>Los Angeles</b>	23	52	70
	<b>Orange/San Diego</b>	16	53	60
	<b>Inland Empire</b>	19	62	68
<b>Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger</b>		22	54	72

When asked “What do you think is the most important issue facing California’s public colleges and universities today,” 31 percent of Californians name student costs and affordability, 25 percent say lack of government funding and budget cuts, and fewer than 10 percent name any other single issue. The percentage naming affordability is 4 points lower than in November 2008 and October 2007 (35% each), but the percentage mentioning state budget cuts or lack of government funding has risen 6 points since 2008 (19%) and 11 points since 2007 (14%).

## PERCEPTIONS OF STATE BUDGET CUTS

All of California's budget categories were subject to spending reductions in the 2008–09 and 2009–10 state budgets, including higher education, which represents the third largest category in state spending. To compensate for the budget cuts, California's three higher education systems have had to consider ways to increase funding and decrease spending. How concerned are residents about these responses?

The University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and California Community College (CCC) systems have all had to increase tuition and fees as a result of budget cuts. Most Californians (as well as likely voters) are very (62%) or somewhat (27%) concerned about this. Majorities across parties say they are very concerned: Democrats (72%), independents (63%), Republicans (53%). Majorities across regions also say they are very concerned, although residents in the Inland Empire (Riverside and San Bernardino Counties) and the San Francisco Bay Area (67% each) are the most likely to express this level of concern. Across demographic groups, blacks (75%) and Latinos (68%) are more likely than others to say they are very concerned, and women (69%) are far more likely than men (54%) to be very concerned. Residents between the ages of 35 and 54 and those with household incomes under \$40,000 are more likely than others to be very concerned.

**“How about increasing tuition and fees for college students to deal with state budget cuts—are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?”**

	All Adults	Race				Likely Voters
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	
<b>Very concerned</b>	62%	61%	75%	68%	57%	62%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	27	30	22	23	29	27
<b>Not too concerned</b>	6	4	–	4	8	6
<b>Not at all concerned</b>	5	5	3	4	5	4
<b>Don't know</b>	–	–	–	1	1	1

A majority of Californians are also very (57%) or somewhat (29%) concerned about lower admission rates. Although the community colleges are grappling with increasing enrollment, partly resulting from a lack of employment opportunities in the current economic environment, the additional demand is also due to lower admission rates at California State University and the University of California.

Democrats (68%) and independents (59%) are more likely than Republicans (49%) to be very concerned about the reduction in admissions. Across regions, San Francisco Bay Area residents (62%) are the most likely, and Orange/San Diego residents (53%) the least likely, to be very concerned. Blacks (68%) are more likely than Latinos (59%), whites (58%), and Asians (44%) to be very concerned. Women are more likely than men (64% to 50%), and parents are more likely than others (64% to 54%) to be very concerned.

**“How about admitting fewer college students to deal with state budget cuts—are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?”**

	All Adults	Race				Likely Voters
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	
<b>Very concerned</b>	57%	44%	68%	59%	58%	61%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	29	37	24	31	28	27
<b>Not too concerned</b>	7	7	4	5	7	6
<b>Not at all concerned</b>	6	10	–	5	6	5
<b>Don't know</b>	1	2	4	–	1	1

**PERCEPTIONS OF STATE BUDGET CUTS (CONTINUED)**

Another option for dealing with state budget cuts in California’s public colleges and universities is to offer fewer classes. California’s community colleges have reduced course offerings by as much as 20 percent, and branches of the California State University and the University of California have also cut programs and courses. Most residents are very (57%) or somewhat (29%) concerned about fewer class offerings, and our findings are similar for likely voters. Republicans (49%) are again less likely than independents (58%) or Democrats (67%) to say they are very concerned. Majorities across regions are very concerned about course reductions, as are majorities across racial/ethnic groups (68% blacks, 60% Latinos, 55% Asians, 55% whites). Those with only some college education (62%) are more concerned about this issue than those with college degrees (56%) or no college education (55%). Students currently enrolled in California’s higher education system are far more likely to say they are very concerned than residents overall (76% vs. 57%).

**“How about offering fewer college classes to deal with state budget cuts—are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?”**

	All Adults	Region					Likely Voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
<b>Very concerned</b>	57%	54%	56%	57%	60%	60%	58%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	29	32	30	30	27	26	28
<b>Not too concerned</b>	7	9	8	7	7	4	7
<b>Not at all concerned</b>	5	4	5	6	5	8	5
<b>Don’t know</b>	2	1	1	–	1	2	2

Reducing the pay and working time of college faculty and staff is another way to deal with the state’s budget cuts. California’s public colleges and universities have already cut jobs and mandated employee furloughs. About half of the state’s residents (48%) say they are very concerned about reducing the hours and pay of college faculty and staff, and 32 percent are somewhat concerned. A majority of Democrats (57%) are very concerned, compared to fewer independents (48%) and Republicans (38%). Across regions, about half of the residents in Los Angeles (51%), the San Francisco Bay Area (50%), and Orange/San Diego Counties (48%) are very concerned about reducing staff hours and pay, compared to fewer in the Central Valley (43%) and the Inland Empire (42%). Blacks (59%) are again the most likely to be very concerned about this cost-cutting measure when compared to Latinos (53%), whites (47%), and Asians (36%). And women are again much more likely than men to be very concerned (54% to 42%). Older residents are less likely than others to be very concerned. Among income groups, residents with incomes under \$40,000 are the most highly concerned. Current students are much more likely than residents overall to be very concerned (59% to 48%).

**“How about reducing the pay and hours for college faculty and staff to deal with state budget cuts—are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?”**

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Very concerned</b>	48%	57%	38%	48%	48%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	32	31	33	31	31
<b>Not too concerned</b>	11	7	15	12	11
<b>Not at all concerned</b>	8	4	13	8	9
<b>Don’t know</b>	1	1	1	1	1

## RATINGS OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

At least six in 10 residents give positive performance ratings to all three branches of California’s higher education system: CCC (13% excellent, 52% good), CSU (9% excellent, 52% good), UC (13% excellent, 49% good). Fewer than three in 10 say any of the branches are doing a not-so-good or poor job. In 2007 and 2008, about two in three residents gave positive ratings to each of the three branches. Today, parents of California public college students, residents currently attending the schools, and alumni of the state’s higher education institutions, give similarly high marks to each of the three branches.

“Overall, is the \_\_\_\_\_ doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job?”

	California Community College System	California State University System	University of California System
<b>Excellent</b>	13%	9%	13%
<b>Good</b>	52	52	49
<b>Not so good</b>	22	20	20
<b>Poor</b>	5	6	6
<b>Don’t know</b>	8	13	12

The CCC system receives excellent or good ratings from 65 percent of residents and 63 percent of parents. More than six in 10 residents across regions and political groups say the system is doing an excellent or good job; most across racial/ethnic groups say the same, although blacks are the least likely to agree. Across regions, residents in Orange/San Diego Counties are the most likely to give high marks.

The CSU system receives excellent or good ratings from majorities of residents and parents (61% each). Over half of residents across regions, parties, and demographic groups agree. Positive assessments of CSU are highest among college graduates (69%) and increase with rising income but decline with age.

The UC system also receives high marks from six in 10 residents (62%) and parents (60%). Again, majorities across regional, political, and demographic groups say the UC system is doing an excellent or good job. Residents in Orange/San Diego Counties are the most likely to give high marks to UC, while residents in the Central Valley are the least likely. Positive ratings of the UC system are highest among college graduates (72%) and increase with rising income but decline with age.

“Overall, is the \_\_\_\_\_ doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job?”

<i>Percent saying excellent/good</i>		California Community College System	California State University System	University of California System
<b>All Adults</b>		65%	61%	62%
<b>Likely Voters</b>		67	62	63
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Asian</b>	67	63	69
	<b>Black</b>	49	58	60
	<b>Latino</b>	62	55	58
	<b>White</b>	69	65	63
<b>Region</b>	<b>Central Valley</b>	61	57	55
	<b>San Francisco Bay Area</b>	62	60	63
	<b>Los Angeles</b>	62	61	62
	<b>Orange/San Diego</b>	71	71	74
	<b>Inland Empire</b>	68	52	57
<b>Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger</b>		63	61	60

## IMPROVING HIGHER EDUCATION

Seven in 10 Californians (70%) agree with the statement that additional state funding would lead to major improvements in the state’s higher education system, while 26 percent disagree. Similar percentages agreed in 2008 (68%) and 2007 (69%). An even higher percentage of Californians agree (80%) that better use of existing state funds would lead to major improvements in California’s higher education system. Findings again are similar to 2008 (81%) and 2007 (83%).

When asked about the best way to significantly improve California’s higher education system, half of residents (52%), likely voters (51%), and parents (53%) say the answer lies in a combination of additional funding and better use of existing state funds. Thirty-eight percent say all that’s needed is a better use of existing funds, and 7 percent say that more funding alone is the key. Findings are similar to those in 2007 and 2008. Across parties, Democrats (65%) are the most likely to prefer a combined approach, while Republicans (58%) are the most likely to prefer using existing funds more wisely. Independents (51%) favor a combined approach. Fewer than one in eight across all groups say increased funding alone.

**“To significantly improve California’s higher education system, 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.”**

		Use Existing Funds More Wisely	Increase Amount of Funding	Use Funds More Wisely and Increase Funding
<b>All Adults</b>		38%	7%	52%
<b>Likely Voters</b>		41	6	51
<b>Party</b>	<b>Democrat</b>	26	8	65
	<b>Republican</b>	58	5	35
	<b>Independent</b>	41	6	51
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Asian</b>	33	8	56
	<b>Black</b>	27	3	70
	<b>Latino</b>	32	11	54
	<b>White</b>	43	6	49
<b>Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger</b>		37	9	53

Nearly nine in 10 Californians believe that the higher education system needs major (50%) or minor (39%) changes; only 8 percent say it is fine the way it is. Findings are similar among likely voters. Compared to last year, the percentage of all adults saying major changes has increased by 10 points. Majorities of residents across all regions say changes are needed, although Orange/San Diego residents are the least likely to say so. More than half of Latinos (58%) and blacks (57%) say major changes are needed, compared to less than half of whites (47%) and far fewer Asians (33%).

**“Overall, do you think the higher education system in California—including public colleges and universities—is in need of major changes, minor changes, or that it is basically fine the way it is?”**

	All Adults	Region					Likely Voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
<b>Major changes</b>	50%	53%	51%	51%	37%	51%	51%
<b>Minor changes</b>	39	36	39	37	50	33	38
<b>Fine the way it is</b>	8	7	7	8	11	8	7
<b>Don’t know</b>	3	4	3	4	2	8	4

## IMPORTANCE AND ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Two in three Californians (66%) and three in four parents (75%) believe a college education is necessary for a person to succeed in today’s work world. Three in 10 residents (31%) and 22 percent of parents believe there are many ways to succeed in the work world without a college education. Findings were similar among all adults in 2008 and 2007. Californians place much more importance on college than do adults nationwide, according to a survey conducted last December by Public Agenda and the National Center for Policy and Higher Education (55% college is necessary, 43% many other ways to succeed).

In California, Latinos (81%) are somewhat more likely than blacks (76%) and much more likely than Asians (66%) and whites (57%) to believe that college is necessary for success. Across education groups, strong majorities agree that a college education is necessary, with residents who have only a high school education or less the most likely to agree. Belief that a college education is necessary declines with increasing age. Three in four California college students (74%) say college is necessary for success.

**“Do you think that a college education is necessary for a person to be successful in today’s work world, or do you think that there are many ways to succeed in today’s work world without a college education?”**

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Education		
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	High School or Less	Some College	College Graduate
<b>College is necessary</b>	66%	66%	76%	81%	57%	75%	62%	61%
<b>Other ways to succeed</b>	31	33	21	16	40	21	34	36
<b>Don’t know</b>	3	1	3	3	3	4	4	3

While two-thirds of Californians say college is essential to succeed, 65 percent say getting a college education today is more difficult than it was 10 years ago; another 21 percent say it is about as difficult as it was 10 years ago, while 9 percent say it is less difficult. Residents today are more likely than in 2007 (56%) to say it is more difficult. Among those who say college is necessary, 71 percent say it has become more difficult to get a college education today than it was 10 years ago.

More than two in three residents (68%) and parents (72%) believe many qualified people do not have the opportunity to go to college, while fewer than three in 10 say the vast majority who are qualified to go to college have the opportunity to do so. Our findings were similar in 2007 and 2008. The opinions of Californians are similar those of adults nationwide (according to Public Agenda, 67% think that many don’t have the opportunity, while 29% think that the majority do).

**“Do you think that currently the vast majority of people who are qualified to go to college have the opportunity to do so, or do you think there are many people who are qualified to go but don’t have the opportunity to do so?”**

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Education		
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	High School or Less	Some College	College Graduate
<b>Majority have opportunity</b>	28%	34%	21%	17%	33%	17%	27%	37%
<b>Many don’t have opportunity</b>	68	61	79	81	62	82	67	58
<b>Don’t know</b>	4	5	–	2	5	1	6	5

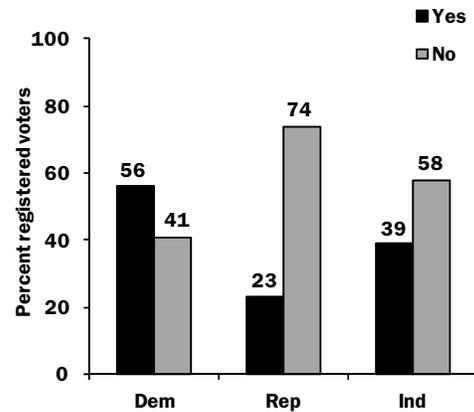
Although many Californians believe in the necessity of college, 62 percent think the price of a college education is rising faster than prices of other things; fewer think it is rising at the same rate (23%) or more slowly (5%). The belief that costs are rising faster has increased 7 points since 2008. This view is shared by a majority across regions and political and demographic groups and is similar to adults nationwide, according to the Public Agenda survey (63% faster rate).

# ATTITUDES AND POLICY PREFERENCES

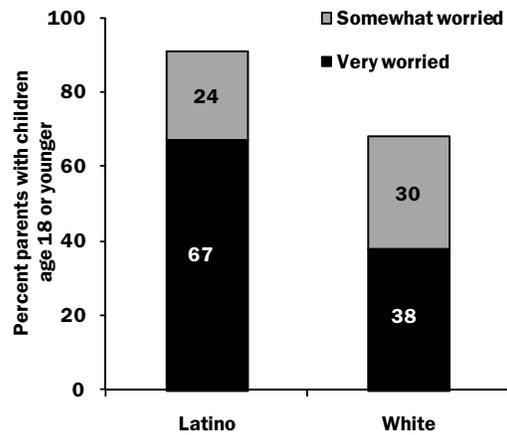
## KEY FINDINGS

- A strong majority of Californians say spending for public colleges and universities should be a high priority. Still, most are unwilling to pay higher taxes or increase student fees to make up for state budget cuts. A slim majority support a hypothetical construction bond measure. *(pages 14, 15)*
- Majorities express support for a variety of state and federal policies to make the higher education system more affordable. Californians are divided on spending more state money to lower student costs if it means less money for other state programs. *(pages 16, 17)*
- A majority say that lower-income students have less opportunity than others to go to college, while a majority say middle-class students have about the same opportunity as others. Californians are as likely to say racial and ethnic minorities have less opportunity as to say they have the same opportunity as others. *(page 18)*
- Californians believe that an economically and racially diverse student body is very important. *(page 19)*
- Nine in 10 parents want their children at least to graduate from college, but many worry about affording it. Most parents say students have to borrow too much for a college education. *(pages 20, 21)*
- Strong majorities say higher education is very important for California's future and that the state will need more college-educated residents. But growing numbers of voters have very little or no confidence in the state's ability to plan for the future of higher education. *(pages 22, 23)*

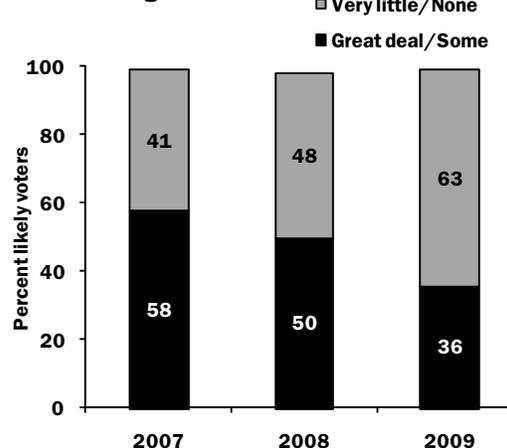
**Willing to Pay Higher Taxes for Public Colleges and Universities?**



**Parents' Concern About Affording a College Education for Their Children**



**Confidence in State Government to Plan for Future of Higher Education**



## STATE BUDGET AND REVENUES

Despite the state’s current budget situation, six in 10 Californians give a very high (26%) or high (33%) priority to spending on public colleges and universities. Thirty-one percent give it medium priority and 9 percent low or very low priority. Findings among likely voters are nearly identical. The percentage of all adults giving higher education spending a very high or high priority has increased 5 points since last year.

Across parties, 67 percent of Democrats and 61 percent of independents place a very high or high priority on higher education spending, compared to 42 percent of Republicans. The same percentage of Republicans places a medium priority on such spending. Residents in Los Angeles (65%), the San Francisco Bay Area (64%), and Orange/San Diego Counties (57%) are more likely than those in the Central Valley and Inland Empire (49% each) to put a high priority on higher education spending. Majorities across demographic groups give high priority to spending, but blacks (37%) and Latinos (36%) are more likely than others (22% Asians, 20% whites) to give very high priority to this spending area.

**“Given the state’s current budget situation...what priority should be given to spending for California’s public colleges and universities?”**

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Very high priority</b>	26%	30%	16%	28%	25%
<b>High priority</b>	33	37	26	33	32
<b>Medium priority</b>	31	26	42	26	32
<b>Low priority</b>	6	3	9	6	6
<b>Very low priority</b>	3	1	6	5	3
<b>Don’t know</b>	1	3	1	2	2

Although they value spending on higher education, majorities of Californians (56%) and likely voters (54%) say they are unwilling to pay higher taxes to offset higher education spending cuts. About four in ten would be willing (41% all adults, 43% likely voters). A similar question in 2008 asked if residents would pay higher taxes to maintain current funding levels for public colleges and universities. In January 2008, 50 percent of residents were willing to do this, but support had declined to 44 percent by last November.

Currently, 56 percent of Democrats are willing to pay higher taxes for public colleges and universities, with 74 percent of Republicans unwilling. Most independents (58%) would be unwilling to pay higher taxes for this purpose. Across regions, only San Francisco Bay Area residents (50% yes, 45% no) would consider paying higher taxes. Elsewhere, about six in 10 are opposed. In most demographic groups, over half are opposed to raising taxes for higher education. Among current California higher education students, 52 percent would be willing to pay higher taxes. Among those placing a very high or high priority on higher education spending, 53 percent would pay higher taxes.

**“Would you be willing to do each of the following to make up for state budget cuts to public colleges and universities...Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?”**

	All Adults	Region					Likely Voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
<b>Yes</b>	41%	37%	50%	39%	39%	36%	43%
<b>No</b>	56	60	45	59	60	63	54
<b>Don’t know</b>	3	3	5	2	1	1	3

**STATE BUDGET AND REVENUES (CONTINUED)**

Californians (68%) and likely voters (66%) are even more opposed to increasing student fees than they are to paying higher taxes to make up for higher education budget cuts. This finding is consistent with the high level of concern residents express generally about raising fees, with 62 percent very concerned about increasing tuition and fees to offset budget cuts. Opposition was slightly lower last November (62%) in a similar question about willingness to raise fees to maintain funding levels.

There is widespread agreement on this issue today, with solid majorities across parties, regions, and demographic groups saying they are unwilling to increase student fees to make up for budget cuts. Still, levels of opposition vary. Inland Empire (75%) and Central Valley (72%) residents are the most unwilling to raise student fees, followed by San Francisco Bay Area (69%), Los Angeles (66%), and Orange/San Diego County (60%) residents. Blacks (82%) are most opposed, followed by Latinos (74%), Asians (70%), and whites (63%). Lower- (74%) and middle-income (70%) residents are more opposed than upper-income residents (57%). Those with no college (73%) or some college education (72%) are more opposed than college graduates (61%). Among current California higher education students, 75 percent oppose increasing student fees. Among those who place a very high or high priority on higher education spending by the state, 71 percent oppose raising student fees to offset budget cuts.

**“Would you be willing to do each of the following to make up for state budget cuts to public colleges and universities...Would you be willing to increase student fees for this purpose, or not?”**

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Yes</b>	29%	26%	31%	31%	30%
<b>No</b>	68	72	65	67	66
<b>Don't know</b>	3	2	4	2	4

A slim majority of Californians (53%) support a hypothetical 2010 bond measure to pay for construction projects in the state’s higher education system, while 40 percent would vote no. Support is lower among likely voters (46% yes, 47% no), falling short of the simple majority that such a bond would need to pass. Support among all adults has dropped 11 points since October 2007 (64% to 53% today).

Registered voters are divided along party lines, with 61 percent of Democrats saying they would vote yes and 55 percent of Republicans saying they would vote no on such a bond. Independents are more likely to say yes (51%) than no (42%). Just over half of residents across regions would support a construction bond for higher education. Across racial/ethnic groups, over six in 10 Latinos (68%), blacks (64%), and Asians (61%) would vote yes, with whites more likely to vote no (49%) than yes (44%). Support declines sharply as age, education, and income increase. A strong majority (63%) of current California higher education students would vote yes. Among those who place a very high or high priority on higher education spending by the state, 62 percent would vote yes on a construction bond measure.

**“If there was a bond measure on the state ballot in 2010 to pay for construction projects in California’s higher education system, would you vote yes or no?”**

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Yes</b>	53%	61%	39%	51%	46%
<b>No</b>	40	33	55	42	47
<b>Don't know</b>	7	6	6	7	7

## ROLE OF GOVERNMENT POLICY

Despite the current economic and fiscal climate, Californians (85%) and likely voters (83%) remain strongly supportive of increasing government funding for work-study opportunities for college students. Support for this proposal was similarly high among all adults in November 2008 (88%) and October 2007 (86%).

Registered voters across parties today favor increasing funding for work-study jobs, with Democrats most supportive (93%), followed by independents (82%) and Republicans (77%). At least eight in 10 across regions and demographic groups share this view. Blacks (97%) and Latinos (92%) are especially likely to favor increasing work-study funding, as are those with household incomes under \$40,000 (90%).

### “How about increasing government funding available for work-study opportunities for students to earn money while in college?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Favor</b>	85%	93%	77%	82%	83%
<b>Oppose</b>	13	6	21	16	15
<b>Don't know</b>	2	1	2	2	2

Support is also high for increasing government funding for scholarships and grants. Eighty percent of residents and 77 percent of likely voters express support for this idea. Support among all adults was at 83 percent in both November 2008 and October 2007.

Strong majorities across political parties favor increasing government funding for scholarships and grants, but support is far higher among Democrats (89%) and independents (84%) than among Republicans (66%). At least 75 percent across regions and demographic groups favor increasing government funding for this purpose. Blacks, at 91 percent, are the most likely to express support for more grant and scholarship funding, followed by Latinos (86%), Asians (79%), and whites (76%). Support declines somewhat with older age and rising income. Parents with children 18 or younger are somewhat more in favor than others (84% to 77%).

### “How about increasing government funding available for scholarships or grants for students?”

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Favor</b>	80%	89%	66%	84%	77%
<b>Oppose</b>	18	10	31	15	20
<b>Don't know</b>	2	1	3	1	3

**ROLE OF GOVERNMENT POLICY (CONTINUED)**

Although they are concerned about and oppose higher student tuition and fees, Californians are not necessarily in favor of spending more state money to keep down tuition and fees at the expense of other state programs. Forty-nine percent of residents favor this concept, a 4-point decline since last November and an 8-point drop since October 2007.

Today, 48 percent of likely voters would favor spending more state money to keep down tuition and fees at the expense of other state programs. Forty-three percent of likely voters would oppose this idea. Across parties, a majority of Democrats (56%) favor the idea, while a majority of Republicans (55%) oppose it. Independents are divided (48% favor, 46% oppose). This idea generates a more divided response across the state’s regions and demographic groups. About half of residents in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles (51% each) express support, about half in the Inland Empire (51%) express opposition, Central Valley residents are slightly more in favor than opposed (47% to 43%), and Orange/San Diego County residents are divided (47% favor, 48% oppose). Across racial/ethnic groups, majorities of Asians (57%) and Latinos (55%) and half of blacks (51%) favor spending more to keep down student costs even if it means less for other programs, while whites are divided (45% favor, 47% oppose). Middle-aged residents (53%), those with no college education (52%), those in households making under \$40,000 (52%), and parents with children age 18 or younger (51%) are among the most likely to favor this idea. Among current California higher education students and parents of current California higher education students, 55 percent favor spending more state money to keep down student costs at the expense of other state programs.

**“How about spending more state government money to keep down tuition and fee costs, even if it means less money for other state programs?”**

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Favor</b>	49%	56%	40%	48%	48%
<b>Oppose</b>	43	33	55	46	43
<b>Don't know</b>	8	11	5	6	9

Californians (67%) and likely voters (63%) express support for the idea of a sliding scale for tuition and fees so that students pay according to their income status. Last November, a similar 70 percent of Californians supported this idea.

Majorities across parties are also in favor, with Democrats (74%) more likely than independents (66%) and Republicans (53%) to say so. Support for a sliding tuition and fee scale is highest in Los Angeles at 73 percent, and lowest in Orange/San Diego Counties at 60 percent. Majorities across demographic groups favor having a sliding scale at California’s public colleges and universities. Across racial/ethnic groups, blacks (85%) are the most likely to express support, followed by Latinos (78%), whites (62%), and Asians (61%). Support declines sharply as education and income levels rise.

**“How about having a sliding scale for tuition and fee costs, so that students pay according to their income status?”**

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>Favor</b>	67%	74%	53%	66%	63%
<b>Oppose</b>	29	22	44	30	33
<b>Don't know</b>	4	4	3	4	4

## DISPARITIES IN COLLEGE OPPORTUNITIES

Californians continue to think that qualified students from low-income families, regardless of ethnic background, have less opportunity than others to receive a college education. Today, six in 10 Californians (60%) and parents of children age 18 or younger (58%) hold this view. Fewer than three in 10 Californians (27%) and parents (28%) believe low-income students have about the same opportunity. Findings were similar in 2008 and 2007.

Today, majorities across racial/ethnic groups also think students from low-income families have less opportunity to get a college education, with blacks most likely to hold this view. This perception among blacks has increased 16 points since last year. Residents in Los Angeles (65%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (65%) are the most likely to think that low-income families have less opportunity, with majorities across all regions agreeing. Among current California higher education students, 35 percent believe low-income students have about the same opportunity as others.

**“Do you think qualified students from low-income families, regardless of their ethnic background, have less opportunity, more opportunity, or about the same opportunity as others to get a college education?”**

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	
<b>Less opportunity</b>	60%	59%	74%	64%	57%	58%
<b>More opportunity</b>	12	9	9	7	14	14
<b>About the same opportunity</b>	27	29	17	29	27	28
<b>Don't know</b>	1	3	–	–	2	–

When it comes to opportunities for qualified students who are ethnic or racial minorities, such as blacks or Latinos, Californians are divided. Four in 10 Californians (40%) and parents of children age 18 or younger (38%) believe these students have about the same opportunity as others, while 37 percent of Californians and 38 percent of parents believe qualified minority students have less opportunity. The perception of less opportunity is slightly lower today than last year (42%), but is similar to 2007 (39%).

Today, the perception that qualified minority students have less opportunity is held by six in 10 blacks, and by half of Latinos, compared with three in 10 Asians and whites. This belief is held by a plurality in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area, while a plurality in the Central Valley, Inland Empire, and Orange/San Diego Counties believe that minority students have about the same opportunity.

**“Do you think qualified students who are ethnic or racial minorities, such as blacks or Latinos, have less opportunity, more opportunity, or about the same opportunity as others to get a college education?”**

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	
<b>Less opportunity</b>	37%	29%	59%	51%	29%	38%
<b>More opportunity</b>	20	12	6	12	26	21
<b>About the same opportunity</b>	40	54	34	35	41	38
<b>Don't know</b>	3	5	1	2	4	3

A majority of Californians (53%) and half of parents with children age 18 or younger (50%) think qualified middle-class students, regardless of ethnic background, have about same opportunity as others to get a college education. Findings were similar in 2007. Today, pluralities across racial/ethnic groups and across regions believe middle-class students have the same opportunity as others.

## IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT DIVERSITY

Eight in 10 Californians believe it is very (54%) or somewhat important (26%) for public colleges and universities to have an economically diverse student body, while one in five say it is not too (9%) or not at all important (10%). Findings among parents of children 18 or younger are similar to those among all residents and findings among both groups are similar to 2008.

Today, blacks (70%) and Latinos (65%) are far more likely than Asians (48%) and whites (47%) to say economic diversity is very important. Across regions, residents in the San Francisco Bay Area (61%) and Los Angeles (57%) are more likely than those in the Inland Empire (51%), the Central Valley (49%), or Orange/San Diego Counties (47%) to say an economically diverse student body is very important. Across parties, Democrats (66%) and independents (51%) are much more likely than Republicans (38%) to place this high level of importance on economic diversity. The belief that economic diversity is very important decreases as age and income levels increase.

### “How important do you think it is for public colleges and universities to have an economically diverse student body—that is, a mix of students from lower, middle, and upper-income backgrounds?”

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	
<b>Very important</b>	54%	48%	70%	65%	47%	55%
<b>Somewhat important</b>	26	37	19	20	29	24
<b>Not too important</b>	9	5	8	8	11	11
<b>Not at all important</b>	10	10	2	6	12	10
<b>Don't know</b>	1	–	1	1	1	–

Californians' perceptions regarding the importance of a racially diverse student body are similar. A strong majority of Californians believe it is very (54%) or somewhat important (23%) for public colleges and universities have a racially diverse student body, while fewer than one in four say it is not too (9%) or not at all important (13%). Findings among parents of children age 18 or younger are similar. Findings among Californians and parents are similar to last year.

Blacks (81%) and Latinos (65%) are again much more likely than Asians (47%) or whites (45%) to believe a racially diverse student body is very important. Across regions, residents in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles (57% each) are more likely than those in Orange/San Diego Counties (52%), the Central Valley (50%), or the Inland Empire (48%) to say a racially diverse student body is very important. Across parties, seven in 10 Democrats (69%) say racial diversity is very important, while fewer than half of independents (48%) and Republicans (36%) say the same. This view is held by more women (57%) than men (51%) and declines as age, education, and income levels rise.

### “How important do you think it is for public colleges and universities to have a racially diverse student body—that is, a mix of blacks, whites, Asians, Hispanics and other minorities?”

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	
<b>Very important</b>	54%	47%	81%	65%	45%	56%
<b>Somewhat important</b>	23	29	11	17	28	21
<b>Not too important</b>	9	10	1	7	11	8
<b>Not at all important</b>	13	13	6	10	15	14
<b>Don't know</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1

## PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS AND CONCERNS

Parents of children age 18 or younger continue to express high hopes for their children’s educational futures. This survey marks the fifth time we have asked what parents hope will be the highest educational level their youngest child will achieve, and each time more than 85 percent of parents have said a college degree or graduate degree after college. Today, 89 percent (44% college graduate, 45% graduate degree after college) have these high expectations. Strong majorities across political and demographic groups hope their youngest child will at least graduate from college; white parents (52%) are far more likely than Latino parents (30%) to hope their child will earn a graduate degree. (Sample sizes for black and Asian parents are too small for analysis on parent-only questions.)

While expectations remain high, the level of parental concern about being able to afford a college education for their youngest child continues to grow. Today, half (50%) of parents are very worried about being able to afford a college education, up 4 points since last year and 7 points since 2007. In a similar question by CBS News in May, a greater percentage of parents nationwide (65%) said they were very concerned. Today, Latino parents (67%) are far more likely than white parents (38%) to be very worried, although concern among white parents has increased 9 points since last year. Women are far more worried than men (59% to 42%). Concern decreases as age, education, and income rise.

**“How worried are you about being able to afford a college education for your youngest child?”**

<i>Parents of children age 18 or younger only</i>	<b>Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger</b>	<b>Income</b>			<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	
		<b>Less than \$40,000</b>	<b>\$40,000 to under \$80,000</b>	<b>\$80,000 or more</b>	<b>Latino</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>Very worried</b>	50%	71%	46%	30%	67%	38%
<b>Somewhat worried</b>	27	22	26	35	24	30
<b>Not too worried</b>	12	3	17	18	5	18
<b>Not at all worried</b>	11	4	11	17	4	14

When asked about the progress they have made in saving for their child’s college education, 62 percent of parents say they are behind, a 5-point increase since last year; 28 percent say they are just where they should be, and only 6 percent say they are ahead. Seventy-three percent of Latino parents say they are behind (a 10-point increase since last year), compared to 56 percent of white parents (a 6-point increase). Less-educated and lower-income parents are more likely to say they are behind in saving.

When it comes to the amount of information they have regarding financial aid for their child’s college education, a plurality of parents (46%) say they do not have enough information, 38 percent say just enough, and 13 percent say they have more than enough information about financial aid. Findings are similar to last year. Latino parents are far more likely than white parents to say they don’t have enough information. The belief among parents that they do not have enough information declines as education and income levels increase.

**“Do you feel like you have more than enough, just enough, or not enough information about financial aid for your child’s college education?”**

<i>Parents of children age 18 or younger only</i>	<b>Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger</b>	<b>Income</b>			<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	
		<b>Less than \$40,000</b>	<b>\$40,000 to under \$80,000</b>	<b>\$80,000 or more</b>	<b>Latino</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>More than enough</b>	13%	8%	16%	19%	9%	17%
<b>Just enough</b>	38	35	38	41	33	40
<b>Not enough</b>	46	56	44	34	57	39
<b>Don’t know</b>	3	1	2	6	1	4

## PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENT LOANS AND FAMILY SAVINGS

With many parents holding high educational hopes along with a growing concern about college affordability, do parents think the cost of a college education keeps qualified, motivated students from attending? Seven in 10 parents (71%) say yes. This perception was similar in 2007 (70%). Today, over two in three parents across income and racial/ethnic groups agree. Among all adults, 69 percent hold this view.

Over seven in 10 parents also agree that students have to borrow too much money to pay for a college education. This perception was similar in 2008 (71%) and 2007 (71%). Today, Latino parents (64%) are much less likely than white parents (78%) to agree that students must borrow too much money. Parents with annual household incomes of less than \$40,000 are less likely than more affluent parents to agree with this statement. According to the Public Agenda survey, adults nationwide (86%) are more likely than California adults (76%) to agree that students must borrow too much.

### “Students have to borrow too much money to pay for their college education.”

Parents of children age 18 or younger only	Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger	Income			Race/Ethnicity	
		Less than \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	Latino	White
<b>Agree</b>	73%	64%	78%	78%	64%	78%
<b>Disagree</b>	26	35	21	20	35	20
<b>Don't know</b>	1	1	1	2	1	2

When it comes to saving for their children’s college education, only 28 percent of parents agree that most families do a good job of saving, while 69 percent disagree. Findings were similar in 2007 and 2008. Today, while most white parents are pessimistic (86% disagree) regarding the the job most families do saving for college, Latino parents are more optimistic (51% agree, 47% disagree). Differences are apparent across income groups, with parents in households earning under \$40,000 more likely to agree and those in households earning more than \$40,000 more likely to disagree. Among all adults, 23 percent agree that most families do a good job of saving and 73 percent disagree.

### “Most families today do a good job of saving for their children’s college education.”

Parents of children age 18 or younger only	Parents of Children Age 18 or Younger	Income			Race/Ethnicity	
		Less than \$40,000	\$40,000 to under \$80,000	\$80,000 or more	Latino	White
<b>Agree</b>	28%	49%	18%	8%	51%	10%
<b>Disagree</b>	69	49	79	88	47	86
<b>Don't know</b>	3	2	3	4	2	4

Although many California parents think students have to borrow too much money and that most families are not doing a good job of saving, they are more divided on whether anyone who needs financial help to go to college can get loans or financial aid. Over half of California parents (53%) agree that help is available, while 42 percent disagree. Findings are similar to last year. Today, Latino parents (66%) are far more likely than white parents (43%) to say financial help is available. The belief that anyone can get financial aid declines sharply as household income levels of parents rise. According to the Public Agenda survey, adults nationwide are more likely than California adults to say financial help is available (57% to 51%).

## HIGHER EDUCATION AND CALIFORNIA'S FUTURE

Nearly all Californians across regional, political, and demographic groups say that California's higher education system is important to the quality of life and economic vitality of the state over the next 20 years. Ninety-six percent of Californians and likely voters say that higher education is either very (72%) or somewhat important (24%) to the state. Findings among all adults are similar to 2007 and 2008. Although strong majorities across racial/ethnic groups say higher education is very important to the future, Latinos and blacks are most likely to hold this view. Partisans agree that higher education is important for the future, but Democrats (79%) and independents (71%) are more likely than Republicans (63%) to say it is very important.

**“In general, how important is California's higher education system to the quality of life and economic vitality of the state over the next 20 years?”**

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Likely Voters
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	
<b>Very important</b>	72%	64%	76%	81%	69%	72%
<b>Somewhat important</b>	24	33	19	16	27	24
<b>Not too important</b>	2	2	–	1	3	2
<b>Not at all important</b>	1	–	5	1	1	1
<b>Don't know</b>	1	1	–	1	–	1

Six in 10 Californians (61%) and likely voters (61%) think that if current trends continue, California's economy will need a higher percentage of college-educated workers in 20 years. About one in four Californians and likely voters believe the state will need about the same percentage and one in 10 say a lower percentage will be needed. Findings have shifted somewhat from 2007 and 2008, with fewer Californians saying higher percentage and more saying about the same percentage. Across parties today, Republicans (48%) are less likely than independents (67%) and Democrats (69%) to say a higher percentage is needed. Majorities across most regional and demographic groups think the state will need a higher percentage. Across racial/ethnic groups, Asians (48%) are the least likely to hold this view, while at least six in 10 or more across other groups say a higher percentage will be needed.

**“In thinking ahead 20 years, if current trends continue, do you think California's economy will need a higher percentage, a lower percentage, or about the same percentage of college-educated workers as today?”**

	All Adults	Region					Likely Voters
		Central Valley	San Francisco Bay Area	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	Inland Empire	
<b>Higher percentage</b>	61%	57%	65%	63%	59%	61%	61%
<b>Lower percentage</b>	9	9	8	10	9	8	9
<b>About the same percentage</b>	26	30	24	25	29	24	27
<b>Don't know</b>	4	4	3	2	3	7	3

Current projections indicate that California will not meet the demand for college-educated residents in the coming years. When asked if they think the state will have enough college-educated residents to fill the demand for jobs and skills in 20 years, half of residents (49%) and likely voters (51%) think the state will not have enough. Three in 10 adults say the state will have just enough and 16 percent say it will have more than enough. Findings were similar in 2007 and 2008. Pluralities across political, regional, and demographic groups believe the state will not have enough college-educated workers. Blacks (65%) and Democrats (59%) are among the most likely to say the state will have a shortage.

**HIGHER EDUCATION AND CALIFORNIA’S FUTURE (CONTINUED)**

Considering what the future holds, how important do Californians think it is to spend more public funds to increase capacity in public colleges and universities? Most Californians think it is at least somewhat important to spend funds for this purpose, with 43 percent saying very important and 38 percent somewhat important. The perception that this spending is very important has decreased 8 points since 2007 (51% 2007, 46% 2008, 43% today).

Across political parties, Democrats (53%) are much more likely than independents (39%) and nearly twice as likely as Republicans (28%) to say it is very important. Latinos (61%) are much more likely than blacks (48%) and far more likely than Asians (39%) and whites (34%) to think that it is very important to spend public funds for increased capacity. Residents in Los Angeles (49%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (48%) are the most likely across regions to hold this view. Among parents of current California higher education students, 50 percent say spending is very important to increase capacity.

**“In thinking ahead 20 years, how important do you think it is for the state government to be spending more public funds to increase capacity in public colleges and universities?”**

	All Adults	Race/Ethnicity				Likely Voters
		Asian	Black	Latino	White	
<b>Very important</b>	43%	39%	48%	61%	34%	41%
<b>Somewhat important</b>	38	49	39	28	43	38
<b>Not too important</b>	10	7	3	7	12	11
<b>Not at all important</b>	6	2	9	3	7	8
<b>Don’t know</b>	3	3	1	1	4	2

Confidence in the state government’s ability to plan for the future of the higher education system has dropped among Californians. Today, four in 10 (41%) have a great deal (8%) or only some confidence (33%), a decline of 11 points since 2008 (52%) and 16 points since 2007 (57%). A majority of Californians now have very little or no confidence in state planning for the future of higher education.

Today, confidence is below half among Democrats (47% great deal/some, down 10 points since 2008), independents (37%, down 9 points since 2008) and Republicans (35%, down 13 points since 2008). Across racial/ethnic groups, Asians (51%) and Latinos (48%) express the most confidence in state government, while whites (37%) and blacks (34%) are less confident. Confidence in the state government’s ability to plan for the future of California’s higher education system declines sharply with increasing age and education and income levels. Fifty-three percent of current California higher education students say they have a great deal or some confidence in the state’s ability to plan for higher education.

**“How much confidence do you have in the state government’s ability to plan for the future of California’s higher education system?”**

	All Adults	Party			Likely Voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
<b>A great deal</b>	8%	8%	6%	8%	4%
<b>Only some</b>	33	39	29	29	32
<b>Very little</b>	37	38	35	40	38
<b>None</b>	20	15	29	23	25
<b>Don’t know</b>	2	–	1	–	1

# REGIONAL MAP

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# METHODOLOGY

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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 Jennifer Paluch, project manager for this survey, and survey research associates Dean Bonner and Sonja Petek. This survey was conducted with funding from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation as part of a three-year grant on K–12 and higher education, environment, and population issues. We benefited from discussions with Hewlett program staff and others; however, the survey methods, questions, and the content of the report were determined solely by Mark Baldassare and the survey staff.

Findings in this report are based on a telephone survey of 2,502 California adult residents, including 2,252 interviewed on landline telephones and 250 interviewed on cell phones. Interviewing took place on weekday nights and weekend days from October 20 to November 3, 2009. Interviews took an average of 20 minutes to complete.

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 and the sample telephone numbers were called as many as six times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. 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.

Cell phone interviews were included in this survey to account for the growing number of Californians who use them. These 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 and the sample telephone numbers were called as many as eight times to increase the likelihood of reaching an eligible respondent. 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 for their time to help defray the potential 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 and cell phone interviewing was conducted in English, Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese), Vietnamese, and Korean, according to respondents’ preferences. We chose these languages because Spanish is the dominant language among non-English speaking adults in California, followed in prevalence by the three Asian languages. Accent on Languages, Inc. translated the survey into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever. Abt SRBI Inc. translated the survey into Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean, and conducted all interviewing.

With assistance from Abt SRBI, 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. Abt SRBI used data from the 2007 and 2008 National Health Interview Survey and data from the 2005–2007 American Community Survey for California, both to estimate landline and cell phone service in California and to compare it against landline and cell phone service reported in the survey. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any differences in demographics and telephone service.

The sampling error for the total of 2,502 adults is  $\pm 2$  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: For the 2,094 registered

voters, it is  $\pm 2.1$  percent; for the 1,488 likely voters, it is  $\pm 2.5$  percent; for the 973 parents of children 18 or younger it is  $\pm 3.1$  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.

Throughout the report, we refer to five geographic regions that account 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 from other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, likely voters, and parents, but sample sizes for these less populated areas are not large enough to report separately in tables and text.

We present specific results for respondents in four self-identified racial/ethnic groups: Asian, black, Latino, and non-Hispanic white. We also compare the opinions of registered Democrats, Republicans, and independents (i.e., those registered as “decline to state”). We also analyze the responses of likely voters—those who are the most likely to participate in the state’s elections.

We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those conducted by CBS News and by Public Agenda and the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (“Public Agenda/National Center”).

# QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESULTS

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## CALIFORNIANS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

October 20–November 3, 2009

2,502 California Adult Residents:

English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese

MARGIN OF ERROR ± 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

1. First, overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Arnold Schwarzenegger is handling his job as governor of California?  
28% approve  
60 disapprove  
12 don't know
  2. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Schwarzenegger is handling California's public college and university system?  
21% approve  
61 disapprove  
18 don't know
  3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?  
18% approve  
68 disapprove  
14 don't know
  4. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling California's public college and university system?  
16% approve  
66 disapprove  
18 don't know
  5. Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?  
17% right direction  
76 wrong direction  
7 don't know
  6. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?  
23% good times  
69 bad times  
8 don't know
  7. Next, what do you think is the most important issue facing California's public colleges and universities today?  
**[code, don't read]**  
31% student costs, affordability, tuition, fees  
25 not enough government funding, state budget cuts  
6 financial aid  
5 administrative costs, salaries, waste  
3 access to education, reduced admissions  
2 class size, overcrowding, student-teacher ratio  
2 immigrants  
2 professors too liberal, politics in classroom  
2 reduced course offerings, courses full  
2 teachers, quality, teaching/instruction  
8 other  
12 don't know
- Next, I'm going to read you a list of issues people have mentioned when talking about California's higher education system today. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem.

**[rotate questions 8 to 10]**

8. How about the overall quality of education in California's public colleges and universities today?

- 21% big problem
- 37 somewhat of a problem
- 37 not much of a problem
- 5 don't know

9. How about the overall affordability of education for students in California's public colleges and universities today?

- 57% big problem
- 29 somewhat of a problem
- 12 not much of a problem
- 2 don't know

10. How about the overall state budget cuts to California's public colleges and universities today?

- 70% big problem
- 21 somewhat of a problem
- 7 not much of a problem
- 2 don't know

11. Overall, do you think the higher education system in California—including public colleges and universities—is in need of major changes, minor changes, or that it is basically fine the way it is?

- 50% major changes
- 39 minor changes
- 8 fine the way it is
- 3 don't know

As you may know, California's higher education system has three branches—the California Community College system, the California State University system, and the University of California system.

**[rotate questions 12 to 14]**

12. Overall, is the California Community College system doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job?

- 13% excellent
- 52 good
- 22 not so good
- 5 poor
- 8 don't know

13. Overall, is the California State University system doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job?

- 9% excellent
- 52 good
- 20 not so good
- 6 poor
- 13 don't know

14. Overall, is the University of California system doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job?

- 13% excellent
- 49 good
- 20 not so good
- 6 poor
- 12 don't know

In general, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? First,

**[rotate questions 15 and 16]**

15. Additional state funding would lead to major improvements in California's higher education system.

- 70% agree
- 26 disagree
- 4 don't know

Next,

16. Better use of existing state funds would lead to major improvements in California's higher education system.

- 80% agree
- 16 disagree
- 4 don't know

17. To significantly improve California’s higher education system, which of the following statements do you agree with the most?  
**[rotate 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.

- 38% use funds more wisely
- 7 increase state funding
- 52 use funds more wisely and increase funding
- 3 don’t know

As you may know, in an effort to close the gap between state spending and revenues, the governor and legislature have made cuts in all major budget areas, including higher education. There are a number of ways for California’s public colleges and universities to deal with state budget cuts. How concerned are you about each of the following?

**[rotate questions 18 to 21]**

18. How about increasing tuition and fees for college students to deal with state budget cuts—are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 62% very concerned
- 27 somewhat concerned
- 6 not too concerned
- 5 not at all concerned

19. How about admitting fewer college students to deal with state budget cuts—are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 57% very concerned
- 29 somewhat concerned
- 7 not too concerned
- 6 not at all concerned
- 1 don’t know

20. How about offering fewer college classes to deal with state budget cuts—are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 57% very concerned
- 29 somewhat concerned
- 7 not too concerned
- 5 not at all concerned
- 2 don’t know

21. How about reducing the pay and hours for college faculty and staff to deal with state budget cuts—are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 48% very concerned
- 32 somewhat concerned
- 11 not too concerned
- 8 not at all concerned
- 1 don’t know

**[rotate questions 22 to 25]**

Next,

22. Do you think that a college education is necessary for a person to be successful in today’s work world, or do you think that there are many ways to succeed in today’s work world without a college education?

- 66% college is necessary
- 31 many ways to succeed without a college education
- 3 don’t know

23. In your view, has getting a college education become more difficult than it was 10 years ago, less difficult than it was 10 years ago, or is it about as difficult as it was 10 years ago?

- 65% more difficult
- 9 less difficult
- 21 about as difficult
- 5 don’t know

24. Compared to other things, are college prices going up at a faster rate, are college prices going up at a slower rate, or are they going up at about the same rate?

- 62% faster rate
- 5 slower rate
- 23 same rate
- 10 don't know

25. Do you think that currently, the vast majority of people who are qualified to go to college have the opportunity to do so, or do you think there are many people who are qualified to go but don't have the opportunity to do so?

- 28% majority have the opportunity
- 68 many people don't have the opportunity
- 4 don't know

Next, please say if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

**[rotate questions 26 to 29]**

26. The price of a college education keeps students who are qualified and motivated to go to college from doing so.

- 69% agree
- 28 disagree
- 3 don't know

27. Almost anyone who needs financial help to go to college can get loans or financial aid.

- 51% agree
- 43 disagree
- 6 don't know

28. Students have to borrow too much money to pay for their college education.

- 76% agree
- 21 disagree
- 3 don't know

29. Most families today do a good job of saving for their children's college education.

- 23% agree
- 73 disagree
- 4 don't know

Next,

**[rotate questions 30 and 31]**

30. How important do you think it is for public colleges and universities to have a racially diverse student body—that is, a mix of blacks, whites, Asians, Hispanics, and other minorities?

- 54% very important
- 23 somewhat important
- 9 not too important
- 13 not at all important
- 1 don't know

31. How important do you think it is for public colleges and universities to have an economically diverse student body—that is, a mix of students from lower-, middle-, and upper-income backgrounds?

- 54% very important
- 26 somewhat important
- 9 not too important
- 10 not at all important
- 1 don't know

Next, please tell me if you think the following groups of people have less opportunity, more opportunity, or about the same opportunity as others to get a college education.

**[rotate questions 32 to 33]**

32. Do you think qualified students from low-income families, regardless of their ethnic background, have **[rotate 1 and 2]** [1] less opportunity, [2] more opportunity, **[or]** about the same opportunity as others to get a college education?

- 60% less opportunity
- 12 more opportunity
- 27 about the same
- 1 don't know

32a. Do you think qualified students from middle-class families, regardless of their ethnic background, have **[rotate 1 and 2]** [1] less opportunity, [2] more opportunity, **[or]** about the same opportunity as others to get a college education?

- 29% less opportunity
- 16 more opportunity
- 53 about the same
- 2 don't know

33. Do you think qualified students who are ethnic or racial minorities, such as blacks or Latinos, have **[rotate 1 and 2]** [1] less opportunity, [2] more opportunity, **[or]** about the same opportunity as others to get a college education?

- 37% less opportunity
- 20 more opportunity
- 40 about the same
- 3 don't know

I am going to read you several ways that the federal and state governments can make California's higher education system more affordable to students. For each of the following, please say if you favor or oppose the proposal.

**[rotate questions 34 to 37]**

34. How about increasing government funding available for work-study opportunities for students to earn money while in college?

- 85% favor
- 13 oppose
- 2 don't know

35. How about increasing government funding available for scholarships or grants for students?

- 80% favor
- 18 oppose
- 2 don't know

36. How about spending more state government money to keep down tuition and fee costs, even if it means less money for other state programs?

- 49% favor
- 43 oppose
- 8 don't know

37. How about having a sliding scale for tuition and fee costs, so that students pay according to their income status?

- 67% favor
- 29 oppose
- 4 don't know

38. Given the state's current budget situation, on a scale of 1 to 5—with 1 being a very low priority and 5 being a very high priority—what priority should be given to spending for California's public colleges and universities?

- 3% very low priority
- 6 low priority
- 31 medium priority
- 33 high priority
- 26 very high priority
- 1 don't know

Next, would you be willing to do each of the following to make up for state budget cuts to public colleges and universities?

**[rotate questions 39 and 40]**

39. Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?

- 41% yes
- 56 no
- 3 don't know

40. Would you be willing to increase student fees for this purpose, or not?

- 29% yes
- 68 no
- 3 don't know

41. If there was a bond measure on the state ballot in 2010 to pay for construction projects in California's higher education system, would you vote yes or no?

53% yes  
40 no  
7 don't know

42. Next, in general, how important is California's higher education system to the quality of life and economic vitality of the state over the next 20 years?

72% very important  
24 somewhat important  
2 not too important  
1 not at all important  
1 don't know

43. In thinking ahead 20 years, if current trends continue, do you think California's economy will need **[rotate 1 and 2]** (1) a higher percentage, (2) a lower percentage, **[or]** about the same percentage of college-educated workers as today?

61% higher percentage  
9 lower percentage  
26 about the same percentage  
4 don't know

44. In thinking ahead 20 years, if current trends continue, do you think California will have **[rotate 1 and 2]** (1) more than enough, (2) not enough, **[or]** just enough college-educated residents needed for the jobs and skills likely to be in demand?

16% more than enough  
49 not enough  
29 just enough  
6 don't know

45. In thinking ahead 20 years, how important do you think it is for the state government to be spending more public funds to increase capacity in public colleges and universities?

43% very important  
38 somewhat important  
10 not too important  
6 not at all important  
3 don't know

46. How much confidence do you have in the state government's ability to plan for the future of California's higher education system?

8% a great deal  
33 only some  
37 very little  
20 none  
2 don't know

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

84% yes *[ask q47a]*  
16 no *[skip to q48b]*

47a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?

45% Democrat *[ask q48]*  
31 Republican *[skip to q48a]*  
4 another party *(specify) [skip to q49]*  
20 independent *[skip to q48b]*

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

57% strong  
40 not very strong  
3 don't know

**[skip to q49]**

48a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

- 50% strong
- 47 not very strong
- 3 don't know

**[skip to q49]**

48b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

- 23% Republican Party
- 44 Democratic Party
- 24 neither (*volunteered*)
- 9 don't know

49. Would you consider yourself to be politically:

**[read list, rotate order top to bottom]**

- 11% very liberal
- 20 somewhat liberal
- 30 middle-of-the-road
- 24 somewhat conservative
- 13 very conservative
- 2 don't know

50. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics?

- 27% great deal
- 40 fair amount
- 26 only a little
- 7 none

**[question 51 asked only of registered voters]**

51. In thinking about the upcoming California governor's election in 2010, how important to you are the candidates' positions on higher education?

- 53% very important
- 37 somewhat important
- 7 not too important
- 2 not at all important
- 1 don't know

**[d1-d4c: demographic questions]**

**[questions d4d to d4g asked only of parents of children age 18 or younger]**

d4d. What do you hope will be the highest grade level that your youngest child will achieve: some high school, high school graduate, some college, college graduate, or a graduate degree after college?

- some high school
- 4% high school graduate
- 3 some college
- 44 college graduate
- 45 a graduate degree after college
- 4 don't know

d4e. How worried are you about being able to afford a college education for your youngest child?

- 50% very worried
- 27 somewhat worried
- 12 not too worried
- 11 not at all worried

d4f. How do you feel about the progress, if any, that you have made so far in saving to help pay for your child's college education—do you feel you are ahead, behind, or just about where you should be at this point?

- 6% ahead
- 62 behind
- 28 just about where you should be
- 3 haven't started yet/will not be saving (*volunteered*)
- 1 don't know

d4g. Do you feel like you have more than enough, just enough, or not enough information about financial aid for your child's college education?

- 13% more than enough
- 38 just enough
- 46 not enough
- 3 don't know

**[d5-d18: demographic questions]**

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