

The Coalition to Invest in Texas Schools

Overview of Texans' Support of Public Education Issues

Several polls on education have been released over the last few weeks, asking a variety of questions such as satisfaction with the quality of education, the importance of education as a state issue, and whether funding should be increased. While the poll sources vary, the results are very consistent.

Voters agree that *education or improving school performance is the most important issue facing the state of Texas today.*

- 32 percent, according to a Coalition poll¹ in January (second was jobs at 12 percent)
- 44 percent, according to a Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA) poll² in February (second was health care at 25 percent)
- 19 percent, according to a Texas Conservative Coalition (TCC) poll³ in January (tied with lowering the cost of health insurance)

Voters want to *continue to see increased academic standards. According to the adequacy study conducted by Texas A&M University, "other things being equal...it costs more to produce higher levels of educational outcomes."*

- 63 percent want an increase in state academic standards²
- 24 percent want higher academic standards, tied as second priority for the legislature with teacher pay and benefits and smaller class sizes³
- 79 percent agreed that spending more money for education will result in a more well educated workforce in Texas which will lead to an improved economy¹

Voters support *increased funding at the state level for public K-12 education in Texas.*

- 73 percent, according to the Coalition poll¹
- 69 percent, according to the TSTA poll²
- 85 percent believe it is important for each district in the state to have access to roughly the same amount of money to educate its students¹

Voters favor *local control for public schools.*

- 48 percent believe control for public schools should be shared between parents, local school boards, and state officials³
- 39 percent believe control of public schools should rest on parents and local school boards³

Voters have a *favorable opinion about the quality of public education provided in Texas, or believe quality is improving.*

- 52 percent have a favorable opinion (39 percent unfavorable)¹
- 60 percent say schools are in good shape or are improving and need to continue to do so (69 percent of parents of school-aged parents agreed with this statement)²
- 84 percent of parents gave their child's school a grade of "A" or "B"²

*1 **Coalition to Invest in Texas Schools** poll conducted by Public Strategies Inc. on Jan. 15-18 with a sample of 800 registered voters. Margin of error is +/-3.5 percent.*

*2 **TSTA** poll conducted by The Tarrance Group, Inc., and Harstad Strategic Research, Inc., on Feb. 11-17 with a sample of 804 registered voters. Margin of error is +/-3.5 percent.*

*3 **Texas Conservative Coalition** poll conducted by Wilson Research Strategies on Jan. 14-18 and Jan. 23-24 with a sample of 1,000 adults over age 18 who "vote most of the time" or more. Margin of error is +/-3.2 percent.*