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Final Top Line Survey Results
Susquehanna Polling and Research, Inc
Spring 2009 Statewide Poll (on behalf of Education Voters, PA)
Sample Size: 700 Registered Voters
Conducted: May 26-30, 2009

INTRODUCTION: We are conducting a survey of attitudes and opinions concerning some important issues facing Pennsylvania today. May we have a few minutes of your time to complete the survey?

Great, thank you...

Q1. Do you think things in Pennsylvania are going in the right direction, or do you think things have gotten on the wrong track?

1. Right direction	257	37%
2. Wrong track	331	47%
3. Undecided	112	16%

Thinking about state issues for a few minutes...

Q2. Which of the following two statements comes closer to your point of view regarding education funding? (ROTATE STATEMENTS)

Statement A: In a tough economy, education is an investment in the future and we must prepare children for the workforce needs of tomorrow to help grow the economy. The state must improve the education funding system and should implement the 2nd step of the 6 year plan to increase the state share of basic funding, which will also reduce the reliance on local property taxes, which will help local communities, Or...

Statement B: In a tough economy, we can't afford to spend any more money than we have to on education; it is already a significant expense. The state will need to cut back on plans to improve education and the funding system even if it means we delay meeting some needs for kids. The state can't afford additional resources; therefore local communities will need to be responsible for coming up with any additional money needed for schools, Or...

1. Statement A	461	66%
2. Statement B	158	23%
3. Neither	43	06%
4. Undecided	32	05%
5. Refuse	5	01%

Q3a. I'd like to give you two arguments about education and the state budget. Please tell me which view comes closest to your own... (ROTATE CHOICES)

[N=345]

Viewpoint #1: We must have a balanced state budget and the decline in revenues poses a difficult challenge. However, we must continue to make progress on reforming education funding and investing in educational quality. Although it is difficult, we must make this a priority for both our children and Pennsylvania's economic health. Revenue can come from additional taxes on cigarettes and smokeless tobacco and new natural gas extraction fees paid by companies that drill, Or...

Viewpoint #2: We must have a balanced state budget and the decline in revenues poses a difficult challenge. Although it is a difficult choice, we cannot sustain any progress on education in difficult times and we must substantially cut the state money to fund education. We shouldn't look to revenues from any kind of taxes for the state, no matter the circumstances. Any shortfalls in local school budgets will have to be addressed locally, Or...

1. Viewpoint 1	231	67%
2. Viewpoint 2	72	21%
3. Neither	17	05%
4. Undecided	18	05%
5. Refuse	7	02%

Q3b. I'd like to give you two arguments about education and the state budget. Please tell me which view comes closest to your own... (ROTATE CHOICES)

[N=355]

Viewpoint #1: We must have a balanced state budget and the decline in revenues poses a difficult challenge. However, we must continue to make progress on reforming education funding and investing in educational quality. Although it is difficult, we must make this a priority for both our children and Pennsylvania's economic health. We could raise the revenue through a half percent increase in the personal income tax.

Or...

Viewpoint #2: We must have a balanced state budget and the decline in revenues poses a difficult challenge. Although it is a difficult choice, we cannot sustain any progress on education in difficult times and we must substantially cut the state money to fund education. We shouldn't look to revenues from any kind of taxes for the state, no matter the circumstances. Any shortfalls in local school budgets will have to be addressed locally.

1. Viewpoint 1	222	63%
2. Viewpoint 2	99	28%
3. Neither	13	04%
4. Undecided	18	05%
5. Refuse	2	01%

Q4. Thinking about the elections in 2010 for governor and state legislature, would you be more likely to vote for... (ROTATE CHOICES)

Candidate A, who says that Pennsylvania must invest in public education to prepare children for the future, that a good education system will help build our economy and that good public schools are important to communities. Candidate A says that the state legislature should continue progress on reforming the state funding system to reduce the dependence of school districts on property taxes and provide enough funding for kids to meet state standards and says that improving public education should be a top priority issue for officials in Harrisburg, Or..

Candidate B, who says that although education is important schools receive a lot of money already and additional money won't make much difference to improving education. Furthermore, there are many other demands for state funding these days. Candidate B does not support continued efforts to reform the funding system or additional investments in education at this time and does not believe officials in Harrisburg should make addressing education issues a priority right now, Or...

...Which candidate would you be more likely to vote for?

1. Candidate A	460	66%
2. Candidate B	176	25%
3. Neither	24	03%
4. Undecided	29	04%
5. Refuse	11	02%

Q5. Two state programs the state invests tax revenues in include Pre-K or full day Kindergarten. These programs are designed to help children develop with school readiness, age appropriate skills, behaviors and increase achievement. (Rotate statements)

- A) Some say funding for early education should be increased to cover more kids because early education is right for kids, critical for raising student achievement and prevents many kids from becoming disruptive in later years, Or...
- B) Others say that due to the state's budget deficit the state cannot afford to expand early education at this time, Or...

...How important is it that the state continues to expand these early education programs- very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

1. Very important	324	46%	Total Very/Somewhat: 73%
2. Somewhat important	192	27%	
3. Not very important	101	14%	
4. Not at all important	68	10%	
5. Undecided	8	01%	
6. Refuse	7	01%	

Now, I have a few more questions for demographic purposes and then we'll be through...

Q6. Are you registered to vote as a Republican, Democrat, Independent or something else?

1. Republican	280	40%
2. Democrat	364	52%
3. Independent/other	56	08%

Q7. What is your approximate age according to the following brackets: 18-29, 30-44, 45-59 or 60 and over?

1. 18-29	42	06%
2. 30-44	116	17%
3. 45-59	281	40%
4. 60+	241	34%
5. Refuse	20	03%

Q8. Do you consider yourself to be conservative or liberal when thinking about your social, economic and political views?

1. Conservative	327	47%
2. Liberal	180	26%
3. Moderate	154	22%
4. Undecided	19	03%
5. Refuse	20	03%

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE SURVEY. HAVE A GOOD DAY.

Gender:

1. Male	336	48%
2. Female	364	52%

Area:

- | | | |
|-----|-------|---|
| 35 | (05%) | 1. Northwest [Erie, Crawford, Mercer, Venango, Warren, Forest] |
| 77 | (11%) | 2. Southwest [Lawrence, Beaver, Washington, Greene, Fayette, Westmoreland, Indiana, Armstrong, Butler] |
| 84 | (12%) | 3. The "T"/Central [Jefferson, Elk, McKean, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Centre, Cambria, Somerset, Bedford, Fulton, Franklin, Huntingdon, Blair, Potter, Tioga, Bradford, Susquehanna, Wyoming, Sullivan, Lycoming, Clinton, Union, Snyder, Northumberland, Montour, Columbia, Mifflin, Juniata] |
| 84 | (12%) | 4. Northeast/Lehigh Valley [Luzerne, Carbon, Monroe, Schuylkill, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Northampton, Pike, Wayne] |
| 119 | (17%) | 5. South Central [Perry, Cumberland, Adams, York, Lancaster, Lebanon, Dauphin, Berks] |
| 147 | (21%) | 6. Southeast [Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Bucks] |
| 77 | (11%) | 7. Allegheny County |
| 77 | (11%) | 8. Philadelphia |

The margin of error for a sample size of 700 is +/-3.70%

The margin of error for split samples of 345 interviews and 355 interviews is +/-5.2%

About the poll:

This poll was commissioned and paid for by Education Voters, PA, a statewide, non-profit education advocacy organization. For more information, contact Susan Gobreski at (215) 564-2299.

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