The Polling Center  
The Institute of Government  
Jackson State University  
Fall 2014 – FINAL

The Polling Center at Jackson State University’s Institute of Government needs your help. We are conducting a survey of Americans on their opinions about public education in your own community and nationally as well as your views on infrastructure locally and nationally. Your responses to this important online survey are strictly confidential. Thank you very much.

Screener

A. Are you currently a resident of the United States and 18 years of age and older?

01 Yes (continues)
02 No (terminate)
03 Don’t know / Unsure (terminate)

B. What State do you live in?
[Enter state]

Education

Quality

Our first questions are about education quality, programming, testing and funding.

1. In general, how would you describe the quality of public education in the United States today? Would you say it is...

01 Very good
02 Good
03 Poor
04 Very Poor
05 Don’t know/unsure

2. And, how would you describe the quality of public education in your own community today? Would you say it is...

01 Very good
02 Good
03 Poor
04 Very Poor
05 Don’t know/unsure
3. When a school is considered or declared a “failing school”, who would you say is responsible? Please indicate all that apply.

01 Teachers
02 Local school system/district school boards
03 School administrators
04 The State
05 The students
06 Funding / funders
07 Other: ______________________

4. In your view, how should a school system measure its own success? Please indicate all that apply.

01 Graduation rates
02 Student test scores
03 Scholarships awarded
04 Teacher qualification / accomplishments
05 Unsure

The following are a number of statements about the quality of local school systems. Please indicate, for each, if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. If I was moving, and had young children, I would make the move based largely on local public school quality</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. If I was moving, and had pre-K children, I would avoid a school district that didn’t fund public Pre-K education</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I see a connection between crime and public school dropout rates</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Many times, based on education funding levels, children in lower income communities are at an education disadvantage</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Programming and Testing

9. How aware would you say you were of either “Third Grade Gate” or the concept of testing third graders in public schools to ensure they meet specific standards before moving to fourth grade? Would you say...

01 Very aware
02 Somewhat aware
03 Somewhat unaware
04 Not at all aware
05 Unsure

10. “Third Grade Gate” is newly enacted legislation in Arizona, California and Mississippi. How strongly would you say you support or oppose such a concept. Would you say...

01 Strongly support
02 Somewhat support
03 Somewhat oppose
04 Strongly oppose
05 Unsure

11. Because of affordability and availability, some children have more years of public school preparation prior to Third Grade Gate or similar testing. How strongly would you agree or disagree that, for the testing to be fair and effective, all tested children should receive the same preparation. Would you...

01 Strongly agree
02 Somewhat agree
03 Somewhat disagree
04 Strongly disagree
05 Unsure
The following are a number of public school programs. Please indicate if you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose funding of each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public School Program</th>
<th>Strongly Support</th>
<th>Somewhat Support</th>
<th>Somewhat Oppose</th>
<th>Strongly Oppose</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Head Start</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Pre-K Education</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Drop Out / Student Retention Programs</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Testing at specific intervals</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Common Core Testing (Common Core State Standards define expectations, state-by-state, for what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade. Common Core is not tied to the federal No Child Left Behind Program)</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following are a number of statements about public schools. Please indicate, for each, if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Students receiving Pre-K education tend to be more successful in school</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. There is role for public schools in more comprehensively supporting homeless children</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Testing concepts, such as “Third Grade Gate”, should be funded by the sponsoring State or authority</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Funding

20. Please think for a moment and consider current public school funding levels. In general, would you say public schools in this country are...

01  Significantly underfunded
02  Somewhat underfunded
03  Receive reasonable and balanced funding
04  Over-funded
05  Significantly over-funded
06  Unsure

21. How aware would you say you are of the funding and funding levels of your own municipal public schools? Would you say...

01  Very aware
02  Somewhat aware
03  Somewhat unaware
04  Not at all aware
05  Unsure

Based on all that you know or have heard...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Federal Government</th>
<th>State Government</th>
<th>Local Government</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. Where does most public school funding come from?</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Where should most public school funding come from?</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following are a number of statements about public school funding. Please indicate, for each, if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24. My own State <strong>adequately funds</strong> local public school education</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I am willing to pay somewhat more in taxes to better fund public schools in my community</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Public schools are funded equitably or evenly across jurisdictions or from municipality to municipality</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Good performing public schools are generally better funded schools</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. The better our public schools do, the better our economy does</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Poor performing public schools are most likely to be situated in poorer communities</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Instead of tax increases, we should move tax funds from other less important programs or services to increase public school funding</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. We should consolidate school districts to allocate more to education programs, teachers and students</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. When I vote, I specifically support candidates who advocate for increased public school funding</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
33. Sometimes the Federal or State government makes new requirements for programs, services or testing on local public school systems without providing the funds for implementation. Some refer to these as "unfunded mandates" leaving the municipalities to find funds to meet these new requirements. In your view, who should be **most responsible** for funding these "unfunded mandates"?

01 The mandating authority  
02 The Federal Government  
03 The State Government  
04 The Local Government / School District  
05 A combination  
06 Unsure

34. Which of the following would you say best describes the public school system buildings in your own community? Based on what you know or have heard, would you say…

01 Dangerously neglected  
02 Neglected  
03 In fair to good shape  
04 In excellent shape  
05 Unsure
Infrastructure

35. When you think about our infrastructure nationally, which of the following do you most think about or which of the following come to mind. Please indicate all that apply...

01 Roads/Streets
02 Bridges
03 Water delivery systems / drainage
04 Public buildings
05 Waste systems
06 Public school facilities
07 Public facilities
08 Utility systems – gas, water, electric, phone, internet
09 Rail systems / transport
10 Aviation (air travel facilities and equipment)
11 Maritime (ports/docks/transportation)
12 Public works equipment
13 Other: ____________________________

For our purposes today, we'll define “infrastructure” as the public roads, rail transport, bridges, water delivery systems and drainage, public buildings, waste systems, schools, public works equipment and gas systems that we all use.

36. How closely would you say you follow the issue of infrastructure quality such as aging and repair issues? Would you say...

01 Very closely
02 Somewhat closely
03 Not very closely
04 Not at all
05 Unsure
Based on all you know or have heard, please rate the state of your local infrastructure and then our national infrastructure using a scale of one to ten where one means it is in a “dangerous state of disrepair” to “current status is excellent”. We’ll ask you to rate both your infrastructure’s current status and five years ago.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCAL Infrastructure Status</th>
<th>Dangerous Disrepair</th>
<th>Excellent Status</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37. Today</td>
<td>01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Five Years Ago</td>
<td>01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NATIONAL Infrastructure Status</th>
<th>Dangerous Disrepair</th>
<th>Excellent Status</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39. Today</td>
<td>01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Five Years Ago</td>
<td>01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following are a number of statements about the infrastructure in many of our cities and towns. Please indicate, for each, if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41. If it is not an emergency, too many needed infrastructure improvements nationally are delayed, postponed or “kicked down the road”</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. I'm willing to pay reasonably more in taxes to improve the safety and quality of my own community’s infrastructure</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. I would prefer to see funds moved from other programs and services to fund infrastructure improvements rather than raise taxes</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. For our national economy to grow and add new jobs, we need increased long-term investment in our national infrastructure</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. In general, parents don’t move to towns or cities with school buildings in disrepair</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. In general, businesses don’t move to towns or cities with infrastructure in disrepair</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. I, along with friends/neighbors can have an impact on improving public infrastructure</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Politicians avoid critical long-term infrastructure needs because spending is unpopular with voters</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Inaction or our failure to improve our infrastructure will make it more difficult to compete internationally in economic terms</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
50. To improve our infrastructure, **nationally**, to a status where it would be considered good, we would need....

01 Significantly more funding
02 Somewhat more funding
03 Funding at current levels
04 The status is good now, no additional funding required
05 Unsure

51. Where would you say you go or would go to find more information about the status of the infrastructure in your community? **Please indicate all that apply.**

01 TV ads
02 Radio ads
03 Newspaper ads
04 TV news
05 Radio news
06 Newspaper stories
07 Town / City Hall
08 Small Business Administration
09 Regional Development Corps
10 Chambers of Commerce
11 Financial Intuitions
12 Businesses or Schools
13 Government agencies
14 Utilities / Power companies
15 Brochures
16 Utility Web Sites
17 Senior organizations
18 Bill inserts
19 Internet/Web/E-mails
20 Community organizations
21 Environmental & Conservation organizations
22 Friends / Family
23 Other: Specify______________________________
24 Unsure
Demographics

52. What is your age?

01  18-44
02  45-64
03  65+

53. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

01  Yes (Go to Q50)
02  No (Continue)
03  Don’t know / unsure (Continue)

54. Which one of these groups would you say best represents your race?

01  White
02  Black or African-American
03  Asian
04  Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
05  American Indian or Alaska Native
06  Other

55. What is your highest grade of school completed?

01  Eighth grade or less
02  Some high school
03  High school graduate or GED
04  Some technical school
05  Technical school graduate
06  Some college
07  College graduate
08  Post-graduate or professional degree
09  Refused

56. Would you describe where you live most of the year as rural, suburban or urban?

01  Rural
02  Suburban
03  Urban
04  Unsure
57. Please indicate your gender.

01  Male
02  Female

58. Please indicate the number of children you have.

01  None
02  One
03  Two
04  Three
05  Four
06  Five or more

59. Which of the following categories best describes your total family income before taxes?

01  Under $10,000
02  $10,000 to less than $40,000
03  $40,000 to less than $75,000
04  $75,000 to less than $100,000
05  $100,000 to less than $150,000
06  $150,000 to less than $200,000
07  $200,000 or more
08  Don’t know / unsure

60. In political terms, do you consider yourself to be a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or member of some other party?

01  Republican
02  Democrat
03  Independent/Unaffiliated
04  Some other party
01  Don’t know / not sure

Thank you very much for your participation in this important survey.