



Californians & Education

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Supported with funding from the Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell Foundation, the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the Silver Giving Foundation, and the Stuart Foundation



The PPIC Statewide Survey provides a voice for the public and likely voters—informing policymakers, encouraging discussion, and raising awareness on critical issues of the day.

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News Release

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PDT on Wednesday, April 11, 2018.

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PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND EDUCATION

Majorities Concerned about School Shootings, Oppose Arming Teachers

NEWSOM MAINTAINS LEAD IN GOVERNOR'S RACE, FOLLOWED BY COX, VILLARAIGOSA

SAN FRANCISCO, April 11, 2018—An overwhelming majority of Californians are concerned about the threat of a mass shooting in their local schools in the wake of the Parkland, Florida, killings. But a majority also oppose allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns in schools. These are among the key findings of a statewide survey on education released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC).

When asked about school shootings, 73 percent of California adults and 82 percent of public school parents say they are very or somewhat concerned. Democrats (55%) are much more likely than independents (36%) and far more likely than Republicans (24%) to say they are very concerned. The survey, which began just after the March for Our Lives protests against gun violence, found that across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (68%) and African Americans (57%) are more likely to be very concerned than Asian Americans (49%) and whites (34%).

Two-thirds of adults (67%) and public school parents (68%) oppose allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns in schools. There are stark partisan differences on this question. An overwhelming majority of Democrats (86%) and a strong majority of independents (69%) are opposed, while a solid majority of Republicans (60%) favor allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns. Californians in our survey (67%) are more likely to oppose arming school officials than are adults nationwide (50%, according to a February 2018 CBS News poll).

"In the wake of the Florida mass shooting tragedy, many California public school parents are concerned about school safety," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO. "Yet most oppose having more teachers carry guns."

Majorities Concerned about Impact of Immigration Enforcement

Asked about another contentious national issue involving children in schools, 70 percent of Californians are very (43%) or somewhat (27%) concerned that federal immigration enforcement will affect undocumented students in local public schools and their families. Latinos (59%) are the most likely to be very concerned, compared to fewer African Americans (43%), whites (35%), and Asian Americans (34%). Democrats (61%) are more likely than independents (36%) and three times as likely as Republicans (20%) to be very concerned.

For the second year in a row, 65 percent of Californians support the designation of public school districts as "sanctuary safe zones" to protect undocumented students and their families from federal immigration enforcement. Strong majorities of Democrats and solid majorities of independents are in favor, while strong majorities of Republicans are opposed. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (82%) are the most likely to be in favor, followed by African Americans (70%). About half of whites (52%) are in favor.

"Solid majorities of Californians—with deep divisions by party—continue to support having their local school districts declared as sanctuary safe zones for undocumented students," Baldassare said.

Election 2018: Candidate Views on Public Schools Seen as Important

With the June midterms fast approaching, Democrat Gavin Newsom (26%) remains the top choice among likely voters in the governor's race, followed by Republican John Cox (15%), Democrat Antonio Villaraigosa (13%), Republican Travis Allen (10%), and Democrats John Chiang (7%) and Delaine Eastin (6%). Nearly a quarter of likely voters (22%) remain undecided.

The gubernatorial candidates' positions on K–12 public education are very important to a majority of likely voters (64%). Democratic (69%) and independent (65%) likely voters are more likely than Republicans (55%) to hold this view.

"Despite a rancorous political climate," Baldassare said, "majorities across party lines agree that the candidates' positions on K–12 public schools are very important in deciding whom to support."

In the nonpartisan primary election for state superintendent of public instruction, an overwhelming majority of likely voters (74%) don't know whom they'd vote for, while candidates Tony Thurmond and Marshall Tuck are tied at 13 percent.

Asked whether candidates for statewide office should work with or push back against the Trump administration on K–12 issues, 52 percent of likely voters prefer that candidates push back, while 39 percent prefer that they work with the administration.

Most Likely Voters Support More School Funding

A majority of likely voters (60%) say state funding for public schools is inadequate, and parents are most likely to name lack of funding as the biggest issue facing K–12 schools in their community (24%, compared to 9% teacher quality, 7% safety and bullying).

When asked how California's school funding compares to other states, 48 percent of likely voters and 47 percent of public school parents say per pupil spending for K–12 education is either average or below average. The National Education Association ranks California 29th of the 50 states.

Voters may get the opportunity to approve additional school funding. A possible 2020 initiative could change how commercial property taxes are assessed. The additional revenue would be divided between K–12 public schools and local governments. How do voters feel about this potential ballot measure on the eve of the 40th anniversary of Proposition 13? Among likely voters, 53 percent say they would vote yes. Democrats (71%) are much more likely than independents (55%) and far more likely than Republicans (39%) to support it.

A majority of likely voters (60%) would also vote yes if their school district put a bond measure on the ballot to pay for construction projects, which would require a 55 percent majority to pass. But fewer than half (48%) would vote for a local parcel tax to fund public schools, which falls short of the required two-thirds vote. When asked about reducing the vote threshold for passage of local parcel taxes for schools to 55 percent, half of likely voters (49%) say yes and 41 percent say no.

"Six in ten likely voters say the state's K–12 funding is inadequate," Baldassare said. "Solid majorities favor local school bonds, while fewer support local parcel taxes for schools in this election year."

Job Approval Ratings for Brown, Legislature

Half of likely voters (50%) approve of the way that Governor Jerry Brown is handling his job. Fewer than half (40%) approve of his handling of the state's K–12 public education system, while a relatively high percentage (19%) don't have an opinion on this question. Among public school parents, 55 percent approve of Brown's handling of K–12 education.

Fewer than half (42%) of likely voters approve of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job, while 49 percent disapprove. Just 34 percent of likely voters approve of the legislature's handling of K–12 education, while 20 percent don't know. Approval of the legislature's handling of K–12 education is higher among public school parents (52%).

Majorities Think LCFF Will Boost Academic Achievement

Although the governor's proposed budget fully funds the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), more than two-thirds of Californians (70%) say they've heard nothing at all about it. LCFF gives additional funding to school districts with more English language learners and lower-income students, and it also gives districts increased flexibility on spending decisions. After being read a description of the policy, 71 percent of Californians favor it. While majorities across parties favor the funding formula, Democrats (81%) and independents (73%) are much more likely than Republicans (55%) to do so.

Most Californians (71%) are at least somewhat optimistic that the implementation of LCFF will lead to improved academic achievement among English language learners and lower-income students. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (86%) and Asian Americans (78%) are more likely than African Americans (68%) and whites (60%) to expect improvement. Notably, 41 percent of Latinos expect academic achievement among these students to improve a lot. Across parties, strong majorities of Democrats (75%) and independents (68%) expect improvement, while Republicans are more skeptical (50% think achievement will improve).

The LCFF requires school districts to develop, adopt, and annually update three-year Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) and to reach out to parents and the community for input. A majority of public school parents (54%) say they have received information on how to get involved. How likely are they to participate? Latino parents (80%) are more likely than white parents (68%) to say they are at least somewhat likely to do so.

Local Schools Get Positive Reviews from Parents

Most public school parents (61%) give their local schools grades of A or B when asked to rate their quality. A third of public school parents are aware that state test scores are lower than scores in most other states. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics show that California test scores in grades 4 and 8 in English and math rank below average or near the bottom nationally.

To help parents learn about the quality of their local K–12 public schools, the state launched the California School Dashboard in December. The dashboard is an online tool that evaluates school performance using multiple measures. Although an overwhelming majority of public school parents (83%) say they can easily find information about the quality of their child's school, most (56%) have heard nothing at all about the new dashboard.

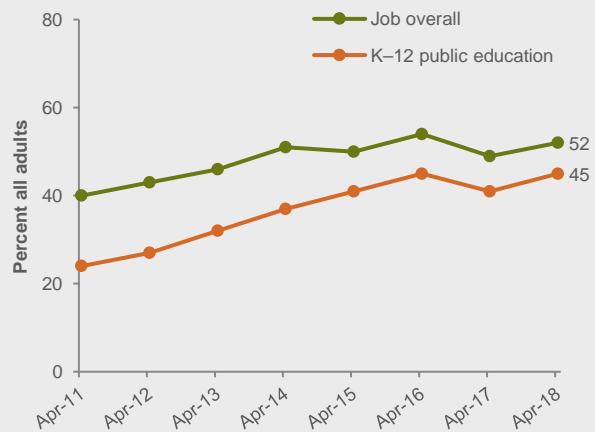
When it comes to the types of schools they prefer, a majority of public school parents say it is extremely or very important that their local school have a mix of students from different racial/ethnic (63%) and economic (50%) backgrounds. Given a hypothetical choice among public, private, religious, or charter schools for their children—if cost and location were not an issue—a third of parents chose a traditional public school (35%). A similar proportion chose a private school (31%), while fewer picked a religious school (18%) or charter school (13%). Most parents also want their children to graduate from college. A third (35%) hope their children earn a four-year college degree and nearly half (48%) hope they obtain a graduate degree.

Perceptions, Attitudes, and the 2018 Election

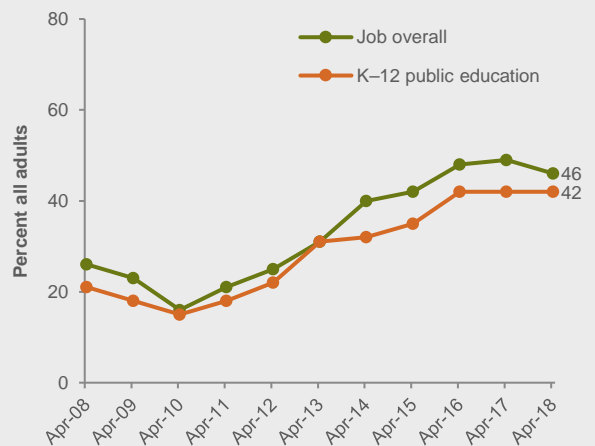
Key Findings

- Fifty-two percent of Californians approve of Governor Jerry Brown, but slightly fewer approve of his handling of K–12 education. Forty-six percent of residents approve of the state legislature, and a similar share approve of its handling of K–12 education. *(page 7)*
- Twenty-seven percent of Californians are aware that the state’s per pupil spending is about average compared to other states, while a third think student test scores are below average (24%) or near the bottom (9%). *(page 8)*
- A majority of Californians (54%) and public school parents (61%) give their local public schools a positive grade of A or B. Majorities say it is extremely or very important that their local schools have students from different racial/ethnic and economic backgrounds. *(page 9)*
- A quarter of California parents say lack of funding is the biggest problem facing their local public schools. Eight in ten parents hope their child gets a four-year college degree or a graduate degree after college. *(page 10)*
- Seven in ten Californians are concerned about the impact that increased federal immigration enforcement may have on students in their local public schools. Two in three support their local public school district designating itself a “sanctuary safe zone.” *(page 11)*
- Nearly three in four adults are concerned about the threat of a mass shooting in their local schools. Sixty-seven percent oppose allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns in schools. *(page 12)*
- Democrat Gavin Newsom leads the governor’s race among likely voters. Majorities of likely voters across parties say candidates’ positions on K–12 education are very important. Three in four are undecided in the race for superintendent of public instruction. *(page 13)*

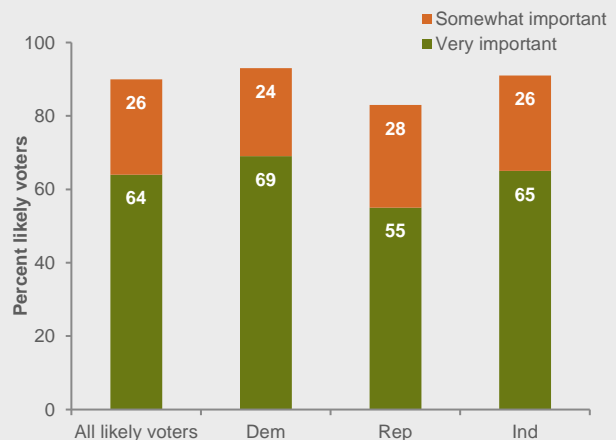
Approval ratings of Governor Brown



Approval ratings of the California Legislature



Importance of gubernatorial candidates' positions on K–12 education



Approval Ratings for State Elected Officials

Half of adults (52%) and likely voters (50%) approve of the way that Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor. Approval was similar in March (51% adults, 54% likely voters) and last April (49% adults, 52% likely voters). Today, Democrats (74%) are far more likely than independents (44%) and Republicans (15%) to approve. Majorities in the San Francisco Bay Area (62%) and Los Angeles (56%)—and fewer in other regions (46% Central Valley, 44% Inland Empire, 44% Orange/San Diego)—approve. Majorities of Asian Americans (61%), Latinos (60%), and African Americans (56%)—and fewer whites (44%)—approve.

Fewer than half of Californians approve of the governor’s handling of the state’s K–12 public education system (45% adults, 40% likely voters), with relatively high shares saying they don’t know. Approval ratings were similar last April (41% adults, 37% likely voters). Today, Democrats (56%) are much more likely than independents (40%) and Republicans (13%) to say they approve. Latinos (57%), Asian Americans (53%), and African Americans (49%) are more likely than whites (33%) to say they approve. Fifty-five percent of public school parents approve of the governor’s handling of K–12 education.

“Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Jerry Brown is handling...?”

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
His job as governor of California	Approve	52%	74%	15%	44%	50%
	Disapprove	30	16	78	39	42
	Don't know	18	10	7	16	8
The state's K–12 public education system	Approve	45	56	13	40	40
	Disapprove	31	18	68	39	41
	Don't know	25	26	20	21	19

Forty-six percent of adults and 42 percent of likely voters approve of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job. Approval of the legislature was similar in March (46% adults, 45% likely voters) and last April (49% adults, 44% likely voters). Today, Democrats (62%) are much more likely to approve than independents (39%) and Republicans (16%). A slim majority in the San Francisco Bay Area (51%), compared to fewer than half in other regions (48% Los Angeles, 47% Inland Empire, 44% Orange/San Diego, 39% Central Valley), say they approve. Latinos (54%) and Asian Americans (52%) are more likely than whites (40%) and African Americans (39%) to say they approve of the legislature.

Forty-two percent of adults and 34 percent of likely voters approve of the legislature’s handling of the state’s K–12 public education system, while one in five say they don’t know. Approval ratings were similar last April (42% adults, 35% likely voters). Today, approval is higher among Democrats (48%) than independents (34%) and Republicans (14%). Fifty-two percent of public school parents say they approve.

“Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling...?”

		All adults	Party			Likely voters
			Dem	Rep	Ind	
Its job	Approve	46%	62%	16%	39%	42%
	Disapprove	40	28	75	51	49
	Don't know	14	10	9	9	9
The state's K–12 public education system	Approve	42	48	14	34	34
	Disapprove	38	29	68	46	46
	Don't know	20	23	18	19	20

California’s Rankings

California ranked 29th out of the 50 states in expenditures for public K–12 education per student, according to the National Education Association’s *Rankings and Estimates* report (2017). Pluralities of California adults (46%) and public school parents (47%) say the state’s per pupil spending for K–12 public schools is either average or below average compared to other states, while relatively few view California as either near the top (16% adults, 16% public school parents) or near the bottom (11% adults, 12% public school parents). The results were similar when we last asked this question in 2015. Today, Republicans (25%) are more likely than other partisan groups to say the state’s spending is near the top. African Americans (23%) are more likely than other racial/ethnic groups to say that spending is near the bottom (11% whites, 10% Latinos, 9% Asian Americans). Compared to 20 years ago, fewer adults today say the state’s spending is below average or near the bottom (30% today, 47% in 1998); more say it is above average or near the top (33% today, 14% in 1998).

“Where do you think California currently ranks in per pupil spending for K–12 public schools? Compared to other states, is California’s spending near the top, above average, average, below average, or near the bottom?”

	All adults	Party			Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Near the top	16%	9%	25%	15%	16%
Above average	17	17	17	16	16
Average	27	32	14	22	26
Below average	19	24	22	23	21
Near the bottom	11	10	13	15	12
Don’t know	10	8	9	8	8

California ranks below average or near the bottom in both English and math test scores for grades 4 and 8, according to the National Assessment of Education Progress data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2017). Solid majorities of adults (60%) and public school parents (64%) say that California’s K–12 student test scores are average or below average compared to other states, while relatively few perceive the state as near the top (8% adults, 8% public school parents) or near the bottom (9% adults, 8% public school parents). Whites (13%) are more likely than other racial/ethnic groups to say the state’s student test scores are near the bottom. Fewer adults today say the state’s student test scores are below average or near the bottom compared to when we asked this question in 2015 and 20 years ago (33% today, 46% in 2015, 53% in 1998), while more adults today say they are above average or near the top (23% today, 11% in 2015, 10% in 1998).

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

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Near the top	8%	8%	13%	10%	4%	8%
Above average	15	16	25	15	12	13
Average	36	32	34	43	32	39
Below average	24	32	17	17	31	25
Near the bottom	9	8	4	7	13	8
Don’t know	7	3	7	7	7	6

Local Public Schools

Majorities of adults and public school parents give passing grades when asked to rate the quality of public schools in their neighborhoods today. A majority of adults give local schools grades of A (20%) or B (34%), while 24 percent say C, 12 percent say D, and 5 percent say F. Only 5 percent say they don't know. At least half of adults have awarded an A or a B since 2005. Today, fewer African Americans (45%) and whites (48%) give their local public schools an A or B, compared to Asian Americans (67%) and Latinos (62%). Public school parents are slightly more likely than adults overall to give an A or B (61% to 54%). Majorities give an A or B in the San Francisco Bay Area (58%), Orange/San Diego (58%), and Los Angeles (58%), compared to fewer in the Central Valley (48%) and the Inland Empire (46%). The grades for local public schools in our survey are similar to those of adults nationwide in the May 2017 Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research survey (15% A, 34% B, 24% C, 11% D, 6% Fail, 10% no opinion).

“Overall, how would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today? If you had to give your local public schools a grade, would it be A, B, C, D, or F?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
A	20%	13%	31%	25%	16%	24%
B	34	32	36	37	32	37
C	24	33	15	21	28	23
D	12	14	8	10	13	11
F	5	6	5	5	5	4
Don't know	5	1	5	3	6	–

The racial and economic segregation of local public schools is a continuing concern among educators and policymakers given the persistence of an achievement gap in student outcomes. Solid majorities of adults (61%) and public school parents (63%) say it is extremely or very important that the public schools in their community have a mix of students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. African Americans (71%), Latinos (67%), and Asian Americans (65%) are more likely than whites (54%) to hold this view. Half or more of adults (54%) and public school parents (50%) also say it is extremely or very important that the public schools in their community have a mix of students from different economic backgrounds. The share holding this view varies across income groups (59% under \$40,000; 55% \$40,000 to under \$80,000; 46% \$80,000 or more). Californians are slightly more likely to see these two attributes as at least very important than are adults nationwide in the Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research survey (extremely or very important: 55% racial and ethnic backgrounds, 45% economic backgrounds).

“How important is it to you that the public schools in your community have a mix of students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds—is this extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not so important, or not important at all?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Extremely important	27%	49%	32%	19%	28%	24%
Very important	34	22	33	48	26	39
Somewhat important	19	22	17	15	24	16
Not so important	7	1	7	7	8	7
Not important at all	11	6	10	11	13	14
Don't know	1	–	1	1	2	1

Parents’ Perspectives and Expectations

Nearly one in four parents (24%) name lack of funding as the biggest problem facing K–12 public schools in their community. Other problems that were mentioned by at least 5 percent of parents include quality of teachers (9%), safety and bullying (7%), lack of parental involvement (6%), and large class sizes (5%). Similar proportions of white (23%) and Latino (21%) parents say lack of funding is the biggest issue facing their local schools. Across income groups, 30 percent of parents with household incomes of \$40,000 or more say lack of funding is the biggest problem, while 17 percent of parents with household incomes under \$40,000 say the same. Parents with household incomes under \$40,000 (12%) are somewhat more likely than parents with higher household incomes (4% \$40,000 or more) to name safety and bullying as the biggest problem.

“What do you think is the biggest problem facing K–12 public schools in your community?”

Parents only (Top five issues mentioned)	All parents	Household income		Race/Ethnicity	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 or more	Latinos	Whites
Lack of funding	24%	17%	30%	21%	23%
Quality of teachers	9	9	8	10	10
Safety, bullying	7	12	4	7	8
Lack of parental involvement	6	4	6	6	6
Large class sizes	5	4	6	5	6

When asked which type of school they would send their child to if cost and location were not an issue, a third of parents choose a traditional public school (35%). A similar share of parents select a private school (31%), while fewer choose a religious (18%) or charter school (13%). Parents with household incomes under \$40,000 (44%) are more likely than those with household incomes of \$40,000 or more (30%) to choose a public school. Pluralities across education and racial/ethnic groups choose a traditional public school. Results were similar among parents of school-age children nationwide: a third would send their child to a public (34%) or private school (31%), while fewer would choose a charter (17%) or religious school (14%), according to the 2017 Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research poll.

“I have a question about four school types.... Imagine you could send your youngest child to any one of these four kinds of schools and cost and location were not an issue. All things equal, which would you pick?”

Parents only	All parents	Household income		Race/Ethnicity	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 or more	Latinos	Whites
Public school	35%	44%	30%	34%	38%
Charter school	13	11	15	13	13
Religious school	18	13	21	21	18
Private school	31	29	32	29	30
Other	1	1	–	1	–
Don't know	2	2	2	1	1

Most parents want their children to graduate from college. A plurality of parents (48%) hope their child attains a graduate degree after college, while a third (35%) hope for a four-year college degree. Pluralities of white (49%) and Latino (43%) parents hope their child attains a graduate degree. A majority of parents with household incomes of \$40,000 or more (61%) hope their child attains a graduate degree; a plurality of those with lower incomes (40%) hope for a four-year college degree. Parents who are college graduates (63%) are more likely than those with some college education (43%) or a high school education (45%) to say they hope their child attains a graduate degree.

Immigration and Public Schools

Seven in ten Californians are concerned (43% very, 27% somewhat) that increased federal immigration enforcement efforts will impact undocumented students in their local public schools and their families. This is nearly identical to findings from last year (46% very, 24% somewhat). Today, public school parents hold views similar to all adults; their concern has eased somewhat compared to last April (51% very, 27% somewhat). Latinos (59%) are the most likely to be very concerned, compared to fewer African Americans (43%), whites (35%), and Asian Americans (34%). Perceptions across racial/ethnic groups are unchanged from last April, with the exception of Asian Americans, who were more likely to be very concerned last April (50%). Democrats (61%) are three times more likely than Republicans (20%) to be very concerned about increased federal immigration enforcement efforts; 36 percent of independents are very concerned. The share of Californians across regions who are very concerned is slightly higher in Los Angeles (46%), the Inland Empire (45%), and the San Francisco Bay Area (45%) than in the Central Valley (39%) and Orange/San Diego (38%). Women are more likely than men to be very concerned (49% to 39%).

“How concerned are you that increased federal immigration enforcement efforts will impact undocumented students and their families in your local public schools?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Very concerned	43%	43%	34%	59%	35%	43%
Somewhat concerned	27	24	33	25	26	26
Not too concerned	13	14	16	5	18	13
Not at all concerned	16	17	16	10	19	18
Don't know	2	1	1	1	2	–

California attorney general Xavier Becerra recently released a policy guide for school officials that lays out how they can protect students from immigration enforcement on school grounds. Do Californians support public school districts designating themselves “sanctuary safe zones” to indicate they will protect undocumented students and their families from federal immigration enforcement efforts? Sixty-five percent of Californians favor this idea—unchanged from last year. Public school parents hold similar views (72%, 74% in 2017). Most Democrats and solid majorities of independents are in favor, while strong majorities of Republicans are opposed. Majorities in all demographic groups and regions are in favor. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (82%) are the most likely to be in favor, followed by African Americans (70%), Asian Americans (64%), and whites (52%). Once again, support among Asian Americans has dropped since last April (81%). Across regions, residents of Los Angeles (73%) are the most likely to be in favor (65% San Francisco Bay Area, 63% Inland Empire, 59% Orange/San Diego, 59% Central Valley). Support declines with rising age and income levels (74% under \$40,000; 60% \$40,000 to \$80,000; 57% \$80,000 or more). Women are more likely than men to express support (70% to 60%).

“Do you favor or oppose your public school district designating itself as a ‘sanctuary safe zone’ to indicate it will protect its undocumented students and their families from federal immigration enforcement efforts?”

	All adults	Party			Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	65%	86%	22%	61%	72%
Oppose	30	11	74	32	24
Don't know	5	3	5	7	4

School Safety

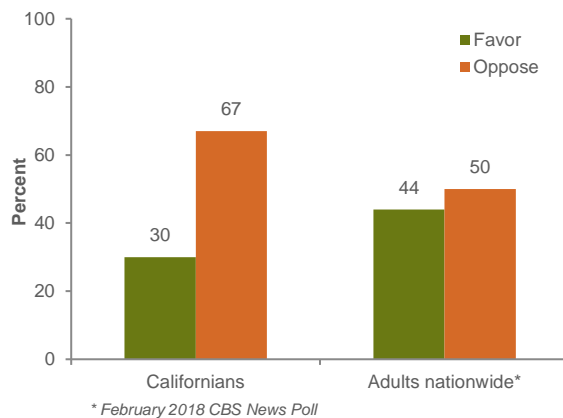
Last month’s March for Our Lives demonstrations called upon the nation to end gun violence and mass shootings following the school shooting in Parkland, Florida. How concerned are Californians about the threat of a mass shooting in their local schools? An overwhelming majority of Californians (73%) and public school parents (82%) say they are very concerned (49% adults, 60% public school parents) or somewhat concerned (24% adults, 22% public school parents). Democrats (55%) are much more likely than independents (36%) and far more likely than Republicans (24%) to say they are very concerned. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (68%) and African Americans (57%) are the most likely to say they are very concerned, compared to fewer Asian Americans (49%) and whites (34%). Women (57%) are much more likely than men (43%) to express concern. The likelihood of being very concerned declines as income levels rise. Californians who have some college education (40%) or college degrees (42%) are less likely to be very concerned than those with only a high school education (61%).

“How concerned are you about the threat of a mass shooting in your local schools? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Very concerned	49%	57%	49%	68%	34%	60%
Somewhat concerned	24	19	24	15	32	22
Not too concerned	14	14	16	8	17	9
Not at all concerned	12	10	11	7	15	10
Don't know	1	–	1	1	1	–

About two-thirds of Californians (67%) and public school parents (68%) oppose allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns in schools. There are stark partisan differences: a solid majority of Republicans (60%) are in favor, while an overwhelming majority of Democrats (86%) and a solid majority of independents (60%) are opposed. Half or more across regions and demographic groups oppose allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns in schools. Whites (59%) and residents of the Central Valley (50%) are the least likely to oppose. Women (73%) are more likely than men (63%) to oppose. Among those who are very concerned about a school shooting, 77 percent oppose allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns in school. Californians in our survey (67%) are more likely to oppose allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns in schools than are adults nationwide (50%, according to a February CBS News poll).

Support for allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns



“Do you favor or oppose allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns in schools?”

	All adults	Party			Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Favor	30%	13%	60%	29%	29%
Oppose	67	86	36	69	68
Don't know	3	1	4	3	3

2018 Election

With the June primary quickly approaching, slightly more than half of likely voters say they are following news about the gubernatorial candidates very (18%) or fairly (36%) closely. Just under half of likely voters were following the news about the gubernatorial candidates in March (14% very, 34% fairly).

Today, Democrat Gavin Newsom (26%) remains the top choice among likely voters in the June primary, followed by Republican John Cox (15%), Democrat Antonio Villaraigosa (13%), Republican Travis Allen (10%), and Democrats John Chiang (7%) and Delaine Eastin (6%). (Only candidates with independently verifiable campaign organizations and resources for statewide campaigning were included.) Twenty-two percent of likely voters remain undecided. Results were similar in March (28% Newsom, 14% Cox, 12% Villaraigosa, 10% Allen, 6% Chiang, 5% Eastin, 24% undecided). Today, Newsom leads Villaraigosa among Democratic likely voters, while Cox leads Allen among Republicans. Independent likely voters are divided between Newsom and Cox. Latino likely voters prefer Villaraigosa; whites prefer Newsom.

When thinking about the governor’s race, 64 percent of likely voters say the candidates’ positions on K–12 public education are very important to them (26% somewhat important). Democratic (69%) and independent (65%) likely voters are more likely than Republicans (55%) to say it is very important. Parents of children 18 or under are more likely than others to hold this view (74% to 59%).

“If the June primary for governor were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for?*

Likely voters only	All likely voters	Party			Race/Ethnicity		
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Latinos	Whites	Other groups
Gavin Newsom	26%	37%	7%	25%	9%	29%	35%
John Cox	15	2	33	23	12	18	10
Antonio Villaraigosa	13	19	5	9	34	6	13
Travis Allen	10	–	25	9	4	14	6
John Chiang	7	7	3	9	5	7	7
Delaine Eastin	6	8	2	6	10	4	6
Someone else (specify)	1	1	–	1	1	–	2
Don't know	22	24	24	19	24	22	21

*For complete text of this question, including ballot designations, see p. 25.

When asked who they would vote for in the nonpartisan primary election for state superintendent of public instruction, three in four likely voters are not sure. When asked whether it is more important to them that candidates for statewide office—such as governor or state superintendent of public instruction—work with the Trump administration on K–12 public education or push back against the Trump administration, half of likely voters prefer candidates to push back (52%), while four in ten prefer that they work with the administration (39%).

“If the June nonpartisan primary election for state superintendent of public instruction were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for?*

Likely voters only	All likely voters	Party			Race/Ethnicity		
		Dem	Rep	Ind	Latinos	Whites	Other groups
Tony Thurmond	13%	19%	6%	10%	24%	10%	15%
Marshall Tuck	13	12	13	15	20	8	17
Someone else (specify)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Don't know	74	69	81	75	56	82	69

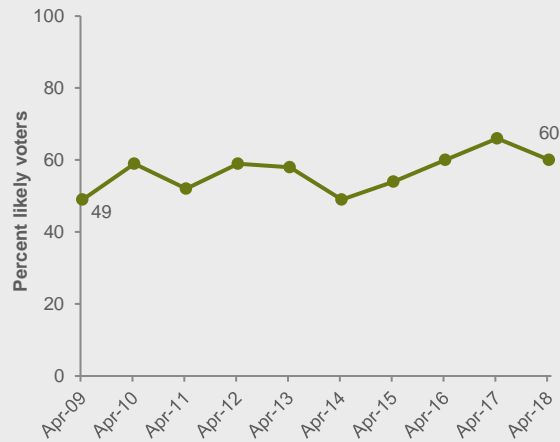
*For complete text of this question, including ballot designations, see p. 25.

Policy and Funding Preferences

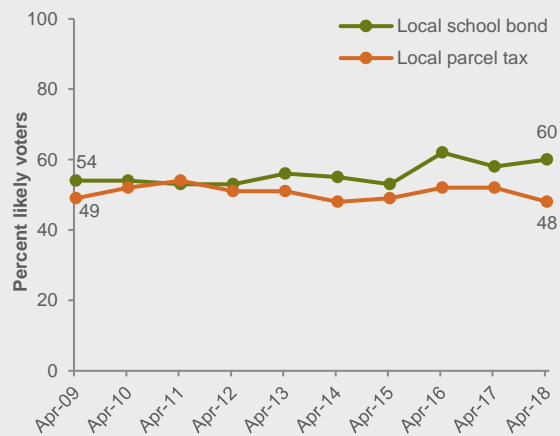
Key Findings

- Six in ten adults and likely voters say the current level of state funding for their local public schools is not enough. A majority of adults (61%) and likely voters (53%) favor taxing commercial properties at market rate and directing some of the revenues to K–12 public schools. *(page 15)*
- A majority of adults (57%) and fewer likely voters (49%) favor replacing the two-thirds voter requirement for local parcel taxes with a 55 percent majority. Seven in ten adults (70%) and six in ten likely voters (60%) would vote yes on a local bond measure for school construction; support for a potential local parcel tax for public schools is below the two-thirds threshold needed to pass (61% adults, 48% likely voters). *(page 16)*
- Few Californians (29%) have heard about the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). However, after being read a brief description, seven in ten adults and majorities across parties are in favor of the funding policy. *(page 17)*
- A majority of adults (58%) are confident that districts receiving additional LCFF funding will spend it on English language learners and lower-income students. Seven in ten expect that the academic achievement of these students will improve as the state implements the LCFF. *(page 18)*
- A majority of public school parents (54%) say they have received information about involvement in their school’s accountability plan, but only 28 percent say they are very likely to participate. *(page 19)*
- Eight in ten public school parents say they can easily find information about the quality of their child’s school. However, a majority (56%) say they have heard nothing at all about the new California School Dashboard. *(page 20)*

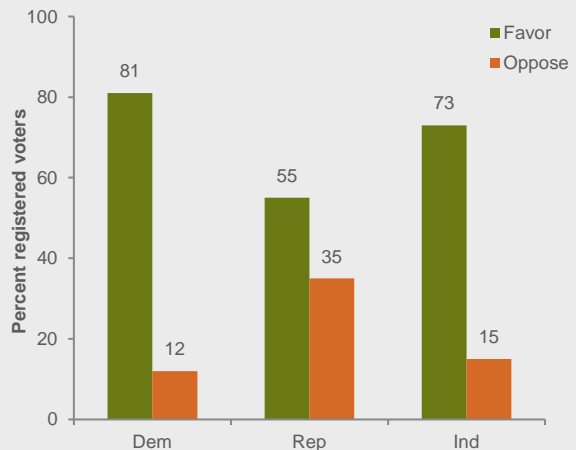
Perception that state funding for local schools is not enough



Support for local school bond and local parcel tax



Support for the Local Control Funding Formula



State Funding for Schools

Six in ten Californians and likely voters think the current level of state funding for their local public schools is not enough. Two in three public school parents (66%) hold this view. The shares holding this view were similar last April (64% adults, 66% likely voters, 69% public school parents). Notably, at least half of adults have said state funding is not enough dating back to April 2008.

Today, Democrats (68%) and independents (62%) are much more likely than Republicans (48%) to say their local public schools do not get enough state funding. Majorities across regions say state funding is inadequate. Women (67%) are much more likely than men (54%) to say state funding is not enough. Across racial/ethnic groups, African Americans (76%) are the most likely to hold this view (59% Latinos, 59% whites, 57% Asian Americans). Majorities across age, education, and income groups say their local public schools lack state funding.

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

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
More than enough	10%	5%	19%	11%	13%
Just enough	23	19	25	21	19
Not enough	59	68	48	62	60
Don't know	9	8	8	7	8

The 40th anniversary of Proposition 13 is in June, and a possible 2020 initiative could change how commercial property taxes are assessed. The additional net revenue generated from this change would be divided between schools and local governments. When asked about a potential ballot measure that would make this change and direct some of the new tax revenue to state funding for K–12 public schools, 61 percent of adults and 53 percent of likely voters would vote yes. Democrats (71%) are much more likely than independents (55%) and far more likely than Republicans (39%) to support this proposal. Support ranges from a high of 68 percent in the San Francisco Bay Area to a low of 55 percent in the Central Valley (63% Inland Empire, 62% Orange/San Diego, 59% Los Angeles). About seven in ten Asian Americans (71%), African Americans (68%), and Latinos (68%) would vote yes, compared to about half of whites (53%). Support declines as age and income increase. Support is somewhat higher among public school parents (69%) than among all adults; it is also higher among renters (69%) than homeowners (53%).

In our January survey, which did not mention additional state funding for K–12 public schools, 46 percent of likely voters were in favor of the general idea of having commercial properties taxed according to their current market value.

“As you may know, under Proposition 13, residential and commercial property taxes are both strictly limited. What if there was a state ballot measure to have commercial properties taxed according to their current market value and direct some of this new tax revenue to state funding for K–12 public schools? Would you vote yes or no?”

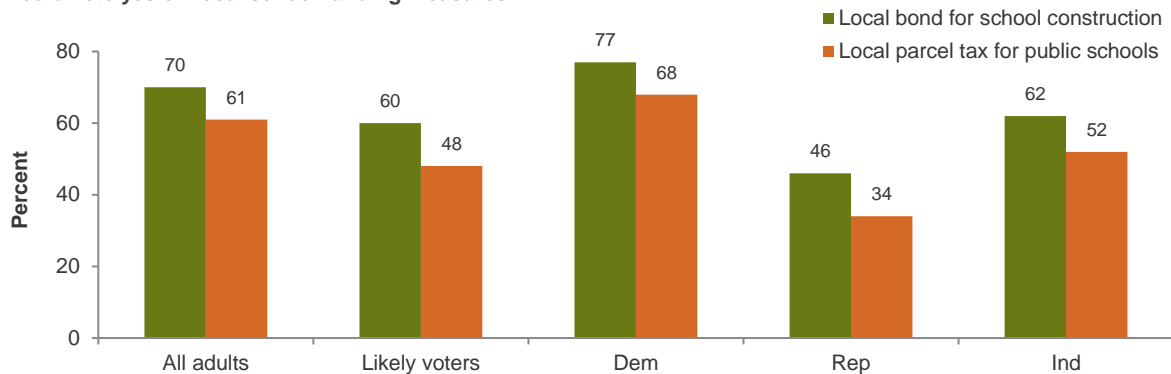
	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Yes	61%	71%	39%	55%	53%
No	33	22	57	40	42
Don't know	6	7	4	5	5

Raising Local Revenue

In recent years, Californians have passed numerous local school bond measures and one statewide bond measure—Proposition 51 (55.2% yes)—to fund school construction. A strong majority of adults (70%) and a majority of likely voters (60%) today say they would vote yes if their local school district had a bond measure on the ballot to pay for construction projects (local school bonds require a 55% majority to pass). Support was similar last year (68% adults, 58% likely voters). In fact, since 1999, at least six in ten adults and majorities of likely voters have said they would vote yes on a local school bond. Today, at least six in ten across regions would vote yes. Solid majorities of Democrats (77%) and independents (62%) would vote yes; fewer than half of Republicans (46%) would do so. More than six in ten across age, education, and income groups would vote yes. Support is highest among Latinos (83%) and lowest among whites (59%; 76% Asian Americans, 77% African Americans).

A majority of adults (61%) and fewer than half of likely voters (48%) say they would vote yes on a local parcel tax to fund public schools (local parcel taxes require a two-thirds majority to pass). Support for a local parcel tax has been about 60 percent among adults and about half among likely voters since 2009. Today, support is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (65%), followed by the Inland Empire (62%), Los Angeles (61%), Orange/San Diego (60%), and the Central Valley (57%). Majorities of Democrats (68%) and independents (52%) would vote yes on a parcel tax; a majority of Republicans (59%) would vote no. Asian Americans (79%) and African Americans (75%) are more likely than Latinos (69%) and whites (50%) to say they would vote yes. Renters (70%) are much more likely than homeowners (51%) to say they would vote yes. Support declines as age and income rise.

Would vote yes on local school funding measures



When asked about a state ballot measure to replace the two-thirds vote requirement with a 55 percent majority vote to pass local parcel taxes for local public schools, 57 percent of adults and 49 percent of likely voters say they would vote yes. Last April, 46 percent of adults and 42 percent of likely voters said this was a good idea. Today, majorities of Democrats and independents would vote yes, compared to about one in three Republicans. Majorities across regions would vote yes. Support is higher among Latinos and African Americans (71% each) than among Asian Americans (57%) and whites (46%). Support declines as age, education, and income rise.

“What if there was a state ballot measure to replace the two-thirds vote requirement with a 55 percent majority vote for voters to pass local parcel taxes for their local public schools? Would you vote yes or no?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
Yes	57%	64%	35%	54%	49%
No	34	25	56	40	41
Don't know	9	11	9	5	10

Local Control Funding Formula

The governor’s proposed 2018–19 budget fully funds the Local Control Funding Formula, but most Californians and public school parents (70% each) say they have heard nothing at all about the state school funding formula. About three in ten adults (29%) and public school parents (30%) say they have heard a lot or a little. More than two-thirds of adults have said they have heard nothing at all since we first began asking this question in April 2014. Today, at least two-thirds of Californians across regions and political and demographic groups say they have heard nothing at all about the LCFF.

“Next, how much, if anything, have you heard about the Local Control Funding Formula, a policy enacted in recent years that changes the way K–12 public school districts are funded in California?”

	All adults	Party			Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind	
A lot	5%	6%	7%	4%	4%
A little	24	26	21	28	26
Nothing at all	70	68	71	67	70
Don't know	1	1	1	1	–

Though awareness of the LCFF is low, after being read a brief description of the policy, more than seven in ten adults and public school parents (71% each) favor the policy, which gives additional funding to school districts that have more English language learners and lower-income students and gives districts increased flexibility over spending. Support for the LCFF among all adults was similar in 2017 (65%). Today, while majorities across parties favor the LCFF, Democrats (81%) and independents (73%) are much more likely than Republicans (55%) to do so. Regionally, majority support is highest in Orange/San Diego (76%) and lowest in Los Angeles (66%). Though strong majorities across all demographic groups favor the LCFF, support is higher among adults ages 18 to 34 (77%) than among older Californians (68% 35 to 54, 69% 55 and older).

“The Local Control Funding Formula provides additional funding to school districts that have more English language learners and lower-income students and gives flexibility over how state funding is spent. Do you favor or oppose this policy?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents	Heard about LCFF
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites		
Favor	71%	77%	71%	75%	68%	71%	76%
Oppose	19	20	15	17	21	20	19
Don't know	10	4	14	8	11	9	6

With the LCFF set to be fully funded, how confident are Californians that school districts that receive additional funding will direct those funds to support English language learners and lower-income students? A majority of adults say they are very confident (13%) or somewhat confident (45%) that this additional funding will be spent on these students. Findings were similar last April (11% very, 42% somewhat) but were slightly higher in April 2016, when 65 percent of adults were at least somewhat confident that the funds would benefit English language learners and lower-income students. Today, public school parents (60%) express similar levels of confidence as adults overall (58%).

Majorities across racial/ethnic groups express at least some confidence that the additional funding will go to English language learners and lower-income students, though Latinos (65%) and Asian Americans

(63%) are more likely than whites (53%) and African Americans (52%) to express confidence. Across parties, 65 percent of Democrats are at least somewhat confident that districts will spend additional funding on English language learners and lower-income students, compared to fewer independents (49%) and Republicans (41%). Notably, Californians with household incomes under \$40,000 (67%) are more likely than those with higher incomes (57% \$40,000 to under \$80,000; 52% \$80,000 or more) to say they are at least somewhat confident that school districts that receive additional funding will use those funds to support English language learners and lower-income students.

“As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, how confident are you that local school districts which receive additional funding will spend that money on programs and support for English language learners and lower-income students?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Very confident	13%	14%	14%	18%	9%	15%
Somewhat confident	45	38	49	47	44	45
Not too confident	23	23	21	21	25	18
Not at all confident	16	23	11	12	19	21
Don't know	3	1	5	2	3	1

Californians are at least somewhat optimistic that the implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula will lead to improved academic achievement among English language learners and lower-income students. Seven in ten adults (24% a lot, 47% somewhat) and public school parents (30% a lot, 41% somewhat) think the implementation of the LCFF will improve academic achievement. Findings among all adults were similar last April (21% a lot, 47% somewhat). Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (86%) and Asian Americans (78%) are more likely than African Americans (68%) and whites (60%) to expect improvement. Notably, 41 percent of Latinos expect the academic achievement of English language learners and lower-income students to improve a lot. Across parties, strong majorities of Democrats (75%) and independents (68%) expect improvement, while Republicans are more skeptical (50% will improve, 42% will not improve). Solid majorities across all regions and demographic groups expect at least some improvement, though younger Californians are more likely than older residents to expect academic improvement (85% 18 to 34, 65% 35 to 54, 65% 55 and older). Similarly, those with lower household incomes are more likely to expect improvement than are those with higher incomes (80% under \$40,000; 71% \$40,000 to under \$80,000; 64% \$80,000 or more).

“As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, do you think the academic achievement of English language learners and lower-income students will or will not improve?” (If it will improve: “Do you think it will improve a lot or somewhat?”)

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Improve a lot	24%	27%	23%	41%	13%	30%
Improve somewhat	47	41	55	45	47	41
Will not improve	20	29	15	9	28	21
Don't know	8	3	7	5	12	8

Parental Involvement

The LCFF requires school districts to develop, adopt, and annually update three-year Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs) and to reach out to parents and the broader community for input. A majority of public school parents (54%) say they have received information from their child’s school or school district on how to get involved. This marks a slight increase from last year, when only 46 percent of public school parents said they had received information. Today, public school parents with household incomes below \$40,000 (59%) are slightly more likely to say they have received information than are those with income of \$40,000 or more (52%). Latino public school parents (58%) are slightly more likely than white public school parents (50%) to say they have received information.

“The Local Control Funding Formula requires school districts to seek input from parents in developing and revising their accountability plans for how to allocate resources. Has your child’s school or school district provided you with information about how to become involved, or not?”

Public school parents only	All public school parents	Household income		Race/Ethnicity	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 or more	Latinos	Whites
Yes	54%	59%	52%	58%	50%
No	41	36	45	38	42
Don't know	5	6	3	4	8

Twenty-eight percent of public school parents say they are very likely to participate in the process of revising and updating their district’s accountability plan, and 46 percent say they are somewhat likely to do so. Findings were similar in 2017, when 25 percent of public school parents said they were very likely to participate and 47 percent said they were somewhat likely to do so.

Today, Latino public school parents (80%) are more likely than white public school parents (68%) to say they are at least somewhat likely to participate in the process of revising and updating their local school district’s accountability plan. Public school parents across income groups are equally as likely to say they will participate. Fathers are as likely as mothers to say they are at least somewhat likely to participate in the process of revising and updating their local school district’s accountability plan.

“How likely are you to participate in the process of revising and updating your local school district’s accountability plan? Are you very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?”

Public school parents only	All public school parents	Household income		Gender	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 or more	Men	Women
Very likely	28%	28%	27%	29%	25%
Somewhat likely	46	48	46	46	47
Not too likely	13	11	17	14	12
Not at all likely	12	13	9	10	14
Don't know	1	—	1	1	2

School Quality Information

Eight in ten public school parents (83%) feel they can easily find information about the quality of their child’s school. Similar proportions of public school parents with household incomes below and above \$40,000 (85% each) and Latinos and whites (86% each) hold this view. Fathers (87%) are slightly more likely than mothers (79%) to feel they can easily find information about the quality of their child’s school.

“Do you feel you can easily find information about the quality of your child’s school?”

<i>Public school parents only</i>	All public school parents	Household income		Race/Ethnicity	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 or more	Latinos	Whites
Yes	83%	85%	85%	86%	86%
No	15	14	15	13	12
Don't know	2	2	–	1	2

In December, the California Department of Education and the State Board of Education launched the California School Dashboard. The dashboard is a new online tool which uses multiple measures to evaluate how the state’s K–12 schools are performing. Are public school parents aware of the new California School Dashboard? A majority of public school parents (56%) have heard nothing at all about the California School Dashboard; a third of public school parents have heard a little, and one in ten say they have heard a lot.

Similar shares of public school parents with household incomes below and above \$40,000 (54% and 59%, respectively) have heard nothing at all. Notably, Latino public school parents (53%) are more likely than white parents (34%) to have heard at least a little about the new dashboard. Mothers (14%) are more than twice as likely as fathers (6%) to have heard a lot about the dashboard. Among public school parents who say they can easily find information about the quality of their child’s school, 48 percent have heard at least a little about the California School Dashboard.

“How much, if anything, have you heard about the California School Dashboard, a new online tool which uses multiple measures to evaluate how the state’s K–12 schools are performing? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?”

<i>Public school parents only</i>	All public school parents	Household income		Race/Ethnicity	
		Under \$40,000	\$40,000 or more	Latinos	Whites
A lot	10%	11%	7%	10%	10%
A little	34	35	34	43	24
Nothing at all	56	54	59	48	66

Regional Map



Methodology

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 survey research associate Lunna Lopes, project manager for this survey, associate survey director Dean Bonner, and survey research associate Alyssa Dykman. This *Californians and Education* survey is supported with funding from the Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell Foundation, the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, the Silver Giving Foundation, and the Stuart Foundation. It is the 14th annual PPIC Statewide Survey on K–12 education since 2005. The PPIC Statewide Survey invites input, comments, and suggestions from policy and public opinion experts and from its own advisory committee, but survey methods, questions, and content are determined solely by PPIC’s survey team.

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 1,704 California adult residents, including 1,193 interviewed on cell phones and 511 interviewed on landline telephones. Interviews took an average of 17 minutes to complete. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights from March 25–April 3, 2018.

Cell phone 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. 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 to help defray the 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 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. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (age 18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing using a “youngest male/female” method to avoid biases in age and gender.

For both cell phones and landlines, telephone numbers were called as many as eight times. When no contact with an individual was made, calls to a number were limited to six. Also, to increase our ability to interview Asian American adults, we made up to three additional calls to phone numbers estimated by Survey Sampling International as likely to be associated with Asian American individuals.

Live landline and cell phone interviews were conducted by Abt Associates in English and Spanish, according to respondents’ preferences. Accent on Languages, Inc., translated new survey questions into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever.

Abt Associates uses the US Census Bureau’s 2012–2016 American Community Survey’s (ACS) Public Use Microdata Series for California (with regional coding information from the University of Minnesota’s Integrated Public Use Microdata Series for California) to compare certain demographic characteristics of the survey sample—region, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education—with the characteristics of California’s adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the ACS figures. To estimate landline and cell phone service in California, Abt Associates used 2016 state-level estimates released by the National Center for Health Statistics—which used data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and the ACS. The estimates for California were then compared against landline and cell phone service reported in this survey. We also used voter registration data from the California Secretary of State to compare the party registration of registered voters in our sample to party registration statewide. The landline and cell phone samples were then integrated using a frame integration weight, while sample balancing adjusted for differences across regional, age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, telephone service, and party registration groups.

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,704 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,330 registered voters, the sampling error is ± 3.6 percent; for the 867 likely voters, it is ± 4.4 percent; for the 523 parents, it is ± 5.5 percent; for the 391 public school parents, it is ± 6.2 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.

We present results for five geographic regions, accounting 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 of other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, likely voters, parents and public school parents but sample sizes for these less populous areas are not large enough to report separately. We also present results for congressional districts currently held by Democrats or Republicans, based on residential zip code and party of the local US House member.

We present results for non-Hispanic whites, who account for 42 percent of the state’s adult population, and also for Latinos, who account for about a third of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest-growing voter groups. We also present results for non-Hispanic Asian Americans, who make up about 15 percent of the state’s adult population, and non-Hispanic African Americans, who comprise about 6 percent. Results for other racial/ethnic groups—such as Native Americans—are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, likely voters, parents, public school parents, but sample sizes are not large enough for separate analysis. Results for African American and Asian American likely voters are combined with those of other racial/ethnic groups because sample sizes for African American and Asian American likely voters are too small for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of those who report they are registered Democrats, registered Republicans, and decline-to-state or independent voters; the results for those who say they are registered to vote in other parties are not large enough for separate analysis. We also analyze the responses of likely voters—so designated per their responses to survey questions about voter registration, previous election participation, intentions to vote this year, attention to election news, and current interest in politics.

The percentages presented in the report tables and in the questionnaire may not add to 100 due to rounding.

We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those in national surveys by CBS News and Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research. Additional details about our methodology can be found at www.ppic.org/content/other/SurveyMethodology.pdf and are available upon request through surveys@ppic.org.

Questionnaire and Results

CALIFORNIANS AND EDUCATION

March 25–April 3, 2018

1,704 California Adult Residents:
English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR $\pm 3.2\%$ AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE
PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

1. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Jerry Brown is handling his job as governor of California?

52% approve
30 disapprove
18 don't know

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

45% approve
31 disapprove
25 don't know

3. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling its job?

46% approve
40 disapprove
14 don't know

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

42% approve
38 disapprove
20 don't know

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

67% yes *[ask q5a]*
33 no *[skip to q6b]*

5a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?

44% Democrat *[ask q6]*
26 Republican *[skip to q6a]*
5 another party *(specify) [skip to q7]*
25 independent *[skip to q6b]*

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

59% strong
37 not very strong
4 don't know

[skip to q7]

6a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

61% strong
35 not very strong
4 don't know

[skip to q7]

6b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

22% Republican Party
46 Democratic Party
25 neither *(volunteered)*
7 don't know

7. [likely voters only] As you may know, California now has a top-two primary system for statewide races in which voters can cast ballots for any candidate, regardless of party, and the two candidates receiving the most votes—regardless of party—will advance to the general election. If the June primary for governor were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for? [rotate names and then ask “or someone else?”]

- 26% Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, Lieutenant Governor/ Businessman
- 15 John Cox, a Republican, Businessman/Taxpayer Advocate
- 13 Antonio Villaraigosa, a Democrat, Public Policy Advisor
- 10 Travis Allen, a Republican, California Assemblyman/Businessman
- 7 John Chiang, a Democrat, California State Treasurer
- 6 Delaine Eastin, a Democrat, educator/Youth Advocate
- 1 someone else (specify)
- 22 don't know

8. [likely voters only] How closely are you following news about candidates for the 2018 governor’s election—very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

- 18% very closely
- 36 fairly closely
- 32 not too closely
- 13 not at all closely
- 1 don't know

9. [likely voters only] In thinking about the 2018 governor’s election, how important to you are the candidates’ positions on K–12 public education—very important, somewhat important, or not too important?

- 64% very important
- 26 somewhat important
- 9 not too important
- 2 don't know

Next,

10. [likely voters only] If the June nonpartisan primary election for State Superintendent of Public Instruction were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for? [rotate names and then ask “or someone else?”]

- 13% Tony Thurmond, Educator/State Legislator
- 13 Marshall Tuck, Schools Improvement Director
- someone else (specify)
- 74 don't know

11. [likely voters only] Which of the following is more important to you in candidates for statewide office, such as governor or State Superintendent of Public Instruction, when it comes to K–12 public education—[rotate] [1] that they work with the Trump administration [or] [2] that they push back against the Trump administration?

- 39% work with the Trump Administration
- 52 push back against the Trump Administration
- 3 both (volunteered)
- 7 don't know

Changing topics,

12. Where do you think California currently ranks in per pupil spending for K–12 public schools? Compared to other states, is California's spending near the top, above average, below average, or near the bottom?

- 16% near the top
- 17 above average
- 27 average
- 19 below average
- 11 near the bottom
- 10 don't know

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

- 8% near the top
- 15 above average
- 36 average
- 24 below average
- 9 near the bottom
- 7 don’t know

14. Next, overall, how would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today? If you had to give your local public schools a grade, would it be A, B, C, D, or F? [if necessary, read: Think of grades A to F as a scale where A is the best and F is failing.]

- 20% A
- 34 B
- 24 C
- 12 D
- 5 F
- 5 don’t know

[rotate questions 15 and 16]

15. How important is it to you that the public schools in your community have a mix of students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds—is this extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not so important, or not important at all?

- 27% extremely important
- 34 very important
- 19 somewhat important
- 7 not so important
- 11 not important at all
- 1 don’t know

16. How important is it to you that the public schools in your community have a mix of students from different economic backgrounds—is this extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not so important, or not important at all?

- 19% extremely important
- 35 very important
- 24 somewhat important
- 9 not so important
- 12 not important at all
- 1 don’t know

Next,

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

- 10% more than enough
- 23 just enough
- 59 not enough
- 9 don’t know

18. As you may know, under Proposition 13, residential and commercial property taxes are both strictly limited. What if there was a state ballot measure to have commercial properties taxed according to their current market value and direct some of this new tax revenue to state funding for K–12 public schools? Would you vote yes or no?

- 61% yes
- 33 no
- 6 don’t know

19. What if there was a state ballot measure to replace the two-thirds vote requirement with a 55 percent majority vote for voters to pass local parcel taxes for their local public schools? Would you vote yes or no?

- 57% yes
- 34 no
- 9 don’t know

[rotate questions 20 and 21]

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

- 70% yes
- 22 no
- 8 don't know

21. What if there was a measure on your local ballot to increase local parcel taxes to provide more funds for the local public schools? Would you vote yes or no?

- 61% yes
- 34 no
- 6 don't know

Next,

22. How much, if anything, have you heard about the Local Control Funding Formula, a policy enacted in recent years that changes the way K–12 public school districts are funded in California? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

- 5% a lot
- 24 a little
- 70 nothing at all
- 1 don't know

23. The Local Control Funding Formula provides additional funding to school districts that have more [rotate] [English language learners] [and] [lower-income students] and gives local school districts more flexibility over how state funding is spent. In general, do you favor or oppose this policy?

- 71% favor
- 19 oppose
- 10 don't know

24. As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, how confident are you that local school districts which receive additional funding will spend that money on programs and support for [rotate in same order as Q23] [English language learners] [and] [lower-income students]? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

- 13% very confident
- 45 somewhat confident
- 23 not too confident
- 16 not at all confident
- 3 don't know

25. As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, do you think the academic achievement of [rotate in same order as Q23] [English language learners] [and] [lower-income students] will or will not improve? (if it will, ask: Do you think it will improve a lot or somewhat?)

- 24% improve a lot
- 47 improve somewhat
- 20 will not improve
- 8 don't know

26. [public school parents only] The Local Control Funding Formula requires school districts to seek input from parents in developing and revising their accountability plans for how to allocate resources. Has your child's school or school district provided you with information about how to become involved, or not?

- 54% yes
- 41 no
- 5 don't know

27. [public school parents only] And how likely are you to participate in the process of revising and updating your local school district's accountability plan? Are you very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?

- 28% very likely
- 46 somewhat likely
- 13 not too likely
- 12 not at all likely
- 1 don't know

On another topic,

28. [public school parents only] Do you feel you can easily find information about the quality of your child’s school?

- 83% yes
- 15 no
- 2 don’t know

29. [public school parents only] Next, how much, if anything, have you heard about the California School Dashboard, a new online tool which uses multiple measures to evaluate how the state’s K–12 schools are performing? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

- 10% a lot
- 34 a little
- 56 nothing at all
- don’t know

Next,

30. [parents only] What do you think is the biggest problem facing K–12 public schools in your community?

[code, don’t read]

- 24% lack of funding
- 9 quality of teachers
- 7 safety, bullying
- 6 lack of parental involvement
- 5 large class sizes
- 4 low teacher pay
- 3 mismanagement, poor leadership
- 3 too much bureaucracy
- 2 English learners / immigration
- 2 limited/poor curriculum
- 2 lack of discipline, student behavior
- 1 high drop-out rates / low graduation rates
- 1 teacher shortage
- 1 teacher unions, benefits
- 16 other (*specify*)
- 14 don’t know

31. [parents only] I have a question about four school types. [rotate] One is [1] traditional public schools. Another is [2] charter schools, which are publicly funded but run outside of the public school system. The third is [3] religious or parochial schools. And the fourth is [4] private schools. Imagine you could send your youngest child to any one of these four kinds of schools and cost and location were not an issue. All things equal, which would you pick?

- 35% public school
- 13 charter school
- 18 religious school
- 31 private school
- 1 other (*volunteered*)
- 2 don’t know

32. [parents only] Next, what do you hope will be the highest grade level that your youngest child will achieve: some high school; high school graduate; two-year community college graduate or career technical training; four-year college graduate; or a graduate degree after college?

- some high school
- 5% high school graduate
- 8 two-year community college graduate or career technical training
- 35 four-year college graduate
- 48 a graduate degree after college
- 3 don’t know

On another topic,

33. How concerned are you that increased federal immigration enforcement efforts will impact undocumented students and their families in your local public schools? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 43% very concerned
- 27 somewhat concerned
- 13 not too concerned
- 16 not at all concerned
- 2 don’t know

34. Do you favor or oppose your public school district designating itself as a sanctuary “safe zone” to indicate it will protect its undocumented students and their families from federal immigration enforcement efforts?

- 65% favor
- 30 oppose
- 5 don't know

Next,

35. How concerned are you about the threat of a mass shooting in your local schools? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 49% very concerned
- 24 somewhat concerned
- 14 not too concerned
- 12 not at all concerned
- 1 don't know

36. Do you favor or oppose allowing more teachers and school officials to carry guns in schools?

- 30% favor
- 67 oppose
- 3 don't know

37. Next, would you consider yourself to be politically:

[read list, rotate order top to bottom]

- 13% very liberal
- 19 somewhat liberal
- 29 middle-of-the-road
- 21 somewhat conservative
- 14 very conservative
- 4 don't know

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

- 25% great deal
- 34 fair amount
- 30 only a little
- 10 none
- don't know

[d1-d16 demographic questions]

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