



**May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: INTERESTED PARTIES**  
**FR: RYAN WINGER, COURTNEY SIEVERS, MAGELLAN STRATEGIES**  
**RE: COLORADO EDUCATION ISSUES SURVEY SUMMARY**

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This is a summary of a live phone and online survey of 731 registered voters in the state of Colorado. The online interviews were conducted April 22<sup>th</sup> – May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019. The phone interviews were conducted May 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019. This survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.54% at the 95 percent confidence interval. This survey was weighted slightly to reflect the voter registration demographics of Colorado. The complete results can be found on our website, [MagellanStrategies.com](http://MagellanStrategies.com).

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### **Survey Overview**

The focus of this survey was to measure and understand the opinions and viewpoints of Colorado voters on a wide variety of education issues. This includes from teacher pay, state-funded full-day kindergarten, the federal government's role in public education, school choice, school safety and vocational training.

With such a wide-ranging survey, there is a significant amount of data here. That is particularly true for the verbatim responses, only a very small portion of which have been included in this summary. Some of the findings may confirm what you expected, while other findings might challenge your assumptions. Whatever the case, we encourage thoughts and feedback as we continue to provide accurate, insightful data on the important public policy issues facing our state.

### **Understanding the Demographics of Colorado's Registered Voters**

Before reviewing the survey results, it is important to understand the major subgroups among registered voters in Colorado. Unaffiliated voters now comprise 39% of all registered voters, with Democrats and Republicans trailing at 30% and 29%, respectively. This shows the importance of unaffiliated voters when considering any public policy issue within Colorado. Also, while voters aged 18-34 are the largest group of voters in the state by age range at 28%, this survey has weighted them down slightly to 24% and added a percentage point to each of our other four age ranges: 35-44 at 18%, 45-54 at 17%, 55-64 at 18%, and voters age 65 and older at 23%.

## **Key Findings:**

- When asked about the importance of public education to them personally, **75% of voters answered that it is either very important (38%) or extremely important (37%)**. Clearly public education is a significant issue for Colorado voters, whether they have a child in the public school system or not.
- Colorado voters are split on the proper role of the federal government in our public education system, as **35% believe the federal government should be less involved while 34% believe that federal government should be more involved**.
- A plurality of Colorado voters, 30% believe **the most important characteristic for a public school is having strong academic standards**, followed by **fostering a positive learning environment (19%)**, **hiring quality teachers (17%)**, and **ensuring school safety and security (17%)**.
- **Fifty-eight percent of voters have a favorable opinion of public schools** in Colorado. The most common reasons given are a positive personal experience with public schools and quality teachers. The most common reasons given for why voters have an unfavorable opinion of public schools are: a negative personal experience with public schools, lack of funding to the classroom, a negative learning environment for students, a perceived political agenda in the schools, and low standards resulting in students unprepared for life after school.
- **Forty-three percent of voters have a favorable opinion of charter schools** in Colorado. The most common reasons given are: a positive personal experience with charter schools, higher standards, and a more positive learning environment for students. The most common reasons given for why voters have an unfavorable opinion of charter schools are the perception that they remove resources from public schools and are lacking accountability and diversity.
- When asked if they approve or disapprove of the job their local public schools are doing educating and preparing students for the future, **59% approve and 32% disapprove**.
- To measure voters' perception of school choice in Colorado, the survey asked if parents in Colorado already have the freedom to choose which school their child attends, or if more needs to be done in order to give parents that freedom. The survey found that **47% believe that parents already have school choice, while 40% believe that more needs to be done**.
- Regardless whether they are a parent or not, voters were asked which type of school they would choose to provide their child the best education possible. **Public school was the top choice at 41%, though the combination of those who**

**chose a private school (28%) or charter school (16%) was slightly higher at 44%.** This is significant because there is evidence in the verbatim responses that voters conflate private schools and charter schools. They essentially view them together as distinct from a traditional public school. Home school was the choice for 9% of respondents.

- **Voters overwhelmingly believe that students in local school districts are spending too much time preparing for and taking standardized tests,** with 67% of voters agreeing with that statement and only 19% disagreeing.
- When asked about funding for public schools in Colorado, **67% of voters think that public schools are underfunded while 20% do not.**
- **Half of all voters disagree with the statement that school districts in Colorado effectively manage their financial resources and spend taxpayer money wisely,** compared to 36% who agree.
- **Sixty-one percent of voters support state-funded, full-day kindergarten, regardless of the cost to Colorado taxpayers,** including 36% who strongly support the policy.
- Nearly **3 out of 4 voters believe that public school teachers are underpaid in Colorado.** The most common reasons given for why voters think public school teachers are underpaid were: the demands/stress of the job, the importance of the job for our future, and teachers struggling to make ends meet because of the cost of living or other expenses. The most common reasons given for why voters do not think public school teachers are underpaid were: they do not work year-round, they have favorable pensions/benefits, and they knew the pay when they entered the profession.
- While only 11% of voters believe that public schools are very safe for students, **a large majority of 71% thinks that schools are somewhat safe.** It is important to note that these interviews were conducted before the shooting at STEM School Highlands Ranch.
- In another broad measurement of voter satisfaction with the public education system, respondents were asked if they agree that the public education system in Colorado is setting up students for success in the future. **A majority of 63% agreed with that statement, while only 26% disagreed.**
- Voters were asked their impression of how important a college education is today, with an option of very important, somewhat important or not important at all. **There was an even split in the responses between somewhat important (45%) and very important (43%).**

- There was significant agreement across all voter subgroups on the issue of vocational training. **When asked whether they agree that Colorado public high schools should do more to focus on vocational training, an overwhelming majority of 83% of respondents agreed.**
- After a brief informative statement on the issue of school vouchers, voters were asked whether they support or oppose a school voucher program. **Half of all voters support a school voucher program** after the explanation that a school voucher program allows parents to allocate public funding towards their child’s education at a private school of their choice, including religiously affiliated private schools.

**Importance of Public Education**

To begin the survey voters were asked: How important is the issue of public education to you personally? Seventy-five percent replied either extremely important or very important, with only 4% saying that the issue is not important to them at all. Women were more likely than men to respond that the issue is extremely important, and voters under the age of 44 place greater importance on public education compared to older voters. Democratic voters also show greater concern for public education, while Republicans and unaffiliated voters are more likely to say the issue is very or somewhat important rather than extremely important.

Not surprisingly, respondents who currently have a student in their household are far more likely to say that public education is extremely important, while one-fourth of those without a child in the household say the issue is only somewhat important. There are no significant differences across geographic areas of the state, though those in a big city or small town are more likely to respond that the issue is extremely important than those in suburban or rural areas. Looking at respondents by income level, those in households making \$75k-\$125k/year are the most likely to say that public education is extremely important.

*“How important is the issue of public education to you personally?”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wom</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Unaf</u>	<u>18-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65+</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>No Student</u>
Extremely Important	37%	31%	41%	24%	47%	32%	46%	33%	24%	50%	30%
Very Important	38%	43%	34%	43%	35%	38%	37%	37%	43%	34%	40%
Somewhat Important	21%	22%	20%	25%	17%	25%	15%	26%	25%	15%	24%
Not Important At All	4%	4%	4%	8%	1%	4%	2%	4%	8%	0%	6%
Unsure/Refused	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%

*“How important is the issue of public education to you personally?”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Big City</u>	<u>Sub-urban</u>	<u>Small Town</u>	<u>Rural Area</u>	<u>Below \$50k</u>	<u>\$50k-\$75k</u>	<u>\$75k-\$125k</u>	<u>+\$125k</u>
Extremely Important	37%	42%	34%	41%	33%	34%	38%	41%	36%
Very Important	38%	35%	40%	40%	35%	40%	36%	35%	44%
Somewhat Important	21%	21%	22%	18%	20%	22%	20%	19%	17%
Not Important At All	4%	2%	4%	1%	12%	3%	6%	5%	3%
Unsure/Refused	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

**The Federal Government’s Involvement in Public Education**

Voter opinion on the proper role of the federal government in public education is evenly split, as 34% of respondents think the federal government should be more involved, 35% think it should be less involved, and 26% think the federal government should keep its involvement about the same.

The results are dramatically different across party lines, as over half of Democrats think the federal government should be more involved, while over half of Republicans think the federal government should be less involved. Unaffiliated voters are evenly split. Among the different age ranges, 43% of voters aged 18-44 believe the federal government should be more involved in public education, while a large plurality of voters over age 44 thinks that the federal government should be less involved.

*“When thinking about public education across the country, do you think the federal government should be more involved in public education than it currently is, should keep its involvement about the same, or should the federal government be less involved in public education?”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wom</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Unaf</u>	<u>18-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65+</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>No Student</u>
More Involved	34%	34%	33%	18%	53%	30%	43%	26%	28%	34%	33%
Stay the Same	26%	26%	26%	26%	25%	28%	32%	24%	19%	29%	25%
Less Involved	35%	37%	34%	53%	18%	35%	22%	44%	47%	34%	36%
Unsure/Refused	5%	3%	7%	3%	4%	7%	3%	6%	6%	3%	6%

**What Voters Look for in a Public School (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

To measure what voters look for in a public school, respondents were read a list of seven different priorities and asked which one is the most important. The results show interesting differences across the major demographic subgroups. While a plurality of both men and women chose strong academic standards as their top priority, the second highest choice among women was ensuring school safety and security (22%), which was only the fourth highest response among men. School safety and security is also a top priority for voters age 44 and younger, though still behind fostering a positive learning environment (which is not unrelated from school safety) and strong academic standards. Voters over the age of 45 are significantly more likely to choose strong academic standards as their top priority.

Not surprisingly, school safety and security is more important for those respondents who have a student in their household, as 22% said it was the most important characteristic. For those without a student in the household, the clear top priority was strong academic standards.

*“Regardless if you have a child in your household or not, among the following characteristics of a public school, which one do you think is the most important?”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Strong Academics	30%	32%	28%	34%	19%	34%	22%	38%	31%	24%	32%
Positive Environment	20%	18%	21%	13%	29%	17%	26%	16%	11%	23%	18%
Quality of Teachers	17%	16%	18%	16%	22%	15%	15%	20%	19%	18%	17%
School Safety/Security	17%	12%	22%	20%	21%	12%	22%	13%	16%	22%	16%
Extracurriculars	7%	10%	5%	6%	5%	11%	9%	3%	11%	5%	8%
Classroom Discipline	4%	6%	3%	6%	1%	6%	2%	5%	8%	5%	4%
Good Communication	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%	1%	3%	1%	0%	2%	2%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%
Unsure/Refused	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%	4%	0%	2%

*“Regardless if you have a child in your household or not, among the following characteristics of a public school, which one do you think is the most important?”*

Answer	All	Big City	Sub-urban	Small Town	Rural Area	Below \$50k	\$50k-\$75k	\$75k-\$125k	+\$125k
Strong Academics	30%	22%	31%	35%	31%	27%	20%	33%	44%
Positive Environment	20%	14%	19%	28%	22%	16%	16%	23%	23%
Quality of Teachers	17%	23%	18%	8%	16%	16%	20%	18%	18%
School Safety/Security	17%	22%	18%	10%	15%	21%	21%	14%	11%
Extracurriculars	7%	14%	5%	11%	5%	11%	9%	5%	2%
Classroom Discipline	4%	3%	3%	6%	9%	5%	7%	3%	1%
Good Communication	2%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%	3%	3%	1%
Other	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Unsure/Refused	2%	2%	1%	0%	2%	2%	3%	0%	0%

**Image Rating of Public Schools in Colorado**

Voters have a favorable impression of public schools in Colorado, with an image rating of nearly 2-to-1 (58% favorable and 31% unfavorable). There is again a clear difference across party lines, as just over 50% of Republicans have a favorable opinion of public schools compared to 68% of Democrats. Unaffiliated voters are in the middle, though closer to Republicans as 55% have a favorable opinion.

Most other voter subgroups are relatively similar on this question, though interestingly those with a household income above \$75k are significantly more likely than those below \$75k to have a favorable impression of public schools.

*“Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of public schools in Colorado?”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Total Favorable	58%	57%	60%	51%	68%	55%	56%	60%	59%	62%	57%
Total Unfavorable	31%	33%	29%	40%	21%	33%	32%	32%	28%	31%	31%
Unsure/No Opinion	11%	10%	11%	9%	11%	12%	12%	8%	13%	7%	12%
Very Favorable	11%	12%	10%	10%	14%	8%	10%	9%	15%	13%	10%
Somewhat Favorable	47%	45%	50%	41%	54%	47%	46%	51%	44%	49%	47%
Very Unfavorable	7%	9%	6%	13%	4%	7%	7%	8%	8%	9%	7%
Somewhat Unfavorable	24%	24%	23%	27%	17%	26%	25%	24%	20%	22%	24%

Answer	All	Big City	Sub-urban	Small Town	Rural Area	Below \$50k	\$50k-\$75k	\$75k-\$125k	+\$125k
Total Favorable	58%	53%	60%	60%	55%	49%	54%	69%	70%
Total Unfavorable	31%	35%	30%	30%	34%	38%	36%	20%	24%
Unsure/No Opinion	11%	12%	10%	10%	11%	13%	10%	11%	6%
Very Favorable	11%	7%	10%	15%	14%	8%	13%	12%	9%
Somewhat Favorable	47%	46%	50%	45%	41%	41%	41%	57%	61%
Very Unfavorable	7%	9%	7%	6%	10%	9%	5%	7%	10%
Somewhat Unfavorable	24%	26%	23%	24%	24%	29%	31%	13%	14%

**Why Voters Have a Favorable Opinion of Public Schools in Colorado (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters have a favorable opinion of public schools in are a positive personal experience with public schools and quality teachers. It is interesting to note how many respondents describe a favorable opinion of public schools but qualify the statement by saying that they do the best they can given a bad situation (low funding, low pay, too much testing, etc...).

*“In general Colorado has very high quality schools that teach our children the skills they need to be successful.” – Female, 35-44, Republican, Douglas County*

*“I was in Colorado public schools from 2<sup>nd</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. I got a good education and had high quality teachers.” – Male, 18-34, Democrat, Jefferson County*

*“Because my daughter went to school here and got a good education. I just feel sad the teachers are not paid more and there are not more teachers per student in the public schools. But in general I think they do a good job and giving children good variety of extracurricular activities and having high academic standards.” – Female, 55-64, Democrat, Boulder County*

*“I think that teachers who teach in public schools in Colorado are willing to work with students of all ability levels with limited resources.” – Female, 18-34, Unaffiliated, Arapahoe County*

*“My daughter improved after going from charter school to a regular public school.” – Female, 35-44, Unaffiliated, El Paso County*

*“It’s obvious that our school system is working as students are becoming lawyers, doctors, engineers, etc...With as little as teachers are paid, they are doing an awesome job of educating students.” – Female, 55-64, Unaffiliated, Weld County*

*“I feel they are dedicated to the education of our next generation, but I fear the government is not funding education enough.” – Female, 35-44, Democrat, Larimer County*

*“Because I think they are trying to do a good job without having the monetary support that they need.” – Male, 65+, Democrat, Logan County*

*“When my kids were in school the teachers and lessons prepared them for college.” – Female, 45-54, Unaffiliated, Teller County*

*“I feel schools overall good teachers, just need for of them.” – Male, 55-64, Republican, Garfield County*

### **Why Voters Have an Unfavorable Opinion of Public Schools in Colorado (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters have an unfavorable opinion of public schools in Colorado are a negative personal experience with public schools, lack of funding to the classroom, a negative learning environment for students, a political agenda in the schools, and low standards/students unprepared for life after school.

*“They don’t teach to a standard. All they do is prepare kids of standardized tests.” – Male, 45-54, Republican, El Paso County*

*“Too many kids in one class, not having different ways of teaching.” – Male, 18-34, Democrat, Moffat County*

*“The districts are poorly run and too large. Teachers are unhappy because they’re paid so little.” – Female, 18-34, Democrat, Denver*

*“It’s all about making kids feel good, liberal progressive indoctrination, and promotion of alternative lifestyles. Actual academic education is no longer the priority of educational institutions.” – Female, 65+, Republican, Arapahoe County*



*“Looking at kids that graduate they have no idea how to do basic things like balance a checkbook, pay bills, cook, know what compound interest is and what it means to pay it, drive or know how government works. Very disappointing.” – Female, 45-54, Republican, Weld County*

*“[Schools] spend too much time and money on courses that are not needed and won’t help in the student’s future.” – Male, 45-54, Unaffiliated, Douglas County*

*“I don’t have children in public schools, but I’ve heard from others that the quality of education has been below their expectations.” – Female, 55-64, Republican, Denver*

*“Too much money going to administrators and not enough to the classroom.” – Male, 45-54, Unaffiliated, Weld County*

*“The lack of funding is so low, students are not learning to their needs, it seems to only be about passing standardized tests. Teacher pay is low, administrative pay is high.” – Female, 35-44, Democrat, Pueblo County*

*“Teachers in general do not get paid enough but in Colorado the cost of living is so high. Teachers can’t make enough to pay rent.” – Female, 18-34, Republican, Adams County*

**Image Rating of Charter Schools in Colorado**

A plurality of voters have a favorable impression of charter schools in Colorado, with an image rating of nearly 2-to-1 (43% favorable and 22% unfavorable), though a much larger percentage (35%) are unsure or have no opinion. Men have a more favorable opinion of charter schools than women, and the familiar partisan break is there as well, as 55% of Republicans have a favorable opinion of charter schools compared to only 30% of Democrats. Democratic voters are relatively split on the issue, as 36% have an unfavorable opinion of charter schools and 34% are unsure. Charter schools have a slightly higher image rating among those voters over age 45 and those at higher income levels.

*“Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of charter schools in Colorado?”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Total Favorable	43%	47%	39%	55%	30%	43%	39%	46%	46%	48%	41%
Total Unfavorable	22%	22%	22%	7%	36%	23%	23%	20%	23%	22%	22%
Unsure/No Opinion	35%	31%	39%	38%	34%	34%	38%	34%	31%	30%	37%
Very Favorable	12%	14%	11%	19%	6%	11%	9%	15%	15%	15%	11%
Somewhat Favorable	31%	33%	28%	36%	24%	32%	30%	31%	31%	33%	30%
Very Unfavorable	7%	9%	6%	2%	14%	6%	8%	6%	8%	7%	7%
Somewhat Unfavorable	15%	13%	16%	5%	22%	17%	15%	14%	15%	15%	15%

*“Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of charter schools in Colorado?”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Big City</u>	<u>Sub-urban</u>	<u>Small Town</u>	<u>Rural Area</u>	<u>Below \$50k</u>	<u>\$50k-\$75k</u>	<u>\$75k-\$125k</u>	<u>+\$125k</u>
Total Favorable	43%	35%	45%	39%	51%	39%	39%	47%	51%
Total Unfavorable	22%	24%	23%	26%	13%	22%	28%	22%	17%
Unsure/No Opinion	35%	41%	32%	35%	36%	39%	33%	31%	32%
Very Favorable	12%	8%	14%	13%	11%	12%	11%	13%	11%
Somewhat Favorable	31%	27%	31%	26%	40%	27%	28%	34%	40%
Very Unfavorable	7%	10%	7%	9%	4%	8%	10%	8%	3%
Somewhat Unfavorable	15%	14%	16%	17%	9%	14%	18%	14%	14%

**Why Voters Have a Favorable Opinion of Charter Schools in Colorado (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters have a favorable opinion of charter schools are: a positive personal experience with charter schools, higher standards, and a more positive learning environment for students.

*“My daughter that attended got individual attention as well as a very quality education.”  
 – Female, 55-64, Unaffiliated, Weld County*

*“Charter schools are the best of both worlds, the Public school structure with Private school rules.” – Male, 45-54, Unaffiliated, El Paso County*

*“Charter schools have smaller classroom size and more teaching accountability. They also encourage more parental involvement.” – Female, 45-54, Republican, Jefferson County*

*“From what I know the education seems to be more tailored to a child’s abilities and is then grown from there. They have more abilities to do more hands on teaching.” – Female, 35-44, Democrat, Pueblo County*

*“Smaller schools are more welcoming, warm and inviting. The class size is much more favorable. They are more personable and seem much easier to connect with students and build relationships.” – Female, 55-64, Unaffiliated, Adams County*

*“I have seen that charter schools have improved offerings and learning in areas. I think that they provide competition to regular schools and give a choice that was lacking before.” – Female, 55-64, Unaffiliated, Fremont County*

*“Charter schools in Colorado have more demanding curriculums and achieve higher standards than public schools.” – Male, 45-54, Democrat, Boulder County*

*“I don't know enough to say much but they parents and kids that I know are very happy with the charter schools they go to.” – Female, 35-44, Democrat, Larimer County*

*“Academic standards are high, so students graduate with the knowledge necessary to be successful.” – Female, 65+, Republican, El Paso County*

*“The charter schools here get very high ratings and test scores. They are doing something right.” – Male, 35-44, Republican, El Paso County*

### **Why Voters Have an Unfavorable Opinion of Charter Schools in Colorado (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters have an unfavorable opinion of charter schools are the impression that they remove resources from public schools, they lack accountability and they lack diversity.

*“They're being used to undermine the public schools across the state.” – Male, 55-64 Democrat, El Paso County*

*“They focus too much on profit and on the children that can succeed with the least amount of help. They do not focus enough on the children that have special needs or they just don't accept them at all.” – Male, 55-64, Unaffiliated, Douglas County*

*“I think they take funds away from public education without giving back a reasonable chance for all students to benefit from them.” – Female, 55-64, Unaffiliated, Larimer County*

*“I have a somewhat unfavorable opinion of Charter schools because they are not regulated so it is not clear what they are teaching or if it fits what students need to learn.” – Female, 35-44, Unaffiliated, Weld County*

*“I don't know a whole lot about charter schools but there seems to be less oversight and less regulation.” – Female, 18-34, Democrat, Arapahoe County*

*“I had a bad experience with enrollment for my daughter. They declined my enrollment after being accepted, and I found out charter schools can do whatever they want.” – Female, 35-44, Democrat, Denver*

*“They are an personal option, but should not be funded by the government. Government funding should be directly to public schools.” – Female, 65+, Unaffiliated, Weld County*

*“My daughter started school in a charter school and was asked to repeat a grade instead of them giving her extra help to succeed into the next.” – Female, 35-44, Unaffiliated, El Paso County*

*“Public schools are still the best way to utilize our tax dollars to achieve maximum value.” – Male, 65+, Democrat, Arapahoe County*

*“I just don't think they live up to what people expect them to. I don't see a lot of difference in them and other schools.” – Female, 35-44, Republican, Jefferson County*

**Job Approval of Local Public Schools**

Respondents were asked whether they approve of the job local public schools are doing educating and preparing students for the future. Nearly 60% of all respondents approve of the job public schools are doing, and 32% disapprove. Democrats were most positive as 70% approve, as do nearly 70% of voters with a household income over \$75k/year. On the other end of the spectrum, 50% of Republicans approved of the job local schools are doing, as well as a small majority of rural voters and voters with a household income below \$50k/year.

*“Do you approve or disapprove of the job your local public schools are doing educating and preparing students for the future?”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Total Approve	59%	61%	57%	50%	70%	57%	60%	61%	55%	65%	57%
Total Disapprove	32%	32%	33%	41%	22%	34%	31%	32%	35%	32%	33%
Unsure/No Opinion	9%	7%	10%	9%	8%	9%	9%	7%	10%	3%	10%
Strongly Approve	11%	10%	12%	10%	12%	10%	10%	11%	13%	17%	9%
Somewhat Approve	48%	51%	45%	40%	58%	47%	50%	50%	42%	48%	48%
Strongly Disapprove	11%	13%	10%	17%	4%	12%	8%	13%	13%	11%	11%
Somewhat Disapprove	21%	19%	23%	24%	18%	22%	23%	19%	22%	21%	22%

Answer	All	Big City	Sub-urban	Small Town	Rural Area	Below \$50k	\$50k-\$75k	\$75k-\$125k	+\$125k
Total Approve	59%	58%	61%	61%	53%	52%	56%	68%	69%
Total Disapprove	32%	34%	30%	33%	37%	38%	33%	25%	27%
Unsure/No Opinion	9%	8%	9%	6%	10%	10%	11%	7%	4%
Strongly Approve	11%	8%	11%	15%	13%	6%	13%	15%	13%
Somewhat Approve	48%	50%	50%	46%	40%	46%	43%	53%	56%
Strongly Disapprove	11%	14%	10%	9%	11%	13%	9%	10%	9%
Somewhat Disapprove	21%	20%	20%	24%	26%	25%	24%	15%	18%

**Voter Opinion on School Choice in Colorado**

The survey included a question to gauge whether respondents believe that parents in Colorado truly have school choice when determining which school their child attends. Among all respondents, 47% believe that parents in Colorado already have the freedom to choose their child’s school, while 40% believe that more needs to be done to ensure that freedom. That same split holds true for most of the major demographic subgroups, although a small majority of Republicans and a near majority of voters residing in big cities believe that more needs to be done on school choice.

Among respondents with a student in the household, who are the most familiar with the prospect of choosing a school for their child, a small majority of 52% believe they already have the freedom to make that choice.

*“Do you believe parents in Colorado already have the freedom to choose which school their child attends OR do you think more needs to be done to give parents in Colorado greater freedom in their school choices?”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wom</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Unaf</u>	<u>18-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65+</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>No Student</u>
Parents Have Freedom	47%	45%	49%	41%	50%	50%	47%	49%	46%	52%	46%
More To Be Done	40%	45%	35%	50%	36%	35%	41%	37%	42%	42%	39%
Unsure/Refused	13%	10%	16%	9%	14%	15%	12%	14%	12%	6%	15%

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Big City</u>	<u>Sub-urban</u>	<u>Small Town</u>	<u>Rural Area</u>	<u>Below \$50k</u>	<u>\$50k-\$75k</u>	<u>\$75k-\$125k</u>	<u>+\$125k</u>
Parents Have Freedom	47%	41%	48%	43%	57%	43%	45%	55%	52%
More To Be Done	40%	47%	38%	42%	34%	43%	41%	32%	40%
Unsure/Refused	13%	12%	14%	15%	9%	14%	14%	13%	8%

**Personal Choice to Provide Best Education Possible for Your Child**

To measure how voters view different types of schooling, the survey asked which type of school they would choose for their child to provide them the best education possible. A plurality of 41% would choose a public school, followed by private schools at 28%, charter schools at 16% and home school at 9%. The only major voting subgroup where a plurality would choose an option other than public school was among Republicans, as 39% would choose a private school. In another example of a partisan split in the survey, 55% of Democrats would choose a public school, the only subgroup where a majority would do so.

It is interesting to note that 44% of respondents would choose a private school or charter school (there is evidence in the verbatim responses that some voters conflate the two), which is slightly higher than the 41% who would choose a public school. Among those with a student in the household, the 45% who would choose a private or charter school is equal to the 45% who would choose a public school. Clearly this is a question on which voters are split, and it will be interesting to track in future surveys.

*“Regardless if you are a parent or not, if you could choose any type of school for your child to provide them the best education possible would you choose a public school, a charter school, a private school or would you home school?”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Public School	41%	41%	41%	30%	55%	38%	41%	40%	41%	45%	38%
Private School	28%	31%	25%	39%	21%	25%	27%	25%	33%	25%	29%
Charter School	16%	15%	16%	15%	13%	18%	17%	18%	9%	20%	14%
Home School	9%	7%	10%	11%	4%	9%	7%	10%	9%	8%	9%
Unsure/Refused	6%	6%	8%	5%	7%	10%	8%	7%	8%	2%	10%

Answer	All	Big City	Sub-urban	Small Town	Rural Area	Below \$50k	\$50k-\$75k	\$75k-\$125k	+\$125k
Public School	41%	48%	40%	39%	35%	37%	40%	49%	42%
Charter School	28%	26%	27%	36%	22%	26%	26%	25%	33%
Private School	16%	13%	18%	15%	10%	15%	18%	15%	18%
Home School	9%	8%	7%	4%	22%	13%	6%	7%	4%
Unsure/Refused	6%	5%	8%	6%	11%	9%	10%	4%	3%

**Why Voters Would Choose a Public School (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters would choose a public school to educate their children are: a positive personal experience with public schools, greater diversity, and positive social experiences.

*“Public schools allow the flexibility my kids need and provide many opportunities that the other types of schools do not provide.” – Female, 45-54, Democrat, Larimer County*

*“Mainly for the diversity and social skills. Being in public school is just like being in a city or workplace where you have to deal with different personalities and opinions.” – Male, 45-54, Republican, Adams County*

*“It provides the best environment for students to learn and meet people and provides good education at no cost.” – Female, 18-34, Democrat, Denver*

*“I feel like public schools give the students more of an idea about real world situations.” – Female, 45-54, Unaffiliated, El Paso County*

**Why Voters Would Choose a Charter School (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters would choose a charter school to educate their children are: a more positive environment compared to a traditional public school, greater freedom in teaching methods/curriculum, and higher academic standards.

*“I want smaller class sizes and more parent involvement.” – Female, 18-34, Republican, Arapahoe County*

*“Charter schools have more demanding curriculums and produce better-educated students.” – Male, 45-54, Democrat, Boulder County*

*“The problem in schools will always be parents. Charter schools require parents to be involved, and can easily remove a student whose parents are unwilling to address that student’s behavior.” – Male, 45-54, Unaffiliated, El Paso County*

*“Charter schools overall have better funding/financial support, better parent involvement and higher academic expectations of their students.” – Female, 55-64, Republican, Arapahoe County*

### **Why Voters Would Choose a Private School (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters would choose a private school to educate their children are: higher academic standards, more structure/discipline, and shared religious values.

*“The school has more control and parents are much more involved. The students are better behaved and more focused on learning.” – Female, 35-44, Democrat, Adams County*

*“I believe the standards are higher and they are taught better life skills, manners, money skills and discipline.” – Male, 55-64, Republican, El Paso County*

*“The atmosphere is better. The education is better. God is in most, the classes are smaller, the kids get more help.” – Female, 65+, Republican, Mesa County*

*“I believe Christian education is very important for my children, as long as they are still getting a quality education. Public schools would teach them certain things that I believe are untrue, such as evolution.” – Male, 35-44, Unaffiliated, Larimer County*

### **Why Voters Would Choose to Home School (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters would choose to home school their children are: greater control over the children’s education, religious values, and the negative environment in public or private schools.

*“One can lay a strong moral foundation according to the family’s dynamics and faith. Safety and privacy is an issue as well. One can choose the curriculum that meets the*

*needs of the individual student.” – Female, 55-64, Unaffiliated, Adams County*

*“I will know exactly what my student is learning and how well they are doing.” – Female, 18-34, Republican, El Paso County*

*“Because I can teach children age-appropriate skills and cultivate a love of learning without the drama of peer pressure, popularity contests and other needless/useless competition.” – Female, 55-64, Republican, El Paso County*

*“Parents are already a child’s first teachers. If they are qualified or well supported, a parent should have the option to teach their own children. This isn’t the best option for all parents, but is the best option when done right.” – Male, 55-64, Unaffiliated, Denver*

**Standardized Testing**

A large majority of voters think that students in local school districts are spending too much time preparing for and taking standardized tests, with 67% agreeing with that statement and only 19% disagreeing. There are some significant differences across the major demographic subgroups, although Republicans and older voters are slightly more likely to disagree.

*“Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Local school districts are spending too much time preparing for and taking standardized tests.”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Total Agree	67%	66%	68%	61%	72%	68%	74%	66%	56%	74%	64%
Total Disagree	19%	23%	16%	24%	18%	18%	16%	21%	23%	17%	21%
Unsure/No Opinion	14%	11%	16%	15%	10%	14%	10%	13%	21%	9%	15%
Strongly Agree	33%	31%	34%	32%	34%	31%	38%	34%	20%	40%	29%
Somewhat Agree	34%	35%	34%	29%	38%	37%	36%	32%	36%	34%	35%
Strongly Disagree	5%	7%	3%	7%	3%	6%	3%	7%	5%	5%	5%
Somewhat Disagree	14%	16%	13%	17%	15%	12%	13%	14%	18%	12%	16%

**Funding for Colorado’s Public Schools**

Voters overwhelmingly believe that public schools in Colorado are underfunded, at 67% compared to only 20% who do not think so. There is dramatic split along party lines, as only 48% agree while 87% of Democrats believe public schools are underfunded. Unaffiliated voters are directly in the middle at 67%. The same split exists across age groups, as 78% of voters under age 44 agree compared to only 52% of voters over age 65. Geographically, voters in big cities (75%) or small towns (79%) are more likely to agree that public schools are underfunded, while the number is lower for suburban (63%) and rural voters (60%).



*“Do you think public schools in Colorado are underfunded?”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wom</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Unaf</u>	<u>18-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65+</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>No Student</u>
Yes	67%	65%	69%	48%	87%	67%	78%	64%	52%	74%	64%
No	20%	23%	18%	35%	6%	19%	11%	25%	30%	18%	21%
Unsure/Refused	13%	12%	13%	17%	7%	14%	11%	11%	18%	8%	15%

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Big City</u>	<u>Sub-urban</u>	<u>Small Town</u>	<u>Rural Area</u>	<u>Below \$50k</u>	<u>\$50k-\$75k</u>	<u>\$75k-\$125k</u>	<u>+\$125k</u>
Yes	67%	75%	63%	79%	60%	69%	72%	67%	65%
No	20%	13%	24%	12%	26%	18%	15%	23%	24%
Unsure/Refused	13%	12%	13%	9%	14%	13%	13%	10%	11%

**Fiscal Responsibility of School Districts in Colorado**

When asked whether they agree or disagree that school districts in Colorado effectively manage their financial resources and spend taxpayer money wisely, 36% of voters agreed with the statement while 50% disagreed and 14% did not have an opinion. This finding suggests that although voters generally have a favorable opinion of public schools, there are areas where they see room for improvement.

Not surprisingly this is an issue that breaks along party lines, as 60% of Republicans disagree with the statement that school districts spend money wisely while Democrats are more evenly split as 47% agree and 39% disagree. It is also interesting to note there is little difference in the responses from those who have a student in their household and those who do not.

*“Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? School districts in Colorado effectively manage their financial resources and spend taxpayer money wisely.”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wom</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Unaf</u>	<u>18-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65+</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>No Student</u>
Total Agree	36%	36%	36%	27%	47%	35%	34%	36%	40%	37%	36%
Total Disagree	50%	52%	48%	60%	39%	50%	48%	53%	47%	53%	48%
Unsure/No Opinion	14%	12%	16%	13%	14%	15%	18%	11%	13%	10%	16%
Strongly Agree	15%	16%	15%	11%	24%	12%	12%	17%	20%	15%	16%
Somewhat Agree	21%	20%	21%	16%	23%	23%	22%	19%	20%	22%	20%
Strongly Disagree	24%	27%	21%	33%	11%	27%	21%	28%	22%	27%	22%
Somewhat Disagree	26%	25%	27%	27%	28%	23%	28%	25%	25%	26%	26%

**Full-Day Kindergarten (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The survey also tested support for one of Governor Polis’ top legislative priorities: state-funded full-day kindergarten. There is a significant level of support for full-day kindergarten at 62% and opposition at only 27%. Responses vary widely across party lines, as the idea is supported by just 43% of Republicans but 84% of Democrats. On this issue unaffiliated voters are closer to Republicans, though a majority of 58% still support state-funded full-day kindergarten. Support is also stronger among younger voters under age 44 (69% support), those with a student in their household (70% support), and those with an annual household income above \$125k (70%).

*“Do you support or oppose state-funded full-day kindergarten, regardless of the cost to Colorado taxpayers?”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Total Support	62%	62%	61%	43%	84%	58%	69%	59%	50%	70%	58%
Total Oppose	27%	30%	25%	45%	8%	28%	20%	32%	33%	22%	29%
Unsure/No Opinion	11%	8%	14%	12%	8%	14%	11%	9%	17%	8%	13%
Strongly Support	37%	36%	37%	25%	53%	32%	43%	32%	32%	44%	34%
Somewhat Support	25%	26%	24%	18%	31%	26%	26%	27%	18%	26%	24%
Strongly Oppose	15%	16%	14%	23%	3%	18%	8%	17%	23%	12%	16%
Somewhat Oppose	12%	14%	11%	22%	5%	10%	12%	15%	10%	10%	13%

Answer	All	Big City	Sub-urban	Small Town	Rural Area	Below \$50k	\$50k-\$75k	\$75k-\$125k	+\$125k
Total Support	62%	71%	56%	70%	63%	62%	60%	61%	70%
Total Oppose	27%	18%	32%	20%	24%	23%	26%	30%	26%
Unsure/No Opinion	11%	11%	12%	10%	13%	15%	14%	9%	4%
Strongly Support	37%	44%	31%	45%	41%	37%	34%	38%	45%
Somewhat Support	25%	27%	25%	25%	22%	25%	26%	23%	25%
Strongly Oppose	15%	6%	19%	12%	11%	11%	12%	17%	18%
Somewhat Oppose	12%	12%	13%	8%	13%	12%	14%	13%	8%

**Public School Teacher Salaries**

In addition to asking whether public schools are underfunded, the survey asked voters if they think public school teachers are underpaid in Colorado. Nearly 3 out of 4 voters agreed with this viewpoint. While there were differences across demographic groups, with Republicans and older voters being less likely to agree while overwhelming majorities of Democrats and younger voters agree, a majority of voters agree that public school teachers are underpaid across every voter subgroup.

*“Do you think public school teachers are underpaid in Colorado?”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wom</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Unaf</u>	<u>18-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65+</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>No Student</u>
Yes	74%	70%	77%	57%	91%	73%	82%	70%	65%	78%	72%
No	18%	22%	14%	35%	5%	16%	11%	21%	27%	15%	20%
Unsure/Refused	8%	8%	9%	8%	4%	11%	7%	9%	8%	7%	8%

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Big City</u>	<u>Sub-urban</u>	<u>Small Town</u>	<u>Rural Area</u>	<u>Below \$50k</u>	<u>\$50k-\$75k</u>	<u>\$75k-\$125k</u>	<u>+\$125k</u>
Yes	74%	79%	64%	82%	71%	78%	77%	72%	71%
No	18%	13%	30%	9%	21%	15%	16%	20%	21%
Unsure/Refused	8%	8%	6%	9%	8%	7%	7%	8%	8%

**Why Voters Think Teachers are Underpaid (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters think public school teachers are underpaid were: the demands/stress of the job, the importance of the job for our future, and teachers struggling to make ends meet because of the cost of living or other expenses.

*“Because they do massive amounts of work, far beyond what their contracts demand.” – Male, 18-34, Democrat, Denver*

*“They do amazing work and put in hours for our future leaders for ridiculously low pay.” – Male, 35-44, Unaffiliated, Jefferson County*

*“I believe all teachers are underpaid. They should make more money than anyone. Without teachers we wouldn’t have presidents, lawmakers, doctors or any other career that requires an education.” – Female, 35-44, Republican, Mesa County*

*“The cost of living is very high and teachers cannot afford to live in their districts.” – Male, 65+, Democrat, Douglas County*

*“Recent news stories brought this to my attention and in research I found that Colorado had dropped to close to the bottom in teacher pay. With the cost of living in Colorado, this is ridiculous and turns teaching into second income status.” – Female, 65+, Unaffiliated, Weld*

**Why Voters Do Not Think Teachers are Underpaid (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The most common reasons given for why voters do not think public school teachers are underpaid were: they do not work year-round, they have favorable pensions/benefits, and they knew the pay when they entered the profession.

*“They work 9 months in the year, have great pensions and can retire early, unlike the rest of us.” – Female, 55-64, Unaffiliated, Boulder County*

*“They get a good salary considering their benefits and paid time off. Not too many people get as much time off as teachers. Basically with all their benefits they work 6 months a year.” – Female, 45-54, Republican, Weld County*

*“They have a decent salary. If they wanted to focus on money, they should have gotten into another field. You don’t teach to become rich.” – Male, 18-34, Republican, Adams County*

*“Teachers are paid fine. They take the job knowing the pay, but then turn around and complain. Shame.” – Female, 55-64, Republican, Larimer County*

*“Teachers have too much time off and are paid accordingly.” – Female, 55-64, Democrat, Rio Blanco County*

**School Safety (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

Voters were asked about their perception of school safety, and whether public schools in Colorado are very safe, somewhat safe or not safe at all for students. It is important to note that these interviews were conducted before the shooting at STEM School Highlands Ranch. The vast majority of respondents, 71%, consider schools “somewhat safe” compared to only 12% who consider them to be very safe. There were no significant differences across demographic groups. Clearly, while this is an issue where public opinion is heavily impacted by recent news events, there is room for improvement as only 12% consider schools very safe.

*“Do you think public schools in Colorado are very safe, somewhat safe or not safe at all for students?”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Very Safe	12%	15%	9%	12%	10%	12%	11%	10%	15%	11%	12%
Somewhat Safe	71%	67%	75%	73%	73%	69%	73%	76%	57%	78%	69%
Not Safe at All	8%	8%	8%	8%	7%	9%	9%	6%	12%	6%	9%
Unsure/Refused	9%	10%	8%	7%	10%	10%	7%	8%	16%	5%	10%

Answer	All	Big City	Sub-urban	Small Town	Rural Area	Below \$50k	\$50k-\$75k	\$75k-\$125k	+\$125k
Very Safe	12%	10%	11%	8%	16%	8%	13%	15%	12%
Somewhat Safe	71%	64%	73%	78%	73%	68%	75%	70%	81%
Not Safe at All	8%	14%	7%	9%	4%	13%	6%	8%	1%
Unsure/Refused	9%	12%	9%	5%	7%	11%	6%	7%	6%

**Preparing Students for Future Success (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

The survey measured opinions of whether the public education system in Colorado is setting up students for success in the future. Similar to the other broad measurements in the survey, a healthy majority agrees with this viewpoint at 63%, though there are differences across demographic groups.

The majorities are smaller among Republicans, voters over age 65, rural voters and voter making below \$50k/year. Conversely, Democrats, younger voters under age 44 and voters making above \$75k/year are more likely to agree that the public education system is setting up students for success in the future. It is also interesting to note that among those with a student in the household, who are most familiar with the public school system, 70% agree.

*“Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The public education system in Colorado is setting up students for success in the future.”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wom</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Unaf</u>	<u>18-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65+</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>No Student</u>
Total Agree	63%	63%	63%	53%	73%	64%	66%	64%	55%	70%	61%
Total Disagree	26%	27%	25%	39%	17%	22%	21%	28%	33%	26%	26%
Unsure/No Opinion	11%	10%	12%	8%	10%	14%	13%	8%	12%	4%	13%
Strongly Agree	10%	13%	8%	10%	16%	5%	11%	9%	10%	14%	9%
Somewhat Agree	53%	50%	55%	43%	57%	59%	55%	55%	45%	56%	52%
Strongly Disagree	10%	11%	9%	16%	6%	7%	7%	11%	13%	10%	10%
Somewhat Disagree	16%	16%	16%	23%	11%	15%	14%	17%	20%	16%	16%

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Big City</u>	<u>Sub-urban</u>	<u>Small Town</u>	<u>Rural Area</u>	<u>Below \$50k</u>	<u>\$50k-\$75k</u>	<u>\$75k-\$125k</u>	<u>+\$125k</u>
Total Agree	63%	63%	64%	68%	54%	54%	59%	77%	76%
Total Disagree	26%	23%	26%	19%	37%	34%	29%	17%	15%
Unsure/No Opinion	11%	14%	10%	13%	9%	12%	12%	6%	9%
Strongly Agree	10%	6%	10%	9%	15%	7%	9%	15%	12%
Somewhat Agree	53%	57%	54%	59%	39%	47%	50%	62%	64%
Strongly Disagree	10%	10%	9%	5%	16%	10%	11%	8%	6%
Somewhat Disagree	16%	13%	17%	14%	21%	24%	18%	9%	9%

**The Importance of a College Education (Asked to Online Survey Only)**

When asked their opinion of how important a college education is today, 45% of voters believe it is somewhat important and 43% believe it is very important. Democrats, voters aged 45-64 and those with an annual household income above \$125k were the most likely to consider a college education very important. The percentage answering “very important” was below 40% among Republicans, unaffiliated voters, voters over age 65, small town voters and rural voters.

*“How important is a college education today? Is it very important, somewhat important or not important at all?”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wom</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Unaf</u>	<u>18-44</u>	<u>45-64</u>	<u>65+</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>No Student</u>
Very Important	43%	42%	43%	39%	53%	37%	41%	50%	35%	46%	41%
Somewhat Important	45%	45%	45%	48%	39%	48%	49%	39%	47%	46%	45%
Not Important at All	8%	9%	7%	10%	4%	9%	8%	7%	9%	3%	9%
Unsure/Refused	4%	4%	5%	3%	4%	6%	2%	4%	9%	5%	5%

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Big City</u>	<u>Sub-urban</u>	<u>Small Town</u>	<u>Rural Area</u>	<u>Below \$50k</u>	<u>\$50k-\$75k</u>	<u>\$75k-\$125k</u>	<u>+\$125k</u>
Very Important	43%	46%	46%	36%	31%	40%	43%	43%	52%
Somewhat Important	45%	48%	41%	56%	48%	41%	44%	52%	44%
Not Important at All	8%	3%	8%	8%	13%	11%	10%	4%	3%
Unsure/Refused	4%	3%	5%	0%	8%	8%	3%	1%	1%

**Vocational Training**

On a related note, voters were asked whether they agree with the viewpoint that Colorado’s public high schools should do more to focus on vocational training, or teaching students the skills and knowledge required for a specific job or trade. Over 80% of respondents agreed, the largest majority for any question asked in the survey. Not only that, but support is near or above 80% for every major voting subgroup. Clearly there is a desire among Colorado voters to create more opportunities for those high school students who do not wish to attend a two or four year college or university.

*“Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Colorado public high schools should do more to focus on vocational training, or teaching students the skills and knowledge required for a specific job or trade, such as a welder, cosmetologist, healthcare assistant, or construction worker.”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Total Agree	83%	84%	82%	83%	83%	82%	86%	80%	82%	84%	83%
Total Disagree	10%	10%	10%	11%	11%	10%	8%	14%	9%	11%	10%
Unsure/No Opinion	7%	6%	8%	6%	6%	8%	6%	6%	9%	5%	7%
Strongly Agree	49%	53%	46%	10%	16%	5%	51%	46%	50%	49%	50%
Somewhat Agree	34%	31%	36%	43%	57%	59%	35%	34%	32%	35%	33%
Strongly Disagree	4%	4%	3%	16%	6%	7%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%
Somewhat Disagree	6%	6%	7%	23%	11%	15%	5%	10%	5%	6%	6%

### **School Vouchers**

The survey touched on the issue of school vouchers, which has been a contentious issue in Colorado, particularly in Douglas County. Respondents were read a statement educating them about school vouchers, and then asked whether they supported or opposed a school voucher program. Support for vouchers was right at 50%, 37% opposed them and 13% were unsure. There was a significant difference across party lines, as 64% of Republicans supported school vouchers compared to only 35% of Democrats. Unaffiliated voters are in the middle at 53% support. Compared to the state as a whole, support for school vouchers is slightly higher among those with a student in the household, those in rural areas and those with an annual household income below \$50k/year.

*“As you may know, a school voucher program allows parents to allocate public funding towards their child’s education at a private school of their choice, including religiously affiliated private schools. Knowing this, do you support or oppose a school voucher program?”*

Answer	All	Men	Wom	Rep	Dem	Unaf	18-44	45-64	65+	Student	No Student
Total Support	50%	53%	48%	64%	35%	53%	50%	52%	48%	56%	48%
Total Oppose	37%	37%	36%	20%	54%	35%	35%	37%	39%	30%	39%
Unsure/No Opinion	13%	10%	16%	16%	11%	12%	15%	11%	13%	14%	13%
Strongly Support	24%	28%	20%	40%	12%	22%	16%	28%	33%	24%	24%
Somewhat Support	26%	25%	28%	24%	23%	31%	34%	24%	15%	32%	24%
Strongly Oppose	24%	26%	22%	10%	33%	26%	20%	27%	27%	21%	25%
Somewhat Oppose	13%	11%	14%	10%	21%	9%	15%	10%	12%	9%	14%

*“As you may know, a school voucher program allows parents to allocate public funding towards their child’s education at a private school of their choice, including religiously affiliated private schools. Knowing this, do you support or oppose a school voucher program?”*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Big City</u>	<u>Sub-urban</u>	<u>Small Town</u>	<u>Rural Area</u>	<u>Below \$50k</u>	<u>\$50k-\$75k</u>	<u>\$75k-\$125k</u>	<u>+\$125k</u>
Total Support	50%	47%	52%	42%	60%	57%	43%	44%	54%
Total Oppose	37%	43%	33%	44%	32%	30%	44%	41%	35%
Unsure/No Opinion	13%	10%	15%	14%	7%	13%	13%	15%	11%
Strongly Support	24%	22%	24%	21%	32%	25%	22%	22%	29%
Somewhat Support	26%	25%	28%	21%	28%	32%	21%	22%	25%
Strongly Oppose	24%	29%	22%	27%	20%	17%	30%	27%	23%
Somewhat Oppose	13%	14%	11%	17%	12%	13%	14%	14%	12%

**Conclusion**

We hope that the data provided in this survey proves helpful to anyone interested in education issues in Colorado. Our intention in producing this survey is not to push an ideological agenda, but rather to highlight the truth that the question of how best to educate our children is incredibly complex, and it is a question for which there are no easy fixes or solutions.

Again, with such a wide-ranging survey there is a significant amount of data here. That is particularly true for the verbatim responses, only a very small portion of which have been included in this summary. Some of the findings may confirm what you had already expected, while some might challenge your assumptions. Whatever the case, we encourage your thoughts and feedback as we look forward to continuing to provide accurate, insightful data on the important public policy issues facing our state.

**Full Results**

Please visit our website at [MagellanStrategies.com](http://MagellanStrategies.com) to download the full survey results.