

Granite State Poll Sample Questions Draft 4

Commission to Study School Funding

Goal: Frame 5 to 6 questions to poll NH residents. What is the most important feedback the Commission needs to design a fair and effective funding formula? This poll provides us another pulse on public understanding, values, and thinking about school funding within the Commission's charge - Section 193-E:2-e - <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/XV/193-E/193-E-mrg.htm>.

Timing: September 2020, next version to Survey Center by Wednesday, August 12th. Data will be collected online over a 4-day period. The Survey Center provides raw data and a report a week later.

Demographic Questions

- Asked on each poll: Age, sex, region, level of education, income, party
- Other suggestions from our group:
 - Current parent in the public schools (grade/school level or yes/no, Previous had a student in the public schools)
 - Property owner in NH, renter, seasonal property owner, out of state owner, other,
 - School district you live in (drop down list)
 - Community you live in (drop down list)
 - Employment status: employed, unemployed, retired

Guidance from the UNH Survey Center Staff:

- Avoid, "nice to know questions." Ask ourselves, "how does this help make a decision?"
- Avoid lots of information in the questions. If it can't be succinct, probably not worth asking.

Draft Questions for Discussion:

1. Next are some questions about public education in New Hampshire. First, how much on average do you think New Hampshire school districts spend per student?

ENTER DOLLAR AMOUNT

2. And what percentage of public education costs do you think are currently funded by the state government?

ENTER PERCENTAGE 0-100%

1. On average, New Hampshire school districts spend approximately \$19,000 per student each year and the state government pays for approximately 31% (approximately \$6,000 per student) of local public education costs while the rest is covered by local governments. In your opinion, do you think that the state government should increase its funding to local public education costs, decrease its funding, or keep it about the same? - Increase funding, decrease funding, keep about the same, don't know

2. In some communities, taxpayers pay less than \$3 per \$1,000 of property value in combined local and statewide education property tax while in other communities, taxpayers pay as much as

\$24 per \$1,000 in education property tax. Would you favor or oppose changing this so that everyone pays the same property tax rate to fund public schools in New Hampshire? –

Strongly Favor, Somewhat Favor, Neutral, Somewhat Oppose, Strongly Oppose, Don't know/Not sure (check numbers, need a citation from DRA)

3. Currently, New Hampshire funds over 60% of total public education costs with local property taxes. In your opinion, should the percentage of public education costs funded by property taxes increase, decrease, or stay about the same? – Increase, Decrease, Stay about the same, Don't Know

4. Would you favor or oppose the creation of the following in order to decrease the amount of local property taxes that fund education in New Hampshire? – Strongly Favor, Somewhat Favor, Neutral, Somewhat Oppose, Strongly Oppose, Don't Know/Not Sure

A statewide property tax

An income tax

A sales tax

Other

5. Which of these comes closest to your opinion on what New Hampshire should have for a school funding system? –

A state funding system that distributes money to districts based upon differences in poverty and property wealth

A state funding system that distributes money equally to every school district

Don't know enough about this to say

6. In your opinion, which of the following do you value most in order to provide New Hampshire students a high-quality public education? (Please rank your top 5).

- Increased teacher salaries
- Increased teacher quality
- Better technology
- Smaller class sizes
- Better school leadership
- Higher learning standards
- Better quality of classrooms and buildings
- Better social, emotional, and behavioral support
- Better transportation
- Better food services
- More extracurricular programs

- Better curriculum content
- Better special education
- More early childhood education
- More English language learner support
- More career and technical education
- More advanced placement courses
- More low-income student support (e.g., free and reduced breakfast and lunch)
- Other (Please specify)

About the Granite State Panel Sample (from UNH Survey Staff)

We are conducting all statewide polls now using randomly selected respondents from the Granite State Panel (<https://cola.unh.edu/unh-survey-center/projects/granite-state-panel>). This is a probability-based web panel of approximately 5,500 panelists we have recruited from randomly selected phone numbers by conducting phone or text-to-web surveys then asking them to join the panel. Unlike most web panels, which are opt-in, meaning anyone can join and are therefore not representative, we use the same random selection methods as traditional telephone surveys, thus keeping our panel representative of the state of New Hampshire. We also ran many side-by-side comparisons of phone and panel surveys to validate our panel results before making this decision. In fact, our web results were slightly closer to the actual outcome of the 2020 Democratic Presidential Primary than our phone results were.