

MEMORANDUM

To: Interested Parties
From: Wes Anderson & Kayla Dunlap
Date: March 3, 2015
Re: Tennessee Statewide for Federation for Children – Highlights Memo II

KEY FINDINGS

Below are additional highlights from our recent Tennessee statewide survey of likely voters conducted February 2nd through the 4th which measures voters’ opinions on the overall quality of Tennessee’s education system and attitudes toward new education legislation like opportunity scholarships. This memo provides further insight on opportunity scholarships and the overall challenges Tennessee’s public school system faces.

Opportunity Scholarships: After being informed about the State Legislature’s push for opportunity scholarships that would allow parents to use specified state monies to send their child to a school that better fit his/her needs, voters were then asked whether they themselves would “consider sending [their] child to another public school or a private or church-run school if a state-funded scholarship were available.” In response, a substantial 60% of voters said they would consider it while only 29% said they would not. This includes 67% of Republican primary voters and a noteworthy 68% of those in the Memphis Media Market.

Would You Use a State-Funded Scholarship	<i>Total</i>	<i>GOP Primary Voters</i>	<i>DEM</i>	<i>IND</i>	<i>GOP</i>	<i>Memphis M.M.</i>	<i>Nashville M.M</i>	<i>African American</i>
Yes	60%	67%	54%	57%	66%	68%	60%	68%
No	29%	22%	38%	29%	24%	26%	25%	29%

Low & Middle Income Students: When it comes to low and middle income families, 59% of Tennessee voters agreed that it is unfair that children of these families are “trapped in public schools that fail them simply because their parents can’t afford to pay for private school or move to a better school district.” This sentiment was primarily driven by those in the Memphis and Nashville Media Markets where agreement hit 63% and 62% respectively.

Low/Middle Income Students are Trapped	<i>Total</i>	<i>GOP Primary Voters</i>	<i>DEM</i>	<i>IND</i>	<i>GOP</i>	<i>Memphis M.M.</i>	<i>Nashville M.M</i>	<i>African American</i>
Agree	59%	59%	62%	60%	57%	63%	62%	77%
Disagree	34%	34%	33%	32%	36%	31%	31%	20%

Education as Most Important Issue: Lastly, voter sensitivity to this issue should come as no surprise seeing as education ranks number one (23%) on most important issue, edging out both healthcare (22%) and the economy (20%).

Most Important Issue	<i>Total</i>	<i>GOP Primary Voters</i>	<i>DEM</i>	<i>IND</i>	<i>GOP</i>	<i>Memphis M.M.</i>	<i>Nashville M.M.</i>	<i>African American</i>
Education	23%	23%	26%	19%	23%	21%	24%	28%
Health	22%	22%	21%	20%	23%	20%	25%	23%
Economic	20%	21%	20%	22%	19%	24%	17%	19%

METHODOLOGY

The following survey was conducted by OnMessage Inc. in Tennessee. Telephone interviews were conducted on February 2-4, 2015. This survey consists of 600 likely voters with a 200 person oversample of likely GOP primary voters and was stratified by county to reflect historic voter trends. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 4.00%.

ABOUT US

Wes Anderson is a leading GOP pollster with 20 years of experience in opinion research. As a founding partner, Wes now leads the polling divisions of OnMessage Inc. and OnMessage Sports, providing political and corporate clients with a full spectrum of quantitative and qualitative opinion research products. You can read more about Wes Anderson at onmessageinc.com.