



To: American Federation for Children
From: David Kanevsky
Re: New Hampshire Statewide Survey
Date: March 18, 2025

The following outlines the key findings from a survey of n=500 New Hampshire voters, conducted March 13-16, 2025. The survey was conducted via a mix of live calls to landlines and cell phones. The sample was stratified based on respondents probability of voting, and weighted to reflect a likely Presidential electorate based on region/geography, gender, age, education, party registration, vote history, and 2024 vote recall. The exact language for each school choice proposal is included at the end of this memo.

Overview

New Hampshire voters are supportive of school choice. The state's current school program is popular, and voters support various proposals to expand school choice, with the Senate proposal that would increase enrollment caps and expand eligibility having the most support among voters.

Key Findings

- 1. Voters feel positively towards Governor Kelly Ayotte, the New Hampshire state legislature, and school choice.***

Images Ranked by %Favorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Net
Kelly Ayotte	46%	35%	+11%
The New Hampshire State Legislature	40%	29%	+11%
School Choice	41%	30%	+11%
Donald Trump	42%	52%	-10%

- 2. After hearing a brief description, a solid majority support New Hampshire's current school program.***

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of voters support New Hampshire's current school choice proposal, compared to just 33% who are opposed. The current school choice program is not only favored by a majority of registered Republicans (67% favor – 26% oppose) and Undeclared voters (68% favor – 24% oppose), but even a significant number of registered Democrats support it (40% favor – 53% oppose). Self-identified ticket-splitters support the current program by a two-to-one margin (62% favor – 31% oppose).

The majority of voters think the current school choice program either does not go far enough (23%) or strikes the right balance (29%), while 37% say the current school choice program goes too far.

3. *Voters support various proposals to expand New Hampshire’s school choice program, with the Senate proposal getting the highest level of support (please see appendix for proposal language).*

Proposal	Total Favor	Total Oppose	Net
Senate	54%	39%	+15%
Governor	49%	44%	+5%
House	46%	46%	0%

While the House and Governor’s proposals get higher support among Republicans, the Senate proposal gets more support among Undeclared voters, Democrats and ticket-splitters.

	Registered GOP (34%)			Registered Undeclared (36%)			Registered Dem (30%)			Ticket-Splitters (34%)		
	Favor	Oppose	Net	Favor	Oppose	Net	Favor	Oppose	Net	Favor	Oppose	Net
Senate	56%	39%	17%	61%	32%	29%	42%	48%	-6%	57%	36%	21%
Governor	60%	35%	25%	54%	39%	15%	31%	60%	-29%	48%	43%	5%
House	61%	37%	24%	48%	44%	4%	29%	60%	-31%	47%	44%	3%

4. *After hearing about all the school choice proposals, voters prefer the Senate plan.*

<i>“Which of these school choice proposals do you prefer the MOST?”</i>	1 st Choice	Combined 1 st and 2 nd Choice
Senate	33%	47%
House	18%	37%
Governor	14%	31%
None of These	30%	42%

While registered Republicans are divided between the Senate and House proposals, the Senate proposal is preferred the most by registered Undeclared voters, Democrats, and ticket-splitters.

	Registered GOP (30%)		Registered Undeclared (36%)		Registered Dem (30%)		Ticket-Splitters (34%)	
	1st Choice	Combined	1st Choice	Combined	1st Choice	Combined	1st Choice	Combined
Senate	25%	44%	43%	59%	31%	38%	33%	47%
House	26%	47%	17%	40%	8%	21%	18%	37%
Governor	17%	33%	14%	33%	12%	25%	15%	28%
None	27%	36%	23%	36%	42%	55%	29%	45%

5. A majority of voters support school choice, even in the face of attacks that it cuts money from public schools and raises property taxes.

Regardless of your views on specific school choice proposals, which statement comes closest to your own opinion?

51% *School choice is a good idea because it empowers parents to hold both public and private schools accountable with their tax dollars and have more input on their children's education.*

...or...

44% *School choice is a bad idea because it cuts money from already underfunded public schools, hurts small towns and rural communities, and causes property taxes to rise.*

It's not just registered Republicans (64%) who think school choice is a good idea, but so do a majority of registered Undeclared voters (53%) and ticket-splitters (55%). Even 34% of registered Democrats think school choice is a good idea.

School choice is not just popular in Republican areas, but also in swing districts. In swing state senate districts, which are districts that have not either voted consistently Republican or Democrat for President and Governor in 2024 and U.S. Senate and Governor in 2022, 51% say school choice is a good idea compared to 45% who say it is a bad idea.

6. Voters do not believe that local school districts need to raise property taxes to make up for funds that go to school choice programs.

New Hampshire public schools receive around \$24,000 per student, while the average cost of a school choice scholarship is \$5,200 per student. Even when students leave for private school, schools keep all local funding, which is typically over \$15,000 per student. Knowing this, which statement comes closest to your view?

63% *School districts should be able to adjust their budgets without raising property taxes when students leave for school choice programs since they continue receiving taxpayer funding, while serving fewer students.*

...or...

28% *School districts may need to raise property taxes when students leave for school choice programs because losing state funding makes it harder to provide resources for students who remain in public schools.*

Not only do 78% of Republicans and 60% of Undeclared voters believe that localities do not need to raise property taxes to make up for funds that go to school choice programs, so do the plurality of registered Democrats (49% adjust budgets without raising taxes – 37% may need to raise taxes).

7. Voters are divided on whether to provide phase out grants to public schools that lose students to private schools.

As part of its school choice program, New Hampshire gives phase out grants to public schools for two years after a child transfers from a public school to a private school, even though that public school is no longer serving that student.

Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose providing phase out grants for two years to New Hampshire public schools for students who transfer to private schools and they are no longer serving?

Just 42% of voters favor providing phase out grants, while 47% oppose them. Intensity favors opponents, nearly twice as many strongly oppose phase out grants (25%) as strongly favor them (13%).

Question Language Appendix

Below is the language for each school choice proposal. The current proposal was asked first, with the order of the Governor, Senate, and House proposals randomized.

Label	Language
Current	As you may know, New Hampshire has a school choice program that allows families who are at or below 350% of the federal poverty limit, approximately \$110,000 a year for a family of four, to be eligible to send their children to the school of their choice. The current program serves approximately 5,300 students who get an average of \$5,200 in scholarships to attend the school of their choice.
Governor	This proposal would allow families currently enrolled in New Hampshire's school choice program to continue to be eligible to attend the school of their choice, while also expanding eligibility to only families whose children currently attend public school or are entering kindergarten, regardless of the family's income, with no caps on student enrollment.
Senate	This proposal would make all families eligible to send their children to the school of their choice, but cap the enrollment to 10,000 students in the first year. Priority would be given to lower- and middle-income families and students with disabilities, with the possibility to expand the enrollment cap in future years if there is increased demand.
House	This proposal would increase eligibility in the first year for families making up to 400% of the poverty limit, or approximately \$125,000 a year for a family of four. Then in the second year, it would allow all parents regardless of income to enroll in the program, without any caps on enrollment.

After hearing each proposal, respondents were then asked if they thought the proposal went too far, not far enough or was about right. Here is the language that was asked for each proposal.

Label	Intro	Not Far Enough	Too Far	About Right
Current	Do you think New Hampshire's current school choice program:	Does not go far enough because it still leaves too many students ineligible	Goes too far because it would take too much money away from public schools	Or does this strike the right balance?
Governor	Do you think this proposal to expand New Hampshire's school choice program to only families whose children currently attend public school or are entering kindergarten:			Or does this strike the right balance by expanding eligibility, while not funding families who already pay for their child to attend a private school?
Senate	Do you think this proposal to expand New Hampshire's school choice program to all families and increase the enrollment cap to 10,000 students, while giving priority to lower- and middle-income families and students with disabilities:			Or does this strike the right balance by expanding eligibility, while being fiscally responsible?
House	Do you think this proposal to expand New Hampshire's school choice program by increasing the income cap the first year and in the second year, allow all parents regardless of income to enroll in the program, without any caps on enrollment:	Does not go far enough because it still leaves too many students ineligible in the first year		Or does this strike the right balance by expanding eligibility, but phasing it in over time and making all students eligible?