



News Release

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National Poll: 7 in 10 Voters Want More Federal Support for State-funded Pre-K

Strength of results sends message to 2008 candidates

(Washington, D.C.) – [Pre-K Now](#) today released results of a national poll on voters' views of state and federal support for high-quality pre-kindergarten programs. The findings reveal broad support for making voluntary pre-k for all children a larger fiscal priority, and suggest that candidates' positions on the issue could influence many Americans' votes this fall.

“The results show that Americans of diverse backgrounds, incomes and political beliefs recognize the importance of ensuring that all families have access to affordable, quality pre-k so that our nation’s children can start school ready to learn and thrive,” said Libby Doggett, executive director of Pre-K Now. “If I were a candidate in a competitive Congressional race, this is a poll I’d pay attention to.”

A bipartisan polling team from Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc. and American Viewpoint surveyed 800 registered voters, along with an additional 200 “swing voters” who typically split their votes between Democrats and Republicans. Strong support for a new federal investment in pre-kindergarten is evident across all demographic groups, though support is particularly strong among swing voters between 18 and 39 years of age, swing voters in the South, and black and Latino voters.

“We found solid support for both a federal role in pre-k and federal funding, and compared with other issues we survey, we saw significantly less drop-off in support when we put a price tag on the idea - even among Republican voters typically leery of government spending,” said Jay Campbell of Hart Research Associates. “These are very positive numbers.”

Additional findings:

- Seven in 10 voters—and 7 in 10 swing voters—support a new federal grant to help states increase the quality and availability of their pre-k programs.
- By nearly 3:1, voters are more likely to support a Congressional candidate who backs increased funding for pre-k.
- Asked what makes a persuasive case for federal pre-k grants to states, 72% of voters found it very or fairly convincing that pre-k should be an opportunity for all children, including those from the middle-class families.
- Almost 7 in 10 voters want state and local governments to provide voluntary pre-k for all children.
- A large majority of every demographic—including 64% of Republican voters—said that a lack of high-quality pre-k programs in their community would be a problem.
- A solid majority (56%) of voters said that federal, state and local governments are doing too little to make sure that all children have access to affordable pre-k programs.

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“We know from decades of research that quality pre-k is a smart use of public dollars; now we have evidence that voters of nearly every stripe recognize the value of pre-k and want lawmakers to make greater investments,” said Doggett. “Among other candidates for office, we hope Senators McCain and Obama take note as they work to appeal to voters hungry for strong leadership on pre-k education.”

To learn more about the poll and the results, visit: www.preknow.org/embargo/poll/index.cfm

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