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MinnCAN
EDUCATION SURVEY RESULTS 2014

Objectives

Gauge what education issues and challenges are most important to Minnesota residents. To address this objective, 400 Minnesota adults ages 18–74 were surveyed by PadillaCRT. A 28-question survey was administered online and via telephone from September 11–24, 2014. The margin of error for the study is +/-4.9 percent.

Method

The survey primarily consisted of multiple-choice questions, with an additional open-ended question to uncover the attitudes and motivations behind respondents' choices.

Respondents were geographically representative of the state of Minnesota, with 54 percent of respondents living in the Minneapolis/ St. Paul metro area, and the remaining 46 percent living in other counties in the state.

Respondents represented various ages, races and political affiliations. See pages 19–21 for full demographic information.

Tables

Note on significance testing:

*

denotes a significant difference at a 95% confidence interval (p<.05)

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denotes a significant difference at a 90% confidence interval (p<.10)

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q1. Are you currently a resident in the state of Minnesota?	Yes	100.0%	100.0%	**100.0%**
VOL:	No	–	–	**–**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q2. What is your age?	18 to 24	7.4%	12.0%	**9.5%**
	25 to 34	19.9%	21.2%	**20.5%**
	35 to 49	28.2%	33.2%	**30.5%**
	50 to 64	32.4%	25.5%	**29.3%**
VOL:	65 to 74	12.0%	8.2%	**10.3%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q3. In which Minnesota county do you live?	7-county metro	100.0%	–	**54.0%**
VOL:	Outstate county	–	100.0%	**46.0%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
	Taxes	57.9%	57.1%	**57.5%**
Q4. Which of the following issues will be important to you as you decide who to support in the November election?	Education	55.1%	**63.0%	**59.0%**
	The environment	32.9%	35.3%	**34.0%**
	Health care	64.4%	59.2%	**62.0%**
	The economy	63.0%	61.4%	**62.3%**
	Transportation	25.5%	20.1%	**23.0%**
VOL:	Other	11.6%	*3.8%	**8.0%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q5. How important will education be as you decide whom to support in the November election?	Extremely important	18.1%	**25.0%	**21.3%**
	Very important	41.7%	40.8%	**41.3%**
	Somewhat important	25.5%	24.5%	**25.0%**
	Not too important	13.0%	*6.5%	**10.0%**
VOL:	Not sure	1.9%	3.3%	**2.5%**

Q6. What education-related issues will be important to you as you decide whom to support in the November election?

	METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Bullying	44.5%	49.6%	**47.0%**
Teacher tenure and layoff policies	33.6%	39.3%	**36.4%**
Early learning and pre-Kindergarten	35.3%	43.6%	**39.4%**
Achievement gap	52.1%	*31.6%	**41.9%**
All day kindergarten	31.9%	31.6%	**31.8%**
School funding	77.3%	70.1%	**73.7%**
Curriculum & standards	58.8%	61.5%	**60.2%**
Testing	44.5%	44.4%	**44.5%**
Class size	63.0%	57.3%	**60.2%**
Teacher quality	68.1%	67.5%	**67.8%**
VOL: Other	5.0%	6.0%	**5.5%**

Q7: If a candidate held each of the following positions, how would that impact your support for him or her?

		MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT THE CANDIDATE	NEUTRAL /UNSURE	LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT THE CANDIDATE
Supports educator performance more than seniority in deciding whom to lay off, if and when layoffs occur	Metro	58.8%	29.6%	11.6%
	Outstate	60.3%	31.5%	8.2%
	TOTAL	**59.5%**	**30.5%**	**10.0%**
Supports changing automatic teacher tenure rules	Metro	45.8%	43.5%	10.6%
	Outstate	*35.9%	48.9%	15.2%
	TOTAL	**41.3%**	**46.0%**	**12.8%**
Supports testing using annual statewide tests to measure student proficiency and growth	Metro	38.0%	44.4%	17.6%
	Outstate	44.0%	37.5%	18.5%
	TOTAL	**40.8%**	**41.3%**	**18.0%**
Supports increased funding for wrap around services (food clothing and other non-academic aid in schools for kids in need & families)	Metro	44.9%	40.3%	14.8%
	Outstate	44.0%	35.9%	20.1%
	TOTAL	**44.5%**	**38.3%**	**17.3%**

		MORE LIKELY TO SUPPORT THE CANDIDATE	NEUTRAL /UNSURE	LESS LIKELY TO SUPPORT THE CANDIDATE
Supports increasing funding for early learning and pre-Kindergarten to prepare Students for kindergarten	Metro	47.2%	39.4%	13.4%
	Outstate	52.2%	36.4%	11.4%
	TOTAL	**49.5%**	**38.0%**	**12.5%**
Supports charter schools	Metro	35.6%	50.5%	13.9%
	Outstate	33.2%	46.7%	**20.1%
	TOTAL	**34.5%**	**48.8%**	**16.8%**
Supports allowing school leaders to recruit and hire teachers of their choice, even if they are currently licensed out-of-state or hold an alternative license	Metro	40.7%	45.8%	13.4%
	Outstate	33.2%	48.4%	18.5%
	TOTAL	**37.3%**	**47.0%**	**15.8%**
Supports paying educators based on performance	Metro	62.0%	30.6%	7.4%
	Outstate	56.5%	30.4%	**13.0%
	TOTAL	**59.5%**	**30.5%**	**10.0%**

Q8. Which of the following best describes how you think state legislators prioritize education-related issues?

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
	They prioritize education too much	11.1%	8.2%	**9.8%**
	They prioritize education about right	30.1%	23.9%	**27.3%**
	They prioritize education too little	44.0%	50.5%	**47.0%**
VOL:	Unsure	14.8%	17.4%	**16.0%**

Q9. What do you believe is the biggest contributor to kids' success in K-12 education?

	METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Quality teachers	25.9%	29.9%	**27.8%**
Household income	1.9%	2.7%	**2.3%**
School quality	6.0%	9.8%	**7.8%**
Race/ethnicity	0.5%	0.0%	**0.3%**
School funding	5.1%	7.1%	**6.0%**
State & local government (Governor, Legislature, School Board)	1.9%	0.5%	**1.3%**
Family involvement	44.4%	38.6%	**41.8%**
School leadership	4.2%	2.2%	**3.3%**
Rigorous curriculum & standards	3.7%	3.3%	**3.5%**
Peer & community influence	3.7%	4.3%	**4.0%**
VOL: Other	2.8%	1.6%	**2.3%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q10. How do you think K-12 students in Minnesota are doing compared to kids in the United States as a whole?	Much better	15.3%	16.3%	**15.8%**
	A little better	44.0%	43.5%	**43.8%**
	About the same	21.3%	22.3%	**21.8%**
	A little worse	10.2%	9.8%	**10.0%**
	Much worse	2.3%	0.5%	**1.5%**
	VOL: Unsure	6.9%	7.6%	**7.3%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q11. How do you think kids of color in Minnesota are doing in school (K-12) compared to white kids?	Much better	0.9%	*4.9%	**2.8%**
	A little better	5.1%	3.3%	**4.3%**
	About the same	24.5%	*33.7%	**28.8%**
	A little worse	40.7%	37.5%	**39.3%**
	Much worse	20.8%	*9.8%	**15.8%**
	VOL: Unsure	7.9%	10.9%	**9.3%**

Q12. How do you think kids of color in Minnesota are doing in school (K-12) compared to kids of color in the United States as a whole?

	METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Much better	6.0%	7.6%	**6.8%**
A little better	37.0%	**28.3%	**33.0%**
About the same	27.8%	31.0%	**29.3%**
A little worse	14.8%	19.0%	**16.8%**
Much worse	5.6%	**2.2%	**4.0%**
VOL: Unsure	8.8%	12.0%	**10.3%**

Q13: What grade would you give public schools in Minnesota when it comes to how well they educate the following groups of kids?

		A	B	C	D	F
White	Metro	28.2%	51.4%	18.1%	1.4%	0.9%
	Outstate	*19.6%	**59.8%	19.6%	0.5%	0.5%
	TOTAL	**24.3%**	**55.3%**	**18.8%**	**1.0%**	**0.8%**
Black	Metro	11.1%	31.0%	36.1%	16.2%	5.6%
	Outstate	9.2%	35.9%	42.4%	10.9%	*1.6%
	TOTAL	**10.3%**	**33.3%**	**39.0%**	**13.8%**	**3.8%**
Latino	Metro	10.2%	35.2%	39.4%	12.5%	2.8%
	Outstate	7.1%	38.6%	46.2%	*5.4%	2.7%
	TOTAL	**8.8%**	**36.8%**	**42.5%**	**9.3%**	**2.8%**
Asian	Metro	19.0%	53.7%	21.3%	4.6%	1.4%
	Outstate	13.0%	56.0%	27.7%	2.2%	1.1%
	TOTAL	**16.3%**	**54.8%**	**24.3%**	**3.5%**	**1.3%**
Native American	Metro	11.1%	30.1%	34.7%	18.5%	5.6%
	Outstate	7.1%	33.7%	**42.9%	12.5%	3.8%
	TOTAL	**9.3%**	**31.8%**	**38.5%**	**15.8%**	**4.8%**
Low Income	Metro	11.1%	30.6%	38.0%	17.1%	3.2%
	Outstate	8.7%	**38.6%	41.3%	*9.2%	2.2%
	TOTAL	**10.0%**	**34.3%**	**39.5%**	**13.5%**	**2.8%**

		METRO MEAN	OUTSTATE MEAN	TOTAL MEAN
Q14. If you were guess, what do you think the high school graduation rate is for children in each of the following groups in Minnesota?	White	81.7%	80.7%	**81.3%**
	Black	59.4%	62.3%	**60.7%**
	Latino	63.2%	64.3%	**63.7%**
	Asian	77.2%	77.7%	**77.5%**
	Native American	56.1%	58.9%	**57.4%**
VOL:	Low Income	58.0%	*63.0%	**60.3%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q15. What do you think is the single biggest contributor to the achievement gap?	Teacher quality	4.6%	6.0%	**5.3%**
	Household income	5.1%	7.1%	**6.0%**
	School quality	9.3%	5.4%	**7.5%**
	Race/ethnicity	1.4%	*4.9%	**3.0%**
	School funding	4.2%	4.9%	**4.5%**
	Neighborhood safety	4.6%	2.2%	**3.5%**
	State & local governments (Governor, legislator, school boards)	0.9%	1.1%	**1.0%**
	Peer & community influences	12.5%	16.8%	**14.5%**
	Family involvement	48.1%	43.5%	**46.0%**
	School leadership	2.3%	1.1%	**1.8%**
	Curriculum & standards	3.7%	2.7%	**3.3%**
VOL:	Other	3.2%	4.3%	**3.8%**

Q16. How successful do you believe we can be in closing the achievement gap in ten years?

	METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Completely	5.6%	5.4%	**5.5%**
Mostly	22.7%	18.5%	**20.8%**
Some	54.2%	54.9%	**54.5%**
Not at all	10.6%	8.7%	**9.8%**
VOL: Unsure	6.9%	**12.5%	**9.5%**

% OF MENTIONS

Q17. Why did you answer the previous question as you did? (OPEN-ENDED)

Family/environment is a hurdle	**30.6%**
Optimistic outlook, if proper attention given	**18.2%**
Government not taking the right steps	**9.9%**
Quality of schools/teachers needs to improve	**8.7%**
Problem can't be fixed in 10 years	**8.1%**
Students need to take responsibility for own achievement	**4.3%**
This is a very difficult issue	**4.3%**
There will always be some gap	**4.3%**
The disparity in income contributes to this issue	**3.1%**
That's how I feel	**2.5%**
Other	**6.4%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q18. Minnesota can completely close the achievement gap.	Strongly agree	4.2%	*9.8%	**6.8%**
	Agree	35.6%	**27.7%	**32.0%**
	Neutral	20.8%	23.9%	**22.3%**
	Disagree	25.9%	26.1%	**26.0%**
	Strongly disagree	9.3%	7.6%	**8.5%**
	VOL: Unsure	4.2%	4.9%	**4.5%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q19. Minnesota's annual statewide student tests accurately measure student growth, proficiency and the achievement gap.	Strongly agree	2.3%	4.9%	**3.5%**
	Agree	30.6%	26.1%	**28.5%**
	Neutral	34.7%	33.7%	**34.3%**
	Disagree	20.8%	24.5%	**22.5%**
	Strongly disagree	6.9%	6.0%	**6.5%**
	VOL: Unsure	4.6%	4.9%	**4.8%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q20. During teacher training, a student teacher ispartnered with a veteran educator for a ten-week clinical experience. Student teachers should be partnered with effective mentor teachers, as determined by teacher evaluations	Strongly agree	31.5%	36.4%	**33.8%**
	Agree	45.8%	46.2%	**46.0%**
	Neutral	16.7%	12.5%	**14.8%**
	Disagree	2.3%	2.7%	**2.5%**
	Strongly disagree	1.9%	0.5%	**1.3%**
VOL:	Unsure	1.9%	1.6%	**1.8%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
Q21. Which of the following best describes your opinion on the frequency of state, district and school-based assessment of students?	We are testing too frequently	28.7%	28.8%	**28.8%**
	We are testing the right amount	41.2%	42.4%	**41.8%**
	We are not testing as often as we should	12.5%	15.2%	**13.8%**
VOL:	Unsure	17.6%	13.6%	**15.8%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
D1. With which political party do you currently identify: Republican, Democratic, or an independent?	Republican	28.2%	27.2%	**27.8%**
	Democratic	33.8%	33.2%	**33.5%**
	Independent	27.3%	23.9%	**25.8%**
	VOL: Other	10.6%	15.8%	**13.0%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
D2. Do you lean more to the Democratic Party or the Republican Party? (OF INDEPENDENTS)	Democratic Party	27.1%	25.0%	**26.2%**
	Republican Party	28.8%	18.2%	**24.3%**
	VOL: Neither	44.1%	56.8%	**49.5%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
D3. Which one of the following best describes where you live?	An urban area/city	29.6%	24.5%	**27.3%**
	A suburban area	63.0%	*18.5%	**42.5%**
VOL:	A rural area	7.4%	*57.1%	**30.3%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
D4. Do you have child(ren) under the age of 18 living at home?	Yes	34.3%	*45.7%	**39.5%**
VOL:	No	65.7%	*54.3%	**60.5%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
D5. Are you a current or former K-12 public school teacher in Minnesota?	Yes	7.4%	10.3%	**8.8%**
VOL:	No	92.6%	89.7%	**91.3%**

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
D6. What is your gender?	Male	47.7%	44.0%	**46.0%**
	Female	51.9%	56.0%	**53.8%**
VOL:	Other	0.5%	0.0%	**0.3%**

D7. Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity?

		METRO	OUTSTATE	TOTAL
	White	83.8%	*94.0%	**88.5%**
	Black	4.2%	1.6%	**3.0%**
	American Indian	1.9%	1.1%	**1.5%**
	Asian/Pacific Islander	5.6%	*1.6%	**3.8%**
	Hispanic/Latino	3.2%	1.6%	**2.5%**
VOL:	Other	1.4%	0.0%	**0.8%**

Demographic Footnotes

In many cases, the poll did not find statistically significant differences in response patterns across demographic groups. Here we highlight a few response categories where significant differences were apparent.

Q4. Which of the following issues will be important to you as you decide who to support in the November election?

Issues with significantly higher importance to sub-groups:
- Education: Outstate**, Younger respondents*, Females*, Democrats*, Parents*
- Taxes: Males**, Republicans*, Parents**
- Environment: Democrats*
- Health care: Females*, Democrats**
- Economy: Independents*
- Transportation: Males*

Q6. What education-related issues will be important to you as you decide whom to support in the November election?

Females were more likely than males to put importance on:
- Bullying (51.4% compared to 40.0%)**
- Early learning/pre-K (44.3% compared to 31.6%)*
- Class size (66.4% compared to 50.5%)*.

Q7: If a candidate held each of the following positions, how would that impact your support for him or her?

Percent of respondents who would be more likely to support a political candidate, based on party:
- Supports changing automatic teacher tenure rules
    - Democrats: 32.1%*
    - Republicans: 48.6%
- Supports testing using annual statewide tests to measure student proficiency and growth
    - Democrats: 33.6%**
    - Republicans: 44.1%

- Supports increased funding for wrap around services (food clothing and other non-academic aid in schools for kids in need & families)
    – Democrats: 59.0%*
    – Republicans: 32.4%
- Supports increased funding for early learning and pre-kindergarten to prepare students for kindergarten
    – Democrats: 62.7%*
    – Republicans: 37.8%
- Supports charter schools
    – Democrats: 23.9%**
    – Republicans: 36.9%
- Supports allowing school leaders to recruit and hire teachers of their choice, even if they are currently licensed out-of-state or hold an alternative license
    – Democrats: 30.6%*
    – Republicans: 46.8%
- Supports paying educators based on performance
    – Democrats: 52.2%**
    – Republicans: 65.8%

Q8. Which of the following best describes how you think state legislators prioritize education-related issues?

Percentage that feels education is prioritized too little by political affiliation:
- Democrats: 59.4%*
- Independents/Other: 45.8%
- Republicans: 34.2%

Q9. What do you believe is the biggest contributor to kids' success in K-12 education?

Respondents who view family involvement as the most important contributor:
- Respondents of color: 30.4%*
- White respondents 43.1%*

Q14. If you were guess, what do you think the high school graduation rate is for children in each of the following groups in Minnesota?

Differences in estimated graduation by race of respondent for:
- White students
    - White respondents' estimate: 81.3%
    - Respondents' of color estimate: 80.8%
- Black students*
    - White respondents' estimate: 61.5%
    - Respondents' of color estimate: 54.5%
- Latino students*
    - White respondents' estimate: 64.5%
    - Respondents' of color estimate: 57.3%
- Asian students
    - White respondents' estimate: 77.8%
    - Respondents' of color estimate: 74.9%
- Native American students*
    - White respondents' estimate: 58.2%
    - Respondents' of color estimate: 51.6%
- Low-income students*
    - White respondents' estimate: 61.2%
    - Respondents' of color estimate: 53.2%

Q15. What do you think is the single biggest contributor to the achievement gap?

Differences in achievement gap perceptions by race/ethnicity:
- Family involvement*
    - White respondents: 47.6%
    - Respondents of color: 34.8%
- Peer & community influences*
    - White respondents: 15.9%
    - Respondents of color: 4.3%
- School funding*
    - White respondents: 3.7%
    - Respondents of color: 10.9%
- Curriculum & standards*
    - White respondents: 2.3%
    - Respondents of color: 10.9%

Q16. How successful do you believe we can be in closing the achievement gap in ten years?

Respondents who think we can be completely or mostly successful by political affiliation:
• Democrats: 33.8%**
• Independents/Other: 23.2%
• Republican: 21.6%

Q21. Which of the following best describes your opinion on the frequency of state, district and school-based assessment of students?

*Testing perceptions: comparison by race***
• We are testing too frequently
    – White respondents: 30.0%
    – Respondents of color: 17.4%
• We are testing the right amount
    – White respondents: 41.1%
    – Respondents of color: 47.8%
• We are not testing as often as we should be
    – White respondents: 12.5%
    – Respondents of color: 23.9%
• Unsure
    – White respondents: 16.4%
    – Respondents of color: 10.9%

About MinnCAN

Launched in 2011, MinnCAN: The Minnesota Campaign for Achievement Now is an education advocacy nonprofit. MinnCAN is a movement of nearly 12,000 Minnesotans—and growing—dedicated to creating the political will to enact smart public policies to ensure that every Minnesota child has access to a great public school.

www.minncan.org