

Capital Survey Research Center

State of Alabama Public Schools (11002)

796 Registered Voters (SME +/-3.4%)
 219 Public School Households (SME 6.6%)

May 10-11,16-18,23-25,31, June 01, 2011

1. At this time, do you have any **children in school** in kindergarten through high school? Are they in:

	Total	PSH*
Public school	26%	94%
Private or church school	6%	
Both public and private or church	2%	4%
No school age children	65%	
Other	1%	

2.-9. Please tell me what grade-A, B, C, D or F-you would give to each of the following. (**Registered Voter Sample: S=796**)

	A	B	C	D	F	DK
Public school oldest child attends	44%	27%	18%	4%	5%	3%
Public schools in your community	19%	32%	27%	10%	7%	6%
Public schools in Alabama	9%	24%	38%	15%	5%	9%
Public schools in the nation	5%	25%	41%	10%	4%	14%
Private schools in your community	19%	35%	15%	3%	2%	26%
Church schools in your community	19%	33%	15%	4%	2%	27%
Community colleges and schools	21%	43%	19%	4%	2%	11%
State universities and colleges	31%	46%	12%	3%	2%	7%

* Public School Household

2.-9. Please tell me what grade-A, B, C, D or F-you would give to each of the following. (**Public School Household Sample: S=219**)

	A	B	C	D	F	DK
Public school oldest child attends	44%	27%	18%	4%	5%	3%
Public schools in your community	28%	34%	17%	14%	2%	4%
Public schools in Alabama	13%	30%	34%	11%	3%	9%
Public schools in the nation	4%	25%	41%	11%	2%	17%
Private schools in your community	17%	34%	13%	4%	2%	30%
Church schools in your community	20%	33%	13%	4%	4%	27%
Community colleges and schools	25%	43%	14%	2%	1%	14%
State universities and colleges	40%	38%	11%	1%	1%	10%

10. What do you think is the most important thing that needs to be done that would most help public schools earn an "A" grade? (open end)

(**Registered Voter Sample: S=798**)

	Frequency	Percent
Funding	118	15%
Better Teachers/Teaching	87	11%
Parental accountability	67	8%
Class size/More teachers	63	8%
Discipline/Safety/Security	57	7%
Higher salaries	37	5%
Christian teachers/Bible/God/Prayer	26	3%
Basics/Reading/Math	24	3%
Tenure reform	23	3%
Curriculum	22	3%
Leadership/Administration	21	3%
Teacher evaluation	17	2%
Focus on kids	13	2%
Computers/Technology	12	2%
High expectations/Standards	11	1%
Teacher attitudes/Skills	10	1%
Tutoring	9	1%
Cut extracurricular activities/Athletics	8	1%
Do away with teacher's union	8	1%
Take politics out of schools	7	1%
Empower teachers	7	1%
Books/Materials/Supplies	6	1%
Equitable distribution of resources/offerings	6	1%
Drop NCLB	6	1%
After school activities/Athletics	5	1%
Less testing	4	1%
Facilities	4	1%
Teaching incentives/Merit pay	4	1%
Consolidate schools	4	1%
Don't Know/Other	109	10%
Total	798	

11. If there is a consistently low performing school in your community, what do you believe should be done?

	Total	PSH*
Keep school open with new teachers, staff, and support	36%	33%
Keep school open and provide outside Support	31%	30%
Close school/Reopen with new staff	9%	12%
Close school/Make Charter School	7%	10%
Close school/Send students to high performing school	5%	3%
Don't Know/Other	12%	12%

12. In your opinion, how much does the amount of money spent on a public school student's education affect the quality of education?

	Total	PSH*
A great deal	47%	54%
Quite a lot	23%	22%
Not too much	19%	13%
Not at all	7%	9%
Don't Know/Other	5%	2%

13.-15. How would you grade the performance of the following in support of public schools? (**Registered Voter Sample: S=796**)

	A	B	C	D	F	DK
President Obama	15%	26%	27%	12%	10%	10%
Governor Bentley	12%	26%	26%	9%	9%	18%
Alabama Legislature	5%	17%	35%	17%	15%	12%

13.-15. How would you grade the performance of the following in support of public schools? (**Public School Household Sample: S=219**)

	A	B	C	D	F	DK
President Obama	15%	27%	30%	11%	7%	10%
Governor Bentley	10%	27%	29%	10%	11%	13%
Alabama Legislature	4%	15%	41%	18%	14%	5%

16. School superintendents and school boards can be elected or appointed. Which of the following do you most support?

	Total	PSH*
Elect both superintendent and board	59%	58%
Appoint superintendent/Elect board	11%	12%
Elect or appoint does not matter	11%	9%
Appoint superintendent and board	7%	8%
Elect superintendent/Appoint board	8%	10%
Don't Know/Other	5%	3%

17. In your opinion, which of the following is the most important factor in determining whether students learn in school?

	Total	PSH*
Student's parents	43%	46%
Teacher	22%	20%
Student	16%	17%
School	4%	4%
Don't Know/Other	15%	13%

18. Which of the following do you believe is the biggest problem with your local public school teachers?

	Total	PSH*
Lack support and resources	24%	34%
Too much paper work, testing, duties	19%	25%
Class size	11%	8%
Not dedicated hard workers	8%	7%
Students not able or dedicated	8%	6%
Standards are not high enough	7%	6%
Not well trained	5%	4%
Not competent	3%	2%
Poor hiring	2%	1%
Don't Know/Other	13%	7%

19. Recently, some school districts have experimented with the idea of paying students money for specific behaviors or achievements such as reading books, attendance, and getting good grades. Do you support or oppose paying small amounts to students to change behaviors?

	Total	PSH*
Support	21%	26%
Oppose	76%	71%
Don't Know/Other	3%	3%

20. Should all teachers be paid on a standard scale or should each teacher be paid on the basis of the work done?

	Total	PSH*
Paid on basis of work done	57%	53%
Paid on standard scale	36%	37%
Don't Know/Other	7%	10%

21. How closely should a teacher's pay be tied to student performance?

	Total	PSH*
Very closely tied	26%	21%
Somewhat closely tied	42%	39%
Not very closely tied	9%	10%
Not at all tied	18%	25%
Don't Know/Other	6%	5%

22. What do you think should be the primary purpose for evaluating teachers?

	Total	PSH*
Helping them improve	62%	61%
Documenting ineffectiveness	24%	7%
Establishing their salary	6%	28%
Don't Know/Other	8%	4%

23. Do you have trust and confidence in the men and women who are teaching children in your local public schools?

	Total	PSH*
Yes	73%	81%
No	17%	13%
Don't Know/Other	10%	6%

24. Some say that tenure is a major problem that hurts public schools. Do you believe that is true? What kind of problem do you think tenure is?

	Total	PSH*
Tenure law and procedures are bad	27%	26%
No, tenure is not a problem	24%	9%
Administrators don't administer well	11%	8%
School boards don't administer well	8%	7%
Schools need to keep teachers	4%	27%
Don't Know/Other	26%	23%

25. Think about the best teacher you ever had. Please tell me what made that teacher the best you had. (**Registered Voter Sample: S=821**) (open end)

Cared	194	24%
Able / Professional / Skilled / Talented	102	12%
Challenged us / Made us work / Strict	65	8%
Dedicated	64	8%
Consistent high ideals and expectations	54	7%
Related / Connected well	47	6%
Encouraged	39	5%
Discipline	30	4%
Enjoyed / Passionate about teaching	28	3%
Fun and interesting	27	3%
Excited about what was being taught	17	2%
Wanted all students to succeed	16	2%
Equal treatment / Fair	15	2%
Helped / Hands on	15	2%
Personality	12	1%
Interested students	11	1%
Listened / Paid attention / Understanding	9	1%
Patient	8	1%
Presentation / Communication	5	1%
Hard but fair	5	1%
Respected	4	0%
Flexible	2	0%
Stayed late / Worked hard	2	0%
Partner in learning	2	0%
Provided tools to meet high standards	2	0%
Taught standards and morals	2	0%
Explained thoroughly	1	0%
Morning devotional	1	0%
Don't Know / No Reply / Other	42	5%
Total	821	

26. Do you think your local public school system has a hard time getting good teachers?

	Total	PSH*
Yes	44%	39%
No	50%	58%
Don't Know/Other	6%	3%

27. Do you think your local public school teachers are:

	Total	PSH*
Very well supported/recognized	19%	23%
Somewhat well supported/recognized	37%	32%
Not very well supported/recognized	22%	26%
Not well supported/recognized	15%	16%
Don't Know/Other	6%	3%

28. Would you like a child of yours to be a public school teacher?

	Total	PSH*
Yes	57%	58%
No	37%	37%
Don't Know/Other	6%	5%

29. To fix the problems of public education do you support providing alternatives to public schools such as vouchers, private schools, or school choice, or do you support fixing public schools?

	Total	PSH*
Provide public school options	29%	24%
Fix public schools	65%	71%
Don't Know/Other	6%	5%

30. One proposal to fix public schools is to have Charter schools. Charter schools are public schools funded by public dollars under a charter that gives them more independence in how the school operates. Do you favor or oppose charter schools?

	Total	PSH*
Favor	49%	49%
Oppose	38%	36%
Don't Know/Other	13%	15%

31. Would you support charter schools in your community, if they took funds away from your other local public schools?

	Total	PSH*
Yes	31%	34%
No	62%	59%
Don't Know/Other	7%	7%

32. Do you believe that K-12 graduates today are better, less, or equally prepared for work or college than they were when you were in school?

	Total	PSH*
Less prepared	47%	34%
Better prepared	30%	41%
Equally prepared	20%	23%
Don't Know/Other	3%	2%

33. Student discipline is often mentioned as a major problem in public schools. Do you believe public school teachers have sufficient authority to discipline students?

	Total	PSH*
Yes	27%	32%
No	70%	67%
Don't Know/Other	3%	1%

34. A school's performance can be measured based on the percentage of students passing standardized tests at the end of the year or the improvement students made during the year. What do you think is the best way to measure school performance?

	Total	PSH*
Percentage passing year end tests	19%	14%
Improvement made over the year	76%	83%
Don't Know/Other	5%	3%

35. In Alabama, AEA, the public school education employees association, is influential in shaping public school policies, programs, and the education budget. Overall, what impact do you believe AEA has on public schools in Alabama?

	Total	PSH*
Greatly Help	14%	11%
Somewhat Help	43%	49%
Somewhat Hurt	19%	19%
Greatly Hurt	10%	10%
Don't Know/Other	14%	11%

36. Are you generally aware of the public school acts and bills that have been adopted or are now being considered in the current session of the Alabama Legislature? How do you feel so far about the record and impact of the Legislature on public schools?

	Total	PSH*
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Strongly support public schools	5%	7%
Somewhat support public schools	13%	17%
Somewhat hurt public schools	9%	10%
Strongly hurt public schools	8%	11%
No, not aware	61%	52%
Don't Know/Other	4%	3%

37. The Alabama Legislature is now controlled by the Republican Party. What impact do you think Republican Party control of state government will have on public schools?

	Total	PSH*
Very positive	10%	7%
Somewhat positive	43%	45%
Somewhat negative	21%	22%
Very negative	15%	14%
Political party makes no difference	4%	5%
Don't Know/Other	7%	7%

38. At this time, how do you feel about the future of public schools in Alabama?

	Total	PSH*
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Very confident will improve	13%	13%
Somewhat confident will improve	26%	28%
Somewhat concerned will not improve	39%	40%
Very concerned will not improve	19%	16%
Don't Know/Other	3%	3%

39. Why are you concerned about the future of public schools in Alabama? (**Registered Voter Sample: S=438**) (open end)

Funding	105	24%
Future / Students not being educated	64	15%
Discipline / Safety	42	10%
Parents	22	5%
Politics / Parties split	15	3%
Administration / Leadership	13	3%
Republicans	12	3%
Children / Grandchildren	12	3%
Lack of teacher support	11	3%
Tenure	9	2%
Teacher hiring	7	2%
Teachers need better pay	7	2%
Teachers just for money	7	2%
Class size	7	2%
Curriculum	7	2%
AEA influence	7	2%
Overwhelming for teachers	6	1%
Legislature	5	1%
Attacks on AEA	4	1%
Drop outs	4	1%
Students not interested	4	1%
Standards too low	3	1%
God / Prayer absent	3	1%
Not enough teachers	3	1%
Closing schools	2	0%
Incompetent teachers	2	0%
Public schools gone	2	0%
Private schools	2	0%
Authority lost	1	0%
Charter Schools	1	0%
No cooperation	1	0%
Segregated schools	1	0%
Schools no fun anymore	1	0%
Quality	1	0%
Teachers need authority	1	0%
Don't Know / No Reply / Other	44	10%
Total	438	

Demographics
(Registered Voter Sample: S=796)

Region		PSH*	Party I.D.		PSH*
North	47%	49%	Democrat	33%	35%
Middle	29%	31%	Republican	26%	23%
South	24%	20%	Independent	36%	39%
			Don't Know	2%	3%

Church Attendance

None	12%	13%
< Once month	6%	5%
Once month	12%	15%
Once week	34%	36%
> Once week	31%	29%
Other	5%	3%

Residence

Rural county	17%	19%
Rural community	14%	18%
Small Town	12%	8%
Small city	12%	18%
Medium size city	16%	14%
Large city	23%	14%
Suburb	8%	7%
Other	3%	7%

Gender

Male	44%	42%
Female	56%	58%

Race

Black / A-A	26%	26%
White	73%	73%
Other	1%	1%

Education

< High School	4%	4%
High School	19%	19%
Some college	27%	21%
College	28%	34%
Graduate	22%	21%
Other	1%	1%

Income

< \$25,000	16%	18%
\$25-\$50,000	26%	23%
\$50-\$75,000	18%	14%
\$75-\$100,000	14%	20%
>\$100,000	13%	17%
Other	13%	8%

Age

18-24	10%	6%
25-34	17%	16%
35-50	28%	54%
51-64	24%	16%
65+	21%	8%

Marital Status

Married	62%	71%
Single	21%	13%
Partner	1%	<1%
Divorced	8%	11%
Widowed	8%	5%

* Public School Household

Gerald W. Johnson, Director
Capital Survey Research Center
Alabama Education Association
334.834.9790
geraldj@alaedu.org