



Californians & Education

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PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

The PPIC Statewide Survey provides a voice for the public and likely voters—informing policymakers, encouraging discussion, and raising awareness on critical issues of the day.

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News Release

EMBARGOED: Do not publish or broadcast until 9:00 p.m. PT on Wednesday, April 22, 2020.

*Note: Results on Californians' economic outlook as well as on concerns among all adults about COVID-19 causing a family member's illness or a negative impact on personal finances were **released publicly** on Monday, April 20, and are not under this embargo.*

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PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND EDUCATION

Many Parents Worry about School Closures, Home Learning

APPROVAL HIGH FOR HOW LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE HANDLING CLOSURES

SAN FRANCISCO, April 22, 2020—Many California parents see local school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic as at least somewhat of a problem, and around two in three are concerned about providing productive learning at home. Still, more than nine in ten parents of children 18 or under approve of how their local school district is handling the school closures, while solid majorities approve of Governor Newsom's handling of K–12 education overall. These are among the key findings of a statewide survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California.

Asked to name the most important issue facing the state's public schools today, California adults (14%) and public school parents (16%) are most likely to name COVID-19 and distance learning, followed by lack of funding (11% adults, 10% public school parents), concerns about curriculum (9% adults, 8% public school parents), large class sizes (7% adults, 9% public school parents), and concerns about standards/quality of education (5% adults, 8% public school parents).

Many parents of children 18 or under (52% parents, 58% public school parents) say the local school closures due to COVID-19 pose a big problem or somewhat of a problem. Asked how concerned they are about providing productive learning at home, solid majorities (63% parents, 70% public school parents) say they are very or somewhat concerned. Parents with annual household incomes less than \$60,000 (69%) are more likely than parents with household incomes of \$60,000 or more (56%) to be at least somewhat concerned about offering learning at home.

"COVID-19 is the most important issue facing schools today as many parents report having problems with school closures and express concerns about learning at home," said Mark Baldassare, PPIC president and CEO.

Overwhelming majorities of Californians (78% adults, 83% public school parents) are either very or somewhat worried that they or a family member will get sick from the coronavirus. Similar shares (75% adults, 85% public school parents) are very or somewhat worried that the pandemic will have a negative impact on their personal finances.

Governor's Handling of K–12 Education and Local Districts' Handling of School Closures Have Strong Approval

Overwhelming majorities of Californians (73% adults, 78% public school parents) approve of Governor Newsom's handling of K–12 education. This is a notable increase from April 2019, when 53 percent of

adults and 68 percent of public school parents approved. More than nine in ten parents (93% parents, 92% public school parents) approve of how their local school district is handling school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The April PPIC Survey finds overwhelming approval of the way that Governor Newsom is handling K–12 education and how local school districts are handling school closures,” Baldassare said.

Views Are Mixed on Issuing School Bonds, Slim Majority Supports “Split Roll” Property Tax

Optimism about the state’s economy has dropped substantially. Only about one in five (19%) Californians say they expect good financial times in the state during the next 12 months. This is down from 49 percent in January 2020 and is lower than at any point since the Great Recession.

A majority of Californians (59% adults, 53% likely voters, 78% public school parents) say they would vote yes today on a state bond measure to pay for school construction projects, while there is a similar level of support (55% adults, 50% likely voters, 74% public school parents) for a bond measure from their local school district. (Local school bonds need a 55% majority to pass.) However, slightly smaller shares (51% adults, 44% likely voters, 71% public school parents) say that now is a good time for the state government to issue school construction bonds or for local school districts to issue construction bonds (49% adults, 43% likely voters, 64% public school parents).

“With most Californians in a pessimistic mood about the economy, fewer than half of California likely voters say it is a good idea to issue state and local school bonds at this time,” Baldassare said.

A ballot measure eligible for the November 2020 statewide ballot would tax commercial properties at their current market value but would not lift limits that Prop 13 (1978) places on residential property taxes—creating a “split roll” property tax system. A slim majority of Californians (53% adults, 53% likely voters, 62% public school parents) support a ballot measure that would make this change and direct some of the new revenues to funding for public schools. In April 2019, 56 percent of adults, 54 percent of likely voters, and 67 percent of public school parents said they would vote yes. Today, Democrats (71%) are far more likely than independents (44%) and Republicans (24%) to say they would vote yes.

“A slim majority in favor of the ‘split roll’ property tax initiative for more school funding is a result of strong support among Democrats while majorities of Republicans and independents are opposed,” Baldassare said.

Most Approve of State’s K–12 School Funding Formula

After reading a brief description of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), the system enacted seven years ago for state funding of K–12 schools, overwhelming majorities (71% adults, 79% public school parents) approve. Also, solid majorities (62% adults, 72% public school parents) think the academic achievement of English language learners and low-income students will improve because of the LCFF.

Overwhelming majorities (80% adults, 81% public school parents) are either very or somewhat concerned about college readiness among public school students in lower-income areas. Asked about English language learners, strong majorities (70% adults, 70% public school parents) are either very or somewhat concerned about improving outcomes for these students, while about nine in ten (88% adults, 93% percent) say doing so is either very or somewhat important for Californian’s future.

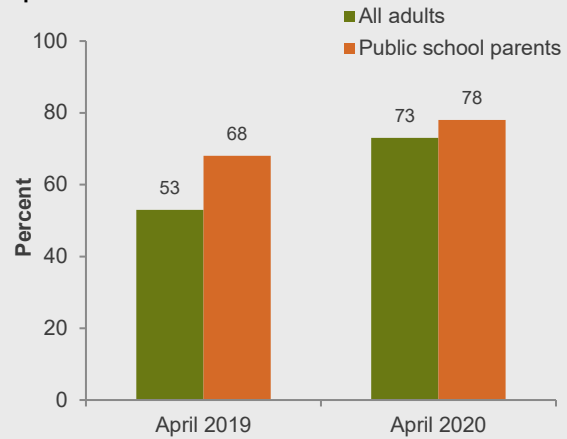
“Most Californians support the state’s efforts to direct more funding to lower-income and English Learner students as they cite concerns about their college readiness and their importance to the state’s future,” Baldassare said.

Perceptions and Attitudes

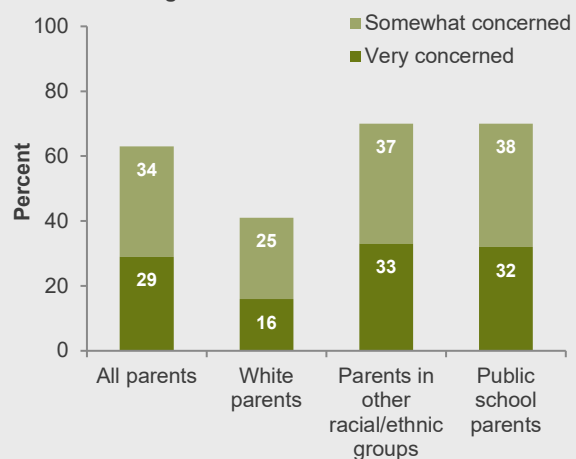
Key Findings

- More than seven in ten Californians approve of Governor Newsom’s handling of K–12 public education. More than nine in ten parents approve of the way their local school district is handling school closures.
- Majorities of parents say school closures due to the coronavirus outbreak have been a problem for them and are concerned about providing productive learning in their homes during this time. *(page 6)*
- Californians name the coronavirus as the biggest problem facing K–12 schools. Parents say preparing students for college is the most important goal. *(page 7)*
- Six in ten Californians say the state’s K–12 public education system is going in the right direction. However, they are divided on whether the system is in need of major or minor changes. *(page 8)*
- Eight in ten Californians are concerned that public school students in lower-income areas are less likely to be ready for college, and about nine in ten say it is important to improve student outcomes for English language learners for the state’s future. *(page 9)*
- Forty-five percent of adults and 53 percent of public school parents give their local public schools a positive grade of A or B. Majorities say their local public schools are doing an excellent or good job of preparing students for college (64%) and for jobs and the workforce (57%). *(page 10)*
- Six in ten adults (61%) and public school parents (60%) think teacher salaries are too low. Majorities say schools in lower-income areas should pay teachers higher salaries and offer them additional training and professional development. *(page 11)*

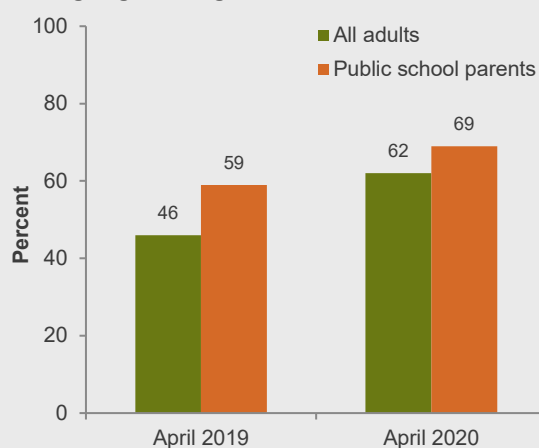
Approval of Governor Newsom’s handling of K–12 public education



Parental concern about providing productive learning at home during local school closures



Perception that California’s K–12 public schools are going in the right direction



The Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Schools

As the number of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in California continues to rise, more than eight in ten Californians say their lives have been disrupted a lot (48%) or some (36%) by the outbreak, while fewer than two in ten report just a little (12%) disruption or none at all (4%). Public school parents (58% a lot, 34% some) are somewhat more likely to hold these views. Californians are more likely than adults nationwide to say their lives have been disrupted at least some (45% a lot, 27% some) according to an April Kaiser Family Foundation poll. About eight in ten report they are very (41% adults, 56% public school parents) or somewhat (37% adults, 27% public school parents) worried that they or their family members will get sick from the coronavirus. Similar shares say they are very (41% adults, 55% public school parents) or somewhat (34% adults, 30% public school parents) worried that the coronavirus will have a negative impact on their personal finances—and there has been a steep decline in expectations of good economic times among all adults (49% January, 19% April). Approval of Governor Newsom’s handling of K–12 public education has risen sharply compared to a year ago (from 53% to 73% for adults; from 68% to 78% for public school parents).

Notably, 93 percent of parents and 92 percent of public school parents approve of the way their local school district is handling school closures because of the coronavirus outbreak. Fifty-two percent of parents of children 18 or under and 58 percent of public school parents say that local school closures have been a big problem or somewhat of a problem. Parents with household incomes under \$60,000 (55%) are more likely than those with higher incomes (46%) to see school closures as at least somewhat of a problem, and renters (55%) are somewhat more likely than homeowners (48%) to hold this view.

“How much of a problem for you and your family are local school closures because of the coronavirus outbreak?”

Parents only	All parents	Household income		Homeownership		Public school parents
		Under \$60,000	\$60,000 or more	Own	Rent	
Big problem	21%	24%	16%	17%	24%	25%
Somewhat of a problem	31	31	30	31	31	33
Not much of a problem	48	45	53	52	45	41
Don't know	–	–	1	1	–	–

Earlier in April, Tony Thurmond, the state superintendent of public instruction, sent a letter to all county superintendents recommending that they plan to offer digital instruction, or “distance-learning,” for the remainder of the school year. When asked how concerned they are about providing productive learning at home, 63 percent of parents and 70 percent of public school parents say they are very or somewhat concerned. Parents with annual household incomes under \$60,000 (69%) are more likely than those with incomes of \$60,000 or more (56%) to say they are at least somewhat concerned. Homeowners (61%) are about as likely as renters (65%) to express concern about providing productive learning in their homes. Whites (41%) are much less likely than parents in other racial/ethnic groups (70%) to be concerned.

“How concerned are you about providing productive learning in your home during local school closures because of the coronavirus outbreak?”

Parents only	All parents	Household income		Homeownership		Public school parents
		Under \$60,000	\$60,000 or more	Own	Rent	
Very concerned	29%	32%	25%	27%	31%	32%
Somewhat concerned	34	37	31	34	34	38
Not too concerned	22	23	21	18	25	23
Not at all concerned	15	9	22	21	10	7
Don't know	–	–	1	1	–	–

Important Issues and Goals

When asked to name the most important issue facing California’s K–12 public schools today, California adults (14%) and public school parents (16%) are most likely to mention COVID-19 and distance learning, followed by lack of funding, concerns about curriculum, large class sizes, and concerns about standards/quality of education. COVID-19 and a lack of funding are the top mentions across racial/ethnic groups. COVID-19 is mentioned most often by residents of Orange/San Diego (17%), Los Angeles (16%), and the Inland Empire (14%), while the top issue in the San Francisco Bay Area is a lack of funding (16%). Central Valley residents are most likely to mention concerns about curriculum (14%).

“What do you think is the most important issue facing California’s K–12 public schools today?”

Top five issues mentioned	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
COVID-19, distance learning	14%	21%	15%	15%	12%	16%
Lack of funding	11	9	15	9	12	10
Concerns about curriculum	9	4	9	5	12	8
Large class sizes	7	7	3	9	5	9
Concerns about standards/quality of education	5	5	5	5	5	8

When asked whether the quality of education is a big problem in California’s K–12 public schools today, 27 percent of adults and 17 percent of public school parents say yes. Republicans (47%) are much more likely than independents (32%) and Democrats (20%) to hold this view. At least one in five or more across demographic groups see the quality of education as a big problem. Californians age 55 or older (37%) are much more likely than younger Californians (23%) to hold this view. Regionally, about three in ten see the quality of education as a big problem.

Californians are divided on the most important goal of California’s K–12 public schools: 27 percent say it is teaching life skills and 24 percent say it is preparing students for college. A plurality of public school parents (43%) say the most important goal is preparing students for college. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (43%) are the most likely to say preparing students for college. Regionally, residents of Los Angeles (29%), the Central Valley (28%), and the Inland Empire (25%) are the most likely to say preparing students for college (20% San Francisco Bay Area, 16% Orange/San Diego). Californians with a high school diploma or less (36%) are much more likely than those with some college education (20%) or college graduates (14%) to say preparing students for college is the most important goal of California’s K–12 public schools.

“In your opinion, what is the most important goal of California’s K–12 public schools?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Teaching students life skills	27%	19%	34%	20%	31%	14%
Preparing students for college	24	30	19	43	11	43
Teaching students the basics	16	23	16	7	23	13
Preparing students for the workforce	15	18	12	12	18	12
Preparing students to be good citizens	13	6	16	15	11	14
Other (volunteered)	5	4	4	4	5	4

Overall Direction of State K–12 Policy

In the context of the coronavirus crisis, majorities of Californians say the state’s K–12 public education system is going in the right direction (62% adults, 60% likely voters); fewer than four in ten say it is going in the wrong direction (36% adults, 39% likely voters). Californians are much more likely to say the state’s K–12 public education system is going in the right direction today than they were last year (46% adults, 45% likely voters). Today, Democrats (78%) are far more likely than independents (58%) and Republicans (36%) to say it is going in the right direction. Majorities across regions say it is going in the right direction (67% Los Angeles, 64% San Francisco Bay Area, 61% Inland Empire, 58% Central Valley, 57% Orange/San Diego). Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (72%) and Asian Americans (70%) are the most likely to hold positive views, compared to fewer African Americans (57%) and whites (53%). About seven in ten public school parents (69%) say the system is going in the right direction.

“Thinking about the kindergarten through 12th grade public education system overall in California today, do you think it is generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters	Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind		
Right direction	62%	78%	36%	58%	60%	69%
Wrong direction	36	21	64	36	39	31
Don’t know	2	1	–	5	2	–

Californians have mixed opinions about changes in the quality of K–12 education over the past few years. A plurality say the quality has stayed the same (43%) or gotten worse (35%), and only 20 percent say the quality has improved. When we last asked this question in 2011, 54 percent of adults said the quality had worsened in the last few years. Today, a plurality of public school parents (43%) say the quality of education has stayed the same. A majority of Republicans (58%) say quality has worsened, while a plurality of Democrats say it has stayed the same (45%); independents are more divided. Residents of Los Angeles (25%) are the most likely to say the quality has improved, while those in the Inland Empire (40%) are the most likely to say it has gotten worse.

“Over the past few years, do you think the quality of education in California’s K–12 public schools has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters	Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind		
Improved	20%	25%	10%	18%	20%	29%
Gotten worse	35	29	58	37	40	28
Stayed the same	43	45	31	42	38	43
Don’t know	1	1	–	3	1	–

Adults and public school parents also have mixed opinions on whether the K–12 public education system in California is in need of major changes (46% adults, 46% public school parents) or minor changes (44% adults, 40% public school parents). Republicans (61%) are more likely than independents (47%) and Democrats (40%) to say the system is in need of major changes. Regionally, residents of Los Angeles (51%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (49%) are the most likely to hold this view.

Despite these mixed views, approval for the state legislature’s handling of K–12 public education is high today (69% adults, 67% likely voters, 77% public school parents) and much higher than last April (47% adults, 45% likely voters, 59% public school parents). This mirrors the change in Governor Newsom’s approval rating for his handling of K–12 public education.

Lower-Income Students and English Language Learners

More than eight in ten adults (37% very, 44% somewhat) and public school parents (39% very, 46% somewhat) say they are concerned that California’s K–12 public schools in lower-income areas have a shortage of good teachers compared to schools in wealthier areas. Across racial/ethnic groups, African Americans and Latinos (43% each) are the most likely to say they are very concerned (34% Asian Americans, 31% whites). Regionally, Inland Empire residents (46%) are the most likely to say they are very concerned (39% Los Angeles, 35% Orange/San Diego, 35% San Francisco Bay Area, 31% Central Valley). About three in ten or more across demographic groups say they are very concerned.

Eight in ten adults and public school parents also say they are concerned that K–12 public school students in lower-income areas are less likely than other students to be ready for college when they finish high school. African Americans and Latinos (43% each) are the most likely to say they are very concerned, followed by whites (34%) and Asian Americans (30%). Across regions, more than three in ten say they are very concerned (43% Inland Empire, 41% Los Angeles, 38% San Francisco Bay Area, 36% Orange/San Diego, 31% Central Valley).

“How concerned are you that California’s K–12 public schools students in lower-income areas are less likely than other students to be ready for college when they finish high school?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Very concerned	37%	43%	30%	43%	34%	39%
Somewhat concerned	43	31	56	39	43	42
Not too concerned	14	22	11	13	16	15
Not at all concerned	5	4	4	4	6	5
Don't know	1	–	–	1	1	–

About one in five students in California’s K–12 public schools are English language learners (ELL), according to a [recent PPIC publication](#). When asked how much they have heard about ELL students, about two in three report they have heard a lot (19% adults, 25% public school parents) or a little (49% adults, 52% public school parents) about these students. In a separate question, a majority of adults (23% very, 47% somewhat) and public school parents (19% very, 51% somewhat) say they are concerned about improving student outcomes for ELL students.

About nine in ten adults and public school parents think improving outcomes for ELL students is important for California’s future economic wellbeing and quality of life. Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (53%) are the most likely to say this is very important, followed by Asian Americans (39%), whites (37%), and African Americans (35%). More than one in three across regions and across age, education, and income groups hold this view. Women (49%) are much more likely than men (36%) to say it is very important. The share saying very important increases with rising age.

“How important is improving student outcomes for English language learners for California’s future economic wellbeing and quality of life?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Very important	43%	35%	39%	53%	37%	43%
Somewhat important	45	52	47	41	46	50
Not too important	9	7	11	6	12	5
Not at all important	3	6	2	1	4	2
Don't know	1	–	–	–	2	–

Local Public Schools

When asked to rate the quality of local public schools, 45 percent of adults and 53 percent of public school parents give their local schools an A or a B. Responses were similar among all adults last April (8% A, 30% B). African Americans are less likely than other racial/ethnic groups to give an A or a B. Positive views range from 40 percent in the Central Valley to 48 percent in the San Francisco Bay Area. College graduates (51%) and those with incomes higher than \$80,000 (50%) are more likely than those with other educational and income levels to give an A or B. Democrats (51%) are more likely than Republicans (41%) and independents (43%) to grade local schools positively. The grades for local public schools in our survey are similar to those of adults nationwide in the May 2019 Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research survey (9% A, 35% B, 39% C, 11% D, 5% Fail).

“Overall, how would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today? If you had to give your local public schools a grade, would it be A, B, C, D, or F?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
A	11%	2%	10%	12%	11%	14%
B	34	33	34	35	34	39
C	39	38	45	38	38	31
D	10	16	8	9	10	10
F	5	11	3	5	5	6
Don't know	1	–	1	1	2	–

When asked about how their local public schools are doing in preparing students for college, 64 percent of adults (9% excellent, 55% good) and seven in ten public school parents (9% excellent, 62% good) give positive ratings. At least half of adults have rated their schools positively since April 2013. Today, Orange/San Diego and San Francisco Bay Area residents (67% each) are the most likely to rate their schools positively, followed by those in Los Angeles (63%), the Central Valley (62%), and the Inland Empire (62%). Across racial/ethnic groups, African Americans (52%) are the least likely to have a positive view about college preparation. When asked about how their public schools are doing in preparing students for jobs and the workforce, nearly six in ten adults (7% excellent, 50% good) and seven in ten public school parents (10% excellent, 60% good) express positive opinions. African Americans (47%) are once again the least likely among racial/ethnic groups to hold a positive view.

“Are your local public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in...?”

		All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
			African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Preparing students for college	Excellent	9%	2%	13%	9%	10%	9%
	Good	55	50	54	57	54	62
	Not so good	29	38	25	28	32	25
	Poor	5	9	6	5	3	3
	Don't know	1	1	2	–	2	–
Preparing students for jobs and the workforce	Excellent	7	8	8	8	7	10
	Good	50	39	49	57	46	60
	Not so good	35	36	37	29	38	26
	Poor	7	15	3	5	7	4
	Don't know	2	1	3	1	2	–

School Teachers

Most Californians (61%) and public school parents (60%) think salaries for teachers in their community are too low; about one in three say teacher salaries are just about right, and a few (6% adults, 3% public school parents) say they are too high. Across regions, the share expressing the view that salaries are too low ranges from 49 percent in the Inland Empire to 73 percent in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Perceptions also differ among partisans: about half of Republicans (49%) say salaries are too low, compared to majorities of independents (61%) and Democrats (73%). The perception that salaries are too low is most prevalent among African Americans (73%), followed by Asian Americans (63%), whites (63%), and Latinos (56%).

“Do you think salaries for teachers in your community are too high, too low, or just about right?”

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Too high	6%	5%	5%	7%	9%	3%	3%
Too low	61	60	49	60	60	73	60
Just about right	31	31	46	31	30	23	36
Don't know	2	3	–	2	2	1	2

An overwhelming majority of adults and public school parents say the shortage of teachers is a big problem (39% adults, 40% public school parents) or somewhat of a problem (46% adults, 48% public school parents) in California’s K–12 public schools today. African Americans (56%) are the most likely to call this a big problem, followed by Latinos (46%), Asian Americans (38%), and whites (31%). There is also a partisan divide on this question: Democrats are twice as likely as Republicans (52% to 26%) to say teacher shortages are a big problem, while 35 percent of independents hold this view.

Given the level of concern about teacher shortages in schools in lower-income areas, do Californians support policies to attract and retain good teachers? About two in three Californians (63%) and public school parents (68%) think local schools in lower-income areas should pay higher salaries to attract and retain teachers. Fewer Californians held this view in 2010 (51%) during the Great Recession, but findings were similar in 2007 (67%) and 2006 (66%). Support for this proposal is lowest among whites (59%), compared to about two in three in other racial/ethnic groups. Views also differ along partisan lines, with Republicans (46%) much less likely than independents (64%) and Democrats (75%) to support higher salaries. Overwhelming majorities of adults (72%) and public school parents (78%) are in favor of local schools in lower-income areas providing additional training and professional development to teachers. Support for this policy was identical among all adults the last time we asked this question in 2008 (72%). About two in three Asian Americans (67%) and whites (65%) express support, compared to 80 percent of African Americans and Latinos. Once again, Republicans (50%) are less supportive than independents (70%) and Democrats (84%).

“Should local schools in lower-income areas...?”

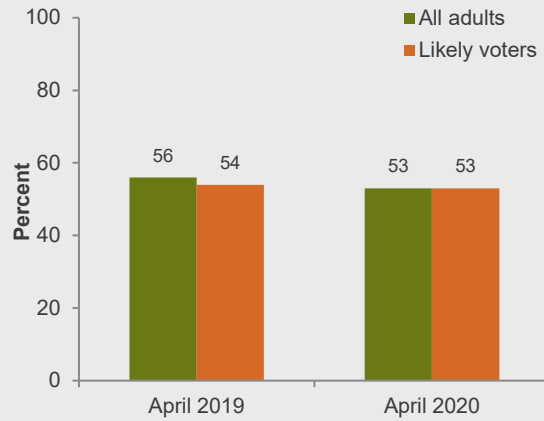
		All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
			African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Pay higher salaries to attract and retain teachers	Yes	63%	67%	64%	68%	59%	68%
	No	35	28	36	31	39	31
	Don't know	2	5	–	2	2	1
Provide additional training and professional development to teachers	Yes	72	80	67	80	65	78
	No	27	14	33	18	34	21
	Don't know	1	6	–	2	1	1

Funding and Policy Preferences

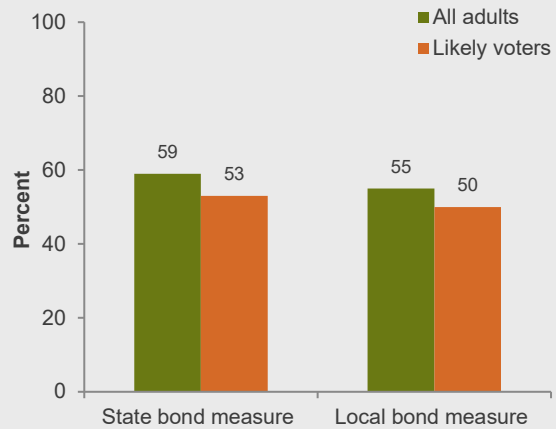
Key Findings

- Fifty-three percent of California likely voters would support a “split roll” property tax to fund public schools. Fifty-three percent of likely voters would vote yes on a state bond for school construction, while 44 percent say it is a good idea for the state to issue construction bonds at this time. More than six in ten support two of the governor’s budget proposals to increase state funding for K–12 education. *(page 13)*
- Fifty percent of likely voters would vote yes on a local bond for school construction, and 43 percent say it is a good idea for school districts to issue construction bonds at this time. About four in ten say they would support a local parcel tax for schools and favor lowering the two-thirds vote requirement to 55 percent for local parcel taxes. *(page 14)*
- A majority (54%) of adults favor charter schools. Two in three say it is important for parents in lower-income areas to have the choice of sending their children to charter schools, while 58 percent are concerned about charter schools taking away funding from traditional public schools. *(page 15)*
- A majority of Californians (56%) are in favor of the Common Core State Standards. Seven in ten support the Local Control Funding Formula. *(page 16)*
- Two in three adults say the state should fund voluntary preschool, and eight in ten say that preschool affordability is a problem. Forty-six percent say preschool is very important to K–12 success. *(page 17)*
- Fifty-four percent of adults say it is very important that school curriculum include career technical or vocational education. Forty-seven percent say their local public schools are doing very or somewhat well at preparing students for well-paying jobs in today’s economy. *(page 18)*

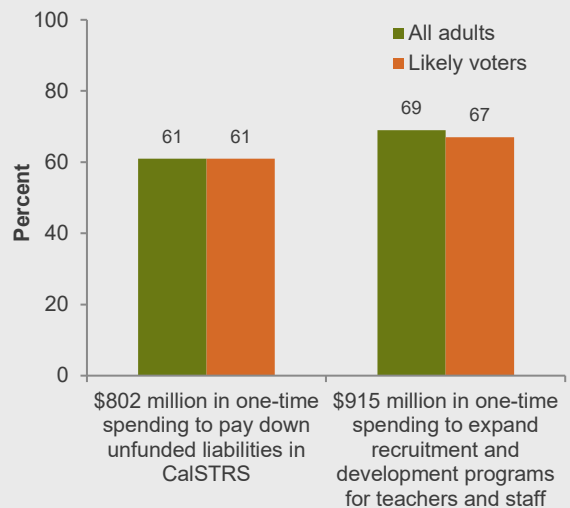
Support for a “split roll” property tax that would direct new tax revenue to K–12 public schools



Support for school construction bonds



Support for Governor Newsom’s budget proposals



State Funding for Local Public Schools

One of the most surprising results of California’s March primary was the defeat of the Proposition 13 state bond measure (47% yes, 53% no). The last time a state school bond was defeated was in 1994.

About half of Californians (50%), likely voters (55%), and public school parents (55%) say that the current level of state funding for their local public schools is not enough. By comparison, 56 percent of adults, 59 percent of likely voters, and 63 percent of public school parents held this view last April. Today, Democrats (64%) are much more likely than independents and Republicans (45% each) to say that their local public schools do not get enough state funding. Across racial/ethnic groups, African Americans (58%) are most likely to say that the level of state funding for local schools is inadequate (51% whites, 49% Latinos, 41% Asian Americans).

A ballot measure eligible for the November 2020 ballot would tax commercial properties according to their current market value but would not lift the 1978 Proposition 13 limits on residential property taxes—creating a “split roll” property tax system. Fifty-three percent of adults and likely voters and 62 percent of public school parents say they would vote yes on a potential state ballot measure that would make this change and direct some of the new tax revenue to state funding for K–12 public schools. By comparison, 56 percent of adults, 54 percent of likely voters, and 67 percent of public school parents said they would vote yes last April. Today, Democrats (71%) are far more likely than independents (44%) and Republicans (24%) to say they would vote yes.

“As you may know, under Proposition 13, residential and commercial property taxes are both strictly limited. What if there was a state ballot measure to have commercial properties taxed according to their current market value and direct some of this new tax revenue to state funding for K–12 public schools? Would you vote yes or no?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters	Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind		
Yes	53%	71%	24%	44%	53%	62%
No	46	28	76	53	47	38
Don't know	2	1	–	2	1	–

Governor Newsom has proposed K–12 spending increases for the next fiscal year. After reading brief descriptions, solid majorities are in favor of allocating \$802 million in one-time spending to pay down unfunded liabilities in the California State Teachers’ Retirement System (61% adults, 61% likely voters, 62% public school parents) and are in favor of allocating \$915 million in one-time spending to expand recruitment and development programs for teachers and staff (69% adults, 67% likely voters, 77% public school parents). Majorities across regions, racial/ethnic groups, and demographic groups are in favor of both proposals.

Lastly, 59 percent of adults, 53 percent of likely voters, and 78 percent of public school parents say they would vote yes on a state bond measure to pay for school construction projects. By comparison, 51 percent of adults, 44 percent of likely voters, and 71 percent of public school parents say that it is a good idea for the state government to issue school construction bonds at this time.

“Generally speaking, do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea for the state government to issue bonds to pay for school construction projects at this time?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters	Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind		
Good idea	51%	59%	28%	42%	44%	71%
Bad idea	46	39	71	55	54	27
Don't know	2	2	1	4	2	1

Local Revenues for Public Schools

In California’s March primary, 44 of 122 local school bond measures on the ballot passed. This was another surprising outcome, reflecting a significant drop in passage rates in recent elections. About half of adults (55%) and likely voters (50%) today say they would vote yes if their local school district had a bond measure on the ballot to pay for construction projects (local school bonds require a 55% majority to pass). A strong majority of Democrats (69%) compared to fewer independents (48%) and Republicans (25%) would vote yes. By comparison, 74 percent of public school parents would vote yes. Majorities in Los Angeles (62%), the Inland Empire (54%), the San Francisco Bay Area (54%), the Central Valley (53%), and fewer in Orange/San Diego (47%) would vote yes. Majorities of Latinos (72%), African Americans (61%) and Asian Americans (52%) would vote yes, compared to 42 percent of whites.

“If your local school district had a bond measure on the ballot to pay for school construction projects, would you vote yes or no?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters	Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind		
Yes	55%	69%	25%	48%	50%	74%
No	43	30	74	51	49	26
Don't know	2	2	1	1	1	–

Forty-two percent of adults and likely voters and 53 percent of public school parents say they would vote yes on a local parcel tax to fund local public schools (local parcel taxes require a two-thirds majority to pass). A majority of Democrats (56%)— compared to fewer independents (40%) and Republicans (14%)— say they would vote yes. Fewer than half across the state’s regions would support a local parcel tax to fund local public schools. Latinos (53%), Asian Americans (45%), and African Americans (41%) are more likely than whites (33%) to say they would vote yes. Renters (50%) are much more likely than homeowners (35%) to say they would vote yes.

When asked if they would support a state ballot measure to replace the two-thirds vote requirement with a 55 percent majority vote to pass local parcel taxes for local public schools, 42 percent of adults, 40 percent of likely voters, and 56 percent of public school parents say they would vote yes. (State ballot measures require a simple majority to pass.) A majority of Democrats (55%) and fewer independents (36%) and Republicans (19%) say they would vote yes. A majority of San Francisco Bay Area residents (53%) say they would support the measure, compared to about four in ten in other regions. Latinos (54%) and Asian Americans (48%) are more likely than African Americans (32%) and whites (31%) to say they would vote yes. Renters (51%) are much more likely than homeowners (35%) to express support.

In the midst of a COVID-19 crisis that has deeply shaken public economic confidence—80 percent expect bad times financially in the next 12 months—49 percent of adults and 43 percent of likely voters say it is a good idea for local school districts to issue bonds for school construction projects at this time. Sixty-four percent of public school parents say this is a good idea. Majorities in Los Angeles (54%) and the San Francisco Bay Area (51%) say issuing local school bonds is a good idea, compared to fewer in other regions (48% Central Valley, 45% Inland Empire, 39% Orange/San Diego). Democrats (59%) are far more likely than independents (38%) and Republicans (22%) to say this is a good idea.

“Generally speaking, do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea for local school districts to issue bonds to pay for school construction projects at this time?”

	All adults	Party			Likely voters	Public school parents
		Dem	Rep	Ind		
Good idea	49%	59%	22%	38%	43%	64%
Bad idea	49	37	77	58	54	34
Don't know	3	4	1	4	3	2

California’s Charter Schools

Two in three Californians have heard about charter schools, with 15 percent saying they have heard a lot and 52 percent saying a little. Awareness of California’s charter schools was similar last April (16% a lot, 51% a little). Today, majorities across parties, regions, and demographic groups say they have heard at least a little about them. Notably, three in ten or more Asian Americans (38%), African Americans (32%), Latinos (31%), whites (31%), and public school parents (30%) have heard nothing about California’s charter schools.

Fifty-four percent of Californians say they generally are in favor of charter schools. Californians’ views on charter schools were similar last April (49% favor, 46% oppose). Today, 64 percent of public school parents are in favor. Majorities across regions and about half or more across racial/ethnic groups are in favor. Support for charter schools is lower among Democrats (40%) than among independents (56%) and Republicans (73%).

“The state created charter schools to offer parents an alternative to traditional public schools. These schools are expected to meet basic state requirements but are exempt from many state laws and regulations. In general, do you favor or oppose charter schools?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Favor	54%	46%	48%	59%	55%	64%
Oppose	43	48	50	39	42	33
Don't know	3	6	2	3	3	3

Solid majorities of Californians (67%) and public school parents (73%) say it is very or somewhat important for parents in lower-income areas to have the choice of sending their children to charter schools instead of traditional local public schools. The ability to choose a charter school is perceived as somewhat less important than it was last April (75% adults, 81% public school parents). Today, about two in three or more across racial/ethnic groups say that having this choice is important. More than six in ten across parties and regions say it is important for parents in lower-income areas to have this choice.

“How important is it for parents in lower-income areas to have the choice of sending their children to charter schools instead of traditional local public schools?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Very important	30%	37%	22%	32%	30%	35%
Somewhat important	37	37	43	40	36	38
Not too important	20	13	24	19	19	20
Not at all important	9	9	9	7	12	5
Don't know	3	4	2	2	3	1

About six in ten Californians say they are very (24%) or somewhat (34%) concerned about charter schools taking away state funding from traditional local public schools. The shares expressing concern were similar last April (28% very, 36% somewhat). Today, two in three public school parents are very (22%) or somewhat (43%) concerned about this issue. Latinos (67%) are the most likely to be concerned, followed by Asian Americans (61%), African Americans (57%), and whites (49%). Across regions, concern is highest in the San Francisco Bay Area (63%) and Los Angeles (62%) and lower elsewhere (55% Inland Empire, 55% Orange/San Diego, 51% Central Valley).

Common Core and Local Control Funding Formula

Nearly a decade after the state’s adoption of the Common Core State Standards, 66 percent of Californians have heard about these standards (20% a lot, 46% a little). After reading a brief description of the policy, 56 percent of adults say they favor Common Core. A similar share of adults held this view last April (51%). Today, 68 percent of public school parents are in favor. Across parties, Democrats (60%) are the most likely to be in favor of the standards, followed by independents (51%) and Republicans (42%). Regionally, six in ten in the San Francisco Bay Area (61%) and Los Angeles (61%), are in favor compared to about half in the Inland Empire (52%), Orange/San Diego (49%), and the Central Valley (48%). Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (69%) are the most likely to say they favor Common Core. Shares holding this view vary with educational attainment (67% high school only, 45% some college, 54% college graduate).

“The Common Core State Standards are a single set of K–12 English language arts and math standards that most states, including California, have voluntarily adopted. From what you’ve read and heard, do you favor or oppose the Common Core education standards?”

	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Favor	56%	55%	59%	69%	45%	68%
Oppose	41	37	37	28	51	30
Don't know	4	8	4	3	3	2

Seven years after the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) was enacted, the share of Californians who have heard about it remains low (4% a lot, 21% a little). Forty percent of public school parents have heard about the policy (5% a lot, 35% a little). After reading a brief description, seven in ten adults favor the LCFF, while eight in ten public school parents hold the same view. Support was similar last April (67% adults, 77% public school parents). Overwhelming majorities of Democrats (81%) and independents (70%) are in favor, compared to half of Republicans (51%). Majorities across regions are in favor (76% Los Angeles, 74% San Francisco Bay Area, 66% Central Valley, 66% Inland Empire, 64% Orange/San Diego). Across racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (79%) are the most likely to hold this view. Strong majorities across age, education, homeownership, and income groups are in favor.

“The Local Control Funding Formula provides additional funding to school districts that have more English language learners and lower-income students and gives flexibility over how state funding is spent. In general, do you favor or oppose this policy?”

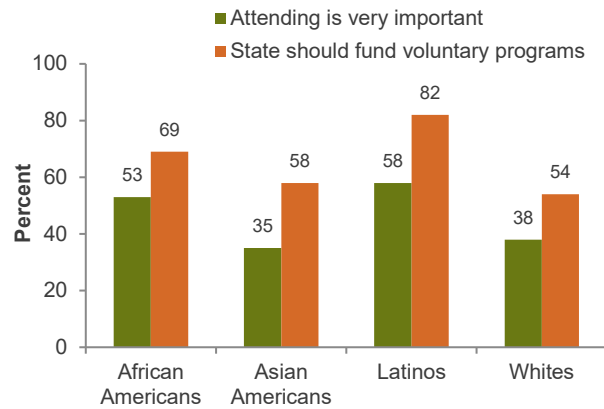
	All adults	Race/Ethnicity				Public school parents
		African Americans	Asian Americans	Latinos	Whites	
Favor	71%	65%	67%	79%	65%	79%
Oppose	26	27	32	18	31	20
Don't know	3	8	2	2	3	2

As the state continues to implement the LCFF, 50 percent of adults and 60 percent of public school parents are confident that local school districts that receive additional funding will direct those funds to support English Language Learners and lower-income students. Sixty-two percent of adults and seventy-two percent of public school parents think the academic achievement of English language learners and lower-income students will improve because of the LCFF. Pluralities expect performance to improve somewhat (45% adults, 41% public school parents) and fewer expect a lot of improvement (17% adults, 31% public school parents), while more than one in four say it will not improve (35% adults, 26% public school parents).

Early Childhood Education

Today, nearly eight in ten Californians say attending preschool is important (46% very, 32% somewhat) to a student’s success in kindergarten through 12th grade. Identical shares held these views in April 2019. Today, 88 percent of public school parents say preschool is very (56%) or somewhat (32%) important. Across parties, Democrats (59%) are much more likely than independents (42%) and Republicans (30%) to say that preschool is very important. Regionally, a majority of Los Angeles residents (57%) hold this view, compared to fewer than half elsewhere. Latinos (58%) and African Americans (53%) are much more likely than whites (38%) and Asian Americans (35%) to say preschool is very important. Women (51%) are more likely than men (41%) to say this, as are adults age 35 to 54 (53%) compared to those age 18 to 34 (39%) and 55 and older (46%). Half of Californians with a high school diploma only (51%) hold this view, compared to 45 percent of those with some college education and 41 percent of college graduates. More than four in ten across income groups say preschool is very important to a student’s success.

Opinions on preschool education



“How important is attending preschool to a student’s success in kindergarten through grade 12?”

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Very important	46%	47%	41%	57%	35%	45%	56%
Somewhat important	32	28	29	30	37	35	32
Not too important	15	16	23	9	20	14	7
Not at all important	7	9	6	4	7	6	5
Don’t know	–	–	–	–	1	–	–

A strong majority of adults (65%) and public school parents (81%) think the state should fund voluntary preschool for all four-year-olds in California. Majorities across regions hold this view. Democrats (80%) are far more likely to say this than are independents (54%) or Republicans (41%). Majorities across racial/ethnic groups think the state should fund voluntary preschool (82% Latinos, 69% African Americans, 58% Asian Americans, 54% whites). Majorities of homeowners and renters hold this view, as do majorities across age, gender, educational levels, and income groups.

“Do you think that the state government should or should not fund voluntary preschool programs for all four-year-olds in California?”

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Should	65%	63%	67%	76%	51%	66%	81%
Should not	33	35	32	23	44	32	18
Don’t know	2	2	–	1	5	2	1

In response to a separate question, 81 percent of adults (35% big, 46% somewhat) and 79 percent of public school parents (33% big, 46% somewhat) say that preschool affordability is a problem.

College and Career Pathways

Career technical or vocational education is critical to meeting California’s workforce needs. Nine in ten adults say that it is very (54%) or somewhat important (36%) that their local public schools include career technical or vocational education as part of the curriculum. Views among adults (94%) were similar when we last asked this question in April 2014, but the share saying very important has decreased while the share saying somewhat important has increased (73% very, 21% somewhat). Majorities across parties say it is very important (63% Republicans, 56% independents, 54% Democrats). Majorities across regions say this with the exception of Orange/San Diego (48%). Among racial/ethnic groups, majorities of whites (57%), African Americans (54%), and Latinos (54%) hold this view, compared to 38 percent of Asian Americans. Women (58%) are more likely than men (48%) to say it is very important, as are Californians over the age of 35 (43% 18 to 34, 52% 35 to 54, 66% 55 and older). Half of public school parents (49%) say it is very important.

“How important to you is it that your local public schools include career technical or vocational education as part of the curriculum?”

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Very important	54%	53%	57%	55%	48%	54%	49%
Somewhat important	36	31	34	37	39	41	42
Not too important	7	10	7	6	8	4	6
Not at all important	3	5	2	1	3	–	2
Don't know	1	1	–	1	1	1	1

Fewer than half of Californians think that their local public schools prepare students very (10%) or somewhat well (37%) for well-paying jobs in today’s economy. Six in ten public school parents hold this view (16% very, 44% somewhat). Fewer than one in ten across parties (8% Democrats, 8% independents, 3% Republicans) and fewer than two in ten across regions think that students are very well prepared. Among racial/ethnic groups, Latinos (21%) are much more likely than Asian Americans (5%), African Americans (4%), and whites (4%) to hold this view. Fewer than two in ten across age groups (8% 18 to 34, 13% 35 to 54, 9% 55 and older) say this. Those with only a high school diploma are more likely to think students are very well prepared (18% high school only, 6% some college, 4% college graduate), as are those with lower incomes compared to those with higher incomes (16% under \$40,000, 10% \$40,000 to under \$80,000, 5% \$80,000 or more).

“In general, how well do you think your local public schools prepare someone for a well-paying job in today’s economy?”

	All adults	Region					Public school parents
		Central Valley	Inland Empire	Los Angeles	Orange/San Diego	San Francisco Bay Area	
Very well	10%	7%	13%	15%	8%	6%	16%
Somewhat well	37	35	34	38	33	44	44
Not too well	39	42	35	31	44	42	31
Not at all well	13	14	18	13	12	8	8
Don't know	1	1	–	2	2	1	1

Three in four parents say they hope their youngest child attains a four-year college degree (37%) or a graduate degree after college (38%). About eight in ten parents say they are very (43%) or somewhat (36%) worried about being able to afford a college education for their youngest child. Parents with household incomes under \$60,000 are twice as likely as those with higher incomes to be very worried (58% to 27%).

Regional Map



Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, president and CEO and survey director at the Public Policy Institute of California, with assistance from survey research associate, Alyssa Dykman, project manager for this survey, associate survey director Dean Bonner, and survey research associate Rachel Lawler. The Californians and Education survey is supported with funding from the Dirk and Charlene Kabcenell Foundation, the Sobrato Family Foundation, and the Stuart Foundation. It is the 16th annual PPIC Statewide Survey on K–12 education since 2005. The PPIC Statewide Survey invites input, comments, and suggestions from policy and public opinion experts and from its own advisory committee, but survey methods, questions, and content are determined solely by PPIC’s survey team.

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 1,633 California adult residents. The median time to complete the survey was 18.5 minutes. Interviews were conducted from April 1–9, 2020.

The survey was conducted in English and Spanish by Ipsos, an international market and opinion research organization, using its online research panel KnowledgePanel. KnowledgePanel members are recruited through probability-based sampling and include both those with Internet access and those without. KnowledgePanel provides internet access for those who do not have it and, if needed, a device to access the internet when they join the panel. KnowledgePanel members are primarily recruited using address-based sampling (ABS) methodology, which improves population coverage, particularly for hard-to-reach populations such as young adults and minority groups. ABS-recruited Latinos are supplemented with a dual-frame random digit dialing (RDD) sampling methodology that targets telephone exchanges associated with areas with a higher concentration of Latinos to provide the capability to conduct representative online surveys with Latinos, including those who speak only Spanish. KnowledgePanel’s recruitment was originally based on a national RDD frame and switched to the primarily ABS-based methodology in 2009. KnowledgePanel includes households with landlines and cell phones, including those with cellphones only and those without phones. ABS allows probability-based sampling of addresses from the US Postal Service’s Delivery Sequence File (DSF). The DSF-based sampling frame used for address selection is enhanced with a series of refinements—such as the appendage of various ancillary data to each address from commercial and government data sources—to facilitate complex stratification plans. Taking advantage of such refinements, quarterly samples are selected using a stratified sampling methodology that aims to retain the representativeness of the panel. KnowledgePanel recruits new panel members throughout the year to offset panel attrition.

To qualify for the survey, a panel member must be age 18 or older and reside in California. A total of 1,685 respondents completed the survey out of 3,041 panelists who were sampled, for a response rate of 55%. To ensure the highest data quality, we flagged respondents who sped through the survey, which we defined as completing the survey in one fourth of the overall median time (less than 4.64 minutes). We also flagged respondents if their self-reported age or gender did not match the data stored in their profile. A total of 52 cases were removed after this review process, resulting in 1,633 total qualified and valid cases.

Accent on Languages, Inc., translated new survey questions into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever.

Ipsos uses the US Census Bureau’s 2014–2018 American Community Survey’s (ACS) Public Use Microdata Series for California (with regional coding information from the University of Minnesota’s Integrated Public Use Microdata Series for California) to compare certain demographic characteristics of the survey sample—region, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education—with the characteristics of California’s adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the ACS figures. We also used voter registration data from the California Secretary of State to compare the party registration of

registered voters in our sample to party registration statewide. The sample of Californians is first weighted using an initial sampling or base weight that corrects for any differences in the probability of selecting various segments of the KnowledgePanel sample. This base weight is further adjusted using an iterative proportional fitting (raking) procedure that aligns sample demographics to population benchmarks from the 2014–2018 ACS data as well as party registration benchmarks from the California Secretary of State’s voter registration file.

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.3 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,633 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.3 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,380 registered voters, the sampling error is ± 3.4 percent; for the 1,091 likely voters, it is ± 3.7 percent; for the 377 parents of children 18 or under, it is ± 6.7 percent; for the 272 public school parents, it is ± 7.8 percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

We present results for five geographic regions, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “San Francisco Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, “Inland Empire” refers to Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and “Orange/San Diego” refers to Orange and San Diego Counties. Residents of other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes for these less populous areas are not large enough to report separately.

We present results for non-Hispanic whites, who account for 42 percent of the state’s adult population, and also for Latinos, who account for about a third of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest-growing voter groups. We also present results for non-Hispanic Asian Americans, who make up about 15 percent of the state’s adult population, and non-Hispanic African Americans, who comprise about 6 percent. Results for other racial/ethnic groups—such as Native Americans—are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes are not large enough for separate analysis. Results for African American and Asian American likely voters are combined with those of other racial/ethnic groups because sample sizes for African American and Asian American likely voters are too small for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of those who report they are registered Democrats, registered Republicans, and decline-to-state or independent voters; the results for those who say they are registered to vote in other parties are not large enough for separate analysis. We also analyze the responses of likely voters—so designated per their responses to survey questions about voter registration, previous election participation, intentions to vote this year, attention to election news, and current interest in politics.

The percentages presented in the report tables and in the questionnaire may not add to 100 due to rounding.

We compare current PPIC Statewide Survey results to those in our earlier surveys and to those in national surveys by Kaiser Family Foundation and Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research. Additional details about our methodology can be found at www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/SurveyMethodology.pdf and are available upon request through surveys@ppic.org.

Questionnaire and Results

CALIFORNIANS AND EDUCATION

April 1–9, 2020

1,633 California Adult Residents:

English, Spanish

MARGIN OF ERROR ±3.3% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE
 PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Newsom is handling the state's kindergarten through 12th grade public education system?

73% approve
 25 disapprove
 2 don't know

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling the state's kindergarten through 12th grade public education system?

69% approve
 29 disapprove
 2 don't know

3. Thinking about the kindergarten through 12th grade public education system overall in California today, do you think it is generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

62% right direction
 36 wrong direction
 2 don't know

Next,

4. What do you think is the most important issue facing California's K–12 public schools today?

[open-ended, code]

14% COVID-19, distance learning
 11 lack of funding
 9 concerns about curriculum
 7 large class sizes
 5 concerns about standards/quality of education
 3 bullying
 3 lack of discipline/behavior of children
 3 low teacher pay
 3 quality of teachers
 3 teacher retention/shortage
 2 concerns about politics influencing education
 2 inadequate preparation for college/life skills
 2 inequities
 2 safety/security
 2 too much testing
 21 other
 7 don't know

5. In your opinion, what is the most important goal of California’s K–12 public schools? —[rotate] (1) preparing students for college; (2) preparing students for the workforce; (3) teaching students the basics; (4) teaching students life skills; [or] (5) preparing students to be good citizens?

- 27% teaching students life skills
- 24 preparing students for college
- 16 teaching students the basics
- 15 preparing students for the workforce
- 13 preparing students to be good citizens
- 5 other
- don’t know

6. How much of a problem is the quality of education in California’s K–12 public schools today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

- 27% big problem
- 56 somewhat of a problem
- 16 not much of a problem
- 1 don’t know

7. Over the past few years, do you think the quality of education in California’s K–12 public schools has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same?

- 20% improved
- 35 gotten worse
- 43 stayed the same
- 1 don’t know

8. Overall, do you think the K–12 public education system in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or that it is basically fine the way it is?

- 46% major changes
- 44 minor changes
- 9 fine the way it is
- 1 don’t know

[rotate questions 9 and 10]

9. How concerned are you that California’s K–12 public schools in lower-income areas have a shortage of good teachers compared to schools in wealthier areas? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 37% very concerned
- 44 somewhat concerned
- 14 not too concerned
- 4 not at all concerned
- 1 don’t know

10. How concerned are you that California’s K–12 public school students in lower-income areas are less likely than other students to be ready for college when they finish high school? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 37% very concerned
- 43 somewhat concerned
- 14 not too concerned
- 5 not at all concerned
- 1 don’t know

11. Next, how much, if anything, have you heard about students who are English language learners in California? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

- 19% a lot
- 49 a little
- 32 nothing at all
- don’t know

12. How concerned are you about the issue of improving student outcomes for the English language learners in California today? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 23% very concerned
- 47 somewhat concerned
- 22 not too concerned
- 7 not at all concerned
- 1 don’t know

13. In thinking about priorities for the kindergarten through 12th grade public education system in California, do you think that efforts to improve student outcomes for English language learners should be a [rotate order] very high priority, high priority, medium priority, low priority, [or] very low priority?

[rotate order top to bottom]

- 15% very high priority
- 37 high priority
- 38 medium priority
- 7 low priority
- 3 very low priority
- 1 don't know

14. How important is improving student outcomes for English language learners for California's future economic wellbeing and quality of life? Is this very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 43% very important
- 45 somewhat important
- 9 not too important
- 3 not at all important
- 1 don't know

Changing topics,

[rotate questions 15 and 16]

15. Where do you think California currently ranks in per pupil spending for K–12 public schools? Compared to other states, is California's spending near the top, above average, average, below average, or near the bottom?

- 9% near the top
- 21 above average
- 39 average
- 25 below average
- 5 near the bottom
- 1 don't know

16. Where do you think California currently ranks in student test scores for K–12 public schools? Compared to other states, are California's student test scores near the top, above average, average, below average, or near the bottom?

- 3% near the top
- 15 above average
- 45 average
- 29 below average
- 7 near the bottom
- 1 don't know

17. Next, overall, how would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today? If you had to give your local public schools a grade, would it be A, B, C, D, or F? Think of grades A to F as a scale where A is the best and F is failing.

- 11% A
- 34 B
- 39 C
- 10 D
- 5 F
- 1 don't know

[rotate questions 18 and 19]

18. Are your local public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in preparing students for college?

- 9% excellent
- 55 good
- 29 not so good
- 5 poor
- 1 don't know

19. Are your local public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in preparing students for jobs and the workforce?

- 7% excellent
- 50 good
- 35 not so good
- 7 poor
- 2 don't know

[rotate questions 20, 21, and 22]

20. Do you think the current level of resources for lower-income students in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

- 9% more than enough
- 41 just enough
- 49 not enough
- 1 don't know

21. Do you think the current level of resources for English language learners in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

- 12% more than enough
- 49 just enough
- 36 not enough
- 2 don't know

22. Do you think the current level of resources for special education in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

- 9% more than enough
- 47 just enough
- 42 not enough
- 2 don't know

On another topic,

23. Do you think the current level of state funding for your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

- 11% more than enough
- 37 just enough
- 50 not enough
- 2 don't know

24. As you may know, under Proposition 13 passed by the California voters in 1978, residential and commercial property taxes are both strictly limited. What if there was a state ballot measure to have commercial properties taxed according to their current market value and direct some of this new tax revenue to state funding for K–12 public schools? Would you vote yes or no?

- 53% yes
- 46 no
- 2 don't know

25. What if there was a state ballot measure to replace the two-thirds vote requirement with a 55 percent majority vote for voters to pass local parcel taxes for their local public schools? Would you vote yes or no?

- 42% yes
- 55 no
- 3 don't know

26. If the state ballot had a bond measure to pay for school construction projects, would you vote yes or no?

- 59% yes
- 39 no
- 2 don't know

27. Generally speaking, do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea for the state government to issue bonds to pay for school construction projects at this time?

- 51% good idea
- 46 bad idea
- 2 don't know

Next,

[rotate questions 28 and 29]

28. Governor Newsom's budget proposal allocates \$802 million in one-time spending to pay down unfunded state liabilities in the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS). Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

- 61% favor
- 35 oppose
- 4 don't know

29. Governor Newsom's budget proposal allocates \$915 million in one-time spending to expand recruitment and development programs for teachers and staff. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?

- 69% favor
- 28 oppose
- 2 don't know

[rotate questions 30 and 31]

30. If your local school district had a bond measure on the ballot to pay for school construction projects, would you vote yes or no?

- 55% yes
- 43 no
- 2 don't know

31. What if there was a measure on your local ballot to increase local parcel taxes to provide more funds for the local public schools? Would you vote yes or no?

- 42% yes
- 57 no
- 1 don't know

32. Generally speaking, do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea for local school districts to issue bonds to pay for school construction projects at this time?

- 49% good idea
- 49 bad idea
- 3 don't know

Following is a list of issues people have mentioned when talking about teachers in California's K–12 public schools today. Please answer if you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not really a problem.

[rotate questions 33 and 34]

33. How about teacher quality?

- 26% big problem
- 53 somewhat of a problem
- 19 not really a problem
- 1 don't know

34. How about a shortage of teachers?

- 39% big problem
- 46 somewhat of a problem
- 14 not really a problem
- 1 don't know

Next,

35. Do you think salaries for teachers in your community are too high, too low, or just about right?

- 6% too high
- 61 too low
- 31 just about right
- 2 don't know

[rotate questions 36 and 37]

36. Should local schools in lower-income areas pay higher salaries to attract and retain teachers, even if it costs the state more money?

- 63% yes
- 35 no
- 2 don't know

37. Should local schools in lower-income areas provide additional training and professional development to teachers, even if it costs the state more money?

- 72% yes
- 27 no
- 1 don't know

38. How much, if anything, have you heard about California's charter schools, publicly funded schools typically run by organizations under a contract? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

- 15% a lot
- 52 a little
- 32 nothing at all
- don't know

39. The state created charter schools to offer parents an alternative to traditional public schools. These schools are expected to meet basic state requirements, but are exempt from many state laws and regulations. In general, do you favor or oppose charter schools?

- 54% favor
- 43 oppose
- 3 don't know

40. How important is it for parents in lower-income areas to have the choice of sending their children to charter schools instead of traditional local public schools? Is this very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 30% very important
- 37 somewhat important
- 20 not too important
- 9 not at all important
- 3 don't know

41. How concerned are you about charter schools taking away state funding that is available for traditional local public schools? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 24% very concerned
- 34 somewhat concerned
- 28 not too concerned
- 12 not at all concerned
- 1 don't know

Changing topics,

42. How much, if anything, have you heard about the Common Core State Standards, a new set of English and math standards that the state began implementing in recent years? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

- 20% a lot
- 46 a little
- 33 nothing at all
- 1 don't know

43. The Common Core State Standards are a single set of K–12 English language arts and math standards that most states, including California, have voluntarily adopted. From what you've read and heard, do you favor or oppose the Common Core education standards?

- 56% favor
- 41 oppose
- 4 don't know

On another topic,

44. How much, if anything, have you heard about the Local Control Funding Formula, a policy enacted in recent years that changes the way K–12 public school districts are funded in California? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

- 4% a lot
- 21 a little
- 74 nothing at all
- 1 don't know

45. The Local Control Funding Formula provides additional funding to school districts that have more *[rotate]* [English language learners] *[and]* [lower-income students] and gives local school districts more flexibility over how state funding is spent. In general, do you favor or oppose this policy?

- 71% favor
- 26 oppose
- 3 don't know

46. As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, how confident are you that local school districts which receive additional funding will spend that money on programs and support for *[rotate in same order as q45]* [English language learners] *[and]* [lower-income students]? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

- 7% very confident
- 43 somewhat confident
- 35 not too confident
- 14 not at all confident
- 2 don't know

47. As the state implements the Local Control Funding Formula, do you think the academic achievement of *[rotate in same order as q45]* [English language learners] *[and]* [lower-income students] will or will not improve?

- 17% improve a lot
- 45 improve somewhat
- 35 will not improve
- 3 don't know

48. [public school parents only] The Local Control Funding Formula requires school districts to seek input from parents in developing and revising their accountability plans for how to allocate resources. Has your child’s school or school district provided you with information about how to become involved, or not?

- 37% yes
- 61 no
- 1 don’t know

49. [public school parents only] And how likely are you to participate in the process of revising and updating your local school district’s accountability plan? Are you very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely?

- 11% very likely
- 45 somewhat likely
- 32 not too likely
- 12 not at all likely
- 1 don’t know

50. [public school parents only] Do you feel you can easily find information about the quality of your child’s school?

- 68% yes
- 32 no
- don’t know

51. [public school parents only] How much, if anything, have you heard about the California School Dashboard, a new online tool which uses multiple measures to evaluate how the state’s K–12 schools are performing? Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

- 8% a lot
- 44 a little
- 48 nothing at all
- don’t know

Changing topics,

[rotate questions 52, 53, and 54]

52. How concerned are you about the impacts of increased federal immigration enforcement efforts on undocumented students and their families in your local public schools? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 27% very concerned
- 33 somewhat concerned
- 22 not too concerned
- 18 not at all concerned
- 1 don’t know

53. How concerned are you about the threat of a mass shooting in your local schools? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 34% very concerned
- 32 somewhat concerned
- 26 not too concerned
- 8 not at all concerned
- don’t know

54. How concerned are you about students and their families in your local schools experiencing homelessness? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 33% very concerned
- 38 somewhat concerned
- 21 not too concerned
- 8 not at all concerned
- don’t know

55. On another topic, do you think that the state government should or should not fund voluntary preschool programs for all four-year-olds in California?

- 65% should
- 33 should not
- 2 don’t know

56. How important is attending preschool to a student's success in kindergarten through grade 12? Is this very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 46% very important
- 32 somewhat important
- 15 not too important
- 7 not at all important
- don't know

[rotate questions 57 and 58]

57. How much of a problem is the quality of preschool education in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

- 16% big problem
- 50 somewhat of a problem
- 32 not much of a problem
- 3 don't know

58. How much of a problem is the affordability of preschool education in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

- 35% big problem
- 46 somewhat of a problem
- 18 not much of a problem
- 2 don't know

[rotate questions 59 and 60]

59. How concerned are you that children in lower-income areas are less likely than other children to be ready for kindergarten? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 27% very concerned
- 44 somewhat concerned
- 19 not too concerned
- 9 not at all concerned
- 1 don't know

60. How concerned are you that students who speak English as a second language are less likely than other children to be ready for kindergarten? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 20% very concerned
- 43 somewhat concerned
- 24 not too concerned
- 12 not at all concerned
- 1 don't know

Changing topics,

61. How important to you is it that your local public schools include career technical or vocational education as part of the curriculum? Is this very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

- 54% very important
- 36 somewhat important
- 7 not too important
- 3 not at all important
- 1 don't know

62. In general, how well do you think your local public schools prepare someone for a well-paying job in today's economy? Would you say very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not at all well?

- 10% very well
- 37 somewhat well
- 39 not too well
- 13 not at all well
- 1 don't know

63. [parents only] Next, what do you hope will be the highest grade level that your youngest child will achieve: some high school; high school graduate; two-year community college graduate or career technical training; four-year college graduate; or a graduate degree after college?

- 1% some high school
- 10 high school graduate
- 14 two-year community college graduate or career technical training
- 37 four-year college graduate
- 38 a graduate degree after college
- don't know

64. [parents only] How worried are you about being able to afford a college education for your youngest child? Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

- 43% very worried
- 36 somewhat worried
- 14 not too worried
- 7 not at all worried
- don't know

On another topic,

65. How much, if at all, has your life been disrupted by the coronavirus outbreak? Would you say a lot, some, just a little, or not at all?

- 48% a lot
- 36 some
- 12 just a little
- 4 not at all
- don't know

[rotate questions 66 and 67]

66. How worried, if at all, are you that you or someone in your family will get sick from the coronavirus? Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

- 41% very worried
- 37 somewhat worried
- 17 not too worried
- 5 not at all worried
- don't know

67. How worried, if it all, are you that the Coronavirus will have a negative impact on the personal finances of you and your family? Are you very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not at all worried?

- 41% very worried
- 34 somewhat worried
- 19 not too worried
- 6 not at all worried
- don't know

68. Do you feel that worry or stress related to coronavirus has had a negative impact on your mental health, or not? (if yes, ask: "Was that a major impact or a minor impact?")

- 27% yes, major impact
- 23 yes, minor impact
- 50 no
- don't know

69. [parents only] Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that your local school district is handling school closures because of the coronavirus outbreak?

- 93% approve
- 7 disapprove
- don't know

70. [parents only] How much of a problem for you and your family are local school closures because of the coronavirus outbreak? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

- 21% big problem
- 31 somewhat of a problem
- 48 not much of a problem
- don't know

71. [parents only] How concerned are you about providing productive learning in your home during local school closures because of the coronavirus outbreak? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

- 29% very concerned
- 34 somewhat concerned
- 22 not too concerned
- 15 not at all concerned
- don't know

72. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?

- 19% good times
- 80 bad times
- 1 don't know

73. Some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote in California?

- 85% yes [ask q73a]
- 15 no [skip to q74b]

73a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?

- 50% Democrat [ask q74]
- 26 Republican [ask q74a]
- 2 another party (specify) [ask q75]
- 22 independent [ask q74b]

74. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?

- 59% strong
- 41 not very strong
- don't know

[skip to q75]

74a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

- 60% strong
- 40 not very strong
- don't know

[skip to q75]

74b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

- 36% Republican Party
- 61 Democratic Party
- 3 neither (volunteered)
- don't know

75. [likely voters only] How closely are you following the news about candidates for the 2020 presidential election?

- 40% very closely
- 43 fairly closely
- 15 not too closely
- 3 not at all closely
- don't know

76. Would you consider yourself to be politically:

[read list; rotate order top to bottom]

- 10% very liberal
- 22 somewhat liberal
- 38 middle-of-the-road
- 20 somewhat conservative
- 9 very conservative
- 1 don't know

77. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics?

- 25% great deal
- 37 fair amount
- 28 only a little
- 11 none
- don't know

[d1-d15 demographic questions]

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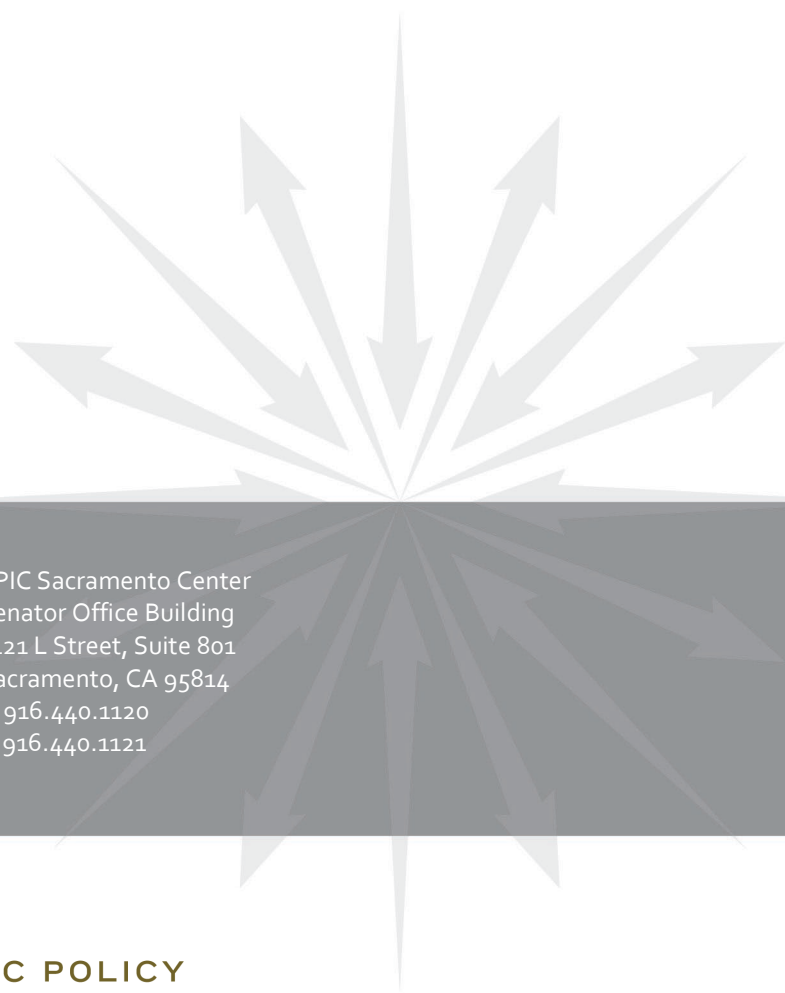
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