California Voter Views of the Shortage of Teachers in the K-12 Schools and Policies Aimed at Addressing the Problem

— A statewide survey conducted for —
EdSource and the Institute for Education Policy

— by —
The Field Poll

October 2015
About the Survey

Population surveyed: California registered voters.

Method of data collection: Live telephone interviews conducted by The Field Poll in its late September – early October 2015 statewide survey.

Sampling method: Voters selected at random from lists derived from the state’s official voter rolls.

Languages of administration: English and Spanish.

Sample size: 1,002 registered voters statewide.

Interviewing period: September 17 – October 4, 2015
How serious is California’s shortage of public school teachers?

- **Very serious**: 64%
- **Somewhat serious**: 22%
- **Not serious**: 11%
- **No opinion**: 3%

**Party registration**
- **Democrats**: 73%
- **Republicans**: 48%
- **No party preference/other**: 66%

**Gender**
- **Male**: 60%
- **Female**: 68%

**Race/ethnicity**
- **White non-Hispanic**: 57%
- **Latino**: 72%
- **African American***: 82%
- **Asian/Pacific Islander**: 68%

*Small sample base.*
Graph 2
How important is it for the state to do more to encourage young people and others to enroll in teacher prep programs?

65% Extremely important
26% Somewhat important
7% Not important
2% No opinion

Total

% Extremely important
65%

Party registration

Democrats
76%
Republicans
49%
No party preference/other
64%

Gender

Male
59%
Female
70%

Race/ethnicity

White non-Hispanic
57%
Latino
74%
African American*
80%
Asian/Pacific Islander
70%

* Small sample base.
Voter reaction to two proposals aimed at dealing with the state teacher shortage

Graph 3

Increase the number of teachers by having the state forgive a portion of college loans or offering scholarships*

- **58%** Favor strongly
- **27%** Favor somewhat
- **5%** Oppose somewhat
- **8%** Oppose strongly
- **2%** No opinion

Allow schools to hire individuals who have not yet completed their training or earned a teaching credential

- **30%** Favor somewhat
- **26%** Favor strongly
- **14%** Oppose strongly
- **4%** No opinion

* If the teacher teaches at least 4 years in a low-income community or in a subject where there is a shortage.
How important is it for the state to do each of the following to ensure that there are more high-quality teachers in the K-12 schools?

- **Ensure all teachers receive rigorous training and preparation before they begin teaching**: 65% extremely important, 29% somewhat important, 5% not important.
- **Require that teachers receive ongoing professional development after they receive their teaching credentials**: 62% extremely important, 30% somewhat important, 6% not important.
- **Ensure that new teachers receive mentoring and support so they don’t leave teaching within a few years**: 59% extremely important, 31% somewhat important, 8% not important.
- **Provide opportunities for prospective teachers to receive a year of practice teaching under the guidance of an expert teacher**: 51% extremely important, 37% somewhat important, 11% not important.
Graph 5
How serious a problem is it that public schools in low-income communities have fewer fully qualified teachers than those in wealthier areas?

- **Very serious**: 66%
- **Somewhat serious**: 23%
- **Not serious**: 8%
- **No opinion**: 3%

**Race/ethnicity**
- White non-Hispanic: 61%
- Latino: 73%
- African American*: 82%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 67%

**Gender**
- Male: 60%
- Female: 72%

**Party registration**
- Democrats: 75%
- Republicans: 50%
- No party preference/other: 69%

*Small sample base.*
Graph 6
Are the starting salaries of qualified K-12 teachers in your own local community too high, too low or about right?

- **Too low**: 58%
- **About right**: 18%
- **Don’t know**: 21%
- **Too high**: 3%

**Party registration**
- **Democrats**: 66%
- **Republicans**: 44%
- **No party preference/other**: 61%

**Gender**
- **Male**: 52%
- **Female**: 64%

**Race/ethnicity**
- **White non-Hispanic**: 53%
- **Latino**: 62%
- **African American***: 73%
- **Asian/Pacific Islander**: 63%

*Small sample base."
Graph 7
How important is it for school districts to offer entry-level teachers starting salaries that are comparable to what is being offered to other new college graduates?

- **Total**: 51% Extremely important
- **Democrats**: 63% Extremely important
- **Republicans**: 36% Extremely important
- **No party preference/other**: 49% Extremely important
- **Male**: 45% Extremely important
- **Female**: 57% Extremely important
- **White non-Hispanic**: 47% Extremely important
- **Latino**: 54% Extremely important
- **African American***: 57% Extremely important
- **Asian/Pacific Islander**: 59% Extremely important

*Small sample base.*
How important is it for the state’s teaching force to be racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse?

- **2%** No opinion
- **46%** Extremely important
- **31%** Somewhat important
- **21%** Not important

**Party registration**
- **Democrats**: 60%
- **Republicans**: 30%
- **No party preference/other**: 42%

**Gender**
- **Male**: 39%
- **Female**: 53%

**Race/ethnicity**
- **White non-Hispanic**: 35%
- **Latino**: 63%
- **African American***: 73%
- **Asian/Pacific Islander**: 45%

* Small sample base.
Graph 9
Would you vote Yes or No on the Nov. 2016 statewide ballot prop. that would require schools to offer students not proficient in English academic instruction in both English and their native language?**

- **Total**: 61% Yes, 32% No, 7% Undecided

**Party registration**
- Democrats: 71% Yes
- Republicans: 42% Yes
- No party preference/other: 65% Yes

**Gender**
- Male: 57% Yes
- Female: 65% Yes

**Race/ethnicity**
- White non-Hispanic: 50% Yes
- Latino: 77% Yes
- African American*: 76% Yes
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 71% Yes

* Small sample base.
** And require more opportunities for English-speakers to master other non-English languages.

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Graph 10
How likely would you be to encourage a friend or family member to become a K-12 teacher in California today?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Likely</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race/ethnicity</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18-29</td>
<td></td>
<td>White non-Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Small sample base.

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