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GREAT LAKES CENTER
FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH & PRACTICE

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:	Reports on 10 state public opinion surveys on K-12 school choice
AUTHORS:	Various
PUBLISHER/THINK TANK:	The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice
DOCUMENT RELEASE DATES:	March 2005 through October 2008
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Summary of Review

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice has published 10 state reports based on surveys of likely voters in those states. According to the reports, the surveys demonstrate state residents' endorsement of vouchers allowing parents to send children to private schools. This review finds this conclusion suspect due to several factors. Too many people contacted by phone failed to participate in the survey, thus compromising the generalizability of findings. In addition, many of those surveyed did not know about the educational issues on the surveys, such as voucher policies. These problems were exacerbated by potentially biased wording of questions, which may have resulted in more responses favorable to vouchers. By contrast, a much smaller percentage of respondents in Gallup surveys, especially individuals with children in public schools, support the use of vouchers. Moreover, the actual survey data indicate that state populations were much more divided over vouchers than the report summaries would indicate. Contrary to the authors' claims, the data provide little evidence that state public officials will increase their electability by supporting school-choice policies.

Review

I. INTRODUCTION

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice has recently sponsored, in conjunction with similar-minded state-advocacy organizations, a series of reports based on public opinion polls. As of October 2008, such reports had been issued in 10 states.[1] These studies purport to demonstrate that potential state voters support the positions of school choice proponents. The purpose of the studies is apparently to encourage state legislators to support legislation to expand voucher policies.

II. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE REPORTS

Over the last three years, the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice has sponsored and published reports of public opinion polls in 10 states, starting with Arizona in March 2005. This was followed by Florida (January 2006), Georgia (March 2007), Illinois (December 2007), Nevada (January 2008), Tennessee (March 2008), Idaho (March 2008), Oklahoma (June 2008), Maryland (September 2008), and Montana (October 2008). The reports come to very similar conclusions:

- Only a minority of potential voters view public schools as performing satisfactorily.
- Respondents prefer private schools over public schools.
- Potential voters want more educational choices than just public schools.
- Public money in the form of school vouchers should be available to parents so that they can send their children to private schools.
- Potential voters are more likely to support candidates who back school choice legislation.

III. RATIONALES SUPPORTING FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The papers' conclusions are based on the answers respondents gave and the authors' interpretations of the survey responses.

IV. THE REPORTS' USE OF RESEARCH LITERATURE

The authors do not cite any research literature pertaining to opinions of public schools, private school, charter schools, or the use of public funds to support private schooling. One item that would have been very useful for readers would have been a comparison between the results of the Friedman survey and the annual survey conducted by the Gallup organization for Phi Delta Kappa and published in the *Kappan* magazine. In the most recent Gallup survey respondents were asked whether they "...favor or oppose allowing students and parents to choose a private school to attend at public expense?"[2] Fifty percent were opposed, whereas in 2006 and 2007, 60% were opposed, as were 54% of the respondents in 2004 and 1997. These findings suggest that attitudes towards vouchers tend to be unstable. A related question asked in the 2007 Gallup survey was, "A proposal has been made which would allow parents to send their school-aged children to any public, private, or church-related school they chose. For those choosing nonpublic schools the government would pay all or part of the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal in your state?"[3] In 2007, 58% of the respondents opposed the

proposal, compared with 46% in 2002 and 54% in 1994. In 2007, 62% of the respondents without children opposed the proposal, while 49% of the respondents with children in public schools opposed the proposal.[4] Only in 2002 did more a majority of all respondents, those without children and those with children, favor the proposal.

When the 2007 respondents were asked whether they favored a proposal in which all of the tuition to private or church-related schools was paid by the government, 67% of all respondents opposed it, while 70% of respondents without children and 60% of respondents with children in public schools opposed the proposal. By contrast, when the respondents were asked whether they favored or opposed the proposal if only part of the tuition was paid by the government, 48% still opposed it, including 52% of respondents without children and 39% of the respondents with public school children.

Results of the Gallup polls lead to several conclusions. Opinions regarding vouchers vary over time, with the 2008 and 2002 surveys perhaps reflecting pro-privatization sentiment. However, the current economic crisis that has been blamed on a poorly regulated private financial sector may well produce quite different attitudes about vouchers for private schooling. In a year or two from now, the pendulum may again swing back.

A second conclusion is that surveys about vouchers must be sensitive to whether the respondents are parents of public school children or are not. Few of the Friedman reports broke down responses by the presence of children in the family. Aggregate results that do not differentiate subgroups may miss important distinctions. Finally, whether vouchers for private schools are paid completely by the government, or only partly, significantly affects the level of public endorsement.

The Gallup poll for 2008 also asked respondents to rate charter schools. These are public schools operating under a special agreement with the state education agencies that frees them from some restrictions imposed on conventional public schools, but nevertheless requires them to meet state accountability mandates, including those specified under No Child Left Behind. Gallup has asked a charter school question on several of the annual polls since 2000. The specific question asks, "As you may know, charter schools operate under a charter or contract that frees them from many of the state regulations imposed on public schools and permits them to operate independently. Do you favor or oppose charter schools?"[5] Over the years that the question was asked, the percentage of the polled sample that favored charters increased from 44% in 2004 to 60% in 2007. But in 2008 support for charter schools declined to 51%. Among respondents without children in school, the percentages were slightly different, from 42% in 2000 to 58% in 2007.[6] Further, among respondents who were parents of public school children, the percentages ranged from 40% in 2000 to 63% in 2007. The percentages of respondents who did not have an opinion or did not know about charter schools have been as high as 13% (all respondents and those without children in 2002 and 2006 and parents with public school children in 2000) and as low as 3% (parents with children in public schools in 2007).[7]

V. Review of the Reports' Methods and of the Validity of Findings and Conclusions

The validity of a survey report's findings depends, in part, on two methodological elements: sampling procedures and the qual-

ity of the survey questions.

Sampling Procedures

The Friedman Foundation contracted with commercial polling firms to obtain survey interview data. All respondents were called using some variation of random digit-dialing phone polling. In each state interviews were conducted over a relatively short time frame (2 to 7 days), which helps to ensure that opinions were unlikely to change during the polling interval.

The numbers of state residents included in each of the surveys were fairly substantial, and the degree of error associated with the conventional 95% confidence interval ranged from 4% in the Arizona report to 2.5% for Illinois. In the Florida survey, all state residents were eligible to be interviewed; in the other nine state surveys, the major criterion for inclusion was that the respondents be a potential voter in the next state election.

Although large numbers of potential state voters were interviewed, the broader issue is whether the respondents were representative of the state. And, in fact, it is unclear how successful the reports are in reflecting states' voting populations. For instance, while the Arizona study reports that respondents reflect the age, gender, political party, and county residence of the state's voting population, African Americans and Hispanics appear to be underrepresented in the survey.[8] Respondents in the Florida study were reported to be consistent with the gender and race/ethnic composition of the state, although specific demographic information was not presented. The age categories of Florida interviewees were statistically weighted to yield results that conform to the state's age distribution, which implies the age of respondents interviewed was not comparable with the state's age distribution.

In the more recently released eight opinion polls, the authors state that the polls are "scientifically representative" of likely voters. However, the exact probability sampling design (e.g., simple random sample, cluster sampling, sampling proportionate to size of voting areas, etc.) used to contact potential respondents is not specified. Demographic information describing the gender, race/ethnicity, broad age category, broad income category, and political party affiliation of respondents is presented. However, state voting records seldom list the social and economic characteristics of voters. Lists of voters are unlikely to specify whether the individuals have children and the ages of the children. These are concerns—although an examination of recent state data from the U.S. Census Bureau does indicate the demographic characteristics of respondents in the most recent eight reports are comparable to the proportion of individuals in the state with the social traits presented in the appendix of each study. With a little more transparency, the reports might be able to address reasonable apprehensions about sampling design.

Response rates, on the other hand, appear to be a more recalcitrant problem. Findings from studies with high participation rates can be viewed as more valid than results derived from surveys with low levels of participation. For most of the state reports, however, it is hard to tell if the interviewees are representative of potential state voters because of a basic lack of information about such response rates. Only the three most recently released Friedman reports—covering Montana, Maryland, and Oklahoma—present information enabling estimation of the survey refusal and participation rates, and one of these (Montana, as discussed below) appears to have a serious re-

sponse-rate problem.

In the three reports that do provide the necessary data, it is presented in a somewhat misleading way. For example, in Montana, there were 3,589 eligible respondents (likely voters), and the report states that 1,200 people were interviewed. This implies a response rate of roughly 33.4%. However, only 912 individuals *completed* the phone interview, while 288 people hung up before answering all of the survey questions. Therefore, only about 25% of the likely Montana voters actually answered all of the questions in the survey, which considerably lessens the likelihood that the study's findings are representative of the state's voting population. The concern here is about response bias—the likelihood that those people who agreed to take part in the survey and who did complete the entire survey are different from other likely voters in important but unmeasured ways. If, for instance, respondents who are supporters of public schools pick up on an anti-public school tone to the questions, might they end the survey earlier than those with more negative views of public schools?

Data provided in the Maryland and Oklahoma studies reveal that only those likely voters who completed the entire phone questionnaire were counted as the 1200 respondents surveyed. The participation rates for potential voters in Maryland and Oklahoma (41.4% and 43.8%, respectively) were much higher than among likely voters in Montana and are consistent with typical phone surveys.

Beyond those three states, no information is provided by the Friedman authors that might be used by readers to help assess whether the interviewees in the Georgia, Illinois, Nevada, Tennessee, and Idaho surveys are typical of state residents. The findings in the reports may be biased due to high non-response rates and unrepresentative samples; we cannot know without additional information.

Wording of Questions

A major concern about the Friedman studies is that some of the more important questions are worded in such a manner as to elicit a pro-voucher response from those surveyed. For example, surveys in Georgia, Idaho, Illinois and Nevada ask, "If a private school offered the best education for a particular child, would you favor allowing parents the option of using public funds to send their children to a private school?" Another version qualifies the question by the term "special needs scholarship." The majority of respondents respond to these questions by noting that they "strongly favor" or "somewhat favor" the option. It is likely that only individuals who are ideologically committed to the public schools would deny a parent the opportunity to provide the best education for their children, including a private school education, especially if the children are eligible for "special needs" assistance. Other questions ask whether parents should be allowed to choose the education for their children. Compare these to the wording used in the Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup survey: "Do you favor or oppose allowing students and parents to choose a private school to attend at public expense?" Over the past six years, those opposed have consistently outpaced those in favor ("favor" ranges from 36-44%, while "oppose" ranges from 50-60%).

Similarly, another question asked, "Some states give businesses a tax credit if they contribute money to fund private school scholarships. This policy is called a 'tax-credit scholarship.' If a proposal were made in (name of state) to create a tax-credit scho-

larship system, would you favor or oppose such an idea?" The poorly understood distinction between a tax deduction and a tax credit greatly complicates the ability to survey likely voters about such a policy. After all, can't businesses take charitable contributions off of their corporate income taxes? To oppose this item in the absence of knowledge about the nature of the tax policy and any cost to public schools is tantamount to opposing corporate giving. In a related question, respondents were read the statement: "One argument in favor of tax-credit scholarship system is that it is good fiscal policy. School districts will save money, and potentially reduce local taxes, because participating students go to private schools, where per-pupil costs are normally less than in regular public schools. Do you agree or disagree with that statement?" Although 51% of the Idaho respondents agreed with the question, it is unclear with what they agreed. Do the respondents actually believe that all the alleged benefits of tax-credit scholarships will occur? Or do they agree with the ideas of saving money and reducing taxes? Given many or even most respondents' likely lack of knowledge about tax credits, it is highly possible that state residents agreed that they would like to receive the presumed financial benefits of tax-credit scholarships. In short, many respondents likely expressed a preference for a desired outcome rather than agreeing that the presumed statement is true. Had the respondents been presented more neutral questions about tax-credits and vouchers, the findings may have been less favorable towards these issues.

Specific Findings

Below, we offer a brief examination of the reports' presentation of specific findings.

Importance of Education. In nine of the surveys, respondents were asked to state the most important issue facing their state or the issue that was most important to them (the Florida survey did not ask this item). As shown in Table 1 in the Appendix to this review, the results do show that K-12 education was an issue of substantial importance. However, contrary to the impressions left by the Friedman reports' emphasis, only in Arizona and Georgia did at least one third of the respondents state education was the most salient issue.

Respondent Familiarity with Educational Issues. Interviewees were then asked a series of questions pertaining to educational issues, regardless of the respondent's most important issue. An issue that arises in public opinion surveys is whether respondents have sufficient knowledge of a topic to answer questions in an informed manner. In only the Florida survey were individuals asked if they were familiar with K-12 education in the state. Approximately 28% of the respondents said they were "Not at all familiar," while almost 37% stated they were "Somewhat familiar." Respondents in the most recent seven surveys were asked to identify the level of state spending on public schools and the salary of the state's school teachers, and very few—between 4% and 40%—knew this information (see Table 2 in the Appendix). Requiring respondents to have a rough idea of the amount of money spent on public education may be an overly stringent criterion to denote familiarity of public school issues, but the data in Table 2 suggest that respondents' beliefs and opinions may not be well grounded.

Evaluation of Public Schools. Respondents were also asked their opinion of the state's public school system (see Appendix, Table 3). The authors of the Friedman reports claim that respondents are dissatisfied with their public schools, but such a conclusion assumes that evaluating the schools as "fair"

—which generally garners the lion's share of answers—indicates dissatisfaction with public schools. In fact, public evaluations of schools should be interpreted with caution because respondents are more likely to provide lower ratings to schools with which they are less familiar. Individuals report that the schools their children attend, or those in their community, are of higher quality than schools in general. To illustrate, a recent national Gallup Poll shows that parents with children in school give higher grades to the public schools their children attend (30% gave an "A") than generally to the schools in their community (12% gave an "A").[9] Similarly, community schools receive much more favorable evaluations than do schools throughout the nation as a whole (3% gave an "A"). Only the first Friedman report, from Arizona, included a question about public schools in their communities; the other nine asked only about public schools throughout the state. But the Arizona results showed the same pattern as Gallup has found. Scale scores for the Arizona survey ranged from a value of 1 ("Terrible, Couldn't be Worse') to a score of 10 ("Perfect"). The mean scale score for all Arizona public schools was 5.44, but the average score (6.44) of the respondents' community schools was 13% higher.

Attitudes toward Private Schools, Charter Schools, and Vouchers. The majority of questions in the Friedman surveys ask respondents their opinions about private schools, charter schools, and the use of public money to send children to non-traditional public schools (i.e., vouchers). Almost identical questions were asked in the final eight Friedman reports. A substantial percentage of respondents indicate they prefer private schools to public schools, with a smaller but still favorable response to charters, because the school curriculums and overall academic quality were assumed to be superior to that of regular public schools. A majority also tended to respond favorably to the Friedman questions about vouchers (see Appendix, Table 4).

The conclusion proposed by the authors of the Friedman reports is that state residents are enthusiastic towards vouchers. This view is based on combining responses from the "strongly favorable" and "somewhat favorable" response categories. Only in Georgia, however, was the response clearly positive toward vouchers, with 41% responding that they "strongly favor" the policy (as worded by the Friedman survey). In the other states, the "strongly favorable" response ranged from 12% to 22%. It is unclear how to interpret the "somewhat favorable" response (as well as the "somewhat unfavorable" response). There is a substantive difference between actually supporting a voucher policy and simply responding such a practice would be all right, a reasonable interpretation of "somewhat favorable." (A similar problem is found with the Gallup survey, which offers just the "favor" and "oppose" options.)

Moreover, the authors of the Friedman reports tend to overlook the large percentages of respondents who express a negative opinion of vouchers. For example, 58% of the Maryland interviewees, as do 48% of those surveyed in Oklahoma, "strongly oppose" or "somewhat oppose" the use of taking state money to pay for vouchers—even given the wording of the Friedman survey questions. Almost half of the Illinois residents surveyed and 56% of those in Tennessee expressed "somewhat unfavorable" or "strongly unfavorable" views towards school vouchers. Approximately 40% or more of the respondents from the Idaho, Nevada, and Montana surveys express a negative view of using public money to fund vouchers. And looking at the "oppose" responses, one sees

a relative tilt toward "strongly," as compared to the "favor" responses. The survey results can be interpreted, for policy purposes, in a variety of ways.

Conclusions based on the surveys deserve caution for an additional reason: many of those surveyed had limited familiarity with the concept of vouchers. In four of the state surveys, individual respondents were asked if they had ever heard of vouchers. Among the Illinois residents, 38% replied that they had "not heard of" vouchers. Likewise 53% of the Nevada and Tennessee interviewees said they had not heard of vouchers, while 46% of the Idaho respondents indicated no knowledge of vouchers. This makes the wording issues discussed above extraordinarily important, since the questions provide the only information upon which respondents base their judgment.

Table 5 of the Appendix to this report presents not these uncoached responses but instead the familiarity responses given after the interviewer explained the concept. That is, in the four states mentioned above, a second familiarity question was asked after the explanation, and in four other states, the question was asked only after the explanation. The table shows that familiarity increases greatly following an explanation. In the Illinois survey, although 37% of the study participants initially said they had "never heard" of vouchers, this decreased to only 20% after the explanation. For Nevada, the change was from 53% down to 18%. For Tennessee, those unfamiliar dropped from 53% to 28%, and for Idaho, it went from 46% to 21%. In short, the degree to which respondents understand the concept of vouchers may be far less than the survey responses indicate. The results also suggest that respondents' opinions of vouchers may be subject to change if they had more information.

Political Implications for Prospective Candidates to State Offices. A final conclusion set forth in the Friedman reports is that candidates who support school choice proposals such as tax credits and vouchers will benefit at election time (see Appendix, Table 6). The reports include statements such as "[name of state] voters are more likely to vote for a state representative, state senator, or governor who supports schools vouchers."[10] This conclusion is purportedly based on responses to a survey question asking, "Thinking ahead to the next election, when a candidate for Governor, State Senator or Representative supports tax-credit scholarships, would that make you more likely to vote for them, less likely to vote for them, or no difference whatsoever in your selection of a candidate?" Yet only in Georgia did the results show candidates substantially benefiting from supporting a pro-school choice position. In most of the states surveyed, candidates' positions on school choice issues made no difference, or voters were undecided. Other issues besides those pertaining to educational choice are more salient to voters. As seen in Table 1, potential voters were more concerned about non-educational issues prior to the 2008 election. These data suggest that candidates for state political offices will neither benefit nor be disadvantaged at the polls solely on the basis of their positions on school choice issues. Supporting pro-school-choice policies will likely have little impact on the electability of state officials in most states.

VI. Reports' Usefulness for Guidance of Policy and Practice

The 10 papers reviewed appear to be an attempt to persuade state legislators to support school-choice policies, with an emphasis on business tax-credits, individual tax-credits,

school vouchers, and charter schools. The thrust of these reports is that voters prefer private schools and the state should provide the funds for parents to send their children to better schools. The major weaknesses concern the wording of key questions and possible bias resulting from sampling design and low response rate. Moreover, while the responses of those surveyed in the 10 states may reflect their beliefs endorsing alternatives to public schools, their views should not be construed—as they often are in these reports—to mean that adopting vouchers and other pro-choice school policies will in fact improve the quality of education.

Accordingly, while the reports are intended to *influence* policy, they do little to actually *guide* policy. Rather than rely on public opinion surveys that present beliefs as fact, legislators and school officials would most benefit from examining research investigating whether charter schools and vouchers actually increase student achievement and other important outcomes.

Appendix

Table 1: State Issue Reported as Most Important to the Respondent

	K-12 Educ	Jobs	Taxes	Health	Crime	Housing	Other
Arizona	41	*nm*	5	17	15	*nm*	22
Florida	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Georgia	33	21	8	*nm*	18	*nm*	20
Illinois	17	27	18	14	17	*nm*	7
Nevada	21	25	22	13	14	*nm*	5
Tennessee	19	26	17	15	10	*nm*	13
Idaho	22	28	15	13	5	*nm*	17
Oklahoma	21	29	18	13	7	*nm*	12
Maryland	16	31	7	11	18	15	2
Montana	22	31	11	11	9	10	6

Source: Friedman Foundation reviewed reports.
nm indicates an insufficient number of respondents mentioned the issue to merit a separate category.

Table 2: Percent Correctly Identifying State Expenditures on Public Education

	Money Spent on Each Public School Student	Average Salary of Public School Teacher
Illinois	28	29
Nevada	37	36
Tennessee	27	23
Idaho	14	28
Oklahoma	40	20
Maryland	8	4
Montana	22	28

Source: Friedman Foundation reviewed reports.

Table 3: Respondent Evaluation of State Public Schools

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Undecided
Georgia	Not Asked	39	18	14	29
Illinois	7	18	38	19	18
Nevada	7	21	39	14	19
Tennessee	11	18	35	17	19
Idaho	9	23	34	13	21
Oklahoma	7	33	30	11	19
Maryland	3	14	35	32	16
Montana	11	31	38	13	7
Combined[a]	8	22	36	17	17

Source: Friedman Foundation reviewed reports.
[a] Authors' computations based on data provided in the reports.

Table 4: Opinion of Vouchers

	Strongly Favorable	Somewhat Favorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Strongly Unfavorable
Georgia[a]	41	17	8	14
Illinois	12	39	35	14
Nevada	13	41	17	29
Tennessee	13	26	23	38
Idaho	22	38	21	19
Oklahoma[b]	16	38	23	24
Maryland[b]	18	24	39	19
Montana[b,c]	22	32	21	18

Source: Friedman Foundation reviewed reports.

[a] 9% of the Georgia respondents were undecided while 11% were neutral towards vouchers.

[b] The response categories in this state survey were "strongly favor," "somewhat favor," "somewhat oppose," and "strongly oppose."

[c] 7% of the Montana respondents "Did not know" how they felt about vouchers.

Table 5: Familiarity with School Vouchers

	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not That Familiar	Never Heard Of
Georgia	36	44	12	8
Illinois	11	40	29	20
Nevada	11	44	27	18
Tennessee	26	19	27	28
Idaho	24	35	20	21
Oklahoma	12	43	29	16
Maryland	24	33	26	17
Montana	28	37	18	18

Source: Friedman Foundation reviewed reports.

[a] Includes 6% of respondents who replied "Don't know."

Table 6: Likelihood of Voting for an Elected State Official Who Supports School Choice/ School Vouchers

	More Likely	No Difference	Less Likely	Undecided
Georgia	54	17	13	26
Illinois	25	11	20	44
Nevada	35	33	25	7
Tennessee	32	36	21	11
Idaho	29	38	19	14
Oklahoma	21	47	11	21
Maryland	24	38	29	38
Montana	29	39	15	17

Source: Friedman Foundation reviewed reports.

Notes & References

[1] The complete list of reports considered in this review is as follows:

Kenski, M. (2005, March). *Arizona Likely Voter Survey on Proposed Legislation to Enhance School Choice.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

Forster, G. (2006, January). *Florida's Opinion on K-12 Public Education Spending.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

Enlow, R.C. (2007, March). *Georgia's Opinion on School Vouchers.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

DiPerna, P. (2007, December). *Illinois' Opinion on K-12 Education and School Choice.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

_____ (2008, January). *Nevada's Opinion on K-12 Education and School Choice.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

_____ (2008, March). *Tennessee's Opinion on K-12 Education and School Choice.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

_____ (2008, March). *Idaho's Opinion on K-12 Education and School Choice.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

_____ (2008, June). *Oklahoma's Opinion on K-12 Education and School Choice.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

_____ (2008, September). *Maryland's Opinion on K-12 Education and School Choice.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

_____ (2008, October). *Montana's Opinion on K-12 Education and School Choice.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

[2] Bushaw, W. J. & Gallup, A. M. (2008). The 40th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the public schools. *Phi Delta Kappan, 90*(1):9-20, 11. The Gallup Organization has conducted annual polls of public opinion about schools since 1969. Their data are based on representative national samples drawn from the Gallup's 48,000-member household panel that had been recruited from random digit dialing sampling. Weighting is used to enhance the representativeness of the obtained sample of about 1,000 individuals to the population of adults aged 18 and over. At the 95 percent confidence level, sampling errors are limited to 3 percent for the all respondents and 5 percent for the sub-sample of parents of school-aged children.

[3] Rose, L. C & Gallup, A. M. (2007). The 39th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the public schools. Phi Delta Kappan, 89(1):33-45, 38.

[4] Rose, L. C & Gallup, A. M. (2007). The 39th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the public schools. Phi Delta Kappan, 89(1):33-45, 38.

[5] Bushaw, W. J. & Gallup, A. M. (2008). The 40th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the public schools. *Phi Delta Kappan, 90*(1):9-20, 11.

[6] Rose, L. C & Gallup, A. M. (2007). The 39th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the public schools. Phi Delta Kappan, 89(1):33-45, 38.

[7] The Bushaw and Gallup (2008) report did not indicate if responses differed by having children attending schools.

[8] According to the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (USGPO, 2008: Table 18) African Americans comprise 7.2% of the Arizona population, but only 1.8% of those interviewed were placed in this racial category. Hispanics are also underrepresented in the Arizona survey. Eight percent of the respondents were Hispanic.

[9] Bushaw, W. J. & Gallup, A. M. (2008). The 40th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the public schools. *Phi Delta Kappan, 90*(1):9-20, 12.

[10] DiPerna, P. (2008, March). *Tennessee's Opinion on K-12 Education and School Choice.* Indianapolis, IN: Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, 9.

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