

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Mike Dunleavy
Senator

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Senator Mike Dunleavy 
District D

DATE: March 25, 2013

RE: Dittman Research Poll

On March 21, 2013 the Alaska House Majority Caucus leadership released the results of their annual in-depth poll conducted by Dittman Research and Communications. Dittman Corp. surveyed 800 Alaskans March 13-14, resulting in a 3.4-percent margin of error. All regions of the state were represented and balanced to the 2010 Census.

Attached to this memorandum is page six of the Dittman Corp. report. I hope you find the results of questions 40 and 41 interesting. If the poll results are to be believed, it would appear that an overwhelming majority of Alaskans favor the right to weigh-in on whether to amend the constitutional language that deals with public funding and private/religious education.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the results of this survey, I can be reached at 907-465-6600.

Thank you for your interest.

Moving now to education...

38) Student graduation and test scores in Alaska consistently rank among the lowest in the nation, despite significant increases in overall state funding for education during the past decade. Given that fact, in your opinion should the state insist on demonstrated student performance improvements in our schools before increasing the state K through 12 education funding formula, or should student performance not be used to determine education funding? [Below options were not read]

- Insist on improvements before increasing funding 48%
- Do not take performance into account 43%
- Unsure 9%

39) How familiar are you with the concept of school choice programs as they pertain to K through 12 education? Are you...

- Very familiar..... 16%
- Somewhat familiar 29%
- Not too familiar..... 22%
- or- Have you never heard of the school choice program 31%
- Unsure 2%

Split
sample
Set A

40) A school choice program allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. The goal is to improve overall performance by creating healthy competition among the schools. If this program is adopted, a portion of state funds that are currently allocated to a student's school district would instead follow the student to the school of their parents' choosing.

Would you support or oppose amending Alaska's constitution to allow a school choice program in Alaska? ...and is that strongly or somewhat support/oppose?

- Strongly support..... 39%
- Somewhat support..... 17%
- Somewhat oppose..... 7%
- Strongly oppose 29%
- Unsure 8%

Split
sample
Set B

40) Please tell me which of the following two statements comes closest to your view:

- Allowing public funds to be used for private schools will lead to an erosion of Alaska's public school system (skipped next question)..... 31%
- or- Allowing parents to choose where to send their child to school, and allowing a portion of the public funds to follow the child, will create a healthy competition and improve the overall performance of Alaska's schools 61%
- Neither/Other (volunteered) (skipped next question) 3%
- Unsure (skipped next question) 5%

READ IN RANDOM ORDER

41) Would you support or oppose amending Alaska's constitution to allow a school choice program in Alaska?

- Support..... 84%
- Oppose 11%
- Unsure..... 5%