

**NLWJC - Kagan**

**DPC - Box 019 - Folder 011**

**Education - Hart Poll**

**KEY FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL  
EDUCATION SURVEY**

This report presents the key findings of an in-depth national survey of the public's attitudes on the issue of education. The interviews for this survey were conducted between January 21 and January 24, with a representative sample of 1,002 Americans who voted in last November's presidential election.

The results of this survey clearly suggest that *education is the right issue for President Clinton to take as a defining priority for his second term*. Improving education is at the very top of the voters' agenda for presidential leadership (Q. 3, Q. 5). Moreover, President Clinton comes to this issue with a solid measure of credibility and trust (Q. 8a).

What is especially striking about the response to education is the breadth of the audience for presidential leadership on this issue. Fifty-six percent of Democrats rate it as an extremely important goal for the President to work on, but so do 44% of Independents and 42% of Republicans. While voters under the age of 30 and mothers with school-aged children are the most likely to rank education as an extremely important priority, the emphasis on improving education and the schools cuts across occupational and income lines in a way that few other issues do.

Americans believe that the country's educational needs can best be met by doing what is necessary to improve the public schools, rather than by promoting greater access to private alternatives (Q. 10). But Americans also believe that public schools have to change to make sure children are better prepared to meet the challenges they face in today's world. (Q. 6).

The policy initiatives that resonate most strongly with the public are the ones that respond most directly to the desire to have "strong schools with clear standards of achievement and discipline, to help instill the knowledge, values, and citizenship that are so important to our children and our society." The test for schools today is the degree to which they provide children with a solid foundation in basic skills, in a safe and disciplined environment.

For this survey, we tested voters' reactions to fourteen possible policy goals—asking voters to rate each one on a four-part scale ranging from "extremely important" to "less important" (Q. 13).

Six goals clearly rank above the other eight as top priorities—with 47% or more rating each one of these as being extremely important. These six initiatives are:

- *Making sure that all students have mastered the basics of reading, writing, and math by the time they complete elementary school (69% extremely important)*
- *Having an all-out commitment to literacy programs to ensure that all children are able to read by the third grade (59% extremely important)*

- *Increasing the level of discipline and safety in the schools, with tough measures to keep guns and drugs out, and to remove disruptive students to alternative schools (57% extremely important)*
- *Making sure that all students have up-to-date textbooks and school buildings that are safe and in reasonable repair (52% extremely important)*
- *Establishing meaningful standards for student achievement and performance, and making sure that students reach them before being awarded a high school diploma (49% extremely important)*
- *Getting schools more involved in emphasizing basic values, such as personal responsibility, respect, and good citizenship (47% extremely important).*

Items that deal with the education of children at the elementary and secondary level score far higher in this survey than items dealing with post-secondary education and lifetime learning. Moreover, items involving "getting the basics right" resonate far more strongly than those dealing with high technology and innovation.<sup>1</sup>

There is a broad consensus that the federal government is doing too little when it comes to dealing with the issue of education (61%)—a view shared by Independents and Republicans, as well as Democrats (Q. 11a). However, there is an even division of opinion about whether the bigger danger for the long term

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<sup>1</sup> The lowest rated items on this scale were: "instilling a spirit of reform and innovation in the public schools, with programs like charter schools to provide new alternatives and greater choice" (17% extremely important); "passing a new GI Bill for the 21<sup>st</sup> century that gives people lifetime access to training and skill development throughout their working careers" (19% extremely important); and, "making sure that every school has computers and is wired for the Internet by the year 2000, so students can benefit from the new information superhighway" (30% extremely important).

is too much federal interference in education or insufficient federal leadership in doing what is necessary to improve our schools (Q. 11b). This division follows party lines—with Democrats saying by 60% to 28% that the federal government will not be involved enough, Republicans saying by 66% to 28% that the federal government will interfere too much, and Independents evenly divided.

The one topic on which there is a broad consensus about the value of a federal role is the establishment of meaningful national standards for what students should be expected to learn and achieve in basic skill areas such as reading and math.

*Indeed, the most important finding of this research is that there is a major opportunity for President Clinton to put his personal stamp on the issue of education by becoming the leading voice for meaningful national standards, and by encouraging states and local governments to participate in a national test to measure reading and math skills.*

The public is far more receptive to the idea of national standards than the current political debate would suggest—even when the issue of federal involvement is raised. For example:

- Eighty-four percent express a favorable reaction to the idea of establishing meaningful national standards for what students should be expected to learn and achieve in basic skill areas such as reading and math, including fully 66% who are *very* favorable (Q. 14a).
- Despite the broad public interest in having national standards, Americans say by 59% to 26% that such standards do not now exist (Q. 14b).
- By a lopsided margin of 67% to 22%, voters say it is a good idea for the *federal government* to be involved in promoting national standards for students in basic skill areas such as reading and math (Q. 15a).
- Even when given the counter-argument that "federal involvement would mean too much interference with state and local control of public schools," voters say by 58% to 35% that the federal government should be involved in promoting national standards (Q. 15b).

We asked respondents what their reaction would be if President Clinton proposed new efforts by the federal government to encourage states and local school districts to participate in a national test to measure reading skills for all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students and math skills for all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Overall, 77% say they would be favorable (including 48% who say they would be *very* favorable), 8% say they would be neutral, and just 14% say they would be unfavorable (Q. 16a). The response is positive across the range of demographic, partisan, and ideological groups—even among voters who earlier had expressed mixed feelings about federal interference with local prerogatives in education.

The best reason for moving toward a system of national testing is that "in a country where many people often move from state to state, we need a common standard of what students should be achieving in basic skills such as reading and math" (Q. 16c). The public believes most valuable uses for national

reading and math tests would be “identifying low-performing schools that need to be improved” and “making sure that students have mastered the basics before being promoting to the next level” (Q. 17b). Indeed, national standards take on greater prominence as a priority in the public’s mind when they are harnessed to “making sure students master the skills they need.”

Eight of out nine voters say that they would have confidence in the ability of reading and math teachers to develop and approve a national test—including 56% who say they would have a great deal of confidence in reading and math teachers. This is a far higher degree of confidence than voters would be willing to invest in governors, business leaders, testing experts, state and local school boards, or the U.S. Department of Education (Q. 17a).

At the end of this survey, we gave respondents the following argument *against* federal involvement in national testing: “Some people say that the federal government should *not* be involved in establishing a national test in reading and math, because this will give the federal government too much power to create a national curriculum and a one-size-fits all approach to education, when education should be under state and local control.” *Even with this as the last word on the subject, voters support by 55% to 33% the involvement of the federal government in encouraging states and local district to participate in a national reading and math test (Q. 17c).* In this final reading on the issue, voters who we have classified as being in the political center favor national testing by 61% to 27%. Support is also stronger than average among voters under the age of 40

(64% favor), upper-income voters (61%), mothers of school-aged children (62% favor), and public school parents with lower confidence in their schools (64% favor). Senior citizens oppose the national test by 49% to 39%. While white evangelicals are evenly divided on this question, Catholic voters favor national testing by 58% to 31%.

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ASAP

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Interviews: 1002 Interviews  
 Dates: January 21-24, 1997

FINAL

Study #4838  
 National Education  
 January 1997

49 Male
51 Female
[5]

AREA		TYPE	SAMPLE POINT			FORM	DATE
[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	[11]	[12]	January [13] [14] 1997

1a. Are you currently registered to vote at this address?

Registered .....	100	CONTINUE	[15]
Not registered .....	-	TERMINATE AND DO NOT	
Not sure .....	-	COUNT TOWARD QUOTA	

1b. Did you vote in the election for president this past November, when the candidates were Bill Clinton, Bob Dole, and Ross Perot? (IF "YES" ASK:) For whom did you vote - Bill Clinton, Bob Dole, or Ross Perot?

Yes, voted .....		[16]
Bill Clinton.....	42	
Bob Dole.....	33	CONTINUE
Ross Perot.....	5	
Refused/Other (VOL) .....	20	
No, did not vote .....	-	TERMINATE AND DO NOT
Not sure .....	-	COUNT TOWARD QUOTA

1c. And in the election for U.S. House of Representatives this past November, did you vote for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate in your district?

Voted for Democratic candidate .....	43	[17]
Voted for Republican candidate .....	43	
Other (VOL) .....	3	
Did not vote (VOL) .....	2	
Not sure/can't recall .....	9	

2. Thinking about the way things are going in the country these days, would you say that you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the direction of the country these days?

Very satisfied.....	5	[18]
Somewhat satisfied .....	41	
Somewhat dissatisfied .....	33	
Very dissatisfied .....	19	
Not sure.....	2	

3. What do you feel are the most important issues, problems, or goals that you personally would like to see the President and Congress do something about? What issues do you think should be the top priorities for the President and Congress to work on?

(PROBE FOR MULTIPLE RESPONSES:) Are there any other issues, problems, or goals that you would like to see the President and Congress do something about? [19-22]

Education	21%
Crime, violence	14
Welfare reform	12
Balancing the budget	12
Health care	11
Social Security issues	10
<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/>	
Don't know, no response	3%

4. Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the job Bill Clinton is doing as president? (IF "APPROVE" OR "DISAPPROVE," ASK:) Do you strongly (approve/disapprove) of the job Bill Clinton is doing as president, or just somewhat (approve/disapprove) of the job he is doing?

Strongly approve .....	18	[23]	64
Somewhat approve .....	46		32
Somewhat disapprove .....	17		
Strongly disapprove .....	15		
Not sure .....	4		

5. I'm going to read you some goals that President Clinton might work on in his second term. For each one I mention, please rate how important you personally consider that goal to be—(a) an extremely important goal that's one of the top few priorities you want the President to work on; (b) a very important goal that's near the top of your priorities; (c) a somewhat important goal that you would put in the middle of your priorities, or (d) a less important goal you would put lower down in your priorities for the President to work on.

How would you personally rate the importance of (READ ITEM)—do you consider it to be: (a) an extremely important goal that's one of the top few priorities you want the President to work on; (b) a very important goal that's near the top of your priorities; (c) a somewhat important goal that you would put in the middle of your priorities, or (d) a less important goal you would put lower down in your priorities for the President to work on?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

	<u>Extremely</u> <u>Important</u>	<u>Very</u> <u>Important</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>Important</u>	<u>Less</u> <u>Important</u>	<u>Not</u> <u>Sure</u>		
Improving education and the schools .....	48	40	6	5	1	[25]	88
Reducing crime and violence** .....	48	37	11	3	1	[27]	85
Moving people from welfare to work * .....	44	39	14	1	2	[28]	83
Protecting Social Security and Medicare ** .....	43	33	18	5	1	[31]	
Balancing the federal budget .....	40	37	17	5	1	[26]	
Improving health care coverage for children * .....	38	41	15	3	3	[30]	
Reducing the federal tax burden on average families .....	36	37	21	5	1	[32]	
Helping families afford college and vocational training ** .....	26	40	23	10	1	[29]	
Reforming the campaign finance laws * ..	15	29	35	18	3	[24]	66 (22 pt diff w/schools) 44

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).  
\*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

6. Now, I'd like to get your opinion about how well different programs and aspects of our society are working. For each item I mention, please tell me whether you think: (a) it works pretty well as it exists now, (b) some changes are needed, but basically should be kept the same, (c) major changes are needed, or (d) a complete overhaul is needed.

When you think about (READ ITEM) , do you think: a) it works pretty well as it exists now, b) some changes are needed, but basically should be kept the same, c) major changes are needed, or d) a complete overhaul is needed.

	<u>Works Pretty Well</u>	<u>Some Changes Needed</u>	<u>Major Changes Needed</u>	<u>Complete Overhaul Needed</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>	
Social Security.....	18	36	20	23	3	[33]
The federal income tax system.....	13	32	22	30	3	[34]
Medicare.....	18	37	23	15	7	[35]
The public education system.....	9	35	33	21	2	[36] 44-54

7. Turning specifically now to the issue of education, what are the most important things you'd like to see the President and Congress do when it comes to the issue of education? What do you feel the most important goals should be for the President and Congress in dealing with the issue of education?

(PROBE FOR MULTIPLE RESPONSES:) Are there any other things you'd particularly like to see the President and Congress do when it comes to the issue of education? \* [37-40]

Education funding	16%
Raise the standards	11
Get back to the basics	9
Equal education for all students	8
More qualified teachers	8
----- Don't know; no response	8%

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

8a. How much do you trust President Clinton to have the right kinds of policies for dealing with the issue of education -- do you trust President Clinton a lot, a fair amount, just some, or very little when it comes to dealing with the issue of education?

Trust a lot.....	22	[41]	58-39
Trust a fair amount.....	36		
Trust just some.....	17		
Trust very little.....	22		
Not sure.....	3		

8b. How much do you trust the Republicans in Congress to have the right kinds of policies for dealing with the issue of education -- do you trust the Republicans in Congress a lot, a fair amount, just some, or very little when it comes to dealing with the issue of education?

Trust a lot.....	9	[42]	41-56 =
Trust a fair amount.....	32		
Trust just some.....	29		
Trust very little.....	27		
Not sure.....	3		

9a. Generally speaking, how would you rate the quality of the public schools in the nation today—excellent, good, just fair, not so good, or poor? \*

Excellent.....	1	[43]	
Good.....	22		23-73
Just fair.....	45		
Not so good.....	14		
Poor.....	14		
Not sure.....	4		

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

9b. And how would you rate the quality of the public schools in your local community—excellent, good, just fair, not so good, or poor? \*

Excellent.....	13	[44]	
Good.....	39		52-46
Just fair.....	27		
Not so good.....	8		
Poor.....	11		
Not sure.....	2		

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

9c. Thinking about the country overall, how would you rate the quality of the education students receive in the public schools today—excellent, good, not so good, or poor? \*\*

Excellent.....	2	[45]	
Good.....	36		31-60
Just fair.....	17		
Not so good.....	27		
Poor.....	16		
Not sure.....	2		

\*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

9d. And thinking about your own local community now, how would you rate the quality of the education students receive in your local public schools—excellent, good, not so good, or poor? \*\*

Excellent.....	13	[46]	
Good.....	40		53-44
Just fair.....	13		
Not so good.....	18		
Poor.....	12		
Not sure.....	4		

\*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

10. When it comes to meeting the educational needs of the country, which one of the following approaches would you be more likely to favor: (a) doing what is necessary to improve the quality of education in the public schools, or (b) using tax-funded vouchers or tax deductions to help parents pay the cost of sending their children to private or religious schools, instead of public schools? \*

Improve quality of education in public schools.....	69	[47]	
Vouchers for private or religious schools.....	25		
Depends (VOL).....	3		
Not sure.....	3		

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

10. When it comes to meeting the educational needs of the country, which one of the following approaches would you be more likely to favor: (a) doing what is necessary to improve the quality of education in the public schools, or (b) using some of the tax money we now spend on public schools to help parents pay the cost of sending their children to private or religious schools? \*\*

Improve quality of education in public schools .....	69	[48]
Vouchers for private or religious schools .....	26	
Depends (VOL).....	2	
Not sure .....	3	

\*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

- 11a. From what you know, do you feel that the federal government is doing too much, doing too little, or doing the right amount when it comes to dealing with the issue of education?

Doing too much.....	15	[49]
Doing too little .....	61	
Doing the right amount .....	15	
Not sure .....	9	

- 11b. Looking ahead, which concerns you more—a) that the federal government will get too involved in the issue of education and interfere with things that are better left to the states and local communities; or b) that the federal government will not be involved enough in doing what's necessary to improve our schools and meet the country's educational needs?

Federal government will get too involved .....	47	[50]
Federal government will not be involved enough.....	44	
Both/neither (VOL) .....	5	
Not sure.....	4	

12. I'm going to read you some statements about the importance of having national leaders, such as the President, make public education a top priority in the next few years. For each one, please tell me whether you think that statement gives a very convincing reason for making public education a top national priority, a fairly convincing reason, a somewhat convincing reason, or not that convincing a reason for making public education a top priority.

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY VERY CONVINCING REASON

	Very Convincing Reason	Fairly Convincing Reason	Somewhat Convincing Reason	Not That Convincing A Reason	Not Sure	
We need strong schools with clear standards of achievement and discipline to help instill the knowledge, values, and citizenship that are so important to our society *	65	19	10	5	1	[55]
Now more than ever, it takes a good education to get a good job, and we need to make sure that Americans can get the kind of education and training they need to get ahead **	62	20	10	7	1	[53]
Quality education is the key to America's success in the new global economy, and we need to make sure that our schools and universities are providing the world-class education and training we'll need to keep America's economy in the forefront *	60	21	13	5	1	[51]
Education is our country's way of providing real hope and opportunity for all Americans to improve themselves and live up to their potential, regardless of their economic circumstances *	58	24	11	5	2	[52]
We live in a time of rapid change, including new technology, and we need a clear national commitment to make sure that our schools are able to keep up with the changes and new demands for excellence as we head into the 21st century **	57	22	12	8	1	[56]
The public schools have always been the place where new generations of Americans have learned about our nation's democratic values and traditions, and continuing that tradition is especially important now, as our society becomes increasingly diverse **	38	24	18	19	1	[54]

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

\*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

13. Now I'm going to mention some major goals that national leaders, such as the President, might have in the area of education and training. For each one I mention, please tell me how important you personally consider that goal to be— (a) an extremely important goal that's one of the top few priorities you want the President to work on; (b) a very important goal that's *near* the top of your priorities; (c) a somewhat important goal that you would put in the middle of your priorities, or (d) a less important goal you would put lower down in your priorities for the President to work on.

How would you personally rate the importance of (READ ITEM)—do you consider it to be: (a) an extremely important goal that's one of the top few priorities you want the President to work on; (b) a very important goal that's *near* the top of your priorities; (c) a somewhat important goal that you would put in the middle of your priorities, or (d) a less important goal you would put lower down in your priorities for the President to work on?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Less Important	Not Sure		
Making sure that all students have mastered the basics of reading, writing, and math by the time they complete elementary school * .....	69	26	2	2	1	[57]	95-4
Having an all-out commitment to literacy programs to ensure that all children are able to read by the third grade ** .....	59	33	4	3	1	[58]	92-7
Increasing the level of discipline and safety in the schools, with tough measures to keep guns and drugs out and to remove disruptive students to alternative schools ** .....	57	30	8	3	2	[68]	87-11
Making sure that all schools have up-to-date textbooks and that school buildings are safe and in reasonable repair * .....	52	37	8	2	1	[69]	
Establishing meaningful standards for student achievement and performance, and making sure that students reach them before being awarded a high school diploma * .....	49	39	8	4	-	[60]	88-12
Getting schools more involved in emphasizing basic values, such as personal responsibility, respect, and good citizenship ** .....	47	34	10	7	2	[66]	81-17
Providing tax credits and deductions to help ensure that all qualified students are able to afford a college education * .....	41	38	16	4	1	[67]	79-20
Establishing meaningful standards for student achievement and performance, and holding the education system accountable for achieving those standards ** .....	39	41	14	4	2	[61]	80-18
Increasing opportunities for non-college-bound students, by expanding apprenticeships and school-to-work programs* .....	36	42	17	4	1	[65]	
Providing "Hope Scholarships" that makes two years of community college available to every student who works hard and achieves good grades ** .....	35	36	18	9	2	[64]	71-27
Making a greater commitment to early childhood education, by expanding the availability of pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs * .....	32	35	20	12	1	[63]	

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

\*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

Q.13 (cont'd)

	<u>Extremely Important</u>	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Less Important</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>		
Making sure that every school has computers and is wired for the Internet by the year 2000, so that students can benefit from the new information superhighway **.....	30	34	21	12	3	[70]	64-33
Passing a new "G.I. Bill" for the 21 <sup>st</sup> century that gives people lifetime access to training and skill development throughout their working careers *.....	19	31	30	17	3	[59]	
Instilling a spirit of reform and innovation in the public schools, with programs like charter schools to provide new alternatives and greater choice **.....	17	27	33	17	6	[62]	

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).

\*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

14a. What is your reaction to the idea of establishing meaningful national standards for what students should be expected to learn and achieve in basic skill areas such as reading and math--very favorable, somewhat favorable, neutral, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

Very favorable .....	66	[71]
Somewhat favorable .....	18	
Neutral .....	8	
Somewhat unfavorable ....	3	
Very unfavorable .....	4	
Not sure .....	1	

14b. Would you say that we already have meaningful national standards for what students should be expected to learn and achieve in basic skill areas such as reading and math, or that we do not currently have these kinds of national standards?

We already have national standards .....	26	[72]
We do not currently have national standards.....	59	
Some of both (VOL).....	6	
Not sure.....	9	

15a. And do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea for the *federal government* to be involved in promoting national standards for students in basic skill areas such as reading and math?

Good idea .....	67	[73]
Bad idea.....	22	
Some of both (VOL).....	6	
Not sure .....	5	

- 15b. Let me read you two statements about having the federal government be involved in promoting national standards for students in basic skill areas such as reading and math. After you hear them both, please tell me one of these statements you agree with more.

**Statement A:** The federal government *should* be involved in promoting national standards, because we have a national interest as a country to encourage excellence in education for students wherever they live, and to hold schools more accountable for giving students the education they need.

**Statement B:** The federal government should *not* be involved in promoting national standards, because federal involvement would mean too much interference with state and local control of public schools.

Statement A/pro-involvement.....	58	[74]
Statement B/anti-involvement .....	35	
Some of both (VOL).....	6	
Not sure .....	1	

- 16a. There is some talk that President Clinton might propose new efforts by the federal government to encourage states and local school districts to participate in a national test to measure reading skills for all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students and math skills for all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

What would your reaction be if President Clinton proposed new efforts by the federal government to encourage states and local school districts to participate in a national test to measure reading skills for all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students and math skills for all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students—very favorable, somewhat favorable, neutral, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable?

Very favorable .....	48	[75]
Somewhat favorable .....	29	
Neutral .....	8	
Somewhat unfavorable ....	7	
Very unfavorable .....	7	
Not sure .....	1	

77-14

- 16b. Why would you feel that way if President Clinton proposed new efforts by the federal government to encourage states and local school districts to participate in a national test to measure reading skills for all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students and math skills for all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students? To your way of thinking, what are the advantages or disadvantages of this kind of a national testing proposal?

(PROBE:) Are there any other reasons why you think it might be a good idea or a bad idea for the federal government to encourage states and local school districts to participate in a national test to measure reading and math skills? \*\* [76-83]

Net Advantages	65%	Net Disadvantages	29%
Have all states, country on the same level	21	Federal government should not be involved	12
Need to know where we need to improve	17	It may not work for everyone	6
Focus people on where our children should be	7	The cost of the testing	4
It is a good idea	6	It is not needed	3
Will make teaching establishment more accountable	4	It is a waste of federal funding	2
-----		Don't know; no response	7%

\*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

16c. I'm going to read you some reasons that people might give for supporting a new effort by the federal government to encourage states and local school districts to participate in a national test to measure reading and math skills. For each one, please tell me whether you think it is a very convincing reason, a fairly convincing reason, just somewhat of a convincing reason, or not that convincing of a reason.

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY VERY CONVINCING REASON

	Very Convincing Reason	Fairly Convincing Reason	Somewhat Convincing Reason	Not That Convincing A Reason	Not Sure		
In a country where many people often move from state to state, we need a common national standard of what students should be achieving in basic skills such as reading and math *.....	58	20	13	8	1	[85]	78-21
American students consistently score less well than students in Europe and Japan on measures of educational achievement, and we need a national effort to assure world-class standards of excellence in America's schools ** .....	50	16	18	14	2	[87]	66-32
Our schools today are promoting too many students who do not have basic skills they need; a national test could help reverse this trend, and target extra help to the students who need it.....	49	20	16	14	1	[86]	69-30
Parents and taxpayers deserve to have a way of knowing how well their schools are performing, and a national test will help make schools more accountable for their performance ** .....	48	16	17	18	1	[88]	64-35
A national test would give local communities a tool for knowing how well their schools are performing compared to schools all over the country * .....	44	28	16	11	1	[84]	72-27

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A).  
 \*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

17a. I'm going to mention some different kinds of people and groups that could be involved in developing and approving the kind of national reading and math test we have been talking about. For each one I mention, please tell me how much confidence you would have in that group being involved in developing and approving a national test—a great deal of confidence, a fair amount, just some, or very little confidence?

How much confidence would you have in (READ ITEM) when it comes to developing and approving a national test—a great deal, a fair amount, just some, or very little? \*

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY A GREAT DEAL OR FAIR AMOUNT

	A Great Deal	A Fair Amount	Just Some	Very Little	Not Sure		
Reading and math teachers.....	56	32	7	3	2	[90]	✓
The U.S. Department of Education....	26	35	19	16	4	[89]	
State and local school boards.....	22	38	20	18	2	[91]	
Testing experts.....	25	33	19	18	5	[92]	
Business leaders.....	19	29	24	24	4	[93]	=
Governors.....	12	29	23	33	3	[94]	

\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM A),

17b. I'm going to mention some ways in which a national reading and math test might be used. For each one, please tell me whether you think this would be a very valuable use for a national test, a fairly valuable use, just somewhat of a valuable use, or not really a valuable use for a national test. \*\*

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE PERCENTAGE WHO SAY VERY VALUABLE

	<u>Very Valuable</u>	<u>Fairly Valuable</u>	<u>Just Somewhat</u>	<u>Not Really Valuable</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>		
A national test could help identify low-performing schools that need to be improved.....	59	14	16	11	-	[97]	73-27
A national test could be used to make sure that students have mastered the basics before being promoted to the next level .....	56	17	14	12	1	[98]	73-26
A national test could help identify low-performing students who need extra help and attention.....	48	19	17	14	2	[95]	
A national test could help raise the standards of excellence that students are expected to achieve.....	46	20	21	13	-	[96]	

\*\* Asked of one-half the respondents (FORM B).

17c. Finally, some people say that the federal government should not be involved in establishing a national test in reading and math, because this will give the federal government too much power to create a national curriculum and a one-size-fits-all approach to education, when education should be under state and local control.

Thinking back on everything we have discussed, who do you tend to agree with more--those who say that the federal government should be involved in encouraging states and local school districts to participate in a national reading and math test, or those who say that the federal government should not get involved in national student testing?

Federal government should be involved.....	55	[99]
Federal government should not get involved.....	33	
Some of both (VOL).....	9	
Not sure .....	3	

FACTUALS: These last few questions are for statistical purposes only.

F1. How old are you? (IF REFUSED, ASK:) Well, can you tell me which age group you belong to? Are you in the age group 18 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, 35 to 39, 40 to 44, 45 to 49, 50 to 54, 55 to 59, 60 to 64, or 65 and over?

18-24.....	5	[100]
25-29.....	9	
30-34.....	9	
35-39.....	11	
40-44.....	13	
45-49.....	11	
50-54.....	9	
55-59.....	8	
60-64.....	7	
65 and over.....	18	
Refused.....	-	

F2. What type of work do you do?

Professional/manager.....	21	[101]
White collar worker .....	21	
Blue collar worker .....	22	
Farmer.....	1	
Student.....	2	
Homemaker.....	7	
Retired.....	22	
Unemployed.....	3	
Never worked/not sure.....	1	

F3. What is the last grade you completed in school?

Grade school .....	2	[102]
Some high school.....	6	
High school graduate.....	25	
Some college, no degree .....	19	
Vocational training, 2-year college .....	9	
4-year college/bachelor's degree .....	20	
Some postgraduate work, no degree.....	4	
2-3 years' postgraduate work, master's degree.....	12	
Doctoral degree/law degree .....	3	
Not sure .....	-	

F4a. What is your current marital status?

Married .....	66	[103]
Single/never married.....	16	
Divorced .....	9	
Widowed .....	9	
Not sure/refused.....	-	

F4b. Do you have any children under age 18 living in your household at this time?

Yes, have children.....	38	CONTINUE	[104]
No, do not have children .....	62	SKIP TO Q.F5a	
Not sure.....	-		

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAY THEY HAVE CHILDREN 18 OR UNDER IN HOUSEHOLD IN Q.F4b.)

F4c. Do the children in this household attend public school or private school, or are they not yet of school age?

<b>Yes, Have Children In School</b>		
Have children in public school.....	73	[105]
Have children in private/parochial school.....	10	
Have children in both public and private school.....	3	
Not sure what kind of school/refused .....	1	
<b>No, Do Not Have Children In School</b>		
Not Sure If Have Children In School.....	13	
	-	

**(ASK EVERYONE.)**

F5a. How would you describe your overall point of view in terms of the political parties? Would you say you are mostly Democratic, leaning Democratic, completely independent, leaning Republican, or mostly Republican?

Mostly Democratic .....	30	[107]
Leaning Democratic .....	12	
Completely independent .....	18	
Leaning Republican .....	15	
Mostly Republican .....	22	
Not sure .....	3	

F5b. Thinking about your general approach to issues, do you consider yourself to be liberal, moderate, or conservative?

Liberal .....	20	[108]
Moderate .....	41	
Conservative .....	35	
Not sure .....	4	

F6. How would you describe the area in which you live—a large city, a medium to small city, a suburb near a city, a small town that is not near a city, or a rural or country area?

Large city .....	21	[109]
Medium to small city .....	26	
Suburb near a city .....	21	
Small town that is not near a city .....	18	
Rural or country area .....	14	
Not sure .....	-	

F7. If you added together the yearly income of all the members of your family who were living at home last year, would the total be less than \$10,000, between \$10,000 and \$20,000, between \$20,000 and \$30,000, between \$30,000 and \$40,000, between \$40,000 and \$50,000, between \$50,000 and \$75,000, between \$75,000 and \$100,000, or would the total be more than that?

Less than \$10,000 .....	6	[110]
Between \$10,000 and \$20,000 .....	10	
Between \$20,000 and \$30,000 .....	14	
Between \$30,000 and \$40,000 .....	16	
Between \$40,000 and \$50,000 .....	13	
Between \$50,000 and \$75,000 .....	18	
Between \$75,000 and \$100,000 .....	8	
More than \$100,000 .....	6	
Not sure/refused .....	9	

F8. Finally, are you from a Hispanic or Spanish-speaking background? (IF "NO," ASK:) What is your race—white, black, Asian, or something else?

Hispanic .....	4	[111]
White .....	80	
Black .....	10	
Asian .....	1	
Other .....	4	
Refused .....	1	

F9a. In what religion were you brought up?

Protestant.....	55	<b>CONTINUE</b>	<b>[131]</b>
Catholic.....	28		
Jewish.....	2	<b>SKIP TO</b>	
Other.....	11		
None.....	2	<b>VALIDATION</b>	
Not sure/refused.....	2		

**(ASK ONLY OF PROTESTANTS IN Q.F9a)**

F9b. Would you describe yourself as either a fundamentalist or an evangelical Christian, or would you not describe yourself that way?

Yes, fundamentalist/evangelical/both .....	17	<b>[132]</b>
No, neither fundamentalist or evangelical.....	32	
Not sure .....	6	
Non-Protestants (Q.F9a).....	45	