

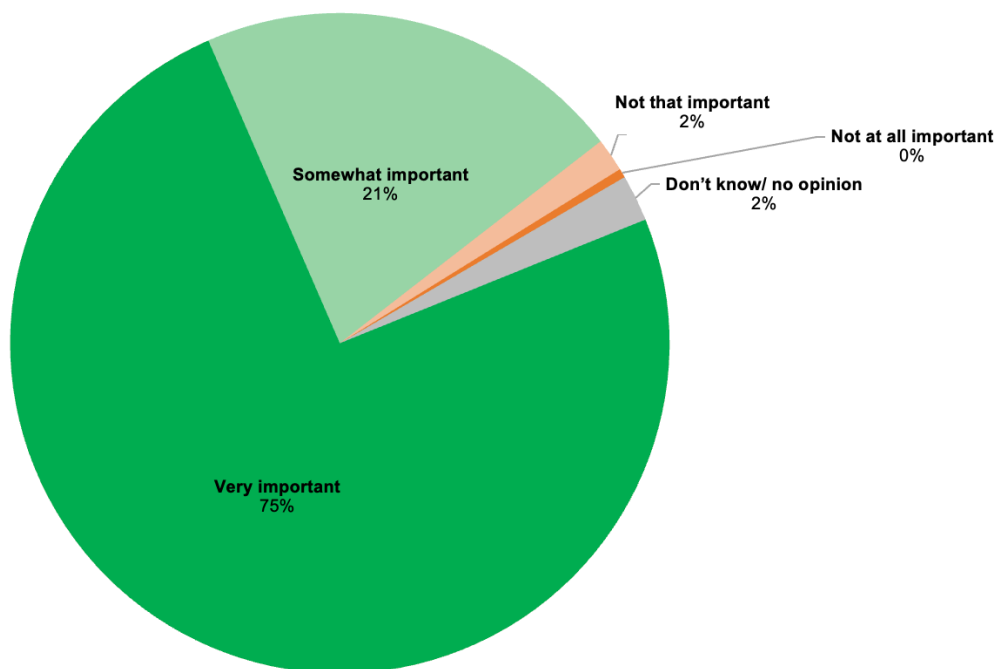
Think New Mexico Statewide Election Policy Survey (2023) Summary Report

BSP Research fielded a state-wide survey of 403 ($n = 403 \pm 4.9\%$) registered voters in New Mexico on behalf of Think New Mexico. The survey included an oversample of parents ($n = 183$) who either currently have children enrolled in public school or who raised children who were educated in New Mexico's public school system. This allows for comparisons to be made in attitudes between parents with direct experience with public schools in the state and the rest of the electorate. The poll, fielded from 11/13/2023 through 11/27/2023, was implemented through web-based interviews. The survey was available in either Spanish or English, depending on respondents' preference. The poll was led by Dr. Gabriel Sanchez, the Director of Research at BSP Research, a nationally recognized expert in New Mexico politics and policy.

Policy Attitudes Regarding Class Sizes in K-12 Education

Significant education research has found that smaller class sizes are associated with higher student performance in the elementary grades. The survey asked respondents for their opinion regarding elementary class sizes in New Mexico. Registered voters in New Mexico recognize the salience of class sizes, as nearly all respondents (96%) indicated that elementary class sizes are important for student success, 75% report that it is very important.

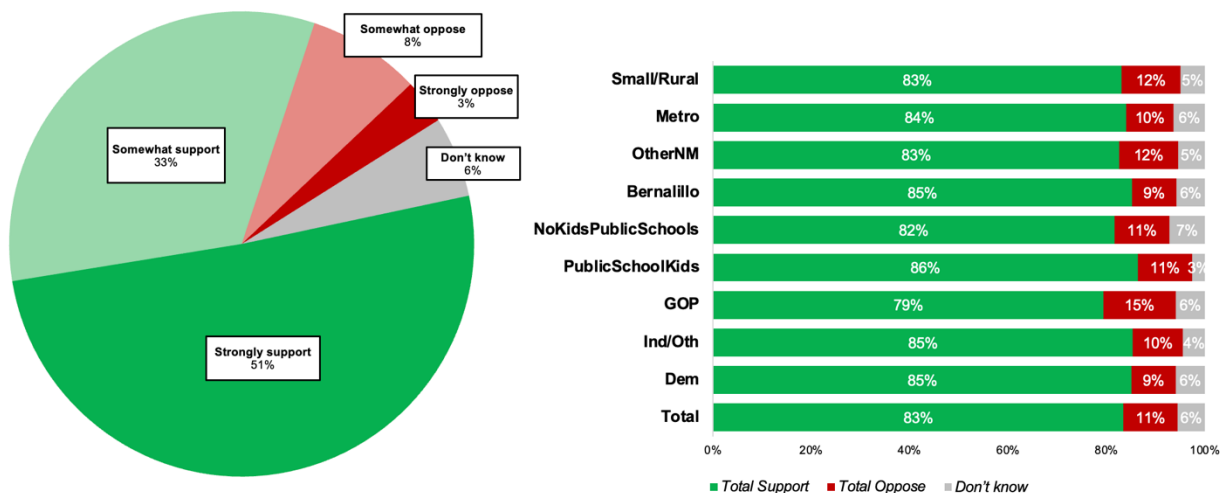
How important do you think elementary school class size is for student success?



Furthermore, when asked to evaluate their perception of class sizes in New Mexico currently, 55% report that elementary schools are currently “too big” in the state. This includes 63% in Bernalillo County, home to the state’s largest school district, Albuquerque Public Schools. This is significantly greater than the 22% who believe that the class sizes in the state are “just about right”. Only 2% of respondents believe that class sizes are too small, with the remaining 20% not sure.

A robust 83% of registered voters in New Mexico support a state law setting the maximum number of students in each elementary school class at 20, including 51% who strongly support the passage of such a law. Support for a state law capping elementary class sizes at 20 is consistent across all sub-groups of the electorate, with identical percentages in the strongly support category for voters who live in both metro or rural areas of the state. Although self-identified Republicans are slightly less supportive than Democrats and Independents when we combine strongly and somewhat support together, Republicans are more likely (+3%) than other New Mexicans to strongly support capping elementary schools at 20 students per class.

Would you support or oppose a state law setting the maximum number of students in each elementary school class at 20 students?

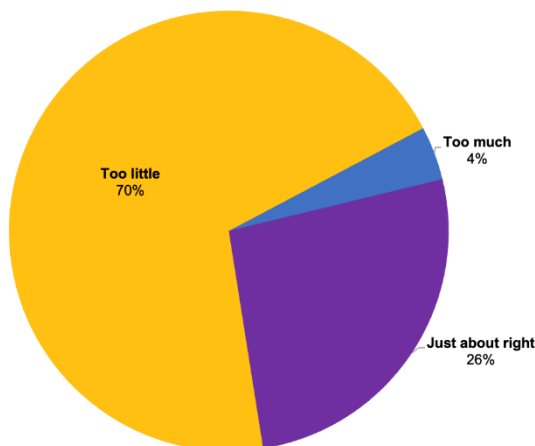


Policy Views Regarding School Board Administration

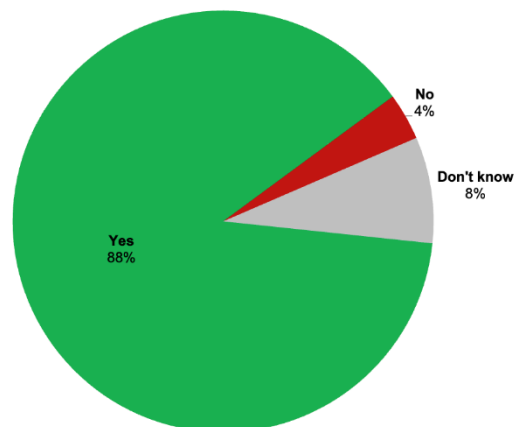
The survey also provides several measures of attitudes regarding school board administration across the state of New Mexico. There is high support for reforms to increase transparency of school boards across New Mexico, including a robust 87% who believe that school board meetings should be required to be livestreamed online to allow all New Mexicans to attend those meetings. Similarly, 79% of the sample support (54% strongly support) requiring every school board candidate to publicly report who has given money to their campaign. Support for this reform is consistent across all sub-groups of the electorate in the state, but is particularly high among men (87%), non-Hispanic White New Mexicans (86%), and those with four-year college degrees (89%). When taken collectively, it is clear New Mexicans support measures aimed at increasing the transparency of school boards in their communities.

The survey also asked respondents to provide their opinion regarding revisions to state laws regarding school boards, including the number of hours of professional training required of school board members in the state. After being informed that school board members are currently required to complete 5 hours of professional training each year, 70% of respondents responded that they felt that this was “too little” training time. Another 26% reported that this was “just about right”, with only 4% of respondents reporting that 5 hours of professional training annually is “too much”.

New Mexico school board members are currently required to complete 5 hours of professional training each year. Do you think 5 hours of training is too little training time, too much training time, or just about right?



Should school board members be required to receive enhanced training in topics like how to read school district budgets, how to effectively oversee a school district superintendent, and how school board members can positively impact student achievement when they are elected to the school board?

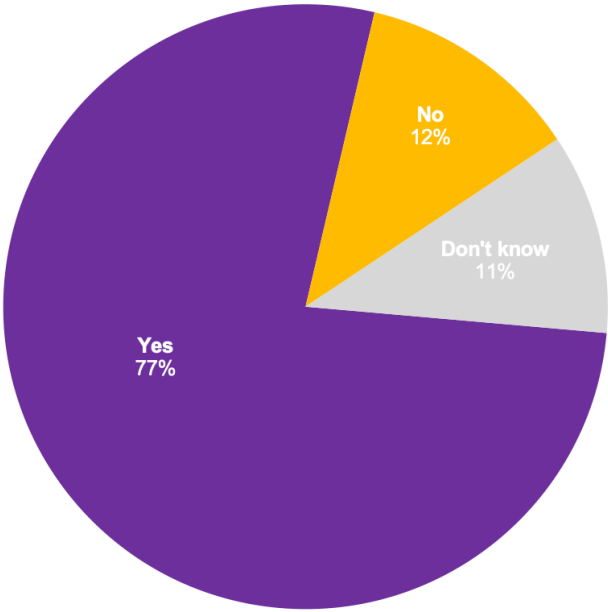


The survey provides lawmakers with some specific areas that registered voters would like to see enhanced training requirements for school board members. For example, 88% of respondents agreed with the statement that “school board members should be required to receive enhanced training in topics like how to read school district budgets, how to effectively oversee a school district superintendent, and how school board members can positively impact student achievement when they are elected to the school board”. Support for enhanced training in these areas is consistent across all sub-groups of the electorate.

Consistent with the other items focused on transparency in the survey, 77% of respondents believe that details about each school board member’s training, including topics covered and hours completed, should be posted on the school district’s website.

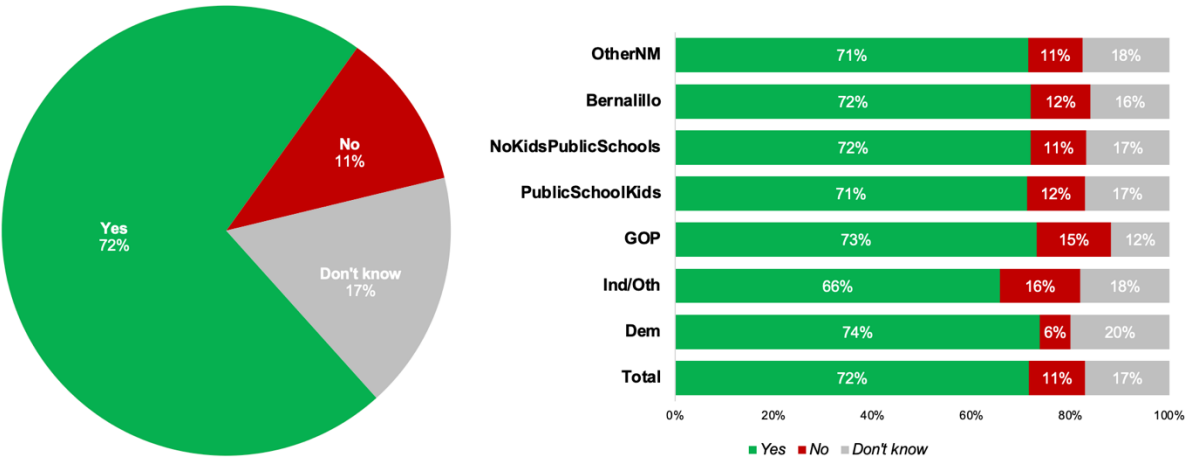
When asked to prioritize where school districts should spend resources, 77% of registered voters in New Mexico believe that a state law should be passed to limit the amount districts can spend on administrative costs so that the district spends more on hiring teachers and student support staff and buying school supplies.

Should a law be passed to limit the amount districts can spend on administrative costs so that the district spends more on hiring teachers and student support staff and buying school supplies?



Finally, after informing respondents that while current state law prohibits school districts from hiring immediate family members of school board members, there is no penalty for violating this state law, 72% of respondents reported that school board members who violate this state law should be required to step down from their seat on the school board to avoid a conflict of interest. Support is nearly identical among both Democrats and Republicans, with slightly lower support (66%) among Independents. There is also no significant difference in attitudes on this reform policy between parents with children in public schools across the state and other registered voters, or between residents of rural or metro areas of the state.

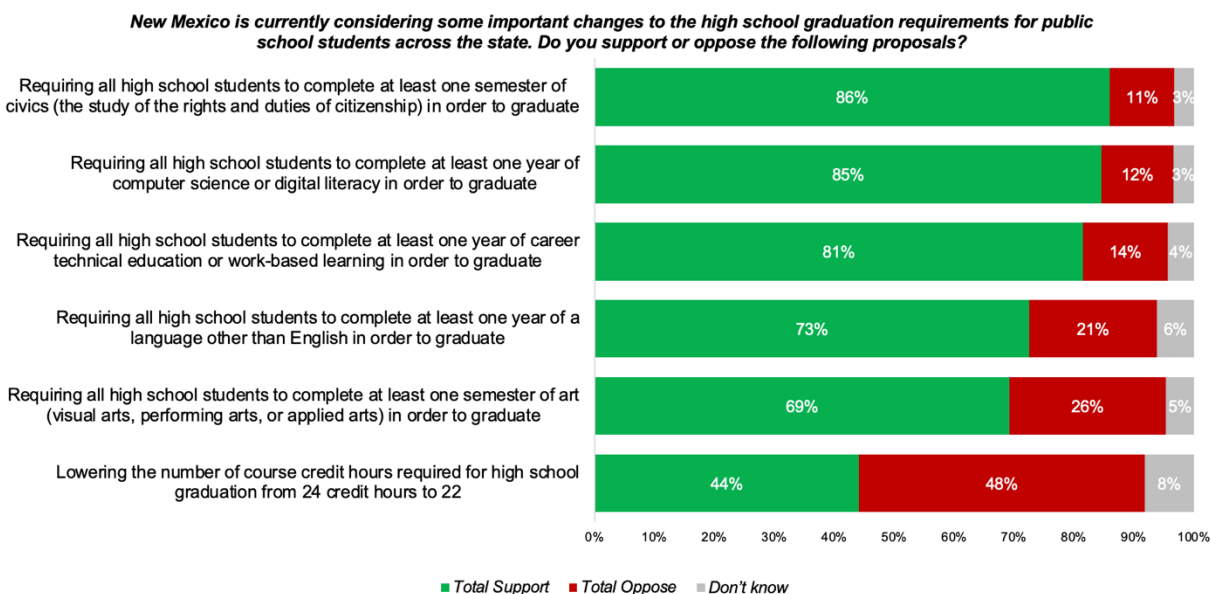
To avoid a conflict of interest, state law prohibits public school districts from hiring immediate family members of school board members. However, there is no penalty for violating this state law. Should school board members who violate this state law be required to step down from their seat on the school board?



Policy Views Regarding Graduation Requirements

The final theme in the survey was focused on graduation requirements. The survey reveals that New Mexican registered voters are highly supportive of revising the requirements for high school graduation to ensure graduates have a wide range of skills and experiences. Support is highest (86%) for requiring all high school students to complete at least one semester of civics (the study of the rights and duties of citizenship) in order to graduate, however there is strong support across a wider range of requirements. For example, 85% support requiring all high school students to complete at least one year of computer science or digital literacy in order to graduate. Half of the sample strongly supports requiring at least one year of computer science or digital literacy, including 54% of Republicans in New Mexico and 56% of New Mexicans who live in households that make \$80,000 or more in pre-tax income annually.

Nearly 8 in 10 (81%) of registered voters support requiring all high school students to complete at least one year of career technical education or work-based learning in order to graduate, including 47% who strongly support this requirement. Support is particularly high for requiring technical education/work-based learning among Latino New Mexicans (87%), those with some college education but not a four-year degree (86%) and Republicans (87%).



There is also high support (75%) for allowing students to complete Probability and Statistics or Data Analysis as an alternative to the current Algebra II requirement in place in New Mexico. Providing students with alternative paths to the math requirement is highly consistent across all sub-groups of the electorate in New Mexico, though registered voters who live in urban areas of the state are more likely (+7%) than residents of rural areas to support expanded flexibility in this requirement.

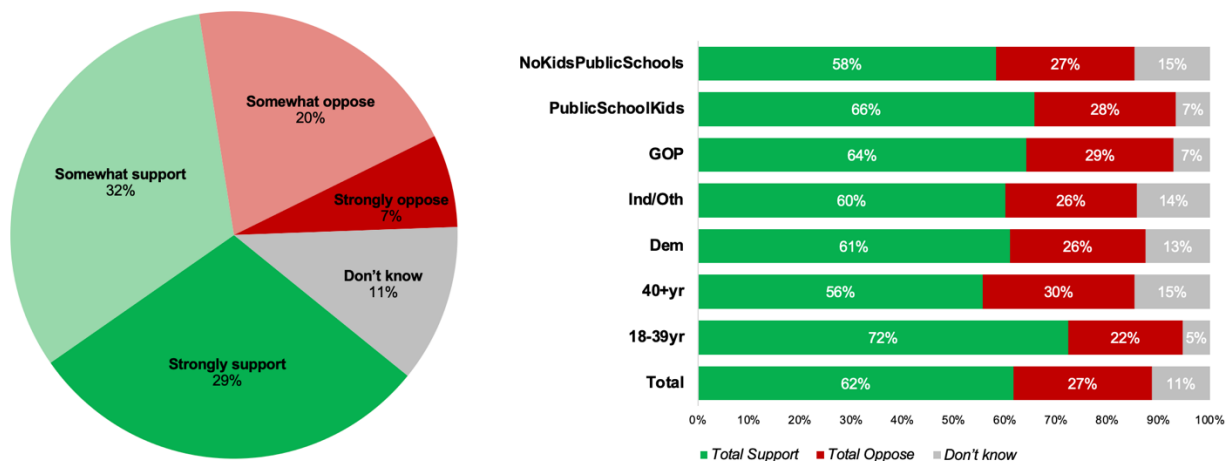
Furthermore, nearly 3 in 4 (73%) registered voters in New Mexico support requiring all high school students to complete at least one year of a language other than English in order to graduate, including 40% who strongly support this requirement. Encouraging multilingualism through this language requirement is particularly high among Latino registered voters (81%) and those between the ages of 18-39 (80%).

Similarly, 69% of registered voters surveyed support requiring all high school students to complete at least one semester of art (visual arts, performing arts, or applied arts) in order to graduate from high school. Support for requiring a semester of art is particularly high for Democrats (77%) and New Mexicans with a four-year degree or higher (75%).

There is also strong support (71%) to increase the health education requirement to two semesters from the current one semester requirement in New Mexico, including 34% who strongly support this revision to graduation requirements in the state. There is far less support (42%) for lowering the physical education requirement to one semester instead of two semesters which is the current requirement in New Mexico.

Finally, 62% of New Mexican registered voters support the current state law that requires all high school students to complete one year of an advanced placement course, honors course, or a dual-credit course. Support for the current law is slightly higher among Republicans (64%) relative to Democrats (+3%) and Independents (+4%), and is particularly high among registered voters between the ages of 18-39 (72%).

Do you support or oppose the current state law that requires all high school students to complete one year of an advanced placement course, an honors course, or a dual-credit course?



Methodology Statement

The survey of 403 total completed interviews with registered voters in New Mexico resulted in an overall margin of error of +/- 4.9%. Survey respondents were randomly selected for web-based interviews and was available in both English and Spanish at respondent's discretion. Data were compared to the best-known estimates of the U.S. Census Current Population Survey (CPS) for demographic profile of New Mexico adults and post-stratification weights were applied to bring the data into direct balance with Census estimates. The poll was led by Dr. Gabriel Sanchez, the Director of Research at BSP Research, a nationally recognized expert in New Mexico politics and policy.