



TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: BILL McINTURFF/ELIZABETH HARRINGTON – PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES
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RE: KEY FINDINGS – KANSAS STATEWIDE TELEPHONE SURVEY OF REGISTERED VOTERS
AND PUBLIC/CHARTER SCHOOL PARENTS

DATE: APRIL 23, 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Nearly all voters (96%) and public school parents (96%) believe serving nutritious foods in schools is important in helping ensure that children are prepared to learn and do their best in school.
- More than nine in ten voters (95%) and public school parents (94%) believe it is important for schools to provide nutrition education as part of the school curriculum.
- More than seven out of ten voters (76%) and public school parents (76%) in the state support requiring public schools to meet the national nutrition standards for school meals.
 - There is a majority of support among Republican (65%), Independent (78%), and Democratic (91%) voters.
 - There is a majority of support across media market (Kansas City – 77%, Topeka – 72%, Wichita – 77%).
- The majority of voters and public school parents think schools should be required to serve more nutritious food options such as fruits, vegetables, and whole-grains with every school meal. Respondents also think if school meals provided a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain options it would make school meals much better.
- Two-thirds of voters (67%) and public school parents (66%) in the state support requiring public schools to meet the national nutrition standards for school snacks (food sold in school stores, food and drink vending machines, and a la carte items in the cafeteria).
 - There is a majority of support among Republican (59%), Independent (72%), and Democratic (75%) voters.

- There is a majority of support among voters across media market (Kansas City – 66%, Topeka – 68%, Wichita – 68%).

KEY FINDINGS:

Nearly all voters (96%) and public school parents (96%) believe serving nutritious foods in schools is important in helping ensure that children are prepared to learn and do their best in school. Respondents also overwhelmingly believe it is important for children to have enough time during the lunch period to eat their lunches (96% – All Voters, 98% – Public School Parents).

- Respondents were asked *“Do you think that serving nutritious foods in schools is...very important, somewhat important, not that important, or not important at all in helping to ensure that children are prepared to learn and do their best in school?”*

Public School Parents	All Voters	
96%	96%	TOTAL IMPORTANT
3%	2%	TOTAL NOT IMPORTANT
75%	73%	Very important
21%	23%	Somewhat important
3%	2%	Not that important
*	*	Not important at all

- Respondents were asked *“Do you think that children having enough time during the lunch period to eat their lunches is...very important, somewhat important, not that important, or not important at all?”*

Public School Parents	All Voters	
98%	96%	TOTAL IMPORTANT
1%	4%	TOTAL NOT IMPORTANT
64%	60%	Very important
34%	36%	Somewhat important
*	3%	Not that important
1%	1%	Not important at all

More than nine in ten voters (95%) and public school parents (94%) believe it is important for schools to provide nutrition education as part of the school curriculum.

- Respondents were asked “How important do you think it is for schools to provide nutrition education as part of the school curriculum... very important, somewhat important, not that important, or not important at all?”

Public School Parents	All Voters	
94%	95%	TOTAL IMPORTANT
6%	5%	TOTAL NOT IMPORTANT
58%	59%	Very important
36%	36%	Somewhat important
5%	4%	Not that important
*	1%	Not important at all

More than seven out of ten voters (76%) and public school parents (76%) in the state, support requiring public schools to meet the national nutrition standards for school meals.

- Respondents were read the following information and question: “Thinking now just about the meals program served in kindergarten through twelve grade public school cafeterias...The national school meals program provides breakfasts and lunches to many school children across the country, and provides them for free or at a reduced cost to children from low-income families. In this program, the federal government reimburses school districts for the costs of meals that meet certain nutrition standards, such as providing fruits and vegetables, limiting the use of salt, and following age-appropriate calorie limits. Individual school districts have the flexibility to build on the requirements, as long as the meals meet basic, minimum standards. To be clear, this school lunch is a full meal that can only be purchased as a full meal--it does not include extra items that can be purchased individually for additional money.

Do you favor or oppose requiring public schools to meet these national nutrition standards for school meals? And do you strongly (favor/oppose) or just somewhat (favor/oppose) requiring public schools to meet these national nutrition standards for school meals?”

Public School Parents	All Voters	
76%	76%	TOTAL FAVOR
21%	22%	TOTAL OPPOSE
42%	42%	Strongly Favor
34%	34%	Somewhat Favor
9%	11%	Somewhat Oppose
12%	11%	Strongly Oppose
3%	2%	Don't Know

- There is a majority of support among Republican (65%), Independent (78%), and Democratic (91%) voters for the national nutritional standards for school meals.

- Majorities of women (78%), men (73%), public school moms (80%), and public school dads (72%) support the school meals standards.
- There is a majority of support among voters for the school meals standards across media market (Kansas City – 77%, Topeka – 72%, Wichita – 77%).

More than seven in ten public school parents (77%) in the state report that their children participate in the school meals program.

- More than half of public school parents (57%) report their child/children eat lunch that is prepared by the school four to five days per week, 20% report it is one to three days per week, and 22% say their child/children never eats lunch prepared by the school.
- Public school parents whose children participate in the school meals program are supportive of requiring public schools to meet the national nutrition standards for school meals.

<i>Public School Parents</i>		
<i>Favor/Oppose requiring public schools to meet the national nutrition standards for school meals, by child participation levels in meals program</i>		
	<u>Eat School Meal 1-3 Days/Week</u>	<u>Eat School Meal 4-5 Days/Week</u>
Favor	75%	77%
Oppose	23%	20%

Majorities of voters and public school parents believe schools should be required to serve more nutritional food options with every school meal.

- We tested different things public schools are required to do or offer with every school meal. Respondents were asked whether they thought public schools should be required to do each or not. The table below shows the percentage of voters and public school parents who said public schools should be required to do each with every school meal.

<i>Public Schools Should Be Required to _____ With Every School Meal</i>	% Yes	
	<u>Public School Parents</u>	<u>All Voters</u>
Include a serving of fruits or vegetables	98%	96%
Offer free water	95%	95%
Provide foods made from whole-grains	74%	72%
Limit the amount of salt	71%	72%

Voters and public school parents believe there are changes that schools could implement that would make school meals better.

- We tested different changes that could be made to public school meals. Respondents were asked to rate each change on a scale of zero to ten. *“For each one, please tell me whether you think this would make school meals better or worse using a scale from zero to ten. On this scale, a ten means this would make school meals much better, and a zero means it would make school meals much worse. A five is right in the middle. You may use any number from zero to ten.”* The table on the following page shows the average rating on the scale of zero to ten among voters and public school parents.

<i>Would this make school meals better or worse</i>	Average Rating	
	<u>Public School Parents</u>	<u>All Voters</u>
If school meals provided a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain options	8.4	8.4
If school meals were prepared and cooked in the school cafeteria kitchen rather than pre-packaged and reheated	8.5	8.3
If school meals included more locally grown fruits and vegetables	7.5	7.5
If school meals included more meats and poultry from local sources	7.3	7.3

Two-thirds of voters (67%) and public school parents (66%) in the state support requiring public schools to meet the national nutrition standards for school snacks (food sold in school stores, food and drink vending machines, and a la carte items in the cafeteria).

- Respondents were read the following information and question: *“Thinking now about food available to students that is not a part of the public school meals program...In many schools, there is also food available to students that is not a part of the public school meals program. This includes food that is sold in school stores, food and drink vending machines, and a la carte items, such as a slice of pizza, a container of yogurt, or a piece of fruit. There are national Smart Snacks nutritional standards that provide for more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy items. There are calorie caps on the food sold in school stores, food and drink vending machines, and a la carte items.*

Do you favor or oppose requiring public schools to meet these national nutrition standards for food sold in school stores, food and drink vending machines, and a la carte items? And do you strongly (favor/oppose) or just somewhat (favor/oppose) requiring public schools to meet these national nutrition standards for food sold in school stores, food and drink vending machines, and a la carte items?”

<u>Public School Parents</u>	<u>All Voters</u>	
66%	67%	TOTAL FAVOR
32%	32%	TOTAL OPPOSE
39%	38%	Strongly Favor
27%	29%	Somewhat Favor
17%	16%	Somewhat Oppose
15%	16%	Strongly Oppose
1%	1%	Don't Know

- There is a majority of support among Republican (59%), Independent (72%), and Democratic (75%) voters for the national nutritional standards for school snacks.

- Majorities of women and men support the school snack standards, though women (74%) are more supportive than men (59%). This stronger support among women is also reflected among public schools parents (moms – 72%/dads – 60%).
- There is a majority of support among voters for the school snacks standards across media market (Kansas City – 66%, Topeka – 68%, Wichita – 68%).
- A majority of voters (58%) and public school parents (56%) favor the national nutritional standards for both school meals and school snacks.

METHODOLOGY:

Public Opinion Strategies and Hart Research Associates conducted a statewide telephone survey of N=500 registered voters. In addition, oversample interviews were conducted among parents or guardians of children in K-12 public/charter schools for a total of N=212 interviews completed among this audience. The survey was conducted March 3-5, 2015. The margin of error on the sample of N=500 is $\pm 4.4\%$ and the margin of error on the sample of N=212 is $\pm 6.7\%$.