

4th Texas Voter Poll

February 10, 2022



With the March 1 primaries and November elections on the horizon, a new statewide poll shows Texas voters broadly agree on a range of issues that affect them as parents, homeowners, business owners, and employees, while sharing widespread concern about the future of Texas.



of Texas voters are **extremely or very concerned** about Texas elementary school students' low reading scores.



of Texas voters – or almost half of Texas voters – expressed **extreme concern** about Texas elementary school students' low reading scores.



are **extremely or very concerned** that the state's \$100 billion yearly investment in education and workforce doesn't lead to well-paying jobs.



of Texas voters – or almost half of Texas voters – believe crime has increased in their community since last year.



are **extremely or very concerned** about the historic backlog of criminal cases in Texas courts.



are **extremely or very concerned** that more than one-quarter of Texas police officers who receive a dishonorable discharge get rehired by another law enforcement agency.

Despite statewide headlines that suggest deep divisions within the electorate, the 4th Texas Voter Poll shows that many of Texas voters' concerns cross partisan, racial, and economic lines. The findings also demonstrate strong demand across the state for common-sense, bipartisan solutions to critical issues linked to our future prosperity.

The survey polled 1,001 registered voters between Jan. 19 and 26 about their attitudes towards the present and future of Texas and their concerns about issues facing the state. It has a margin of error of $\pm 3.1\%$. The interviews were conducted via cell phone (44%), landline (21%), and online (34%).

“

For our state to be the best place to live and work, we must take a hard look at this frank assessment of where voters think we are today across a wide range of issues and develop strategies that will move our state forward.

We cannot afford to allow voters' concerns about Texas' future to fester and pessimism to take hold. If we are to carry on the legacy of success we have inherited, we must seize this moment to bring people and businesses together in support of policies that can address these fundamental issues.

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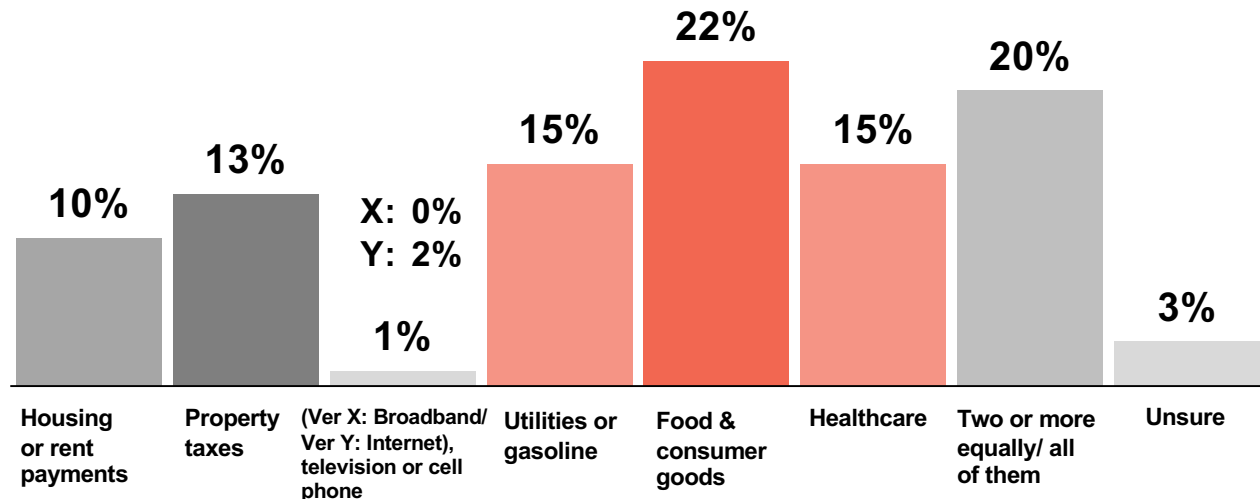


Margaret Spellings

President & CEO

TEXAS²⁰³⁶

With inflation continuing at historic levels, Texas voters differed about which goods and services they were most worried about increasing in cost this year



Key breakdowns of how concerns are spread across the state

22% were most worried about rising **food and consumer goods**, driven by 35–44 year-old voters, West Texas voters, and those making \$75,000–\$119,999.



15% were most worried about rising **healthcare prices**, driven by younger voters, those living in Houston, and Hispanic voters.



15% were most worried most about rising **utility or gas** prices, driven by 55–64 year-old voters and East Texas voters.



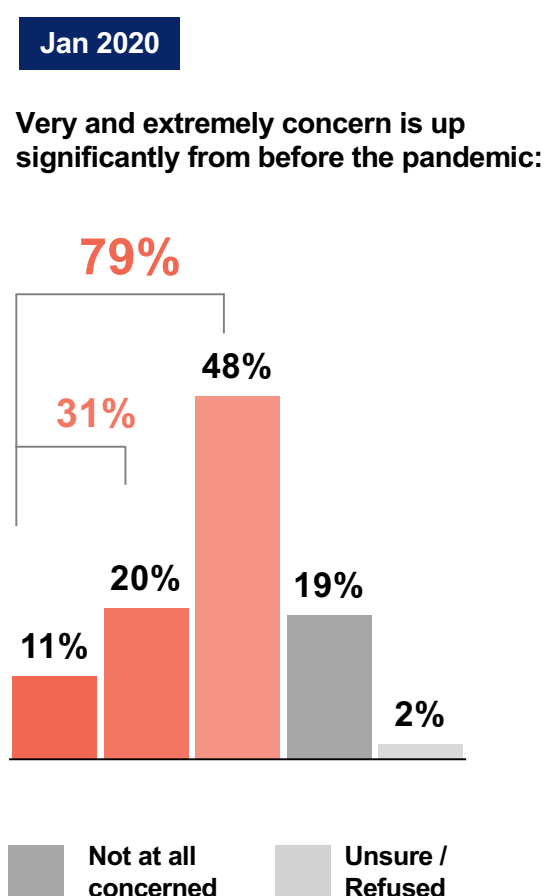
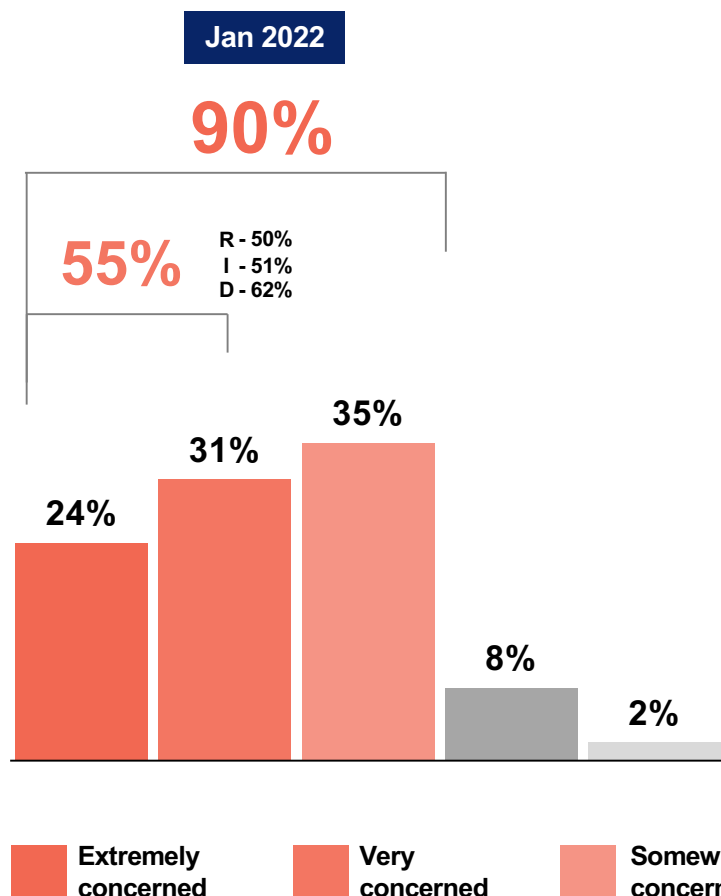
13% were most worried about rising **property taxes**, driven by 45–54-year-old voters and those making \$120,000 or more per year.



10% were most worried about rising **housing or rent payments**, driven by 18–44-year-olds, Black voters, renters, and those living in Central Texas.



How would you describe your level of concern about the future of Texas



Only **43%** of Texas voters said they **believe** Texas will be better off 20 years from now than it was 20 years ago.

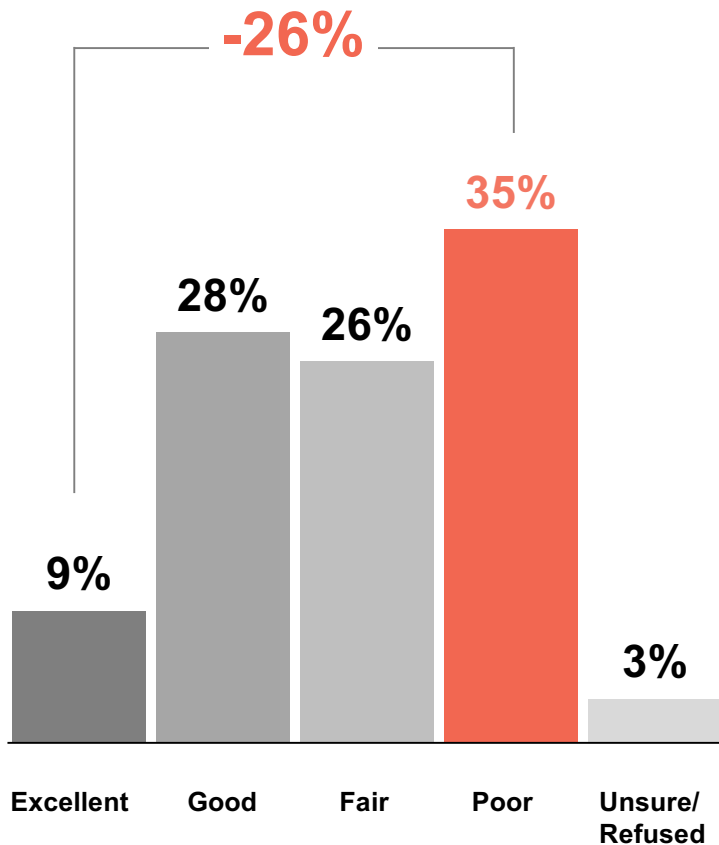
31% of Texas voters said they **don't believe** Texas will be better off 20 years from now than it was 20 years ago.

Only **41%** of Texas voters believe Texas children will have **better opportunities** to succeed.

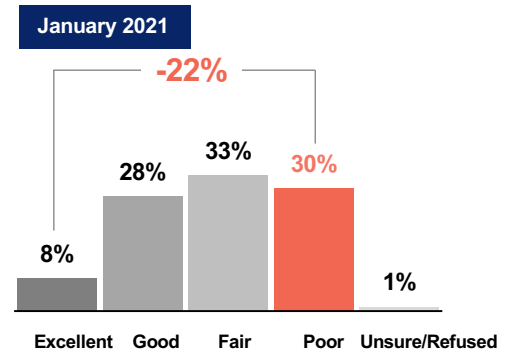
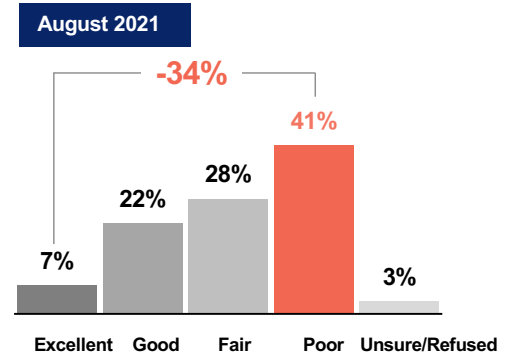
29% of Texas voters say that the opportunities for Texas children will be **worse**.

Only **24%** of Texas voters believe **both the state and Texas children will be better off in the future**.

A majority of Texas voters (61%) say state government is doing a fair or a poor job of solving problems and serving the needs their needs

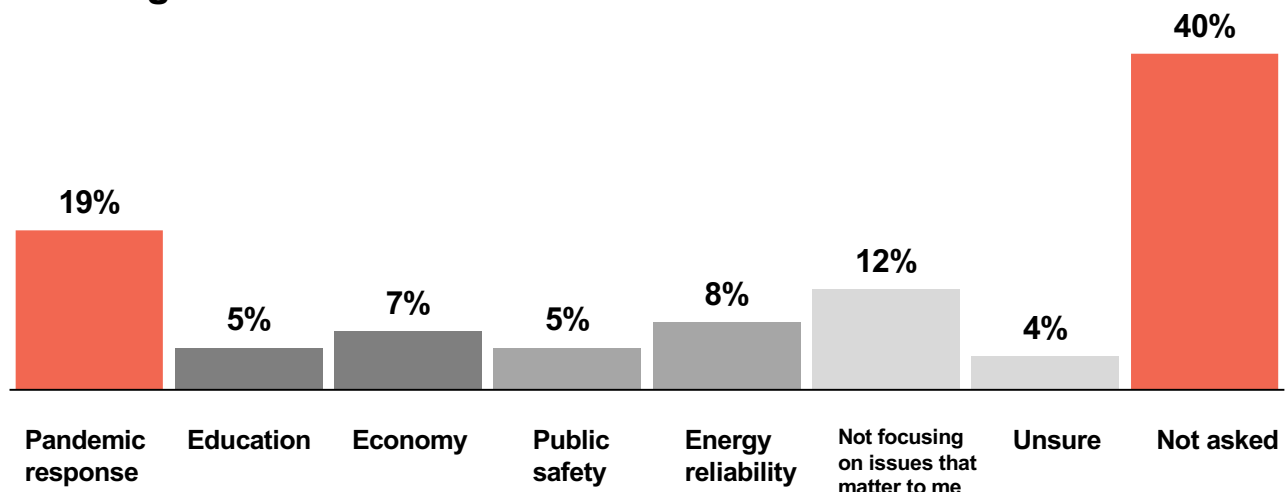


In comparison to answers in 2021

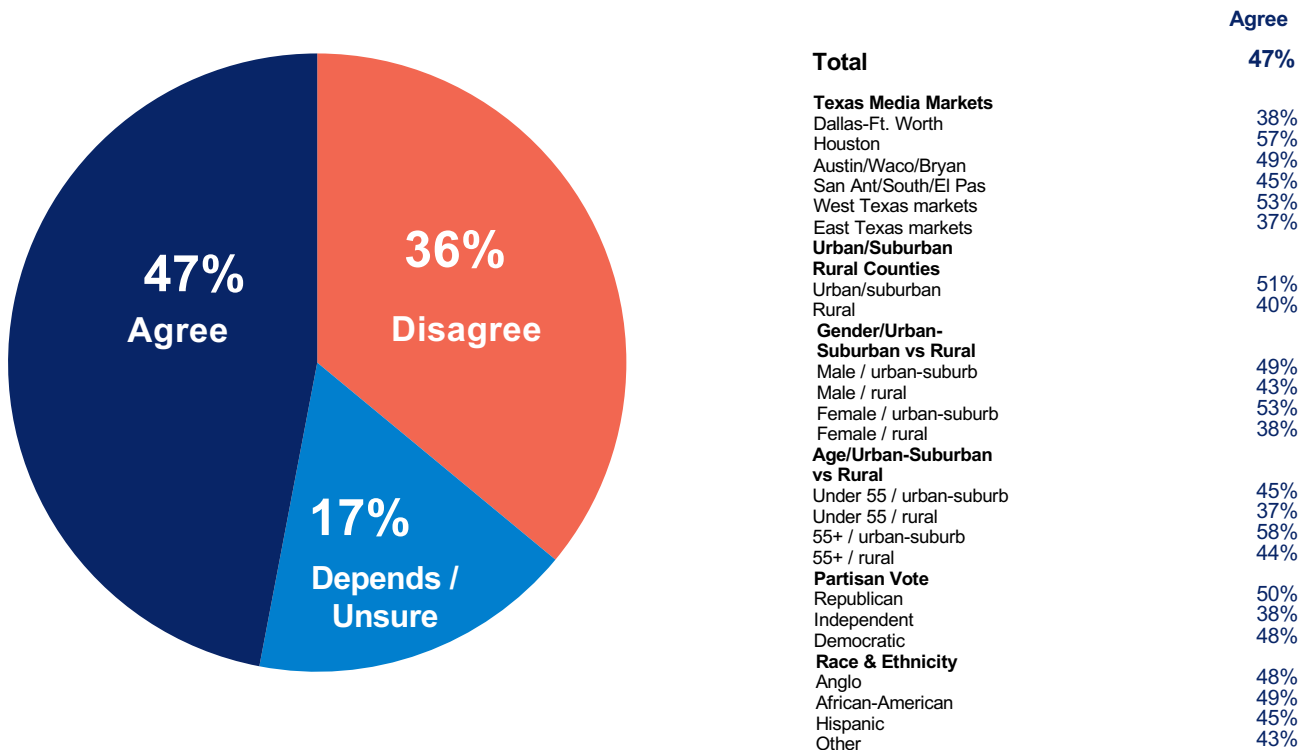


Jan. 2021 q slightly difference as ended:
"since the pandemic began."

When asked why they rated state government performance as fair or poor, Texas voters indicated their disapproval was due to the following reasons



Almost half of Texas voters believe that crime has increased in their community since last year



In a split sample question, Texas voters expressed trust in local police and law enforcement and differing views based on region about how sufficiently staffed they are to handle crime

Do you trust your local police and law enforcement to handle crime and public safety issues?

70% Yes
21% No
10% Unsure

Range 35 Age	Yes	No	Unsure
18-34	55%	34%	12%
35-44	61%	28%	11%
45-54	66%	22%	12%
55-64	78%	17%	5%
65 or older	82%	9%	9%
TX Media Markets			
Dallas-Ft Worth	68%	22%	10%
Houston	61%	32%	7%
Austin/Waco/Bryan	75%	11%	15%
San Ant/South/EI Paso	74%	16%	11%
West Texas Markets	79%	13%	8%
East Texas Markets	79%	16%	5%

Is your local police and law enforcement sufficiently staffed and equipped to handle crime and public safety issues?

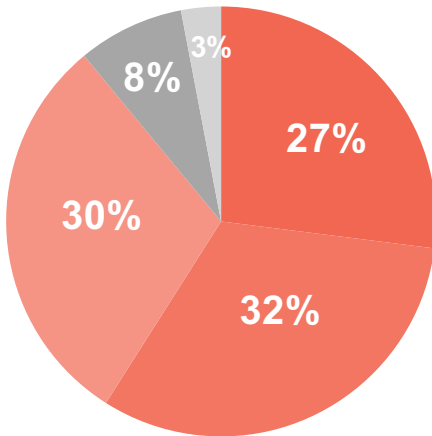
56% Yes
25% No
18% Unsure

Range 35 Age	Yes	No	Unsure
18-34	57%	27%	15%
35-44	61%	25%	14%
45-54	55%	20%	25%
55-64	58%	20%	22%
65 or older	53%	30%	17%
TX Media Markets			
Dallas-Ft Worth	59%	19%	21%
Houston	51%	26%	23%
Austin/Waco/Bryan	46%	39%	15%
San Ant/South/EI Paso	62%	23%	15%
West Texas Markets	59%	26%	15%
East Texas Markets	65%	26%	9%

Texas voters expressed concerns about justice and safety issues related to criminal case backlogs and re-hiring police officers with a dishonorable discharge



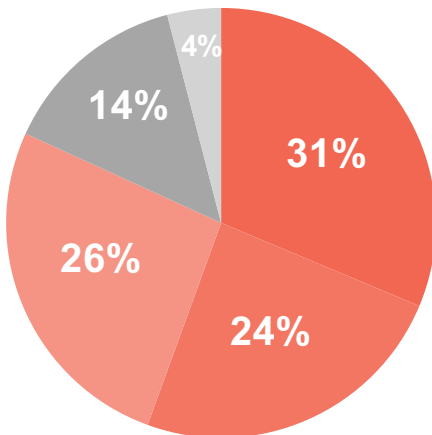
Please tell me if each of the following makes you extremely concerned, very concerned, somewhat concerned or not concerned about the future of Texas.



The pandemic led to a historic backlog of criminal cases in Texas courts, delaying justice both for people charged with crimes and victims themselves while crowding jails and increasing taxpayer costs.

	Extremely concerned	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure	Extremely - Not
An increase in crime in your community since last year?						
Agree	34%	35%	22%	7%	2%	27%
Disagree	19%	33%	37%	10%	1%	9%
Depend s/Unsure	22%	22%	36%	8%	10%	14%

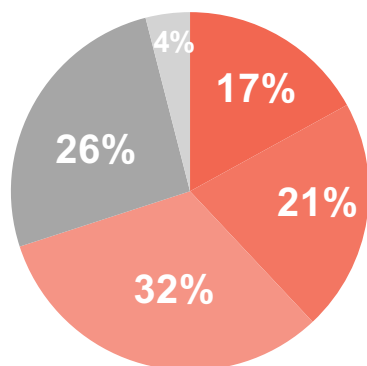
Please tell me if each of the following makes you extremely concerned, very concerned, somewhat concerned or not concerned about the future of Texas.



In recent years, over a quarter of Texas police officers that receive a dishonorable discharge from their department get re-hired by another law enforcement agency.

	Extremely concerned	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not concerned	Unsure	Extremely - Not
Trust your local police/law enforcement?						
Yes	24%	26%	30%	17%	2%	7%
No	55%	19%	17%	4%	5%	52%
Local police sufficiently staffed & equipped?						
Yes	28%	25%	27%	17%	3%	11%
No	39%	20%	25%	13%	3%	26%

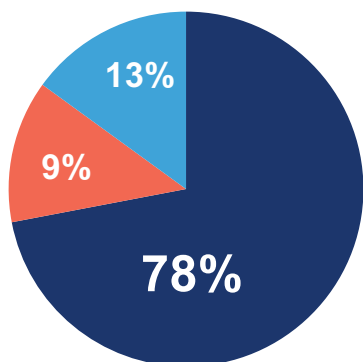
Texas voters expressed concern about the uneven population growth across our state



Please tell me if each of the following makes you extremely concerned, very concerned, somewhat concerned or not concerned about the future of Texas.

Over the past decade, Texas grew rapidly causing housing affordability issues in major cities, but at the same time, more than half of Texas counties [143 out of 254] actually lost population.

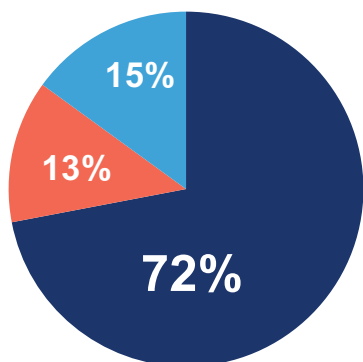
Texas voters showed strong support for efforts to address primary care shortages across Texas



In counties where there is a shortage of primary care physicians, Texans should authorize highly trained nurse practitioners to provide more health care services.

Agr.		Dis.
78%	R :	10%
72%	I :	11%
80%	D :	7%

Texas voters also agreed with our state accepting and maximizing the use of federal funds



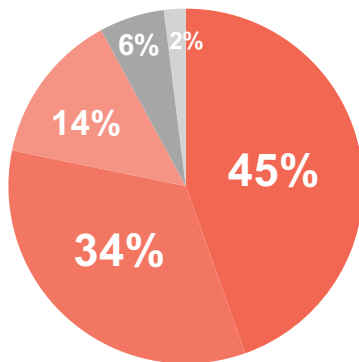
Texas must accept and maximize the impact of federal infrastructure and COVID relief funding while ensuring the funds are spent wisely so as to not create a shortfall when funds run out.

Agr.		Dis.
65%	R :	18%
71%	I :	13%
81%	D :	9%

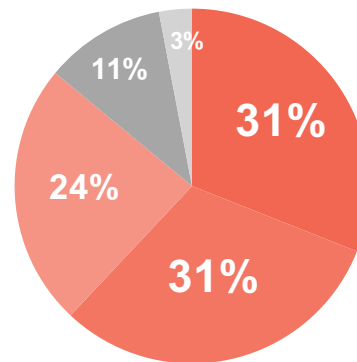
Texas voters showed extreme or very strong concern about the quality of our public education and workforce systems



Please tell me if each of the following makes you extremely concerned, very concerned, somewhat concerned or not concerned about the future of Texas.



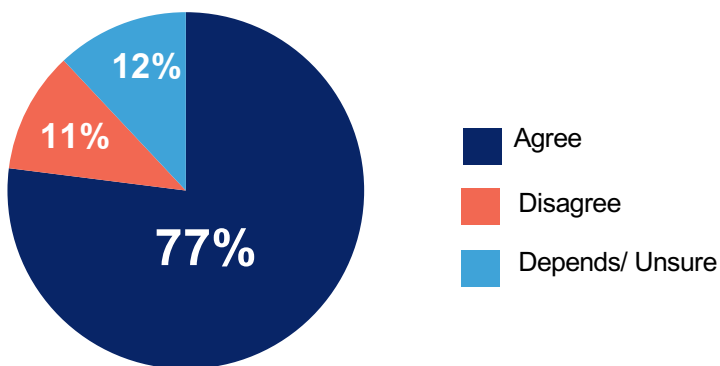
Only 30% of Texas fourth graders can read at grade level.



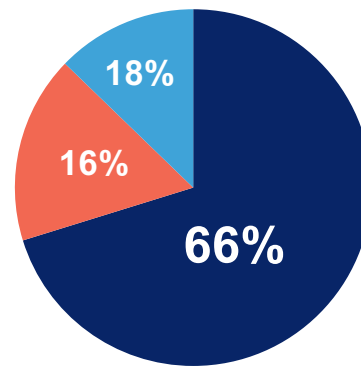
Texas spends roughly \$100 billion per year on education and workforce programs, yet only one-third of Texas high school graduates attain a post-secondary degree, and only one-half of Texas households earn a living wage.

Given these concerns, it was not surprising to see widespread support for the state's efforts to improve education-to-workforce systems

Please tell me if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements or positions.



When state leaders set goals for our education and workforce systems, those goals should aim to ensure Texans earn wages that are at least **high enough** to stay off all government benefits.

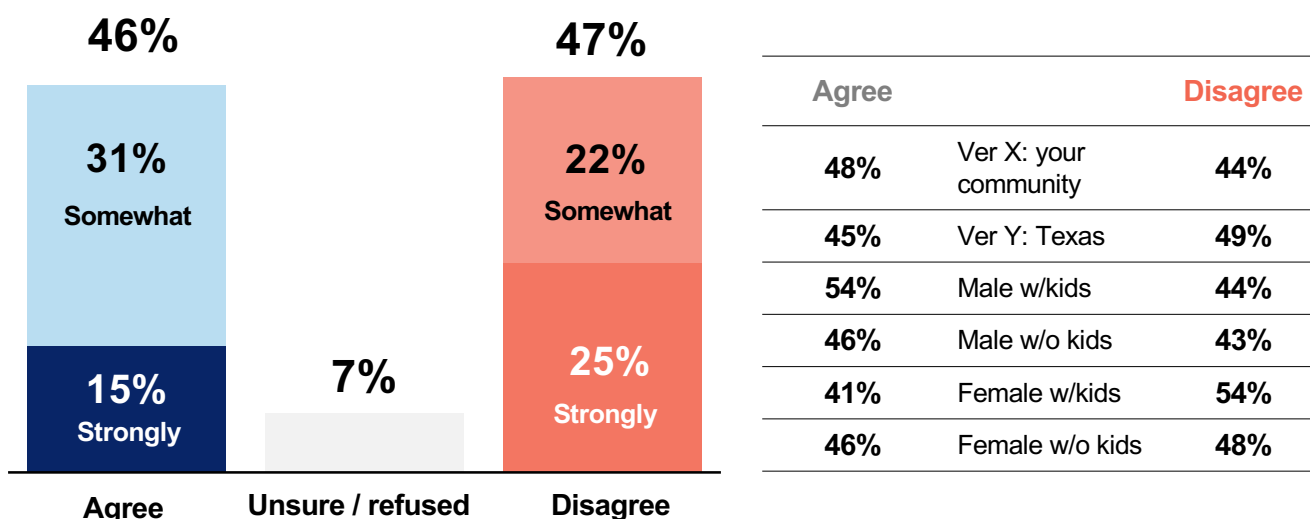


Texas spends over \$100 billion per year on schools, colleges, and workforce training. The most important gauge of success of our education system is whether Texans obtain **good-paying jobs**.

Last August, voters were clearly split about how they felt about school performance during the pandemic

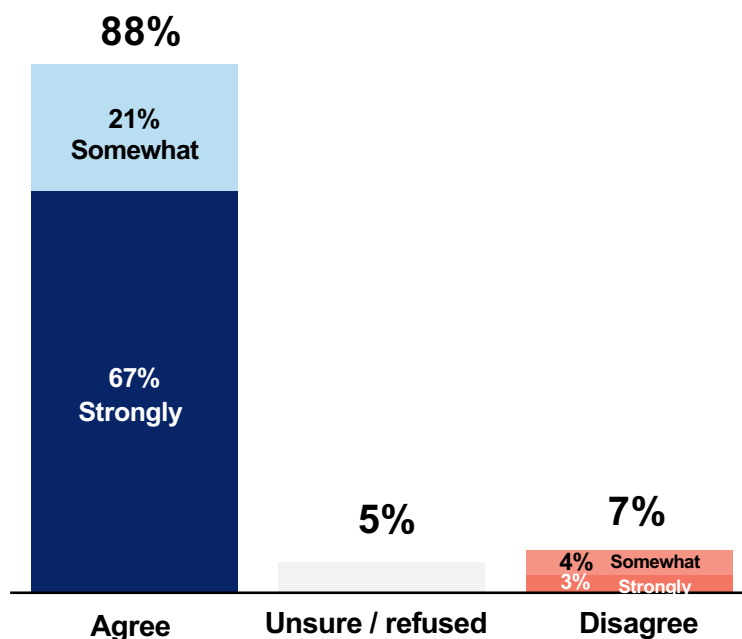
Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

“Schools in (Ver X: your community / Ver Y: Texas) handled the COVID-19 pandemic situation well over the past 18 months.”



Therefore, it was not surprising to see widespread voter support for leveraging technology to ensure all students have access to advanced coursework

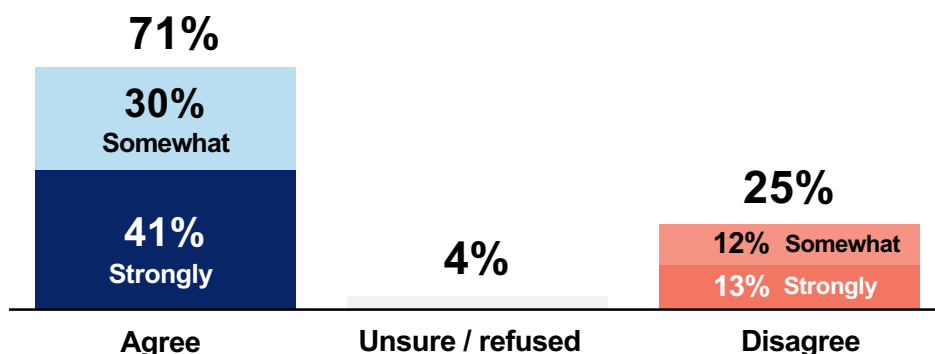
Many rural schools do not offer access to advanced coursework, including 8th grade Algebra and high school AP courses. Without these courses, students can face obstacles to reaching their full potential in math and science. Using the recent investments in online learning, do you agree or disagree that all students – regardless of where they live – should have the option to take courses online offered by other school districts when those courses are not offered at their school?



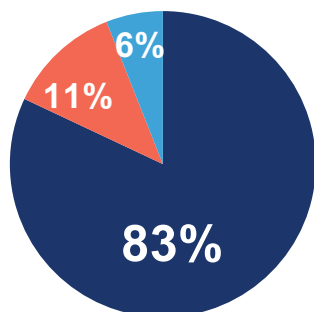
Source: Texas Voter Poll, August 24-29, 2021, N=1,001 respondents; margin of error: $\pm 3.1\%$,

Given the growing concern about low reading scores, it was not surprising in August to see widespread voter support for standardized testing to measure progress and help students improve

Do you agree or disagree that we need to care enough about how all students are learning to measure their progress with standardized testing so we can help them improve?

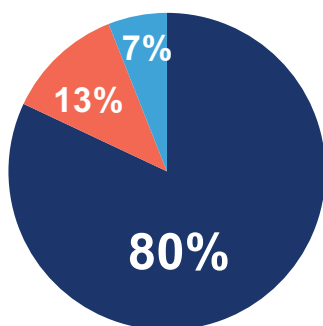


Texas voters also indicated a willingness to look at further options to help Texas students achieve their potential, including providing a choice of schools



Agree Disagree Depends/Unsure

Version X: If the public school a student is zoned to fails to adequately educate the student, then the family should have the option to enroll their child in another public school.



Agree Disagree Depends/Unsure

Version Y: If the public school a student is zoned to fails to adequately educate the student, then the family should have the option to enroll their child in another public or private school.

Agr.	Dis.	Agr.	Dis.
86%	8%	81%	11%
81%	12%	87%	9%
77%	16%	78%	15%
		86%	11%

Source: Texas Voter Poll, August 24-29, 2021, N=1,001 respondents; margin of error: $\pm 3.1\%$,

Here in Texas, primary elections matter.

The March 1 Texas primary elections are when voters from both parties will select their candidates to run in the November general election up and down the ballot. That means that the candidates that win the March primaries will drive the issues for the November election—and the state's policy priorities for the next four years.

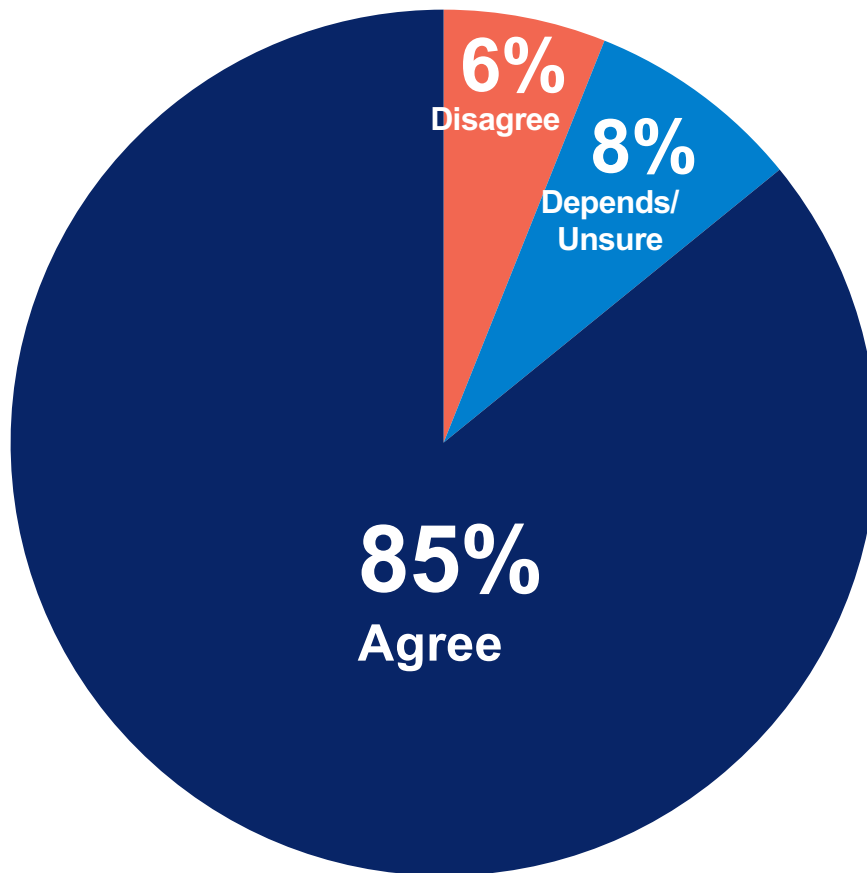
As early voting for the March 1 primary elections starts on Monday, Feb. 14th, we asked voters to help us better understand why so few registered voters cast their ballots, so Texans could find ways to address the reasons more Texas voters do not vote in these critical elections. Here were the top reasons why:

	Don't think their vote will make a difference	Don't know enough about the candidates	Don't know how to vote in a Texas primary	Don't identify closely with one party	Issues being debated by the candidates don't reflect the voters' priorities	Other	Unsure/refused
Total	31%	19%	7%	6%	14%	9%	14%
Age & Gender							
Male / 18-54	29%	18%	12%	9%	16%	9%	8%
Male / 55+	27%	21%	3%	5%	13%	13%	18%
Female / 18-54	40%	15%	7%	8%	13%	5%	11%
Female / 55+	26%	24%	6%	4%	13%	8%	20%
Party Affiliation							
Republican	31%	20%	8%	4%	14%	10%	13%
Independent	23%	13%	5%	11%	15%	9%	23%
Democratic	36%	21%	8%	5%	13%	7%	10%
Race & Ethnicity							
Anglo	32%	20%	6%	5%	14%	10%	14%
African-American	30%	22%	9%	6%	12%	8%	13%
Hispanic	31%	18%	11%	7%	14%	6%	14%
Other	26%	11%	3%	14%	17%	13%	15%

There is one place where Texans can agree:

There's only one Texas.

We must solve challenges together to ensure
Texas is the best place to live and work.



<u>Agr.</u>	<u>Dis.</u>
88%	R : 5%
73%	I : 7%
83%	D : 8%

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“

Texas' history is marked by ingenuity and drive, and I am confident that we are up to the challenge of preparing for our state's future.

These poll results showcase the growing civic demand for action on issues that matter to future generations of Texans.

”



Tom Luce
Founder & Chairman

TEXAS³⁶