



## Excellent Education for Everyone

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### **Statewide Poll Offers Findings on New Jersey Citizens' Opinions on Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program, School Funding Options and School Vouchers**

**The Monmouth University Polling Institute Undertook the 2006  
Opinion Poll for Newark-based Excellent Education for Everyone (E3)**

Newark, NJ— September 27, 2006 - An overwhelming majority (74%) of New Jersey residents support establishing a corporate tax credit scholarship pilot program for students in four urban districts, a new poll of statewide opinions on school funding options revealed. A majority (54%) supports vouchers which would let parents “pay for tuition at the public, private, or religious school of their choice.”

Released today (September 27, 2006) by Excellent Education for Everyone (E3), the poll provides a wealth of data on school funding issues broken down by race, party affiliation, geographic location, income, gender, education and age. “The districts named in the Scholarship Act (A-257/S-1332) are among the most expensive, poorest performing, least accountable districts in the State,” says E3's deputy director Derrell Bradford. “Support is highest for the scholarships among minorities (85%) and Democrats (80%), many of whom in the State legislature favor the legislation. The public is clearly tired of school districts and district officials protecting their budgets and their interests at the expense of children.”

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Conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute, the survey of 802 residents has a margin of error of +/- 3.5%. The poll sought views on enacting a 5-year pilot program to provide scholarships for students in Camden, Newark, Trenton and Orange, which would be funded by corporate tax credits; tested the appetite of the public for reshaping the State's school funding formula towards weighted per-pupil funding, an idea now being discussed in the legislature; and questioned support for school vouchers. "The response to the question on funding the student directly and making the dollars follow the child should inform the members of the legislature that their discussion of weighted student funding is both correct and timely," added Bradford. "The current model of funding districts directly, particularly in urban districts, is far from transparent, and does not drive innovation, accountability, or efficiency."

Prominent Democrats in the state have been leading the charge for parental school choice, alongside advocacy and community groups such as E3, The Black Ministers' Council of NJ and the Latino Leadership Alliance. Respondents overwhelmingly favor the concept of the Urban Schools Scholarship Act legislation (A-257/S-1332), which was introduced by Assemblywoman Nilsa Cruz-Perez (D-Camden) and Senator Joseph Doria (D-Bayonne).

The full report (and table of results) may be downloaded today at [www.nje3.org](http://www.nje3.org). For Monmouth University Polling Institute, please contact: Patrick Murray, Director, Polling Institute Monmouth University @ 732.263.5858 or via email at [pdmurray@monmouth.edu](mailto:pdmurray@monmouth.edu).

Note:

The survey was conducted by telephone from July 11 to 13, 2006 with a scientifically selected random sample of 802 New Jersey adults. The figures in this release are based on this sample size. All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. The sampling error is +/- 3.5 percent, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey residents were found to think the state was in good economic condition, one would be 95 percent sure that the true figure would be between 46.5 and 53.5 percent had all New Jersey residents been interviewed, rather than just a sample. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by race

or age, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample.

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Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects. The verbatim wording of all questions asked is reproduced in this memo. The sample has been stratified based on county and the data have been weighted on age and education to insure an accurate proportional representation of the state. This study was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute.