



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 30, 2008**

**CONTACT: DEAN DEBNAM**  
**888-621-6988 / 919-880-4888**

## **Wake Voters Do Not Support At Large School Board**

**Raleigh, N.C.** – Despite a lot of hubbub about making school board elections at large, a new Public Policy Polling survey finds that the majority of Wake County voters are fine with leaving the system as it is.

Only 33% of respondents supported changing the system. 54% said the current method of representation is fine, and 13% said they were unsure.

“There has been a lot of noise about this issue but the reality is that most people in Wake County think the way we currently elect school board members is just fine,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “Folks might be best served by moving onto something else.”

Even among respondents with children in the schools, there is majority support for leaving the current method of election as it is.

The poll also found that politicians agitating on this issue may do so at their own peril. 42% of respondents said they would be less likely to vote for a candidate who supported going to at large elections.

62% of Wake County voters favor comprehensive sex education in the schools compared to just 29% who are opposed, a result that PPP has found in its surveys of local voters many times through the years.

Respondents were also asked to assess the importance of various school related issues. Teacher quality and school safety polled as the most important, with reassignment and school schedules seen as less important.

PPP surveyed 596 Wake County voters on April 24th. The survey has a margin of error of  $\pm 4.0\%$ . Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify.

Complete results are attached and can be found at [www.publicpolicypolling.com](http://www.publicpolicypolling.com). Results include crosstabs breaking down the results by gender, party affiliation, race, and age.

If you have questions about this release or would like an interview regarding this release, please contact Dean Debnam at (888) 621-6988 or 919-880-4888.

###





## Wake County Schools Poll

**Q1** Do you think the way of electing school board members in Wake County should be changed from a model where they are chosen in individual districts to one where they are chosen at large? If you think the current system of electing school board members in districts is fine, press 1. If you think the system should be changed to at large, press 2. If you're not sure, press 3.

*Current System is Fine*.....54%      *Change to At Large*33%  
*Not Sure*.....13%

**Q2** If you knew that changing the way of electing school board members to at large elections would be likely to decrease minority representation would you be more or less likely to support changing the way they are elected? If it would make you more likely to support changing the way they are elected, press 1. If it would make you less likely to support changing the way they are elected, press 2. If you're not sure, press 3.

*More likely to support*.....25%      *Less likely to support*.....46%  
*Not sure* .....29%

**Q3** If a candidate for office supported changing school board elections from districts to at large, would that make you more or less likely to support them? If it would make you more likely to support them, press 1. If it would make you less likely to support them, press 2. If it wouldn't make a difference, press 3.

*More likely to support*.....35%      *Less likely to support*.....42%  
*No difference*.....23%

**Q4** Wake County Public Schools are currently allowed to teach abstinence only with no sex education. Do you favor or oppose allowing the public schools to provide voluntary sex education? If you favor allowing sex education, press 1. If opposed, press 2. If you're not sure, press 3.

*Favor*.....62%      *Not sure* .....9%  
*Opposed* .....29%

**Q5** I am going to name some issues about our schools. Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, a little concerned, or not concerned at all about these issues?

The first is school safety. If you are very concerned about school safety, press 1. If you are somewhat concerned, press 2. If a little concerned, press 3. If you are not concerned, press 4.

*Very concerned*.....51%  
*Somewhat concerned*.....31%  
*A little concerned* .....14%  
*Not concerned* .....4%





**Q6** The second is class sizes. If you are very concerned about class sizes, press 1. If you are somewhat concerned, press 2. If a little concerned, press 3. If you are not concerned, press 4.

*Very concerned*..... 43%  
*Somewhat concerned* ..... 32%  
*A little concerned* ..... 14%  
*Not concerned* ..... 11%

**Q7** The third is teacher quality. If you are very concerned about teacher quality, press 1. If you are somewhat concerned, press 2. If a little concerned, press 3. If you are not concerned, press 4.

*Very concerned*..... 65%  
*Somewhat concerned* ..... 20%  
*A little concerned* ..... 9%  
*Not concerned* ..... 5%

**Q8** The fourth is reassignment. If you are very concerned about reassignment, press 1. If you are somewhat concerned, press 2. If a little concerned, press 3. If you are not concerned, press 4.

*Very concerned*..... 48%  
*Somewhat concerned* ..... 21%  
*A little concerned* ..... 13%  
*Not concerned* ..... 18%

**Q9** The fifth is school schedules. If you are very concerned about school schedules, press 1. If you are somewhat concerned, press 2. If a little concerned, press 3. If you are not concerned, press 4.

*Very concerned*..... 33%  
*Somewhat concerned* ..... 23%  
*A little concerned* ..... 17%  
*Not concerned* ..... 27%

**Q10** Do you have children in the Wake County Public Schools? If yes, press 1. If no, press 2.

*Yes* ..... 40%  
*No*..... 60%

**Q11** If you are a Democrat, press 1. If a Republican, press 2. If unaffiliated, press 3.

*Democrat* ..... 42%  
*Republican*..... 34%  
*Unaffiliated*..... 25%

**Q12** If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

*Woman* ..... 55% *Man*..... 45%

**Q13** If you are white, press one now. If you are African-American, press two now. If other, press 3.

*White* ..... 74%  
*African-American* ..... 19%  
*Other*..... 7%

**Q14** If you are 18 to 29 years old, press 1 now. If you are 30 to 45, press 2. If you are 46 to 65, press 3. If older, press 4.

*18 to 29*..... 4%  
*30 to 45*..... 22%  
*46 to 65*..... 46%  
*65 and older*..... 27%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Children	
		Yes	No
<b>Method of Election</b>			
<b>Current System is Fine</b>	54%	51%	55%
<b>Change to At Large</b>	34%	37%	31%
<b>Not Sure</b>	13%	11%	14%

	Base	Children	
		Yes	No
<b>Decrease in Minority Representation</b>			
<b>More likely to support</b>	25%	25%	25%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	45%	44%	46%
<b>Not sure</b>	29%	31%	29%

	Base	Children	
		Yes	No
<b>Vote Effect</b>			
<b>More likely to support</b>	35%	42%	31%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	42%	40%	44%
<b>No difference</b>	22%	18%	25%

	Base	Children	
		Yes	No
<b>Sex Education</b>			
<b>Favor</b>	62%	59%	64%
<b>Opposed</b>	29%	29%	29%
<b>Not sure</b>	9%	12%	7%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Children	
		Yes	No
<b>School Safety</b>			
Very concerned	51%	50%	51%
Somewhat concerned	31%	32%	31%
A little concerned	14%	15%	13%
Not concerned	4%	3%	5%

	Base	Children	
		Yes	No
<b>Class size</b>			
Very concerned	43%	54%	36%
Somewhat concerned	31%	25%	36%
A little concerned	14%	9%	18%
Not concerned	11%	12%	10%

	Base	Children	
		Yes	No
<b>Teacher Quality</b>			
Very concerned	65%	65%	65%
Somewhat concerned	20%	18%	22%
A little concerned	9%	11%	8%
Not concerned	5%	6%	5%

	Base	Children	
		Yes	No
<b>Reassignment</b>			
Very concerned	49%	52%	46%
Somewhat concerned	21%	18%	23%
A little concerned	13%	8%	16%
Not concerned	18%	22%	15%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Children	
		Yes	No
<b>School Schedules</b>			
<b>Very concerned</b>	33%	40%	29%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	23%	24%	22%
<b>A little concerned</b>	17%	12%	20%
<b>Not concerned</b>	27%	24%	29%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
<b>Method of Election</b>				
<b>Current System is Fine</b>	54%	63%	42%	56%
<b>Change to At Large</b>	33%	26%	46%	29%
<b>Not Sure</b>	13%	11%	12%	15%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
<b>Decrease in Minority Representation</b>				
<b>More likely to support</b>	25%	24%	37%	9%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	46%	58%	31%	44%
<b>Not sure</b>	29%	18%	32%	47%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
<b>Vote Effect</b>				
<b>More likely to support</b>	35%	32%	41%	30%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	42%	50%	33%	43%
<b>No difference</b>	23%	18%	26%	27%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
<b>Sex Education</b>				
<b>Favor</b>	62%	79%	40%	62%
<b>Opposed</b>	29%	13%	51%	29%
<b>Not sure</b>	9%	8%	9%	9%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
<b>School Safety</b>				
<b>Very concerned</b>	51%	49%	56%	47%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	31%	31%	30%	33%
<b>A little concerned</b>	14%	16%	12%	13%
<b>Not concerned</b>	4%	5%	3%	6%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
<b>Class size</b>				
<b>Very concerned</b>	43%	52%	41%	29%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	32%	29%	30%	39%
<b>A little concerned</b>	14%	10%	16%	19%
<b>Not concerned</b>	11%	8%	13%	13%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
<b>Teacher Quality</b>				
<b>Very concerned</b>	65%	65%	71%	55%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	20%	19%	18%	26%
<b>A little concerned</b>	9%	10%	7%	13%
<b>Not concerned</b>	5%	6%	4%	6%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
<b>Reassignment</b>				
<b>Very concerned</b>	48%	40%	62%	44%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	21%	20%	18%	27%
<b>A little concerned</b>	13%	14%	10%	15%
<b>Not concerned</b>	18%	26%	10%	14%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Unaffiliated
<b>School Schedules</b>				
<b>Very concerned</b>	33%	29%	36%	35%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	23%	22%	26%	22%
<b>A little concerned</b>	17%	17%	15%	18%
<b>Not concerned</b>	27%	32%	22%	25%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
<b>Method of Election</b>			
<b>Current System is Fine</b>	54%	56%	52%
<b>Change to At Large</b>	33%	31%	35%
<b>Not Sure</b>	13%	13%	12%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
<b>Decrease in Minority Representation</b>			
<b>More likely to support</b>	25%	21%	30%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	46%	51%	40%
<b>Not sure</b>	29%	29%	30%







**Crosstabs**

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
<b>Vote Effect</b>			
<b>More likely to support</b>	35%	33%	38%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	42%	45%	39%
<b>No difference</b>	23%	22%	24%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
<b>Sex Education</b>			
<b>Favor</b>	62%	65%	59%
<b>Opposed</b>	29%	26%	34%
<b>Not sure</b>	9%	9%	8%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
<b>School Safety</b>			
<b>Very concerned</b>	51%	56%	44%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	31%	29%	33%
<b>A little concerned</b>	14%	11%	17%
<b>Not concerned</b>	4%	4%	5%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
<b>Class size</b>			
<b>Very concerned</b>	43%	51%	34%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	32%	28%	36%
<b>A little concerned</b>	14%	13%	16%
<b>Not concerned</b>	11%	8%	14%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
<b>Teacher Quality</b>			
Very concerned	65%	67%	62%
Somewhat concerned	20%	16%	26%
A little concerned	9%	11%	8%
Not concerned	5%	6%	5%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
<b>Reassignment</b>			
Very concerned	48%	50%	46%
Somewhat concerned	21%	20%	23%
A little concerned	13%	13%	13%
Not concerned	18%	17%	18%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
<b>School Schedules</b>			
Very concerned	33%	33%	33%
Somewhat concerned	23%	22%	24%
A little concerned	17%	16%	19%
Not concerned	27%	29%	24%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
<b>Method of Election</b>				
Current System is Fine	54%	54%	60%	46%
Change to At Large	33%	33%	33%	30%
Not Sure	13%	13%	7%	24%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
<b>Decrease in Minority Representation</b>				
<b>More likely to support</b>	25%	23%	28%	33%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	46%	48%	45%	27%
<b>Not sure</b>	29%	29%	28%	39%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
<b>Vote Effect</b>				
<b>More likely to support</b>	35%	34%	41%	30%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	42%	42%	45%	44%
<b>No difference</b>	23%	25%	14%	26%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
<b>Sex Education</b>				
<b>Favor</b>	62%	66%	52%	49%
<b>Opposed</b>	29%	28%	34%	35%
<b>Not sure</b>	9%	7%	14%	16%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
<b>School Safety</b>				
<b>Very concerned</b>	51%	48%	61%	51%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	31%	30%	32%	33%
<b>A little concerned</b>	14%	16%	7%	8%
<b>Not concerned</b>	4%	5%	-	8%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
<b>Class size</b>				
Very concerned	43%	43%	45%	35%
Somewhat concerned	32%	31%	38%	25%
A little concerned	14%	17%	3%	18%
Not concerned	11%	9%	14%	22%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
<b>Teacher Quality</b>				
Very concerned	65%	66%	62%	63%
Somewhat concerned	20%	20%	21%	22%
A little concerned	9%	9%	14%	8%
Not concerned	5%	6%	3%	8%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
<b>Reassignment</b>				
Very concerned	48%	48%	48%	55%
Somewhat concerned	21%	21%	24%	16%
A little concerned	13%	16%	-	18%
Not concerned	18%	16%	28%	12%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
<b>School Schedules</b>				
Very concerned	33%	29%	48%	33%
Somewhat concerned	23%	26%	10%	25%
A little concerned	17%	18%	10%	22%
Not concerned	27%	27%	31%	20%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	65 and older
<b>Method of Election</b>					
<b>Current System is Fine</b>	54%	46%	51%	54%	58%
<b>Change to At Large</b>	33%	37%	39%	34%	27%
<b>Not Sure</b>	13%	18%	10%	12%	15%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	65 and older
<b>Decrease in Minority Representation</b>					
<b>More likely to support</b>	25%	48%	22%	22%	29%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	46%	17%	46%	48%	44%
<b>Not sure</b>	29%	35%	32%	29%	27%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	65 and older
<b>Vote Effect</b>					
<b>More likely to support</b>	35%	48%	35%	34%	34%
<b>Less likely to support</b>	42%	21%	45%	45%	39%
<b>No difference</b>	23%	31%	19%	21%	27%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	65 and older
<b>Sex Education</b>					
<b>Favor</b>	62%	44%	64%	64%	58%
<b>Opposed</b>	29%	56%	25%	30%	29%
<b>Not sure</b>	9%	-	12%	5%	13%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	65 and older
<b>School Safety</b>					
Very concerned	51%	79%	49%	47%	55%
Somewhat concerned	31%	13%	24%	36%	30%
A little concerned	14%	8%	20%	12%	12%
Not concerned	4%	-	6%	5%	3%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	65 and older
<b>Class size</b>					
Very concerned	43%	71%	43%	42%	41%
Somewhat concerned	32%	8%	28%	34%	35%
A little concerned	14%	4%	16%	13%	17%
Not concerned	11%	17%	13%	11%	7%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	65 and older
<b>Teacher Quality</b>					
Very concerned	65%	50%	55%	68%	68%
Somewhat concerned	20%	41%	23%	17%	21%
A little concerned	9%	-	17%	8%	8%
Not concerned	5%	8%	5%	7%	3%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	65 and older
<b>Reassignment</b>					
Very concerned	48%	65%	55%	46%	45%
Somewhat concerned	21%	4%	18%	21%	27%
A little concerned	13%	8%	10%	14%	13%
Not concerned	18%	23%	17%	19%	15%





**Crosstabs**

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	65 and older
<b>School Schedules</b>					
<b>Very concerned</b>	33%	34%	40%	31%	31%
<b>Somewhat concerned</b>	23%	35%	19%	24%	24%
<b>A little concerned</b>	17%	-	17%	15%	22%
<b>Not concerned</b>	27%	31%	25%	30%	23%

