

2010 ConnCAN Education Survey
N=600; all registered voters
Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall, Inc. (DHM Research)

1. In general, would you say that Connecticut is headed in the right direction, or are things off on the wrong track?

Response Category	N=600
Right direction	34%
Wrong Track	50%
Don't know	16%

2. When you think about Connecticut's **public schools**, what if anything comes to mind? (*Open-ended responses*)

Response Category	N=600
Good school/educational system	23%
Poor school/educational system	22%
Underfunded/need for more resources	17%
Not focusing on educational quality/fundamentals	13%
Expensive to fund/money is not spent wisely	11%
Lack of educational equality among public school districts	11%
Poor administration/management	8%
Poor quality of teachers	7%
Lack of discipline	5%
Good/qualified teachers	5%
Need for improvement/educational reform	5%
Don't have children in public schools	5%
Over-crowded	5%
Lack of after-school/extracurricular programs	4%
All other responses	3% or less
Nothing/None	3%
Don't know	7%

Agreement with statements about state of education in Connecticut

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	DK
3. Some Connecticut schools are producing great results while others have consistently failed to deliver an education that prepares students for success.	3%	7%	33%	51%	6%
4. I think it's unfair that families with money can choose to relocate to a district with a better school or send their children to private schools if they don't like their district school but lower income families cannot do this.	20%	20%	23%	34%	3%
5. The governor should be held responsible for the quality of the state's public education system.	17%	20%	28%	34%	2%
6. I feel confident that a child of mine could attend <u>any</u> public school in Connecticut and receive an education that would prepare him or her for success.	28%	23%	22%	23%	4%
7. Our school system in Connecticut is failing too many of our children each year.	13%	25%	24%	28%	11%

Importance of reform priorities

Reform	Not at all Important	Not too important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	DK
8. Recruit new leaders in the governor's office, at the State Board of Education, and in the State Department of Education who are committed to making fundamental reforms to the state's education system.	5%	5%	32%	54%	4%
9. Ensure that every child, regardless of income, race, or ethnicity is taught by an effective teacher.	1%	2%	8%	90%	0%
10. Fund schools based on the number of students they actually educate, not the number of students in their district, with adjustments for those with higher learning needs.	5%	6%	38%	44%	7%
11. Replace the administrators and teachers in schools that are failing to educate students with new, high-performing staff and programming that meets the students' needs.	6%	7%	25%	60%	3%

Agreement with reform priorities related to teacher effectiveness

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	DK
12. Decisions about teacher hiring, layoffs, salary, and tenure should be based on a number of factors related to teachers' demonstrated performance, including their students' achievement growth, rather than only the length of time in the classroom as these decisions are currently made.	5%	5%	27%	62%	2%
13. Teacher preparation programs – the programs that individuals need to go through to be certified as teachers – should be held accountable for the performance of the teachers they educate.	7%	9%	30%	53%	2%
14. Teachers who have been given multiple chances to improve but consistently fail to provide their students a quality education should be removed from the classroom.	3%	6%	23%	67%	1%
15. High-quality teacher and principal candidates who come from nontraditional backgrounds should not have to jump through unnecessary hoops to secure a job.	11%	11%	28%	45%	6%

Agreement with reform priorities related to Connecticut's school finance system

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	DK
16. State funding for public education should follow individual students to whatever public school they choose to attend, including schools outside of their district/neighborhood; magnet and specialty schools; charter schools; and technical schools.	10%	12%	35%	41%	3%
17. Schools and districts know better than the State Department of Education how best to educate their students and should have more flexibility to use their funding in ways that meet their students' needs.	4%	8%	36%	51%	2%
18. We need a simple, transparent, and fair state funding system that funds students based on their needs, regardless of what public school they attend.	4%	3%	31%	60%	2%

Agreement with reform priorities related to school choice and improvement

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	DK
19. Connecticut should increase its number of high-quality schools of choice, including magnet schools, charter schools, and technical schools, to meet the needs of all students.	6%	10%	32%	50%	2%
20. Schools that show no student achievement gains for 10 or more years should be closed and replaced with new, high-quality schools.	17%	21%	28%	29%	4%
21. Districts and schools should be given increased flexibility if they agree to implement key reforms and be held accountable for results.	3%	4%	41%	50%	3%
22. District leaders and school principals should be able to adjust their hiring and salary policies so that a school's staff best meets the needs of its students.	5%	7%	36%	50%	2%

23. Given everything we've talked about what is the one message you would like to give your next governor about improving education in the state? (*Open-ended responses*)

Response Category	N=600
Raise educational standards/focus on quality education	24%
Teacher evaluations/weed out ineffective teachers regardless of tenure/reward good teachers for student success	18%
Maintain educational funding/do not cut funding	15%
Recruit and retain quality teachers	15%
More parental involvement	14%
Better allocation of financial resources in the public school system	12%
Educational equality among public school districts/closing the achievement gap	10%
Realize the importance/necessity of education	9%
Allow administrative flexibility/local control	8%
More/larger variety of educational programs	7%
Reduce influence of/remove teacher unions	5%
Hold students accountable	4%
Emphasize basics/fundamental education	4%
All other responses	3% or less
Nothing/None	7%
Don't know	4%

Methodology

DHM Research conducted a telephone survey of 600 Connecticut voters. This is a sufficient sample size to assess voters' opinions generally and to review findings by multiple subgroups including gender, age, political party, area of state, household income, and ethnicity. Spanish language interviewers were available so that a larger pool of respondents had the opportunity to participate.

Statement of Limitations. Any sampling of opinions or attitudes is subject to a margin of error, which represents the difference between a sample of a given population and the total population (here, Connecticut voters). For a sample size of 600, if the respondents answered a particular question in the proportion of 90% one way and 10% the other, the margin of error would be +/- 2.4%. If they answered 50% each way, the margin would be +/- 4.0%.¹

About DHM Research: DHM Research is an **independent** and **non-partisan** opinion research firm located in Portland, Oregon. For the past three decades, they have been assessing residents' and voters' opinions and priorities for public education on behalf of school districts, education organizations, and foundations across the United States. www.dhmresearch.com

¹ These plus-minus error margins represent differences between the sample and total population at a confidence interval, or probability, calculated to be 95%. This means that there is a 95% probability that the sample taken for this study would fall within the stated margins of error if compared with the results achieved from surveying the entire target population.