



EPIC-MRA Press Release

Let MI Kids Learn Poll Results

Contact Bernie Porn EPIC-MRA – 517-285-5681

600 Sample Statewide Survey of Active & Likely November Voters on the Let MI Kids Learn Proposal

Polling Dates: May 11-17, 2022

Conducted by live interviewers, including 70% cell phones -- Margin of Error: ±4.0%

EPIC ▪ MRA

4710 W. Saginaw

Highway

Suite 2C

Lansing, MI 48917

P: 517-886-0860

F: 517-886-9176

E: info@epicmra.com

W: www.epicmra.com

Key survey findings

93% of Michigan voters know little or nothing about proposal

48% to 36% oppose proposal on 1st test after hearing a description

Four messages against proposal convincing to 60%-75% of voters

64% opposes proposal after hearing messages against it – 42% strongly

92% say legislators should vote “no” to put it on ballot so voters decide

64% solid majority are less likely to vote for legislators who vote “yes”

The questions were commissioned by For MI Kids, For Our Schools Coalition and conducted by EPIC-MRA among active & likely November 2022 general election voters.

A 93 percent overwhelming majority heard only a little (11%) or nothing at all (82%) about the proposal.

On the initial test of the proposal to create a Student Opportunity Scholarship program for low-income or disabled students, funded by contributions encouraged through new state income tax credits, a 48 percent to 36 percent plurality said they oppose the proposal, with 16 percent undecided. Among opponents, 29 percent held their view strongly.

After respondents heard four messages against the proposal, a 64 percent to 23 percent majority opposed it, including 43 percent strongly. From the first to second question on the proposal, support dropped by 13 points and opposition increased by 16 points.

Survey respondents were told that under a loophole in state law, if signatures are collected from 8 percent of voters, Michigan lawmakers could get around the Governor’s veto and pass the Let MI Kids Learn proposal, without giving the public a chance to vote on it at the polls.

When asked if they think their state legislator should vote against the proposal so voters

- Educational
- Political
- Industrial
- Consumer

- Market
- Research
- Analysis

can decide whether to enact it or reject it in the upcoming November election, a near unanimous 92 percent said they want their legislator to vote “no,” which would place it on the ballot for voters to decide, with only 5 percent saying their legislator should vote “yes” to enact it into law without a vote of the people.

Finally, when voters were asked whether their willingness to vote for their state legislator would change if they did vote to enact the proposal into law without giving voters the ability to decide for themselves, a 64 percent solid majority said they would be less likely to vote for their state legislator in the November election (42 percent much less likely), with only 3 percent more likely to vote for their state legislator; 28 percent reported their legislator’s vote on this issue would not influence them one way or the other.

The most striking findings in the poll are the partisan breakdowns of the responses. On the initial question on the Let MI (my) Kids Learn proposal, a 55 percent to 30 percent majority of Democrats oppose the proposal and a 45 percent to 40 percent plurality of Republicans also opposed the proposal, while a 45 percent to 35 percent plurality of Independents supported it.

On the follow-up question about the proposal, after voters heard four arguments against the plan, solid majorities said those messages were convincing reasons to vote “no.” Then, a 64 percent majority of all voters opposed the proposal, including 75 percent of Democrats, 63 percent of Independents and even 55 percent of Republicans.

When asked how their legislator should vote on the proposal if enough petition signatures are turned in, 92 percent said their legislator should vote “no” so it will be placed on the ballot for voters to accept or reject -- including 96 percent of Democrats, 94 percent of Independents, and 88 percent of Republicans.

Finally, if their state legislator decided to vote “yes” on the proposal to enact it without letting voters decide, a 64 percent majority said they are less likely to vote for their state legislator, including 73 percent of Democrats, 65 percent of Independents and 55 percent of Republicans.

“In my nearly four decades of polling, I have seldom seen such a silver bullet of an issue where messaging moved numbers as much as it did on this proposal,” **said Bernie Porn, President of EPIC-MRA.** “If state legislators decide to vote to enact this plan and deny voters the opportunity to vote on it in the election, they could pay a heavy price at the polls if opponents of the proposal spend enough to communicate the messages tested in this poll.”

The wording of the questions are as follows:

Turning to another topic, how much have you seen, heard, or read about a ballot proposal called Let MI [my] Kids Learn – a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?

1% A lot
3% Some
11% Only a little
82% Not at all
3% Undecided/Refused

The Let MI [my] Kids Learn ballot proposal would create what its sponsors are calling a Student Opportunity Scholarship program for low-income or disabled students, funded by contributions encouraged through new state income tax credits. Specifically, the program would provide up to \$500 for public school students to pay for private school services, up to \$1,100 for public school students with disabilities to pay for private school services, and up to \$7,800 for private school students to pay for tuition at private schools. The tax credits would be capped at \$500 million in the first year but could increase annually after that. Based on this description or what you may know, do you support or oppose the proposal? [IF SUPPORT/OPPOSE, ASK]: “Would that be strongly or somewhat?”

- 11% Strongly support the proposal*
- 25% Somewhat support the proposal*
- 36% TOTAL SUPPORT*
- 48% TOTAL OPPOSE*
- 19% Somewhat oppose the proposal*
- 29% Strongly oppose the proposal*
- 16% Undecided/Refused*

Now I would like to read several statements that describe reasons why people say they oppose the Let MI [my] Kids Learn proposal. For each one, please tell me if that statement describes a very convincing reason, somewhat convincing reason, or not a convincing reason at all to oppose the proposal.

<i>[ROTATE QUESTIONS]</i>	<u>Very</u>	<u>TOT</u>	<u>Not</u>	<u>DK/</u>
	<u>Conv</u>	<u>Conv</u>	<u>Conv</u>	<u>REF</u>
<i>For many rural areas across Michigan, there aren't other schools for families to choose from – especially not exclusive private schools. As the center of our communities, these small-town schools need more resources to serve local kids, instead of having funding taken away for the benefit of private schools elsewhere.</i>	52%	75%	20%	5%
<i>In just the first year, the initiative would divert \$500 million in tax revenues from public schools and services – funds that are desperately needed to meet the needs of the 90% of Michigan students who attend public schools.</i>	47%	71%	24%	5%
<i>The Legislature passed this same program last year and the Governor vetoed it because school voucher schemes like this violate the State Constitution's ban on spending public tax dollars on private schools.</i>	35%	63%	31%	7%
<i>Led by Betsy DeVos, this is her latest attempt to undermine public schools and allow billionaires like herself to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. She not only wants to siphon off money from public schools to give to private schools, but she wants to get a tax break in the process.</i>	45%	60%	33%	7%

Thinking about those arguments against the Let MI [my] Kids Learn proposal, let me ask again - do you support or oppose the proposal? [IF SUPPORT/OPPOSE, ASK]: "Would that be strongly or somewhat?"

- 8% Strongly support the proposal*
- 15% Somewhat support the proposal*
- 23% TOTAL SUPPORT*
- 64% TOTAL OPPOSE*
- 21% Somewhat oppose the proposal*
- 43% Strongly oppose the proposal*
- 13% Undecided/Refused*

Under a loophole in state law, if signatures are collected from just 8 percent of voters, Michigan lawmakers could end-run the Governor's veto and pass the Let MI [my] Kids Learn proposal into law – without giving the public a chance to vote on the proposal at the polls. Do you think your state legislator should vote to support this proposal so it can become law, or do you think your state legislator should vote against the proposal so you and other Michigan voters can decide whether to enact it into law or reject it in the upcoming November election?

- 5% Legislator should vote Yes to enact it without a vote of the people*
- 92% Legislator should vote No to place it on the ballot for voters to decide*
- 3% Undecided/Refused*

If your state legislator voted to enact this proposal into law without giving voters the ability to decide for themselves, would you be more likely to vote for your state legislator in the November election, less likely to vote for him or her, or would you say that this one issue would not influence you one way or the other? [IF MORE/LESS LIKELY, ASK]: "Would that be much or somewhat (more/less) likely?"

- 2% Much more likely to vote for legislator if he/she voted for the proposal*
- 1% Somewhat more likely to vote for legislator if he/she voted for the proposal*
- 3% TOTAL MORE LIKELY*
- 28% Would not influence respondent one way or the other*
- 64% TOTAL LESS LIKELY*
- 21% Somewhat less likely to vote for legislator if he/she voted for the proposal*
- 42% Much less likely to vote for legislator if he/she voted for the proposal*
- 6% Undecided/Refused*

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