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Final: Top Line Survey Results
PA Statewide Poll – The Education Policy and Leadership Center
Conducted November 14 – 18, 2012
Sample Size: 800 Registered Voters
[With Comparisons to October 2011 Survey]

INTRODUCTION: We are conducting a survey of attitudes and opinions concerning some important issues facing Pennsylvania today. May we have a few minutes of your time to complete the survey? Great, thank you...

Q1. What is the single most important problem facing Pennsylvania today? That is, the one that you would like to see resolved by your state elected officials. (DO NOT READ CHOICES – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

Property/school Taxes.....60	08%	Natural gas drilling.....23	03%
Other Taxes (general).....13	02%	Environment/Pollution.....3	00%
Crime/Violence/Drugs.....23	03%	Education/Schools.....92	12%
Economy/Jobs.....365	46%	Lack of funding (state/local)	72 09%
Economy (general)	116 14%	School safety	4 01%
Jobs (general)	241 30%	Student performance	6 01%
Currently unemployed	3 00%	Lack of parental involvement	2 00%
Stagnant wages/COLA	1 00%	Other	7 01%
Other	3 00%	Health & Welfare.....29	04%
Transportation/Growth.....14	02%	Healthcare (general)	10 01%
Street/road conditions	12 01%	Healthcare (reform)	8 01%
Other	2 00%	Social Security	4 01%
Gov't Spending/Budget.....46	06%	Medicare	2 00%
Gov't spending (general)	22 03%	Medicaid	3 00%
Out of control (federal)	6 01%	Other	2 00%
Out of control (state)	14 02%	Social/cultural issues.....3	00%
Out of control (county)	2 00%	Abortion	1 00%
Out of control (local)	1 00%	Gay marriage	1 00%
Other	1 00%	Other	2 00%
Politicians/Government.....33	04%	Quality of Life.....1	00%
Corruption/ethics (general)	2 00%	Abandoned homes	1 00%
Federal (Obama/Congress)	9 01%	Undecided.....62	08%
State (Corbett/Harrisburg)	16 02%	Other.....32	04%
General anti-incumbent	2 00%		
Honesty/ethics	3 00%		
Other	1 00%		

Thinking more about state issues in Harrisburg...

Q2. Which TWO of the following seven issues should be the top priorities for both the governor and state legislature in Harrisburg to concentrate on – reducing property taxes; increasing state funding for and improving public education; fixing highways, roads and bridges; reforming the way state government operates; creating jobs and improving the economy; improving public safety and reducing crime; or protecting the environment? (ROTATE ITEMS – PROBE FOR TWO ANSWERS)

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
270	(34%)	1. Reducing property taxes	25%	+09
324	(40%)	2. Increasing state funding for and improving education	38%	+02
162	(20%)	3. Fixing highways, roads and bridges	22%	-02
164	(21%)	4. Reforming how state government operates	26%	-05
455	(57%)	5. Creating jobs and improving the economy	62%	-05
96	(12%)	6. Improving public safety and reducing crime	12%	--
70	(09%)	7. Protecting the environment	10%	-01
14	(02%)	8. Undecided (DO NOT READ)	01%	+01
7	(01%)	9. None/other (DO NOT READ)	01%	--

Thinking more about public education and schools for a few minutes...

(ROTATE Q3-Q4)

Q3. How would you rate the job public schools in Pennsylvania are doing preparing students for COLLEGE? Would you say they are doing an excellent job, a good job, a fair job or a poor job?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Excellent	37	05%	07%	-02
2. Good	287	36%	35%	+01
3. Fair	294	37%	35%	+02
4. Poor	137	17%	16%	+01
5. Undecided	44	06%	07%	-01

Q4. How would you rate the job public schools in Pennsylvania are doing preparing students for jobs after high school graduation? Would you say they are doing an excellent job, a good job, a fair job or a poor job?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Excellent	26	03%	04%	-01
2. Good	205	26%	30%	-04
3. Fair	328	41%	37%	+04
4. Poor	193	24%	22%	+02
5. Undecided	49	06%	07%	-01

Q5. How would you rate the job public schools in your school district are doing preparing students for both college and jobs after graduation? Would you say they are doing an excellent job, a good job, a fair job or a poor job?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Excellent	99	12%	14%	-02
2. Good	289	36%	39%	-03
3. Fair	238	30%	28%	+02
4. Poor	141	18%	16%	+02
5. Undecided	33	04%	04%	--

Q6. Which THREE of the following eight issues represent the biggest challenges confronting teachers in the public school system today? That is, the two or three that can have the biggest impact on the quality of education being provided to students. (ROTATE ITEMS – PROBE FOR TWO ANSWERS)

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
459	(57%)	1. Lack of involvement and support from parents and caregivers of students	48%	+09
216	(27%)	2. Safety concerns including students' social and behavioral problems	24%	+03
396	(50%)	3. Budget cuts resulting in fewer educational programs for students, inadequate teaching and curriculum materials, and fewer academic supports for students such as libraries and tutors	25%	+25
148	(18%)	4. Insufficient teacher preparation and professional development programs	23%	-05
264	(33%)	5. Class sizes are too large and a poor teacher-to-student ratio	21%	+12
149	(19%)	6. The effects of poverty on students' ability to learn in the classroom	18%	+01
215	(27%)	7. Too much emphasis on testing	25%	+02
102	(13%)	8. Lack of quality early education programs	--	+13
25	(03%)	9. Undecided (DO NOT READ)	03%	--
24	(03%)	10. None/other (DO NOT READ)	04%	-01

Q7. Do you think teacher salaries in the district where you live are too high, too low or just about right? (ROTATE ITEMS)

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Too high	164	21%	24%	-03
2. Too low	160	20%	17%	+03
3. About right	416	52%	51%	+01
4. Undecided	60	08%	09%	-01

Q8. Following are several factors many people believe can have an influence on the ability of students to learn and meet academic proficiency standards. After I read the **entire** list, please tell me which two or three can have the **BIGGEST** influence on students - the family's support for the student; the quality of the teacher; the size of school classes; the level of school funding; the availability of up-to-date computers, technology, textbooks and libraries; school counseling and support services; access to high quality early education programs; or having safe and secure schools? (ROTATE CHOICES – PROBE FOR THREE ANSWERS)

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
502	(63%)	1. Family's support for the student	65%	-02
419	(52%)	2. Quality of the teacher	59%	-07
258	(32%)	3. Size of school classes	34%	-02
184	(23%)	4. Level of school funding	21%	+02
199	(25%)	5. Availability of up-to-date computers, technology, textbooks and libraries	50%	-25
64	(08%)	6. School counseling and support services	12%	-04
141	(18%)	7. Access to high quality early education programs	--	+18
157	(20%)	8. Safe and secure schools	--	+20
14	(02%)	9. Undecided	03%	-01
12	(01%)	10. Other	00%	+01
4	(01%)	11. Refuse	00%	+01

Q9. In your opinion, what is the single most important factor in judging the success of a public school? (DO NOT READ CHOICES – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

183	(23%)	1. Graduation rates
81	(10%)	2. Test scores
27	(03%)	3. Safety
280	(35%)	4. Preparing student's success in post-secondary education or the workforce
60	(08%)	5. Development of social and civic skills
55	(07%)	6. Teacher performance
58	(07%)	7. Undecided
55	(07%)	8. Other (verbatim)

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

(ROTATE Q10 – Q18)

Q10. The well-being of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and our local communities is dependent upon having an "educated citizenry". (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	637	80%	Total Agree: 96%	97%	-01
2. Somewhat agree	128	16%	Total Disagree: 03%	02%	+01
3. Strongly disagree	6	01%			
4. Somewhat disagree	20	03%			
5. Undecided	8	01%		01%	--

Q11. All students in Pennsylvania should be legally entitled to the opportunity to receive a quality education. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	688	86%	Total Agree: 97%	95%	+02
2. Somewhat agree	86	11%	Total Disagree: 02%	04%	-02
3. Strongly disagree	7	01%			
4. Somewhat disagree	10	01%			
5. Undecided	8	01%		01%	--

Q12. High quality public schools are vital for the success of Pennsylvania's economy. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	593	74%	Total Agree: 92%	93%	-01
2. Somewhat agree	140	18%	Total Disagree: 06%	06%	--
3. Strongly disagree	14	02%			
4. Somewhat disagree	34	04%			
5. Undecided	17	02%		01%	+01

Q13. High quality public schools are vital for the success of my local community. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	610	76%	Total Agree: 94%	93%	+01
2. Somewhat agree	145	18%	Total Disagree: 04%	06%	-02
3. Strongly disagree	17	02%			
4. Somewhat disagree	17	02%			
5. Undecided	10	01%		01%	--

Q14. High quality public schools are vital for creating successful citizens. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	607	76%	Total Agree: 94%	92%	+02
2. Somewhat agree	146	18%	Total Disagree: 04%	07%	-03
3. Strongly disagree	11	01%			
4. Somewhat disagree	25	03%			
5. Undecided	10	01%		00%	+01

Q15. Everyone benefits from high quality public schools. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	608	76%	Total Agree: 92%	90%	+02
2. Somewhat agree	129	16%	Total Disagree: 07%	10%	-03
3. Strongly disagree	28	04%			
4. Somewhat disagree	29	04%			
5. Undecided	4	00%		01%	-01

Q16. State government has a responsibility to ensure adequate funding for all school districts so that students in all areas of the state regardless of the wealth of their local school district have an opportunity to learn and succeed. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	597	75%	Total Agree: 93%	88%	+05
2. Somewhat agree	146	18%	Total Disagree: 05%	08%	-03
3. Strongly disagree	17	02%			
4. Somewhat disagree	25	03%			
5. Undecided	13	02%		03%	-01

Q17. I have trust and confidence in the men and women who are teaching children in the public schools in the district where I live. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	314	39%	Total Agree: 72%	76%	-04
2. Somewhat agree	261	33%	Total Disagree: 23%	20%	+03
3. Strongly disagree	87	11%			
4. Somewhat disagree	98	12%			
5. Undecided	38	05%		05%	--

Q18. The responsibility of state government to adequately fund school districts should be maintained in both good and poor economic times, even if it means lawmakers must make politically difficult decisions concerning additional state revenues and/or cuts to other state programs. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	449	56%	Total Agree: 81%	82%	-01
2. Somewhat agree	196	25%	Total Disagree: 15%	14%	+01
3. Strongly disagree	51	06%			
4. Somewhat disagree	72	09%			
5. Undecided	29	04%		03%	+01

Q19. Which two of the following seven issues are the primary reasons why some parents choose to send their child to another school other than one in their home district? Is it...concerns about safety issues in the school; concerns about safety issues going to and from school; the need for better academic quality; the need for more academic choices; the need for more extracurricular opportunities; better convenience for parents or guardians; more emphasis on religious instruction; or something else? (ROTATE ITEMS – PROBE FOR TWO ANSWERS)

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
367	(46%)	1. Safety issues in school	55%	-09
126	(16%)	2. Safety issues going to and from school	19%	-03
425	(53%)	3. Need for better academic quality	56%	-03
184	(23%)	4. Need for more academic choices	30%	-07
75	(09%)	5. Need for more extracurricular opportunities	11%	-02
62	(08%)	6. Better convenience for parents and guardians	11%	-03
231	(29%)	7. Emphasis on religious instruction	--	+29
15	(02%)	8. Other	03%	-01
28	(04%)	9. Undecided	05%	-01

Q20. Would you encourage a child of yours, or a young person to whom you are close to take up teaching in the public schools as a career?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Yes	517	65%	68%	-03
2. No	244	31%	28%	+03
3. Undecided	37	05%	04%	+01

Thinking more specifically for a few minutes about how public schools and school districts are funded...

Q21. National studies show that states on average pay nearly fifty percent of the total cost of local school districts' expenses for educating students, while Pennsylvania state government pays about thirty five percent of the total cost of the state's 500 school districts. Should Pennsylvania increase its share of state funding to local school districts even if it means the state has to cut funding for other non-education state programs and services or raise some taxes or fees to raise the additional revenue?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Yes	461	58%	50%	+08
2. No	247	31%	36%	-05
3. Undecided	89	11%	14%	-03

Q22. Studies show that some school districts in Pennsylvania currently spend more than \$27,000 per year per student, while other districts spend less than \$10,000 per year per student. Should state government take steps to increase state funding to poorer school districts as a way to reduce this funding disparity, even if it means less funding will be available for state increases to wealthier districts?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Yes	543	68%	62%	+06
2. No	162	20%	23%	-03
3. Undecided	93	12%	15%	-03

Q23. Should all school districts be required to offer the option of a developmentally appropriate full-day kindergarten program to all age qualifying students?

1. Yes	581	73%
2. No	185	23%
3. Undecided	33	04%

Q24. How satisfied are you with your school district's allocation and management of available public resources?

1. Very satisfied	174	22%	Total satisfied: 65%
2. Somewhat satisfied	349	44%	
3. Very dissatisfied	80	10%	Total dissatisfied: 20%
4. Somewhat dissatisfied	81	10%	
5. Undecided	114	14%	

Following are several statements about other areas of public education that we would like your input on. Please tell me if you generally agree or disagree with each statement.

(Rotate Q25 – Q31)

Q25. It is important that a comprehensive education for all K through 12 students include arts education, including visual art, music, theatre and dance. (TEST INTENSITY)

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	439	55%	Total Agree: 81%	81%
2. Somewhat agree	206	26%		
3. Strongly disagree	48	06%	Total Disagree: 17%	17%
4. Somewhat disagree	87	11%		
5. Undecided	8	01%		01%
6. Refuse	12	01%		00%

Q26. All students in my community have ample arts education opportunities in their schools and community. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	254	32%	Total Agree: 63%	63%	--
2. Somewhat agree	248	31%		Total Disagree: 25%	25%
3. Strongly disagree	119	15%			
4. Somewhat disagree	81	10%			
5. Undecided	87	11%		12%	-01
6. Refuse	11	01%		00%	+01

Q27. My local community and region have sufficient publicly-supported opportunities for all citizens to experience the arts in cultural organizations—such as museum and performance halls—as well as in public spaces. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	302	38%	Total Agree: 67%	69%	-02
2. Somewhat agree	232	29%		Total Disagree: 25%	26%
3. Strongly disagree	96	12%			
4. Somewhat disagree	101	13%			
5. Undecided	58	07%		05%	+02
6. Refuse	11	01%		00%	+01

Q28. All K-12 students and their families should be able to choose to attend any public school for which the student is academically qualified in the district where they live. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	487	61%	Total Agree: 84%	84%	--
2. Somewhat agree	183	23%		Total Disagree: 12%	13%
3. Strongly disagree	41	05%			
4. Somewhat disagree	52	06%			
5. Undecided	27	03%		03%	--
6. Refuse	11	01%		00%	+01

Q29. All K-12 students and their families should be able to choose to attend any public school for which they are academically qualified in any district, regardless of residence, without cost to the student or family for tuition or fees. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	215	27%	Total Agree: 46%	42%	+04
2. Somewhat agree	149	19%		Total Disagree: 48%	53%
3. Strongly disagree	266	33%			
4. Somewhat disagree	119	15%			
5. Undecided	39	05%		04%	+01
6. Refuse	12	01%		00%	+01

Q30. Taxpayer funds should be used to support tuition for students attending non-public schools like religious or private schools. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	130	16%	Total Agree: 29%	30%	-01
2. Somewhat agree	103	13%	Total Disagree: 66%	67%	-01
3. Strongly disagree	426	53%			
4. Somewhat disagree	99	12%			
5. Undecided	28	04%		03%	+01
6. Refuse	14	02%		00%	+02

Q31. Public school choice policies should ensure that all qualified public school students should have the opportunity to enroll in advanced placement courses, career and technical courses, arts courses, foreign language courses and, if they have completed high school graduation requirements before the completion of their senior year, academically appropriate college courses. (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly agree	589	74%	Total Agree: 95%	93%	+02
2. Somewhat agree	167	21%	Total Disagree: 03%	04%	-01
3. Strongly disagree	8	01%			
4. Somewhat disagree	16	02%			
5. Undecided	8	01%		02%	-01
6. Refuse	12	01%		00%	+01

Q32. As you may know, charter schools in Pennsylvania are currently an option for parents and children within the public school system and often have a specific focus such as math, science, technology or the arts. They receive their funding from the school districts where the charter school students live, and operate under a charter that exempts them from some state requirements imposed on traditional public schools. Do you favor or oppose the continued use of public charter schools as an option for parents and children within the public school system? (TEST INTENSITY)

				<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Strongly favor	275	34%	Total favor: 57%	53%	+04
2. Somewhat favor	181	23%	Total Oppose: 32%	35%	-03
3. Strongly oppose	163	20%			
4. Somewhat oppose	94	12%			
5. Undecided	74	09%		11%	-02
6. Refuse	13	02%		00%	+02

Now, I just have a few more questions for demographic purposes and we'll be through...

Q33. Are you registered to vote as a Republican, Democrat, Independent or something else?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Republican	304	38%	39%	-01
2. Democrat	400	50%	52%	-02
3. Independent/other	88	11%	09%	+02
4. Refuse	8	01%	00%	+01

Q34. What is your age according to the following brackets: 18 - 29, 30 - 39, 40 – 49, 50 to 59 or 60 and over?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. 18-29	80	10%	06%	+04
2. 30-39	144	18%	14%	+04
3. 40-49	152	19%	18%	+01
4. 50-59	160	20%	30%	-10
5. 60+	264	33%	32%	+01

Q35. Do you consider yourself to be conservative or liberal when thinking about your social, economic and political views?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Conservative	343	43%	49%	-06
2. Liberal	223	28%	27%	+01
3. Moderate	198	25%	19%	+06
4. Undecided	21	03%	05%	-02
5. Refuse	14	02%	01%	+01

Q36. What is the last grade you completed in school? (DO NOT READ CHOICES)

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. K-8	2	00%	00%	--
2. Some high school but did not graduate	16	02%	02%	--
3. Graduated high school	199	25%	30%	-05
4. Technical or vocational school (2-year degree)	55	07%	07%	--
5. Some college	152	19%	14%	+05
6. Graduated college (4-year degree)	206	26%	26%	--
7. Graduate/professional school	159	20%	20%	--
8. Undecided	0	00%	00%	--
9. Refuse	11	01%	01%	--

Q37. Do you currently have any school age children living in the household?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Yes	278	35%	32%	+03
2. No	513	64%	66%	-02
3. Undecided	0	00%	00%	--
4. Refuse	9	01%	01%	--

Q38. Do you live in a community that could be described as urban, suburban or rural?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Urban	171	21%	19%	+02
2. Suburban	376	47%	46%	+01
3. Rural	240	30%	33%	-03
4. Undecided	4	00%	01%	-01
5. Refuse	9	01%	01%	--

Q39. What was your total household income for 2011 according to the following income brackets – less than \$15,000, \$15 to \$30,000, \$31 to \$50,000, \$51 to \$75,000, \$76,000 - \$99,000, \$100,000 to \$200,000 or over \$200,000?

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Less than \$15K	22	03%	06%	-03
2. \$15 - \$30K	85	11%	09%	+02
3. \$31 - \$50K	137	17%	14%	+03
4. \$51 - \$75K	183	23%	19%	+04
5. \$76K - \$99K	110	14%	15%	-01
6. \$100K - \$200K	114	14%	18%	-04
7. \$200,000+	28	03%	04%	-01
8. Undecided	28	03%	01%	+02
9. Refuse	94	12%	13%	-01

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE SURVEY. HAVE A GOOD DAY.

Gender:

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
1. Male	384	48%	48%	--
2. Female	416	52%	52%	--

Voted – 1 or better in G11, 10, G09 and/or 08, and new registered voters since November 2011 (from record):

			<u>10/11</u>	<u>%CH</u>
0X	11	01%	01%	--
1X	183	23%	18%	+05
2X	213	27%	28%	-01
3X	164	20%	26%	-06
4X	230	29%	27%	+02

Area (from record):

- 40 (05%) 1. **Northwest** [Erie, Crawford, Mercer, Venango, Warren, Forest]
 - 96 (12%) 2. **Southwest** [Lawrence, Beaver, Washington, Greene, Fayette, Westmoreland, Indiana, Armstrong, Butler]
 - 104 (13%) 3. **The "T"/Central** [Jefferson, Elk, McKean, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Centre, Cambria, Somerset, Bedford, Fulton, Franklin, Huntingdon, Blair, Potter, Tioga, Bradford, Susquehanna, Wyoming, Sullivan, Lycoming, Clinton, Union, Snyder, Northumberland, Montour, Columbia, Mifflin, Juniata]
 - 88 (11%) 4. **Northeast/Lehigh Valley** [Luzerne, Carbon, Monroe, Schuylkill, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Northampton, Pike, Wayne]
 - 128 (16%) 5. **South Central** [Perry, Cumberland, Adams, York, Lancaster, Lebanon, Dauphin, Berks]
 - 168 (21%) 6. **Southeast** [Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Bucks]
 - 88 (11%) 7. **Allegheny County**
 - 88 (11%) 8. **Philadelphia**
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Methodology: This poll was commissioned by The Education Policy and Leadership Center and conducted by Susquehanna Polling and Research. Completed interviews were conducted November 14 -18, 2012 with 800 registered voters. Only voters with prior vote history in G11, G10, G09 and/or G08 were contacted, as well as new registrants since 2011. Interviews are randomly selected and conducted via telephone using the professionally-trained survey research staff from the Harrisburg telephone call center of Susquehanna Polling and Research. Interviews are closely monitored to ensure a representative sample of Pennsylvania's electorate is achieved based on party affiliation, geography, gender, age and other demographics; results are sometimes statistically weighted.

The margin of error for a sample size of 800 interviews is +/-3.46% at the 95% confidence level
