



*Trusted Perspective
Innovative Data
Superior Results*

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SUBJECT: SCHOOL CHOICE - INITIAL FINDINGS
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WPAi completed a series of studies to understand the full policy and messaging impact of school choice programs across the country. In each phase, we took our learnings and applied it to the next phase to build a comprehensive program that will be wholly impactful in your efforts to bring school choice across the country.

- Phase I – Expert Interviews (n=9 Experts) and Qualitative Boards (n=38 Parents).
Conducted May 27 – June 16, 2021
- Phase II – Facebook Issue Test (56 messaging concepts).
Urban Parents – 475,335 impressions, 6,686 click-throughs
Exurban Parents – 519,314 impressions, 15,500 click-throughs
Conducted July 5 – July 16, 2021
- Phase III – National Quantitative Studies
N=3,149 Registered Voters for a National Discrete Choice Model Test (Online)
Conducted July 31 – August 11, 2021
n=517 Registered Voters for a Urban Messaging Model Test (Live Caller)
n=513 Registered Voters for an Exurban Messaging Model Test (Live Caller)
Conducted August 8-10, 2021

School Choice – A New Approach

Identifying what to call a program that is beneficial to children and parents across the country when it has been so negatively defined by school choice opponents is perhaps one of the more important ventures here.

The fight for school choice, and framing around that language, has worked for more than three decades. However, in this research, we have found a new approach to school choice that has a much stronger effect now than historical language framed around “school choice.”

This memo focuses solely on the new approach to school choice framing.

We tested a variety of options (learned from partials of the National Discrete Choice Model Test) in both of the Urban and Exurban Messaging Model Test first, prior to finishing the National Discrete Choice Model data collect.

In the Urban and Exurban Messaging Models, not one program name stands out above the others and similarly in both urban and exurban regions in the country. To that end, neither of the messaging models, at least overall, truly stand out above the noise of a messaging environment.

	Exurban		Urban	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
School Freedom	75%	24%	74%	21%
School Choice Scholarships	85%	13%	64%	26%
Education Freedom	85%	14%	69%	25%
Education Choice Scholarships	75%	20%	84%	14%
Education Freedom Scholarships	72%	21%	72%	19%

Further testing, therefore, was required to identify the best possible name and was accomplished in the National Discrete Choice Model Test.

In the National Discrete Choice Model Test, we tested a series of ten choices with each of the 3,149 respondents.

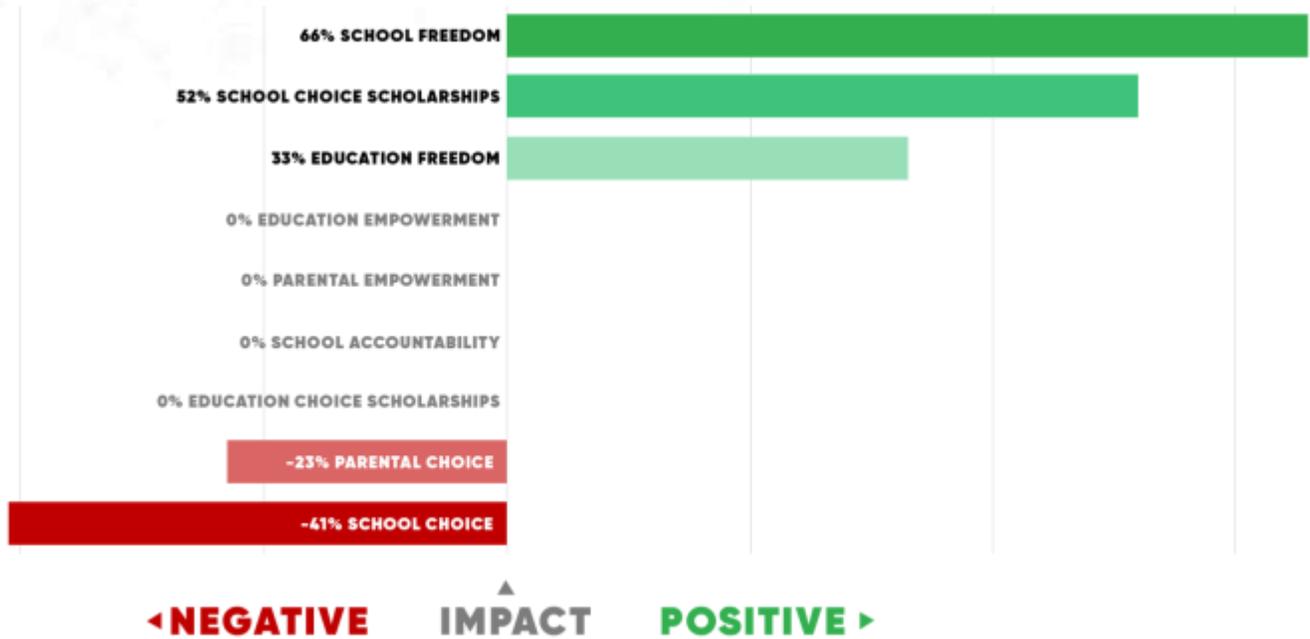
In each choice, the respondent was asked:

- A randomized first word (School, Education, Parental, etc.),
- A randomized second word (Choice, Freedom, Empowerment, etc),
- A randomized adversary (Union Bosses, School Boards, Teachers Union, Politicians, etc) with the purpose of identifying which to use to boost support for school choice,
- And then a randomized set of two arguments in favor of school choice (that we learned from the first two phases).

Along with each choice, the respondent was asked to rate how much, on a scale from 0 to 10, they disagree or agree with the statement. A multiple ordinary least squares (OLS) regression is then run with the agree/disagree statements as the dependent variable.

There are two clear winners for what School Choice should be re-branded as: **School Freedom** and **School Choice Scholarships**.

- School Choice is clearly the least powerful statement, and it has a negative effect nationally and should not be the phrase used in school reforms in the national Congress and in state legislatures across the country.



There are also clear adversaries, or those groups or individuals that can be tied as enemies of School Freedom in order to increase support for the program: **Politicians and Union Bosses.**

- Note attacking teachers' unions or inadequate teachers does not have a powerful effect in increasing support for school choice movements as alternative groups do; in fact, it reduces support overall.

Conclusions

- School Choice needs to be re-branded as either/both **School Freedom** or **School Choice Scholarships**. Maintaining the name School Choice has a negative effect on the effort.
- The most powerful adversaries (enemies) to use to boost support for school choice are **Politicians** and **Union Bosses**.
 - System of Bureaucrats and Dark Money Special Interests are also powerful enemies to create.
- The arguments in favor of school choice are less clear both in the National Discrete Choice Model and the Urban/Exurban Messaging Models but do show up in multiple subgroups.

About WPA Intelligence

Since 1998, WPA Intelligence has been a leading provider of survey research, predictive analytics and technology for corporations, educational institutions, public affairs programs, non-profits, and campaigns from President to Governor, U.S. Congress, and local elections in all 50 states and multiple foreign countries. In the 2017-2018 and 2019-2020 cycles, WPAi's polling and analytics plotted the course for multiple winning Senate, Governor, and House campaigns.

WPAi's data and analytics continue to lead the industry. In the 2016 Republican Primary for President, arguably the most unprecedented presidential contest by way of turnout and political environment volatility, WPAi accurately projected turnout and the ballot score in 42 states using predictive analytics. In 2018, our predictive analytics tools were a key element of the RNC Voter Scores program and predicted the margins in numerous races with unmatched accuracy. Again in 2020, WPAi had unparalleled accuracy helping propel several candidates to victory in U.S. House and Senate elections.

WPAi has been nationally recognized for providing cutting-edge intelligence to help our clients win. The American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC) awarded WPAi "Pollies" for our Predictive Analytics and Adaptive Sampling techniques and our groundbreaking, data-focused social media application "Leonardo." For our work in 2018, WPAi received "Reed Awards" for Best use of Data Analytics/Machine Learning, Best Use of Online Targeting for a Gubernatorial Campaign, Best New Research Technique, and Best Application of AI Technology to Optimize Targeting. In 2019, Chris Wilson, CEO, won Technology Leader of the Year by Campaigns & Elections and Matt Knee, Director of Analytics won AAPC's 40 under 40; in 2020, Trevor K. Smith, Ph.D., Research Director, won AAPC's 40 under 40 as well.