

# What Voters and Teachers Think About A+ Washington: A Way Forward For All Students

*Strategies for Improving Education in Washington*

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM A STATEWIDE SURVEY

### WASHINGTON VOTERS AND TEACHERS AGREE

A+ Washington: A Way Forward for All Students was developed by Excellent Schools Now (ESN), a statewide coalition of education, business and community-based organizations committed to improving Washington's education system. ESN believes we can ensure that every student starts school ready to learn, graduates from high school prepared for college, and earns a degree that prepares them to succeed in life.

In January 2012, in order to determine where the public stands on key education issues, ESN polled 500 registered voters and 500 public school teachers in Washington. The results are clear. Washington voters and teachers support A+ Washington: A Way Forward For All Students. You can learn more about the A+ Washington Plan at [www.apluswashington.org](http://www.apluswashington.org)

### KEY FINDINGS:

**93% of voters and 74% of teachers agree:** Principals should be able to hire teachers in their schools based on performance and skills match, not seniority.

**90% of voters and 59% of teachers agree:** Teachers and principals should be compensated for their knowledge, skills, and performance, not just based on seniority and graduate degrees.

**82% of voters and 70% of teachers agree:** Washington should use new data tools to determine which schools are not serving our students well, and be able to transform those schools that are chronic underperformers with additional support and technical assistance.

**74% of voters and 81% of teachers agree:** Access to pre-kindergarten should be expanded so all students start school ready to learn and read and do arithmetic by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

**86% of voters and 71% of teachers agree:** Teachers and school leaders who have been given intensive professional development, coaching, and support but who consistently fail to provide their students a quality education should be removed from the classroom.

**88% of voters and 94% of teachers agree:** Teacher and school leader evaluations should be based on multiple measures, not just student achievement.

**81% of voters and 79% of teachers agree:** Teachers' and principals' professional development activities should be aligned with individualized needs as determined in their performance evaluations.

**89% of voters and 68% of teachers agree:** Teachers and principals should be granted continuing contracts based on knowledge, skills, and performance as determined by evaluations, not just on seniority.

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**80% of voters and 61% of teachers agree:** Washington's K-12 public education system needs to provide financial and student performance data that makes it easy for educators, parents, and taxpayers to hold schools and school districts accountable and determine support needed to improve.

**78% of voters and 79% of teachers agree:** In these economic times, it is critical that our state prioritize funding for policies that help students including mentoring for beginning teachers, full-day kindergarten, core state standards, and an educator evaluation system that measures student growth and provides teachers and principals the help they need.

**93% of voters and 95% of teachers agree:** Teachers and principals should have the flexibility they need in curriculum, scheduling, and staffing decisions to help individual students achieve.

**86% of voters and 84% of teachers agree:** Educators should get the training and professional development they need to understand and trust an evaluation system that uses multiple measure of student growth.

## **OTHER KEY FINDINGS:**

**76% of voters and 46% of teachers agree:** Washington should adopt policies that are successful in other states, including increasing the number of high-quality alternate options like public charter schools and technical schools, to meet the needs of students in low-performing schools.

**You can learn more about the A+ Washington Plan at [www.apluswashington.org](http://www.apluswashington.org). Also, follow us on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/APlusWA](https://www.twitter.com/APlusWA)).**

### **About Excellent Schools Now:**

*Excellent Schools Now is a coalition of education, business and community-based organizations in Washington State working to achieve meaningful education reform that increases student achievement, closes the achievement gap and prepares students to be college and career-ready.*

*Excellent Schools Now Coalition currently includes the following members: Alliance for Education, America's Edge, ArtsEd Washington, Black Collective, Black Education Strategy Roundtable, Coalition for Equal Education Rights, College & Work Ready Agenda, College Spark, College Success Foundation, Democrats for Education Reform (Washington Chapter), Executive Council for a Greater Tacoma, Invest in Youth, King County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, League of Education Voters, New Futures, Pacific Science Center, Partnership for Learning, Powerful Schools, Rainier Scholars, Seattle Biomedical Research Institute, Seattle Breakfast Group, Schools Out Washington, Social Venture Partners, Spokane Library Ladies, Stand for Children, Students for Education Reform – Whitworth Chapter, Tabor 100, Teachers United, Technology Access Foundation, Technology Alliance, Washington Alliance of Black School Educators, Washington Biotechnology & Biomedical Association, Washington Coalition for School Libraries and Information Technology, Washington Global Health Alliance, Washington Roundtable and Washington Technology Industry Association. Our goal is to achieve meaningful education reform that increases student achievement, closes the achievement gap and prepares students to be college and career-ready ([www.excellentschoolsnow.org](http://www.excellentschoolsnow.org)).*

*About the Sample Size: 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, voters or teachers in Washington). For a sample size of 500, the margin of error is +/- 4.4%, at the 95% confidence level.*

*About DHM Research: Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall, Inc. has been providing opinion research and consultation throughout the Pacific Northwest and other regions for over three decades. The firm is non-partisan and independent and specializes in research projects to support public policy making.*