

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: EVITARUS

DATE: March 13, 2024

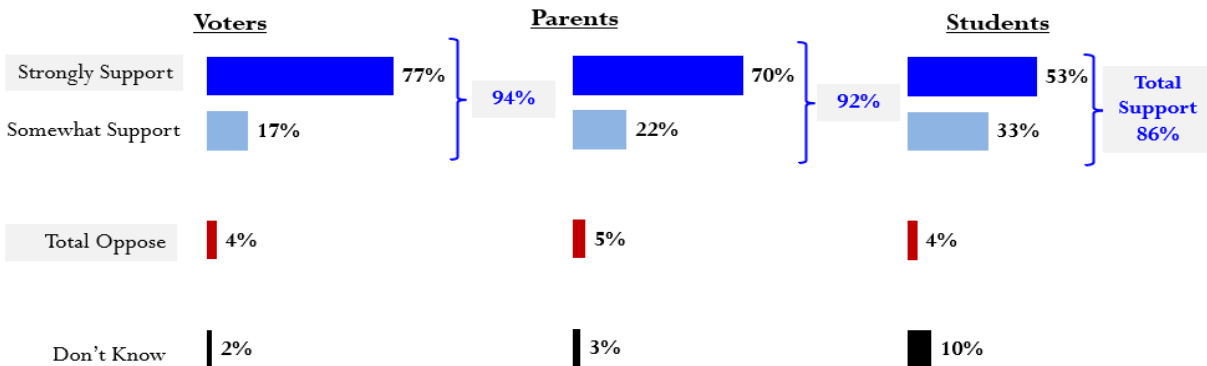
RE: Key Findings – Los Angeles County Education Issues Survey

From November 20, 2023–January 21, 2024, EVITARUS conducted three (3) online surveys among Los Angeles County voters, parents, and high school students to assess attitudes toward pressing issues facing the County, the quality of education in Los Angeles public high schools, and attitudes toward expanding local opportunities for young people to learn about skilled trades education in public high schools.¹

The survey research results demonstrate that voters, parents, and high school students strongly support the expansion of skilled trades education in Los Angeles public high schools, including more than three-quarters (77%) of voters and a comparable share of parents (70%), as shown in the figure below. A strong majority (84%) of students also support expansion.

A Majority of Voters, Parents, and High School Students Support the Expansion of Skilled Trades Education in Los Angeles County High Schools

Q: Do you support or oppose the expansion of skilled trades programs in Los Angeles high schools?

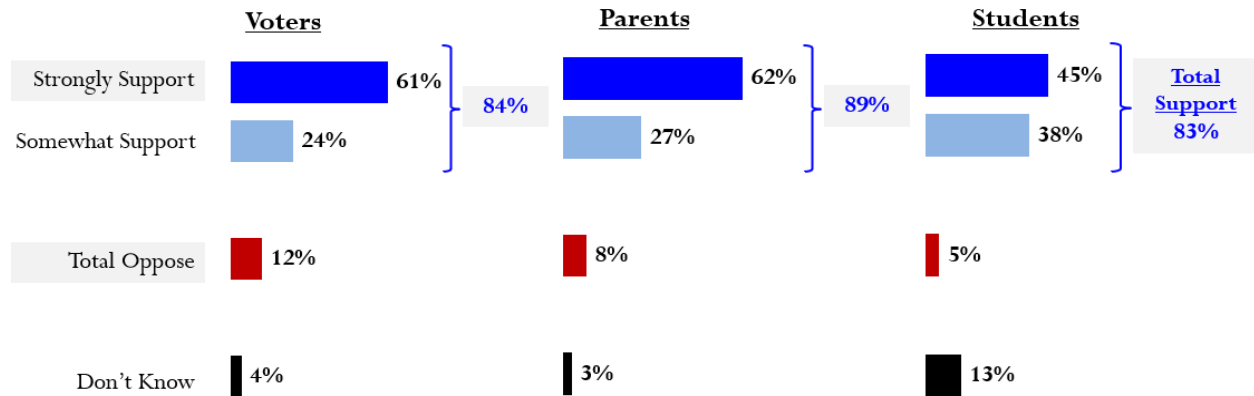


¹ Between November 20 and January 21, 2024, EVITARUS conducted online surveys among Los Angeles County voters (n=400), parents of high school students (n=495), and high school students (n=258). The voter survey sample represents a random sample of Los Angeles County registered voters and is associated with a margin of sample error of ±4.9% at the 95% confidence level. The parent survey sample was drawn using a combination of address-based sampling and recruitment through community-based non-profit youth-serving organizations in Los Angeles County and has been weighted to reflect the distribution of Los Angeles County parents by gender, ethnicity, and region. The student survey sample was recruited through community-based non-profit youth-serving organizations in Los Angeles County, with a concentrated focus on South Los Angeles. A full description of the survey methodology can be found at the conclusion of this memorandum.

Likewise, **survey respondents strongly support increasing funding for skilled trades programs.** More than eight-in-ten voters (84%), parents (89%), and students (83%) support increasing state and local funding for programs to train high school students in skilled trades.

A Majority of Voters, Parents, and High School Students Support Increasing Funding for Skilled Trades Education

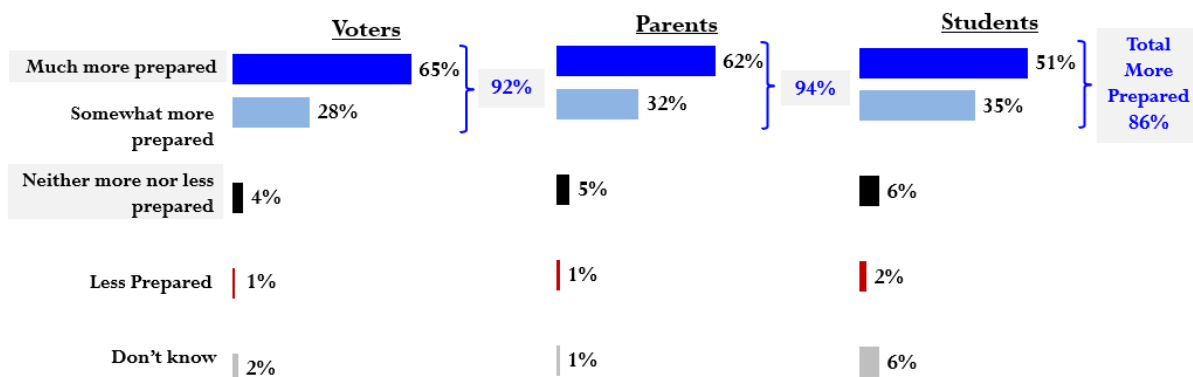
Q: Do you support or oppose increasing state and local funding programs to train high school students and others in the skilled trades?



High levels of support for skilled trades likely stems from the value voters, parents, and students ascribe to skilled trades careers and the opportunity skilled trades education can provide to students in terms of building practical real-world skills and preparing for a career. More than three-quarters of voters, parents, and students believe it is “very important” for local high schools to prepare students for jobs and careers of the future and more than three in five say it is very important for high schools to offer classes in professional trades. Situated alongside this finding is the fact that **more than 80% of voters, parents, and high school students agree that skilled trades classes will make students more prepared for a career, and seven in ten or more agree that skilled trades education can help prepare students for college.**

Voters, Parents, and Students Believe That Skilled Trades Will Make Students Better Prepared for Careers

Q: Would having more opportunities to study the skilled trades in high school make students more or less prepared for a career?



While preparation for skilled trades careers and careers that require a four-year college degree may have traditionally been viewed as distinctive, if not mutually exclusive, pathways, **the survey research suggests that voters, parents, and students view skilled trades as holding value for all students**—both college and non-college bound. In fact, voters, parents, and students each largely reject the idea that training in skilled trades is not for college-bound students.

Voters, Parents, and Students Agree That Skilled Trades Education Can Help Students Prepare for College

*Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

	Percent Rating Each As "Total Agree"		
	Voters	Parents	Students
Skilled trades classes will provide better access to a good job	91	91	88
There will always be work for those in skilled trades.	90	81	80
Skilled trades education can help students prepare for college	70	87	76
Training in skilled trades is not for college bound students	30	24	39

*All numbers are percentages.

Among voters and parents, **high levels of support for expanding skilled trades education in Los Angeles County public high schools is also linked to the fact that training in skilled trades has largely disappeared** from most local high schools. Nearly two-thirds of voters and parents identify this fact as a highly compelling reason to support the expansion of skilled trades education. They also identify the fact that development projects, such as the construction of SoFi Stadium, have required that Los Angeles bring in construction workers from across the country to build the stadium—as a “very convincing” reason to expand skilled trades education locally so that young people can have access to access to good paying, in-demand jobs in their own community.

Among students, a majority identify the opportunity to explore their interests, acquire real-world skills, and potentially find hobbies that could turn into careers as a convincing reason to expand skilled trades—along with information about the pay and benefits associated with skilled trades. **Notably, after learning more about skilled trades, seven in ten students (70%) say that they would consider taking a skilled trades class if such classes were offered at their high school.** An additional 7% of students reported that they had already taken a skilled trades class, suggesting a high level of demand for these courses.

Nearly 7 in 10 LA County Public High School Students Say They Would Consider Taking a Skilled Trades Class If Offered at Their High School

Q: Would you consider taking a skilled trades class if your high school offered them?



Taken together, the results of the surveys make clear that voters, parents, and students believe it is highly important for Los Angeles County high schools to expand skilled trades education. They view this expansion as squarely in-line with the role of high schools in preparing students for jobs and careers of the future, and believe skilled trades education provides an opportunity for all students to learn valuable real-world skills that will better prepare them for life after graduation.

METHODOLOGY

From November 20, 2023–January 21, 2024, EVITARUS conducted three (3) online surveys among Los Angeles County voters, parents, and high school students. The surveys were designed to assess attitudes towards local high school performance, opportunities for young people, and the viability of expanding skilled trades classes in public high schools.

The research was designed with an intentional focus on, and consideration of, the perspectives of students and parents from backgrounds disproportionately impacted by inequities in our education system. Namely, the fact that, as a function of historical and present-day structural inequities, a persistent achievement gap, across a broad range of indicators, exists among students from Black and Latino backgrounds compared to students from White and Asian American backgrounds. A substantial body of research suggests that this gap grew, and was exacerbated by, the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, scholarship has demonstrated that racial, school-based segregation and educational tracking—the organization of students for instruction into different, and typically low vs. high-quality, curricular paths—was specifically designed to harm Black and Latino students.² With these considerations in mind, the research design incorporated outreach to, and engagement with, Los Angeles-based, youth-serving non-profit organizations, who reviewed research instruments and supported parent and student research participant recruitment.

² McCardle, Todd (2020). "A Critical Historical Examination of Tracking as a Method for Maintaining Racial Segregation," *Educational Considerations*: Vol. 45: No. 2. <https://doi.org/10.4148/0146-9282.2186>

The surveys included:

- **400 Los Angeles County Registered Voters**—selected at random from the Los Angeles County file of registered voters. The Margin of Sampling Error (MOE) is +/- 4.90%.
- **495 parents of students attending Los Angeles County public high schools**—recruited through non-profit community-based partner organizations that serve Los Angeles County youth and address-based sampling (ABS). The results of the survey were weighted to reflect the population of Los Angeles County public school parents by gender, ethnicity, and region.
- **258 high school students** attending Los Angeles County public high schools and recruited through non-profit community-based partner organizations that serve Los Angeles County youth.