

Illinois Voters Voice Strong Support for Civic Education Requirements

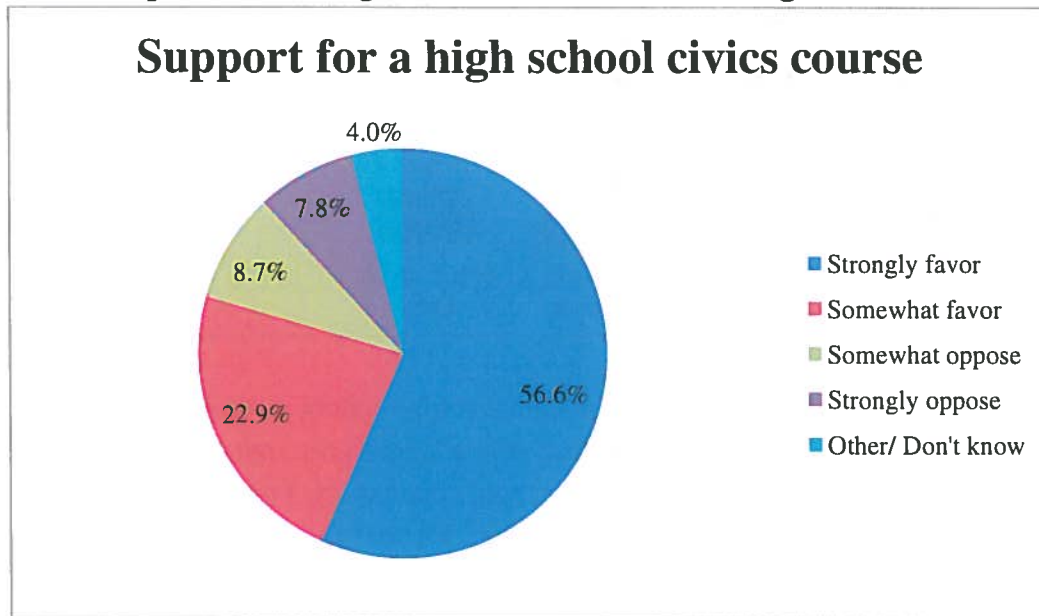
Written by:

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The Paul Simon Public Policy Institute (PSPPI) conducted its annual statewide poll from September 23 through October 15, 2014. The poll included three questions pertaining to civic education which mirror recommendations of the Illinois Task Force on Civic Education that would require legislative action by the Illinois General Assembly. They encompass a required civics or government course for high school graduation, along with student service projects in both middle and high school.

Based on a poll of 1,006 registered voters across Illinois, and with a margin of error of plus or minus three-percent, PSPPI found broad support for these recommended civic education requirements. The high school civics course polled best, with more than three-quarters of respondents favoring it strongly (56.6%; see Figure 1) or somewhat (22.9%).

Figure 1: Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois high school students to take or pass a civics or government course in order to graduate?

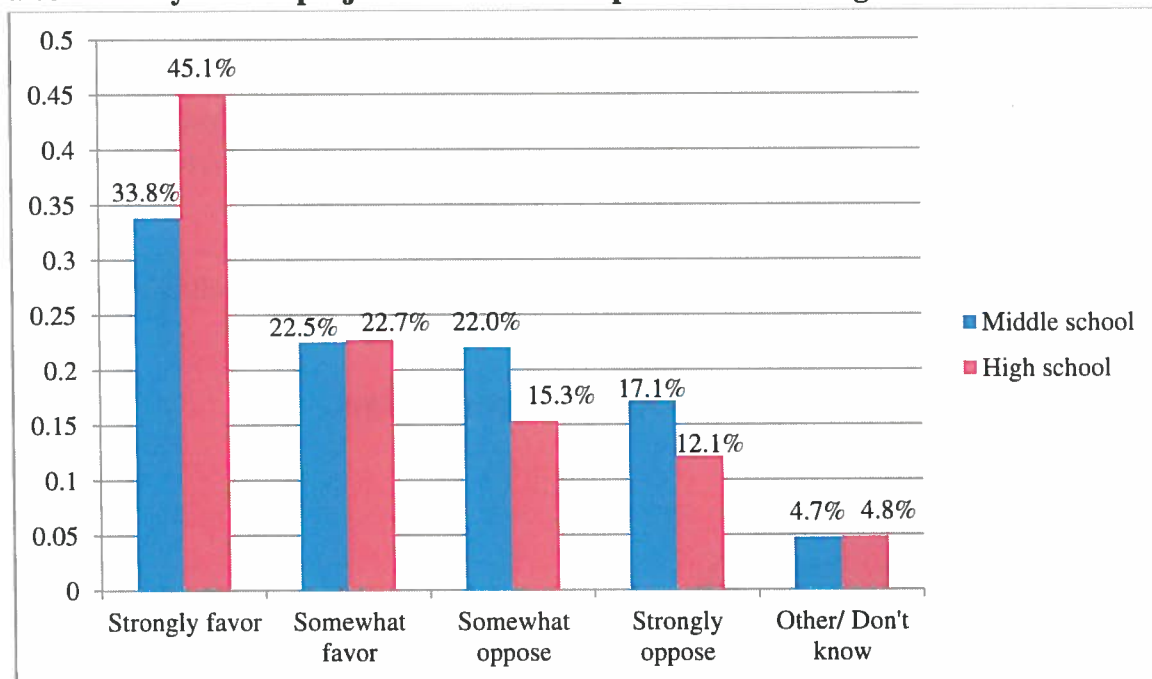


Support for a required civics course grew with the age of survey participants, from a low of 52.8% who strongly favored it among those 35 or younger to a high of 60.3% among those 66 and older. While support was highest among white participants (60.7% strongly favored), it fell slightly among Hispanics (56.2%), and significantly among blacks (39.0%).

Support was strong across the political spectrum, but increased when moving from liberal (53.9%) to moderate (58.3%) to conservative (61.2%). Similarly, Republicans (64.3%) were more likely to show strong support than independents (56.3%) or Democrats (53.1%).

More than two-thirds of survey respondents strongly (45.1%; see Figure 2) or somewhat (22.7%) favored a required service project for high school graduation. Support fell slightly for a similar requirement at the middle school level (33.8% favored strongly and 22.5% somewhat).

Figure 2: Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois students to complete a community service project in order to complete middle or high school?



Hispanic respondents showed the most support for middle and high school service requirements. Nearly seven-in-ten (69.6%) Hispanics surveyed voiced strong support for high school service and 60.9% expressed similar sentiments for its middle school counterpart. This compares with 42.0% and 32.9%, respectively, for whites, and 48.6% and 32.9% for blacks.

Support for a high school service requirement was highest in Chicago (52.0% strongly support) and its suburbs (48.9%), falling significantly downstate (34.3%). Similar, although less pronounced, trends held for middle school. The ideological and partisan breakdown of support for both middle and high school service requirements was counter to trends for the civics course. For example, liberals (50.3%) and Democrats (49.0%) were more likely to strongly favor a high school service requirement than conservatives (37.6%) and Republicans (38.7%).

Complete statistical results and survey methodologies follow.

Civic Education Questions

Paul Simon Public Policy Institute Statewide Poll • Fall 2014

Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois high school students to take and pass a civics or government course in order to graduate?

<u>Response</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
Strongly favor	56.6%
Somewhat favor	22.9%
Somewhat oppose	8.7%
Strongly oppose	7.8%
Other/Don't know	4.0%

Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois high school students to complete a community service project in order to graduate?

<u>Response</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
Strongly favor	45.1%
Somewhat favor	22.7%
Somewhat oppose	15.3%
Strongly oppose	12.1%
Other/Don't know	4.8%

Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois middle school students to complete a community service project in order to graduate?

<u>Response</u>	<u>Percent Responding</u>
Strongly favor	33.8%
Somewhat favor	22.5%
Somewhat oppose	22.0%
Strongly oppose	17.1%
Other/Don't know	4.7%

The Simon Institute Poll interviewed 1,006 registered voters across Illinois. It has a margin for error of plus or minus 3 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that if we were to conduct the survey 100 times, in 95 of those instances the results would vary by no more than plus or minus 3 points from the results obtained here.

Live telephone interviews were conducted by Customer Research International of San Marcos, Texas. Cell phone interviews accounted for 30 percent of the sample. A Spanish language version of the questionnaire and a Spanish-speaking interviewer were made available. Fieldwork was conducted from September 23 through October 15. Customer Research International reports no Illinois political clients. The survey was paid for with non-tax dollars from the Institute's endowment fund.

Note: The "Paul Simon Public Policy Institute Poll," the "Simon Poll" and the "Southern Illinois Poll" are the copyrighted trademarks of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University. Use and publication of these polls is encouraged – but only with credit to the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at SIU Carbondale.

Illinois Statewide Poll October, 2014

Table 32: 22. Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois high school students to take and pass a civics or government course in order to graduate?

	Region		Education				Ideology				Party Affiliation				Born-Again		Gender			
	Chicago		High School or Less	Some College	College +	Liberal	Mod-erate	Conser-vative	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	Non-Chris-tian	Male	Female				
	City	Suburbs															Down-state	Chicago Suburbs	(A)	(B)
Base	200	503	303	219	309	469	356	276	322	478	166	269	175	549	271	502				
	106%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%				
Strongly favor	108	286	175	110	108	270	192	161	197	254	94	173	97	319	150	298				
	56.5%	54.0%	57.7%	50.2%	60.8%	57.5%	53.3%	58.3%	61.1%	53.1%	56.6%	64.3%	55.4%	58.1%	55.3%	59.3%				
Somewhat favor	51	117	62	52	55	119	91	61	63	120	37	53	41	126	59	108				
	230	25.5%	20.4%	23.7%	17.8%	25.3%	25.5%	22.1%	19.5%	25.1%	22.2%	19.7%	23.4%	22.9%	21.7%	21.5%				
Somewhat oppose	16	45	26	22	23	41	35	19	29	44	16	22	13	42	31	41				
	8.6%	8.0%	8.5%	10.0%	7.4%	8.7%	9.8%	6.8%	9.0%	9.2%	9.6%	8.1%	7.4%	7.6%	11.4%	8.1%				
Strongly oppose	14	37	27	27	26	23	25	22	24	41	9	16	15	40	20	39				
	7.7%	7.0%	8.9%	12.3%	8.4%	4.9%	7.0%	7.9%	7.4%	8.5%	5.4%	5.9%	8.5%	7.2%	7.3%	7.7%				
(OTHER/DON'T KNOW)	11	18	13	8	17	16	13	13	9	19	10	5	9	22	11	16				
	4.1%	5.5%	4.2%	3.6%	5.5%	3.4%	3.6%	4.7%	2.8%	3.9%	6.0%	1.8%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	5.1%				
Mean	1.66	1.66	1.67	1.84	1.61	1.60	1.69	1.63	1.62	1.72	1.62	1.55	1.67	1.63	1.70	1.63				

- An uppercase letter denotes statistical significance at alpha = .01 level
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Illinois Statewide Poll October, 2014

Table 32b: 22. Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois high school students to take and pass a civics or government course in order to graduate?

	Age										Race				Income				Employment				Company Type
	<35		35-50		51-65		66+		White	Black	Hispanic	Other	<\$50k	\$50k-\$100k	\$100k+	Full-Time	Part-Time	Retired	Not employed	Private	Gov./Non-Profit		
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)	(K)	(L)	(M)	(N)	(O)	(P)	(Q)	(R)	(S)	(T)	(U)		
Base	1006	127	217	305	307	709	146	46	58	291	291	418	114	338	118	567	254						
		(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)	(L)	(M)	(N)	(O)	(P)	(Q)						
Strongly favor	569	67	118	175	185	430	57	26	32	156	162	236	54	202	68	338	131						
	56.56%	52.76%	54.30%	57.38%	60.26%	60.65%	39.04%	56.52%	55.17%	62.54%	55.95%	56.46%	47.37%	59.76%	57.63%	59.61%	51.57%						
							F	f	f	j	i		n	m		q	p						
Somewhat favor	230	28	61	69	59	158	37	9	15	65	60	107	33	64	21	126	63						
	22.86%	22.05%	28.11%	22.62%	19.22%	22.28%	25.34%	19.57%	25.86%	22.34%	20.62%	25.60%	28.95%	18.93%	17.80%	22.22%	24.80%						
			d		b					k		n	no	lm	m								
Somewhat oppose	87	15	16	37	25	59	16	5	5	32	23	31	13	29	11	45	25						
	8.65%	11.01%	7.37%	8.85%	8.14%	8.32%	10.96%	10.87%	8.62%	11.00%	7.90%	7.42%	11.40%	8.58%	9.32%	7.94%	9.84%						
Strongly oppose	78	12	15	22	26	37	27	4	5	27	16	26	9	28	14	35	22						
	7.75%	9.45%	6.91%	7.23%	8.47%	5.22%	18.49%	8.70%	8.62%	9.28%	5.50%	6.22%	7.89%	8.28%	11.86%	6.17%	8.66%						
						F	E			k		c			i								
(OTHER/DON'T KNOW)	42	5	7	12	12	25	9	2	1	11	10	18	5	15	4	23	13						
	4.17%	3.94%	3.23%	3.93%	3.91%	3.53%	6.16%	4.35%	1.72%	3.78%	3.44%	4.31%	4.39%	4.44%	3.39%	4.06%	5.12%						
Mean	1.66	1.77	1.66	1.65	1.63	1.57	2.09	1.70	1.70	1.75	1.55	1.62	1.79	1.64	1.75	1.59	1.74						

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Illinois Statewide Poll October, 2014

Table 33: 23. Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois high school students to complete a community service project in order to graduate?

	Region			Education			Ideology			Party Affiliation			Born-Again		Gender	
	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate	High School or Less	Some College	College +	Liberal	Mod-erate	Conser-vative	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	Male	Female
Base	1006	200 (A)	303 (B)	219 (C)	309 (D)	469 (E)	356 (F)	276 (G)	322 (H)	478 (I)	166 (J)	269 (K)	175 (L)	549 (M)	271 (N)	504 (O)
Strongly favor	454	104	246	98	145	208	179	136	121	234	78	104	79	247	212	242
	45.13%	52.00%	48.91%	44.75%	46.93%	44.35%	50.28%	49.28%	37.58%	48.95%	46.99%	38.66%	45.14%	44.99%	42.23%	48.02%
Somewhat favor	228	46	113	69	70	119	81	62	71	105	36	66	34	123	113	115
	22.66%	23.00%	22.77%	17.35%	22.65%	25.37%	22.75%	22.46%	22.05%	21.97%	21.69%	24.54%	19.43%	22.40%	22.51%	22.82%
Somewhat oppose	154	27	71	56	39	85	51	34	62	64	28	47	29	86	77	77
	15.31%	13.50%	14.12%	13.24%	12.63%	18.12%	14.33%	12.32%	19.25%	13.39%	16.87%	17.47%	16.57%	15.66%	14.02%	15.28%
Strongly oppose	122	18	49	43	40	37	30	28	54	53	18	40	26	62	78	44
	12.13%	9.00%	9.74%	19.63%	12.94%	7.89%	8.43%	10.14%	16.77%	11.09%	10.84%	14.87%	14.86%	11.29%	11.07%	6.73%
(OTHER/DONT KNOW)	48	5	24	11	15	20	15	16	14	22	6	12	7	31	22	26
	4.77%	2.50%	4.77%	5.02%	4.85%	4.26%	4.21%	5.80%	4.35%	4.60%	3.61%	4.46%	4.00%	5.65%	4.38%	5.16%
Mean	1.94	1.79	1.84	2.22	2.08	1.91	1.89	1.80	2.16	1.86	1.91	2.09	2.01	1.93	1.89	1.84

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Illinois Statewide Poll October, 2014

Table 33b: 23. Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois high school students to complete a community service project in order to graduate?

	Age										Race					Income					Employment					Company Type										
	35-50		51-65		66+		White		Black		Hispanic		<\$50k		\$50k-\$100k		\$100k+		Full-Time		Part-Time		Retired		Not employed		Private		Gov./Non-Profit							
	n	(A)	n	(B)	n	(C)	n	(D)	n	(E)	n	(F)	n	(G)	n	(H)	n	(I)	n	(J)	n	(K)	n	(L)	n		(M)	n	(N)	n	(O)	n	(P)	n	(Q)	
Base	1005	127	217	305	307	709	146	45	58	291	291	227	418	114	338	118	567	254																		
Strongly favor	454	59	104	150	127	298	71	32	28	131	134	111	201	53	131	62	258	111																		
	45.1%	46.4%	47.9%	49.1%	41.3%	42.0%	48.6%	69.5%	48.2%	45.0%	46.0%	48.9%	48.0%	46.4%	38.7%	52.5%	45.5%	43.7%																		
Somewhat favor	228	34	53	71	60	176	25	7	13	66	69	51	93	28	76	25	130	56																		
	22.6%	26.7%	24.4%	23.2%	19.5%	24.8%	17.1%	15.2%	22.4%	22.6%	23.7%	22.4%	22.2%	24.5%	22.4%	21.1%	22.8%	22.0%																		
Somewhat oppose	154	15	36	41	54	118	22	2	7	42	44	39	61	19	56	16	83	46																		
	15.3%	11.8%	16.5%	13.4%	17.5%	16.6%	15.0%	4.3%	12.0%	14.4%	15.1%	17.1%	14.5%	16.6%	16.5%	13.5%	14.6%	18.1%																		
Strongly oppose	122	17	21	27	47	81	22	4	9	45	29	18	41	11	54	13	68	29																		
	12.1%	13.3%	9.6%	8.9%	15.3%	11.4%	15.0%	8.7%	15.5%	15.4%	9.9%	7.9%	9.8%	9.5%	15.9%	11.0%	11.9%	11.4%																		
(OTHER/DON'T KNOW)	48	2	3	16	19	36	6	1	1	7	15	8	22	3	21	2	28	12																		
	4.7%	1.5%	1.3%	5.2%	6.1%	5.0%	4.1%	2.1%	1.7%	2.4%	5.1%	3.5%	5.2%	2.6%	6.2%	1.6%	4.9%	4.7%																		
Mean	1.94	1.92	1.88	1.81	2.07	1.97	1.96	1.51	1.95	2.00	1.86	1.84	1.85	1.69	2.10	1.83	1.93	1.97																		

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Illinois Statewide Poll October, 2014

Table 34: 24. Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois middle school students to complete a community service project in order to graduate?

	Region			Education			Ideology			Party Affiliation			Born-Again		Gender			
	Total	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Down-state	High School or Less	Some College	College +	Liberal	Mod-erate	Conser-vative	Dem	Ind	Rep	Yes	No	Non-Chris-tian	Male	Female
Base	1006	200 (A)	503 (B)	303 (C)	210 (D)	309 (E)	469 (F)	356 (G)	276 (H)	322 (I)	478 (J)	166 (K)	269 (L)	175 (M)	540 (N)	271 (O)	502 (P)	504 (Q)
Strongly favor	340 33.80%	81 40.50%	172 34.39%	86 28.38%	81 36.95%	107 34.63%	150 31.90%	137 36.48%	106 38.41%	85 26.40%	180 37.66%	51 30.72%	80 29.74%	59 33.71%	177 32.24%	103 38.01%	157 31.27%	183 36.31%
Somewhat favor	226 22.47%	46 24.00%	123 24.45%	55 18.15%	40 18.26%	71 22.98%	115 24.52%	84 23.60%	54 19.57%	77 23.91%	101 21.13%	40 24.10%	62 23.05%	34 19.43%	126 22.95%	63 23.25%	113 22.51%	113 22.42%
Somewhat oppose	221 21.97%	42 21.00%	109 21.67%	70 23.10%	40 18.26%	59 19.09%	119 25.37%	71 19.94%	61 22.10%	79 24.53%	104 21.76%	36 21.69%	65 24.16%	39 22.29%	126 22.95%	54 19.93%	107 21.31%	114 22.62%
Strongly oppose	172 17.10%	24 12.00%	77 15.31%	71 23.43%	46 21.00%	59 19.09%	64 13.65%	49 13.76%	41 14.86%	68 21.12%	74 15.48%	30 18.07%	49 18.22%	35 20.00%	92 16.76%	40 14.76%	99 19.72%	73 14.48%
(OTHER/DON'T KNOW)	47 4.67%	5 2.50%	21 4.17%	21 6.93%	12 5.48%	13 4.21%	21 4.48%	15 4.21%	14 5.07%	13 4.04%	19 3.97%	9 5.42%	13 4.83%	8 4.57%	28 5.10%	11 4.06%	26 5.18%	21 4.17%
Mean	2.23	2.05	2.19	2.45	2.25	2.24	2.22	2.09	2.14	2.42	2.16	2.29	2.32	2.30	2.26	2.12	2.31	2.16

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Illinois Statewide Poll October, 2014

Table 34b: 24. Would you favor or oppose a proposal to require all Illinois middle school students to complete a community service project in order to graduate?

	Age						Race			Income				Employment				Company Type														
	<35		35-50		51-65		66+		White	Black	Hispanic	<\$50k		\$50k-\$100k		\$100k+			Full-Time	Part-Time	Retired	Not employed	Private	Gov./Non-Profit								
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n		%	n	%	n	%	n	%							
Base	1006	100%	217	21%	305	30%	307	31%	709	70%	146	15%	46	5%	58	6%	291	29%	227	23%	418	41%	114	11%	338	34%	118	12%	567	57%	254	25%
Strongly favor	340	33.8%	46	21%	80	26%	102	33%	233	33%	48	14%	28	8%	19	6%	110	31%	79	23%	143	40%	46	13%	98	28%	47	14%	190	56%	83	25%
Somewhat favor	226	22.4%	30	14%	56	25%	77	24%	163	23%	28	8%	6	2%	16	5%	60	17%	58	17%	103	29%	23	7%	72	21%	23	7%	136	40%	51	15%
Somewhat oppose	221	21.9%	30	14%	44	20%	64	20%	168	24%	30	9%	5	1%	10	3%	58	17%	53	16%	87	24%	28	8%	77	23%	26	8%	119	36%	62	19%
Strongly oppose	172	17.1%	21	10%	32	14%	52	16%	108	15%	34	5%	6	1%	12	4%	57	16%	29	9%	69	19%	16	5%	65	19%	18	6%	98	29%	41	12%
(OTHER/DONT KNOW)	47	4.6%	0	0%	5	2%	14	4%	37	5%	6	1%	1	0%	1	0%	14	4%	8	2%	16	4%	1	0%	1	0%	4	1%	24	7%	17	5%
Mean	2.23		2.20		2.13		2.24		2.22		2.36		1.76		2.26		2.22		2.15		2.20		2.12		2.35		2.13		2.23		2.26	

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