

MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Global Strategy Group
RE: Survey of New Haven Voters
DATE: 01.07.14

For the first time in more than two decades, New Haven has a new mayor in Toni Harp. A voting member of the New Haven Board of Education, Harp has a great opportunity to build on investments in education that are working for the city's children. Voters are committed to continued improvements to education so that all students have the opportunity to attend high-quality schools that will prepare them for future success, according to a recent survey of 400 registered voters in New Haven conducted by Global Strategy Group between December 10 and December 12, 2013. The margin of error of the survey at the 95% confidence level is +/- 4.9%.

Key findings include:

- **New Haven voters have a strong desire to continue efforts to improve the city's schools.** They almost universally favor continuing efforts to improve schools (96% support/2% oppose), including nearly 8 in 10 who strongly support continued improvements. Support crosses demographic lines as men and women (96% support), younger and older voters (98%/92%), white and non-white voters (92%/99%), and parents of school-age children and non-parents (97%/96%) seek to build on the progress of recent years.
- **New Haven voters fundamentally believe we must create a public education system that gives all students the opportunity to succeed.** Three-quarters (75%) of voters believe that improving education is important because students in New Haven should have an equal opportunity to succeed and that success should not just be limited to those who can afford it.
- **New Haven voters want to give students more opportunity by expanding early childhood education and making school funding fairer.** Voters favor both expanding early childhood education (including universal pre-kindergarten), where participation has been shown to be an early predictor of success (68% say this is an "excellent" idea and 77% say will do "a lot" to improve education), and ensuring that school funding is fairer so New Haven students receive the same amount of funding as students in wealthier school districts (57% "excellent" idea/74% will do "a lot").
- **New Haven voters believe that parents should have more options so they can find the right school where their children can thrive.** Giving parents more access to public school options, including traditional public schools, magnet schools, and charter schools, is also seen as a crucial step for improving education (41% "excellent" idea/60% will do "a lot"). Voters are favorable towards charter schools (57% favorable/19% unfavorable) and a majority (54%) view charters as places that provide opportunity to receive a high-quality education. This positive outlook on charters is even more common among parents (64% provide opportunity/22% drain resources) and non-white voters (60% provide opportunity/26% drain resources).

- **New Haven voters believe that supporting and retaining the very best teachers is critical to ensuring students' success.** Voters think that great teachers can make a big difference in a child's life and poor teachers can stifle a child's ability to learn, with over two-thirds (67%) believing it is essential to continue improving education by both holding teachers accountable for their performance and developing those teachers who deliver for New Haven's students.