



Alberta Teachers' Association  
**March 2017 Tracking Survey**

**ENVIRONICS**  
RESEARCH

## Methodology

This report presents the findings of a telephone survey conducted among 805 adult Albertans interviewed during the period from March 6 to 14, 2017. The margin of error for a sample of 805 is plus or minus 3.4 percentage points (at the 95% confidence level).

The sampling method was designed to complete 800 interviews within households randomly selected across the province. The sample was disproportionate, with smaller cities and rural areas oversampled to permit meaningful statistical analysis. Respondents within each household contacted by landline were screened for random selection using the “most recent birthday” method. In this wave of the tracking survey, cell phone sample was also included (25% of sample). The data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample’s regional, age and gender composition reflects that of the actual Alberta population according to the most recently available Census information (2011).

*In this report, results are expressed as percentages unless otherwise noted. Results may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses.*

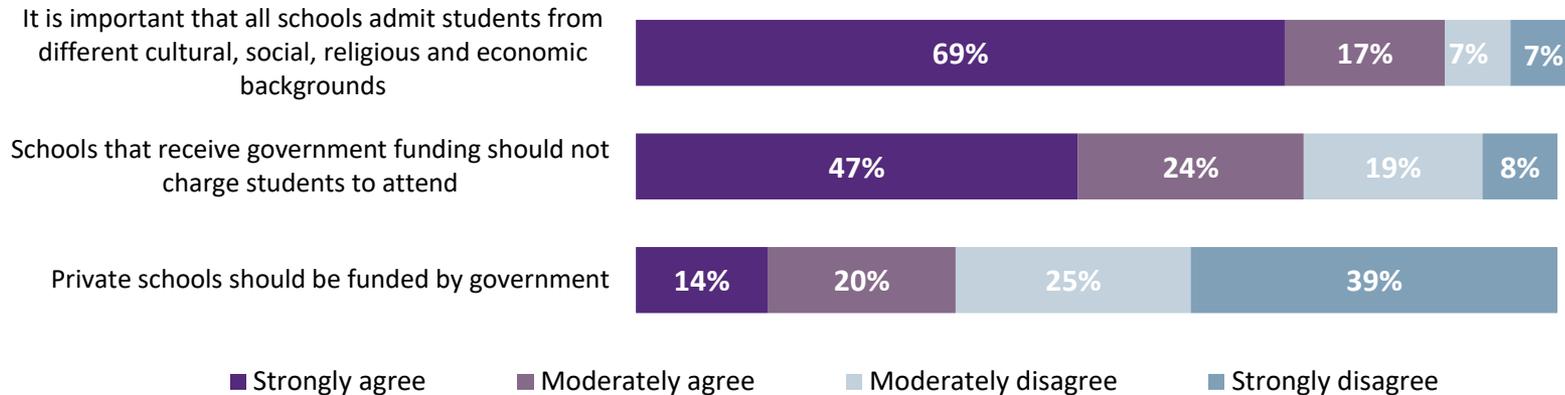


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## Perspectives on public and private schooling

# Majorities continue to support school diversity, do not think schools receiving public funds should charge, and disagree with public funding of private education

## Agreement with statements about school diversity



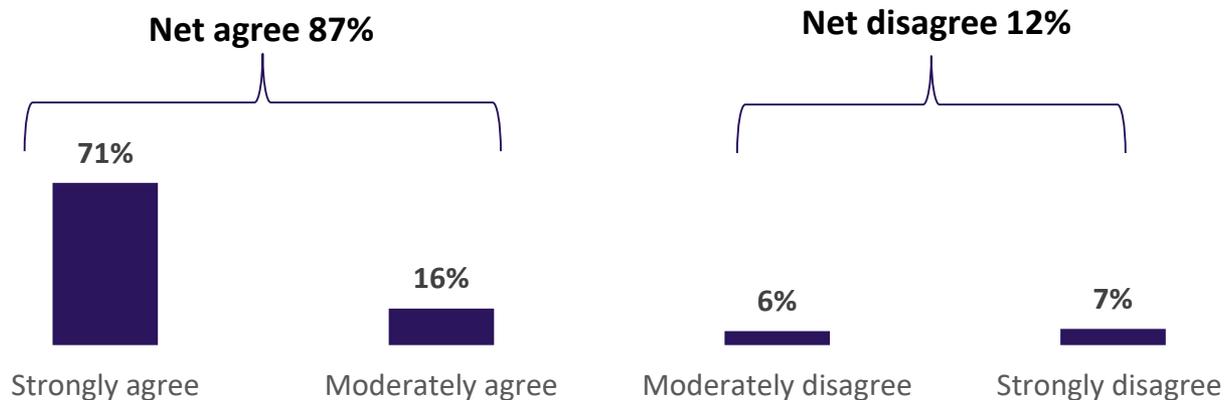
Strong majorities of Albertans continue to agree to some extent that schools in the province should admit a range of students (86%, down 2 points). Seven in ten agree that schools receiving government funding should not charge students to attend, a decrease of seven points from June 2016. Only a minority of one-third agree to some extent that private schools should be government funded.

Level of agreement with these statements is generally similar across subgroups. Agreement with statements about diversity and not charging students are higher among women and those age 30 to 44. Strong support for government funding of private schools is still a minority, but greater among, those with a child in K-6 (24%), women (18%), and those with high school or less education (19%).

Q: In Alberta, parents have a choice of public or private schooling for their children. Would you say that you strongly agree, moderately agree, moderately disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements related to public and private schooling?

# Albertans strongly feel that school receiving government funding should be required to be inclusive

**Agreement for the statement “Schools that receive government funds should be required to accept all students, regardless of cultural, social, religious or economic background”**



Albertans were read a new statement in this wave: “Schools that receive government funds should be required to accept all students, regardless of cultural, social, religious or economic background.” A strong majority of close to nine in ten (87%) agrees to some extent with this view, including seven in ten who agree strongly. One in ten disagrees to some extent.

Agreement is the dominant view across the province and all subgroups. It is marginally higher in smaller communities of 25,000 or less (88%) than in larger ones (81%), and among younger Albertans (96% age 18 to 29, 92% age 30 to 44) than older ones (80%-82% age 45 and older).

Q: In Alberta, parents have a choice of public or private schooling for their children. Would you say that you strongly agree, moderately agree, moderately disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements related to public and private schooling?

# Close to six in ten Albertans think the government provides too much operational funding to private schools

## Opinion about the operational funding Alberta provides to private schools



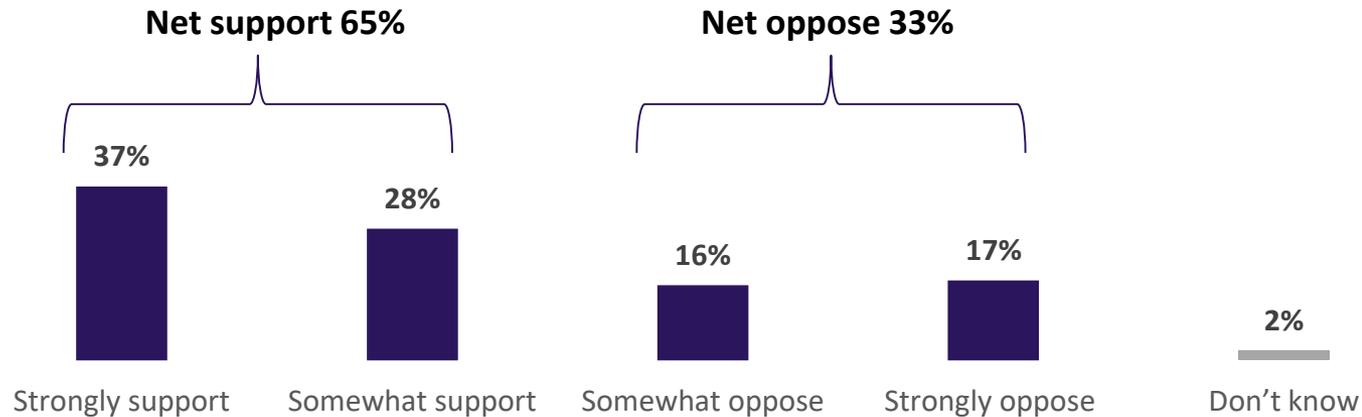
Albertans were given information about the funding of private schools in other provinces, and then told that private schools in Alberta receive 70 percent of the operational funding provided to public schools. Given this information, close to six in ten think Alberta is overfunding private schools; one-third think the funding balance is right, and just under one in ten think private schools should be getting more.

Feeling private schools get too much funding currently is the dominant view across the province and most subgroups of the population. Thinking there is too much funding is slightly higher in Edmonton (65%) and the rural central region (73%) than elsewhere, while Calgary and small cities are the areas with the highest proportions feeling the current funding model is about right (40% each). Saying private schools receive too much funding is also higher among those with college or higher education (63% vs, 45% with high school or less) and those with household incomes of \$80,000 or more (65% vs. 52% among those earning less (52%).

Q: *In five provinces private schools do not receive any government funding. In four provinces they receive either 50 or 60 per cent of the amount of operational funding provided to public schools. In Alberta private schools currently receive 70% of the operational funding provided to public schools. Do you feel 70 percent is too little, too much, or is this just about right?*

# Two-thirds of Albertans at least somewhat support phasing out public funding of private schools and reallocating those funds to the public education system

## Agreement that public funding for private schools should be phased out and reinvested in the public system



Two-thirds of Albertans express some level of approval for the proposal to phase out public funding of private schools and reinvest the money in the public education system; one in three strongly support this. One-third oppose this to some extent, divided equally between moderate and strong opposition; people are twice as likely to strongly support as strongly oppose this idea.

Support for the phasing out of public funding of private schools is consistent across the province and almost all population subgroups. The only group with a majority expressing opposition is the small proportion who feel the government is investing too much in public education (58% oppose).

Q: Some have suggested public funding of private schools should be phased out, with the savings directed to improving learning opportunities in the public system. Do you support or oppose this proposal? Would that be strongly or somewhat?

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403-613-5735

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