

2015 PARCA Survey Toplines
Conducted Jan. 5-21, 2015
State-wide RDD sample of Alabama, n=592
Margin of error +/- 4.03%

Weighted by race and gender to match state demographics

1. I'm going to name four big investments the state makes with your tax dollars. If you had to choose just one of them as the most important service the state provides, which one of these would it be? [Randomized]
 which one of these services would you rank as the next most important?

	Mean Rank	Percent #1
Education	1.80	49.1
Healthcare for the poor and the elderly	2.34	27.9
Public safety, including prisons and law enforcement	2.60	16.7
Highways	3.26	6.3

2. Would you be willing to pay more state taxes to prevent budget cuts in [Randomized: INSERT ITEM]? [THEREAFTER: How about [NEXT ITEM]]?

	Yes	No	No opinion
Education	63.2	37.7	6.0
Healthcare for the poor and the elderly	56.5	36.9	6.6
Public safety, including prisons and law enforcement	51.1	42.9	6.0
Highways	42.0	51.6	6.4

Education

3. Do you think there is too little, too much or enough money now being spent on education in Alabama?

	percentages
Too little	66.74
Enough	19.84
Too much	5.50
No opinion	7.92
Total	100

Key: percentages = cell percentages

4. And do you think the money that goes to education is generally being spent properly or not properly?

	percentages
Properly	21.76
Not properly	63.61
No opinion	14.63
Total	100

5. Your local government, the state, and the national government are all involved in public education. On a scale of 1 to ten, where ten represents the highest level of trust and 1 represents the lowest level, indicate how much you trust each level of government to handle school funds properly.

	Mean
Federal government	4.37
State Government	5.01
Local government	5.71

6. How well do you think Alabama public schools do compared to schools in other states? On average would you say public schools in our state perform worse than schools in most states, perform as well as schools in the average state, or do we have one of the better-performing school systems in the nation?

	percentages
worse than most	45.76
As well as average	38.61
One of best in the nation	7.56
No opinion	8.07
Total	100

7. How well funded do you think Alabama public schools are compared to schools in other states? On average would you say public schools in our state are funded at lower levels than schools in most states, funded as well as schools in the average state, or do we have one of the better-funded school systems in the nation?

	percentages
Lower than most	57.52
As well as average	25.06
One of best funded in the nation	4.07
No opinion	13.35
Total	100

8. I'm going to list some ways we spend education dollars. For each one, please tell me whether you think the state of Alabama should spend more, less, or leave funding at the current level. [Randomized]

	Spend more	Fund at current level	Spend less	No opinion
Classroom supplies	72.92	16.15	4.31	6.62
Classroom technology	71.35	15.96	4.97	7.71
Teacher salaries	70.01	16.39	4.69	8.91
Hiring more teachers	66.8	16.69	5.94	10.57
School security	64.74	22.23	5.51	7.52
Prof. development for teachers	60.55	21.73	8.92	8.80
Textbooks	56.7	23.22	10.28	9.80
Music and the arts	56.24	26.16	10.04	7.56
Pre-k classes	54.08	26.8	10.55	8.58
School counselors	48.27	30.53	12.16	9.04
School buses & transportation	39.61	43.57	7.88	8.94

9. Do you think the level of school funding makes a difference in the quality of education?

	percentages
Yes	78.74
No	17.84
No opinion	3.43
Total	100

10. If a community is too poor to fund local schools adequately, should the state government make up the difference?

	percentages
Yes	83.48
No	10.51
No opinion	6.01
Total	100

11. The State of Alabama makes sure that the combination of state and local funds going to schools reaches the minimum level that the state defines as adequate. Many communities collect additional taxes for schools, and as a result there are differences in the level of funding. The lowest funded system in 2014 was about one thousand five hundred dollars per student below the state average, which amounts to about thirty thousand fewer dollars for a classroom of 20 students. Some people think this gap is too big while others think it is not a problem. How about you? Do you think the funding gap is too big or is it not a problem?

	percentages
Funding gap is too big	63.02
Funding gap not a problem	24.95
No opinion	12.03
Total	100

12. The State of Alabama has two separate budgets. The biggest budget is for education and is funded mostly by state income and sales tax dollars. Other state programs are funded from a smaller general fund budget. Some policy makers want to combine the two budgets, to give the legislature more control over state spending.

[ROTATE] Do you favor combining the two state budgets into one, or keeping education dollars in a separate budget?

[ALTERNATE WITH THIS TEXT] Do you favor keeping education dollars in a separate budget, or combining the two state budgets into one?

	percentages
Combine budgets	20.29
Keep education separate	70.06
No opinion	9.65
Total	100

13. The State of Alabama has set a goal for 90 percent of all public school students to graduate from high school on time. Currently, about 86 percent of public school students in Alabama finish high school on time. How important do you think it is for the state to reach its goal of a 90 percent graduation rate? would you say it is very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at

	percentages
Very Important	75.43
Somewhat important	16.69
Not very important	2.709
Not at all important	2.715
No opinion	2.459
Total	100

Corrections

15. The next few questions concern Alabama's Corrections system, which has custody of people convicted of crimes.

I'm going to read three statements describing the purposes of the corrections system. [Randomized] which of these do you think describes the most important purpose of the corrections system? which do you think describes the second most important purpose of the corrections system?

	Mean rank	Percent #1
To protect the public from criminal offenders	1.81	37.29
To rehabilitate offenders so they won't commit crimes when they return to society	2.03	36.11
To punish offenders for the crimes they have committed	2.16	26.59

16. Next, I want you to tell me how good a job the corrections system does in performing each function. On a scale of one to ten where ten means the system does a very good job and one means the system does a very poor job, how would you rate the Alabama corrections system's performance of each of these functions? How good a job does the state do in [Randomized]?

	Mean
Protecting the public from criminal offenders	5.72
Punishing offenders for the crimes they have committed	5.42
Rehabilitating offenders so they won't commit crimes when they return to society	3.75

17. Alabama prisons are currently the most over-crowded in the country. State officials agree that Alabama needs to address its prison overcrowding problem. I'm going to describe possible steps the state might take to reduce overcrowding. For each one, tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the action. [Randomized]

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion	Agree + Strongly agree
Invest in programs to rehabilitate inmates so they don't return to prison	4.38	11.23	51.66	28.33	4.39	79.99
Find safe ways to move more nonviolent inmates back to the community	3.84	15.48	56.66	19.08	4.94	75.74
Build more prisons	8.65	35.05	41.05	10.36	4.88	51.41
Sentence only violent offenders to prison; supervise others in the community	11.81	30.8	41.32	9.19	6.88	50.51

Medicaid

18. Next, I'd like to ask you some questions about Medicaid. Medicaid is the government program that provides health insurance to low income families and pays for nursing home care for low income seniors. One out of every five Alabamians qualifies for Medicaid. It provides health insurance for almost half of all children in Alabama, and it pays for over half of all births and 2/3 of all nursing home care. It is a very large program. To pay for it, the Legislature commits over 1/3 of the appropriations from the state's general fund each year.

How important is it for the state to have such a program? would you say it is very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

	percentages
Very important	71.00
Somewhat important	23.63
Not too important	2.51
Not at all important	1.36
No opinion	1.50
Total	100

19. Have you or someone you know ever received health care coverage through Medicaid?

	percentages
Yes	68.60
No	28.98
No opinion	2.421
Total	100

20. Have you or someone you know ever received nursing home care paid for, in whole or in part, by Medicaid?

	percentages
Yes	41.05
No	54.11
No opinion	4.85
Total	100

21. Do you think that you or someone in your family may need to rely on Medicaid benefits in the future?

	percentages
Yes	60.94
No	36.55
No opinion	2.52
Total	100

22. Medicaid in Alabama provides health insurance to able-bodied adults in families with children only if their income is very low. Childless adults do not qualify at all. The federal government offers matching funds to states that expand coverage for low income adults. Do you think Alabama should accept the federal funds to expand health-care coverage under Medicaid or maintain its Medicaid program as is?

	percentages
Expand Medicaid	52.58
Maintain current program	38.01
No opinion	9.41
Total	100