



MONDAY, OCT. 27, 2025

CONTACT:

Ashley Koning, Director
Office: 848-932-8940
akoning@rutgers.edu

All news releases are available at https://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu/press_releases/. Follow the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll on [Facebook](#) and [Bluesky](#).

Voters Largely Oppose Increasing or Expanding New Jersey's Sales Tax

Support for school vouchers and district consolidation is divided, according to Rutgers-Eagleton poll, but more support the latter if guaranteed stable property taxes

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (Oct. 27, 2025) – One thing most New Jersey voters agree on? Don't increase or expand the state sales tax, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll.

Seventy-six percent of likely voters strongly oppose extending the sales tax to additional types of purchases, such as clothing and groceries (76%); 15% are somewhat opposed, 4% are somewhat supportive, and 3% are strongly supportive.

This majority opposition crosses partisan lines and extends to all demographic groups.

"Taxes have long been the third rail of New Jersey politics and remain the issue voters see as the state's biggest problem," said [Ashley Koning](#), an assistant research professor and director of the [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling](#) at [Rutgers University-New Brunswick](#). "Both Mikie Sherrill and Jack Ciattarelli are navigating the same political reality: New Jerseyans want change, but they are wary of any policy that could have a negative impact on their wallets. How each candidate frames their affordability message in these final moments will determine who gains the upper hand."

A plurality of voters also opposes increasing the sales tax from its current 6.6% rate.

When asked whether they support or oppose restoring the sales tax to its former 7% rate, 52% of likely voters say they are strongly opposed and 20% are somewhat opposed. Eighteen percent say they somewhat support this idea and 3% strongly support it.

All demographic groups maintain a majority opposition, including all partisans, though Republicans are more opposed (85%) than independents (72%) and especially Democrats (63%)

when it comes to restoring the state sales tax to 7%.

The opposition increases when asked about increasing the sales tax from 6.6% to 10%. Seventy-six percent of voters “strongly oppose” such an increase, 10% somewhat oppose, 5% somewhat support, and 4% strongly support.

Schools and Property Taxes

When it comes to tax-funded vouchers parents or guardians could use to help pay tuition for their child to attend a private or religious school instead of public school, opinions are mixed.

Nearly half of likely voters support giving parents or guardians vouchers (30% “strongly,” 19% “somewhat”), while 45% are opposed (32% “strongly,” 13% “somewhat”). Republicans are more supportive of vouchers (67%) than Democrats (37%) or independents (45%).

On school district consolidation, 13% strongly support merging their local school district with a nearby district, 23% are somewhat supportive, 18% are somewhat opposed, and 26% are strongly opposed.

Providing arguments for and against consolidation before asking about one’s views slightly increases support: Among those who received the additional argument text, 20% are strongly supportive, 24% somewhat supportive, 17% somewhat opposed, and 24% strongly opposed.

Support for district consolidation rises to a majority once property taxes enter the equation. More than half of likely voters would support merging their local school district with a nearby district school (28% “strongly,” 29% “somewhat”) if it guaranteed property taxes would be stable for the next five years; slightly more than a quarter would still oppose it (16% somewhat, 12% strongly).

“New Jersey voters are divided on these education policies that have been put forth by the gubernatorial candidates – school choice by Ciattarelli and school consolidation by Sherrill,” said Koning. “But when the argument is made that consolidation may lead to some property tax stability, consolidation garners more support. Public opinion on these education issues should provide some context for what the candidates should or should not focus on when it comes to New Jersey schools and how they should frame their related policy proposals.”

When given the hypothetical case that their property taxes would remain stable, majorities of all demographic groups, including all partisans, are supportive of consolidation, except when it comes to age and parental status. While majorities of voters ages 50 to 64 (64%) and 65 or older (73%) would be supportive, those 18 to 34 (46% supportive versus 37% opposed) and those 35 to 49 (44% supportive versus 42% opposed) have more mixed opinions.

Sixty-one percent of individuals without children in the household are supportive, while those

with children in the household are mixed, with 46% of parents or guardians supportive and 44% opposed.

Voters have mixed views on their local public schools: 50% say they are doing an “excellent” (15%) or “good” (35%) job overall, while 42% say they are doing “only fair” (25%) or “poor” (17%). Eight percent are unsure.

Republicans are more likely to feel negatively about the job schools are doing (27% “poor,” 34% “only fair”) compared with other partisans. Voters ages 65 and older (18% “excellent,” 47% “good”) and those with a four-year college degree or additional schooling (21% “excellent,” 37% “good”) are more likely to feel positively than their counterparts.

Results are from a statewide poll of 795 voters contacted via live calling and texting from Oct. 3 to Oct. 17. The likely voter sample has a margin of error of +/- 4.7 percentage points. The registered voter sample has a margin of error of +/- 4.6 percentage points.

#

ABOUT THE EAGLETON CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEREST POLLING

Home of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP) was established in 1971 and is the oldest and one of the most respected university-based statewide polling operations in the United States. Now in its 52nd year and with the publication of over 200 polls, ECPIP’s mission is to provide scientifically sound, nonpartisan information about public opinion. To read more about ECPIP and view all of our press releases, published research and data archive, please visit our website: eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. You can also visit our [Facebook](#) and [Bluesky](#).

ABOUT THE EAGLETON INSTITUTE OF POLITICS

The Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling is a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. The Eagleton Institute studies how American politics and government work and change, analyzes how the democracy might improve and promotes political participation and civic engagement. The Institute explores state and national politics through research, education and public service, linking the study of politics with its day-to-day practice. To learn more about Eagleton programs and expertise, visit eagleton.rutgers.edu.

ABOUT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEW BRUNSWICK

Rutgers University-New Brunswick is where Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, began more than 250 years ago. Ranked among the world’s top 60 universities, Rutgers’s flagship university is a leading public research institution and a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities. It is home to internationally acclaimed faculty and has 12 degree-granting schools and a Division I Athletics program. It is the Big Ten Conference’s most diverse university. Through its community of teachers, scholars, artists, scientists and healers, Rutgers is equipped as never before to transform lives.

QUESTIONS AND TABLES START ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Questions and Tables

The questions covered in this release are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are New Jersey likely voters unless otherwise noted; all percentages are of weighted results. Interpret groups with samples sizes under 100 with extreme caution.

T2. To what extent would you support or oppose extending the New Jersey state sales tax to additional types of purchases, like clothing and groceries?

	LV*	RV**
Strongly support	3%	3%
Somewhat support	4%	4%
Somewhat oppose	15%	14%
Strongly oppose	76%	76%
Don't know	3%	2%
Unweighted N=	788	788

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strong supp	5%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	5%	9%	1%	1%	1%
Smwht supp	5%	2%	3%	5%	2%	5%	2%	5%	3%	4%	2%
Smwht opp	11%	14%	18%	20%	10%	15%	13%	14%	15%	16%	13%
Strong opp	79%	77%	73%	68%	84%	76%	77%	67%	79%	77%	82%
Don't know	1%	4%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	5%	2%	1%	2%
Unwt N=	249	312	227	426	347	578	185	167	207	189	225

* LV indicates likely voter

** RV indicates registered voter

**Taxes and Schools
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Income		Education	
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Strong supp	2%	3%	3%	3%
Smwht supp	3%	4%	5%	2%
Smwht opp	15%	15%	14%	16%
Strong opp	78%	74%	76%	77%
Don't know	1%	4%	3%	2%
Unwt N=	302	424	326	461

T1A. The New Jersey state sales tax is currently 6.6%. To what extent would you support or oppose restoring the sales tax to 7%?

Note: This question was part of a split sample. Half of respondents received T1A and half received T1B.

	LV	RV
Strongly support	3%	4%
Somewhat support	18%	18%
Somewhat oppose	20%	21%
Strongly oppose	52%	52%
Don't know	6%	6%
Unweighted N=	409	409

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	White, Non-Hispanic	Nonwhite	18-49	50+
Strong supp	4%	5%	1%	5%	2%	3%	5%	5%	2%
Smwht supp	30%	11%	13%	17%	18%	19%	15%	14%	21%
Smwht opp	29%	22%	9%	17%	24%	22%	18%	21%	19%
Strong opp	34%	50%	76%	53%	51%	51%	54%	52%	52%
Don't know	4%	12%	2%	8%	5%	5%	8%	6%	6%
Unwt N=	135	162	112	222	178	314	81	191	218

	Income		Education	
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Strong supp	1%	6%	4%	3%
Smwht supp	17%	18%	14%	21%
Smwht opp	24%	16%	18%	23%
Strong opp	54%	50%	57%	48%
Don't know	4%	9%	8%	5%
Unwt N=	156	221	171	237

T1B. The New Jersey state sales tax is currently 6.6%. To what extent would you support or oppose increasing the sales tax to 10%?

Note: This question was part of a split sample. Half of respondents received T1A and half received T1B.

	LV	RV
Strongly support	4%	4%
Somewhat support	5%	4%
Somewhat oppose	10%	10%
Strongly oppose	76%	76%
Don't know	6%	6%
Unweighted N=	383	383

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	White, Non-Hispanic	Nonwhite	18-49	50+
Strong supp	4%	4%	3%	5%	3%	2%	7%	6%	1%
Smwht supp	3%	4%	7%	7%	3%	5%	5%	5%	4%
Smwht opp	13%	11%	6%	11%	8%	10%	10%	8%	11%
Strong opp	75%	75%	78%	69%	83%	77%	75%	76%	77%
Don't know	6%	5%	6%	8%	4%	7%	3%	5%	6%
Unwt N=	117	151	115	206	171	266	105	185	198

	Income		Education	
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +
Strong supp	4%	3%	5%	2%
Smwht supp	5%	5%	1%	8%
Smwht opp	11%	10%	8%	11%
Strong opp	74%	77%	77%	76%
Don't know	6%	6%	8%	3%
Unwt N=	147	207	155	228

E1. How would you rate the overall job public schools are doing in your local community?

	LV	RV
Excellent	15%	16%
Good	35%	36%
Only fair	25%	24%
Poor	17%	16%
Don't know	8%	8%
Unweighted N=	795	795

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Excellent	21%	15%	10%	15%	16%	17%	13%	11%	17%	15%	18%
Good	41%	42%	22%	39%	32%	35%	37%	27%	35%	32%	47%
Only fair	23%	19%	34%	22%	27%	22%	28%	35%	21%	26%	19%
Poor	5%	19%	27%	19%	14%	16%	19%	19%	24%	17%	8%
Don't know	10%	6%	7%	5%	10%	11%	3%	9%	3%	10%	8%
Unwt N=	252	315	228	430	349	582	186	169	209	189	228

	Income		Education		Parent/Guardian	
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +	Yes	No
Excellent	13%	19%	10%	21%	19%	14%
Good	36%	36%	33%	37%	29%	38%
Only fair	26%	23%	27%	23%	23%	26%
Poor	16%	17%	19%	14%	22%	15%
Don't know	9%	5%	11%	5%	7%	8%
Unwt N=	303	428	328	466	215	573

E2A. Some people say consolidating school districts could streamline resources, reduce government spending and property taxes, increase efficiency, and expand opportunities for students. Others say consolidation could reduce local control and community identity, increase class sizes, cause job losses, and create transportation challenges. To what extent would you support or oppose merging your local school district with a nearby district?

Note: This question was part of a split sample. Half of respondents received E2A and half received E2B.

	LV	RV
Strongly support	20%	19%
Somewhat support	24%	23%
Somewhat oppose	17%	17%
Strongly oppose	24%	25%
Already have consolidation	2%	3%
Don't know	13%	13%
Unweighted N=	389	389

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	White, Non-Hispanic	Nonwhite	18-49	50+
Strong supp	17%	20%	23%	24%	17%	19%	24%	13%	27%
Smwht supp	20%	27%	22%	22%	24%	24%	25%	18%	30%
Smwht opp	21%	17%	13%	17%	16%	20%	9%	22%	12%
Strong opp	28%	19%	29%	21%	28%	21%	28%	31%	18%
Already have	3%	1%	3%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	3%
Don't know	11%	16%	10%	13%	12%	13%	12%	15%	10%
Unwt N=	115	160	114	209	169	287	89	189	200

**Taxes and Schools
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Income		Education		Parent/Guardian	
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +	Yes	No
Strong supp	19%	23%	18%	22%	15%	20%
Smwht supp	23%	22%	23%	23%	14%	25%
Smwht opp	21%	15%	18%	15%	9%	21%
Strong opp	22%	29%	23%	26%	40%	19%
Already have	2%	3%	2%	3%	5%	3%
Don't know	12%	8%	15%	10%	15%	13%
Unwt N=	147	205	156	232	97	288

E2B. To what extent would you support or oppose merging your local school district with a nearby district?

Note: This question was part of a split sample. Half of respondents received E2A and half received E2B.

	LV	RV
Strongly support	13%	13%
Somewhat support	23%	23%
Somewhat oppose	18%	17%
Strongly oppose	26%	26%
Already have consolidation	4%	4%
Don't know	16%	16%
Unweighted N=	400	400

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age	
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	White, Non-Hispanic	Nonwhite	18-49	50+
Strong supp	11%	12%	18%	19%	8%	17%	8%	8%	18%
Smwht supp	19%	24%	28%	29%	19%	27%	19%	22%	25%
Smwht opp	23%	20%	9%	13%	22%	12%	28%	20%	16%
Strong opp	21%	30%	28%	23%	29%	21%	34%	33%	21%
Already have	2%	4%	6%	5%	3%	4%	2%	5%	3%
Don't know	24%	11%	11%	11%	20%	20%	9%	13%	18%
Unwt N=	135	154	111	219	176	290	96	188	212

**Taxes and Schools
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

	Income		Education		Parent/Guardian	
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +	Yes	No
Strong supp	10%	17%	12%	15%	12%	16%
Smwht supp	25%	24%	21%	26%	25%	24%
Smwht opp	16%	18%	15%	20%	15%	16%
Strong opp	24%	30%	33%	19%	36%	19%
Already have	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	5%
Don't know	21%	8%	16%	15%	9%	19%
Unwt N=	153	221	169	231	117	281

E3. If school district consolidation guaranteed that property taxes would remain stable for the next five years, to what extent would you support or oppose consolidation?

	LV	RV
Strongly support	28%	27%
Somewhat support	29%	29%
Somewhat oppose	16%	16%
Strongly oppose	12%	13%
Don't know	14%	15%
Unweighted N=	789	789

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strong supp	26%	27%	30%	33%	22%	28%	28%	19%	19%	33%	39%
Smwht supp	30%	27%	31%	28%	30%	29%	29%	27%	25%	31%	34%
Smwht opp	19%	18%	12%	15%	18%	15%	19%	25%	19%	12%	10%
Strong opp	8%	11%	18%	12%	12%	11%	13%	12%	23%	10%	5%
Don't know	18%	17%	8%	11%	17%	16%	11%	17%	14%	15%	11%
Unwt N=	249	314	226	429	344	577	186	169	208	186	226

	Income		Education		Parent/Guardian	
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +	Yes	No
Strong supp	26%	31%	25%	30%	21%	30%
Smwht supp	34%	25%	31%	27%	25%	31%
Smwht opp	15%	19%	17%	16%	22%	14%
Strong opp	9%	15%	12%	13%	22%	9%
Don't know	16%	11%	16%	13%	11%	16%
Unwt N=	301	425	325	463	214	569

E4. To what extent do you support or oppose giving parents/guardians tax-funded vouchers they can use to help pay for tuition for their child to attend private or religious schools of their choice instead of public schools?

	LV	RV
Strongly support	30%	30%
Somewhat support	19%	18%
Somewhat oppose	13%	13%
Strongly oppose	32%	33%
Don't know	5%	5%
Unweighted N=	790	790

	Party ID			Gender		Race or Ethnicity		Age			
	Dem	Ind	Rep	Man	Woman	Non-Hispanic white	Nonwhite	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Strong supp	17%	28%	47%	29%	32%	27%	34%	32%	39%	28%	23%
Smwht supp	20%	17%	20%	21%	17%	16%	24%	22%	15%	14%	25%
Smwht opp	19%	11%	11%	13%	14%	15%	12%	17%	5%	14%	18%
Strong opp	39%	38%	19%	31%	34%	37%	25%	24%	38%	39%	29%
Don't know	5%	6%	4%	6%	4%	5%	5%	6%	3%	6%	5%
Unwt N=	251	313	226	426	348	577	186	169	209	188	224

	Income		Education		Parent/Guardian	
	<\$100K	\$100K+	Some college or less	4-year college degree +	Yes	No
Strong supp	29%	30%	35%	26%	40%	26%
Smwht supp	19%	18%	18%	19%	11%	21%
Smwht opp	15%	12%	14%	13%	8%	16%
Strong opp	32%	35%	28%	37%	36%	31%
Don't know	5%	5%	6%	4%	5%	5%
Unwt N=	301	426	325	464	215	568

Methodology

The Rutgers–Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live interviewers October 3-17, 2025, with a random sample of New Jersey likely voters (n=795). Likely-voter status was modeled at the respondent level: Each self-identified voter received an individual turnout probability based on past voting history and reported likelihood of voting. That probability was then incorporated into the post-stratification weights described below. This poll included 140 adults reached through live calling and 655 through one-to-one SMS text messaging by live interviewers that led respondents to an online version of the survey. Distribution of phone use in this sample is:

Cell call	13%
Landline call	4%
Text to web	82%

The data were weighted to represent the population of registered voters in New Jersey. A base weight was not applied, as the sample was selected with equal probability from records that included a phone number. Table 1 outlines the variables used in the calibration process and identifies the sources of the benchmark distributions.

The calibration was accomplished using iterative proportional fitting (IPF). This procedure balances each calibration variable to target benchmarks individually and iteratively. The entire set of calibration variables is cycled through until the weights converge across all dimensions. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on survey estimates. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target population.

Table 1. Calibration Variable Definitions and Benchmark Sources

Variable (categories)	Source
Sex (M, F)	L2 voter file
Age (18-34, 35-49, 50-64, 65+)	L2 voter file
Education (HS grad or less, some college / Assoc degree, 4-yr college grad, graduate degree)	CPS 2024 Voting and Registration Supplement PUMS data ¹
Race (White~Hispanic, Black~Hispanic, Hispanic, Asian~Hispanic, Other/mixed~Hispanic)	CPS 2024 Voting and Registration Supplement PUMS data
Region (urban, suburb, exurban, Phila/south, shore)	L2 voter file
2024 recalled vote (Harris, Trump, other, did not vote) ²	The American Presidency Project, UC Santa Barbara ³

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. SSRS calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. *Current Population Survey, November 2024: Voting and Registration Supplement [Public Use Microdata Sample]*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce. Released April 21, 2025. Available at [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov).

² The 2024 vote distribution pulled from The American Presidency Project was adjusted so that the proportion of voters who reported not voting matched the unweighted percentage in the survey data.

³ <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/statistics/elections/2024>.

sample design and systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for the likely voter sample is 1.83. The total sample design effect for the registered voter sample is 1.78.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. The survey's margin of error is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample — the one around 50%. In this poll, the simple sampling error for 795 New Jersey likely voters is +/-3.5 percentage points at a 95% confidence interval. Sampling error should also be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. The design effect is 1.83, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 4.7 percentage points. Thus, if 50% of New Jersey voters in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95% sure that the true figure is between 45.3% and 54.7% (50 +/- 4.7) if all New Jersey voters had been interviewed, rather than just a sample. The simple sampling error for registered voters is +/- 3.5% and the adjusted margin of error with the 1.78 design effect is +/- 4.6%.

Sampling error is only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Sampling error does not consider other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as selection bias, non-response bias, question wording, context effects, or reporting accuracy, which may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by Braun Research, Inc. and Rumble Up with sample from L2 Data and Marketing Systems Group (MSG). Special thank you to Siena Research Institute for consultation on likely voter modeling and weighting. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP). Ashley Koning and Jessica Roman led analysis and preparation of this release, with assistance from David Martin. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process. Full questionnaires are available on request and can also be accessed through our archives at eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. For more information, please contact poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu.

**Taxes and Schools
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll**

**Weighted Demographics
795 New Jersey Likely Voters
Overall Margin of Error = +/- 4.7 percentage points**

Please note: Totals may equal slightly more or less than 100% due to rounding.

		deff	MOE			deff	MOE
Democrat	31%	1.83	+/- 8.4%	<100K	49%	1.78	+/- 7.5%
Independent	37%	1.92	+/- 7.6%	100K+	51%	1.82	+/- 6.4%
Republican	32%	1.73	+/- 8.5%				
				Some college or Less	50%	1.78	+/- 7.2%
Man	48%	1.79	+/- 6.3%	4-Yr College Degree or More	50%	1.76	+/- 6.0%
Woman	52%	1.80	+/- 7.0%				
Non-Hispanic white	64%	1.78	+/- 5.4%				
Nonwhite	36%	1.65	+/- 9.2%				
18-34	25%	1.77	+/- 10.0%				
35-49	24%	1.94	+/- 9.4%				
50-64	26%	1.73	+/- 9.4%				
65+	26%	1.85	+/- 8.8%				