



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Wisconsin Poll: Crowley Leads Tiffany 46% to 42% in Governor's Race

Statewide survey also finds overwhelming support for school choice and accountability: 76% want greater access to public school options, and 85% want the same standards for all publicly funded schools

MILWAUKEE, WI — A new statewide poll commissioned by City Forward Collective and CFC Action Fund finds a competitive race for Wisconsin governor, with Democrat David Crowley leading Republican Tom Tiffany 46% to 42%.

The survey, conducted by YouGov among 2,000 Wisconsin adults from September 22 to October 9, also finds broad agreement on several major education issues, including expanding access to public school options, holding all publicly funded schools to the same accountability standards, and restoring higher expectations for student achievement.

Among the 1,715 respondents included in the gubernatorial vote question, 46% support Crowley, 42% support Tiffany, 9% are unsure, and 2% say they do not plan to vote. The four-point margin underscores a competitive contest for the state's highest office.

The survey also finds that 43% of Wisconsin adults view current Governor Tony Evers favorably, compared with 38% who view him unfavorably.

Beyond the governor's race, the results reveal substantial agreement among Wisconsin residents about the direction of public education.

"While Wisconsin voters may be divided over who should lead the state, there's remarkable agreement about what families want from their schools," **said Colleston Morgan Jr., President and Executive Director of CFC.** "They want access to great schools, high expectations for every student, and the same accountability standards for every publicly funded school."

Wisconsin Families Want More School Options

The survey finds that Wisconsinites overwhelmingly support giving families more flexibility to choose the public schools that best meet their children's needs.

76% support making it easier for families to choose a public school other than their assigned neighborhood school, compared with just 14% who oppose.

The findings also show broad acceptance of different types of schools:

- 65% have a favorable view of traditional public schools.
- 60% have a favorable view of private schools.
- 55% have a favorable view of public charter schools.
- 63% define school choice as families being able to choose among traditional public, charter, and private schools, while 21% define it as choosing among traditional public schools within a district.
- 51% support expanding public charter schools, compared with 24% who oppose.
- 49% support Wisconsin's parental choice programs, compared with 38% who oppose.

The results suggest that Wisconsin residents do not view support for one type of school as incompatible with support for others.

At the same time, voters are clear that school quality matters more than school type. Asked to identify their top two education priorities, 52% chose ensuring all students have access to a high-quality education, while 41% selected preparing students for jobs and careers. Just 12% identified giving families more school options as a top-two priority.

"Families aren't interested in ideological fights over what type of school their children attend," **said Morgan**. "They want good schools, and they want the ability to choose the one that works best for their child. The focus should be on expanding access to quality options, not pitting one type of school against another."

Overwhelming Support for Equal Accountability and Higher Academic Standards

The poll also finds a striking consensus around school accountability and academic expectations.

85% of Wisconsin adults support requiring all publicly funded schools to meet the same accountability standards for student outcomes, including 49% who strongly support the policy. Just 8% oppose it.

Residents also favor restoring more rigorous expectations for student achievement:

- 72% support restoring Wisconsin's previous academic proficiency standards, compared with 9% who oppose.
- 39% say the state's current K-12 academic standards are too low, while 42% say they are about right.
- Just 4% believe the standards are too high.

- 48% say Wisconsin public schools are not doing a good job preparing students for jobs and careers, compared with 39% who say they are.

"Parents want to know their children are learning what they need to succeed, and they expect every school receiving public dollars to be held to the same standard," Morgan said. "We should be raising expectations for our students, not lowering them."

Statewide Support for Addressing Milwaukee's School Challenges

The statewide survey also finds that Wisconsin residents want action to address the financial and enrollment challenges facing Milwaukee Public Schools.

A majority of Wisconsin adults — 58% — support closing or consolidating under-enrolled MPS schools, compared with 19% who oppose. Another 56% support the state stepping in to manage the district.

The results suggest that concerns about Milwaukee's education challenges extend beyond the city itself, with residents across Wisconsin expecting leaders to make difficult decisions to improve the school system.

"These findings point toward a straightforward education agenda: give families more access to great schools, hold every publicly funded school to the same high standards, and make sure education resources are being used effectively to support students," Morgan said.

About the Poll

The statewide survey was conducted by YouGov among 2,000 Wisconsin adults from September 22 to October 9, 2026. The online survey was weighted to represent Wisconsin's adult population by demographic and political characteristics. The reported margin of error is ± 2.6 percentage points. The governor's race question was reported among 1,715 respondents and has a larger margin of error. The survey is of Wisconsin adults, not exclusively registered or likely voters.

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City Forward Collective envisions a city where every Milwaukee child receives an excellent education that prepares them to thrive at a high-quality school of their choice. We advance our mission to secure Milwaukee's future through informing, engaging, and catalyzing transformation across Milwaukee's K12 school ecosystem. Learn more about our work at www.cityforwardcollective.org

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CFC Action Fund is a 501(c)(4) organization whose mission is to secure Milwaukee's future by electing champions and advancing policies to ensure that every Milwaukee child receives an

excellent education at a high-quality school of their choice. For more information, visit our website at www.cfcactionfund.org

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