

February 12, 2013

**To: Interested Parties**

**Fr: Anzalone Liszt Grove Research**

**Re: Executive Summary of Poll Findings on Support for SELF in Southwest Washington**

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Below are key findings from a recent survey of 400 voters in Clark County, Washington conducted for Support for Early Learning and Families (SELF) by Anzalone Liszt Grove Research.<sup>1</sup>

- **Nearly two-thirds of voters support SELF's proposal to build an early learning system for Clark County.** By a 46-point margin, (64% favor / 18% oppose), voters support SELF's proposal. Nearly one in five voters (19%) is undecided on the proposal, offering the opportunity to further expand support. The proposal's strongest backers include Democrats, those with household incomes over \$50,000 a year, voters under 50 and women (especially women with a college degree). Non-college voters and independents under 50 are the most likely to be undecided.
- **Support remains strong when dedicated funding is raised.** When voters are asked whether they would support dedicated funding for early learning, their level of support declines by 5 points, with 59% continuing to favor the proposal and just 24% opposing it. The decline in intense support is slightly larger, with the share *strongly* favoring the proposal declining from 39% to 32%. The groups whose support for the proposal declines the most due to dedicated funding include those over the age of 70 and Republican women.
- **Statistics around school achievement, domestic violence, and poverty raise the most widespread concern among voters.** Statements related to these issues raise serious concerns with about two-thirds of voters. Facts and stats that are more general, or one step removed from children and their safety, don't inspire as much passion.

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<sup>1</sup> Anzalone Liszt Grove Research conducted a poll of 400 likely voters in Clark County, WA using a voter file sample. Interviews were conducted January 15-17, 2013. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.9% at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups is higher and varies.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CONCERNS</b></p> <p><i>“I’m going to read you a list of things some people say worry them personally when it comes to the health, well-being and success of Clark County’s youngest children. After each, please tell me whether it is one of the things that concerns you most, whether it concerns you a great deal, some, not too much or not at all.”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>One of the things that concerns you most</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>One of most/great deal</b></p>
That 38 percent of third graders in Washington do not meet math standards	<b>27%</b>	<b>70%</b>
That 28 percent of third graders in Washington do not meet reading standards	<b>29%</b>	<b>69%</b>
That the rate of domestic violence in Clark County increased from 2007 to 2010, and is higher than it is statewide	<b>36%</b>	<b>68%</b>
That 14 percent of Clark County children are living below the poverty level	<b>32%</b>	<b>66%</b>
<p><b>That for every five children who are eligible for Head Start or similar programs, there is only one slot available<sup>2</sup></b></p>	<b>27%</b>	<b>63%</b>
That by the time children enter kindergarten, 90 percent of the brain is already developed	<b>15%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<p><b>That Clark County has a shortage of quality services for children and families</b></p>	<b>17%</b>	<b>46%</b>
That most full-time childcare providers in Clark County earn \$12 dollars per hour or less	<b>12%</b>	<b>40%</b>

- Professional development for child care providers, linking parents to resources, and measuring the effectiveness of early childhood programs are very important to voters.** Voters are most receptive to proposals focused on increasing training and mentoring for child care providers and on providing parents with resources to help them make informed child care decisions. Creating an assessment to measure the effectiveness of different early learning programs is also quite popular.

Including pay improvement for child care providers neither helps nor hurts support, but we should be wary of being “big brother-ish,” as home visits and the creation of a voluntary rating system of providers are less popular. Educating businesses about policies that encourage strong parenting of young children is supported but is not seen as a top priority.

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<sup>2</sup> Bold font indicates that this concern drives support for SELF/funding, according to analytical modeling.

<b>PROPOSALS</b>	<b>One of the most important</b>	<b>One of most / Very important</b>
<i>"I'm going to read you some possible aspects of the proposed early learning effort to help prepare our youngest children for success in school and life. After each, please tell me how important that aspect of the effort is to you personally."</i>		
Strengthen professional development, training and mentoring for local child care providers and other early learning professionals	<b>23%</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Link parents with resources to help them make informed choices when selecting child care providers<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>60%</b>
Strengthen professional development, training and mentoring—and improve pay—for local child care providers and other early learning professionals	<b>21%</b>	<b>58%</b>
Conduct trainings, implement best practices and align goals among early learning providers and elementary schools to ensure a seamless transition to Kindergarten	<b>19%</b>	<b>58%</b>
Implement a common Kindergarten assessment tool that measures the true effectiveness of different early learning programs	<b>21%</b>	<b>57%</b>
Educate local businesses about policies that support strong parenting of young children	<b>16%</b>	<b>52%</b>
Support development of the Quality Rating and Improvement System in Clark County—a voluntary rating system for parents to consider when selecting child care providers	<b>17%</b>	<b>49%</b>
Provide home visits to support new parents with important tools and resources for early learning	<b>16%</b>	<b>49%</b>

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<sup>3</sup> Bold font indicates that this proposal drives support for SELF/funding, according to analytical modeling