



Nicole Blodgett &lt;nbloodgett@panaschools.com&gt;

## Fwd: Poll: Voters like Pritzker - and many like vouchers

Jason Bauer <jbauer@panaschools.com>  
To: Nicole Blodgett <nbloodgett@panaschools.com>

Thu, Oct 4, 2018 at 7:37 AM

October board meeting

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **State School News Service** <j.m.broadway74@gmail.com>  
Date: Thu, Oct 4, 2018 at 2:02 AM  
Subject: Poll: Voters like Pritzker - and many like vouchers  
To: <jbauer@panaschools.com>

### Subscribe to ISNS



Volume 24, Number 53, October 4, 2018

To view the web version, [click here](#).

## Poll: Voters like Pritzker - many like vouchers

By Jim Broadway, Publisher, Illinois School News Service

Last week's [report on the recent poll](#), conducted by the Center for State Policy and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Springfield and Illinois NPR, showed voters are more likely to vote for the Democratic candidate, J.B. Pritzker, than to vote for Gov. Bruce Rauner's reelection in November. But the results seem uncertain.

For Pritzker to have commitments from only 35%, a plurality barely more than one-third of likely voters, suggests he has work to do even though Rauner managed to get only 23% of respondents feeling sure to vote for him. But a whopping 27% said they are "undecided," and 15% say they'll vote for "someone else."

Who might be the someone else? There will be [other candidates](#) on the ballot - Republican Sen. Sam McCann of Plainview, running on the "Conservative" ticket, and Libertarian candidate Grayson Jackson of Antioch - but no polls suggest either will tally in the double figures. It's Pritzker or Rauner, take your pick.

You'd think such a large undecided bloc would make the candidates uncomfortable, and it probably does, but when the votes are cast the previously undecided voters usually split along the same lines as those who decided earlier. That (and a [late influx of \\$20 million](#)) should ease the minds of Pritzker supporters.

**The UIS/NPR survey covered a wide range** of issues. Under the heading of education, poll respondents were seen to be split down the middle with a bare 50% in

favor of compulsory kindergarten at age 5 and similarly split on the question of vouchers. African-American respondents heavily favored both proposals.

A majority of respondents also favored a graduated income tax structure - taxing the marginal income of the very wealthy at a higher rate than the top rate for middle- and low-income taxpayers - but support varied by political party affiliation. Republicans (53%) want to protect the rich by keeping the regressive "flat tax."

But Democrats (69%) and independents (56%) favored the graduated tax system (which is the one used by almost all other states that have income taxes, and by the federal government). As the [Center for Tax and Budget Accountability](#) has said for years, our flat tax system is a contributor to Illinois' frequent fiscal crises.

What about raising the minimum wage? As with the graduated tax issue, strong support by Democrats (80%) for a higher minimum wage was buttressed by support from independents (59%), leaving only Republicans (30%) giving the policy less than a majority support. [Pritzker favors](#) a graduated tax and a higher minimum wage.

**Does it make a difference** what the candidates favor? It depends on the issue - and which candidate wins. Rauner is a staunch supporter of term limits - which is also favored by 80% of poll respondents - but such irrational policy will not be enacted unless current legislative leaders are somehow unseated.

House Speaker Michael Madigan and Senate President John Cullerton accept election results as what, in a democracy, should limit the careers of public officials. While success in elections would seem to reflect favorably on a public official, Rauner has said Madigan's lengthy political career is evidence of "corruption."

Rauner has a record, which is his biggest disadvantage this election year. He is (rightly) seen as the cause of a two-year gap in state budgets, a gap that shredded the social safety net and inflicted damage on the state university system that will take a decade or more for the higher education institutions to recover from.

Pritzker's record is in his previous advocacy efforts and in the clear statements - in his speeches and on his campaign Internet site - of what policy he favors. His school policy statements stress early childhood education and a moratorium on the creation of additional charter schools. He favors legalizing - and taxing - marijuana.

**A bill raising the minimum wage for teachers**, as you know, was vetoed by Rauner. Now the sponsors of [SB 2092](#) have indicated an [intention to seek to override](#) that veto during the legislature's fall session. Rejecting the veto will require a bit of Republican help in the House. Can the Democrats get that help?

They might. The Senate passed the bill with 37 votes, one more than the three-fifths vote a veto override requires. But the bill received only 65 votes in the House, where 71 votes are needed to override a veto. While it seems a tall order, there are factors that may nudge both chambers in the direction of an override.

First, there is the reality that the advocates are influential. The bill's sponsors, Sen. Andy Manar and Rep. Christian Mitchell, are unusually effective - and the Illinois Education Association and Illinois Federation of Teachers are both powerful lobbying entities. To vote "with them" can be a political plus.

Also, there's the recent PDK poll indicating that 78% of respondents believe teachers are underpaid - and would support them even if they went on strike for higher salaries. Yes, this point is weakened somewhat by the fact that legislators will not be in session again until [the week after the November elections](#).

Though it still seems unlikely, a post-election vote on SB 2092 may boost the bill over the finish line since there will be a number of "lame duck" Republicans on the House floor. What influence would Rauner have over them?

**Remember when we had a Superintendent of Public Instruction?** I visited Wisconsin over the weekend - my son is a doctoral student at UW-Madison - and I learned that Wisconsin still has an elected state superintendent. Moreover, he is challenging the incumbent governor - and appears to be winning.

Republican Gov. Scott Walker, you'll recall, has served two terms during which he all but destroyed public employee unions in his state. He also cut more than \$800 million from the state's education budget in order to sign into law some tax cuts for corporations and other wealthy constituents.

Now Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Evers is locked in a tight race with Walker for the governor's office, and the key issue appears to be [PK-12 school funding](#). Briefly, Evers wants a greater state investment in the public schools, while Walker would prefer to offer tax credits as a funding mechanism.

For many years, Wisconsin's policy was for the state to pay 65% or more of the cost of public education. Wow! That goal has been set aside in Walker's administration, but Evers wants to return to that level of state support. The race is close, but Evers seems to be riding a "blue wave" this year. He may win.

**Illinois had an elected state superintendent from 1854 until 1971.** It was an excellent part of our democracy, in my view. It guaranteed, for example, that every four years there would be two candidates (at least) promoting PK-12 school policy up and down the state, each seeking support for their specific proposals.

Not everyone agrees with me about this. After I included this observation in a speech some years ago, a school official in the audience discounted the idea. The office is not visible enough, he said. The candidate who is elected would just be the candidate of the same political party of the governor who gets elected.

Oh? The last elected state superintendent, Michael Bakalis, a Democrat, served while Richard B. Ogilvie, a Republican, occupied the governor's office. And prior to Bakalis the state superintendent was Ray Page, a Republican, who served with Gov. Otto Kerner, a Democrat. So much for that school official's objection.

The influence of an election victory is powerful. Bakalis had three times the staff that State Superintendent Tony Smith has today, far more resources of every kind. The election of the state superintendent strongly influenced the legislative branch and the governor's office to implement the winning candidate's proposals.

None of this is to discount the efforts of Smith and the current State Board of Education to gather input from educators and community constituencies throughout the state. Their courage in proposing strong school funding and other policies is to be commended. But an election's impact would be far greater.

### **Snippets:**

**U.S. Rep. Bill Foster (D-Naperville) is now** the only PhD physicist in Congress. In an [interview for an article](#) in this month's issue of Scientific American, he described the challenge he faces in explaining science-related policy to many colleagues, of both parties, who come to him for help. He regrets the lack of "evidence-based political debate," but beyond that sees the rapid advance of technology as a major issue. "We should have a dedicated high tech committee," he said.

Potential problem: If people start using "digital cash" as currency, he said, that "would affect a huge source of revenue for banks large and small." But as other countries go that way, it may be that "the whole world will just walk away from the U.S. dollar. I don't think that's a recipe for making American finance great again."

**Rauner can't help it.** The governor [posted a tweet on Twitter](#) in which he claimed credit for a high percentage of African-Americans holding senior positions in his administration. His tweet was accompanied by a photo purporting to show some of

them in a meeting. But it was [a stock photo](#); no one in the photo was an employee of the state. Rauner's office informed [The State Journal-Register](#) they didn't have release forms signed by employees to use photos of them.

**Teach for America, the non-profit** organization that puts recent college graduates in low-income school districts, seems to be [experiencing another personnel shake-up](#), including at the level of leadership. Interestingly, considering its mission, the organization says it is eliminating the position of "Chief Diversity Officer."

TA is pretty large, with about \$273 million in revenue for 2016, the last year for which a [form 990 is on file](#). It had a deficit of about \$14 million that year, but still carried over more than \$350 million in assets. The organization receives funding via ISBE - nearly \$1 million in each of the last two years. (More next time.)

**Another journalist has received death threats.** Chris Britt, formerly a cartoonist with The State Journal-Register in Springfield, has been the target of death threats after drawing a cartoon [based on testimony](#) given by Supreme Court nominee Judge Brett Kavanaugh. Anyone questioning Trump is vulnerable to that.

Speaking of Kananaugh, the question of "accountability" for acts he may have committed as a teenager three decades ago is not a legal issue; it is philosophical, but still important. A [journal article](#) co-authored by an Arizona State University faculty member argues that *favorable personality changes* mitigate culpability.

But Kavanaugh, still acting like an "[aggressive, entitled teen](#)," fails that test.

**Children carrying cell phones to elementary school** are more likely than those without such technology to be bullied, or to be bullies - or both - a [study involving 4,500 children](#) suggests. Researcher Elizabeth Englander, professor of psychology and director of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State University, recognizes parents' need to connect with their children but (at the link above) offers some tips that should be shared with parents.

**Links to some newsletters posted so far this year** are available [at this web page link](#). Please remember that *current* ISNS archives are for our subscribers only; *do not share this link*. But all 2017 issues can be found [HERE](#). You *may share the 2017 archives web page link* with anyone who wants to see it.

**The only way to contact me:** Use the link below. As soon as you "submit" your message, it is sent to me by email. Your message may be complex and "attached" to a document, or it may be as simple as "call me."

IF YOU NEED TO SPEAK WITH ME directly, leave a phone number for me to call and tell me what would be a good time to converse. I am always connected to my email, and I promise to respond to you as soon as possible.

**Invoice Reminder:** All invoices are *emailed* via the PNC Bank. ISNS is *now paperless*. If you need me to resend an invoice, use the contact link to tell me. I deeply appreciate your support of ISNS. This service cannot exist without you.

**Your inputs - questions, comments, suggestions** - are valued. For twenty-three years ISNS has been guided by wisdom "from the field." To contribute in this way, just [click this link to our contact form](#).

**DO NOT CLICK THE 'UNSUBSCRIBE' LINK!** That would automatically drop you from the ISNS subscriber list. The "unsubscribe" link is required so we cannot remove it. But to continue receiving the ISNS newsletter, DO NOT CLICK IT. If you wish to update your account, including choosing your email preference (HTML or text-only) please [submit this form](#). Otherwise, use the "contact form" link in the last paragraph of today's newsletter to contact Jim Broadway for any reason. Thank you.

State School News Service, [347 S Durkin Dr, Springfield, IL 62704](#)

SafeUnsubscribe™ [jbauer@panaschools.com](mailto:jbauer@panaschools.com)

[Forward this email](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by [j.m.broadway74@gmail.com](mailto:j.m.broadway74@gmail.com) in collaboration with



Try it free today

--  
Mr. Jason Bauer  
Superintendent - Pana CUSD #8  
14 E. Main Street  
Pana, IL 62557  
Phone: (217) 562-1500  
Fax: (217) 562-1501