

Report

Manitoba Government K-12 Education System

Manitoba: March 2021



DATE 2021-03-26 PROJECT NUMBER 45894-025

Leger

We know Canadians

METHODOLOGY

Context and Objectives

Context

The Government of Manitoba has been consulting Manitobans regarding changes to the K-12 education system over several years. As a result of the consultation and based on the recommendations of Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education, the government of Manitoba plans to implement some changes in the Manitoba K-12 education system. Through this project, the provincial government wants to understand the impressions of the education system among Manitobans, their perceptions of education administration, expectations from the changes based on the Commission recommendations and their confidence in the government in delivering the results.

Objectives

The objectives of this report are to understand:

- The general impressions of K-12 education system among Manitobans
- Awareness and perceptions of education system administration
- Impressions of Manitobans regarding the Commission on K-12 Education recommendations
- Most effective communication to gather support for recommended changes

Methodology

Study Population

- Manitoba residents, aged 18 and older.

Data Collection

- A total of n=1001 online surveys were conducted via Leger's online panel, LEO.
- Interviews were conducted from March 05 to March 12, 2021.

Statistical Analysis

- As a non-probability internet survey, a margin of error is technically not to be reported.
- If the data were collected through a random sample, the margin of error would be Manitoba Residents (n=1001) $\pm 3.1\%$, 19 times out of 20.
- Using data from the 2016 Census, results were weighted according to age, gender, and region in order to ensure a representative sample of the population.
- The numbers presented have been rounded to the nearest whole number. However, raw values were used to calculate the sums presented and therefore may not correspond to the manual addition of these numbers.

Key Driver Analysis

- Key Driver analysis results have been added to understand what influences the impression about K-12 Education reform.
- Logit Model has been used for Key driver analysis, because the dependent variables have been transformed into binary variable.
- Key driver analysis results added throughout the report have predictive power of over 80%

Key Findings

Assessment of current K-12 education system:

- Overall, two-thirds of Manitobans are satisfied with the current education system and believe that quality of education is good in the province. 72% of parents with children under age of 18 years are also satisfied with the current education system.
- Just over half of Manitobans believe that they are getting good value of the money invested in the system. 43% also believe that education system is headed in the wrong direction and needs some changes, otherwise it would be worse in future.
 - Regions outside Winnipeg have more negative impression of current education system as 50% (except Eastern MB) believe that the system, without intervention, will be worse in future.
 - Manitobans acknowledge that schools need to improve performance around exposing children to life skills and imparting job focused education. About 11% believe that Manitoba's education system needs to be rebuild from ground up while another 34% believe it needs major repairs.

Changes in Administration:

- 67% of Manitobans agree with the idea of reducing the number of school boards, school divisions and bureaucracy to create saving for the classrooms.
 - It is interesting to note that despite being third highest spending province, only 37% believe that Manitoba education system is adequately funded.
- 55% of Manitobans also recognize that the province has too many school boards and they could be reduced to about half or less.
- Similarly, majority Manitobans agree that Winnipeg has more school divisions than required. However, there are some concerns among parents that need to be addressed—about 40% of them believe that more school boards allow parents to have their say in their children's education and have customized programs in the schools.

Key Findings (2/2)

- **Trustee:** 32% Manitobans believe that trustees play an important role in children's education.
 - 43% of the province is unaware of the role of trustees in the education system and another 44% recognize that trustees play role in setting budgets for school boards and setting education tax rates.
 - 33% of Manitobans voted for trustee in municipal elections in 2018 and would be concerned if trustees are not elected anymore.

Education System Reforms:

- One in five Manitobans are aware of the education system reforms, however they only vaguely recall details such as reduction in school division or school boards.
- With information, 65% feel positive about the reforms. Parents are more likely to be optimistic about the reforms.
- **Timing and implementation:** 63% believe that now is the time to move ahead with the reforms as pandemic has exposed many challenges and stresses in the education system. However, about half of the residents have concerns around government's ability to implement the reforms successfully.

Communication:

- Focus communication on how reforms will improve operations and make more fund available for classroom to support students and teachers.
- Most of Manitobans expect the reforms to better prepare the children for a job, followed by making the system less administratively top-heavy.

Key Drivers : K-12 Education System Reforms

Key Drivers Analysis:

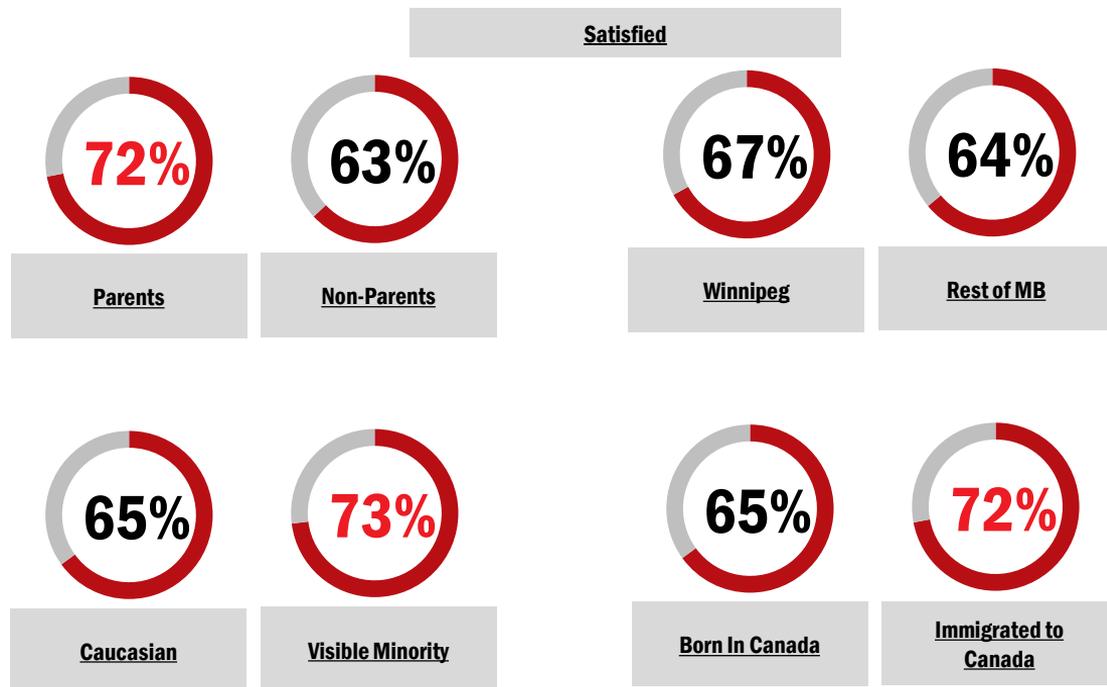
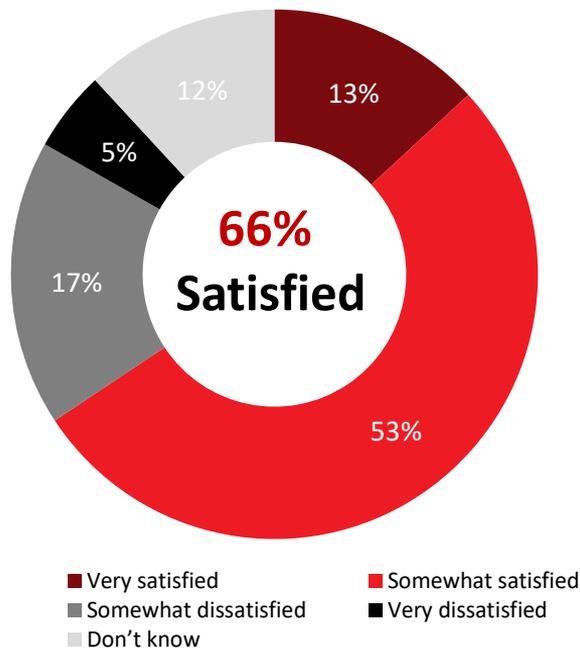
- **Confidence in Government** has biggest impact on general population's impressions about the new reforms. Manitoba government's ability to implement the changes successfully contributes 36% in making opinion about the reforms.
- Other top messages that influence the opinion about education reforms are:
 - 'Moving from the elected trustee model to Community Parent Councils increases the ability of parents to influence education decisions at the school level'. This influences 17% opinion about the reforms.
 - 'All savings realized through the changes will stay in the education system. By improving operations, up to \$20 million will be shifted to the classrooms to support students and teachers.' This influences 10% of opinion on reforms.
 - 'The changes being recommended are based on the evidence of what has worked in other places.' This messaging also influences 10% opinion on K-12 education system reforms.

There is no significant difference in the attributes driving opinion among general population and parents of kids.

Detailed Results Assessment – Current Education System

Overall, two-thirds of Manitobans and about **three-quarters of parents are satisfied** with the current K-12 education system

There is scope for improving the education system perceptions among those living outside Winnipeg.



30% in Southern MB and 28% in Western MB are dissatisfied vs. 20% in Winnipeg.

Q1: Overall, how satisfied are you with the K-12 system of education we have in Manitoba?

Base: All respondents (n=1001)

While two-thirds Manitobans believe the quality of education is good, just over half agree they are getting good value of money invested. **Leger**

Parents, those aged 55+ seem to be generally more positive about the quality of education or value of investment.

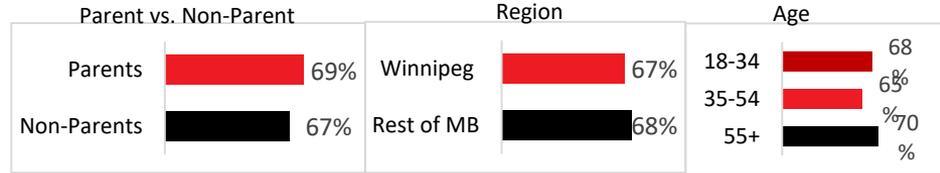
Good Quality

67%



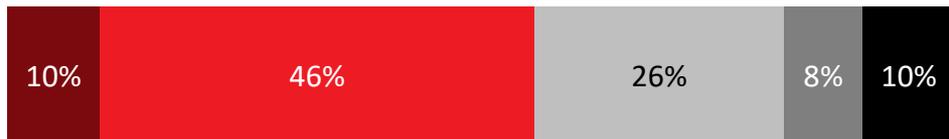
■ Very good quality
 ■ Somewhat good quality
 ■ Somewhat poor quality
■ Very poor quality
 ■ Don't know

Good Quality



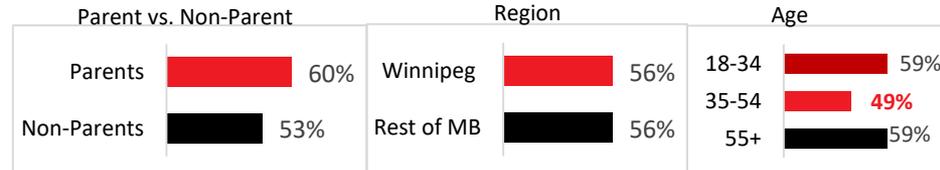
Good Value

56%



■ Very good value
 ■ Somewhat good value
 ■ Somewhat poor value
■ Very poor value
 ■ Don't know

Good Value



67% Visible Minority say 'good value' vs. 54% Caucasians. 68% of those immigrated find value 'good' vs. 54% born in Canada

Q2: Taking everything into account, how would you rate the quality of the public education system in Manitoba today?

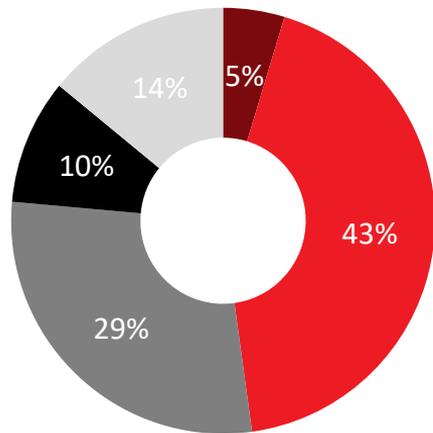
Q3: How would you rate the overall value Manitobans receive from the money invested in the public education system today? Base: All respondents (n=1001)

About two in five Manitobans believe that education system is headed in the wrong direction in province

More Caucasian and middle aged are likely to believe that education system is headed in wrong direction than visible minority or other age groups respectively.

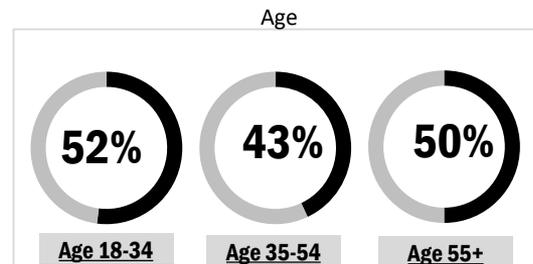
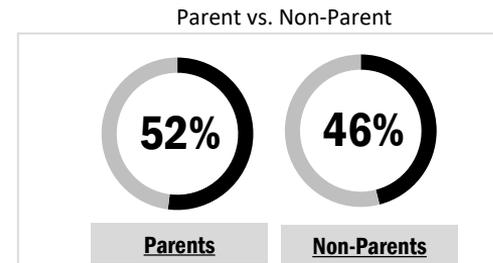
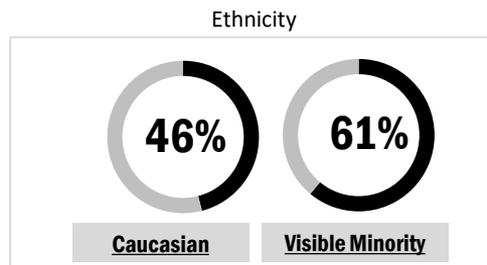
Total RIGHT DIRECTION, 48%

Total WRONG DIRECTION, 38%



- Strongly right direction
- Somewhat right direction
- Somewhat wrong direction
- Strongly wrong direction
- Don't know

RIGHT DIRECTION

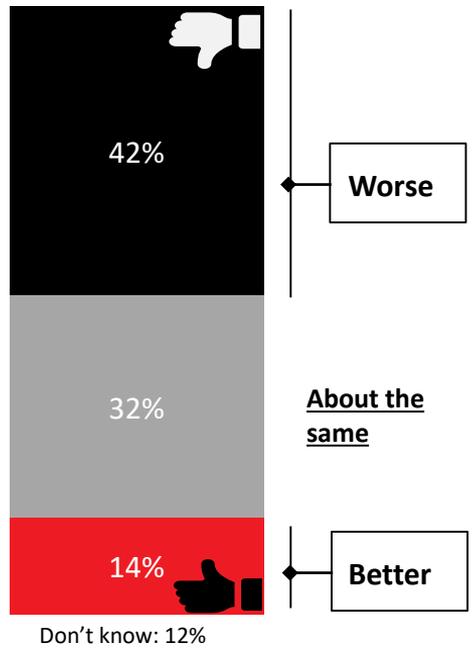


Q5: All things considered, would you say Manitoba's K-12 education system is currently headed in the right direction, or is it headed in the wrong direction?

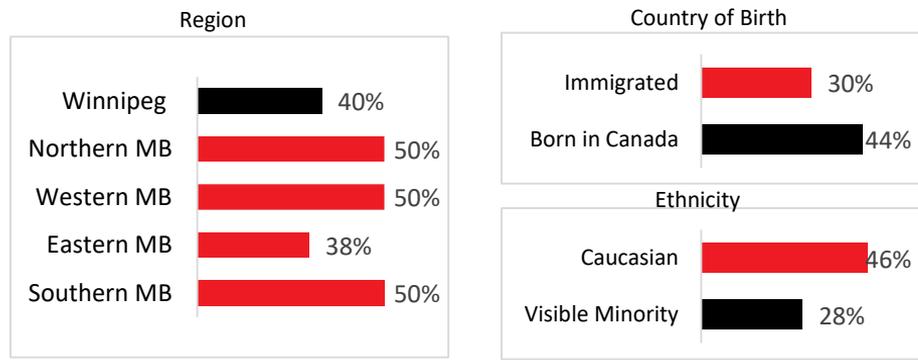
Base: All respondents (n=1001)

42% Manitobans and 45% non-Winnipeggers believe that education system will be **worse in future** if no changes are made

Future of Public Education System

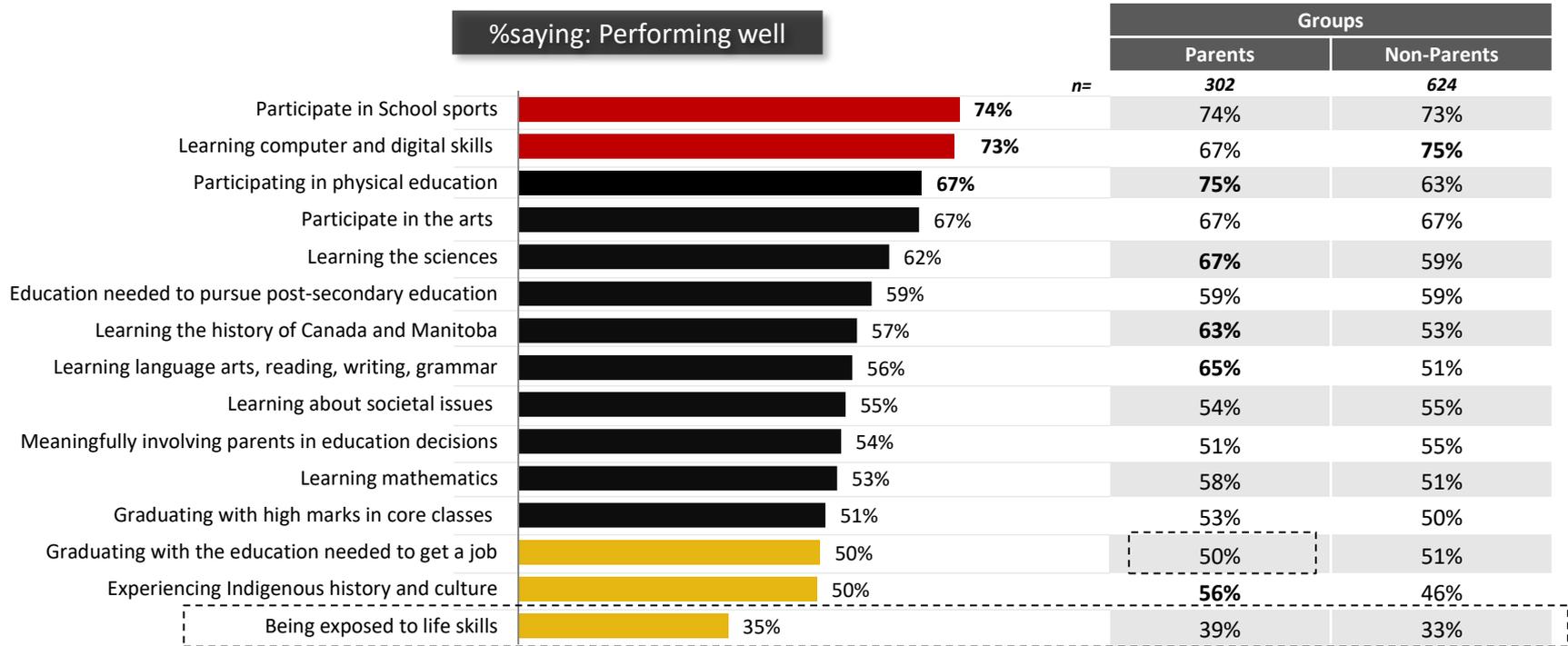


Future of Public Education System - %Saying "Worse"



34% of those currently satisfied with the education system also believe that education system will be worse without any change

Manitobans identify that exposure to life skills at schools and getting job focused education needs improvement



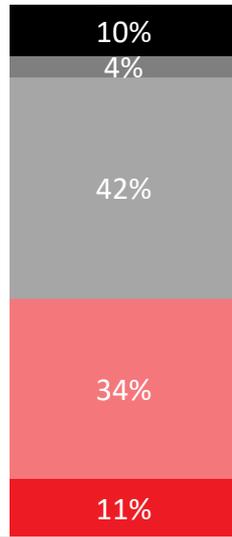
Q7: Please rate how you feel about each of these aspects in terms of the level performance you associate with each. How well are Manitoba schools performing on...

Base: All respondents (n=1001)

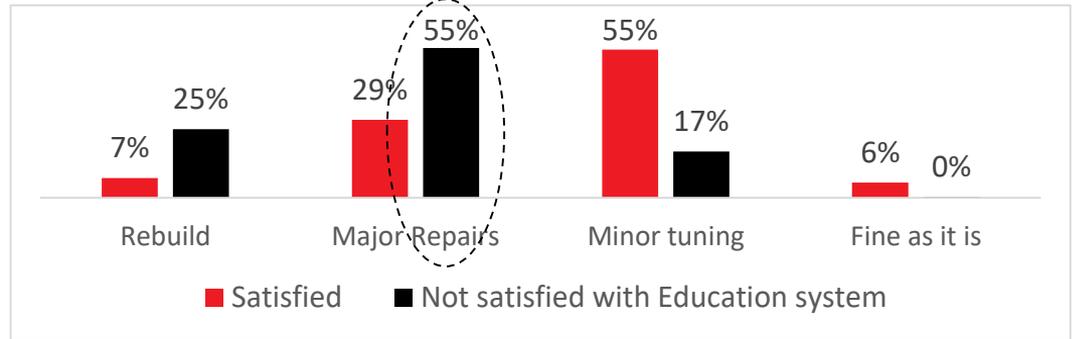
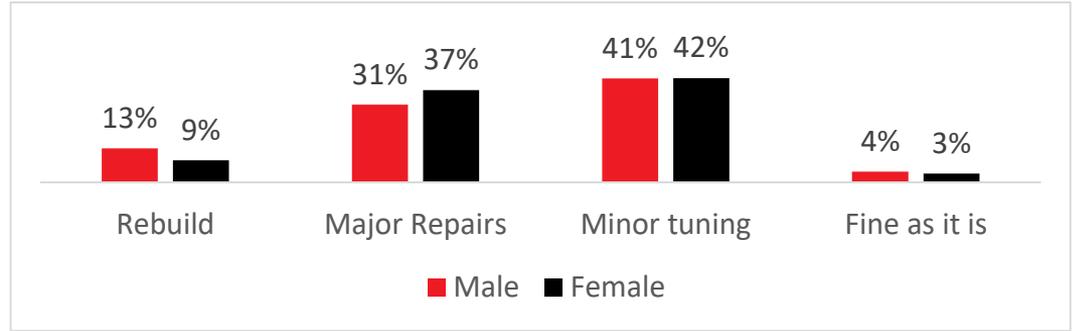
About 45% Manitobans believe that current education system needs **Leger** either major repairs or needs to be rebuilt from ground up

80% of Manitobans not satisfied with current education system want major repairs in the system or want it rebuilt from ground up.

Rebuild or Major Repair
45%



- Don't know
- Fine as it is
- Minor tuning
- Major repairs
- Rebuild from the ground up



Q6: Do you feel it requires a complete rebuilding from the ground up, some fairly major repairs, some minor tuning up, or is everything fine the way it is?

Base: All respondents (n=1001)

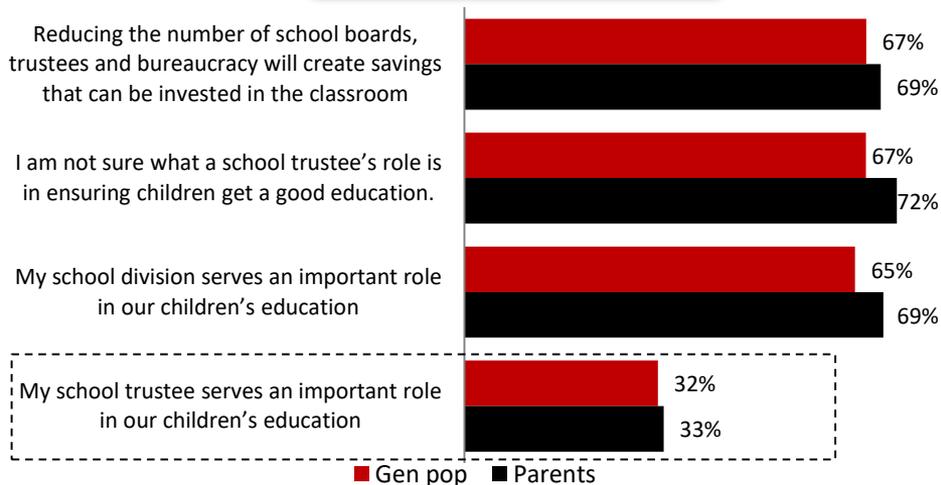
Detailed Results

Education System – Administration

The idea of reducing school boards and trustees to create savings for classrooms has appeal. Not many believe **trustees** are important.

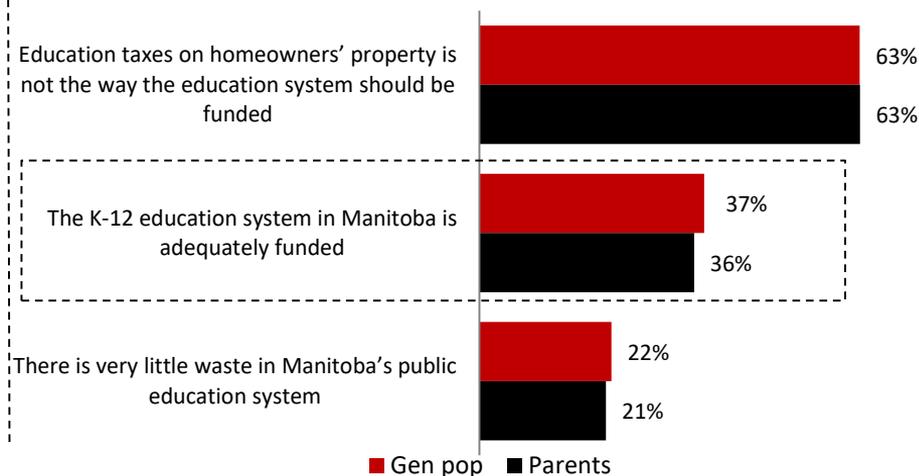
Despite being third highest spending province, only 37% believe that Manitoba's K-12 education system is adequately funded (43% males believe vs. 32% females).

%Agree: Administration



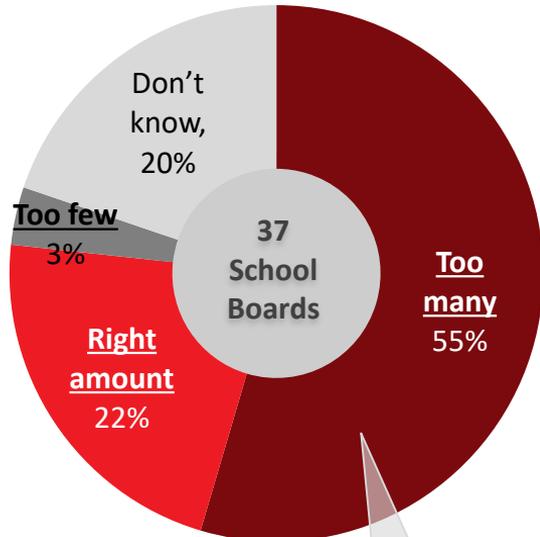
62% Winnipeggers believe that school divisions are important vs. 69% in rest of MB. 38% of residents outside Winnipeg believe school trustees are important vs. 28% Winnipeggers

%Agree: Funding & Spending



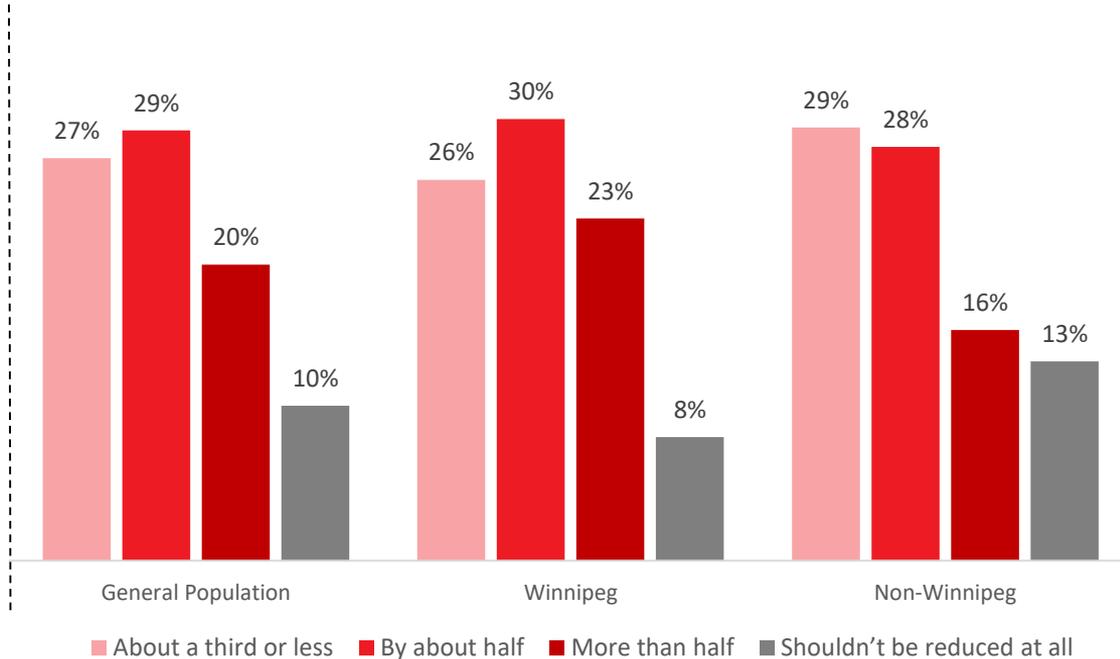
24% Winnipeggers believe there is little waste in Manitoba's education system compared to 18% in rest of MB.

Over half of Manitobans recognize that the province has too many school boards currently and could be reduced by a third to half



61% Winnipeggers believe there are too many School boards vs. 45% Rest of MB (58% Eastern MB).
66% of those aged 55+ believe they are too many vs. 48% of those aged 18-54

Reduction in School Boards

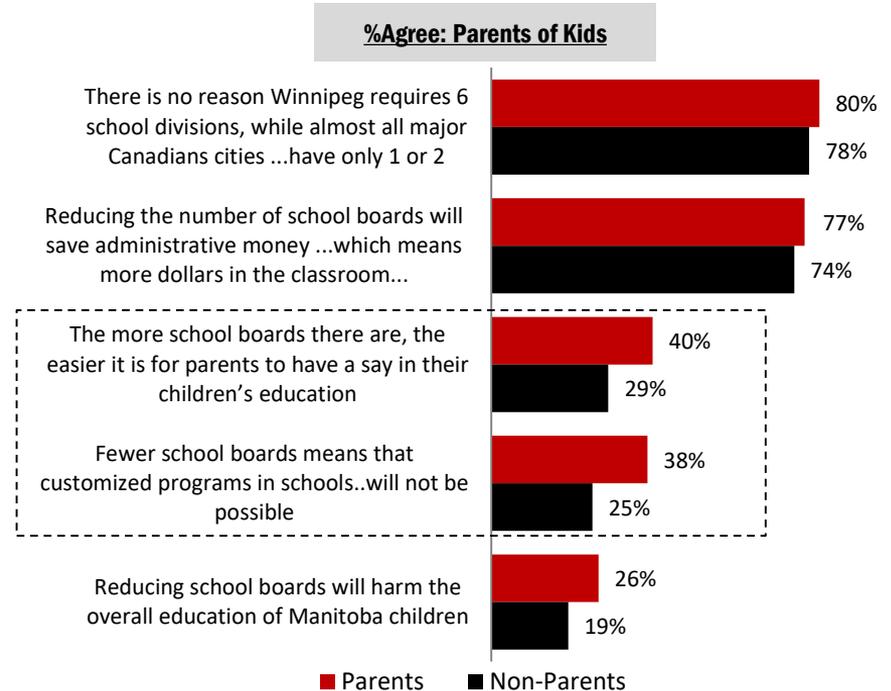
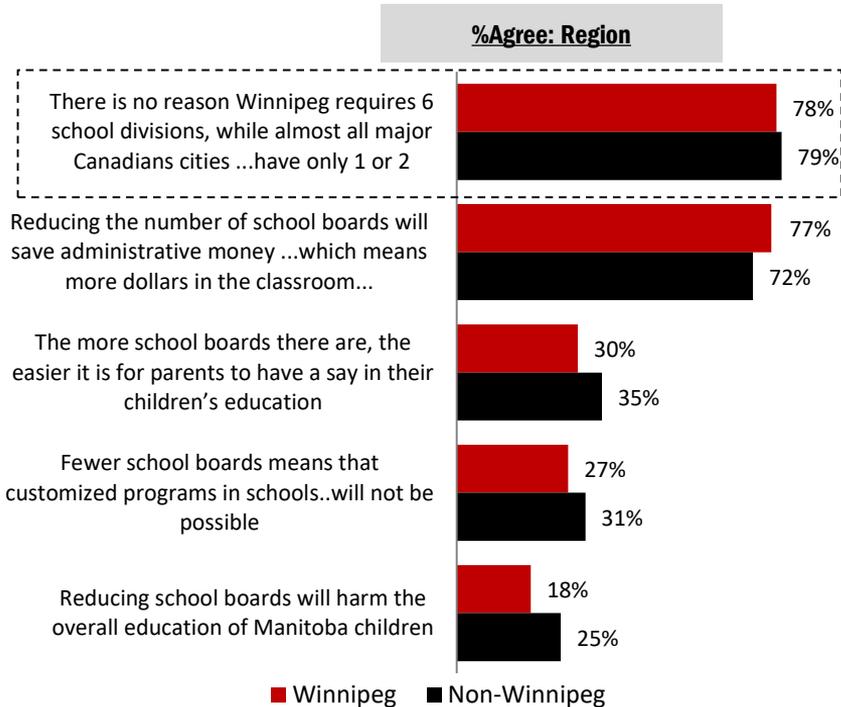


Q9: Manitoba's public K-12 school system is currently divided into 37 different school boards. Do you feel this is too many school boards, the right amount or too few?

Q10: If the number of school boards were reduced, should they be reduced by... Base: All respondents (n=1001)

Regardless of region, majority Manitobans also agree that Winnipeg has more **school divisions** than needed

Manitoba government may need to address parents' concerns around the impact of reducing school boards on having their say in children's education or having customized programs

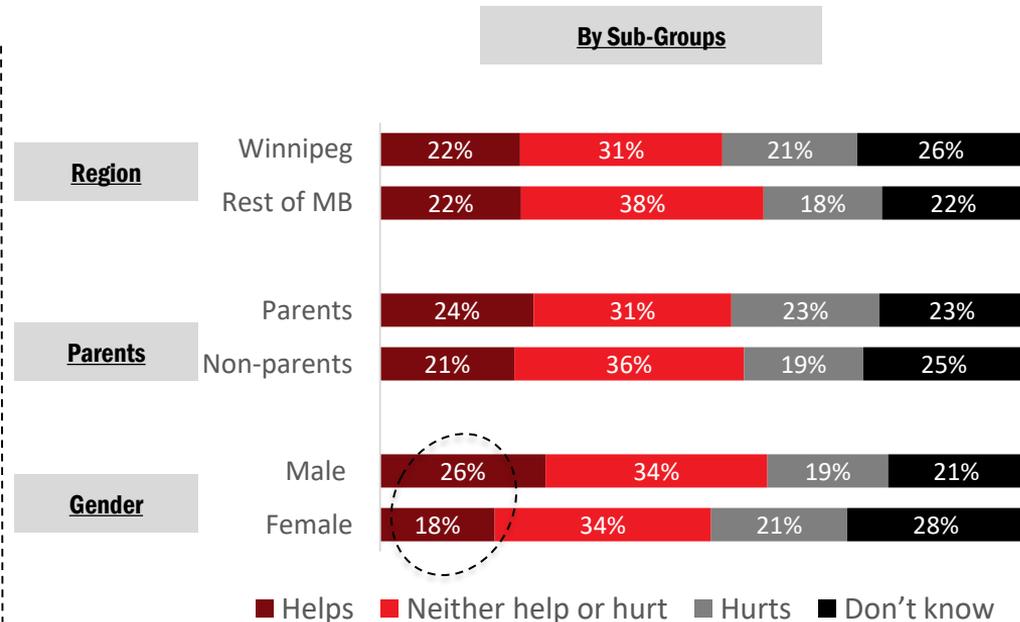
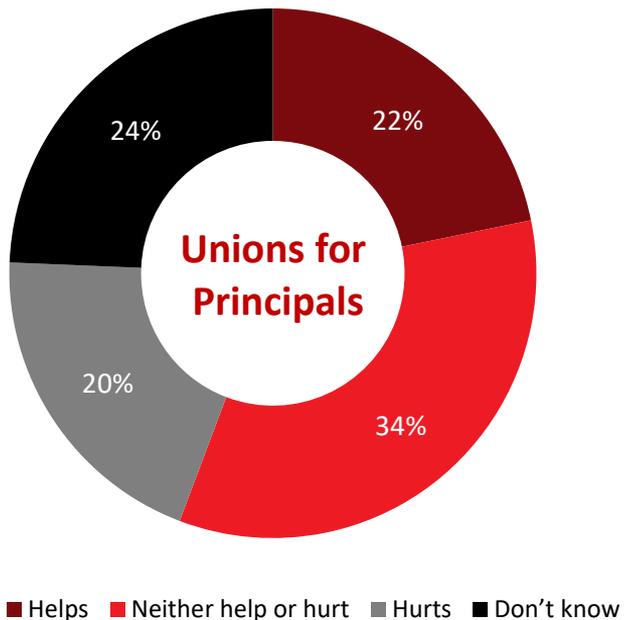


Q11: Please rate whether you agree or disagree with each statement. (TOTAL AGREE SUMMARY)

Base: All respondents (n=1001)

34% feel not being in the **same union as teachers** won't impact principals' ability to manage schools, others are divided on the impact of being in the same union.

While Winnipeg and rest of MB have similar opinions overall (22%), a higher proportion of Western MB (29%) believe union will improve principal's ability to manage schools (vs. 12% Southern MB)



Q12: Do you think giving principals their own union, independent of teachers, will help or hurt their ability to manage schools?

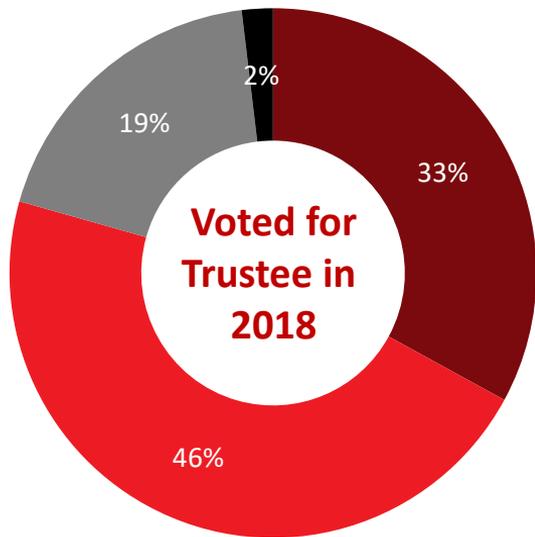
Base: All respondents (n=1001)

Detailed Results

Education System – Trustees

Only one-third of Manitobans voted for a school trustee in 2018. The same amount would be concerned if they were not elected anymore

Voted for Trustee in past



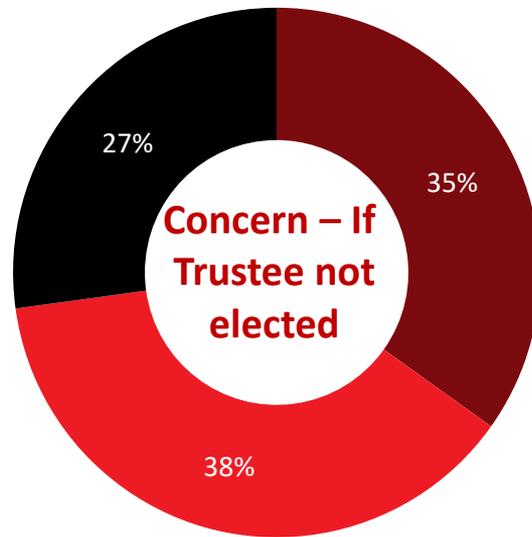
■ Yes ■ No ■ Can't remember ■ Prefer not to answer

- 37% of Winnipeggers voted for a trustee vs. 28% of Rest of MB (only 19% Southern MB)
- 51% of parents didn't vote for trustee (vs. 44% others)
- 39% males voted vs. 27% females

Q14: Did you vote for your school trustee in the municipal election in 2018?

Base: All respondents (n=1001)

Concern if trustee is not elected



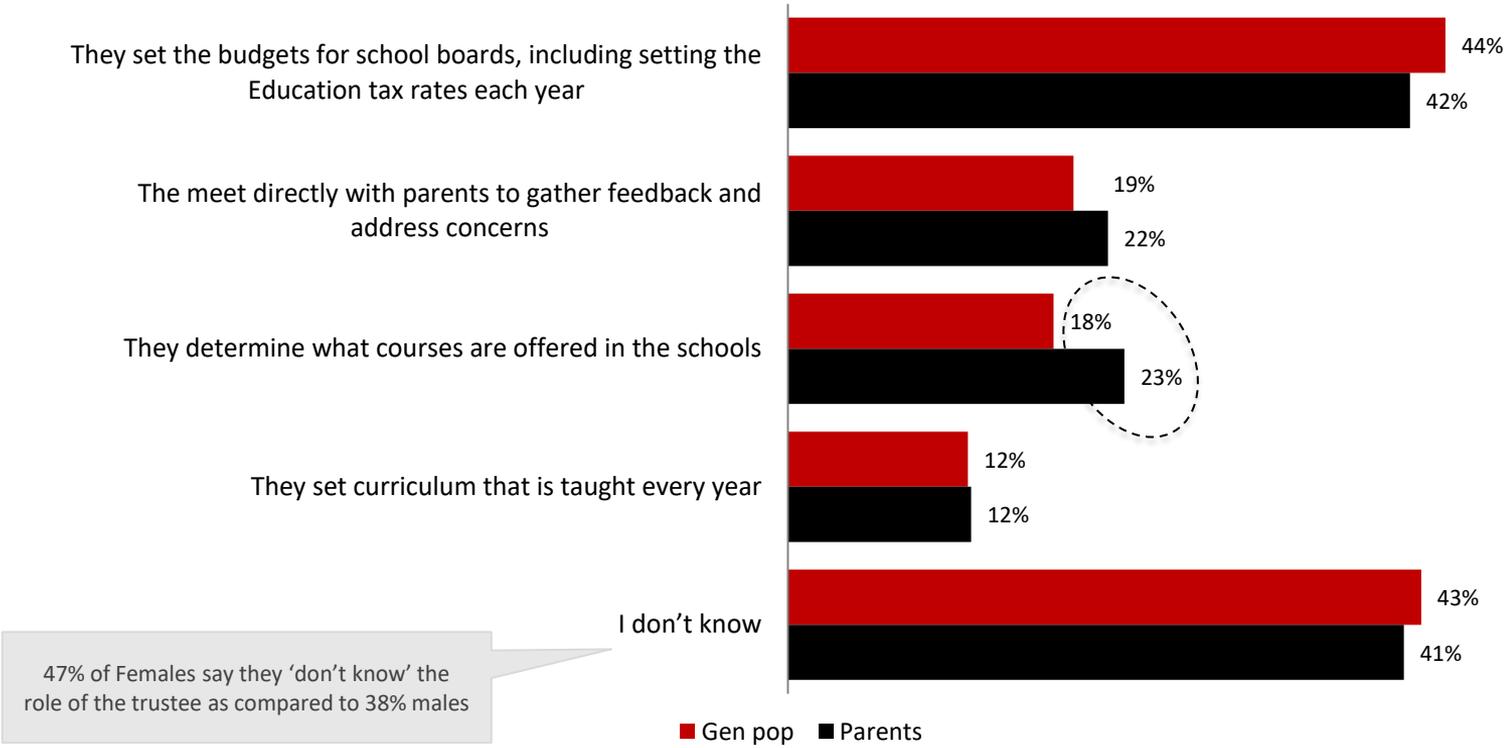
■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

39% males vs. 31% females said they will have concerns if trustee were no longer elected

Q14A: Would it concern you if school trustees were no longer elected?

Base: All respondents (n=1001)

However, over two in five are unaware of the role of trustee; 44% associate trustees with setting school board budgets and education tax rates



47% of Females say they 'don't know' the role of the trustee as compared to 38% males

Q13: School trustees are part of the K-12 education system. What role do school trustees play in the system? (TOTAL MENTIONS) Mentions less than 2% hidden

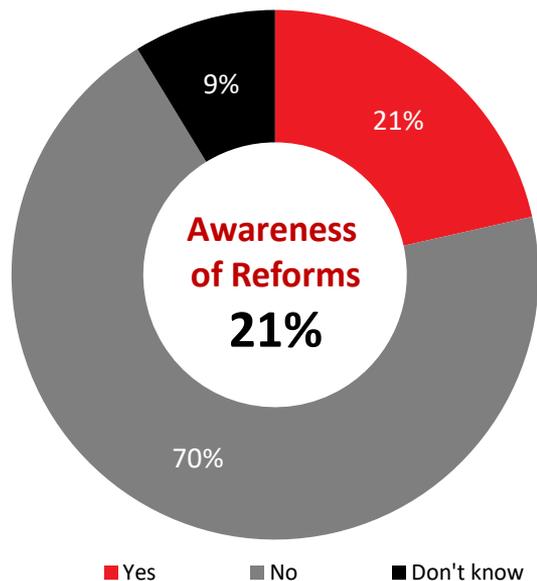
Base: All respondents (n=1001)

Detailed Results

Education System Reform

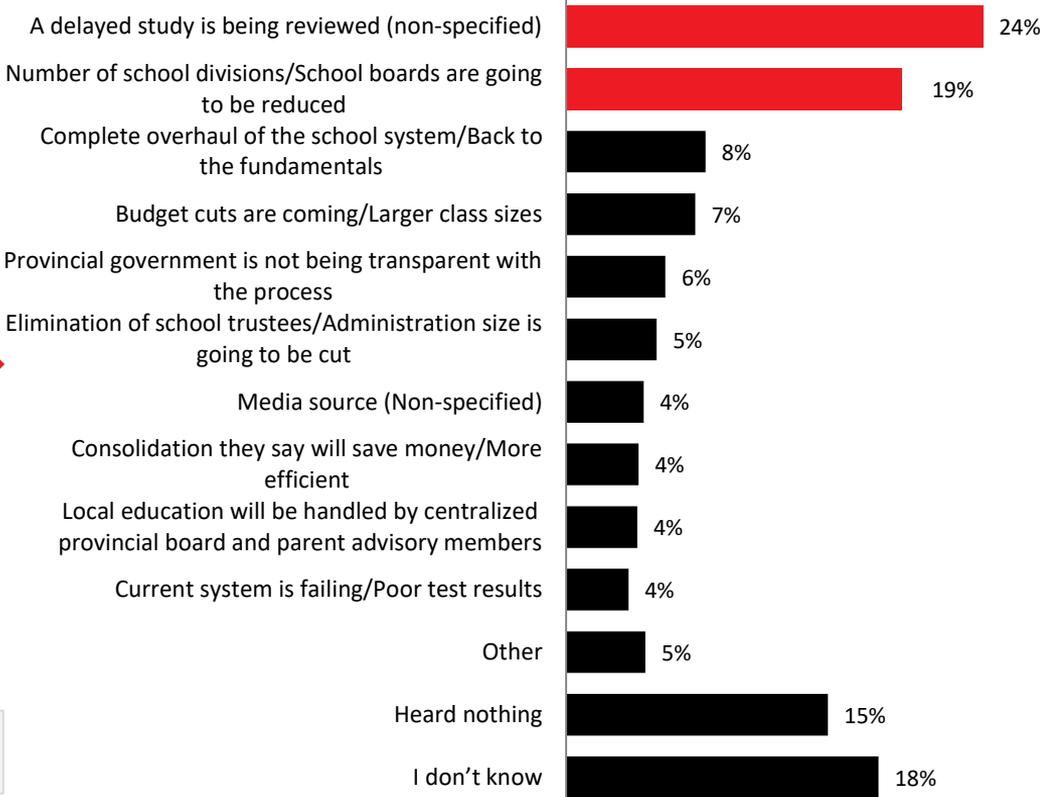
21% Manitobans have prior awareness of reforms. Those aware, only vaguely recall details about reduction in school divisions.

Awareness - Education Reforms



N=215 (Aware)

Awareness is highest among Males aged 55+ (26%) and lowest among females 35-54 (17%)



Q15: Have you read, heard or seen anything about the review of Manitoba's K-12 education system?

Q16: What have you read, heard or seen? Base: All respondents (n=1001)

Information shared with respondents– Education Reforms

EDUCATION REFORMS

Student Learning and Outcomes

Improve outcomes for all students across the province, by focusing on:

- ✓ improving student assessment and closing achievement gaps,
- ✓ increasing classroom supports
- ✓ curriculum implementation and renewal

Future Focus

Build student skills and competencies for life-long success through:

- ✓ equitable access to programming options
- ✓ fostering creativity and innovation,
- ✓ Addressing geographic and socio-economic barriers

Excellence in Teaching and Leadership

Ensure educators and administrators have the knowledge, skills and tools to focus on what students need to learn and implement that in the classroom. Foster ongoing professional growth and best practices

Governance and Accountability

Reduce disparities by building a cohesive and aligned provincial education system that is accountable for results, student centered, classroom focused and parent friendly.

Student, Parent and Community Engagement

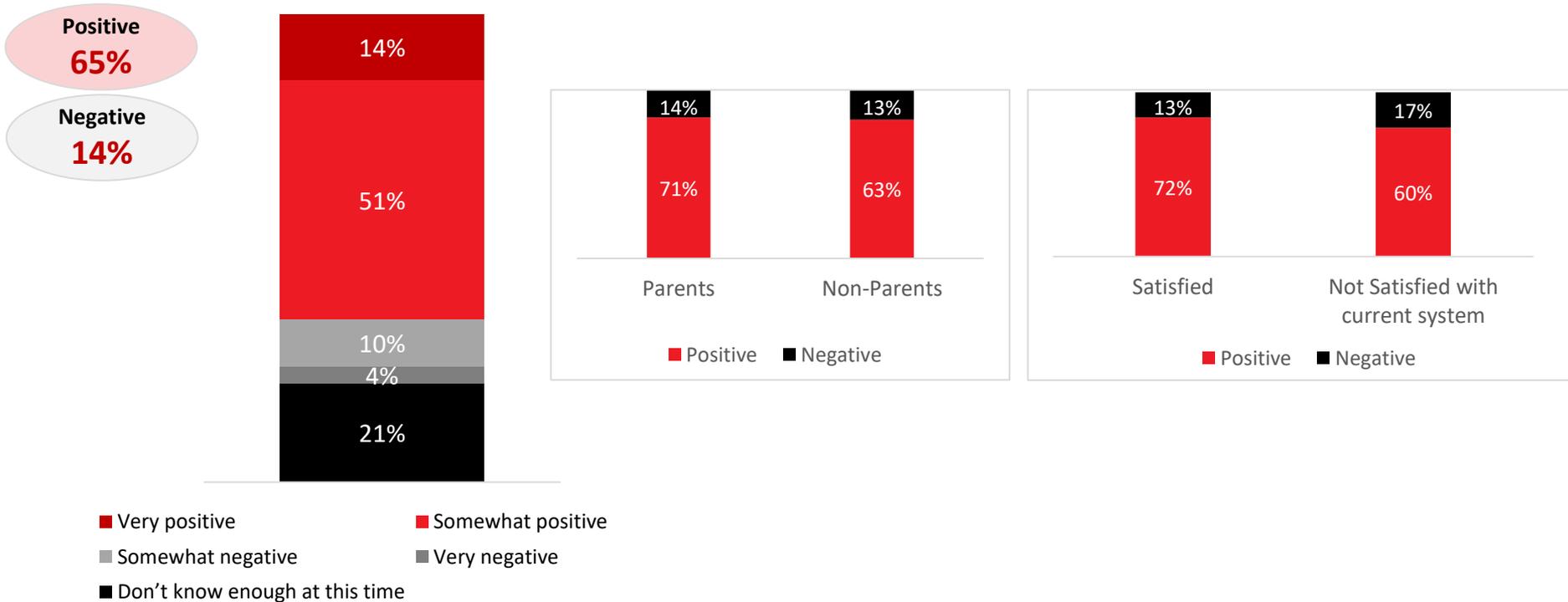
Fewer School Boards but a stronger student, parent and community voice in education through authentic involvement in the design and oversight of the education system.

- ✓ Establish Community School Councils
- ✓ Work on improving attendance and absenteeism
- ✓ Promote community education

In Summary, the focus of the education reforms is to:

- *Provide greater focus on improving student learning outcomes*
- *Reduce the number of school divisions and education bureaucracy*
- *Replace the system of elected school trustees with local parent school councils*
- *Re-focus the education budget from administrative support to classroom activities and supports*

After seeing some reforms, two-thirds have positive impression of the reforms. Parents are more optimistic about the reforms than others.

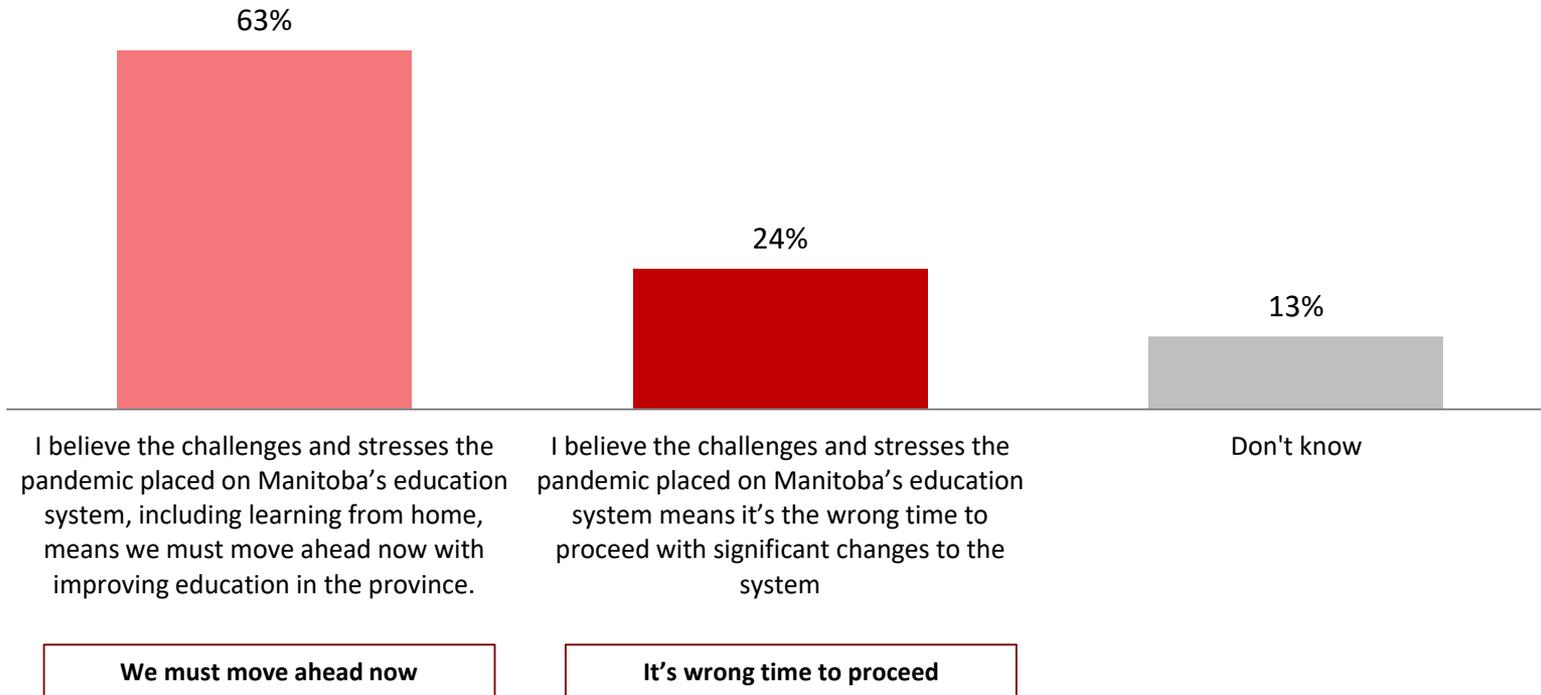


Q17: Based on what you have just read or have heard about planned education system changes, overall do you have a positive or negative impression in terms of how they will change the education of Manitoba's children? Base: All respondents (n=1001)

Detailed Results

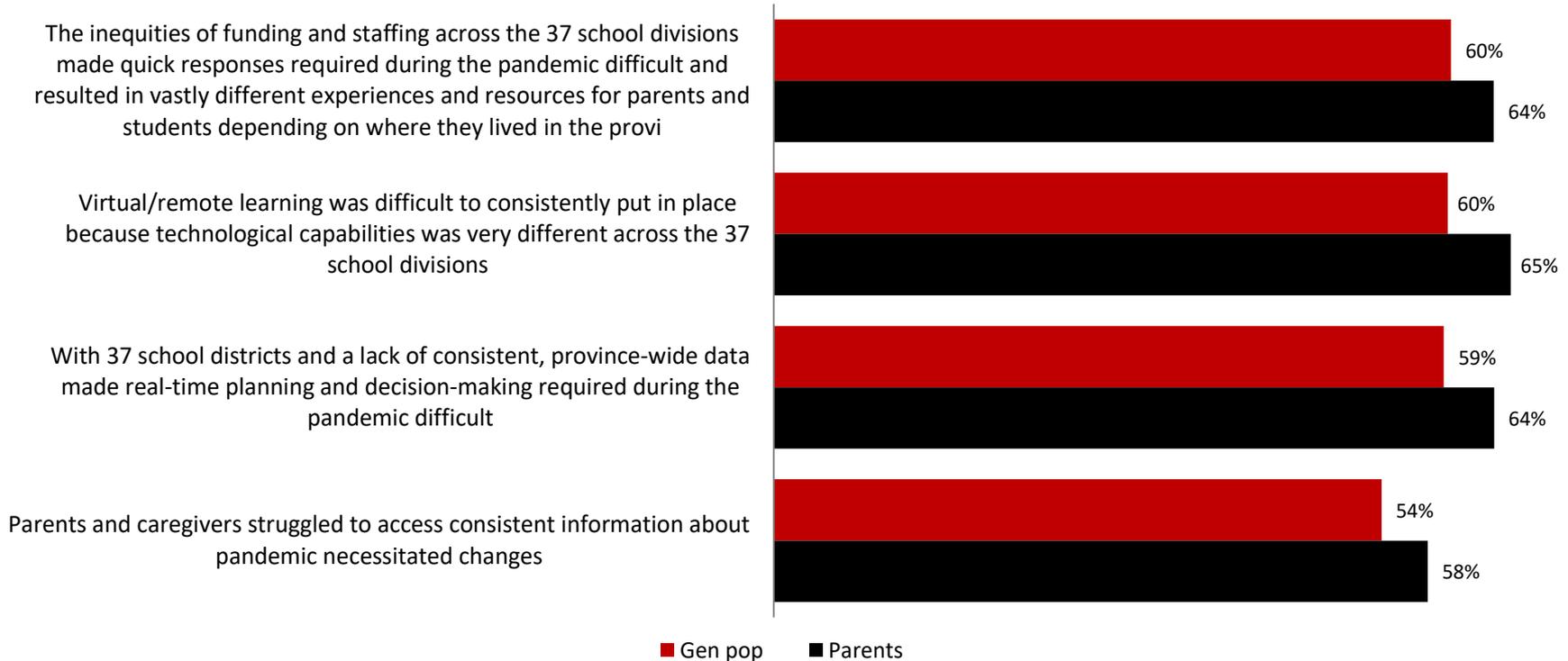
Education System Reform- Implementation

Majority of Manitobans agree that reforms should be implemented now as pandemic has exposed many challenges in education system

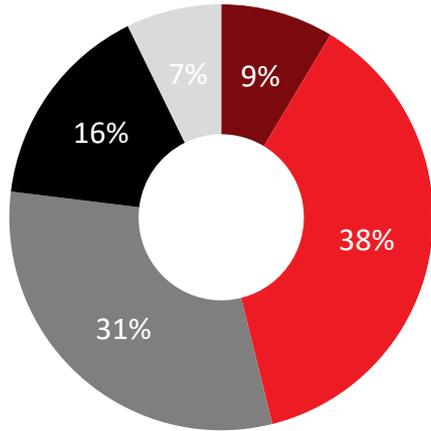


- 70% females support moving ahead now vs. 55% males.
- 74% of those dissatisfied with current education system support moving ahead now vs. 63% of those satisfied.

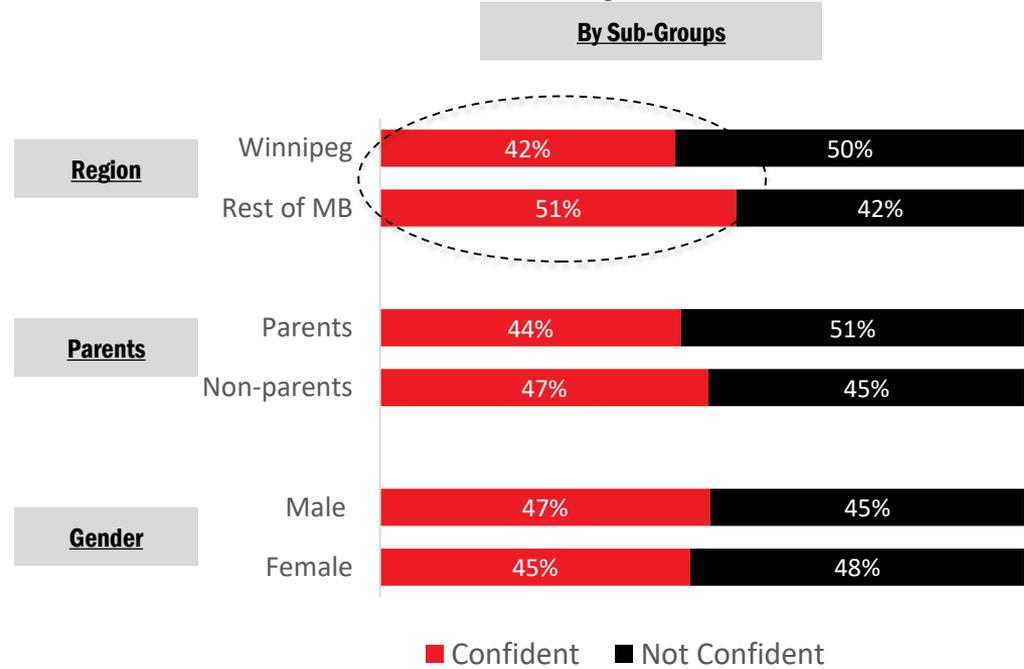
Inconsistencies in virtual learning and inequities of funding across school divisions are good reasons to go ahead with reforms now



However, some efforts are needed to improve public confidence in government's ability to implement the reforms successfully



■ Very confident ■ Somewhat confident
■ Not very confident ■ Not confident at all
■ Don't know



KEY DRIVER ANALYSIS:

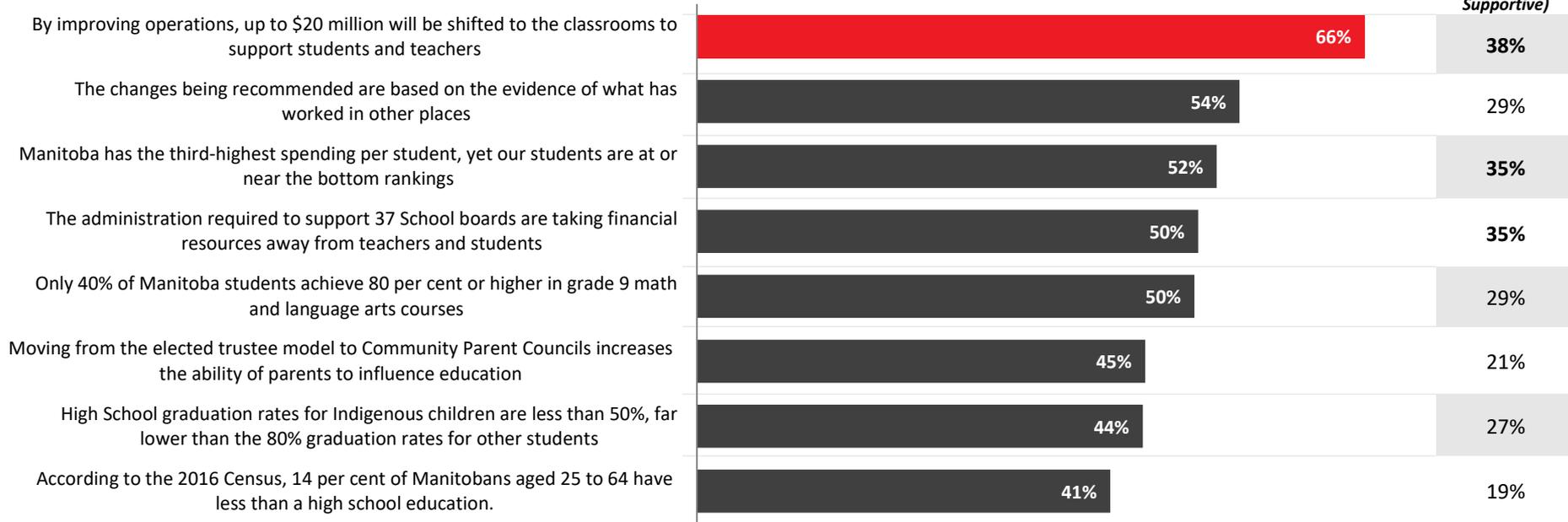
Confidence in government is the most important factor influencing the opinion on K-12 education reform system. 36% of opinions on reform are dependent on the confidence in governments ability. **Promote past successes of government to improve confidence as that drives the opinion on this reform.**

Detailed Results

Education System Reform- Communications

Explaining how improved operations would make **more funds available for classroom** improves support

Negative Impression about Reform
(Make More Supportive)



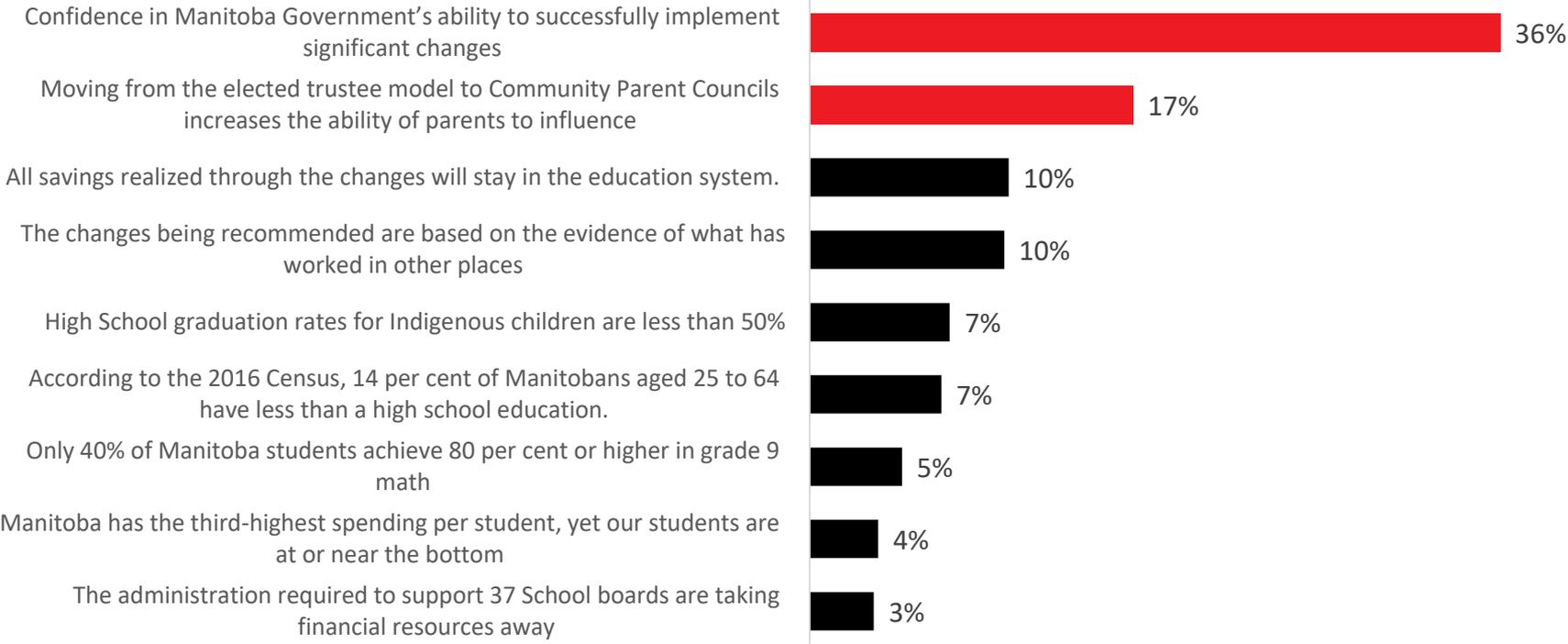
50% of Rest of MB would support more on knowing that moving from trustee model would improve parents influence (vs. 41% Winnipeg).

Q18: Please indicate whether the information makes you more supportive of making changes to the system, less supportive or does not change your view toward making changes. (MORE SUPPORTIVE SUMMARY) Base: All respondents (n=1001)

Confidence in government drives opinion on reforms. Along with improving confidence, focus communication on parents' **increased ability to influence** education through community parents council



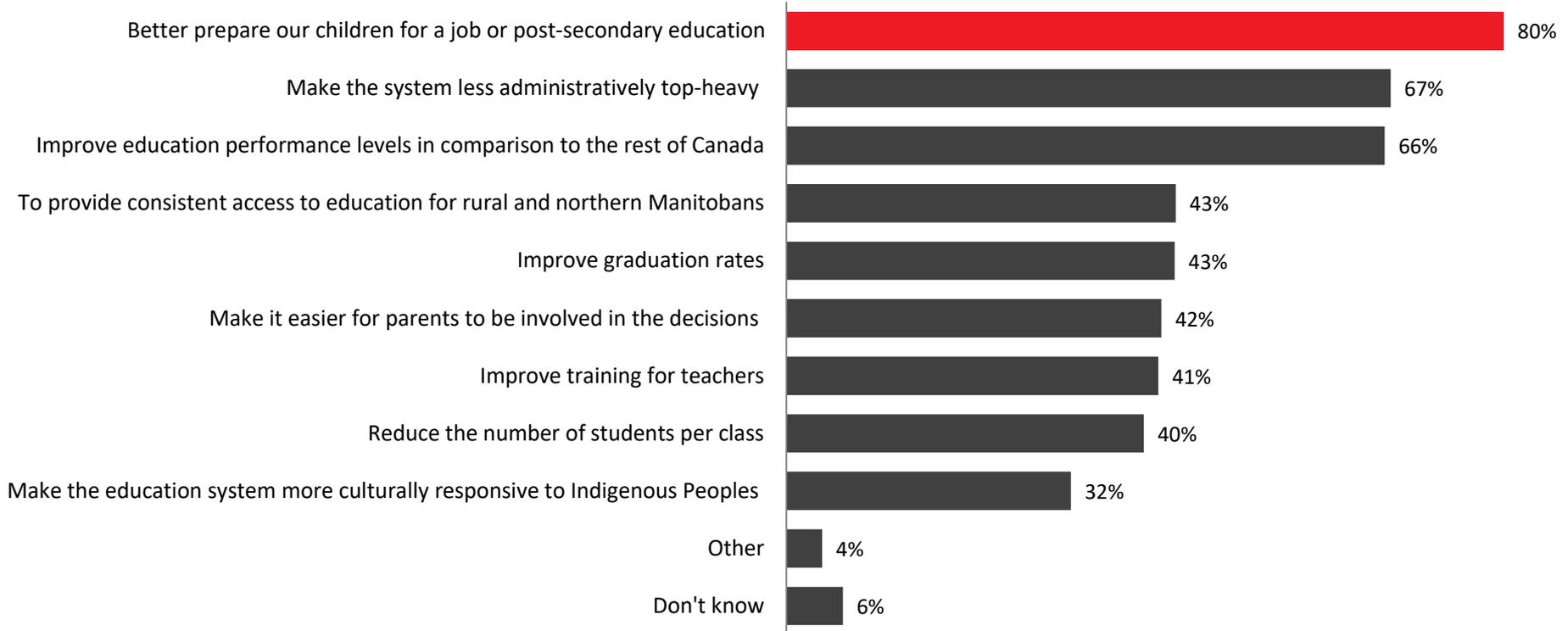
Key Driver Analysis



Model predicts 85.48% of the data correctly. Data transformation: Q17 into binary, i.e. positive vs negative, Q18 into binary, i.e. supportive vs non-supportive. Logit model (because the dependent variable Q17 has been transformed into a binary variable), with multiple imputations for missing data and 5% of outliers have been removed

80% Manitobans believe that **'better preparing our children for a job'** should be primary focus of the new reforms

25% select 'Making system less administratively top-heavy' as most important reason.



Q19: In your opinion, what should be the primary focus or goal of the education changes that are being implemented in Manitoba. (TOP 5 REASONS)

Base: All respondents (n=1001)

Recommendations

Improve confidence in Government: Work on improving confidence in government through communicating a thoughtful plan based on input from Manitobans and experts. Promote past success of the government and demonstrate its ability to successfully implement changes.

Proceed with reforms: Reducing the number of school boards and Winnipeg school divisions. Has support. Highlight in communications how all the funds saved by reducing bureaucracy and improving operations will go to classrooms.

Highlight the need: Highlight parents and caregivers' struggle during pandemic and inequities of funding across school divisions as the reason for need to implement changes now.

Communicate expected outcome: Explain that the changes will result in preparing the children for the jobs better and improve life skills

Address concerns: Address parent's concerns about having customized programs or less say in children's education with reduced school boards.

RESPONDENTS PROFILE

RESPONDENT PROFILE – *Manitoba*

	Weighted
n=	1001
Gender	(%)
Male	48
Female	51
Other	<1
Age	
18 to 34	30
35 to 54	33
55 years of age or older	37
Household Income	
Less than \$40,000	19
\$40,000 to less than \$80,000	32
\$80,000 or more	36

	Weighted
n=	641
Region	(%)
Winnipeg	59
Outside Winnipeg	41
Children under age of 18	
Yes	32
No	68
Children in Education System	
Public K-12 school	58
Private K-12 school	6
Pre-school or nursery school	25
None	16
Home school	6
Other	4

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- **Leger Digital**
Digital strategy and user experience
- **International Research**
Worldwide Independent Network (WIN)

600

EMPLOYEES



185

CONSULTANTS



8

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