

To: David Bossie
The Presidential Coalition

From: Kellyanne Conway

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Re: Virginia Governor Race: Telephone Survey of 661 Likely Voters

Youngkin Takes a Slim Lead over McAuliffe, 43%-41%

11% Remain Undecided; Education a Decisive Issue

Key Survey Findings

Early voting has been underway for over a month, two gubernatorial debates have concluded, and in less than two weeks, polls will close on November 2nd and Virginians will elect a new governor. In this four-night survey of 661 likely voters across Virginia, Republican Glenn Youngkin has 43% of the vote; Democrat and former governor Terry McAuliffe has 41%. One-in-ten (11%) are solidly undecided and 4% refused to answer. This marks a shift from last month's survey, when McAuliffe had a slight lead over Youngkin 46%-42%.

With neither candidate close to 50% of the vote, and a flood of ads, candidate appeals and heavy-hitter surrogates expected to visit the state as Youngkin and McAuliffe make their final appeals, this is anyone's race. In a state that Biden-Harris won by 10% a year ago and where McAuliffe was governor for four years, Youngkin has made the race competitive.

The economy, inflation, and COVID remain key concerns, but this race has been redefined in the closing month around the issue of education. McAuliffe's now famous statement in last month's debate, "I don't think parents should be telling schools what they should teach kids" cost him, according to this poll. 43% were bothered by it and 37% are less likely to vote for McAuliffe because of it. In a separate question, 8 in 10 voters rejected the National School Boards Association characterization of concerned parents voicing their concern as "domestic terrorists".

Following a year-plus of screentime as schooltime, the rise in Critical Race Theory curricula, criminal cover-ups like the rape of a 14-year in a Loudoun County school and other outrages surfaced at school board meetings, concerned parents are a strong voting bloc in Virginia. If the enraged become the engaged, it could cost McAuliffe the election. Youngkin has capitalized on this, and 48% think he is the better candidate to ensure that parents have a say on

where their children go to school and what is taught there. This is a 20% advantage over McAuliffe on education.

In this survey, 44% said Youngkin was seen as the candidate more likely to create better jobs and jump start the economy; 38% say McAuliffe is.

ANALYSIS

Governor's race trending toward Youngkin:

If the general election for Virginia's were today, would you vote for...		
Governor	Youngkin	43%
	McAuliffe	41%
	Hard undecided/DK	11%
	Refused	4%

- Those who are more likely to vote for Terry McAuliffe include: **Ages 30-49 (45%), Men under the age of 49 (45%), Hispanics (45%), Urban residents (51%), Suburban residents (45%), Moderates (58%)**
- Those who are more likely to vote for Glenn Youngkin include: **Ages 18-29 (46%), Whites (47%), Ages 65+ (48%), Rural residents (57%), Men ages 50+ (47%), Independents (40%)**

Who are undecideds?

- **Ages 18-29 (17%), Hispanics (20%), Women under the age of 49 (14%), Education of High School or Less (14%)**

Joe Biden is not the closer McAuliffe needs: President Joe Biden's approval continues to decline and he is now underwater in a state he won by 10-points less than a year ago. *His total approval rating and his "strongly disapproval" rating are nearly identical at 45% and 44% respectively.* Our survey last month, found Biden with a positive 49% approval and 48% disapproval. Those more likely to disapprove of President Biden include: **Men 50+ (53%), Ages 18-29 (53%), Whites (53%), Private Sector employees (53%), Married (54%), Rural Residents (66%), Independents (50%), Education of those with some college (61%).**

Youngkin has the edge on the economy: 44% of voters see Glenn Youngkin as the better candidate to create better jobs and jump-start the economy, while 38% say McAuliffe is the better candidate. Among those that think Youngkin is the better candidate on the economy

include: **Ages 18-29 (49%), Whites (47%), Private Sector employees (48%), Rural Residents (57%), Education of those with some college (58%), Moms (44%).**

Education is the key to victory: Youngkin is seen, overwhelmingly, as the better candidate to ensure that parents have a say on where their children go to school and what is taught to their children in school -- Youngkin sits at 48% and McAuliffe at 28%, an eye-popping 20-point gap between the candidates. Those that say Youngkin is the better candidate on education include: **Ages 18-29 (51%), Married (52%), Rural Residents (59%), Women (49%), Some College (62%), Suburbs (46%), Independents (44%).** Urban voters have McAuliffe and Youngkin even at 37% each.

McAuliffe dismissing parents' role in schools is an election liability: McAuliffe's comments at the debate have proven to be problematic. 37% say they are less likely to vote for McAuliffe while 31% say it does not make a difference. Among those that disagree with McAuliffe's comment include: **Ages 18-29 (44%), Men 50+ (40%), and Rural residents (47%), Independents (35%) and Suburbs (35%).**

Of note, undecided voters are more likely to say his comment does not make a difference (38%) than those who say it makes them less likely to vote for McAuliffe (29%).

Concerned parents aren't "domestic terrorists": Voters also widely reject President Biden's Department of Justice and the National School Boards Association labeling concerned parents as "domestic terrorists". An overwhelming 84% of voters think parents should be able to freely question and raise concerns to their local school boards regarding their children's education. Those more likely to believe parents should be able to freely question and raise concerns include: **Women ages 50+ (87%), African Americans (87%), those with a Highschool education or less (90%), Moms (92%), and Rural residents (89%).**

METHODOLOGY

The Presidential Coalition (TPC) recently commissioned a telephone survey of 661 likely voters in Virginia. This quantitative research was conducted between October 18-21, 2021 at a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) facility (60% landlines, 40% mobile phones). Sampling controls were used to ensure that a proportional and representative number of voters were interviewed from such demographic groups as age, gender, race, and geographic region. The margin of error is $\pm 3.8\%$ at the 95% confidence interval for overall survey, M.O.E.s for subgroups are larger.