For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Garrett Ballengee
304-561-7634

Polling Results: West Virginians Desire More Control Over K-12 Education

West Virginians are concerned about quality of education child is receiving and want more options

CHARLESTON, WV (February 21, 2017) — The Cardinal Institute for WV Policy recently commissioned an opinion survey to gauge the feelings of West Virginians about education and education reform in the Mountain State. Based on the results, West Virginians believe that the state’s education system needs innovative solutions, and that they want more control over their child’s education.

“The survey results indicate that a significant number of people in West Virginia believe that we can do a better job of educating kids in this state. The fact that only three percent of West Virginians feel that the education system in this state is ‘excellent’ is alarming,” said Garrett Ballengee, Executive Director of the Cardinal Institute. “While 45 percent of respondents said WV’s schools were ‘good,’ 48 percent thought they were either ‘poor’ or ‘failing.’ The results are clear that people no longer feel that the status quo works. It’s time for reform.” Ballengee noted.

Key findings include:

- More than four out of five respondents felt that parents should be able to choose the education option that best fits the needs of their children;
- The concept of Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) – the ability for a portion of school tax dollars to follow the child to a school of their choice or saved for college received 56 percent support.
- Nearly half of respondents considered West Virginia’s education system as “poor or failing;” and
- Nearly half of respondents believed that ESAs would have a positive impact on a child’s education while only 25% believe it would have a negative impact.
“It is well past due that the education of West Virginia’s children no longer be dictated by their parent’s zip code, income level, or neighborhood, but rather by the individual needs of the child. The future of education is, no doubt, trending towards choice and flexibility, and West Virginia should, for once, embrace this innovation and follow the lead of other states who have implemented this policy,” said Ballengee.

“This idea is not new in West Virginia. Today, PROMISE scholarship recipients can use their taxpayer funded scholarships at private colleges and universities in the state – the same option should be afforded families with kids in the K-12 system.”

To schedule an interview, contact Garrett Ballengee at 304-561-7634 or garrett@cardinalinstitute.com.

About the Cardinal Institute
The Cardinal Institute for West Virginia Policy, Inc. is a 501c(3) non-profit founded in September 2014 dedicated to research, develop and communicate effective conservative economic public policies for West Virginia.

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