

Missouri Voters' Opinions on Tax-Funded Student Loans and Scholarships

The following document summarizes the opinions of likely voters in Missouri on issues related to tax funded scholarships and student loans. These results are from SLU/YouGov Polls conducted from June 2020 to February 2024. The SLU/YouGov Poll is a biannual survey of likely Missouri voters aiming to inform policymakers, citizens, and researchers of Missourians' opinions on important issues facing the state.

Full demographic crosstabs and raw data for independent analyses of SLU/YouGov Polls are available at slu.edu/poll.

Key Findings

- 45% of Missouri voters agree that the federal government should forgive up to \$10,000 in federal student loan debt. 43% disagree ([Aug. 2022 Poll](#)).
- 64% of Missouri voters believe that tax-funded Education Savings Accounts should be made available to students in households that earn up to \$75,000 (250% of the federal poverty level) ([Feb. 2024 Poll](#)).
- 73% of Missouri voters believe that private schools participating in the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program should follow all Missouri student testing and public reporting requirements ([July 2021 Poll](#)).
- When prompted to think about *religious* private schools, Democratic voters are less likely to support tax-funded scholarships for attending private schools, but Republican and Independent voters are more likely to support such scholarships ([June 2020 Poll](#)).

Media Inquiries

Maggie Rotermund
Senior Media Relations Specialist
maggie.rotermund@slu.edu
314-977-8018

Missouri Voters' Public Opinion on Tax-Funded Loans and Scholarships

Federal Student Loans

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...The U.S. Supreme Court was correct in striking down President Biden's student loan debt forgiveness program.	52%	11%	86%	48%
<i>Reporting percent agree. Source: Aug. 2023 SLU/YouGov Poll, 450 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±5.82%</i>				
...The federal government should forgive up to \$10,000 in student loan debt with those with federal debt	45%	83%	19%	40%
<i>Reporting percent agree. Source: Aug. 2022 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.75%</i>				

Tax-Funded Scholarship Account Availability and Priority

Some states have tax-funded "Education Savings Accounts" that students can use to pay for tuition at K-12 private schools and other education expenses, such as tutoring, online education programs, or textbooks... In Missouri, tax-funded Education Savings Accounts should be made available to (choose all apply)...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...all students	44%	38%	45%	50%
...students with special education needs	58%	54%	57%	65%
...students in households that earn up to \$75,000 (250% of the federal poverty level)	64%	63%	62%	66%
...no one	12%	13%	14%	10%
<i>Reporting percent selected. Source: Feb. 2024 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.74%</i>				

Should any types of students have priority in receiving a Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program tax-credit scholarship (check all that apply)...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...students in low-income households	53%	81%	35%	47%
...students with disabilities	35%	51%	28%	29%
...no students should get priority	41%	16%	57%	48%
<i>Reporting percent selected. Source: July 2021 SLU/YouGov Poll, 950 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±4.18%</i>				

Missouri should make tax-funded scholarships (i.e. school vouchers) to pay for tuition at private schools available to...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...all households with school-age children, regardless of household income	30%	22%	33%	33%
...only for households earning up to 250% of the federal poverty level (e.g. households of 4 earning up to \$65,000)	21%	23%	22%	19%
...only those students with documented learning disabilities, regardless of household income	6%	7%	7%	6%
...Missouri should not make tax-funded scholarships (i.e. school vouchers) available to pay for tuition at private schools	42%	48%	38%	42%
<i>Reporting percent selected (Could only choose one response). Source: Oct. 2020 SLU/YouGov Poll, 931 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.90%</i>				

Missouri should make tax-funded scholarships (i.e. school vouchers) to pay for tuition at private schools, including private religious schools, available to...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...all households with school-age children, regardless of household income	29%	20%	35%	28%
...only for households earning up to 250% of the federal poverty level (e.g. households of 4 earning up to \$65,000)	16%	13%	21%	15%
...only those students with documented learning disabilities, regardless of household income	4%	5%	4%	4%
...Missouri should not make tax-funded scholarships (i.e. school vouchers) available to pay for tuition at private schools	51%	63%	40%	52%
<i>Reporting percent selected (Could only choose one response). Source: Oct. 2020 SLU/YouGov Poll, 931 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.90%</i>				

General Support for Tax-Funded Scholarship Accounts

Missouri recently created a tax-credit scholarship program called the Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program. Private donations will fund kindergarten through 12th grade private school scholarships or other educational services, and donors will receive a tax credit of up to 50% of their state tax liability. Do you...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...support this program	53%	48%	58%	53%

Reporting percent strongly support/support. Source: July 2021 SLU/YouGov Poll, 950 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±4.18%

Do you support or oppose the following policies...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...allowing students to use tax-funded scholarships to attend private schools, including religious schools	47%	24%	63%	54%

Reporting percent strongly/somewhat support. Source: June 2020 SLU/YouGov Poll, 457 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±5.36%

...allowing students to use tax-funded scholarships to attend private schools	46%	39%	53%	41%
---	-----	-----	-----	-----

Reporting percent strongly/somewhat support. Source: June 2020 SLU/YouGov Poll, 443 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±5.91%

Regulations on Schools for Missouri Tax-Funded Scholarship Accounts

Indicate whether you support or oppose regulating the Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program in the following ways...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...participating private schools must accept any tax-funded scholarship to fully cover the costs of attendance	59%	74%	50%	58%
...participating private schools must follow all Missouri student testing and public reporting requirements	73%	81%	70%	73%
...participating private schools must waive admissions requirements for scholarship students	37%	55%	27%	28%
...participating religious private schools must allow students to opt out of religious activities	44%	69%	28%	37%
...the tax-credit scholarship program being limited to students who live in areas with a population of 30,000 or more	16%	22%	15%	10%

Reporting percent strongly support/support. Source: July 2021 SLU/YouGov Poll, 950 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±4.18%

If Missouri established a tax-funded private school scholarship (i.e. school vouchers) program, indicate whether you support or oppose the following regulations on participating private schools...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...schools must accept any tax-funded scholarship (i.e. school vouchers) to fully cover all costs of attendance	60%	63%	56%	62%

Reporting percent strongly support/support. Source: Oct. 2020 SLU/YouGov Poll, 931 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.90%

About the SLU/YouGov Poll

The SLU/YouGov Poll is a biannual survey of likely Missouri voters aiming to inform policymakers, citizens, and researchers of Missourians' opinions on important issues facing the state. No other academic institution regularly conducts a non-partisan, scientific survey of Missouri voters and makes results and raw data publicly available. For questions or suggestions concerning the SLU/YouGov Poll, contact poll director Steven Rogers, Ph.D., at steven.rogers@slu.edu.

About Saint Louis University

Founded in 1818, Saint Louis University is one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious Catholic institutions. Rooted in Jesuit values and its pioneering history as the first university west of the Mississippi River, SLU offers more than 15,200 students a rigorous, transformative education of the whole person. At the core of the University's diverse community of scholars is SLU's service-focused mission, which challenges and prepares students to make the world a better, more just place.

About YouGov

Saint Louis University has partnered with YouGov to conduct its annual survey of Missouri voters. YouGov conducts surveys for multiple academic institutions and is the primary, trusted survey firm for media organizations, including CBS News and The Economist. An independent Pew Research Center study of online survey firms in 2016 further concluded that YouGov “consistently outperforms competitors.”

The SLU/YouGov Poll is funded by the PRiME Center in SLU’s School of Education.