New Jersey Registered Voters on Lowering the Voting Age

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July 31, 2025

1 Over 50% Support for Lowering Age of School Board Elections in Some Groups

- 67.4% of New Jersey Democrats support lowering the voting age to 16 for school board elections.
- 66.2% of 18-24 year old respondents support lowering the voting age to 16 for school board elections.
- 51.3% of Black respondents support lowering the voting age to 16 for school board elections.
- 51.1% of Latino respondents support lowering the voting age to 16 for school board elections.

2 Key Findings

- At no point does support for lowering the voting age exceed 50% among the general population. Support is highest for allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in school board elections, at 42.7%.
- 15.9% of respondents support lowering the voting age for local elections. Support continues to decline at the state (12.6%) and national levels (11.5%).
- A majority of respondents believe that lowering the voting age in school board elections would increase youth turnout (60.7%) and long-term political engagement (55.1%).
- Democrats are significantly more supportive of lowering the voting age than Republicans at all levels of government.
- Black and Latino respondents are more likely to support lowering the voting age than white or non-Latino respondents.
- Voters in Essex are more likely to support lowering the voting age at every level than those from other counties. At 49.9% almost half of Essex voters support lowering the voting age to 16 for school board elections.
- Lower-income respondents show higher support for lowering the voting age, particularly at the school board level.
- Support decreases with age; older respondents are less supportive of lowering the voting age than younger respondents across all levels of government.
- Women show slightly higher levels of support for lowering the voting age compared to men.
- Parents are somewhat more supportive of lowering the voting age than non-parents.
- Respondents most commonly described 16- and 17-year-olds as “immature,” “uninformed,” and “easily influenced.”

Sam Novey, CDCE Chief Strategist, and Mike Hanmer, CDCE Director, contributed to this report.

Table 1: General Question Responses Weighted

Question	Response	Count	Percent
Do you support or oppose allowing 16-year-olds to vote in school board elections in your community?			
	Strongly Support	197	24.4%
	Somewhat Support	147	18.3%
	Somewhat Oppose	86	10.7%
	Strongly Oppose	306	38.0%
	More Info Needed	69	8.6%
If the voting age were lowered to 16 in your local school board elections, do you think it would...			
	Increase the voter turnout rate in local school board elections	488	60.7%
	Decrease the voter turnout rate in local school board elections	45	5.6%
	Have no effect on the voter turnout rate in local school board elections	271	33.7%
If the voting age were lowered to 16 in your local school board elections, do you think it would...			
	Increase future political engagement among youth	443	55.1%
	Decrease future political engagement among youth	40	5.0%
	Have no effect on future political engagement among youth	321	39.9%
Now thinking about other local elections, such as for mayor, would you support setting the voting age at 16 for local elections in your community, or should the voting age be 18?			
	Strongly Support	74	9.2%
	Somewhat Support	54	6.7%
	Somewhat Oppose	104	12.9%
	Strongly Oppose	512	63.7%
	DK/No opinion	60	7.4%
Now thinking about state level elections, such as for governor, would you support lowering the voting age to 16 for state elections in New Jersey, or should the voting age remain at 18?			
	Strongly Support	72	8.9%
	Somewhat Support	29	3.6%
	Somewhat Oppose	91	11.8%
	Strongly Oppose	564	70.2%
	DK/No opinion	48	5.9%
Would you support lowering the voting age to 16 for national elections, or should the voting age remain at 18?			
	Strongly Support	64	7.9%
	Somewhat Support	29	3.5%
	Somewhat Oppose	61	7.6%
	Strongly Oppose	605	75.2%
	DK/No opinion	46	5.7%
Which of the following statements is most accurate:			
	I only vote when there is a national election	45	5.5%
	I only vote when there are national and state elections	93	11.5%
	I vote when there is an election at all levels of government	608	75.6%
	I don't know which level of elections I vote in / It depends	59	7.4%

Table 2: Characteristics Question Responses Weighted

Question	Response	Count	Percent
Which of the following best describe the 16- and 17-year-olds in your community?			
	Easily influenced	455	20.4%
	Uninformed	444	19.9%
	Immature	442	19.8%
	Apathetic	202	9.0%
	Bored	196	8.8%
	Knowledgeable	146	6.5%
	Angry	138	6.2%
	Engaged in the community	136	6.1%
	Mature	73	3.3%

3 Support by Party

Table 3: Support for School Board Elections by Party

Party	Strongly Support		Somewhat Support		Somewhat Oppose		Strongly Oppose		More Info Needed	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Republican	19	9.1%	19	8.9%	24	11.5%	139	65.6%	10	4.9%
Democrat	93	40.5%	62	26.9%	22	9.5%	32	14.0%	21	9.1%

Table 4: Local Election by Party

Party	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Republican	13	6.2%	198	93.5%	1	0.3%
Democrat	62	26.9%	137	59.8%	30	13.3%

Table 5: Support for State Elections by Party

Party	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Republican	13	6.2%	196	92.6%	3	1.2%
Democrat	58	25.2%	150	65.5%	21	9.3%

Table 6: Support for National Elections by Party

Party	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Republican	13	6.2%	195	92.2%	3	1.5%
Democrat	51	22.4%	162	70.5%	16	7.1%

4 Support by Race

Table 7: Support for School Board Elections by Race

Race	Strongly Support		Somewhat Support		Somewhat Oppose		Strongly Oppose		More Info Needed	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
White	108	20.9%	100	19.3%	57	11.0%	213	41.2%	39	7.6%
Black	34	34.8%	16	16.5%	11	11.5%	20	20.0%	17	17.2%
Asian	20	25.6%	13	17.0%	11	14.6%	25	32.2%	8	10.6%

Table 8: Support for Local Elections by Race

Race	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
White	67	13.1%	409	79.4%	39	7.5%
Black	30	30.7%	62	62.7%	7	6.7%
Asian	10	12.8%	59	76.8%	8	10.4%

Table 9: Support for State Elections by Race

Race	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
White	63	12.2%	424	82.3%	28	5.5%
Black	15	14.8%	76	77.1%	8	8.1%
Asian	8	10.5%	63	82.2%	6	7.3%

Table 10: Support for National Elections by Race

Race	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
White	59	11.5%	428	83.1%	28	5.4%
Black	12	12.1%	80	80.5%	7	7.3%
Asian	9	12.2%	61	80.4%	6	7.3%

5 Support by Education

Table 11: Support for School Board Elections by Education Level

Education	Strongly Support		Somewhat Support		Somewhat Oppose		Strongly Oppose		More Info Needed	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Less than high school	1	19.8%	1	11.8%	4	68.4%				
High school graduate	23	23.8%	16	17.0%	39	40.4%	10	10.1%	8	8.8%
Some college or 2-yr degree	56	25.4%	43	19.7%	79	35.7%	23	10.4%	19	8.8%
4-year college graduate	49	21.6%	44	19.4%	90	40.0%	25	11.0%	18	8.0%
Graduate degree	58	25.0%	42	18.1%	89	38.5%	23	10.1%	19	8.3%
Prefer not to say	10	40.1%	1	3.5%	5	18.8%	5	20.7%	4	16.9%

Table 12: Support for Local Elections by Education Level

Education	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Less than high school	1	19.8%	4	68.4%	1	11.8%
High school graduate	12	12.5%	82	85.3%	2	2.2%
Some college or 2-yr degree	33	15.0%	172	78.1%	15	6.9%
4-year college graduate	29	13.0%	179	79.5%	17	7.5%
Graduate degree	50	21.6%	166	71.5%	16	6.9%
Prefer not to say	2	8.6%	13	55.1%	9	36.4%

Table 13: Support for State Elections by Education Level

Education	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Less than high school	1	19.8%	5	80.2%		
High school graduate	10	10.2%	83	87.1%	3	2.6%
Some college or 2-yr degree	32	14.4%	180	81.6%	9	4.0%
4-year college graduate	25	11.1%	191	84.6%	10	4.3%
Graduate degree	32	14.0%	184	79.2%	16	6.8%
Prefer not to say	1	4.0%	12	50.5%	11	45.5%

Table 14: Support for National Elections by Education Level

Education	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Less than high school	1	19.8%	5	80.2%		
High school graduate	8	7.8%	86	90.1%	2	2.1%
Some college or 2-yr degree	25	11.1%	184	83.6%	12	5.3%
4-year college graduate	26	11.7%	189	83.9%	10	4.4%
Graduate degree	32	13.7%	189	81.5%	11	4.8%
Prefer not to say	1	4.0%	12	50.5%	11	45.5%

6 Support by Ethnicity

Table 15: Support for School Board Elections by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Strongly Support		Somewhat Support		Somewhat Oppose		Strongly Oppose		More Info Needed	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Latino	49	32.2%	29	18.9%	7	4.3%	56	37.0%	11	7.5%
Non-Latino	134	22.3%	115	19.2%	76	12.6%	221	36.9%	55	9.1%

Table 16: Support for Local Elections by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Latino	33	21.8%	106	70.1%	12	8.1%
Non-Latino	85	14.2%	470	78.4%	44	7.4%

Table 17: Support for State Elections by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Latino	32	21.0%	108	71.9%	11	7.2%
Non-Latino	64	10.6%	501	83.5%	35	5.9%

Table 18: Support for National Elections by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Latino	28	18.9%	111	73.7%	11	7.4%
Non-Latino	60	10.0%	508	84.7%	32	5.3%

7 Support by Age

Table 19: Support for School Board Elections by Age Group

Age Group	Strongly Support		Somewhat Support		Somewhat Oppose		Strongly Oppose		More Info Needed	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
18–24	40	45.8%	18	20.4%	9	10.1%	16	18.3%	5	5.3%
25–34	42	32.2%	27	20.6%	11	8.5%	44	33.5%	7	5.1%
35–44	33	24.3%	36	26.7%	10	7.1%	44	32.3%	13	9.5%
45–54	31	23.0%	28	20.6%	17	12.2%	50	36.5%	10	7.7%
55–64	34	24.0%	17	11.7%	10	7.2%	70	49.3%	11	7.8%
65+	17	9.6%	21	12.3%	29	17.0%	83	47.7%	23	13.5%

Table 20: Support for Local Elections by Age Group

Age Group	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
18–24	28	31.8%	49	57.2%	9	10.9%
25–34	25	19.3%	95	71.8%	12	8.9%
35–44	25	18.3%	102	75.2%	9	6.5%
45–54	21	15.5%	108	79.3%	7	5.2%
55–64	19	13.1%	113	79.9%	10	7.0%
65+	11	6.1%	150	86.5%	13	7.4%

Table 21: Support for State Elections by Age Group

Age Group	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
18–24	23	26.0%	57	65.8%	7	8.2%
25–34	18	13.3%	103	78.0%	12	8.8%
35–44	20	14.9%	108	79.9%	7	5.2%
45–54	17	12.3%	113	83.1%	6	4.6%
55–64	16	11.0%	117	82.7%	9	6.3%
65+	9	5.0%	158	90.9%	7	4.1%

Table 22: Support for National Elections by Age Group

Age Group	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
18–24	19	21.9%	60	69.9%	7	8.2%
25–34	18	13.4%	105	79.6%	9	7.0%
35–44	17	12.5%	110	81.3%	8	6.2%
45–54	21	15.5%	109	80.2%	6	4.2%
55–64	13	9.3%	119	83.9%	10	6.8%
65+	4	2.5%	163	94.2%	6	3.3%

8 Support by County

Table 23: Support for School Board Elections by County

County	Strongly Support		Somewhat Support		Somewhat Oppose		Strongly Oppose		More Info Needed	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Essex County	27	33.0%	14	16.9%	10	12.0%	23	28.3%	8	9.8%
All Other Counties	170	23.5%	133	18.4%	76	10.5%	283	39.1%	61	8.5%

Table 24: Support for Local Elections by County

County	Support Age 16		Prefer Age 18		DK / No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Essex County	18	22.4%	52	63.8%	11	13.8%
All Other Counties	110	15.2%	564	78.1%	48	6.7%

Table 25: Support for State Elections by County

County	Support Age 16		Prefer Age 18		DK / No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Essex County	12	14.9%	62	75.9%	8	9.2%
All Other Counties	89	12.3%	593	82.1%	40	5.6%

Table 26: Support for National Elections by County

County	Support Age 16		Prefer Age 18		DK / No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Essex County	13	15.4%	60	73.9%	9	10.7%
All Other Counties	80	11.0%	606	83.8%	37	5.1%

9 Support by Gender

Table 27: Support for School Board Elections by Gender

Gender	Strongly Support		Somewhat Support		Somewhat Oppose		Strongly Oppose		More Info Needed	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Men	84	22.2%	52	13.8%	45	11.8%	177	46.6%	21	5.6%
Women	102	25.3%	92	22.9%	39	9.8%	122	30.3%	47	11.8%

Table 28: Support for Local Elections by Gender

Gender	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Men	49	12.9%	307	81.0%	23	6.1%
Women	76	19.0%	290	72.1%	36	8.8%

Table 29: Support for State Elections by Gender

Gender	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Men	41	10.7%	320	84.3%	19	5.0%
Women	60	14.8%	315	78.3%	28	6.9%

Table 30: Support for National Elections by Gender

Gender	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Men	36	9.5%	328	86.4%	16	4.1%
Women	55	13.7%	318	79.1%	29	7.2%

10 Support by Parental Status

Table 31: Support for School Board Elections by Parental Status

Parental Status	Strongly Support		Somewhat Support		Somewhat Oppose		Strongly Oppose		More Info Needed	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Has Child	63	27.8%	47	20.7%	24	10.6%	80	35.2%	13	5.7%
Doesn't Have Child	133	23.1%	100	17.3%	62	10.7%	226	39.1%	56	9.7%

Table 32: Support for Local Elections by Parental Status

Parental Status	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Has Child	43	18.9%	172	75.8%	12	5.3%
Doesn't Have Child	85	14.7%	444	77.0%	48	8.3%

Table 33: Support for State Elections by Parental Status

Parental Status	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Has Child	33	14.7%	183	80.7%	11	4.6%
Doesn't Have Child	68	11.8%	472	81.8%	37	6.5%

Table 34: Support for National Elections by Parental Status

Parental Status	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Has Child	36	15.9%	186	81.8%	5	2.3%
Doesn't Have Child	56	9.7%	480	83.2%	41	7.0%

11 Support by Income

Table 35: Support for School Board Elections by Income

Income	Strongly Support		Somewhat Support		Somewhat Oppose		Strongly Oppose		More Info Needed	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Under $25,000	21	42.9%	10	19.9%	2	3.4%	14	28.5%	3	5.3%
$25,000 to just under $50,000	18	26.6%	13	20.3%	4	5.5%	23	34.7%	9	12.9%
$50,000 to just under $100,000	42	24.6%	36	20.9%	19	11.3%	59	34.3%	15	8.9%
$100,000 or more	85	24.1%	70	19.7%	38	10.7%	141	39.8%	20	5.7%

Table 36: Support for Local Elections by Income

Income	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Under $25,000	12	24.8%	35	71.1%	2	4.1%
$25,000 to just under $50,000	13	19.2%	47	70.9%	7	9.9%
$50,000 to just under $100,000	28	16.1%	123	71.5%	21	12.4%
$100,000 or more	58	16.5%	278	78.5%	18	5.0%

Table 37: Support for State Elections by Income

Income	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Under $25,000	10	19.2%	37	75.1%	3	5.8%
$25,000 to just under $50,000	9	13.5%	48	72.9%	9	13.6%
$50,000 to just under $100,000	21	12.5%	139	80.9%	11	6.6%
$100,000 or more	50	14.0%	288	81.5%	16	4.5%

Table 38: Support for National Elections by Income

Income	Lower Age to 16		Prefer Age 18		DK/No Opinion	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Under $25,000	7	14.0%	40	81.8%	2	4.2%
$25,000 to just under $50,000	7	11.0%	51	77.6%	8	11.5%
$50,000 to just under $100,000	17	9.9%	142	82.8%	12	7.2%
$100,000 or more	50	14.2%	288	81.5%	15	4.3%

12 Methodology Statement

The survey was administered between May 27 and June 6, 2025 to 804 New Jersey registered voters age 18+ across New Jersey using a 100% text to web (TTW) approach. Overall, the results have a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The sample was stratified by the 21 counties that make up New Jersey and weighted on age, race, gender, and region. Sampling and data collection were conducted by Braun Research of Princeton, N.J. This research was conducted in accordance with AAPOR transparency and methodological guidelines.