**The American Education Poll**

**Prospectus**

What Americans know and think about public schools in this country matters. Especially in the current environment, an arms-length view of what Americans believe has significant value for local and state policymakers as they endeavor to ensure the American public schools’ long-term health and quality.

The American Education Poll, an independent national public opinion poll that is intended to capture Americans’ beliefs and knowledge about public schools without bias or favor, can provide a foundation for a consensus about how to build the future of American public education.

**The Poll’s Guiding Principles**

The American Education Poll will be built on the following guiding principles.

* The poll will be developed with a commitment to an unbiased approach based on scientific principles to collect the public's opinions of public education in America and complete transparency in the data collection and the dissemination of the findings.
* The poll questions will be identified through a comprehensive approach to ensure that the issues facing Americans, particularly parents of school-aged children, will be thoughtfully probed with particular attention to historically underrepresented Americans. This commitment will continue through the collection, analysis, and dissemination components of the polling process.
* Rather than focus on how Americans disagree, the American Education Poll will help identify policies and practices that have strong support among Americans, particularly parents, giving greater guidance for education policy.
* Given the unprecedented pace of social change, the American Education Poll will be conducted twice annually.
* Collecting data semiannually will support a focus on trends in public opinion over time, i.e., how Americans’ views may change from one year to the next or within the same year.
* The poll results will be presented clearly and concisely on a robust website that serves a broad spectrum of users, including parents, education professionals, the media, policymakers, and researchers.

**Learning First Alliance**

The Learning First Alliance (LFA) is well-positioned to administer the American Education Poll. LFA is a partnership of 12 leading education organizations, representing more than 10 million members dedicated to improving student learning and achievement in America’s public schools. It is a 501c3 nonprofit organization based in Alexandria, Virginia.

LFA’s varied portfolio of work includes sharing examples of student success supported by data and encouraging collaboration supporting the continual and long-term improvement of public

education based on solid research. It is led by board chair Keith Krueger, CEO of the Consortium for School Networking, and LFA’s executive director, Richard Long. The LFA board is comprised of the member associations’ leaders.

LFA’s members include AASA: The School Superintendents Association; American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; American Federation of Teachers; American School Counselor Association; Consortium for School Networking; Learning Forward; National Association of Elementary School Principals; National Association of Secondary School Principals; National Education Association; National PTA; National School Boards Association; and National School Public Relations Association.

**Center on Research in Education**

The American Education Poll will be housed in LFA's Center on Research in Education (CORE) and co-directed by William Bushaw, Ph.D., and Joan Richardson. They bring extensive experience with education polling to the project.

As chief executive officer at Phi Delta Kappa International (PDK), William (Bill) Bushaw co-directed the PDK poll, initially working with Alec Gallup, chairman of The Gallup Poll. While serving as PDK’s chief executive officer, Bushaw led the poll questionnaire development and served as principal writer for the poll report.

Following Bushaw’s departure from PDK in 2015, Joan Richardson, editor-in-chief of *Kappan* magazine, assumed overall responsibility for all aspects of the poll, from questionnaire development to writing, editing, and disseminating the final results. In 2017, Richardson led the work to produce two state polls in Georgia and New York that were an outgrowth of the PDK poll. In 2018, the 50th edition of the poll, she led the development of an extensive website to share the results of all 50 years of the PDK poll. In 2019, she convened focus groups with parents and teachers to follow up on poll responses.