

To: Interested Parties  
From: Lake Research Partners  
Re: Key Takeaways from New Survey of Likely 2019 Voters  
Date: January 4, 2019

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The following memo summarizes the key findings from the just-completed survey of likely 2019 voters in Chicago, IL.<sup>1</sup> The data suggests Chicago voters remain frustrated with the status quo and that 2019 is shaping up to be yet another change election. After eight years of a pro-corporate mayor who has put downtown businesses ahead of working-class families, voters are ready for a new Mayor who will prioritize public education and make the rich pay their fair share in taxes. A majority of voters wants the next Mayor to address the unequal concentration of wealth in downtown and the displacement of working class African American and Latino families. Headed into contract negotiations with a new mayor, the Chicago Teachers Union continues to set the terms of the public debate on education. Voters believe that, unlike CPS and the Board of Education, the CTU is on their side.

### **The Political Environment**

- Voters are generally pessimistic about both the direction of the city (57% wrong track) and the state of CPS (52% wrong track).
- They are dejected and their issue agenda is noticeably diffuse, with concerns over crime and public safety (19% most important problem), education (16% MIP), property taxes and fees (15% MIP) and jobs and the economy (12% MIP) rounding out a top tier of issues.
  - A close second tier includes ethics and corruption (9%), community-police relations (9%), healthcare (8%), and criminal justice reform (7%).
- The CTU (62% favorable, 24% unfavorable) remains overwhelmingly popular and above the fray in the court of public opinion when compared to the mixed or negative ratings awarded to the City Council (31% favorable, 48% unfavorable), the Board of Education (41% favorable, 45% unfavorable), and the County Board of Commissioners (33% favorable, 32% unfavorable).
- As we have seen in the past, voters offer harsh reviews of the Mayor's handling of education (33% excellent/good vs. 66% just fair/poor) as well as the job performance of Chicago Public Schools (27% excellent/good vs. just fair/poor).

### **The 2019 Mayoral Landscape**

- An initial Mayoral trial heat shows Preckwinkle in the lead at 18%, followed by Mendoza and Daley (12% and 10%, respectively)—the only other two candidates in the double digits (though not the teens).
  - Enyia and McCarthy both draw 7% of the vote, while Vallas and Wilson each get 6%, Lightfoot and Chico sit at 5% apiece, Brown is at 4%, and Fioretti and Ford round out the bottom tier at 1% each.
- Currently, around one-fifth (19%) of voters volunteer that they are fully undecided.

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<sup>1</sup> Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey, which was conducted by telephone using professional interviewers. The survey reached 600 likely 2019 municipal primary voters in Chicago, IL. The survey was conducted from December 11<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018. This poll's margin of error is +/- 4.0%

- Preckwinkle also leads the field when it comes to who voters think will ultimately *be* the next Mayor of Chicago (23% Preckwinkle versus 16% for Daley and just 11% for Mendoza), regardless of whom they support today.
  - At the demographic level, Preckwinkle has an early advantage among African American voters (23% for Preckwinkle, followed by 11% for Wilson, and the other candidates in the single digits) while Mendoza has an early lead among Latinx voters (23% for Mendoza, followed by 14% for Preckwinkle, 12% for Chico, and 11% for Daley). White voters are split more evenly among Preckwinkle (13%), Daley (12%), and Mendoza (14%), and are the only demographic among whom McCarthy gets double digits (12%).

### **Voter Opinions on Specific Educational Issues & Revenue Creation**

- Irrespective of which candidate they currently support, voters overwhelmingly want to see the next Mayor focus on making new investments in education, teachers, and neighborhood schools.
- Fully 93% consider this to be an extremely important issue, including a 59% majority who rank it a “10” (i.e. “a very important”).
- A majority (56%) of voters also says it is important that the next Mayor do something to address the unequal concentration of wealth in downtown and the “push out” of working class African American and Latino families.
- A similar 56% majority also believes that racial segregation should remain an important factor when determining attendance boundaries for Chicago Public Schools. These are key issues the candidates for mayor would do well to address, as they are among the criteria the remaining undecided voters will use to assess them.
- When it comes to sources for new revenue, a millionaires’ income tax (34% excellent idea, 73% total good idea) remains the most popular idea for generating more funding for Chicago Public Schools.
- Voters also solidly support implementing a new tax on large corporations that pay their employees less than \$12 an hour (30% excellent idea, 59% total good idea), suing the big banks to recover losses from ‘toxic swaps’ (27% excellent idea, 61% total good idea).

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