



January 26, 2009

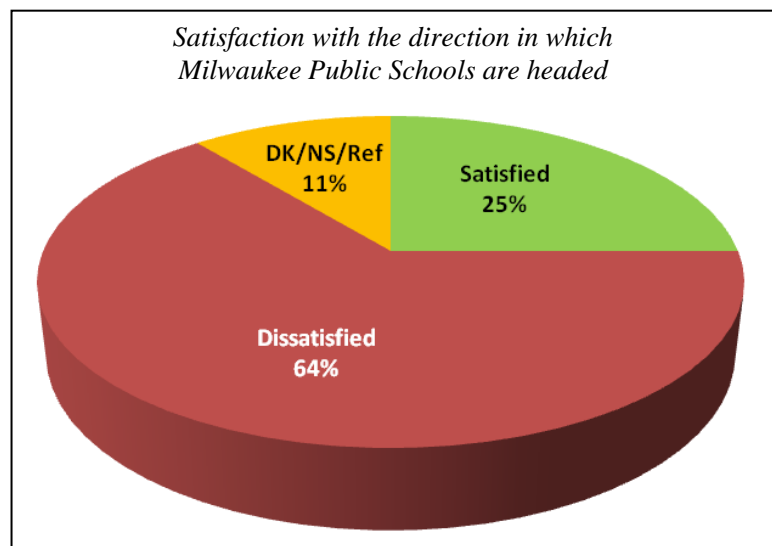
To: Advocates for Student Achievement
Executive Committee

From: brilliant corners Research & Strategies

Re: Highlights of Milwaukee School Board Poll* (Districts 4, 6, and 7)

Voters are dissatisfied with MPS and the current School Board, and are looking for fundamental change.

The calls for change are growing urgent among Milwaukee voters, who are showing very high, even historic levels of dissatisfaction with the current MPS Board. Just 1 in 4 (25 percent) are satisfied with the direction MPS is headed (see chart), and only 29 percent approve of the job the current MPS School Board is doing. These numbers are startling even by the standards of other troubled urban school districts and show a level of frustration among the electorate that goes far beyond a call for minor or incremental change. Voters are looking for fundamental change in the way MPS operates, change that they do not believe is possible either with the current board, or with MPS as it currently exists. Indeed, only 36 percent agree that MPS, as it exists today, can make real progress on student achievement, another indicator that voters see the current system as broken. These numbers represent an indictment of the current Board and the ways it has operated, and speak to the need for a



* Findings from a survey of 400 likely voters in the April 2009 Milwaukee Public School (MPS) Board elections in School Board Districts 4, 6, and 7 with a margin of error of $\pm 4.9\%$.

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dramatic break from the politics of the past. The time is right for new School Board candidates who can articulate a new vision for Milwaukee Schools and show a willingness to work together with other Board members to bring this new vision to life.

Voters want the School Board to come together to achieve real solutions.

Central to the desire for change in this election is the call for Board members to put aside their differences and come together to bring change to Milwaukee Schools. Over eight in ten voters (85 percent) would like to see their School Board member set aside their differences and unite when disputes over issues arise, rather than sticking to ideological principal. In Milwaukee, a candidate who can demonstrate a willingness to break from the past, lead positive change, and work with other members of the Board would be well-positioned to capitalize on the current mindset of the electorate.