

## **Press Release: March 1, 2016: Monomoy Students Conduct Exit Poll**

On Tuesday, March 1, Senior U.S. Government students from Monomoy High School conducted an exit poll at the Harwich Community Center. In all, seventy students participated and 413 voters were interviewed. Most of these voters, 64%, voted in the Democratic primary. Among the Democrats, Sanders led 59% to 40%, and among Republicans, Trump led with 46%, followed by Rubio (21), Kasich (17), Cruz (8) and Carson (5). Most of the voters approved of the job Pres. Obama has done – 53% to 38%, with 9% undecided.

Breaking the results down by gender, women were 9% more likely than men to vote Democratic, which is the about the same gender gap we usually see. Among Democrats, men were more strongly for Sanders (67-33 over Clinton), while women were more evenly split (54-45 for Sanders). Among Republicans, men supported Trump more strongly – 49-23-16 over Rubio and Kasich, while among women, the race was a bit closer – 42-21-20. Women were more supportive of Pres. Obama's performance – 56-32, while men's support was 49-43.

By age, we compared younger (18-39 years old) to middle aged (40-59) to older voters (60+). Younger voters were a bit more likely to vote Democratic – 68% of younger voters compared to 65% and 61%. Within the party primaries, there were dramatic gaps. Among Democrats, young people favored Sanders 81-18, compared to 58-41 and 52-48 among middle aged and older voters. Among Republicans, young voters actually favored Rubio 45-41. Middle aged voters favored Trump 54-20 with Kasich getting 7%. Kasich came in second with older voters with 24% compared to 44 for Trump and 17 for Rubio.

We asked voters to cite up to three issues as being most important to them. The economy was the cited most - by 65%. There was not much difference among the candidates' supporters within each party, but there were significant differences between those voting in the two party primaries. The economy was cited by 77% of Republican voters, compared to 56% of Democrats. The deficit and national debt was cited by 52% of Republicans vs. 20% of Democrats. Foreign Policy was also a greater focus for Republicans – 47% compared to 38%. Other issues were more of a concern for Democratic voters – Health Care (51% to 26%), Education (40% to 14%) and the Environment (36% to 7%).

We also asked about a potential November election between Clinton and Trump, which Clinton led 53% to 30% with 17% undecided. With this matchup, the gender gap was especially large, as women favored Clinton 62% to 23% with men much closer at 44% to 37%. Clinton led among all age groups, though least decisively among younger voters (46-35, compared to 59-29 and 52-28 among middle aged and older voters). Looking at the other candidates' supporters, some interesting patterns emerge. Sanders supporters favored Clinton 64-12 with 24% undecided. Rubio supporters favored Trump 44-19 with 36% undecided. Interestingly, Kasich supports were evenly split 28-28 with 44% undecided. This suggests that Democrats would have an easier time uniting behind Clinton than Republicans will around Trump.

On a related issue, we asked if voters would consider voting for an independent in November, and 64% said they would. A majority of all three partisan groups agreed – 53% of Democrats, 66% of Republicans, and 73% of Independents. This is dramatically different from the results that we got when four years ago when 36% of the voters said they might support an independent. This might suggest a possible opening for an independent candidate like Michael Bloomberg.

We would like to thank Harwich Town Clerk Anita Doucette for her continuing support of our students in allowing us to conduct this exit poll, and to thank all the voters who took the time to talk with us. The exercise offers us great insights into the electoral process as well as this election. We look forward to November!