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POLL SHOWS STRONG SUPPORT FOR A TRIAL OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

A UMR poll has shown strong public support for a trial of the government's controversial National Standards education policy.

A representative sample of 750 people was asked to either agree or disagree with the statement - "The National Standards should be tested before being implemented in schools so that their impact on children's learning is known."

71% of participants who had children in primary school agreed with the statement, with 55% of those "strongly agreeing". Just 15% of parents of primary school children disagreed, with 14% having no opinion or being unsure.

Support for the trial overall amongst participants was 66%. Just 18% disagreed, while 16% had no opinion or were unsure. Support for a trial was highest among women and people aged 30-44.

NZEI President Frances Nelson says the poll results clearly show that the Government does not have parental support to bulldoze the implementation of the Standards in schools this year without a robust trial.

"They also reflect what we are seeing in communities around the country during our National Standards bus tour - that people understand that children's learning is too important to experiment with."

"Principals, Boards and parents are consistently calling for a trial of the Standards to ensure they will be good for children's learning. As the Education Minister launches a 'charm offensive' on National Standards this week, we urge the Government to listen to what parents and educationalists are saying and agree to a trial."

The UMR poll was commissioned by NZEI Te Riu Roa and conducted between February 18-22nd. Go to www.handsupforlearning.org.nz for a copy of the full results.