



Alberta Teachers' Association
February 2018 Tracking Survey
Class size and support for special needs education

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Methodology

This report presents the findings of a telephone survey conducted among 815 adult Albertans interviewed during the period from February 20-28, 2018. The margin of error for a sample of 815 is plus or minus 3.4 percentage points (at the 95% confidence level).

The sampling method was designed to complete 800 interviews within households randomly selected across the province. The sample was disproportionate, with smaller cities and rural areas oversampled to permit meaningful statistical analysis. Respondents within each household contacted by landline were screened for random selection using the “most recent birthday” method. In this wave of the tracking survey, cell phone sample was also included (25% of sample). The data are statistically weighted to ensure the sample’s regional, age and gender composition reflects that of the actual Alberta population according to the most recently available Census information (2011).

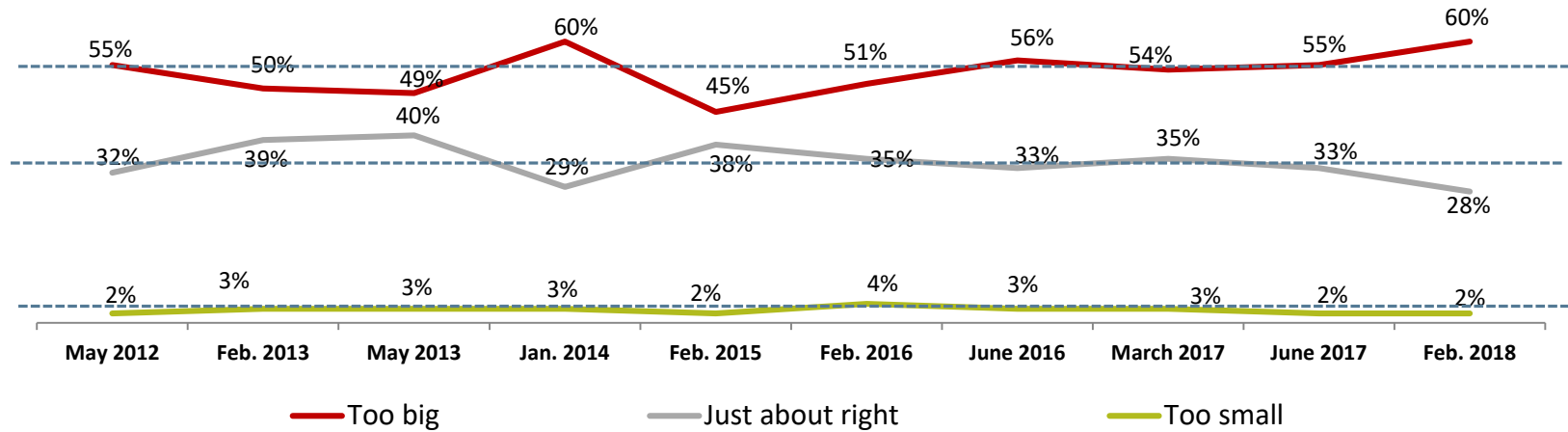
In this report, results are expressed as percentages unless otherwise noted. Results may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses.



Opinions on class size and support for special needs education

Six in ten Albertans say class sizes are too large, the highest proportion since January 2014

Opinion about class sizes in Alberta's schools



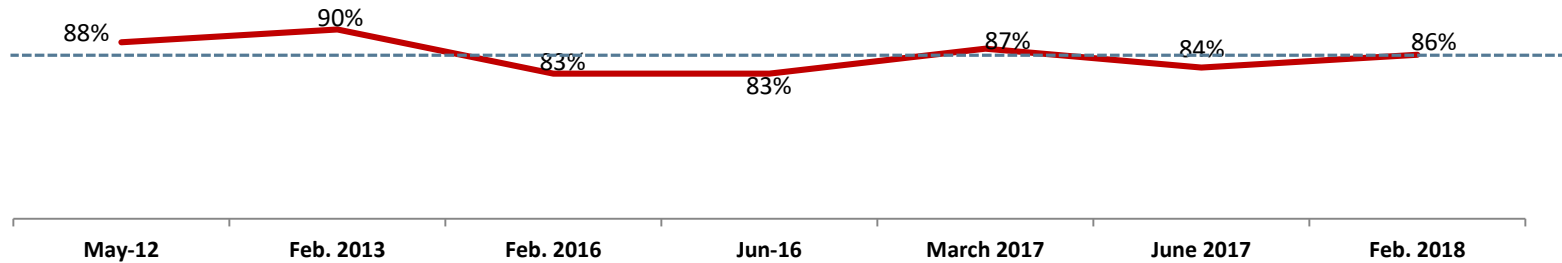
(Dotted lines show the average from 2011-2018 = 54% too big; 34% just about right; 3% too small)

Six in ten Albertans now think that, in general, class sizes in the province's schools are too large (60%, up five percentage points from June 2017). Under three in ten think they are about the right size (38%), and the remainder either say they are too small (2%) or do not provide an opinion (10%).

Q. Thinking about the number of students in a class with one teacher... in general, would you say that class sizes in Alberta's schools are too big, too small, or are they just about right?

A strong majority of Albertans continues to agree with the ATA's position on province-wide standards for maximum class sizes

Overall agreement (strongly, somewhat) that province-wide standards for maximum class size standards are needed



(Dotted lines show the average from 2012-2018 = 86% province-wide standards for max class size standards are needed)

Albertans were asked to indicate their agreement with a statement reflecting the ATA position on maximum class sizes. Just under nine in ten continue to agree at least moderately that province-wide standards for maximum class sizes are needed.*

Overall agreement is statistically similar across the province in this wave.

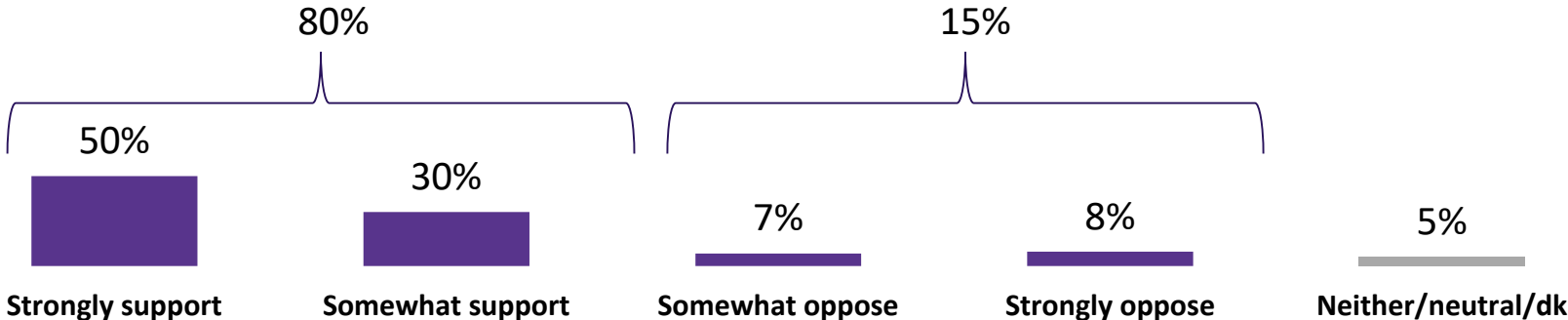
Q. Please tell me to what extent you strongly agree, moderately agree, moderately disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements?

Province-wide standards for maximum class sizes are needed in Alberta

* Note that only the question about province-wide standards was asked in February 2018 and June 2017; in February 2013 this was asked after a questions about acceptable class sizes for different grades.

Eight in ten Albertans support increasing education funding to reduce class sizes

Level of support for increased education funding to reduce the size of classrooms in Alberta's schools

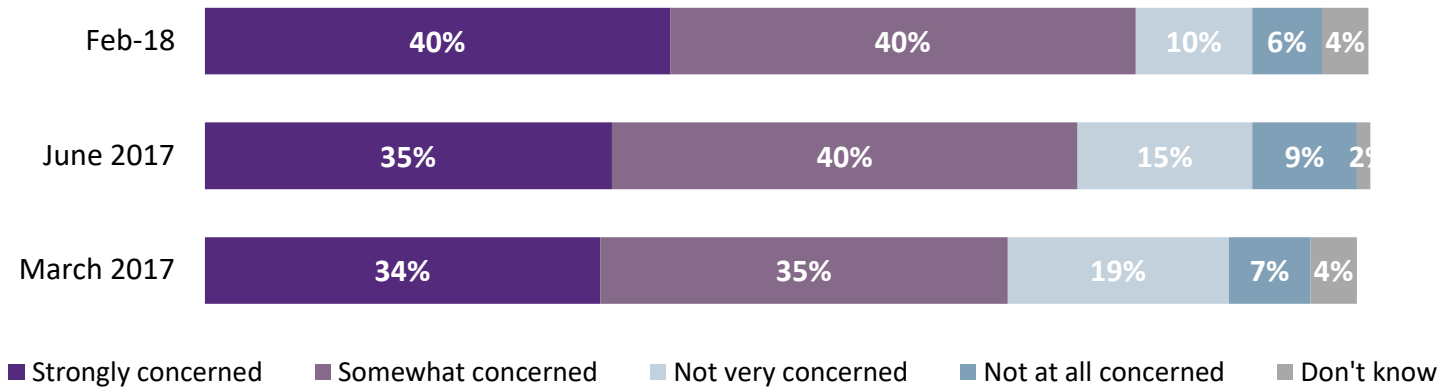


A strong majority of Albertans of four in five support increasing education funding specifically to reduce class sizes. Support is the dominant position across the province and across subgroups of the population, with some notable differences.

Q. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose increased education funding to reduce the size of classes in Alberta's schools?

Eight in ten now express some level of concern about in-class supports for special needs and ESL learners

Level of concern about classroom support for special needs and ESL learners



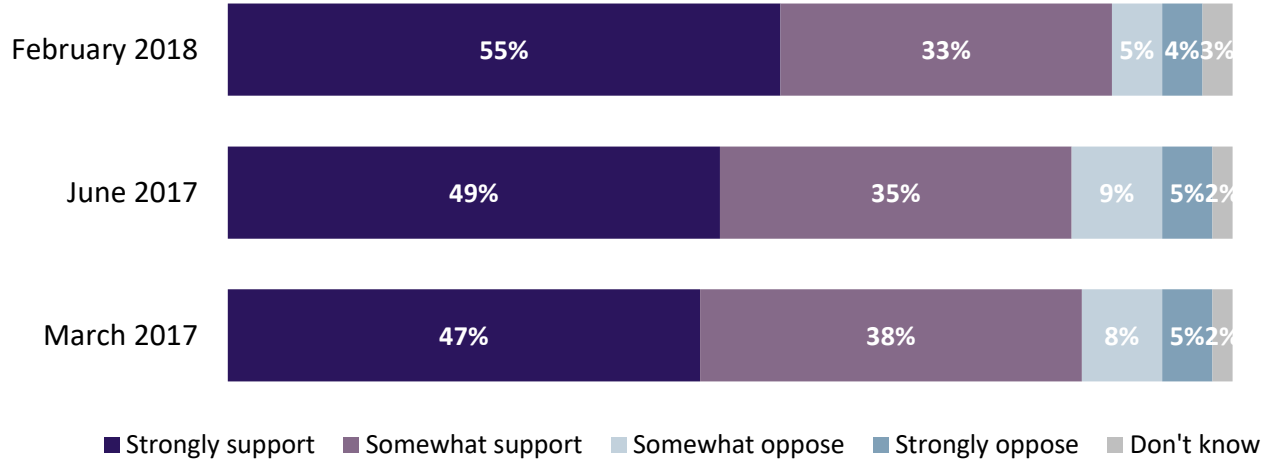
Four in ten Albertans express now strong concern about the levels of in-class support for students with special needs or English language learners, and four in ten express moderate concern. Fewer than one in five say they are not very or not at all concerned about this issue.

Concern is quite similar across the province and is generally similar by subgroup.

Q. Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not at all concerned about current levels of in class support for students with special needs and/or English language learners?

Almost nine in ten at least somewhat support increased funding for special needs/ESL, including seven in ten who feel too much is already spent on education

Support for increased education funding for special needs and ESL learners



Now almost nine in ten Albertans (88%) support increased funding for special needs and/or ESL learners to some extent, with over strongly supporting. One in ten express some level of opposition.

Support remains similar across the province, and is also consistent across most subgroups.

Q. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose increased education funding to provide better support to students with special needs and/or English language learners?

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