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*This poll was conducted by the
Monmouth University Polling Institute*

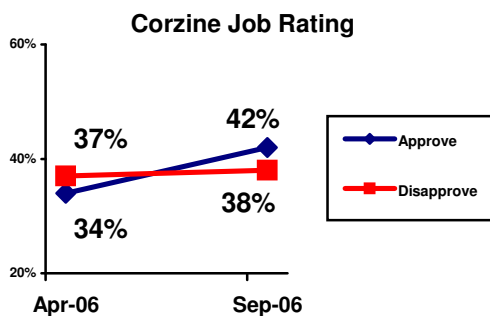
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PUBLIC GIVES CORZINE A “C”

Public sees no substantial improvements, but feel he’s trying

When the *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* first asked state residents to grade Governor Jon Corzine a few months into his administration, the verdict was “needs improvement.” Now that he’s eight months into his term and has survived a contentious budget battle with the legislature, the public concludes that not much has changed, but at least it looks like he’s trying.



Overall, Governor Corzine’s job approval ratings have improved while his disapprovals have remained steady. Currently, 42% of the New Jersey public approve of how their governor is handling his job compared to 38% who disapprove. This marks a reversal from his upside down 34% to 37% job rating in April.

At the same time, nearly 6-in-10 New Jerseyans (58%) continue to believe the state is on the wrong track while only 29% feel it is heading in the right direction.

“It looks like more New Jerseyans are giving the governor the benefit of the doubt,” commented Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute. “While they don’t see any major policy accomplishments so far, they feel he is working hard.”

When asked to grade the Corzine administration in a number of key areas, the public is only able to muster C's and D's in most policy areas, but he scores a "B-" for the amount of effort he puts into working for the state. This has bumped up his overall average to a solid "C", which is half a grade higher than his April report card.

As with the April report card, Governor Corzine continues to receive particularly poor grades for providing property tax relief and making New Jersey a more affordable place to live, key themes in his campaign and an issue on which special legislative committees are now meeting.

Specifically, Corzine continues to average a "D+" in the areas of providing property tax relief and making New Jersey a more affordable place to live. On property taxes, only 20% of residents feel he has earned an A or B, 25% give him a C, and 45% give a D or F. On cost of living affordability, only 17% of residents feel he has earned an A or B, 24% give him a C, and 55% say he earns a D or is failing in this subject. These individual grades are slightly better than in April, but not enough to raise the governor's overall average for these subjects.

"The governor may have spurred the legislature to launch special hearings, but when it comes to actual plans for property tax relief, New Jerseyans are asking 'Where's the beef?'," remarked Murray.

Jon Corzine, Governor September 2006 Report Card						
Subject	A/B	C	D/F	Incom- -plete	Average Grade	April 2006
Cost-Cutting	26%	31%	34%	9%	C-	C-
Property Taxes	20%	25%	45%	9%	D+	D+
Government Ethics	36%	28%	28%	7%	C	C
Cost of Living	17%	24%	55%	3%	D+	D+
Schools	31%	30%	27%	13%	C	C
Quality of Appointments	30%	33%	20%	17%	C	n/a
Level of Effort	50%	27%	17%	5%	B-	C+
Overall grade					C	C-

Corzine's best policy subjects so far – relatively speaking – seem to be in the areas of government ethics and schools, where he averages a “C”. On bringing ethics and honesty to government, he receives an A or B from 36%, a C from 28%, and a D or F from 28%. On improving schools, he receives an A or B from 31%, a C from 30%, and a D or F from 27%. These averages are unchanged from April.

After this summer's budget battle and state shutdown, the governor continues to average a “C-” on controlling costs and cutting waste. This includes receiving an A or B from 26%, a C from 31%, and a D or F from 34%, which is basically identical to his pre-budget grades on this subject.

The current report card also asked New Jerseyans to grade their governor on the quality of the people he has appointed to office. As with the other areas polled, the reviews are mixed, with 30% saying he has earned an A or B in this area, 33% a C, and 20% a D or F. Another 17% feel they cannot give a grade in this area, making his average grade on appointments a “C.”

The only area in the report card where the governor's grades have improved is in the level of effort he puts into working on behalf of the state. The average grade he receives from residents for effort is a “B-”, his only grade above the C level. This includes 50% who grade him an A or B for effort (up from 42% in April), 27% who grade him a C, and 17% who give poor marks of D or F (down from 22% in April).

When the individual subjects are averaged, the governor receives an overall “C” grade point average from Garden State residents for the past few months. Broken down by partisan preference, he averages a “C+” among Democrats, a “C-” among Republicans, and a “C” among independents. These averages represent a half-grade improvement among all partisan groups since the April report card.

Similarly, the improvement in Governor Corzine's job approval rating has come from all partisan groups – Democrats (62% up from 48%), Republicans (29% up from 19%), and independents (36% up from 30%).

The *Monmouth University/Gannett New Jersey Poll* was conducted by telephone with 800 New Jersey adults from September 18 to 21, 2006. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.5 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the Gannett New Jersey newspaper group (Asbury Park Press, Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, Home News Tribune, and Ocean County Observer).

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. Would you say things in New Jersey are going in the right direction, or have they gotten off on the wrong track?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		REGION OF STATE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	North	Central	South
Right direction	29%	28%	31%	39%	28%	19%	34%	24%	32%	26%	27%
Wrong track	58%	61%	45%	45%	62%	69%	53%	62%	55%	59%	61%
(VOL) Depends	6%	5%	9%	8%	4%	5%	5%	7%	6%	6%	7%
(VOL) Dont know	7%	5%	14%	8%	6%	7%	8%	7%	7%	9%	5%
Unwtd N	800	663	137	219	348	207	371	429	369	193	233

	TREND:		
	September 2006	April 2006	September 2005
Right direction	29%	30%	31%
Wrong track	58%	55%	54%
(VOL) Depends	6%	9%	5%
(VOL) Dont know	7%	6%	10%
Unwtd N	800	803	800

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Jon Corzine is doing as governor?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID			GENDER		REGION OF STATE		
		Yes	No	Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	North	Central	South
Approve	42%	44%	38%	62%	36%	29%	46%	39%	43%	44%	40%
Disapprove	38%	41%	27%	24%	41%	52%	35%	41%	35%	41%	40%
(VOL) Don't know	20%	16%	35%	13%	23%	20%	20%	19%	21%	15%	20%
Unwtd N	800	663	137	219	348	207	371	429	369	193	233

	TREND:	
	September 2006	April 2006
Approve	42%	34%
Disapprove	38%	37%
(VOL) Don't know	20%	29%
Unwtd N	800	803

3. I'd like you to grade the Corzine administration on how it has handled specific issues over the past few months. For each one I read, please give a letter grade of A, B, C, D or F for failing. What grade would you give the Corzine administration for ... ?

A. Controlling costs and cutting waste

TREND:		
	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	7%	5%
B	19%	20%
C	31%	29%
D	13%	14%
F - Failing grade	21%	20%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	13%
Unwtd N	800	803

B. Providing property tax relief

TREND:		
	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	5%	5%
B	15%	12%
C	25%	21%
D	14%	15%
F - Failing grade	31%	35%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	13%
Unwtd N	800	803

C. Bringing ethics and honesty back to state government

TREND:		
	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	11%	8%
B	25%	27%
C	28%	24%
D	13%	12%
F - Failing grade	15%	17%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	11%
Unwtd N	800	803

D. Making New Jersey a more affordable place to live

TREND:		
	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	7%	5%
B	10%	10%
C	24%	23%
D	17%	14%
F - Failing grade	38%	40%
(VOL) Don't know	3%	9%
Unwtd N	800	803

E. Improving our schools

TREND:		
	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	10%	8%
B	21%	19%
C	30%	28%
D	15%	14%
F - Failing grade	12%	16%
(VOL) Don't know	13%	15%
Unwtd N	800	803

4. What grade would you give the governor for the level of effort he puts into working for New Jersey?

TREND:		
	September 2006	April 2006
A - Highest grade	22%	16%
B	28%	26%
C	27%	29%
D	9%	11%
F - Failing grade	8%	11%
(VOL) Don't know	5%	8%
Unwtd N	800	803

5. And what grade would you give him for the quality of the people he has appointed to serve in his administration?

	September 2006
A - Highest grade	6%
B	24%
C	33%
D	10%
F - Failing grade	10%
(VOL) Don't know	17%
Unwtd N	800

Results for this *Monmouth University/Gannett NJ Poll* are based on telephone interviews conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on September 18-21, 2006 with a statewide random sample of 800 adult residents. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute's policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues which affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.

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