

# Franklin Pierce University / WBZ Poll

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POLLING



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## Democratic Presidential Primary

**RINDGE, NH** – With the 2008 New Hampshire Presidential Primary on Tuesday, Barack Obama’s victory in the Iowa caucuses has helped him to close the gap with Senator Hillary Clinton among likely Democratic primary voters. In June, following the Democratic debate, Clinton commanded a much larger number (38%) of voters than Obama (16%), a lead she maintained in September. In a poll taken before the Iowa caucuses, Clinton’s lead has dropped to only four points, with Clinton at 32 percent and Obama close behind at 28 percent. Today, Obama (34%) and Clinton (31%) are in statistical tie in voter support. Notably, Clinton’s so-called “inevitability factor” has diminished among Democratic primary voters. In September, 61 percent believed that she would end-up winning the nomination, compared to only 30 percent today. In contrast, the belief that Obama will end-up winning the nomination has risen 27 points from September and is now at 38 percent, overtaking Clinton’s figure.

## **Overview**

The findings outlined in this report are based on the latest Franklin Pierce University / WBZ Poll, conducted by RKM Research and Communication in collaboration with faculty and student interviewers at Franklin Pierce University. The Franklin Pierce University / WBZ Poll is sponsored by Franklin Pierce University and WBZ. The project represents a collaboration that provides Franklin Pierce University students unique learning opportunities to participate in the polling process and gain real-world experience working with an independent marketing research firm.

## **Methodology**

The poll is based on interviews with 403 likely Democratic Presidential Primary voters. All respondents interviewed in this study were part of a fully representative sample. The survey was administered by telephone, January 4 – 6, 2008. The survey of 403 respondents has a maximum margin of sampling error of +/- 4.9%.

**Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton are in a statistical dead heat among Democratic primary voters.**

Following the Iowa caucuses, Obama has closed the gap in New Hampshire. Obama and Clinton are in a virtual tie for voter support among Democratic primary voters. If the Democratic presidential primary were held today, Obama would receive 34 percent of the vote, compared to 31 percent for Clinton and 20 percent for Edwards. Richardson would receive six percent of the vote in the current poll. As shown in the table below, Obama's support has increased over the past few months, from 18 percent in September to 28 percent before the Iowa caucuses and 34 percent today.

**If the Democratic presidential primary election were held today, who would you vote for?**

	January 6, 2008	January 2, 2008	September 17, 2007	June 4, 2007	March 13, 2007
Barack Obama	34%	28%	18%	16%	25%
Hillary Clinton	31%	32%	36%	38%	32%
John Edwards	20%	19%	12%	13%	16%
Bill Richardson	6%	8%	10%	8%	3%
Dennis Kucinich	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Joe Biden	0%	3%	3%	4%	1%
Chris Dodd	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%*
Mike Gravel	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Undecided	7%	8%	11%	10%	9%

\*=Less than 1%

**The majority of Clinton, Obama and Edwards supporters said that their decision is firm, yet approximately one-third of voters said that they could change their mind before the primary.**

After indicating their candidate choice, voters were then asked if their choice is firm, or if they could change their mind sometime between now and the primary election on January 8<sup>th</sup>. Overall, one-third of Democratic voters (33%) said that they could still change their mind before the primary, down five points from a poll taken four days ago. Among likely voters who support Clinton, 70 percent indicated that their's is a firm choice, while 29 percent indicated that they could change their mind. Among likely voters who support Obama, 67 percent indicated that their's is a firm choice, while 33 percent indicated that they could change their mind. Among likely voters who support Edwards, 64 percent indicated that their's is a firm choice, and 35 percent indicated that they could change their mind. Notably, the number of Obama supporters and Edwards supporters who indicated that their's is a firm choice increased six points and 11 points, respectively, from four days ago.

**Is that a firm choice, or could you change your mind between now and the primary election?**

	Clinton		Obama		Edwards	
	<i>January 6, 2008</i>	<i>January 2, 2008</i>	<i>January 6, 2008</i>	<i>January 2, 2008</i>	<i>January 6, 2008</i>	<i>January 2, 2008</i>
Firm choice	70%	69%	67%	61%	64%	53%
Could change mind	29%	30%	33%	38%	35%	45%

**Nearly all Democratic voters said that Obama did well in the Iowa caucuses, while only a little over one-third said that Clinton did well.**

Voters were asked which candidate performed well in the Iowa caucuses. Ninety-two percent said that Obama did well, compared to only 45 percent who said that Edwards did well and 37 percent who said that Clinton did well.

**As far as you know, which Democratic presidential candidate did well in the Iowa caucuses?**

	January 6, 2008
Barack Obama	92%
John Edwards	45%
Hillary Clinton	37%
Bill Richardson	1%
Joe Biden	0%
Chris Dodd	0%
Dennis Kucinich	0%
Mike Gravel	0%

Undecided 4%  
 \*=Less than 1% | TOTAL MENTIONED

The results suggest that vote choice is somewhat influenced by perceptions of each candidate's performance in Iowa. Among voters who said that Hillary Clinton did well in the Iowa caucuses, 35 percent would vote for Clinton, 30 percent would vote for Obama and 17 percent would vote for Edwards. Among voters who said that John Edwards did well in the Iowa caucuses, 31 percent would vote for Obama, 29 percent would vote for Edwards and 23 percent would vote for Clinton. Among voters who said that Barack Obama did well in the Iowa caucuses, 37 percent would vote for Obama, 29 percent would vote for Clinton and 19 percent would vote for Edwards.

**If the Democratic presidential primary election were held today, who would you vote for?**

	Said ... did well in the Iowa caucuses		
	<i>Hillary Clinton</i>	<i>John Edwards</i>	<i>Barack Obama</i>
Hillary Clinton	35%	23%	29%
Barack Obama	30%	31%	37%
John Edwards	17%	29%	19%
Bill Richardson	6%	7%	6%
Dennis Kucinich	1%	2%	1%
Joe Biden	0%	0%	0%
Chris Dodd	0%	0%	0%
Mike Gravel	0%	0%	0%
Undecided	9%	8%	7%

**Hillary Clinton's net favorability has dropped 10 points from a poll taken four days ago.**

It is interesting to track each candidate's favorability rating in order to better understand how the contest is shaping up over time. Edwards (77%) and Obama (74%) enjoy the highest net favorability ratings in the current poll, similar to the poll taken before the Iowa caucuses. Clinton's net favorability, once as high as 73 percent in June, has dropped significantly from September (65%) to the poll taken before the Iowa caucuses (58%) and is at 48 percent today. The results outlined below indicate that Edwards and Obama each have high net favorability ratings before and after the Iowa caucuses.

**Do you have a somewhat or very favorable opinion of ... ?**

	January 6, 2008			January 2, 2008	Sept. 17, 2007	June 4, 2007	March 13, 2007
	<i>Favorable</i>	<i>Unfavorable</i>	<i>Net Favorability</i>	<i>Net Favorability</i>	<i>Net Favorability</i>	<i>Net Favorability</i>	<i>Net Favorability</i>
John Edwards	87%	10%	77%	75%	58%	65%	66%
Barack Obama	85%	11%	74%	74%	67%	74%	67%
Hillary Clinton	73%	25%	48%	58%	65%	73%	55%
Bill Richardson	62%	18%	44%	49%	37%	41%	17%
Dennis Kucinich	39%	35%	4%	10%	1%	-3%	-4%
Mike Gravel	8%	31%	-23%	-21%	-7%	-13%	-3%
Joe Biden	-	-	-	34%	20%	31%	10%
Chris Dodd	-	-	-	16%	12%	21%	3%

**Senator Clinton gained ground in terms of being perceived as having the best experience for the job from a poll taken four days ago.**

Respondents were asked the reasons why they would vote for their first choice candidate. The results are shown below for the top three Democratic candidates.

**Which of the following best describes why you would vote for ... ?**

	Clinton				Obama			
	<i>January 6, 2008</i>	<i>January 2, 2008</i>	<i>Sep 17, 2007</i>	<i>June 4, 2007</i>	<i>January 6, 2008</i>	<i>January 2, 2008</i>	<i>Sep 17, 2007</i>	<i>June 4, 2007</i>
Electability	6%	5%	5%	11%	6%	3%	4%	4%
Position on issues	27%	44%	32%	35%	25%	33%	34%	41%
Best experience	32%	21%	26%	23%	1%	1%	0%	2%
Lead in new direction	23%	24%	30%		52%	52%	48%	
Character	4%	3%	2%	3%	12%	10%	11%	25%

	Edwards			
	<i>January 6, 2008</i>	<i>January 2, 2008</i>	<i>Sep 17, 2007</i>	<i>June 4, 2007</i>
Electability	6%	9%	8%	11%
Position on issues	63%	71%	55%	51%
Best experience	0%	1%	0%	1%
Lead in new direction	20%	8%	20%	
Character	6%	8%	17%	21%

Clinton gained ground in terms of being perceived as having the best experience for the job from January 2<sup>nd</sup> (21%) to January 6<sup>th</sup> (32%). Many Clinton voters are also drawn to her candidacy based on her position on issues (27%) and her ability to lead in a new direction (23%).

Obama voters are drawn to his candidacy based on his ability to lead in a new direction (52%) and his position on issues (25%). Consistently, approximately one-half of Obama supporters are drawn to his candidacy based on his ability to lead in a new direction. According to R. Kelly Myers, “Obama appears to be the candidate that voters associate with change – the apparent ‘buzz’ word in this year’s election.”

Edwards voters are drawn to his candidacy primarily based on his position on issues (63%) and his ability to lead in a new direction (20%).

## Variations in Support

The following table shows variations in support for the Democratic candidates compared over time.

	Obama (34%)				Clinton (31%)				Edwards (20%)			
	Jan. 6	Jan. 2	Sept.	June	Jan. 6	Jan. 2	Sept.	June	Jan. 6	Jan. 2	Sept.	June
<b>Party Registration</b>												
<i>Democrats</i>	46	54	53	52	64	67	63	54	59	63	61	64
<i>Independents</i>	54	46	47	48	36	33	37	46	41	37	39	36
<b>Ideology</b>												
<i>Liberal</i>	38	44	40	44	33	38	40	44	42	36	48	38
<i>Moderate</i>	49	49	52	47	54	50	48	47	49	55	46	45
<i>Conservative</i>	10	6	7	9	11	9	10	9	6	8	6	17
<b>Gender</b>												
<i>Male</i>	44	44	46	44	34	38	32	41	43	37	49	45
<i>Female</i>	56	56	54	56	66	62	68	59	57	63	51	55
<b>Age</b>												
<i>18-34</i>	8	15	15	13	5	4	5	4	5	4	3	6
<i>35-54</i>	33	37	40	37	24	31	37	32	39	29	48	53
<i>55-64</i>	32	25	26	30	32	27	24	30	37	35	32	26
<i>65+</i>	27	23	19	20	39	38	33	34	19	32	17	15
<b>Annual Income</b>												
<i>&lt;\$35K</i>	10	15	8	9	17	20	21	19	3	17	7	11
<i>\$35-50K</i>	6	10	22	17	17	11	13	15	12	21	15	16
<i>\$50-75K</i>	26	30	29	22	24	28	32	20	26	31	28	22
<i>\$75-100K</i>	26	19	19	24	14	15	17	21	36	13	26	22
<i>&gt;\$100K</i>	32	26	22	28	28	26	17	25	23	18	24	29

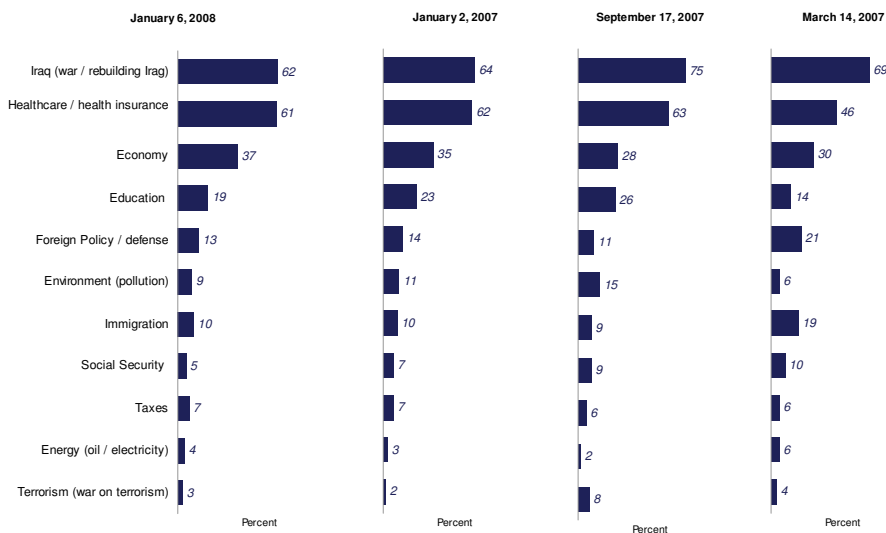
Barack Obama has lost some ground among self-identified liberals, at 38 percent today, compared to 44 percent in a poll taken January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

While Obama has maintained a strong following among younger voters in the polls, the results suggest that, today, over one-half of his supporters are over the age of 55 (59%), a higher figure than in a poll taken before the Iowa caucuses (48%) and in September (45%). Clinton, however, has maintained a strong following among these older voters, with 71 percent of her supporters over the age of 55 today.

**Voters are most likely to mention the Iraq war and health care as issues that are important to them, followed by the economy and immigration.**

Voters were asked which three policy issues will be most important to them in deciding who to vote for in the Democratic primary. Sixty-two percent of voters mentioned the Iraq war or rebuilding Iraq and 61 percent mentioned health care or health insurance. Additionally, 37 percent of voters mentioned the economy and 19 percent mentioned education. While health care has stayed relatively level in terms of its importance among Democratic voters since September, the results suggest that the Iraq situation is not as important to voters today as it was in September.

**Which policy issues will be most important to you in deciding who to vote for in the NH primary?**



*Among: Democrats | compared over time | total mentioned*

**More voters believe that Obama, rather than Clinton, will end-up winning the Democratic nomination.**

When asked which candidate they think will ultimately win the Democratic nomination, 38 percent identified Obama, up from 11 percent in September and 21 percent in a poll taken before the Iowa caucuses. The belief that Clinton will win the nomination, however, has dropped significantly from a high of 61 percent in September to 48 percent in the pre-Iowa poll and to 30 percent in today's poll.

According to Myers, "Any inevitability factor that Hillary Clinton possessed in previous polls has diminished since the Iowa caucuses."

**Which candidate do you think will end-up winning the Democratic nomination?**

	January 6, 2008	January 2, 2008	September 17, 2007	June 4, 2007	March 13, 2007
Barack Obama	38%	21%	11%	13%	18%
Hillary Clinton	30%	48%	61%	48%	38%
John Edwards	5%	4%	4%	5%	7%
Bill Richardson	1%	1%*	1%	1%	1%
Joe Biden	0%	1%*	0%	1%	1%*
Chris Dodd	0%	0%	0%	1%*	0%*
Dennis Kucinich	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%*
Mike Gravel	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Undecided	26%	25%	21%	30%	33%

\*=Less than 1%

These results suggest that, among voters who said that Hillary Clinton did well in the Iowa caucuses, the belief that Obama (35%) and Clinton (34%) will win the nomination is similar. Among voters who said that John Edwards did well in Iowa, 39 percent said that Obama will end-up winning the nomination while 26 percent identified Clinton. Among voters who said that Barack Obama did well in Iowa, 40 percent said that Obama will win the nomination and 29 percent identified Clinton.

**Which candidate do you think will end-up winning the Democratic nomination?**

	Said ... did well in the Iowa caucuses		
	Hillary Clinton	John Edwards	Barack Obama
Hillary Clinton	34%	26%	29%
Barack Obama	35%	39%	40%
John Edwards	4%	7%	5%
Bill Richardson	0%	1%*	1%*
Joe Biden	0%	0%	0%
Chris Dodd	0%	0%	0%
Dennis Kucinich	0%	0%	0%
Mike Gravel	0%	0%	0%
Undecided	27%	28%	26%