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IWU Poll Results: Voters Favor School Merger, Split Evenly on Gay Rights Measure

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IWU poll results

**Voters Favor School Merger,
Split Evenly on Gay Rights Measure**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--The March 19 referendum on merging two local school systems gets the green light from voters, according to a new poll conducted by Illinois Wesleyan University students. The canvass also reveals area voters are evenly split on a hotly debated gay-rights law.

The March 19 ballot measure to merge school District 87 and Unit 5 won the support of 50 percent of poll respondents, while 38 percent opposed the plan and 12 percent were undecided.

Sixty-seven percent of respondents live in District 87 and 26 percent reside in Unit 5. Seven percent of respondents were unsure whether they live in District 87 or Unit 5 or had no response.

Forty-four percent of respondents disapproved a measure recently debated by the Bloomington city council which would have amended the city's anti-discrimination code by adding a sexual preference provision, barring discrimination in employment and housing for people who are gay. Forty-three percent approved the proposal, which was defeated, and 13 percent were undecided.

The March 10-11 stratified poll, conducted by students in an IWU research methods class taught by Tari Renner, associate professor and chairperson of political science, surveyed 638 persons. Its margin of error is plus or minus 4 percent.

The survey also gauged opinions of registered voters in Bloomington about the McLean County state's attorney's race; the Republican presidential primary race; approval ratings for President Bill Clinton, House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Gov. Jim Edgar, Rep. Thomas Ewing, and Bloomington Mayor Jesse Smart; the local congressional campaign; next year's Bloomington mayor's race, and environmental regulations.