

Franklin Pierce / WBZ Poll

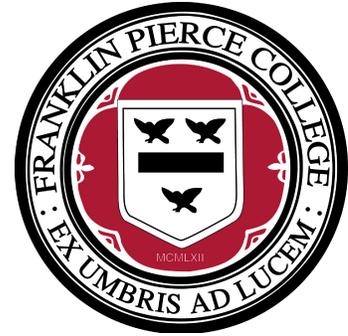
June 4, 2007

By: R. Kelly Myers
Senior Fellow
Franklin Pierce College

President and Chief Analyst
RKM Research and Communications

603.433.3982

To download this report in .PDF format: www.fpc.edu/nhdems-0604.pdf



Democratic Presidential Primary

RINDGE, NH – With just over half a year before the much anticipated 2008 New Hampshire Presidential Primary, Senator Hillary Clinton has opened a much larger lead over her Democratic rivals following Sunday night's debate held just outside Manchester, New Hampshire. Just 3 months ago, Clinton held a 7-point lead over her closest challenger, Senator Barack Obama (25%). Former Senator John Edwards was in third place, attracting 16 percent of the vote, while former Presidential candidate, Al Gore was at 10 percent. Each of the other Democratic presidential hopefuls was polling in the low single digits.

Today, Clinton commands a much larger lead, attracting the support of 38 percent of Democratic primary voters, which is more than twice the level of support held by her closest challenger, Barack Obama at 16 percent. Her increase appears to be due, in part, to her strong performance in last night's debate. Clinton's support is made more solid by her strong standing among registered Democrats and registered Independents, as well as her strong standing among male and female Democratic primary voters.

Overview

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

Debate exposure

Democratic primary voters were asked if they watched the debate among Democratic presidential hopefuls held on Sunday evening, June 3rd - or if have read, seen or heard any news stories about the debate.

	Exposure to Debate
Watched debate ONLY	29%
Read, saw or heard stories about the debate in the news	33%
BOTH—Watched debate and read, saw or heard news stories	23%
Neither	16%

Overall, many Democratic primary voters (52%) watched the debate (which includes those who watched the debate *only* and those who watched the debate *and* recall reading, hearing or seeing stories about the debate in the news. An additional 23 percent of Democratic primary voters recall reading, hearing or seeing stories about the debate in the news, and only 16 percent did not watch the debate nor read, see or hear any stories about the debate in the news.

Who won the debate?

When asked who won the debate, or performed better than the other candidates in the debate, Clinton emerges as the clear winner, identified by 45 percent of Democratic primary voters. Only 8 percent of Democratic primary voters said that Obama won the debate. Nor did many Democratic primary voters say that Edwards won the debate (4%), or outperformed the other candidates.

	June 4, 2007
Hillary Clinton	45%
Barack Obama	8%
John Edwards	4%
Al Gore	0%
Bill Richardson	3%
Dennis Kucinich	1%*
Joe Biden	3%
Wesley Clark	0%
Chris Dodd	1%*
Mike Gravel	0%
Al Sharpton	0%
Unsure	37%

*=Less than 0.5%

Debate and media coverage

Hillary Clinton benefited by: 1) how voters perceived her performance in the debate; and by the way 2) her performance was interpreted in the news media.

It is worth noting that perceptions that Clinton won the debate are strongest among Democratic primary voters who watched the debate AND read, saw or heard news stories about the debate in the media. Among these voters, nearly two-thirds (60%) said that Clinton outperformed her rivals in the debate. These results suggest that not only did Clinton perform well in the debates, but that most of the media coverage regarding Clinton's performance was favorable.

	<i>Watched Debate Only</i>	<i>News Media Only</i>	<i>BOTH</i>
Hillary Clinton	47%	32%	60%
Barack Obama	11%	5%	7%
John Edwards	6%	3%	3%
Bill Richardson	4%	2%	1%
Joe Biden	3%	3%	2%
Undecided	27%	53%	27%

*=Less than 0.5%

Democratic Presidential Primary

As noted, the recent debate appears to be influencing Clinton's support among voters. If the Democratic Presidential Primary were held today, Clinton would be in the lead, receiving 38 percent of the vote. Obama, who once held a much closer second place in the contest, has dropped to a more distant second place, attracting 16 percent of the vote. Edwards and Gore have also both dropped in the polls, with Edwards dropping from 16 to 13 percent, and Gore from 10 to 8 percent.

Interestingly, Governor Bill Richardson is the only second-tier candidate who has moved significantly upward between March, 2007 (3%) and today (8%). Senator Joe Biden has moved up slightly from 1 to 4 percent.

	June 4, 2007	March 13, 2007
Hillary Clinton	38%	32%
Barack Obama	16%	25%
John Edwards	13%	16%
Al Gore	8%	10%
Bill Richardson	8%	3%
Dennis Kucinich	2%	2%
Joe Biden	4%	1%
Wesley Clark	1%	1%
Chris Dodd	1%	*
Mike Gravel	0%	0%
Al Sharpton	0%	0%
Undecided	10%	9%

*=Less than 0.5%

According to Myers, "what is interesting today is how far ahead Clinton has pulled in just three months. This appears to be due to the coverage she has received based to her national fund-raising and strong campaigning, her performance in last night's debate and the perception that she will ultimately win the Democratic nomination. In March, for example, only 35 percent of Democratic primary voters thought that Clinton would end-up winning the Democratic nomination, compared to 26 percent for Obama. Today, 48 percent of voters think that Clinton will ultimately win the nomination, compared to 13 percent who think Obama will. These results suggest that an ever-increasing number of Democratic voters believe in the inevitability of her nomination. With so much time left to go in the campaign, it remains uncertain whether Clinton will be able to maintain what appears to be some early momentum relative to her closest rivals."

Variations in Candidate Preference

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.

	Clinton		Obama		Edwards	
	<i>June 4, 2007</i>	<i>March 13, 2007</i>	<i>June 4, 2007</i>	<i>March 13, 2007</i>	<i>June 4, 2007</i>	<i>March 13, 2007</i>
Electability	11%	4%	4%	5%	11%	11%
Position on issues	35%	43%	41%	39%	51%	59%
Best experience	23%	23%	2%	0%	1%	8%
Leadership qualities	22%	17%	24%	19%	13%	5%
Character	3%	7%	25%	33%	21%	16%

Clinton voters are drawn to her candidacy based on her position on the issues (35%), and increasingly on her electability. She has also move forward in terms of being perceived as having leadership qualities.

Obama, on the other hand, has lost ground in some areas where he enjoyed a relative advantage in the last poll. Specifically, he has lost ground in terms of being perceived as having the right character for the job.

Methodology

The poll is based on interviews with 424 likely Democratic Presidential Primary voters. All respondents interviewed in this study were part of a fully representative sample. The survey was administered by telephone, June 4, 2007. The survey of 424 respondents has a maximum margin of sampling error + 4.8%.