



# Political Sentiment Poll

2020 Presidential Election

Sept. 7, 2020

# Introduction

The Political Sentiment Poll for the 2020 Presidential Election uniquely measures emotional response to candidates and key issues, or what we call “Unsettled Matters.” The poll is unique in its measurement of the three dimensions of emotion: appeal, engagement, and empowerment. The poll was created and administrated by University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications Advertising Professor Jon Morris with the aid of student assistants. The purpose of the poll is to take into account the actual feelings that lead to changes of heart among voters. While the results of past polls predicted many events of the 2008 and 2016 Presidential Elections, the poll doesn’t necessarily predict voting patterns.

The latest poll was administered on Sept. 7, 2020 and measures emotional responses to the two presidential candidates: Donald Trump and Joe Biden. The poll measured the emotional response of 393 voters. The responses were organized into Perceptual Maps©, and Emotional Temperature™ thermometers to depict the results of the poll visually.

# Nine Key Emotion Groups

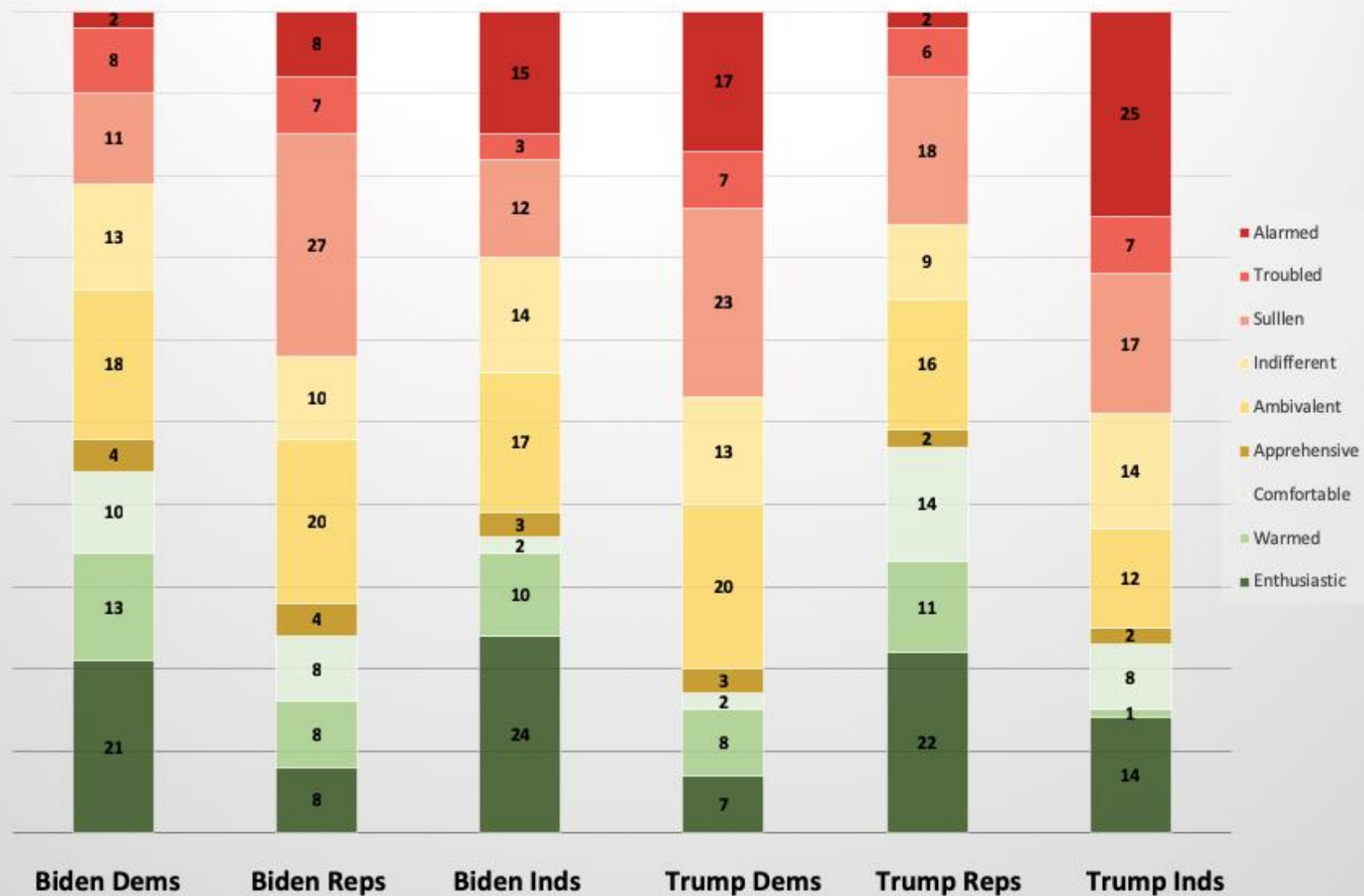
The Perceptual Map is broken into nine key segments as labeled below. This shows the distribution of the responses. Emotion Group© indicates that most people are enthusiastic, ambivalent, or sullen about the prospect of Joe Biden as president of the United States.

President Trump, on the other hand, elicits more feelings of ambivalence, sullenness, and alarm, relative to Biden, particularly among Independents.

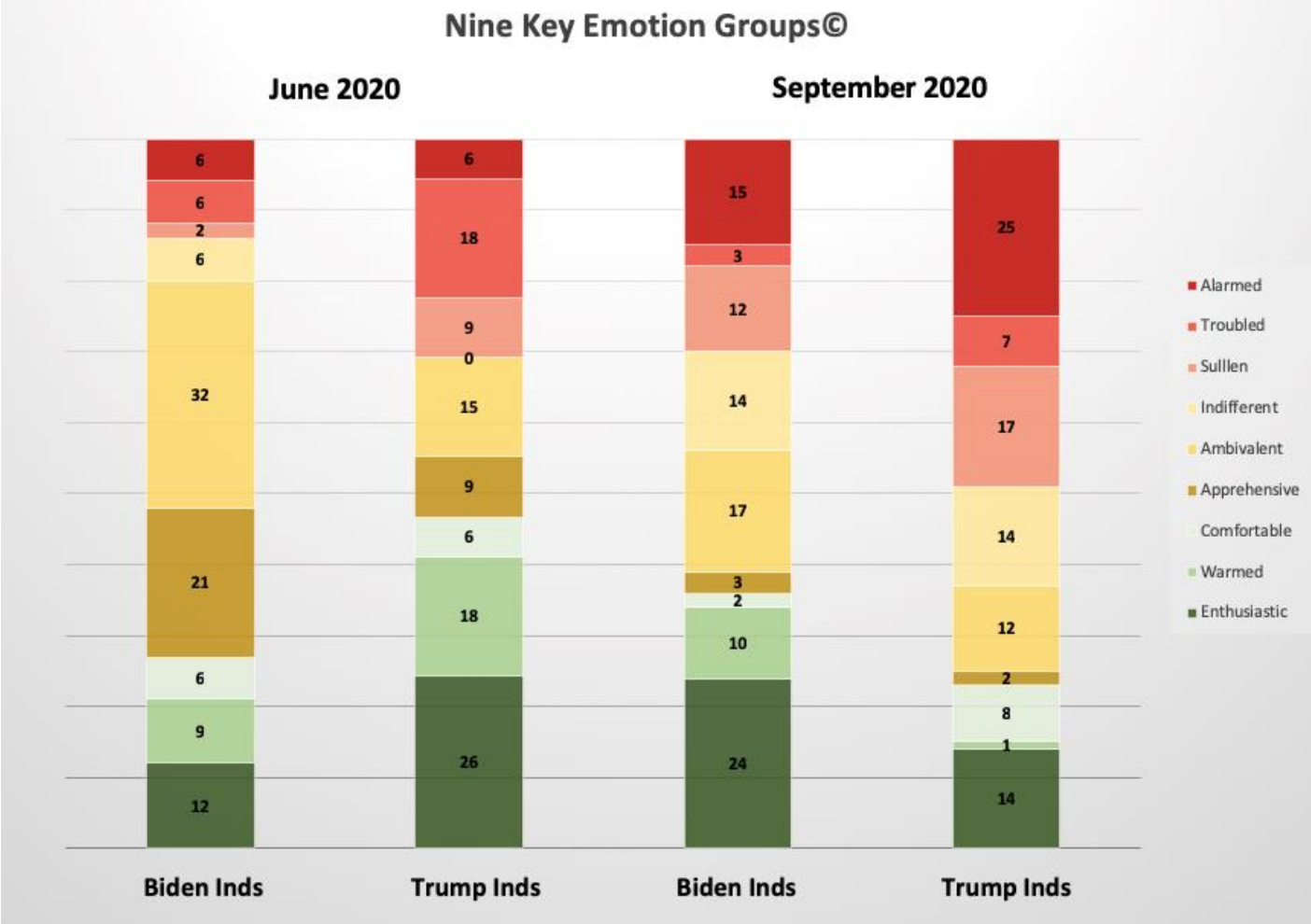
Trump elicits slightly more enthusiasm, warmth and comfort among Republicans than Biden does with Democrats, and Independents report more feelings of enthusiasm, warmth, and comfort about Biden than Trump.

	Enthusiastic	Warmed	Comfortable	Apprehensive	Ambivalent	Indifferent	Sullen	Troubled	Alarmed
Biden Dems	21%	13%	10%	4%	18%	13%	11%	8%	2%
Biden Reps	8%	8%	8%	4%	20%	10%	27%	7%	8%
Biden Ind	24%	10%	2%	3%	17%	14%	12%	3%	15%
Trump Dems	7%	8%	2%	3%	20%	13%	23%	7%	17%
Trump Reps	22%	11%	14%	2%	16%	9%	18%	6%	2%
Trump Ind	14%	1%	8%	2%	12%	14%	17%	7%	25%

## Nine Key Emotion Groups©



The greatest changes between the June 2020 survey and September 2020 survey can be found amongst Independent voters. Generally, Independent voters had decreased feelings of enthusiasm, warmth, and comfort toward Trump, and increased alarm, trouble, and sullenness. Interestingly, Biden saw a decrease in the feelings of indifference, ambivalence, and apprehensiveness, while both the more negative emotions of trouble and sullenness, and more positive emotions of comfort, warmth, and enthusiasm increased.



## Independents after measuring emotional response were asked, “What makes you feel they way?”

	Enthusiastic	Warmed	Comfortable	Apprehensive	Ambivalent	Indifferent	Sullen	Troubled	Alarmed
<b>Biden</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More experienced</li> <li>- Seems like a good person</li> <li>- Is sincere, people have respect for him</li> <li>- He knows how to do the job after being Vice President</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has experience, seems to want to unite the country</li> <li>- Better than Trump</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Decent and competent, does not engage in the practices Trump does</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do not like his ideas</li> <li>- I am just unsure of him</li> <li>- I don't think Biden is a great choice, but better than Trump</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feel pretty neutral about him rather than excited or hopeful</li> <li>- Not my favorite candidate but much better than Trump</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I feel like Biden is not functioning well cognitively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He is not a good person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I feel good if it gets Trump out of office but it just feels like we're putting a body into office instead of getting a great leader</li> <li>- He is not mentally well</li> </ul>
<b>Trump</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Happy</li> <li>- Positive feeling</li> <li>- He's done a lot for our country already</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policies in line with what I believe in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He has done great things for America</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not bad</li> <li>- Very bad</li> <li>- Indifferent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Did his best, people have been unfair toward him</li> <li>- Hit and miss, seems to be dividing the country</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proven he does not know what he's doing, as he has let hundreds of people die by not responding to the pandemic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Careless in many ways, makes me nervous that he will say the wrong thing to the wrong person</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of truthfulness and integrity</li> <li>- Terrible person and it makes me angry to even think about him</li> </ul>

Generally, Independents had more positive responses toward Biden. However, comments made in open-ended questions indicate that these voters deem him to be the “lesser of two evils.” Those who were sullen, troubled, or alarmed about Biden becoming president expressed concern over his mental state. Independents who indicated enthusiasm, warmth, and comfort for Trump indicated that he has done a good job over the last four years. However, those who were sullen, troubled or alarmed expressed concern over the way he has run the country, ranging from his truthfulness to his integrity.

## Republicans after measuring emotional response were asked “What makes you feel they way?”

	Enthusiastic	Warmed	Comfortable	Apprehensive	Ambivalent	Indifferent	Sullen	Troubled	Alarmed
<b>Biden</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He wants to bring us together</li> <li>- He may make some changes in the future</li> <li>- He will do good things for everyone in the US</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Waiting for change</li> <li>- Good person</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No opinion on him</li> <li>- Don't agree with him on some major issues</li> <li>- I feel that he is not an ideal leader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I don't like his ideas and views</li> <li>- He was a good politician, but I don't feel much about him</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He's old and hasn't proven anything in all of his years in politics</li> <li>- Completely unfit to be president of the US</li> <li>- Because he is a democrat and is untrustworthy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Policies are not good</li> <li>- He is old and has already had a failed run at the presidency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He is losing cognitive ability</li> <li>- He has been in politics a long time, and his track record is not impressive</li> <li>- Do not feel like he would be an effective leader</li> <li>- Puppet of the left</li> </ul>
<b>Trump</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Effective leadership</li> <li>- He has accomplished more than any other president ever</li> <li>- Very happy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What he does is great, how he does it isn't</li> <li>- I think he is a good president. He has done well for our country although sometimes his morals aren't good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He does what he promises</li> <li>- He is a conservative. He creates job, and builds the economy</li> <li>- I like his no nonsense approach. My beliefs align with his</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He has great goals for the US and will get our economy back on track, he just needs to think before he speaks</li> <li>- I approve of economic and foreign trade actions. I disapprove of his character and social media presence more</li> <li>- Less terrifying than Biden</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He's already in, and I hate Biden</li> <li>- Has fulfilled more of his campaign promises than any other president</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Problems in the country</li> <li>- He is not doing a very good job with the big issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He is a hot head and a liar</li> <li>- COVID-19 situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fear for the country's economy</li> <li>- Irritating character</li> <li>- Because of how he handled COVID</li> </ul>

Generally, Republicans had more positive comments toward Trump. Those who were enthusiastic, warmed, comfortable, ambivalent and indifferent applauded his achievements over the last four years. On the other hand, respondents who were sullen, troubled, and alarmed about Biden indicated that he has not done enough for the country during his years in office.



## Democrats after measuring emotional response were asked “What makes you feel they way?”

	Enthusiastic	Warmed	Comfortable	Apprehensive	Ambivalent	Indifferent	Sullen	Troubled	Alarmed
<b>Biden</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I believe he cares for America. He loves this country, and that will help him make the best decisions for all of us</li> <li>- Experienced and truthful</li> <li>- Honest and fair</li> <li>- Can bring this country together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feel some hope</li> <li>- Even though Biden wasn't my ideal candidate, he's got experience and empathy</li> <li>- He isn't perfect, but he is what we need to pull our country out of the shambles it is in today</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He is kind and likeable</li> <li>- He is a good person</li> <li>- Biden can bring America back to what it has always stood for</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I think he's a bit more in touch with the people as a whole</li> <li>- He is the only possibly choice against Trump so I am trying to remain positive</li> <li>- He is a status quo warrior that will revert the US back to where it was prior to Trump</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He is passive. Not exciting but better than Trump</li> <li>- I'm not super excited but he won't destroy our democracy. I wish he was more liberal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I think he's whatever. Nothing exceptional. I think chaos may diminish if he's president, but I am not sure if life will improve significantly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Biden and Trump are both awful choices for president</li> <li>- I believe Biden has mild dementia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He flip flops on positions and panders. I think he has potential mental deficiency due to his age</li> </ul>
<b>Trump</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He is not doing his work properly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not satisfied</li> <li>- I don't like Trump</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Racism issue</li> <li>- COVID-19 effects and social issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I like his policies but he should act more presidential</li> <li>- The current situation makes me feel this way</li> <li>- Protects law and order, fights for Americans economic rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I feel this way because I am nervous</li> <li>- Current situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do not think that Trump as an individual is the right person to lead the country since he divides rather than unites the country based on religion, race, and incites the wrong set of people to war</li> <li>- Narcissistic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He is not a good leader or president</li> <li>- I am disappointed that he doesn't live up to his potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- He is running our country into the ground</li> <li>- Chaotic, leading America in the wrong direction</li> <li>- He puts lives in danger</li> <li>- One of the worst presidents ever</li> </ul>

Generally, Democrats had more positive comments toward Biden. Those who were enthusiastic, warmed, comfortable, ambivalent and indifferent believed that he will bring the country back together. On the other hand, respondents who were sullen, troubled, and alarmed about Trump indicated that he has not done enough for the country during a time of crisis, including for COVID-19 and the BLM movement.

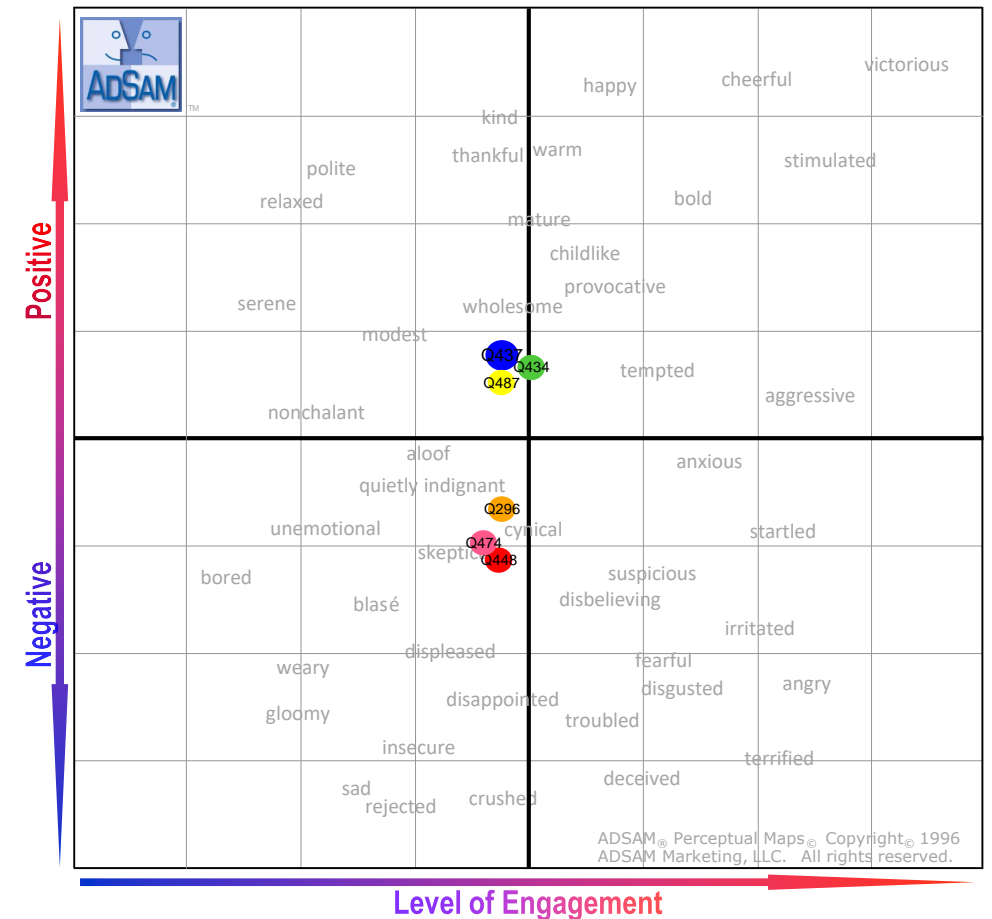
# Perceptual Maps

The Perceptual Map® plots the average responses of the intersections of Appeal, Engagement and Empowerment. Through the use of semantics, words are matched through a database to indicate their level of Engagement.

When viewing the Perceptual Maps, the dots in the upper right corner represent a high level of appeal and engagement. The dots in the bottom left corner represent a very low appeal and engagement. Empowerment is indicated by the size of the dot.

# Democrat

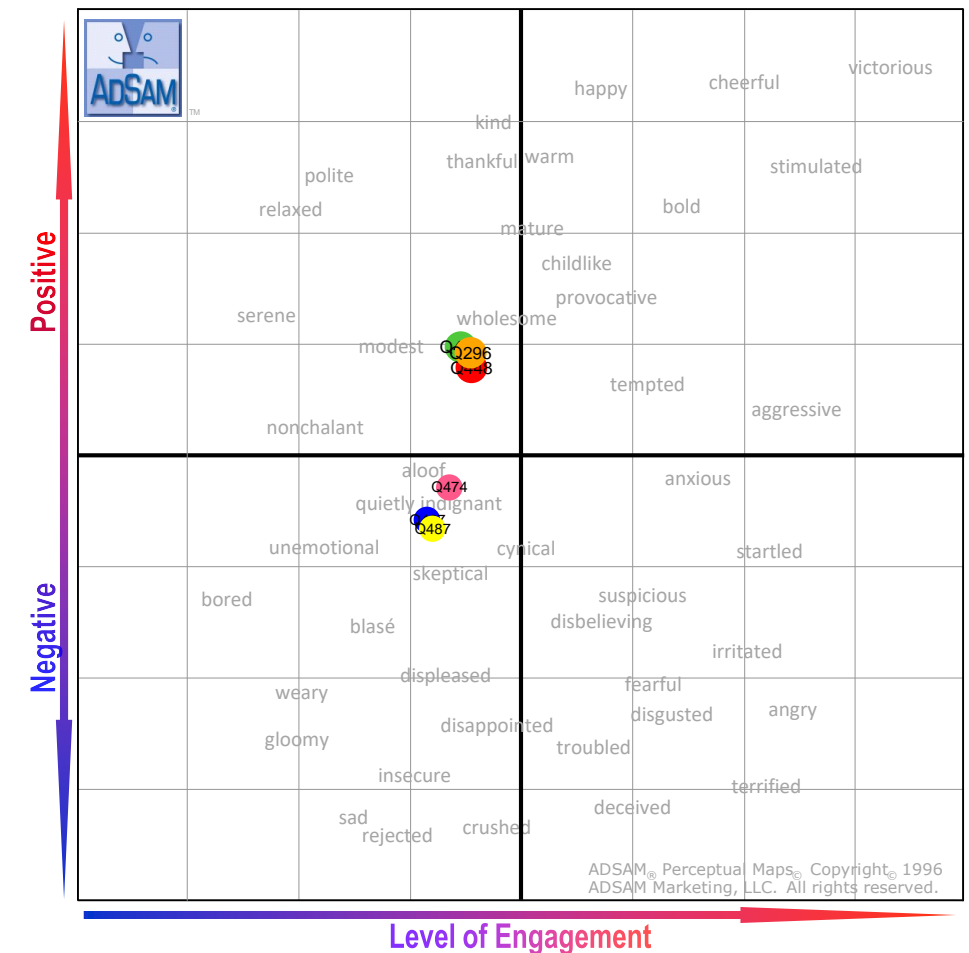
This map has not changed significantly from the last survey, and still indicates that Democrats have a general positive appeal toward Joe Biden as President, and a negative appeal toward Donald Trump as President. Also, they show high appeal on their ideal candidate as President.



- Q434 How do you feel about your ideal candidate as president of the United states?
- Q448 How do you feel about Donald Trump as president of the United States?
- Q437 How do you feel about Joe Biden as president of the United States?
- Q296 How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Donald Trump?
- Q487 How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Joe Biden?
- Q474 How do you feel about the current state of the economy?

# Republican

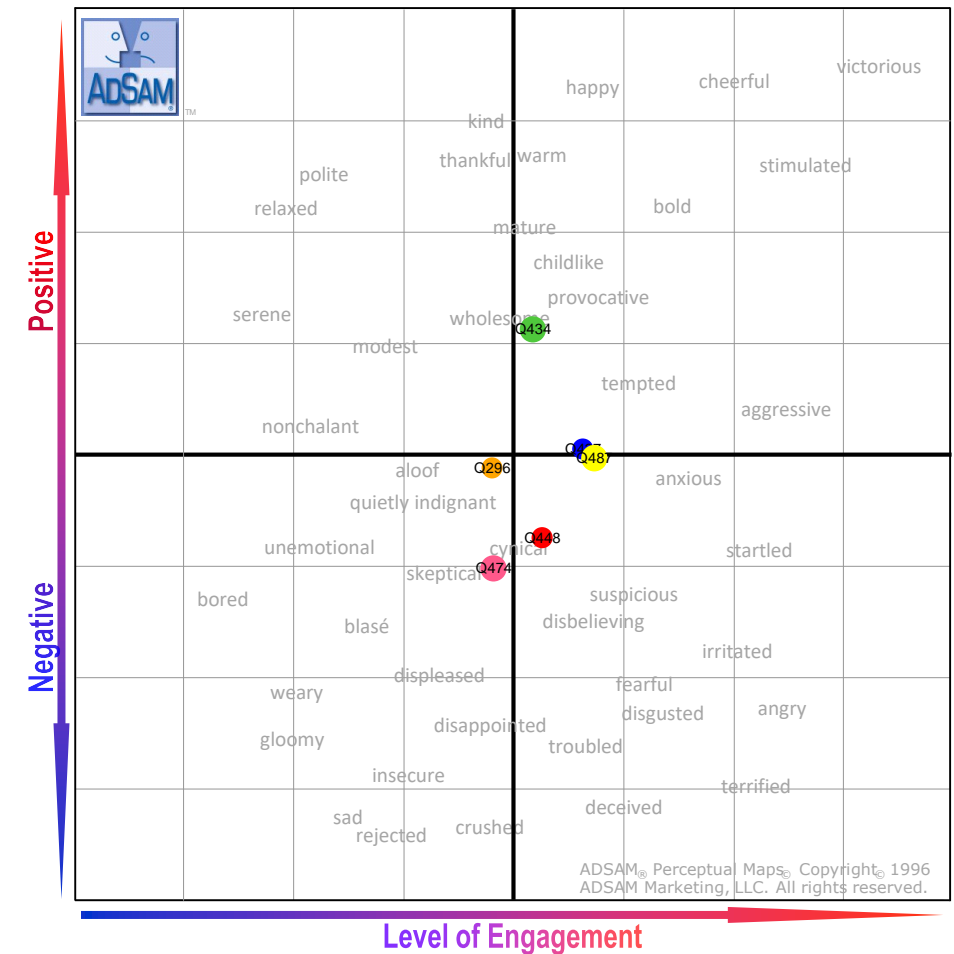
This map indicates that Republicans have not changed drastically in their responses, with a positive appeal toward Donald Trump as President, and negative appeal toward Joe Biden as President. Again, they show high appeal on their ideal candidate as president of the United States. One major change is that Republicans have a more positive appeal toward the economy under Donald Trump than they did in the previous survey.



- Q434 How do you feel about your ideal candidate as president of the United states?
- Q448 How do you feel about Donald Trump as president of the United States?
- Q437 How do you feel about Joe Biden as president of the United States?
- Q296 How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Donald Trump?
- Q487 How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Joe Biden?
- Q474 How do you feel about the current state of the economy?

# Independents

This map indicates that Independents have a more positive appeal toward Joe Biden as President than they do Donald Trump.



- Q434 How do you feel about your ideal candidate as president of the United states?
- Q448 How do you feel about Donald Trump as president of the United States?
- Q437 How do you feel about Joe Biden as president of the United States?
- Q296 How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Donald Trump?
- Q487 How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Joe Biden?
- Q474 How do you feel about the current state of the economy?

# Emotional Temperatures

The Emotional Temperature uses a thermometer to depict the results of the poll visually as an index from high appeal and engagement to low.

The Emotional Temperature shows the combination of the appeal and engagement scores in measuring the emotional strength of the candidate or issue. A score of 100 is the average temperature and above 100 is above average.

For poll respondents who identified themselves as **Democrats**, the Emotional Temperature™ indicates that there is a significant difference between the view of Trump and Biden, something that has not changed since the previous survey. Though relative to the previous survey, Biden is now only four points below the Democrat’s feelings about their ideal candidate. This indicates that for Democrats, Biden is close to the ideal candidate. Democrats also have more favorable feelings toward the prospects of the economy under Biden relative to Trump.



- 134 - How do you feel about your ideal candidate as president of the United states?
- 130 - How do you feel about Joe Biden as president of the United States?
- 124 - How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Joe Biden?
- 81 - How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Donald Trump?
- 66 - How do you feel about the current state of the economy?
- 65 - How do you feel about Donald Trump as president of the United States?

Emotional Temperature is based on the AdSAM® Emotional Strength Index®.

Among **Republicans**, the Emotional Temperature™ indicates that Trump polls only one point behind the ideal candidate for Republican voters. This means that among Republicans Trump is very nearly the ideal president. Both their views on the current state of the economy, as well as about Joe Biden are below average among Republicans.



- 126 - How do you feel about your ideal candidate as president of the United states?
- 125 - How do you feel about Donald Trump as president of the United States?
- 121 - How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Donald Trump?
- 83 - How do you feel about the current state of the economy?
- 73 - How do you feel about Joe Biden as president of the United States?
- 72 - How do you feel about the prospects of the economy for you under Joe Biden?

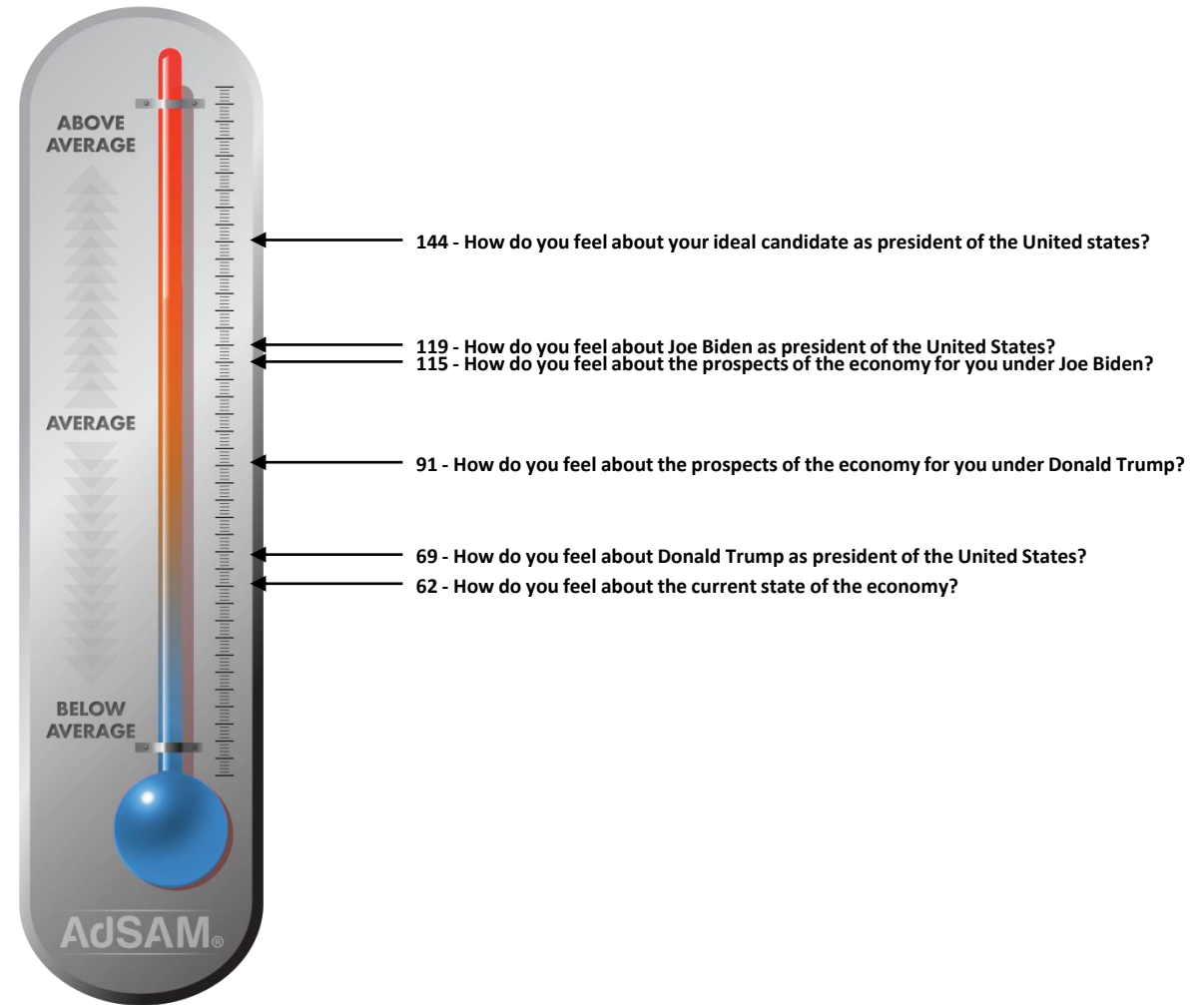
Emotional Temperature is based on the AdSAM® Emotional Strength Index®.

## ADSAM® Emotional Temperature®

For poll respondents who identified themselves as **Independents**, the Emotional Temperature™ indicates that there is a significant difference between their ideal candidate, and the current presidential candidates.

However, Joe Biden is seen as closer to their ideal candidate than Donald Trump is.

Furthermore, Independents have unfavorable feelings toward the current state of the economy, which is significantly below the average.





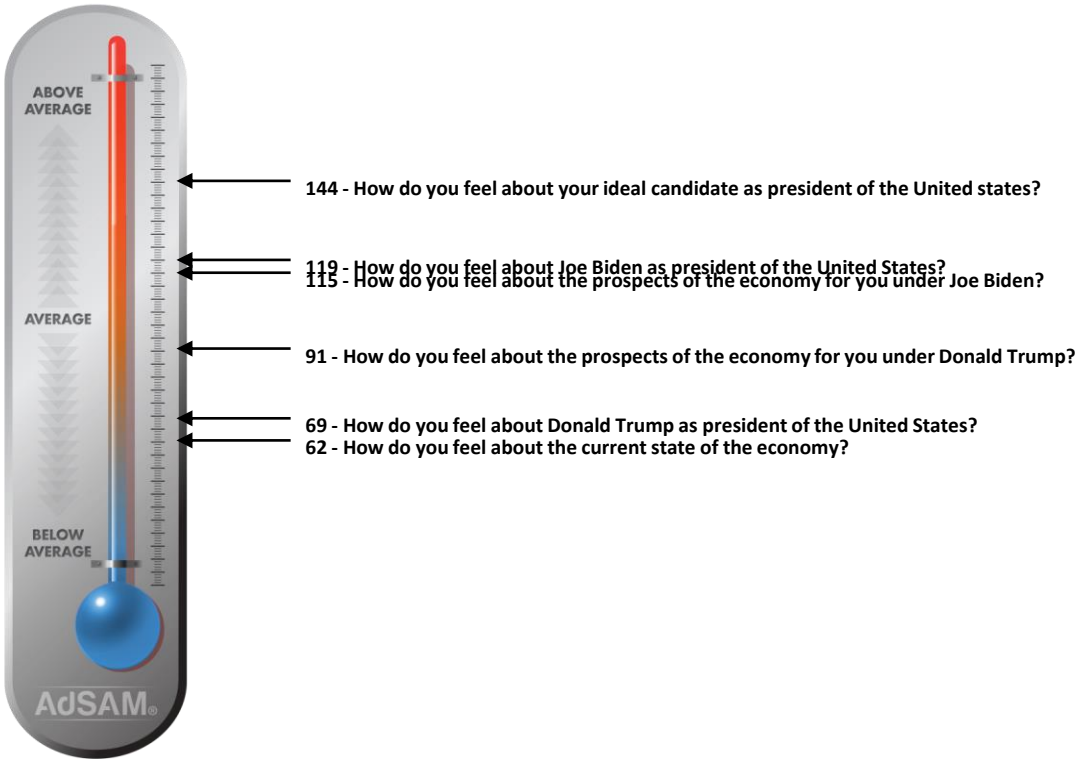
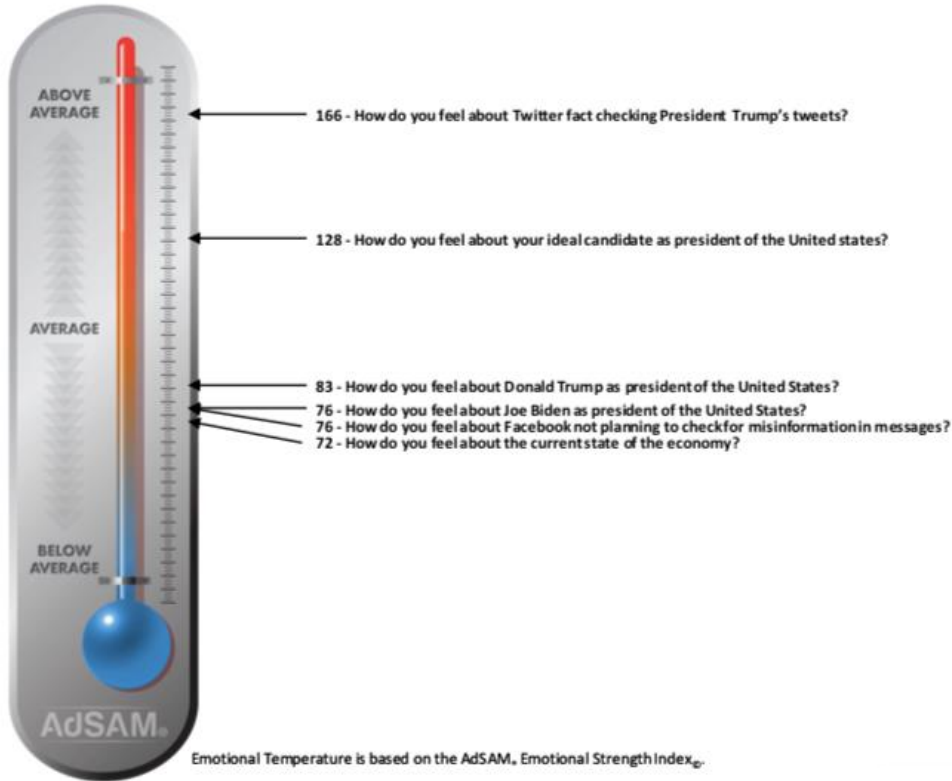
Again, the greatest difference between the June 2020 and September 2020 surveys arose through Independents. In the June 2020 survey, Trump (83) is viewed slightly above Biden (76). However, both candidates were below average.

These numbers changed drastically for the September 2020 survey. As noted, Independents saw Biden as closer to their ideal candidate (144) as president than Trump. Biden was slightly above average (119) , while Trump was below average (69).

June 2020

September 2020

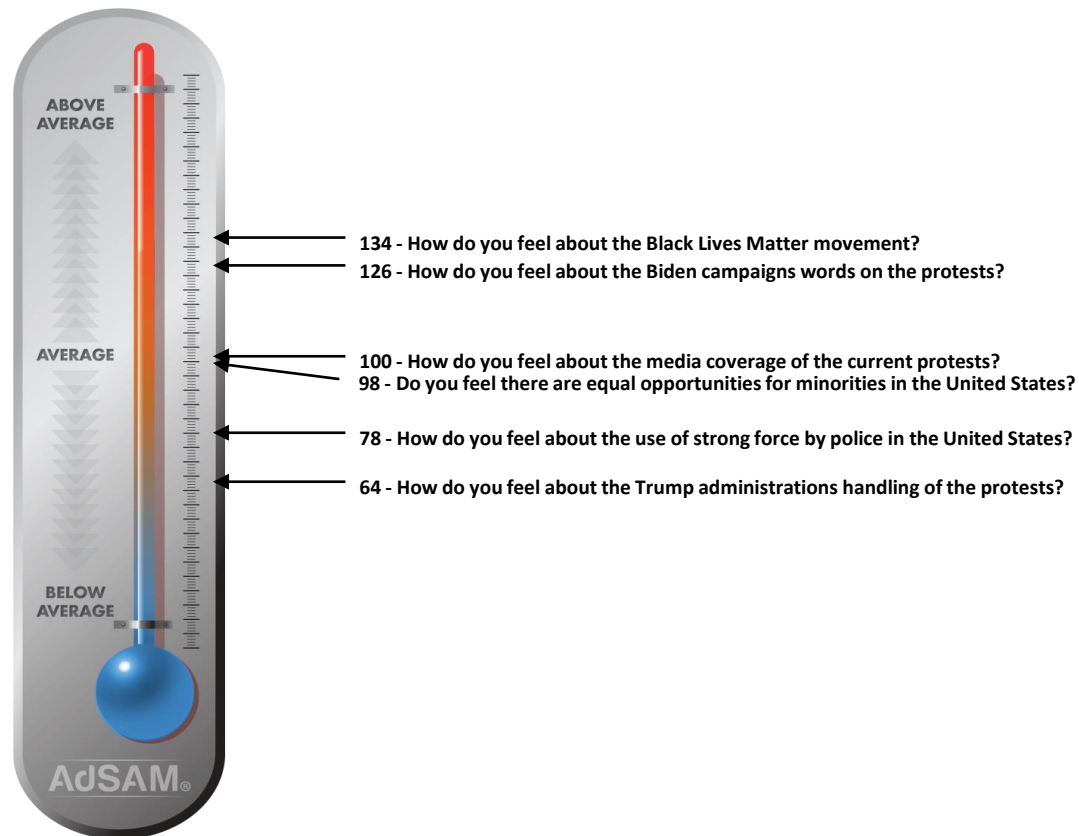
ADSAM. Emotional Temperature.



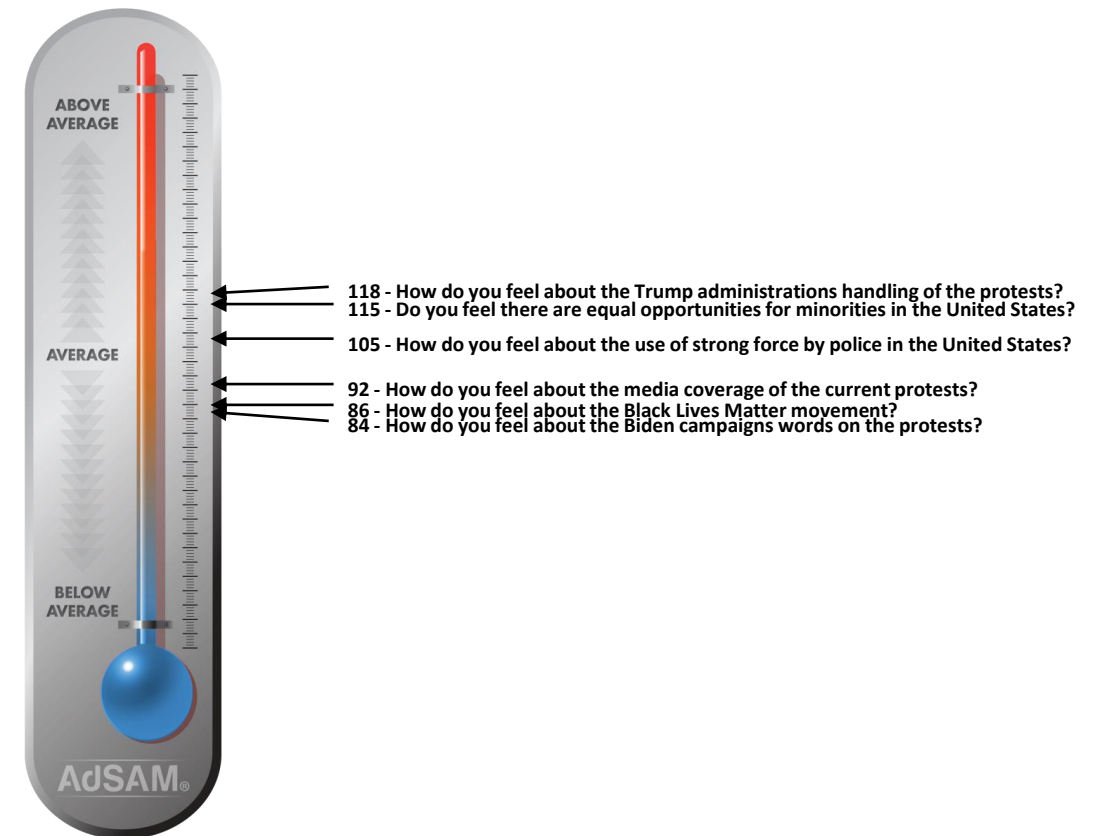
# Unsettled Matters

As with our previous survey, we thought it might be good to take a deeper look into other political issues facing the country. We call them Unsettled Matters.

Some of the greatest differences lie between the Democratic and Republican responses toward the Black Live Matter (BLM) movement. **Democrats** have favorable feelings toward the BLM movement, as well as Biden's words on the subsequent protests. However, Democrats had negative responses toward the Trump administration's handling of the protests.

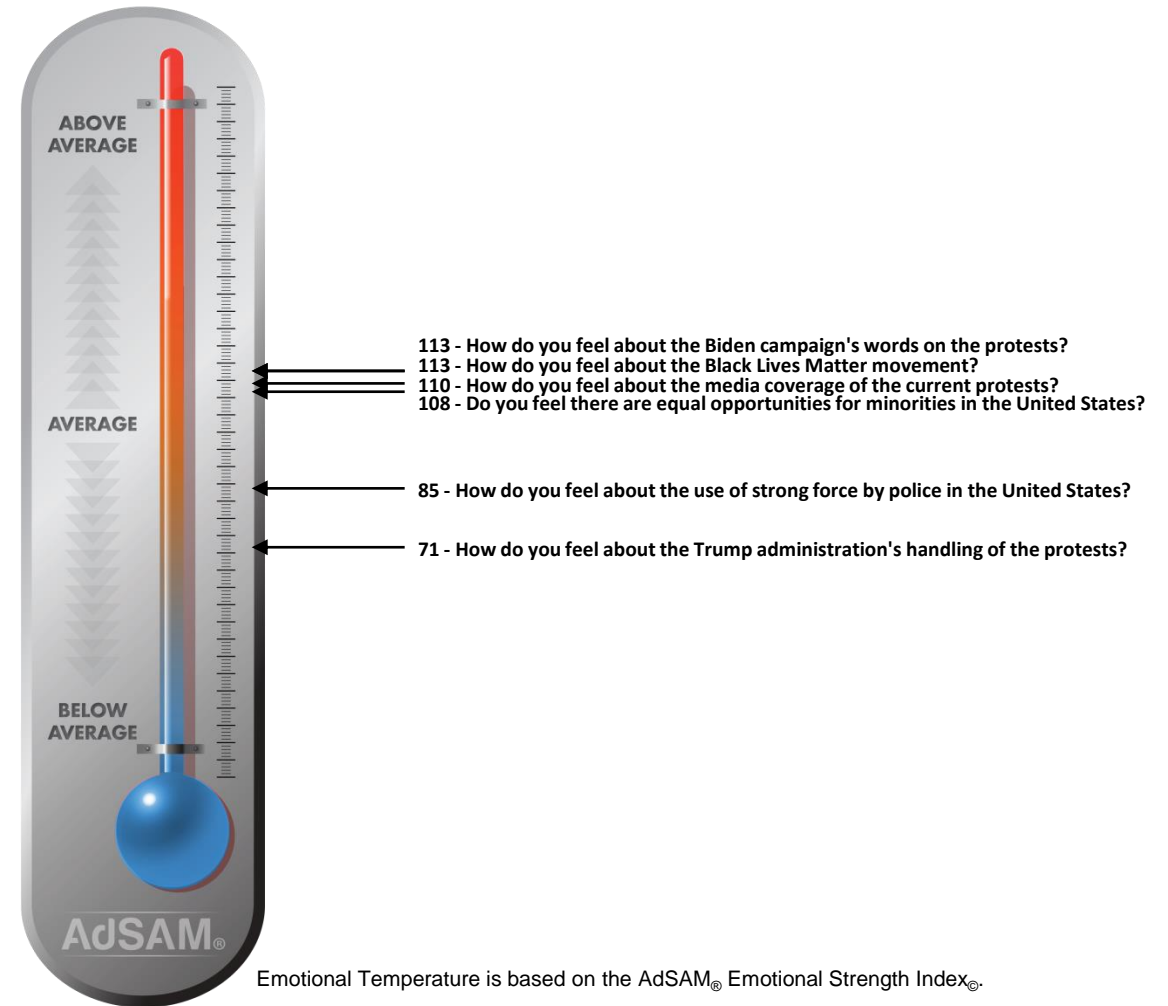


**Republicans** had favorable feelings toward the Trump administration's handling of the protests that grew from the BLM movement. They felt slightly below average toward the BLM movement in general.



Independents were less favorable about the Black Lives Matter movement than Democrats, but more positive than Republicans.

They shared Democrats' negative feelings about how the Trump Administration handled the protests against police violence.

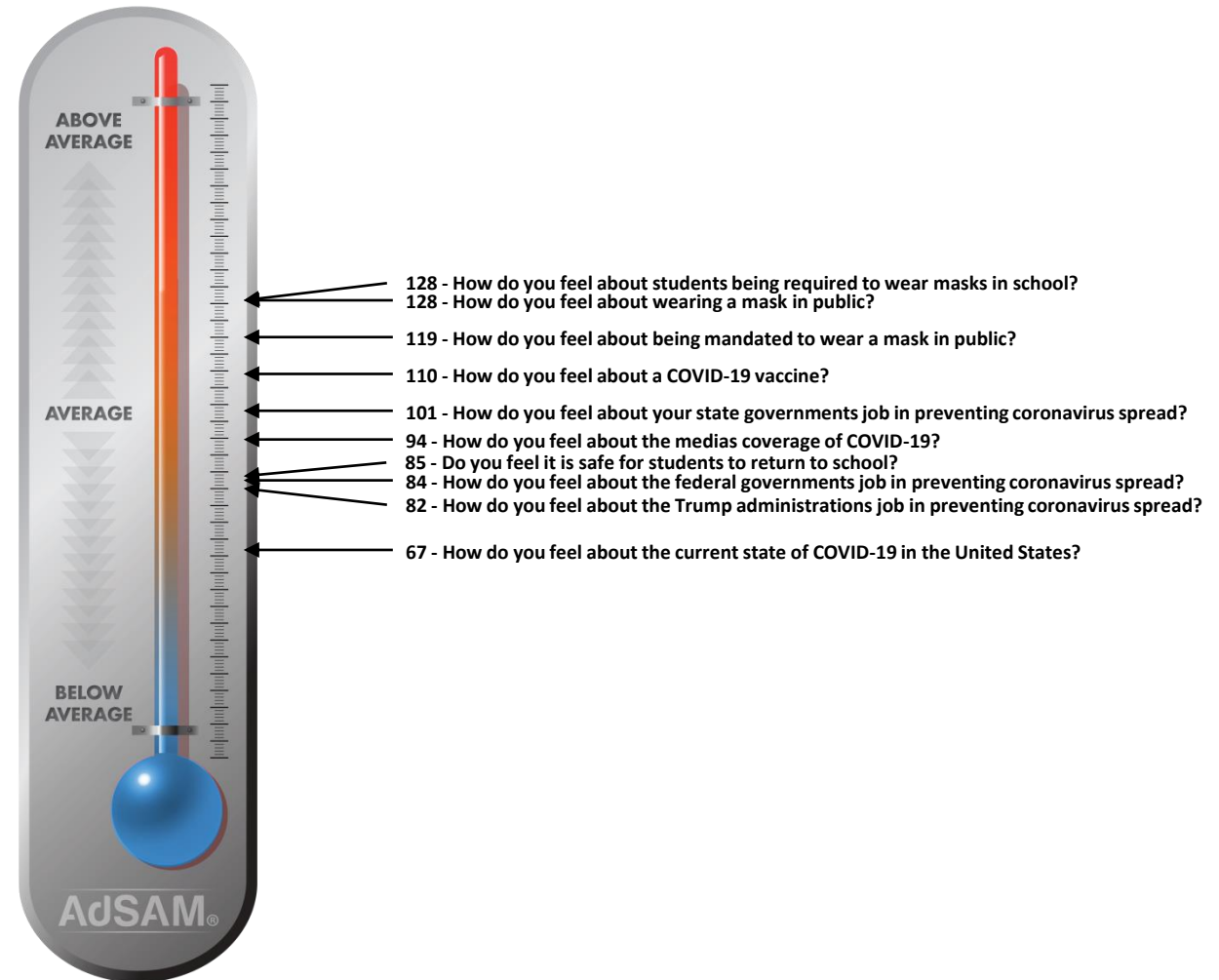


# COVID-19

- For the **total sample**, wearing a mask in public and students wearing masks in schools are viewed far above average and is ranked the number one issue on COVID-19-related issues

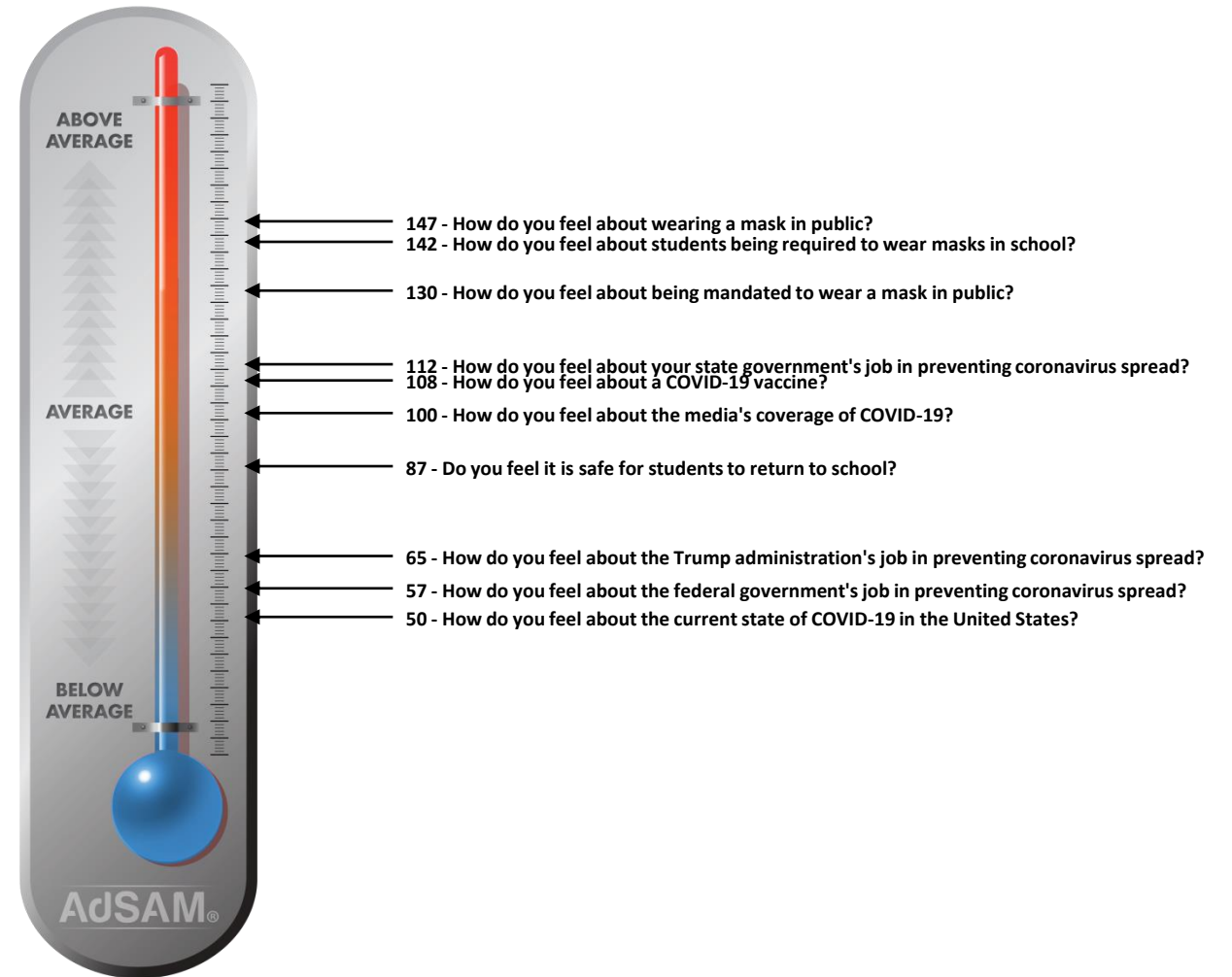
- The view on the state government's prevention on COVID-19 is slightly above participants' views of the federal government's job, as well as the Trump administration's job, in preventing the spread of COVID-19

- As with the previous survey, participants' view towards the current state of COVID-19 is regarded as poor and polls as the lowest issue



Independent voters were more positive than poll respondents overall about wearing masks in public and at schools.

Similarly, they were more negative about the Trump Administration and federal government's efforts to prevent the spread of the virus.



# COVID-19

