



# Findings from Quantitative and Qualitative Research Nationwide Among Voters, Parents, and Teachers

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# Research Methodology

## Quantitative – Online Survey

Lake Research Partners designed and administered this online survey conducted September 18-29, 2024. The survey reached a total of 1,310 likely 2024 voters, which includes a base sample of 800 likely voters and oversamples of 100 African American likely voters, 100 Asian American Pacific Islander likely voters, 100 Latino/a likely voters, 100 Native American likely voters, and 110 likely voters who are parents of school-aged children.

Survey respondents were drawn from online panels and screened to be likely 2024 voters. The base sample of likely voters was weighted slightly by region, gender by region, age, gender by age, race, gender by race, party identification, education, and parental status. The Black oversample was weighted by gender, region, age, and education. The Latino/a oversample was weighted by region, age, and party identification. The AAPI oversample was weighted by region, age, education, and party identification. The Native American oversample was weighted by gender, region, age, and education. The parents of school-aged children oversample was weighted by gender, region, age, education, race, and party identification to ensure the data reflects attributes of the actual population. All oversamples were weighted down into the base to reflect their actual proportion of likely 2024 voters nationwide.

Because the sample is based on those who initially self-selected for participation in a panel rather than a probability sample, no estimates of sampling error can be calculated. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to multiple sources of error, including, but not limited to, sampling error, coverage error, and measurement error. If this poll were conducted among a probability sample, then the margin of error would be +/- 3.5 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval; the margin of error is higher among subgroups.

# Focus Group Methodology

Lake Research Partners conducted five virtual focus groups on behalf of The Hunt Institute, three among voters and two among teachers.

The focus groups lasted about two hours, and participation was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. In addition to meeting the demographic screening criteria for the group, participants in the educator groups were recruited to reflect a mix of experiences such as grade levels, years in the field, type of school, location of school, and type of teacher.

Voters were recruited to reflect a mix of demographics such as political ideology, vote likelihood, education level, marital status, parental status/age and grade of children, and income.

Date	Time	Composition
7/10	7:00 PM ET	White Voters
7/11	7:00 PM ET	Voters of Color
7/15	7:00 PM ET	Conservative Voters
7/16	7:00 PM ET	White Teachers
7/17	7:00 PM ET	Teachers of Color

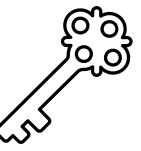
# Qualitative Research Statement of Limitations

- In opinion research, qualitative research seeks to develop insight and direction rather than quantitatively precise or absolute measures. Because of the limited number of respondents and the restrictions of recruiting, this research must be considered in a qualitative frame of reference.
- The reader may find that some of the information seems inconsistent in character upon first reading this report. These inconsistencies should be considered as valid data from the participant's point of view. That is, the participant may be misinformed or simply wrong in their knowledge or judgment, and we should interpret this as useful information about their level of understanding.
- This study cannot be considered reliable or valid in the statistical sense. This type of research is intended to provide knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and opinions about issues and concerns.
- The following limitations are inherent in qualitative research and are stated here to remind the reader that the qualitative data presented here cannot be projected to any universe of individuals.
  - Statement 1. Participants who respond to the invitation of a stranger to participate in this research show themselves to be risk takers and may be somewhat more assertive than non-participants.
  - Statement 2. Some participants speak more often and more forcefully in focus group sessions than other participants, so their opinions tend to carry more weight in the findings.
  - Statement 3. Participants "self-select" themselves.
  - Statement 4. Participants were not selected randomly; as a result, each person in the pool of possible participants did not have an equal chance to be selected.



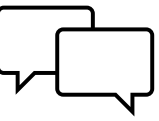
# Key Findings & Recommendations

# Top Take-Aways



- Voters and parents broadly support the education agenda and are willing to invest in resources to better support students, teachers, and their families.
- Teachers in the focus groups share many of the same concerns and views as voters in the focus groups, such as a need to address chronic absenteeism, increase teacher salaries, and address teacher retention.
- While parents and non-parents often respond similarly throughout most of the survey, the differences that emerge show that parents are significantly more optimistic when it comes to their views of education today, while non-parents are much more critical, particularly on whether certain education issues are getting better or worse and the job performances of education entities, as well as how well public schools nationwide or in their community are preparing students for the future.
- Voters see a number of education-related issues as important and see room for improvement, whether in their own community, the state, or nationally.
- **Workforce readiness** is a theme that emerges throughout the survey. Teaching real-world skills for the future workforce is a proposal that voters are ten points more likely to see as very important compared to 2021. **Voters are not confident that students are learning basic skills**, and they see room for improvement in education entities. **Mental health is another priority that is prominent throughout.**
- **Voters rank colleges and universities as well as vocational or technical schools in their state, teachers and other educators, and K-12 public schools in their community as doing a net-positive job handling education today.** They are net-negative on K-12 public schools nationwide, elected officials in their state, and school board members, and even on K-12 public schools in their state.
- **Most voters see almost every aspect of education getting worse**, except for the use of technology in the classroom, which is getting better.
- While voters see preparing K-12 students for a career as universally important, **they do not see public schools nationwide or in their community doing a good job at preparing children for the future.**
- **School safety issues** such as guns and other physical violence as well as bullying, **students not reading at grade level**, and **not teaching real-world skills for the future workforce** are seen as the **biggest problems** in public education today. They also see school safety as getting worse in recent years.
- Similarly, some of these same issues are seen as the most important in public education: **ensuring schools are free of guns and other physical violence, hiring quality teachers, addressing students not reading at grade level, teaching real-world skills for the future workforce, and providing support and resources for children with disabilities.**
- **The top statements are big-picture, values-oriented, and focus on making things better for our children, making them successful, and committing to broad, deep investments in education:**
  - We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids.
  - We need to make sure students learn the things they need to know to be successful both in school and life.
  - Investing in our children is not a political choice, it is a moral choice, it is the right choice, and it is a smart choice.
  - Schools should teach history and current events accurately so that our students don't have an incomplete understanding compared to other students around the world.
- **Diversity in the education workforce, as well as diversity-related curriculum such as teaching about race or gender, are lower priorities or concerns compared to other issues.**
- **There are not many significant changes in responses over the last four years**, but voters now say local school boards, local elected leaders, and national elected officials should have a lot of oversight at higher rates than when asked last year, while teachers, parents of school-age children, school principals, and taxpayers have stayed consistent.

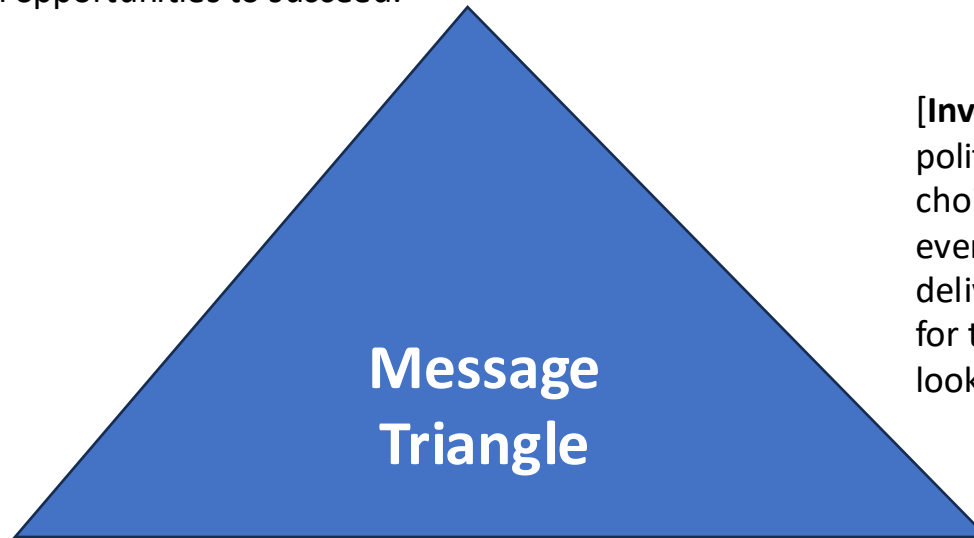
# Messaging Recommendations



- **Many of the messaging recommendations from last year remain true this year, continuing to emphasize career and workforce readiness, school safety, and mental health, which are themes that resonate with voters and parents.** They are also issues that voters see as getting worse.
- **Voters find value in meeting teachers' needs as much as students' needs and see their needs intertwined.**
- **All of our messaging does extremely well with voters, especially investment-focused messaging and messaging on safety:**

**[Invest in Teachers]** Investing in our children is not a political choice, it is a moral choice, it is the right choice, and it is a smart choice. Our public-school teachers need resources in the classroom that allow for personalized learning and engaging lessons, up-to-date textbooks that help students learn, and supportive administrators who give them opportunities to succeed.

**[Physical Safety]** Most of us believe that every child, no matter what they look like or where they come from, deserves a safe and welcoming school where they can thrive. But our schools cannot be a safe place if gun violence, other physical violence, and bullying are not addressed. We need schools to be free of guns and free of bullying – including cyber-bullying. Our schools can be safe places for students to learn when teachers and staff are trained to identify warning signs and intervention techniques.



**[Invest in Schools]** Investing in our children is not a political choice, it is a moral choice, it is the right choice, and it is a smart choice. We must equip every school with the resources necessary to deliver quality education that prepares every child for the future, no matter who they are, what they look like, or where they come from.

# Policy Recommendations

- **Voters and parents prioritize policies that best prepare students for the future and equip them with basic skills including critical thinking and reading comprehension.** They also prioritize supporting teachers and investing in safety and mental health.
- **The most strongly favored policies include the following:**
  - Teaching students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility (70% strongly favor)
  - Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job (69%)
  - Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships (69%)
- **These are almost core values.**
- **Voters say teachers and parents of school-aged children should have the most oversight on education, and they most trust these same groups if they were to say something about education.** Voters are more likely to say local school boards, local elected leaders, and national elected officials should have more oversight than they were last year.
- **Voters favor investments to increase funding for public schools, even if it increased their taxes, such as property or sales tax, but they are tax-sensitive (67% favor/ only 35% strongly).**
- **Education Savings Accounts (56% support) are slightly more popular than school vouchers (51% support),** but intensity is low for both, with around a third in strong support, but 23% strongly oppose vouchers to 16% who strongly oppose ESAs. Most strong support comes from parents of color, parents of children with an IEP, and Latinas.
- **Around six in ten voters would find it very helpful to offer the following:**
  - Afterschool and/or summer learning opportunities
  - Additional counseling or social, emotional, and mental health support
  - Individualized learning plans based on each student's needs
  - Connecting families to community-based support services and resources
- **Diversity in the education workforce and diversity-related curriculum such as teaching about race or gender are lower priorities compared to other issues.**
- **Voters see the use of technology in the classroom as getting better,** though with low intensity, while **school safety and student mental health are seen as getting worse, along with most other issues** such as public school funding nationwide, preparing students to be good citizens, and preparing students academically.



# Career and workforce readiness, including reading comprehension and critical thinking, emerges as one of the top priorities throughout the survey.

- One of the most important issues as well as the top problem in education is “**(not) teaching real-world skills for the future workforce.**” Similarly, ***students not reading at grade level*** is one of the top problems and one of the most important issues.
- In a favorability battery, ***increasing job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships is one of the most strongly favored education proposals for public education leaders and elected officials to prioritize***, with 69% who strongly favor this.
- **More than six in ten voters (64%) strongly favor implementing evidence-based literacy programs in classrooms to improve student reading levels.**
- **Voters also strongly favor:**
  - *Hiring additional school counselors to assist students in college and career exploration and preparation (57%, or 56% career exploration and preparation, not including college)*
  - *Providing incentives to employers, such as financial supports, so they can offer paid internships and other work-based learning opportunities to students (53% strongly favor)*
  - *Providing students as early as elementary school with opportunities to explore different career and job options, such as job shadowing, employer site visits, etc. (49% strongly).*
- **More than half of voters (54%) are much more likely to support someone who makes this statement:** *We are failing to provide too many children with a quality public education. As a result, America is producing a workforce that isn't keeping up. Because the health of our communities and the competitiveness of our nation's workforce depend on a quality education, we need to invest in our schools and ensure today's students can compete in the global economy of tomorrow.*
- **Forty-seven percent of all voters choose critical thinking and 45% choose reading comprehension as the most important skill for students to learn in school in order to achieve workplace readiness.**
- People have diffuse reasons to support improvements in education. **The most compelling reason to support policies that improve the education system nationwide is to enable students to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers (26%)**, followed by allowing all students, regardless of the color of their skin or zip code, to follow their dreams (23%), and to prepare all students for good paying jobs (12%).
- **Voters unanimously feel it is important that K-12<sup>th</sup> grade students get an education that prepares them for a career post-high school – 95% important (75% very important).** Only four percent of voters say this is not important.
- A majority of voters say preparing students to be good citizens has gotten worse (52%), and a plurality says preparing students academically has gotten worse over the years (48%).

# Voters want to invest in teachers so they have the support and resources they need to take care of themselves and students' mental health, and to do their job well.

- **Six in ten voters say student mental health and school safety (60% each) are getting worse.** About two in three voters see the use of technology in the classroom as getting better, but intensity is low. However, this has the most intensity and is the most net-positive across all subgroups. **School safety and student mental health are seen as getting worse.**
- **Voters see the following issues as a very big problem:**
  - Teacher salaries (44% very big problem)
  - Limited access to mental health and other support services for teachers and other educators (43%) – even more so than for students (39%)
  - Lack of quality teachers (40%)
- **Similarly, voters see strong importance in issues around teachers:**
  - Hiring quality teachers (77% very important)
  - Access to mental health services for teachers and other educators (61%)
  - Pay teachers higher salaries to attract and retain them (60%)
- With less intensity but with four in ten rating as strongly important is **increasing diversity in the education workforce (40%)**
- **Voters' top statement is that we should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids – 70% strongly agree, 88% agree.**
- **They also strongly agree that our public-school teachers need resources in the classroom that allow for personalized learning, up-to-date textbooks, and technology – 68% strongly agree.**
- **Half (52%) of voters strongly favor providing mentorship, professional development opportunities, and leadership pathways so that teachers can move into principal and other school leadership positions (82% favor).**
- **The top message is Invest in Teachers, which 68% of voters are very likely to support someone if they were to say it (88% total more likely to support).**

# Safety and mental health are prominent themes throughout the findings, with voters viewing these issues as getting worse. Voters and teachers are very willing to invest in solutions.

- **Six in ten voters see student mental health getting worse**, including 31% who say it is getting a lot worse. Similarly, 60% see school safety getting worse (37% a lot worse). **Parents are net-positive on most items** (saying they are getting better), while **non-parents are largely net-negative** (saying they are getting worse), **especially for student mental health and school safety**.
- **School safety issues are the largest problems voters see in education today**, with guns and other physical violence (56%) and bullying (including cyber bullying – 52%) as the biggest problems. They also see limited access to mental health and other support services for all students (39%) as a very big problem.
- In terms of importance, **ensuring schools are free of guns and other physical violence (80% very important) is the top issue**. Similarly, ensuring schools are free of bullying (69%) and providing access to mental health and other support services for all students (66%) area high on the list.
- **More than six in ten voters strongly agree that public schools should do more to provide better mental health services for all students (63%) and students and their families (62%)**. More than half of parents (55%) also strongly agree that their children’s mental health and wellbeing matters more than their academic achievement.
- **Sixty-three percent of voters strongly favor providing all students with education about the risks of being online and how to stay safe**, 61% strongly favor training school safety officers to interact in a school environment, including anti-bias training, disability awareness, and cultural awareness training, and 56% also strongly favor hiring additional school counselors, social workers, and licensed mental health providers in every school.
- **Sixty-two percent of voters would find it very helpful to have additional counseling or social, emotional, and mental health support, though the question does not specify for whom**.
- **More than half of voters are very likely to support someone who says the Mental Health message** (54% very likely, 81% likely).

# Diversity among teachers and educators in schools is something voters recognize as an issue worth investing in, but less so and with less intensity than many other issues.

- **Voters are torn about whether and how diversity in the educator workforce is changing.** Forty-six percent say it is getting better, but 30% say there is no change or they're not sure, and 24% say it is getting worse.
- **Six in ten (62%) of voters say that racial and gender diversity among teachers and educators in schools has a positive impact on a student's performance,** though intensity is lower (34% very positive).
- **About half of voters see a lack of diversity in the educator workforce as a problem (49%),** including 21% who see it as a very big problem, but this is at the bottom of the list compared to other issues.
- On the other hand, **four in ten say increasing diversity in the education workforce is very important (68% important).**
- **About half of voters (48%) strongly agree that the teacher workforce of public schools should reflect the diversity of the student body and local communities.**
- **Similarly, 45% strongly favor investing in strategies and programs to increase the racial and cultural diversity of the educator workforce.**
- **Six in ten voters see racial and gender diversity among teachers and educators in schools as having a positive impact on a student's performance,** including 34% who say it is very positive, but 23% say it has no impact or are not sure.
- **The Diversity in Education messages have high intensity but both fall to the bottom of the list compared to our other messages.** With the statistic about diversity,\* 46% are very likely to support someone who says it, and without the statistic, 53% are very willing.
- **Black voters especially see a role for diversity in education.** Fifty-eight percent of Black voters say diversity in the educator workforce is getting better, compared to 48% AAPI and even lower numbers among white voters, Native American voters, and Latino/a voters. At the same time, they are 18 points more likely than voters overall to see a lack of diversity in the education workforce as a problem. Black voters have the highest intensity (64% very likely) for the Diversity in Education – No Statistic message compared to voters of other races, especially Latino/as (45%) and Native Americans (44%).

\*Students of color make up over 50% of the student population, while the teaching workforce is still 80% white. Yet studies show students who have a teacher of a similar backgrounds are less likely to be suspended, more likely to graduate high school, and more likely to enroll in education after high school.

# Summary – Current State of Public Education

- In the current context, **the economy and jobs (27%)**, followed by immigration (17%) and abortion (10%), **are the most important issue that voters would like elected officials to address**. Only three percent of voters choose education, about the same as 2021 (5%).
- **More than nine in ten parents say they are confident in having a clear understanding of how well their children are doing academically, including 64% who are very confident**. This is similar to confidence last year.
- **Parents have slightly less intensity in their confidence when it comes to understanding how their children are doing in other aspects of their development, like social, emotionally, and mentally (56% very confident)**, but 92% are still confident overall.
- **Voters are only net-positive when it comes to use of technology in the classroom and diversity in the educator workforce, and are net-negative on other aspects**. Even for these items, intensity is low. **School safety and student mental health are seen as getting especially worse**.
- **Consistent with previous years, voters think colleges and universities in their state as well as teachers and educators are doing an excellent or good job when it comes to education today**. They are net-negative when it comes to K-12 public schools in their state or nationwide, elected officials in their state, and school board members. In focus groups, voters and teachers alike say one reason elected officials and education leaders have not handled education well is because the issue has become too politicized.
- **People rate the job that public schools nationwide (55%) as doing only a just fair or poor job in preparing our children for the future, split on K-12 schools in their state (46% excellent/good, 47% just fair/poor), and just over half rate the K-12 schools in their community as excellent/good (54%)**. In focus groups, most voters say students are less prepared now than five or ten years ago, and voters say they're not well-prepared because they're not taught basic skills, are only taught to the test, and lack proper socialization and lacking real-world consequences as a result of the pandemic.
- **Voters say a broad range of entities should have a lot or some oversight on what is taught or included in K-12 curriculum, though they split on national elected officials (47% a lot/some, 47% a little/none at all). Fifty-nine percent say teachers should have a lot of oversight, followed by 48% who say parents of school-age children should have a lot**. Political entities have increased in how much oversight voters say they should have, while other entities have remained consistent.

# Summary of Key Findings – Education Priorities

- Voters see ensuring public schools are free of guns and other violence, students not reading at grade level, ensuring public schools are free of bullying (including cyber bullying), and not teaching real-world skills for the future workforce **as the biggest problems in education today.**
- The **most important issues in education** are also ensuring public schools are free of guns and other physical violence, addressing students not reading at grade level, teaching real-world skills for the future workforce, and hiring quality teachers.
- Over the years, **some voters have begun to see certain issues as bigger problems, especially regarding school safety and not reading at their grade level.** Importance has remained consistent, except **they see teaching real-world skills for the future workforce as 10 points more intensely important than in 2021.**
- **There are not major differences between parents and non-parents when it comes to education issues they view as a very big problem or very important,** except 59% of non-parents view **students not reading at grade level** as a very big problem, compared to 39% of parents.

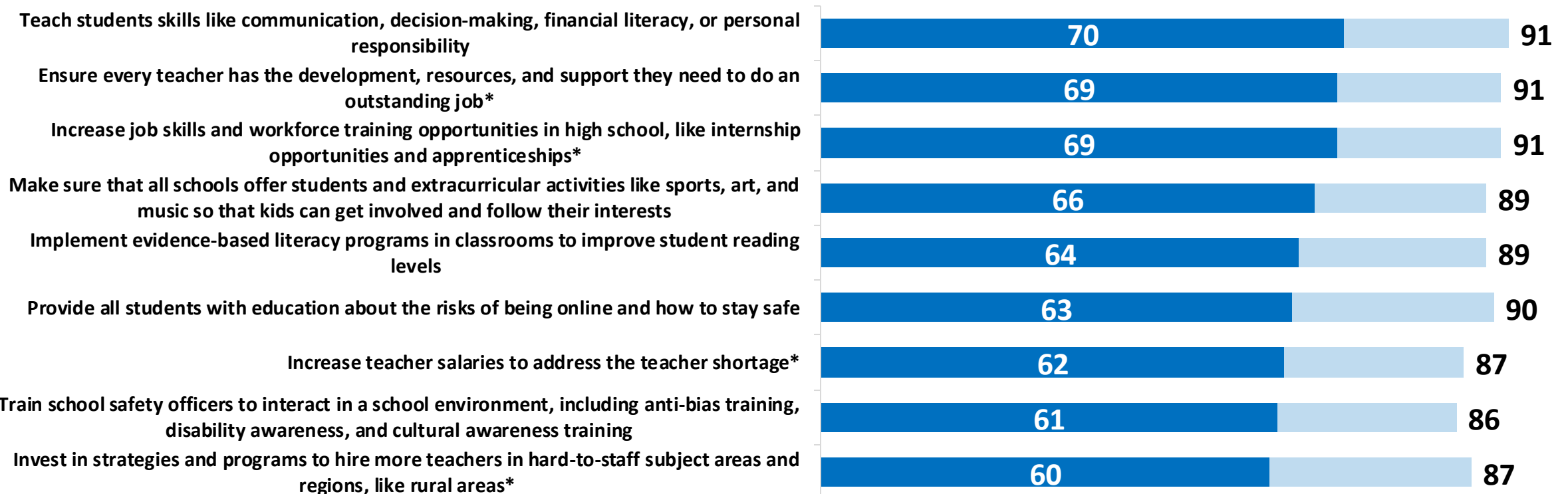
Top Tier (by very big problem)	2024	
	% Very big problem	% Very important
Ensuring public schools are free of guns and other physical violence	56	80
Students not reading at grade level	52	73
Ensuring public schools are free of bullying (including cyber bullying)	52	69
Not teaching real-world skills for the future workforce	51	70
Teacher salaries	44	60
Limited access to mental health and other support services for teachers and other educators	43	61
The widening learning gap between students from low-income and students from high-income families	42	56
Book banning and curriculum censorship	42	33
Banning teachings about race and racism in the US in classrooms	42	31
Teaching about gender and sexuality in the classroom	41	24
Lack of quality teachers	40	77

\*Split sampled; - means the question was not asked

# Summary – Reactions to Education Proposals

- Voters strongly favor nearly all policies across the board to help improve public schools if our public officials and education leaders prioritized them.
- While a majority still favor the bottom-tier policies, including at least three in ten voters who strongly favor them, **wedge-issue policies like teaching about race and gender, as well as incorporating AI in learning, fall to the bottom:**
  - Prevent schools from teaching students about race, sexuality, and transgenderism (39% strongly favor)
  - Ensure public schools are ready to incorporate artificial intelligence (AI) programs into the learning environment to make sure our students stay competitive in the global workplace (32%)
  - Ensure public schools are ready to incorporate artificial intelligence (AI) programs into the learning environment (30%)

Now you will see a list of different proposals people say could improve public schools if our public officials and education leaders prioritized them. For each, indicate whether you would favor or oppose the proposal. [TOP TIER]



Favor – not so strongly

Favor – strongly

# Summary – Preparing Students for the Future

- **Getting an education that provides K-12<sup>th</sup> grade students for a career post-high school is a core value for voters across subgroup**, with more than nine in ten voters finding it important, including three in four who find it very important. **However, voters do not think that children are being prepared well for the future**, because they do not seem to know basic skills and because of remote learning after COVID leading to a lack of socialization and lack of real-world consequences.
- **Six in ten voters say public schools nationwide are only doing a just fair or poor job preparing our children for the future**, including 25% who say they are doing a poor job. At the same time, **half of voters rate the job public schools in their community are doing to prepare children for the future as just fair or poor**, with 17% who say they are doing a poor job, and 42% who say they are doing an excellent/good job, but intensity is low (11% excellent).
  - Parents are 20 points more likely to say that public schools nationwide are doing an excellent/good job (49%) compared to non-parents (29%), and 14 points more likely to say public schools in their community are doing an excellent/good job (51% compared to 37% non-parents).
- Over the years, voters have consistently prioritized enabling students to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers as their most compelling reason to support policies (26% this year), followed closely by to allowing students to follow their dreams, regardless of the color of their skin or zip code (23%).
- **Problem-solving (49%), communication (49%), and critical thinking (47%) are the most important for students to learn in school to achieve workplace readiness**, followed by reading comprehension (45%) and personal responsibility (43%). A fifth of voters say all of the skills are the most important.
- **Voters see all policies as very helpful in helping students moving forward**, especially offering afterschool and/or summer learning opportunities (64% very helpful/93% helpful). Since 2021, intensity has grown, especially for this policy – a 17-point increase.



# Summary – Language and Messaging

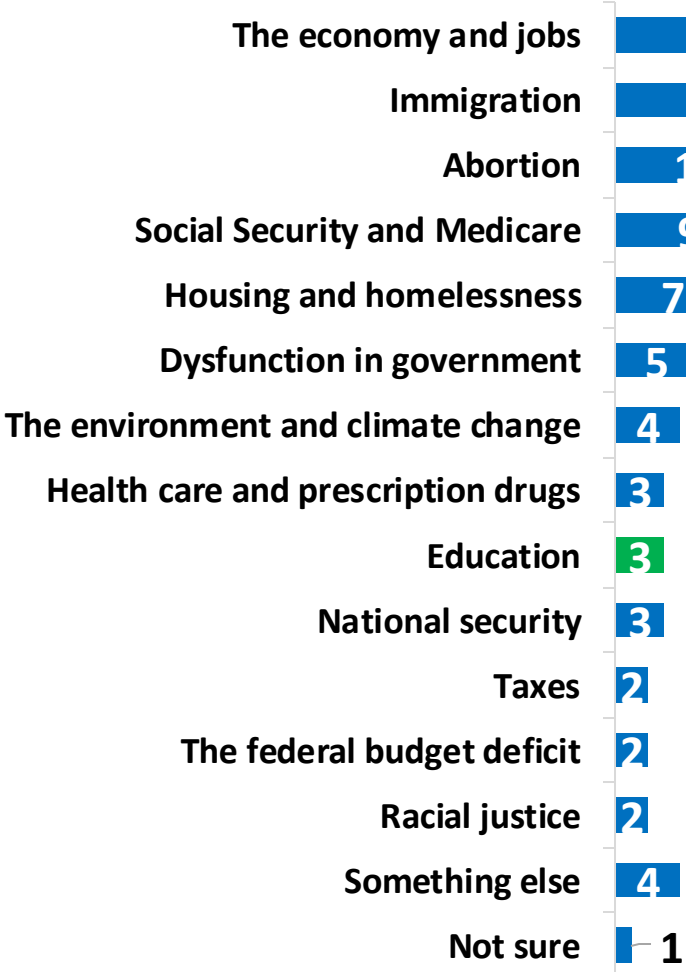
- **Voters most strongly agree that we should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of teachers, and make things better for all our kids – 70% strongly agree, 88% agree.** These are core values. Half or more voters strongly agree with all other statements as well, except for “our public schools provide a good education for every student,” which has lower intensity (32% strongly agree, 61% agree).
- **Voters also strongly agree with a variety of big-picture, values-oriented, education-related statements, especially 75% who strongly agree that:**
  - *We need to make sure students learn the things they need to know to be successful in both school and life* (92% agree)
  - *Investing in our children is not a political choice, it is a moral choice, it is the right choice, and it is a smart choice* (91%)
  - *Schools should teach history and current events accurately so that our students don’t have an incomplete understanding compared to other students around the world* (90%)
- Statements in the bottom tier with lower intensity focus on parental involvement, diversity in the teacher workforce, teacher pronoun usage, and children being exposed to rigorous learning opportunities. Despite attacks, there is growing agreement among voters that parents are being included in their child’s education and what they are taught, up 6 points from last year and 17 points from 2022.
- Voters want elected officials to address education. **All of our statements from public officials and education leaders make three quarters or more voters likely to support them, including close to half or more who would be very likely.** The top statement is **Invest in Teachers** (68% very likely/88% likely):
  - *Investing in our children is not a political choice, it is a moral choice, it is the right choice, and it is a smart choice. Our public-school teachers need resources in the classroom that allow for personalized learning and engaging lessons, up-to-date textbooks that help students learn, and supportive administrators who give them opportunities to succeed.*
- **Forty-one percent of voters say they would most like to hear from teachers about efforts to transform public schools in the U.S, followed by parents of school-age children (25%) and education policy experts and leaders (21%).** Harris (16%) and Trump (15%) are ranked higher than Biden (7%), Vance (7%), or Walz (10%).



# Current State of Public Education

The most important issue for voters, as we have seen in other studies, is the economy and jobs, followed by immigration and abortion. Education is a lower priority for voters in the survey, but some teachers and voters in the focus groups said education is important to them.

Here is a list of issues some people in this area have mentioned. Please indicate which one you think is the most important issue for elected leaders to address.



“It’s not a major issue that influences my vote.”  
- Woman of color voter

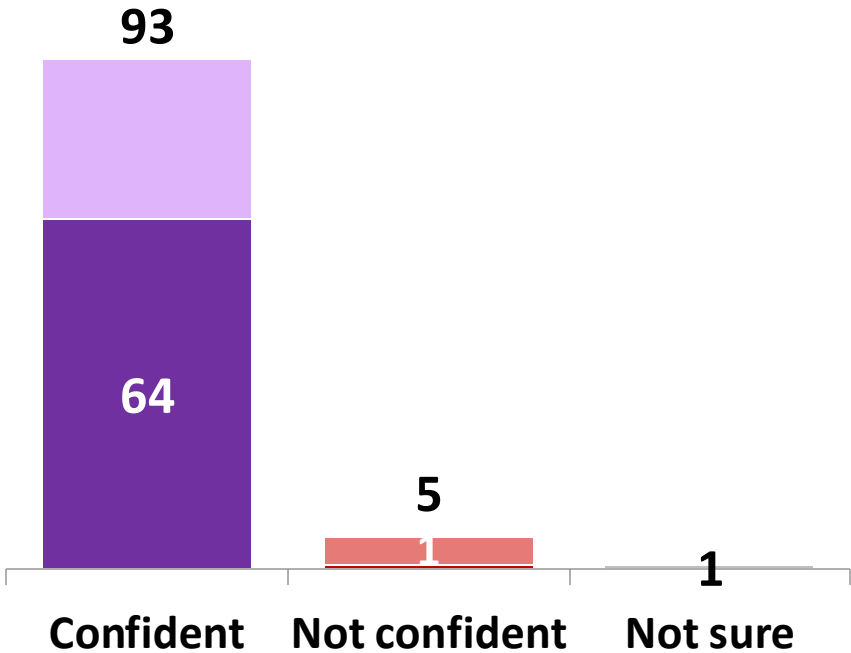
“I don't think it's at the top of my list nationally, because I don't feel like that much has changed in all the years that I've been teaching, for like 30 years, I don't feel like that much has changed. I think we've gone along with technology, clearly has changed, but I don't feel like that much has changed and all the promises that are always made nationally, I just don't feel like they ever happened.” -White woman teacher

“Well I mean education matters, right. It’s opened up a lot of opportunities for people and I think it strengthens the community. So I think that’s why it’s very important.” - Man of color voter

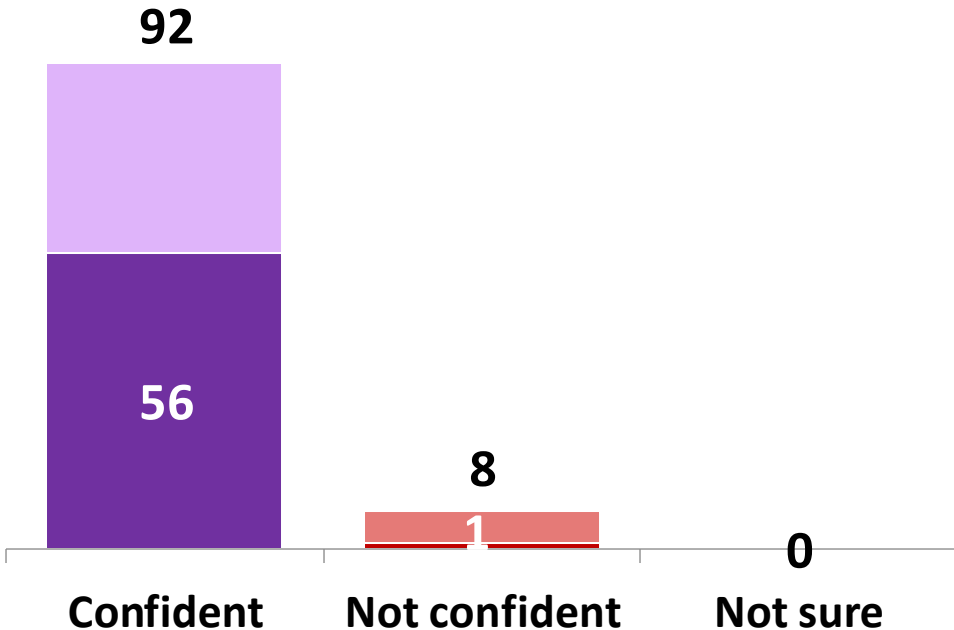
“It's just as important. We talking about the future, the future scholars, future business owners; just you're trying to create good citizens in this world so it's just as important as anything else.”-Male teacher of color

Like last year, more than six in ten parents say they are very confident they have a clear understanding of how well their children are doing academically, and more than nine in ten are confident overall. With slightly lower intensity, parents are also confident that they have a clear understanding of how well their children are doing in other aspects of their development. Native Americans are 24 points more intensely confident when it comes to their child’s academic wellness compared to their developmental wellness.

[Asked of Parents only] How confident are you that you have a clear understanding of how well your child(ren) are doing academically?\*(N=522 unweighted)



[Asked of Parents only] And how confident are you that you have a clear understanding of how well your child(ren) are doing in other aspects of their development, like socially, emotionally, and mentally?\*(N=522 unweighted)



	% very confident	Academic wellness	Developmental wellness
White	62	55	
Black	68	58	
Latino/a	72	64	
AAPI^	54	47	
Native American^	71	47	

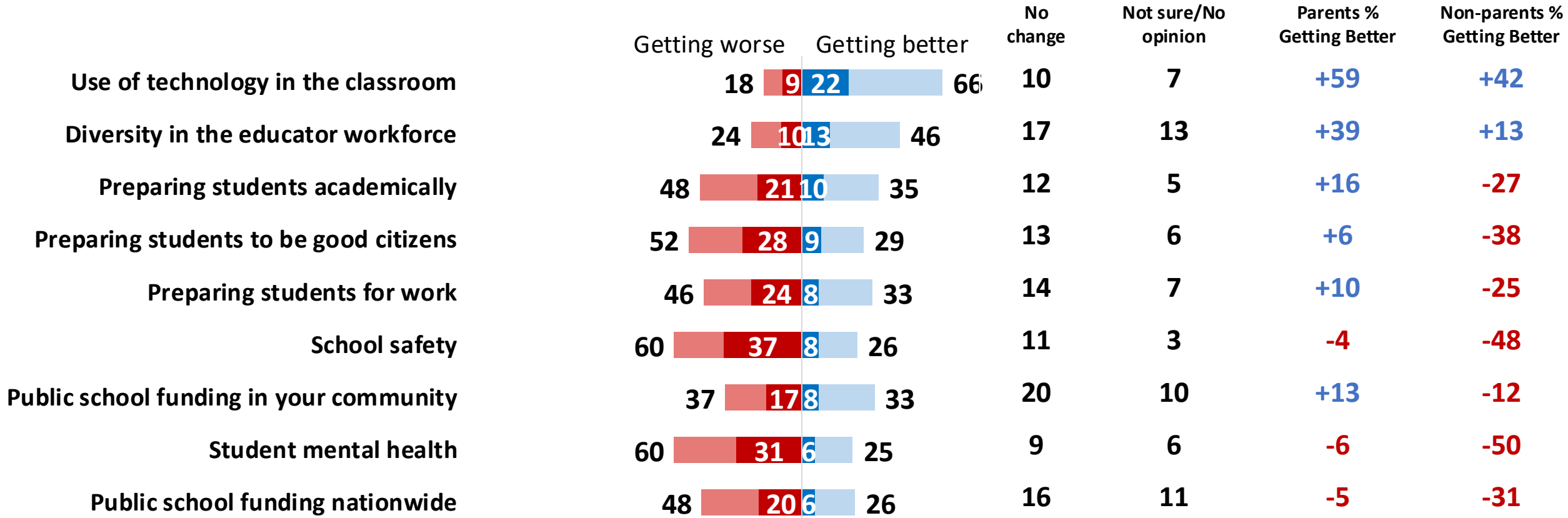
Confidence in parents understanding their children’s academic performance last year does not differ from this year, but confidence in their developmental wellness is down slightly from last year (62% very confident in 2023), though overall confidence remains the same.

^note small n size



Voters are largely net-negative in the direction of various aspects of education, seeing most as getting worse. About two in three voters see the use of technology in the classroom getting better, but intensity is low. However, this has the most intensity and is the most net-positive across all subgroups. School safety and student mental health are seen as getting the worst. Parents are net-positive on most items (saying they are getting better), while non-parents are largely net-negative (saying they are getting worse), especially for student mental health and school safety.

For each of the following items related to education in the United States, please indicate whether you think it is getting better, getting worse, or there has been no change to the item in recent years?



58% of Black voters say diversity in the educator workforce is getting better, compared to 48% AAPI, 47% Native American, 45% white, and 42% Latino/a voters.



Voters overall rank various entities doing an excellent/good job when it comes to education today, especially colleges and universities in their state as well as teachers and other educators, but intensity is low. They are net-negative when it comes to K-12 public schools in the state and nationwide, elected officials in their state, and school board members. Over the years, views have remained consistent across the board.

How would you rate the job for each of the following when it comes to education today?

% excellent/good

Parents Non-parents

	Just fair/Poor	Excellent/Good	Net	NS/NO	Parents	Non-parents	
Colleges and universities in your state	31	9 16	61	+30	7	66	59
Teachers and other educators	36	12 15	59	+23	6	66	55
Vocational or technical schools in your state	31	9 12	55	+24	13	66	49
K-12 public schools in your community	39	13 12	54	+15	7	64	49
Pre-K schools and programs in your state	39	11 11	49	+10	12	61	43
K-12 public schools in your state	47	15 10	46	-1	7	55	41
Elected officials in your state	57	28 8	36	-21	6	42	33
K-12 public schools nationwide	55	17 7	36	-19	9	47	30
School board members	55	22 7	33	-22	12	44	27

\*split sampled



## Voters across groups overwhelmingly say the quality of education in K-12 public schools nationwide has gotten worse. Several women of color attribute it to a lack of personalized learning, poor discipline and mismanagement in and out of the classroom, and large class sizes.

- “I think **it's gotten worse overall** throughout like the entire country.” - Conservative woman voter
- “I think that locally it has gotten worse and followed the national trends. I have a son who teaches middle schools science, and there seems to be this kind of push around testing, not learning. Not loving to learn, but to be able to score well on these standardized tests, and what you find is that a lot of the **kids didn't learn the material in, you know secondary school**. So when they go to college you know they're starting out in remedial classes, and so it takes longer to, of course finish. And also I think that there's this, I'm all for, you know every child getting an appropriate education, but I know just from talking to my son that, a lot of time all of the attention is going to the students who have some kind of behavioral or other kind of issue. **And so the kids who really want to learn, a lot of times they're not getting what they need, because the teacher has to, you know give a lot of attention to a lot of discipline kinds of issues**. And if you send those kids out, then there becomes an issue of not being able to manage your classroom. So, I see that. I know I'm a lot older than these kids today, but we didn't have those problems when I was in school. There was both; discipline at school and at home, and you know kids who weren't doing what they were supposed to do, and causing trouble got out of the classroom so everybody else could learn.” - Woman of color voter
- “ **I think the size of the classroom is a huge, huge, it's a big deal**. Because like I said, just throw a bunch of students in a classroom and you know like and only a third of them are actually getting the lesson, and people are getting lost in the space of the classroom serves no purpose, so yeah.” - Woman of color voter

# Teachers say that elected officials and education leaders have not handled education well recently, because they use education for their own political agenda while not actually improving the system.

- “Some governors and state officials and school boards have used public education to further, and to start culture wars, in my view. **They're using education to set political agendas and establish political agendas to further the culture war divide.**” -White male teacher
- “I think they've also used public education as **a platform to continue misinformation and to perpetuate falsehoods of what's happening across the nation.**” -White woman teacher
- “I think they fumbled the ball. They fumbled the ball. **They've, both political sides, you know, have fumbled the ball with educators, and they left us being the ones helping them define what education is.** That's nice, but they fumbled it every and each four years with new programs that fit their needs, with the same taxpayer dollars and parents wishing that, you know, accountability and results were better. And then we wishing, you know, many of the things from parents with accountability as well. A lot of lip service. So, I think, you know, they've fumbled the ball, you know. I think people at the ground level are doing as best as they can with the resources that they have possible, and I think a lot of that doesn't get addressed either. There's a lot of efforts in teachers all around that are very positive, but unfortunately, you know, it's always the negative stuff that comes up. **But, you know, in order to solve some of these problems, you have to address and tell the public what the problem actually is first, so you can't provide a solution, throw funding money at something without addressing the other problem.** That's all.” -Male teacher of color



## While one voter acknowledges her state is increasing teacher salaries, other voters see elected officials as too political, investing in the wrong things, and too bureaucratic.

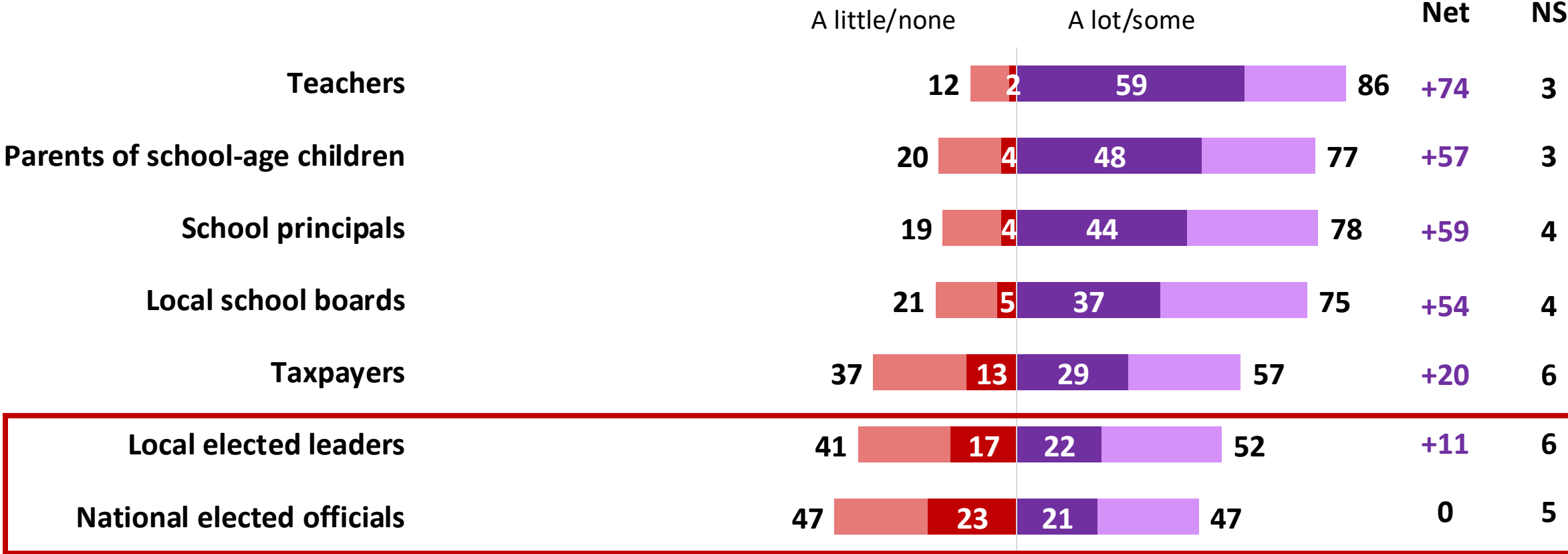
- “Well here in Georgia what you’re seeing is a lot of the school systems are **increasing teacher salaries**. So we’re seeing a lot of increase in teacher salaries.” - Woman of color voter
- “**I believe they [elected officials and education leaders] are trying to destroy our society.** They're trying to do the opposite, rather than stating values.” - Conservative woman voter
- “I mean, not to get too political, but it seems like certain, **one political side is kind of trying to push this indoctrination on the children**, you know, and it's just not good.” - Conservative male voter
- “I would agree. **I feel like government officials and leaders are investing the money in the wrong places in a lot of schools** and so again, like kind of how we talked about a lot of funding going into sports. And while there's nothing necessarily wrong with that kind of thing, **a lot of money should also be going into other programs, for a lot of other students that don't necessarily want to be involved in sports.**” - White woman voter
- “And like I said; you got a federal board of education, a state board of education, a county board of education, and a local board of education. **You want to get back to these kids, stop with the so many.**” - Man of color voter

## White voters say the job teachers are doing is the same or worse today as it was five or ten years ago. Voters of color feel it has become more challenging to be a teacher, and teachers have needed to improve in order to continue teaching, especially when they are often left without support.

- **“No, I think 2015 was a far better year than today.** We had things like schoolmatters.com that actually rated schools. You had kids under grade 6 that actually had numeric grades. They did away with that, at least in Connecticut, right, where it's literally a pass/fail.” - White male voter
- **“I would still be in the middle.”** - White woman voter
- **“No I find things a lot more challenging for educators now than 20, 30 years ago.** Because kids are, show no respect to the teachers nowadays. There is much more lack of respect that teachers have to deal with today. **So they have to be stronger now.”** - Man of color voter
- **“Well they’re doing the best that they can do with what they have and try and keep on going without even giving up, you know. To me I consider them heroes.”** - Man of color voter
- **“It’s far more challenging today to be a teacher, in my opinion, than it was in the past.** And I said not to mention the fact that teachers are up against students being easily distracted on an ongoing basis with the monster of the internet. It’s just like they... You know like there was a time when a lesson was given and you know with instruction of, you know like doing research and things like that. And today it’s like the accessibility and the easiness of just Googling everything, takes away from the fundamentals of learning, of actually retaining information, valuable information. **So obviously this is going to make the educators position so much more challenging because they have to do so much more.** They have to find even more, even more ways to connect with students. It’s just there’s so many obstacles in front of the students that, I mean, as I believe [participant] said; I consider all educators superheroes, I think you said heroes, but to me they’re superheroes.” - Woman of color voter

**Voters say all entities should have a lot or some oversight on what is taught or included in K-12 curriculum, though they split on national elected officials. At least four in ten voters say teachers, parents of school-age children, and school principals should have a lot of oversight.**

How much oversight, if any, should each of the following have on what is taught or included in K-12 curriculum?



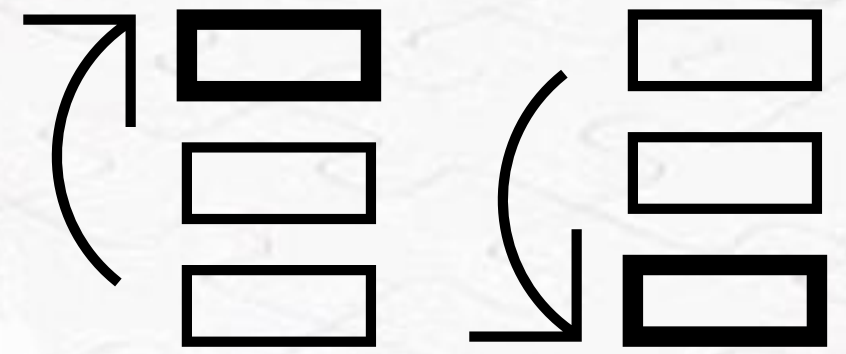
Some  
 A lot  
 A little  
 None at all

Across subgroups, teachers should have the most oversight. Fathers, suburban voters, older men, and Black voters bring local school boards to their top entities. Parents are 8 points more likely than non-parents to say national elected officials should have a lot of oversight (26%, 18% non-parents).

## Local school boards, local elected leaders, and national elected officials have seen the most increase in intensity and overall oversight since last year, while teachers, parents of school-age children, school principals, and taxpayers have stayed consistent.

How much oversight, if any, should each of the following have on what is taught or included in K-12 curriculum?

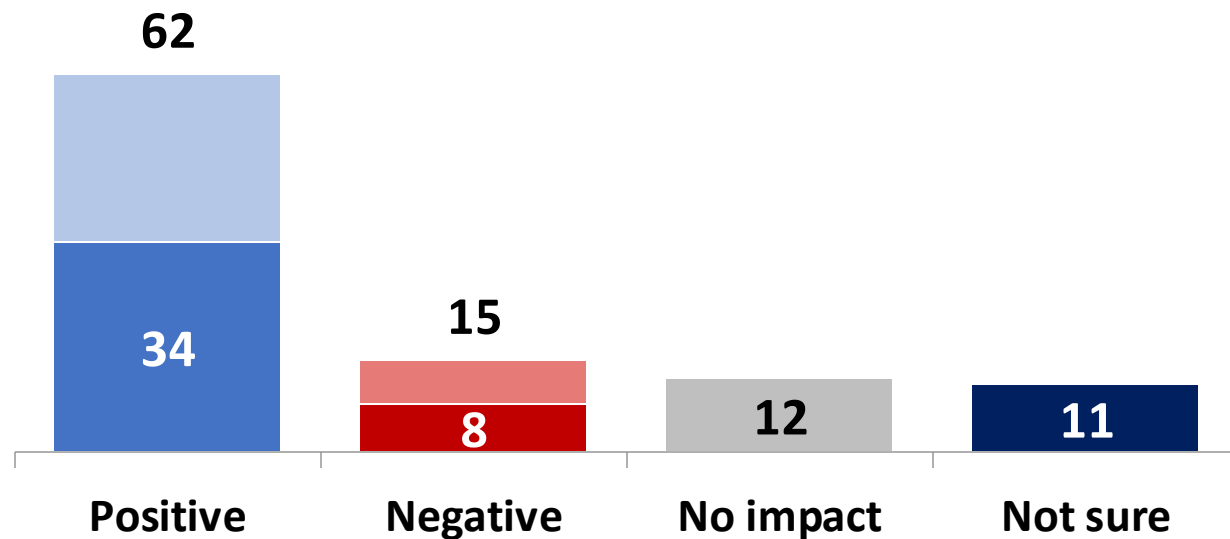
	2024		2023		Change since last year A lot/some (a lot)
	% A lot/some (A lot)	% A little/none (none at all)	% A lot/some (A lot)	% A little/none (none at all)	
Teachers	86 (59)	12 (2)	85 (55)	14 (4)	+1 (+4)
Parents of school-age children	77 (48)	20 (4)	72 (44)	26 (7)	+5 (+4)
School principals	78 (44)	19 (4)	74 (36)	24 (6)	+4 (+8)
Local school boards	75 (37)	21 (5)	68 (29)	29 (8)	+7 (+8)
Taxpayers	57 (29)	37 (13)	55 (25)	41 (17)	+2 (+4)
Local elected leaders	52 (22)	41 (17)	43 (16)	53 (24)	+9 (+6)
National elected officials	47 (21)	47 (23)	37 (14)	30 (58)	+10 (+7)



# Education Priorities

Six in ten voters see racial and gender diversity among teachers and educators in schools as having a positive impact on students' performance, with 34% who say it has a very positive impact. Nearly half of Black voters and Democrats say diversity has a very positive impact. Only a plurality of Independents and Republicans say diversity has a positive impact, and at least one in five Native Americans, rural voters, and Republicans say diversity has a negative impact.

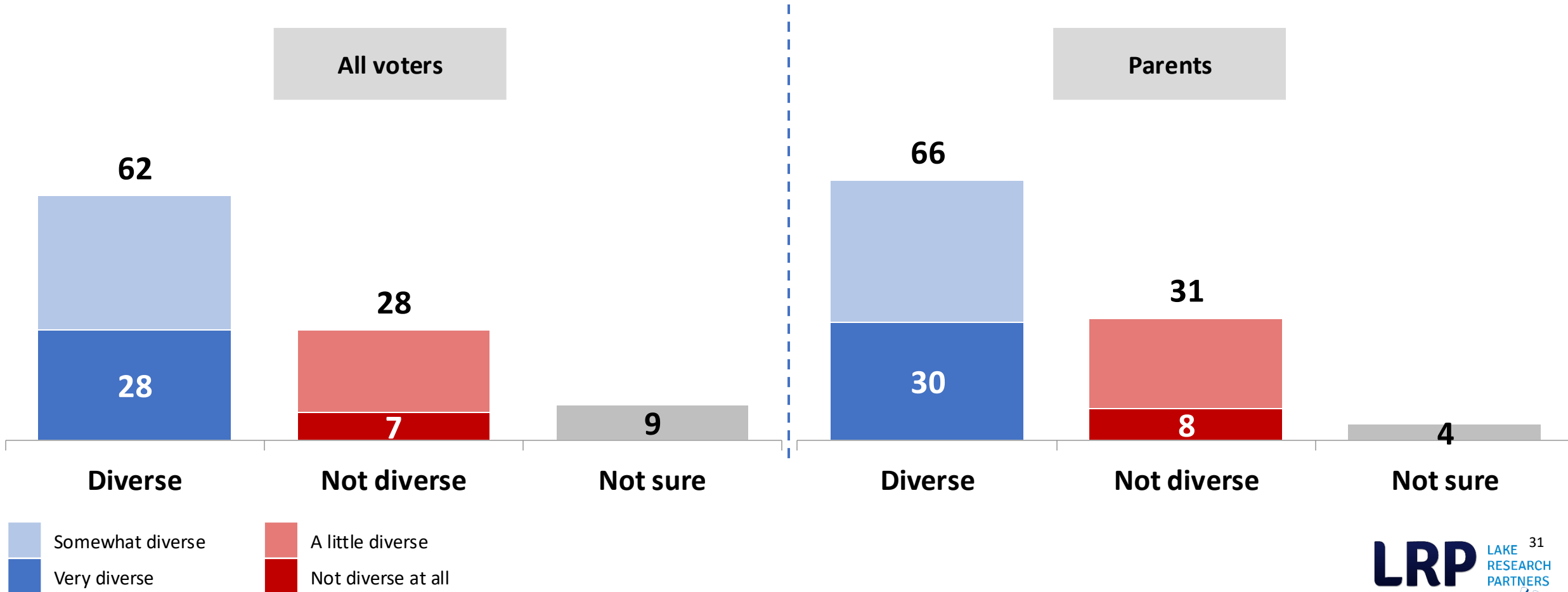
Overall, do you think racial and gender diversity among teachers and educators in schools has a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative, very negative, or no impact on a student's performance?



	Very Positive	Total Positive	Total Negative
Fathers	42	74	11
Mothers	38	63	13
Childfree men	30	57	16
Childfree women	32	60	15
K-5 child	42	69	13
6-8 grade child	44	68	10
9-12 grade child	41	64	14
White	32	59	16
Black	46	73	11
Latino/a	34	64	14
AAPI	40	76	8
Native American	31	53	21
Urban	38	66	13
Suburban	33	63	13
Rural	31	54	20
Democrat	47	81	6
Ind/DK	21	45	13
Republican	23	45	24

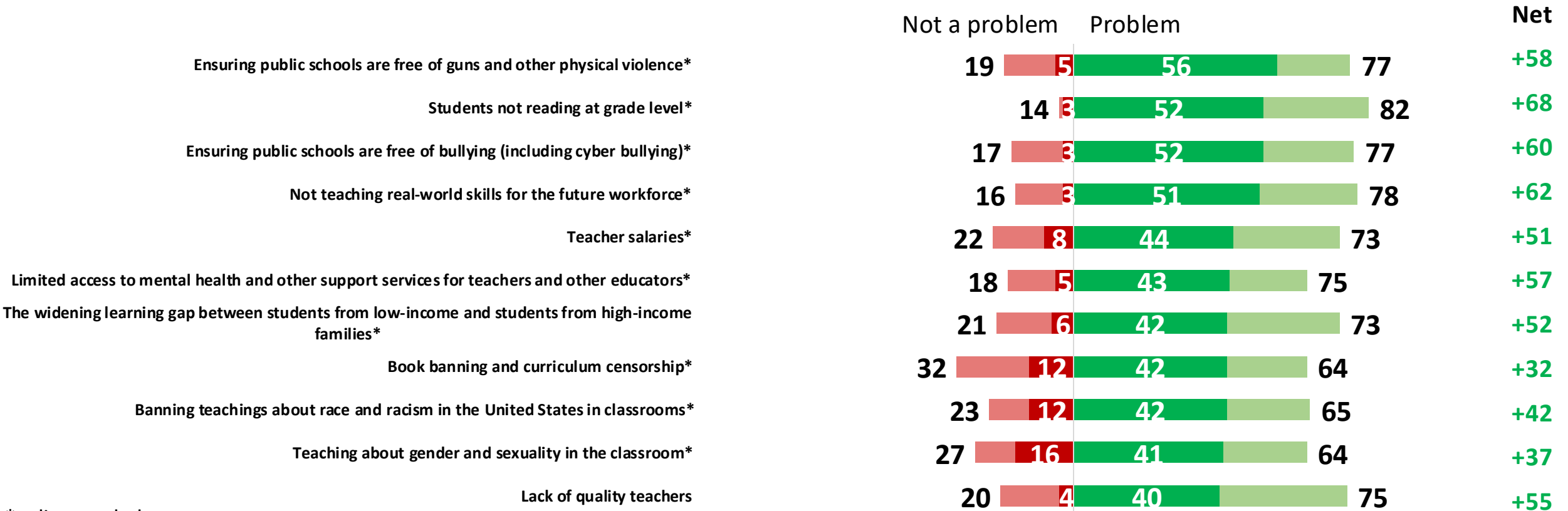
Parents have similar views as voters overall when it comes to how racially diverse they view their local school district to be. Around three in ten voters and parents consider their district to be very diverse, and more than six in ten say they are diverse overall. Around three in ten say their district is not racially diverse.

How racially diverse do you consider your local school district to be?



# Voters see lots of problems in education. Voters are most likely to say that school safety, reading levels and not teaching real-world skills are the biggest problems in public education. Book banning, banning teachings about race and racism, and teaching about gender, as well as lack of quality teachers are lower in intensity, but still problematic.

[SSA] Here is a list of different issues related to public education. For each one please indicate how big of a problem you think it is.\*  
[TOP TIER]



\*split sampled



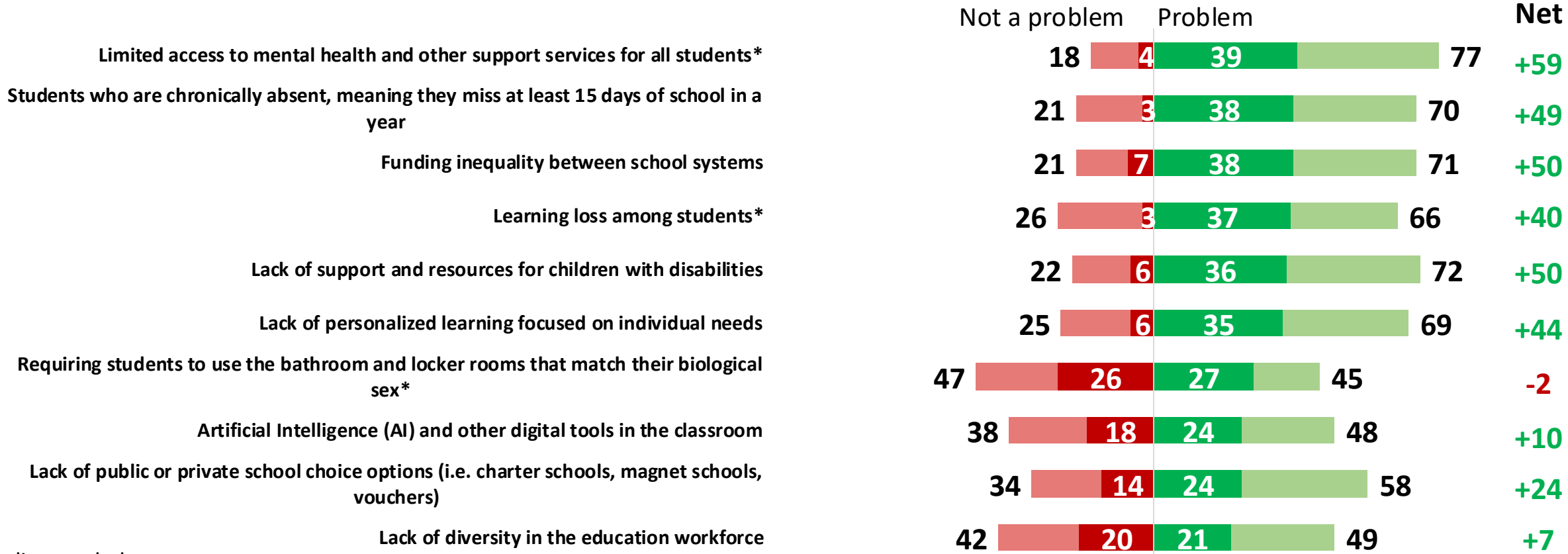
Non-parents are 20 points more likely to see students not reading at grade level as a very big problem (59%) compared to parents (39%). After gun safety, fathers (49%) and parents/guardians of a child 0-4 (63%) are most concerned about teacher salaries. After ensuring schools are free of bullying, rural voters see limited access to mental health for teachers as the biggest problem (60%).



Policies in the bottom tier have the least intensity, but most are still net likely to be seen as problems except for requiring students to use the bathroom and locker rooms that match their biological sex, where people are split overall and have similar intensity on either side. Policies in this tier tend to focus on the absence of certain resources or issues, such as a lack of diversity in the education workforce, lack of school choice options, lack of personalized learning, lack of support and resources for children with disabilities, and limited access to mental health, as well as issues like AI and learning loss. These are also overall priorities.

Here is a list of different issues related to public education. For each one please indicate how big of a problem you think it is.\*

[BOTTOM TIER]



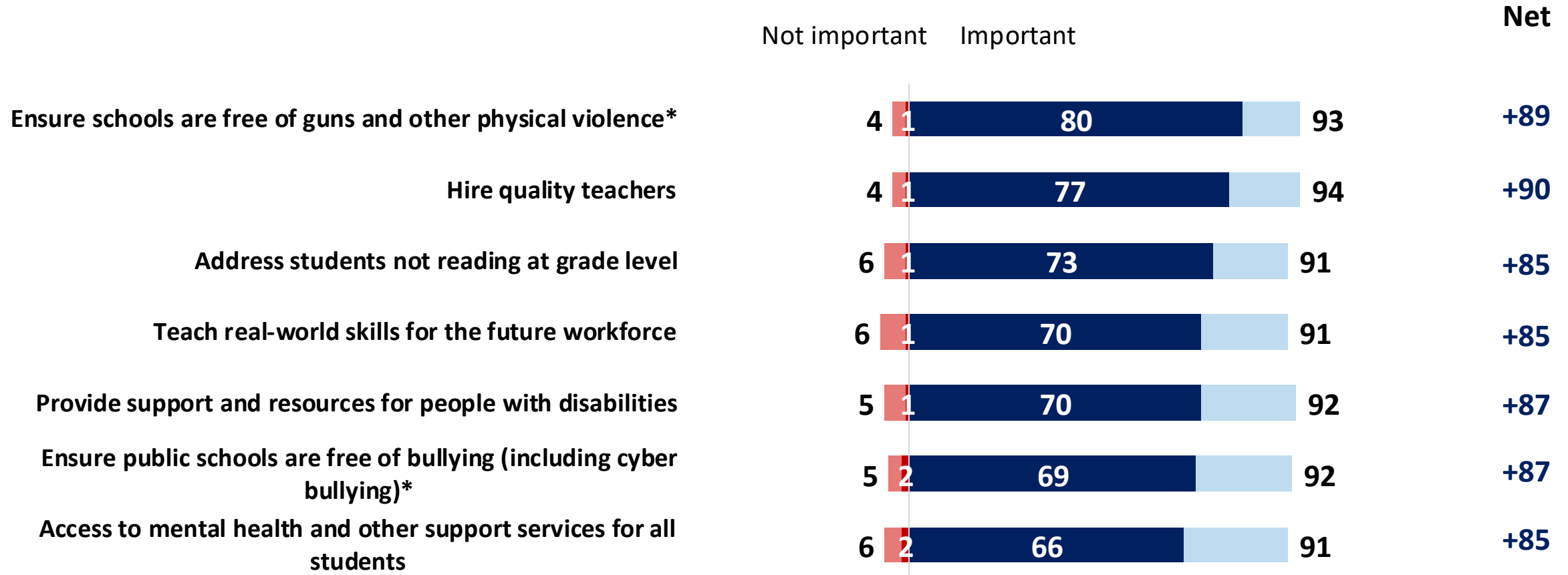
\*split sampled



68% of Black parents think a lack of diversity in the education workforce is a problem (26% very big problem). This is similar to Black voters overall (67% problem, including 34% very big problem).

Two-thirds or more of voters find the top-tier issues to be very important for leaders to address, and more than nine in ten say they are important overall. The top issues for education leaders to address are ensuring schools are free of guns and other physical violence, hiring quality teachers, addressing students not reading at grade level, and teaching real-world skills for the future workforce.

{SSB} Here is a list of different issues related to public education. For each one, please indicate how personally important it is that public officials and education leaders address the issue. [TOP TIER]



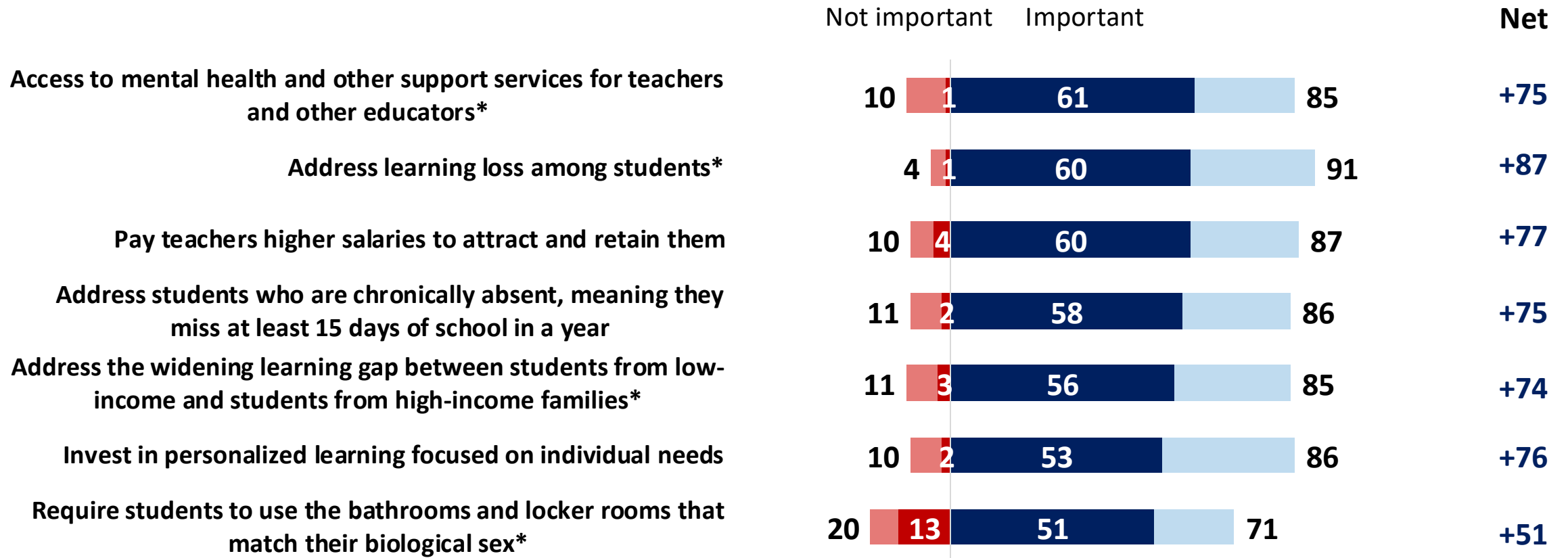
\*split sampled



Non-parents are 8 points more likely to find addressing students not reading at grade level to be very important (76%) compared to parents (68%).

**With lower intensity, at least half of voters find the second tier of policies to be very important. Policies in this tier focus on access to mental health of teachers, teacher pay, investing in personalized learning, and addressing learning loss, chronic absenteeism, and the widening learning gap between low- and high-income families.**

**{SSB} Here is a list of different issues related to public education. For each one please indicate how personally important it is that public officials and education leaders address the issue.\* [SECOND TIER]**

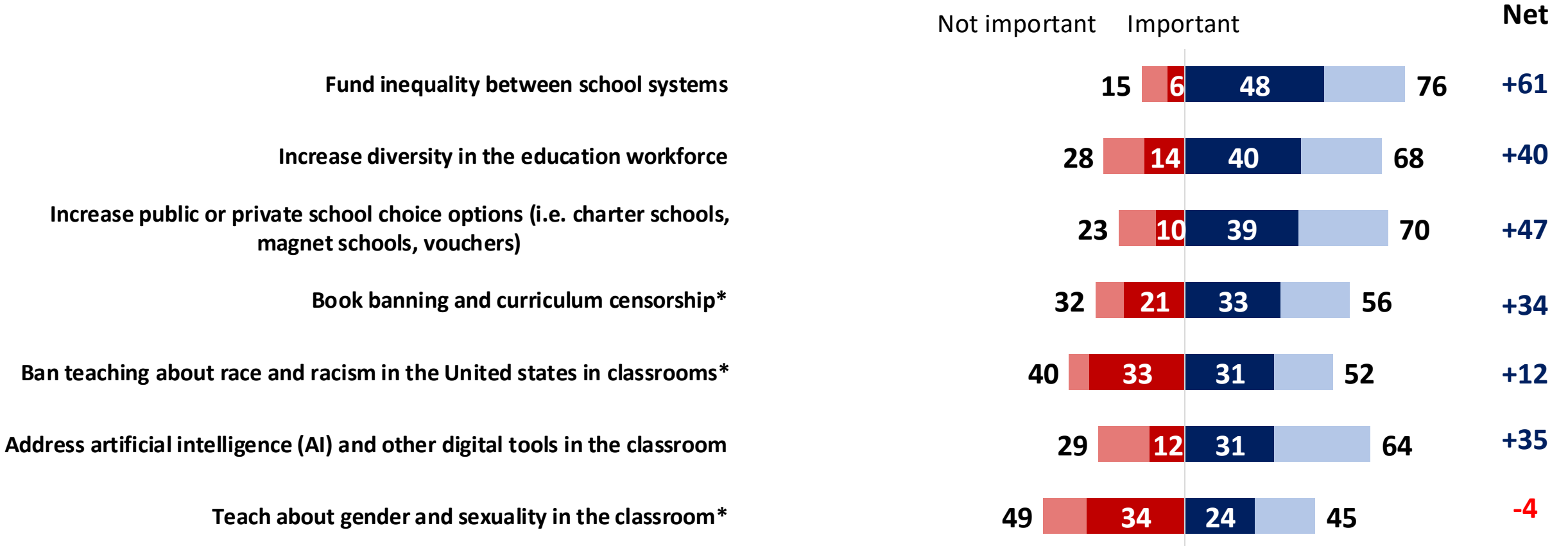


■ Somewhat important  
■ Very important  
■ A little important  
■ Not important at all

\*split sampled

**Bottom-tier issues for education leaders to address have lower intensity but are overall supported by at least half of voters, except when it comes to teaching about gender and sexuality in the classroom, where voters split. A third of voters also find banning teaching about race and racism in the US in classrooms to be not important at all for education leaders to address.**

{SSB} Here is a list of different issues related to public education. For each one please indicate how personally important it is that public officials and education leaders address the issue.\* [BOTTOM TIER]



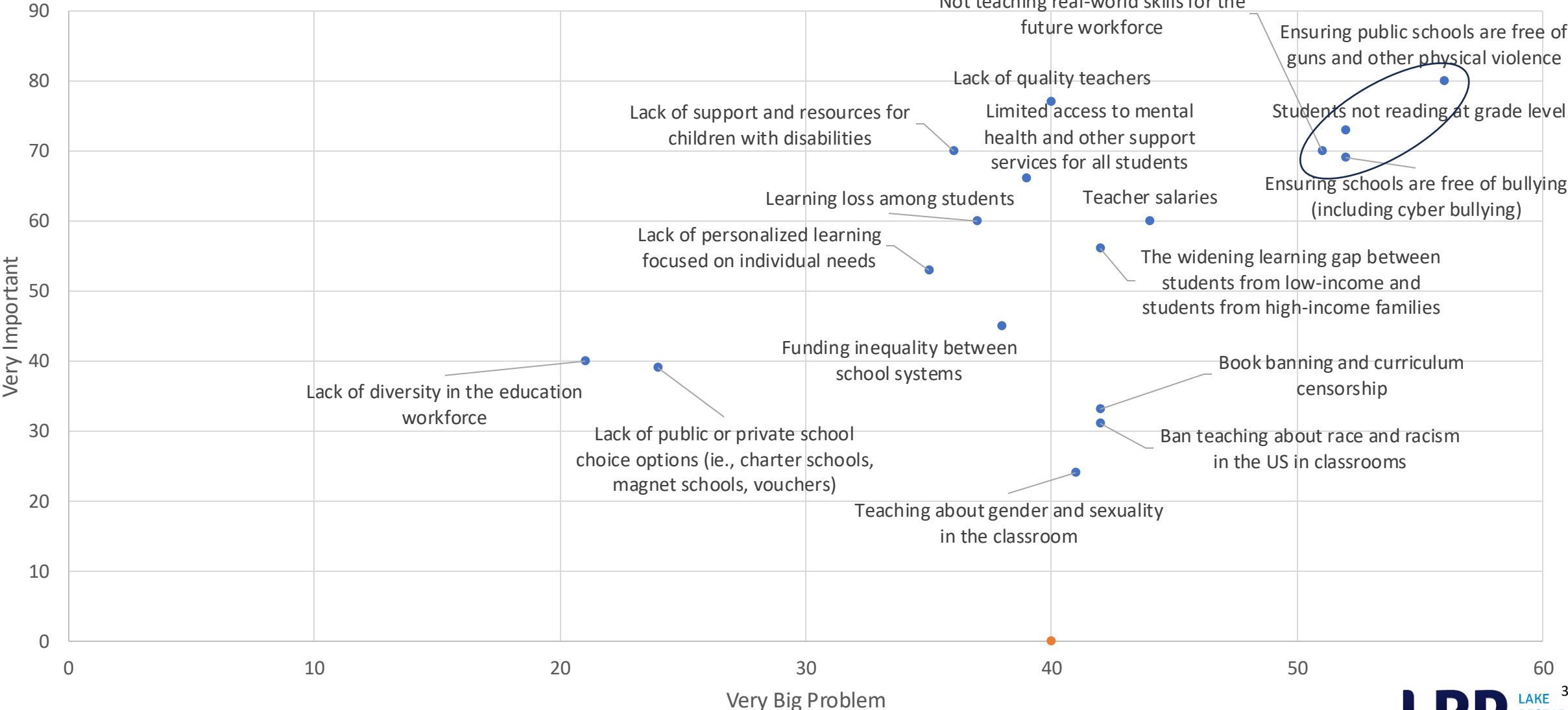
\*split sampled

Somewhat important  
 Very important  
 A little important  
 Not important at all

Parents are 12 points more likely to find increasing public or private school choice options to be very important (47%) compared to non-parents (35%).

Education-related issues are generally considered more intensely important than they are a very big problem. The four areas that converge the most are ensuring public schools are free of guns and other violence, students not reading at grade level, ensuring schools are free of bullying (including cyber bullying), and not teaching real-world skills for the future workforce.

### Very Big Problem vs. Very important

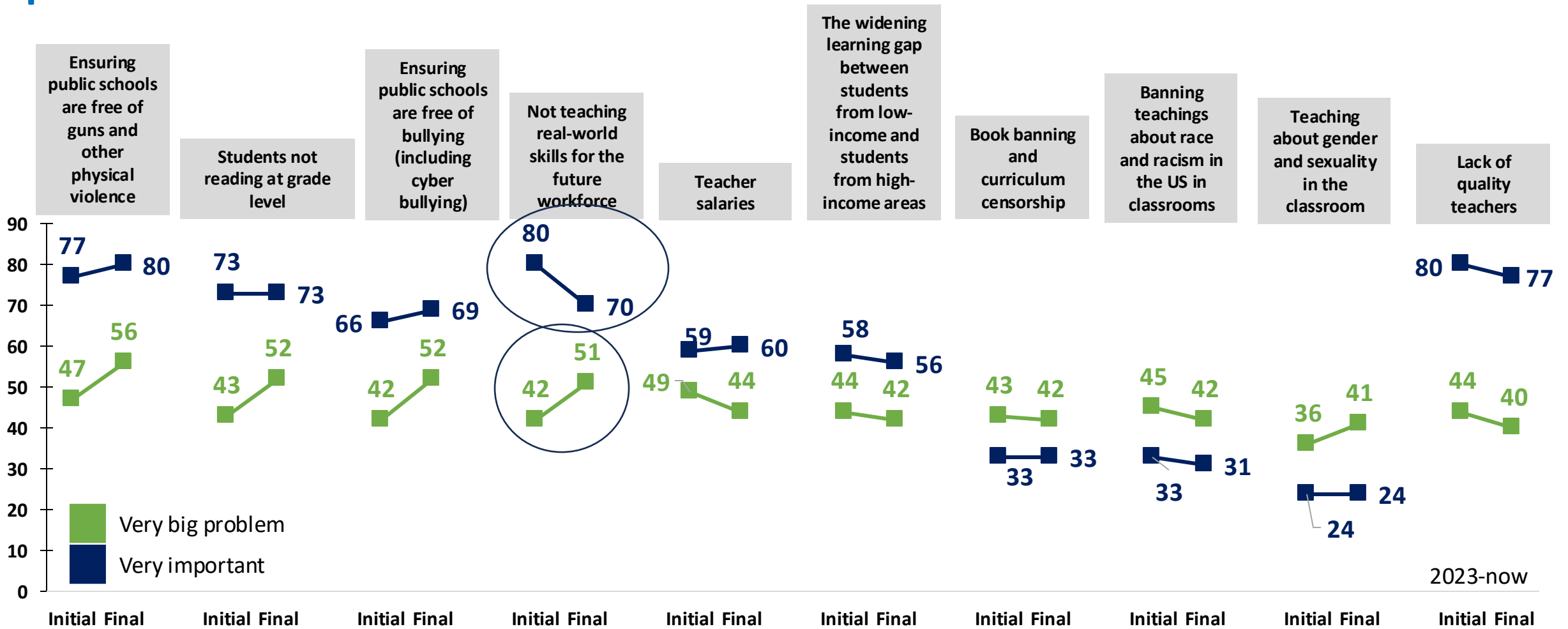


Over the years, voters have considered a variety of issues to be a very big problem with growing intensity, especially regarding school safety and not reading at their grade level. There has been little change in how intensely important they see these issues, except for teaching real-world skills for the future workforce, which they are ten points less likely to see as very important compared to 2021.

	2024		2023		2022		2021		% Change Over Time	
	% Very big problem	% Very important	% Very big problem	% Very important	% Very big problem	% Very important	% Very big problem	% Very important	% VB Problem	% V Important
Ensuring public schools are free of guns and other physical violence	56	80	53	79	47	77	-	-	+9	+3
Students not reading at grade level	52	73	52	73	43	73	-	-	+9	0
Ensuring public schools are free of bullying (including cyber bullying)	52	69	48	71	42	66	-	-	+10	+3
Not teaching real-world skills for the future workforce	51	70	54	70	48	67	42	80	+9	-10
Teacher salaries	44	60	49	59	-	-	-	-	-5	+1
The widening learning gap between students from low-income and students from high-income families	42	56	44	58	-	-	-	-	-2	-2
Book banning and curriculum censorship	42	33	47	27	43	33	-	-	-1	0
Banning teachings about race and racism in the US in classrooms	42	31	45	33	-	-	-	-	-3	-2
Teaching about gender and sexuality in the classroom	41	24	36	24	-	-	-	-	+5	0
Lack of quality teachers	40	77	44	80	-	-	-	-	-4	-3

\*Split sampled; - means the question was not asked

# Movement is especially evident for “not teaching real-world skills for the future workforce,” where importance decreases while it being a very big problem increases.



2023-now

**There is slightly more of an increase for other issues such as mental health access, personalized learning, and support and resources for children with disabilities. Voters consider school choice options to be 7 points more intensely important than they did in 2022, but other policies, especially learning loss among students and funding inequality, have dropped by double digits.**

	2024		2023		2022		2021		% Change Over Time	
	% Very big problem	% Very important	% Very big problem	% Very important	% Very big problem	% Very important	% Very big problem	% Very important	% VB Problem	% V Important
Limited access to mental health and other support services for all students	39	66	43	66	37	63	32	73	+7	-7
Funding inequality between school systems	38	48	40	41	39	51	36	59	+2	-11
Learning loss among students^	37	60	39	53	40	60	39	75	-2	-15
Lack of support and resources for children with disabilities	36	70	38	72	32	74	32	78	+4	-8
Lack of personalized learning focused on individual needs	35	53	37	56	29	53	30	68	+5	-15
Lack of public or private school choice options (i.e., charter schools, magnet schools, vouchers)	24	39	26	30	22	32	-	-	+2	+7
Lack of diversity in the education workforce	21	40	27	39	21	38	-	-	0	+2

\*Split sampled; - means the question was not asked; ^wording change since 2023, where voters were previously asked in the context of covid-19



## Voters are concerned about student safety and tie it to mental health. Even if violence is outside of schools, one voter says it can follow students into the school. Voters are more conflicted about gun violence, which some see as a problem and others think does not occur as frequently as people say.

- “...being that I'm in law enforcement, I mean; this is something that hurts every time you see it. And I think it's the same for everyone else that has to see something like violence at a school. There are a number of ways that you can protect students in schools and unfortunately, I think when you go through the different states, different school systems, that all looks different. But I think there are certain things that could be done to help prevent that type of thing, individually in states, as well as in the home. **But it's definitely something I think everyone is impacted by, say, a shooting at a school.**” - Conservative male voter
- **“It’s very important... If mental health services were provided at school for people that were struggling with bullying, then I feel like it would be less likely that there will be gun violence within the school.** I know a lot of children don’t feel comfortable talking to their parents about certain things or don’t really have somebody that’s confidence that they feel with sharing. And sometimes they do need somebody that’s not biased, not within the home to go and explain exactly how they feel, and to vent to. So I feel like if they didn’t have someone that was there and just an opening ear and open arms to be able to vent about certain things, that they don’t feel comfortable in different certain situations, and certain people, that it would be a reduction with the violence. And if we beefed up on more with maybe security when it came to our schools, especially our high schools, then we will have less gun violence, and be less fearful of being able to drop our kids off to school, and wondering if they’re going to make it home or not.” - Woman of color voter
- **“As terrible as the school shootings are, I feel that they get sensationalized in the news and they make it act like it's constantly happening when it's pretty rare.** I think other issues like what's being taught in the schools and some of the other aspects that we've been speaking about are a lot more important, but because the news wants to just focus on certain things constantly, people think it's constantly happening.” - Conservative male voter
- **“Well to me some of that stuff was sensationalized.** If you look statistically during the 70s, there was actually more shootings than there are currently now. So, you know, to me, statistically, your chances of being shot at the school are very slim so.” - White woman voter

# Both teachers and voters see chronic absenteeism as a large problem because it is disruptive to learning, both in tracking down students as well as catching them up when they return. Some voters say remote learning has de-emphasized the need to show up in person.

- “I think it's a lack of motivation overall, like just not caring at all. I don't know, like my time when I went to school, it was completely different. I mean, you always have your class clown and whatever, but people used to care more, like you actually wanted to be present, you know, go to class. The whole society right now is like they have a different agenda for the children in schools.” - Conservative woman voter
- “Yeah, it's almost like a two-edged sword. You have the parents that have to work to keep food on the table, keep their kids in school. And then you have kids that struggle at home because parents are working or not present, issues with truancy and that sort of thing kind of spirals out of control where parents can't get to their kid or calling off work to go pick up a kid and **it's like a deeply rooted problem in the home.**” - Conservative male voter
- “It seems like it's been exacerbated post COVID from what I've heard from people in the school systems. **That a lot of times since COVID, it's seemed like there is, from the parent's viewpoint that, you know going into the school building is just not as important as it once was.** That the kids could learn on their own at home, they don't have to go to school like every single day. So it seems like absenteeism is an issue.” - Woman of color voter
- “I think **COVID showed these kids and a lot of parents that they kind of don't have to go to school.** It's no big deal, you can stay home. We stayed home for like six months and everything was fine. **But I don't think that being home for six months and then doing school at home for a bunch of time really helped kind of accentuate the importance of in-person.**” - White male voter
- “It affects your consistency, you know, your flow and your ability to maintain, especially if you're introducing new concepts and things like that, **and then having to kind of help some of the kids play catch up.**” -White male teacher
- “I think it all ties into we're looked at as where, how much our students grow. And so, when they take standardized tests at the end of the year, you can look back and be like, Johnny missed 45 days, and then that reflects on the teacher, then that determines how many evaluations we get. And so, the disconnect, we've really tried at our school to bring in the parents. We have hired a specific person just for chronic absent students, so it has kind of helped, but I don't know that it's enough...**But the stress of just the testing environment, if you're absent, you're not learning, and then it affects everything.**” -White woman teacher
- “And in terms of like the absenteeism, I do think that that is true. And I think maybe during like pandemic time, parents were assuming that the kids were so regulated to get themselves up and get themselves on the Zoom, and they knew exactly what time to be ready for school. And now that that's not the case anymore, **I think parents sadly, or were hands off that now they forget to become hands on and saying; oh, I need to make sure that my kid got up and is out the door, because they could have just rolled back over in bed because that's what they were so used to doing.** So, I do think that I have a lot of students who are missing school. And then you're right, you have to go through the hurdles of like checking in with the attendance secretary and then did you contact home and while they're not returning my call, and when you asked that student, it's a lot of time just like there's no real reason. It's not because they're sick, it's not because they missed the bus, like they're just not getting up and coming. And I don't know why no one is checking that they didn't get out of bed that day.”- Woman teacher of color

Several white teachers say they understand why people like school choice because it gives students the opportunity to have an education that fits their needs. Teachers of color are more torn about school choice, understanding the benefits but feeling more critical about taking resources from traditional public schools. One teacher also says they see a relationship between kids leaving a school and a school being labeled as a low-performing school, which then causes more transfers.

- “I’ve had friends do that just on their values. I live in the south and they’re pushing a lot of stuff down here that a lot of people just don’t believe. So, a lot of my friends, because my kids are younger, have pulled them out of elementary school, and **it’s mainly like the stuff that they’re kind of pushing on kids these days and wanting to teach them all that doesn’t line up with their values.** So they’re like, well I’ll educate them on my own then.” -White female teacher
- “I’m kind of in the boat right now. My youngest son just wants to learn. And he says there’s so many behaviors in his class that he wants to be in a quiet environment. And, you know, he’s not wrong and it’s not the teacher’s fault, but they are dumping them, if you have a strong, if you’re a strong teacher you get those kids that need more of the attention. So I think for me, **I’m looking, because my son just wants to learn and not have to deal with behaviors.**” -White female teacher
- “I see school choice, especially in our city that allows parents to pick and choose whether **they want their children to go, which means it will divert funds from the public school system if we give them things like vouchers.** But our parents aren’t educated enough to know what is happening in those schools... The school choice is supposed to be where all kids can actually benefit from a solid education, but it’s just a matter of moving kids from school to school and then, of course the teachers follow and they move from school to school because in some aspect they’re chasing the dollar sign, they’re not committed to the school, they’re not committed to growth.” - Woman teacher of color
- “I have to put my parent, daddy hat on.... And where I work is different than where my child goes to school in terms of school district. I work for a different school district and for my child has to go that gets enrolled in school. For me it’s a wonderful option and I’m kind of mixed... **I want that choice, because it gives me flexibility, it gives me freedom. It helps me be able to participate in the school community at both ends, one at my child’s school side, and then my professional side.** Because it gives me that flexibility in terms of time and management. On the other hand, I think the school choice thing, it’s complicated.” -Male teacher of color
- “When school choice is introduced and parents see they have that option, which I’m not totally against, **what it does to schools that have been labeled as low performing schools, it kills morale...** if your school is constantly labeled as a low performing school because you have kids coming and going, who do not have an educational foundation, it doesn’t leave a lot of room for improvement... So school choice it can be a double-edged sword in many cases, because we can’t see equity amongst the schools if you keep moving and shifting. It’s like moving the goal posts, keep moving it.”-Woman teacher of color

## Teachers say teacher retention is a major issue that schools are not properly addressing. Low pay, high workloads, a lack of support, and not considering teaching to be a career are reasons teachers leave. Most voters see teacher retention as a major issue, too, especially due to low pay, high workloads, and large classroom sizes.

- “I think it’s pay, workload, demands, it’s a lot. You know, why do it for the amount, for the amount of hours you put in, it's not worth it. Like [participant] said, **we had teachers leaving in October, and then those classrooms went unfilled the remainder of the year.**” -White woman teacher
- “Yeah, I would like to add, no list of changes, but before the retention piece becomes an issue, **I'm noticing the lack of low-quality educators that's coming into the field.** Some people are stepping into teaching because that's what they want to do for the moment. Unlike, I don't know, I can't speak for everyone, but unlike myself, I chose education. And some people are using it as a pit stop to the next level or the next career. And so that's where that high retention rate comes into play because they're not dedicated to our student’s education, and that becomes problematic.” -Woman teacher of color
- “Some [teachers] are going to different districts. You have some that just go to different districts. But I just feel like from the top, even, you have some that come in new, and they really want to do a really good job, but they're not always getting the right training and support. So you get a combination of some that you're like, they're not here for the kids. **But even some of the ones that's there for the kids, they're not really getting the support that's needed, the materials, and that extra push or support from above.**” -Male teacher of color
- **“We've had teachers leaving the public school system and even private school systems in some cases to go work at Target where they get paid more an hour.”** - Conservative male voter
- **“My guess is I just think teachers really aren’t paid enough.** They have a pretty difficult job, pretty big classrooms, probably a lot of problem students and there’s a lot of like mental attacks that comes with that job, but they really don’t get paid anything. **Like you can have less stress at a much easier job, so if I were a teacher I’d probably do something else.”** - Woman of color voter
- **“I do feel like teachers are underpaid.** My mother is a retired pre-school teacher, so I seen what she went through day in and day out, especially all the years that she taught with having over crowded classrooms, and not being accommodated with having like a reduction if it was too overwhelming. Or not having any type of assistance within the classroom and having 30 plus kids. **I do just feel like teachers are resentful due to not being listened to by faculty and higher ups, and also being too overwhelmed with the amount of children that they may have in their classrooms.”** - Woman of color voter
- **“Yeah, I hear quite a bit from my wife about teachers moving on and moving on pretty quick.** And sometimes the teacher that's coming on to replace them might not have quite the education, quite the experience as the person that they're replacing.” - Conservative male voter

# Teachers who have seen their students use AI say they fear it leads to a lack of critical thinking or a deeper understanding of content.

- **“I will say in my classroom it's impacted me pretty heavily with students who are turning in essays that are written by chat GPT quite a lot,** and our department has begun discussing whether we still need to teach basic writing skills at the high school level, or whether we need to simply teach kids editing and revising and teach them how to use AI to write a basic essay, and then take that essay and make it their own, or whether we continue to teach in the building blocks of writing. It's, it's an interesting discussion, one that I won't be a part of much longer since I'll be retiring before too long, but, but it's a really interesting conversation.” -White male teacher
- **“I'm fearful of it just in a life sense and in what it's going to do to our ability to write and think critically and document our thoughts in a, you know, an organized way** and that it's may eventually contribute to the dumbing down of society, I don't know. But it doesn't really affect my kiddos are, you know, too young to be affected by that. But there are some, you know, there are already some horror stories about what it's doing socially to certain kids that can, let's just say, create AI images of their classmates, it's really scary.” -White male teacher
- **“It's very significant. Children are more apt to use their brains to figure out how to quickly get an answer rather than understand the concept of the topic that they're learning.** It has been something that has been going on since the pandemic, really with students cheating on their assignments, and it started off with, you know, a Google search, but now students are using AI. And recently with our statewide testing at our school, a group of students who were historically level one, below level one, like third grade, second grade, reading levels, got fours and fives on their standardized tests because they used AI during the test.” -Woman teacher of color

Some white teachers say AI could be beneficial to their jobs, as they are able to create specific lesson plans that work for different students' needs or use it to fill out paperwork. However, one teacher is concerned about using AI to grade assignments because it prevents a teacher from offering real feedback and understanding where a student is at.

- “If AI can figure out how to fill out all that paperwork that I really don't want to do, that would be great.” -White woman teacher
- “I will say that a lot of our teacher use it to help develop their lesson plans. It's actually quite interesting because you can be very narrow and you can say; I'm teaching this demographic of student, this age of student, I want to teach a lesson on Chaucer and the Canterbury Tales; and it will give you a very detailed lesson plan, then you can go through that lesson plan and you can pick and choose some things, you can add some things you want, so I think it has streamlined some things for some of our Teacher. I've used it just a little bit, but I know a lot of our teachers rely on it heavily.” -White male teacher
- “One of the things, **there's two teachers on our school that are using it to grade their assignments.** They give an assignment and then they input everything into AI and it scores, it grades, it gives kids feedback. And to me that's scary because they don't have any idea of the level of their students and what their abilities of the students are, because they never actually read any of the work. **They don't give any authentic feedback.** Students are getting feedback, but the teachers are unaware of what they need to do to improve the education of those students because they never actually read their work. **That scares me that there's a little automated grading going on, and I don't think you can be as in tune with what your students need if you do that.**” -White male teacher

## Most voters hesitate to fully endorse AI use in classrooms. While some acknowledge it could be beneficial, they have concerns about cheating and academic integrity, reliability, and overdependence.

- “I feel like it’s both beneficial and also hinderance due it’s less human interaction, more technology based. And true enough that is what our life is turning into. **It’s more technology than actual human interaction.** But I guess with the development that it being incorporated into schooling we would just have to see within time. I always feel like a one-on-one actual person is always better than an artificial intelligence. So it’s just something that is kind of like...I’m kind of hesitant about it, I just would have to see the progression over time...It’s just it’s not a person. **Technology can always glitch, technology can always crash.** With a actual person, unless you’re absent you can get that education, you can get that knowledge from an actual person. If you have other questions or concerns you can consistently have a conversation with a person rather than with artificial technology. Anything can happen, you can get false information. You know, like not feel comfortable with talking to that person or incorporating these, incorporating things within the curriculum and things of that nature. **So I just feel like an actual person will always be better than technology.**” - Woman of color voter
- “I have heard reports of students using AI to complete assignments and essays and reports and there are some programs that can catch that and others that don't. **So that's definitely an integrity issue.**” - Conservative male voter
- “**My mind immediately went to not just integrity issues but critical thinking and creative writing and you know it's so easy to go to AI right now to write a resume.** Of course you have to give it the prompts, right, you have to know what to ask so there needs to be some thinking and intelligence on your part but I also see that maybe at the K through high school level, they're not gonna be asking as much as they ask of us at work.” - Conservative woman voter
- “I view it as not necessarily the best idea, only because I think kids already have, you know, looked up just Googling the answer to everything. They don't have to know anything when Google already could give you all the answers you ever needed. And to me, using like Chat GPT and stuff like that is doing the same thing, having something else to do the work for you, so **you're not actually learning what you need to be learning.** And maybe I don't know a lot about Chat GPT myself so maybe that's why I feel that way.” - White woman voter

**However, some parents see potential in AI when it comes to learning opportunities, especially when used responsibly, like simulating experiences they would not normally have.**

- **“The technology. I mean, I think it's remarkable technology and instead of having to run to the library and look at an encyclopedia, AI can definitely generate phenomenal answers.** You know, like I actually use it in **flight training.** And so it's pretty cool stuff. It's not a cheat if you use it correctly, and it's not a cheat if you train it correctly. And so, you know, I think it's honestly, it's the future. So it's, I think it's essential to, to learn how to use it, to learn how to have it be a buddy and a partner as opposed to seen as a cheat, you know.” - White male voter
- **“Maybe the possibility of students being able to experience things that they wouldn't without this artificial intelligence.** Like the ability to actually feel like maybe you're in a rainforest, or you're somewhere, you know a child might not normally see if they didn't have access to the technology. **So, I think that as a science teacher I thought, think my son said he was really interested in showing really kind of what a real atom looked like, because you can use some of this AI technology to kind of give them some real hands-on experiences that they may not normally get.”** - Woman of color voter

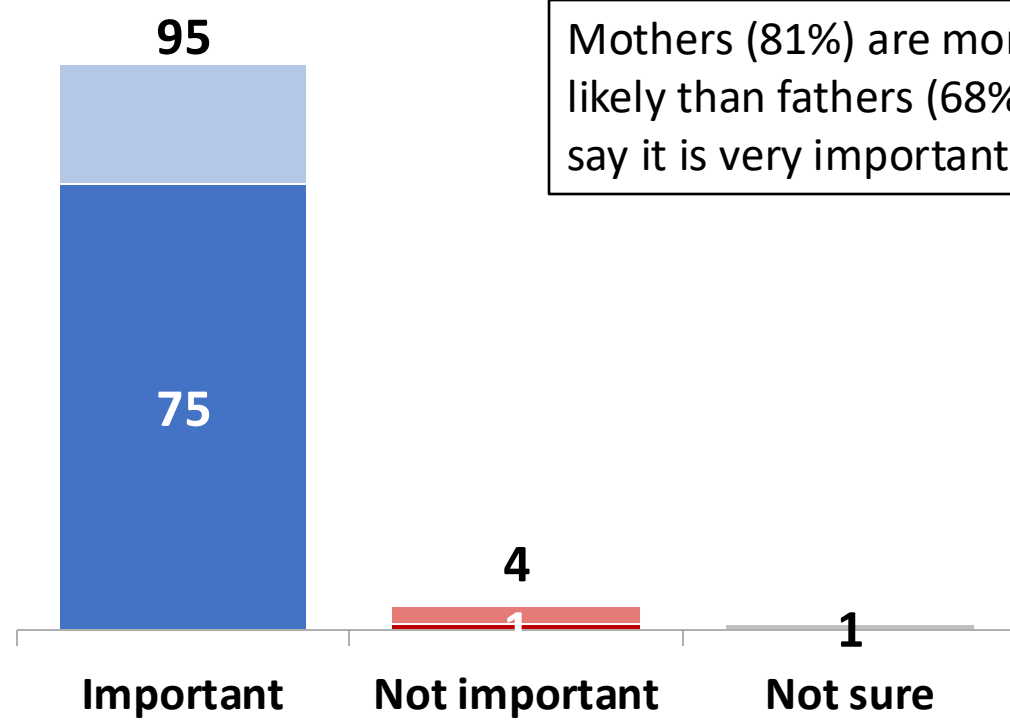




# Preparing Students for the Future

Getting an education that prepares K-12<sup>th</sup> grade students for a career post-high school is a core value for voters across subgroup, with more than nine in ten voters finding it important, including three in four who find it very important. Moreover, focus group participants do not think that children are being prepared for the future, because they do not seem to know basic skills.

How important is it that K-12<sup>th</sup> grade students get an education that prepares them for a career post-high school?



Mothers (81%) are more likely than fathers (68%) to say it is very important.

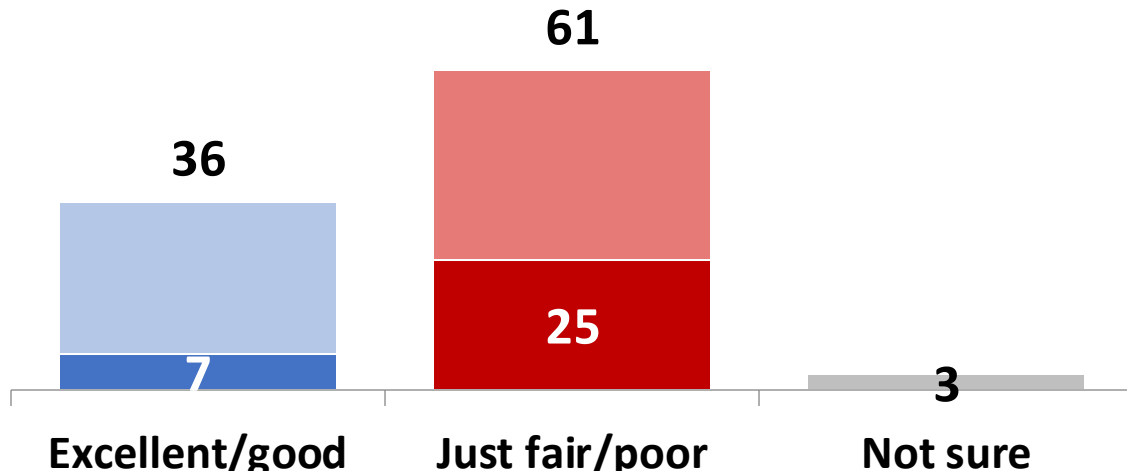
- “So I'm just, I actually worry about like my nephew is gonna be 10, I worry about him because it's like, **what are they teaching him? And is he going to be given the right skills to be able to get somewhere in life** without having these crazy expectations of walking into, into an entry level interview and asking for like 90,000 off the bat. That's not realistic.” - Conservative woman voter
- “**Well I definitely don't think they're teaching them the skills that they need.** You know...I pushed my kids, I said listen you got to start thinking about things that can't get outsourced or off shore right. So jobs where they need physical presence, somebody to be there. It's just doesn't seem like they're up-skilling anyone in the education system to deliver those skills to the kids either. **So either trade or up-skilling kind of needs to be there.**” - Man of color voter
- “A lot of these kids are 19, 20 years old, never worked before, but some of them don't know the difference between like a flathead screwdriver and a Phillips head screwdriver, you know? **And that gets back to like what [participant] was saying earlier about just having like the basics of life.**” - White male voter

Somewhat important  
Very important

A little important  
Not important at all

Six in ten voters say public schools nationwide are only doing a just fair or poor job preparing our children for the future, with 25% who say they are doing a poor job. About half rate the job public schools in their community are doing to prepare children for the future as just fair or poor, with 17% who say they are doing a poor job. Forty-two say they are doing an excellent/good job, but intensity is low.

How would you rate the job public schools nationwide are doing to prepare our children for the future?\*



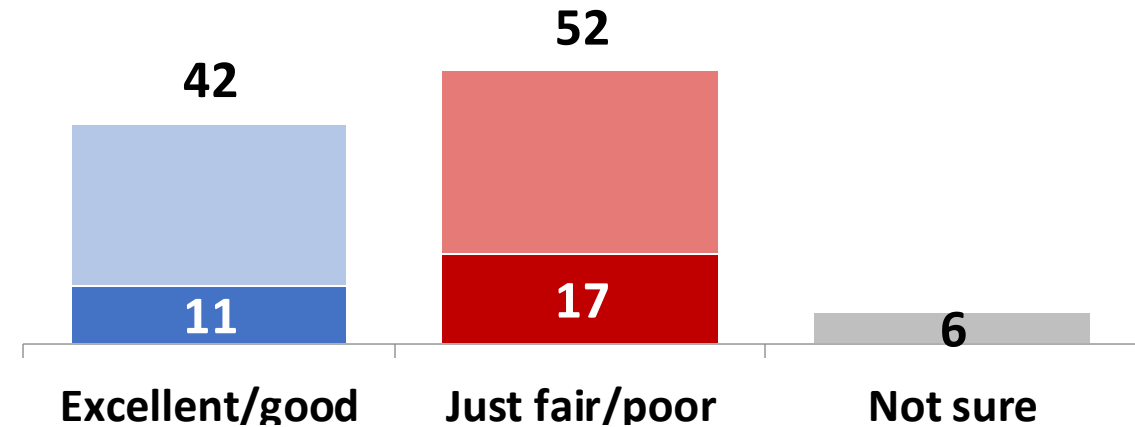
**Most likely to say they are doing a poor job nationwide:**

- Native American non-college^ (43%), Boomer men^ (40%), Strong Republicans (39%), Rural childfree (37%), Latino/a non-college^ (37%), 65+ (36%), Childfree men (36%)

**Most likely to say they are doing a poor job in their community:**

- West South Central (29%), HHI \$15k-24,999 (26%), 50-64 (25%), Strong Republican (25%), Native American^ (24%), Rural childfree (24%), South men (24%), Rural (24%)

How would you rate the job public schools in your community are doing to prepare our children for the future?\*



Nationwide *	% Excellent	% Excellent/Good	% Just Fair/Poor
Parents	13	49	49
Non-parents	3	29	67
In your community*	% Excellent	% Excellent/Good	% Just Fair/Poor
Parents	20	51	48
Non-parents	6	37	54



\*split sampled  
^small n size

**Most voters say they feel students are less prepared than they were five or ten years ago, because of teaching to the test and not focusing on the broader topics, kids' interests, or basic skills. Only one participant thinks students are better prepared, because he thinks that technology access during the pandemic has better prepared students.**

- “I think prior to 2020 my opinion [was that] kids are probably being more prepared for life, life skills, technology acumen, just exposure to stuff that, when I was a kid, you had to look it up in encyclopedia Britannica, right; everything's at their fingertips and they all have tablets. So yeah, I don't know. I think they're, you know, adjusted for COVID, **I think my opinion is they're probably better prepared.**” - White male voter
- **“Definitely less prepared in my opinion...** I don't think anybody's prepared if you want to get like most technical... When I was in grade school it wasn't only just subjects being taught. Teachers really [took] the time to try and teach impactful things about integrity and other things like that. And I just feel like **today because the testing is the standard, the schools are so overtly putting the pressure on making sure you get a 90 in science, even if you're not enjoying it, even if you don't understand it.** Even if you're passing it, they're not taking in the moment of the magic of the subjects in general. I just feel as though these things are just going to be, do these children a disservice as they get older and on to college and things of that nature.” - Woman of color voter
- **“I don't think they're equipping them with basic skills.** I've had many, we were gonna co-op and many students come to our classes and they don't even know how to like do basic things like pay a bill or how to manage a bank account, how to set one up, how to cook, how to just do basic things around the home. So I feel like they lack in that area. Also how to be like a team player because I don't know it seems like nowadays it's more for self-focused on just working on your own, working for yourself to get ahead. So I don't know, I think the basic skills are lacking as well.” - Conservative woman voter

## Several voters of color see COVID playing a largely negative role in preparing students for the future, particularly a lack of socialization and fewer real-world consequences or proper discipline.

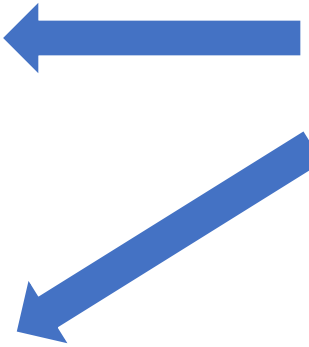
- “Yeah, I think like kids don’t quite, like I mean it’s not just the students. I feel like me too, like I don’t always know how to interact anymore post-COVID. I feel like there’s a recovery period of like; okay where did my social skills go? And I think in like younger education you do develop a lot of that when you’re having your social circles. **And so, yeah, I don’t know, I think that there was a few years taken from students.**” - Woman of color voter
- **“I think it just seems like there are fewer and further between repercussions for their actions, and that’s, if you want to talk about skill sets, that’s something they all got to learn. If you’re not going to be, if you’re going to be lazy you’re going to get the least. If you’re going to be rude, you’re not going to get the job. If you’re going to be you know misbehaving, and missing out on stuff, nobody’s going to want to have you around as an employee right. So, all that stuff just seems to disappear because they had years when they weren’t worried about it all, and then when they came back to school it just seems like; to me the educators either are just letting everything sort of fall to the wayside, or as a teacher they get so exasperated trying to get the discipline through, and they don’t have follow up from the administration, that they start to give up too.”** - Man of color voter

# Over the years, voters have consistently prioritized enabling students to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers as their most compelling reason to support policies, followed closely by allowing students to follow their dreams, regardless of the color of their skin or zip code.

**From the list below, what is the most compelling reason to support policies that improve the education system nationwide?**

- Most likely to choose enabling students to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers:
- Suburban Latino/as^ (46%)
  - College-educated AAPI (39%)
  - HHI \$150k+^ (39%)
  - Childfree woman in the West (39%)
  - AAPI women (38%)
  - Latino/a non-parents (37%)
  - AAPI non-parents (37%)
  - College women (37%)
  - Urban AAPI^ (35%)
  - Parent or guardian of a child 19-22 (34%)
  - Latino/a college (34%)

- Most likely to choose allowing all students...to follow their dreams:
- Mothers in the West^ (44%)
  - Urban Black voters (39%)
  - Black women (38%)
  - Black non-college (37%)
  - Black non-parents (36%)
  - East South Central^ (36%)
  - Child not currently enrolled in school^ (34%)
  - Parent or guardian of child 19-22 (33%)
  - Black parents (33%)
  - Urban people of color (33%)

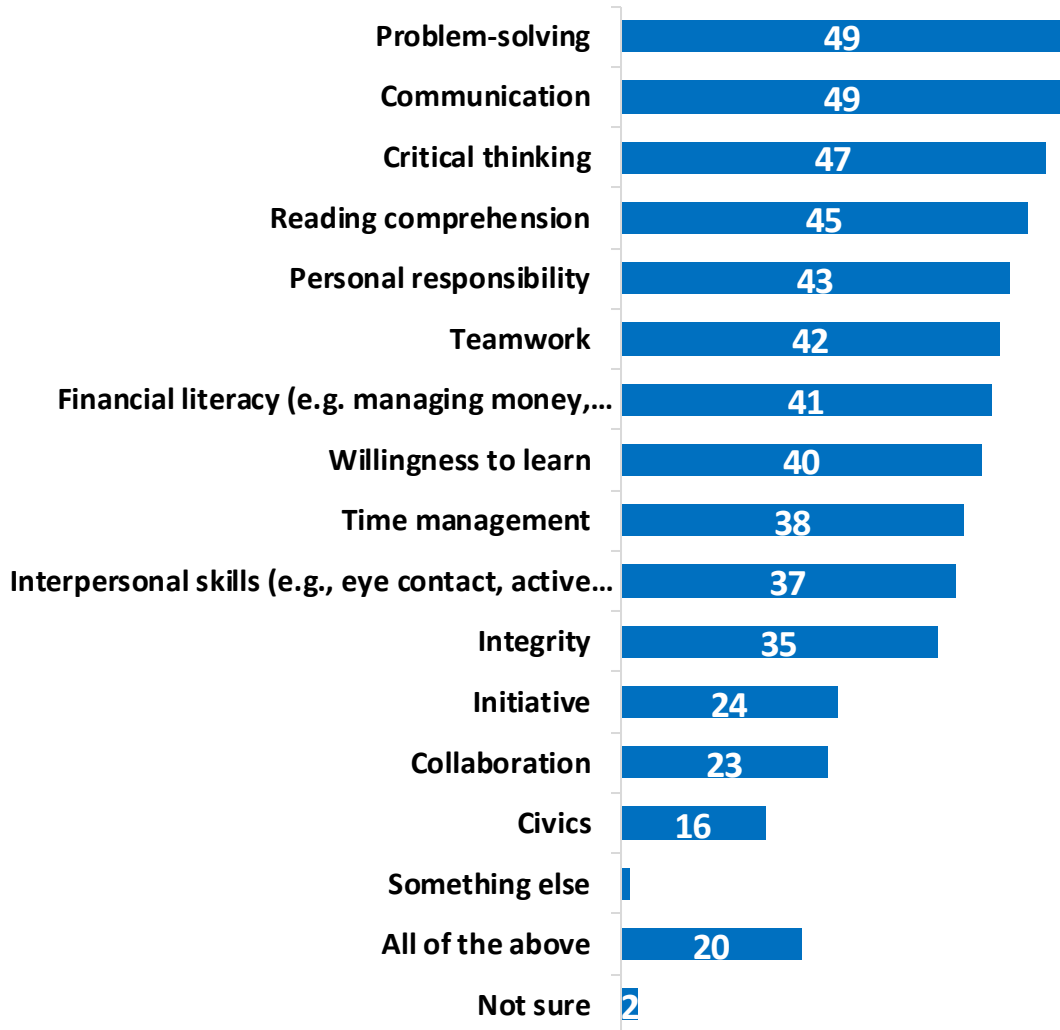


	% Chosen		
	2024	2023	2022
To enable students to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers	26	27	28
To allow all students, regardless of the color of their skin or zip code, to follow their dreams	23	25	27
Prepare all students for good paying jobs	12	11	10
Help students catch up academically	11	8	9
To teach students to be good citizens	9	9	8
To improve the economy	8	5	5
Expose students to new experiences, ideas, and perspectives	7	10	9

Note: Something else and not sure answer options are not graphed

# Problem-solving, communication, and critical thinking are the most important for students to learn in school to achieve workplace readiness, followed by reading comprehension, personal responsibility, teamwork, and financial literacy. A fifth of voters say all of the skills are the most important.

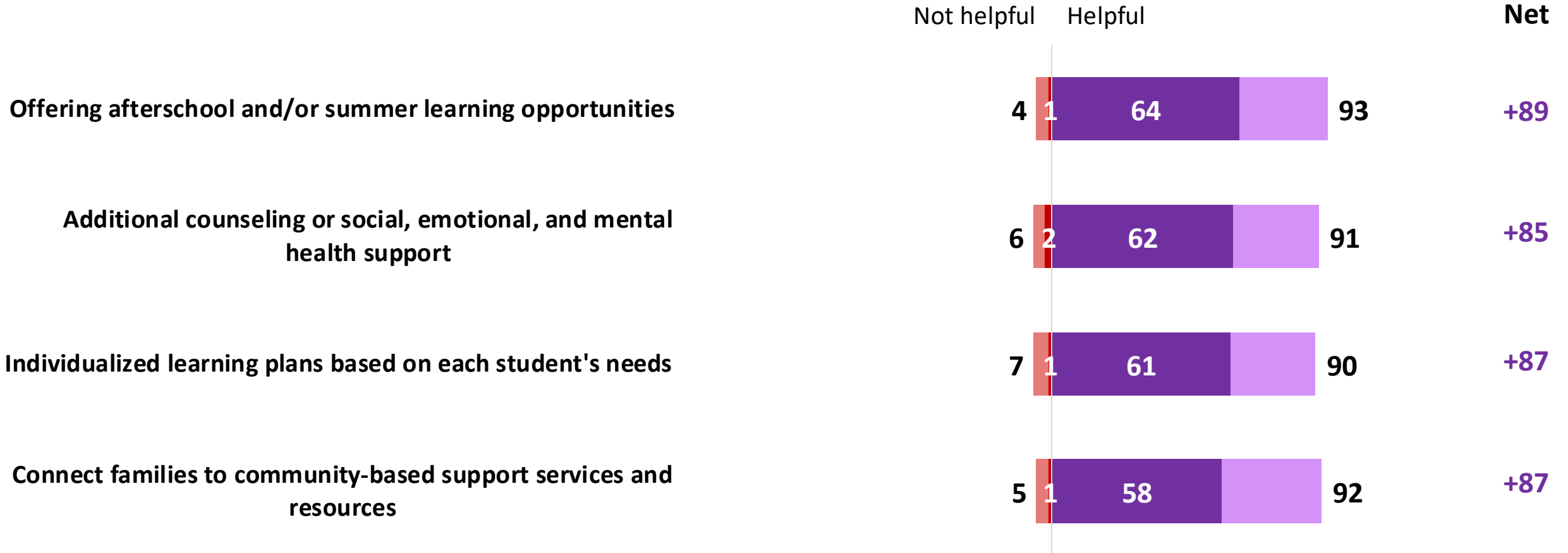
Workplace readiness, or the ability to be productive and effective in society, has been described as an important skillset for students to learn in order to be ready to get and keep a job, starting a family, and more. From the list below, which skills do you think are MOST important for students to learn in school in order to achieve workplace readiness? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY



	Top skill
Fathers	Communication (50%)
Mothers	Problem-solving (52%)
K-5 child	Communication (52%)
6-8 grade child	Critical thinking (53%)
9-12 grade child	Communication (54%)
White	Problem-solving and communication (49% each)
Black	Problem-solving (49%)
Latino/a	Critical thinking (55%)
AAPI	Critical thinking (58%)
Native American	Problem-solving and communication (54% each)
Urban	Communication (49%)
Suburban	Problem-solving (52%)
Rural	Problem-solving (53%)
Democrat	Problem-solving (52%)
Ind/DK	Problem-solving and reading comprehension (43% each)
Republican	Communication (50%)

# Voters see all policies as very helpful in moving students forward, with all of them testing strongly.

How helpful do you think each of the following would be in helping students moving forward?





Intensity in all areas has grown 6-7 points since last year, and even more so since 2021, especially for offering afterschool and/or summer learning opportunities, which is seen as 17 points more intensely helpful now.

	2024		2023		2022		2021		% Change Over Time	
	% Very helpful	% Total Helpful	% Very helpful	% Total Helpful	% Very helpful	% Total Helpful	% Very helpful	% Total Helpful	% Very helpful	% Total Helpful
Offering afterschool and/or summer learning opportunities	64	93	57	90	48	89	47	86	+17	+7
Additional counseling or social, emotional, and mental health support	62	91	55	88	51	85	49	82	+13	+9
Individualized learning plans based on each student's needs	61	90	54	88	53	88	49	88	+12	+2
Connect families to community-based support services and resources	58	92	52	89	-	-	-	-	+6	+3

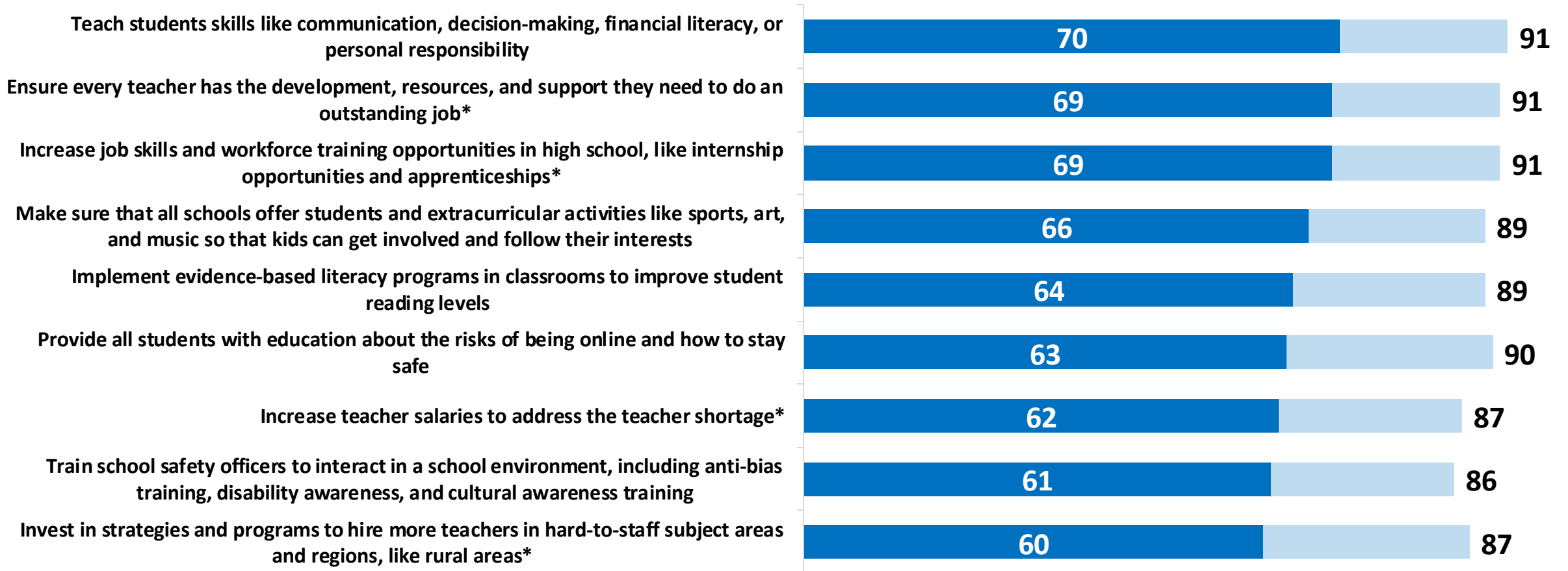
- means the question was not asked



# Reactions to Education Proposals

**At least six in ten voters strongly favor the top-tier policies, especially teaching skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility; ensuring every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job; and increasing job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like opportunities and apprenticeships.**

**Now you will see a list of different proposals people say could improve public schools if our public officials and education leaders prioritized them. For each, indicate whether you would favor or oppose the proposal. [TOP TIER]**

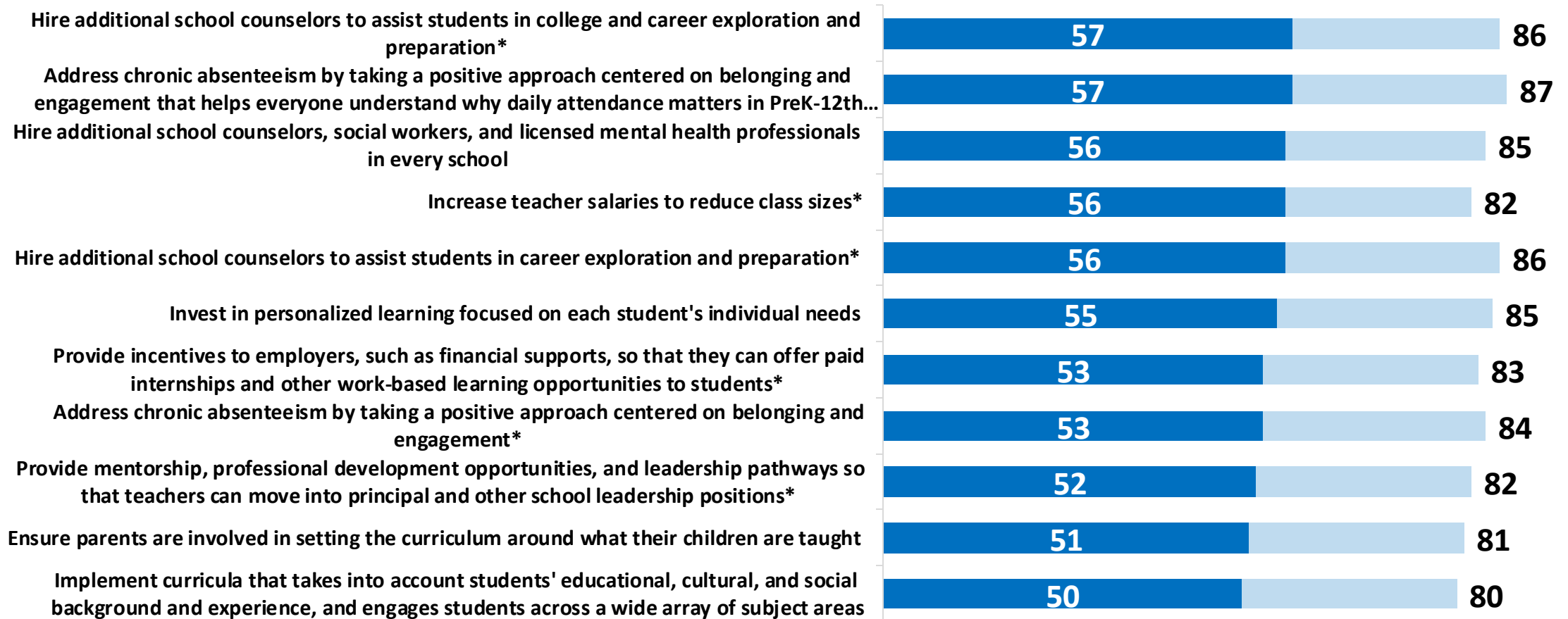


Favor – not so strongly  
Favor – strongly

\*split sampled

Second-tier policies also have strong favorability, with at least half or more strongly favoring and eight in ten favoring overall. These policies focus on areas such as hiring additional school counselors, addressing chronic absenteeism, and investing in personalized learning.

Now you will see a list of different proposals people say could improve public schools if our public officials and education leaders prioritized them. For each, indicate whether you would favor or oppose the proposal. [SECOND TIER]



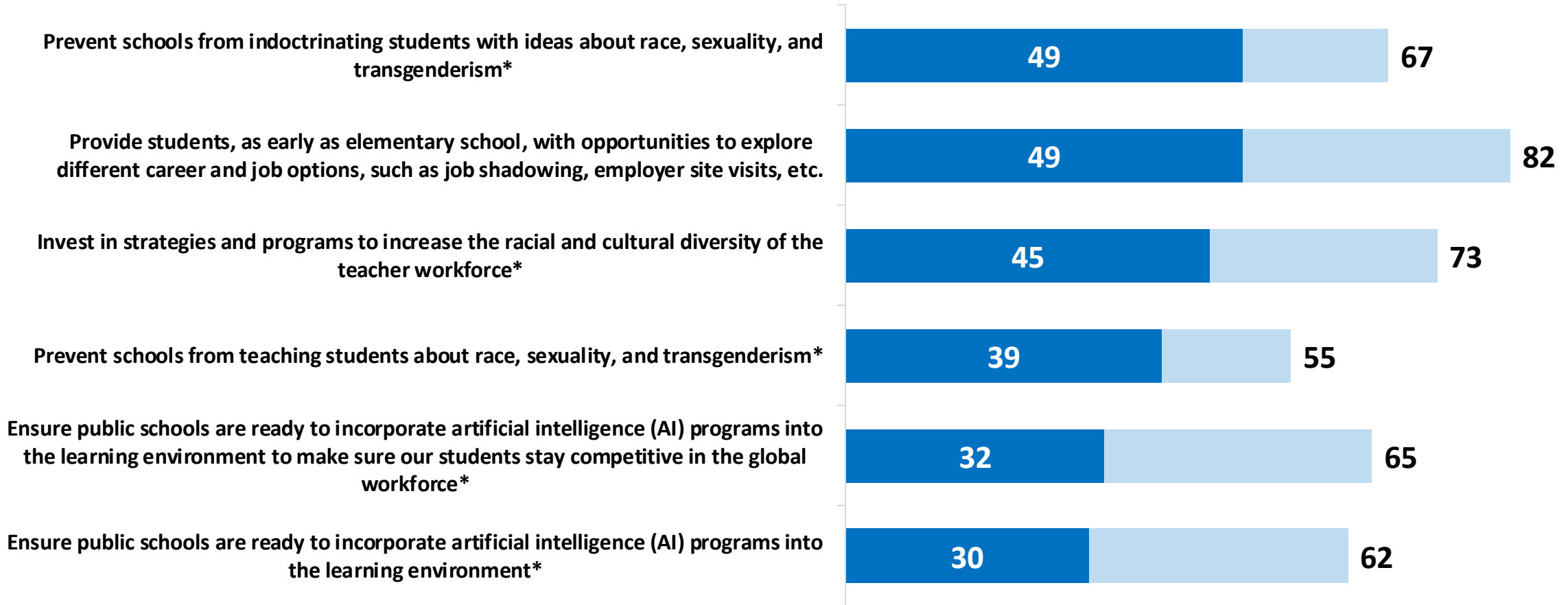
Favor – not so strongly

Favor – strongly

\*split sampled

A majority of voters favor the policies in the third tier as well, but intensity falls into the 30s. Policies in this tier mostly focus on curriculum related to race and gender, and using AI in the classroom.

Now you will see a list of different proposals people say could improve public schools if our public officials and education leaders prioritized them. For each, indicate whether you would favor or oppose the proposal. [THIRD TIER]



■ Favor – not so strongly  
■ Favor – strongly

\*split sampled

Across subgroups, top-tier proposals are strongly favored by more than half, except for K-5<sup>th</sup> grade parents, where 48% strongly favor investing in hiring more teachers in rural areas. In addition to ensuring every teacher has what they need to do an outstanding job, Black voters most strongly favor implementing evidence-based literary programs. 9-12<sup>th</sup>-grade parents also most strongly favor increasing teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage. Parents are more intense but both parents and non-parents have the same rank order.

Now you will see a list of different proposals people say could improve public schools if our public officials and education leaders prioritized them. For each, indicate whether you would favor or oppose the proposal. [TOP TIER] \*split sampled

% Strongly Favor	All Voters	Parent	Non-Parent	White	Black	Latino/a	AAPI <sup>^</sup>	Native Am. <sup>^</sup>	Father	Mother	K-5	6-8 <sup>^</sup>	9-12
Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility	70	63	73	69	70	68	82	82	55	70	57	58	67
Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*	69	64	72	69	73	66	73	75	58	69	61	59	62
Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*	69	63	72	70	66	68	67	70	52	72	61	63	66
Make sure that all schools offer students extracurricular opportunities like sports, art, and music so that kids can get involved and follow their interests	66	63	68	67	66	66	67	68	59	66	60	66	66
Implement evidence-based literacy programs in classrooms to improve student reading levels	64	60	66	62	72	62	65	69	53	65	58	55	58
Provide all students with education about the risks of being online and how to stay safe	63	58	65	62	67	61	60	67	54	61	53	54	62
Increase teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage*	62	60	64	64	60	57	60	65	56	63	55	55	67
Train school safety officers to interact in a school environment, including anti-bias training, disability awareness, and cultural awareness training	61	60	62	60	67	59	63	64	55	64	59	58	66
Invest in strategies and programs to hire more teachers in hard-to-staff subject areas and regions, like rural areas*	60	58	61	61	64	53	65	58	55	60	48	54	62

Subgroups of voters do not differ too much in their intensity based on whether hiring additional school counselors would help assist students in college exploration in preparation in addition to career exploration and preparation, but mothers and high-school parents more strongly favor including college by 11 points. Native Americans prefer leaving out college exploration by 11 points.

Now you will see a list of different proposals people say could improve public schools if our public officials and education leaders prioritized them. For each, indicate whether you would favor or oppose the proposal.

% Strongly Favor	All Voters	Parent	Non-Parent	White	Black	Latino/ a	AAPI <sup>^</sup>	Native/ Ind. <sup>^</sup>	Father	Mother	K-5	6-8 <sup>^</sup>	9-12
Hire additional school counselors to assist students in <b>college and</b> career exploration and preparation*	57	58	56	57	59	60	52	51	50	64	59	58	63
Hire additional school counselors to assist students in career exploration and preparation*	56	54	57	53	61	65	56	62	55	53	51	51	52

\*split sampled; <sup>^</sup>note small n size

## Increasing teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage is stronger than increasing teacher salaries to reduce class sizes, especially for Native Americans and parents with a child in 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Now you will see a list of different proposals people say could improve public schools if our public officials and education leaders prioritized them. For each, indicate whether you would favor or oppose the proposal.

% Strongly Favor	All Voters	Parent	Non-Parent	White	Black	Latino/ a	AAPI <sup>^</sup>	Native/ Ind. <sup>^</sup>	Father	Mother	K-5	6-8 <sup>^</sup>	9-12
Increase teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage*	62	60	64	64	60	57	60	65	56	63	55	55	67
Increase teacher salaries to reduce class sizes*	56	58	55	55	62	57	55	57	59	58	50	58	56

\*split sampled; <sup>^</sup>note small n size



Addressing chronic absenteeism positively with a basis in understanding why attendance matters is 8 points more strongly favored by fathers than without explaining why attendance matters, and there is little difference for mothers. High-school parents are 17 points more likely to strongly favor it with this understanding. Latino/a and Native American voters are respectively 8 points and 12 points more likely to strongly favor addressing chronic absenteeism without explaining why attendance matters.

Now you will see a list of different proposals people say could improve public schools if our public officials and education leaders prioritized them. For each, indicate whether you would favor or oppose the proposal.

% Strongly Favor	All Voters	Parent	Non-Parent	White	Black	Latino/a	AAPI^	Native/Ind.^	Father	Mother	K-5	6-8^	9-12
Address chronic absenteeism by taking a positive approach centered <b>on belonging</b> and engagement <b>that helps everyone understand why daily attendance matters in PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade education*</b>	57	54	59	57	63	49	57	51	53	54	52	47	64
Address chronic absenteeism by taking a positive approach centered on belonging and engagement*	53	51	54	51	61	57	51	63	45	55	45	47	47

\*split sampled; ^note small n size

**In the groups, voters share mixed feelings about preventing schools from “indoctrinating” students about race, sexuality, and transgenderism. Some parents were not opposed to the subjects but preferred to teach them in a home setting where the conversation is more controlled and left up to the parents, and some think these topics can mislead students or even negatively impact their mental health, or may distract from other subjects.**

- **“I think it corrupts their innocence**, and it creates that, it plants that seed of confusion in their mental health, kind of going back to that. I think that's what creates bad mental health in students is when they introduce those concepts to them at such an early age when they can't comprehend what it is that they're being taught. **So it definitely needs to be eliminated from the schools.”** - Conservative woman voter
- **“Yeah. I agree. I chose that as well. That's just bringing stuff up into school that shouldn't be taught or to be up to the parents. When kids are really young too, they're pretty confused in life and to have the school, pushing this kind of stuff on them**, you know. I mean, when I was younger in fifth grade, I probably thought I was Batman for a whole year, you know, you know, you know what I'm saying? **It's like kids get confused.** So first school to kind of push them on them and you get like **justify those kind of ways of thinking**, you know.” - Conservative male voter
- **“I just want to bring up a point, like just thinking numbers, right? Like statistically, you know only 5.5 % of the U.S. identifies as LGBT and like 1% or 1.1% is transgender and 12% are African American. But like from a bandwidth perspective, I feel like the focus has been decidedly on these topics.** And again, you know, we talked about like political lightning rod. Yeah, it's touchy and we're all white people here talking about it, but I don't know how it got to a point where this is the focus, when there's so many other concerns with K through 12 education. Like why am I even focusing on this? Now I'm gonna speak out of the other side of my mouth. Marginalized population basis, right, all of them, and like the first to admit, like my exposure and direct conflict...contact, you know, with the transgender community is so hyper-limited, I could probably count it on a hand. But to me, it's like a bandwidth issue. I'm not saying that the people are distraction, but **I think the focus is a distraction from, you know, the litany of other shit that we need to educate these kids in a, you know, 13-year period. It just, it doesn't feel right to me, but again.”** - White male voter

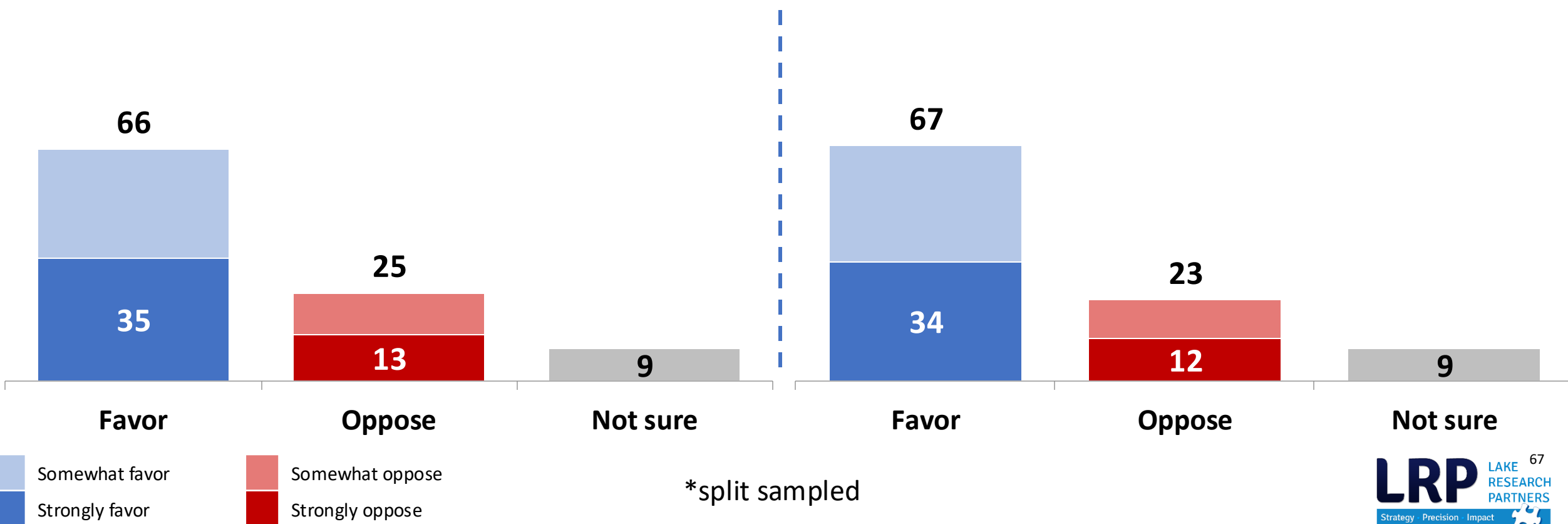
Participants saw a list of proposals some people say should be prioritized to improve public schools, and provided reactions to the following proposal:  
“Preventing schools from indoctrinating students with ideas about race, sexuality, and transgenderism.”

Whether we ask before or after presenting proposals to improve public schools, there is little difference in support for increasing funding for public schools even if it increased property or sales taxes. About two thirds favor increasing funding, with more than three in ten who strongly favor, while about a quarter are opposed.

Would you favor or oppose increasing funding for public schools even if it increased your taxes - such as property or sales tax?\*

Before proposal battery

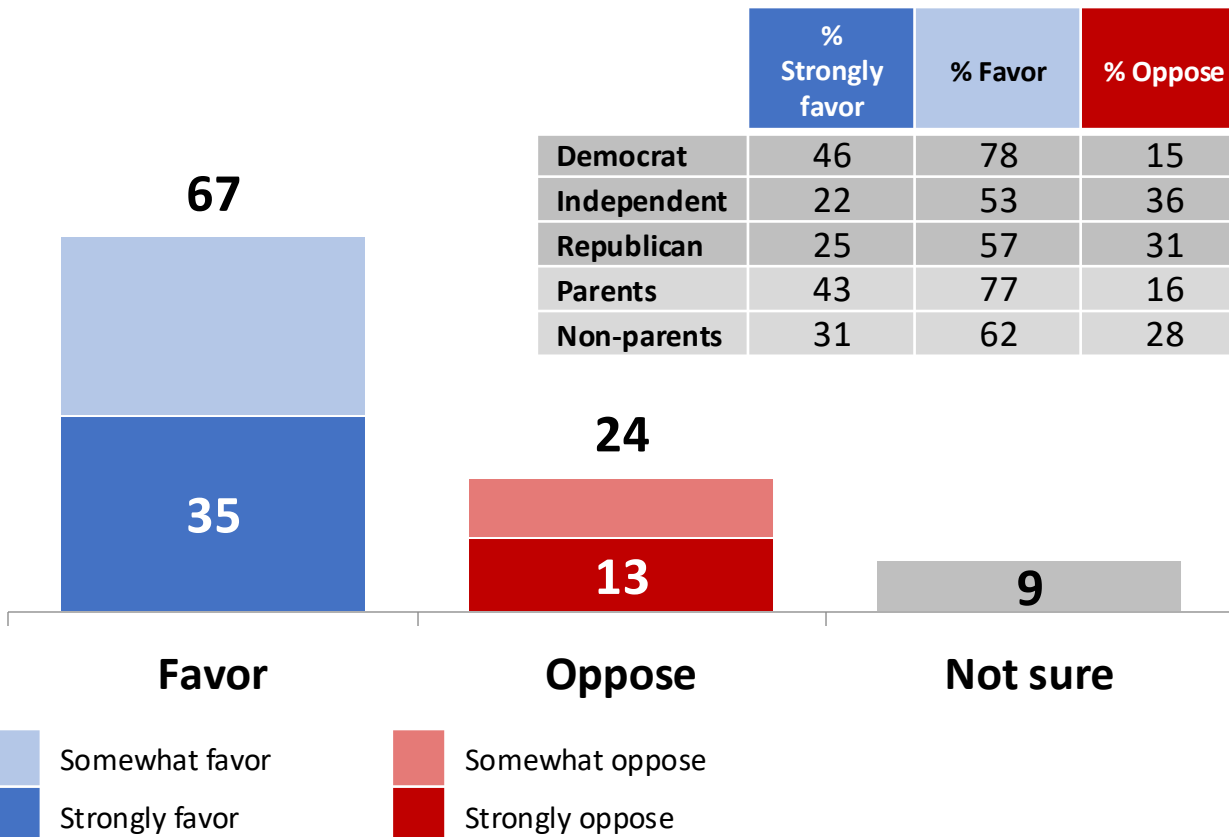
After proposal battery



# People of color tend to be more favorable toward increased funding, while older and Republican men are most likely to oppose. Independent men^ are the only group net-opposed (-1). Parents are more in favor than non-parents.

Would you favor or oppose increasing funding for public schools even if it increased your taxes - such as property or sales tax?

Combined responses asked before/after proposal battery



	% Strongly favor	% Favor	% Oppose
Democrat	46	78	15
Independent	22	53	36
Republican	25	57	31
Parents	43	77	16
Non-parents	31	62	28

## Most likely to strongly favor:

- Fathers in the South (58%)
- Child with an IEP (54%)
- Native American parents^ (53%)
- Child in public charter school^ (50%)
- Suburban Black voters^ (49%)
- Rural people of color (48%)
- Latino/a parents (48%)
- Democratic men (48%)

## Most likely to oppose:

- Independents (36%), especially Independent men^ (48%)
- Native American men^ (35%)
- Northeast men (35%), especially without children^ (43%)
- Northeast women without children^ (35%)
- Boomer men (34%)
- Older men (33%)
- Republican men (33%)

^note small n size

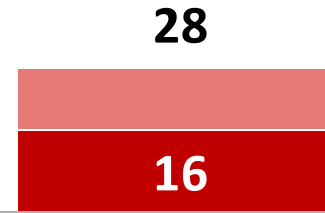
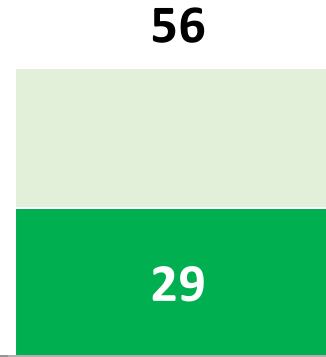
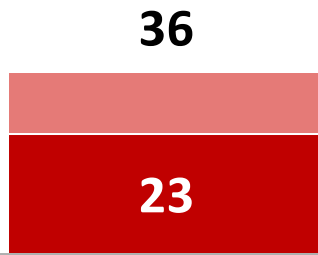
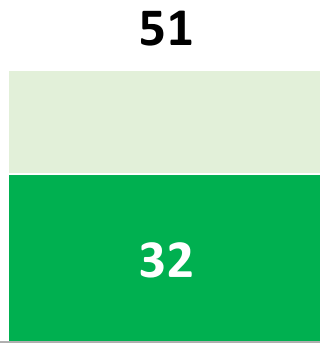
**Voters support using public taxpayer dollars slightly more for Education Savings Accounts than for school vouchers, but strong support is about the same for both. They are 7 points more likely to strongly oppose using taxpayer dollars for school vouchers than for ESAs.**

Some states are considering using public taxpayer dollars for school vouchers to pay for students to attend private or religiously affiliated schools. Do you support or oppose states using taxpayer dollars for school vouchers?\*

Some states are considering using public taxpayer dollars for Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) that parents could use for K-12 private school tuition and fees, online learning programs, private tutoring, and other approved learning services and materials. Do you support or oppose using taxpayer dollars for Education Savings Accounts?\*

**+15**

**+27**



**Support**

**Oppose**

**Not sure**

**Support**

**Oppose**

**Not sure**

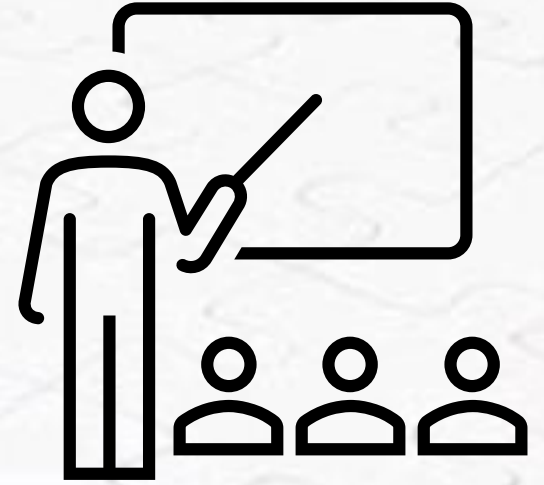
Not so strongly support  
 Strongly support  
 Not so strongly oppose  
 Strongly oppose

Those who are most likely to oppose using public taxpayer dollars for school vouchers are Boomer women (41%), childfree women in the West^ (40%), and small-town voters^ (38%).

\*split sampled ^Note small n size

## In focus groups, voters start out positive about taxpayer funding for vouchers, though we know from other work this is a complicated issue in their mind.

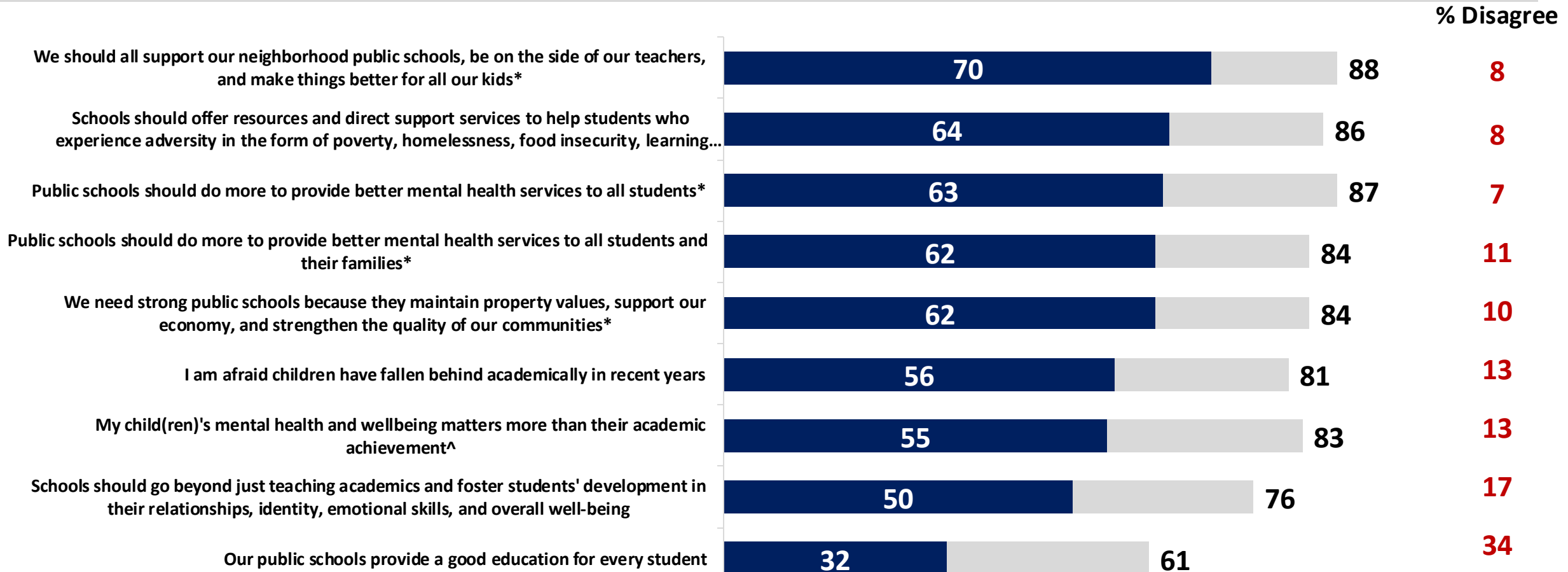
- **“I'm definitely for it clearly.** I think the money should follow the student rather than the district that they would be assigned to. We are with the charter schools so I do receive the funds to purchase our curriculum **so I like having that freedom to choose what I want my children to learn instead of a school district deciding on that.** So, I agree with that 100%.” - Conservative woman voter
- **“My oldest, he does online schooling still through public school, but it's online now instead. But he used to go in person and then due to COVID he started online. I think seeing it from his father's point of view, it's easier. You don't have to take your kid anywhere. Your kid can just sit and do their own thing. You don't have to pick them up. You know, there's a lot less things, I feel like, but they think they have to worry about; but it's, in my opinion, not the greatest for every kid. Yes, it's beneficial for some children. Some children do learn better in that kind of environment.”** - White woman voter
- **“I think, not to get political, but I think given the political landscape, right, fear of your child being indoctrinated, the idea of DEI initiatives, and somebody brought up redistricting because of it. I think, you know, to some extent parents and decision makers are getting fed up and if it's a choice of spending time with your children and getting partial funding for it and homeschooling them and teaching them the way that your family, you know, beliefs are, versus having somebody else do it, I think, and getting the money kind of takes the sting out of a having to carry a second job in many instances, I think, it's a sensible decision for some people, right? It's, the political landscape kind of lends itself to that being more commonplace.”** - White male voter
- **“The system's not working.** It's not up to par as to what it used to be. Now it has to go through second party and third-party systems to even keep up with what is considered the standards of today.” - Man of color voter
- **“I think that one of the things that's driving the change towards homeschooling and vouchers is that some parents want to be able to control what their children are learning and where they're learning certain things at.** And so they don't believe that the school system or the, you know, the place where their child goes to school is the place for them to learn certain kinds of moral or you know values outside of the home. So I think that that's driving some of the movement to other places.” - Woman of color voter



# Reactions to Value Statements

Half or more of voters strongly agree with all of the statements, except that our public schools provide a good education for every student – 61% agree and 34% disagree overall. People most strongly agree that we should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids.

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.



Not so strongly agree  
Strongly agree

Parents and non-parents respond similarly to all statements, except non-parents are 12 points more likely to strongly agree that they are afraid children have fallen behind academically in recent years (60%) compared to parents (48%).

\*Split sampled  
^Asked of parents only



# Top Statements (% Strongly Agree)

**Subgroups of parents consistently most strongly agree that we should all support our neighborhood public schools, schools should offer resources and services to help students who experience adversity, and public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students.**

## Parents

- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (67%)
- Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care (65%)
- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students\* (65%)

## Mothers

- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (71%)
- Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care (70%)

## Fathers

- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students\* (65%)
- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (61%)

## White Parents

- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (68%)
- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students\* (65%)

## Parents of color

- Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care (67%)
- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students\* (67%)

\*Split sampled

## Top Statements (% Strongly Agree)

**While most groups place supporting neighborhood schools in their top two statements, Latino/as instead focus on resources and direct support services, as well as student mental health services.**

White

- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (72%)
- Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care (63%)

Black

- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students and their families\* (73%)
- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (72%)

Latino/a

- Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care (68%)
- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students\* (66%)

AAPI

- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students and their families\* (70%)
- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (68%)

Native  
American

- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (69%)
- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students\* (67%)

\*Split sampled

## Top Statements (% Strongly Agree)

**Voters' top statement by gender or age is that we should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for our kids. Older voters also most strongly agree that we need strong public schools for economic reasons and include families in the provision of mental health services.**

### Men

- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (66%)
- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students\* (57%)

### Women

- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (74%)
- Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care (73%)

### <50

- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (67%)
- Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students\* (65%)

### 50+

- We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids\* (74%)
- Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care (65%)
- **Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students and their families\* (65%)**
- **We need strong public schools because they maintain property values, support our economy, and strengthen the quality of our communities (65%)**

\*Split sampled

## Independents also prioritize a statement tying education to property values, while Republicans most strongly agree that children have fallen behind academically in recent years.

Democrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids* (78%)</li><li>• Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care (72%)</li><li>• Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students* (72%)</li></ul>
Independent /DK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids* (68%)</li><li>• <b>We need strong public schools because they maintain property values, support our economy, and strengthen the quality of our communities (63%)</b></li></ul>
Republican	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>I am afraid children have fallen behind academically in recent years (64%)</b></li><li>• We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids* (63%)</li></ul>

\*Split sampled

## Top Statements (% Strongly Agree)

Suburban voters most strongly agree with a statement relating strong schools to property values. Rural voters prioritize mental health for students and their families, while urban voters prioritize it for students alone.

Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids* (74%)</li><li>• Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students* (69%)</li></ul>
Suburban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids* (64%)</li><li>• Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care (61%)</li><li>• <b>We need strong public schools because they maintain property values, support our economy, and strengthen the quality of our communities (61%)</b></li></ul>
Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids* (74%)</li><li>• Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students <u>and their families</u>* (71%)</li></ul>

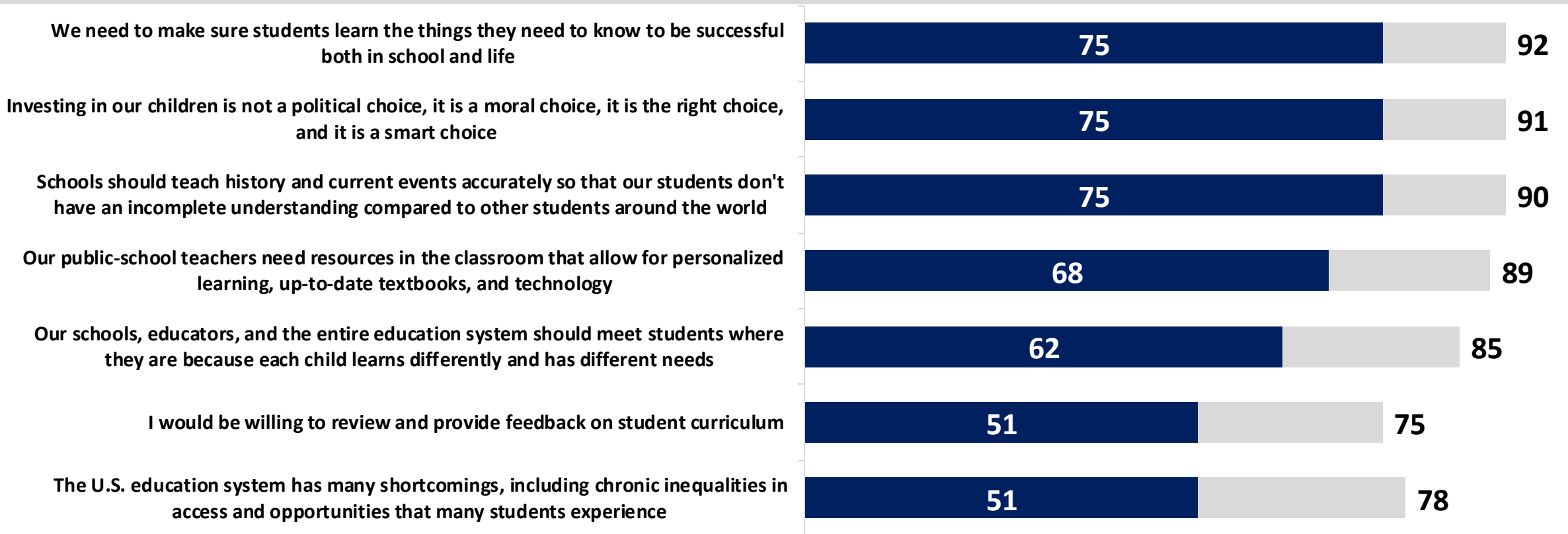
\*Split sampled

# Voters worry schools are not providing a good education for every student because they teach to the test, shuffle kids through the system, and do not focus on children's strengths or interests.

- “I would say you kind of teach to a test versus teach for education you teach to get a certificate, teach to get your diploma, but the education, the knowledge, I think it's lost in that.” - Conservative male voter
- “My dad was a teacher also, and he mentioned that **they cater to the lowest denominator in the class**. So if they're not getting the information to kind of see it at level one, so they do understand it, and then at the same time, if they don't understand it, **they still pass to the next grade without making sure that they have that foundation to move on.**” - Conservative woman voter
- “**I don't feel like schools necessarily have like a lot of investment in what they're teaching**, they just don't care to be there as much anymore, I feel like. At least in my local community, that's what it feels like a lot of the time, which is really disappointing, because I feel like when I went to school, it wasn't as much like that, **teachers were more invested.**” - White woman voter
- “It's been awhile since I've been in school, but can they? I think so. **It's just matter of just paying attention to the individual needs of the student.** Some kids learn faster than others, some don't. Like some are just really good at certain things that aren't good at other things. I think like some curriculums should be able to be chosen by the student rather than them being forced to do something mathematically like throughout their career when they're really not good with math. They might be better with English. And then that way they can start developing what they want to do in the future, because as much as they'd like us to do all the things in school, sometimes they don't need to be done as far as college... Your college courses don't necessarily require everything that high school requires. So if you're trying to go into like a tech thing, you may not need as much social studies or something like that. I know me, I'm good at several things, but my sister wasn't good at somethings, but she was, excelled at other things, and it just kind of hurt her grades because she wasn't good at other things. So it's just, **I feel like they need to have more control over what they learn throughout their high school and school career.** I guess in elementary school all the basics should be covered, but once you get into high school you should be able to choose your path more.” - Woman of color voter

When given a list of value statements, half or more of voters strongly agree with statements that revolve around meeting students' needs through individualized learning or meeting them where they are, teaching accurate history and current events, and providing teachers with resources they need. Half of voters also say they are willing to review student curriculum and that the US education system has many shortcomings, but these are far below the intensity of the other statements.

Here are some statements about education today. For each, please indicate whether you agree or disagree. [TOP TIER]



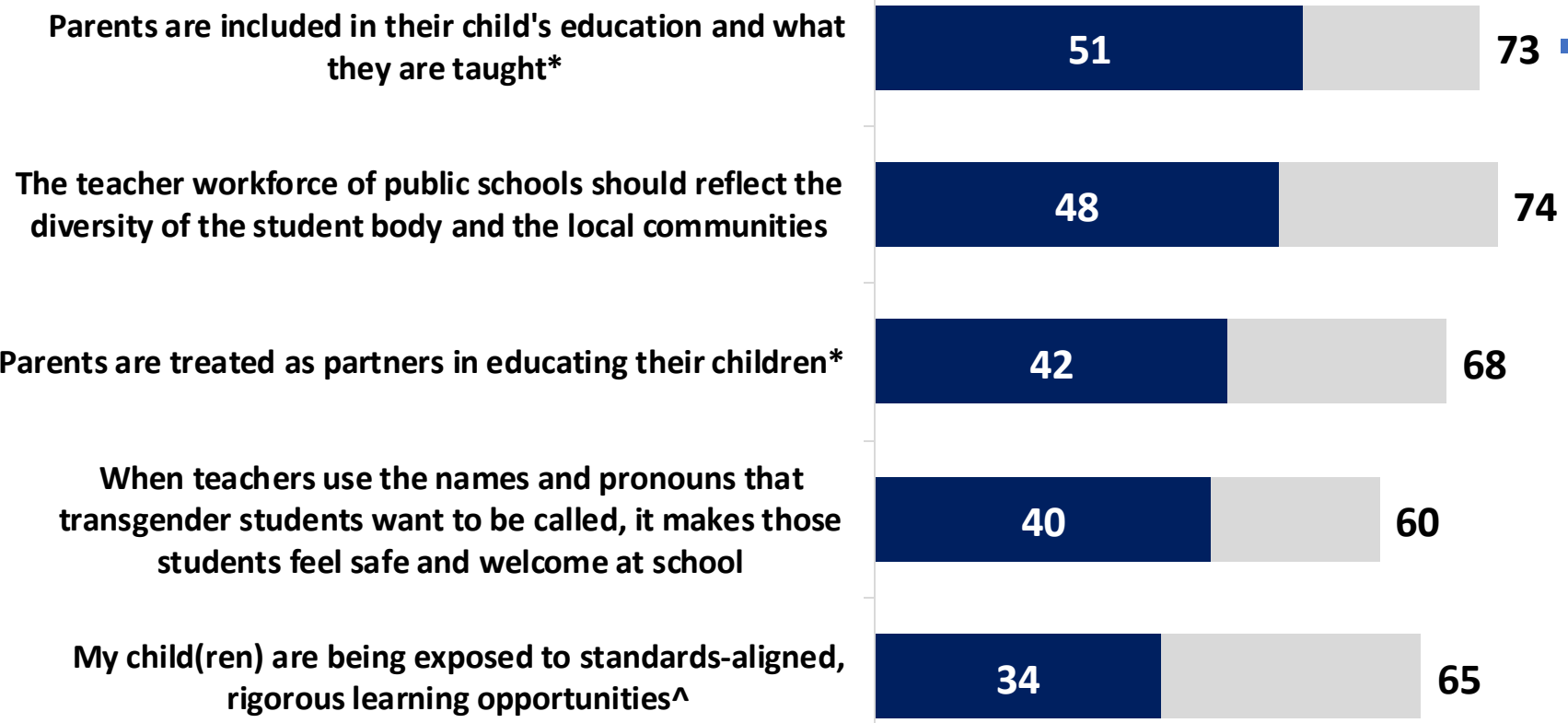
Not so strongly agree  
Strongly agree

Parents are 10 points more likely to strongly agree they are willing to review and provide feedback on student curriculum (58% compared to 48% among non-parents) but 11 points less likely to strongly agree that schools should teach history and current events accurately so that our students don't have an incomplete understanding (68% compared to 79% among non-parents).

\*Split sampled  
^Asked of parents only

Though about 7 in 10 voters agree that parents are included in their child’s education, and are treated as partners in educating their children, fewer than half strongly agree with these bottom-tier statements, which tend to deal with diversity and gender. There is much less intense agreement among parents on children being exposed to rigorous learning opportunities.

Here are some statements about education today. For each, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement. [BOTTOM TIER]

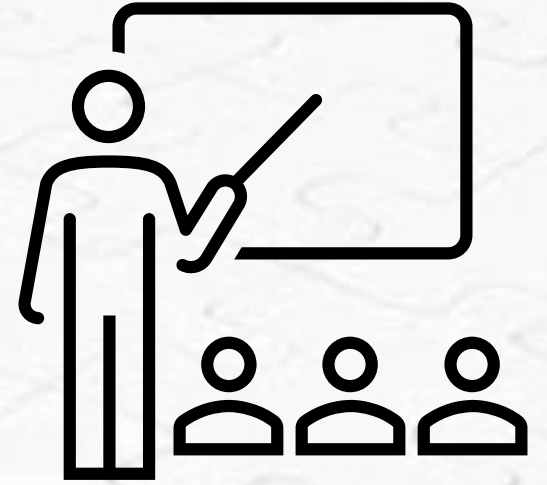


2023	2022
45%	34%
<p>While all other battery items remain relatively consistent over the years, there is growing strong agreement among voters that parents being included in their children’s education and what they are taught, up 17 points from 2022 and +6 points from last year.</p> <p>There is no change among parents, but non-parents increase from 27% in 2022 to 49% in 2024.</p>	

Not so strongly agree  
Strongly agree

\*Split sampled  
^Asked of parents only





# Reactions to Messages

## Full Text of Messages – Part One of Two

**[Invest in Teachers]** Investing in our children is not a political choice, it is a moral choice, it is the right choice, and it is a smart choice. Our public-school teachers need resources in the classroom that allow for personalized learning and engaging lessons, up-to-date textbooks that help students learn, and supportive administrators who give them opportunities to succeed.\*

**[Physical Safety]** Most of us believe that every child, no matter what they look like or where they come from, deserves a safe and welcoming school where they can thrive. But our schools cannot be a safe place if gun violence, other physical violence, and bullying are not addressed. We need schools to be free of guns and free of bullying – including cyber-bullying. Our schools can be safe places for students to learn when teachers and staff are trained to identify warning signs and intervention techniques.\*

**[Invest in Schools]** Investing in our children is not a political choice, it is a moral choice, it is the right choice, and it is a smart choice. We must equip every school with the resources necessary to deliver quality education that prepares every child for the future, no matter who they are, what they look like, or where they come from.\*

**[Great Equalizer - Catch Up]** Quality public education is a great equalizer. No matter what we look like, where we live, or what's in our wallets, most of us want our public schools to inspire imagination, cultivate critical thinking, and ensure our children can live fulfilling lives. That's why it is so important to support our public schools and our public-school teachers. We need to invest in hiring more educators and the technological resources they need to support learning and to get children caught up.\*

**[Nutrition]** Every child has the right to an excellent public education, but right now we're not getting the job done. If we're serious about making sure every child can pursue their dreams, let's get serious about doing what works. Real learning cannot happen when students start the day hungry or are stressed about problems at home; so, let's make sure those who need it have healthy meals and mental health support from trusted counselors and nurses.

## Full Text of Messages – Part Two of Two

**[Great Equalizer - Thrive]** Quality public education is a great equalizer. No matter what we look like, where we live, or what's in our wallets, most of us want our public schools to inspire imagination, cultivate critical thinking, and ensure our children can live fulfilling lives. That's why it is so important to support our public schools and our public-school teachers. We need to invest in hiring more educators and the technological resources they need to support learning and make sure every child has the opportunity to thrive.\*

**[Mental Health]** Public schools should do more to provide better mental health services to all students. From hiring additional school counselors, nurses, and licensed mental health professionals to training educators to identify warning signs and intervention techniques related to mental health in every school, our schools can do more to care for the emotional well-being of children and youth beyond the classroom.\*

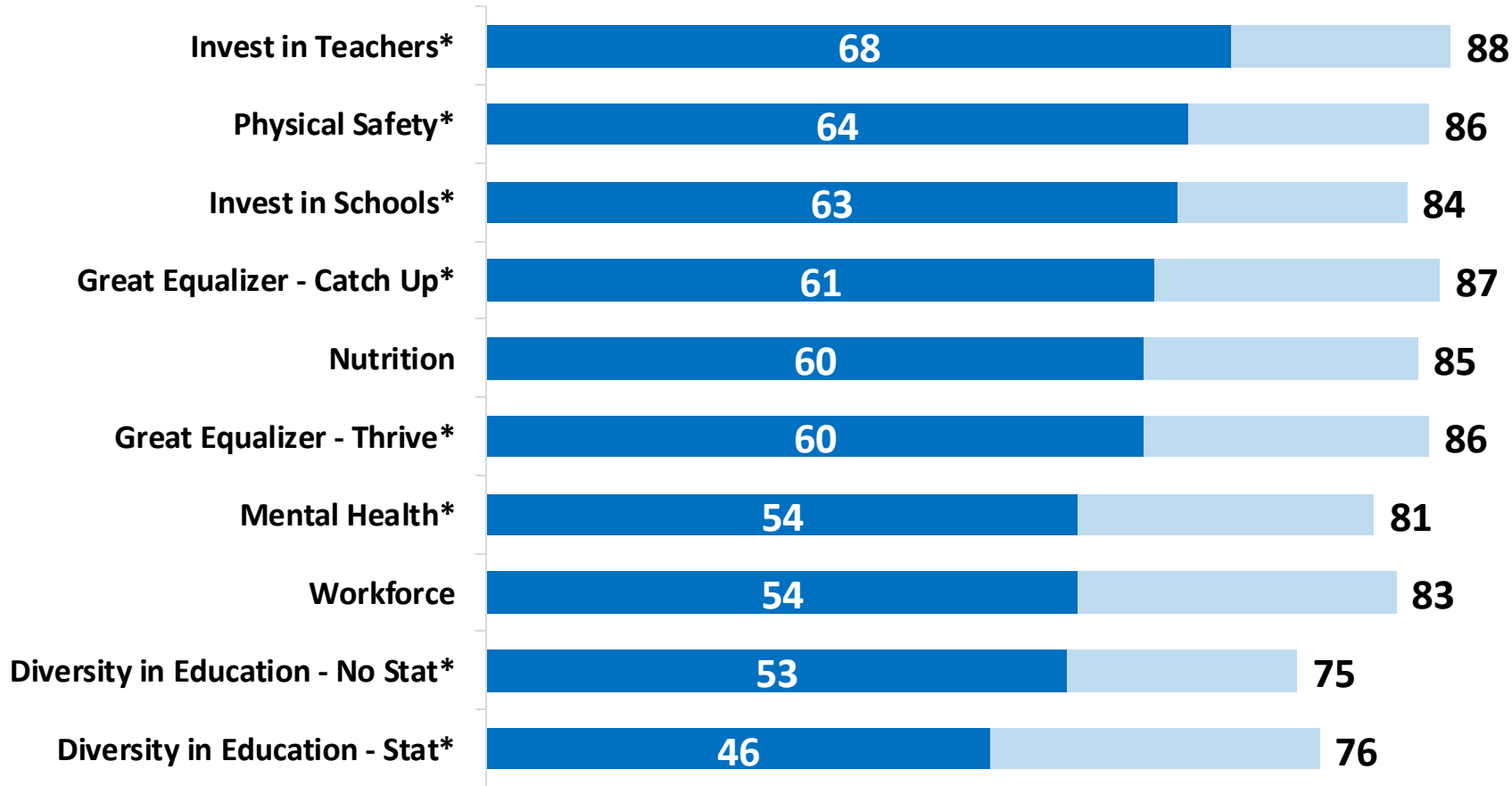
**[Workforce]** We are failing to provide too many children with a quality public education. As a result, America is producing a workforce that isn't keeping up. Because the health of our communities and the competitiveness of our nation's workforce depend on a quality education, we need to invest in our schools and ensure today's students can compete in the global economy of tomorrow.

**[Diversity in Education – No Stat]** Every child, regardless of race, ability, or zip code, needs a neighborhood school with well-prepared teachers who reflect the diversity of the student body they are teaching. When students are taught by teachers of a similar background to them, they are less likely to be suspended, more likely to graduate high school, and more likely to enroll in education after high school. Districts should address the disparity and prioritize diversity in the teacher-hiring process.\*

**[Diversity in Education - Stat]** Every child, regardless of race, ability, or zip code, needs a neighborhood school with well-prepared teachers who reflect the diversity of the student body they are teaching. Students of color make up over 50% of the student population, while the teaching workforce is still 80% white. Yet studies show students who have a teacher of a similar backgrounds are less likely to be suspended, more likely to graduate high school, and more likely to enroll in education after high school.\*

At least three in four voters are likely to support someone who makes any of the statements tested, and more than half are very likely to support them if they said any except diversity in education (including the statistic). The top statement is Invest in Teachers, followed by Physical Safety, and Invest in Schools. Across race, Black voters respond more positively to the Diversity in Education messages at higher rates than other subgroups.

Now you will see some different statements from public officials and education leaders who support investing in changes to our public education system. For each one, please indicate how likely you would be to support someone who made that statement.



% very likely: Diversity in Education	With Statistic	No Statistic
	White	43
Black	56	64
Latino/a	51	45
AAPI <sup>^</sup>	52	57
Native American <sup>^</sup>	53	44

Somewhat likely  
Very likely

\*split sampled <sup>^</sup>small n size

# Top Statements (% Very Likely)

Subgroups of parents are most likely to support an official who talks about investing in teachers or schools.

Mothers are also very likely to support someone who talks about diversity in education without statistics.

Parents of color and K-8<sup>th</sup> grade parents are very likely to support someone saying the Great Equalizer – Catch Up statement, while high-school parents prefer the Great Equalizer – Thrive version.

High school parents also rank Nutrition as one of their top messages, along with Diversity in Education without statistics.

Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (64%)</li> <li>Invest in Schools* (59%)</li> </ul>
Mothers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (69%)</li> <li><b>Diversity in Education – No Stat* (59%)</b></li> </ul>
Fathers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools* (63%)</li> <li>Invest in Teachers* (57%)</li> </ul>
White Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (64%)</li> <li>Invest in Schools* (60%)</li> </ul>
Parents of color	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (64%)</li> <li><b>Great Equalizer – Catch Up* (60%)</b></li> </ul>
K-5 Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (67%)</li> <li><b>Great Equalizer – Catch Up* (61%)</b></li> </ul>
6-8 Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (68%)</li> <li><b>Great Equalizer – Catch Up* (61%)</b></li> </ul>
9-12 Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (63%)</li> <li><b>Great Equalizer – Thrive* (59%)</b></li> <li>Invest in Schools* (58%)</li> <li><b>Nutrition (58%)</b></li> <li><b>Diversity in Education – No Stat* (58%)</b></li> </ul>

\*Split sampled

# Top Statements (% Very Likely)

Most voter subgroups are very likely to support someone who says statements about investing in teachers and schools or physical safety. Black voters also are most likely to support someone talking about mental health, Latino/as and rural voters are most likely to support someone who says the Great Equalizer – Thrive statement, and urban voters are most likely to support them for saying the Great Equalizer – Catch up statement.

White	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (69%)</li> <li>Physical Safety* (65%)</li> </ul>
Black	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Mental Health* (69%)</b></li> <li>Invest in Teachers* (68%)</li> </ul>
Latino/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools* (65%)</li> <li><b>Great Equalizer – Thrive* (64%)</b></li> </ul>
AAPI^	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical Safety* (70%)</li> <li>Invest in Schools* (68%)</li> </ul>
Native American^	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools* (78%)</li> <li>Invest in Teachers* (64%)</li> </ul>

Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (64%)</li> <li>Physical Safety* (60%)</li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (72%)</li> <li>Invest in Schools* (68%)</li> </ul>
<50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (63%)</li> <li>Invest in Schools* (58%)</li> </ul>
50+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (73%)</li> <li>Physical Safety* (71%)</li> </ul>

Democrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (74%)</li> <li>Physical Safety* (72%)</li> </ul>
Independent/DK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools* (63%)</li> <li>Invest in Teachers* (60%)</li> </ul>
Republican	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (63%)</li> <li>Invest in Schools* (61%)</li> </ul>

Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools* (68%)</li> <li><b>Great Equalizer – Catch Up* (66%)</b></li> </ul>
Suburban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (68%)</li> <li>Physical Safety* (66%)</li> </ul>
Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers* (68%)</li> <li><b>Great Equalizer – Thrive* (67%)</b></li> </ul>

\*Split sampled  
^note small n size

**While teachers like hearing it is a moral choice rather than a political choice to invest in children, some feel it sounds too idealistic or buzzwordy, and that it puts too much responsibility on teachers to do the investing, or they want to know how this will be possible. Voters like this statement and feel like it is straightforward and true.**

**[Invest in Teachers]** Investing in our children is not a political choice, it is a moral choice, it is the right choice, and it is a smart choice. Our public-school teachers need resources in the classroom that allow for personalized learning, up-to-date textbooks that help students' learning, as well as supportive administrators and opportunities for professional development.

- “I think it was just a statement overall. I mean looking at this and reading each line in the statement, **it just sounds like a no-brainer to me.** This is logical, this makes sense. Without resources, without up-to-date tech and up-to-date information, how are kids supposed to learn anything? Things are changing so quickly. And if they're learning things that are out of date and obsolete, that makes no sense. And it's not a political choice. It should be nothing political with children. **It just makes sense.** Children should be given, they should all have the opportunity to get the same education. It should be good, quality education, not just bottom of the barrel.” - Conservative woman voter
- “**Everything sounds good, but I mean, it just has to, I don't know how to say it. Just, the resource needs to go to the right place, I guess it's the only way I can put it.**” - Conservative male voter
- “**Moral choice for me, that was the key.** We've politicized education, unfortunately in some places and it's not a political issue, it's a moral imperative that we do the right thing and educate our youth to make our country the best as possible, no matter who the kid is, whether, for that last part there, where they come from. That's just how I look at schooling.” -White male teacher
- “I was convinced, I rated it a two because there's some buzzwords here that are **captivating**, right. Like, you know, ‘**investing in our children, it's a moral choice, resources, personalized learning, up-to-date textbooks.**’ I'm like, yeah, those are buzzwords, that's what our children need. I think for me, **what was lacking here again is just like, what do the teachers need in order to make these things possible?** Because when I read this, I'm just like, wow, the burden is still incredibly heavy on the teacher to ensure that all these things happen.”- Woman teacher of color
- “It's too long, **I'm drowned by buzzwords.** If they just say invest in your kid or in kids or in children that's enough for me, but that isn't. I've heard people say that there's no soul in there, or at least something similar to it. **It sounds, it looks like a politician's reading this, or wrote this, or something for them to read back to the public.** I would have given it a zero, now that I really think about it, it only has **one word, two words that I like, ‘invest, children.’**”-Male teacher of color

## Teachers recognize a strong need to address mental health, but many feel the mental health message is too narrow, that services should apply to whole communities rather than just students, and that services should be provided by more than just teachers. Conservative voters recognize teachers shoulder too much of the burden of addressing students' mental health.

**[Mental Health]** Public schools should do more to provide better mental health services to all students. From hiring additional school counselors and licensed mental health professionals to training educators to identify warning signs and intervention techniques related to mental health in every school, our schools can do more to care for the emotional well-being of children and youth beyond the classroom.

- **"I'm thinking it has to do with family as well and in schools, but what if you looked at one of the core curriculum pieces being mental? How to deal with feelings, how to communicate feelings, how to identify feelings, how to, like what is mental health? And give some of the students the tools and resources, like teach from that instead of just offering resources. Like how many counselors and mental health professionals can you really have on a campus and how much more work can you put on a teacher to learn about warning signs and intervention techniques?"** - Conservative woman voter
- **"While I think mental health is important and we talked a little bit about having extra things like, say, security, security enhancements, like it's kind of like a robbing Peter to pay Paul type thing and that if we're really going to push towards the education, we should focus on the education. However, mental health wasn't discussed when I was in school and I imagine it wasn't for others as well, so I don't really see the value in it, but I also see this more as something that is addressed in the home versus in the schools."** - Conservative male voter
- **"I think teachers already have enough on their plate and then they have to kind of be trained to be like peripheral counselors, that's kind of unfair. I mean, I think if it's something that's glaringly obvious, if there's a kid who clearly has some sort of the issue, maybe they should speak to the guidance counselor, maybe reach out to a parent. But I don't think that burden should fall on the teacher directly. And I do think that is more of a private home thing and a parent would hopefully be equipped to, you know, see if their child has an issue and they should be able to hopefully pick up on that and address it themselves and not leave it to the school to take care of them. That's more of like a parenting and private matter, I think."** - Conservative woman voter
- **"In the 20 years I've been in education, it's changed a lot. Teachers have changed. Public education in general has changed. Students and families have changed. I don't know that requiring public education to take on the mental health concerns of all of our children is the right answer; for schools to be solely responsible for children's mental health isn't fair and I think we need to partner with somebody else. We need to get parents, guardians, families involved."** -White woman teacher
- **"I feel like it's a very general statement. It sounds like something a politician would say, or someone who was just trying to make it sound like it would be effective to do all of these things, without actually... the word funding is not mentioned. It doesn't say anything about, we need to fund these programs. We need to fund these mental health professionals to work with these students. This is an intensive and present need; this is something that is urgent. And that's what needs to be conveyed here."** - Woman teacher of color
- **"I think it's missing a big one, which is what is the state of public schools now. I think a lot of us teachers are already doing a lot. I think 90 percent or even more are doing our damn-est best in the classroom for students to do their very best for their parents, for themselves. And asking for more versus, let me tell you what the state of this community is in right now, and what they've told me they need in terms of more. So it's very general and it's lacking some of that nowness. It's very suggestive of what everybody else should be doing. And I just, it's very irritating to me to see that."** -Male teacher of color



## Voters have mixed reviews on the Great Equalizer, with disagreement on whether education is actually the surest path to a better future. While teachers recognize the impact education plays in providing opportunities to students, several teachers feel this is not the only equalizer and that funding needs to go to teachers and resources that would better improve education.

**[Great Equalizer]** Quality public education is a great equalizer. No matter what we look like or where we live, education is the surest path to a better future. That's why it is so important to support our public schools and our public-school teachers. That means investing in more teachers and counselors and funding for the tech they need to support learning and to get children caught up.

- “So I rated it a 3. And I really do agree with, and like the statement’s entirety, but **no matter what we look like or where we live, education’s the surest path to a better future.** I believe that, I believe education, what you do with it obviously, but the opportunity to receive it is definitely giving a brighter look to the future for who’s afforded it.” - Woman of color voter
- “**The first two lines, I thought they were good.** But that’s like you know the basis. So just like all of the other statements about critical thinking, where is the evidence? **Just because you have more teachers and more counselors, and more money, doesn’t mean that you’re going to do better for the kids, so I’d need to see some kind of evidence.**” - Man of color voter
- “I rated it a 1. **I don’t know if I necessarily agree that no matter what we look like or where we live education is a surest path to a better future.** I do think that everyone should be allotted the opportunity to an education and kind of decide for themselves whether or not, you know going down a path of education is the necessary right path for them. You might come across people who are in you know sort of one-off situations where, you know maybe they might go down the social media route. Or maybe they might go down a route of being talented within a specific, you know sport or something like that. So, I guess the main thing that stood out to me was that sentence there is; that **no matter what, education is the surest path to a better future;** because I feel like in some situations that **you might come across, you know kids or students who are outliers, where education might not be the right path to them...**” - Man of color voter
- “I rated it a three because the very first sentence I was drawn to. It says, ‘quality public education is a great equalizer.’ It's not that it's the equalizer, it's just one of the many things that can actually be provided to anyone regardless of, once again, what they look like where they live. It's one of the things that can be put into place. It's a great equalizer. **It's not the only answer. It's just one of the things that can make a well-rounded student and being able to invest in teachers is critical.**”- Woman teacher of color
- “I rated it a two. I also agree that its one of the great equalizers or, and you know, **it's the more sure path to a better future, not necessarily 100 percent guaranteed.** I think I just would want more clarity on the part that says like ‘that means investing, in more teachers.’ I just feel like none of these quotes ever said like compensate our teachers fairly. Again, I just feel like it puts these burdens on teachers to do X, Y, Z...”- Woman teacher of color
- “**I've just been in it for a while where I've seen so much money being thrown at technology and it doesn't really support, you know, the money that goes there doesn't really make the teacher any smarter or the child any smarter.** I just, I don't feel it. I don't feel it in the statement.”-Male teacher of color

**While most voters recognize that diversity would be nice to have, some say it is not the only factor in being successful, and is harder to achieve in certain communities, especially if they are more racially homogenous or rural. White teachers generally agree that we need a more diverse education workforce, but they have mixed views on whether the statistic can be trusted. One teacher says that even if it is true, simply having more diversity does not necessarily mean that students have a teacher who shares their identity.**

**[Diversity in Education]** We need a more diverse education workforce. Only about 20 percent of teachers are people of color, but studies show that students of color (who are 52 percent of the students) who have a teacher of a similar backgrounds are less likely to be suspended and more likely to graduate high school, to enroll in education after high school, and to get a degree or certificate.

- “Well teachers with diverse backgrounds can in tune communicate a lot better with students of diverse backgrounds. **I’ve seen teachers with similar backgrounds to students connect a lot closer to that student, making that student much more comfortable.** I’ve seen that quite many, many times.” - Man of color voter
- “I just don’t feel like that’s the, the number one factor of success within your schooling career, just based off of diversity. **It is beneficial if you see someone of color or see someone that looks like yourself. But I don’t necessarily feel like that is a main deciding factor of your success.**” - Woman of color voter
- “I was the 3. So, you know, people like to feel understood and sometimes, you know, and again, like **tiny little community, everybody’s white, doesn’t make a difference. But in bigger communities, it’s nice to be seen and heard.** And, you know, I think you tend to learn better from people who can connect and, you know, that feel like you. So I do believe that. I think this is important and yeah, and it’s convincing.” - White male voter
- “For me, the main reason that I feel like I can’t fully support it; is **as nice as it would be for every school to have diversity, I feel like that’s hard depending where you are living,** if you’re going to be able to have diversity in your school, especially when your students might not even be that diverse. I live in a pretty rural area, so the students in this area are mostly going to be white kids. So then trying to have diversity in your school for educators isn’t very likely to happen. So while it’s a good idea it would be very hard to achieve.” - White male voter
- “This one definitely wasn’t as convincing as the others, but I do feel, you know, with a similar background, I don’t know, that part got me a little bit. In a good way. I do think, you know, it, **having a more, you know, diverse selection of teachers, I think that can be a positive thing.**” -White woman teacher
- “I just agree with this sentiment to begin with, whether there was a study or not, and I mentioned that earlier too, like **people should be taught by people who look like them as much as is possible.**” -White male teacher
- “I did three. **You can’t argue with the study** so it said that I just believed the study. It says study show, you know that if they had a similar teacher, so that convinced me.” - White woman teacher
- **I’m just generally skeptical when something just says "study show" and doesn't cite the source.**” -White male teacher
- “I gave it a two because, even if 52% of teachers were people of color to match the students, there is no, **there's nothing that says that a teacher who is a person of color will be, you know specifically teaching children of color. You know it's not a one-to-one.** So while I agree that the education...the body of educators should match the body of students, you know even if, I guess what I'm saying is even if it was, if the percentages were aligned it doesn't necessarily mean that a particular student is going to have a teacher who quote unquote “looks like them” and if that's the case, are they then less likely to graduate high school?” -White male teacher

## While some white women voters think healthy and affordable meals are important options for students to have, one voter says it seems unfair for the school to have to pay for these meals.

**[Nutrition]** Every child has the right to an excellent public education, but right now we're not getting the job done. Real learning cannot happen when students start the day hungry or are stressed about problems at home; so, let's make sure those who need it have healthy meals and mental health support from trusted counselors.\*

- “So I'll go. So I did not make it to three, because I really feel like if you're going to have meals for some students, you should just have it across the board. And everybody should get breakfast and/or lunch. Because if you're only feeding certain children, I mean, it's kind of like one of those things where, you know, you're the one with the food stamp, you know, in the line. So everybody kind of knows like; hey, your parents don't make a lot of money or whatever. **So I really feel like it literally should just be across the board, you're gonna do for one, you do for all.**” - White woman voter
- “I feel like even though a lot goes into education, making sure that they're not stressed about stuff going on at home and not being hungry, it is a very big deal to start off on the right track. And like for my son's school specifically, every child had an opportunity to have breakfast. So I know like in this, it specifically phrases ‘those who need it have healthy meals,’ but the way I read it in my mind is like; **it's available so if you need it, you can go get it. It's just up to that child if they wanted to participate in that or not, but it was there for anybody regardless.** So I think having everybody have that option will be really great.” - White woman voter
- “So I put it to this, but this conversation just makes me think, and I just want to share. **So it's kind of hard for me to see that we're putting the responsibility on feeding the kids on schools, and the school system, and the school budget.** The government is not doing much on making sure that when families are created, the families and kids are born, the families where the kids are born are able to support the children. So like I think there are more tests and responsibilities for us when we get like our driver's license, than when we are to produce a child in this country. And then somehow the society, our taxes and the school systems are now carrying that weight for some of the families that can't support financially, and end up having children go to school hungry. And I just think it's a little messed up, or not a little a lot. Yeah.” - White woman voter

\*statement not tested among teachers

# While some voters acknowledge students have fallen behind, the comparison to other countries does not necessarily work to persuade voters into thinking this is an important reason to invest in our schools.

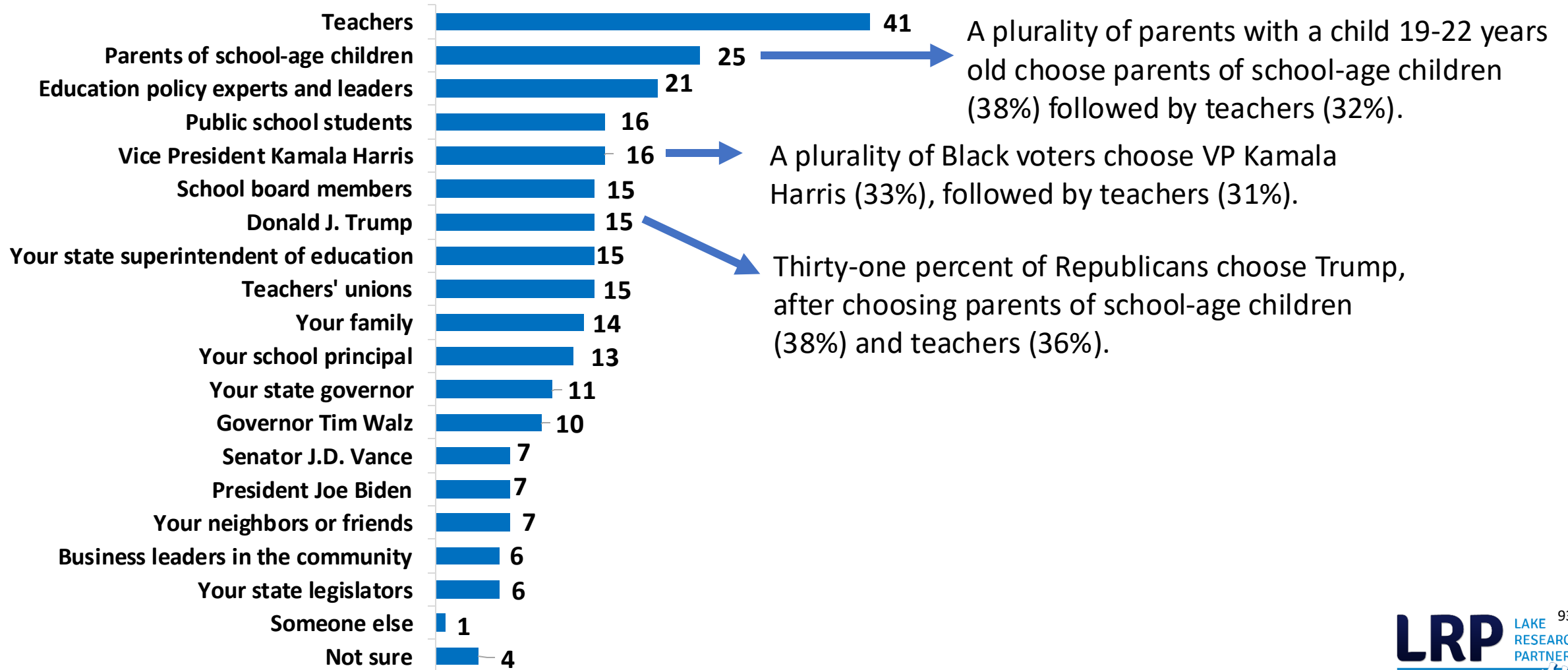
**[Workforce]** We are failing to provide too many children with a quality public education. As a result, America is producing a workforce that isn't keeping up with better-educated workforces overseas. The health of our communities and the competitiveness of our nation's workforce depend on a quality education. We need to invest in our schools to ensure today's students can compete in the global economy of tomorrow.\*

- “I think education here has just fallen behind overall in comparison to, you know, globally. **In the other countries, children are being taught, you know, other extracurricular activities and, you know, extra things that will help them in the future and, you know, how to be successful, basically.** And that's not being taught here.” - Conservative woman voter
- “The health of our communities and the competitiveness of our nation's workforce depends on a quality education.’ I think that was the most important sentence to me, **and I think it captured both the side of when we were talking about, and as far as competing as a nation, and then as far as keeping whether it be mental health, physical health, you know, preserving that with the children.** So I just, I liked that sentence the most.” - White woman voter
- “I just didn't like the emphasis just on the schools; **I think it's broader than just the schools.** So I agreed with the sentiment but, and also, I, you know, like I would say we need to invest in our students' education and our students' like enlightenment, rather than putting the onus on the physical building, something like that. So maybe that's semantic, but. I would just say that I'd like this overall, but the last sentence would be to invest in our schools again. I think listen, the US spends like \$19,000 per student a year. **Like how much more do we have to throw at it to make it work, right?”** - White male voter
- “I rated it a 1, I didn't find it super convincing, because when I think about like the American education system producing a workforce, and if the argument is that, like basically **it's the word overseas that gets me.** Because I think about like okay, all the workers from like China and India, I'm like I don't know if they're like, I don't know if their education system is better per se, and that's why they're like better workforce. But it's more like they come here and it's like they're just trained to be a lot more disciplined than Americans are. **So I wasn't really convinced that it's like the quality of the education as much as it is, especially if I'm comparing it for with like overseas workers and like a global economy. It's more like the level of discipline that other countries have that's stronger than our American culture.”** - Woman of color voter

\*statement not tested among teachers

**Four in ten voters say they would most like to hear from teachers about efforts to transform public schools in the U.S, followed by parents of school-age children, and education policy experts and leaders. Harris and Trump, who test about the same, are ranked higher than Biden, Vance, or Walz.**

Here are some public figures and organizations that you might hear from about efforts to transform public schools in the U.S. Choose the two or three entities you trust the most as a source of information on this topic.



# Messaging Guidance x Race

	Top Proposals (% Strongly Favor)	Top Value Statements (% Strongly Agree)	Top Statements from Elected Officials (% Very Likely)
<b>White</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>Physical Safety*</li> </ul>
<b>Black</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> <li><b>Implement evidence-based literacy programs in classrooms to improve student reading levels</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students <u>and their families</u>*</b></li> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Mental Health*</b></li> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> </ul>
<b>Latino/a</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> <li><b>Great Equalizer – Thrive*</b></li> </ul>
<b>AAPI<sup>^</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students <u>and their families</u>*</b></li> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical Safety*</li> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> </ul>
<b>Native American<sup>^</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> </ul>

**Black voters most strongly favor implementing evidence-based literacy programs. Black and AAPI voters most strongly agree with doing more to provide mental health services to all students and their families. Black voters' top statement from elected officials is also focused on mental health, while Latino/a voters are very likely to support someone who talks about education as the great equalizer allowing students to thrive.**

\*Split sampled

<sup>^</sup>note small n size

# Messaging Guidance x Gender and Age

	Top Proposals (% Strongly Favor)	Top Value Statements (% Strongly Agree)	Top Statements from Elected Officials (% Very Likely)
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>Physical Safety*</li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> </ul>
<50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> <li><b>Make sure that all schools offer students extracurricular opportunities like sports, art, and music so that kids can get involved and follow their interests</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> </ul>
50+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students <u>and their families</u>*</li> <li><b>We need strong public schools because they maintain property values, support our economy, and strengthen the quality of our communities</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>Physical Safety*</li> </ul>

Younger voters strongly favor offering extracurricular activities in addition to the other top proposals across groups that focus on teaching students skills, increasing job skills and workforce training opportunities, and ensuring teachers have the support they need. A value statement about maintaining property values is also strong for older voters.

\*Split sampled

# Messaging Guidance x Party Identification

Voters across party choose similar proposals and statements, but Independents strongly agree with a statement about the importance of strong public schools to maintain property values and support our economy, while Republicans most strongly agree they are afraid children have fallen behind academically in recent years. Of the statements from elected officials, those focused on investing in schools and teachers rise to the top across partisan lines. Democrats are very likely to support someone who talks about physical safety as well.

	Top Proposals (% Strongly Favor)	Top Value Statements (% Strongly Agree)	Top Statements from Elected Officials (% Very Likely)
Democrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Increase teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li><b>Physical Safety*</b></li> </ul>
Independent/DK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li><b>We need strong public schools because they maintain property values, support our economy, and strengthen the quality of our communities</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> </ul>
Republican	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Increase teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>I am afraid children have fallen behind academically in recent years</b></li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> </ul>

\*Split sampled ^note small n size



# Messaging Guidance x Parents

Subgroups of parents strongly favor proposals that benefit students and teachers alike by meeting their needs and providing resources. Top statements they'd like to hear from elected officials focus on investments in schools and teachers. Mothers are very likely to support someone who talks about diversity in education without statistics, and parents of color are very likely to support someone who talks about education as the great equalizer allowing students to catch up.

	Top Proposals (% Strongly Favor)	Top Value Statements (% Strongly Agree)	Top Statements from Elected Officials (% Very Likely)
Mothers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li><b>Diversity in Education – No Stat*</b></li> </ul>
Fathers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide incentives to employers, such as financial supports, so that they can offer paid internships and other work-based learning opportunities to students*</li> <li>Make sure that all schools offer students extracurricular opportunities like sports, art, and music so that kids can get involved and follow their interests</li> <li>Increase teacher salaries to reduce class sizes*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> </ul>
White Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> <li>Increase teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage*</li> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> </ul>
Parents of color	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Make sure that all schools offer students extracurricular opportunities like sports, art, and music so that kids can get involved and follow their interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li><b>Great Equalizer – Catch Up*</b></li> </ul>

\*Split sampled

# Messaging Guidance x Grade Level of Child

Parents of children across grade level have similar proposals and statements that resonate with them, but high school parents are more likely than others to strongly favor increasing teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage and are very likely to support an elected official who says education as the great equalizer allowing students to thrive. Parents of other grades who resonate more with education as the great equalizer allowing students to catch up.

	Top Proposals (% Strongly Favor)	Top Value Statements (% Strongly Agree)	Top Statements from Elected Officials (% Very Likely)
K-5 Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> <li>• Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> <li>• Make sure that all schools offer students extracurricular opportunities like sports, art, and music so that kids can get involved and follow their interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>• Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>• Great Equalizer – Catch Up*</li> </ul>
6-8 Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure that all schools offer students extracurricular opportunities like sports, art, and music so that kids can get involved and follow their interests</li> <li>• Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>• Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>• Great Equalizer – Catch Up*</li> </ul>
9-12 Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>• <b>Increase teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage*</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>• Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>• <b>Great Equalizer – Thrive*</b></li> </ul>

\*Split sampled

# Messaging Guidance x Urbanicity

Voters across urbanicity have differing proposals and statements that resonate most, but all prioritize teaching students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility, and all strongly agree that we should support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids. Suburban voters are more likely to strongly favor increasing teacher salaries and be drawn to the Physical Safety statement.

	Top Proposals (% Strongly Favor)	Top Value Statements (% Strongly Agree)	Top Statements from Elected Officials (% Very Likely)
Urban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> <li>Increase job skills and workforce training opportunities in high school, like internship opportunities and apprenticeships*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Schools*</li> <li>Great Equalizer – Catch Up*</li> </ul>
Suburban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> <li>Increase teacher salaries to address the teacher shortage*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Schools should offer resources and direct support services to help students who experience adversity in the form of poverty, homelessness, food insecurity, learning obstacles, or lack of health care</li> <li>We need strong public schools because they maintain property values, support our economy, and strengthen the quality of our communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>Physical Safety*</li> </ul>
Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure every teacher has the development, resources, and support they need to do an outstanding job*</li> <li>Teach students skills like communication, decision-making, financial literacy, or personal responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We should all support our neighborhood public schools, be on the side of our teachers, and make things better for all our kids*</li> <li>Public schools should do more to provide mental health services to all students <u>and their families</u>*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in Teachers*</li> <li>Great Equalizer – Thrive*</li> </ul>

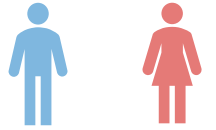
\*Split sampled



# Appendix

# Demographics of Likely 2024 Voters in the Survey

## GENDER



47% 53%  
Non-binary: 0%

## AGE

Under 30 15%  
30-39 16%  
40-49 16%  
50-64 27%  
65+ 26%

## RACE/ETHNICITY

White 70%  
Black 13%  
Latino/a 11%  
Asian/Pacific Isl. 5%  
Native American 3%  
Middle Eastern 1%  
None of these/other 0%

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

<\$15K 9%  
\$15,000-\$24,999 11%  
\$25,000-\$34,999 14%  
\$35,000-\$49,999 15%  
\$50,000-\$74,999 22%  
\$75,000-\$99,999 11%  
\$100,000-\$124,999 6%  
\$125,000-\$149,999 5%  
\$150K+ 5%

Below \$50K 49%  
Above \$50K 50%

## EDUCATION

1-11<sup>th</sup> grade 2%  
HS/GED 23%  
Vocational or Technical 2%  
Some College 18%  
Associate Degree 12%  
4-year/Bachelor's 29%  
Grad or Advanced Degree 13%

58%  
42%

## AREA TYPE

City with 1mil+ 21%  
Smaller city 16%  
Suburb 37%  
Small town 10%  
Rural area 16%  
Tribal land/Reservation 0%

## BATTLEGROUND VOTERS

'24 BG Voter 21%  
Not '24 BG Voter 79%

## PARTY IDENTIFICATION



Democrat 47%



Independent/NS 9%

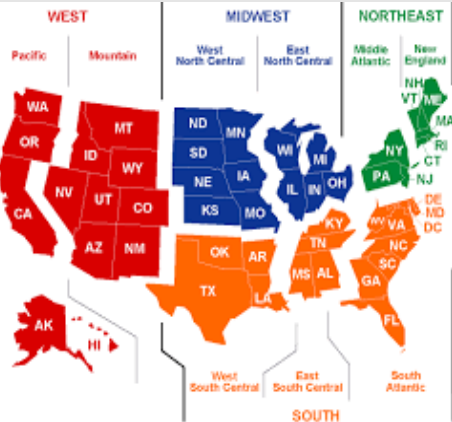
Republican 43%

## 2024 LIKELY VOTER

Almost certain 88%  
Probably 12%

## REGION

New England 5%  
Middle Atlantic 13%  
East North Central 15%  
West North Central 7%  
South Atlantic 21%  
East South Central 6%  
West South Central 10%  
Mountain 8%  
Pacific 16%



# Demographics of Likely 2024 Voters in the Survey

## PARENT/GUARDIAN STATUS

Yes, child/children 18 or under in household	<b>30%</b>
Yes, child/children 18 or under not in household	<b>2%</b>
Yes, child/children ages 19-22	<b>3%</b>
Yes, child/children over 22	<b>26%</b>
Parent/guardian of school-age child	<b>34%</b>
Yes, child under 18 combined	<b>32%</b>
Yes, child over 18 combined	<b>28%</b>
No, not a parent/guardian	<b>42%</b>

## AGE OF CHILDREN

0-4 years	<b>22%</b>
5-12 years	<b>55%</b>
13-17 years	<b>48%</b>
18-22 years	<b>11%</b>
Over 22 years	<b>12%</b>

## GRADE LEVEL OF CHILDREN

Pre-K	<b>11%</b>
K - 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	<b>42%</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	<b>30%</b>
9 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> grade	<b>38%</b>
Vocational/Technical	<b>1%</b>
2-year college	<b>2%</b>
4-year college	<b>6%</b>
Not currently in school	<b>11%</b>

## CHILD WITH IEP

Yes	<b>34%</b>
No	<b>60%</b>
Not sure	<b>6%</b>

## GRANDCHILDREN UNDER 18

Yes	<b>29%</b>
No	<b>71%</b>

## KNOW A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY

Yes	<b>39%</b>
No	<b>59%</b>
Not sure	<b>2%</b>

## MARITAL STATUS

Married	<b>37%</b>
Unmarried w/ partner	<b>11%</b>
Single	<b>27%</b>
Separated/Divorced	<b>18%</b>
Widowed	<b>7%</b>

## CHILD'S ABILITY/DISABILITY

Learning disability	<b>12%</b>
Mental health disability	<b>15%</b>
Social/emotional disability	<b>10%</b>
Sensory disability	<b>4%</b>
Physical disability	<b>6%</b>
Cognitive disability	<b>5%</b>
Other type of disability	<b>1%</b>
All yes	<b>29%</b>
No disability	<b>69%</b>

## TYPE OF SCHOOL

Traditional public school	<b>69%</b>
Private school	<b>14%</b>
Public charter school	<b>14%</b>
Homeschool	<b>12%</b>
Public magnet school	<b>3%</b>
Parochial/religious school	<b>1%</b>
Something else	<b>0%</b>
All public schools	<b>82%</b>

# Demographics of Parents with Children 0-22 Years Old in the Survey

## GENDER



43%



57%

## AGE

Under 30	14%
30-39	32%
40-49	34%
50-64	18%
65+	2%

## RACE/ETHNICITY

White	65%
Black	16%
Latino/a	14%
Asian/Pacific Isl.	5%
Native American	3%
Middle Eastern	0%
None of these/other	0%

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

<\$15K	8%
\$15,000-\$24,999	6%
\$25,000-\$34,999	12%
\$35,000-\$49,999	13%
\$50,000-\$74,999	19%
\$75,000-\$99,999	14%
\$100,000-\$124,999	10%
\$125,000-\$149,999	9%
\$150K+	8%
Below \$50K	39%
Above \$50K	60%

## EDUCATION

1-11 <sup>th</sup> grade	1%	} 57%
HS/GED	22%	
Vocational or Technical	1%	
Some College	19%	} 43%
Associate Degree	14%	
4-year/Bachelor's	27%	
Grad or Advanced Degree	17%	

## AREA TYPE

City with 1mil+	27%
Smaller city	16%
Suburb	34%
Small town	10%
Rural area	13%
Tribal land/Reservation	0%

## BATTLEGROUND VOTERS

'24 BG Voter	21%
Not '24 BG Voter	79%

## PARTY IDENTIFICATION



Democrat 48%

Independent/NS 7%



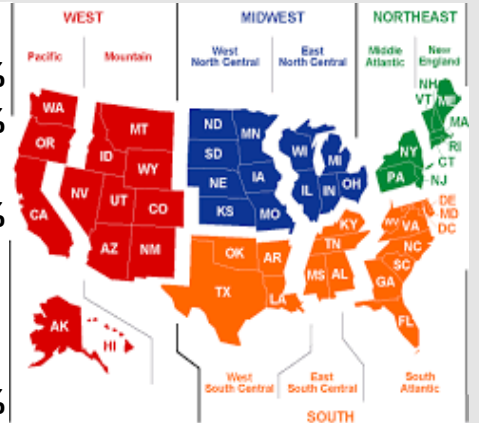
Republican 45%

## 2024 LIKELY VOTER

Almost certain	85%
Probably	15%

## REGION

New England	4%
Middle Atlantic	12%
East North Central	17%
West North Central	8%
South Atlantic	23%
East South Central	7%
West South Central	9%
Mountain	8%
Pacific	12%



# Demographics of Parents with Children 0-22 Years Old in the Survey

## PARENT/GUARDIAN STATUS

Yes, child/children 18 or under in household	<b>88%</b>
Yes, child/children 18 or under not in household	<b>7%</b>
Yes, child/children ages 19-22	<b>10%</b>
Yes, child/children over 22	<b>9%</b>
All yes, combined	<b>100%</b>

## AGE OF CHILDREN

0-4 years	<b>22%</b>
5-12 years	<b>55%</b>
13-17 years	<b>48%</b>
18-22 years	<b>11%</b>
Over 22 years	<b>12%</b>

## GRADE LEVEL OF CHILDREN

Pre-K	<b>11%</b>
K - 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	<b>42%</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	<b>30%</b>
9 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> grade	<b>38%</b>
Vocational/Technical	<b>1%</b>
2-year college	<b>2%</b>
4-year college	<b>6%</b>
Not currently in school	<b>11%</b>

## SCHOOL-AGED CHILD

Yes	<b>86%</b>
No	<b>14%</b>

## GRANDCHILDREN UNDER 18

Yes	<b>37%</b>
No	<b>63%</b>

## CHILD WITH IEP

Yes	<b>34%</b>
No	<b>60%</b>
Not sure	<b>6%</b>

## MARITAL STATUS

Married	<b>53%</b>
Unmarried w/ partner	<b>12%</b>
Single	<b>19%</b>
Separated/Divorced	<b>13%</b>
Widowed	<b>4%</b>

## TYPE OF SCHOOL

Traditional public school	<b>69%</b>
Private school	<b>14%</b>
Public charter school	<b>14%</b>
Homeschool	<b>12%</b>
Public magnet school	<b>3%</b>
Parochial/religious school	<b>1%</b>
Something else	<b>0%</b>
All public schools	<b>82%</b>

## KNOW A CHILD WITH A DISABILITY

Yes	<b>46%</b>
No	<b>52%</b>
Not sure	<b>2%</b>

## CHILD'S ABILITY/DISABILITY

Learning disability	<b>12%</b>
Mental health disability	<b>15%</b>
Social/emotional disability	<b>10%</b>
Sensory disability	<b>4%</b>
Physical disability	<b>6%</b>
Cognitive disability	<b>5%</b>
Other type of disability	<b>1%</b>
All yes	<b>29%</b>
No disability	<b>69%</b>



# More than three quarters of parents whose child or children are not enrolled in a traditional public school this school year say they were previously enrolled in a traditional public school, up slightly from last year.

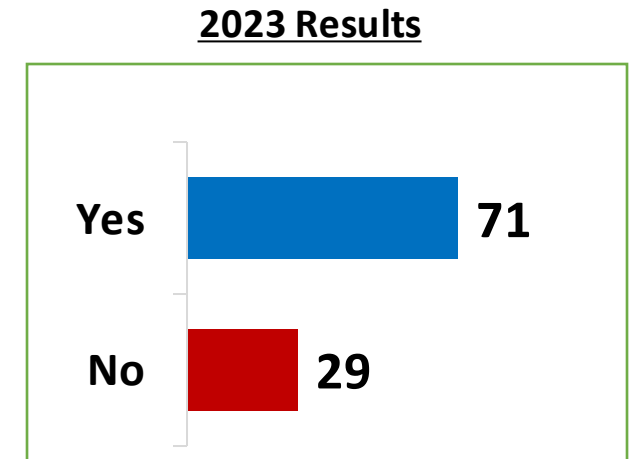
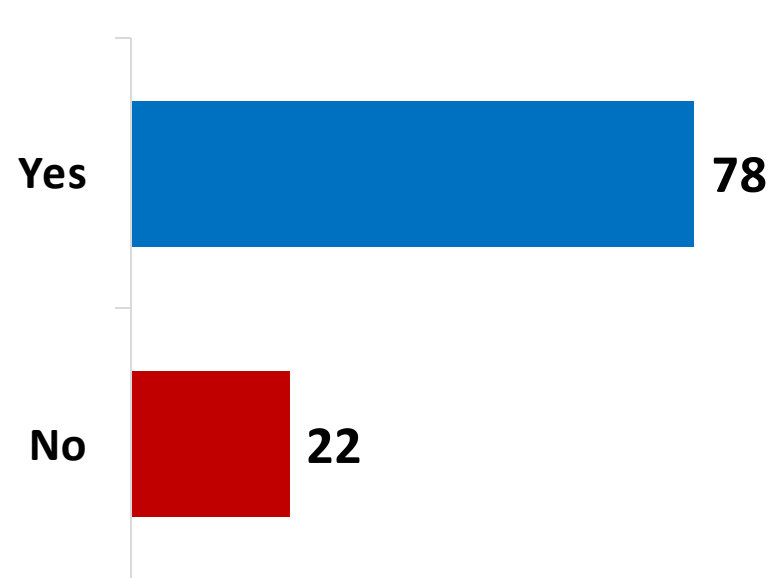
You have indicated that your child or children are NOT enrolled in a traditional public school this year (2024-2025). Were they previously enrolled in a traditional public school? (N=146 unweighted)

## Most likely to have a child or children previously enrolled in a public school:

- Have an IEP^ (94%)
- Non-college women^ (92%)
- All yes, have disability^ (91%)
- Ages 40-49^ (88%)
- Children 13-18 years old (88%)
- 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade^ (88%)

## Most likely to not have a child or children previously enrolled in a public school:

- No IEP (33%)
- Parents of color (31%)
- K-5<sup>th</sup> grade (28%)
- No disability (28%)
- College grads (28%)
- Urban (27%)



^Note small n size



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