



The Nation's Education Agenda

Survey of 1,502 registered voters nationwide, including
558 public school parents and 1,323 2022 voters,
conducted December 12 to 17, 2022



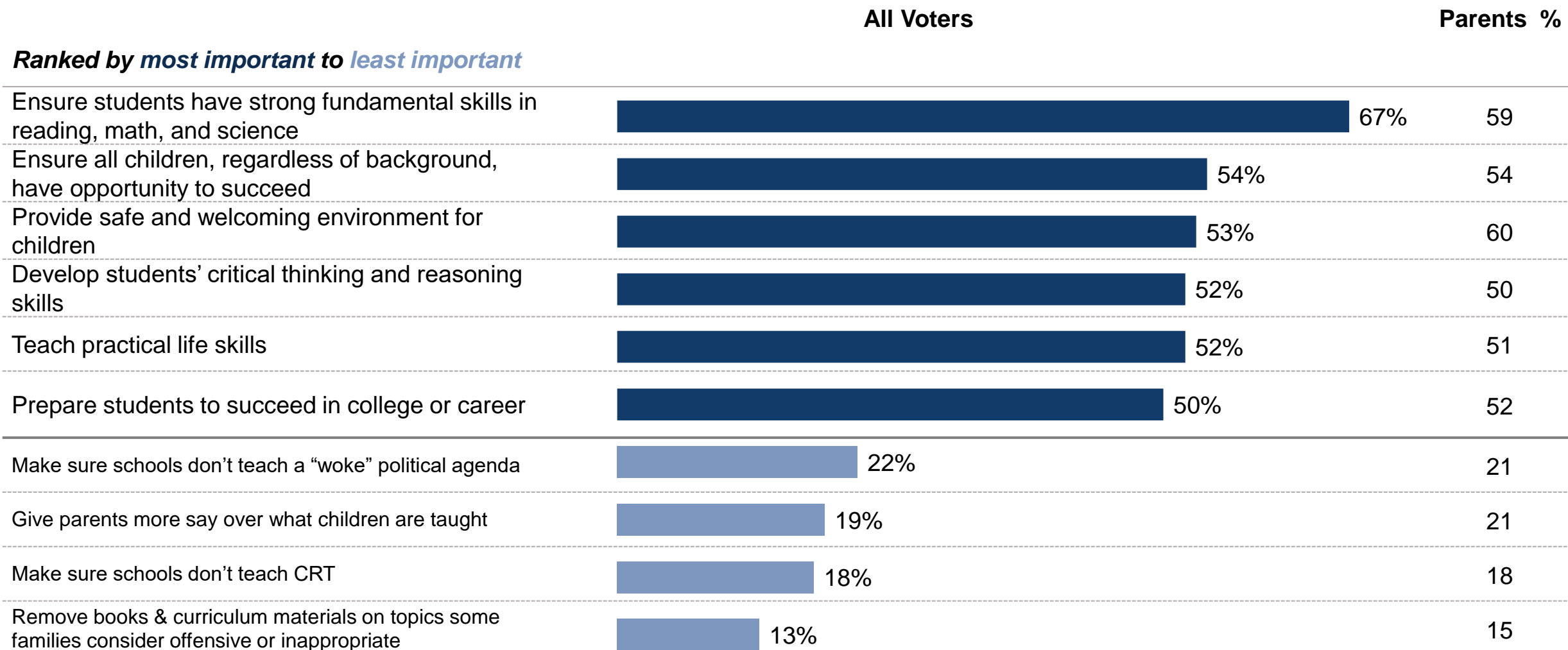
KEY POINT:

When voters and parents prioritize their goals for schools today, they emphasize the building blocks of student success: strong fundamental skills, and critical reasoning skills, practical life skills. And they want schools to provide a safe and welcoming environment for children and ensure an opportunity for all children to succeed.

The goals emphasized by “culture warriors” are at the bottom of the list.

Voters' top goals for schools focus on fundamentals, not the culture war

Four Most Important Goals for Public Schools Today:



KEY POINT:

By a lopsided margin, voters and parents want policymakers to focus on improving education in the public schools rather than giving parents more choice of schools.

Improving public schools is a much higher priority for voters than expanding choice of schools.

Which should be the higher educational priority today?

Improving the quality of education
in the public schools

Giving parents more choice over
which schools their children
attend, including private schools



		Improve quality of education	Give parents more choice			Improve quality of education	Give parents more choice
Key Voter Subgroups	Democrats	92%	8%	Age 18 to 34	85%	15%	
	Independents	81%	19%	Age 35 to 49	78%	22%	
	Republicans	69%	31%	Age 50 to 64	79%	21%	
	Men	76%	24%	Age 65+	78%	22%	
	Women	84%	16%	Public school parents	80%	20%	

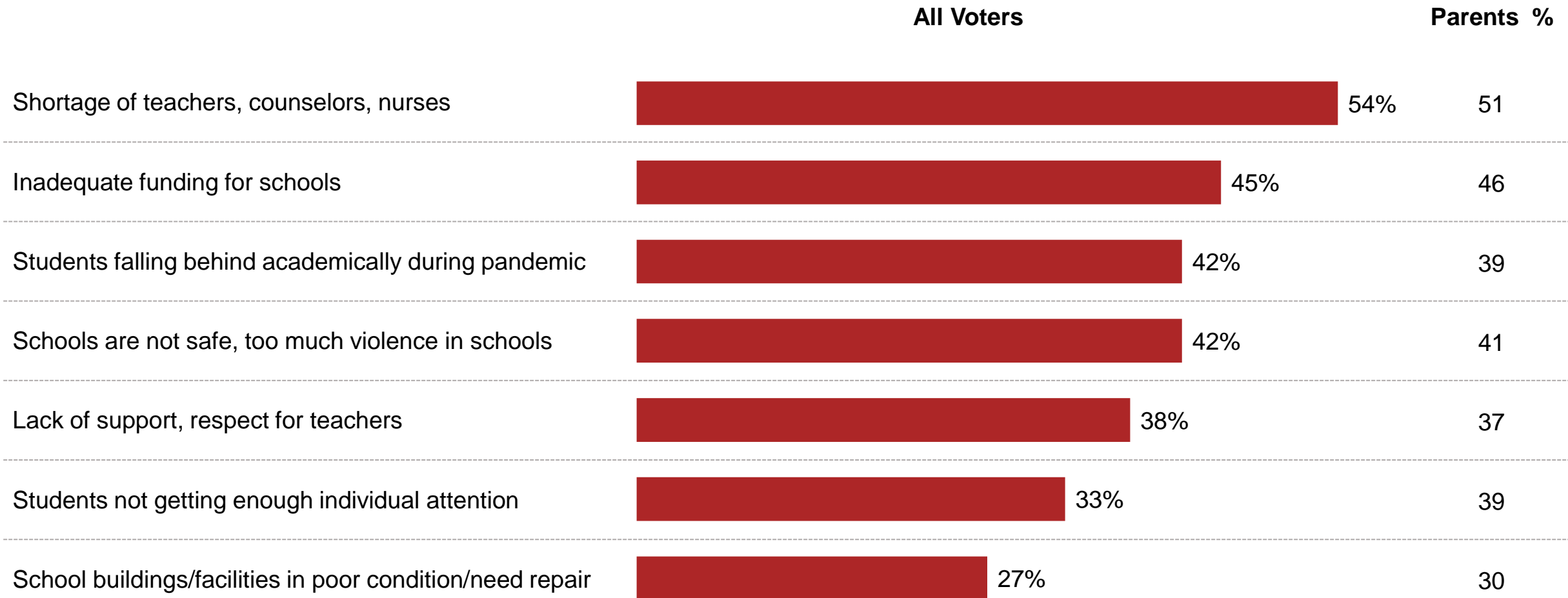
KEY POINT:

We asked voters and parents to identify the most important problems facing public schools today.

They are most likely to emphasize issues affecting student success, starting with school staff shortages, and are least likely to emphasize the “culture war” issues that are the focus of many Republican politicians.

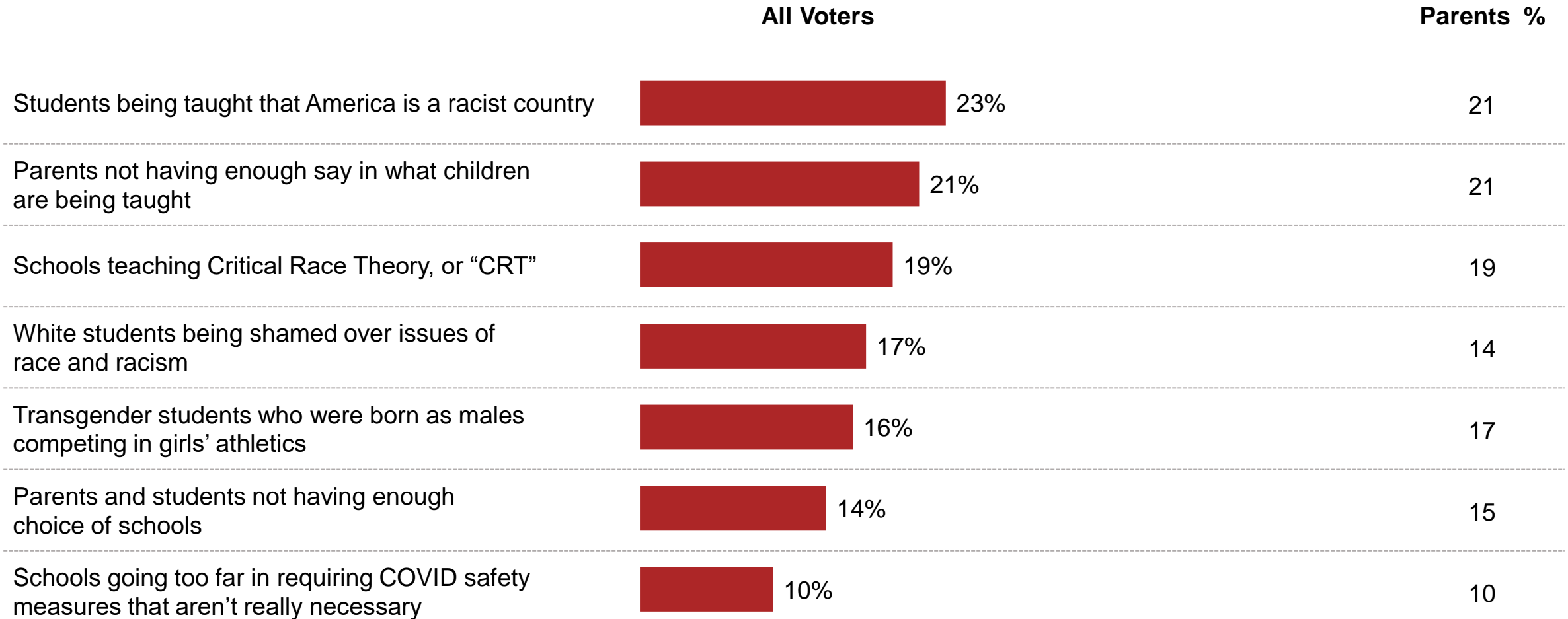
Most Important Problems Facing Public Schools *(top 7 problems)*

Four Most Important Problems for Elected Officials to Address in Public Schools



Least Important Problems Facing Public Schools *(bottom 7 problems)*

Four Most Important Problems for Elected Officials to Address in Public Schools



KEY POINT:

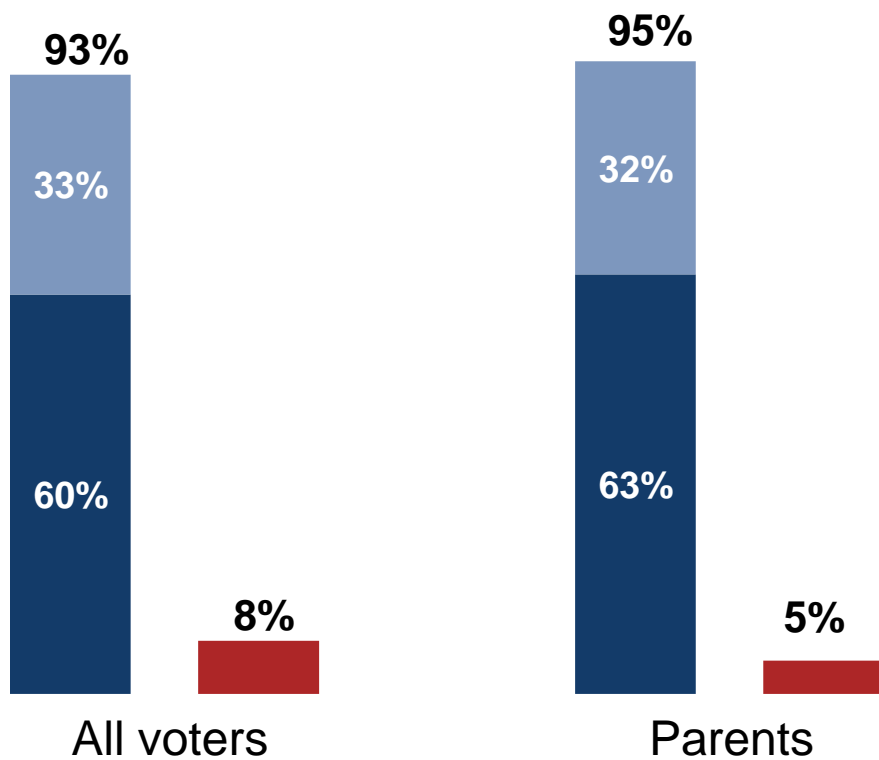
We also asked voters and parents to prioritize policies for improving public education.

Expanding access to career and technical education, addressing staff shortages, reducing class size, and improving literacy skills top the list, while items on the “culture war” agenda, including CRT and school choice, are least important.

Voters say improving public education should be a very important priority for officials in the next two years.

Thinking about priorities for elected officials in the next couple of years, how important should it be to improve public education?

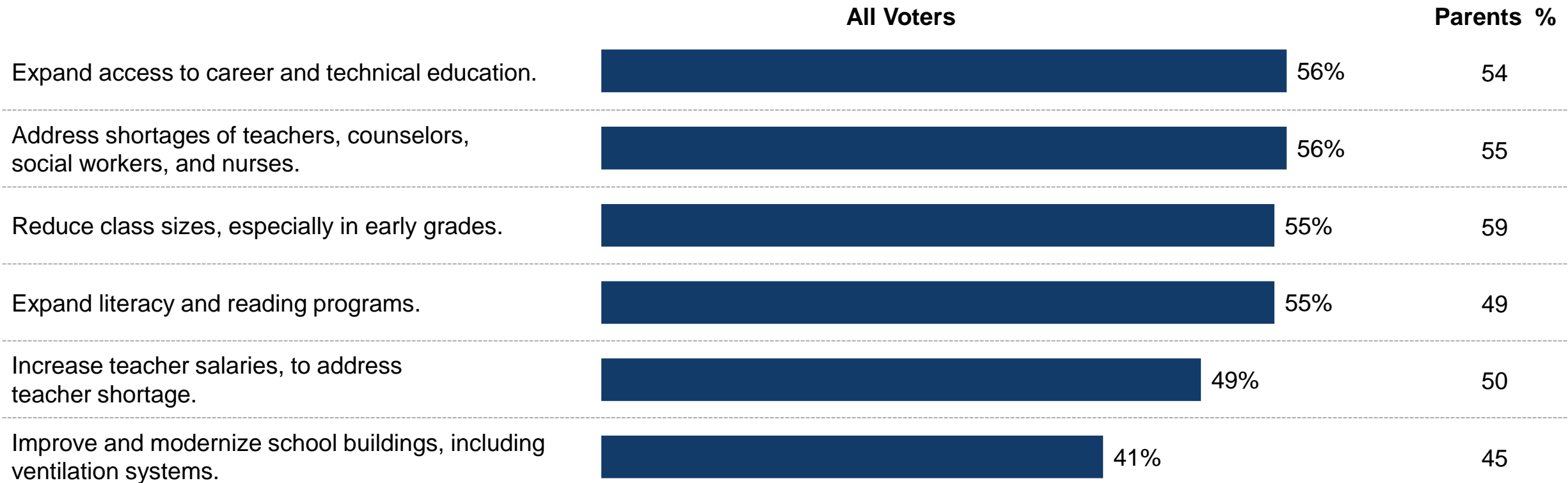
■ Very important ■ Fairly important ■ Less/not important



	Very Important %	Very/Fairly Important %		Very Important %	Very/Fairly Important %
Democrats	68	95	Men	58	92
Independents/leaners	59	93	Women	62	93
Republicans	53	91	White voters	58	92
Swing voters	53	93	Black voters	69	95
Age 18 to 34	55	92	Hispanic voters	60	95
Age 35 to 49	58	94	Northeast	62	94
Age 50 to 64	61	93	South	60	94
Age 65+	64	93	Midwest	57	91
			West	59	93

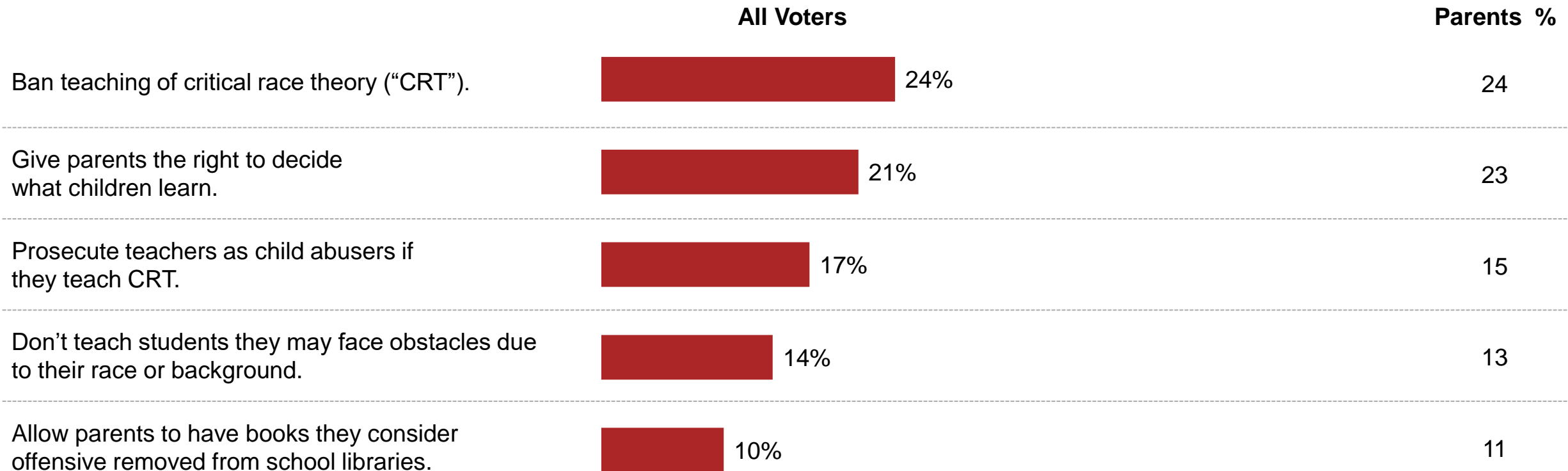
Policies focused on advancing student success are the top priorities.

Four Highest Education Priorities for Elected Leaders



Voters are much less likely to select items on the culture war agenda as priorities.

Four Highest Education Priorities for Elected Leaders



Each one of these five conservative candidate positions was rated a lower priority than every one of the six progressive education policies tested.

KEY POINT:

One key weakness of the culture war agenda is that voters and parents reject the idea that teachers today are pushing a "woke" political agenda in the schools. Most have high confidence in teachers.

Voters see the “culture war” as a distraction from what’s important and believe that politicians who are pushing these issues are doing so for their own political benefit.

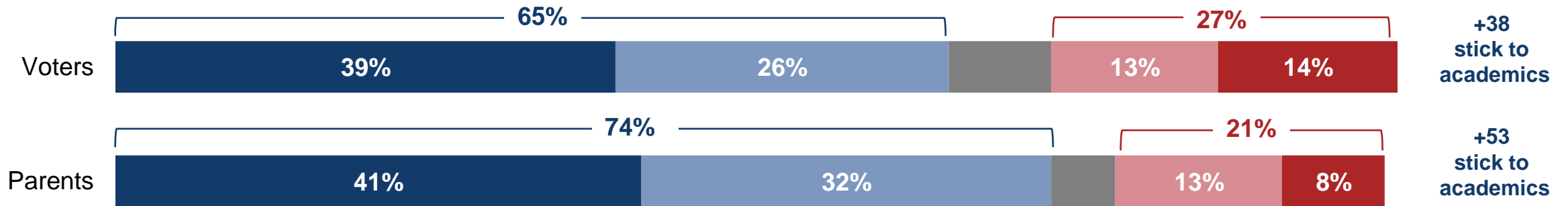
By overwhelming margins, voters and parents reject the contention that teachers are promoting a “woke” political agenda in the classroom.

Our teachers generally stick to teaching appropriate academic content and skills.

■ Much more ■ Somewhat more

Our teachers often go too far in promoting a “woke” political agenda in the classroom

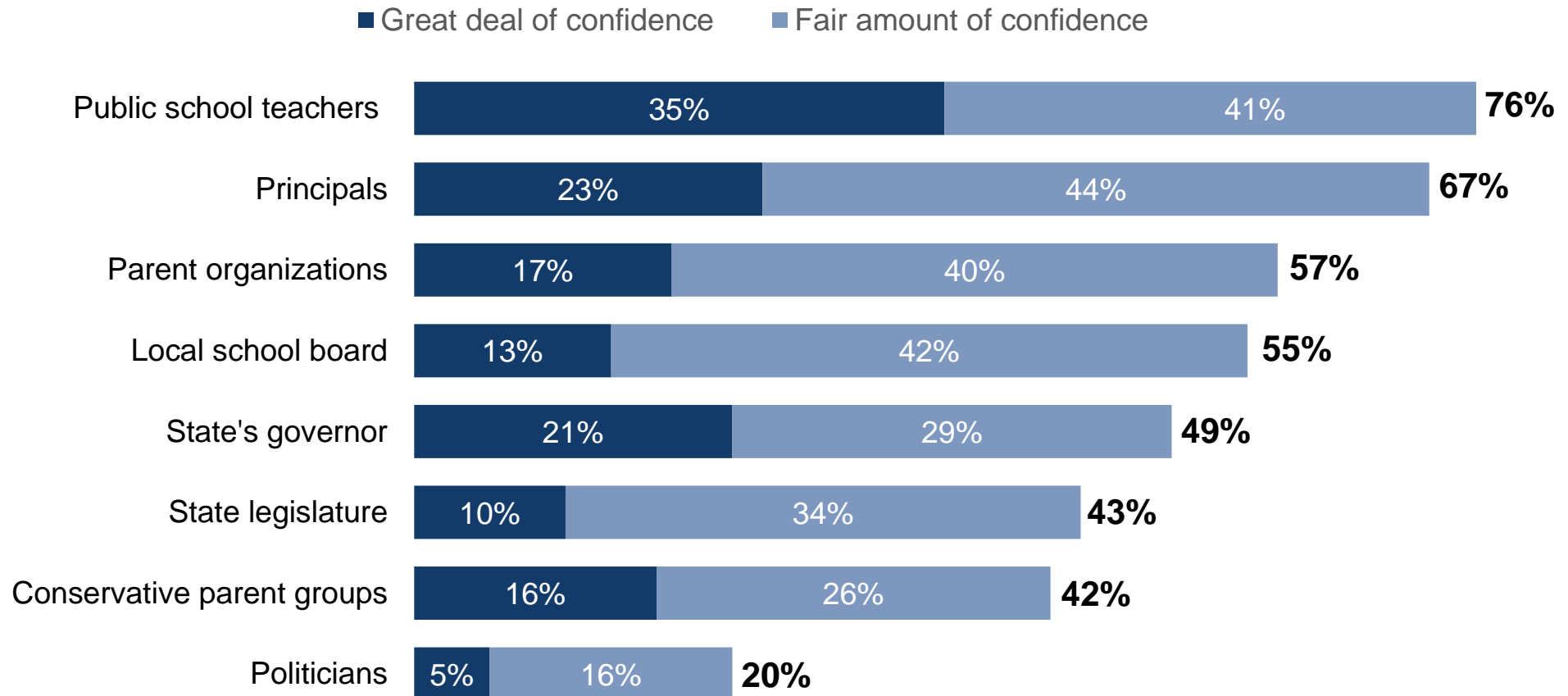
■ Much more ■ Somewhat more



Key Voter Subgroups		Stick to academics		Promote “woke” agenda		
		Stick to academics	Promote “woke” agenda	Stick to academics	Promote “woke” agenda	
	Democrats	78%	13%	Liberals	82%	11%
	Independents	58%	31%	Moderates	66%	23%
	Republicans	54%	39%	Conservatives	51%	41%
	Swing voters	56%	32%			

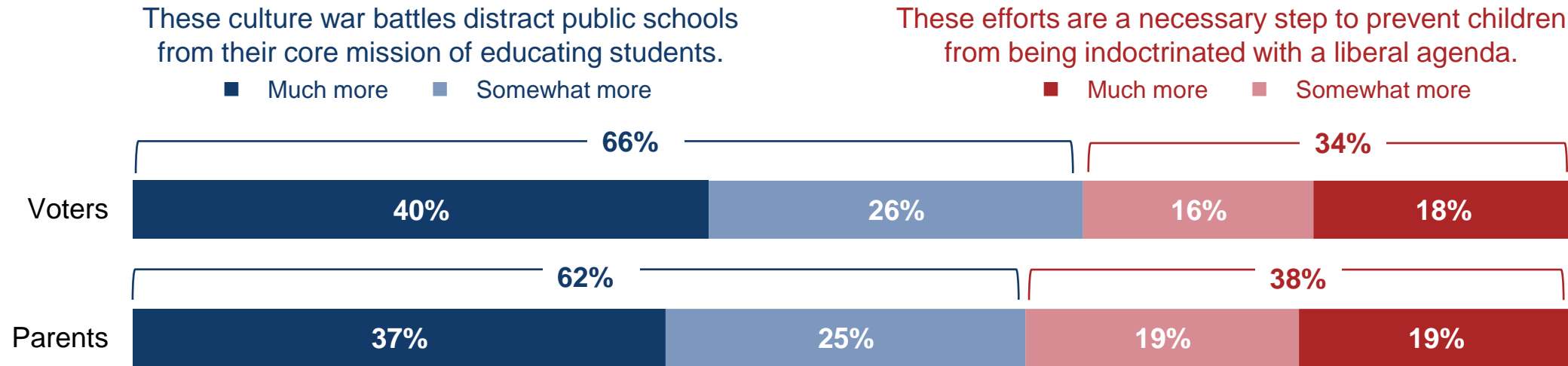
Voters trust educators—especially teachers—over political groups and politicians to have the right ideas for public education.

Total voters who have a great deal/fair amount of confidence in people and organizations involved with public education



Voters and parents agree: culture war battles distract schools from core educational message.

Which statement better describes your view of recent efforts to stop schools from teaching certain topics related to race and gender?



Voters believe that **candidates who focus on stopping schools from teaching certain topics related to race and gender are doing this mainly for their own political benefit (64%)** rather than to improve our public schools **(36%)**.

KEY POINT:

On a head-to-head basis, larger majorities of voters and parents prioritize giving schools and teachers the support they need to help students succeed, over parental control and stopping schools from teaching a “woke, liberal” agenda.

On this question, voters and parents see the priority of the Republican Party at odds with their own priority.

Voters' Priority for Schools: Support and resources for schools, not stopping a "woke agenda."

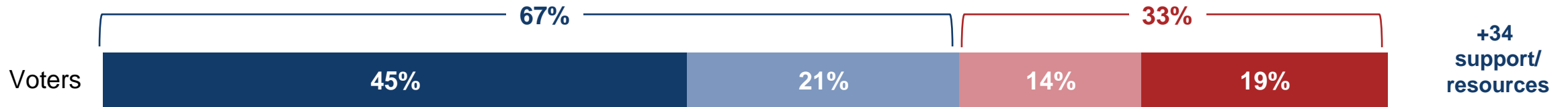
Which of these two approaches do you think should be the higher priority for improving education?

Making sure schools and teachers have the support and resources they need to meet the needs of all students.

■ Much higher ■ Somewhat higher

Giving parents more say in what children are taught and stopping schools from teaching a "woke, liberal" agenda.

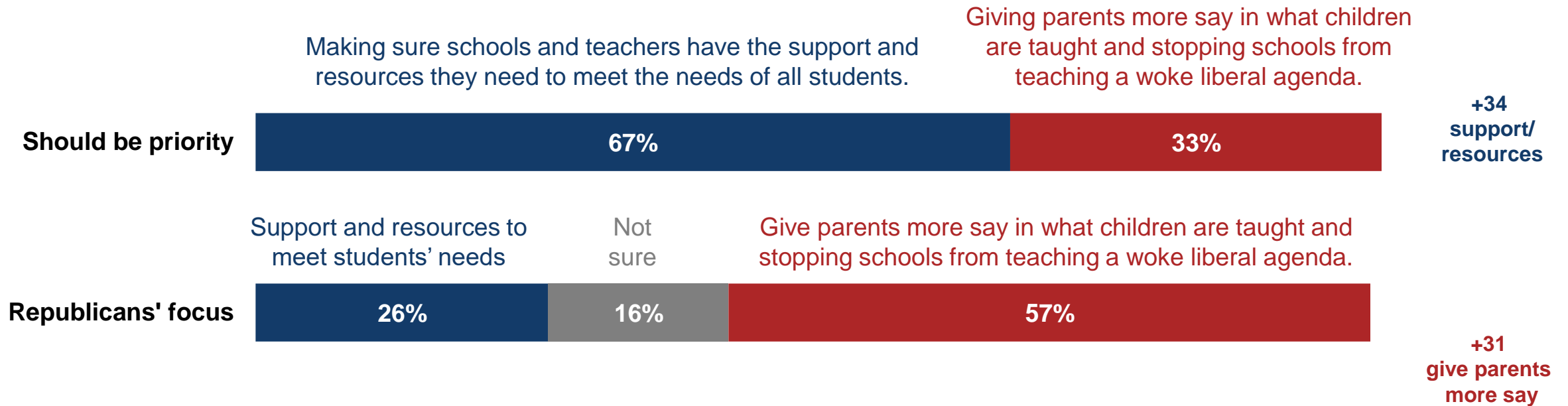
■ Much higher ■ Somewhat higher



Key Voter Subgroups		Support/	Give	Net	Support/	Give	Net	
		resources	parents	support/	resources	parents	support/	
		for schools	more say	resources	for schools	more say	resources	
Democrats		88%	12%	+76	Liberal	90%	10%	+80
Independents		73%	27%	+46	Moderate	77%	23%	+53
Republicans		45%	55%	-9	Conservative	41%	59%	-17
Swing voters		68%	32%	+36	Parent	71%	29%	+42

Republicans are out of step with voters on core education priorities.

Which of these two approaches *[should be the higher priority/are Republican officials focused on]* for improving education?



By a 10-point margin, voters say Democrats are focused on providing needed support and resources to schools.

Which of these two approaches do you think Democratic officials are more focused on right now when it comes to education?



Key Voter Subgroups		Support/	"Woke"	Net	Support/	"Woke"	Net	
		resources	agenda	support/	resources	agenda	support/	
		for schools		resources	for schools		resources	
Democrats		81%	9%	+71	Liberals	83%	9%	+74
Independents		46%	36%	+10	Moderates	53%	27%	+26
Republicans		20%	69%	-48	Conservatives	21%	71%	-50
					Parents	51%	38%	+13

KEY POINT:

Congressional Republicans will further demonstrate how out of sync they are with the public on education if their agenda is on relitigating pandemic policies and pushing “culture war” investigations of schools.

Across party lines, voters agree the new Congress should focus on providing support to public schools, not "culture war" investigations.

Better Approach on Education for New Congress

- Congress should focus on providing schools with the support and resources they need to raise academic achievement, expand and improve literacy programs, provide quality technical and vocational education, address teacher shortages, and provide equal opportunity to all kids. "Culture war" battles distract public schools from their core mission of educating students.
- Congress should focus on determining whether public schools stayed closed too long during the pandemic, and on investigating whether the federal government has tried to erase scientific definitions of gender or has promoted Critical Race Theory and other "woke" educational doctrines

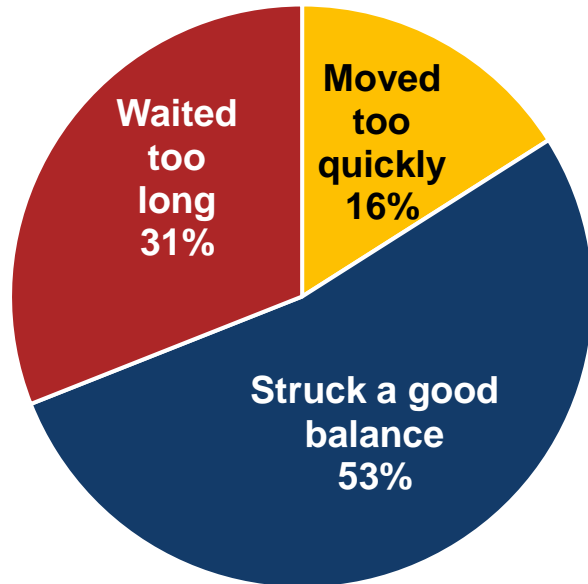


	Support/resources to improve schools	Schools closed too long/promote "woke" policies
Democrats	83%	7%
Independents/leaners	87%	13%
Republicans	77%	23%

Voters and parents reject the claim that schools waited too long to resume in-person instruction.

*In dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and **resuming in-person instruction**, I think public schools in my area:*

2022 Voters



Parents

