## Methodology

- Margin of error = ±3.1 percentage points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area Type</th>
<th></th>
<th>Race</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburbs</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural area</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party ID</th>
<th></th>
<th>Education</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>HS Grad or less</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>College graduates</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th></th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular public</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter school</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Fathers</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Findings

• Parents value public schools as the most important foundation of strong communities and a strong nation, because they help children from all backgrounds to reach their potential.

• Parents reject many of the education trends and policies being implemented in school systems today: budget cuts, increased testing, school closings, shifting resources from regular schools to charters, and a narrowed curriculum.

• Parents want to see a new approach on education. They overwhelmingly prefer a focus on ensuring strong neighborhood public schools for all children over an agenda of school choice through more charters and vouchers.
What Parents Want From Public Schools
Most Important Institution For America’s Future: Public Schools

Which one of the following institutions do you feel is most important in providing a good future for America and the American people?

- Public schools: 60%
- Religious institutions: 16%
- Business corporations: 11%
- The military: 7%

Most important for my community:
- Public schools: 58%
- Religious institutions: 14%
- Business corporations: 12%
- Law enforcement: 11%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring that all children, regardless of background, have the opportunity to succeed</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educating America’s future workforce to build a strong economy</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing students to get good jobs and have successful careers</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting students ready to succeed in college</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing poverty by providing students from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to succeed</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Ratings of 9 and 10 on a zero-to-ten scale, 10 = extremely important goal
Parents' Top Goals For Their Schools

Proportions rating each as a very important goal* for public schools

- Improving students' knowledge in subject areas like English, history, science, and math: 81%
- Providing a safe and secure environment for children: 80%
- Developing students’ critical thinking and reasoning abilities: 68%
- Educating students about the rights and responsibilities of citizens in our democratic society: 61%
- Addressing students’ social, emotional, economic and health needs: 54%

* Ratings of 9 and 10 on a zero-to-ten scale, 10 = extremely important goal
Satisfaction With Children’s Public Schools

When it comes to helping your children achieve up to their full potential, how satisfied are you with your children's public schools?

- **Very/fairly satisfied**
  - Urban: 66%
  - Suburban: 72%
  - Rural: 60%
  - Income less than $50K: 62%
  - Income $50K-$100K: 68%
  - Income more than $100K: 71%
  - Northeast: 70%
  - South: 60%
  - Midwest: 72%
  - West: 72%
- **Children attend:**
  - Regular public schools: 68%
  - Charter schools: 60%

- **Somewhat/not satisfied**
  - 31%

- **Not satisfied**
  - 9%

- **Very satisfied**
  - 38%

- **Overall Satisfaction**
  - 68%
Today’s Students Do More Difficult Schoolwork

Thinking back to when I was in school, I would say that the schoolwork my children do is:

- **74%** More difficult
- **9%** About the same
- **14%** Less difficult

### Children’s schoolwork is more difficult:

- Age 18 to 39: 75%
- Age 40 to 49: 74%
- Age 50/over: 71%
- High school grad/less: 80%
- Some college: 71%
- College graduate: 70%
Positive Assessment Of Teacher Quality

How would you rate the overall quality and performance of teachers in your local public schools?

- Excellent/good: 71%
- Just adequate: 20%
- Not so good/poor: 7%

### Excellent/good

- Urban: 69%
- Suburban: 73%
- Rural: 72%

- Income less than $50K: 69%
- Income $50K-$100K: 72%
- Income $100K or more: 73%

- Whites: 74%
- African Americans: 65%
- Hispanics: 64%

### Children attend:

- Regular public schools: 72%
- Charter schools: 59%
Most Important Qualities For A Good Teacher

*Thinking about the teachers your children have had, which one or two of the following qualities do you feel is most important for a good teacher to have?*

- Understands the individual needs of each child they teach: 46%
- Knows the subject material very well: 29%
- Believes that every student can succeed: 29%
- Loves teaching: 27%
- Cares about children: 19%
Parents’ View Of Current Education Policies And Trends
Parents See Too Much Emphasis On Testing

In your opinion, is there too much, about the right amount, or not enough emphasis on standardized testing and test scores in the public schools?

- Too much testing: 57%
- Right amount of testing: 29%
- Not enough testing: 8%

The standardized tests and assessments given by my state:

- Do NOT accurately measure student achievement: 64%
- Accurately measure student achievement: 28%
Impact Of Testing: Time Away From Learning, Anxiety For Children

Have any of your children ever felt worried or anxious about taking state standardized tests or assessments?

- My child has felt worried/anxious: 59%
- My child has not felt worried/anxious: 39%

The time devoted to preparing students for state tests and administering state tests in my children's schools:

- Has taken too much time away from teaching and learning: 57%
- Has not taken too much time from teaching and learning: 37%
Parents See Two Positive Developments In Education

- Providing health and nutrition services to low-income families through the schools: 84% have had a positive effect, 5% both/neither/not sure, 11% have had a negative effect.
- Having most states adopt a common set of academic standards: 72% have had a positive effect, 8% both/neither/not sure, 20% have had a negative effect.

(continued)
# Few Recent Education Trends Seen As Positive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Trend</th>
<th>Has had positive effect</th>
<th>Both/neither/not sure</th>
<th>Has had negative effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase charters and spend less on public schools</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have some public schools by for-profit corporations</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut back on art/music to focus on reading and math</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High turnover of teaching staff in many schools</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing public schools in major cities</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increases in class sizes</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting school budgets</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layoffs of teachers</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking about the problems facing our public schools today, which one or two of the following are the biggest problems and most important to address?

- Too much standardized testing and teaching to the test: 32%
- Lack of funding: 32%
- Class sizes are too large: 23%
- Lack of support for teachers: 17%
- Poor teacher quality: 16%
- Expectations and standards for students set too low: 15%
- Unsafe schools: 8%
**Parents Want Quality Neighborhood Public School More Than Choice**

*With which statement do you agree more?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree More</th>
<th>Good n’hood school</th>
<th>More choice of schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I want a <strong>good quality neighborhood public school</strong> I can send my children to</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to have <strong>more choice</strong> of which schools I can send my children to</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Urban**
- 67% Good n’hood school
- 27% More choice of schools

**Suburb**
- 69% Good n’hood school
- 22% More choice of schools

**Rural**
- 72% Good n’hood school
- 19% More choice of schools

**Income:**
- Less than $50K: 66% Good n’hood school, 23% More choice of schools
- $50K-$100K: 69% Good n’hood school, 24% More choice of schools
- More than $100K: 74% Good n’hood school, 21% More choice of schools

**Ethnicity:**
- Whites: 72% Good n’hood school, 20% More choice of schools
- African Americans: 59% Good n’hood school, 32% More choice of schools
- Hispanics: 63% Good n’hood school, 27% More choice of schools
Parents Reject Current Education Agenda

- **Reduce salaries and benefits for teachers and other school employees**: 56% strongly disapprove, 79% overall disapprove
- **Reduce spending on regular public schools, increase spending on charters**: 55% strongly disapprove, 76% overall disapprove
- **Close down low-performing public schools, assign the students to other schools**: 37% strongly disapprove, 61% overall disapprove
- **End teacher additional pay for master's degree or other advanced degree**: 44% strongly disapprove, 60% overall disapprove
- **Increase the length of the school day**: 36% strongly disapprove, 58% overall disapprove
- **Taxpayer-funded vouchers for parents to send children to private schools**: 39% strongly disapprove, 56% overall disapprove
- **Increase the length of the school year**: 35% strongly disapprove, 53% overall disapprove
Parents’ Agenda For Public Education
Parents’ Priority: Good Public School In Every Community, Not Charters And Vouchers

With which approach for improving education do you agree more?

We should focus on ensuring that every child has access to a good public school in their community. We need to make the investments needed to ensure all schools provide safe conditions, an enriching curriculum, support for students' social and emotional development, and effective teachers.

We should open more public charter schools and provide more vouchers that allow parents to send their children to private schools at public expense. Children will receive the best education if we give families the financial freedom to attend schools that meet their needs.
Parents’ Priority: Good Public School In Every Community

*With which approach for improving education do you agree more?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Good public schools</th>
<th>More charters/vouchers</th>
<th>Good public schools</th>
<th>More charters/vouchers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban</strong></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suburban</strong></td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural</strong></td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Income:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $50K</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
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<td>77%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>More than $100K</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whites</strong></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>African Americans</strong></td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanics</strong></td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northeast</strong></td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South</strong></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Midwest</strong></td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West</strong></td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democrats</strong></td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independents</strong></td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Republicans</strong></td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mothers</strong></td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fathers</strong></td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children attend:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg. public schools</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter schools</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfaction w/schools:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very/fairly satisfied</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just somewhat/not satisfied</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Professionalism, Standards, & Support – Not Firings – Is Road To Better Teaching

With which statement do you agree more?

The best way to improve teaching is to treat teachers like professionals, raise hiring standards, and give struggling teachers more support and training

57%

The best way to improve teaching is to regularly remove poorly performing teachers from the classroom and hire new teachers to replace them

33%

67% of parents believe that poorly performing teachers could be good teachers with more support and training; only 23% believe they are incapable of being good teachers and should leave the profession.
Parents Want A Well-Rounded Education For Their Children

In each pair, with which statement do you agree more?

It is important for schools to continue offering courses in subjects such as art, music, and physical education, so students receive a well-rounded education

- 74%

Schools should focus more on teaching math and reading, and spend less time on subjects that are less important for students’ success in college

- 18%

Schools should focus on teaching the whole child, including their emotional and social development, in addition to teaching academics

- 54%

Schools should focus more on teaching basic academics, like math, science, and reading, which is their most important responsibility

- 35%
Main Obstacle For Low-Income Kids Is Problems Outside The Classroom

Which is the bigger obstacle facing children from low-income families?

- Social and economic problems outside the classroom: 80%
- Quality of public schools in their community: 14%
- Not sure: 6%

Social/economic problems is bigger obstacle:

- Urban: 80%
- Suburban: 80%
- Rural: 80%
- Income under $50k: 77%
- Income $50K-$100K: 82%
- Income over $100K: 82%
- Whites: 84%
- African Americans: 75%
- Hispanics: 72%
Parents’ Real Education Agenda

- Extra resources to turn around struggling neighborhood schools: 65% strongly approve, 90% total approval.
- Hold charter schools accountable: 72% strongly approve, 89% total approval.
- More support/training to struggling teachers: 62% strongly approve, 89% total approval.
- Expand/improve new teacher mentoring: 58% strongly approve, 89% total approval.
- Reduce class sizes, especially in early grades: 68% strongly approve, 88% total approval.
- Neighborhood hub schools: open longer, academic help, health services for families: 52% strongly approve, 81% total approval.
- Extra pay for teachers in hard-to-staff schools: 46% strongly approve, 80% total approval.
- High-quality preschool for all three/four-year-olds: 58% strongly approve, 80% total approval.
Who Has The Right Ideas For Public Education?

How much confidence do you have in this group to have the right ideas for your public schools?

- **Teachers in public schools**: 52% Great deal of confidence, 48% Fair amount of confidence (81% total confidence)
- **Principals**: 49% Great deal of confidence, 51% Fair amount of confidence (77% total confidence)
- **Parent organizations**: 41% Great deal of confidence, 59% Fair amount of confidence (70% total confidence)
- **Governor of state**: 17% Great deal of confidence, 83% Fair amount of confidence (39% total confidence)
- **Mayors/local officials**: 12% Great deal of confidence, 88% Fair amount of confidence (37% total confidence)
- **Business owners/corporate executives**: 12% Great deal of confidence, 88% Fair amount of confidence (33% total confidence)
Parents Want Elected Officials To Work With – Not “Stand Up To” – Teachers Unions

With which statement do you agree more?

We need elected officials who can work with teachers unions, because improving education requires the involvement of teachers

58%

We need elected officials who will stand up to teachers unions, because they are an obstacle to improving education

30%
Which Kind of Candidate Will Public School Parents Support?

For which candidate would you be more likely to vote, based on this description of their education views?

This candidate believes the best way to provide all children a good education is to help make every regular neighborhood public school a great school, with effective teachers, smaller class sizes, services for families, and a well-rounded curriculum.

79%

This candidate believes we should reduce spending on regular public schools, open more charter schools, remove poorly performing teachers from the classroom, and provide vouchers to parents who send their children to private schools.

15%
Public School Parents On The Promise Of Public Education

Nationwide survey among parents of children in public K-12 schools
Conducted July 2013
for
AFT
A Union of Professionals