



THE INDEPENDENT VOICE
OF PARENTS AND
FAMILIES ACROSS THE
UNITED STATES

Dear _____,

Thank you for meeting with me/us to discuss the National Parents Union's role in making sure our nation's most vulnerable populations of children have access to a high quality education. Here is vital information that we'd like to share with your office. We are eager to discuss the contents of this data and key findings with you in the future.

National Parents Union Leads Only National Parent Poll Designed by Parents

In the spring of 2020, when the pandemic first hit and public schools across the country closed, the National Parents Union began polling parents to ensure that their concerns and ideas were part of the policy discussions about their children's education. In the spring of 2020, we surveyed 500 K12 public school parents in a weekly tracking poll from April thru June. In September 2020, we expanded our polling efforts to a monthly national poll of 1,000 K12 public school parents. Please see methodology at the end of this memo for more details.

The NPU poll project is the only national poll of its kind, developed by parents to capture parent opinions and infuse them into public policy conversations and decision making regarding public education and related matters affecting America's families.

Summary of Key Findings from the NPU National Parents Poll 2020-21

The following is a summary of key findings from the NPU National Parents poll for May 2021.

Majority of parents support law banning hair discrimination in public schools.

- 81% of parents support the Crown Act, a law that would protect public school students and staff from discrimination based on race-related hair texture or hairstyle (e.g., braids, dreadlocks, twists, afros or natural hair).
- Support for the Crown Act is strong across all demographic groups:
 - 80% of white parents; 85% of Black parents; and 84% of Hispanic parents support.
 - 73% of Republican parents; 76% of Independents; and 89% of Democrats support.

Working families report struggling with balancing work and child rearing.

- 1 in 4 have had conflicts between work and childcare, while only 20% of parents say that they have been given more flexibility in their work schedule by their employer.
- 25% of parents with household incomes of less than \$50k were more likely to have lost a job or been furloughed this year.

Schools not communicating with nor engaging parents in conversations and decisions about how the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds will be used at their school.

- Fewer than 3 in 10 parents report that their child's school has shared with them their plan on using the federal funding in particular to help address challenges related to COVID-19 while only 27% say schools have asked them for input or feedback on how the additional funding should be used.
- This is particularly true for lower income families. Only 19% of parents with incomes less than \$50k indicate their school has communicated their plans for the ARP funding and only 16% indicate their school is asking for their input as compared to 42% of parents with an income of \$75k+ receiving information and 32% being asked to provide input. Families with lower incomes are being left out of the conversations that matter most for their children.
- We asked parents how much of a priority should be placed on specific ways in which the funds should be spent. Parents have been consistent throughout our polling on the kinds of activities and services they want to see funded at their schools (% below indicate that the item was one of the top priorities or very important in terms of priority):
 - Computers and high-speed internet access (82%);
 - Services and support for students with disabilities (81%);
 - Free breakfast and lunch program (78%);
 - Guidance counselors, social workers, school psychologists (mental health) (77%);
 - COVID related health and safety measures such as PPE, hand sanitizer etc. (76%);

- Curriculum and staff training to provide an inclusive environment (74%);
- Access to career, trade and college preparation opportunities (73%);
- Individualized learning plan for each student (71%);
- More learning opportunities before and after school (69%);
- Communication about student progress in the language their parents speak (69%)
- Flexible school year calendar and schedule (63%); and,
- More learning opportunities in the summer (61%).

More parents continue to want the option to select either in-person or online/at-home learning format for their own children both this school year and next.

- Majority of parents want both in-person and at-home online learning options to be provided for the remainder of this year (60% in May, 62% in April, 58% in March) and for next year as well (56% in May, 58% in April, 56% in March).
- Majority of parents indicate they want their child on campus full-time next year (51%) while 20% indicate they want their child to attend only remote or online and 21% indicate they want a part-time in person and part-time online option.
 - The results for this question vary significantly by party ideology and race/ethnicity. For example 61% of Republican parents indicate they want their child to attend only full time in person on campus next year while 53% of Democrat parents say the same.
 - 56% of white parents say they want their child only in person on campus while 44% of parents of color want only an in person option (24% of parents of color want an only remote/online option and 23% want the part-time in person and part-time online option.)
 - We also see 3 in 10 parents indicating that they will change their child's school next year if the school is not offering the option that they want (either in person or online).
 - 74% of parents say once they have selected the format for learning next year, they would like it to remain consistent. Only those parents who are indicating an interest in a hybrid option indicate at higher levels they may be open to switching formats during the school year. Bottom line, parents want consistently for their children and families.

Parents continue to say schools should rethink education.

- 55% of parents say that schools should focus on rethinking education rather than going back to the way things were before the pandemic. (55% in April; 59% in March, 60% in February; 59% in January; 58% in December; 66% in November; 64% in October; 60% in September)
- Opinions regarding continuation of statewide testing is divided; 49% of parents say that testing should continue while 45% say that there should be break from statewide testing his year.
- Majority continue to support making access to a quality public education a civil right and in May we hit a new high in terms of % of parents agreeing with this idea; 81% in May, 77% in April, 74% in March; 75% in February; 75% in January; 72% in December; 78% in November; 76% in October and 75% in September.
- Important to note that 43% of parents in our survey in May indicate that their child continues to learn less this school year. This finding has been consistently high in all of our surveys.

When asked what parents worry about making sure their child stays on track in school along with kids missing social interactions with their friends.

- A new question in May found that 6 in 10 parents have experienced more stress due to COVID-19.
- Parents continue to worry about ensuring their children stay on track in school (65%); kids missing social interaction at school and with friends (62%); and concerns about how the pandemic is affecting children's mental health and emotional wellbeing (60%).

Most parents plan to have their children vaccinated.

- When it comes to vaccinating their children, 60% in May (62% in April, 61% in March and 57% in February) indicate they will do so.

Parents continue to approve of President Joe Biden's handling of the health and economic related COVID-19 crisis.

- 67% of parents approve of the President's handling of the public health response (67% in April, 70% in March); 26% disapprove (26% in April, 21% in March).
- 66% of parents approve of the President's handling of the economic recovery (65% in April, 67% in March); 28% disapprove (28% in April, 22% in March).
- 69% of parents approve of the President's handling of the reopening of public schools for in-person learning (62% in April, 64%); 24% disapprove (29% in April, 26% in March).

National Parent Poll Methodology

- The National Parents Union (NPU) will conduct a monthly, online national survey of parents of public schools students in grades K-12 to better understand the challenges and experiences they are facing during the COVID-19 crisis and their expectations and priorities for the future.
- The poll sample will be N= 1,000 parents of K-12 public school students per week.
- The monthly poll will run September 2020 to June 2021.
- Results are weighted by gender, age, race/ethnicity, education and region to reflect known population demographics.
- The poll will be conducted by Echelon Insights.
- Poll results are available on our website at: www.nationalparents.org

If you have found our data useful and would like to discuss it in more detail, do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully,