



National Parents Union Survey
N=1,506 parents of public school students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade
Sample from online web panels
Field Dates: March 26–27, 2024
Margin of error: ± 2.8 percentage points

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE QUESTIONS

IF HAS TWO OR MORE CHILDREN IN GRADES K-12 [QKidNum=2-6], INSERT:
[ParentIntroText] For the following questions, please respond regarding your [INSERT FIRST/SECOND/ETC] child in birth order from oldest to youngest, who is in <INSERT RESPONSE FOR APPROPRIATE CHILD FROM QKidGrade>.
[RANDOMIZE WHICH CHILD IS ASKED ABOUT, SPLITTING EVENLY BASED ON NUMBER OF CHILDREN. FOR EXAMPLE, FOR PARENTS OF TWO CHILDREN, ASK 50% ABOUT FIRST CHILD (IN BIRTH ORDER FROM OLDEST TO YOUNGEST) WHO ATTENDS K-12 SCHOOL, 50% ABOUT SECOND CHILD WHO ATTENDS K-12 SCHOOL. PROGRAM FOR UP TO SIX CHILDREN.]

- [QOnTrack – On Track Battery] “Academic standards” describe what all public school students are expected to learn by the time they complete a particular grade level.**

In the following subject areas, is your child on track to meet the academic standards for their grade level? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-4, 4-1] [RANDOMIZE ITEM ORDER]

1. Yes, definitely 2. Yes, probably 3. No, probably not 4. No, definitely not 5. Unsure

	YES, DEF./PROB	NO, DEF./PROB. NOT	1. Yes, definitely	2. Yes, probably	3. No, probably not	4. No, definitely not	5. Unsure
Writing and reading	93%	7%	70%	23%	5%	2%	*%
Science	91%	6%	63%	27%	4%	2%	3%
Math	90%	9%	69%	22%	6%	3%	1%

Summary of Responses to On Track Battery:

No, probably/definitely not on track in at least one subject area (math, science, or writing/reading) 14%

2. **[QPrepared] By the end of this school year, do you feel your child will be academically prepared for next school year? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-4, 4-1]**

YES, DEFINITELY/PROBABLY	93%
NO, DEFINITELY/PROBABLY NOT	5%
Yes, definitely	66%
Yes, probably	27%
No, probably not	4%
No, definitely not	1%
Unsure	2%

3. **[QImportAttend] How important do you feel it is for your child to attend school every day? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-4, 4-1]**

VERY/SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	98%
NOT TOO/NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	2%
Very important	88%
Somewhat important	10%
Not too important	1%
Not at all important	*%
Unsure	*%

4. **[QBen - Benefits Battery] Thinking about your child's current school, how much do you think attending school in-person benefits your child in each of the following areas? [DISPLAY AS GRID] [RANDOMIZE ITEM ORDER] [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-4, 4-1]**

1. A lot 2. Some 3. Not much 4. Not at all 5. Unsure

	A LOT/ SOME	NOT MUCH/ AT ALL	1. A lot	2. Some	3. Not much	4. Not at all	5. Unsure
Learning academic skills	97%	3%	79%	18%	3%	*%	*%
Developing social skills	95%	4%	82%	14%	3%	1%	1%
Building character	95%	4%	71%	23%	4%	1%	1%
Learning skills they need for the future	95%	5%	71%	24%	4%	1%	1%
Their mental health or emotional wellbeing	91%	8%	65%	26%	6%	2%	1%

5. **[QAbsences] How many days has your child been absent this school year?**

0 - They have not missed any days of school	17%
1-5 days	59%
6-10 days	16%
10-15 days	4%
More than 15 days	3%

[IF CHILD HAS MISSED AT LEAST ONE DAY OF SCHOOL (QAbsences=2-5), ASK:]

6. [QMissReason] What are the reasons your child has been absent from school? (Please select all that apply.) [RANDOMIZE 1-15] [SELECT MULTIPLE]

	(n=1250)
Physical illness	64%
Medical, dental, or other appointments	48%
Weather	22%
Family emergencies	19%
Family vacation	11%
Mental health issues	7%
Lack of transportation	6%
My child just decided they didn't want to attend	5%
My job	4%
Concerns about bullying	4%
Sports or extracurricular activities	4%
Unsafe environment at school	3%
Lack of quality instruction at their school	3%
Concerns about racism	2%
I knew their teacher would be absent / have a substitute	2%
My child is academically advanced and does not need to attend	2%
Other reason (Please specify)	3%

[IF CHILD HAS MISSED AT LEAST ONE DAY OF SCHOOL (QAbsences=2-5), ASK:]

7. [QAbsentImpact] You indicated that your child has missed at least one day of school this school year. Has your child experienced any of the following challenges or benefits as a result of missing school? (Select all that apply, if any.) [RANDOMIZE 1-10] [SELECT MULTIPLE]

	(n=1250)
Benefitted from taking time off to recover from a physical illness	28%
Missed important instruction/curriculum material	17%
Struggled to catch up on schoolwork	15%
Benefitted emotionally or mentally from taking a break from school	14%
Missed out on athletic or other extracurricular activities	10%
Missed important social interactions with peers	10%
Benefitted from a real-world learning experience while absent from school	10%
Benefitted from participating in a special activity that they wouldn't be able to do at school	8%
Faced disciplinary consequences from their school for unexcused absences	7%
Struggled during absences because they couldn't access school counseling services	6%
No, my child has not experienced any of the above	36%
Unsure	3%

8. [QAbsPolicy] Has your child's school shared their policy on attendance and absences with you? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

Yes	90%
No	8%
Unsure	3%

9. **[QSchoolInform]** How does your child’s school keep you informed about your child’s school attendance and absences? Select all that apply. [RANDOMIZE 1-6] [SELECT MULTIPLE]

Phone call	62%
Email	49%
Text message	39%
PowerSchool or other online platform	21%
U.S. mail	15%
Home visit	5%
Other (Please specify)	2%
My child’s school does not inform me about attendance or absences	2%

[IF CHILD HAS MISSED AT LEAST ONE DAY OF SCHOOL (QAbsences=2-5), ASK:]

10. **[QStaffRespect]** When school staff have communicated with you about your child’s absences, do you feel the staff have been . . . ? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-4, 4-1]

	(n=1250)
VERY/SOMEWHAT RESPECTFUL	89%
VERY/SOMEWHAT DISRESPECTFUL	4%
Very respectful	69%
Somewhat respectful	20%
Somewhat disrespectful	2%
Very disrespectful	2%
Unsure	1%
Not applicable — They have not communicated with me at all	6%

11. **[QInfomPrefer]** How would you prefer to be informed about your child’s attendance and absences? Select all that apply. [RANDOMIZE 1-6] [SELECT MULTIPLE]

Phone call	58%
Text message	51%
Email	49%
PowerSchool or other online platform	18%
U.S. mail	11%
Home visit	5%
Other (Please specify)	*%

12. **[QPeerComp]** Compared to other students at their school, do you think your child is . . . ? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-3; 3-1]

Absent more often than most students	8%
Absent about the same amount as other students	28%
Absent less often than most students	59%
Unsure	6%

13. [QAbsentIssue] “Chronic absenteeism” is defined as a student missing at least 10 percent of all school days in an academic year for any reason, including excused and unexcused absences.

Based on what you know about your child’s school, do you think . . . ? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

A small number of students at their school may be chronically absent, but it is not a widespread issue	59%
Chronic absenteeism is a widespread issue at their school — many students are chronically absent	19%
Unsure	23%

14. [QImproveAttend] If your child’s school could do one thing to improve attendance, what do you think would be most effective?

[OPEN-END - TEXT BOX]

Make school more engaging/fun/worthwhile	11%
Provide incentives to attend school (awards/rewards for attendance)	8%
Communicate/engage with parents more	6%
Enforce attendance policies / Hold parents and students accountable	5%
Change school schedule (Later start time, shorter days, more days off, other changes)	5%
Excuse sick students / have them stay home	4%
Address bullying / Address safety issues	4%
Offer virtual option (for kids who are sick or have trouble getting to school, bad weather days, etc)	3%
Offer more transportation options/improve transportation	3%
Improve staff/staffing (Have better teachers and staff, fewer substitutes, more teachers, more one-on-one time)	3%
Generally care about students / Find out what is going on / Encourage students to attend	3%
Clean/sanitize the school better	2%
Support students' mental health needs	1%
Don't count tardies or early departures as absences / Make sure student is actually absent	1%
Improve food, lunch / Offer breakfast	1%
Other	5%
Unsure / Nothing / They already do well / It's up to the parents and students or health / No answer	38%

15. [QAbsent – Absenteeism Battery] How often do you think each of the following are a reason why students are chronically absent from school? [DISPLAY AS GRID, 4 PER PAGE] [RANDOMIZE ITEM ORDER] [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-5, 5-1]

	1. Almost always	2. Most of the time	3. About half the time	4. Less than half the time	5. Almost never	6. Unsure		
	ALMOST ALWAYS/ MOST OF THE TIME	LESS THAN HALF/ ALMOST NEVER	1. Almost always	2. Most of the time	3. About half the time	4. Less than half the time	5. Almost never	6. Unsure
They just don't want to attend school	29%	43%	9%	19%	23%	20%	23%	6%
They have a prolonged illness or get sick a lot	26%	46%	8%	18%	23%	23%	23%	5%
Their parents don't care about their school attendance	21%	47%	8%	13%	23%	21%	26%	9%
They are being bullied at school	19%	51%	7%	12%	22%	24%	27%	8%
They don't have a reliable way to get to and from school (e.g., due to lack of transportation or no one being available to take them)	17%	56%	6%	11%	19%	24%	32%	8%
They do not feel safe at school	17%	60%	5%	12%	15%	25%	35%	8%
Their school is not providing valuable instruction	17%	61%	7%	10%	13%	23%	39%	9%
Their school does not clearly communicate policies about attendance or absences	15%	66%	7%	8%	11%	18%	47%	8%

16. [QAbsLegal] Do you think parents should face legal consequences if their child misses too much school without legitimate or approved reasons? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-4, 4-1]

DEFINITELY/PROBABLY SHOULD	56%
DEFINITELY/PROBABLY SHOULD NOT	35%
Definitely should	22%
Probably should	35%
Probably should NOT	20%
Definitely should NOT	16%
Unsure	8%

17. [QAbSchoolCares] Do you feel that your child's school cares about whether your child is absent from school? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

Yes, their school cares	84%
No, their school does not care	7%
Unsure	9%

[IF SAYS YES, THEIR SCHOOL CARES (QSchoolCares=1), ASK:]

18. [QReasonCares] Thinking about why your child's school cares if they are absent, which of the following do you think their school cares about more? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

	(n=1265)
How absences can affect students' academic progress	68%
How absences can affect the school's funding	26%
Unsure	6%

*QUESTIONS 19-21
FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY*

22. [QNAEP] According to the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a test taken by students across the United States, two-thirds of fourth grade students were NOT at a proficient reading level for their grade.

Do you consider this to be...? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-4, 4-1]

A CRISIS/A MAJOR PROBLEM	75%
A MINOR PROBLEM/NOT A PROBLEM AT ALL	21%
A crisis	20%
A major problem	55%
A minor problem	17%
Not a problem at all	4%
Unsure	5%

23. [QAddressLit] Do you think the federal government should do [SHOW IN SAME ORDER AS RESPONSE OPTIONS: more, about the same amount, or less] to support efforts to improve student literacy in the United States? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-3, 3-1]

Do more	71%
Do about the same amount	20%
Do less	4%
Unsure	4%

TEACHER STRIKES

Shifting to a different topic . . .

24. [QLawsStrike] States have different policies about whether or not public school teachers can legally go on strike (temporarily refuse to work as a form of protest organized by a teachers' union or other group).

Do you think your state laws . . . ? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

Should allow public school teachers to go on strike	49%
Should prohibit public school teachers from going on strike	29%
Unsure	22%

25. [QLocalStrike] Have any of your children ever missed school because their teachers were on strike? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

Yes, my children have missed school because of a teacher strike	14%
No, my children have never missed school because of a teacher strike	81%
Unsure	5%

26. [QStrikeEffect] When teachers go on strike, what kind of effect do you think it has on their students? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-3; 3-1]

Positive effect on students	13%
Neither positive nor negative effect on students	27%
Negative effect on students	51%
Unsure	10%

27. [QStrikeWorth] When teachers go on strike, do you think it is . . . ? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

Usually worth the disruption to students' education	38%
Usually NOT worth the disruption to students' education	43%
Unsure	19%

28. [QAfterStrike] If your children were to miss some days of school due to teachers going on strike, what would you prefer their school to do to make up for the days they missed, if anything? [RANDOMIZE 1-3]

Add days to the school year to make up for lost instruction time	31%
Offer additional class time or tutoring as an option, but don't require students to attend	29%
Make some school days longer to make up for lost instruction time	14%
Something else (Please specify)	4%
Not do anything to make up for the days they missed	13%
Unsure	8%

DEMOGRAPHICS

Now I would like to ask you some questions for statistical purposes . . .

29. [QBirthYear] Which range of years includes the year you were born? [TERMINATE IF MORE THAN 1 YEAR OFF RANGE INDICATED BASED ON QAGE]

1903 – 1927	-
1928 – 1945	-
1946 – 1964	3%
1965 – 1980	40%
1981 – 1996	54%
1997 – 2012	3%

30. [QPartyID] Do you consider yourself a...? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

Republican	30%
Democrat	40%
Independent	25%
Member of another party	*%
Unsure	5%

[IF REPUBLICAN (QPartyID=1), ASK]

31. [QPartyGOP] Would you say you are...? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

	(n=467)
Firmly a Republican	68%
Not firmly a Republican	32%

[IF DEMOCRAT (QPartyID=2), ASK]

32. [QPartyDem] Would you say you are...? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

	(n=593)
Firmly a Democrat	65%
Not firmly a Democrat	35%

[IF INDEPENDENT, MEMBER OF ANOTHER PARTY, OR UNSURE (QParty=3-5), ASK]

33. [QPartyLeanView] Even if neither political party perfectly represents your views, who do you agree with more often on issues that are important to you? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

	(n=446)
Republicans	18%
Democrats	17%
Both equally often	39%
Unsure	26%

[QPartyConsolidated] QParty and QPartyLeanView

Total Republican+Republican-leaning Independents	36%
Total Democratic+Democratic-leaning Independents	45%
Total Independent	20%

ASK ALL:

34. [QIdeology] Regardless of how you typically vote, would you say you consider yourself to be...? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-5, 5-1]

VERY/SOMEWHAT CONSERVATIVE	26%
VERY/SOMEWHAT LIBERAL	26%
Very conservative	12%
Somewhat conservative	13%
Moderate	44%
Somewhat liberal	15%
Very liberal	11%
Unsure	4%

35. [QEmployment] What is your current employment status?

Employed full-time	61%
Employed part-time	9%
Freelance, contract, or temporary work	3%
Furloughed or placed on temporary leave by my employer	*%
Unemployed and looking for work	6%
Unemployed and not currently looking for work	2%
Stay-at-home parent or caregiver	12%
Full time student	1%
Retired	2%
Something else (Please specify)	3%
Prefer not to say	1%

36. [QIncomeHH] Which range includes your total annual household income, before taxes?

Less than \$30,000 per year	22%
\$30,000 to \$49,999 per year	20%
\$50,000 to \$74,999 per year	21%
\$75,000 to \$125,000 per year	21%
More than \$125,000 per year	14%
Prefer not to say	2%

37. [QState] In what state do you live?

[DROPDOWN MENU WITH 50 STATES]

States in the Northeast	15%
States in the Midwest	18%
States in the South	41%
States in the West	26%

38. [QUrbanRural] How would you describe the area in which you live? [RANDOMIZE SCALE 1-4, 4-1]

City	35%
Suburb near a city	39%
Small town not near a city	9%
Rural or country area	17%

39. [QMarital] What is your current marital status?

Single, never married	21%
Married	53%
Living with a partner	13%
Separated	3%
Divorced	9%
Widowed	2%
Prefer not to say	*%

SCREENERS AND INITIAL DEMOGRAPHICS FOR QUOTAS (ASKED AT BEGINNING OF SURVEY)

40. [QAge] What is your age?

[OPEN-END] [TERMINATE IF UNDER 18]

18-34		21%
35-49		63%
50-64		16%
65+		1%

41. [QIndustry] Do you or does anyone in your household work in any of the following industries? [SELECT MULTIPLE] [RANDOMIZE 1-8]

Technology		5%
Sales		5%
Healthcare		11%
Education or early childhood development		7%
Journalism or the media	TERMINATE	-
Food service or the restaurant industry		8%
Market research	TERMINATE	-
Public relations	TERMINATE	-
None of these		70%

42. [QRegVote] Are you currently registered to vote? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

Yes		89%
No		10%
Unsure		1%

43. [QParentalScreener] Are you the parent or guardian of a child or children in any of the following groups? Select all that apply, if any. [SELECT MULTIPLE]

A child in preschool or younger (not yet in kindergarten)		17%
A child in grades kindergarten through 12th grade		100%
A child who has already completed high school		15%
I do not have any children in those groups	TERMINATE	-
Prefer not to say	TERMINATE	-

[IF DOES NOT HAVE A CHILD IN GRADE SCHOOL [Option 2 NOT selected on QParentalScreener], TERMINATE.]

44. [QGender] Do you describe yourself as a man, a woman, or in some other way? [RANDOMIZE 1-2]

Man		44%
Woman		56%
Some other way		*%

45. [QRace] What is your race or ethnicity? [SELECT MULTIPLE] [RANDOMIZE 1-6]

White	55%
Black or African American	15%
Hispanic or Latino	24%
Asian	7%
Native American or Alaska Native	2%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1%
Other race or ethnicity	1%

46. [QEducation] What is the highest level of education you have completed?

High school or less	34%
Some college	19%
Associate degree	11%
Bachelor's degree	22%
Graduate degree	14%
Prefer not to say	*%

47. [QKidNumber] How many children do you have who are currently in grades kindergarten through 12th grade?

0	TERMINATE	-
1		51%
2		34%
3		11%
4		2%
5		1%
6		*%
7		*%
8		*%
9		*%
10 or more		*%

48. [QHomeScreener] Where do your children who are in grades kindergarten through 12th grade live?

Full-time with me in my home		91%
Split between my home and the home of another parent or family member		9%
Not with me	TERMINATE	-

49. [QPublicScreener] What type of school do your children who are in grades kindergarten through 12th grade attend?

Public school		100%
Private school	TERMINATE	-
Homeschool	TERMINATE	-
Prefer not to say	TERMINATE	-

50. [IF HAS ONE CHILD IN K-12, ASK]: In which grade level is your child who is in grade school (K-12)?
[SHOW GRADES LIST]

[IF HAS TWO OR MORE CHILDREN IN K-12, ASK]: Please select the current grade level of each of your children who are in grade school (K-12), in order from oldest to youngest.

First Child (Oldest child in K-12) [SHOW IF QKidNumber=2-10]

Second Child [SHOW IF QKidNumber=2-10]

Third Child [SHOW IF QKidNumber=3-10]

Fourth Child [SHOW IF QKidNumber=4-10]

Fifth Child [SHOW IF QKidNumber=5-10]

Sixth Child [SHOW IF QKidNumber=6-10]

Seventh Child [SHOW IF QKidNumber=7-10]

Eighth Child [SHOW IF QKidNumber=8-10]

Ninth Child [SHOW IF QKidNumber=9-10]

Tenth Child [SHOW IF QKidNumber=10]

[SHOW GRADES LIST FOR EACH CHILD]

Kindergarten	14%
1st grade	11%
2nd grade	13%
3rd grade	12%
4th grade	12%
5th grade	13%
6th grade	13%
7th grade	13%
8th grade	13%
9th grade (Freshman)	14%
10th grade (Sophomore)	14%
11th grade (Junior)	12%
12th grade (Senior)	12%

METHODOLOGY

Echelon Insights conducted a survey on behalf of the National Parents Union to understand K-12 parents' views on current topics related to public education. This survey was fielded online from March 26–27, 2024 in English among a sample of 1,506 parents of public school students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade nationwide using non-probability sampling.

The sample was drawn from the Lucid sample exchange based on gender, age, race/ethnicity, and education quota targets for parents of public school students derived from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) American Community Survey - Education Tabulation, a tabulation of 5-year data from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

Data quality measures included the use of an attentiveness check where respondents were directed to select a particular response and measures to prevent duplicate responses. Respondents who answered more than one-third of the questions they were asked in less than one-third of the median response time per question were removed from the data file.

The sample was weighted to population benchmarks for parents of public school students derived from the American Community Survey - Education Tabulation on gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, and region, as well as on the following interactions derived from American Community Survey data on parents of school-age children: gender by education (college / non-college) and race (white / non-white) by education (college / non-college). The sample was also weighted on gender among those identified as registered voters to reflect benchmark data on voter registration among parents of school-age children from the US Census Bureau's November 2022 Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement.

Calculated as it would be for a random sample and adjusted to incorporate the effect of weighting, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.8 percentage points. This estimate of precision does not account for other potential sources of error that can occur in online surveys with non-probability samples, including, but not limited to, non-coverage due to the survey being conducted online, or possible failure to correct for ways people who have agreed to join an online panel or take online surveys might not be representative of the general population (e.g., on measures that are not included as weighting variables).