

Education Next — Program on Education Policy and Governance — Survey 2014

For details on the methodology behind these survey responses, please see “No Common Opinion on the Common Core: Also teacher grades, school choices, and other findings from the 2014 *EdNext* Poll” by Michael B. Henderson, Paul E. Peterson, and Martin R. West at <http://educationnext.org/>. Michael B. Henderson is the *Education Next*-PEPG survey director.

*Note: For questions with both “a” and “b” versions, a random half of the respondents were assigned version “a” and the other half were assigned version “b”.

*Note: “Parents” are defined as respondents living in a household with one or more children between the ages of 6 and 17.

*Note: Due to rounding, column totals may not always sum to 100.

Knowledge About and Evaluations of Schools

1a. U.S. students regularly participate in international achievement tests. In your opinion, how important is it that our country performs well on these tests compared to other countries?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Very Important	54%	50%	32%	53%	64%
Somewhat Important	34	35	47	34	27
Not So Important	8	9	17	10	6
Not Important at All	4	5	4	3	3

1b. U.S. students regularly participate in international achievement tests. In your opinion, how important is it for America’s future prosperity that our country performs well on these tests compared to other countries?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Very Important	52%	52%	29%	51%	66%
Somewhat Important	36	37	50	40	24
Not So Important	9	9	16	5	7
Not Important at All	3	2	5	4	4

1c. In your opinion, how important is the academic performance of high school students for America’s future prosperity?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Very Important	79%	82%	82%	75%	87%
Somewhat Important	18	16	17	17	8
Not So Important	1	2	1	4	1
Not Important at All	1	0	0	4	3

2. Please tell us your best guess for this question: A 2012 government survey ranked the math skills of 15-year-olds in 34 industrialized countries. With 1 meaning the best and 34 meaning the worst, what is your best guess of where American 15-year-olds ranked on this test?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Ranking	19	18	20	19	18

3. Please tell us your best guess for this question: Students in different parts of the country perform differently in math. The average student in your district performs better than what percent of students across the country?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
%	52	54	53	47	50

4. Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and Fail to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools in the nation as a whole?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
A	3%	4%	2%	2%	8%
B	17	22	25	16	31
C	57	53	62	59	45
D	19	17	10	19	11
Fail	5	5	1	4	5

5. How about the public schools in your state? What grade would you give them?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
A	4%	6%	3%	3%	9%
B	30	37	45	24	39
C	44	40	37	49	38
D	17	12	12	16	11
Fail	6	5	2	8	4

6. How about the public schools in your community? What grade would you give them?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
A	12%	19%	18%	7%	14%
B	35	39	45	26	40
C	35	26	26	41	31
D	12	9	8	16	8
Fail	6	7	3	10	7

7a. Let's consider the public schools in your community once again. Some schools are good at teaching some students, but not so good at teaching other students. What grade would you give the public schools in your community for the specific task of attending to the needs of the most talented students?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
A	24%	32%	28%	21%	29%
B	45	40	43	47	47
C	23	23	20	22	19
D	5	4	8	7	4
Fail	3	1	1	3	1

7b. Let's consider the public schools in your community once again. Some schools are good at teaching some students, but not so good at teaching other students. What grade would you give the public schools in your community for the specific task of attending to the needs of the least talented students?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
A	6%	10%	10%	8%	8%
B	22	28	35	15	26
C	39	34	31	35	38
D	22	16	20	28	17
Fail	11	12	4	14	11

8a. Let's consider the public schools in your community once again. Some schools are good at teaching some students, but not so good at teaching other students. What grade would you give the public schools in your community for the specific task of attending to the needs of students from high-income families?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
A	23%	23%	42%	23%	28%
B	46	49	42	43	45
C	24	20	14	25	21
D	5	6	1	4	5
Fail	2	2	1	5	2

8b. Let's consider the public schools in your community once again. Some schools are good at teaching some students, but not so good at teaching other students. What grade would you give the public schools in your community for the specific task of attending to the needs of students from low-income families?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
A	8%	15%	15%	8%	15%
B	28	34	38	18	25
C	34	27	28	38	36
D	20	16	14	24	17
Fail	8	8	6	12	7

School Spending

9. Based on your best guess, what is the average amount of money spent each year for a child in public schools in your local school district?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
\$	6,485.77	5,775.00	5,959.78	6,483.12	6,656.95

10. Based on your best guess, what is the average amount of money spent each year for a child in public schools in the United States as a whole?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
\$	10,155.46	10,840.32	8,041.78	13,932.67	11,565.98

11a. Suppose the government plans to increase spending in the school system. Reducing average class sizes by 3 students would cost roughly the same amount as increasing teacher salaries by 13 percent or buying \$10,000 in new books and technologies for each class every year. Among these options, which do you favor?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Reducing class sizes by 3 students	35%	39%	38%	27%	31%
Increasing teacher salaries by 13%	33	30	48	41	34
Buying \$10,000 in new books and technologies for each class every year	32	31	14	31	35

11b. Suppose the government plans to increase spending in the school system. Which one of the following options do you favor?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Reducing class sizes	46%	53%	54%	26%	43%
Increasing teacher salaries	24	22	37	33	25
Buying new books and technologies	30	25	9	41	32

12a. As it turns out, according to the most recent information available, \$[ADD VALUE (pps) HERE] is being spent each year per child attending public schools in your district. Do you think that government funding for public schools in your district should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Greatly Increase	9%	12%	12%	20%	17%
Increase	35	35	37	41	43
Stay about the Same	48	45	42	39	33
Decrease	8	8	9	0	6
Greatly Decrease	1	0	0	0	1

12b. Do you think that government funding for public schools in your district should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Greatly Increase	13%	16%	22%	21%	15%
Increase	47	54	53	44	49
Stay about the Same	33	28	23	28	35
Decrease	5	2	2	5	2
Greatly Decrease	2	1	0	2	0

12c. As it turns out, according to the most recent information available, \$[ADD VALUE (pps) HERE] is being spent each year per child attending public schools in your district. Do you think that taxes to fund public schools in your district should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Greatly Increase	3%	8%	9%	6%	7%
Increase	23	22	34	20	27
Stay about the Same	57	52	48	63	50
Decrease	13	13	8	8	11
Greatly Decrease	5	5	0	3	5

School Choice Policies

13. Thinking about the school-age children who currently live with you, what kinds of schools have they attended?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Traditional Public School	87%	87%	86%	90%	90%
Charter School	9	9	8	14	10
Private School	14	14	19	13	9
Home School	8	8	7	6	5

*Note: Respondents could select multiple responses; therefore, column totals will not sum to 100.

**Note: Question was asked only of respondents living in a household with one or more children between the ages of 6 and 17.

14. As you may know, many states permit the formation of charter schools, which are publicly funded but are not managed by the local school board. These schools are expected to meet promised objectives, but are exempt from many state regulations. Do you support or oppose the formation of charter schools?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Support	21%	20%	13%	12%	19%
Somewhat Support	34	35	30	35	34
Somewhat Oppose	20	20	27	20	22
Completely Oppose	8	9	20	9	6
Neither Support nor Oppose	18	17	11	24	19

15. A proposal has been made to offer a tax credit for individual and corporate donations that pay for scholarships to help low-income parents send their children to private schools. Would you favor or oppose such a proposal?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Support	24%	27%	10%	28%	35%
Somewhat Support	36	32	27	32	35
Somewhat Oppose	16	13	24	14	13
Completely Oppose	10	12	23	4	6
Neither Support nor Oppose	14	16	15	21	11

16a. A proposal has been made that would give families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Support	20%	27%	8%	24%	29%
Somewhat Support	30	29	30	35	29
Somewhat Oppose	20	15	11	16	23
Completely Oppose	19	17	42	8	7
Neither Support nor Oppose	12	12	9	17	13

16b. A proposal has been made that would use government funds to pay the tuition of low-income students who choose to attend private schools. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Support	15%	21%	8%	21%	26%
Somewhat Support	22	15	10	26	29
Somewhat Oppose	24	20	29	26	16
Completely Oppose	27	31	48	9	16
Neither Support nor Oppose	12	14	5	18	13

16c. A proposal has been made that would give families with children in failing public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Support	16%	22%	6%	27%	21%
Somewhat Support	35	38	27	38	33
Somewhat Oppose	19	16	23	10	14
Completely Oppose	16	13	32	4	14
Neither Support nor Oppose	14	11	12	21	18

17. Do you favor or oppose students spending more of their time at school receiving instruction independently through or on a computer?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Favor	10%	10%	2%	12%	13%
Somewhat Favor	32	27	31	29	28
Somewhat Oppose	29	30	35	23	30
Completely Oppose	12	18	20	14	20
Neither Favor nor Oppose	16	15	12	23	10

18a. Would you favor or oppose the government paying for all 4-year old children to attend a preschool program?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Favor	27%	33%	35%	41%	36%
Somewhat Favor	27	24	34	30	30
Somewhat Oppose	16	13	15	10	15
Completely Oppose	19	24	11	4	9
Neither Favor nor Oppose	10	7	5	14	9

18b. Would you favor or oppose the government paying for 4-year old children from low-income families to attend a preschool program?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Favor	32%	40%	39%	52%	51%
Somewhat Favor	30	25	31	21	27
Somewhat Oppose	16	13	16	8	9
Completely Oppose	12	13	9	5	5
Neither Favor nor Oppose	10	9	5	14	8

Personnel Policies

19. Based on your best guess, what is the average yearly salary of a public school teacher in your state?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
\$	38,857.47	37,451.27	44,989.57	33,014.90	34,038.86

20a. Suppose you had to grade each teacher in your local schools for the quality of their work using the grades A, B, C, D, and F. What percent of teachers in your local schools would you give each grade? Your answers should add to 100%.

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
A	25%	28%	41%	23%	25%
B	26	28	28	23	25
C	25	23	18	24	21
D	13	11	8	14	13
Fail	9	10	5	11	11

20b. Suppose you had to grade each teacher across the country for the quality of their work using the grades A, B, C, D, and F. What percent of teachers across the country would you give each grade? Your answers should add to 100%.

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
A	21%	23%	30%	21%	26%
B	24	24	27	21	25
C	26	27	23	23	22
D	14	13	11	14	13
Fail	12	10	8	10	11

21a. Do you think that public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Greatly Increase	11%	13%	35%	19%	14%
Increase	51	49	50	54	54
Stay About the Same	32	32	14	21	27
Decrease	5	5	1	3	1
Greatly Decrease	1	1	0	2	4

21b. As it turns out, public school teachers in your state are paid an average annual salary of \$[XX,XXX]. Do you think that public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Greatly Increase	5%	6%	21%	5%	10%
Increase	33	29	48	37	34
Stay About the Same	56	59	31	57	48
Decrease	5	5	1	1	8
Greatly Decrease	2	1	0	0	1

22. Do you favor or oppose basing part of the salaries of teachers on how much their students learn?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Favor	18%	21%	4%	18%	21%
Somewhat Favor	39	38	17	37	35
Somewhat Oppose	21	21	28	22	18
Completely Oppose	11	10	45	11	11
Neither Favor nor Oppose	11	10	6	12	14

23a. Some schools face substantial shortages of teachers in specific subjects like math and science. Do you favor or oppose basing part of the salaries of teachers on whether or not they teach in these subjects?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Favor	13%	15%	15%	11%	20%
Somewhat Favor	43	36	35	44	42
Somewhat Oppose	17	20	18	16	15
Completely Oppose	8	9	27	11	5
Neither Favor nor Oppose	19	19	4	18	18

23b. Schools with many disadvantaged students face substantial problems finding good teachers. Do you favor or opposed basing part of the salaries of teachers on whether or not they teach in those schools?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Favor	14%	15%	13%	13%	23%
Somewhat Favor	49	47	44	39	40
Somewhat Oppose	14	17	20	22	15
Completely Oppose	5	4	8	8	5
Neither Favor nor Oppose	18	17	14	18	17

24a. Teachers with tenure cannot be dismissed unless a school district follows detailed procedures. Do you favor or oppose giving tenure to teachers?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Strongly Favor	8%	11%	29%	13%	13%
Somewhat Favor	24	26	31	28	30
Somewhat Oppose	27	27	25	23	24
Strongly Oppose	23	19	7	5	13
Neither Favor nor Oppose	18	17	8	31	20

24b. Teachers with tenure cannot be dismissed unless a school district follows detailed procedures. Some say that tenure provides teachers with the necessary independence for their work. Others say that it makes it too difficult to replace ineffective teachers. We want to know what you think of tenure. Do you favor or oppose giving tenure to teachers?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Strongly Favor	5%	5%	23%	8%	7%
Somewhat Favor	21	20	28	29	23
Somewhat Oppose	32	25	30	26	29
Strongly Oppose	25	29	8	11	23
Neither Favor nor Oppose	18	22	11	26	19

25. A proposal has been made that would require teachers to demonstrate that their students are making adequate progress on state tests in order to receive tenure. Would you favor or oppose such a proposal?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Strongly Favor	21%	24%	6%	15%	35%
Somewhat Favor	39	35	24	43	36
Somewhat Oppose	16	17	25	16	11
Strongly Oppose	9	9	33	6	4
Neither Favor nor Oppose	15	16	11	19	14

26. Some people say that teacher unions are a stumbling block to school reform. Others say that unions fight for better schools and better teachers. What do you think? Do you think teacher unions have a generally positive effect on schools, or do you think they have a generally negative effect?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Strongly Positive Effect	7%	7%	20%	11%	9%
Somewhat Positive Effect	26	26	39	32	34
Somewhat Negative Effect	24	22	17	15	20
Strongly Negative Effect	16	15	6	4	9
Neither Positive nor Negative Effect	26	29	18	37	28

Accountability

27. Before today, have you ever heard of the Common Core State standards?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Yes	43%	47%	89%	25%	28%
No	57	53	11	75	72

28. How knowledgeable are you about the Common Core standards?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Very Knowledgeable	7%	11%	38%	9%	13%
Somewhat Knowledgeable	37	46	49	36	39
Not Very Knowledgeable	42	33	12	38	39
Not at all Knowledgeable	14	10	2	17	9

*Note: This question was asked only of respondents who said yes to question 27, which asked: “Before today, have you ever heard of the Common Core State standards?”

29/Part I. True or False: The federal government requires all states to use the Common Core standards.

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Definitely True	13%	16%	12%	15%	27%
Probably True	38	40	19	32	39
Probably False	18	12	13	11	8
Definitely False	18	22	52	17	11
Don’t Know	14	10	5	25	15

*Note: This question was asked only of respondents who said yes to question 27, which asked: “Before today, have you ever heard of the Common Core State standards?”

29/Part II. True or False: The Common Core standards set higher expectations for student performance than the standards most states used before the Common Core standards were introduced.

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Definitely True	13%	17%	32%	15%	21%
Probably True	43	43	41	37	44
Probably False	23	20	17	21	12
Definitely False	8	8	6	5	8
Don’t Know	13	11	5	22	15

*Note: This question was asked only of respondents who said yes to question 27, which asked: “Before today, have you ever heard of the Common Core State standards?”

29/Part III. True or False: Under the Common Core standards, states and local school districts can decide which textbooks and educational materials to use in their schools.

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Definitely True	13%	19%	43%	18%	17%
Probably True	34	33	31	34	33
Probably False	26	23	13	18	21
Definitely False	10	12	6	5	13
Don't Know	17	14	7	25	16

*Note: This question was asked only of respondents who said yes to question 27, which asked: "Before today, have you ever heard of the Common Core State standards?"

29/Part IV. True or False: In states using the Common Core standards, the federal government will receive detailed data on individual students' test performance.

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Definitely True	19%	24%	29%	17%	29%
Probably True	50	47	43	43	41
Probably False	11	13	12	9	9
Definitely False	4	3	7	4	3
Don't Know	16	13	10	27	18

*Note: This question was asked only of respondents who said yes to question 27, which asked: "Before today, have you ever heard of the Common Core State standards?"

30. In some states, students must pass a state exam before they are eligible to receive a high school diploma. Do you support or oppose this requirement?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Completely Support	36%	33%	31%	33%	43%
Somewhat Support	35	34	35	27	30
Somewhat Oppose	14	15	19	16	10
Completely Oppose	6	10	10	11	6
Neither Support nor Oppose	8	7	5	13	11

31a. As you may know, in the last few years states have been deciding whether or not to use the Common Core, which are standards for reading and math that are the same across the states. In the states that have these standards, they will be used to hold public schools accountable for their performance. Do you support or oppose the use of the Common Core standards in your state?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Strongly Support	16%	15%	11%	21%	25%
Somewhat Support	38	39	36	48	37
Somewhat Oppose	14	16	22	7	9
Strongly Oppose	12	10	18	4	6
Neither Support nor Oppose	21	20	14	21	23

31b. As you may know, in the last few years states have been deciding whether or not to use standards for reading and math that are the same across the states. In the states that have these standards, they will be used to hold public schools accountable for their performance. Do you support or oppose the use of these standards in your state?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Strongly Support	22%	19%	13%	14%	28%
Somewhat Support	46	42	41	36	38
Somewhat Oppose	12	13	26	21	10
Strongly Oppose	4	7	11	1	4
Neither Support nor Oppose	16	18	10	28	20

College Readiness

32a. Do you think that the number of high school graduates who go on to attend a 4-year college should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Greatly Increase	15%	16%	8%	24%	25%
Increase	40	38	35	42	38
Stay About the Same	32	33	43	25	28
Decrease	12	11	14	8	6
Greatly Decrease	1	1	1	1	3

32b. Nationwide, about 37% of high school graduates go on to attend a 4-year college. Another 29% go on to attend a 2-year college, and 34% attend no college at all. Do you think that the number of high school graduates who go on to attend a 4-year college should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Greatly Increase	17%	25%	15%	20%	30%
Increase	39	39	44	38	39
Stay About the Same	34	27	34	32	21
Decrease	9	8	6	8	8
Greatly Decrease	1	1	0	2	2

33a. Currently, the federal government provides financial aid for college to low-income students through programs like Pell Grants. Do you favor or oppose requiring these students to demonstrate that they are ready for college courses by passing a state test before receiving any federal student aid?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Strongly Favor	38%	35%	32%	23%	45%
Somewhat Favor	35	35	34	31	30
Somewhat Oppose	12	11	17	22	9
Strongly Oppose	7	11	11	14	7
Neither Favor nor Oppose	8	9	6	11	9

33b. Currently, the federal government provides financial aid for college to low-income students through programs like Pell Grants. A recent study shows that about 25% of these students go on to graduate from a 4-year college within six years. Do you favor or oppose requiring these students to demonstrate that they are ready for college courses by passing a state test before receiving any federal student aid?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Strongly Favor	31%	31%	21%	18%	28%
Somewhat Favor	35	33	40	27	36
Somewhat Oppose	15	17	17	23	13
Strongly Oppose	8	10	16	15	8
Neither Favor nor Oppose	11	9	5	17	15

Respondents' Background

34. Apart from weddings and funerals, how often would you say that you attend religious services?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
More than once a week	10%	11%	13%	17%	13%
Once a week	25	29	35	25	23
Once a month	8	9	8	8	10
A few times a year	26	27	22	25	31
Never	31	24	22	24	23

35. Would you say that you have been born again or have had a born-again experience -- that is, a turning point in your life when you committed yourself to Jesus Christ?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Yes	38%	43%	37%	57%	40%
No	62	57	63	43	60

36. Are you a member of a union or an employee association similar to a union?

	Public	Parents	Teachers	African Americans	Hispanics
Yes, I am currently a member of a union	9%	10%	44%	11%	8%
No, but I previously was a member of a union	18	13	19	18	12
No, I have never been a member of a union	73	77	37	71	80