POLLING PAPER #28

2016 SCHOOLING IN AMERICA SURVEY:

Public Opinion on K–12 Education and School Choice

Paul DiPerna
Andrew D. Catt

OCTOBER 2016

ed CHOICE

Charter Member
AAPOR Transparency Initiative
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

EDCHOICE.ORG

POLLING PAPER #28

2016 SCHOOLING IN AMERICA SURVEY:

Public Opinion on K–12 Education and School Choice

Paul DiPerna
Andrew D. Catt

OCTOBER 2016

Survey Project & Profile

Title:	2016 Schooling in America Survey
Survey Sponsor & Developer:	EdChoice
Survey Data Collection & Quality Control:	Braun Research, Inc.
Sample Frame & Population:	National sample of adults (age 18+) living in the 50 United States and District of Columbia
Interview Dates:	April 30 to May 26, 2016
Interview Method:	Live Telephone | 50% landline and 50% cell phone
Interview Length:	15.5 minutes (average)
Language(s):	English
Sample Method:	Dual Frame; Probability Sampling; Random Digit Dial (RDD)
Sample Size:	National/General Public, N = 1,001
Margin of Error:	National/General Public = ± 3.1 percentage points
Response Rates (RR) using AAPOR RR3:	Landline = 10.4%; Cell Phone = 8.1%
Weighting?	Yes (Landline/Cell for National, then Age, Gender, Race, Ethnicity, Census Division/Region)
Oversampling?	Yes (Millennials)* Total Millennials, N = 516 (n = 244 from National sample; n = 272 from additional oversample)

*** Millennial results to be released in a separate report.**

The survey's sponsor and sole funder was the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, now EdChoice (see next page). For more information, contact: Paul DiPerna at paul@edchoice.org

The authors are responsible for overall polling design; question wording and ordering; this report's analysis, charts, and writing; and any unintentional errors or misrepresentations.

IMPORTANT NOTE

This survey was developed by staff of the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice and conducted prior to the organization's renaming as EdChoice, which occurred on July 29, 2016. For clarity, we will refer to the survey and its findings throughout this report as part of an "EdChoice" project or study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

National K–12 Profile and Context

Trend NAEP Reading Avg Scores: 1971 | 1999 | 2012 [1]	**249 | 253 | 257**
Trend NAEP Math Avg Scores: 1973 | 1999 | 2012 [1]	**263 | 272 | 278**
Main NAEP Reading Avg Scores: 1992 | 2002 | 2015 [2]	**256 | 257 | 258**
Main NAEP Math Avg Scores: 1990 | 2000 | 2015 [2]	**238 | 250 | 261**
PISA Reading Avg Score (vs. OECD Avg) [3]	**498 (vs. 496)**
PISA Math Avg Score (vs. OECD Avg) [3]	**481 (vs. 494)**
PISA Science Avg Score (vs. OECD Avg) [3]	**497 (vs. 501)**
Public High School Graduation Rate [4]	**82%**
# Public School Students (excluding Charter School Students) [5]	**46,281,040**
# Public Charter School Students [6]	**2,519,065**
# Private School Students [7]	**5,395,740**
# Home School Students [8]	**1,412,186**
% Public School Students (excluding Charter School Students) [9]	**83.2%**
% Public Charter School Students [9]	**4.5%**
% Private School Students [9]	**9.7%**
% Home School Students [9]	**2.5%**
# Public School Districts [10]	**13,491**
# Public Schools (sans Charter Schools) [11]	**91,806**
# Public Charter Schools [11]	**6,465**
# Private Schools [12]	**33,619**
% Free and Reduced-Price Lunch [13]	**51.7%**
% Individualized Education Program (IEP) [13]	**12.9%**
% Limited Eng. Proficient (LEP)/Eng. Language Learners (ELL) [13]	**8.9%**
$ Revenue Per Student [14]	**$12,460**
$ "Total" Per Student Spending [15]	**$12,186**
$ "Current" Per Student Spending [14]	**$11,066**
$ "Instructional" Per Student Spending [14]	**$6,726**

National Profile Notes

1. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Long-term Trend Assessment. Cross-section averages of average reading scale scores of nine year olds, 13 year olds, and 17 year olds. Cross-section averages of average mathematics scale scores of nine year olds, 13 year olds, and 17 year olds. URL: nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cnj.asp
2. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Cross-section averages of average reading scale scores of fourth, eighth-, and 12th-grade students. Cross-section averages of average mathematics scale scores of fourth- and eighth-grade students. URLs: nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cnb.asp; nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cnc.asp
3. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, *Condition of Education Statistics*. Average scores of 15-year-old students on the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) literacy scales for reading, mathematics, and science. URL: nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cnk.asp
4. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, *Condition of Education Statistics*. Reported public high school graduation rates, determined by the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate (AFGR). Data for 2012–13 school year. URL: nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_coi.asp
5. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*. Total enrollment in public schools – students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade – excluding public charter school students. Data for 2013–14 school year. URL: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_216.20.asp
6. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*. Total enrollment in public charter schools – students in Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Data for 2013–14 school year. URL: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_216.90.asp
7. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*. Total enrollment in private schools—students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Data for 2013–14 school year. URL: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_205.20.asp
8. National- and state-level estimates reported by Ann Zeise for 2013–14 school year, last modified Aug. 16, 2016: a2zhomeschooling.com/thoughts_opinions_home_school/numbers_homeschooled_students
9. Percentages are meant for general impressions only. Due to rounding, percentage totals may be slightly greater or less than 100 percent.
10. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*. Reporting total public school districts. Data for 2013–14 school year. URL: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_214.10.asp
11. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*. Reporting total public schools (excluding charter schools) and total public charter schools. Data for 2013–14 school year. URL: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_216.30.asp

12. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*. Reporting total private schools. Data for 2013–14 school year.
URL: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_214.10.asp
13. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), using the ElS*i table*Generator, based on data obtained via "Local Education Agency (School District) Universe Survey", 2013–14 v.1a; "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey", 2013–14 v.2a; "State Nonfiscal Public Elementary/Secondary Education Survey", 2013–14 v.1a.
URL: nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/tableGenerator.aspx
14. Stephen Q. Cornman and Lei Zhou, *Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2013–14 (Fiscal Year 2014)*, NCES 2016-301. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics (October 2016).
URL: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2016/2016301.pdf
15. Stephen Q. Cornman, *Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2012–13 (Fiscal Year 2013)*, NCES 2015-301. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics (January 2016).
URL: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015301.pdf

Overview

The Schooling in America Survey is an annual project, developed and reported by EdChoice. Our partner, Braun Research, Inc., conducts the live phone call interviews, collects the survey data, and provides data quality control. The purpose of the survey is to measure public opinion on, and in some cases awareness or knowledge of, a range of K–12 education topics and school choice policies. We report response levels, differences ("margins"), and intensities for the country and a range of demographic groups. When possible, we also track response changes over time for certain survey questions.

Our annual snapshots consider the perceived direction of American K–12 education; views on education spending; grades and preferences for different types of schools; standardized testing; and school choice topics, such as charter schools, vouchers, education savings accounts, and tax-credit scholarships. This year, we have asked two sets of questions with a special focus on actions parents have taken to support their child's K–12 education.

A total of 1,001 telephone interviews were completed from April 30 to May 26, 2016, by means of both landline and cell phone. A randomly selected and statistically representative national sample of American adults responded to more than 25 substantive items in live phone interviews. Statistical results have been weighted to correct for known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for the national sample is ± 3.1 percentage points.

In this year's project we included a number of split-sample and partial-sample experiments.[1] An experimental design allows for comparing the effects of two or more alternative wordings for a given subject and question. The purpose of these experiments was to see if providing a new piece of information – or alternative wording – about certain aspects of K–12 education and school choice policies can significantly influence opinion on certain topics. We developed a "composite" average for four of these

[1] Throughout this report we use "partial-sample" and "subsample" interchangeably.

experiments. The main findings for questions on school type preferences, vouchers, education savings accounts, and tax-credit scholarships are based on composite averages of the split/partial samples. However, we are still able to maintain observations on trends because one question version for each topic has been used in previous installments of the Schooling in America Survey.

Ground Rules and Organization

Before discussing the survey results, we want to provide some brief ground rules for reporting national sample and demographic subgroup responses in this report. For each survey topic, there is a sequence for describing various analytical frames. First, we note the raw response *levels* for the national sample on a given question. We focus on the *composite* average for the topics having two or three question versions.

Following that initial observation, we consider the national sample's *margin*, hard/strong response levels, and the net *intensity* computed from the latter.

Third, if we detect statistical significance on a given item, then we briefly report demographic results and differences.[2] Explicit subgroup comparisons/differences are statistically significant with 95 percent confidence, unless otherwise clarified in the narrative. We orient any listing of subgroups' margins and intensities around "most/least likely" to respond one way or the other, typically emphasizing the propensity to be more/less positive. Lists of subgroups with respect to margins and intensities are meant to be suggestive for further exploration and research beyond this project. We do not infer causality with any of the observations in this report.

[2] For terminology: We use the label "current school parents" to refer to those respondents who said they have one or more children in preschool through high school. We use the label "former school parents" for respondents who said their children are past high school age. We use the label "non-parents" for respondents without children. For terms regarding age groups: "young adults" reflect respondents who are age 18 to 34; "middle-age adults" are 35 to 54; and "senior adults" or "seniors" are 55 and older. Labels pertaining to income groups go as follows: "low-income earners" < $40,000; "middle-income earners" ≥ $40,000 and < $80,000; "high-income earners" ≥ $80,000.

Finally, for those questions that we have asked in previous years, we briefly note the annual trends.

The organization of this report has four main sections. The first, second, and third sections describe key findings and presents charts for additional context: (1) broad K–12 education issues and school type preferences; (2) school choice policies and reforms; and (3) parents' schooling experiences. The fourth section details the survey's methodology, summarizes response statistics, and provides additional technical information on call dispositions for landline and cell phone interviews and weighting.

The 2016 Schooling in America Survey questionnaire with topline results are publicly available and posted separately at www.edchoice.org/NationalSurvey2016. That document allows the reader to follow the survey interview by question as well as item wording and ordering.

PART I
Survey Results on K–12 Education, School Types

National Priorities

Nine percent of respondents say "education" is the most important issue facing the country right now, trailing "economy and jobs" (33%) and "healthcare" (12%) as a first priority.

- What else is important? Approximately 9 percent of respondents each indicate "immigration" and "values issues" as a critical issue for the United States.

Certain demographic subgroups significantly differ from one another when saying education is a top priority:

- Urbanites (12%) are more likely to say education is a priority than people living in small towns (4%).[3]
- Republicans (4%) are less likely to see education as a top priority compared to Independents (12%), Democrats (11%), and the national average.
- Young adults (11%) are more likely to put education at the top of their agenda for the country compared with seniors (6%).

The proportion saying education is the country's most important issue has decreased by eight percentage points since last year (2015: 17%).

[3] We are at least 95 percent confident of any noted significant differences comparing subgroups to the national average or between two or more subgroups. Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the unweighted sample size obtained in this survey. **We advise strong caution** when interpreting results for subgroups with relatively small sample sizes (for example, n ≤ 80). When we refer to subgroup sample sizes – for example in forthcoming tables – those numbers represent the unweighted number of interviews.

TABLE 1. Views on National Priorities, 2014–2016

Percentage of All Respondents

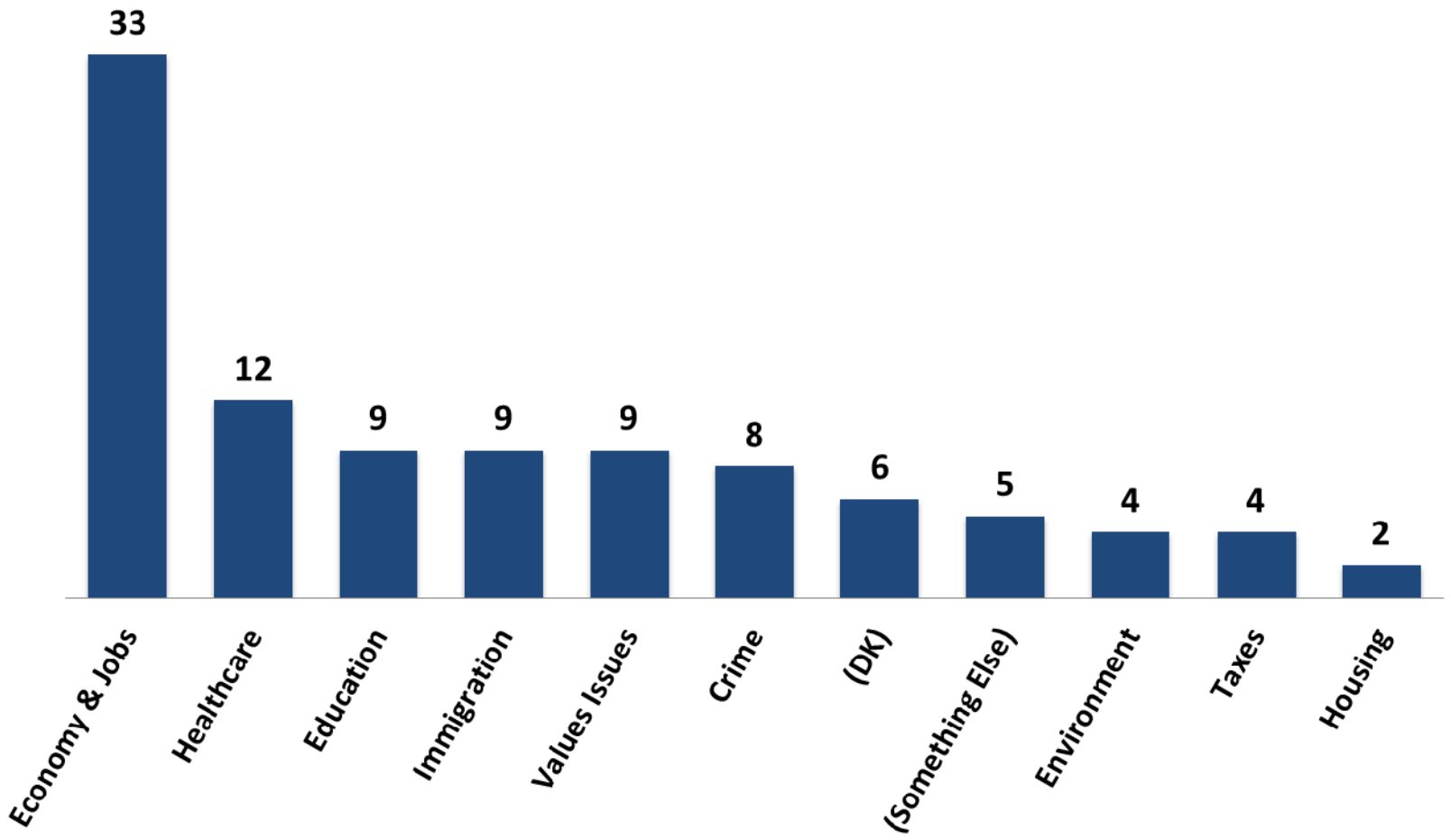
	2014 %	2015 %	2016 %
Economy & Jobs	38	31	**33**
Healthcare	16	13	**12**
Education	13	17	**9**
Immigration	4	7	**9**
Values Issues	5	4	**9**
Crime	4	10	**8**
Taxes	7	5	**4**
Environment	4	5	**4**
Housing	3	2	**2**

Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q1; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey,* 2014–2015.

Notes: All statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Volunteered "Don't Know" or other responses not included in this table.

Q1. Which of the following do you see as the most important issue facing the country right now?

(Percentage of All Respondents)



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q1.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." Refusals not shown.

Direction of K–12 Education

Americans are much more likely to think K–12 education has gotten off on the "wrong track" (62%), compared with nearly one-fourth of adults (24%) who say it is heading in the "right direction."

Negative sentiment has inched upward since last year (2015: 60% wrong track vs. 32% right direction). The 2016 margin is more negative than the 2015 margin by -10 percentage points.

We observe negative attitudes about the direction of K–12 education across most demographics. Most subgroup margins are wider than -30 percentage points. The largest gaps are among: Republicans (-60 points), rural residents (-54 points), seniors (-51 points), and whites (-51 points).

Some key differences stand out when making comparisons within certain demographic categories, or comparing a subgroup to the national average:

- Democrats (34%) are significantly more likely to say "right direction" than the national average. Democrats (34%) and Independents (24%) are significantly more positive than Republicans (15%).
- Current school parents (33%) are more positive than non-parents (22%), former school parents (19%), and the national average.
- Young adults (30%) are more likely to be positive than seniors (18%).
- Middle-income earners (68%) are more likely to be negative than low-income earners (59%). Low-income earners (21%) are more likely to say they "don't know" than high-income earners (10%), middle-income earners (8%), and the national average (13%).
- Small town residents (30%) are more likely to say "right direction" than their counterparts in rural areas (19%).

- Three subgroups are significantly more likely to say “wrong track” than the national average: Republicans (75%), those from rural areas (73%), and whites (69%).

TABLE 2. Views on the Direction of K–12 Education, 2016

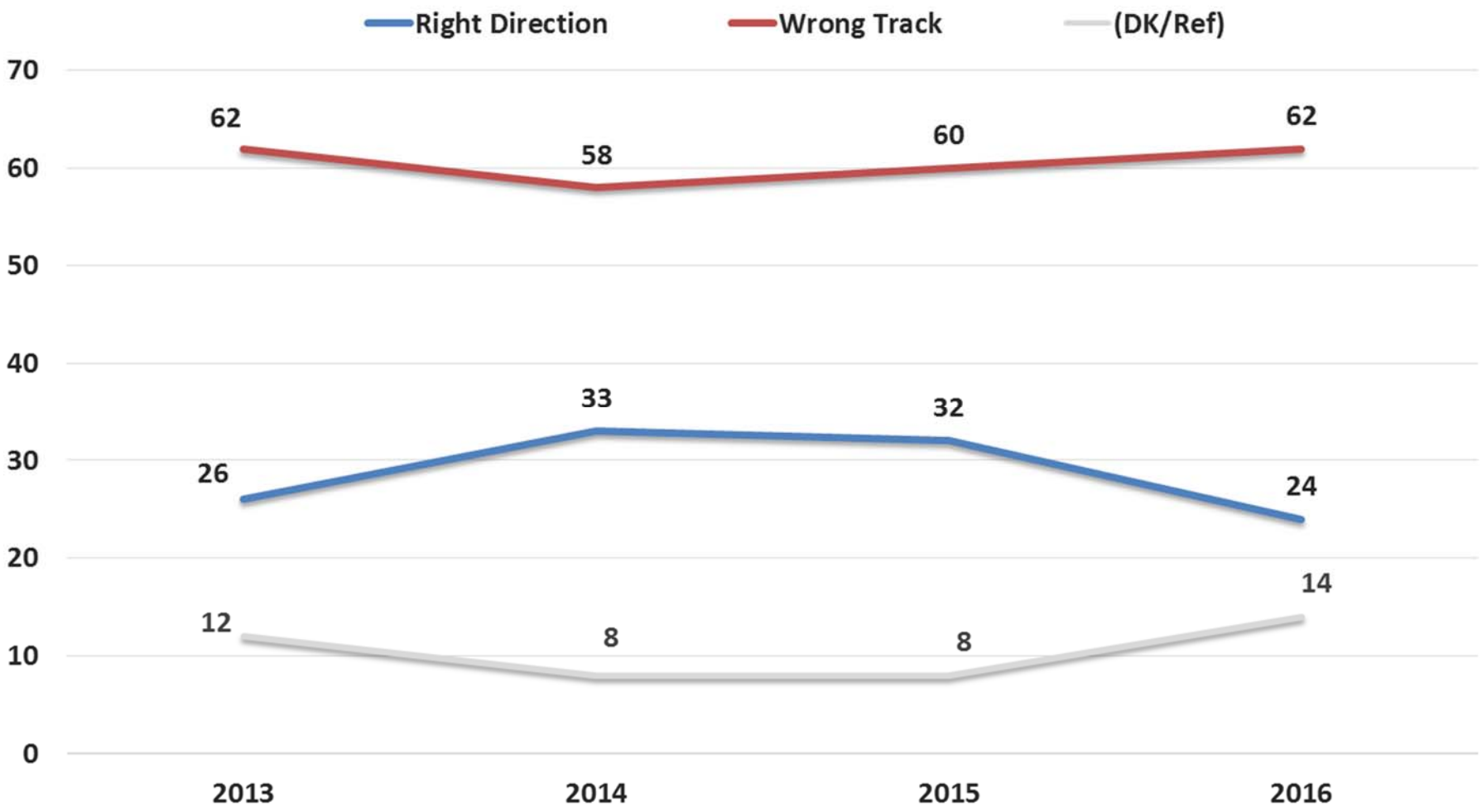
	Right Direction %	Wrong Track %	Margin (net)	N =
ALL RESPONDENTS	**24**	**62**	**-38**	**1,001**
Current School Parent	33	60	-26	219
Former School Parent	19	69	-49	221
Non-Schooler	22	63	-41	501
PARTY ID				
Democrat	34	53	-19	320
Republican	15	75	-60	290
Independent	24	62	-38	255
REGION				
Northeast	23	60	-36	183
Midwest	28	64	-36	215
South	19	65	-45	371
West	28	57	-29	232
COMMUNITY				
Urban	27	60	-34	222
Suburban	22	61	-40	403
Small Town	30	59	-28	190
Rural	19	73	-54	175
AGE GROUP				
18 to 34	30	50	-20	231
35 to 54	24	66	-42	301
55 & Over	18	69	-51	437
HOUSEHOLD INCOME				
Under $40,000	20	59	-39	293
$40,000 to $79,999	24	68	-43	311
$80,000 & Over	29	61	-32	306
RACE/ETHNICITY				
Asian	52	32	20	38
Black	33	49	-16	108
Hispanic	38	49	-11	74
White	18	69	-51	735
GENDER				
Men	28	62	-35	478
Women	21	61	-41	523

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q2.

Notes: Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Margins are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

The Public's Views on the Direction of K–12 Education, 2013–2016

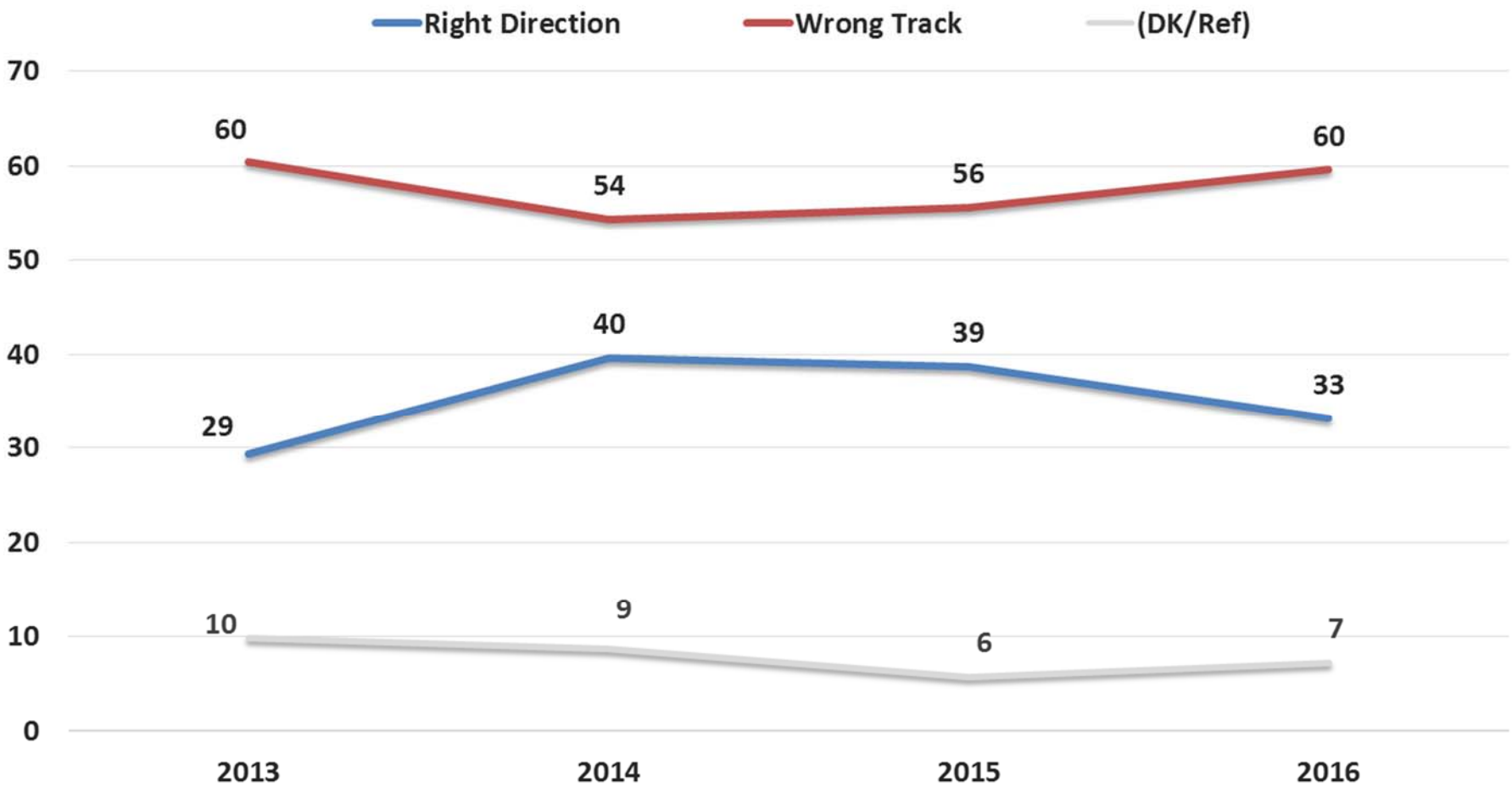
(Percentage of All Respondents)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q2; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

Current School Parents' Views on the Direction of K–12 Education, 2013–2016

(Percentage of Current School Parents)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q2; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

K–12 Education Spending

On average, just over $11,000 is spent on each student in America's public schools, and less than one out of six respondents (15%) could estimate the correct per-student *spending range* for the national average.

- About 21 percent of respondents believe $4,000 or less is being spent per student in the nation's public schools. Another 26 percent of the national sample either say they "don't know" or could not offer a spending number.
- When considering "total expenditures" per student ($12,186 in 2012–13), which is another government definition for spending in K–12 education, it is even more likely Americans' estimates are dramatically further off target.[4]
- Respondents tend to underestimate rather than overestimate. Nearly two out of three respondents (64%) either underestimate educational spending per student (with a cautious definition citing "current expenditures"), or they could not give an answer or guess.

When given an actual per-student spending statistic, Americans are less likely to say public school funding is at a level that is "too low."

- In a split-sample experiment, we asked two slightly different questions. On version 4A, 52 percent of respondents say that public school funding was "too low," (down from 60% in 2015). However, on version 4B, which included data on

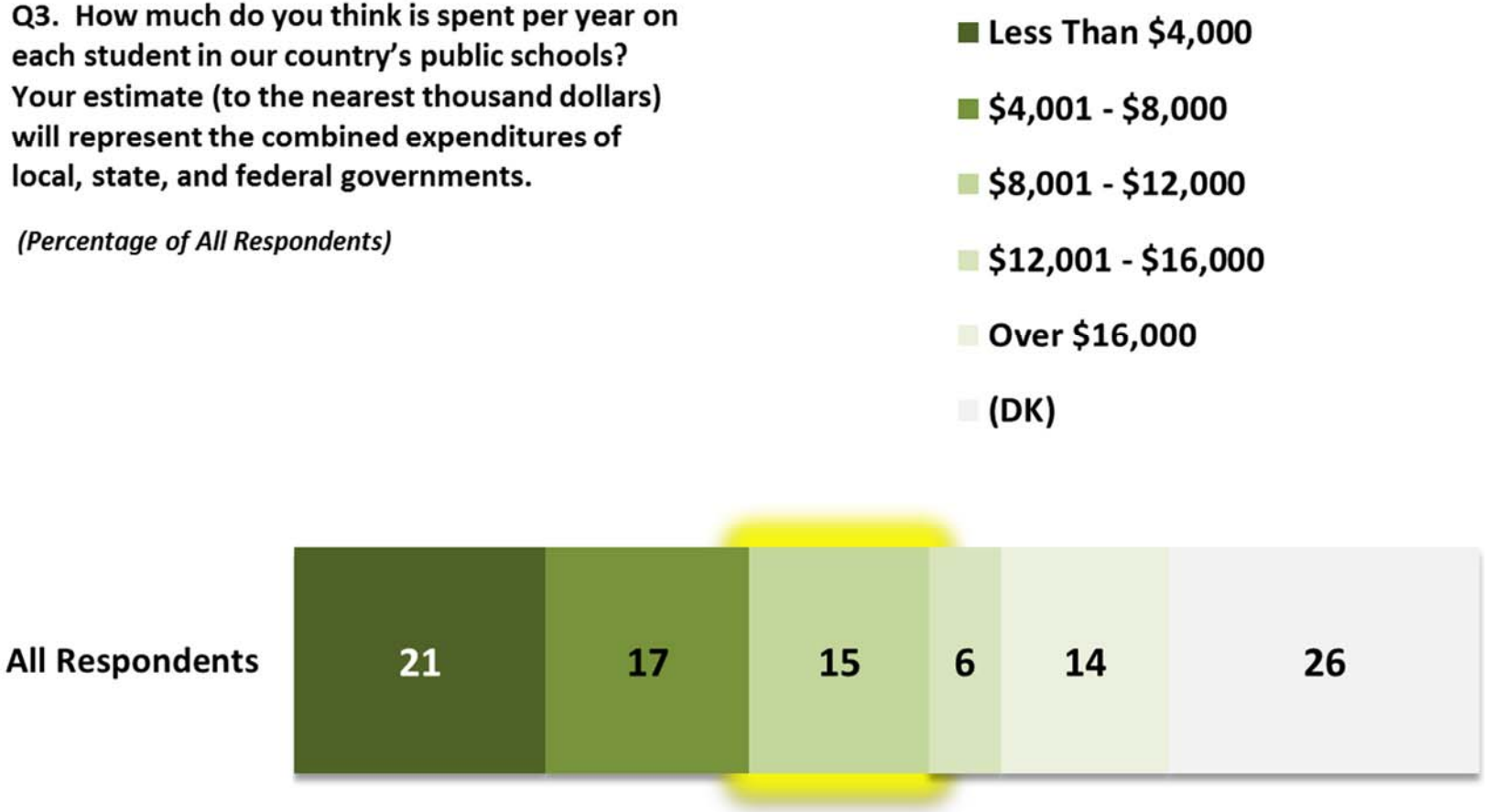
[4] "Current Expenditures" data include dollars spent on instruction, instruction-related support services, and other elementary/secondary current expenditures, but exclude expenditures on long-term debt service, facilities and construction, and other programs. "Total Expenditures" includes the latter categories. See Stephen Q. Cornman, *Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 2012–13 (Fiscal Year 2013)*, NCES 20115-301. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics (January 2016).
URL: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015301.pdf

per-student funding in America ($10,763 in 2012–13),[5] the proportion saying "too low" shrank by 14 percentage points to 38 percent (down from 49% in 2015).

[5] See note 4 on previous page.

Q3. How much do you think is spent per year on each student in our country's public schools? Your estimate (to the nearest thousand dollars) will represent the combined expenditures of local, state, and federal governments.

(Percentage of All Respondents)

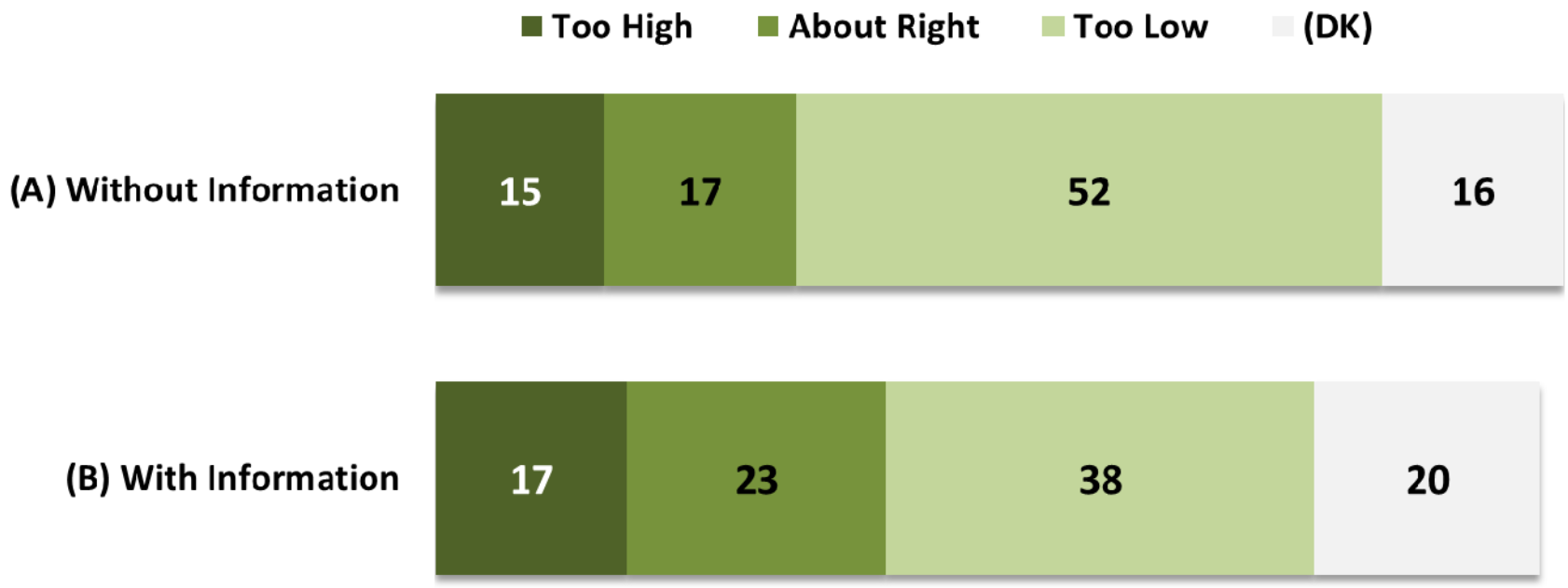


Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q3.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." Refusals not shown.

Q4-Split A. Do you believe that public school funding in our country is at a level that is:

Q4-Split B. According to the most recent information available, on average $10,763 is being spent per year on each student attending public schools in the United States. Do you believe that public school funding in our country is at a level that is:

(Percentage of Split-sample Responses)



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q4A and Q4B.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." Refusals not shown.

Standardized Testing

A plurality of Americans (39%) say the amount of time spent on standardized testing is "too high," compared with 18 percent who say "too low." Since last year, those numbers have both slightly decreased (2015: 42% too high vs. 19% too low).

- Two out of five current school parents (40%) say the amount of time spent on standardized testing is "too high;" however, that level is not significantly different compared with non-parents (40%) or the national average. Among current school parents, the "too high" sentiment is more than twice as high as the proportion who said "too low" (19%). Comparatively, there is a higher proportion of former school parents who say "too high" (44%).
- Democrats (36% too high vs. 23% too low) are significantly more likely to say "too low" than Republicans (47% too high vs. 15% too low).
- Seniors (18%) are significantly less likely to think the amount of time spent testing is "about right" compared to young adults (26%) and middle-age adults (26%).
- Views on testing diverge greatly among income groups. High-income earners (47% too high vs. 13% too low) and middle-income earners (41% too high vs. 18% too low) are much more likely to say "too high" than low-income earners (30% too high vs. 23% too low), and high-income earners are significantly more likely to say "too high" than the national average.

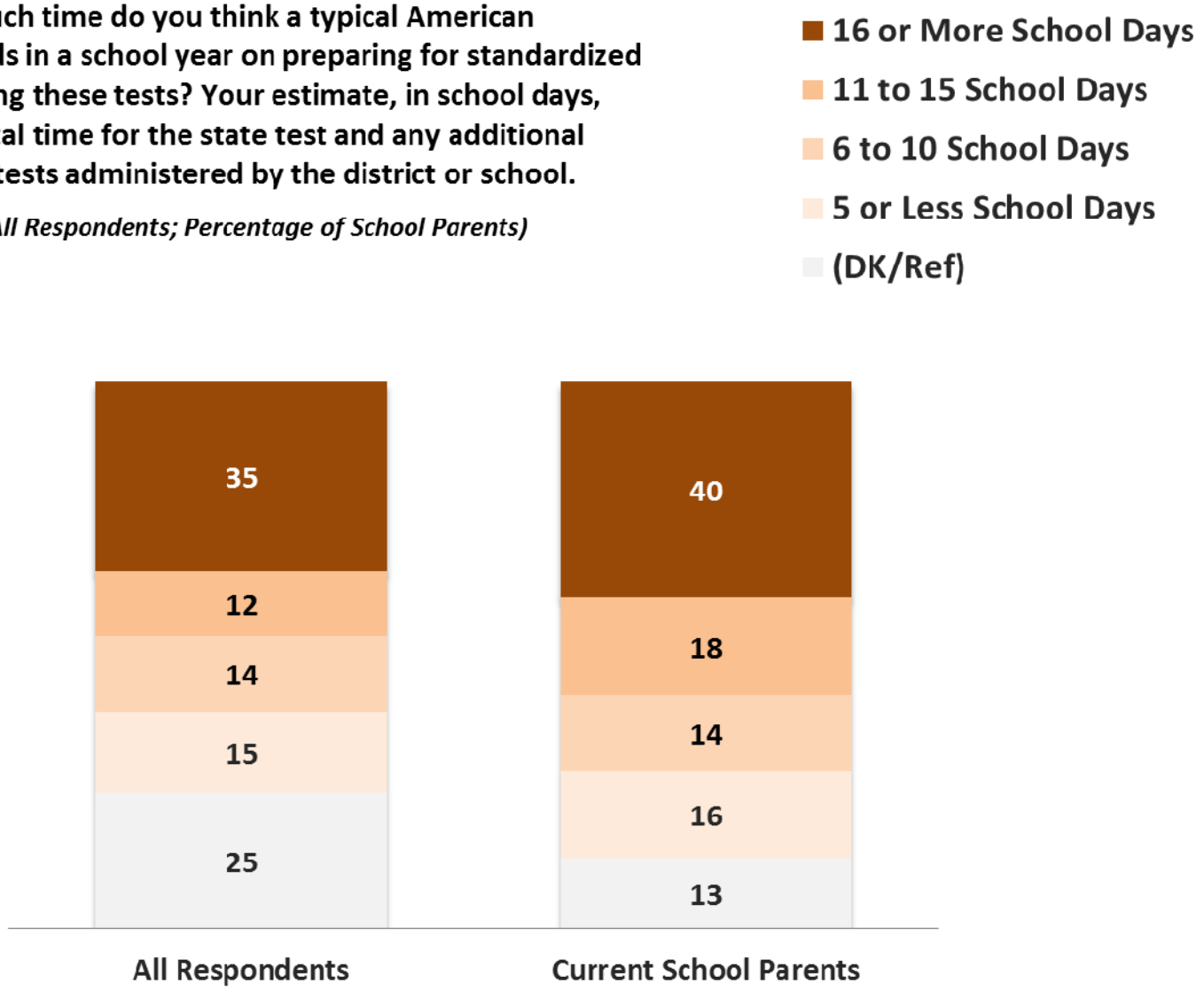
More than one-third of Americans (35%) believe students spend at least 16 or more days of the school year – nearly 10 percent of the academic year – on standardized testing activities. That figure is down since last year (43% in 2015).

- Forty percent of current school parents say students are preparing for or taking standardized tests for at least 16 days of the school year, though that is not a significantly different result compared to the national average.

- Middle-age adults (41%) are significantly more likely to say “16 or more school days” compared to seniors (32%) and young adults (31%). Seniors (31%) are significantly more likely than middle-age adults (19%) to say they “don’t know” or are unsure about responding to this question.
- High-income earners (40%) are significantly more likely to say “16 or more school days” than low-income earners (31%).

Q18. How much time do you think a typical American student spends in a school year on preparing for standardized tests and taking these tests? Your estimate, in school days, will reflect total time for the state test and any additional standardized tests administered by the district or school.

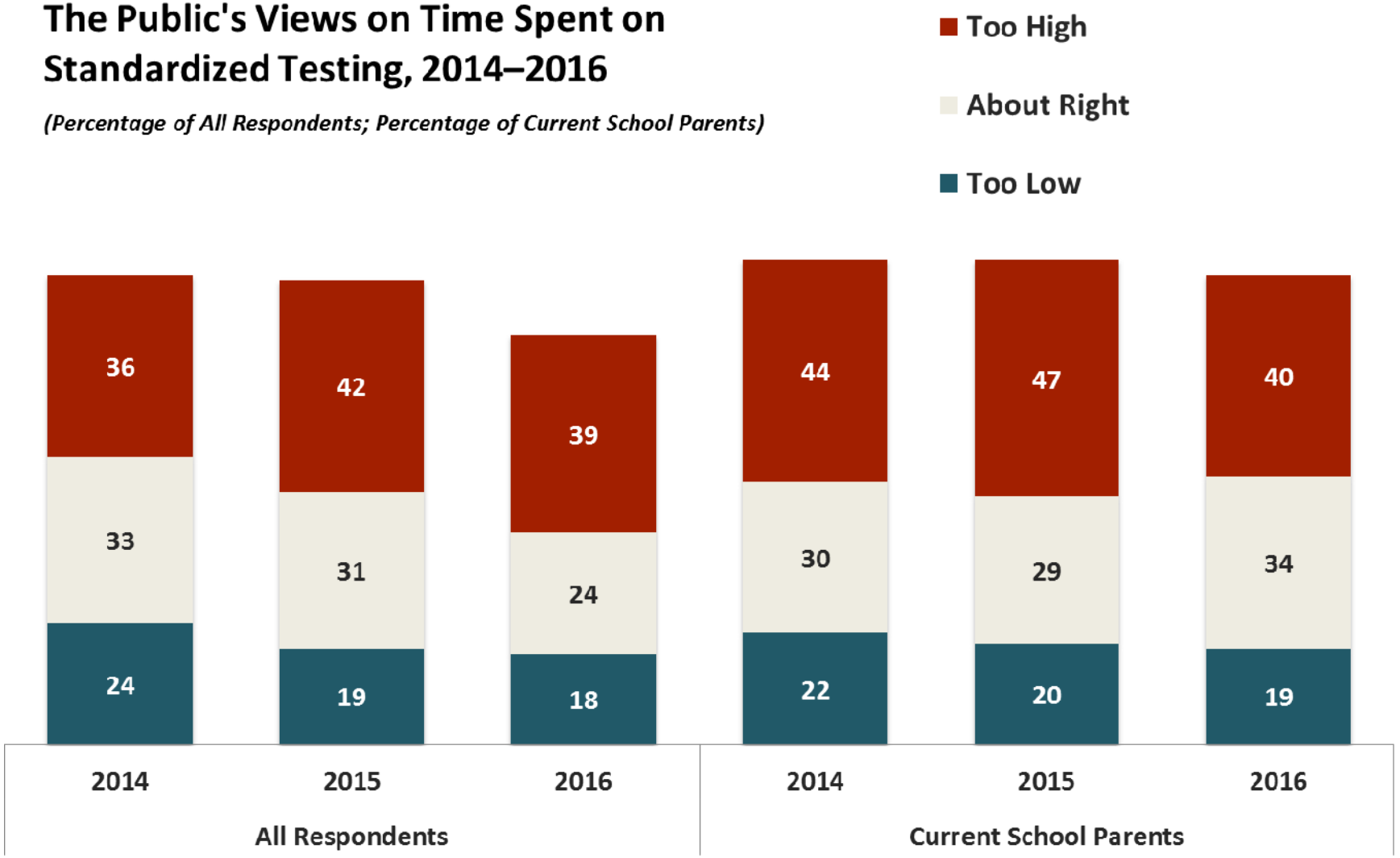
(Percentage of All Respondents; Percentage of School Parents)



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q18.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refused."

The Public's Views on Time Spent on Standardized Testing, 2014–2016

(Percentage of All Respondents; Percentage of Current School Parents)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q19; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey,* 2014–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "Don't Know" and Refusals not shown nor reflected in this chart.

Grades, Preferences for Types of Schools

Grading Local Schools

Americans are much more likely to give grades A or B to private/parochial schools in their communities compared with their local public schools. When considering only those respondents who actually gave a grade, the local private schools (75% gave an A or B) fare even better than public schools (39% gave an A or B).

- When considering *all responses*, we see approximately 34 percent of the general public give an A or B to local public schools; 55 percent give an A or B to local private/parochial schools; and 36 percent giving those high grades to public charter schools. Only 6 percent of respondents give a D or F grade to private schools; 25 percent give the same low grades to public schools; and 10 percent suggest low grades for charter schools.
- It is important to highlight that much higher proportions of respondents do not express a view for private schools (28%) or charter schools (38%), compared with the proportion that do not grade public schools (14%).
- When examining *only those responses giving grades* to different school types in their communities, we observe approximately 39 percent of the national sample give an A or B to local public schools; 75 percent give an A or B to local private/parochial schools; and 59 percent give an A or B to charter schools. Only 9 percent of respondents give a D or F grade to private schools; 16 percent gave low grades to charter schools; and 28 percent assign poor grades to area public schools. Local public schools are three times more likely to get a D or F grade compared to local private schools.

School Type Preferences

When asked for a preferred school type, a plurality of Americans would choose a private school (42%) as a first option for their child. A little more than one-fourth of respondents (28%) would select a regular public school. Nearly equal proportions would select a public charter school (11%) or opt to homeschool their child (10%).[6]

- Those private preferences signal a glaring disconnect with actual school enrollment patterns in the United States. The reality check is profound. About 83 percent of K–12 students attend public schools across the country. Only about 10 percent of students enroll in private schools. Roughly 5 percent of students currently go to public charter schools. It is estimated that just under 3 percent of the country's students are homeschooled.

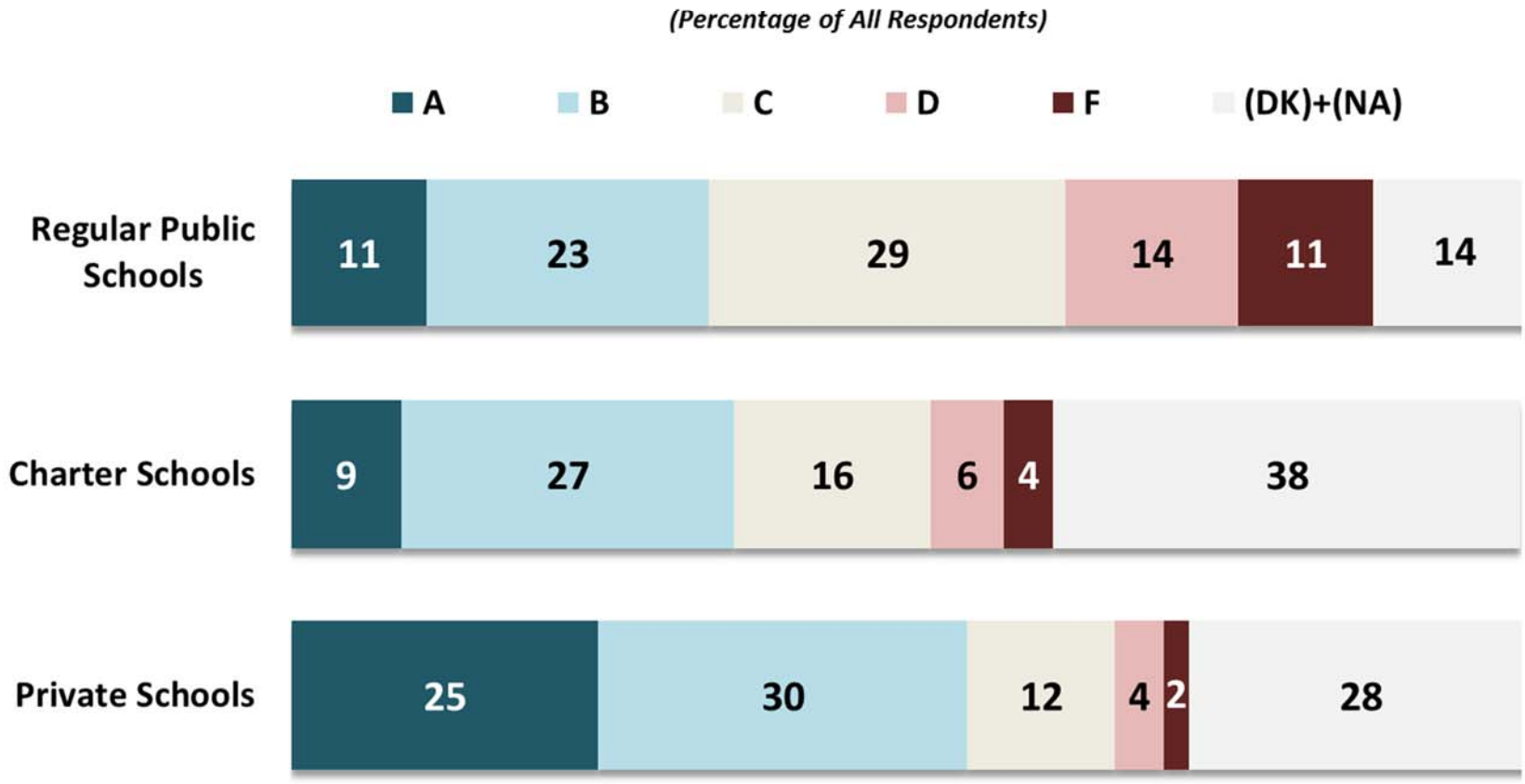
We see a couple changes compared to last year's survey. Fewer Americans today appear to be inclined to select a regular public school on our "trend" question version (2016: 28% vs. 2015: 36%).[7] The preferences for private schools, charter schools, and homeschooling have remain essentially unchanged.

In a follow-up question, more respondents in our survey prioritize "better education/quality" (18%) than any other coded response to explain why they selected a certain school type. Other school attributes cited as important include "better teachers/teachers/teaching" (10%) and "individual attention/one-on-one" (8%).

[6] Unless otherwise noted, the results in this section reflect the composite average of split-sample responses to 6A and 6B.

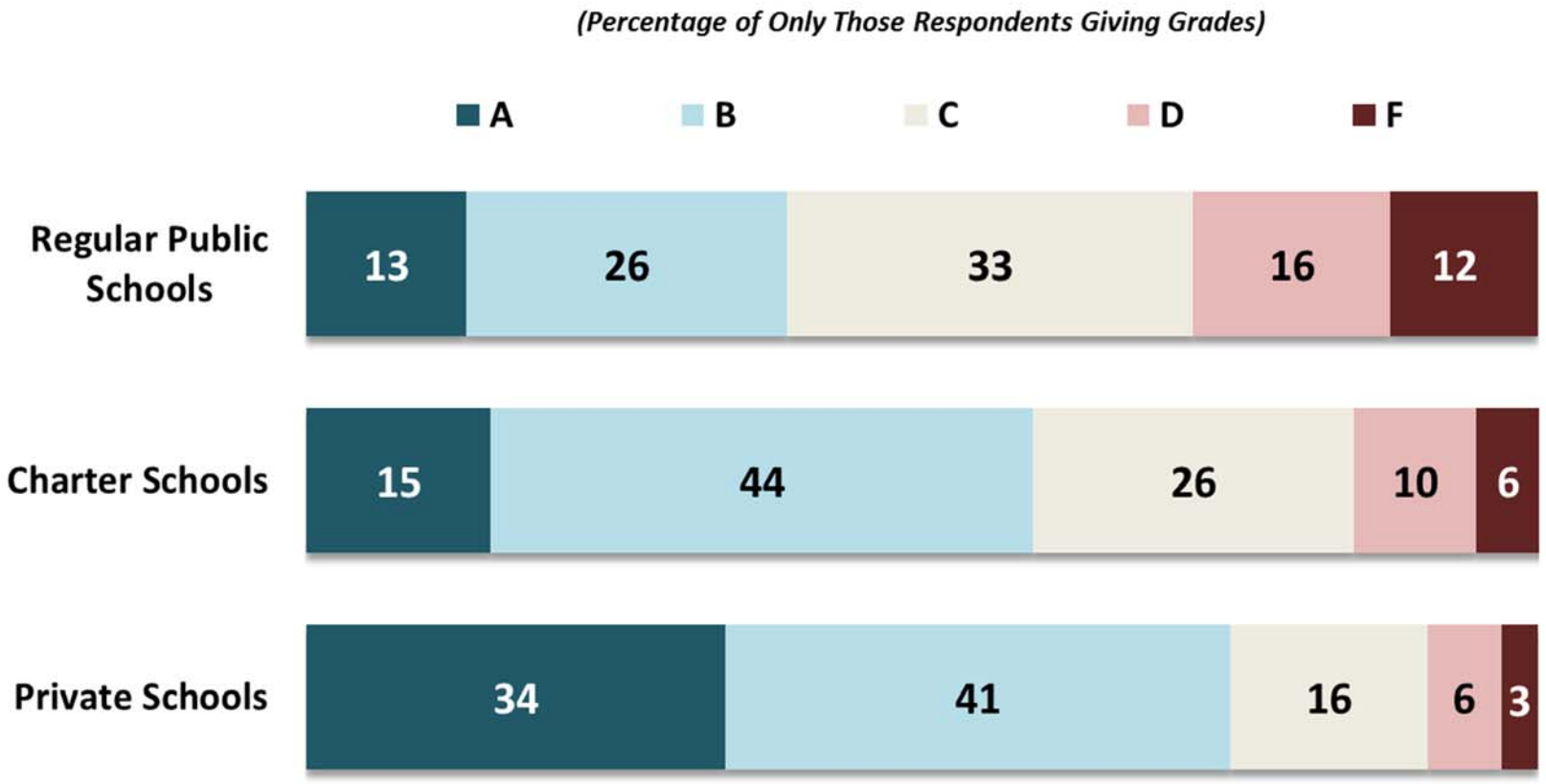
[7] For those survey questions where we used two or three versions to experiment with wording, we first report composite averages. We refer to "trend questions" when describing the question versions in our split/partial-sample experiments that connect to previous years' results and continue trend lines on specific survey topics.

Q5. In thinking about the schools in your area, what grade would you give...



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q5A, Q5B, and Q5C.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered: "DK" means "Don't Know." "NA" means "Not Applicable."

Q5. In thinking about the schools in your area, what grade would you give...



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q5A, Q5B, and Q5C.
Note: Volunteered "Don't Know" and "Not Applicable" responses not shown nor reflected in this chart.

TABLE 3. Preferences for School Types: Composite Results, 2016

Composite Averages Based on Two Question Versions with Corresponding Split Sample Responses

	Private School %	Public School %	Charter School %	Home School %	N =
ALL RESPONDENTS	**42**	**28**	**11**	**10**	**1,001**
Current School Parent	41	28	17	11	219
Former School Parent	42	31	11	10	221
Non-Schooler	44	27	8	9	501
PARTY ID					
Democrat	44	29	11	8	320
Republican	46	25	12	13	290
Independent	44	28	9	10	255
REGION					
Northeast	45	33	5	4	183
Midwest	43	35	8	9	215
South	45	24	13	12	371
West	34	24	15	12	232
COMMUNITY					
Urban	49	25	14	8	222
Suburban	45	24	10	9	403
Small Town	35	34	13	10	190
Rural	35	36	7	15	175
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	36	31	11	9	231
35 to 54	44	24	12	11	301
55 & Over	46	29	9	10	437
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under $40,000	33	29	10	13	293
$40,000 to $79,999	47	26	11	10	311
$80,000 & Over	48	30	13	5	306
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	32	42	12	3	38
Black	44	25	20	10	108
Hispanic	40	29	17	9	74
White	43	28	8	10	735
GENDER					
Men	46	29	11	8	478
Women	39	27	11	11	523

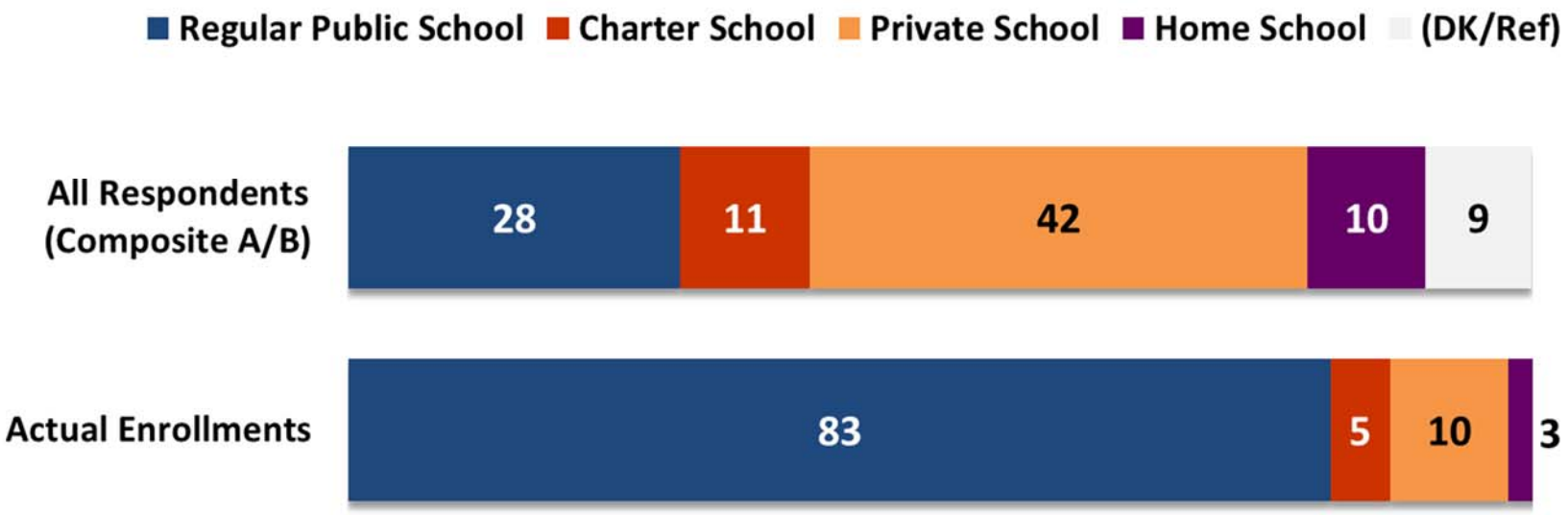
Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q6A and Q6B.

Notes: The "composite" percentages in this chart reflect a weighted average of the split samples' responses to two slightly different versions of this question (6A/B). Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies.

Q6-Split A. If it were your decision and you could select any type of school, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child?

Q6-Split B. If it were your decision and you could select any type of school, *and financial costs and transportation were of no concern*, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child?

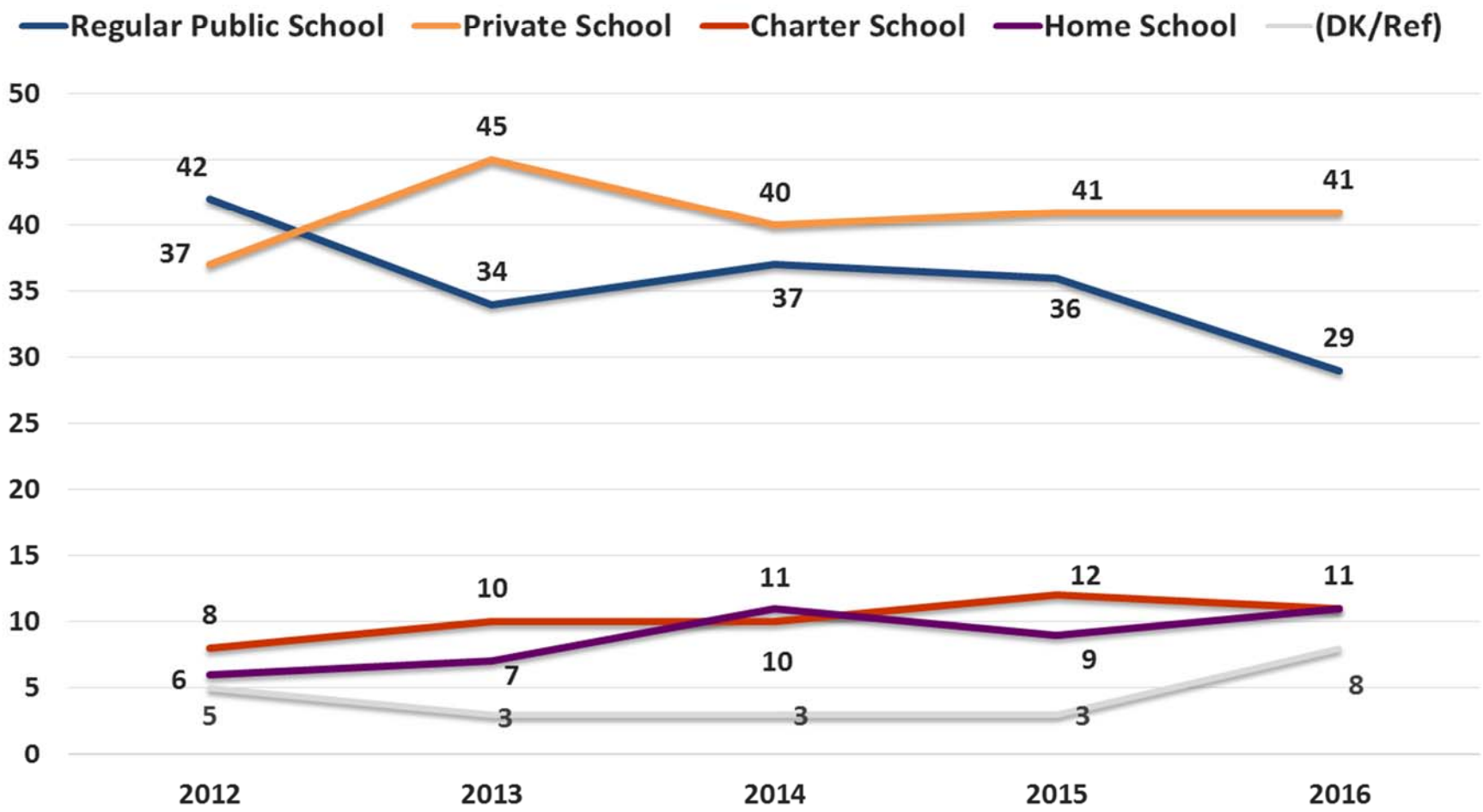
(Percentage of All Respondents)



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q6A and Q6B.
Notes: The percentages in this chart reflect a composite that averages split samples' responses to two slightly different versions of this question (6A/B). Responses within parentheses were volunteered: "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For enrollment data sources, see pp. 5–6.

The Public's Preferences for School Type, 2012–2016

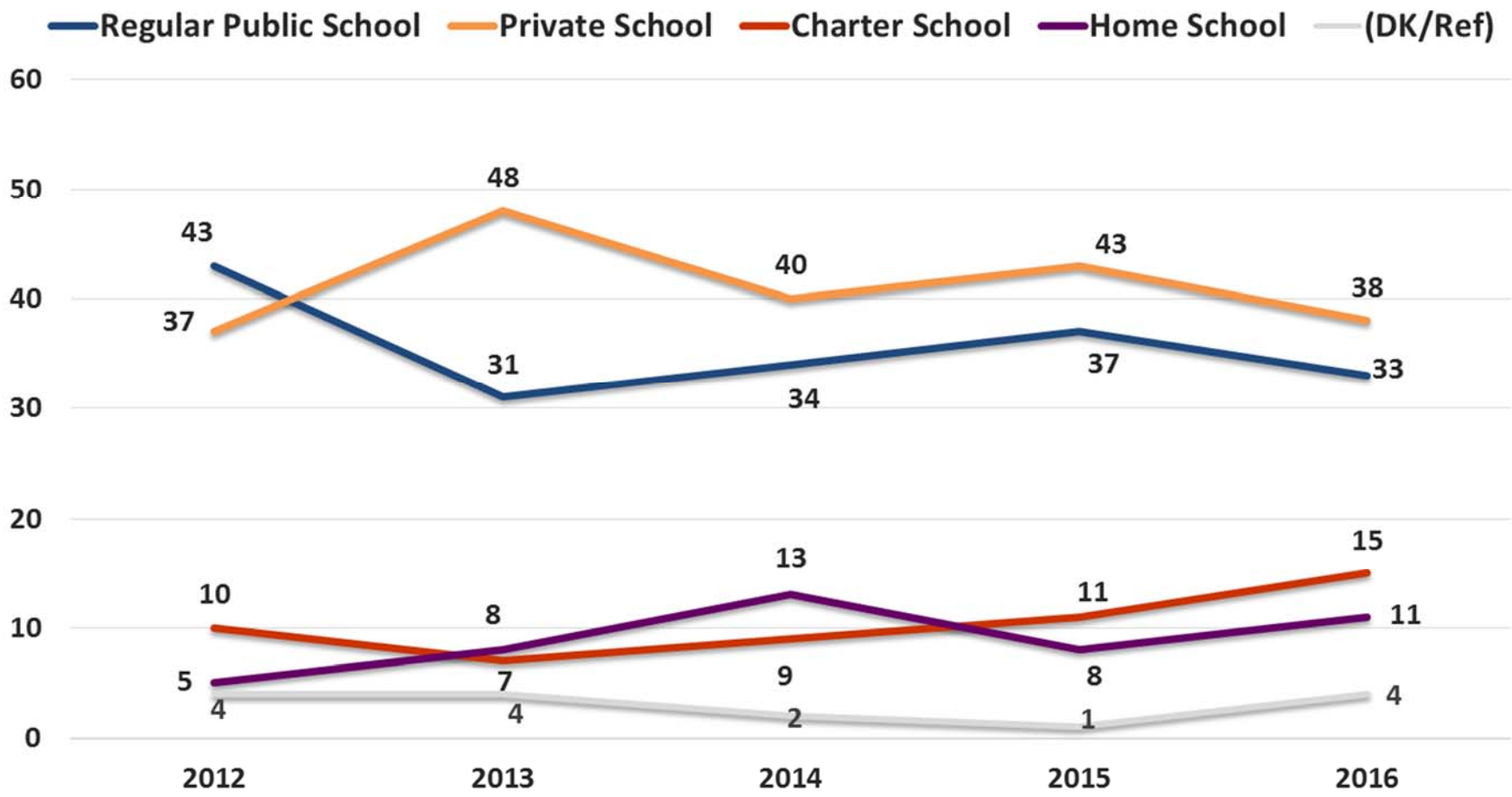
(2012 to 2015: Percentage of All Respondents; 2016: Percentage of Split-sample Respondents, N = 501)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted April 30 to May 26, 2016), Q6A; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

Current School Parents' Preferences for School Type, 2012–2016

(2012 to 2015: Percentage of School Parents; 2016: Percentage of Split-sample of Current School Parents, N = 107)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q6A; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

Q7. What is the most important characteristic or attribute that would cause you to choose a [INSERT SCHOOL TYPE FROM PREVIOUS QUESTION] for your child? Please use one word, or a very short phrase.

Top 10 | Specific impressions offered by <u>all respondents</u> in the national sample (N = 919). Numbers represent counts, not percentages.

BETTER EDUCATION / QUALITY	159
BETTER TEACHERS / TEACHERS / TEACHING	88
INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION / ONE-ON-ONE	71
CLASS SIZE / STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO	63
DISCIPLINE / STRUCTURE	61
SOCIALIZATION / PEERS / OTHER KIDS	45
MORALS / VALUES / ETHICS	38
ACADEMICS / CURRICULUM	35
DIVERSITY / VARIETY	34
COST / TUITION / AFFORDABILITY	32

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q7.

TABLE 4. Top Five Reasons for Choosing a Specific School Type

Regular Public School (N = 281)

16%	Socialization / Peers / Other Kids
12%	Better Education / Quality
11%	Diversity / Variety
9%	Cost / Tuition / Affordability
8%	Better Teachers / Teachers / Teaching

Private School (N = 429)

23%	Better Education / Quality
11%	Discipline / Structure
11%	Individual Attention / One-on-One
11%	Class Size / Student-Reacher Ratio
10%	Better Teachers / Teachers / Teaching

Public Charter School (N = 110)

17%	Better Education / Quality
15%	Better Teachers / Teachers / Teaching
14%	Class Size / Student-Reacher Ratio
13%	Individual Attention / One-on-One
8%	Charter School: General Positive Mentions

Home School (N = 99)

13%	Safety / Less Drugs, Violence, Bullying
11%	Better Education / Quality
10%	Morals / Values / Ethics
9%	Individual Attention / One-on-One
9%	Parents / Parental Involvement

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q7.

Notes: Lists cite the total number of unweighted interviews (N) per school type grouping. However, all percentages reflect the count of coded responses divided by the total number of weighted interviews. Unweighted N's are provided so the reader can roughly assess the reliability of reported percentages. Volunteered "Don't Know" or "Other" responses not included in this table.

PART II
Survey Results on School Choice Topics

Charter Schools

A large swath of Americans support charter schools. A solid majority (59%) say they favor charter schools, whereas 23 percent of respondents say they oppose charters. The margin of support for charter schools is large (+36 points). Americans are more than twice as likely to express intensely positive responses toward charters (21% "strongly favor" vs. 10% "strongly oppose"). Compared to our 2015 survey, support has increased six points and opposition has decreased four points (2015: 53% favor vs. 27% oppose).

- We asked a pair of questions about public charter schools. The first question inquired an opinion without offering any description. On this baseline question, 47 percent of respondents say they favored charters and 20 percent say they opposed them (2015: 42% favor vs. 21% oppose). In the follow-up question, respondents were given a description for a charter school. With this basic context, support rises 12 points to 59 percent, and opposition increases three points to 23 percent.
- The proportion of "don't know" responses shrinks by 14 points (29% to 15%) when comparing the baseline item to the description item. Based on responses to the former, the subgroups with the highest proportions either saying they have never heard of or "don't know" about charter schools are: residents of rural areas (42%), low-income earners (37%), and young adults (34%).

Positive views on charter schools span all observed demographics. All subgroup margins are substantially large in the positive direction—all +30 percentage points or wider—except for six subgroups: low-income earners (+29 points), whites (+28 points), Northeasterners (+26 points), Midwesterners (+23 points), Democrats (+23 points), and former school parents (+28 points). The largest margins are among Republicans (+49 points), current school parents (+47 points), young adults (+46 points), and middle-income earners (+45 points).

- Republicans (67%) are significantly more likely to indicate support for charter schools than Democrats (54%) and the national average. Democrats (30%) are significantly more negative on charter schools than Republicans (18%) and the national average.
- Midwesterners (31%) are significantly more negative on charter schools than Southerners (20%), Westerners (18%) and the national average.
- Low-income earners (53%) are significantly less likely to indicate support for charter schools than middle-income earners (65%) and high-income earners (62%).
- Men (27%) are significantly more likely to oppose charter schools than women (20%).

Intensities are positive across the board. The largest are among Republicans (+19 points), Westerners (+17 points), middle-income earners (+16 points), urbanites (+15 points), and young adults (+15 points). Republicans (27%) and urbanites (27%) stand out as most likely to say they "strongly favor" charter schools.

TABLE 5. Views on Charter Schools: Descriptive Results, 2016

	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
ALL RESPONDENTS	**59**	**23**	**36**	**11**	**1,001**
Current School Parent	69	22	**47**	**13**	219
Former School Parent	58	30	**28**	**12**	221
Non-Schooler	57	23	**35**	**11**	501
PARTY ID					
Democrat	54	30	**23**	**5**	320
Republican	67	18	**49**	**19**	290
Independent	63	23	**40**	**10**	255
REGION					
Northeast	52	26	**26**	**10**	183
Midwest	55	32	**23**	**2**	215
South	63	20	**43**	**13**	371
West	63	18	**44**	**17**	232
COMMUNITY					
Urban	62	28	**34**	**15**	222
Suburban	62	20	**43**	**11**	403
Small Town	57	27	**30**	**12**	190
Rural	55	23	**32**	**5**	175
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	63	17	**46**	**15**	231
35 to 54	58	26	**32**	**10**	301
55 & Over	57	27	**30**	**8**	437
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under $40,000	53	25	**29**	**7**	293
$40,000 to $79,999	65	20	**45**	**16**	311
$80,000 & Over	62	26	**36**	**8**	306
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	65	16	**49**	**16**	38
Black	74	12	**62**	**28**	108
Hispanic	67	21	**45**	**19**	74
White	55	27	**28**	**7**	735
GENDER					
Men	58	27	**31**	**9**	478
Women	60	20	**40**	**13**	523

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q9.

Notes: Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

TABLE 6. Views on Charter Schools: Baseline vs. Descriptive Version, 2016

Percentage of All Respondents

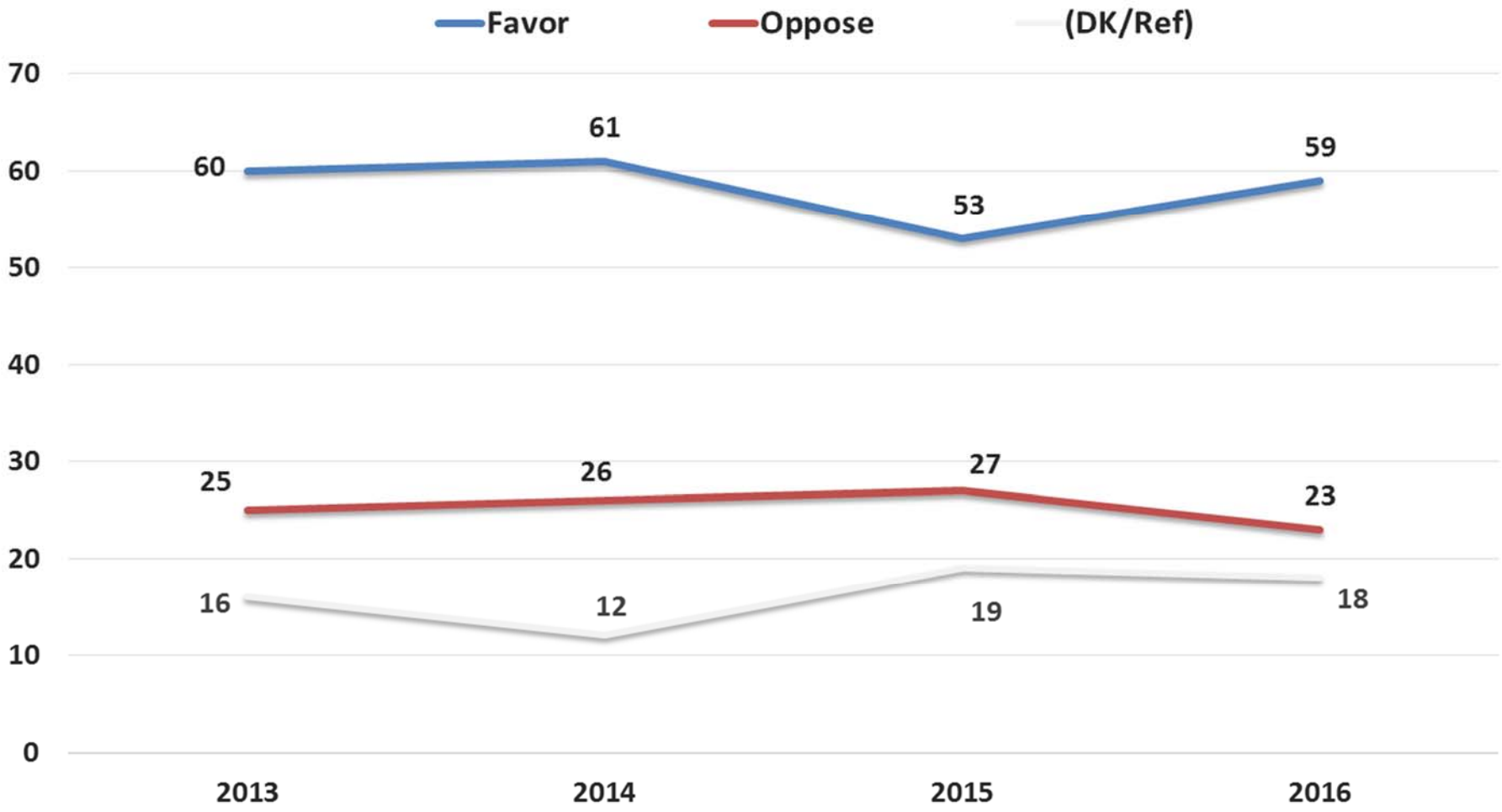
	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
Baseline	**47**	**20**	**27**	**8**	**1,001**
With Description	**59**	**23**	**36**	**11**	**1,001**

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q8 and Q9.

Notes: Sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

The Public's Views on Charter Schools, with Description, 2013–2016

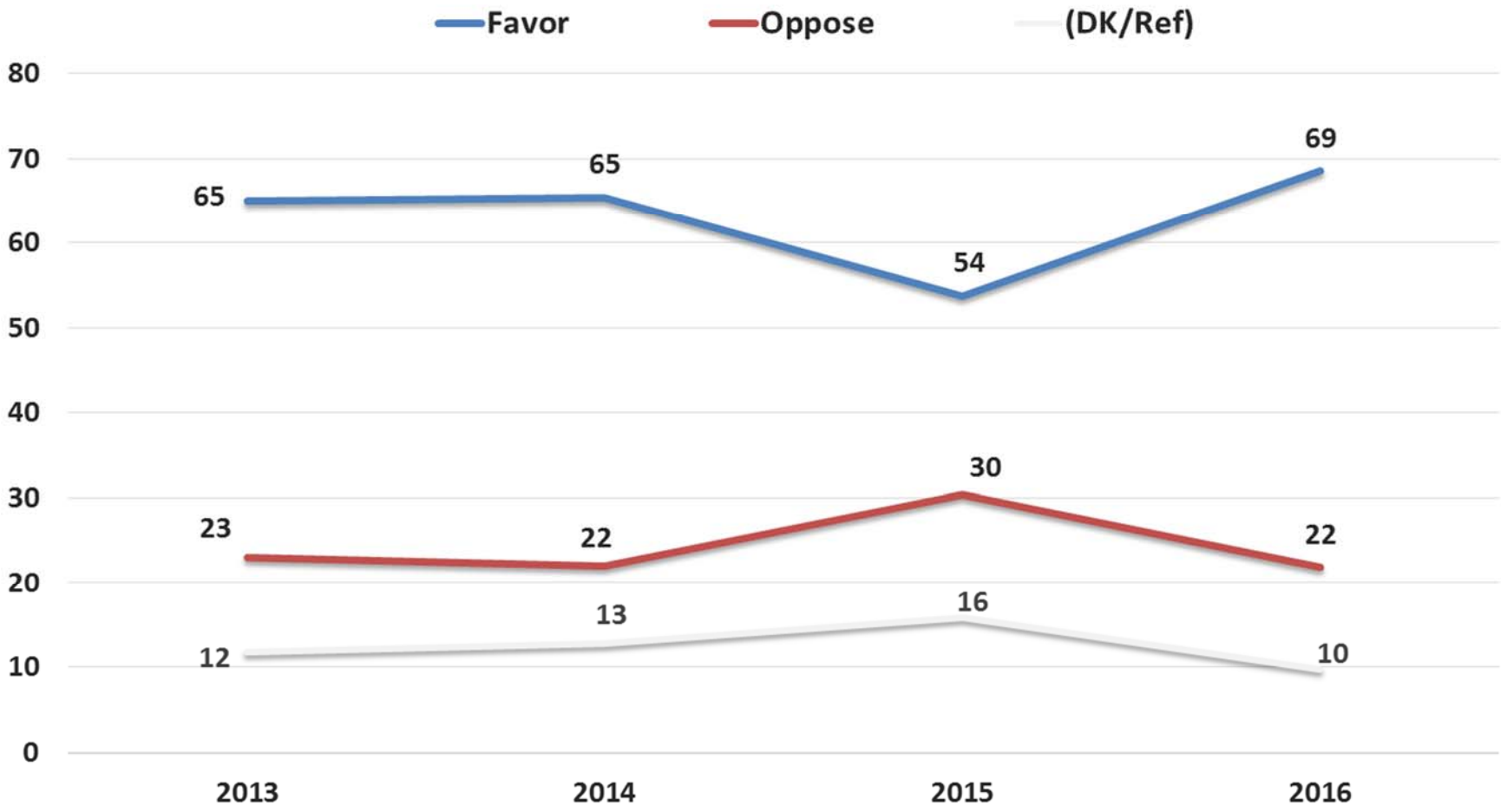
(Percentage of All Respondents)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q9; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

Current School Parents' Views on Charter Schools, with Description, 2013–2016

(Percentage of Current School Parents)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q9; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

School Vouchers

A majority of Americans (56%) say they support school vouchers, compared with 28 percent who say they oppose such a school choice system. The margin of support (+28 points) is large, indicating the public is twice as likely to be supportive of vouchers. The intensity is net positive (+12 points) as respondents are more likely to express a strongly favorable view toward vouchers (28% "strongly favor" vs. 16% "strongly oppose").[8]

The school voucher trend question is one of three versions asked to subsamples this year, which all three combined to produce the composite results reported in this section. When considering only the trend version, we observe the same margin (+28 points) for four out of the last five years, a remarkably stable trend during that time period.

- Similar to the previous pair of charter school questions, our interviewers asked baseline and follow-up questions about school vouchers. In the first question, respondents were asked for their views on vouchers without a description or any other context. On this baseline question, 35 percent of the general population say they favor vouchers, and 21 percent say they oppose such an education policy (2015: 39% favor vs. 26% oppose). In the follow-up questions, using a basic description for a school voucher policy, support rises 21 points to 56 percent, and opposition increases seven points to 28 percent.
- The opinion change on vouchers – from baseline to follow-up – doubles the positive margin, from +14 points to +28 points. The intensity for vouchers also shifts in the positive direction, from +6 points to +11 points.
- We estimate 41 percent of respondents were initially unfamiliar or were unsure about school vouchers. The proportion of "don't know" responses shrinks by 27 points (41% to 14%) when comparing the baseline item to the description item. On the former, the subgroups with the highest proportions

[8] Unless otherwise noted, the results in this section reflect the composite average of responses to Q11A, Q11B, and Q11C.

either saying they have never heard of or "don't know" about school vouchers are young adults (56%) and low-income earners (49%).

Like for charter schools, all demographics express positive views on vouchers. Subgroup margins are substantially large in the positive direction—greater than +20 percentage points for most subgroups. The largest margin is among young adults (+49 points). The smallest margin is among seniors (+12 points).

- Current school parents (67%) are significantly more favorable when it comes to vouchers, compared to non-parents (53%), former school parents (52%), and the national average. Former school parents (37%) are significantly more negative on school vouchers than current school parents (26%) and the national average.
- Republicans (66%) are more likely to indicate support for school vouchers than Independents (55%), Democrats (53%), and the national average.
- Small town residents (67%) are more supportive of vouchers than those from rural areas (54%), suburbanites (51%), and the national average.
- Young adults (64%) are more favorable toward school vouchers than seniors (49%). Seniors (37%) and middle-age adults (32%) are significantly more negative on school vouchers than young adults (15%).
- Low-income earners (22%) are significantly less negative than high-income earners (36%) and the national average.

Intensities are positive for all but one of the subgroups. The largest are among small town residents (+26 points), current school parents (+23 points), and young adults (+22 points). The lowest intensities are found among: seniors (-1 points), former school parents (+2 points), those from rural areas (+3 points), and Democrats (+5 points).

- Small town residents (37%) and Republicans (34%) are most likely to say they "strongly favor" school vouchers.
- Seniors (26%) and rural area residents (21%) have the largest proportions saying they "strongly oppose" school vouchers.

If a respondent has a particular view on school vouchers, he or she is nearly twice as likely to vote for the pro-voucher candidate (26% “more likely” vs. 15% “less likely”). More than half of the respondents (57%) signal that vouchers are not a make-or-break issue or did not express an opinion on this item.

The demographic subgroups most likely to say they will support a pro-voucher candidate are current school parents (37% and margin = +20 points), middle-age adults (33% and margin = +17 points), small town residents (31% and margin = +17 points), and middle-income earners (31% and margin = +15 points). Americans are likely to support a pro-voucher candidate regardless of political party identification:

Democrat: 25% more likely to support; margin = +4 points

Republican: 32% more likely to support; margin = +18 points

Independent: 25% more likely to support; margin = +11 points

Seniors are the only observed demographic that is overall less likely to support a pro-voucher candidate (20% and margin = -3 points).

TABLE 7. Views on School Vouchers: Composite/Descriptive Results, 2016

Composite Averages Based on Three Question Versions with Corresponding Subsample Responses

	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
ALL RESPONDENTS	**56**	**28**	**28**	**11**	**1,001**
Current School Parent	67	26	41	23	219
Former School Parent	52	37	15	2	221
Non-Schooler	53	29	24	8	501
PARTY ID					
Democrat	53	32	22	5	320
Republican	66	27	39	20	290
Independent	55	31	24	8	255
REGION					
Northeast	57	22	35	18	183
Midwest	62	28	34	15	215
South	55	31	24	6	371
West	53	29	24	11	232
COMMUNITY					
Urban	60	30	30	13	222
Suburban	51	30	21	7	403
Small Town	67	22	45	26	190
Rural	54	32	22	3	175
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	64	15	49	22	231
35 to 54	56	32	24	12	301
55 & Over	50	37	12	-1	437
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under $40,000	57	22	36	16	293
$40,000 to $79,999	60	28	32	10	311
$80,000 & Over	54	36	18	10	306
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	67	21	46	24	38
Black	61	25	36	22	108
Hispanic	60	23	37	22	74
White	54	31	24	7	735
GENDER					
Men	56	31	25	11	478
Women	57	26	31	11	523

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q11A, Q11B, and Q11C.

Notes: The percentages in this chart reflect composites that average the split samples' responses to three slightly different versions of this question (11A/B/C). Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

TABLE 8. Views on School Vouchers: Baseline vs. Descriptive Versions, 2016

Baseline, Composite, and Three Question Versions with Corresponding Subsample Responses

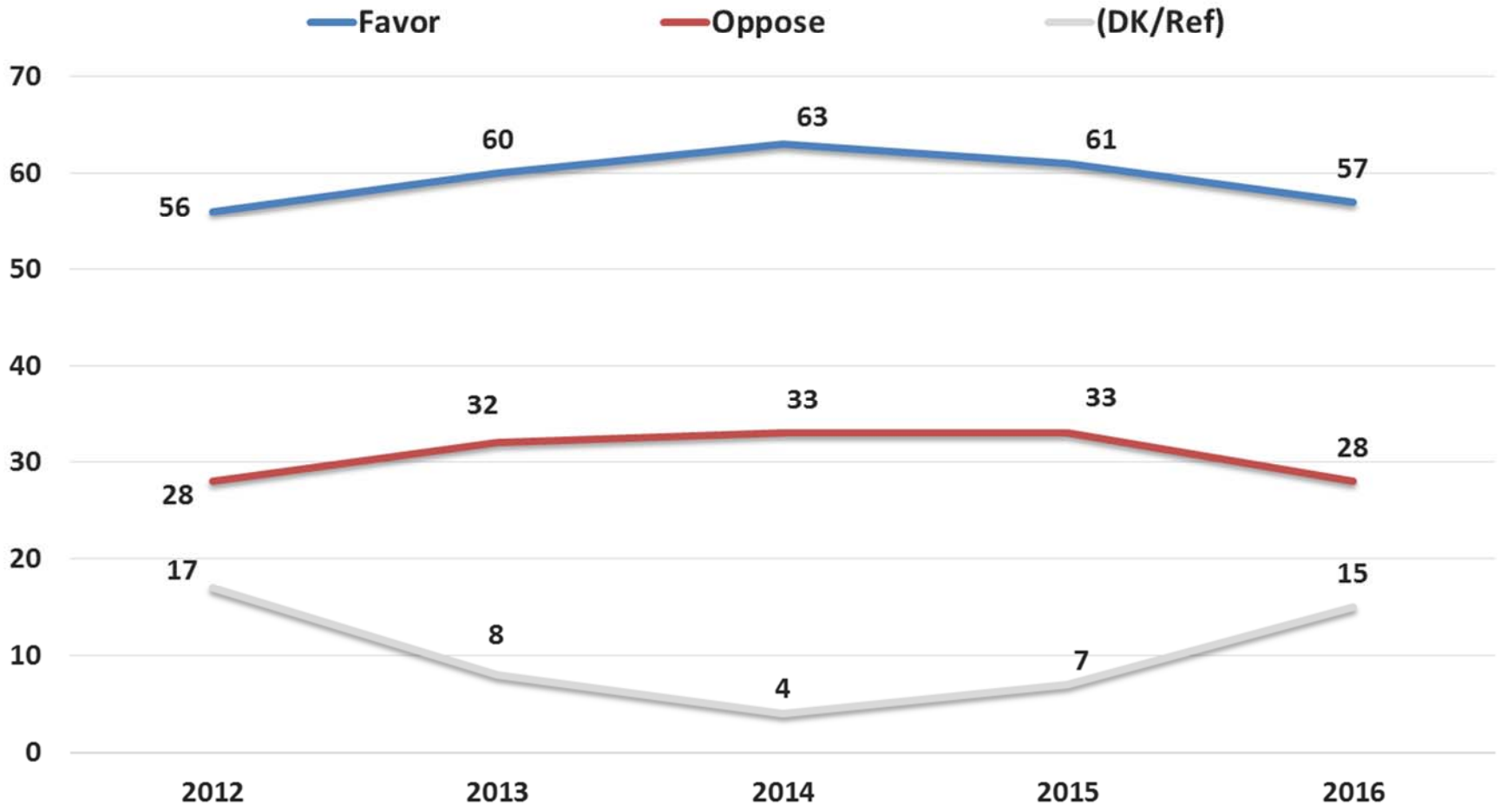
	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
Baseline	**35**	**21**	**14**	**6**	**1,001**
With Description					
Composite A/B/C	**56**	**28**	**28**	**11**	**1,001**
Version A	57	28	29	11	337
Version B	60	27	33	14	326
Version C	52	30	22	9	338

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q10, Q11A, Q11B, and Q11C.

Notes: The "composite" percentages in this chart reflect the weighted average of the subsamples' responses to three slightly different versions of this question (11A/B/C). All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

The Public's Views on School Vouchers, with Description, 2012–2016

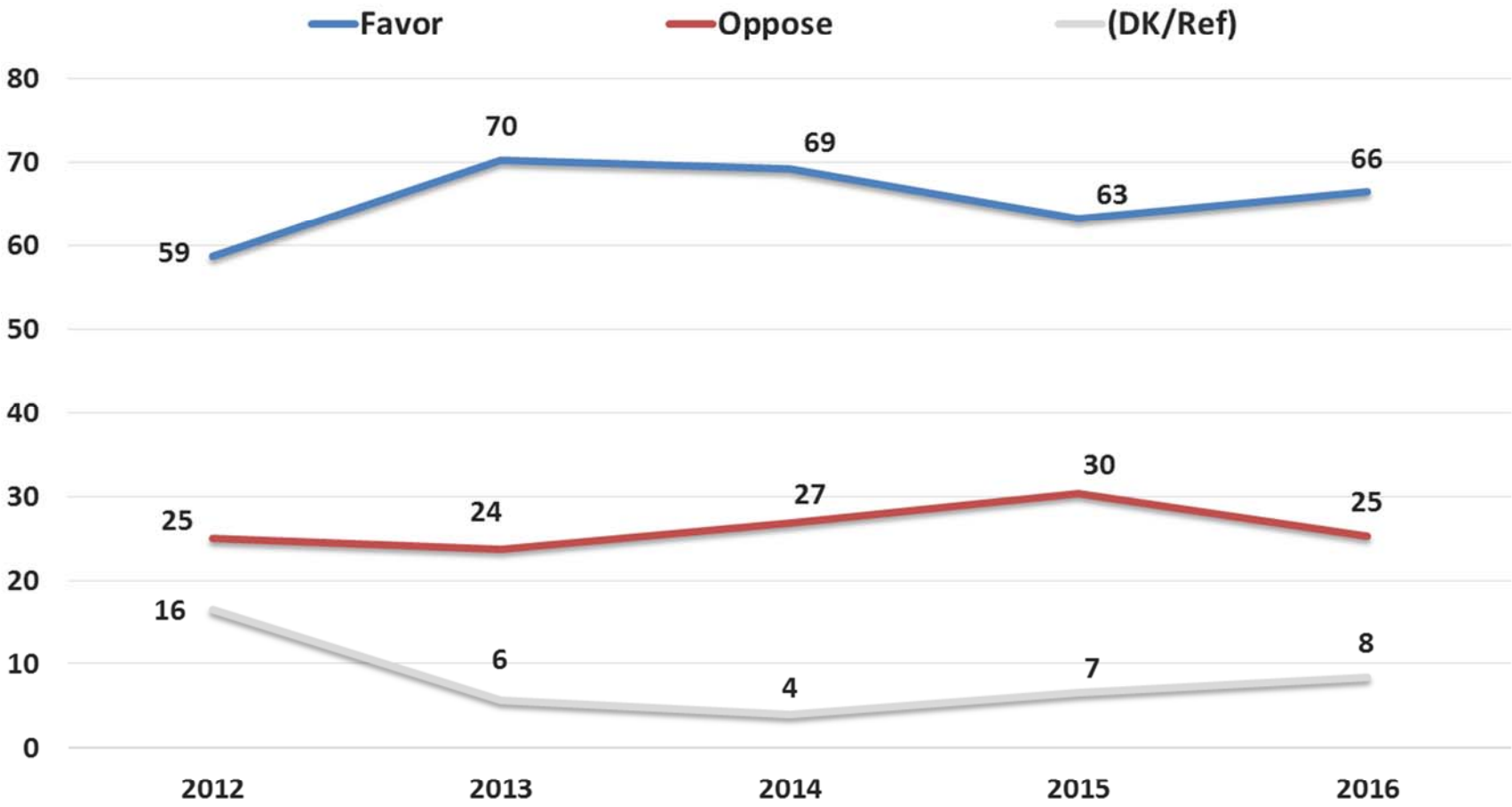
(2012 to 2015: Percentage of All Respondents; 2016: Percentage of Subsample Respondents, N = 337)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q11A; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

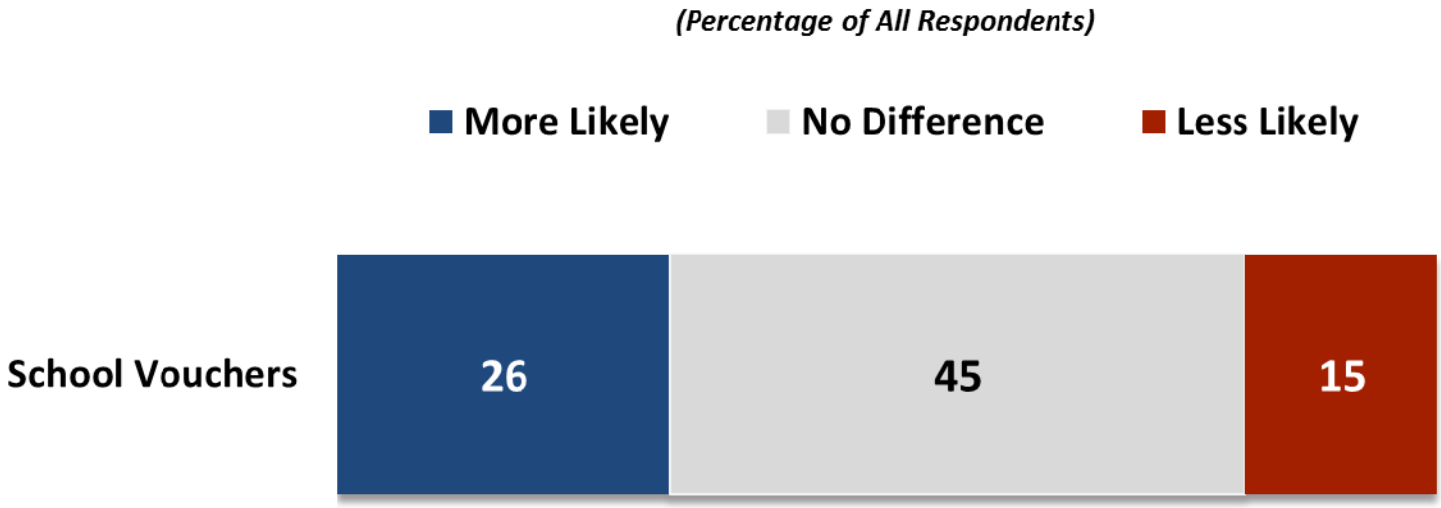
Current School Parents' Views on School Vouchers, with Description, 2012–2016

(2012 to 2015: Percentage of Current School Parents; 2016: Percentage of Subsample's Current School Parents, N = 74)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q11A; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

Q12. Thinking ahead to the next election, if a candidate for Governor, State Senator or Representative supports *school vouchers*, would that make you more likely to vote for him or her, less likely, or make no difference whatsoever in your voting?



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q12.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "Don't Know" and Refusals not shown nor reflected in this chart.

Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)

Nearly half of Americans (49%) say they support an "education savings account" system ("ESA"). The margin of support is large (+23 points) and less one-third of respondents (27%) said they oppose ESAs. The support level and margin have decreased since last year (2015: 62% favor vs. 28% oppose). Americans are more likely to express an intensely favorable view toward ESAs (24% "strongly favor" vs. 15% "strongly oppose").[9]

The ESA trend question is one of two versions asked to partial samples in 2016. The two versions of this question combined to produce the composite results reported in this section. When considering only the trend version, we see year-to-year volatility for responses to the ESA question. The margin has never dipped below +22 points. Americans have been consistently more likely to support ESAs than oppose them. This year we see a spike of "don't know" responses that is noteworthy (2015: 11% vs. 2016: 22%).

All demographics are supportive of ESAs. With only a few exceptions, subgroup margins are greater than +20 percentage points. The largest margins are among: young adults (+36 points) and urbanites (+36 points). By far, the smallest margin is among seniors (+10 points).

- Current school parents (58%) are significantly more supportive of ESAs than non-parents (48%) and former school parents (47%).
- Suburbanites (42%) are significantly less favorable toward ESAs than urbanites (60%), small town residents (56%), and the national average; urbanites are significantly more favorable than the national average.

[9] Unless otherwise noted, the results in this section reflect the composite average of responses to Q13A and Q13B.

- Young adults (54%) are significantly more supportive of ESAs than seniors (43%). Seniors (33%) and middle-age adults (27%) are significantly more negative on ESAs than young adults (19%).
- High-income earners (56%) are more likely to support ESAs than low-income earners (45%).

Intensities are also positive for nearly all demographic subgroups. Current school parents (+22 points) clearly stand out as most intensely positive. On the other end of the spectrum, seniors (-4 points) are the only subgroup to produce a negative intensity.

- Current school parents (33%), urbanites (31%), small town residents (28%), Republicans (28%), middle-age adults (28%), and high-income earners (28%) have the greatest proportions saying they "strongly favor" ESAs.
- Seniors (22%) have the largest proportion saying they "strongly oppose" ESAs.

In a follow-up question, we learn the most common reasons for supporting ESAs are "more freedom and flexibility for parents" (33%) and "access to schools having better academics" (26%). We also asked a similar follow-up to those respondents opposed to ESAs. By far the most common reason for opposing ESAs is the belief they "divert funding away from public schools" (41%).

A split-sample experiment in a follow-up question indicates Americans are inclined toward universal access to ESAs rather than means-tested eligibility that would be based solely on financial need.

- In Split A, more than half of the respondents (56%) say they agree with the statement that "ESAs should be available to all families, regardless of incomes and special needs." About 30 percent "strongly agree" with that statement. Fewer than one out of four (24%) disagree with that statement; 14 percent said they "strongly disagree."
- In the comparison sample, Split B, respondents were asked if they agree with the statement "ESAs should only be available to families based on

financial need." About one-third (36%) agree with that statement, while 19 percent say they "strongly agree." Nearly half (45%) say they disagree with means-testing ESAs, and 28 percent say they "strongly disagree."

If a respondent had a particular view on ESAs, he or she is almost twice as likely to vote for the pro-ESA candidate (25% "more likely" vs. 15% "less likely"). A solid majority of respondents (58%) signal that ESAs are not a make-or-break issue or did not express an opinion on this item.

When considering subgroups, the demographics most likely to say they will support a pro-ESA candidate are current school parents (37% and margin = +22 points), young adults (28% and margin = +19 points), middle-age adults (30% and margin = +15 points), and urbanites (30% and margin = +12 points). The general public is more likely to support a pro-ESA candidate regardless of political party identification:

Democrat: 27% more likely to support; margin = +8 points

Republican: 28% more likely to support; margin = +10 points

Independent: 28% more likely to support; margin = +15 points

Like school vouchers, older Americans are the only observed demographic that is overall less likely to support a pro-voucher candidate (17% and margin = -6 points).

TABLE 9. Views on ESAs: Composite/Descriptive Results, 2016

Composite Averages Based on Two Question Versions and Corresponding Subsample Responses

	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
ALL RESPONDENTS	**49**	**27**	**23**	**9**	**1,001**
Current School Parent	58	26	32	22	219
Former School Parent	47	34	13	10	221
Non-Schooler	48	25	23	9	501
PARTY ID					
Democrat	51	25	26	8	320
Republican	55	28	27	13	290
Independent	50	28	22	9	255
REGION					
Northeast	49	23	26	12	183
Midwest	50	28	22	10	215
South	51	28	23	7	371
West	46	25	21	10	232
COMMUNITY					
Urban	60	24	36	15	222
Suburban	42	27	15	7	403
Small Town	56	26	30	15	190
Rural	50	32	18	2	175
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	54	19	36	18	231
35 to 54	51	27	24	14	301
55 & Over	43	33	10	-4	437
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under $40,000	45	23	22	12	293
$40,000 to $79,999	52	28	24	9	311
$80,000 & Over	56	30	26	11	306
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	49	21	28	15	38
Black	55	21	34	17	108
Hispanic	54	24	30	14	74
White	47	28	19	7	735
GENDER					
Men	53	27	26	11	478
Women	46	26	20	8	523

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q13A and Q13B.

Notes: The "composite" percentages in this chart reflect the weighted average of the subsamples' responses to two slightly different versions of this question (13A/B). Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

TABLE 10. Views on ESAs: Comparing Descriptive Versions, 2016

Composite and Two Question Versions with Corresponding Subsample Responses

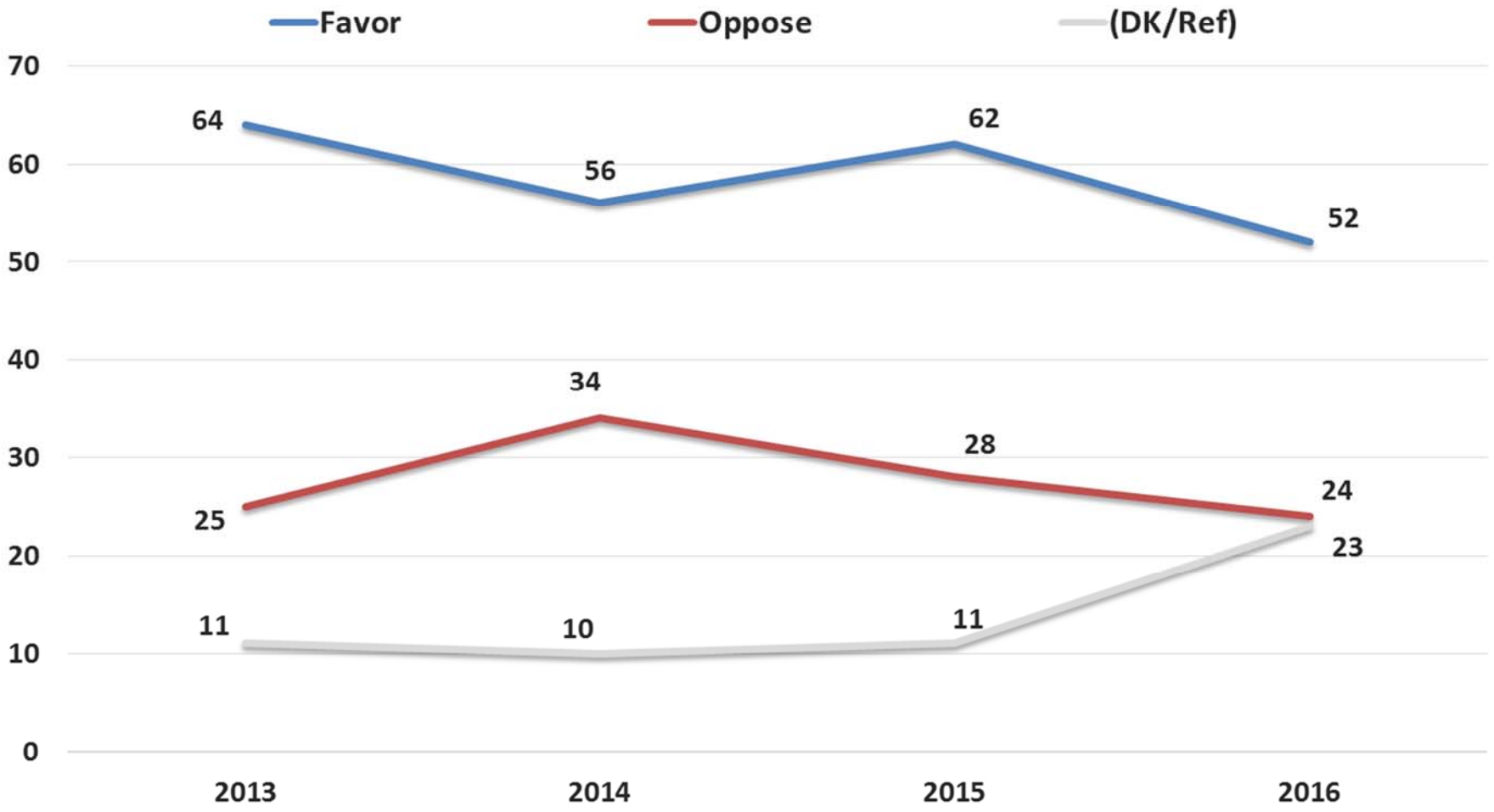
	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
With Description					
Composite A/B	**49**	**27**	**23**	**9**	**1,001**
Version A	52	24	28	11	434
Version B	47	28	19	8	567

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q13A and Q13B.

Notes: The "composite" percentages in this chart reflect the weighted average of the subsamples' responses to two slightly different versions of this question (13A/B). All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

The Public's Views on ESAs, with Description, 2013–2016

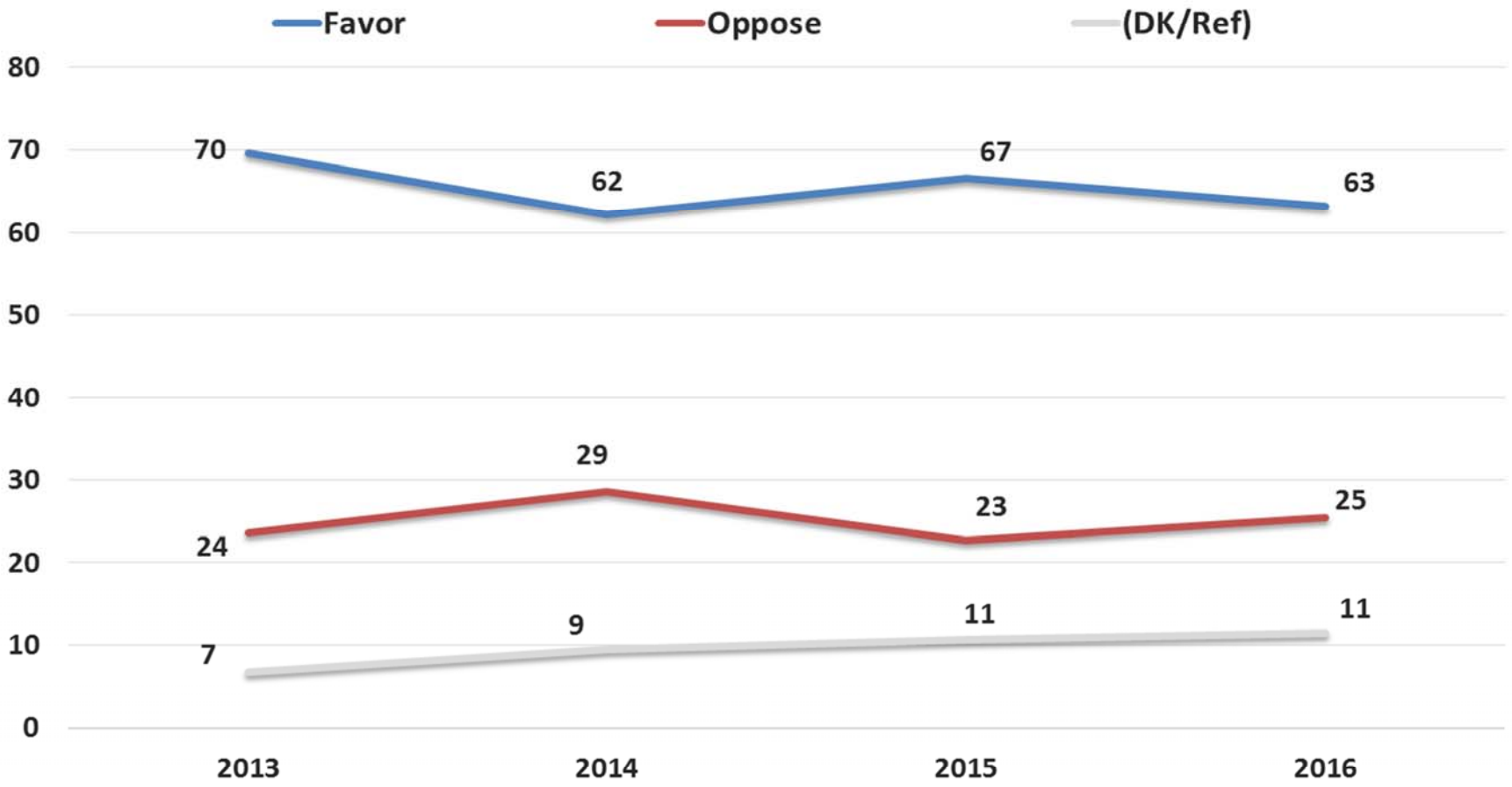
(2013 to 2015: Percentage of All Respondents; 2016: Percentage of Subsample Respondents, N = 434)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q13B; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

Current School Parents' Views on ESAs, with Description, 2013–2016

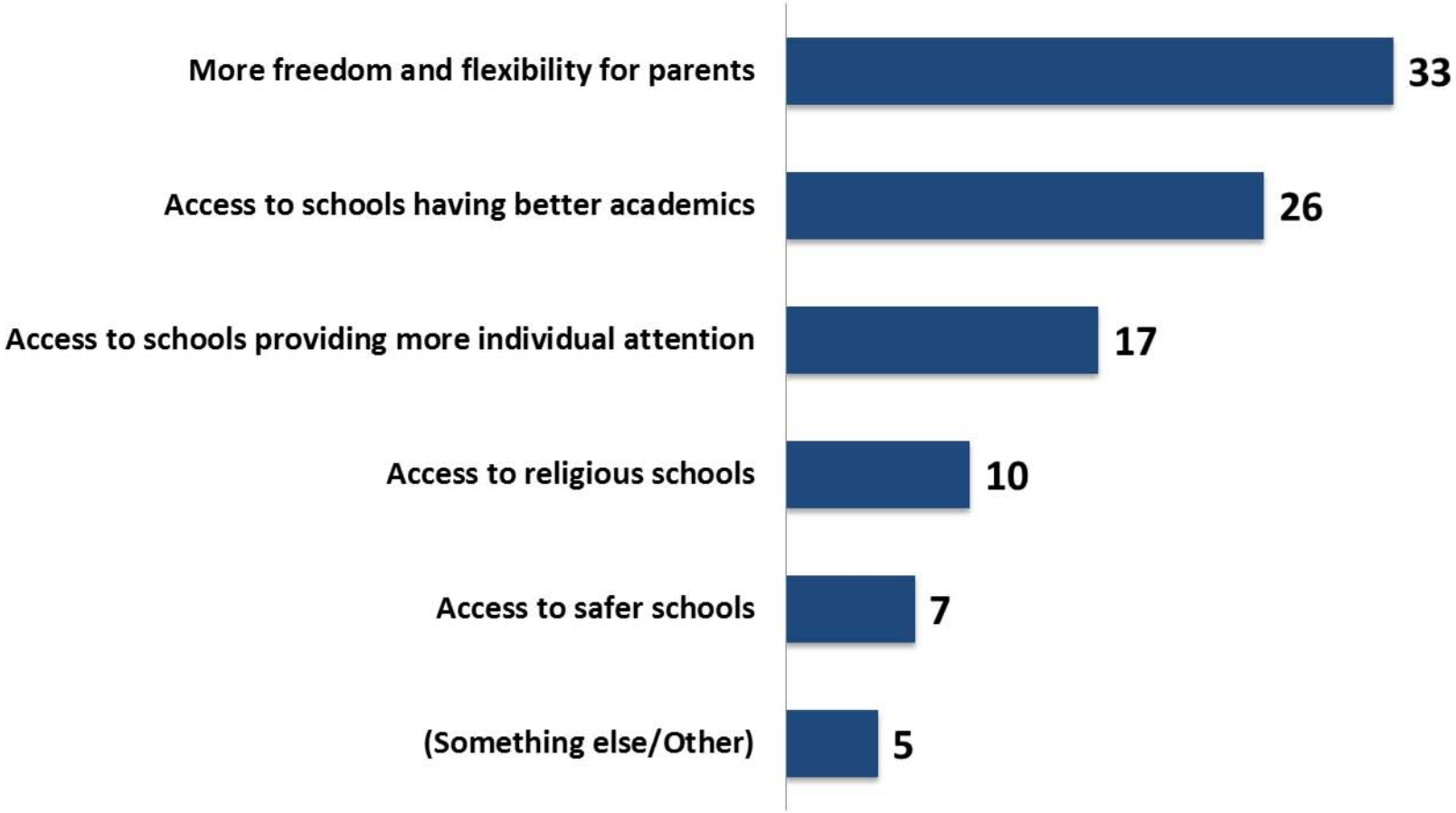
(2013 to 2015: Percentage of Current School Parents; 2016: Percentage of Subsample's Current School Parents, N = 86)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q13B; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

Q14A. What is the most important reason you say you favor ESAs? Is your main reason that such a system provides:

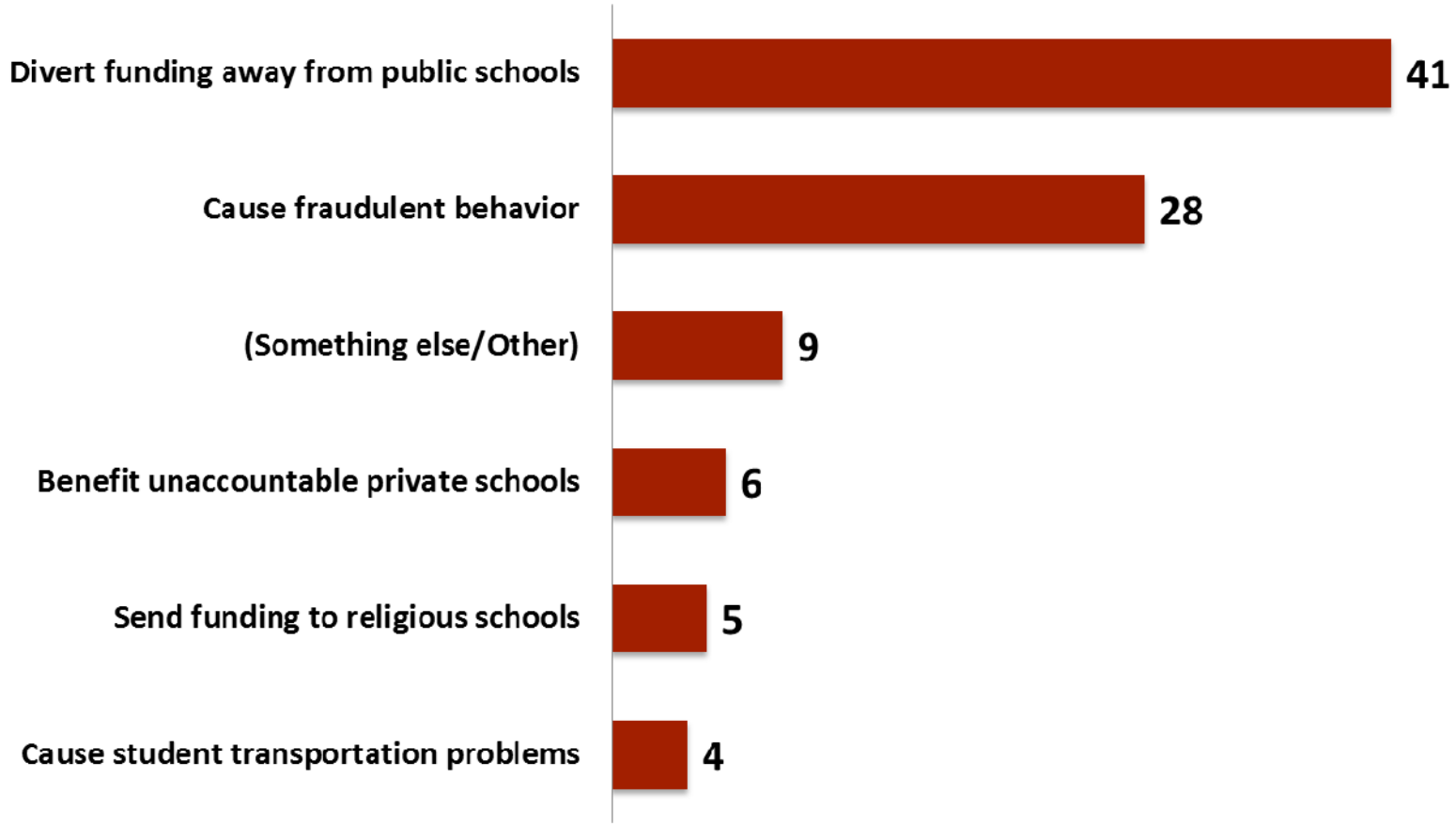
(Percentage of All "Strongly/Somewhat Favor" Responses from Previous Question Subsample, N = 350)



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q14A.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "Don't Know" and Refusals not shown nor reflected in this chart.

Q14B. What is the most important reason you say you oppose ESAs? Is your main reason that such a system would:

(Percentage of All "Strongly/Somewhat Oppose" Responses from Previous Question Subsample, N = 212)

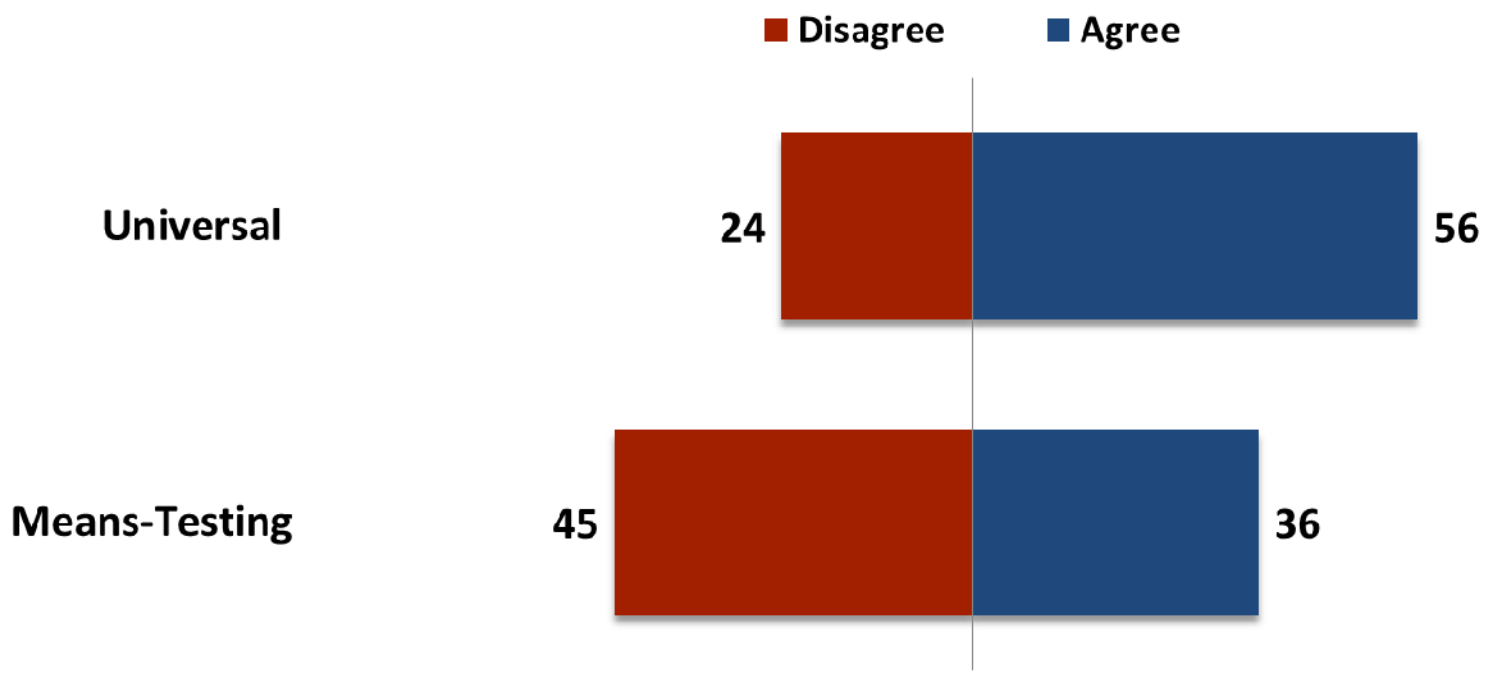


Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q14B.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "Don't Know" and Refusals not shown nor reflected in this chart.

Q15-Split A. Some people believe that ESAs *should be available to all families, regardless of incomes and special needs.* Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

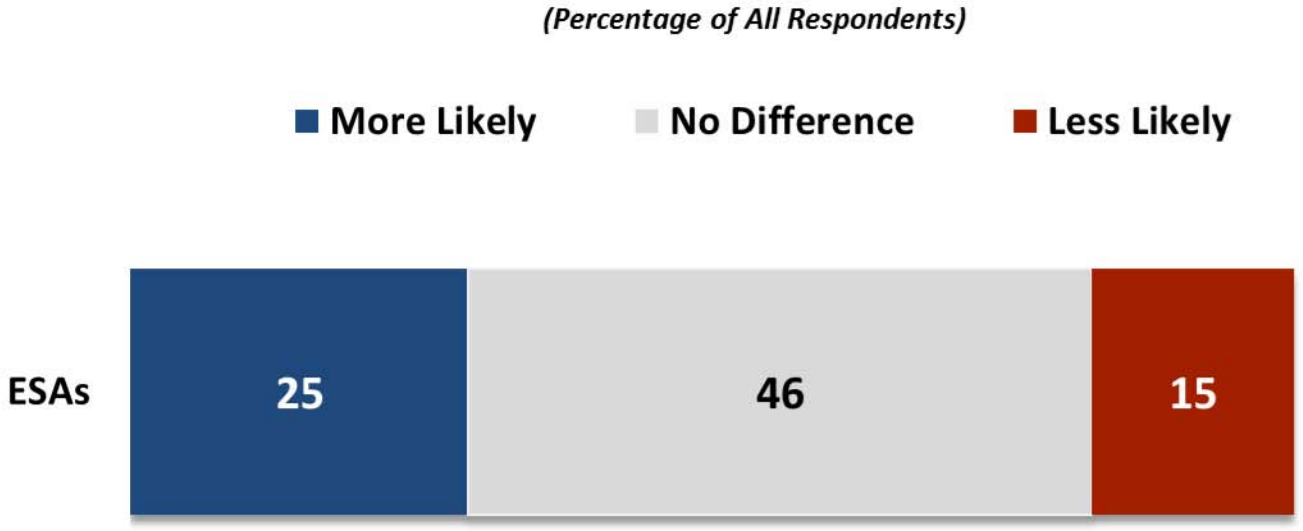
Q15-Split B. Some people believe that ESAs *should only be available to families based on financial need.* Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

(Percentage of Split-sample Responses)



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q15A and Q15B.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "Don't Know" and Refusals not shown nor reflected in this chart.

Q16. Thinking ahead to the next election, if a candidate for Governor, State Senator or Representative supports *education savings accounts (ESAs)*, would that make you more likely to vote for him or her, less likely, or make no difference whatsoever in your voting?



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q16.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "Don't Know" and Refusals not shown nor reflected in this chart.

Tax-Credit Scholarships

Americans are almost twice as likely to say they support a tax-credit scholarship program than they are to oppose one. A majority of respondents (55%) say they support such a policy, whereas 23 percent say they oppose tax-credit scholarships. The margin is +32 percentage points. The general public is more than twice as likely to express intensely positive responses toward tax-credit scholarships (25% "strongly favor" vs. 11% "strongly oppose").[10]

The trend question for tax-credit scholarships is one of three versions asked to partial samples this year. Those three versions combined to produce the composite results reported in this section. On the trend version, the margin has hovered around this year's (+39 points), except last year (+31 points). Generally, over the last four years Americans have been at least twice as likely to support tax-credit scholarships than oppose them. Like ESAs, we have seen a spike of "don't know" responses for tax-credit scholarships that is substantial (2015: 11% vs. 2016: 23%).

All observed subgroup margins are +25 percentage points or greater. The largest margins are among: young adults (+48 points), current school parents (+47 points), small town residents (+43 points), high-income earners (+41 points), and Republicans (+41 points). There were four subgroups that have the lowest margin of +25 points: Independents, suburbanites, middle-age adults, and seniors.

- Current school parents (67%) are significantly more favorable than former school parents (55%), non-parents (53%), and the national average.
- Republicans (62%) are more supportive of tax-credit scholarships than Independents (52%).

[10] Unless otherwise noted, the results in this section reflect the composite average of responses to Q17A, Q17B, and Q17C.

- Small town residents (64%) are significantly more favorable toward tax-credit scholarships than suburbanites (50%).
- Young adults (61%) are significantly more supportive of tax-credit scholarships than seniors (51%). Middle-age adults (28%) and seniors (26%) are significantly more negative than young adults (13%) and the national average.
- High-income earners (63%) are more favorable than low-income earners (52%) and the national average.

Net intensities are positive for all observed demographic subgroups. Subgroups that are most intensely positive include: current school parents (+25 points), young adults (+22 points), small town residents (+22 points), and Republicans (+21 points).

- Small town residents (31%) have the greatest proportion saying they "strongly favor" tax-credit scholarships.
- Seniors (15%) have the largest proportion saying they "strongly oppose" tax-credit scholarships.

TABLE 11. Views on Tax-Credit Scholarships: Composite/Descriptive Results, 2016

Composite Averages Based on Three Question Versions with Corresponding Subsample Responses

	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N=
ALL RESPONDENTS	**55**	**23**	**32**	**14**	**1,001**
Current School Parent	67	20	47	25	219
Former School Parent	55	26	29	14	221
Non-Schooler	53	22	31	9	501
PARTY ID					
Democrat	58	22	35	15	320
Republican	62	21	41	21	290
Independent	52	27	25	9	255
REGION					
Northeast	51	18	34	12	183
Midwest	59	26	33	16	215
South	57	23	33	16	371
West	51	24	28	10	232
COMMUNITY					
Urban	59	22	37	17	222
Suburban	50	25	25	9	403
Small Town	64	21	43	22	190
Rural	55	24	31	12	175
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	61	13	48	22	231
35 to 54	53	28	25	13	301
55 & Over	51	26	25	8	437
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under $40,000	52	18	34	13	293
$40,000 to $79,999	54	27	27	14	311
$80,000 & Over	63	23	41	17	306
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	49	19	31	19	38
Black	63	21	42	21	108
Hispanic	57	21	37	19	74
White	53	24	30	12	735
GENDER					
Men	55	26	29	11	478
Women	55	20	35	17	523

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q17A, Q17B, and Q17C.
Notes: The "composite" percentages in this chart reflect the weighted average of the subsamples' responses to three slightly different versions of this question (17A/B/C). Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

TABLE 12. Views on Tax-Credit Scholarships: Comparing Descriptive Versions, 2016

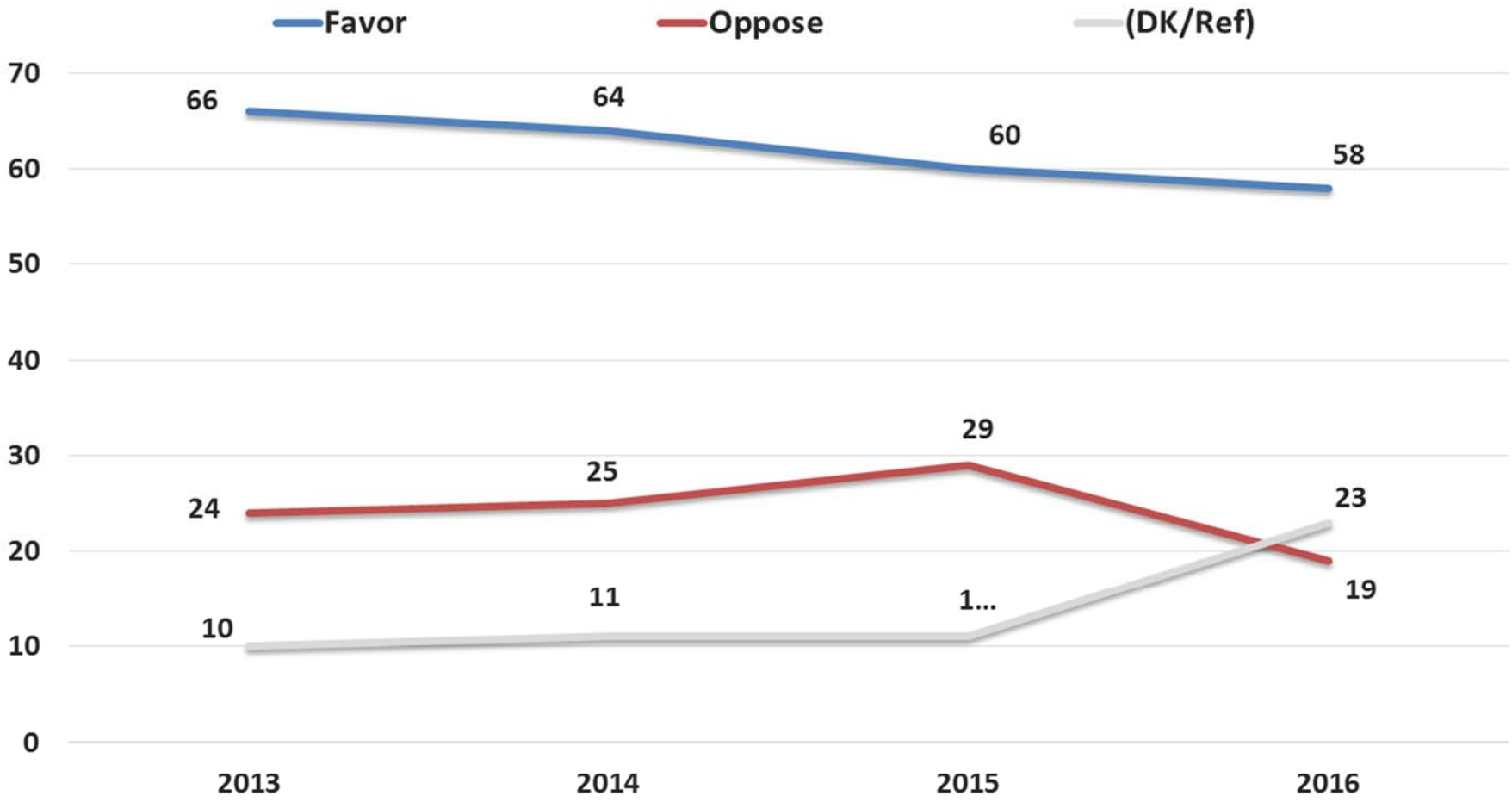
Percentages Based on Three Question Versions and Corresponding Subsample Responses

	Favor %	Oppose %	Margin (net)	Intensity (strong net)	N =
With Description					
Composite A/B/C	**55**	**23**	**32**	**14**	**1,001**
Version A	58	19	39	16	337
Version B	53	25	28	9	326
Version C	53	25	28	17	338

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q17A, Q17B, and Q17C.
Notes: The "composite" percentages in this chart reflect the weighted average of the subsamples' responses to three slightly different versions of this question (17A/B/C). All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies. Margins and intensities are calculated using percentages to the nearest tenth.

The Public's Views on Tax-Credit Scholarships, with Description, 2013–2016

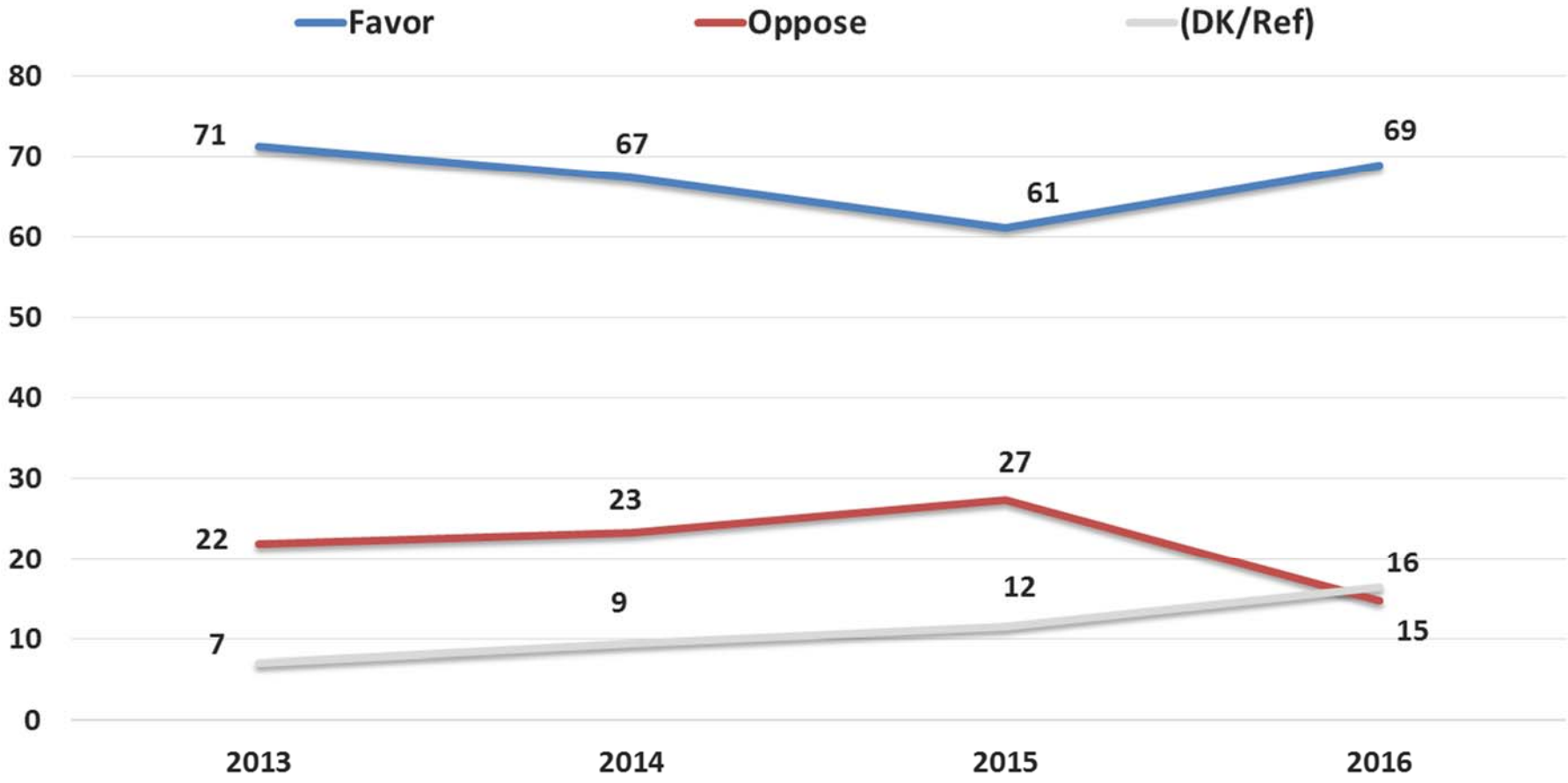
(2012 to 2015: Percentage of All Respondents; 2016: Percentage of Subsample Respondents, N = 337)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q17A; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

Current School Parents' Views on Tax-Credit Scholarships, with Description, 2013–2016

(2012 to 2015: Percentage of Current School Parents; 2016: Percentage of Subsample's Current School Parents, N =74)



Sources: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q17A; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.

Notes: We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

PART III
Survey Results on Parents' Schooling Experiences

Parents' Schooling Experiences

Why Do Parents Change Their Child's School?

We interviewed 440 parents who either have at least one child currently in school or have at least one child past high school age. More than one-third of all school parents (37%) say they have changed their child's school, and there are a number of reasons parents make this decision:

- 36 percent moved their residence that led to a change in school
- 20 percent of parents say they were looking for better education and opportunities for their child
- 14 percent were unhappy with their former's school staff, teachers, or curriculum
- 11 percent indicate they preferred another type of school
- 9 percent say they wanted more personalized attention for their child

What Are the Ways Parents Support Their Child's Education?

School parents make a range of major decisions to support their child's education:

- 21 percent have taken an additional job
    - Urban parents (32%) are twice as likely as suburbanites (16%) and small town parents (16%) to take on an another job for additional income
- 17 percent said they moved closer to their child's school
    - Urban parents (24%) are nearly three times more likely than rural parents (9%) to say they have moved to get closer to their child's school
    - Current school parents (21%) are more than twice as likely as former school parents (9%) to say they moved closer to their child's school

    - Middle-age parents (20%) are twice as likely as seniors (9%) to say they have moved to support their child's education
- 14 percent say they changed a job
    - No significant differences observed among demographics on this item
- 11 percent have taken out a loan
    - 14 percent of middle-age parents have taken out a new loan, which is significantly higher than the proportion of seniors (6%) who say they have taken out a loan for their child's education

Large percentages of school parents have made long-term commitments—at least four months—to support their child's education:

- 85 percent helped with homework at least one night per week
    - No significant differences observed among demographics on this item
- 74 percent transported their child to/from school
    - Suburban parents (80%) are more likely than rural parents (65%) to have transported their child to school
    - Republicans (80%) and Democrats (77%) are both more likely than Independents (63%) to have transported their child to school
    - High-income earners (81%) are more likely than low-income earners (66%) to have made the school transportation commitment
- 49 percent have had family or a friend look after their child
    - Middle-age adults (55%) are significantly more likely than seniors (43%) to have family or a friend look after their child
- 47 percent had family or a friend help transport their child
    - No significant differences observed among demographics on this item
- 38 percent significantly changed their daily routine
    - Seniors (29%) are significantly less likely than middle-age adults (46%) and the national average to say they changed their daily routine
- 35 percent paid for before or after care services
    - No significant differences observed among demographics on this item

- 22 percent paid for tutoring
    - Westerners (27%) and Southerners (24%) are more likely than Midwesterners (13%) to say they have paid for tutoring
    - Urban parents (31%) and suburban parents (27%) are more likely than rural parents (12%) to say they paid for tutoring
- 15 percent paid for their child's transportation
    - Low-income earners (22%) and high-income earners (18%) are more likely than middle-income earners (8%) to say they have paid for transportation

TABLE 13. "How many of your children have ever attended a [Read Each in List]?"

Percentage of Respondents Answering At Least One Child

	Public School %	Private School %	Charter School %	Home School %	N=
ALL PARENTS	**86**	**25**	**9**	**9**	**440**
Current School Parent	83	23	11	11	219
Former School Parent	92	28	7	6	221
PARTY ID					
Democrat	86	24	11	8	140
Republican	87	31	7	7	143
Independent	86	20	9	11	106
REGION					
Northeast	90	33	4	6	73
Midwest	91	15	7	3	106
South	87	30	14	11	162
West	77	21	9	14	99
COMMUNITY					
Urban	83	23	14	9	79
Suburban	87	33	9	9	184
Small Town	90	21	9	8	93
Rural	85	13	6	8	81
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	76	9	17	14	56
35 to 54	87	30	9	9	171
55 & Over	91	26	6	5	198
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under $40,000	93	8	11	8	101
$40,000 to $79,999	83	18	11	10	141
$80,000 & Over	85	42	8	8	170
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	80	16	0	10	14
Black	78	33	23	13	48
Hispanic	82	27	14	10	35
White	89	24	6	7	327
GENDER					
Men	85	28	10	10	205
Women	88	21	9	7	235

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q21.

Notes: Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies.

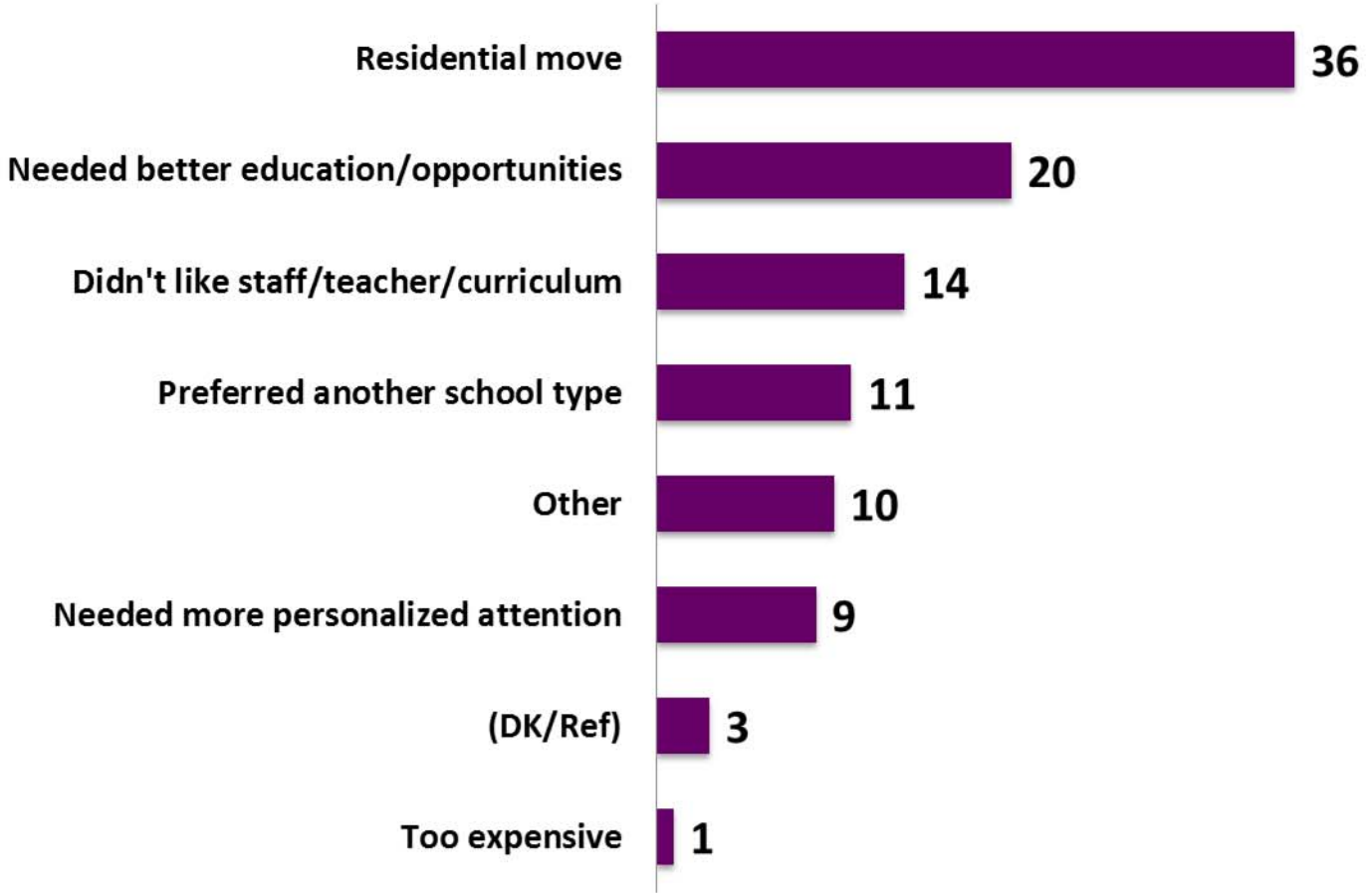
TABLE 14. Parents Saying They Changed Their Child's Schools, and Their Reasons

	All Parents %
Changed Child's School	**37**
Total Number of Respondents, N = 440	
→ ***Reason Changed School***	
Total Number of Respondents Who Changed Schools, N = 161	
Transitioning from Elementary to Middle or Middle to High	**24**
Some Other Important Reason	**85**
→ ***Most Important Reason Changed School***	
Total Number of Respondents Giving Another Reason for Changing School, N = 138	
Residential Move	**36**
Needed Better Education/Opportunities	**20**
Didn't Like Staff/Teacher/Curriculum	**14**
Preferred Another School Type/Moved Out of Public	**11**
Other	**10**
Needed More Personalized Attention	**9**
Too Expensive	**1**
(DK/Ref)	**1**

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q22, Q23, and Q24.

Q24. In a few words, or in a short phrase, please describe the most important reason why you changed your child's school over the summer or during the school year? This would be a reason other than transitioning from elementary school to middle school, or middle school to high school.

(Coded Responses; Percentage of All School Parents Who Actively Changed Their Child's School, N = 138)



Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q24.
Notes: Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal."

TABLE 15. How Have Parents Supported Their Child's K–12 Education?

Percentage of School Parents Affirming a Specific Action With "Yes"

	Taken additional job	Moved closer to school	Changed job	Taken out new loan	
	%	%	%	%	N=
ALL PARENTS	**21**	**17**	**14**	**11**	**440**
Current School Parent	22	21	17	13	219
Former School Parent	19	9	9	7	221
PARTY ID					
Democrat	24	18	12	15	140
Republican	24	17	13	9	143
Independent	15	19	14	11	106
REGION					
Northeast	27	19	11	15	73
Midwest	15	13	18	7	106
South	24	13	11	11	162
West	18	25	16	11	99
COMMUNITY					
Urban	32	24	16	11	79
Suburban	16	16	10	11	184
Small Town	16	18	19	12	93
Rural	25	9	13	7	81
AGE GROUP					
18 to 34	22	21	11	10	56
35 to 54	22	20	17	14	171
55 & Over	18	9	11	6	198
HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
Under $40,000	24	22	18	13	101
$40,000 to $79,999	24	12	11	7	141
$80,000 & Over	16	17	12	13	170
RACE/ETHNICITY					
Asian	30	28	26	10	14
Black	28	21	19	10	48
Hispanic	26	23	16	14	35
White	18	13	12	10	327
GENDER					
Men	18	17	11	9	205
Women	24	16	16	12	235

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q25.

Notes: Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies.

TABLE 16. Parents' Actions/Activities to Support Their Child's K–12 Education *for at Least Four Months of a School Year*

Percentage of School Parents Affirming a Specific Action/Activity With "Yes"

	Helped with homework at least one night/week	Transported child to/from school	Have family or friend Look after child	Have family or friend help transport child	Significantly changed daily routine	Paid for before or after care services	Paid for tutoring	Paid for child's transportation to/from school	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	N=
ALL PARENTS	**85**	**74**	**49**	**47**	**38**	**35**	**22**	**15**	**440**
Current School Parent	86	76	52	50	41	34	21	15	219
Former School Parent	83	72	45	42	33	36	24	15	221
PARTY ID									
Democrat	86	77	55	44	41	33	24	17	140
Republican	88	80	50	52	40	36	21	15	143
Independent	78	63	41	44	31	37	21	11	106
REGION									
Northeast	86	68	49	39	42	36	27	15	73
Midwest	86	71	56	48	36	33	13	12	106
South	85	81	44	46	36	37	24	14	162
West	82	72	51	52	40	31	27	22	99
COMMUNITY									
Urban	84	74	47	46	28	35	31	18	79
Suburban	85	80	49	49	42	39	27	11	184
Small Town	85	72	52	48	42	34	16	14	93
Rural	84	65	49	41	34	27	12	21	81
AGE GROUP									
18 to 34	74	68	46	49	33	30	15	15	56
35 to 54	88	79	55	47	46	36	27	14	171
55 & Over	85	71	43	44	29	35	20	17	198
HOUSEHOLD INCOME									
Under $40,000	87	66	48	44	35	33	18	22	101
$40,000 to $79,999	82	72	50	43	39	35	21	8	141
$80,000 & Over	85	81	52	50	39	39	27	18	170
RACE/ETHNICITY									
Asian	78	78	15	31	20	26	40	8	14
Black	80	82	57	53	39	45	35	25	48
Hispanic	80	63	61	50	44	24	31	11	35
White	88	76	47	45	38	35	17	15	327
GENDER									
Men	81	73	48	46	37	35	24	16	205
Women	88	76	50	47	39	34	21	14	235

Source: EdChoice, *2016 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted Apr. 30 to May 26, 2016), Q26.

Notes: Please consider that each subgroup has a unique margin of error based on its adult population size in the United States and the sample size (N) obtained in this survey. We advise strong caution when interpreting results for subgroups with small sample sizes. The subgroup sample sizes displayed in the far right column represent the unweighted number of interviews. All other statistical results reported in this table and report reflect weighted data, a standard procedure to correct for known demographic discrepancies.

PART IV
Methods and About Us

Methods

The Schooling in America Survey project, funded and developed by EdChoice (formerly the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice) and conducted by Braun Research, Inc. (BRI), interviewed a statistically representative national sample of adults (age 18+) in the 50 United States and District of Columbia. Data collection methods included probability sampling and random-digit dial. The unweighted national sample includes a total of 1,001 General Population telephone interviews completed in English from April 30 to May 26, 2016, by means of both landline and cell phone. Statistical results were weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for the total national sample is ± 3.1 percentage points.

During our study, we oversampled Millennials in the 50 United States and District of Columbia to bring total Millennials to N = 516 (comprised of n = 244 from the national sample dialing and n= 272 from oversample dialing). The margin of sampling error for the total Millennial sample is ± 4.3 percentage points. Results for Millennials and other generation-based demographics will be released in a separate report.

For this entire project, a total of 25,316 calls were made. BRI's live callers conducted all phone interviews.

National sample:

- 11,400 in total – 6,900 landline; 4,500 cell
- Of these calls 4,390 (2,804 landline, 1,586 cell) were unusable phone numbers (disconnected, fax, busy, non-residential, or non-answers, etc.);
- 5,667 (3,447 landline, 2,220 cell) were usable numbers but eligibility unknown (including refusals and voicemail);
- 322 (135 landline, 187 cell) phone numbers were usable but not eligible for this survey; and
- 20 (14 landline, 6 cell) people did not complete the survey.
- The average response rate of the landline interviews was **10.4%**.
- The average response rate of the cell phone interviews was **8.1%**.

Millennial oversample

- 13,916 in total – 6,277 landline; 7,639 cell
- Of these calls 5,456 (2,527 landline, 2,929 cell) were unusable phone numbers (disconnected, fax, busy, non-residential, or non-answers, etc.);
- 7,693 (3,461 landline, 4,231 cell) were usable numbers but eligibility unknown (including refusals and voicemail);
- 238 (107 landline, 131 cell) phone numbers were usable but not eligible for this survey; and
- 14 (5 landline, 9 cell) people did not complete the survey.
- The average response rate of the landline interviews was **4.2%**.
- The average response rate of the cell phone interviews was **6.4%**.

Details on call dispositions, landline and cell phone response rates, and weighting are discussed in the following sections.

Sample Design

A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent the General Population (adults age 18+ in the 50 United States and District of Columbia) who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) provided both samples according to BRI specifications.

SSI starts with a database of all listed telephone numbers, updated on a four- to six-week rolling basis, 25 percent of the listings at a time. All active blocks—contiguous groups of 100 phone numbers for which more than one residential number is listed—are added to this database. Blocks and exchanges that include only listed business numbers are excluded.

Numbers for the landline sample were drawn with equal probabilities from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

Contact Procedures

Interviews were conducted from April 30 to May 26, 2016. As many as eight attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. The sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of the sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential respondents. Each phone number received at least one daytime call.

The Hagan-Collier Method guided respondent selection. Respondents in the landline sample were chosen by asking for the youngest adult male who is now at home. If the youngest male was not home, then the next step would be to request an interview with the youngest female at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, as long as that person was an adult 18 years of age or older.

The survey's margin of sampling error (MSE) is the largest 95 percent Confidence Interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample – the one around 50 percent. The national sample's margin of error for this survey is ± 3.1%. This means that in 95 of every 100 samples drawn using the same methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 3.1 percentage points away from their true values in the population. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance do not address any potential design effect due to weighting.

It is critical to note that the MSE is higher when considering the number of respondents for a given demographic subgroup. For example, the MSE for a subgroup of 150 respondents is ± 8.0 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, question wording, ordering, and other practical difficulties when conducting surveys may introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion research.

Call Dispositions and Response Rates

We use the American Association for Public Opinion Research's "Response Rate 3" (AAPOR RR3) for computing response rates for landline and cell phone proportions of the sample. The response rate is the percentage of known or assumed residential households for which a completed interview was obtained.

National Sample Call Dispositions

SUMMARY

Landline	Cell Phone	
6,900	4,500	Total
6,900	4,500	Released
0	0	Unreleased
4,096	2,914	Usable
2,804	1,586	Unusable
4,142	2,752	Qualified
72.4%	78.6%	Est. Usability
79.2%	73.1%	Est. Eligibility
10.4%	8.1%	Est. Response

DETAIL

Landline	Cell Phone	
1,431	698	Disconnected
11	0	Fax
121	95	Government/Business
0	.	Cell Phone
.	0	Landline
1,563	793	Unusable
1,027	702	No Answer
214	91	Busy
1,241	793	Usability Unknown
500	501	Complete
14	6	Break-Off
514	507	Usable/Eligible
418	397	Refused
87	82	Language Barrier
1,410	728	Voice Mail
1,438	963	Call Back-Retry
75	36	Strong Refusal
19	14	Privacy Manager
3,447	2,220	Usable/Eligible Unknown
135	187	Under 18
135	187	Usable/Ineligible
10.4%	8.1%	Response Rate

Millennial Sample Call Dispositions

SUMMARY

Landline	Cell Phone	
6,277	7,639	Total
6,277	7,639	Released
0	0	Unreleased
3,750	4,711	Usable
2,527	2,929	Unusable
2,959	4,154	Qualified
69.3%	71.2%	Est. Usability
63.0%	72.7%	Est. Eligibility
4.2%	6.4%	Est. Response

DETAIL

Landline	Cell Phone	
1,626	1,848	Disconnected
2	0	Fax
37	54	Government/Business
0	.	Cell Phone
.	0	Landline
1,665	1,902	Unusable
769	913	No Answer
93	114	Busy
862	1,027	Usability Unknown
177	339	Complete
5	9	Break-Off
182	348	Usable/Eligible
601	769	Refused
55	71	Language Barrier
1,749	2,156	Voice Mail
1,002	1,162	Call Back-Retry
48	62	Strong Refusal
6	12	Privacy Manager
3,461	4,232	Usable/Eligible Unknown
107	131	Under 18
107	131	Usable/Ineligible
4.2%	6.4%	Response Rate

Weighting Procedures and Analysis

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to compensate for sample designs and patterns of non-response that might bias results. In this study the sample demographics were balanced to population parameters.

Research provides evidence that participation in surveys tends to vary for different subgroups of the population. Subgroup participation and cooperation may also vary because of substantive interest regarding a survey's topics and questions. To compensate for these known and potential biases, the sample data were weighted for analysis.

The national sample was weighted using population parameters from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 Decennial Census for adults 18 years of age or older living in the 50 United States and the District of Columbia. Results were weighted on Landline/Cell Phone usage first, and then Age, Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Region. The initial weighting to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones are based on the Center for Disease Control's *Early Release of Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS)*, July–December 2013.

For the Millennial sample results, we weighted to general population parameters for Millennials and weighted on Age, Race, Ethnicity, and Gender and Region, based on the U.S Census Bureau's *2013 American Community Survey (ACS), Five-year Estimates*. Please note that we could not use the dual method for weighting Millennials as some phone usage (i.e., landline-only and dual-usage) statistics do not exist for this population.

Weighted and unweighted results are available on request.

Weighting Results for National Sample

	Pre-Weight	Post-Weight	Census Target
AGE			
18 - 24	11%	13%	13.1%
25 - 34	12%	18%	17.6%
35 - 44	12%	18%	17.2%
45 - 54	19%	19%	18.7%
55 - 64	19%	15%	15.8%
65+	25%	16%	17.6%
HISPANIC			
Yes	7%	15%	14.5%
No	93%	85%	85.5%
RACE			
Asian [or Pacific Islander]	4%	5%	5.2%
Black [or African American]	11%	12%	12.0%
Native American	2%	2%	0.8%
White	77%	74%	75.9%
[Other]	2%	3%	4.2%
[Two or More]	4%	3%	1.9%
GENDER			
[Male]	48%	49%	48.6%
[Female]	52%	51%	51.4%
CENSUS REGION/DIVISION			
Northeast	18%	19%	18.2%
Midwest	22%	21%	21.5%
South	37%	37%	37.1%
West	23%	22%	23.1%
EDUCATION ATTAINMENT			
< High School	4%	4%	14.3%
High School Graduate	22%	23%	28.3%
Some College	33%	33%	31.2%
≥ College Graduate	41%	39%	26.3%
HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
< $20,000	13%	15%	18.0%
$20,000 to < $40,000	17%	17%	20.4%
$40,0000 to < $60,000	16%	16%	16.9%
$60,000 to < $100,000	26%	27%	22.1%
$100,000 to < $150,000	11%	9%	12.9%
$150,000 or More	9%	8%	9.7%

Weighting Results for Millennial Sample

	Pre-Weight	Post-Weight	Census Target
AGE			
18 - 24	40%	43%	42.7%
25 - 29	29%	29%	29.2%
30 -34	31%	28%	28.1%
HISPANIC			
Yes	14%	19%	20.4%
No	86%	81%	79.6%
RACE			
Asian [or Pacific Islander]	7%	6%	5.9%
Black [or African American]	13%	14%	14.0%
Native American	2%	2%	0.9%
White	67%	70%	70.0%
[Other]	4%	4%	6.3%
[Two or More]	6%	4%	3.0%
GENDER			
[Male]	46%	50%	50.7%
[Female]	54%	50%	49.3%
CENSUS REGION/DIVISION			
Northeast	19%	17%	17.4%
Midwest	21%	21%	21.0%
South	39%	37%	37.2%
West	22%	24%	24.4%
EDUCATION ATTAINMENT			
< High School	3%	3%	13.7%
High School Graduate	22%	24%	26.4%
Some College	38%	39%	37.7%
≥ College Graduate	36%	34%	22.3%

About the Authors

Paul DiPerna is Vice President of Research and Innovation for EdChoice. Paul's research interests include surveys and polling on K–12 education and school choice policies. He has developed and reported more than 30 state and national surveys. Paul oversees the research projects either produced or commissioned by the organization, and EdChoice has published more than 80 publications under his leadership.

Paul has traveled to 29 states for his work. He presents survey research findings and discusses school choice politics and policies with public officials, policy wonks, academics, and advocates.

Previously, Paul served as the assistant director for the Brown Center on Education Policy at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. His six years at Brookings included projects evaluating the federal Blue Ribbon Schools Program and analyzing student achievement in charter schools. Paul was a research analyst for the first five issues of the Brown Center Report on American Education (2000–2004). He also managed and coordinated the activities of the National Working Commission on Choice in K–12 Education (2001–2005).

Paul's professional memberships and activities include participation in the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research (MAPOR) and the State Politics and Policy Section of the American Political Science Association (APSA).

A native of Pittsburgh, Paul earned an M.A. in political science from the University of Illinois (2000) and B.A. from the University of Dayton (1996).

Paul currently lives in Zionsville, Indiana, with his wife and two daughters.

About the Authors

Andrew D. Catt is Director of State Research and Policy Analysis for EdChoice. In that role, Drew conducts analyses on private educational choice programs, conducts surveys of private school leaders and supports quality control as EdChoice's research and data verifier.

Prior to joining EdChoice—formerly the Friedman Foundation—in May 2013, Drew served as the program associate for The Clowes Fund, a private family foundation located in Indianapolis that awards grants to nonprofits in Seattle, Greater Indianapolis and Northern New England.

Drew graduated from Vanderbilt University in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in Human and Organizational Development, specializing in Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness. While at Vanderbilt, Drew served as research assistant for North Star Destination Strategies, a community branding organization. During that time, Drew also researched the effects of homeschooling on socialization.

Drew received his Master of Public Affairs in Nonprofit Management at Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs in Indianapolis. He also received his Master of Arts in Philanthropic Studies through the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. While in graduate school, Drew's research focused on teacher performance incentives and cross-sector collaboration. Drew is currently pursuing a graduate certificate in Geographic Information Science (GIS) at IUPUI.

Drew is a native of central Indiana and currently resides in downtown Indianapolis with his wife Elizabeth.

Acknowledgements

We are very thankful to the team at Braun Research, who assisted in project development, and for their excellent work in conducting the interviews and collecting the data. We appreciate the time and commitments from Paul Braun, Cynthia Miller, Rich Kuchinsky, Shayne Poole, Jay Schliesmann, and Dave Oshman. We are also grateful to our colleagues on the Communications team. Jennifer Wagner and Katie Brooks read through different versions of this report, and they made terrific suggestions for edits. Finally, we are grateful to the respondents who generously agreed to participate in our survey interviews.

About the Survey Organization

Braun Research, Inc.

The Braun Research combined network of companies, founded in 1995, employs 42 full-time and more than 157 part-time employees engaged in data collection via telephone, and internet for various survey research firms, government and advertising agencies, local community organizations, local and national business groups, foundations, universities and academic entities, as well as religious organizations. In 20 years, Braun Research has conducted almost 10,000 research projects by telephone, internet, and mail worldwide.

Nationally-known research firms have hired Braun Research, including the Gallup Organization, the Pew Research Center, the Eagleton Poll, Mathematica Policy Research, and The Washington Post. Braun Research has worked for the New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services, as well as other government agencies including the United States Departments of the Treasury and Defense, and the Center for Disease Control.

The work we accomplish for other research firms requires us to perform all work up to standards required by the various research organizations where we enjoy membership and in some cases participate actively. Paul Braun is recognized as a leader in the field by colleagues who asked him to serve on these committees. For example Paul Braun is a member of the Market Research Association/Council on Marketing and Opinion Research (MRA/CMOR committees on response rate improvement and in launching a seal of quality for the industry. He has served as President of the New Jersey Chapter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), and he is currently serving on AMEC in North America.

Braun Research is a well-respected firm employing techniques and standards approved by various survey research academic organizations and other affiliations including those with whom Braun is an active member, including AAPOR, MRA/CMOR and the Council on American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO).

About the Survey Sponsor and Developer

EdChoice

EdChoice is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to advancing full and unencumbered educational choice as the best pathway to successful lives and a stronger society. EdChoice believes that families, not bureaucrats, are best equipped to make K–12 schooling decisions for their children. The organization works at the state level to educate diverse audiences, train advocates and engage policymakers on the benefits of high-quality school choice programs. EdChoice is the intellectual legacy of Milton and Rose D. Friedman, who founded the organization in 1996 as the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

Commitment to Methods & Transparency

EdChoice is committed to research that adheres to high scientific standards, and matters of methodology and transparency are taken seriously at all levels of our organization. We are dedicated to providing high-quality information in a transparent and efficient manner.

The American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) welcomed EdChoice to its AAPOR Transparency Initiative (TI) in September of 2015. The TI is designed to acknowledge those organizations that pledge to practice transparency in their reporting of survey-based research findings and abide by AAPOR's disclosure standards as stated in the Code of Professional Ethics and Practices.

The authors welcome any and all questions related to methods and findings. You can contact them by email at info@edchoice.org or by phone at 317-681-0745.

ed CHOICE

111 MONUMENT CIRCLE
SUITE 2650
INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204
317 681 0745

EDCHOICE.ORG