

# K–12 Education and School Choice Reforms

---

## 2020 Schooling in America

Wave 1 (May 22–June 2, 2020)



# KEY FINDINGS

## K–12 EDUCATION

### EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

- EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)
- SCHOOL VOUCHERS
- TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS
- CHARTER SCHOOLS

## RACE/ETHNICITY

## SURVEY PROFILE

# KEY FINDINGS

- **More than half of Americans (56%) say K–12 is on the wrong track, identical to last year.**
  - Two out of five (40%) believe K–12 education is heading in the right direction, which is a 16-point jump since 2016.
- **Parents’ Experiences**
  - Private school parents expressed the highest level of satisfaction (80%) among the four school types—public district, charter, private, and home. Satisfaction among homeschoolers has decreased by 14 percentage points since 2018. Public district school satisfaction increased 4 points since last year.
  - All parents except public district school parents said a “safe environment” is one of the three most influential factors for choosing their kids’ schools. Parents’ top reasons for choosing their public district school are that it was assigned to them (41%) and it is close to their home or work (31%). Private school parents primarily said they made their choice because of academic reputation (34%) or safe environment (34%). Public charter school parents’ top reasons include academic reputation (38%) and safe environment (32%), and homeschooling parents’ top reasons are a safe environment (50%) and individual/one-on-one attention (35%).
  - Actual enrollment patterns don’t reflect Americans’ or parents’ schooling preferences. Four out of five students attend a public district school, but only about one-third of current school parents say that would be their first choice. When parents are given question wording that sets aside "financial costs and transportation" hurdles, we see a jump in preference for homeschooling (+4 points). All parents—Black, Hispanic, White—have diverse schooling preferences. That is a noteworthy similarity among those groups.

# KEY FINDINGS

## ▪ **Grading Local Schools**

- Private schools received the largest proportion of high grades (A/B) compared to public district and public charter schools. Parents of school-age children gave nearly twice as many As to private schools compared to the other two school types. Parents are more likely to give higher grades to local public district schools than the general public.
- Of those giving grades, three-fourths (73%) of parents gave their local private schools an A or B grade; about six of 10 (62%) gave local charter schools such high marks; and a little more than half (56%) graded local district schools A or B.

## ▪ **Public School Funding and Spending**

- Most Americans and parents drastically underestimated public school spending. The median respondent in both groups said spending is about half or one-third of the lowest state average.
- When provided their own state’s average per-student spending, 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 the baseline version, 52 percent of respondents said public school funding was “too low.” However, on the version inserting a statistic for average state public per-pupil spending (state range: \$7,206–\$22,861 in FY17), the proportion that said spending was “too low” shrank by 14 percentage points to 38 percent.

# KEY FINDINGS

## ▪ Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)

- ESAs received the highest level of support (78%) of any other type of educational choice in the eight years we have polled on the policy type. One out of five (20%) say they oppose ESAs.
- Our first question about ESAs asked for an opinion without offering any description. On this baseline question, 49 percent of respondents said they favored ESAs. Current school parents expressed a slightly higher support (54%). Black and Hispanic parents have baseline support levels higher than white parents. In a follow-up question that described how an ESA program operates, support rose by 29 points among all respondents, and increased 27 points (to 81%) among parents.
- Those who favor ESAs are most likely to do so because of “more freedom and flexibility for parents” (30%) or “access to better academic environment” (26%). The main reason for opposing ESAs appears to be the belief that ESAs will “divert funding away from public schools” (23%).
- A large majority of the general public (75%) prefers universal access to ESAs compared to the preference for means-tested eligibility based solely on financial need (55%).

# KEY FINDINGS

## ▪ **School Vouchers**

- On the baseline question about school vouchers—without any description—46 percent of all respondents said they favored the policy. Current school parents expressed higher initial support (55%). Black parents are more likely than white parents to support school vouchers at baseline without a description. In the follow-up question that described how vouchers work, public support rose by 19 points (to 65%) and increased 22 points (to 76%) among current school parents. Support and opposition are at all-time highs in our polling.

## ▪ **Tax-Credit Scholarships**

- Two-thirds of all respondents (69%) said they support tax-credit scholarships, while 28 percent are opposed to the policy type. Current school parents were significantly more likely than the general public to favor such a policy (78%). There have been upticks of support and opposition since last year.

## ▪ **Public Charter Schools**

- On our first question about public charter schools—without any description—52 percent of all respondents said they favored the policy. Current school parents expressed higher initial support (61%). Black parents are more likely than white parents to support charter schools at baseline without a description. In the follow-up question that described how vouchers work, public support rose by 12 points (to 64%) and increased 10 points (to 71%) among current school parents. Support and opposition are at all-time highs in our polling.

# KEY FINDINGS

## K-12 EDUCATION

### EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

- EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)
- SCHOOL VOUCHERS
- TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS
- CHARTER SCHOOLS

### RACE/ETHNICITY

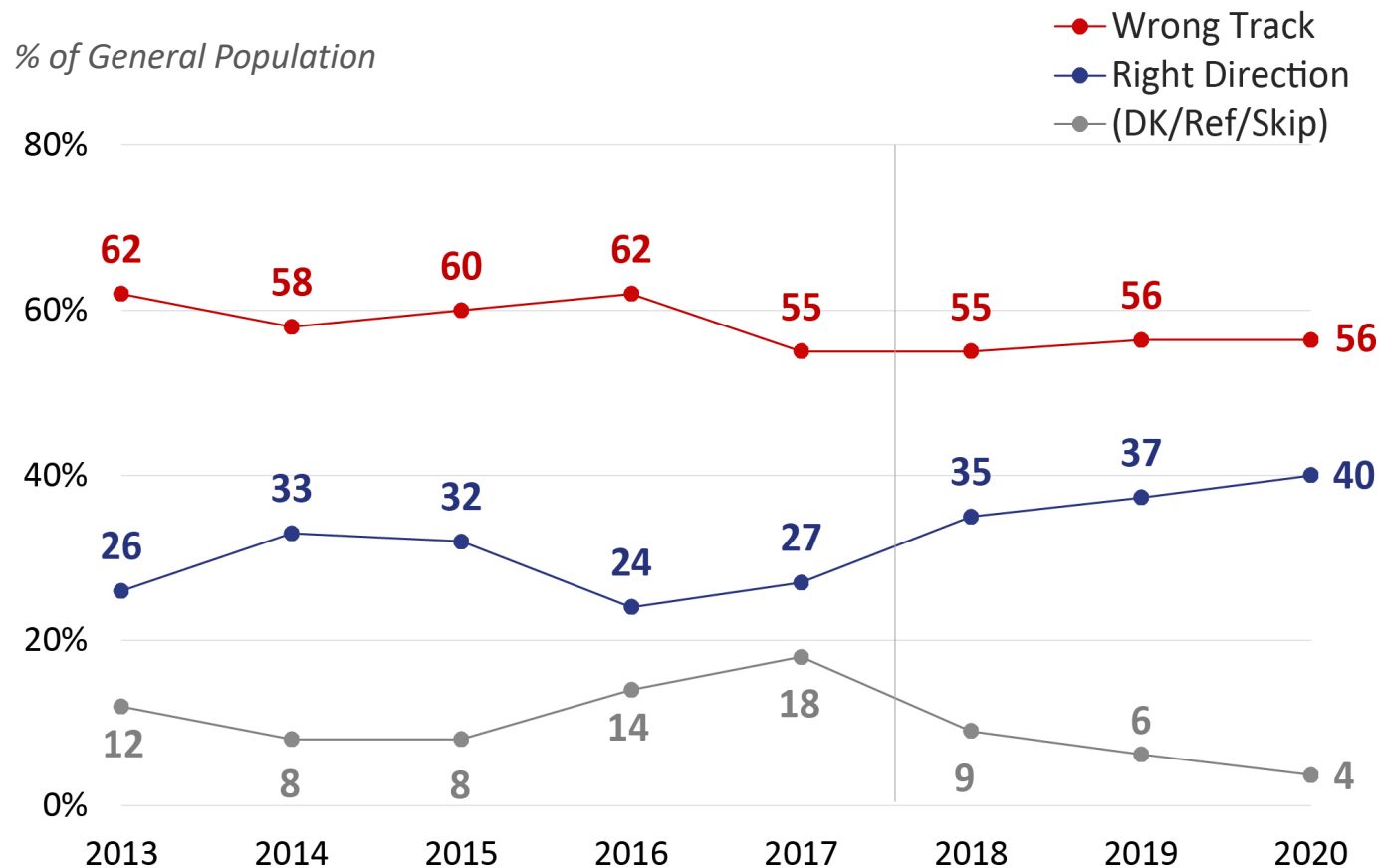
### SURVEY PROFILE

## DIRECTION OF K-12 EDUCATION

Notes: Phone-only survey results shown for 2013–2017. Mixed-mode results (online and phone) shown for 2018–2020. Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For the online survey, the respondent was permitted to skip the question.

Sources: EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q1; EdChoice, *Schooling in America Survey, 2016–2019*; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey, 2013–2015*

More than half of Americans say K–12 is on the wrong track, identical to last year. Two out of five believe K–12 education is heading in the right direction—a 16-point increase since 2016.

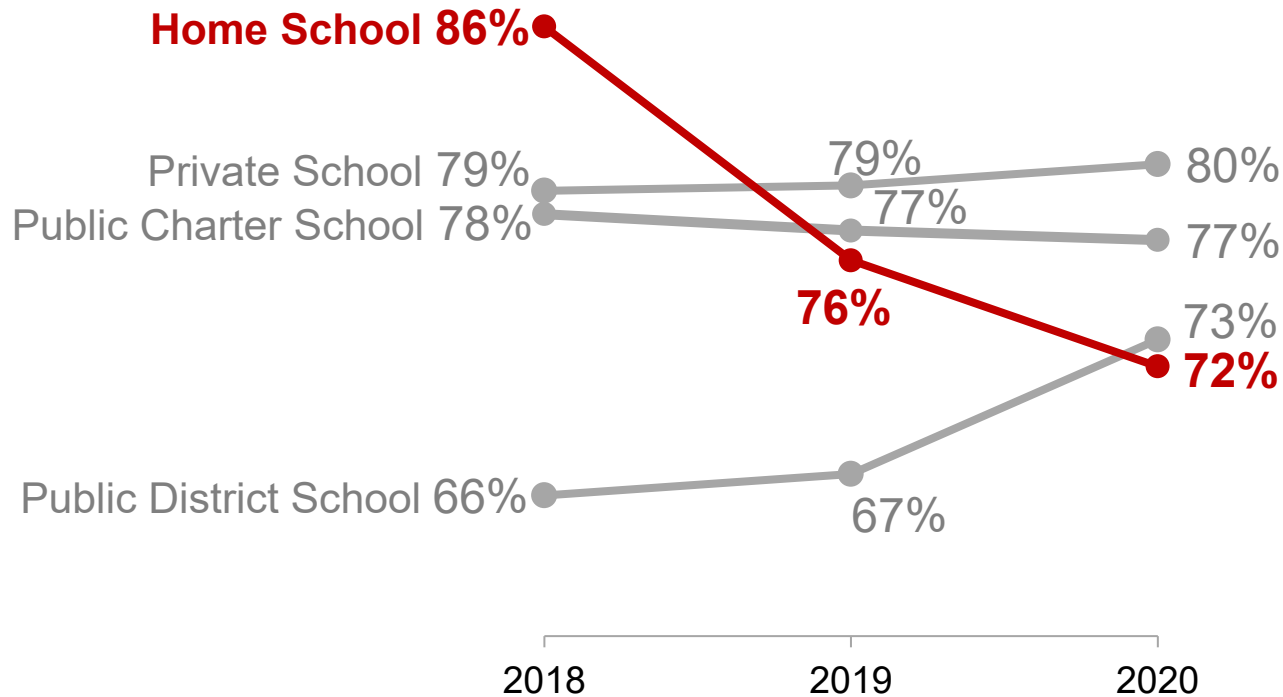




**Satisfaction with homeschooling has gone down in the last two years.  
But satisfaction with public district schools increased since last year.**

## SCHOOLING SATISFACTION

*% of Current School Parents Providing Ranking Who Say They  
Are "Very" or "Somewhat" Satisfied*



*Note:* Sample sizes vary by school type and by year.

*Sources:* EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q4; EdChoice, Schooling in America Survey, 2018–2019

**A safe environment is a very influential factor for why school parents have their child in school. That is especially the case for parents who homeschool.**

## FACTORS FOR CHOOSING A SCHOOL

*% of Current Parents by School Type Children Ever Attend(ed)*

LOW-HIGH

| Ranked As Top Three Factor                | Public District School (N=731) | Private School (N=336) | Public Charter School (N=301) | Home School (N=413) |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Safe Environment                          | 27%                            | 34%                    | 32%                           | 50%                 |
| Academic Reputation                       | 28%                            | 34%                    | 38%                           | 18%                 |
| Morals/Character/Values Instruction       | 16%                            | 32%                    | 26%                           | 26%                 |
| Location/Close to Home or Work            | 41%                            | 14%                    | 21%                           | 24%                 |
| Individual/One-on-One Attention           | 15%                            | 26%                    | 21%                           | 35%                 |
| Discipline                                | 11%                            | 27%                    | 20%                           | 25%                 |
| Socialization/Peers/Other Kids            | 30%                            | 18%                    | 19%                           | 14%                 |
| Class Size                                | 15%                            | 19%                    | 24%                           | 16%                 |
| Our Assigned District/Neighborhood School | 31%                            | 9%                     | 16%                           | 14%                 |
| Test Scores                               | 14%                            | 17%                    | 19%                           | 14%                 |
| Extracurricular Activities                | 18%                            | 14%                    | 16%                           | 14%                 |
| Diversity                                 | 17%                            | 15%                    | 17%                           | 12%                 |
| School Size                               | 14%                            | 16%                    | 16%                           | 9%                  |
| Religious Environment/Instruction         | 6%                             | 20%                    | 11%                           | 15%                 |

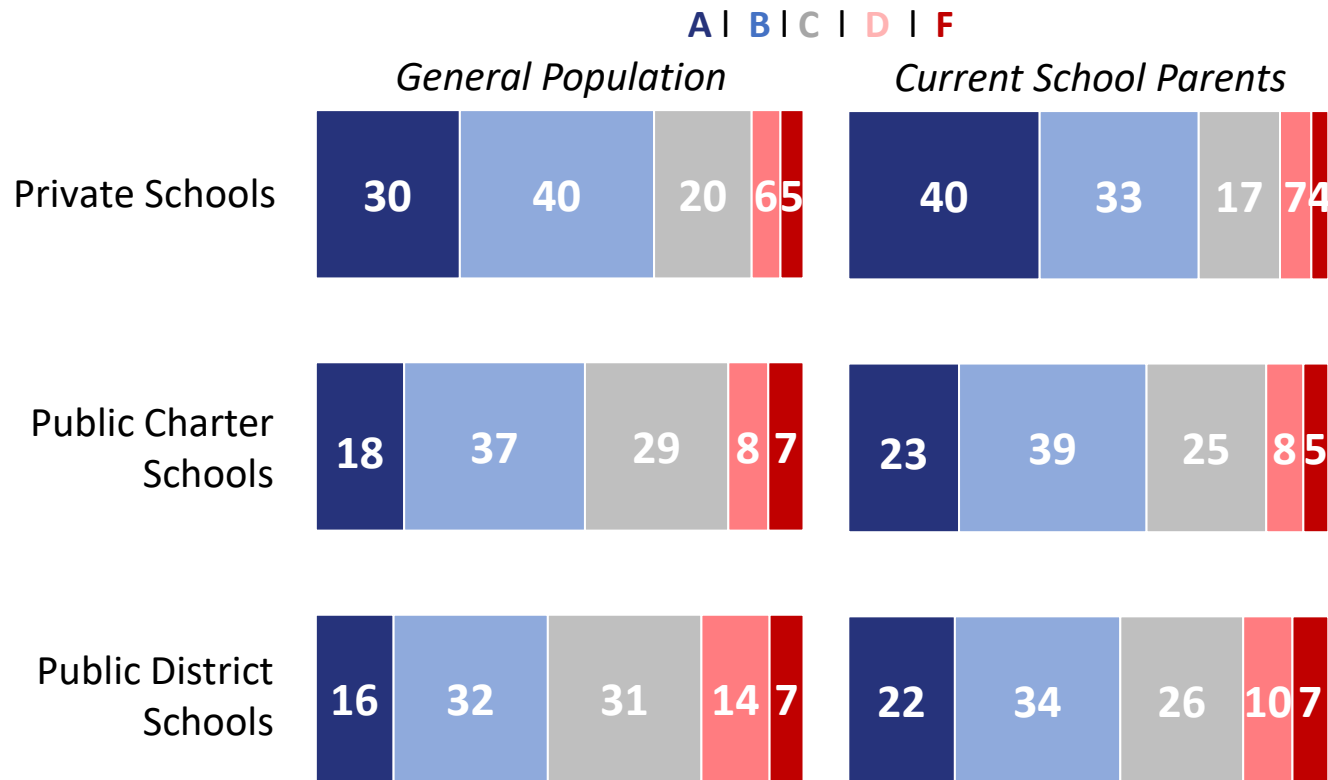
*Notes:* All percentages reflect the count of responses divided by the total number of weighted interviews. Unweighted N's are provided so the reader can roughly assess the reliability of reported percentages.

*Sources:* EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q5, Q6, Q7, and Q8

# GRADING LOCAL SCHOOLS

Generally, the American public gives lower grades to schools than parents. Private schools receive the highest grades compared to other school types.

*% of Respondents That Gave Grades*



*Notes:* Volunteered "Don't Know" and "Not Applicable" responses not shown nor reflected in this chart. Sample sizes vary by school type: Private Schools (N =1,213; 567 Parents); Public Charter Schools (N = 1,131; 517 Parents); Public District Schools (N = 1,493; 789 Parents).

*Sources:* EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q11

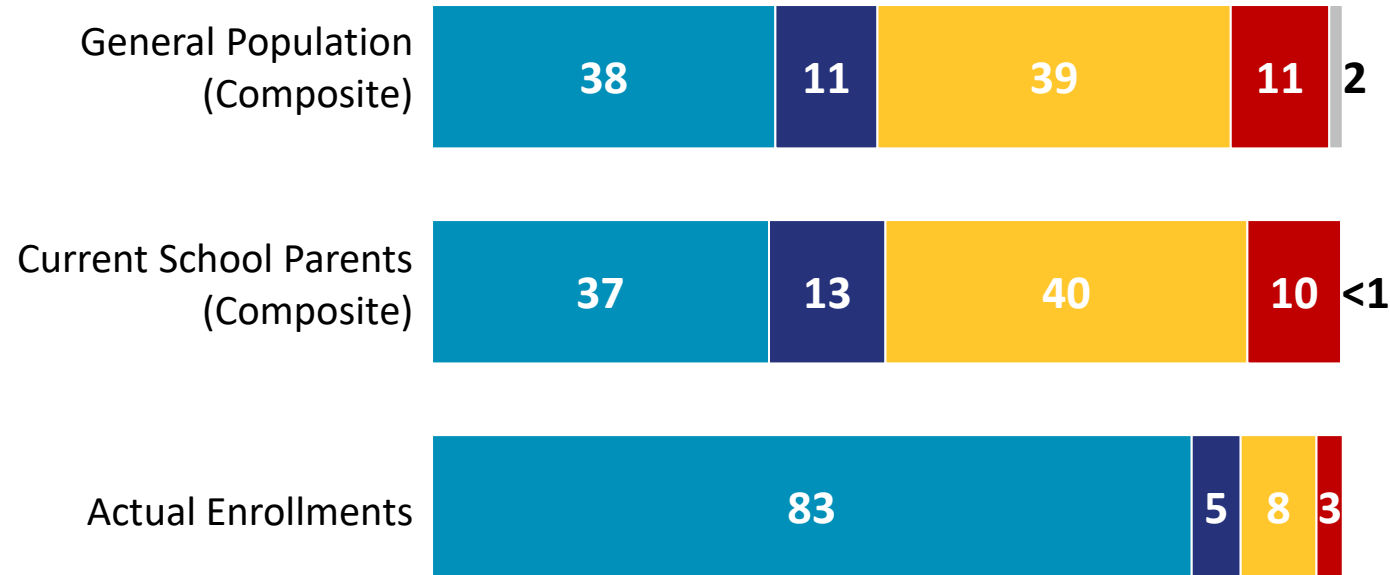
# Actual enrollment patterns do not reflect parents' schooling preferences.

## SCHOOL TYPE PREFERENCE, COMPARED TO ACTUAL ENROLLMENT

*Notes:* The percentages in this chart reflect a composite that averages split samples' responses to two slightly different versions of this question. Responses within parentheses were volunteered: "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For the online survey, the respondent was permitted to skip the question.  
*Sources:* Authors' calculations; National Center for Education Statistics (NCES); EdChoice, 2020 *Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q12

*% of Respondents*

- Public District School
- Public Charter School
- Private School
- Home School
- (DK/Ref/Skip)



# SCHOOL TYPE PREFERENCE BY CONSTRAINTS

## Question Wording 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?*

## Question Wording 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?*

*% of Current School Parents by Split Question Version*



Split/Baseline (N = 407)



Split/Less Constrained (N = 398)



*Notes:* Responses within parentheses were volunteered: "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For the online survey, the respondent was permitted to skip the question.

*Sources:* EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q12

# REASONS FOR A SCHOOL TYPE PREFERENCE

*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.

*Sources:* EdChoice, 2020 *Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q13

**EDCHOICE.ORG**

## There is a wide range of reasons Americans say they prefer any school type.

### TOP FIVE LISTED

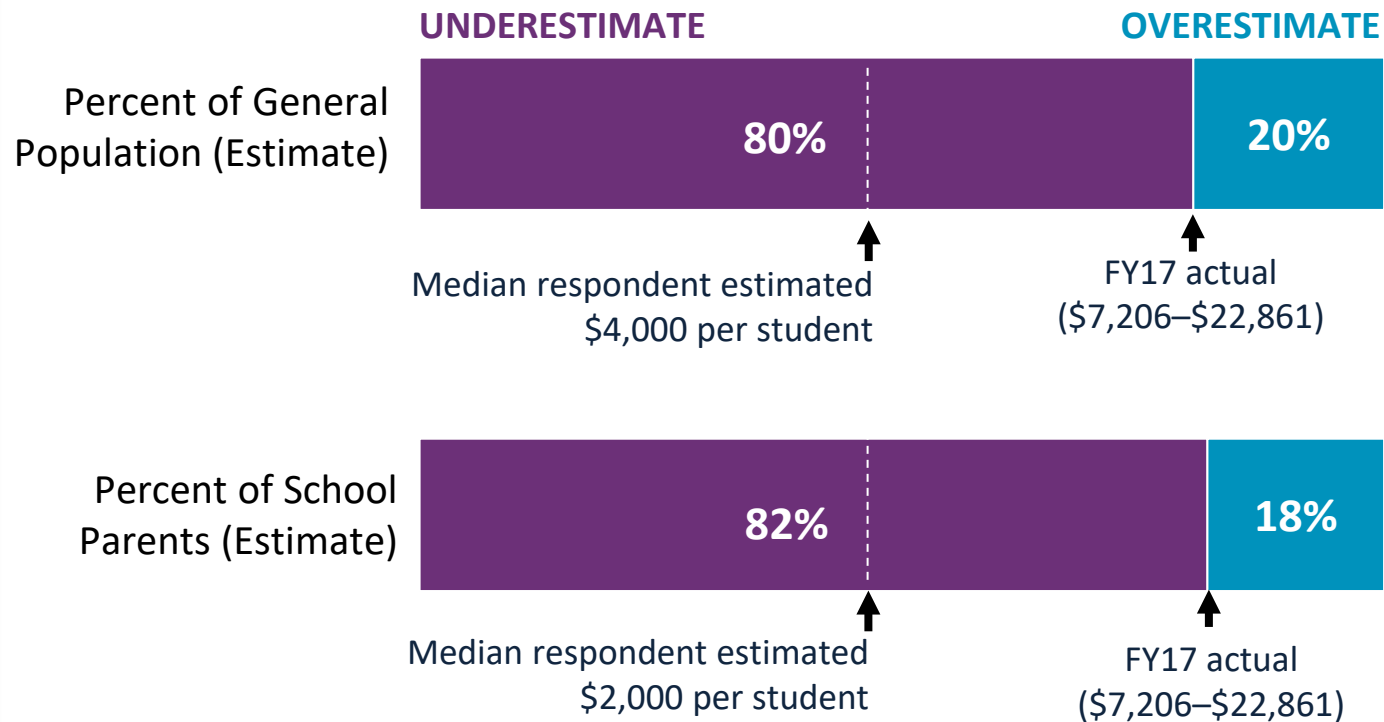
#### *% of General Population by Preferred School Type*

| Public District School (N = 606)               |     |
|--|-----|
| Socialization / Peers / Other Kids             | 14% |
| Better Education / Quality                     | 12% |
| Diversity / Variety                            | 11% |
| Teachers / Teaching / Way They Teach           | 9%  |
| Academics / Curriculum / Standards / Results   | 7%  |
| Private School (N = 637)                       |     |
| Better Education / Quality                     | 19% |
| Class Size / Student-Teacher Ratio             | 14% |
| Individual Attention / One-on-One / Customized | 12% |
| Academics / Curriculum / Standards / Results   | 10% |
| Discipline / Structure / Consistency           | 9%  |
| Public Charter School (N = 182)                |     |
| Better Education / Quality                     | 17% |
| Individual Attention / One-on-One / Customized | 14% |
| Academics / Curriculum / Standards / Results   | 11% |
| Teachers / Teaching / Way They Teach           | 10% |
| Class Size / Student-Teacher Ratio             | 7%  |
| Home School (N = 161)                          |     |
| Safety / Less Drugs, Violence / Bullying       | 22% |
| Individual Attention / One-on-One / Customized | 12% |
| Parental Involvement                           | 9%  |
| Better Education / Quality                     | 7%  |
| Less Political Influences                      | 5%  |

Most Americans and parents drastically underestimated public school spending. The median respondent in both groups said spending is about half or one-third of the lowest state average.

## SCHOOL SPENDING ESTIMATE, COMPARED TO ACTUAL SPENDING

*% of Respondents*



Note: Percentages based on those offering estimates.

Source: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q9

# SCHOOL FUNDING

## Question Wording A

*Do you believe that public school funding in [Your State] is at a level that is:*

## Question Wording B

*According to the most recent information available, on average \$[Amount] is being spent per year on each student attending public schools in [Your State]. Do you believe that public school funding in [Your State] is at a level that is:*

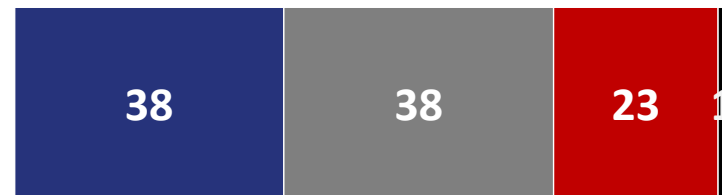
*% of General Population by Split Question Version*

■ Too Low   ■ About Right   ■ Too High   ■ (DK/Ref/Skip)

Split/Without Information (N = 806)



Split/With Information (N = 799)



*Notes:* Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For the online survey, the respondent was permitted to skip the question.

*Sources:* EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q10



# KEY FINDINGS

## K–12 EDUCATION

### EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

- EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)
- SCHOOL VOUCHERS
- TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS
- CHARTER SCHOOLS

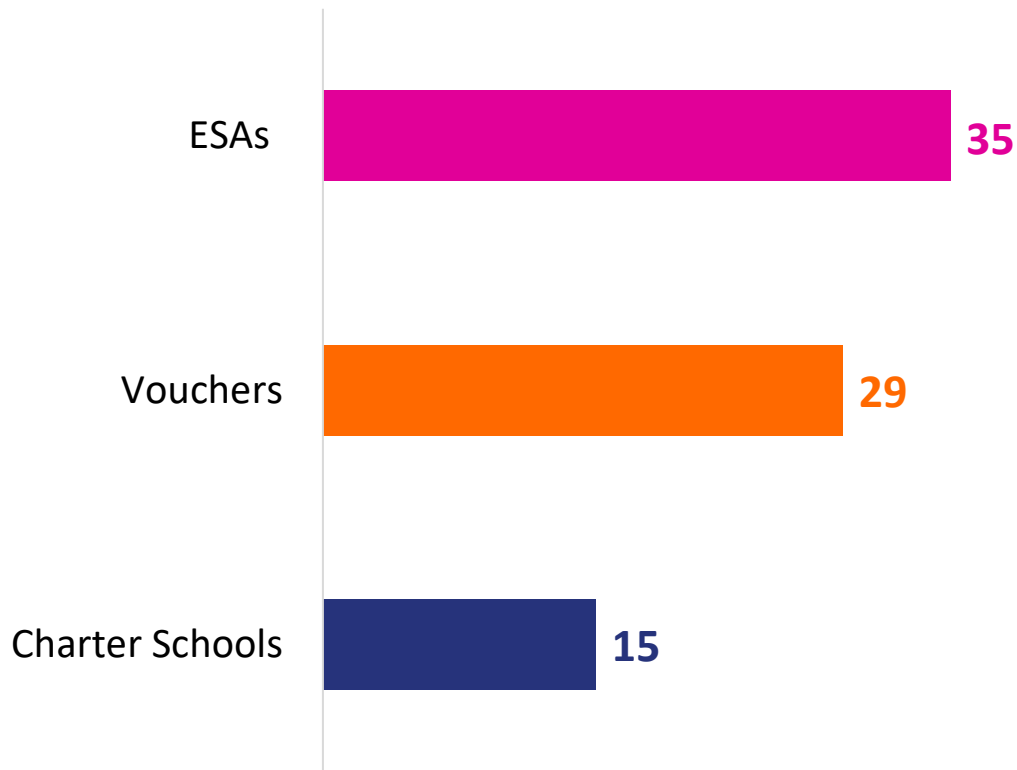
## RACE/ETHNICITY

## SURVEY PROFILE

**About one-third of Americans have never heard of education savings accounts (ESAs). Nearly as many have never heard of school vouchers.**

## **AWARENESS OF EDUCATIONAL CHOICE REFORMS**

*% of General Population Replying They Had Never Heard of Choice on Baseline Question*



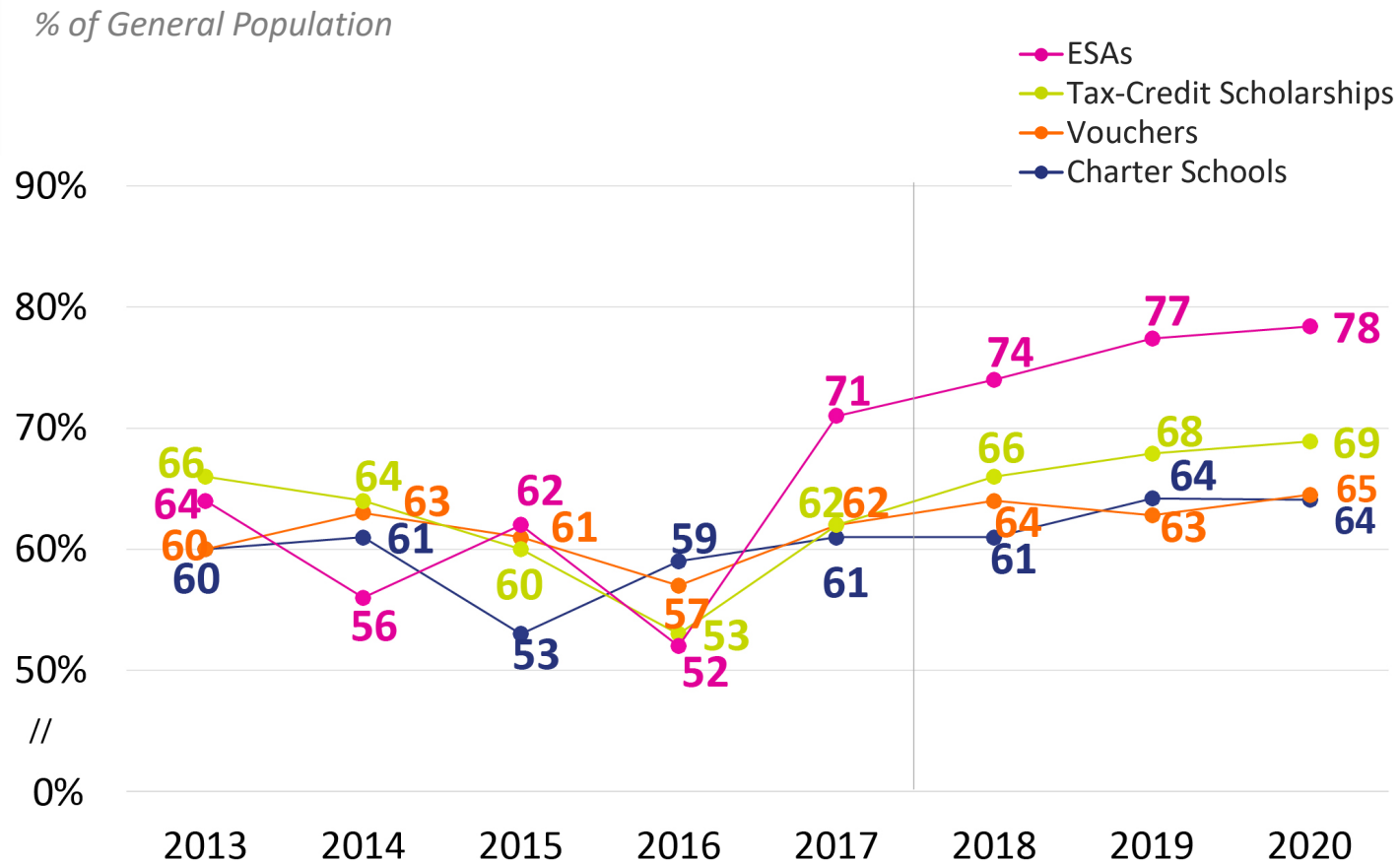
Source: EdChoice, 2020 *Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q14, Q16, and Q18

# FAVORABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL CHOICE REFORMS

Notes: From 2013 to 2015 we slightly changed question wording to more accurately reflect the features of an ESA program and to avoid the inclusion of potentially loaded words or limiting ESA uses. Phone-only survey results shown for 2013–2017. Mixed-mode results (online and phone) shown for 2018–2020.

Sources: EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q15, Q17, Q19, and Q23; EdChoice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2016–2019; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015.

Since 2013, majorities of the general public have expressed more support than opposition to various types of educational choice reforms.



# KEY FINDINGS

## K–12 EDUCATION

### EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

- EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)
- SCHOOL VOUCHERS
- TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS
- CHARTER SCHOOLS

## RACE/ETHNICITY

## SURVEY PROFILE

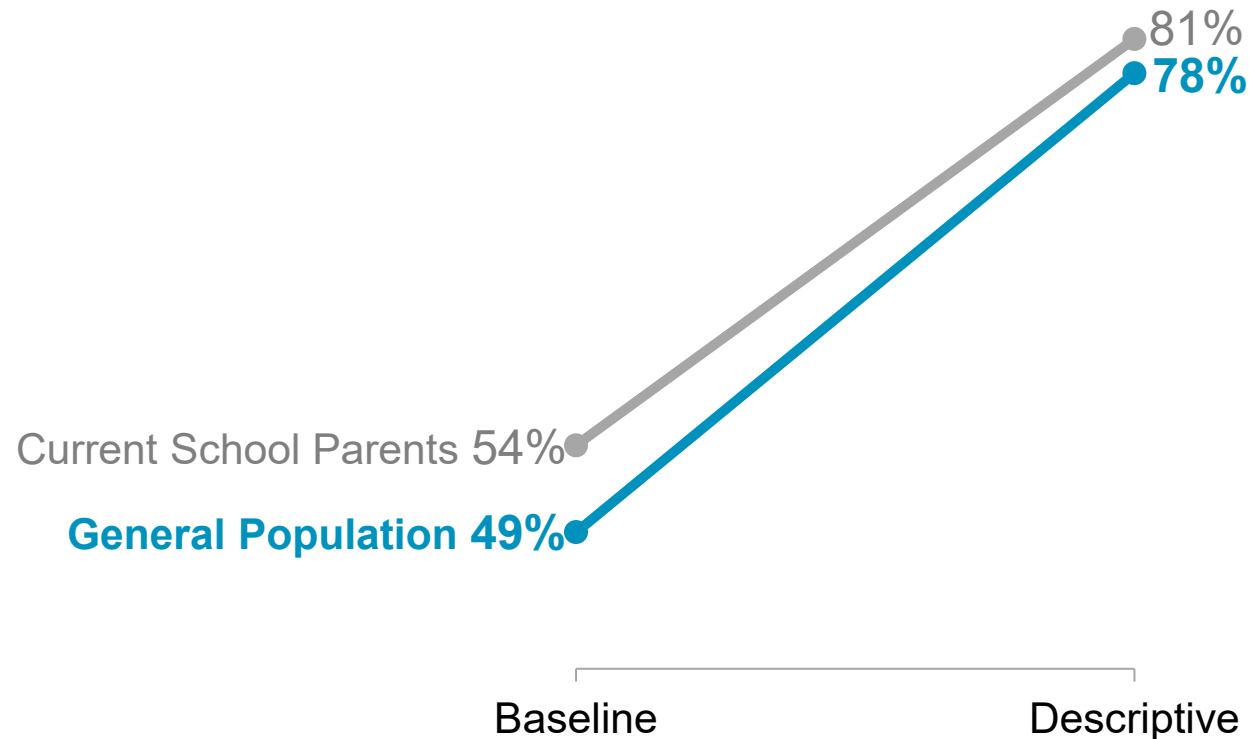
## *How We Describe: Education Savings Accounts (ESAs)*

An **education savings account** in K–12 education—often called an ESA—establishes for parents a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple uses for educational purposes. Parents can then use these funds to pay for: school tuition, tutoring, online education programs, therapies for students with special needs, textbooks or other instructional materials, or future college expenses.

# EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs) FAVORABILITY

When given context about ESAs, support increased by 27 points for parents and by 29 points among the general population.

*% of Respondents Replying "Strongly/Somewhat Favor"*



Source: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q18 and Q19

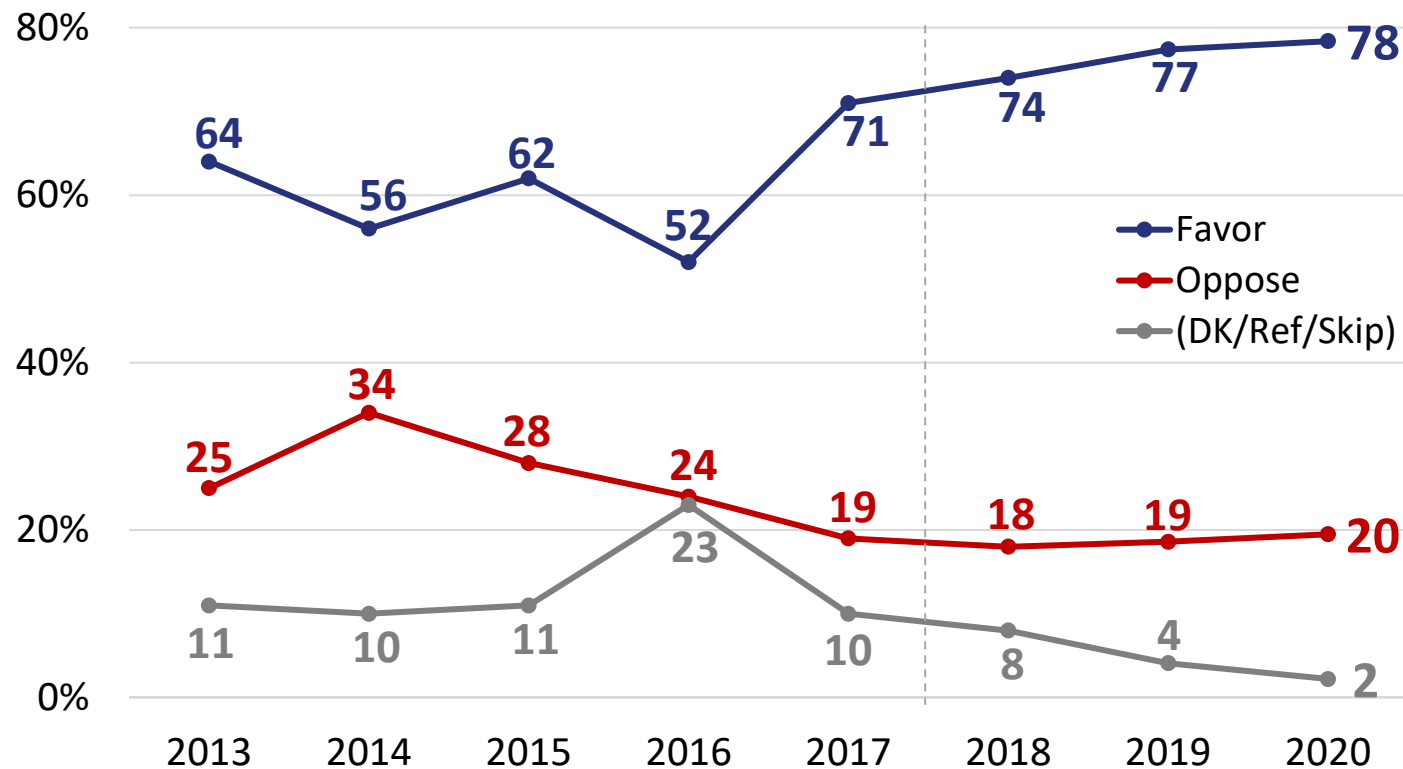
## Americans' support of ESAs is at its highest point in eight years.

# EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs) FAVORABILITY

Notes: From 2013 to 2015 we slightly changed question wording to more accurately reflect the features of an ESA program and to avoid the inclusion of potentially loaded words or limiting ESA uses. Phone-only survey results shown for 2013–2017. Mixed-mode results (online and phone) shown for 2018–2020. Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For the online survey, the respondent was permitted to skip the question.

Sources: EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q19; EdChoice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2016–2019 (partial samples of General Population); Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2013–2015

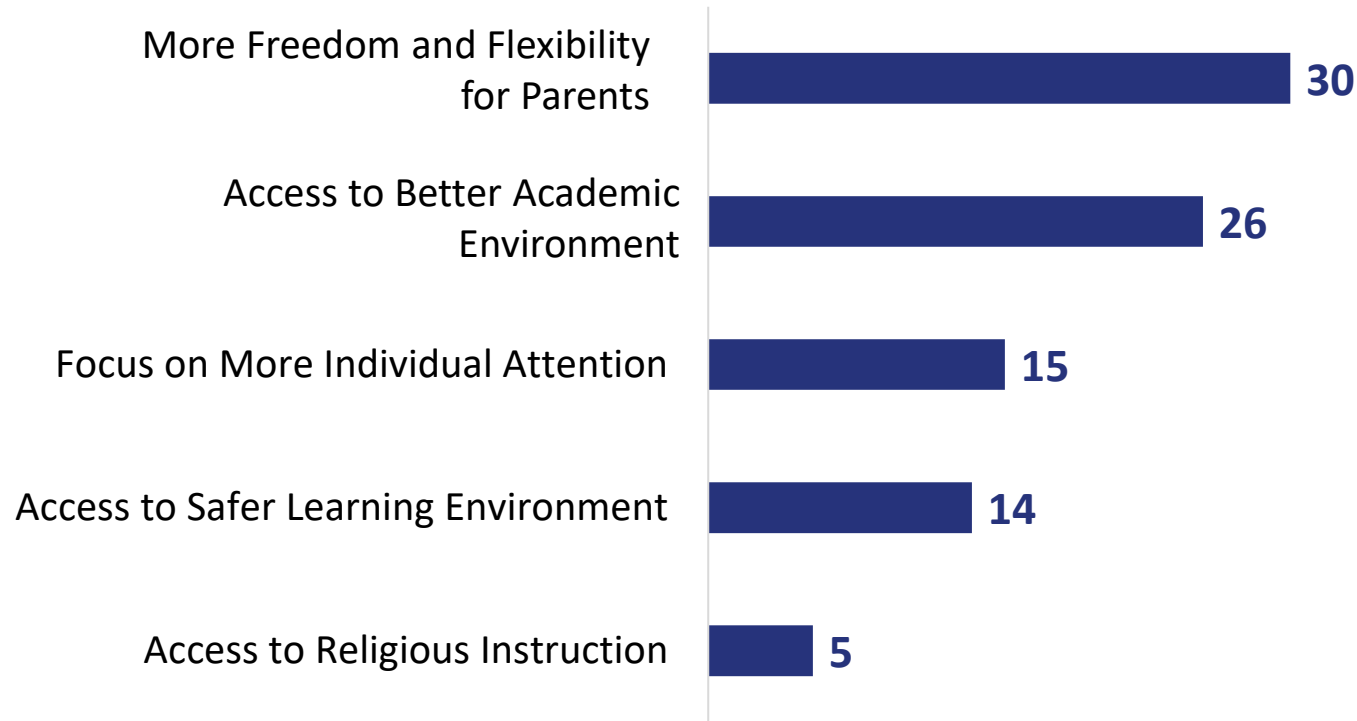
% of General Population



## REASONS FOR SUPPORTING EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)

**Supporters said increased freedom and flexibility for parents was the most important reason they favor ESAs.**

*% of General Population Replying "Strongly/Somewhat Favor" ESAs from Descriptive Question*



*Notes:* Volunteered responses not shown. "Don't Know, Refusals, nor skips reflected in this chart.

*Source:* EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q20



## REASONS FOR OPPOSING EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)

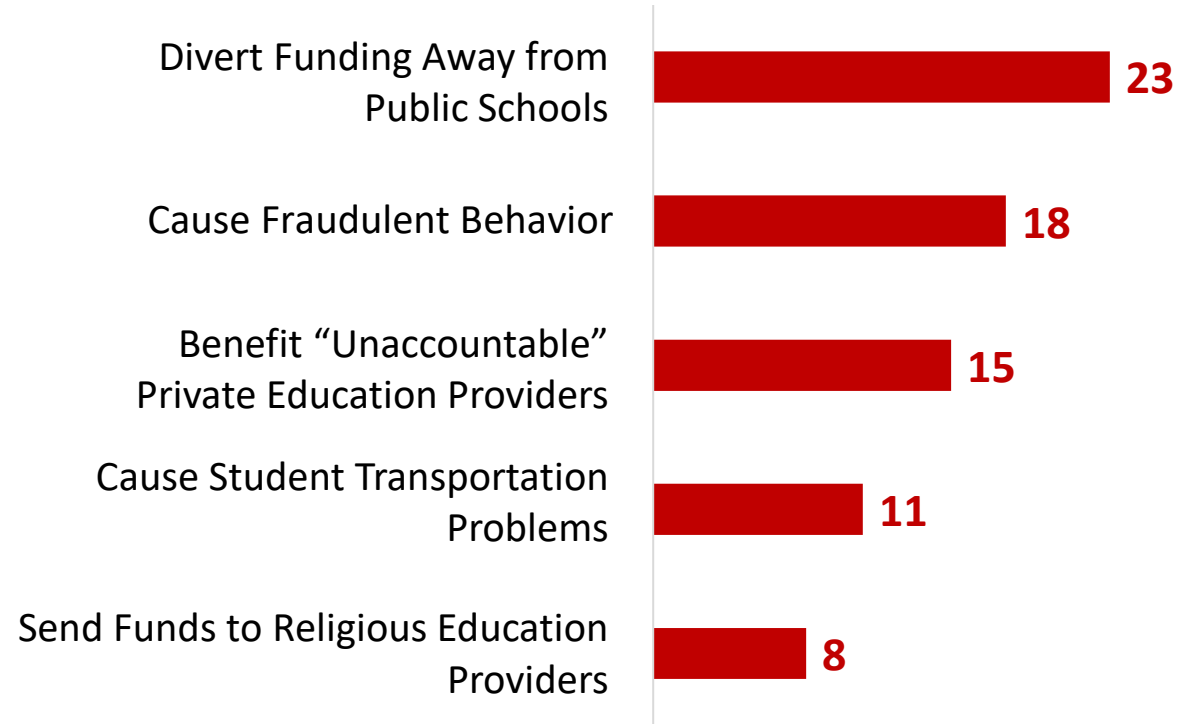
Notes: Volunteered responses not shown. "Don't Know, Refusals, nor skips reflected in this chart.

Source: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q21

EDCHOICE.ORG

Nearly one out of four oppose ESAs because they believe it would take funds away from public schools.

*% of General Population Replying "Strongly/Somewhat Oppose" ESAs from Descriptive Question*



# UNIVERSAL VS. NEEDS-BASED EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)

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

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

*% of General Population by Split Sample*

Split/Universal (N = 802)

22

75

Split/Needs-Based (N = 803)

43

55

*Notes: Volunteered responses not shown. "Don't Know, Refusals, nor skips reflected in this chart.*

*Sources: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q22*

## UNIVERSAL VS. NEEDS-BASED EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)

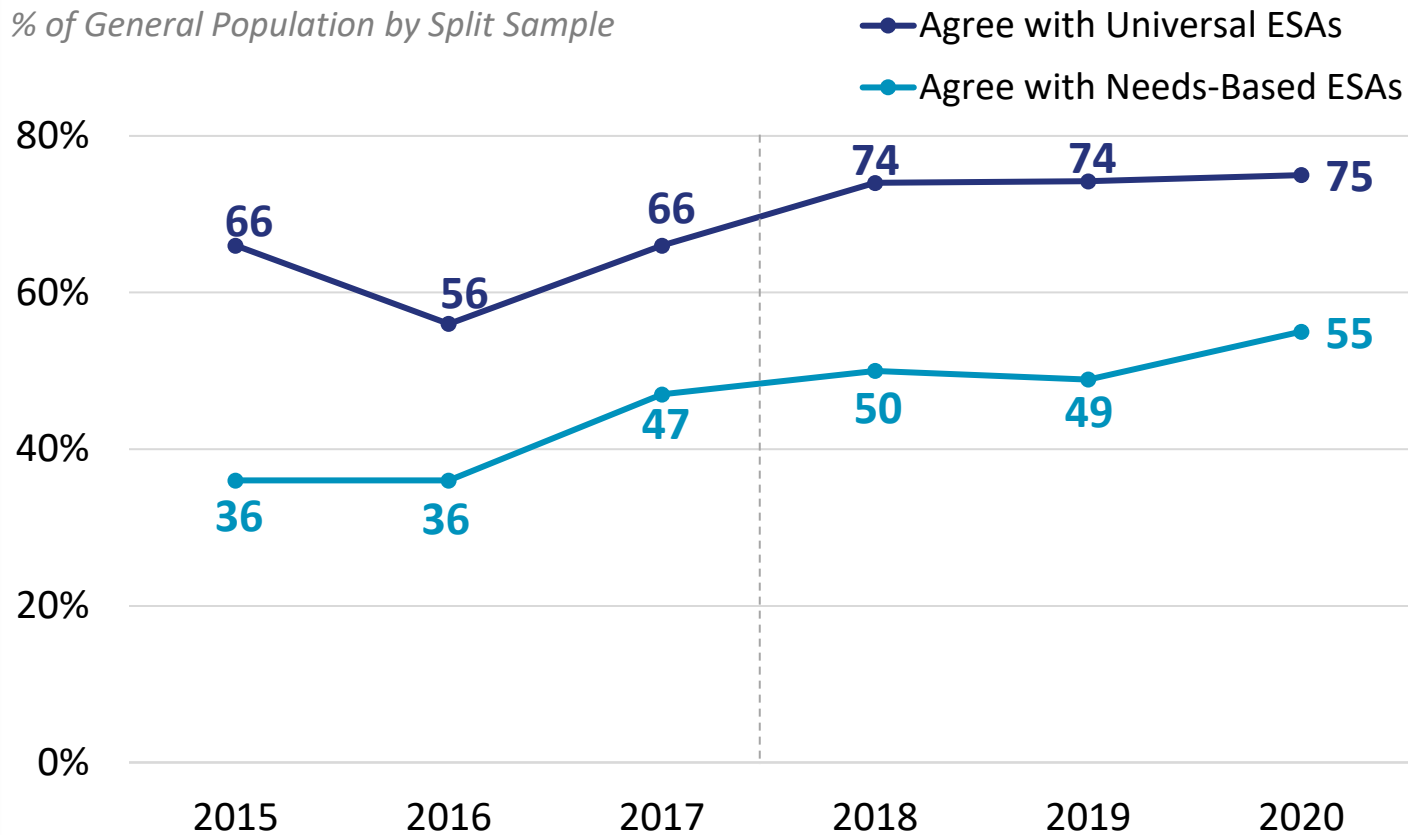
Notes: Phone-only survey results shown for 2015–2017. Mixed-mode results (online and phone) shown for 2018–2020.

Sources: EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q22; EdChoice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2016–2019; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *2015 Schooling in America Survey*

EDCHOICE.ORG

We did a wording experiment about ESA eligibility by comparing half-samples. Three out of four respondents agree with universal ESAs. More than half think ESAs should be available only to families based on financial need.

*% of General Population by Split Sample*



# KEY FINDINGS

## K–12 EDUCATION

### EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

- EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)
- **SCHOOL VOUCHERS**
- TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS
- CHARTER SCHOOLS

## RACE/ETHNICITY

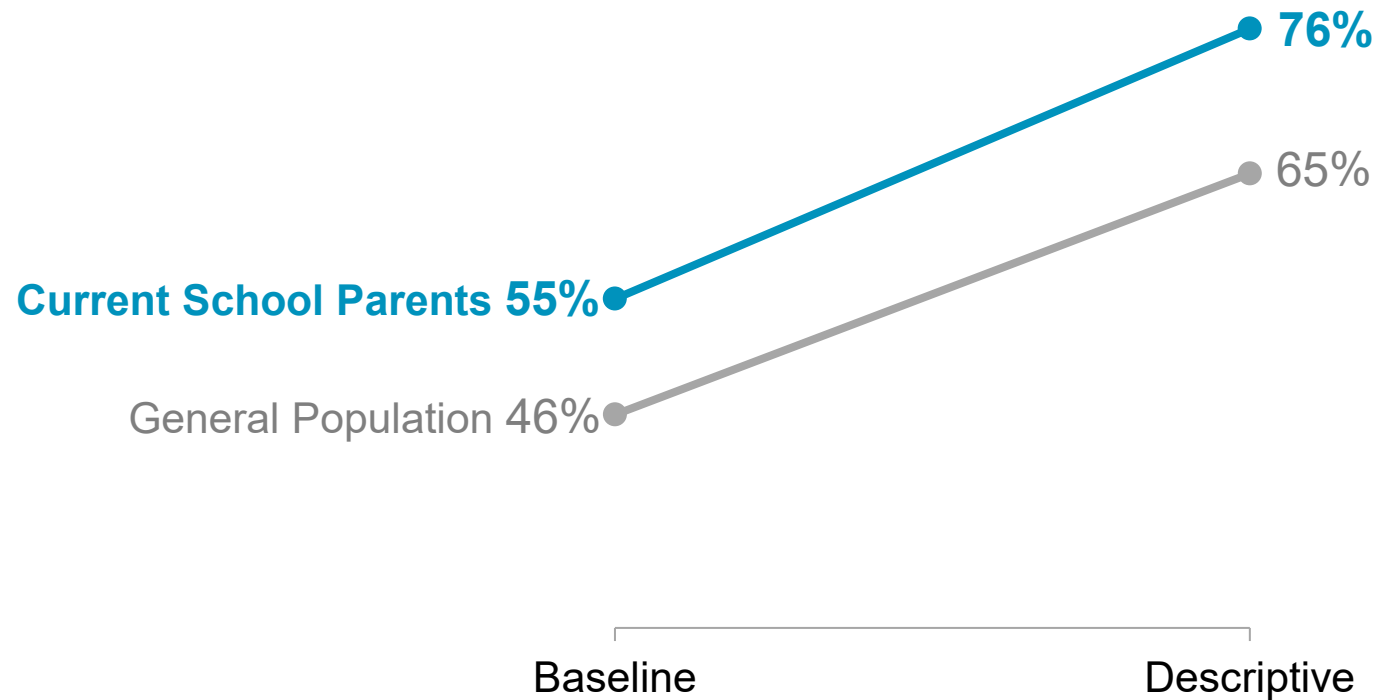
## SURVEY PROFILE

A **school voucher** system allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. If this policy were adopted, tax dollars currently allocated to a school district would be allocated to parents in the form of a school voucher to pay partial or full tuition for the child's school.

# SCHOOL VOUCHERS FAVORABILITY

When given context about school vouchers, support increased by 19 points for the general population and 21 points for parents.

*% of Respondents Replying "Strongly/Somewhat Favor"*



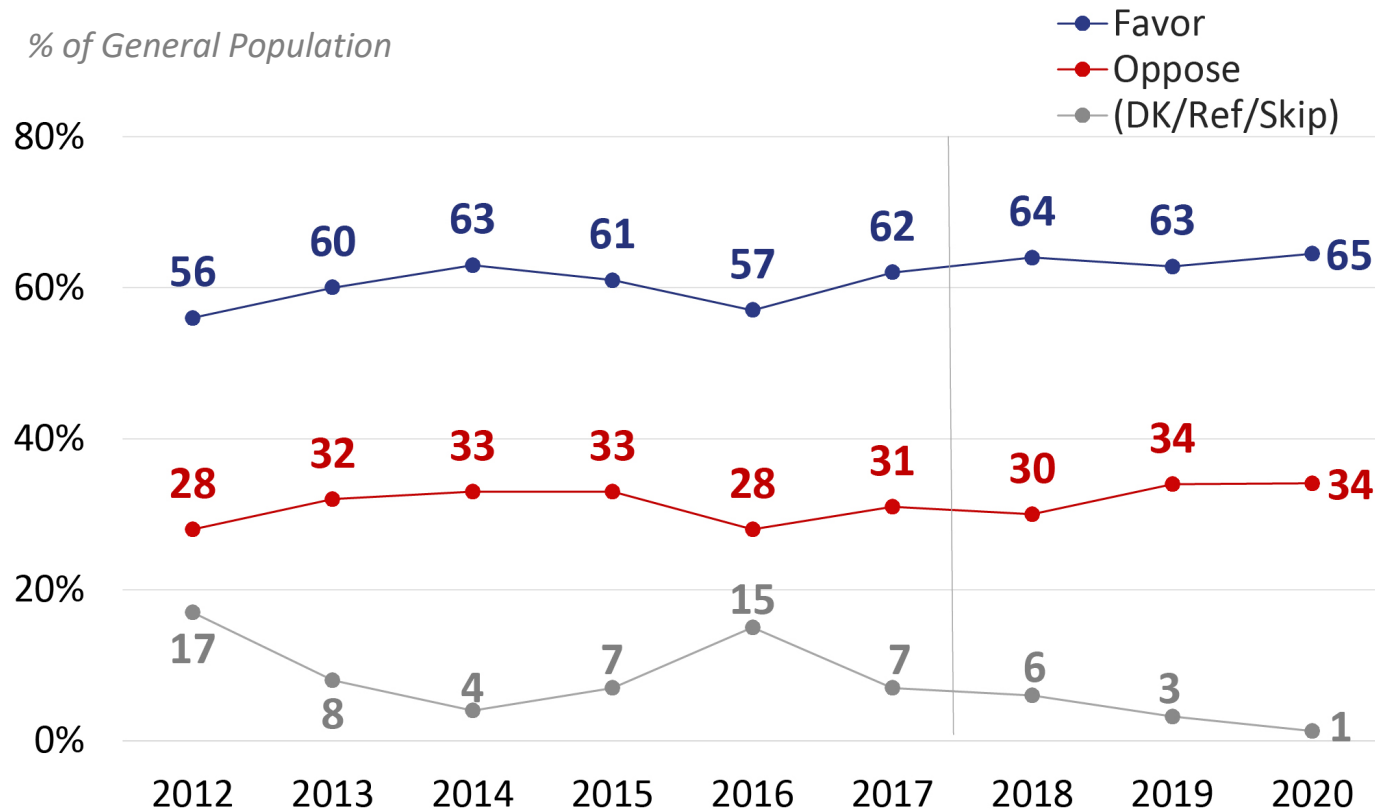
Sources: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q16 and Q17

# SCHOOL VOUCHERS FAVORABILITY

Notes: Phone-only survey results shown for 2012–2017. Mixed-mode results (online and phone) shown for 2018–2020. Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For the online survey, the respondent was permitted to skip the question.

Sources: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q17; EdChoice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2016–2019; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey*, 2012–2015

Nearly two-thirds of the public support school vouchers—a nine-year high. It appears more people now have an opinion about such an education reform.



# KEY FINDINGS

## K–12 EDUCATION

### EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

- EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)
- SCHOOL VOUCHERS
- **TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS**
- CHARTER SCHOOLS

## RACE/ETHNICITY

## SURVEY PROFILE



## *How We Describe: Tax-Credit Scholarships*

A tax credit allows an individual or business to reduce the final amount of a tax owed to government. In a **tax-credit scholarship** system, a government gives tax credits to individuals or businesses if they contribute money to nonprofit organizations that distribute private school scholarships. A nonprofit organization gives a scholarship to a qualifying student who would like to enroll in a private school of their choice, including both religious and non-religious schools. The student's parent then uses the scholarship to pay partial or full tuition for the chosen private school.

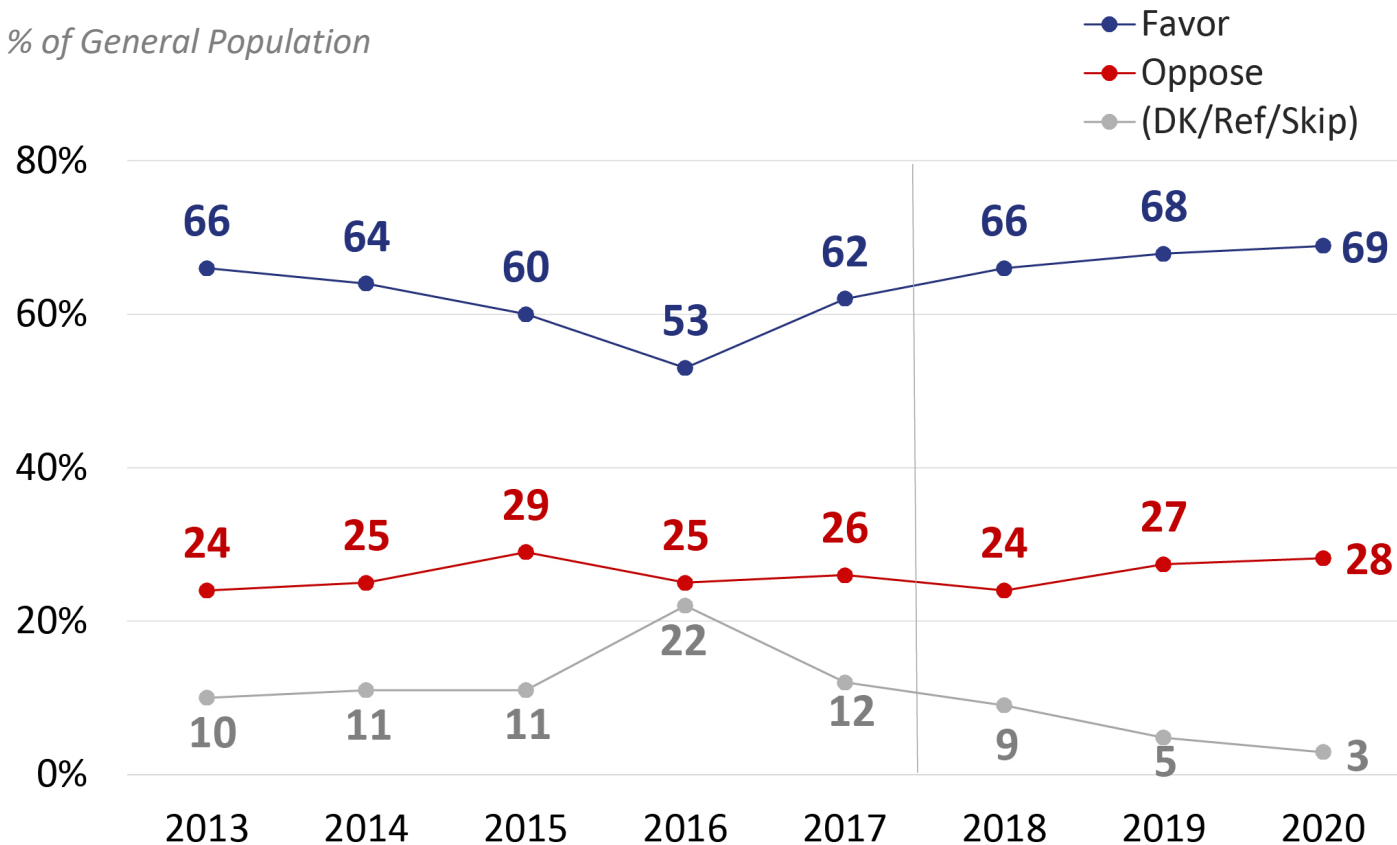
# TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS FAVORABILITY

*Notes:* We used slightly different question wording in 2013–2015, compared with the question version used in 2016–2020. Phone-only survey results shown for 2013–2017. Mixed-mode results (online and phone) shown for 2018–2020. Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For the online survey, the respondent was permitted to skip the question.  
*Sources:* EdChoice, *2020 Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q23; EdChoice, *Schooling in America Survey, 2016–2019*; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, *Schooling in America Survey, 2013–2015*

EDCHOICE.ORG

**Seven out of ten Americans support tax-credit scholarships—an eight-year high. Like vouchers, more people expressed opinions today than in previous years.**

*% of General Population*



# KEY FINDINGS

## K–12 EDUCATION

### EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

- EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)
- SCHOOL VOUCHERS
- TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS
- **CHARTER SCHOOLS**

## RACE/ETHNICITY

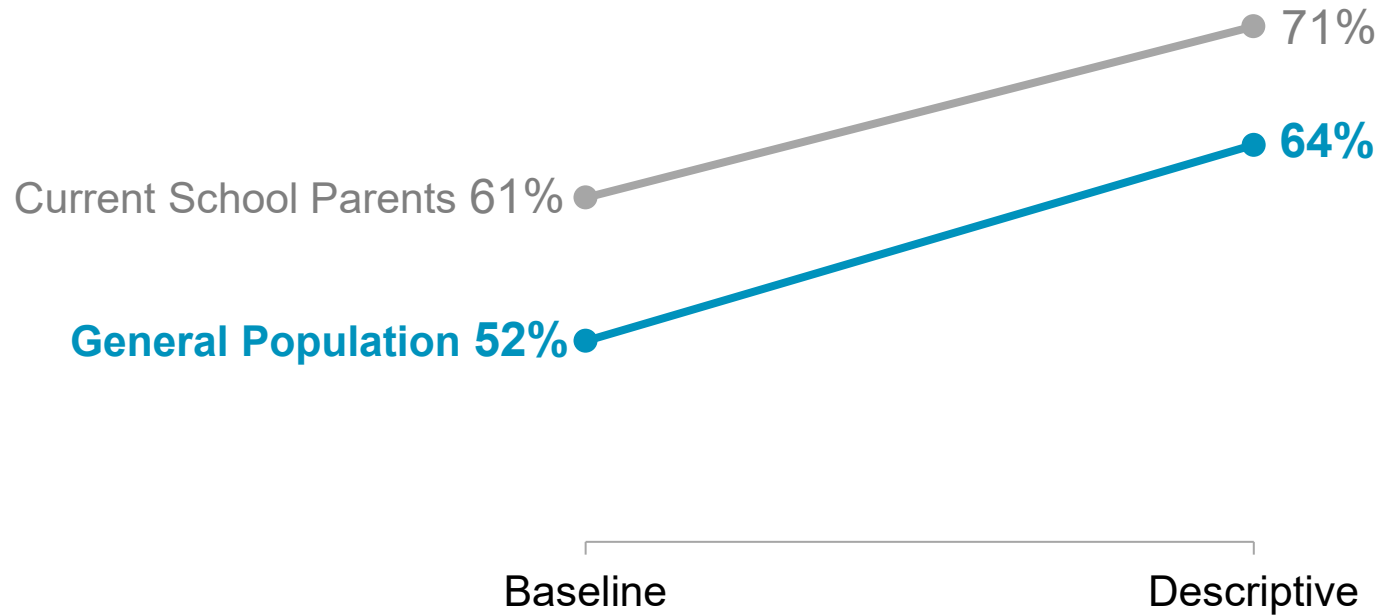
## SURVEY PROFILE

**Charter schools** are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations.

When given a description of charter schools, support increased by 10 points for parents and 12 points for the general population.

## CHARTER SCHOOLS FAVORABILITY

*% of Respondents Replying "Strongly/Somewhat Favor"*



Source: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q14 and Q15

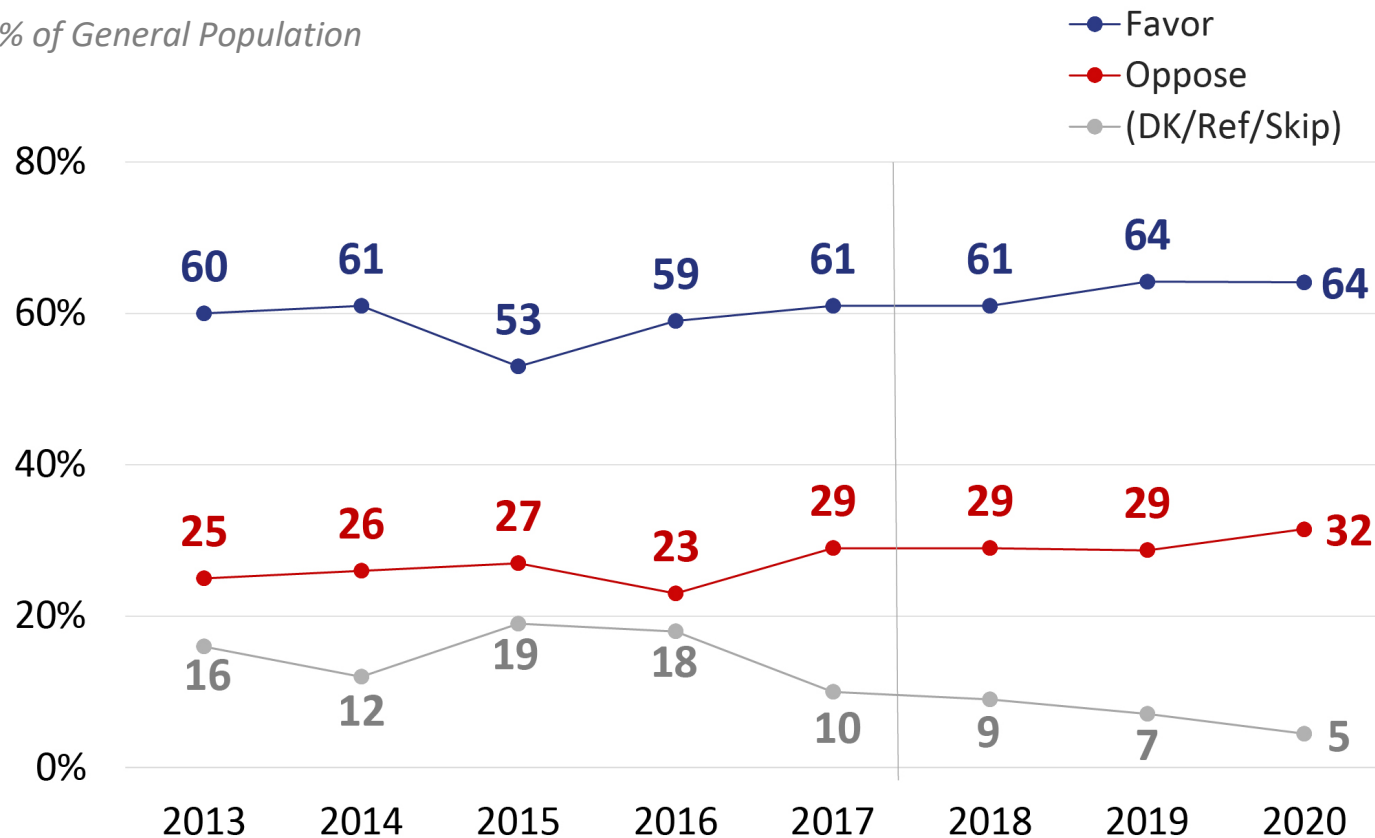
## CHARTER SCHOOLS FAVORABILITY

Notes: Phone-only survey results shown for 2013–2017. Mixed-mode results (online and phone) shown for 2018–2020. Responses within parentheses were volunteered. "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For the online survey, the respondent was permitted to skip the question.

Sources: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q15; EdChoice, Schooling in America Survey 2016–2019; Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, Schooling in America Survey, 2013–2015.

Support for charter schools has hovered around the low-to-mid 60s since we began our national polling, except 2015.

% of General Population



# KEY FINDINGS

## K–12 EDUCATION

### EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

- EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)
- SCHOOL VOUCHERS
- TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS
- CHARTER SCHOOLS

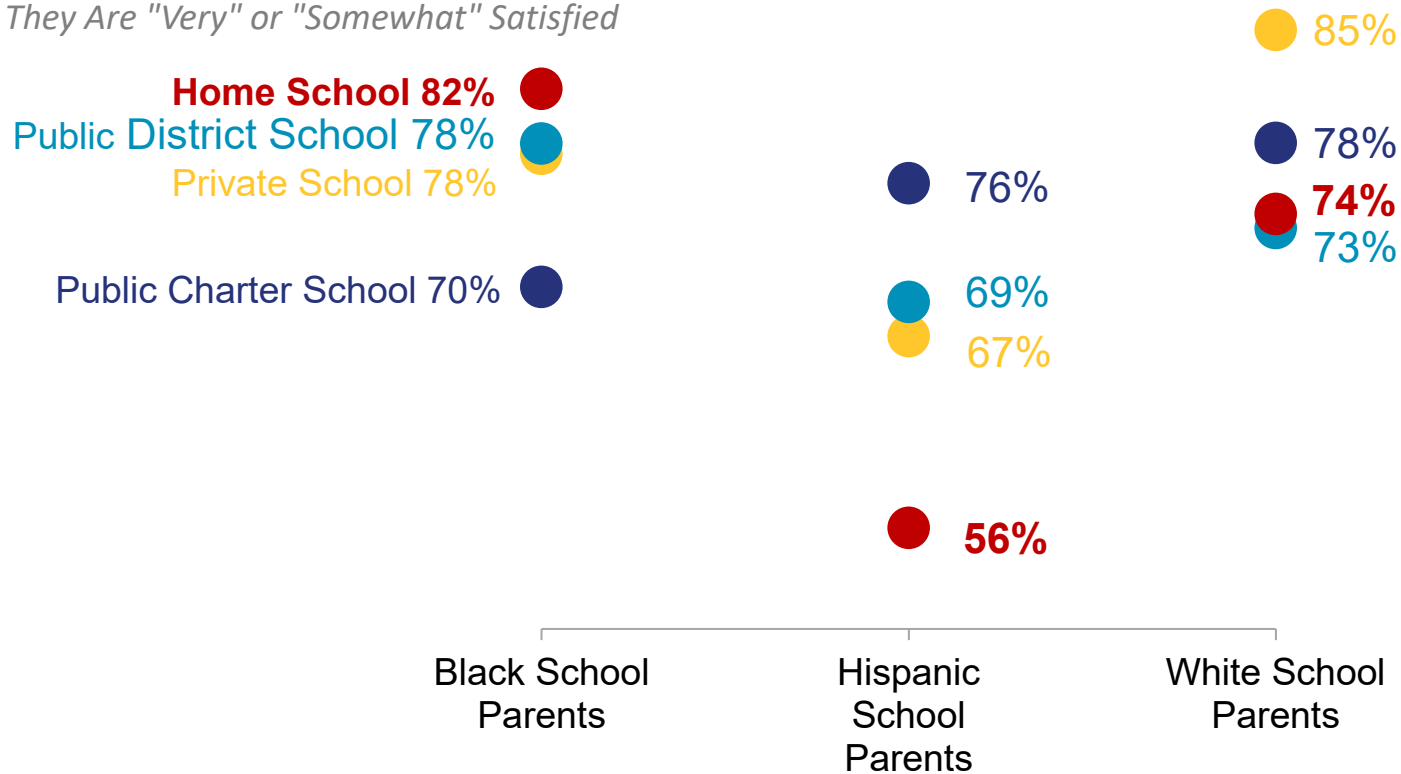
## RACE/ETHNICITY

## SURVEY PROFILE

## SCHOOLING SATISFACTION BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Satisfaction with homeschooling varies greatly by race/ethnicity, with Black school parents (82%) most likely to be satisfied and Hispanic parents least likely to be satisfied (56%).

*% of Current School Parents by Race/Ethnicity Providing Ranking Who Say They Are "Very" or "Somewhat" Satisfied*



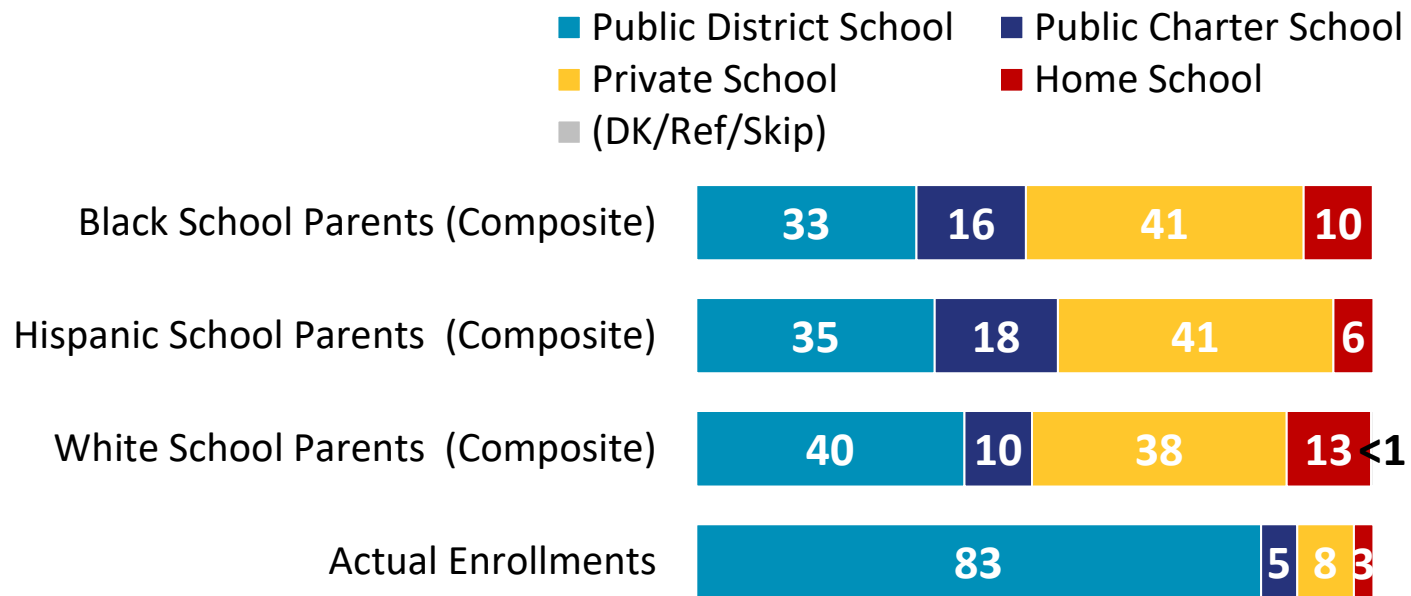
*Note:* Sample sizes vary by school type.  
*Sources:* EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q4



## PREFERRED SCHOOL TYPE BY RACE/ETHNICITY

**All parents—Black, Hispanic, white—have diverse schooling preferences. We do not see significant differences between groups regarding any one school type.**

*% of Current School Parents by Race/Ethnicity*

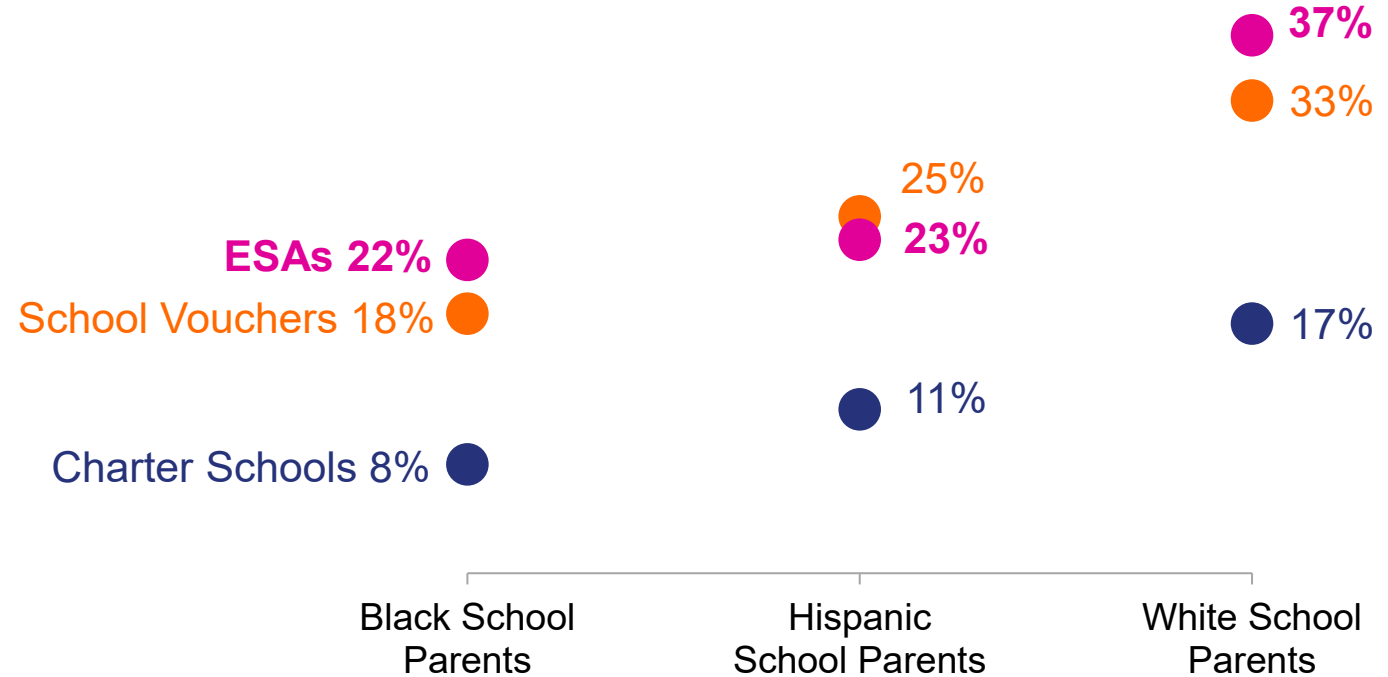


*Notes:* The percentages in this chart reflect a composite that averages split samples' responses to two slightly different versions of this question. Responses within parentheses were volunteered: "DK" means "Don't Know." "Ref" means "Refusal." For the online survey, the respondent was permitted to skip the question.  
*Sources:* Authors' calculations; National Center for Education Statistics (NCES); EdChoice, 2020 *Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q12

# Charter schools are more familiar to parents than other types of educational choice reforms regardless of race/ethnicity.

## AWARENESS OF EDUCATIONAL CHOICE REFORMS BY RACE/ETHNICITY”

*% of Current School Parents by Race/Ethnicity Replying They Had Never Heard of Choice on Baseline Question*

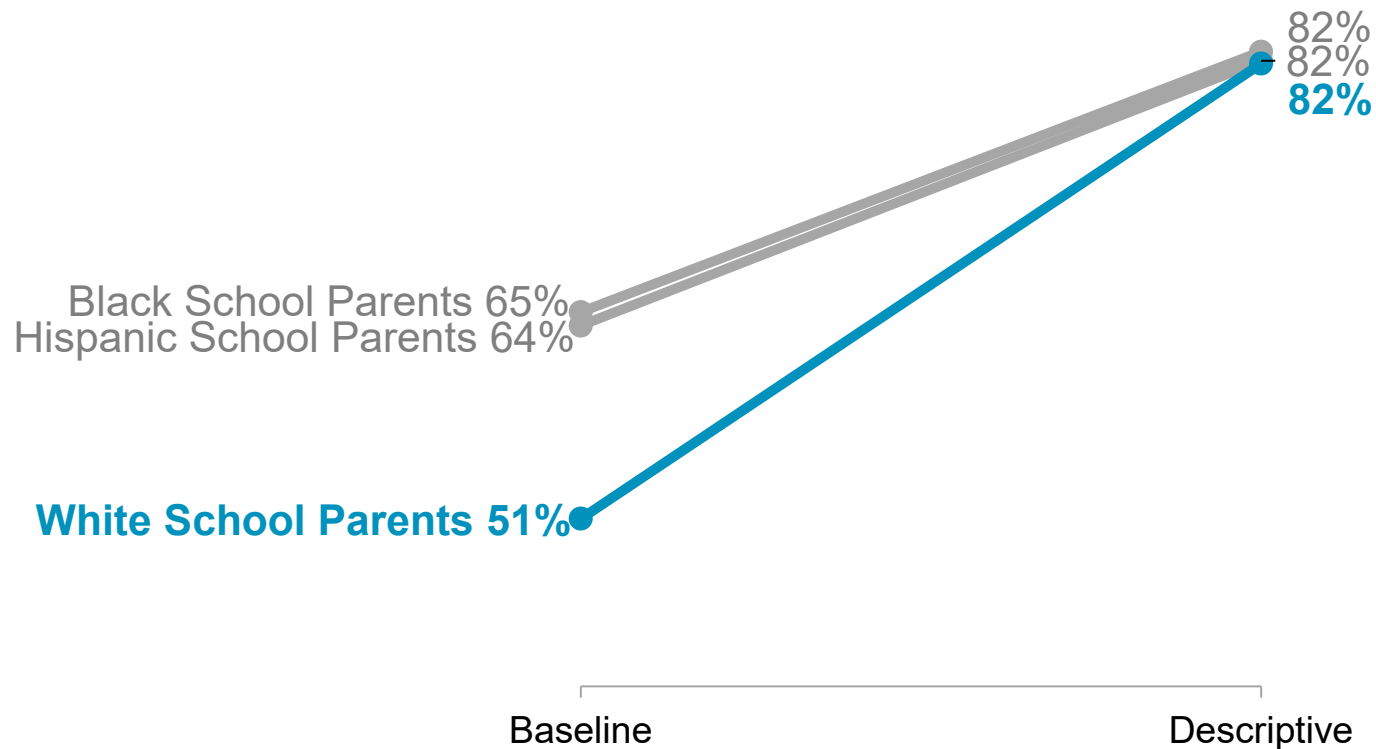


Source: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q14, Q16, and Q18

# EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs) FAVORABILITY BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Approximately 80 percent of Black, Hispanic, and white parents support education savings accounts (ESAs) after given a description. Black and Hispanic parents have baseline support levels higher than white parents.

*% of Current School Parents by Race/Ethnicity Replying "Strongly/Somewhat Favor"*

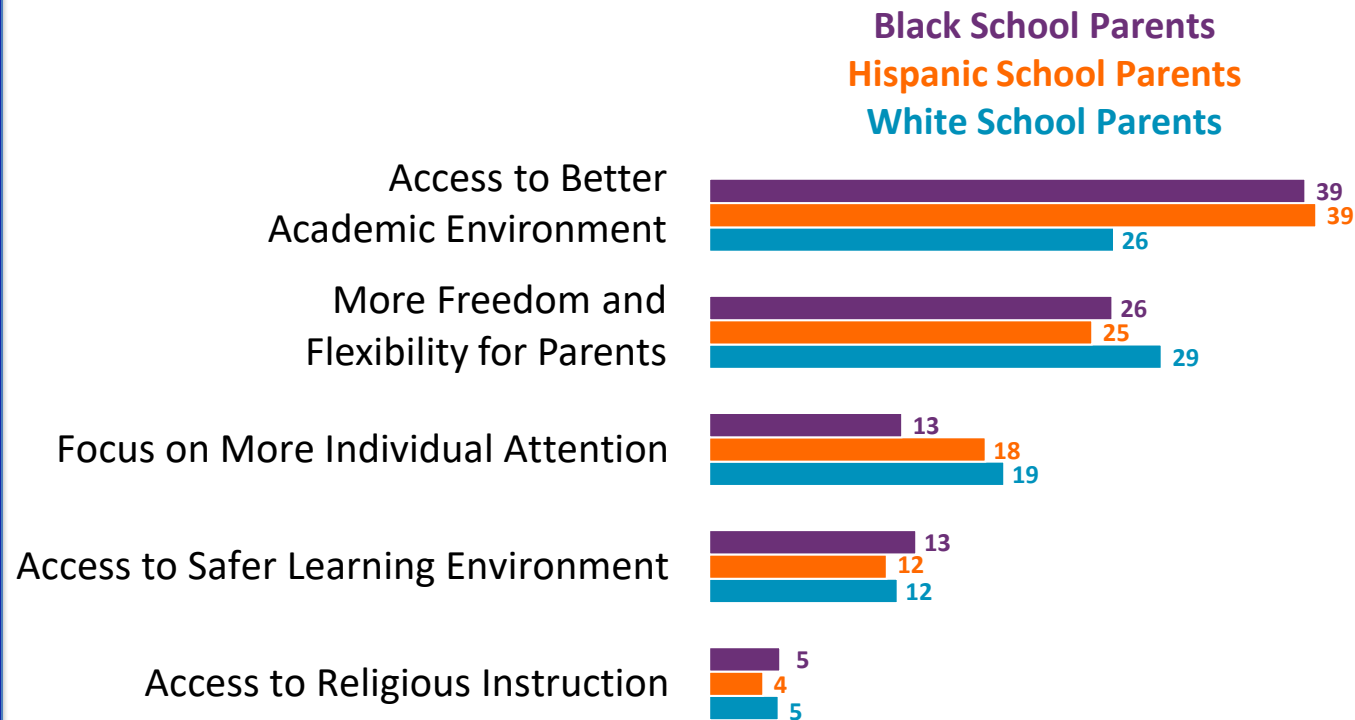


Source: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020), Q18 and Q19

# REASONS FOR SUPPORTING EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs) BY RACE/ETHNICITY

**Black and Hispanic parents said access to better environment was the most important reason they favor ESAs. White parents emphasized that too but were slightly more likely to say freedom and flexibility.**

*% of Current School Parents by Race/Ethnicity Replying "Strongly/Somewhat Favor" ESAs from Descriptive Question*



*Notes:* Volunteered responses not shown. "Don't Know, Refusals, nor skips reflected in this chart. Sample sizes vary by race/ethnicity: Black School Parents (N = 76); Hispanic School Parents (N = 111); White School Parents (N = 423).  
*Source:* EdChoice, 2020 *Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q20

# UNIVERSAL VS. NEEDS-BASED EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs) BY RACE/ETHNICITY

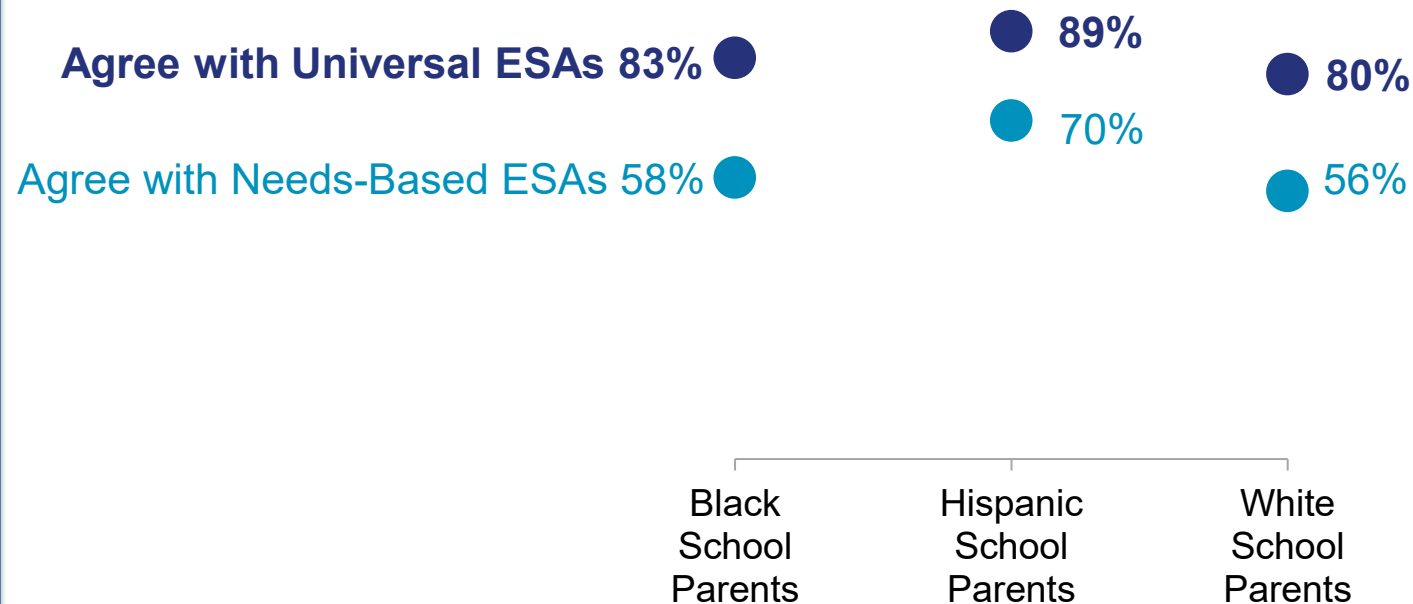
**Question Wording A**

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

**Question Wording B**

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

*% of Current School Parents by Race/Ethnicity*



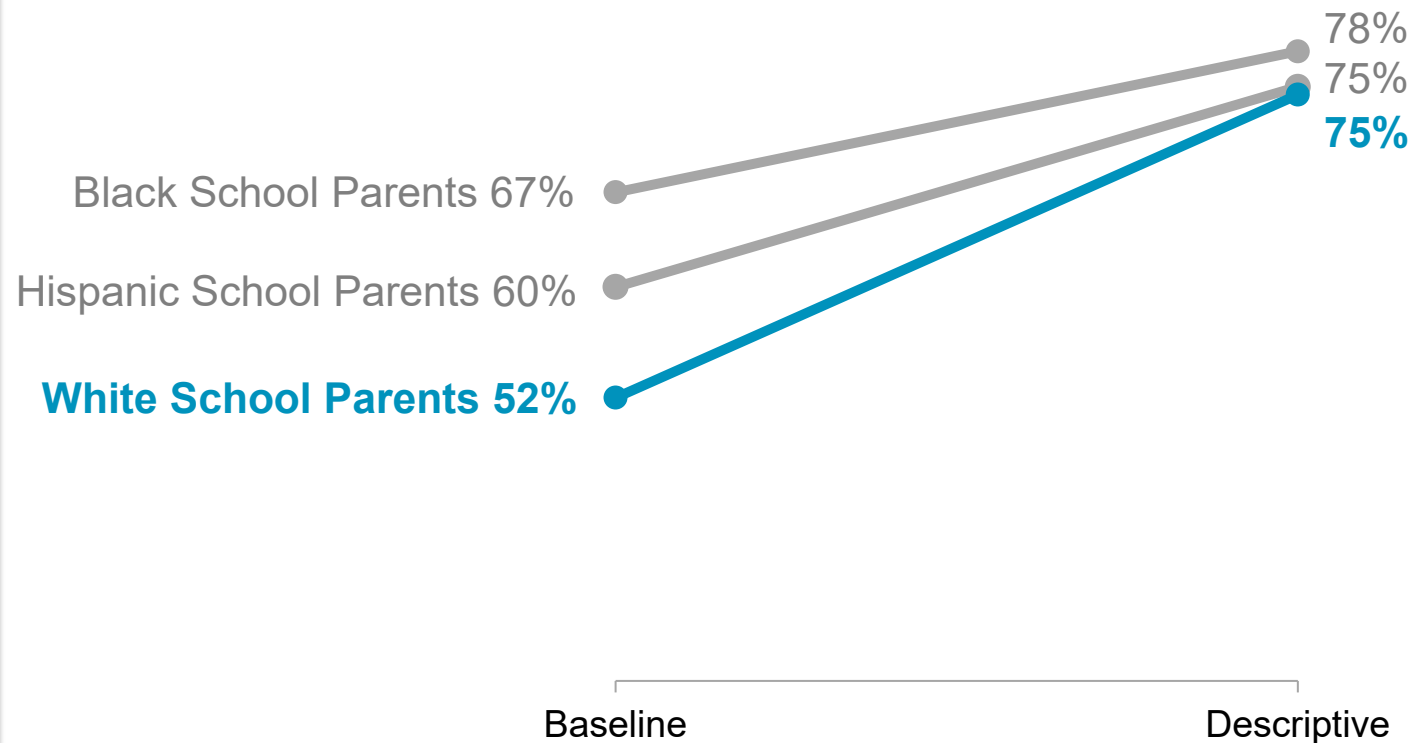
*Notes: Volunteered responses not shown. "Don't Know, Refusals, nor skips reflected in this chart.*

*Sources: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q22*

## SCHOOL VOUCHERS FAVORABILITY BY RACE/ETHNICITY

**Black parents are more likely than white parents to support school vouchers at baseline without a description. About three-fourths of Black, Hispanic, and white parents support vouchers after given a description.**

*% of Current School Parents by Race/Ethnicity Replying "Strongly/Somewhat Favor"*

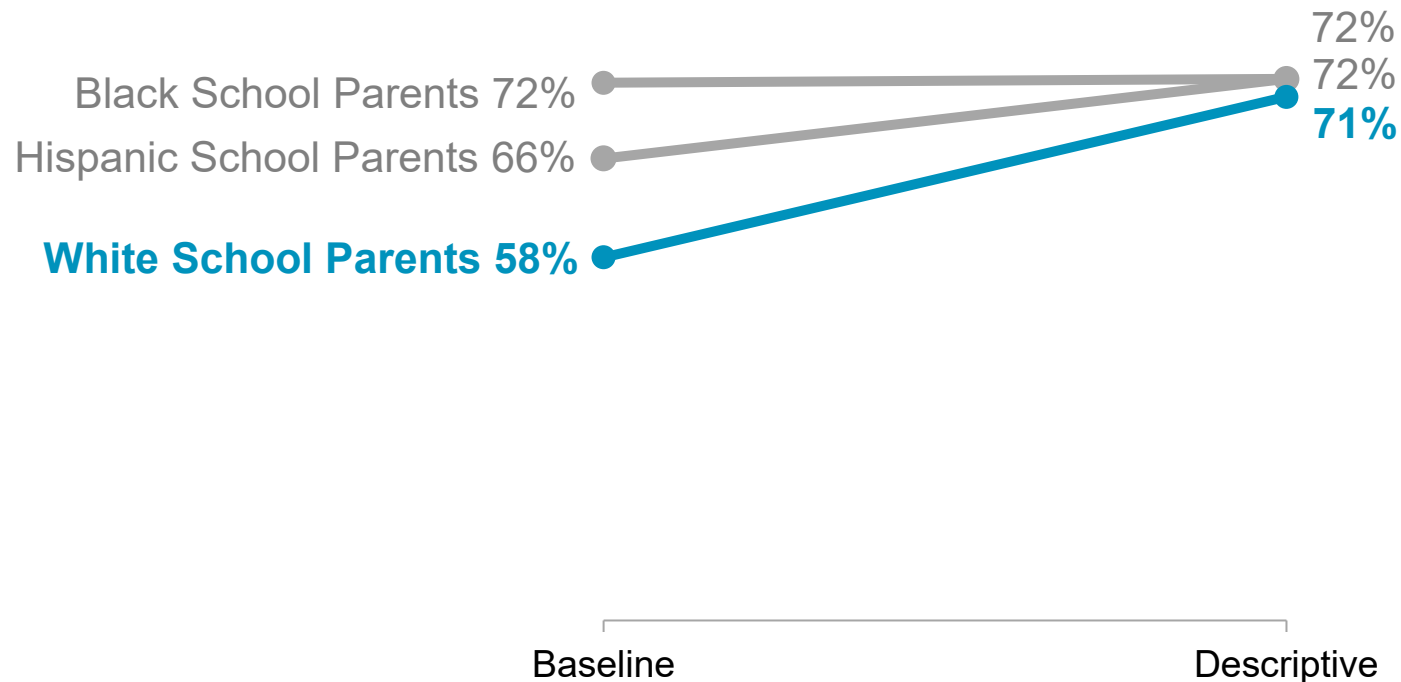


Sources: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q16 and Q17

## CHARTER SCHOOLS FAVORABILITY BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Black parents are more likely than white parents to support charter schools at baseline without a description. About 70% of Black, Hispanic, and white parents support vouchers after given a description.

*% of Current School Parents by Race/Ethnicity Replying "Strongly/Somewhat Favor"*



Source: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22– June 2, 2020), Q14 and Q15

# KEY FINDINGS

## K–12 EDUCATION

### EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

- EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (ESAs)
- SCHOOL VOUCHERS
- TAX-CREDIT SCHOLARSHIPS
- CHARTER SCHOOLS

## RACE/ETHNICITY

## SURVEY PROFILE



# SURVEY PROFILE

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Administration/Fielding Dates</b>                       | Wave1 = May 22 to June 2, 2020  |
| <b>Sponsor and Developer</b>                               | EdChoice  |
| <b>Administration, Data Collection and Quality Control</b> | Braun Research, Inc.  |
| <b>Population</b>  | General Population (Adults, Age 18+)  |
| <b>Sampling Frame</b>                                      | National sample of adults (age 18+) living in the United States, including D.C.   |
| <b>Sampling Method</b>                                     | <u>Mixed Method</u><br>Phone: Probability-based; Dual frame<br>Online: Non-probability-based; Opt-in panel  |
| <b>Mode</b>  | Live Phone for General Population, N = 400<br>- Cell Phone = 75%<br>- Landline = 25%<br>Online for General Population, N = 1,205<br>Online for School Parents (K–12), N = 805 |

# SURVEY PROFILE

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Languages</b>  | English; Spanish option   |
| <b>Median Survey Time</b>   | Phone (General Population): 15.4 minutes<br>Online (General Population, Not School Parents): 15.3 minutes<br>Online (School Parents): 18.1 minutes  |
| <b>Sample Sizes</b>   | General Population, N = 1,605<br>School Parents (Plus Oversample), N = 805  |
| <b>Quota</b>  | School Parents(Plus Oversample), N ≈ 800  |
| <b>Weighting</b>  | <i>General Population</i> (phone and online) – Age, Census Division, Gender, Ethnicity, Race, Education, Phone Usage<br><i>School Parents</i> (phone and online) – Age, Census Region, Gender, Race |
| <b>Questionnaire and topline results:</b> <a href="https://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-SIA-Questionnaire-and-Topline-Results-Wave-1.pdf">https://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-SIA-Questionnaire-and-Topline-Results-Wave-1.pdf</a> |   |
| <b>Project Contact</b>  | Paul DiPerna, paul@edchoice.org   |

## REPORTED POPULATIONS AND SAMPLES SIZES

We provide the following counts of unweighted sample sizes for the populations described in this report. The larger the sample size, the more confident we can be in the reliability of the population's result.

|                                 | Unweighted Sample Size (N) |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| General Population (Adults 18+) | 1,605                      |
| Current School Parents          | 805                        |
| Black                           | 92                         |
| Hispanic                        | 136                        |
| White                           | 517                        |

## Summary Statistics for General Population (N = 1,605), Compared to U.S. Census

|                        | Unweighted Count (N) | Unweighted Online<br>% | Unweighted Phone<br>% | Weighted Total<br>% | Census<br>% |
|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <b>AGE GROUP</b>       |                      |                        |                       |                     |             |
| 18 to 34               | 454                  | 29.8                   | 24.1                  | 30.1                | 30.3        |
| 35 to 54               | 576                  | 39.8                   | 24.1                  | 33.7                | 35.9        |
| 55 and Over            | 575                  | 30.4                   | 52.1                  | 36.2                | 35.9        |
| <b>EDUCATION</b>       |                      |                        |                       |                     |             |
| < College Graduate     | 919                  | 59.5                   | 50.9                  | 69.3                | 71.0        |
| ≥ College Graduate     | 678                  | 40.4                   | 47.8                  | 30.3                | 29.0        |
| <b>GENDER</b>          |                      |                        |                       |                     |             |
| Male                   | 823                  | 46.5                   | 55.5                  | 48.6                | 48.7        |
| Female                 | 782                  | 53.5                   | 45.5                  | 51.4                | 51.3        |
| <b>RACE/ETHNICITY</b>  |                      |                        |                       |                     |             |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 85                   | 6.6                    | 2.3                   | 5.6                 | 5.6         |
| Black/African American | 187                  | 13.2                   | 10.3                  | 12.4                | 12.3        |
| Hispanic/Latino        | 221                  | 15.8                   | 7.8                   | 15.5                | 15.7        |
| Native American        | 16                   | 0.7                    | 2.3                   | 1.0                 | 0.8         |
| White, Not Hispanic    | 1,051                | 62.2                   | 67.3                  | 62.2                | 64.1        |
| Two or More            | 79                   | 3.8                    | 9.3                   | 4.9                 | 2.3         |
| Other                  | 29                   | 1.8                    | 1.5                   | 1.8                 | 4.4         |
| <b>REGION</b>          |                      |                        |                       |                     |             |
| Northeast              | 292                  | 17.5                   | 20.3                  | 18.0                | 17.8        |
| Midwest                | 332                  | 21.1                   | 19.5                  | 21.1                | 21.0        |
| South                  | 634                  | 40.0                   | 38.0                  | 37.6                | 37.7        |
| West                   | 347                  | 21.4                   | 22.3                  | 23.3                | 23.5        |

Note: Counts for Native American, Two or More, and Other reflect weighted subsample sizes.

Sources: EdChoice, 2020 *Schooling in America Survey* (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020). 2018 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

## Summary Statistics for General Population (N = 1,605)

|                                  | Unweighted Count (N) | Unweighted Total % | Weighted Total % |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <b>COMMUNITY TYPE (SELF ID)</b>  |                      |                    |                  |
| Urban                            | 462                  | 28.8               | 27.9             |
| Suburban                         | 659                  | 41.1               | 39.8             |
| Small Town/Rural                 | 480                  | 29.9               | 32.1             |
| <b>GENERATION</b>                |                      |                    |                  |
| Generation Z                     | 133                  | 8.3                | 10.6             |
| Millennial                       | 464                  | 28.9               | 27.5             |
| Generation X                     | 465                  | 29.0               | 27.5             |
| Baby Boomer                      | 462                  | 28.8               | 28.7             |
| Silent                           | 79                   | 4.9                | 5.5              |
| <b>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>          |                      |                    |                  |
| < \$40,000                       | 623                  | 38.8               | 44.3             |
| \$40,000 to < \$80,000           | 486                  | 30.3               | 29.4             |
| ≥ \$80,000                       | 462                  | 28.8               | 24.2             |
| <b>POLITICAL PARTY (SELF ID)</b> |                      |                    |                  |
| Democrat                         | 576                  | 35.9               | 34.7             |
| Republican                       | 487                  | 30.3               | 29.6             |
| Independent                      | 536                  | 33.4               | 35.3             |

Note: Counts for Native American, Two or More, and Other reflect weighted subsample sizes.

Sources: EdChoice, 2020 Schooling in America Survey (conducted May 22–June 2, 2020). 2018 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

**The authors of the Schooling in America reports welcome your feedback and any questions.**

**Paul DiPerna**

**[paul@edchoice.org](mailto:paul@edchoice.org)**

**Andrew D. Catt**

**[dcatt@edchoice.org](mailto:dcatt@edchoice.org)**

**Michael Shaw**

**[mshaw@edchoice.org](mailto:mshaw@edchoice.org)**

## About 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.

## About Braun Research, Inc.

The Braun Research network of companies, founded in 1995, engages 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 24 years Braun Research has conducted over 11,000 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.

Braun Research employs techniques and standards approved by various survey research associations and other affiliations including those with whom Braun has been an active member, including the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR). Paul Braun is recognized as a leader in the field by colleagues and industry peers. He has served as President of the New Jersey Chapter of AAPOR.



EdChoice is committed to research that adheres to high scientific standards. 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 contents of this publication are intended to provide empirical information and should not be construed as lobbying for any position related to any legislation.

We welcome any and all questions related to methods and findings.

