

Attitudes about Public Education among Parents in the U.S.

March 2026



Mission Statement

THINC Foundation promotes transparency in K-12 education and is developing an ethnic studies curriculum that fosters civil dialogue, critical thinking and mutual respect. Through research, public engagement, policy advocacy, and curriculum development, THINC works to ensure that schools prepare students to participate thoughtfully and responsibly in our diverse democratic society.

Methodology

The purpose of the research is to determine how parents perceive public education in the U.S.

These are the findings of a THINC Foundation nationwide U.S. survey, conducted by a leading global market research company, among 2,246 parents of children aged 0 to 17.

The survey was conducted between January 29 to February 13, 2026, using an omnibus instrument, a daily online survey of the U.S. population conducted in English. To achieve a representative sample of the U.S. population, the omnibus sample of adults 18+ was weighted by gender, age, region, race/ethnicity, income, education, and party affiliation.

After applying these weights, non-parents were removed, resulting in a total sample of 2,246 interviews with parents of children aged 0 to 17. Based on this sample size, the THINC study has a credibility interval, a measure of precision used for online, opt-in polls, of +/- 2.1% at the 95% confidence level.

Executive Summary

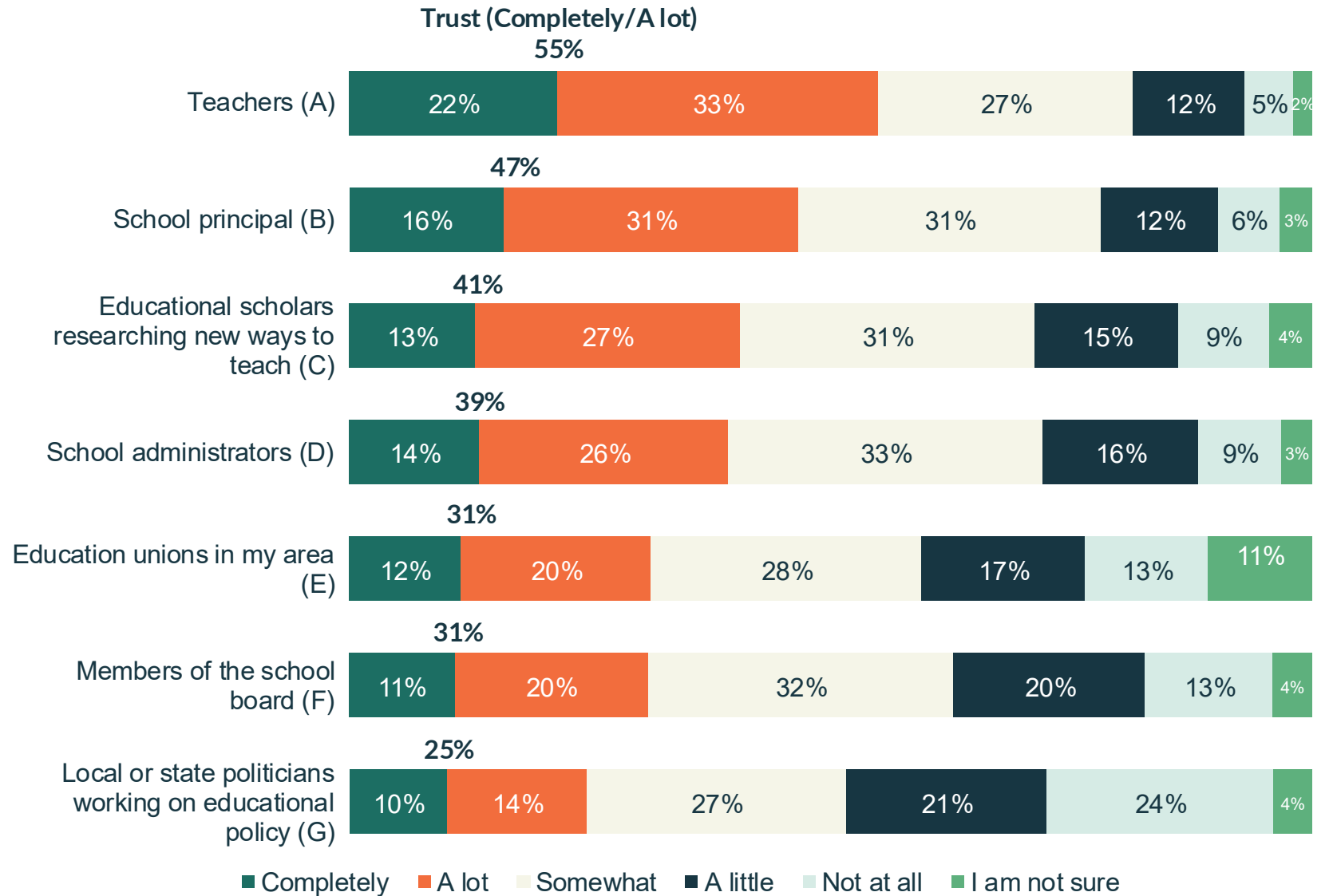
THINC's new national survey of 2,246 parents reveals consensus around core principles for K-12 education, centered on civics, transparency, respect for diverse viewpoints, and the value of a colorblind society.

Key findings include:

- **91%** support teaching mutual respect and engaging with differing viewpoints
- **90%** say civics education is important
- **89%** want school curricula to be publicly available
- **85%** believe individual effort and character matter more than race or ethnicity in life outcomes
- **82%** support teaching the value of a colorblind society, where individuals are judged by character rather than race or ethnicity
- **82%** support teaching democratic processes and responsible citizenship
- **74%** believe racism can come from anyone, regardless of identity or power
- **58%** say it is unacceptable for teachers to share personal political views in class
- **55%** of parents are concerned about their child's curriculum

Trust in Educational Professionals

Parents trust teachers and school principals the most, while teachers' unions, school board members, and politicians shaping educational policy are least trusted.



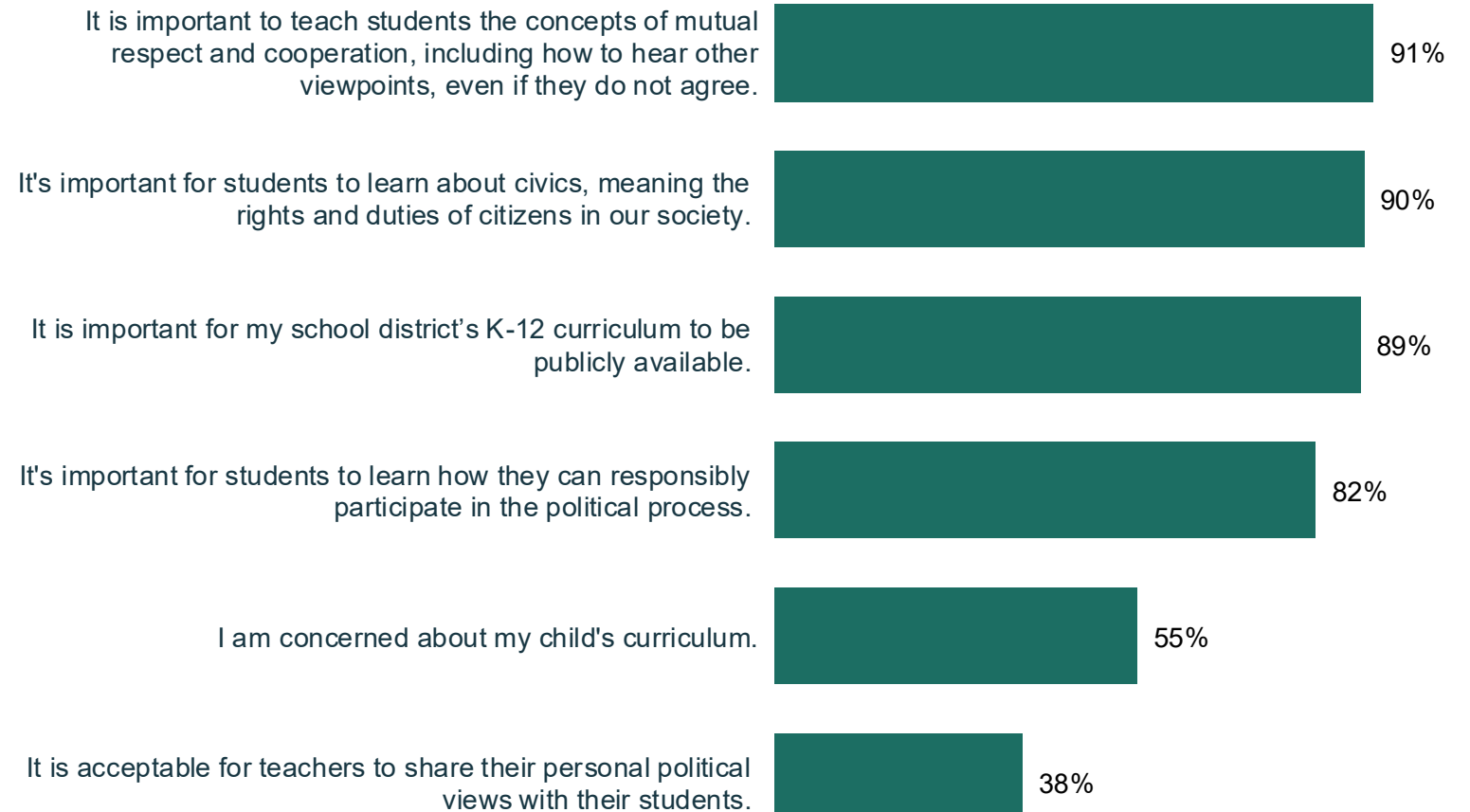
Q. For this section of questions, please think about K-12 schooling. How much do you trust each of the following to ensure children get an unbiased education, free of personal beliefs and ideology? (Please select one for each.)

What Schools Should Focus on

Parents almost universally agree that students should learn about the rights and duties of citizens in society and the importance of mutual respect even if they disagree with someone else's viewpoint.

They also want their district's K-12 curriculum to be publicly available.

Agreement (Completely/Somewhat Agree)



Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Please select one answer for each.)

Sources of Success

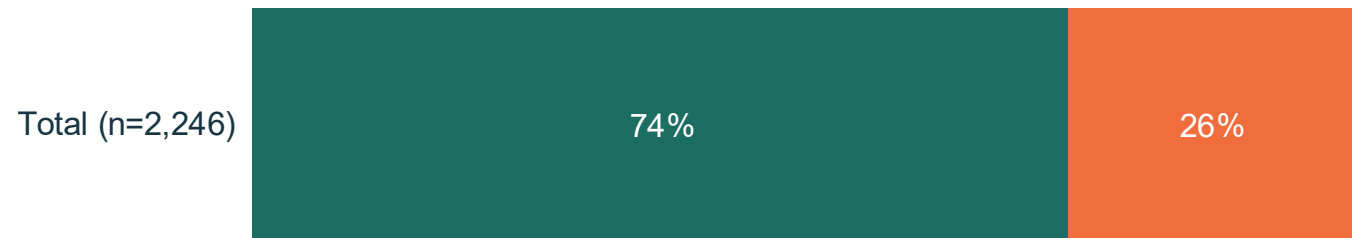
Six in seven parents believe that individual values and behavior – rather than immutable characteristics like race and ethnicity – are the primary determinant of a person's success in life.



- Unchangeable characteristics, such as race and ethnicity
- Individual values and behavior, including hard work, personal responsibility, and merit

Definition of Racism

Three in four parents believe racism can emanate from any group, regardless of identity or power.



- Discrimination based on racial or ethnic characteristics that can come from anyone
- Racial or ethnic prejudice exercised by more powerful groups against less powerful groups, meaning members of minority groups cannot be racist

Q. Which of the following descriptions is closer to how you would define racism?

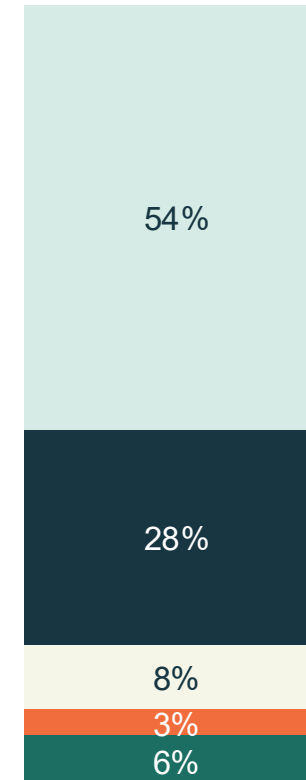
Colorblind Society

82% of parents think that children should be taught the value of a colorblind society, one that primarily takes into consideration a person's actions and character rather than their race or ethnicity.

Top 2 Box (Very/Somewhat Important)

82%

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not important at all
- Not sure



Q. In this next question, we are going to ask you about a "colorblind society". By "colorblind society" we mean one that primarily takes into consideration a person's actions and character, rather than their race or ethnicity. How important is it to you that children be taught the value of a "colorblind society"?