

***Education Next* — Program on Education Policy and Governance**

Trends in the *EdNext* Survey: Question wording and data over time

With the release of its 2017 poll, *EdNext* is celebrating the eleventh anniversary of its annual survey of American public opinion on K-12 education policy. An [interactive graphic available here](http://educationnext.org/ednext-poll-interactive-eleven-year-trends-public-opinion/) presents trends in opinion on key issues over time among the general public, Republicans, Democrats, and teachers. Some of the wording in the questions presented in the graphic varied slightly from year to year; this document lists the variations and data.

<http://educationnext.org/ednext-poll-interactive-eleven-year-trends-public-opinion/>

GRADING SCHOOLS

Questions: Local

Local (2011, 2015, 2016, 2017): Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and Fail to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools in your community?

Local (2012-2014): How about the public schools in your community? What grade would you give them?

Local (2008): Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and Fail to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves, in this community, were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools here?

Questions: National

National (2015, 2016, 2017): How about the public schools in the nation as a whole? What grade would you give them?

National (2011-2014): Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D, and Fail to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools in the nation as a whole?

National (2008): How about the public schools in the nation as a whole? What grade would you give the public schools nationally?

Responses

Responses: A, B, C, D, Fail

		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Local	Democrats	41	41			45	46	49	47	52	55	55
	Republicans	45	40			47	49	49	47	52	54	54
	Teachers		61			63	61	71	63	65	69	66
	Public	43	40			46	47	49	47	52	55	54
National	Democrats	24	22	17	19	24	23	27	24	26	28	28
	Republicans	17	18	19	16	18	19	13	15	21	22	19
	Teachers		34	27	28	38	34	36	27	32	30	33
	Public	21	20	18	18	21	21	20	20	24	25	24

SCHOOL SPENDING

Question: Uninformed

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

Questions: Informed

Informed (2012-2017): According to the most recent information available, \$X is being spent each year per child attending public schools in your district. Do you think that government funding for public schools in your district should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Informed (2008, 2009, 2011): According to the most recent information available, in your district \$X is being spent each year per child attending public schools. Do you think that government funding for public schools in your district should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Responses

Responses: Greatly increase, Increase, Stay about the same, Decrease, Greatly decrease

		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Uninformed	Democrats	71	54	70	68	71	63	72	70	70	61
	Republicans	50	33	52	46	52	42	46	43	51	42
	Teachers	78	56	72	71	68	67	75	72	75	77
	Public	61	45	63	59	63	53	60	57	61	53
Informed	Democrats	59	45		57	47	45	53	58	57	50
	Republicans	39	26		28	37	33	33	29	31	27
	Teachers	67	51		54	60	52	49	59	60	58
	Public	51	37		45	43	43	43	45	45	40

COMMON CORE AND TESTING

TESTING

Questions

Question (2015, 2016, 2017): Do you support or oppose the federal government continuing to require that all students be tested in math and reading each year in grades 3-8 and once in high school?

Question (2012): As you may know, sometime in the next year or two Congress is expected to take action on the federal school accountability law. Should the federal government continue to require that all students be tested in math and reading each year in grades 3-8 and once in high school. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

Question (2011): Some have proposed that the federal government continue to require that all students be tested in math and reading each year in grades 3-8 and once in high school. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

Question (2010): As you may know, this year Congress is expected to take action on the federal school accountability law. Some people have proposed to maintain the current requirement that all students be tested in math and reading each year in grades 3-8 and once in high school. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

Responses

Responses: Completely support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Democrats	86	88	84			79	80	75
Republicans	83	89	83			73	74	70
Teachers	60	66	58			51	52	46
Public	83	88	84			76	78	72

COMMON CORE AND TESTING

COMMON CORE

Questions: Common Core

Common Core (2014-2017): As you may know, in the last few years states have been deciding whether or not to use the Common Core, which are standards for reading and math that are the same across the states. In the states that have these standards, they will be used to hold public schools accountable for their performance. Do you support or oppose the use of the Common Core standards in your state?

Common Core (2012, 2013): As you may know, all states are currently deciding whether or not to adopt the Common Core standards in reading and math. If adopted, these standards would be used to hold the state's schools accountable for their performance. Do you support or oppose the adoption of the Common Core standards in your state?

Questions: Common Core, not named

Common Core, not named (2014-2017): As you may know, in the last few years states have been deciding whether or not to use standards for reading and math that are the same across the states. In the states that have these standards, they will be used to hold public schools accountable for their performance. Do you support or oppose the use of these standards in your state?

Common Core, not named (2012): As you may know, all states are currently deciding whether or not to adopt the same academic standards in reading and math. If adopted, these standards would be used to hold the state's schools accountable for their performance. Do you support the adoption of these standards in your state?

Responses

Responses (2013-2017): Strongly support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Strongly oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

Responses (2012): Completely support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Common Core	Democrats	92	86	79	70	60	64
	Republicans	88	82	54	43	39	38
	Teachers	82	87	54	44	44	51
	Public	90	83	67	58	50	52
Common Core, not named	Democrats	94		83	71	70	78
	Republicans	89		79	57	61	76
	Teachers	73		59	52	50	52
	Public	92		80	64	66	76

SCHOOL CHOICE

CHARTERS

Questions

Question (2008-2017): Many states permit the formation of charter schools, which are publicly funded but are not managed by the local school board. These schools are expected to meet promised objectives, but are exempt from many state regulations. Do you support or oppose the formation of charter schools?

Responses

Responses (2017): Strongly support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Strongly oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

Responses (2008-2016): Completely support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Democrats	72	68	70	66	63	59	59	56	58	45
Republicans	75	75	70	76	82	76	76	76	74	61
Teachers	59	55	52	54	52	46	48	43	46	44
Public	72	71	70	70	73	67	66	65	65	52

VOUCHERS

Questions: Universal Vouchers

Universal Vouchers (2017): A proposal has been made that would give all families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you support or oppose this proposal?

Universal Vouchers (2012, 2015, 2016): A proposal has been made that would give all families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

Universal Vouchers (2011, 2013, 2014): A proposal has been made that would give families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

Questions: Targeted Vouchers, Government funds

Targeted Vouchers, Government funds (2017): A proposal has been made that would use government funds to pay the tuition of low-income students who choose to attend private schools. Would you support or oppose this proposal?

Targeted Vouchers, Government funds (2007-2009, 2013-2016): A proposal has been made that would use government funds to help pay the tuition of low-income students whose families would like them to attend private schools. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

Targeted Vouchers, Government funds (2010-2012): A proposal has been made that would use government funds to pay the tuition of low-income students who choose to attend private schools. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

Questions: Targeted Vouchers, Wider choice

Targeted Vouchers, Wider choice (2017): A proposal has been made that would give low-income families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you support or oppose this proposal?

Targeted Vouchers, Wider choice (2012, 2015, 2016): A proposal has been made that would give low-income families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

Targeted Vouchers, Wider choice (2010): Now we would like to ask about other schooling opportunities. A proposal has been made that would give low-income families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

Targeted Vouchers, Wider choice (2009): A proposal has been made that would give low-income families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

Responses

Responses (2017): Strongly support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Strongly oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

Responses, Universal Vouchers: Completely support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

Responses, Targeted Vouchers, Government funds (2011, 2015, 2016): Completely support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

Responses, Targeted Vouchers, Government funds (2008-2010, 2012-2014): Completely favor, Somewhat favor, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither favor nor oppose)

Responses, Targeted Vouchers, Wider choice: Completely support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Universal Vouchers	Democrats					63	51	49	59	57	56	50

	Republicans					64	67	55	51	55	45	62
	Teachers					40	40	41	42	38	37	40
	Public					64	60	54	56	56	50	55
Targeted Vouchers,	Democrats	59	56	48	45	53	55	51	52	49	39	48
Government funds	Republicans	53	43	41	38	45	40	35	26	32	29	35
	Teachers		37	34	33	36	19	33	19	19	21	37
	Public	56	50	46	42	50	48	47	42	41	36	43
Targeted Vouchers,	Democrats			54	57		58			57	49	52
Wider choice	Republicans			48	55		51			43	37	50
	Teachers			29	31		39			34	30	30
	Public			54	55		55			50	43	51

TAX CREDITS

Question

Question (2009, 2012, 2014-2017): A proposal has been made to offer a tax credit for individual and corporate donations that pay for scholarships to help low-income parents send their children to private schools. Would you favor or oppose such a proposal?

Question (2010, 2011): A proposal has been made to offer a tax credit for individual and corporate donations that pay for scholarships to help parents send their children to private schools. Would you favor or oppose such a proposal?

Responses

Responses (2017): Strongly support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Strongly oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

Responses (2014-2016): Completely support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

Responses (2009-2012): Completely favor, Somewhat favor, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither favor nor oppose)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Democrats	64	63	70	76		71	69	69	68
Republicans	59	75	70	76		68	65	60	69
Teachers	57	58	54	60		44	48	47	54
Public	63	69	70	77		70	68	65	69

TEACHER POLICIES

MERIT PAY

Questions

Question (2017): Do you support or oppose basing part of the salaries of teachers on how much their students learn?

Question (2014-2016): Do you favor or oppose basing part of the salaries of teachers on how much their students learn?

Question (2013): Do you favor or oppose basing the salaries of teachers, in part, on their students' academic progress on state tests?

Question (2011): Do you favor or oppose basing the salaries of teachers *in your local schools*, in part, on their students' academic progress on state tests?

Question (2008-2010): Do you favor or oppose basing a teacher's salary, in part, on his or her students' academic progress on state tests?

Responses

Responses (2017): Strongly support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Strongly oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

Responses (2008-2011, 2013-2016): Completely favor, Somewhat favor, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither favor nor oppose)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Democrats	56	60	62	61		53	62	56	57	47
Republicans	68	62	70	69		58	68	65	63	64
Teachers	20	15	28	20		19	22	20	20	16
Public	61	61	66	65		56	65	60	60	55

TENURE

Questions

Question (2017): Teachers with tenure cannot be dismissed unless a school district follows detailed procedures. Some say that tenure protects teachers from being fired for arbitrary reasons. Others say that it makes it too difficult to replace ineffective teachers. Do you support or oppose giving tenure to teachers?

Question (2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016): Teachers with tenure cannot be dismissed unless a school district follows detailed procedures. Some say that tenure protects teachers from being fired for arbitrary reasons. Others say that it makes it too difficult to replace ineffective teachers. Do you favor or oppose giving tenure to teachers?

Question (2014): Teachers with tenure cannot be dismissed unless a school district follows detailed procedures. Some say that tenure provides teachers with the necessary independence for their work. Others say that it makes it too difficult to replace ineffective teachers. We want to know what you think of tenure. Do you favor or oppose giving tenure to teachers?

Question (2011): Teachers with tenure cannot be dismissed unless a school district follows detailed procedures. Some say that tenure protects teachers from being fired for arbitrary reasons. Others say that it makes it too difficult to replace ineffective teachers. We want to know what you think of tenure. Do you favor or oppose offering tenure to teachers *in your local schools*?

Responses

Responses (2017): Strongly support, Somewhat support, Somewhat oppose, Strongly oppose (drop Neither support nor oppose)

Responses (2009-2012): Completely favor, Somewhat favor, Somewhat oppose, Completely oppose (drop Neither favor nor oppose)

Responses (2013-2016): Strongly favor, Somewhat favor, Somewhat oppose, Strongly oppose (drop Neither favor nor oppose)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Democrats	41	46	46	49	47	38	41	41	50
Republicans	29	23	23	27	33	23	28	29	28
Teachers	65	59	69	67	62	57	60	67	68
Public	36	35	36	38	41	31	35	31	40

UNIONS

Questions

Question (2012-2017): Some people say that teacher unions are a stumbling block to school reform. Others say that unions fight for better schools and better teachers. What do you think? Do you think teacher unions have a generally positive effect on schools, or do you think they have a generally negative effect?

Question (2011): (a) Some people say that teacher unions are a stumbling block to school reform. Others say that unions fight for better schools and better teachers. What do you think? Do you think teacher unions have a generally positive effect on schools across the country, or do you think they have a generally negative effect?

Question (2009, 2010): Some people say that teacher unions are a stumbling block to school reform? Others say that unions fight for better schools and better teachers. What do you think? Do you think teacher unions have a generally positive effect on the schools in your community, or do you think they have a generally negative effect?

Responses

Responses (2013-2017): Strongly positive effect, Somewhat positive effect, Somewhat negative effect, Strongly negative effect (drop Neither positive nor negative effect)

Responses (2011, 2012): Very positive effect, Somewhat positive effect, Somewhat negative effect, Very negative effect (drop Neither positive nor negative effect)

Responses (2009, 2010): Completely positive effect, Somewhat positive effect, Somewhat negative effect, Completely negative effect (drop Neither positive nor negative effect)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Democrats	63	61	61	58	63	63	60	65	70
Republicans	26	26	25	22	26	25	25	31	30
Teachers			65	58	64	72	69	76	75
Public	48	46	44	41	43	45	43	49	50

SALARIES

Questions: Uninformed

Uninformed (2014-2017): Do you think that public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Uninformed (2013): Do you think that public school teacher salaries in your state should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Uninformed (2012): Do you think that teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Uninformed (2011): Do you think that teacher salaries *at your local schools* should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Uninformed (2009, 2010): Do you think that teacher salaries in your state should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Questions: Informed

Informed (2014-2017): As it turns out, public school teachers in your state are paid an average annual salary of \$X. Do you think that public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Informed (2013): As it turns out, public school teachers in your state receive, on average, salaries of \$X. In your view, should their salaries increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Informed (2012): As it turns out, teachers in your state are paid an average annual salary of \$X. Do you think that teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Informed (2011): According to the most recent information available, teachers in your state are paid an average annual salary of \$X. Do you think that teacher salaries *at your local schools* should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Informed (2009, 2010): In your state, teachers are paid an average annual salary of \$X. Do you think that these teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Responses

Responses: Greatly increase, Increase, Stay about the same, Decrease, Greatly decrease

		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Informed	Democrats	60	41	50	49	39	39	44	51	49	44
	Republicans	47	37	30	28	32	33	30	38	33	27
	Teachers	81	71	75	65	73	63	68	83	79	75
	Public	54	40	42	41	37	38	38	45	41	36
Uninformed	Democrats	75	59	64	61	73	66	71	74	76	69
	Republicans	61	48	50	39	52	39	52	49	52	50
	Teachers	89	77	76	66	85	79	85	83	89	87
	Public	69	55	58	52	64	55	62	63	65	61