

# Results from Count on Mothers' study on Mothers' Views on the U.S. Education Climate

Count on Mothers provides legislators, industry leaders, and policymakers with comprehensive first-hand real-time data to help them make more informed decisions. Each issue or policy that we examine is selected based on what surveyed mothers have indicated they want to address, reflecting the priorities of mothers from across the country and political spectrum. We survey mothers because they are the largest group charged with the well-being of children. Every mother is welcomed to contribute to our efforts. We do this work because we believe that mothers' first-hand experiences are a critical source of information, essential to the policymaking process.

This report focuses on information Count on Mothers collected in September 2024 on mothers' views and firsthand experiences in regard to their district public school. We compiled the results to find out the proportion of mothers who send their children to public, private, home, or charter schools, whether they would leave their chosen school if they had the option, and their sentiment around their district public school. In addition, we looked at the potential reasons public school enrollment has dropped over the past five years – specifically, the main problems mothers had who would leave public school if they had the option, and the main problems mothers had with public school who opted for private, charter, or home. A total of **669** Mothers residing in **46** states and from across the political spectrum provided feedback based on their first-hand knowledge.

Mothers identified politically within the given choice of very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, or very liberal. Count on Mothers tallies political affiliation, states of residence, zip codes, ethnicity, number of children, and level of education in order to ensure a representative sample and to study where Mothers agree regardless of ideology. After analyzing Mothers' opinions from the survey, we take this aggregate data and share it with policymakers and the public so they are educated on Mothers' firsthand experiences and views on pressing issues and on the policies that affect children and families that seek to address those issues.

### Methodology

### <u>Design</u>

This process uses a mixed qualitative-quantitative research design. Cross-sectional surveys were distributed in September 2024.

#### **Instrument**

A survey was constructed based on the school climate criteria of the <u>National School Climate</u> <u>Center</u> to gauge a general understanding of mothers' real-time views on school environments and to find potential reasons for the drop in public school enrollment. The instrument measured the proportion of chosen school-type, whether mothers would change school-type if they had the option, sentiment regarding their school climate, and trust in public school teachers and administrators. An open-ended question was used for more nuanced responses, specifically to find the potential reasons families leave or opt-out of public school. The survey also assessed Mothers' political ideology, state/ zip code of residence, ethnicity, number of children, and level of education to better understand the sample demographics.

# Statistical Analysis

Open-ended responses were analyzed for content and grouped thematically. For demographic characteristics, we evaluated differences between groups using chi-square tests. The statistical significance level was set at 0.05. This means that if a particular characteristic has a p-value of 0.05 or less, we can be 95% certain that the difference in the groups is not attributed to chance alone. The lower the p-value, the more confident we can be that there are true differences between the groups. JMP®, Version 17.0.0. SAS Institute Inc., Cary, NC, 1989–2023 was used for data analysis.

### Sampling Procedure

Count on Mothers employs both purposive and snowball sampling strategies. Concerted efforts were made to advertise and distribute the survey to and invite participation of as many mothers as possible. For instance, we created Google advertisements, Instagram-based announcements, and posts in mothers' Instagram groups that consist of participants from across the political spectrum. Additionally, mothers who receive the questionnaire are encouraged to distribute the survey to other mothers who they believe would be interested in sharing their perspectives. At the end of the month, we collect additional responses to fulfill the needed distribution.

### **Sample**

<u>669</u> mothers from **46** states completed the survey focused on the U.S. education climate. Efforts were made to ensure that survey respondents reflected a range of political ideologies, from very conservative to very liberal. Of the 669 Mothers who identified politically, **14.5%** identified as very conservative, **17.2%** identified as conservative, **34.2%** identified as moderate, **19.9%** identified as liberal, **12.4%** identified as very liberal, and **1.8%** identified as other.

While national data on Mothers' political ideologies has not been identified, studies have examined the political ideologies of women, in general. According to a recent Gallup Poll (2021), 32% of women identified as conservative, 37% of women identified as moderate, and 29% of women identified as liberal. Count on Mothers will continue to invite the participation of Mothers across the political spectrum so that our sample closely mirrors these national trends.

66.5% of respondents reported having 1 or 2 children, which is slightly higher than the National average reported in 2014 (Pew Research Center). The race and ethnicity of mothers surveyed were similarly distributed to the U.S. National distributions (2020 US Census). Among mothers surveyed, 36.3% have a college degree or higher, while 63.7% of mothers reported having some college (but no degree) or less.

Main Takeaways **Quantitative Section** 

3 OUT OF 4 Mothers surveyed send their child(ren) to public schools (74%) *followed by homeschooling (8%) then private school (6%) (Table 1a)*.

- Number of children and education level had an impact on what type of school moms chose for their children.
- Race/ethnicity and political affiliation were not shown to statistically impact the distribution of school type.

Of Mothers who send their kids to public school, about 75% agree – regardless of political ideology – it fosters an emotionally supportive and physically safe environment (*Table 3a and Chart 3a*).

 Mothers who send their children to charter (95%), parochial (100%), and private schools (90%) more often agree/strongly agree that their school fosters a safe and supportive environment compared to mothers who send to public schools (74%).

While 75% of all Mothers trust the teachers in their district public schools to help kids reach successful academic outcomes, only 65% of Mothers believe public school administrators will ensure successful educational outcomes.

 Political affiliation and race/ethnicity are shown to statistically impact trust in public school administration, however the number of children and education level do not.

About 40% of Mothers who send their kids to public school would change their school type if they could.

Among mothers who send their kids to charter schools or home school, about
 27% would change their school type if they could. Mothers sending to parochial

and private schools were only 13% and 18%, respectively, likely to switch if they could.

Of Mothers who would switch out of public school, almost half said the most important problem to solve in their school is bullying and safety.

 After bullying and safety, the next significant problems to solve are academics/curriculum and inadequate funding. Mothers who were not sending their kids to public school were a little more likely to point to these problems than mothers who were sending their kids to public school.

### **Qualitative Section**

What's the most important problem to solve in your district's public school (whether your kids attend or not)?

There may be some answers as to why 25% of mothers do not believe their district school fosters emotionally supportive and physically safe environments, and why 35% do not trust their administrators to ensure successful academic outcomes. Among the mothers who answered the open-ended question, many agree there is substantial room for improvement in several key areas such as bullying, safety, funding, and academics. **Moms consistently gave two responses over and over: bullying and safety.** 

- 1. Bullying
- 2. Safety
- 3. Inadequate funding
- 4. Quality of Academics/Curriculum

In fact, almost **four in ten moms** who responded to this open-ended question mentioned these two overlapping issues – bullying and safety. Overall, these moms feel that teachers and school administrators are not doing enough to prevent bullying at school.

- A mom from Florida said that children are being bullied by "both students and teachers."
- A mom from South Carolina said, "the school is doing nothing about it."
- Some of the moms who feel safety is the most important problem to solve specifically mention gun violence and school shootings.

Additionally, moms are concerned about inadequate funding for schools as well as the quality of academics/curriculum.

- An Illinois mom said the most important problem that needs to be solved in her school
  district is "actually having the funding needed to provide students and staff with what
  they need to learn and teach."
- Other moms said that lack of funding has led to their schools having an aging infrastructure, outdated learning materials, and even lack of air conditioning or heating.
- Some moms who are concerned about the quality of academics and the curriculum are also concerned that students are being promoted to the next grade without adequate knowledge or academic foundation.

After cross-tabbing "most important problems to solve" with mothers who would switch out of public school if they were able to, we found almost half (46%) pointed to bullying and safety (table 6c). Mothers who were not sending their kids to public school were a little more likely to point to academics/curriculum and inadequate funding.

### Questions on the U.S. Education Climate

# 1) What type of school does your school age child(ren) attend?

**74% of mothers send their child(ren) to public schools**, followed by homeschooling (8%), then private school (6%) (Table 1a).

The distribution of school type varied when broken out by education level (no college degree vs. college degree) (Table 1b). Of moms who send their children to private school, more than twice as many have a college degree (68%) than do not have a college degree (33%). Of the moms who send their children to parochial (religious-based) schools, 100% of the moms surveyed have a college degree. The overall distribution appeared to marginally shift (although not statistically significant) by self-reported political affiliation (Table 1c).

Chi-square tests were conducted to determine if the distribution of school type is different based on factors such as number of children, education level, race/ethnicity, and political affiliation. The statistically significant predictors are the number of children (p-value 0.0135) and education level (p-value 0.0029), meaning that these two factors had an impact on what type of school moms chose for their children. Race/ethnicity (p-value 0.1936) and political affiliation (p-value 0.0525) were not shown to statistically impact the distribution of school type.

### What type of school does your school age child(ren) attend?

Table 1a: Distibution of School Type

|                       | # of<br>Respondents | Percent of<br>Sample |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Public                | 493                 | 73.7%                |
| Home-school           | 53                  | 7.9%                 |
| Private               | 40                  | 6.0%                 |
| Charter               | 38                  | 5.7%                 |
| Parochial (religious) | 8                   | 1.2%                 |
| Other                 | 37                  | 5.5%                 |
| Grand Total           | 669                 | 100.0%               |

Chart 1b: Distibution of School Type

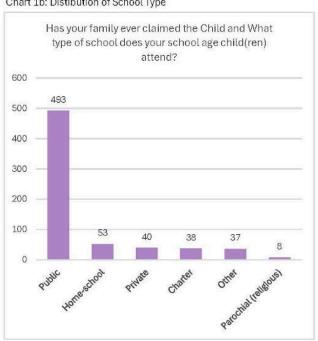


Chart 1a: Percentages of School Type

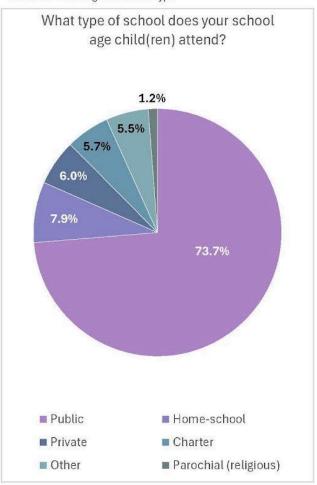


Table 1b: Disribution of School Type by No College Degree vs. College Degree

| Education Level   |                  | Public | Home-<br>school | Private | Charter | Parochial (religious) | Other | TOTAL |
|-------------------|------------------|--------|-----------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|-------|-------|
|                   | # of Respondents | 259    | 26              | 13      | 17      | 0                     | 20    | 335   |
| No college degree | Column %         | 52.5%  | 49.1%           | 32.5%   | 44.7%   | 0.0%                  | 54.1% |       |
|                   | Total%           | 38.7%  | 3.9%            | 1.9%    | 2.5%    | 0.0%                  | 3.0%  | 50.1% |
| College degree    | # of Respondents | 234    | 27              | 27      | 21      | 8                     | 17    | 334   |
|                   | Column %         | 47.5%  | 50.9%           | 67.5%   | 55.3%   | 100.0%                | 45.9% |       |
|                   | Total%           | 35.0%  | 4.0%            | 4.0%    | 3.1%    | 1.2%                  | 2.5%  | 49.9% |
| TOTAL             |                  | 493    | 53              | 40      | 38      | 8                     | 37    | 669   |

# What type of school does your school age child(ren) attend?

Table 1c: Distribution of School Type by Self-Reported Political Affiliation

| Very Liberal          |                  |                      | Liberal               |                     |                      |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
|                       | # of Respondents | Percent of<br>Sample |                       | # of<br>Respondents | Percent of<br>Sample |
| Public                | 68               | 81.9%                | Public                | 106                 | 79.7%                |
| Home-school           | 4                | 4.8%                 | Home-school           | 5                   | 3.8%                 |
| Private               | 4                | 4.8%                 | Private               | 8                   | 6.0%                 |
| Charter               | 3                | 3.6%                 | Charter               | 6                   | 4.5%                 |
| Parochial (religious) | 0                | 0.0%                 | Parochial (religious) | 2                   | 1.5%                 |
| Other                 | 4                | 4.8%                 | Other                 | 6                   | 4.5%                 |
| Grand Total           | 83               | 100.0%               | Grand Total           | 133                 | 100.0%               |
| Moderate              |                  |                      | Conservative          |                     |                      |
|                       |                  | Percent of           |                       | # of                | Percent of           |
|                       | # of Respondents | Sample               |                       | Respondents         | Sample               |
| Public                | 167              | 72.9%                | Public                | 79                  | 68.7%                |
| Home-school           | 17               | 7.4%                 | Home-school           | 9                   | 7.8%                 |
| Private               | 8                | 3.5%                 | Private               | 11                  | 9.6%                 |
| Charter               | 19               | 8.3%                 | Charter               | 7                   | 6.1%                 |
| Parochial (religious) | 1                | 0.4%                 | Parochial (religious) | 3                   | 2.6%                 |
| Other                 | 17               | 7.4%                 | Other                 | 6                   | 5.2%                 |
| Grand Total           | 229              | 100.0%               | Grand Total           | 115                 | 100.0%               |
| Very Conservative     |                  |                      |                       |                     |                      |
|                       |                  | Percent of           |                       |                     |                      |
|                       | # of Respondents | Sample               |                       |                     |                      |
| Public                | 66               | 68.0%                |                       |                     |                      |
| Home-school           | 15               | 15.5%                |                       |                     |                      |
| Private               | 8                | 8.2%                 |                       |                     |                      |
| Charter               | 2                | 2.1%                 |                       |                     |                      |
| Parochial (religious) | 2                | 2.1%                 |                       |                     |                      |
| Other                 | 4                | 4.1%                 |                       |                     |                      |
| Grand Total           | 97               | 100.0%               |                       |                     |                      |

### 2. I would change the type of school my kid(s) attend(s), if I had the option.

There was a relatively even split between moms who would and would not change their child's school type if they had that option (Table 2a and Chart 2a). About 37% of mothers would change their school, about 40% would not change their school type, and about 23% were unsure. Moms who send their children to public school more often agree/strongly agree that they would change their child's school type (41%) compared to moms who send their child(ren) to other types. However, it is notable that moms who send to other types would switch, if they could. Specifically, those who send to parochial (religious) school (13%), private school (18%), and over a quarter of mothers who send kids to charter school (26%), and home school (27%) would change.

There was more of a difference observed when broken out by education level (Table 2b). Of the moms who agree/strongly agree they would change their child's school type, 44% have a college degree and 56% do not have a college degree. When broken out by political affiliation, liberal moms agree/strongly agree less often (29%) that they would change their child's school type compared to the other political affiliations (very liberal: 36%, moderate: 39%, conservative: 41%, and very conservative: 40%). Chi-square tests were conducted to determine if the distribution of moms who would change their child's school is different based on factors such as number of children, education level, race/ethnicity, and political affiliation. Education level (p-value 0.0110), race/ethnicity (p-value 0.0041), political affiliation (p-value 0.0116), and school type (p-value 0.0051) are statistically significant, meaning that these four variables have an impact on whether moms would or would not change their child's school type. However, the number of children (p-value 0.8917) in a family is not shown to have an impact on agreement of whether moms wanted to change their school type if given the opportunity.

# I would change the type of school my kid(s) attend(s), if I had the option.

Table 2c: Distribution of Moms Who Would Change Their Child's School Type by Self-Reported Political Affiliation

| Very Liberal      |                  |                   | Liberal           |                  |                   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strongly agree    | 18               | 21.7%             | Strongly agree    | 20               | 15.0%             |
| Agree             | 12               | 14.5%             | Agree             | 18               | 13.5%             |
| Unsure            | 17               | 20.5%             | Unsure            | 24               | 18.0%             |
| Disagree          | 13               | 15.7%             | Disagree          | 39               | 29.3%             |
| Strongly disagree | 23               | 27.7%             | Strongly disagree | 32               | 24.1%             |
| Grand Total       | 83               | 100.0%            | Grand Total       | 133              | 100.0%            |
| Moderate          |                  |                   | Conservative      |                  |                   |
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strongly agree    | 44               | 19.2%             | Strongly agree    | 19               | 16.5%             |
| Agree             | 46               | 20.1%             | Agree             | 28               | 24.3%             |
| Unsure            | 60               | 26.2%             | Unsure            | 33               | 28.7%             |
| Disagree          | 49               | 21.4%             | Disagree          | 18               | 15.7%             |
| Strongly disagree | 30               | 13.1%             | Strongly disagree | 17               | 14.8%             |
| Grand Total       | 229              | 100.0%            | Grand Total       | 115              | 100.0%            |
| Very Conservative |                  |                   |                   |                  |                   |
| ***               | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                   |                  |                   |
| Strongly agree    | 23               | 23.7%             |                   |                  |                   |
| Agree             | 16               | 16.5%             |                   |                  |                   |
| Unsure            | 14               | 14.4%             |                   |                  |                   |
| Disagree          | 22               | 22.7%             |                   |                  |                   |
| Strongly disagree | 22               | 22.7%             |                   |                  |                   |
| Grand Total       | 97               | 100.0%            |                   |                  |                   |

Table 2d: Distribution of Moms Who Would Change Their Child's School Type by School Type

| School Type    |                  | Agree/ Strongly<br>Agree | Unsure | Disagree/ Strongly<br>Disagree | TOTAL |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|-------|
|                | # of Respondents | 202                      | 109    | 182                            | 493   |
| Public         | Row %            | 41.0%                    | 22.1%  | 36.9%                          |       |
|                | Total %          | 30.2%                    | 16.3%  | 27.2%                          | 73.7% |
|                | # of Respondents | 14                       | 10     | 29                             | 53    |
| Home-school    | Row %            | 26.4%                    | 18.9%  | 54.7%                          |       |
|                | Total %          | 2.1%                     | 1.5%   | 4.3%                           | 7.9%  |
|                | # of Respondents | 7                        | 9      | 24                             | 40    |
| Private        | Row %            | 17.5%                    | 22.5%  | 60.0%                          |       |
| 01.0010/200248 | Total %          | 1.0%                     | 1.3%   | 3.6%                           | 6.0%  |
|                | # of Respondents | 10                       | 8      | 20                             | 38    |
| Charter        | Row %            | 26.3%                    | 21.1%  | 52.6%                          |       |
|                | Total %          | 1.5%                     | 1.2%   | 3.0%                           | 5.7%  |
| Darashial      | # of Respondents | 1                        | 3      | 4                              | 8     |
| Parochial      | Row %            | 12.5%                    | 37.5%  | 50.0%                          |       |
| (religious)    | Total %          | 0.1%                     | 0.4%   | 0.6%                           | 1.2%  |
| Other          | # of Respondents | 15                       | 12     | 10                             | 37    |
|                | Row %            | 40.5%                    | 32.4%  | 27.0%                          |       |
|                | Total %          | 2.2%                     | 1.8%   | 1.5%                           | 5.5%  |
| Grand Total    |                  | 249                      | 151    | 269                            | 669   |

# What type of school does your school age child(ren) attend?

 $Table\ 2c: Distribution\ of\ Moms\ Who\ Would\ Change\ Their\ Child's\ School\ Type\ by\ Self-Reported\ Political\ Affiliation$ 

| Very Liberal      |                  |                   | Liberal            |                  |                   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                    | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strongly agree    | 18               | 21.7%             | Strongly agree     | 20               | 15.0%             |
| Agree             | 12               | 14.5%             | Agree              | 18               | 13.5%             |
| Unsure            | 17               | 20.5%             | Unsure             | 24               | 18.0%             |
| Disagree          | 13               | 15.7%             | Disagree           | 39               | 29.3%             |
| Strongly disagree | 23               | 27.7%             | Strongly disagree  | 32               | 24.1%             |
| Grand Total       | 83               | 100.0%            | Grand Total        | 133              | 100.0%            |
| Moderate          |                  |                   | Conservative       |                  |                   |
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                    | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strongly agree    | 44               | 19.2%             | Strongly agree     | 19               | 16.5%             |
| Agree             | 46               | 20.1%             | Agree              | 28               | 24.3%             |
| Unsure            | 60               | 26.2%             | Unsure             | 33               | 28.7%             |
| Disagree          | 49               | 21.4%             | Disagree           | 18               | 15.7%             |
| Strongly disagree | 30               | 13.1%             | Strongly disagree  | 17               | 14.8%             |
| Grand Total       | 229              | 100.0%            | <b>Grand Total</b> | 115              | 100.0%            |
| Very Conservative |                  |                   |                    |                  |                   |
| 0 1039            | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                    |                  |                   |
| Strongly agree    | 23               | 23.7%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Agree             | 16               | 16.5%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Unsure            | 14               | 14.4%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Disagree          | 22               | 22.7%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Strongly disagree | 22               | 22.7%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Grand Total       | 97               | 100.0%            |                    |                  |                   |

Table 2d: Distribution of Moms Who Would Change Their Child's School Type by School Type

| School Type  |                  | Agree/ Strongly<br>Agree | Unsure | Disagree/ Strongly<br>Disagree | TOTAL |
|--|------------------|--------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|-------|
|  | # of Respondents | 202                      | 109    | 182                            | 493   |
| Public   | Row %            | 41.0%                    | 22.1%  | 36.9%                          |       |
|  | Total%           | 30.2%                    | 16.3%  | 27.2%                          | 73.7% |
|  | # of Respondents | 14                       | 10     | 29                             | 53    |
| Home-school  | Row %            | 26.4%                    | 18.9%  | 54.7%                          |       |
|  | Total%           | 2.1%                     | 1.5%   | 4.3%                           | 7.9%  |
| The state of the s | # of Respondents | 7                        | 9      | 24                             | 40    |
| Private  | Row %            | 17.5%                    | 22.5%  | 60.0%                          |       |
|  | Total%           | 1.0%                     | 1.3%   | 3.6%                           | 6.0%  |
| İ  | # of Respondents | 10                       | 8      | 20                             | 38    |
| Charter  | Row %            | 26.3%                    | 21.1%  | 52.6%                          |       |
|  | Total%           | 1.5%                     | 1.2%   | 3.0%                           | 5.7%  |
| Parochial -  | # of Respondents | 1                        | 3      | 4                              | 8     |
| STATE OF STA | Row %            | 12.5%                    | 37.5%  | 50.0%                          |       |
| (religious)  | Total%           | 0.1%                     | 0.4%   | 0.6%                           | 1.2%  |
|  | # of Respondents | 15                       | 12     | 10                             | 37    |
| Other  | Row %            | 40.5%                    | 32.4%  | 27.0%                          |       |
|  | Total%           | 2.2%                     | 1.8%   | 1.5%                           | 5.5%  |
| Grand Total  |                  | 249                      | 151    | 269                            | 669   |

### 3. My school fosters an emotionally supportive, physically safe environment.

Approximately 76% of mothers surveyed agree/strongly agree that the school their child attends fosters an emotionally supportive and physically safe environment (Table 3a and Chart 3a). Moms who send their children to parochial (religious) schools (100%), charter schools (95%), and private schools (90%) more often agree/strongly agree that the school fosters a safe and supportive environment compared to moms who send their children to public schools (74%).

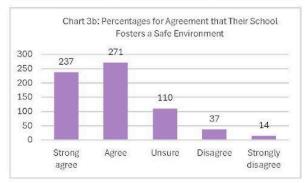
There is a small difference in agreement when broken out by political affiliation, except among very conservative moms (Table 3b). Approximately 71%-77% of moms who self-report as leaning very liberal, liberal, moderate, and conservative agree/strongly agree that their school fosters a supportive and safe environment, while 91% of very conservative mothers agree/strongly agree.

Chi-square tests were conducted to determine if the distribution of moms who felt their child's school fosters an emotionally supportive and physically safe environment is different based on the number of children they have, their education level, race/ethnicity, and political affiliation. Political affiliation (p-value 0.0041) and school type (p-value 0.0003) are the only factors shown to statistically impact moms' agreement that their child's school fosters a supportive and safe environment. Whereas, the number of children (p-value 0.5207), education level (p-value 0.0527), and race/ethnicity (p-value 0.4127) are not statistically significant.

### My school fosters an emotionally supportive, physically safe environment.

Table 3a: Distribution of Agreement that Their School Fosters a Safe Environment

|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Strong agree      | 237              | 35.4%             |
| Agree             | 271              | 40.5%             |
| Unsure            | 110              | 16.4%             |
| Disagree          | 37               | 5.5%              |
| Strongly disagree | 14               | 2.1%              |
| Grand Total       | 669              | 100.0%            |



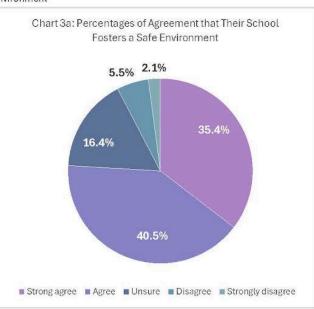


Table 3b: Distribution of Agreement that Their School Fosters a Safe Environment by Self-Reported Political Affiliation

| Very Liberal      |                  |                   | Liberal           |                  |                   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strong agree      | 41               | 49.4%             | Strong agree      | 42               | 31.6%             |
| Agree             | 23               | 27.7%             | Agree             | 61               | 45.9%             |
| Unsure            | 15               | 18.1%             | Unsure            | 17               | 12.8%             |
| Disagree          | 2                | 2.4%              | Disagree          | 13               | 9.8%              |
| Strongly disagree | 2                | 2.4%              | Strongly disagree | 0                | 0.0%              |
| Grand Total       | 83               | 100.0%            | Grand Total       | 133              | 100.0%            |
| Moderate          |                  |                   | Conservative      |                  |                   |
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strong agree      | 66               | 28.8%             | Strong agree      | 36               | 31.3%             |
| Agree             | 96               | 41.9%             | Agree             | 48               | 41.7%             |
| Unsure            | 50               | 21.8%             | Unsure            | 19               | 16.5%             |
| Disagree          | 10               | 4.4%              | Disagree          | 10               | 8.7%              |
| Strongly disagree | 7                | 3.1%              | Strongly disagree | 2                | 1.7%              |
| Grand Total       | 229              | 100.0%            | Grand Total       | 115              | 100.0%            |
| Very Conservative |                  |                   |                   |                  |                   |
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                   |                  |                   |
| Strong agree      | 48               | 49.5%             |                   |                  |                   |
| Agree             | 40               | 41.2%             |                   |                  |                   |
| Unsure            | 5                | 5.2%              |                   |                  |                   |
| Disagree          | 1                | 1.0%              |                   |                  |                   |
| Strongly disagree | 3                | 3.1%              |                   |                  |                   |
| Grand Total       | 97               | 100.0%            |                   |                  |                   |

Table 3c: Distribution of Agreement that Their School Fosters a Safe Environment by School Type

| School Type |                  | Agree/ Strongly Agree | Unsure | Disagree/ Strongly Disagree | TOTAL |
|-------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------|-----------------------------|-------|
|             | # of Respondents | 364                   | 86     | 43                          | 493   |
| Public      | Row %            | 73.8%                 | 17.4%  | 8.7%                        |       |
|             | Total %          | 54.4%                 | 12.9%  | 6.4%                        | 73.7% |
|             | # of Respondents | 41                    | 6      | 6                           | 53    |
| Home-school | Row %            | 77.4%                 | 11.3%  | 11.3%                       |       |
|             | Total %          | 6.1%                  | 0.9%   | 0.9%                        | 7.9%  |
|             | # of Respondents | 36                    | 4      | 0                           | 40    |
| Private     | Row%             | 90.0%                 | 10.0%  | 0.0%                        |       |
|             | Total %          | 5.4%                  | 0.6%   | 0.0%                        | 6.0%  |
|             | # of Respondents | 36                    | 2      | 0                           | 38    |
| Charter     | Row %            | 94.7%                 | 5.3%   | 0.0%                        |       |
|             | Total %          | 5.4%                  | 0.3%   | 0.0%                        | 5.7%  |
| Davashial   | # of Respondents | 8                     | 0      | 0                           | 8     |
| Parochial   | Row %            | 100.0%                | 0.0%   | 0.0%                        |       |
| (religious) | Total %          | 1.2%                  | 0.0%   | 0.0%                        | 1.2%  |
|             | # of Respondents | 23                    | 12     | 2                           | 37    |
| Other       | Row %            | 62.2%                 | 32.4%  | 5.4%                        |       |
|             | Total %          | 3.4%                  | 1.8%   | 0.3%                        | 5.5%  |
| Grand Total |                  | 508                   | 110    | 51                          | 669   |

# 4. Overall, I trust the teachers in my public school to help my child(ren) reach successful academic goals.

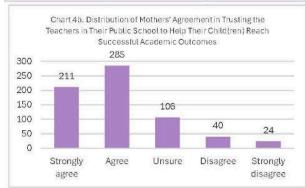
75% of mothers trust the teachers in their public schools to help their child(ren) reach successful academic outcomes. The proportion of moms who agree/strongly agree is mostly consistent across the political spectrum (72%-76%) except for very liberal moms who more often agree (84%) that they trust the teachers in their public schools to help their children reach successful academic outcomes. Chi-square tests were conducted to determine if the distribution of moms who trust the teachers in their public schools to help their children reach successful academic outcomes is different based on the number of children they have, their education level, race/ethnicity, and political affiliation. Political affiliation (p-value 0.0002) is the only factor shown to have a statistically significant impact on moms trusting the teachers in their public schools to help their children reach successful academic outcomes. Whereas, the number of children (p-value 0.9842), education level (p-value 0.9472), and race/ethnicity (p-value 0.3410) are not statistically significant.

### Overall, I trust the teachers in my public school to help my child(ren) reach successful academic outcomes.

Table 4a. Distribution of Mothers' Agreement in Trusting the Teachers in Their Public

School to Help Their Child(ren) Reach Successful Academic Outcomes

|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree    | 211              | 31.7%             |
| Agree             | 285              | 42.8%             |
| Unsure            | 106              | 15.9%             |
| Disagree          | 40               | 6.0%              |
| Strongly disagree | 24               | 3.6%              |
| Grand Total       | 666              | 100.0%            |



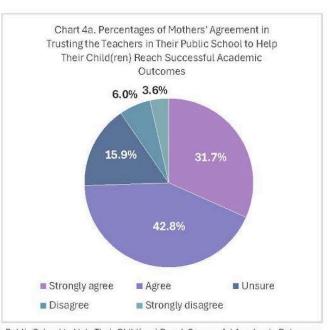


Table 4b. Distribution of Mothers' Agreement in Trusting the Teachers in Their Public School to Help Their Child(ren) Reach Successful Academic Outcomes by Political Affiliation

|                   |                  |                   | I the second      |                  |                   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Very Liberal      |                  |                   | Liberal           |                  |                   |
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strongly agree    | 38               | 45.8%             | Strongly agree    | 46               | 35.1%             |
| Agree             | 32               | 38.6%             | Agree             | 54               | 41.2%             |
| Unsure            | 9                | 10.8%             | Unsure            | 22               | 16.8%             |
| Disagree          | 2                | 2.4%              | Disagree          | 8                | 6.1%              |
| Strongly disagree | 2                | 2.4%              | Strongly disagree | 1                | 0.8%              |
| Grand Total       | 83               | 100.0%            | Grand Total       | 131              | 100.0%            |
| Moderate          |                  |                   | Conservative      |                  |                   |
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strongly agree    | 56               | 24.6%             | Strongly agree    | 36               | 31.3%             |
| Agree             | 109              | 47.8%             | Agree             | 48               | 41.7%             |
| Unsure            | 48               | 21.1%             | Unsure            | 18               | 15.7%             |
| Disagree          | 10               | 4.4%              | Disagree          | 8                | 7.0%              |
| Strongly disagree | 5                | 2.2%              | Strongly disagree | 5                | 4.3%              |
| Grand Total       | 228              | 100.0%            | Grand Total       | 115              | 100.0%            |
| Very Conservative |                  |                   |                   |                  |                   |
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                   |                  |                   |
| Strongly agree    | 34               | 35.1%             |                   |                  |                   |
| Agree             | 38               | 39.2%             |                   |                  |                   |
| Unsure            | 7                | 7.2%              |                   |                  |                   |
| Disagree          | 9                | 9.3%              |                   |                  |                   |
| Strongly disagree | 9                | 9.3%              |                   |                  |                   |
| Grand Total       | 97               | 100.0%            |                   |                  |                   |

# 5. Overall, I trust the public school administrators (principal, assistant principal, superintendent) in my district to ensure successful educational outcomes.

Over 65% of mothers surveyed agree/strongly agree that they trust the public school administrators (principal, assistant principal, superintendent) in their district to ensure successful educational outcomes. The proportion of moms who agree/strongly agree is mostly consistent across the political spectrum (61%-67%) except for very liberal moms who more often agree (78%) that they trust their public school administrators to ensure successful educational outcomes.

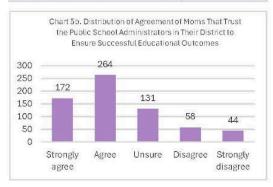
Chi-square tests were conducted to determine if the distribution of moms who trust their public school administrator is different based on the number of children they have, their education level, race/ethnicity, and political affiliation. Political affiliation (p-value 0.0041) and race/ethnicity (p-value 0.0470) are shown to statistically impact moms' agreement that their child's school fosters a supportive and safe environment. The number of children (p-value 0.1106) and education level (p-value 0.2835) are not statistically significant.

# Overall, I trust the public school administrators (principal, assistant principal, superintendent) in my district to ensure successful educational outcomes for my child(ren).

Table 5a. Distribution of Agreement of Moms That Trust the Public School

Administrators in Their District to Ensure Successful Educational Outcomes

|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree    | 172              | 25.7%             |
| Agree             | 264              | 39.5%             |
| Unsure            | 131              | 19.6%             |
| Disagree          | 58               | 8.7%              |
| Strongly disagree | 44               | 6.6%              |
| Grand Total       | 669              | 100.0%            |



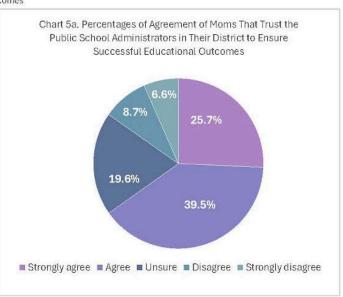


Table 5b. Distribution of Agreement of Moms That Trust the Public School Administrators in Their District to Ensure Successful Educational Outcomes By Political Affiliation

| Very Liberal      |                  |                   | Liberal            |                  |                   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                    | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strongly agree    | 30               | 36.1%             | Strongly agree     | 33               | 24.8%             |
| Agree             | 35               | 42.2%             | Agree              | 53               | 39.8%             |
| Unsure            | 9                | 10.8%             | Unsure             | 26               | 19.5%             |
| Disagree          | 5                | 6.0%              | Disagree           | 15               | 11.3%             |
| Strongly disagree | 4                | 4.8%              | Strongly disagree  | 6                | 4.5%              |
| Grand Total       | 83               | 100.0%            | Grand Total        | 133              | 100.0%            |
| Moderate          |                  |                   | Conservative       |                  |                   |
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                    | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
| Strongly agree    | 49               | 21.4%             | Strongly agree     | 30               | 26.1%             |
| Agree             | 91               | 39.7%             | Agree              | 49               | 42.6%             |
| Unsure            | 66               | 28.8%             | Unsure             | 16               | 13.9%             |
| Disagree          | 13               | 5.7%              | Disagree           | 12               | 10.4%             |
| Strongly disagree | 10               | 4.4%              | Strongly disagree  | 8                | 7.0%              |
| Grand Total       | 229              | 100.0%            | <b>Grand Total</b> | 115              | 100.0%            |
| Very Conservative |                  |                   |                    |                  |                   |
|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |                    |                  |                   |
| Strongly agree    | 30               | 30.9%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Agree             | 30               | 30.9%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Unsure            | 12               | 12.4%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Disagree          | 12               | 12.4%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Strongly disagree | 13               | 13.4%             |                    |                  |                   |
| Grand Total       | 97               | 100.0%            |                    |                  |                   |

### **Qualitative Questions**

# What's the most important problem to solve in your district's public school (whether your kids attend or not)?

Almost half of the mothers who send their kids to public school, and would switch to another type if they could, said that bullying and safety were the most important problems to solve. All mothers who answered the open-ended question, and who attended all types of schools felt similar about their district public school – bullying and safety were the most important problems to solve. However, mothers who were not attending public schools were more likely to say that academics/curriculum and inadequate funding were important problems to solve than moms who were attending public schools.

Moms consistently gave two responses over and over:

## 1) Bullying

### 2) Safety

In fact, almost four in ten moms who responded to this open-ended question mentioned these two overlapping issues. Overall, moms feel that teachers and school administrators are not doing enough to prevent bullying at school. Some of the moms who feel safety is the most important problem to solve specifically mention gun violence and school shootings.

- A mom from Florida even said that children are being bullied by "both students and teachers," and
- A mom from South Carolina said, "the school is doing nothing about it."

Additionally, moms are concerned about:

#### 3) Inadequate funding for schools

### 4) The quality of academics/curriculum

- An Illinois mom said the most important problem that needs to be solved in her school
  district is "actually having the funding needed to provide students and staff with what
  they need to learn and teach,"
- Other moms said that lack of funding has led to their schools having an aging infrastructure, outdated learning materials, and even lack of air conditioning or heating.
- Some moms who are concerned about the quality of academics and the curriculum are also concerned that students are being promoted to the next grade without adequate knowledge or academic foundation.

While most moms have positive feelings towards the schools their children attend, many moms agree there is substantial room for improvement in several key areas such as bullying, safety, funding, and academics. After cross-tabbing "most important problems to solve" with mothers who would switch out of public school if they were able to, we found almost half (46%) pointed to bullying and safety (table 6c). Mothers who were not sending to public school were a little more likely to point to academics/curriculum and inadequate funding.

### What's the most important problem to solve in your district's public school (whether your kids attend or not)?

Table 6a. Distribution of Categorized Open Ended Responses

|  | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Bullying   | 109              | 18.2%             |
| Safety   | 109              | 18.2%             |
| Inadequate funding                                   | 57               | 9.5%              |
| Academics/Curriculum                                 | 55               | 9.2%              |
| Other  | 51               | 8.5%              |
| Large class size/inadequate number of teachers       | 39               | 6.5%              |
| Teacher retention/teacher pay                        | 29               | 4.8%              |
| Behavior and mental health                           | 23               | 3.8%              |
| Political agendas (both ends of the spectrum)        | 19               | 3.2%              |
| Inadequate resources for students with special needs | 18               | 3.0%              |
| Facilities/infrastructure/maintenance                | 16               | 2.7%              |
| Food/nutrition issues                                | 10               | 1.7%              |
| Equity/equality issues                               | 9                | 1.5%              |
| Lack of inclusion                                    | 9                | 1.5%              |
| Transportation/bus issues                            | 8                | 1.3%              |
| Standardized testing                                 | 8                | 1.3%              |
| Drugs/smoking  | 6                | 1.0%              |
| Attendance   | 6                | 1.0%              |
| Teacher qualifications                               | 6                | 1.0%              |
| Inadequate school administration                     | 5                | 0.8%              |
| Lack of communication with parents                   | 4                | 0.7%              |
| School rezoning                                      | 3                | 0.5%              |
| Grand Total  | 599              | 100.0%            |

Table 6b. Distribution of Categorized Open Ended Responses: Moms Who Send Their Children to Public School Who Would Change School Type Given the Opportunity

|  | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Bullying   | 51               | 27.9%             |
| Safety   | 33               | 18.0%             |
| Other  | 16               | 8.7%              |
| Academics/Curriculum                                 | 15               | 8.2%              |
| Inadequate funding                                   | 10               | 5.5%              |
| Large class size/inadequate number of teachers       | 10               | 5.5%              |
| Behavior and mental health                           | 9                | 4.9%              |
| Inadequate resources for students with special needs | 7                | 3.8%              |
| Teacher retention/teacher pay                        | 6                | 3.3%              |
| Attendance   | 4                | 2.2%              |
| Political agendas (both ends of the spectrum)        | 4                | 2.2%              |
| Standardized testing                                 | 4                | 2.2%              |
| Lack of communication with parents                   | 3                | 1.6%              |
| Transportation/bus issues                            | 2                | 1.1%              |
| Facilities/infrastructure/maintenance                | 2                | 1.1%              |
| Inadequate school administration                     | 2                | 1.1%              |
| Drugs/smoking  | 2                | 1.1%              |
| Equity/equality issues                               | 1                | 0.5%              |
| Teacher qualifications                               | 1                | 0.5%              |
| Lack of inclusion                                    | 1                | 0.5%              |
| Grand Total  | 183              | 30.6%             |

Note: Verbatim open ended responses have been categorized

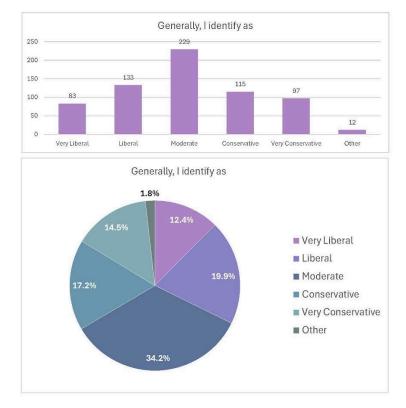
# **Political Ideology**

Count on Mothers is committed to representing Mothers of all political ideologies so that policymakers can be best informed of mothers' experiences and views regardless of ideology or politics.

Regarding the political background of the survey respondents, the sample closely reflects the U.S. breakdown of political ideology among women according to Gallup. **14.5**% identified as very conservative, **17.2**% identified as conservative, **34.2**% identified as moderate, **19.9**% identified as liberal, **12.4**% identified as very liberal, and **1.8**% identified as other.

#### Generally, I identify as

|                   | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Very Liberal      | 83               | 12.4%             |
| Liberal           | 133              | 19.9%             |
| Moderate          | 229              | 34.2%             |
| Conservative      | 115              | 17.2%             |
| Very Conservative | 97               | 14.5%             |
| Other             | 12               | 1.8%              |
| Grand Total       | 669              | 100.0%            |



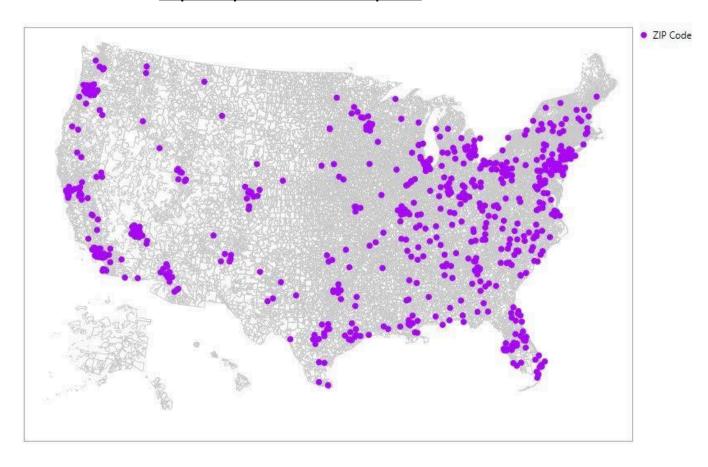
# **State of Residence Question**

Mothers who responded to the survey and answered the state of residence question resided in 46 states. The states with the most representation included: California (7.5%), New York (6.9%), Florida (6.7%), Pennsylvania (6.4%), Texas (6.3%), Ohio (4.2%), Illinois (4.2%), Oregon (4.2%), North Carolina (3.9%), Michigan (3.7%), Nevada (3.6%), and Georgia (3.1%).

|                 | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Alabama         | 8                | 1.2%              |
| Arizona         | 17               | 2.5%              |
| Arkansas        | 5                | 0.7%              |
| California      | 50               | 7.5%              |
| Colorado        | 12               | 1.8%              |
| Connecticut     | 2                | 0.3%              |
| Delaware        | 1                | 0.1%              |
| Florida         | 45               | 6.7%              |
| Georgia         | 21               | 3.1%              |
| Idaho           | 1                | 0.1%              |
| Illinois        | 28               | 4.2%              |
| Indiana         | 16               | 2.4%              |
| Iowa            | 2                | 0.3%              |
| Kansas          | 1                | 0.1%              |
| Kentucky        | 12               | 1.8%              |
| Louisiana       | 10               | 1.5%              |
| Maine           | 1                | 0.1%              |
| Maryland        | 11               | 1.6%              |
| Massachusetts   | 5                | 0.7%              |
| Michigan        | 25               | 3.7%              |
| Minnesota       | 17               | 2.5%              |
| Mississippi     | 7                | 1.0%              |
| Missouri        | 16               | 2.4%              |
| Montana         | 2                | 0.3%              |
| Nebraska        | 5                | 0.7%              |
| Nevada          | 24               | 3.6%              |
| New Hampshire   | 4                | 0.6%              |
| New Jersey      | 18               | 2.7%              |
| New Mexico      | 7                | 1.0%              |
| New York        | 46               | 6.9%              |
| North Carolina  | 26               | 3.9%              |
| North Dakota    | 1                | 0.1%              |
| Ohio            | 28               | 4.2%              |
| Oklahoma        | 5                | 0.7%              |
| Oregon          | 28               | 4.2%              |
| Pennsylvania    | 43               | 6.4%              |
| South Carolina  | 10               | 1.5%              |
| South Dakota    | 2                | 0.3%              |
| Tennessee       | 14               | 2.1%              |
| Texas           | 42               | 6.3%              |
| Utah            | 7                | 1.0%              |
| Virginia        | 20               | 3.0%              |
| Washington      | 7                | 1.0%              |
| Washington D.C. | 1                | 0.1%              |
| West Virginia   | 8                | 1.2%              |
| Wisconsin       | 7                | 1.0%              |
| Wyoming         | 1                | 0.1%              |
| Grand Total     | 669              | 100.0%            |

\*All states represented except Alaska, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Vermont

### Map of Respondents Based on Zip Code

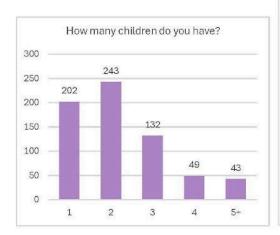


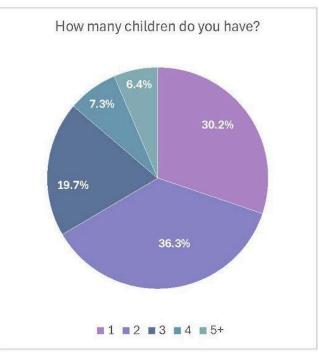
### **Demographics**

- Most mothers surveyed report having 1 or 2 children (67%), which is aligned with national averages (Pew Research Center: <a href="https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2015/05/07/family-size-among-mothers/">https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2015/05/07/family-size-among-mothers/</a>).
- The race and ethnicity of mothers surveyed are also similarly distributed to the US national distributions (2020 US Census:
   https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-rev eal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html).
- There is an even split between mothers surveyed who have a college degree (n = 335, 49.9%) and mothers who do not have a college degree (n = 334, 50.1%).

# How many children do you have?

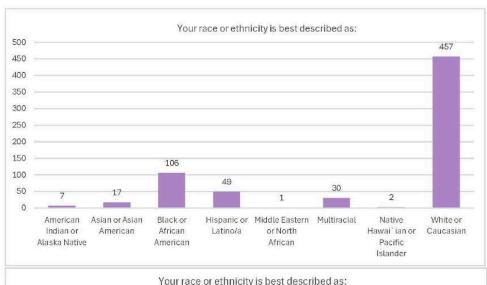
|    | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|----|------------------|-------------------|
| 1  | 202              | 30.2%             |
| 2  | 243              | 36.3%             |
| 3  | 132              | 19.7%             |
| 4  | 49               | 7.3%              |
| 5+ | 43               | 6.4%              |

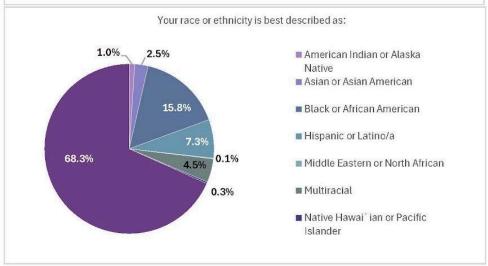




### Your race or ethnicity is best described as:

|                                      | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| American Indian or Alaska Native     | 7                | 1.0%              |
| Asian or Asian American              | 17               | 2.5%              |
| Black or African American            | 106              | 15.8%             |
| Hispanic or Latino/a                 | 49               | 7.3%              |
| Middle Eastern or North African      | 1                | 0.1%              |
| Multiracial                          | 30               | 4.5%              |
| Native Hawai`ian or Pacific Islander | 2                | 0.3%              |
| White or Caucasian                   | 457              | 68.3%             |
| Grand Total                          | 669              | 100.0%            |





### What is the highest level of education you have completed?

|  | # of Respondents | Percent of Sample |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| 12th grade or less                                   | 33               | 4.93%             |
| Graduated from high school or equivalent (e.g., GED) | 162              | 24.22%            |
| Some college, but no degree                          | 140              | 20.93%            |
| Associate degree                                     | 91               | 13.60%            |
| Bachelor's degree                                    | 146              | 21.82%            |
| Master's degree                                      | 78               | 11.66%            |
| Doctoral degree                                      | 19               | 2.84%             |
| Grand Total  | 669              | 100.00%           |

