

Responding To A Pandemic

Poll of Parents and Guardians
on Public Education
in New Orleans

December 2020



Cowen Institute
TULANE UNIVERSITY

Introduction

The Cowen Institute has conducted annual polls on perceptions of public education in New Orleans since 2007. These polls have served to provide insight on how parents and the general public feel about the highly decentralized K-12 public education system in New Orleans. Over time, we have monitored views on a wide range of topics, including school quality, governance, and the prevalence of charter schools in the city. Additionally, each poll has included questions specific and relevant to the particular year in which it was conducted.

Given the ongoing tragedy of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's poll includes questions on how the pandemic has impacted New Orleans families and their ability to access education, including their experiences with:

- Remote and virtual learning
- Returning to in-person learning
- The response of our local school district, New Orleans Public Schools (NOLA-PS), and individual schools to the crisis
- The physical and mental health impacts of the virus

To capture the experiences and attitudes of a wide range of parents, we polled 1,000 public and private school parents and guardians in Orleans Parish, as well as those who home school their children. Public school parents and guardians made up the majority (78%) of our sample.

We hope this year's poll provides insight into the educational experiences of New Orleans families during this unprecedented time. Prior to reading the report, it's important to consider the following contextual features of New Orleans' public education ecosystem:

- In the 2020-2021 school year, there are 83 total public schools in Orleans Parish: 76 of these are overseen by the NOLA-PS, 6 by the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), and 1 by the State Legislature.
- As of October 2019, there were 49,574 K-12 students enrolled in public schools in New Orleans.
- The city's school system has no pre-determined enrollment based on where students live. Students and families apply to schools through a common enrollment system called OneApp and are then matched to a school based on an algorithm that factors in their preferences.

- The city's schools¹ serve primarily students of color (90%) and/or students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds (83%). The majority of public school students are Black (76%).
- As we pointed out in our 2019 *State of Public Education in New Orleans* report, enrollment in New Orleans public schools remains largely segregated along racial and socioeconomic lines. The relatively small percentage of White students in New Orleans public schools is largely concentrated in A and B schools and selective admissions schools (75% of White students attend an A or B school). Meanwhile, fewer than 5% of White students attend a D or F school. Conversely, almost half of Black and Latin/o/a/x students (45% and 46%, respectively) attend C schools, while another 30% of Black students and 20% of Latin/o/a/x students attend D/F schools. Less than a quarter (24%) of Black students and one-third (33%) of Latin/o/a/x students attend A/B schools.
- In fall of 2020, public school students were given the option of returning to in-person learning or continuing with virtual learning. Students who opted to return to in-person learning did so in a phased approach, in which younger students returned earlier than older students. According to NOLA-PS, roughly 60% of students opted to return to in-person school and 40% opted to remain with virtual learning.
- Schools and NOLA-PS provided families with resources during the COVID pandemic. NOLA-PS distributed more than 10,000 computers and 8,000 hotspots, and individual schools distributed thousands more. Schools also distributed more than one million free meals to students during the spring and summer.

As in previous years, this report includes the overall responses of the parents and guardians we polled, as well as their answers broken out by race, socioeconomic status, and other important subgroups such as geographic location and education level. As with all of our previous polls, you can download the data and interact with a wide range of graphs on our cowendata.org website, including a responses of public school parents for each question.

¹ This includes all public schools in Orleans Parish, including schools overseen by NOLA-PS, BESE, and the State Legislature. The source of all data is the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE). Please see our annual report, *The State of Public Education in New Orleans*, for more detailed statistics on public schools in New Orleans.

Methodology

This is the 11th opinion poll on public education in New Orleans published by the Cowen Institute. The survey items were developed by the Cowen Institute in consultation with LJR Custom Strategies, a strategic research and consulting firm led by Principal Jennifer Johnson. The poll was administered via landline and cell phone to a sample of 1,000 adults who reside in Orleans Parish and are the parent/guardian/responsible party for one or more children who currently reside in their household and either attend a K-12 school or are home schooled. It was conducted from October 5-18, 2020 by LJR Custom Strategies.

Findings from the full sample are subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 3.1%. Subgroup analyses are subject to error of up to plus or minus 10%.¹

Of those adults surveyed, 85% were reached by cell phone and 15% were reached by landline. 78% of respondents have at least one student enrolled in a New Orleans Public School, 16% of respondents enrolled their students exclusively in private or parochial schools, and 6% of respondents only home schooled their students. The sample was representative of the location of residence of the population of New Orleans: survey participants were grouped into five residential areas across the city based on zip code. Between 16-26% of respondents were polled from each of those five areas. Additionally, the sample was tightly aligned with the overall demographics of the city's population by race, income, and educational attainment level: 64% identified as Black, 26% as White, 2% as Asian, 4% as Latin/o/a/x, and 2% as other. 40% of respondents had a four-year college degree or higher. 63% of respondents earned less than \$75,000 annually, 21% earned more than \$75,000, and 16% did not provide their annual income.

Throughout the report, unless otherwise explicitly stated, the data presented includes the full sample of parents who answered the question. A number of questions were asked only to a subsample of parents. We note those questions and provide the total number of respondents in the graphs.

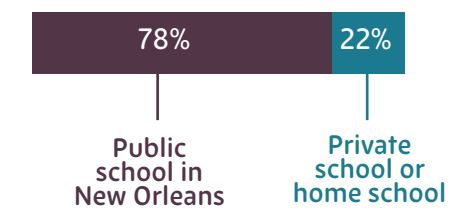
¹ Margin of error indicates the degree of percentage points the results of the poll could differ 95% of the time from the results if every parent in Orleans Parish had participated in the survey. Thus, if our polling had interviewed every parent with school-aged children in Orleans Parish, the results from that poll would vary from this poll of 1000 parents up to 3.1% 95% of the time. Part of the reason we increased the sample size for this year's poll is that it helps to decrease the margin of error by including a greater representative sample of the parent population in the Parish.

Demographics

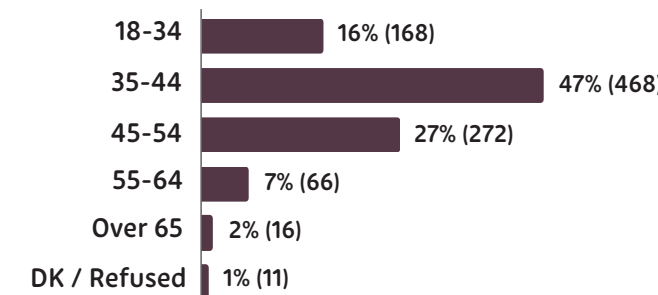
Total Sample

1,000

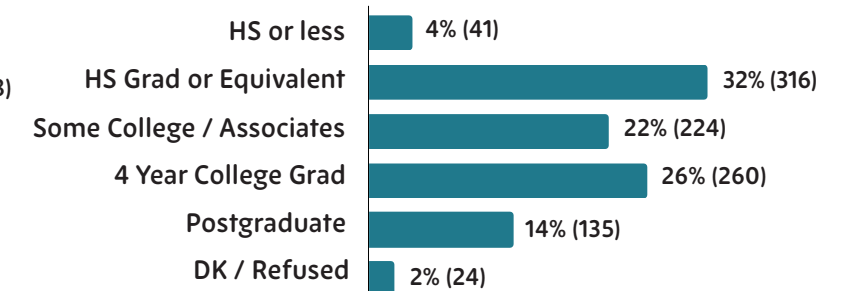
School Child Attends



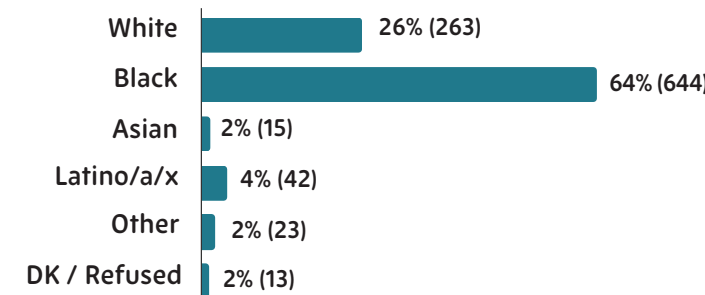
Age



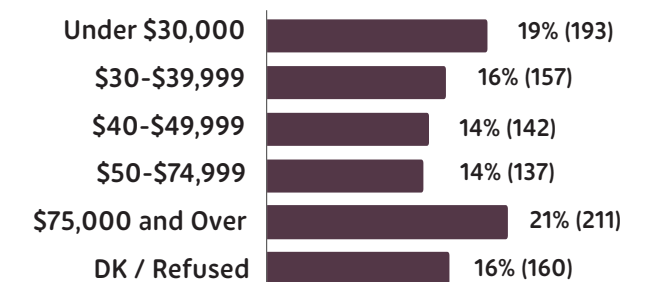
Education



Race



Household Income



Limitations

While the poll's demographics are representative of the city as a whole, they are not representative of the city's public school student population. As noted in the introduction, there is an over-representation of Black students in New Orleans public schools compared to the number of Black residents represented in the city's general population. The demographics of survey respondents are in-line with the city's population, but they do not mirror the families served by public schools due to polling constraints.

Additionally, after completing the poll, we discovered that the polling methodology did not ask for participants' gender identification. Instead, the respondent's gender was presumed by the interviewer. While we recognize that this has been standard practice in polling approaches for some time, we believe that it introduces unreliability into the gender variable and also fails to consider non-binary gender identities. For this reason, we decided to omit gender from our reporting. Failing to notice this before data collection was an oversight on our part and the absence of gender data is an overall limitation of the study.

When presenting findings along racial lines, we report findings according to the categories of White, Black, and other. These racial categories are limiting and fail to capture the racial and ethnic diversity of our city and its residents. However, we decided to include these response categories because our sample contains only 15 Asian and 42 Latin/o/a/x respondents, making it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions about the responses of these groups in this survey.

Another limitation of the current research is the reliance on broad categories for certain subjects — for example, one question includes crime and criminal justice as a single category rather than breaking them out separately. Finally, one important factor to keep in mind: the administrative side of the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) rebranded themselves as New Orleans Public Schools (NOLA-PS) in 2019. Some questions asked parents/guardians about their feelings on New Orleans Public Schools and it is not possible to know whether their responses were strictly about NOLA-PS as an oversight and governing entity, or public schools in the city at large. Additionally, parents and guardians were asked if their child(ren) attended New Orleans public schools, but it is impossible for us to know whether respondents interpreted that as a NOLA-PS school or public schools overseen by other governing entities in the city. Therefore, respondents are grouped into those with children at public schools in the city and those with children at private schools or who home school their children.

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Key Findings

1

The COVID-19 pandemic has directly and closely impacted many families in the city.

Nearly a third of respondents said they knew someone who had become seriously ill with COVID-19.

2

A majority of public school respondents felt more favorably towards NOLA-PS after their response to the pandemic.

56% of respondents with at least one child enrolled in a public school were more favorable to the district based on its response compared to 16% who were less favorable. 27% of respondents stated they didn't know or refused to answer.

3

More than 90% of respondents had access to internet and a laptop in their home.

This is notable, as only 65% of Orleans Parish residents had internet access in their home in 2019.*

4

Attitudes towards virtual learning were unfavorable, but most felt that it had improved over time.

A majority of non-home school respondents felt that their children were learning less in virtual environments than in in-person classrooms, but a majority of respondents also felt that online learning had improved since the spring 2020 semester.

5

Aside from the pandemic, respondents ranked economic uncertainty and crime/criminal justice as the top issues facing the city this year.

This is a departure from previous years, wherein education ranked the top concern among respondents.

6

Attitudes towards public charter schools, the school district, the quality of education in the city, and OneApp were more positive than last year.

A majority (54%) of respondents had positive or very positive views about public charter schools and NOLA-PS (51%). Additionally, 41% of the public school parents/guardians polled this year felt either very or somewhat positive about OneApp.

7

Concerns about OneApp varied along socioeconomic lines.

16% of public school respondents with household incomes over \$75,000 said they had concerns about OneApp compared to 41% of respondents with household incomes under \$30,000 annually.

*The Data Center's report from October 9, 2020, "Who Lives in New Orleans and Metro Parishes Now?", outlines broadband availability in Orleans Parish. <https://www.datacenterresearch.org/data-resources/who-lives-in-new-orleans-now/>.

The Impact of the Pandemic

COVID-19 Infections

This year, we asked respondents a series of questions about how they and their children have been affected by the pandemic, as well as their views on the response of the district, individual schools, and educators to the outbreak.

Tragically, nearly 30% of respondents reported that they knew someone who had become seriously ill with coronavirus. Those in the highest income bracket (\$75,000+) were the most likely to answer 'yes' to this question at 39%. We did not see a noticeable difference in response across racial lines, with 29% of White respondents, 28% of Black respondents, and 28% of other race respondents saying they knew someone who had become seriously ill with COVID-19. 41% of respondents who had the option to return to in-person learning this fall and chose not to stated they'd known someone who had become seriously ill, which exceeded the 24% who responded in the same way and had their children return to in-person learning. Finally, 29% of public school respondents (respondents with at least one child enrolled in a public school) said that they knew someone who had become seriously ill with COVID-19, compared to 28% of non-public school parents.

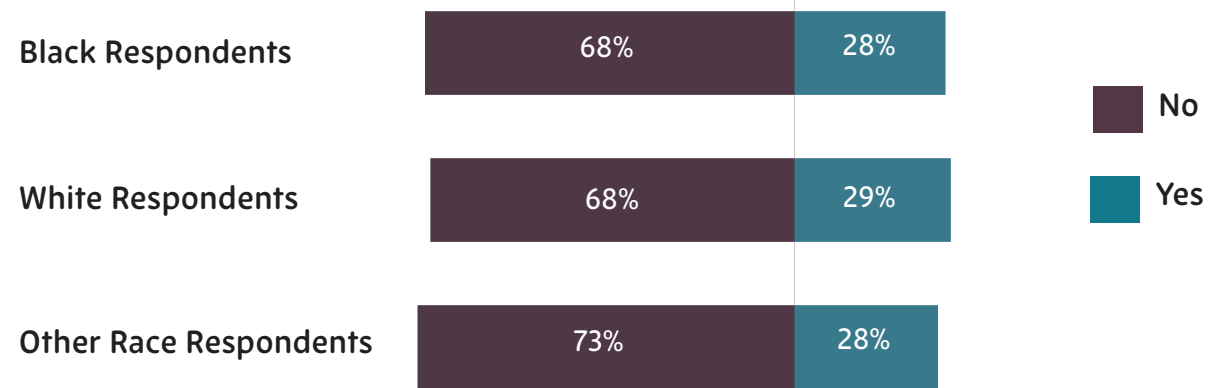
NOLA-PS and School Response to COVID-19

We asked public school respondents about the NOLA-PS response to COVID-19. The NOLA-PS response to COVID elicited positive reviews from respondents. 56% were more favorable to the district based on the response compared to 16% who were less favorable and 27% who did not know or refused to answer the question. The most favorable responses to NOLA-PS's COVID response (>60% favorability) came from higher-income respondents and White respondents. Favorability towards NOLA-PS' response to COVID was comparable among respondents with children who had returned to in-person learning and those who kept their children home.

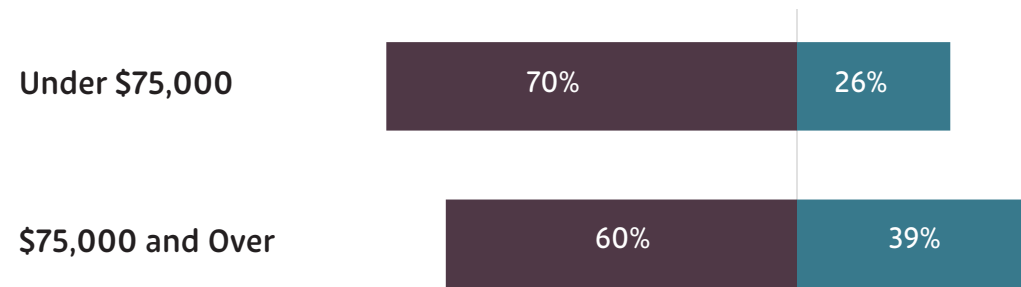
The efforts of NOLA-PS and schools to ensure students had the technology to engage in remote learning clearly also seems to have made an impact. 92% of all respondents said they always have access to a tablet or laptop for online learning, and 91% said they always have access to the internet, with all subgroups of respondents above 80% for both questions.

When asked, public school respondents felt that NOLA-PS could improve their communication (11%) and to encourage schools to focus on safety and cleanliness (9%) when responding to the COVID pandemic.

Have you or has anyone you know personally been seriously ill with COVID-19?

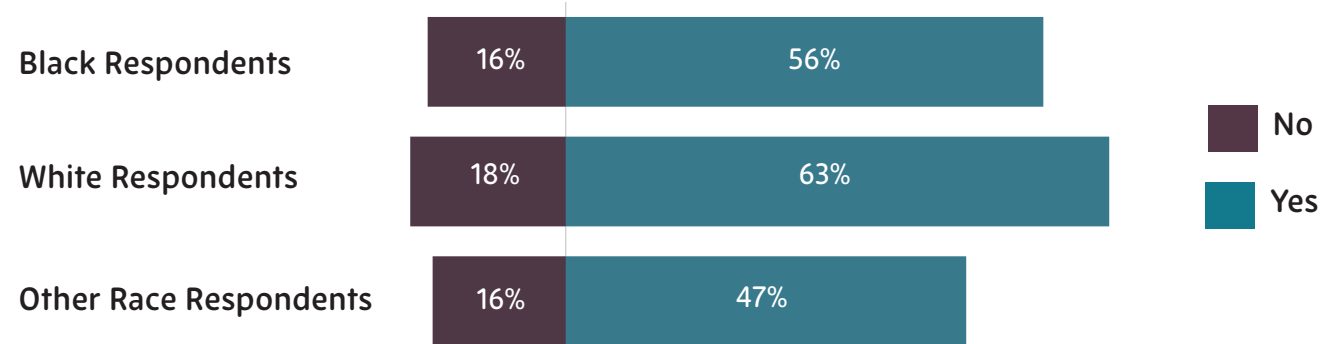


987 total respondents. 644 Black respondents, 263 White Respondents, 80 Other Race Respondents; 31 of these respondents (3%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.



840 total respondents. 629 respondents making under \$75,000 and 211 making over \$75,000. 28 of these respondents (3%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

Has New Orleans Public Schools' and the school board's response to coronavirus made you more favorable or less favorable toward the district?



Only respondents with at least one child enrolled at a public school were asked this question. 769 total respondents. 529 Black respondents, 182 White Respondents, 58 Other Race Respondents; 206 of these respondents (27%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

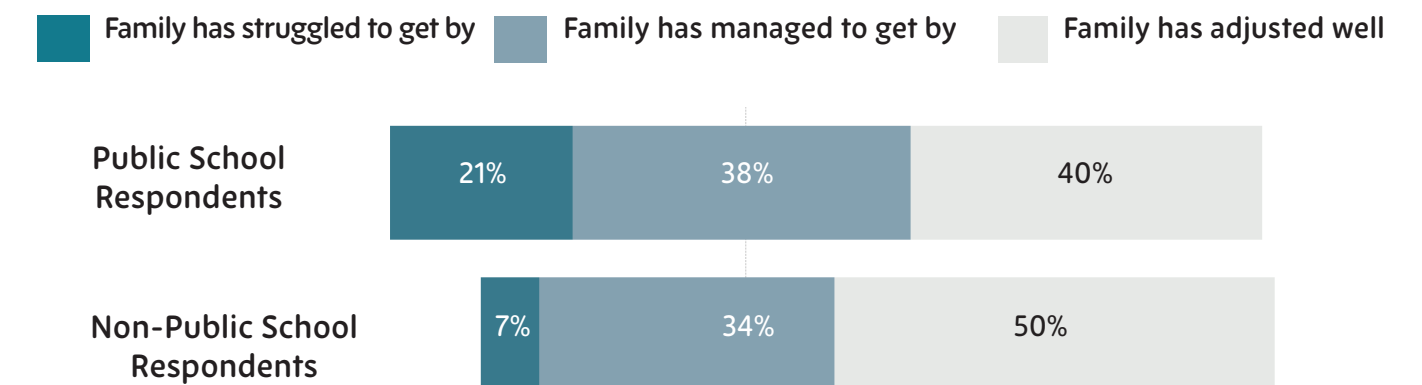
Attitudes Towards Virtual Learning

The overall experience of online learning has gone well for some respondents: 42% said they had adjusted well to online learning, 38% said they have managed to get by with it, and 18% said they have struggled with it. 40% of respondents who had at least one child enrolled in public schools said they had adjusted well to online learning compared to 55% of non-public school respondents. Finally, those who have chosen to remain with online learning had the highest rates of saying they adjusted well at 55%.

Respondents also said online learning has improved since the start of the pandemic: 59% said online learning was better this fall than in the spring, compared to 34% who said it was the same, and just 4% who said it was worse. Respondents continuing with only online learning this fall were also more likely to say virtual learning was better this fall than in the spring (68% versus 57% of those who had at least one child return to in-person learning). Respondents with household incomes greater than \$50,000 were more likely to say online learning was better in the fall than the spring (70%) than respondents with household incomes below \$50,000 (57%). The opinions of Black and White respondents were comparable with regards to the improvement of online learning from spring to fall 2020 (59% and 62%, respectively felt it had improved). Finally, public school respondents (60%) were more likely than non-public school respondents (53%) to say online learning was better in the fall than the spring.

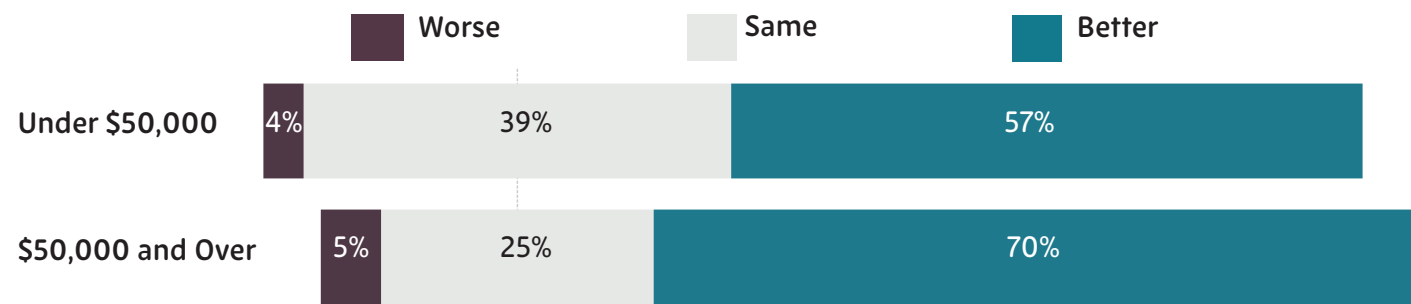
Nonetheless, respondents remain deeply skeptical about the overall efficacy of online learning: 70% strongly agreed or agreed with the idea that they were concerned their child(ren) learned less with remote learning. There were marginal differences along racial lines with 69% of Black respondents saying that they were concerned that their child(ren) learned less with remote learning compared to 73% of White respondents.

Please tell me which one of the following statements you agree with the most, even if none is exactly right:



943 total respondents. 779 public school respondents, 164 non-public school Respondents; 23 of these respondents (2%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

Would you say remote learning this fall has gone better than it did in the spring, about the same, or worse than in the spring?



This question was only asked to respondents whose children are not homeschooled. 787 total respondents. 457 respondents making under \$50,000 and 330 making over \$50,000. 27 of these respondents (3%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

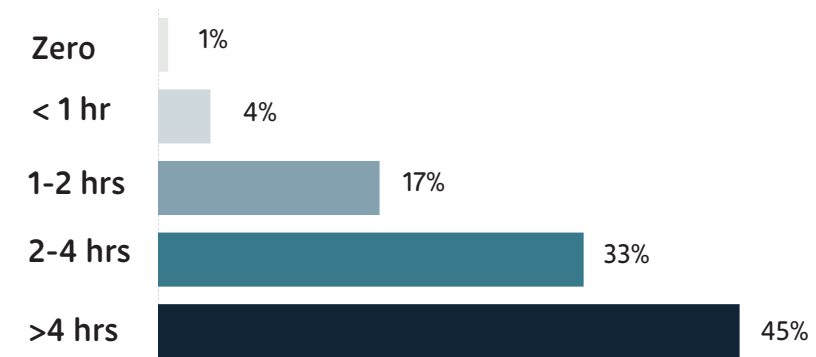
Support during Virtual Learning

We also asked all respondents about the average number hours of a day their child(ren) spent online learning and about the amount of technical support they received from their respective schools. 44% of respondents who are currently participating in virtual learning said their children spent four or more hours a day engaged in online learning, and another 33% said two to four hours a day. 45% of public school respondents and 44% of non-public school respondents said their children spent four or more hours a day engaged in online learning. Respondents with higher household incomes were more likely to say their children spent more than four hours online learning. 68% of households making \$75,000 or more a year reported that their children spent more than four hours engaging in online learning compared to 32% of households making less than \$30,000 a year.

57% of non-home school school respondents who are currently engaged with online learning said they always have technical support from schools for online learning, while 34% said sometimes and 5% said never. However, there were notable differences among respondents based on socioeconomic status, with 80% of respondents making \$75,000 or more saying they always had technical support, compared to 44% of respondents with household incomes below \$30,000. In addition, 56% of public school respondents and 63% of non-public school respondents said they always received technical support from their respective schools.

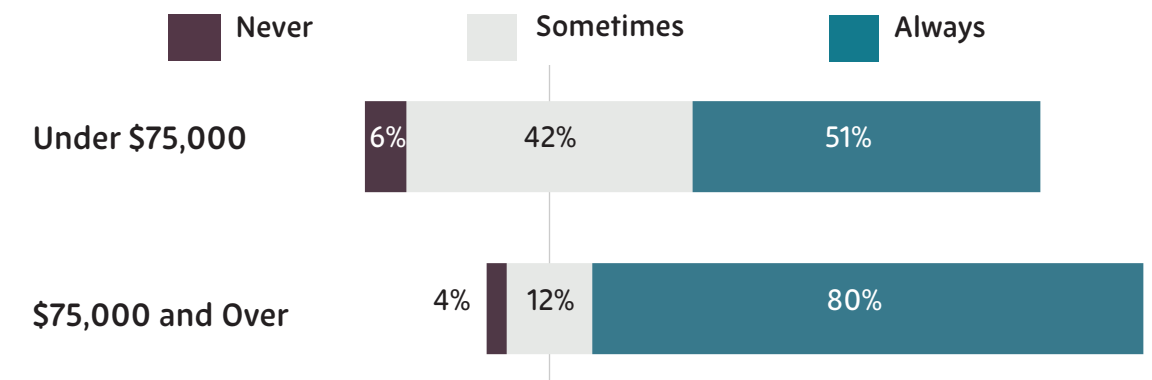
As for how schools are supporting the mental health of students and families during this time, 53% of respondents said they strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that their schools were providing mental health support for families. But again, it appeared that wealthier families were more likely to have access to resources, as 69% of respondents with household incomes of \$75,000 or more annually said their schools were providing these supports compared to 46% of respondents with an annual household income under \$75,000.

On average, on a day when they are attending school from home, about how many hours does each of your children spend attending class online?



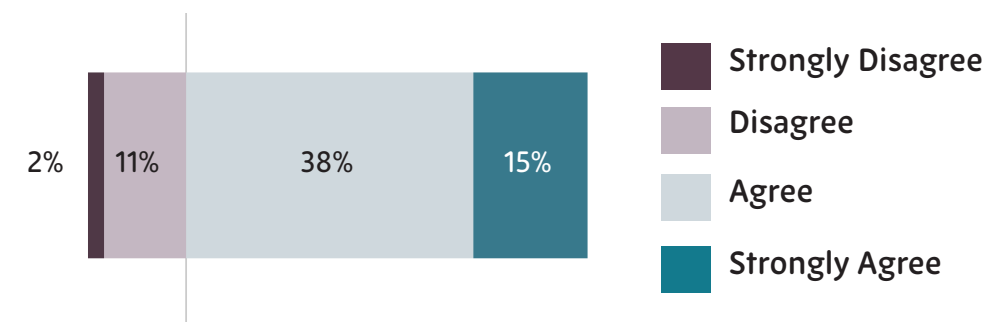
1000 total respondents. 14 of these respondents (1%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

Please tell me whether your household has access to technical support from your children's schools to help with online education always, sometimes, or never.



This question was only asked to respondents whose children are not homeschooled. 787 total respondents. 585 respondents making under \$75,000 and 202 making over \$75,000. 19 of these respondents (2%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with this statement: My children's schools are providing mental health resources to support families during coronavirus.



943 total respondents. This chart does not include homeschooled respondents. 324 of these respondents (34%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

In-Person Learning

The decision to send one's child(ren) back to school during the pandemic is a difficult and deeply personal one for all parents and guardians. Weighing the pros and cons, our poll found that significant majorities of respondents opted to return to in-person learning when given the choice: 77% said they sent at least one of their children back to in-person schooling. There were notable differences along racial lines with regards to returning to in-person learning. 70% of Black respondents decided to send their children back to school compared to 88% of White respondents and 85% of other race respondents. Parents of non-public school students were also more likely to have sent their children back to in-person learning (90%) than parents of public school students (74%).

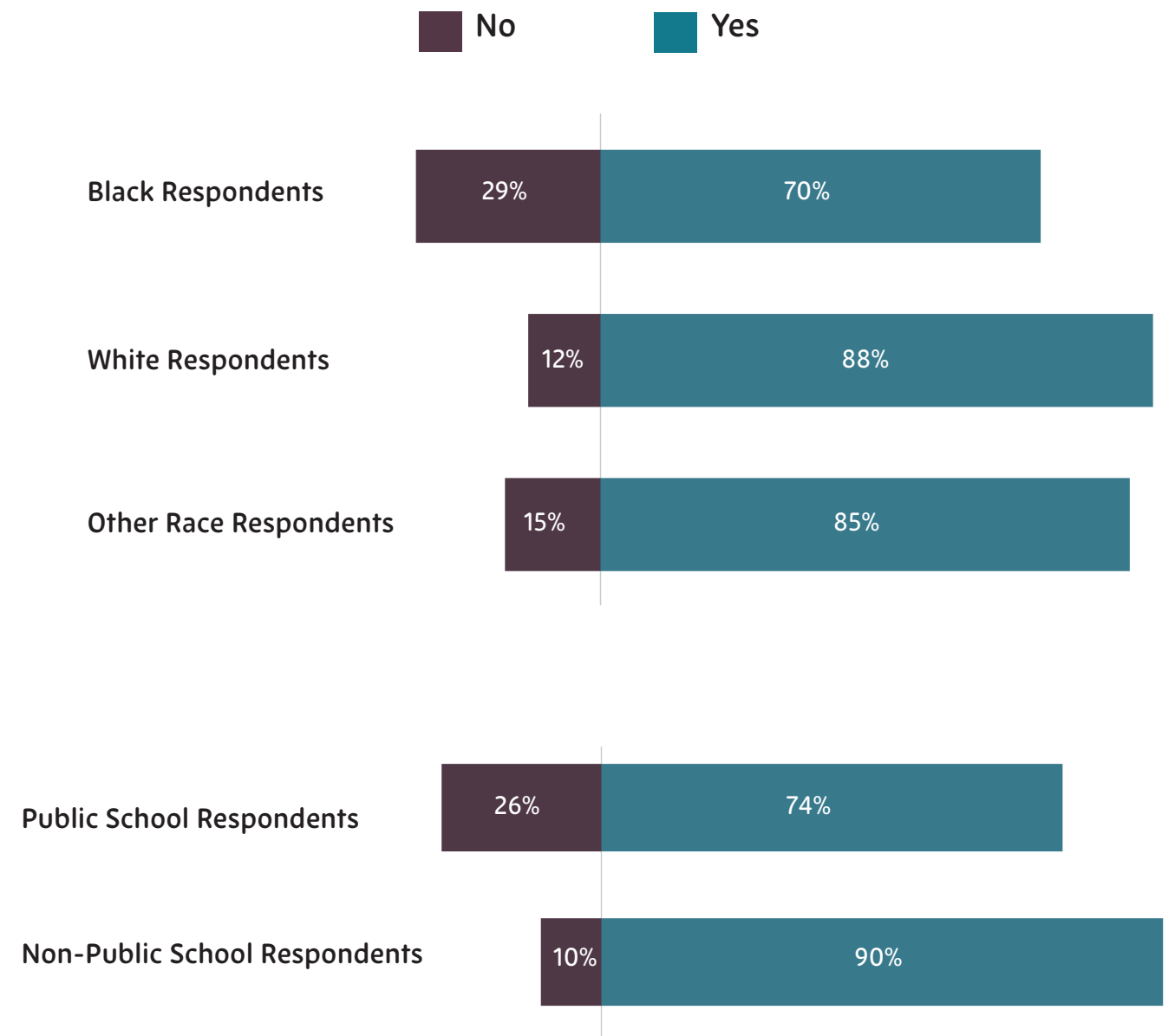
For those respondents who opted to send their children back, their top reason for doing so was that they felt that in-person learning was better than virtual learning, followed by the socialization benefits that come with in-person schooling. Among respondents who decided not to send their children back to in-person learning, the top reasons were concerns about the virus and safety: 41% said concerns about the virus and 26% said they didn't feel it was safe. 41% of respondents who have chosen not to send their children back to in-person learning know someone who has been seriously ill, compared to only 24% of those who have sent a child back to in-person school.

Of those respondents who opted to send their children back, 86% said that the return to in-person learning has gone well or very well. There were minimal differences across racial groups with 86% of Black respondents, 87% of White respondents, and 86% of Other race respondents saying the return to in-person learning had gone well or very well. Similarly, 85% of public school respondents and 88% of non-public school respondents said the return to in-person learning has gone well or very well.

Main Source of Information Regarding NOLA-PS

Public school respondents were most likely to report that their main way of obtaining information about New Orleans Public Schools is through teachers. In all, 53% said teachers were the main source of information. Ranking second was the NOLA-PS website (27%), followed by other parents (22%), and school principals (19%). Only 9% of respondents cited local media (newspapers, television, or local news websites) as a main source of information.

Did you decide to send at least one of your children back to in-person learning?



Only respondents who said they were offered the chance to return to in-person learning were asked this question.

Question broken down by race:
665 total respondents. 415 Black respondents, 191 White Respondents, 59 Other Race Respondents.
1 of these respondents (<1%) is not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

Question broken down by schooling type:
678 total respondents. 554 public school respondents, 124 non-public school respondents,
1 of these respondents (<1%) is not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

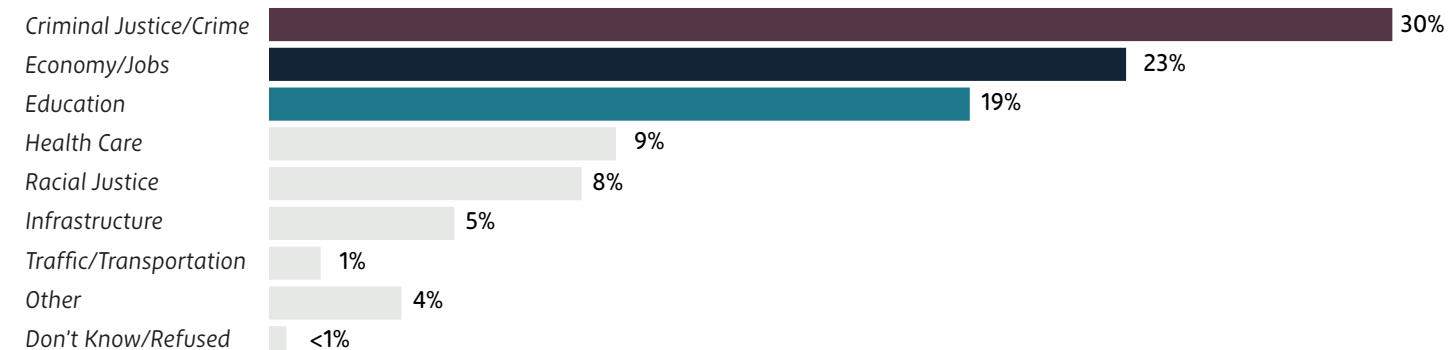
Overall Attitudes Towards Education

Main Issues Facing New Orleans

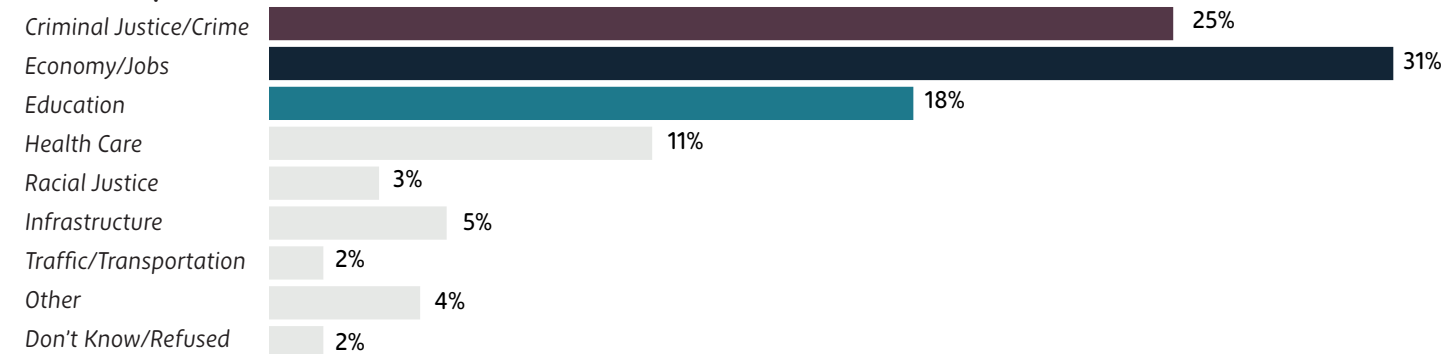
There was a noticeable shift in terms of whether respondents ranked education as a top concern of the issues facing New Orleans from 2019 to 2020. Last year, education was the top concern for 30% of respondents, nudging out crime/criminal justice, which was the main concern for 29% of those polled. In 2020, however, leaving aside coronavirus, education finished as the third most pressing issue for New Orleans respondents, behind crime/criminal justice and the economy/jobs. Twice as many of those polled this year cited the economy as the top issue as compared to last year. Notably, the economy was the top concern for White respondents (31%), while crime/criminal justice was the top concern for Black respondents (30%).

Aside from coronavirus, which one of the following issues facing New Orleans concerns you the most?

Black Respondents



White Respondents



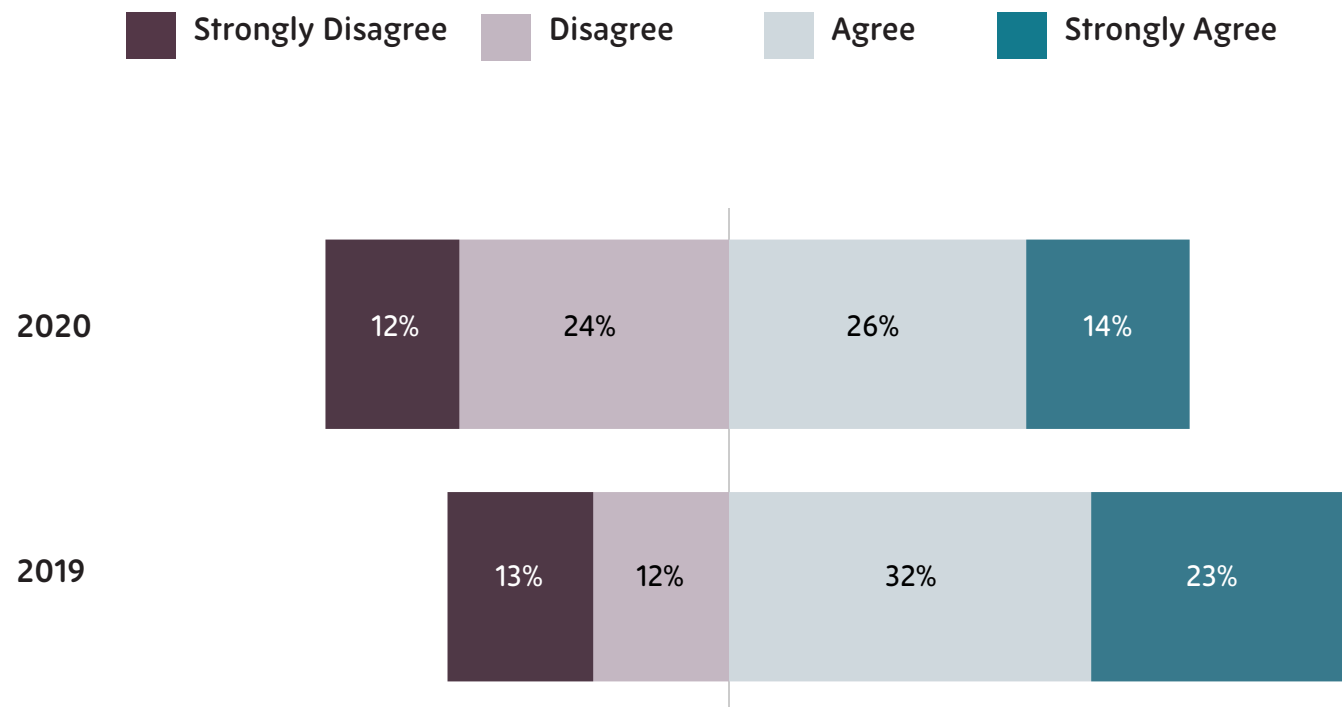
907 total respondents. 644 Black respondents, 263 White respondents,

Increasing Taxes to Pay for Education

One area where respondents' attitudes changed from 2019 to 2020 was in the realm of increasing taxes to pay for education. This arguably could be a byproduct of the financial insecurity brought on by the pandemic for many families. Last year, 55% of respondents stated they agreed or strongly agreed with the idea of paying more in taxes for better schools compared to 40% this year.

Support varied along socioeconomic lines, with 58% of respondents from households making \$75,000 or more annually supporting the idea, compared to 39% of respondents from households making under \$75,000 annually. Support did not vary much along racial lines, with 40% of Black respondents supporting increased taxation to pay for education, and 43% of White respondents supporting the idea. Support also varied slightly by the type of school respondents' children attended. 44% of public school respondents said they support increased taxation compared to 38% of non-public school respondents.

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement 'I would be willing to pay a little more in taxes to help fund public education in New Orleans.?'



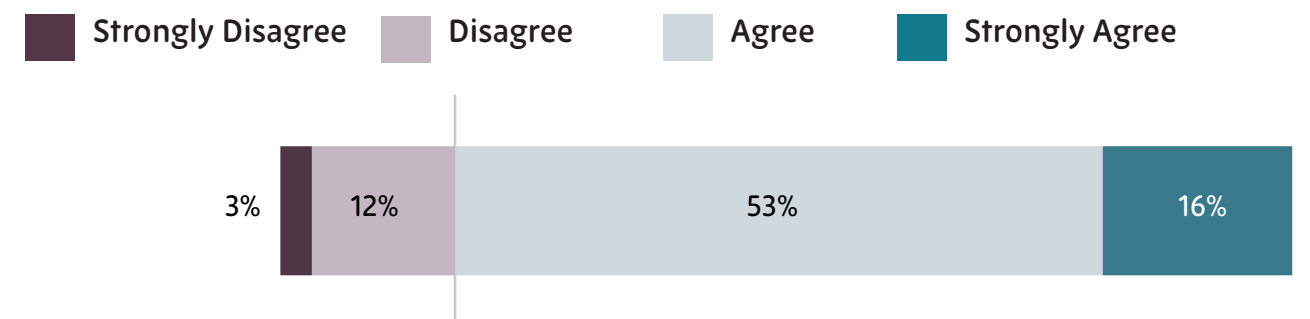
2020: 1000 total respondents
 2019: 500 Total Respondents
 245 (25%) in 2020 and 105 (21%) respondents in 2019 are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

Preparing Students for Life After High School

We asked respondents with at least one child enrolled in a public school if they think New Orleans high schools are preparing students well for college. The majority of respondents believe that New Orleans high schools are preparing students well for college and that students are succeeding at their postgraduate institutions after they matriculate from high school. 69% of all respondents believed the city's high schools are preparing students for college. 68% believed high school graduates are succeeding at college, which was a 27% increase from 2019.

We asked all respondents about paying for post-secondary education. 73% of respondents stated they were concerned or very concerned about the cost of college. Interestingly, even with the economic unrest caused by COVID, this was a 17% drop from what respondents reported last year. Respondents with the highest household incomes were the most concerned about the cost of college (89%).

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the statement 'New Orleans public high schools are preparing students for college'?



Half of respondents with at least one child enrolled at a public school were randomly selected to answer this question. 392 total respondents. 67 respondents are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

Direction and Outlook of Education in New Orleans

Is Public Education in New Orleans Improving?

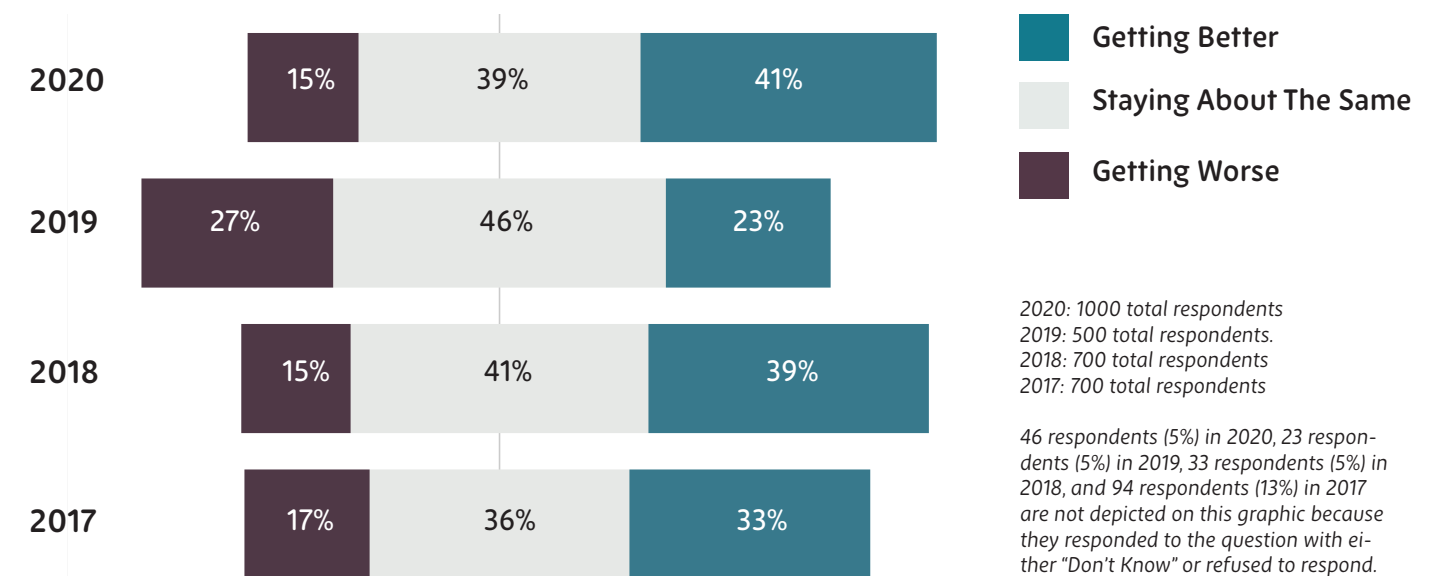
Respondents' overall opinions about K-12 public education and school quality have increased notably compared to 2019 (though it is important to note that in 2019, we only polled parents of public school students), but were in line with responses from 2018 and 2017. This year, among all respondents, 41% of respondents indicated public education was getting better, 15% said it was getting worse, and 39% said it was staying about the same. In 2019, 23% said better, 27% said worse, and 46% said about the same. In 2018, 39% said better, 15% said worse, and 41% said staying the same. Finally, in 2017, 33% said better, 17% said worse, and 36% said staying the same.

In 2020, the attitudes were comparable across racial and socioeconomic lines. 41% of Black respondents, 44% of White respondents, and 36% of other race respondents said New Orleans education is getting better. 40% of respondents from households making over \$75,000 annually and 42% of respondents from households making less than \$75,000 annually said education was getting better.

Predictably, non-public school respondents have more negative perceptions about the city's public education. Only 15% of non-public school respondents said they believed public education in New Orleans was getting better compared to 49% of public school respondents.

When it comes to assigning schools an overall letter grade, respondents also had more positive responses in 2020 than in 2019. Those giving schools a B rose from 11% in 2019 to 32% this year. The percentage giving schools an A doubled from 3% to 6%, while the C grades remained consistent from 47% last year to 45% this year. But notably, in 2019, 34% of public school parents gave the schools a D or an F. This year, that fell to 16%. The percentage of respondents giving schools a B was higher than at any point over the past four years. This held true across racial lines. Once again, non-public school respondents were more negative than public school respondents about public education in New Orleans. 19% of non-public school respondents gave the school system an A or B compared to 42% of public school respondents.

Would you say public education in New Orleans is getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same?

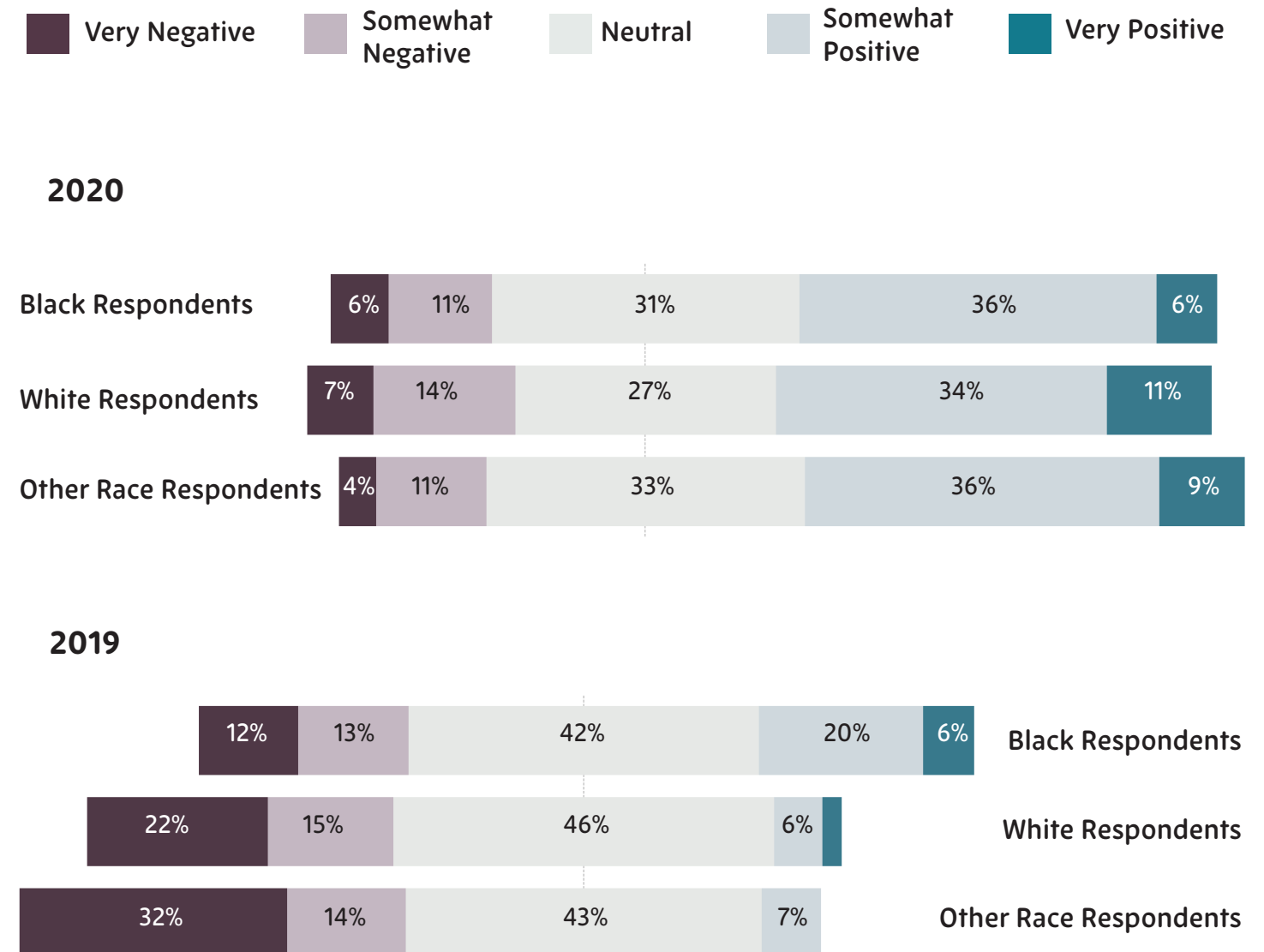


NOLA-PS

Respondents' opinions of the district, NOLA-PS, also grew more positive in 2020. All respondents were asked to rate "New Orleans Public Schools, the body that oversees and authorizes New Orleans' public charter schools." Overall, 44% of respondents had a very or somewhat positive response and 18% of respondents provided a very or somewhat negative rating. In 2019, when we asked respondents about the Orleans Parish School Board (NOLA-PS' previous name), just 19% had positive responses compared to 31% who had negative ones. In addition, 51% of respondents with at least one child enrolled in a public school said they felt positive or very positive about NOLA-PS compared to 18% of respondents with no children enrolled in a public school.

We also asked respondents with at least one child enrolled in a public school if they believed that NOLA-PS should have the authority to exert strong governance over the city's autonomous charter schools. 58% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the idea that NOLA-PS should be able to close or turn over underperforming schools to another operator, compared to 20% who disagreed or strongly disagreed. In 2019, 56% agreed or strongly agreed, showing consistency across these two years. The subgroups with the highest rates of support for that authority were respondents from households earning more than \$75,000 annually (78%) and those who hold a bachelor's degree or higher (69%).

Rate your feelings on New Orleans Public Schools, the body that oversees and authorizes New Orleans' public charter schools, as very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative.



2020: 987 total respondents. 644 Black respondents, 263 White Respondents, 80 Other Race Respondents.
2019: 493 total respondents. 294 Black respondents, 171 White Respondents, 28 Other Race Respondents.

87 of the respondents (9%) in 2020 and 37 of the respondents (9%) in 2019 are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with "Know Name, Can't Rate" or "Don't Recognize" or they refused to respond.

Public Charter Schools

Overall approval for public charter schools was higher in 2020 than in 2019. In 2020, 54% of all respondents felt either very or somewhat positive about public charter schools in the city, compared with just 15% that felt somewhat or very negative. Last year, a total of 35% of respondents felt neutral about public charter schools, compared to 30% who felt positively and 29% who felt negatively.

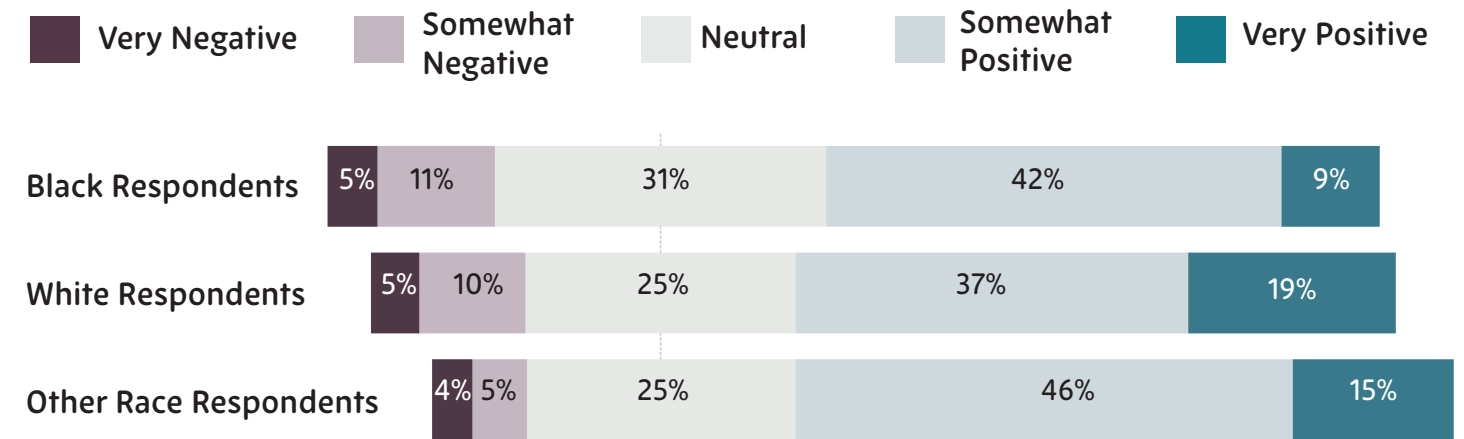
The difference between last year and this year was noticeably different among public school respondents. In 2019, 30% of public school respondents felt positively about public charter schools, and 29% held explicitly negative views. This year, 61% of public school respondents felt positively about the city's public charter schools, compared to 11% who felt negatively.

White respondents were slightly more likely to hold positive opinions of the city's public charter schools than Black respondents, with 56% of White respondents feeling somewhat or very positive about public charter schools compared to 51% of Black respondents.

Additionally, a majority (56%) of all respondents agreed that public charter schools have improved public education in New Orleans, while 24% disagreed. This was an increase from 2019, when 49% agreed they'd improved schools and 37% disagreed. But, it was similar to 2018, where 61% agreed charters improved schools and 17% disagreed, and to 2017, where 64% agreed charters improved schools and 15% disagreed.

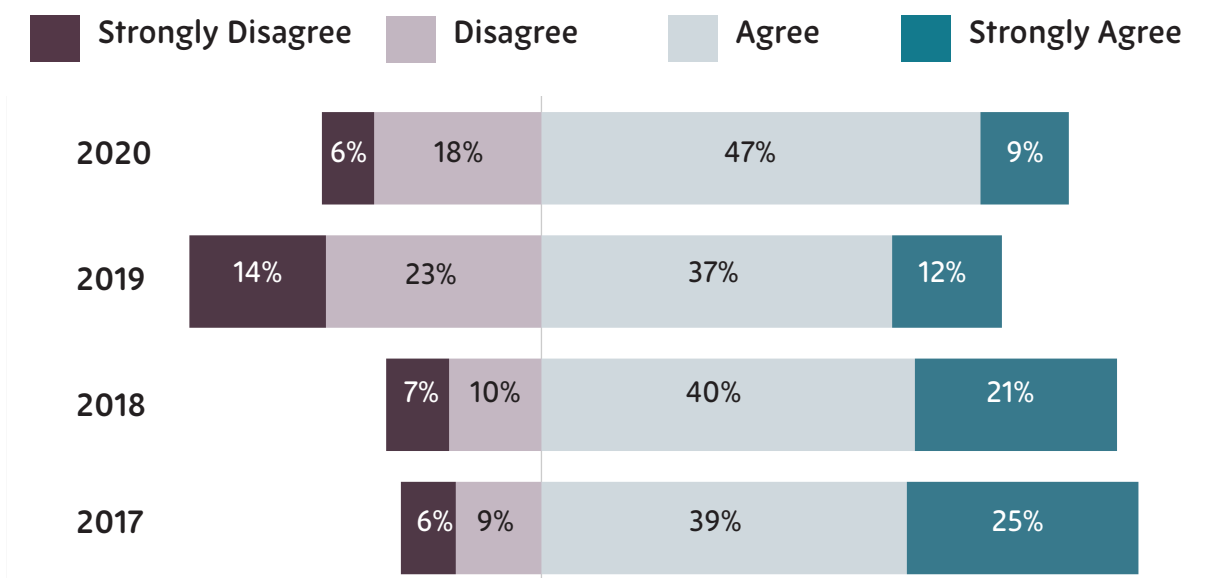
Attitudes towards the impact of charter schools on the city's public education system varied slightly along socioeconomic and racial lines. Respondents from households making more than \$75,000 were more likely to think that education was improving than those from households making less than \$30,000 (66% and 38%, respectively). Moreover, Black respondents were more likely to disagree with the statement that public schools have improved education in New Orleans (26%) than White respondents (21%).

Rate your feelings on public charter schools as very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative.



987 total respondents. 644 Black respondents, 263 White respondents, 80 Other race respondents. 29 of these respondents (3%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with "Know Name, Can't Rate" or "Don't Recognize" or they refused to respond.

Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: Public charter schools have improved public education in New Orleans?



2020: 1000 total respondents, 2019: 500 total respondents, 2018: 700 total respondents, 2017: 700 total respondents. 207 of these respondents (21%) in 2020, 69 respondents (14%) in 2019, 157 respondents (22%) in 2018, and 152 respondents (22%) in 2017 are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with "Know Name, Can't Rate" or "Don't Recognize" or they refused to respond.

OneApp

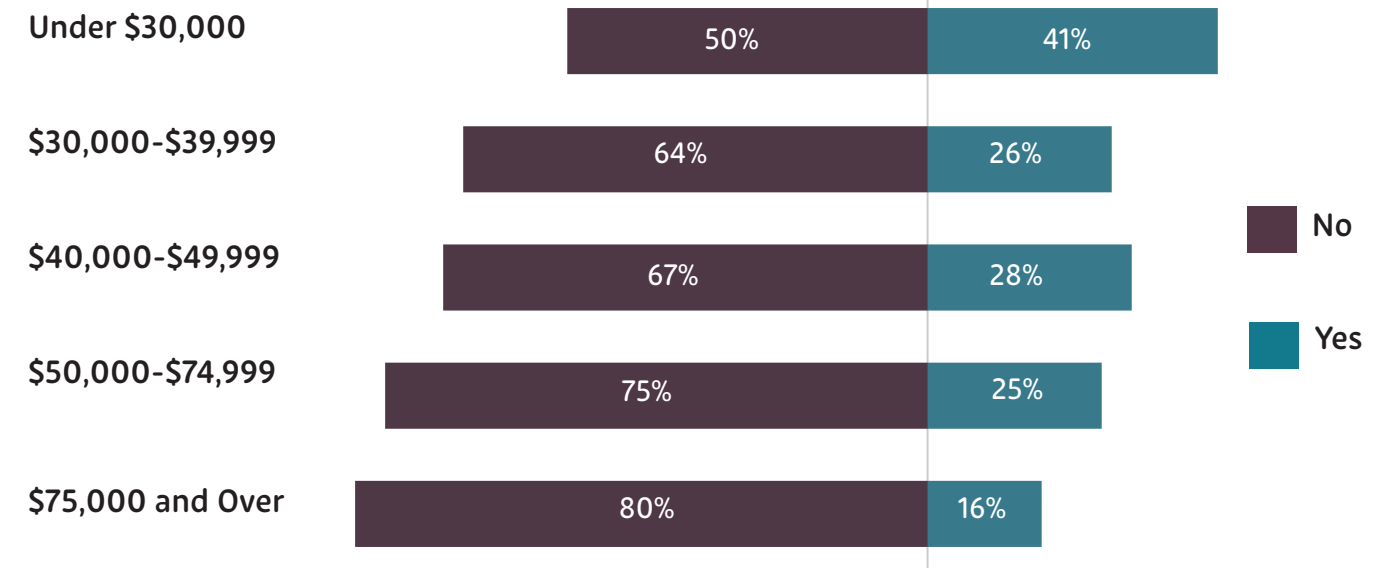
While a majority of respondents did not have positive views of OneApp, sentiment about the enrollment system was more positive than in 2019. Of the public school respondents polled this year, 41% felt either very or somewhat positive about OneApp compared to 18% who felt somewhat or very negative. In 2019, 19% felt positively and 25% felt negatively.

In addition, 26% of respondents reported they have concerns about OneApp. Of the respondents who reported concerns, 30% said it was because they didn't get the school of their choice. Another 16% said they didn't get a school close to home, while 12% said there were not enough good schools, and 12% had problems with the process itself, saying it was difficult to use. Concern about OneApp varied along socioeconomic lines. 41% of respondents with household incomes under \$30,000 stated that they have concerns about OneApp and only 16% of respondents from households with incomes above \$75,000 stated they have concerns about OneApp. Finally, 67% of respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed that OneApp won't work the way it is intended to until there are more quality schools in the city. This was a 6% increase from 2019.

Transportation

COVID-19 has also affected the way public school respondents' children get to school each day. 50% of all parents said that prior to the pandemic, their children took the bus most days. Following the onset of COVID, only 42% of parents said their child(ren) were taking the bus. The number who said they were driving their kids to school rose from 47% to 52% as well. As in our polling about transportation in 2019, there were notable differences in transportation access across race and socioeconomic lines. White respondents (59%) were more likely to drive their children to school after the onset of COVID-19 than Black respondents (44%). Respondents from households making under \$75,000 annually were less likely to drive their children to school (46%) after the onset of COVID-19 than respondents from households making over \$75,000 annually (76%). Respondents from households making less than \$30,000 annually (31%) were the least likely to drive their children to school after the onset of COVID-19.

Do you have any concerns about OneApp?

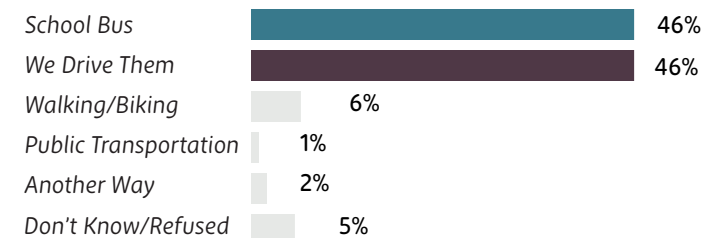


Only respondents with at least one child enrolled at a public school were asked this question. 652 total respondents. 160 respondents making under \$30,000, 135 making \$30,000-\$39,999, 123 making \$40,000-\$49,999, 102 making \$50,000-\$74,999, 132 making \$75,000+.

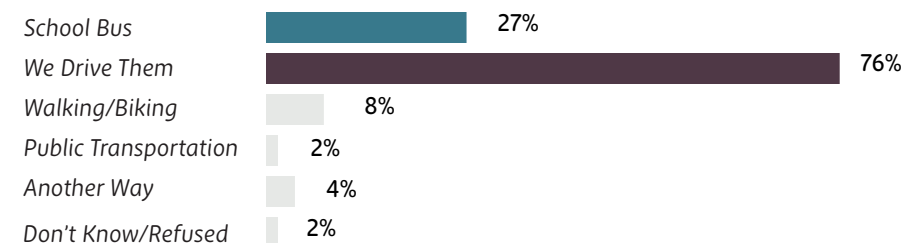
39 respondents (6%) are not depicted on this graphic because they responded to the question with either "Don't Know" or refused to respond.

As your children return to in-person learning, how do you anticipate they will get to school most days?

Respondents with Household Incomes Under \$75,000 Annually



Respondents with Household Incomes Over \$75,000 Annually



652 total respondents. 520 respondents with household incomes under \$75,000 annually, 132 respondents with household incomes over \$75,000 annually.

Conclusion

As previously discussed, this year's polling was conducted during an unprecedented time for our city and our schools. This year, educators, school administrators, and families navigated a challenging transition to a new education landscape in which virtual learning is common practice. Families and educators are still grappling with the economic, logistical, and health-related realities of life during the pandemic. The circumstances presented this year have been undeniably challenging for all involved and the long-term implications remain to be seen.

Our poll found that, overall, many respondents were supportive of the way the district and New Orleans public schools responded to the COVID pandemic. This may be due, in part, to the widespread distribution of technology and meals to students and families. Collectively, attitudes towards public education in the city also seemed more favorable this year compared with last year and were more aligned with response patterns in 2017 and 2018. While this finding is interesting to note, we are unable to account for the shifts in public opinion with the data at hand. Differences in opinion and experience were noted along socioeconomic lines, as well as between public school parents and guardians and non-public school parents and guardians.

Moving forward, there is a need for more nuanced research on parents' and guardians' attitudes towards, and experiences with, New Orleans public schools so we can better understand the overall trends observed in this cross-sectional polling data.

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