

METHODOLOGY AND TOPLINE

Essential Educators: Teacher and Parent Views on COVID-19

Public Agenda

Representative surveys of U.S. adults

Fielded November 11 - December 1, 2020

Data collected by NORC

Released January 2021

<https://www.publicagenda.org/reports/teacher-narratives-1/>

The select survey results below appear in the Public Agenda report “Essential Educators: Teacher and Parent Views on COVID-19” which summarizes findings from a nationally representative survey of 3,130 adult Americans 18 years and older, excluding private school teachers. The survey was fielded November 11 – December 1, 2020 by NORC at the University of Chicago.

The sample includes 2,684 respondents who were randomly sampled from NORC’s probability-based AmeriSpeak panel, of whom 256 were K-12 public school teachers, including charter school teachers. Interviews were conducted online and over the phone, with 2548 completing via the web and 136 completing via telephone. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish, depending on respondent preference. Another 446 K-12 public school teachers, including charter school teachers, were sampled from Lucid, a non-probability opt-in panel. The Lucid sample included 295 Black and Latino teachers. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish, depending on respondent preference, online only.

Respondents completed the survey in English or Spanish. The general public sample was demographically weighted to the 2020 Current Population Survey and the teacher sample was weighted to the 2017-18 National Teacher and Principal Survey.

Public Agenda will release a report in Spring 2021 that includes additional results from this survey.

For questions about this research, please email research@publicagenda.org.

A survey of Americans (ages 18+)

Interview dates: November 11-December 1, 2020

Number of interviews: N=3,130

Margin of error: +/- 2.8 percentage points at the 95% confidence level among all adults

Number of interviews: public and charter school K-12 teachers N=702

Margin of error: +/- 5.8 percentage points at the 95% confidence level

Number of interviews: parents or guardians of children who are currently enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade N=706

Margin of error: +/- 5.1 percentage point at the 95% confidence level

NOTE: All results show percentages among all respondents, unless otherwise labeled.

*NOTE: * = less than 0.5%, - = no respondents*

Select Questionnaire:

Q12. Do you think your community values K-12 public school teachers more now than before the COVID-19 pandemic, less now than before the COVID-19 pandemic, or does your community value them the same amount as before the COVID-19 pandemic?

[HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
A lot more	28%	19%	31%
A little more	29%	38%	27%
The same amount	26%	24%	27%
A little less	8%	12%	7%
A lot less	3%	5%	3%
Don't know	6%	1%	3%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	*

Q13. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about K-12 public school teachers?

[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED; HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]

a. Teachers are putting their lives and their families' lives in danger if they have to teach in-person during the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Strongly agree	43%	50%	40%
Somewhat agree	30%	33%	29%
Somewhat disagree	15%	10%	16%
Strongly disagree	7%	3%	11%
Don't know	4%	2%	4%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	-

b. During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers have complained too much about going back into the classroom

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Strongly agree	12%	9%	14%
Somewhat agree	19%	22%	20%
Somewhat disagree	25%	22%	23%
Strongly disagree	29%	43%	28%
Don't know	15%	4%	15%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	*

c. Despite the risk of COVID-19, teachers should hold in-person classes so that parents can get back to work

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Strongly agree	13%	10%	14%
Somewhat agree	25%	30%	25%
Somewhat disagree	26%	25%	27%
Strongly disagree	29%	33%	25%
Don't know	7%	3%	8%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	1%	-	1%

d. Despite the risk of COVID-19, teachers should hold in-person classes since that is the best way for students to learn

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Strongly agree	15%	15%	20%
Somewhat agree	26%	31%	30%
Somewhat disagree	25%	21%	23%
Strongly disagree	26%	30%	20%
Don't know	7%	2%	7%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	1%	*

e. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that parents can easily take on the roles of teachers and ensure that their children get a good education

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Strongly agree	7%	6%	10%
Somewhat agree	18%	11%	21%
Somewhat disagree	28%	17%	27%
Strongly disagree	41%	64%	37%
Don't know	5%	1%	4%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	1%	-

f. The COVID-19 pandemic will make it more difficult to recruit new teachers to join the teaching profession

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Strongly agree	21%	36%	23%
Somewhat agree	41%	42%	39%
Somewhat disagree	18%	11%	19%
Strongly disagree	6%	4%	6%
Don't know	14%	7%	13%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	-

g. Once a COVID-19 vaccine is available, all teachers and students should be required to be vaccinated if they want to have in-person classes

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Strongly agree	33%	30%	21%
Somewhat agree	25%	28%	23%
Somewhat disagree	14%	14%	19%
Strongly disagree	19%	23%	28%
Don't know	8%	5%	8%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	1%	-

h. Teachers should be able to decide whether to teach online or in-person during the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Strongly agree	31%	41%	32%
Somewhat agree	34%	38%	34%
Somewhat disagree	19%	16%	18%
Strongly disagree	10%	3%	9%
Don't know	6%	2%	7%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	*

Q14. How important is it for K-12 public schools to do each of the following during this school year?

[GRID ITEMS RANDOMIZED]

a. Ensure that teachers have the resources they need to help students who have fallen behind academically because of the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Absolutely essential	77%	83%	76%
Important but not essential	15%	14%	14%
Not important at all	3%	2%	5%
Don't know	4%	1%	4%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	1%

b. Ensure that teachers have the resources they need to help students who are struggling socially and emotionally because of the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Absolutely essential	71%	83%	72%
Important but not essential	21%	14%	20%
Not important at all	4%	1%	4%
Don't know	4%	1%	4%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	-

c. Ensure that teachers have the resources they need if they themselves are struggling socially and emotionally because of the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Absolutely essential	69%	76%	69%
Important but not essential	22%	20%	21%
Not important at all	4%	2%	5%
Don't know	5%	2%	4%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	*

d. Suspend all standardized tests so teachers have time to help students who have fallen behind academically because of the COVID-19 pandemic

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Absolutely essential	40%	58%	44%
Important but not essential	40%	35%	40%
Not important at all	9%	5%	7%
Don't know	10%	2%	9%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	*

e. If teachers are required to teach online because of the COVID-19 pandemic, provide them with training and support to do it effectively

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Absolutely essential	81%	86%	80%
Important but not essential	13%	9%	13%
Not important at all	3%	2%	4%
Don't know	3%	2%	2%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	1%	*

f. If teachers are required to teach online because of the COVID-19 pandemic, provide equipment and technology to those teachers who need it

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Absolutely essential	81%	89%	80%
Important but not essential	11%	8%	12%
Not important at all	3%	1%	5%
Don't know	4%	2%	3%
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	*

Q16. Do you consider yourself a:

[RESPONSE OPTIONS RANDOMIZED]

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Republican	27%	31%	28%
Democrat	37%	42%	33%
Independent	24%	20%	24%
Another party	1%	1%	3%
No preference	11%	6%	12%
Don't know	-	-	-
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	-	*

Show if not Republican or Democrat.

16A. Do you lean more toward the Democrats or the Republicans?

[HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]

	Total n=1,067	Teachers n=194	Parents n=262
Lean Democrat	36%	41%	32%
Lean Republican	29%	26%	30%
Don't lean	34%	33%	38%
Don't know	-	-	-
SKIPPED/REFUSED	1%	-	1%

Show if not currently employed as a teacher in a K-12 school.

Q17. Are you the parent or guardian of any children who are currently in kindergarten through 12th grade?

	Total n=2,428	Teachers	Parents N=706
Yes	30%	NA	100%
No	70%	NA	-
Don't know	-	NA	-
SKIPPED/REFUSED	*	NA	-

Show if not currently employed as a teacher in a K-12 school, but are parent or guardian of any children currently in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Q17A. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, are any of your children currently enrolled in school entirely online or in a mix of online and in-person classes?

	Total	Teachers	Parents N=706
Yes	NA	NA	78%
No	NA	NA	22%
Don't know	NA	NA	-
SKIPPED/REFUSED	NA	NA	*

Show if not currently employed as a teacher in a K-12 school, but are parent or guardian of any children currently in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Q17B. Regardless of whether they are learning online or in-person, which of the following types of K-12 schools are any of your children enrolled in? Select all that apply.

	Total	Teachers	Parents N=706
Traditional public school	NA	NA	77%
Charter school	NA	NA	9%
Private or religious school	NA	NA	8%
Homeschool, pod or micro-school that is independent of any other educational institution	NA	NA	10%
Don't know	NA	NA	1%
SKIPPED ON WEB	NA	NA	*
REFUSED	NA	NA	-

Show if currently employed as a teacher in a K-12 school.

Q19. Currently, are you a member of a teachers' union or not?

	Total	Teachers N=702	Parents
Yes	NA	60%	NA
No	NA	38%	NA
Don't know	NA	2%	NA
SKIPPED/REFUSED	NA	-	NA

Show if currently employed as a teacher in a K-12 school.

Q20. Currently, are you teaching students...

[HALF SAMPLE SHOWN RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER]

	Total	Teachers N=702	Parents
Entirely online	NA	40%	NA
Entirely in-person	NA	17%	NA
A mix of online and in-person	NA	43%	NA
Don't know	NA	-	NA
SKIPPED/REFUSED	NA	*	NA

Show if currently employed as a teacher in a K-12 school.

TEACH2. What grade do you currently teach? Select all that apply.

	Total	Teachers N=702	Parents
Kindergarten	NA	16%	NA
Grade 1	NA	13%	NA
Grade 2	NA	14%	NA
Grade 3	NA	14%	NA
Grade 4	NA	16%	NA
Grade 5	NA	15%	NA
Grade 6	NA	16%	NA
Grade 7	NA	21%	NA
Grade 8	NA	22%	NA
Grade 9	NA	24%	NA
Grade 10	NA	26%	NA
Grade 11	NA	27%	NA
Grade 12	NA	27%	NA
Don't know	NA	-	NA
SKIPPED ON WEB	NA	*	NA
REFUSED	NA	-	NA

Show if currently employed as a teacher in a K-12 school.

TEACH4. How many years have you been a teacher?

	Total	Teachers N=702	Parents
This is my first year	NA	3%	NA
1-5 years	NA	16%	NA
6-10 years	NA	24%	NA
11-20 years	NA	33%	NA
21-30 years	NA	19%	NA
More than 30 years	NA	5%	NA
Don't know	NA	-	NA
SKIPPED/REFUSED	NA	*	NA

Age

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
18-24	12%	2%	5%
25-34	18%	26%	24%
35-44	17%	29%	37%
45-54	14%	27%	19%
55-64	18%	12%	10%
65-74	15%	3%	4%
75+	7%	*	-
Under 18	-	-	-

Region

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Northeast	17%	19%	16%
Midwest	21%	23%	20%
South	38%	34%	39%
West	24%	23%	24%

Gender

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Unknown	-	-	-
Male	49%	24%	44%
Female	51%	76%	56%

Race/Ethnicity

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Non-Hispanic white	63%	79%	53%
Non-Hispanic Black	12%	7%	16%
Hispanic	17%	9%	22%
Other	9%	5%	9%

Education

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Less than HS	10%	*	12%
HS graduate	28%	1%	23%
Vocational/tech school/some college/ associates	28%	2%	32%
Bachelor's degree	19%	39%	21%
Post grad study/professional degree	16%	58%	13%

Employment

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Working - as a paid employee	51%	97%	57%
Working - self-employed	9%	1%	9%
Not working – on temporary layoff from a job	2%	-	2%
Not working – looking for work	6%	-	6%
Not working – retired	18%	-	5%
Not working – disabled	4%	-	3%
Not working - other	10%	1%	17%

Income

	Total N=3,130	Teachers N=702	Parents N=706
Under \$50K	44%	16%	45%
\$50k to \$100k	35%	48%	33%
More than \$100k	22%	36%	22%