The pulse of America: The teaching profession

Americans trust and support teachers, but they draw the line at wanting their own children to join a profession they see as undervalued and low-paid.

Public school teaching as a career path has lost much of its allure. Fifty-four percent of parents would not like one of their children to take up teaching in the public schools as a career, a majority response to this question for the first time since PDK began asking the question in 1969.

Americans may not want their children to become teachers, but most (61%) say they have trust and confidence in teachers. Parents of school-age children have higher trust than those without children in school, 68% vs. 59%.

Key points from 2018 PDK poll

- 66% of Americans say teachers are underpaid; just 6% say teacher pay is too high
- 78% of public school parents would support teachers in their community if they went on strike for more pay
- Those who think more highly of the public schools are more apt to like the idea of having their child become a teacher. 63% of those who give schools nationally an A or B grade would support a teaching career for their child.
- Southerners (78%) are more likely than residents in the northeast (67%) to support a teacher strike for higher pay
- 67% of Hispanics would support having a child become a teacher, compared to 51% of blacks and 40% of whites.

Source: pdkpoll.org

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