

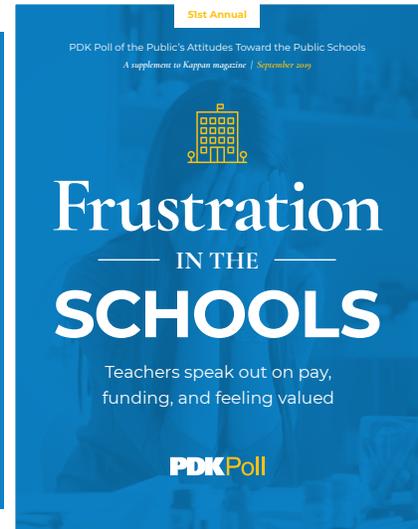
# PDKPoll

The **51st Annual** PDK Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools

[pdkpoll.org](http://pdkpoll.org)

## Highlights

Half of public school teachers have seriously considered leaving the profession in the past few years. Only about half say their community values them a great deal or a good amount, and a majority says that, given the opportunity, they'd vote to go on strike for higher pay.



### Other notable results:

**Discipline.** About half of parents and two-thirds of teachers say school discipline is not strict enough. Americans endorse the concept of zero tolerance but offer less support when presented with practical application of such policies. Adults prefer mediation over detention or suspension when dealing with student misbehavior.

**Assessing school quality.** Nearly all teachers (94%) say the better way to assess a school's quality is to look at the improvement its students show over time, rather than the percentage of students who pass a standardized state test at any given time. Majorities of parents and all adults agree — 77% and 75%, respectively.

**Civics.** Most Americans say students should be required to study civics in schools. Only a minority of parents worry that civics classes might include political content they disagree with; even fewer teachers share that concern.

**Bible studies.** Majorities say schools should offer classes in Bible studies and comparative religions, with small percentages of Americans saying they should be required. Evangelical Christians are most supportive of offering Bible studies in schools and most concerned that comparative religion courses could cause their child to question their family's faith.

**Workforce preparation.** Preparing a student for the workplace isn't the main purpose of a public school education, but a plurality of parents (45%) would still like

to have their child enroll in a job skills course in high school rather than an advanced academic class or an arts or music course.

**School funding.** Most adults, in general, parents and teachers say their local schools have too little money; Black Americans are especially likely to believe this. Even a majority of the most affluent Americans say their schools are underfunded. Americans name lack of financial support as the biggest problem facing public schools in their community for the 18th consecutive year.

**Taxes for schools.** Raising taxes to support public schools remains unpopular, but Americans do support using revenue from state lotteries, legal recreational marijuana, and legal sports gambling to increase school funding.

**Pressures at school.** Half of teachers see pressure to do well on tests as a big problem, compared with about 3 in 10 parents. Teachers are slightly more likely than parents to perceive the pressure to conform as a problem at school. Both groups rate racism, religious bias, and bias toward gay, lesbian, and/or transgender students as relatively small problems.

**Grading the schools.** Parents and teachers generally give pretty high grades to their local schools. Among parents, those who are Asian American, affluent, or college-educated award the highest grades.