

**The 49<sup>th</sup> Annual PDK Poll  
of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools**

**Academic achievement isn't the only  
mission**

# 2017 PDK POLL

## of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools

Joshua P. Starr, Ed.D., CEO, PDK International

@JoshuaPStarr

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





The PDK Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools has been a trusted and independent source of information since 1969.

The poll occurs each May with results published in the September issue of *Kappan* magazine.

The PDK poll is financed solely by the PDK Educational Foundation, which enables PDK to offer an independent and unbiased report of American public opinion.

The 2017 PDK poll on education was designed, managed, analyzed, and reported by Langer Research Associates of New York, N.Y., in consultation with PDK. All results described in this report were tested for statistical significance.





## 2017 national and state polls

### Main areas covered:

- Life after high school
- Choice
- Diversity
- Wraparound services
- Indicators of school quality



## 2017 national and state polls

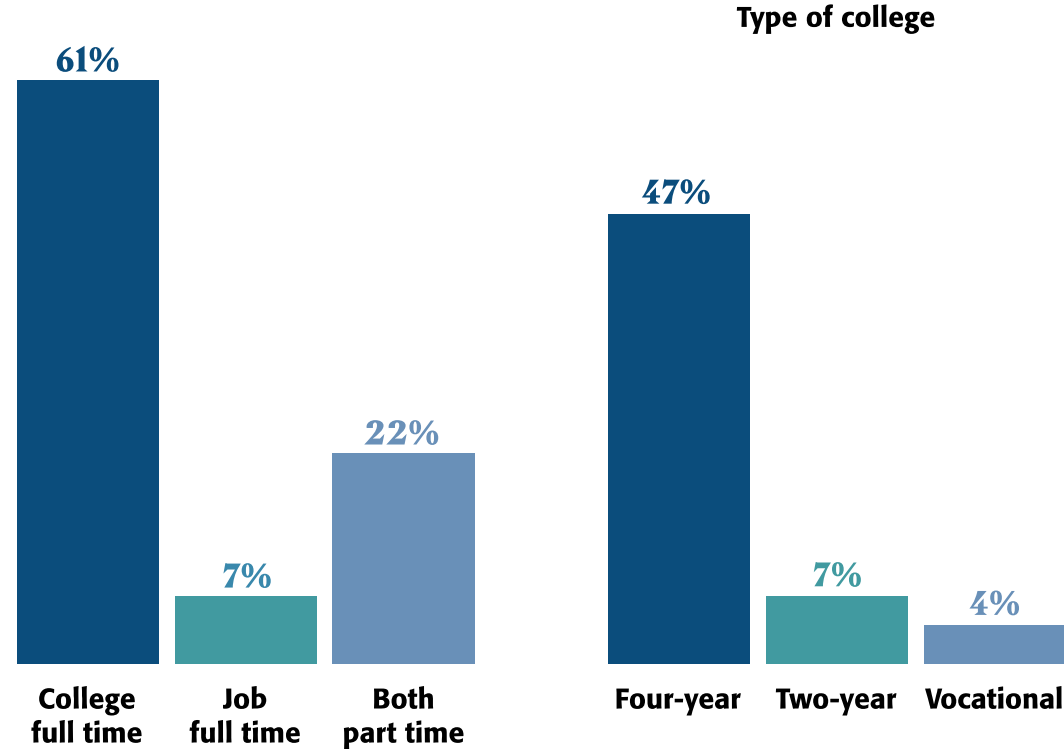
Main themes that emerged:

- Expectations and opportunities gap
- Policy and discourse based on dichotomies

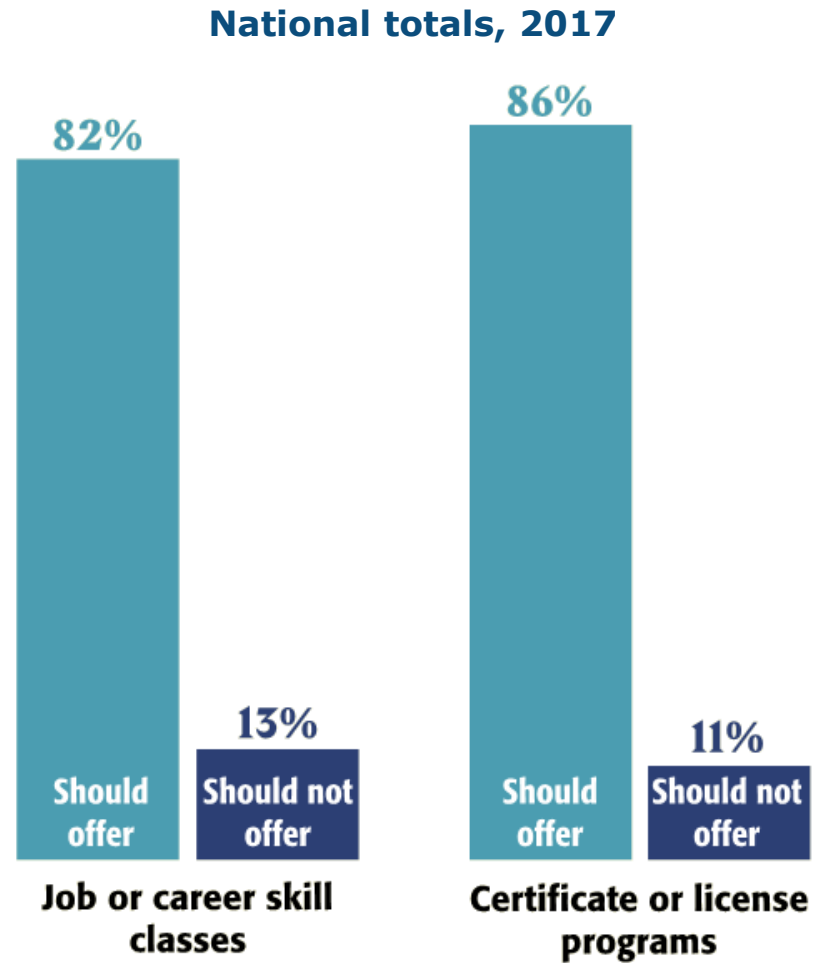
# What's the problem we're trying to solve?

# Expectations for oldest child after high school

Public school parents, 2017



# Career-related courses in public high schools



# Extremely/very important items in school quality

National totals, 2017

Interpersonal skills 82%

Technology & engineering classes 82%

Advanced academic classes 76%

Art & music classes 71%

Extracurricular activities 70%

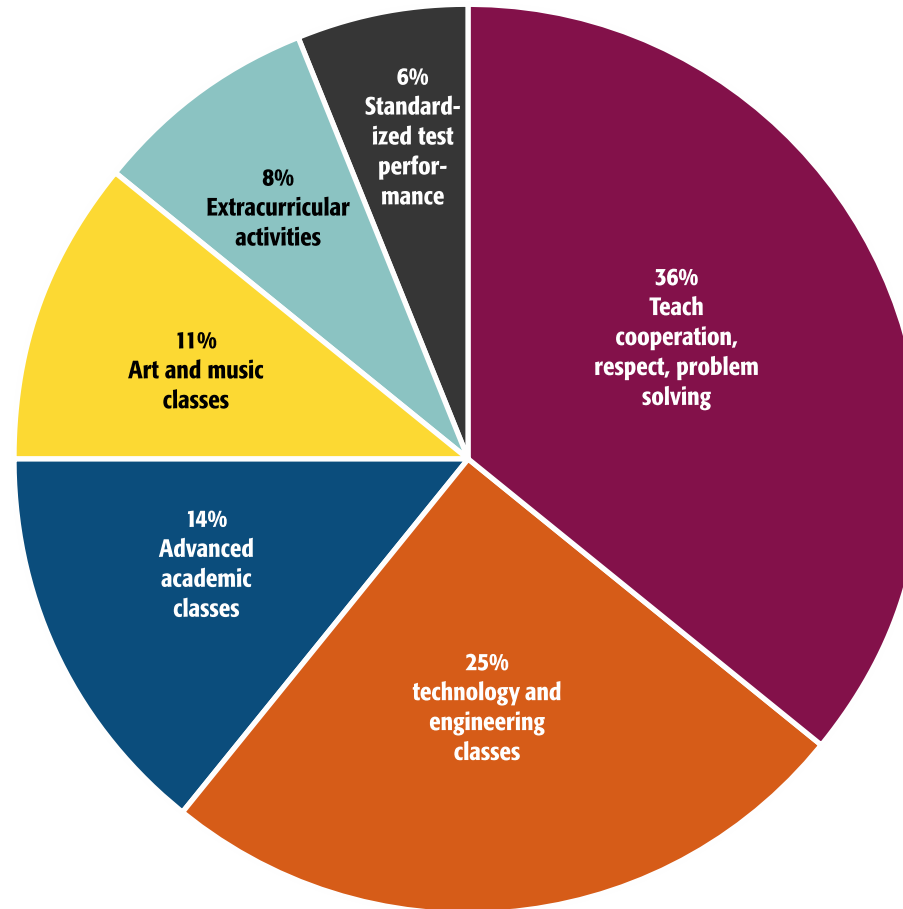
Standardized tests 42%





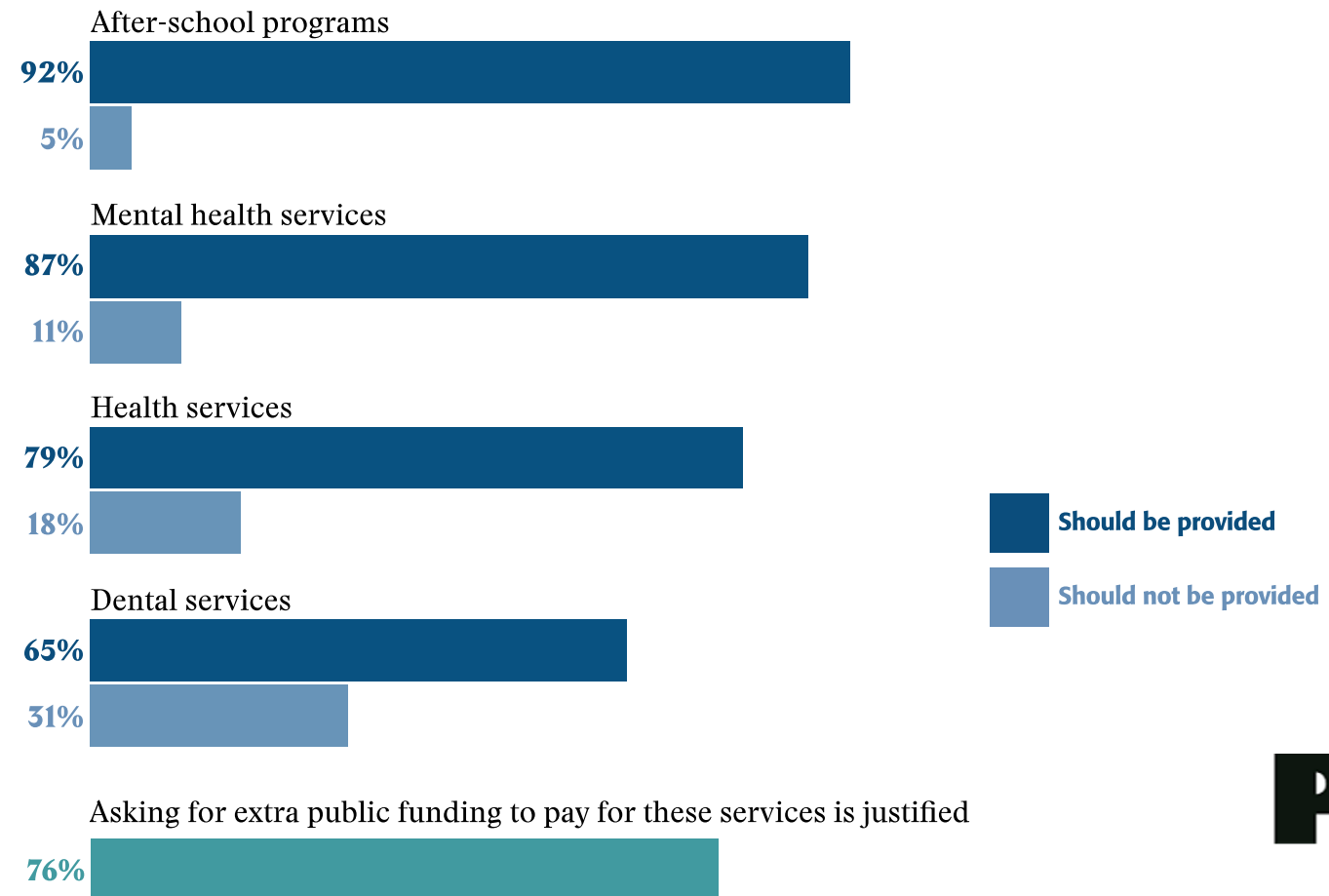
# Most important factor in school quality

National totals, 2017

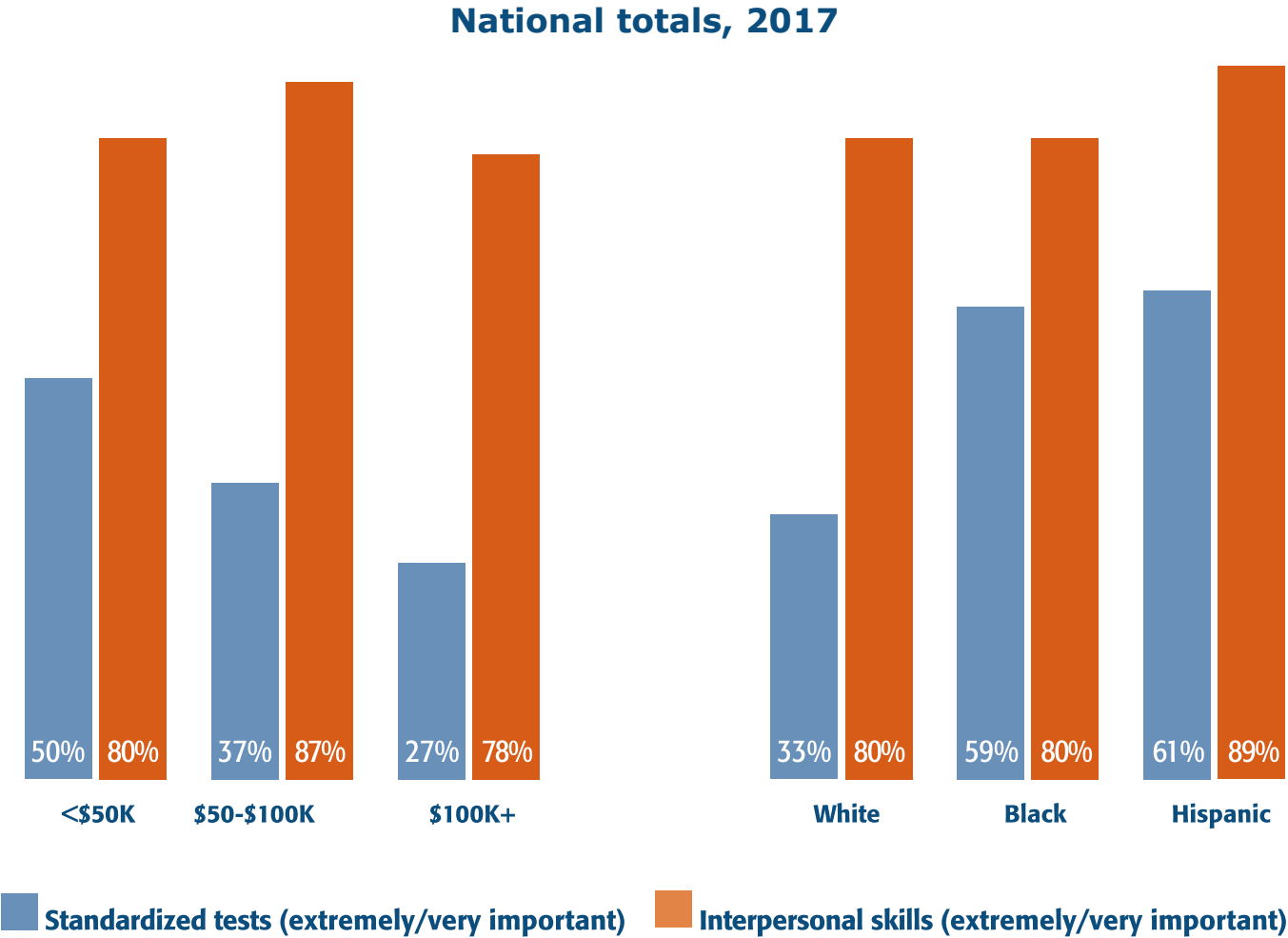


# Support for wraparound services

## National totals, 2017

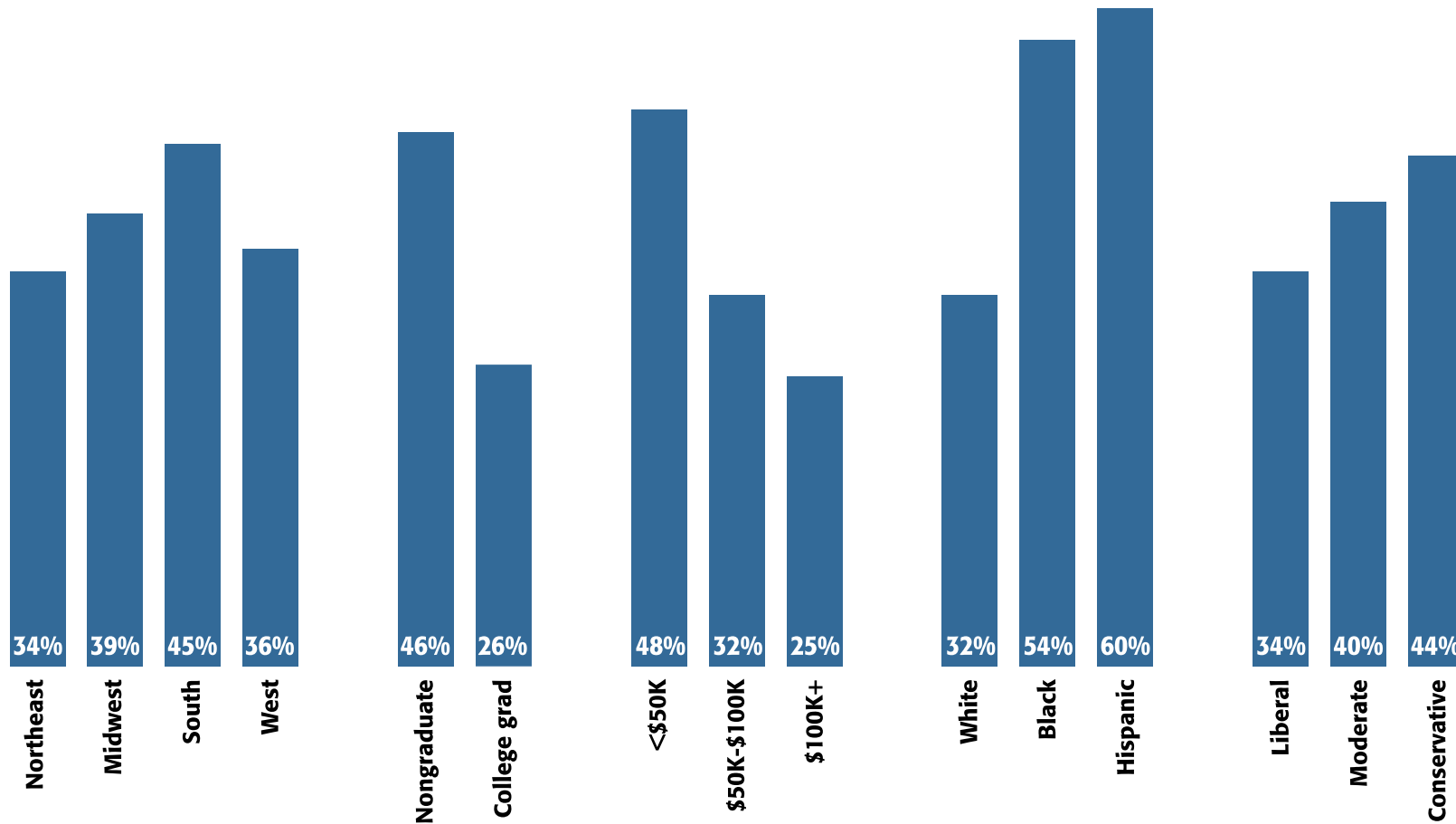


# Importance of standardized tests and interpersonal skills



# Confidence in measuring interpersonal skills with standardized tests

National totals, 2017



# Confidence in accountability systems and testing

## National totals, 2017

State does very well evaluating the quality of schools

14%

Somewhat well

43%

Somewhat poorly

21%

Very poorly

9%

## Public school parents, 2017

Very confident tests do a good job measuring how well child is learning

19%

Somewhat confident

39%

Not so confident

20%

Not at all confident

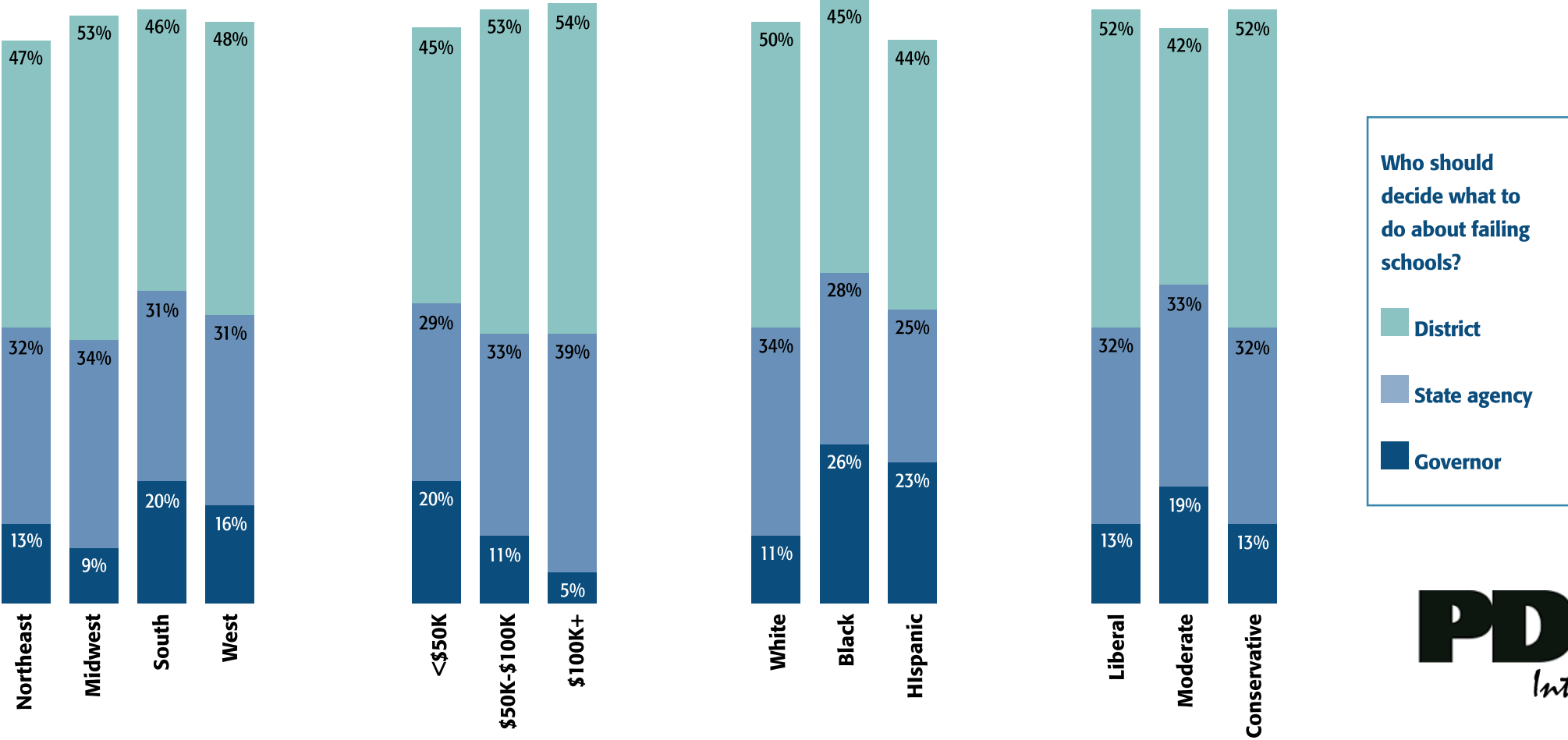
19%





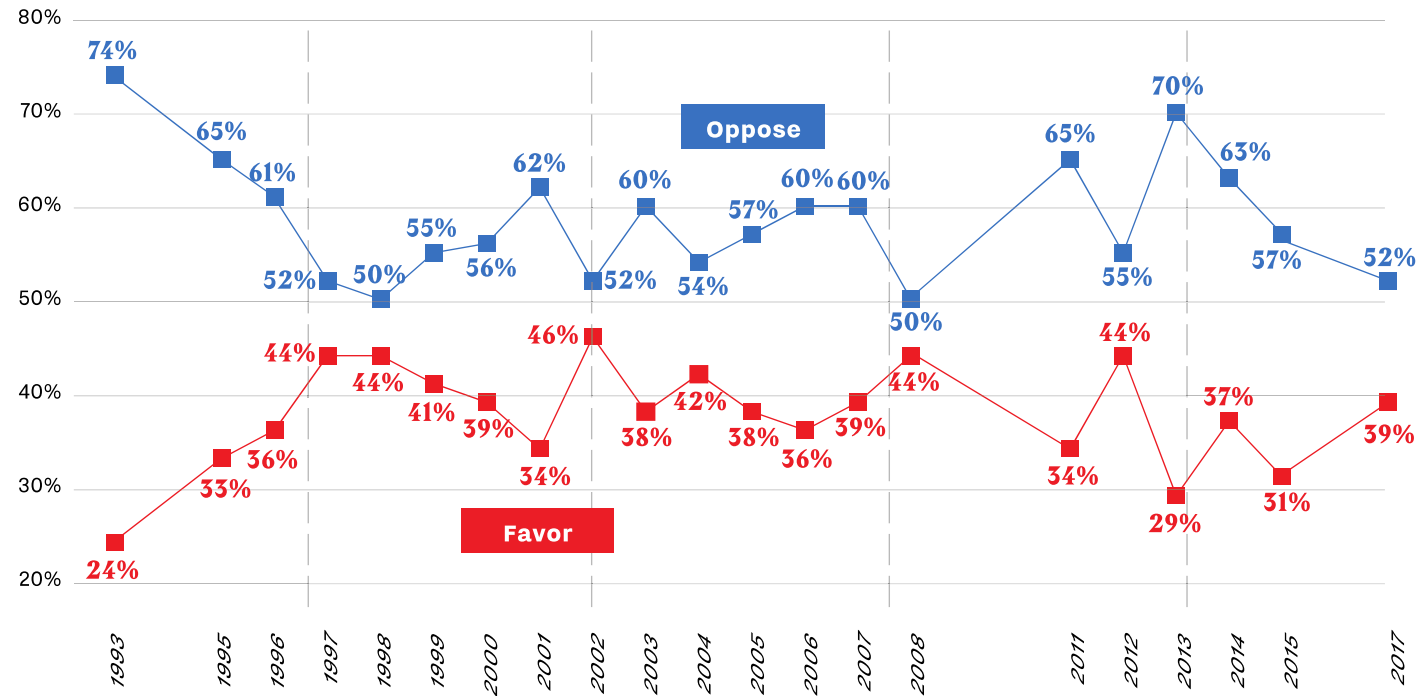
# Preference on decision making when school has been failing

National totals, 2017



# Choosing private school at public expense\*

National totals, 1993-2017

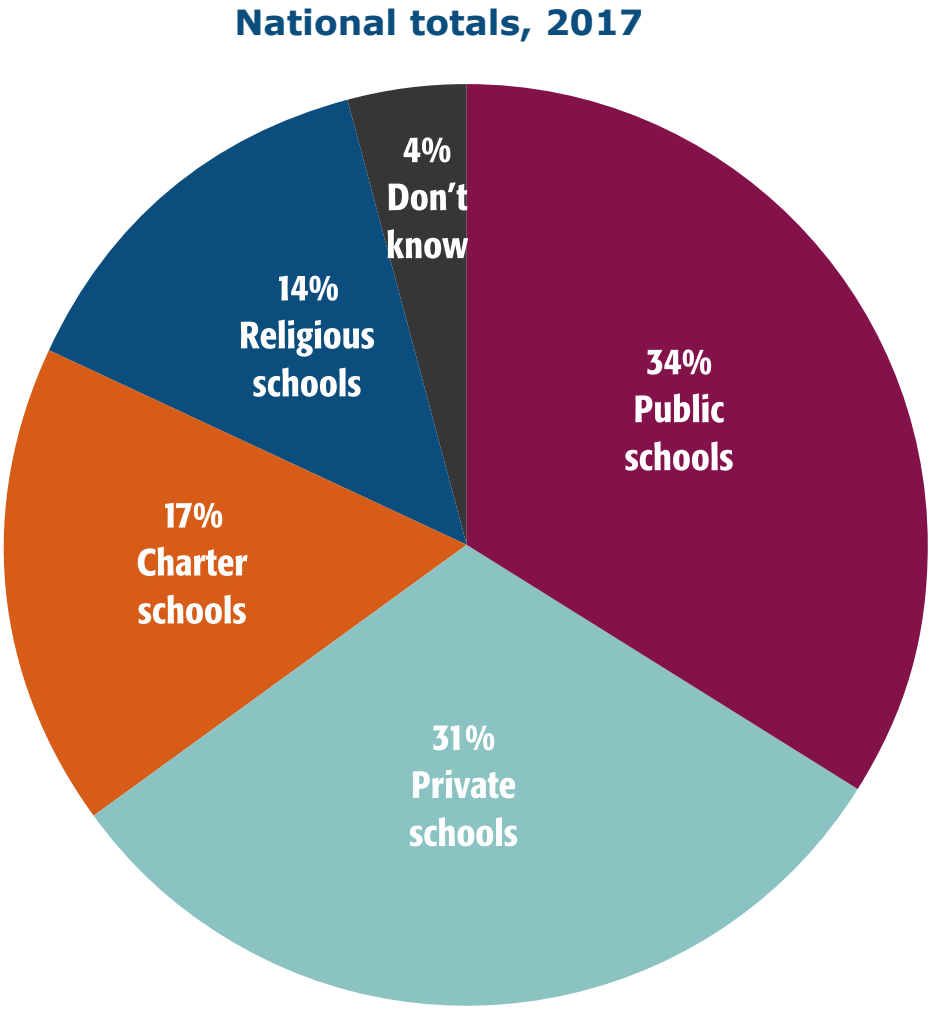


The question: Do you favor or oppose allowing students and parents to choose a private school to attend at public expense?

*\*Note: The term voucher is used in the report to mean public expense or public funding, which were the terms used during polling.*

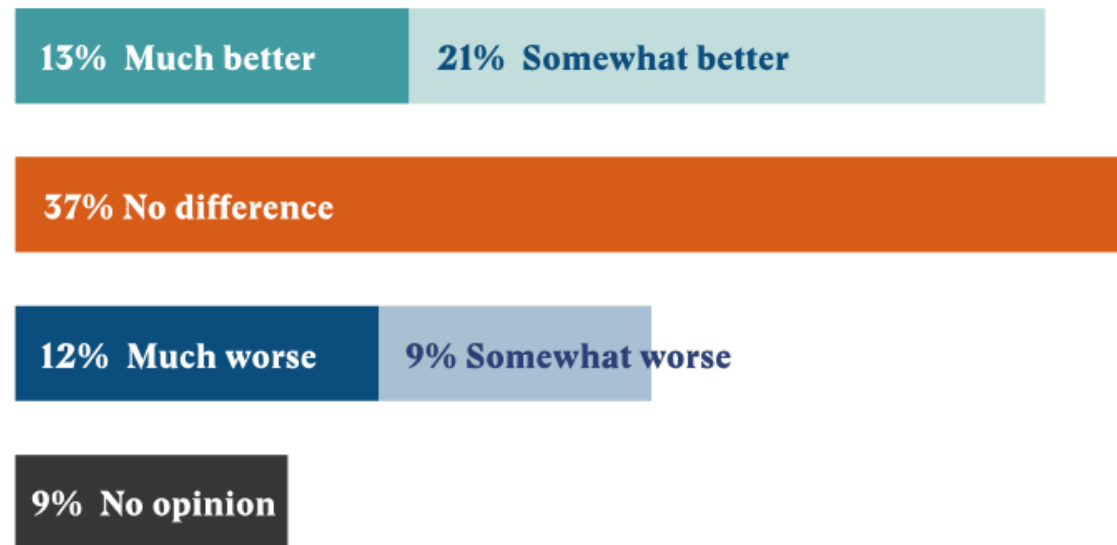


# Where would you send your child if cost and location of school were not an issue?



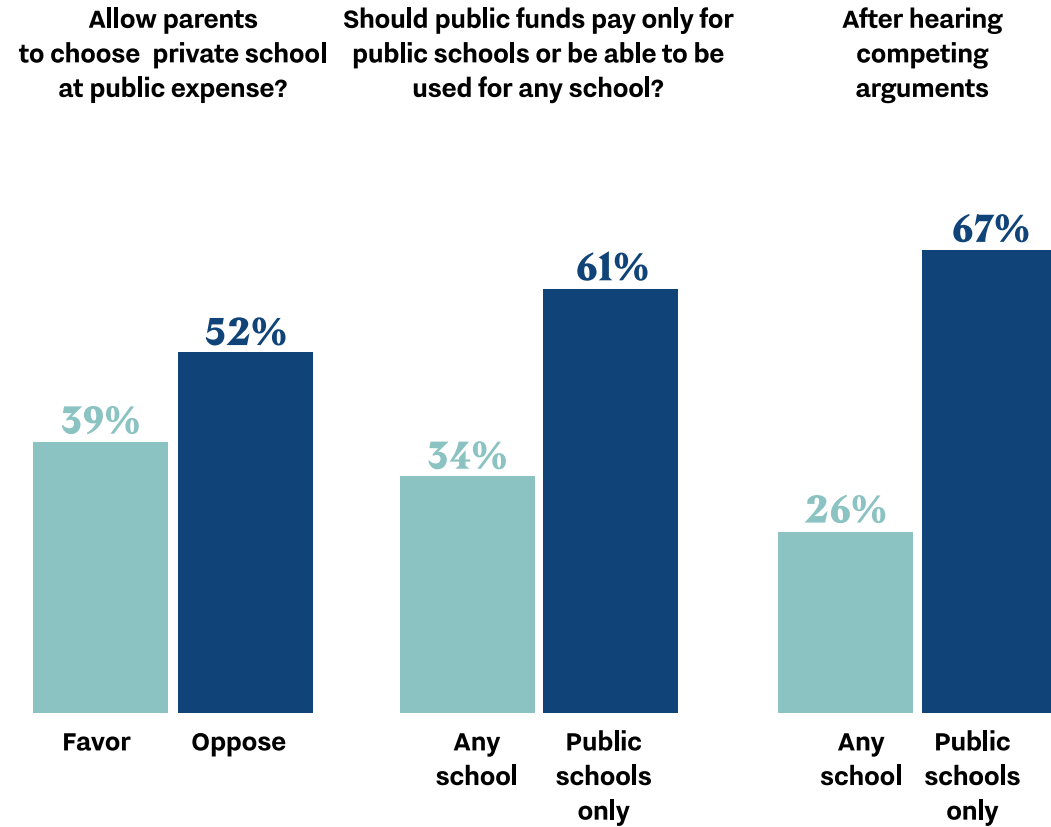
# Effect of vouchers on quality of public schools

National totals, 2017



# Vouchers: Public education fund allocation

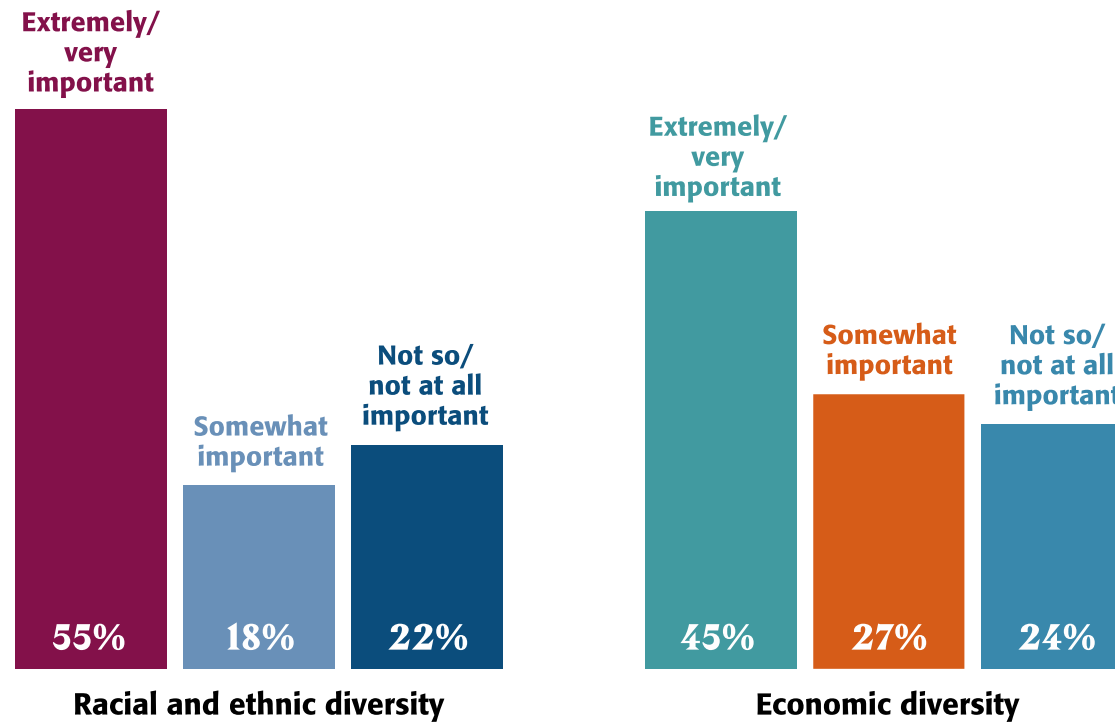
## National totals, 2017





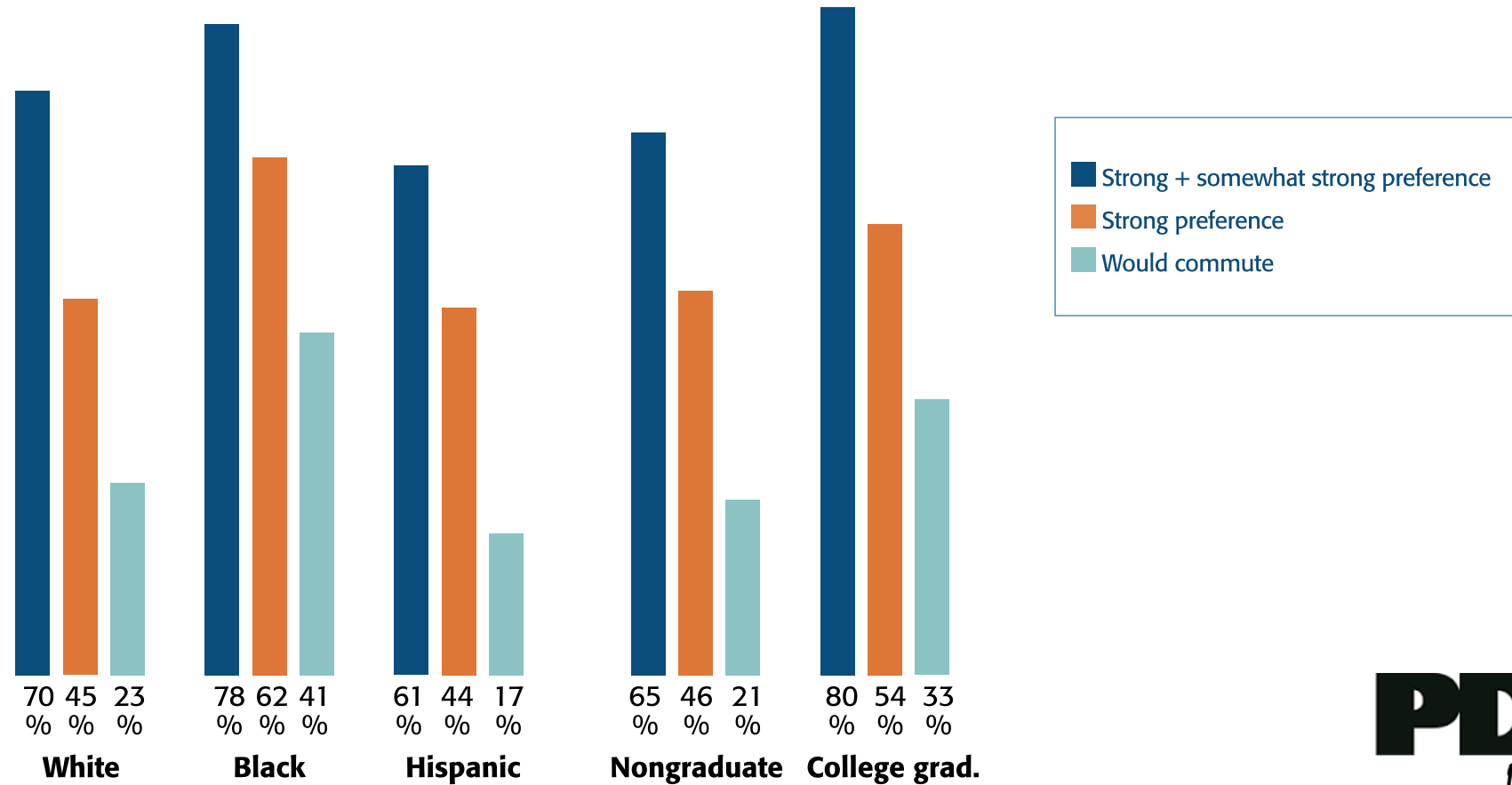
# Importance of diversity in public schools

Parents of school-age children, 2017



# Preference for racial/ethnic diversity in schools and willingness to commute

Parents of school-age children, 2017



## A & B grades for public schools

