



ELEVATE 215

Philadelphia Families Poll

June 2025

METHODOLOGY

On behalf of Elevate 215,
Embold Research
conducted a survey among
Philadelphia parents and
caregivers to better
understand their priorities
and needs when it comes to
their children's education.



Survey of N=606 parents and
caregivers in Philadelphia, PA from
April 2-22, 2025



Respondents were recruited via
dynamic online sampling to
obtain a sample reflective of
the population.



Post-stratification performed on
gender, race/ethnicity, and
school type.



The modeled margin of error is 4.5%

SAMPLE OVERVIEW

[Survey Respondents = 606]



37% - Black

33% - White

15% - Hispanic

7% - Asian

7% - Multiracial & Other



33% - High School or Less

32% - Some College or
2-yr Degree

18% - 4-yr Degree

18% - Graduate Degree



18% - Less Than \$35k

26% - \$35-75k

27% - \$75-150k

20% - \$150k or Over



79% - Children Attend Only Public
District and/or Charter Schools

16% - Children Attend Only Private
Schools and/or Homeschools

5% - Children Attend both Public
and Private Schools



21% - Greater Northeast

18% - Lower Northeast

15% - North Philadelphia

16% - Northwest Philadelphia

13% - South Philadelphia & City Center

6% - Southwest Philadelphia

10% - West Philadelphia

KEY FINDINGS

1 | Perceptions on the
Direction of Philadelphia
Schools Have Improved,
but Parents Remain Divided

2 | Teacher Quality, School
Safety, and Instructional
Practices Are Universally
Prioritized by Parents

3 | Strong Support for a
Common Application
and Enrollment System
for Public District and
Charter Schools

4 | Nearly All Parents Agree
That Improving School
Quality Should Be the
City's Top Budget Priority

PERCEPTIONS OF PHILADELPHIA Schools

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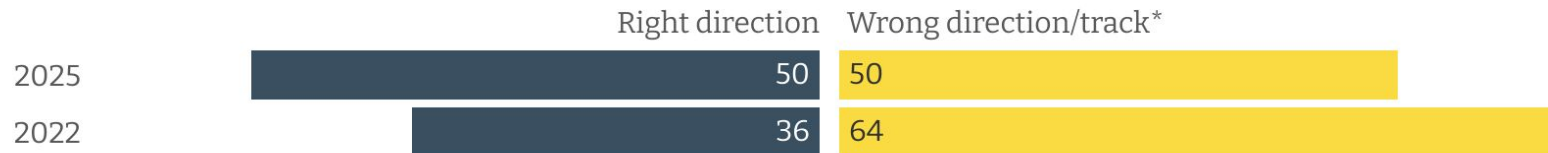
KEY FINDING

1

Perceptions on the Direction of
Philadelphia Schools Have Improved,
but Parents Remain Divided

Perceptions of the direction of Philadelphia schools have significantly improved over the past three years.

Direction of Philadelphia Schools



Q: In general, would you say schools in Philadelphia are going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

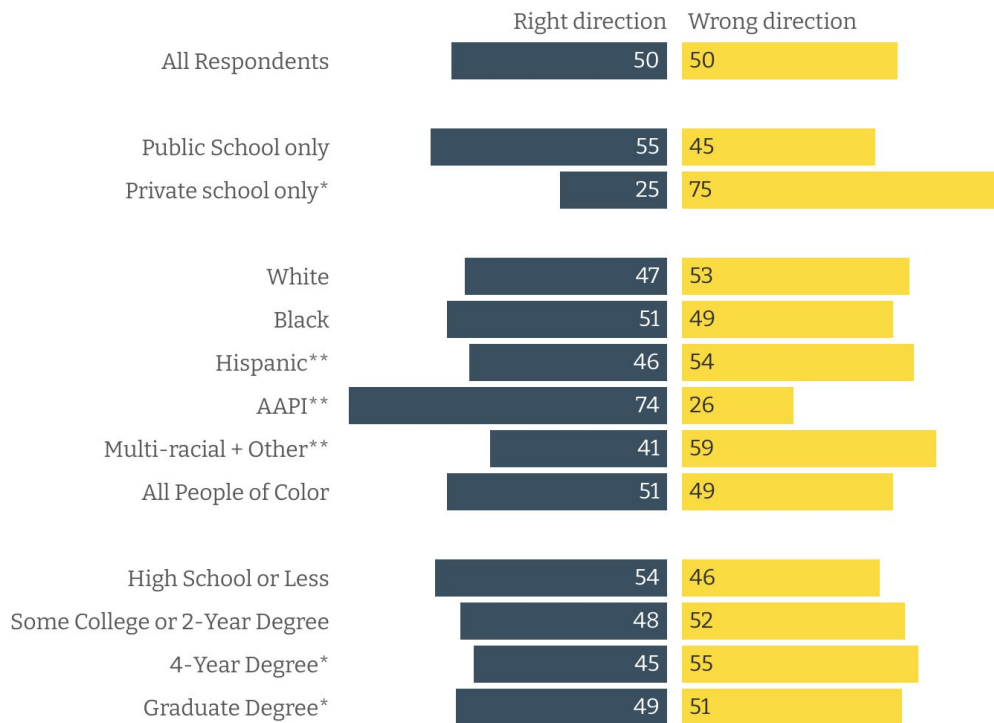
*in 2022, respondents were given the option of "right direction"/"wrong track"



**However,
perceptions of the
direction of
Philadelphia
schools vary
across different
demographic
groups.**

Q: In general, would you say schools in Philadelphia are going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

● Right direction ● Wrong direction



* = small sample size, under N=120

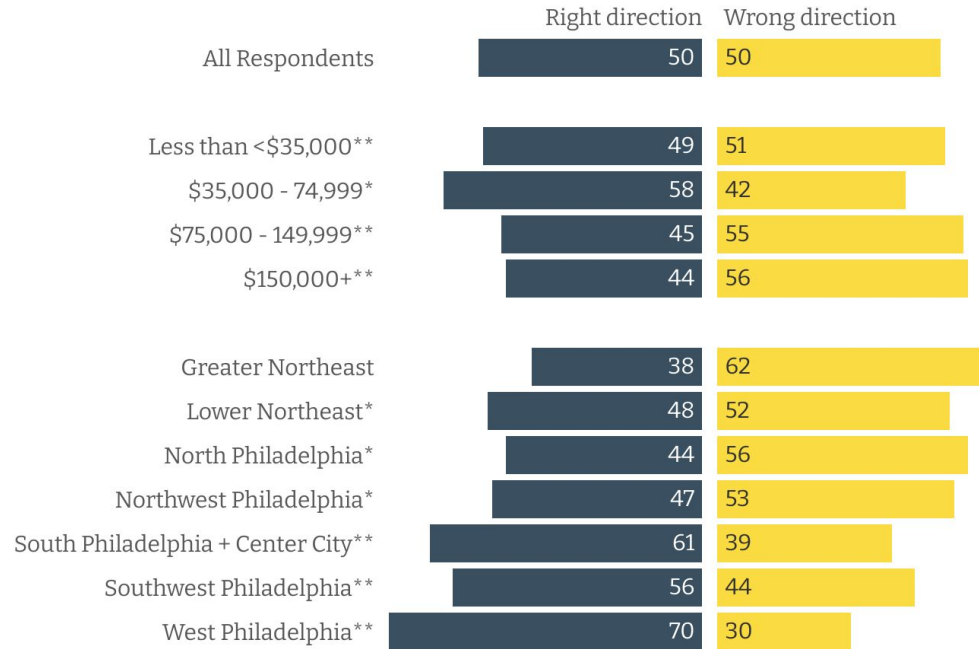
** = extremely small sample size, under N=60



[Cont.]...vary across different demographic groups.

Q: In general, would you say schools in Philadelphia are going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

● Right direction ● Wrong direction



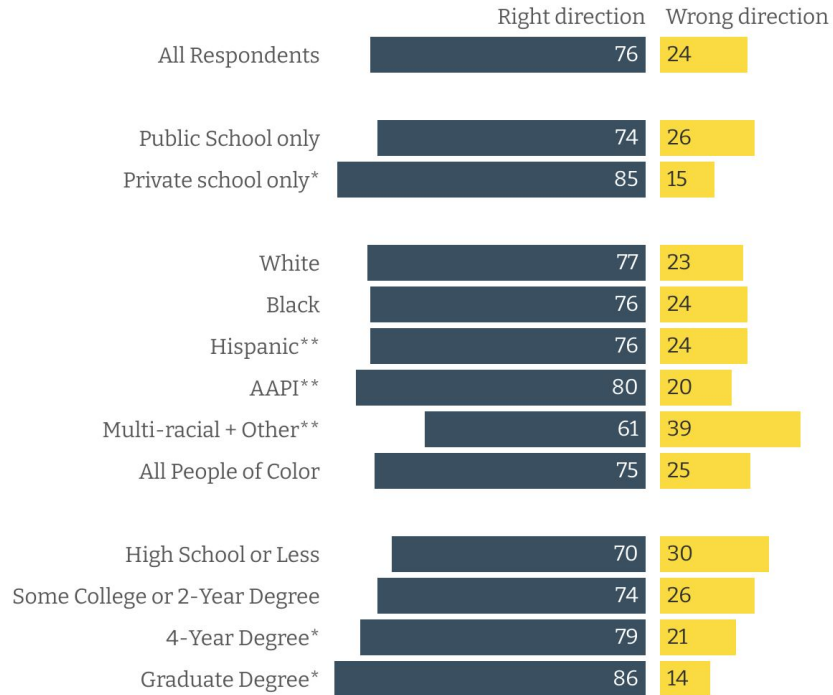
* = small sample size, under N=120

** = extremely small sample size, under N=60



Q: More specifically, would you say the school(s) your child(ren) currently attends is going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

● Right direction ● Wrong direction



* = small sample size, under N=120

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Parents tend to feel very optimistic about the direction of their child's current school across all demographics.

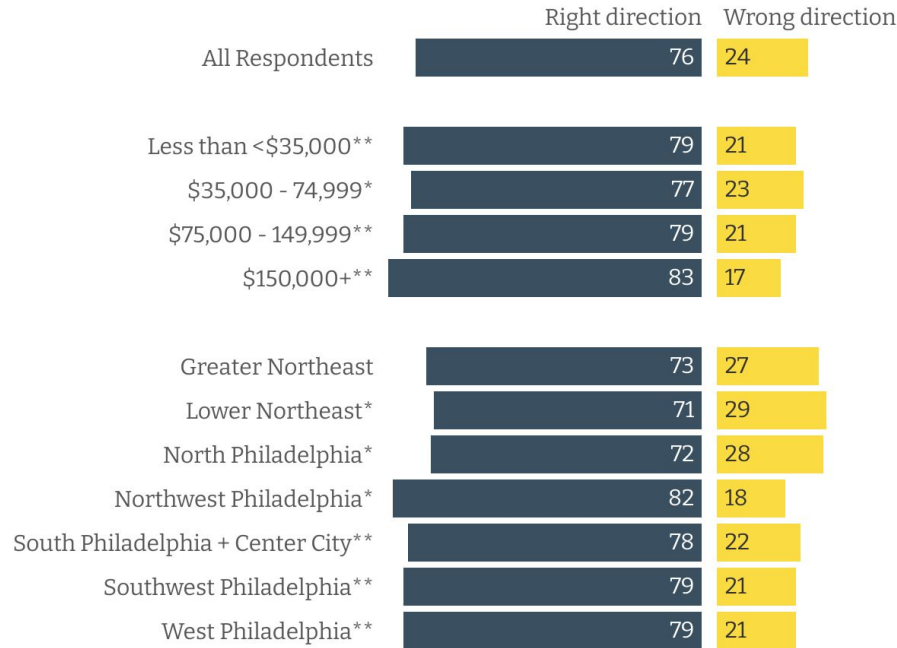
There is also a slight improvement from the 73% who thought schools were on the "right track" in the 2022 Parent Poll, with 27% saying they were heading in the "wrong direction."



[Cont.]...across all demographics.

Q: More specifically, would you say the school(s) your child(ren) currently attends is going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

● Right direction ● Wrong direction



* = small sample size, under N=120

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PERCEPTIONS OF PHILADELPHIA

School Quality

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KEY FINDING

2

Teacher Quality, School
Safety, and Instructional
Practices Are Universally
Prioritized by Parents

Nearly all parents agreed the top three “very important” priorities when choosing a school were Teacher Quality (#1), School Safety (#2), and Instructional Practices (#3).

Top Factors in Selecting a School

Respondents who selected "Very Important"



Q: How important are each of the following priorities to you when considering the school(s) your child(ren) attends?



The top three priorities were “very important” across demographic groups.

Top Factors in Selecting a School

Total “Very Important”

	Teacher quality (#1)	Student safety (#2)	Curriculum and instructional practices (#3)
Respondents	95	95	90
Public School only	95	94	89
Private school only*	97	97	93
White	97	94	90
Black	97	96	92
Hispanic**	89	96	85
AAPI**	93	88	91
Multi-racial + Other**	95	96	82
All People of Color	95	95	89
High School or Less	97	95	87
Some College or 2-Year Degree	97	95	87
4-Year Degree*	88	95	92
Graduate Degree*	97	93	93

Q: How important are each of the following priorities to you when considering the school(s) your child(ren) attends?

* = small sample size, under N=120

** = extremely sample size, under N=60



[Cont.]...top priorities were “very important” across demographic groups.

Top Factors in Selecting a School

Total "Very Important"

	Teacher quality (#1)	Student safety (#2)	Curriculum and instructional practices (#3)
Respondents	95	95	90
Less than <\$35,000**	95	96	87
\$35,000 - 74,999*	96	96	92
\$75,000 - 149,999**	96	94	88
\$150,000+**	93	91	94
Greater Northeast	94	98	86
Lower Northeast*	95	95	87
North Philadelphia*	98	97	89
Northwest Philadelphia*	95	92	92
South Philadelphia + Center City**	96	91	92
Southwest Philadelphia**	96	96	100
West Philadelphia**	95	95	88

Q:How important are each of the following priorities to you when considering the school(s) your child(ren) attends?

* = small sample size, under N=120

** = extremely sample size, under N=60



After the top three, the importance of the four to six priorities differed depending on the demographic group.

Top Factors in Selecting a School

Total "Very Important"

	College and career readiness (#4)	Social and emotional supports (#5)	Parent and family engagement (#6)
Respondents	80	73	71
Public School only	79	74	74
Private school only*	84	66	54
White	70	60	56
Black	89	88	86
Hispanic**	78	64	79
AAP1**	80	93	42
Multi-racial + Other**	89	64	88
All People of Color	86	80	80
High School or Less	88	78	82
Some College or 2-Year Degree	81	76	79
4-Year Degree*	75	64	63
Graduate Degree*	74	70	55

Q: How important are each of the following priorities to you when considering the school(s) your child(ren) attends?

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Top Factors in Selecting a School

Total "Very Important"

	College and career readiness (#4)	Social and emotional supports (#5)	Parent and family engagement (#6)
Respondents	80	73	71
Less than <\$35,000**	85	84	89
\$35,000 - 74,999*	84	86	79
\$75,000 - 149,999**	74	68	53
\$150,000+**	77	54	61
Greater Northeast	82	69	71
Lower Northeast*	77	72	69
North Philadelphia*	98	71	80
Northwest Philadelphia*	74	75	68
South Philadelphia + Center City**	68	66	55
Southwest Philadelphia**	96	93	82
West Philadelphia**	79	80	86

Q: How important are each of the following priorities to you when considering the school(s) your child(ren) attends?

* = small sample size, under N=120

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[Cont.]...the importance of the four to six priorities differed depending on the demographic group.



PERCEPTIONS OF PHILADELPHIA **ENROLLMENT**



KEY FINDING

3

Strong Support for a
Common Application
and Enrollment System
for Public District and
Charter Schools

A strong majority of parents (70%) agree that Philadelphia families would benefit from a common enrollment system.

Support for Common Enrollment



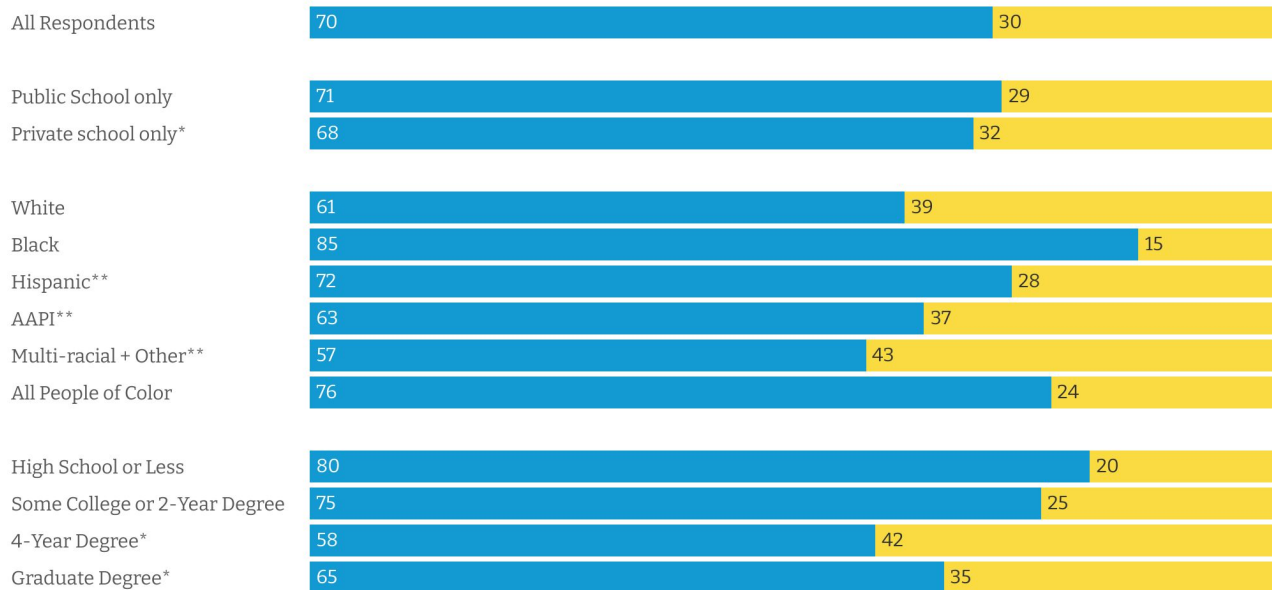
Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Philadelphia families would benefit from a common enrollment system, where they submit one application for all public district and charter schools interested in attending, and receive a single enrollment offer for their child(ren)."



Black parents and parents with lower educational attainment show the strongest support for the system.

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Philadelphia families would benefit from a common enrollment system, where they submit one application for all public district and charter schools interested in attending, and receive a single enrollment offer for their child(ren).”

● Total Agree ● Total Disagree



* = small sample size, under N=120

** = extremely small sample size, under N=60



[Cont.]...low-income parents, North and West Philly parents also expressed a high-level of support.

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “Philadelphia families would benefit from a common enrollment system, where they submit one application for all public district and charter schools interested in attending, and receive a single enrollment offer for their child(ren).”

● Total Agree ● Total Disagree



* = small sample size, under N=120

** = extremely small sample size, under N=60



PERCEPTIONS OF PHILADELPHIA

Budget Priorities

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KEY FINDING

4

Nearly All Parents Agree
That Improving School
Quality Should Be the
City's Top Budget Priority

Parents overwhelmingly agree the City's top budget priority should be investing in improving the quality of schools.

Support for Prioritizing Investing in Schools



Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "The City of Philadelphia's top budget priority should be investing in improving the quality of schools."



The agreement to prioritize city funding for schools was seen across all demographic groups.

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “The City of Philadelphia’s top budget priority should be investing in improving the quality of schools.”

● Total Agree ● Total Disagree



* = small sample size, under N=120

** = extremely small sample size, under N=60



[Cont.]... middle-income parents, and Northwest and South Philly parents expressed a high-level of support.

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “The City of Philadelphia’s top budget priority should be investing in improving the quality of schools.”

● Total Agree ● Total Disagree



* = small sample size, under N=120

** = extremely small sample size, under N=60



CONCLUSION | Based on these findings, the following actions could help address key areas of concern:

1. Invest in Teacher Development and Retention

Families across all demographics agree that teacher quality is crucial to student success. Continued investment in teacher development programs and strategies for teacher retention will be critical to enhancing educational outcomes and supporting long-term progress.

2. Expand and Simplify Access to Schools through Common Enrollment

The strong support for a common enrollment system highlights an opportunity for policy change that would streamline the school application process and make it easier for families, especially those from lower-income backgrounds, to access high-quality schools.

3. Increase Focus on Student Wellbeing and Safety

The priority placed on student safety and wellbeing calls for expanded support systems in schools. This includes not only physical safety but also programs aimed at promoting mental health, emotional support, and a positive school culture for all students.

4. Address Disparities in Educational Preferences

Racial and economic differences in preferences for educational programs suggest that a one-size-fits-all approach may not work for every family. Tailoring education options to meet the specific needs of different demographic groups, including culturally responsive programming and rigorous academic tracks, will help create a more inclusive and effective education system.