



EDUCATION POST

2015 Parent Attitudes Survey

About the Survey

The following analysis contains the results of the 2015 Parent Attitudes Survey, conducted on behalf of Education Post, via an online survey by Lightspeed GMI. Interviews were conducted from July 29 – August 9, 2015 among a representative sample of 1011 public school parents nationwide. The precision of online polls is measured using a credibility interval. The credibility interval for a sample size of 1011 is +/-3.6%. In addition, oversamples were conducted to reach a total of 429 African American public school parents and 412 Hispanic public school parents. The credibility interval for the oversamples is +/-5.6% and larger for subgroups. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including but not limited to coverage error and measurement error. Where figures do not sum to 100, this is due to effects of multiple response or rounding.

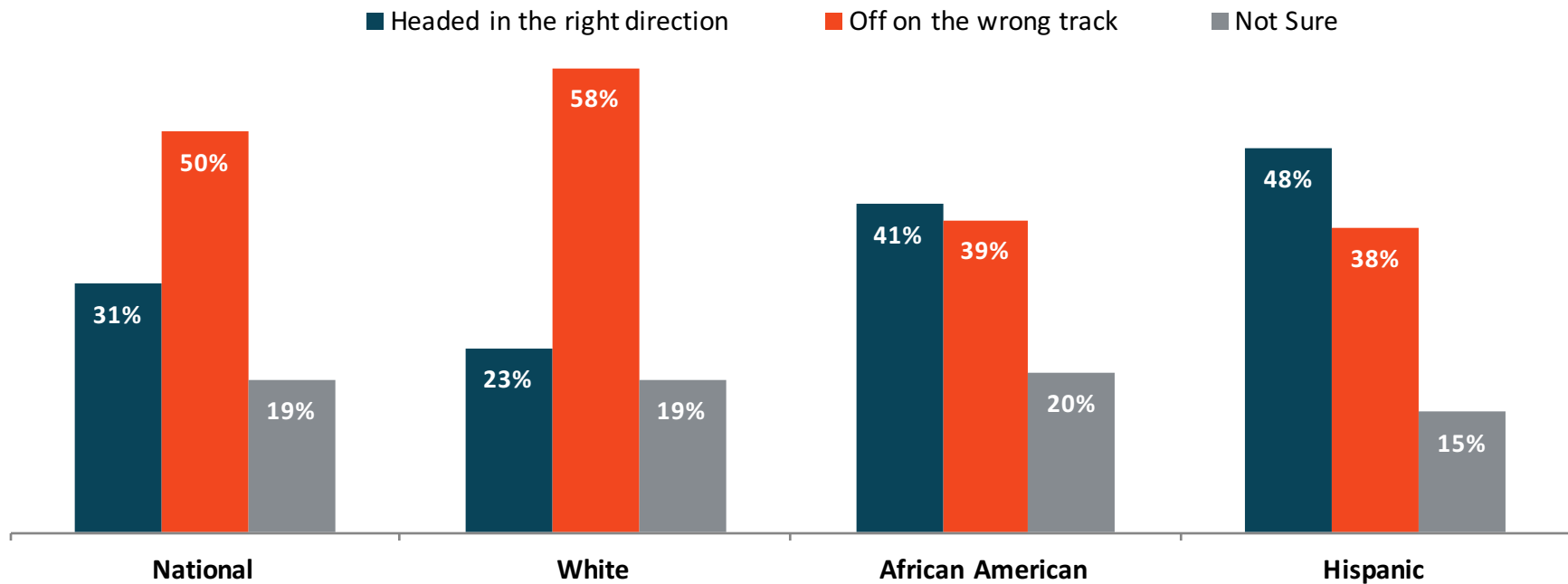
Public school parents are defined as adults (parents and guardian grandparents) with at least one child in a traditional public school or a public charter school in grades K-12.



Education Quality, Satisfaction, and Outcomes

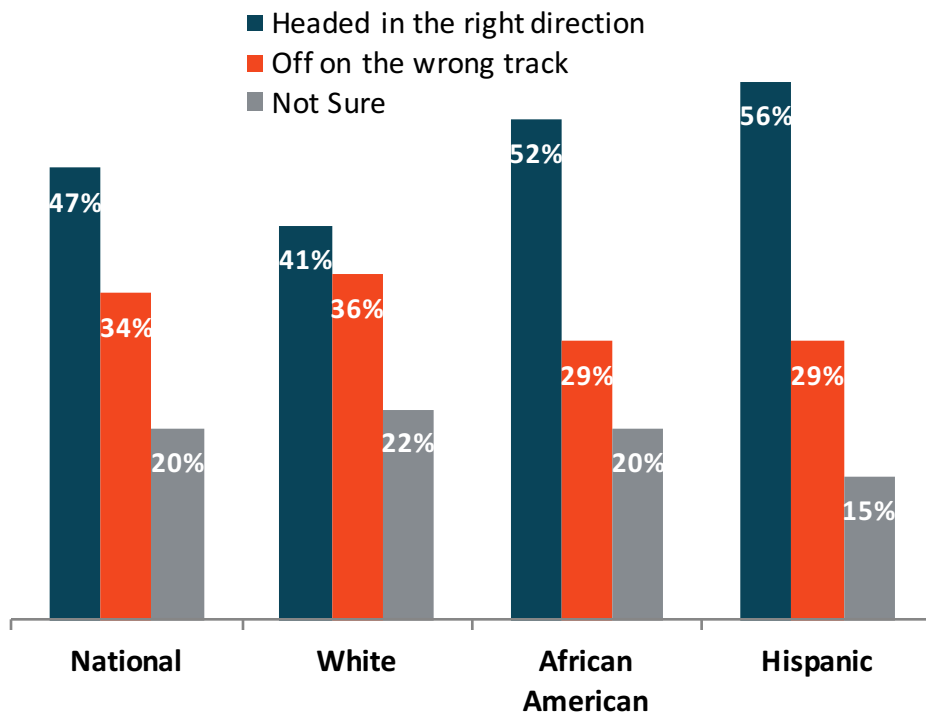
A majority of public school parents think the education system in the U.S. is on the wrong track; African American and Hispanic parents hold more favorable views

Education System in the U.S.:



Parents have a more optimistic view of the education system in their own community; African American and Hispanic parents are even more optimistic

Education System in Your Community:

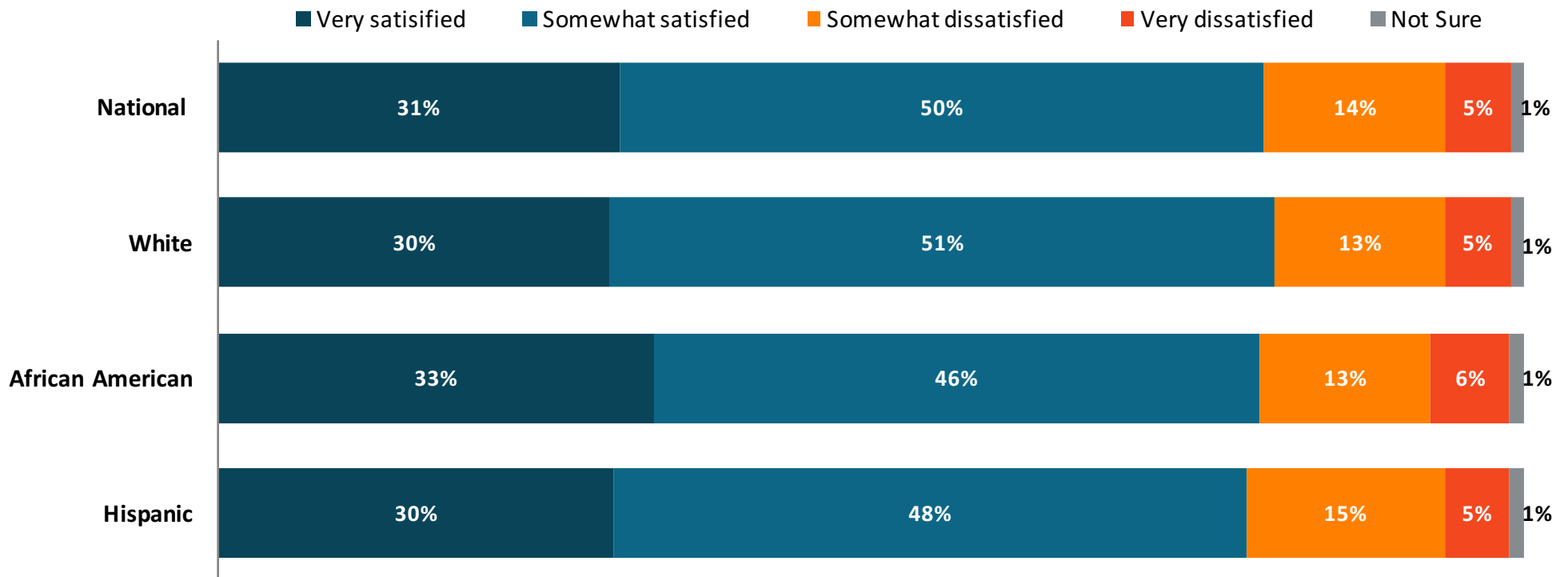


	National	
	Headed in the right direction	Off on the wrong track
<\$100k	44%	35%
\$100k+	58%	28%
Urban	52%	29%
Suburban	48%	32%
Rural	37%	42%
K/Elementary	51%	31%
Middle School	48%	33%
High School	42%	38%

Q: Generally speaking, is the education system in YOUR COMMUNITY headed in the right direction or is it off on the wrong track?

Parents are generally satisfied with the quality of their child’s school; most parents say they are “somewhat satisfied”

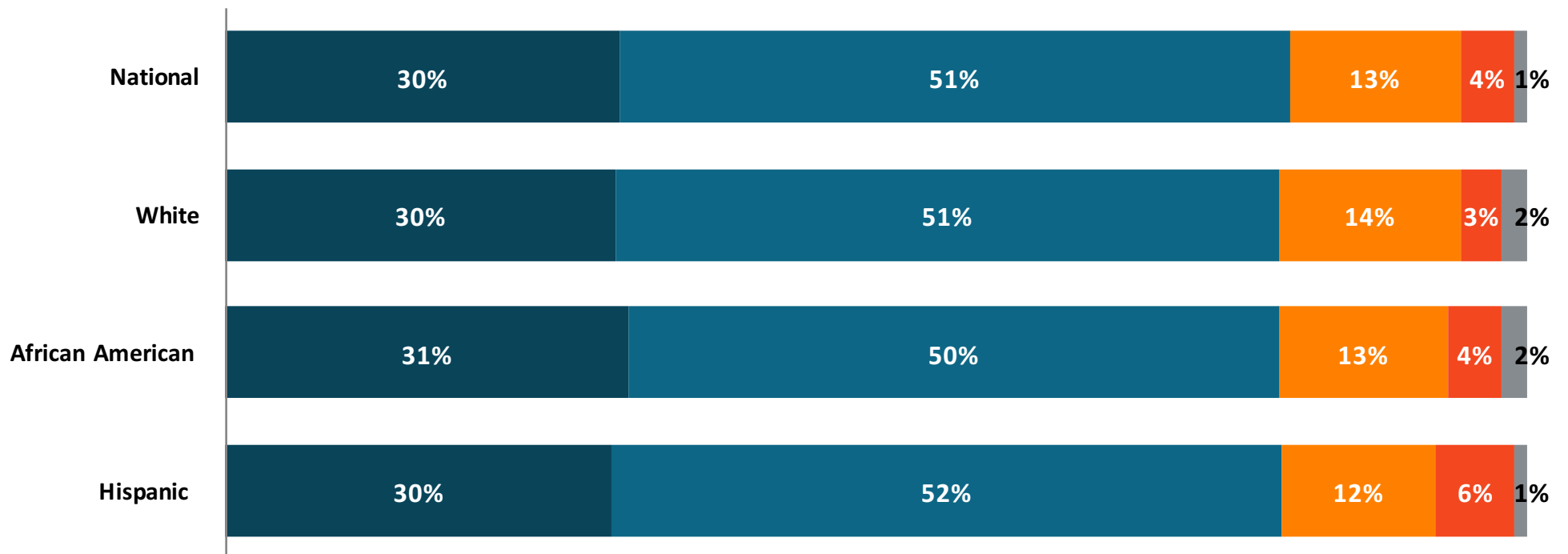
Satisfaction with the Quality of Your Child’s School:



Parents are generally satisfied with the quality of teachers at their child's school; most parents say they are "somewhat satisfied"

Satisfaction with the Quality of Your Child's Teachers:

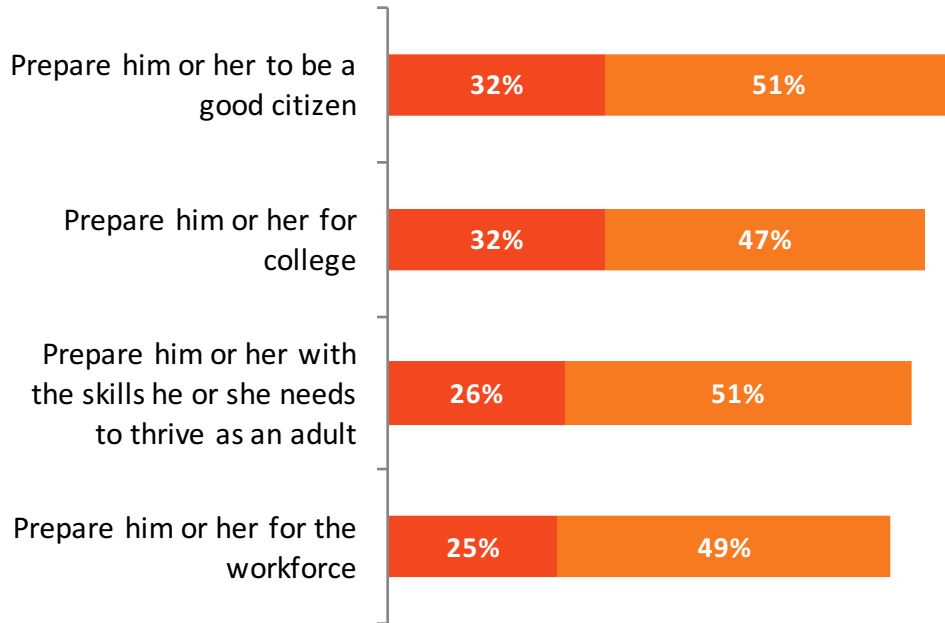
■ Very satisfied ■ Somewhat satisfied ■ Somewhat dissatisfied ■ Very dissatisfied ■ Not Sure



Parents are confident their child's education will prepare them for various paths after high school; most say they are "somewhat confident"

(Parents Nationally) Confidence Your Child's Education Will...

Very confident Somewhat confident



Parents more likely to be very/somewhat confident their child will be prepared to be a good citizen:

- **Higher income** (87% \$100k+ vs. 85% \$50- \leq \$100k vs. 80% \$25k- \leq \$50k vs. 79% \leq \$25k)
- **All non-White** (86% all non-White vs. 81% White)
- **Urban/suburban** (85% urban vs. 86% suburban vs. 77% rural)

Parents more likely to be very/somewhat confident their child will be prepared for college:

- **Higher income** (85% \$100k+ vs. 80% \$50- \leq \$100k vs. 78% \$25k- \leq \$50k vs. 74% \leq \$25k)
- **Urban/suburban** (82% urban vs. 81% suburban vs. 74% rural)
- **Higher educated** (83% college+ vs. 78% less than college)

Parents more likely to be very/somewhat confident their child will be prepared to thrive as an adult:

- **Higher income** (82% \$100k+ vs. 77% \$50- \leq \$100k vs. 75% \$25k- \leq \$50k vs. 74% \leq \$25k)
- **Urban/suburban** (80% urban vs. 79% suburban vs. 69% rural)

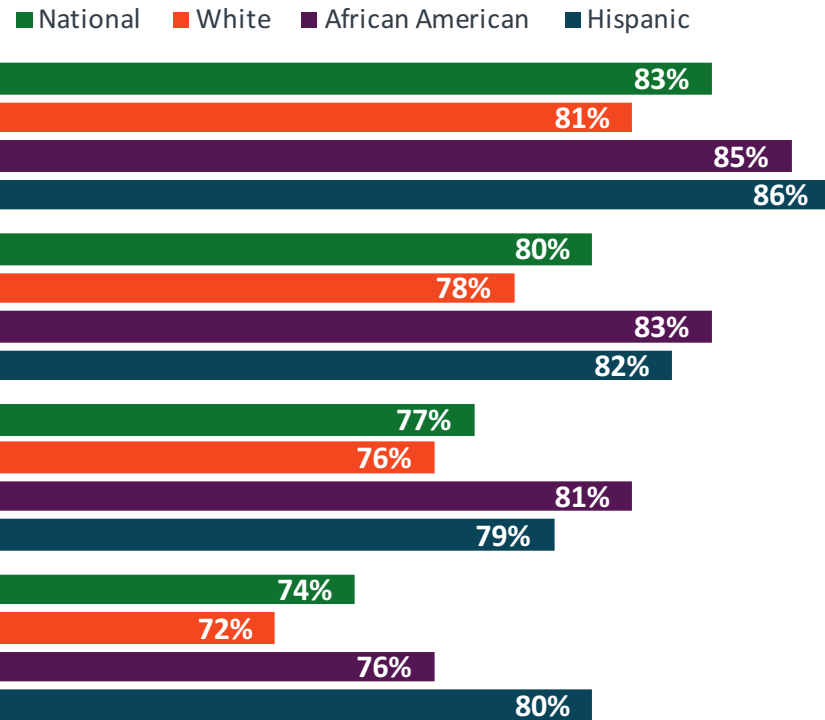
Parents more likely to be very/somewhat confident their child will be prepared for the workforce:

- **Higher income** (78% \$100k+ vs. 75% \$50- \leq \$100k vs. 72% \$25k- \leq \$50k vs. 71% \leq \$25k)
- **Urban/suburban** (79% urban vs. 74% suburban vs. 69% rural)

Q: How confident are you that your child's education will: [Prepare him or her to be a good citizen] [Prepare him or her for college] [Prepare him or her with the skills he or she needs to thrive as an adult] [Prepare him or her for the workforce]?

African American and Hispanic parents express more confidence than White parents that their child's education will prepare them for various paths after high school

Confidence Your Child's Education Will...



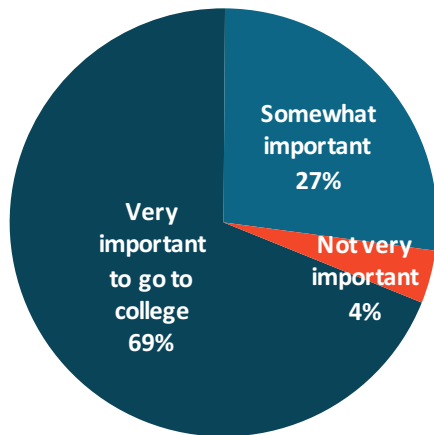
*Displaying percentage of parents who say they are very or somewhat confident.

Q: How confident are you that your child's education will: [Prepare him or her to be a good citizen] [Prepare him or her for college] [Prepare him or her with the skills he or she needs to thrive as an adult] [Prepare him or her for the workforce]?

College: Despite strong consensus that it is important for their own child, parents feel less strongly that college is important for every child

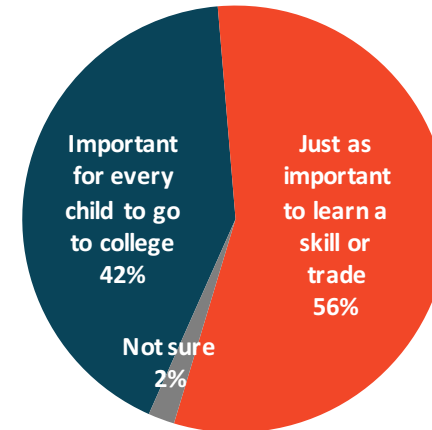
African American and Hispanic parents say college is even more important than White parents for their own child and for all children.

(Parents Nationally) College for Their Child:



	White	African American	Hispanic
Very Important	63%	78%	75%
Somewhat Important	31%	19%	22%

(Parents Nationally) College for Every Child:



	White	African American	Hispanic
Important to go to college	34%	51%	57%
Just as important to learn skill/trade	65%	44%	41%

Parents' top education CONCERNS include lack of parental involvement, inconsistent school quality, and school funding

HIGHEST RATED CONCERNS (Respondents selected 4 choices)	Nat	Wh	AA	Hisp		Nat	Wh	AA	Hisp
Parents are not as involved in their child's education as they should be	41%	41%	43%	38%	Students aren't graduating from high school ready for college or a career	19%	19%	25%	17%
School quality is not consistent, some school districts are doing a great job but others are falling short	36%	37%	33%	34%	Schools don't make good use of the funding they receive	18%	22%	14%	16%
Schools don't get enough funding	34%	31%	39%	38%	Academic standards are not high enough	18%	16%	19%	20%
Students are taking too many standardized tests	32%	35%	26%	29%	Parents do not have enough public school options if they are not happy with the school in their neighborhood	16%	15%	25%	14%
Teachers don't have the respect, support, and resources they need to be effective	30%	33%	26%	26%	We don't have a clear picture of how students are doing across the country because we are not evaluating students by the same standards	14%	13%	12%	15%
Class sizes are too big	30%	27%	28%	34%	There are not enough opportunities for art and music instruction	13%	11%	13%	18%
There are not enough quality teachers	29%	29%	30%	27%	Students don't learn the latest computer and technological skills because schools don't incorporate enough modern technology in classrooms	9%	10%	10%	8%
Students are distracted by too much technology	27%	28%	22%	28%	There are not enough opportunities for physical activity and sports	8%	7%	8%	9%
We aren't holding teachers and schools accountable when students don't succeed	20%	21%	19%	18%	The condition of school buildings	7%	5%	11%	11%

Parents' education PRIORITIES include supporting teachers AND removing ineffective teachers from the classroom

Taking action in low-performing schools, creating higher standards, and more accountability are also important

TOP/HIGH PRIORITY	Nat	Wh	AA	Hisp		Nat	Wh	AA	Hisp
Giving teachers the respect, support, and resources they need to be effective	87%	86%	90%	88%	Implementing common standards of learning across states and school districts	66%	61%	77%	71%
*Removing ineffective teachers from the classroom	84%	85%	82%	85%	*Making hiring, firing, and tenure decisions based on a variety of metrics, including standardized test scores, classroom observations, and student/parent feedback	59%	54%	62%	67%
Requiring states and districts to take action in chronically low-performing schools	79%	78%	86%	81%	Reducing the number of standardized tests students take	53%	52%	56%	58%
Creating higher standards and a more challenging curriculum	76%	74%	78%	77%	*Making teacher tenure harder to get	53%	52%	49%	59%
*Holding teachers and principals more accountable for student achievement	75%	73%	80%	75%	Continuing with annual standardized testing to measure student learning in math and English	52%	46%	62%	58%
Placing a stronger focus on social and emotional development in addition to core academic subjects like math, science, and reading	69%	63%	82%	75%	Opening more public charter schools	40%	31%	52%	52%
Incorporating more vocational education tracks into schools	68%	67%	72%	72%	Eliminating standardized testing all together	39%	36%	41%	45%
Incorporating more technology into the classroom	67%	64%	75%	72%	Reducing the number of public charter schools	23%	19%	29%	33%

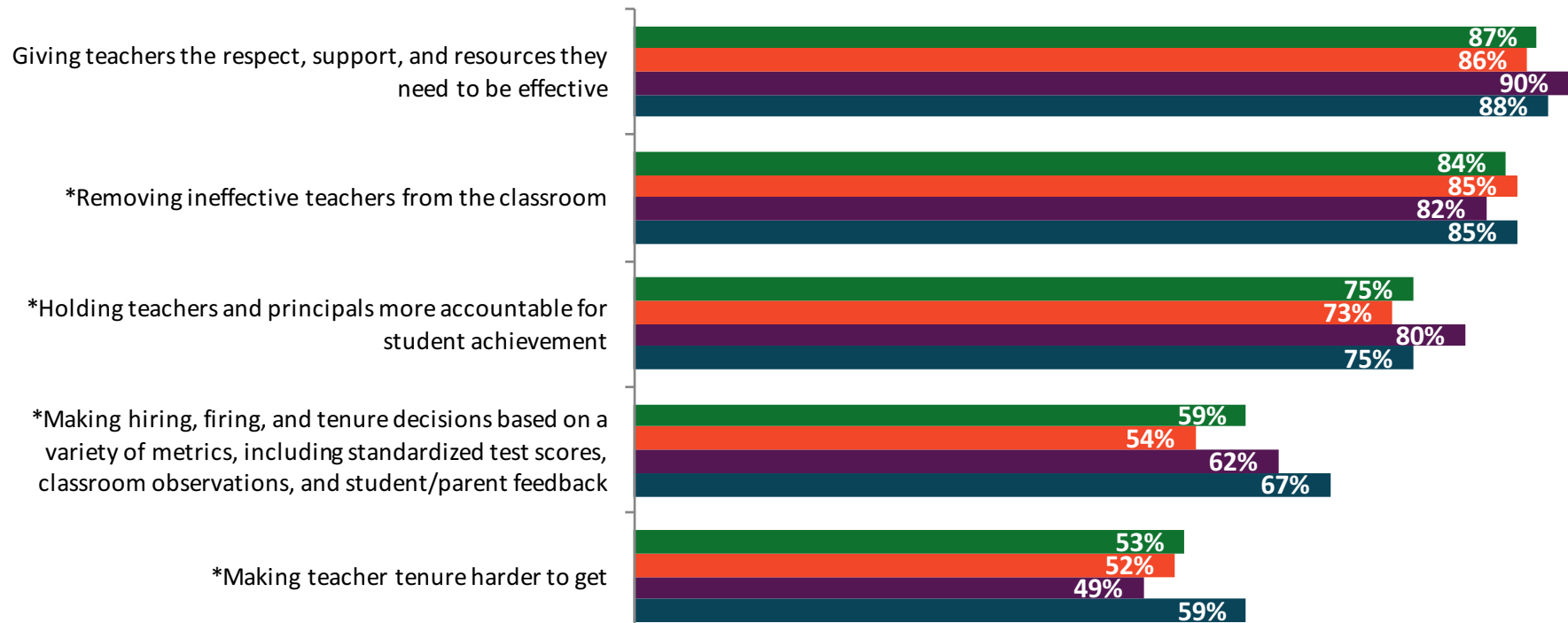
Q: There are a variety of issues people discuss relating to K-12 education in the United States. For each of the items below, please indicate if you personally think it should be a top priority, a high priority, but not a top one, a low priority, or not a priority at all for our country's leaders to address. Alternatively, if you strongly oppose the idea and do not want to see it implemented, please say that.
(*Asked among half the sample)

Parents place highest priority on teacher support, effectiveness, and accountability

A majority of parents also prioritize tenure reform.

Priorities about Teachers:

■ National ■ White ■ African American ■ Hispanic



*Displaying percentage of parents who rate the item as a top or high priority.

Q: There are a variety of issues people discuss relating to K-12 education in the United States. For each of the items below, please indicate if you personally think it should be a top priority, a high priority, but not a top one, a low priority, or not a priority at all for our country's leaders to address. Alternatively, if you strongly oppose the idea and do not want to see it implemented, please say that.

(*Asked among half the sample)



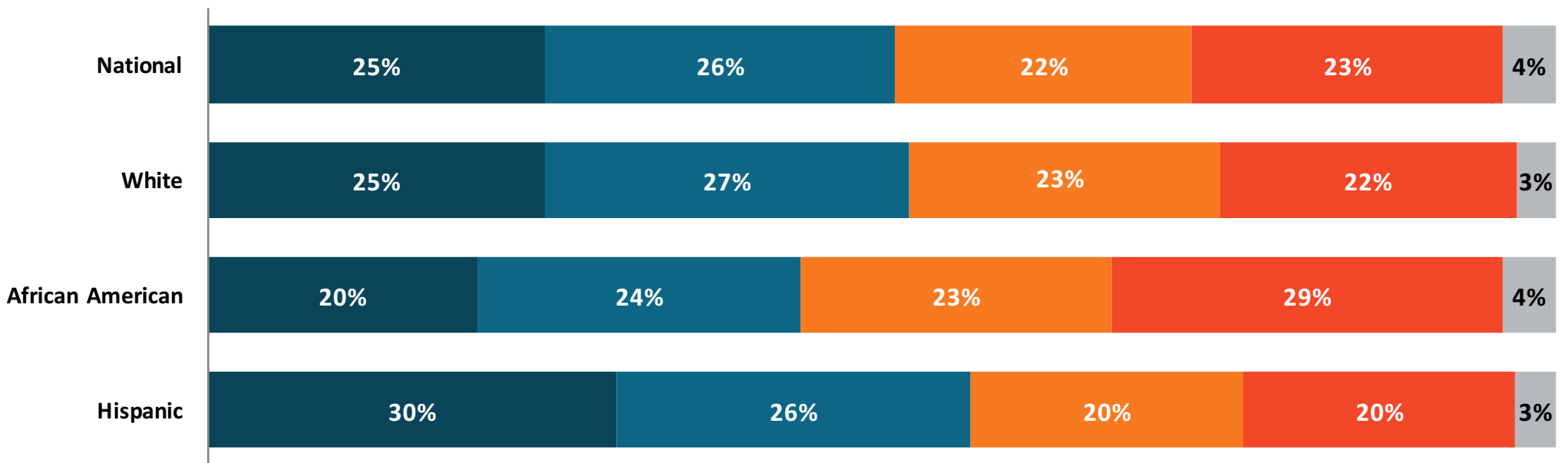
Access to Quality Schools/Public Charters

Parents are divided over whether “all children have access to the same quality of education in our public school system regardless of background, race, or income”

African American parents are more likely to say children don't have equal access.

Parents' View on Whether Students Have Equal Access to the Same Quality of Education:

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Not sure



Higher income, rural, and Hispanic parents are more likely to believe all children have access to the same quality of education

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “All children have access to the same quality of education in our public school system regardless of background, race, or income.”

	RACE			INCOME				AREA			SCHOOL SATISFACTION	
	Wh.	AA	Hisp.	Less than \$25k	\$25 - <\$50k	\$50 - <\$100k	\$100k +	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Satisfied	Not satisfied
Strongly Agree	25%	20%	30%	30%	24%	24%	25%	26%	23%	29%	28%	13%
Somewhat Agree	27%	24%	26%	18%	26%	27%	29%	26%	25%	28%	28%	17%
Somewhat Disagree	23%	23%	20%	18%	21%	23%	25%	20%	27%	16%	21%	25%
Strongly Disagree	22%	29%	20%	28%	23%	22%	19%	23%	23%	22%	19%	41%
Not Sure	3%	4%	3%	7%	6%	2%	2%	5%	3%	5%	3%	5%
TOTAL Agree	52%	45%	57%	48%	50%	52%	54%	51%	48%	57%	57%	30%
TOTAL Disagree	45%	51%	40%	46%	44%	46%	44%	44%	49%	38%	40%	65%

A majority of parents think they have “a few” good schools to send their child to

Urban and African American parents are more likely to say they have options; rural parents report having fewer options.

In thinking about the options you have for sending your child to school, do you think you have good schools to choose from? By a “good school” we mean schools that are performing well academically, affordable, safe, and conveniently located.

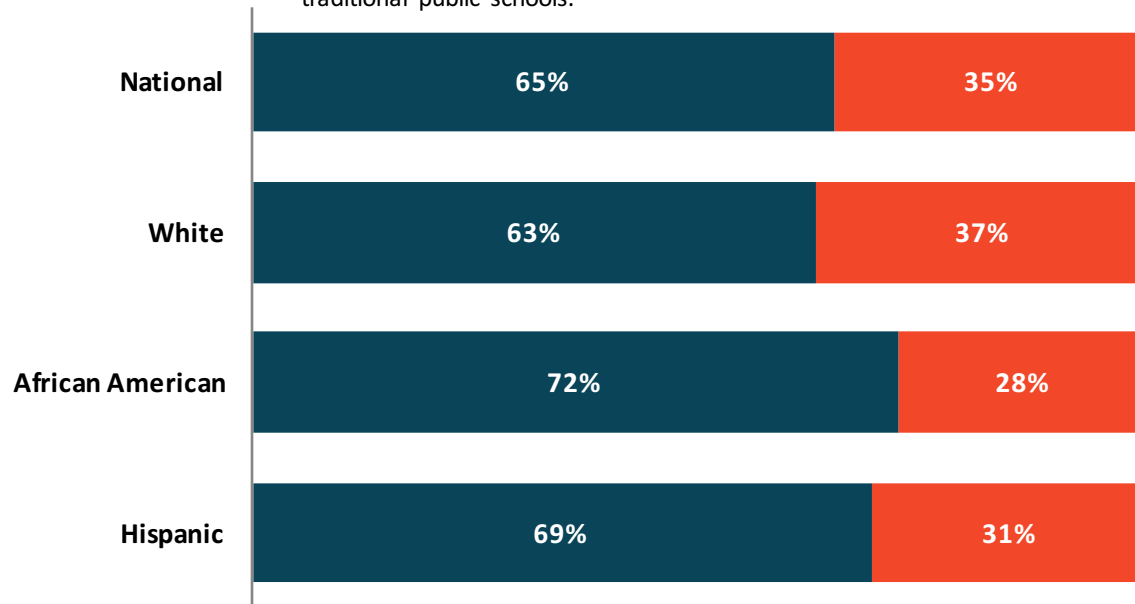
	ALL PARENTS	AREA			RACE		
		Urban	Suburban	Rural	White	African American	Hispanic
I don't have any good schools to send my child to	7%	4%	7%	10%	7%	6%	6%
There is only one good school I can send my child to	23%	18%	20%	35%	25%	19%	21%
There are a few good schools I can send my child to	50%	55%	53%	37%	47%	52%	54%
There are several good schools I can send my child to	14%	16%	15%	10%	14%	18%	15%
Not Sure	6%	6%	5%	8%	7%	6%	5%
TOTAL a few/several	64%	71%	68%	47%	61%	70%	69%
TOTAL no good schools/only one	30%	22%	27%	45%	32%	25%	27%

Q: In thinking about the options you have for sending your child to school, do you think you have good schools to choose from? By a “good school” we mean schools that are performing well academically, affordable, safe, and conveniently located.

Parents are more likely to say public charter schools offer low-income communities options than they are to say public charters take resources and high achieving students away from traditional public schools

How Parents View Public Charter Schools:

- Public charter schools offer parents in low-income communities options for quality schools that would otherwise be inaccessible to them.
- Public charter schools take resources and high achieving students away from traditional public schools.



Parents more likely to believe public charters offer options to low-income parents:

- Lower income** (72% <\$25k vs. 66% \$25-<\$50k vs. 63% \$50K+)
- All non-White** (68% all non-White vs. 63% White)
- Urban/suburban** (68% urban/suburban vs. 56% rural)

Parents more likely to believe public charters take resources and students away from public schools:

- Higher income** (37% \$50K+ vs. 34% \$25-<\$50k vs. 28% <\$25k)
- White** (37% White vs. 32% all non-White)
- Rural** (44% rural vs. 32% suburban/urban)

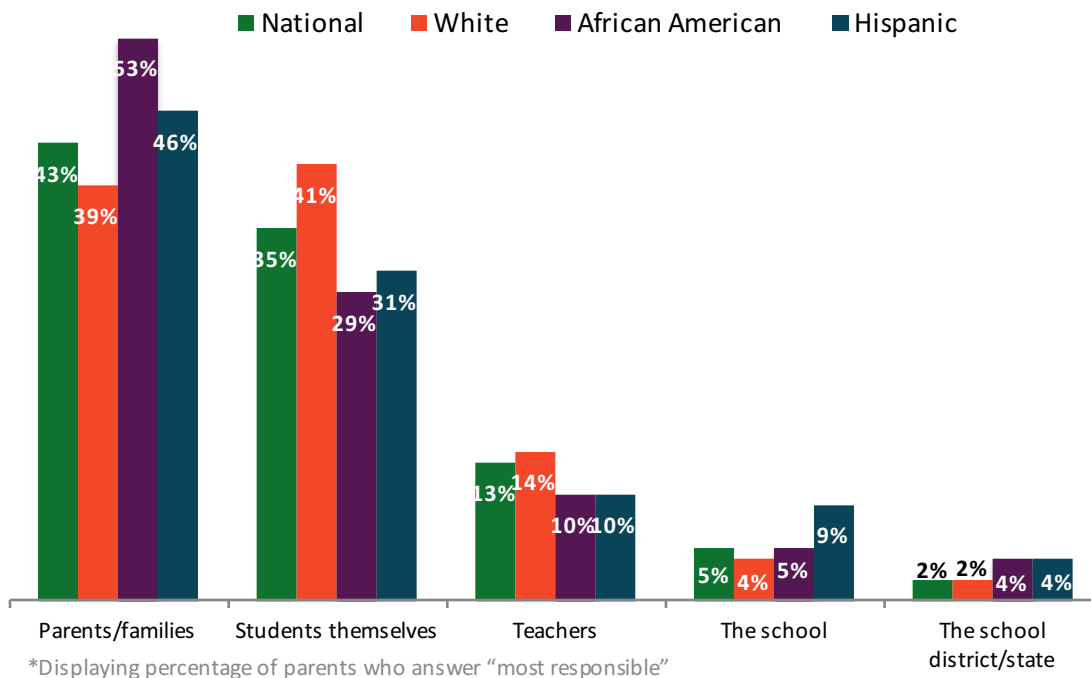




Responsibility & Accountability

Parents consider themselves far more responsible for their students' learning, compared to teachers and schools

Who/What Parents Hold Responsible when a Student Makes Progress in School:



Parents more likely to hold parents/families responsible:

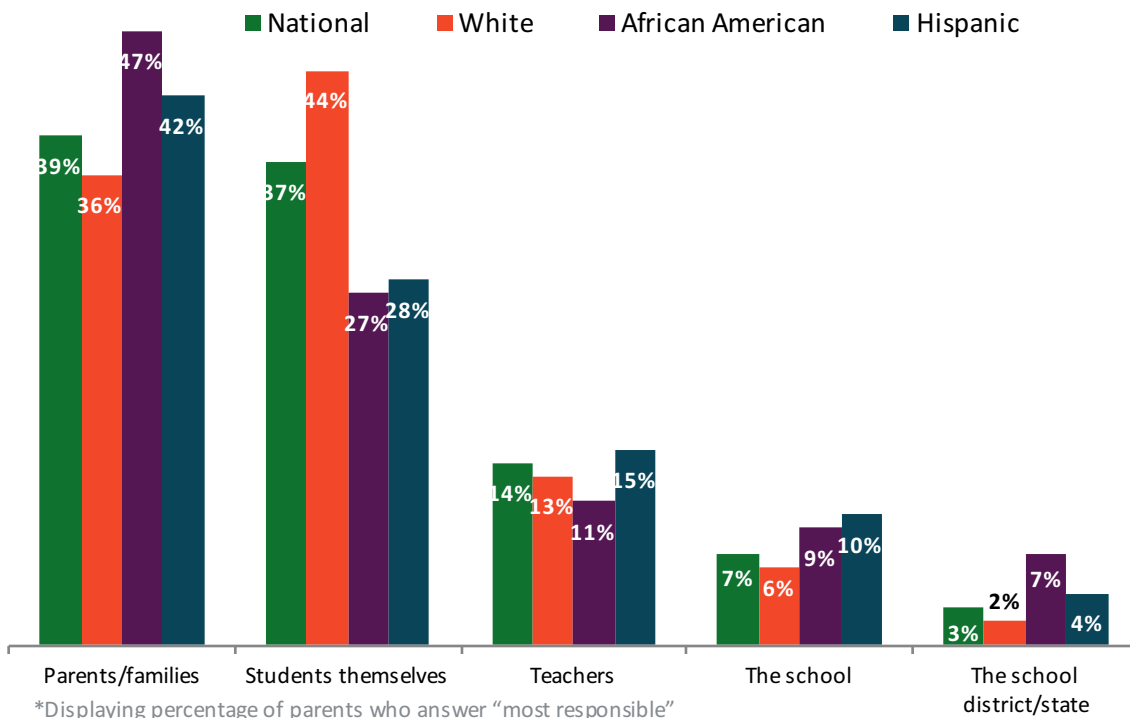
- **Higher educated** (46% at least some college+ vs. 38% HS or less)
- **All non-White** (48% all non-White vs. 39% White)
- **Urban/suburban** (45% urban vs. 46% suburban vs. 35% rural)

Parents more likely to hold students responsible:

- **Lower educated** (40% HS or less vs. 32% some college/Associate's vs. 35% college+)
- **White** (41% White vs. 29% all non-White)
- **Rural** (44% rural vs. 36% suburban vs. 29% urban)

If a student isn't making progress, parents consider themselves and their children most responsible

Who/What Parents Hold Responsible when a Student Does Not Make Progress in School:



Parents more likely to hold parents/families responsible:

- **Higher educated** (43% college+ vs. 37% some college/Associate's vs. 35% HS or less)
- **All non-White** (43% all non-White vs. 36% White)

Parents more likely to hold students responsible:

- **White** (44% White vs. 29% all non-White)
- **Suburban/Rural** (41% suburban vs. 36% rural vs. 31% urban)



Students and Poverty

Parents are more likely to believe that schools and teachers CAN overcome the obstacles faced by our nation's most vulnerable children

Closing the Achievement Gap:

- Schools and teachers can't overcome the obstacles faced by our nation's most vulnerable children, so we should fix the problems of poverty first.
- Schools and teachers can overcome the obstacles faced by our nation's most vulnerable children, so we should focus on improving schools serving students in poverty.

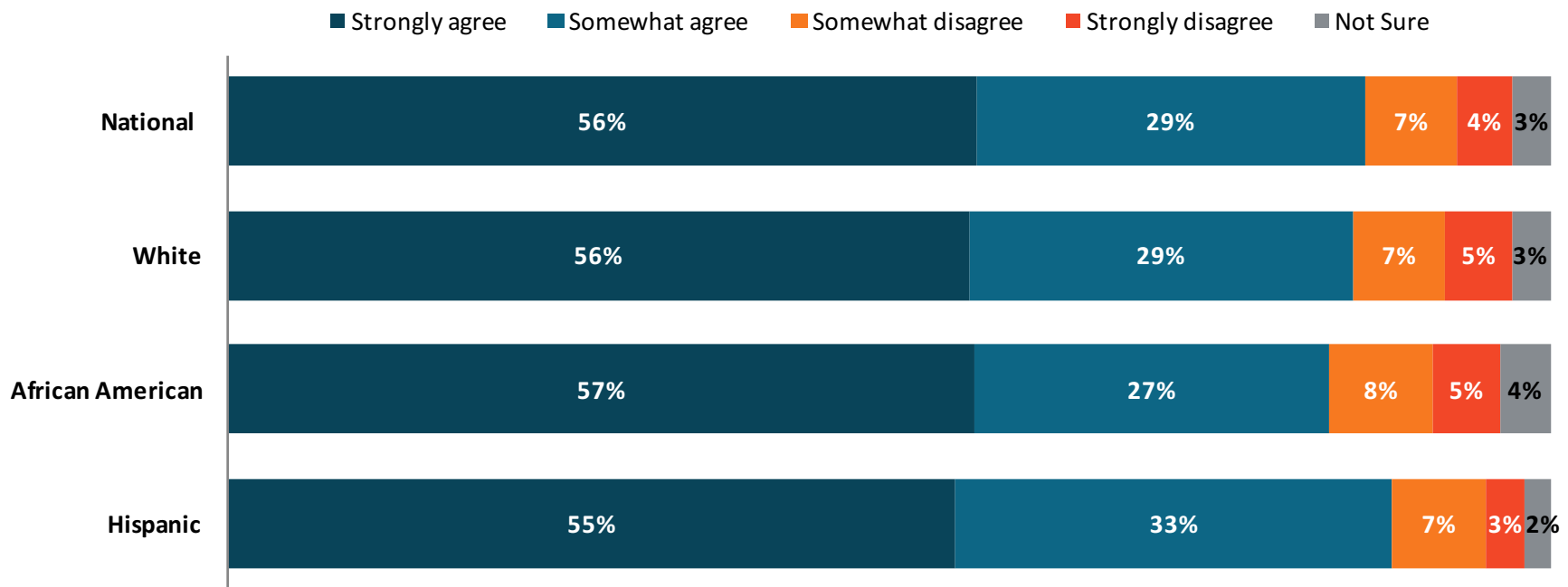


Q: Students from lower income communities are not performing as well academically as students from middle-class communities. Factors outside of our school system like poverty and crime contribute to this gap in performance. Below are two statements about how we should address this issue. Please indicate which statement comes closest to your view.

Schools need to apply the same high standard to all students, regardless of background, race, or income

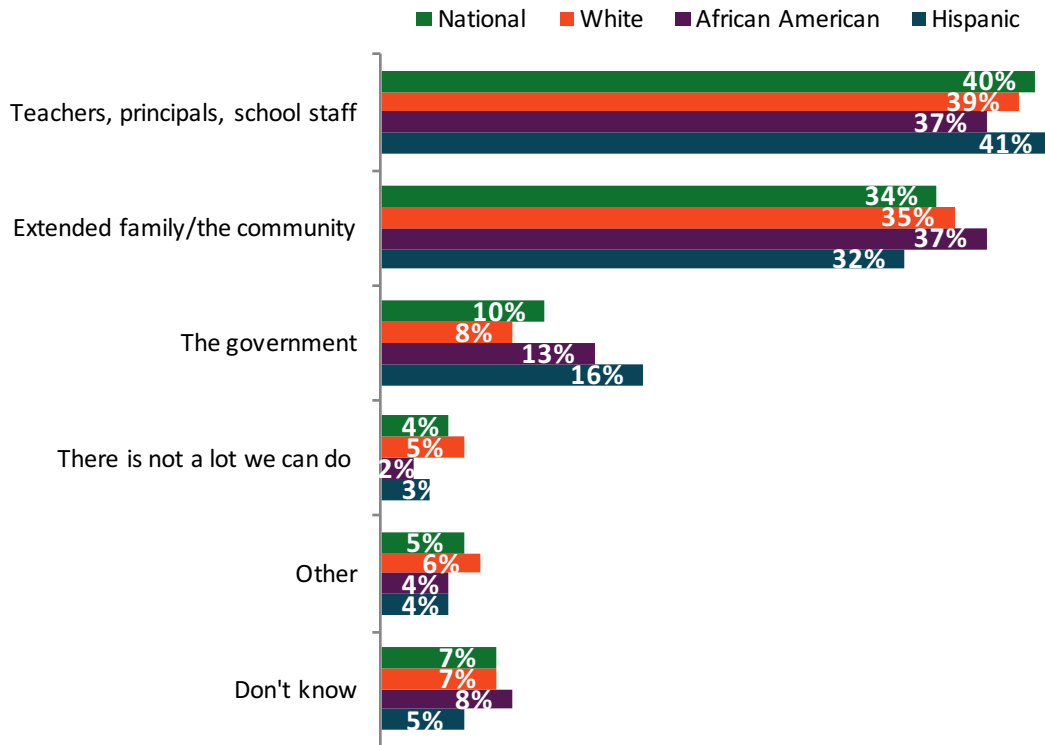
85% of parents nationally agree that schools should apply the same standards to students across the board – a key measure to improve schools and close the achievement gap.

Agree or Disagree: “Schools should apply the same high standards to all students, not expect less of students due to their background, race, or income.”



When students don't have support at home, the schools and the community are expected to step up

Who Should be Responsible for Making Sure Low-Income Students Don't Fall Through the Cracks:



Parents more likely to hold teachers, principals, and school staff responsible:

- Rural** (44% rural vs. 37% urban vs. 39% suburban)

Parents more likely to hold extended family/the community responsible:

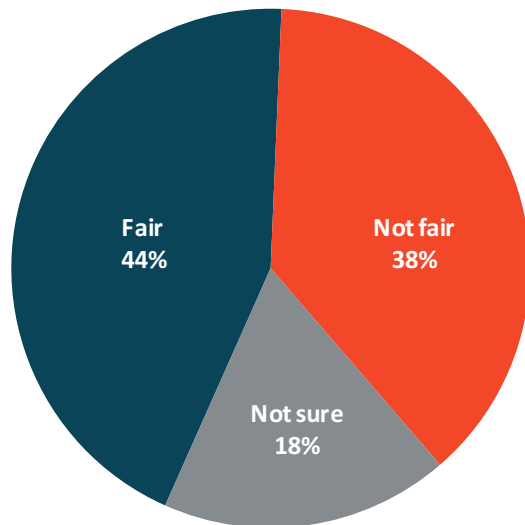
- Higher income** (37% \$100k+ vs. 35% \$50-<\$100k vs. 32% \$25-<\$50k vs. 30% <\$25k)
- Urban** (36% urban vs. 34% suburban vs. 30% rural)
- Greater access to a good school** (37% a few/several options vs. 30% only one/no options)



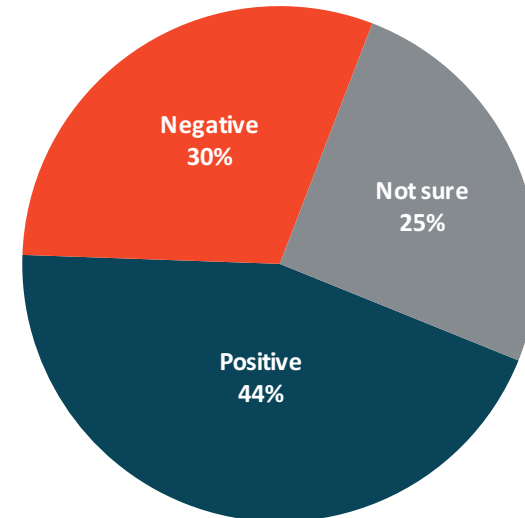
Standardized Tests

A plurality of parents think tests are a fair assessment of performance and have a positive impact on education overall

(Parents Nationally) Standardized Tests are Fair:



(Parents Nationally) Standardized Tests are Positive:



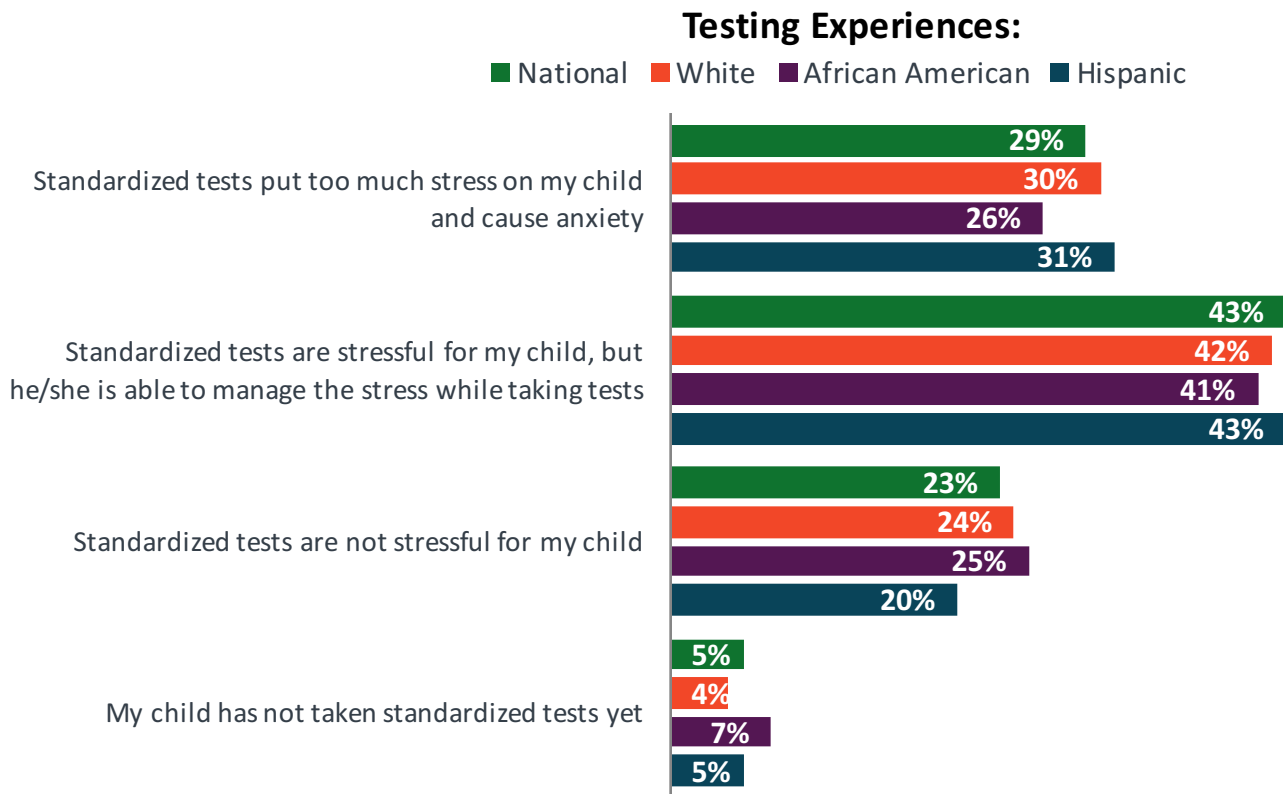
Standardized tests are fair:			
Race	Education	Income	Area
• White: 41%	• HS or less: 41%	• <\$25k: 45%	• Urban: 52%
• AA: 46%	• Some college: 43%	• \$25-<\$50k: 38%	• Suburban: 43%
• Hisp: 52%	• College+: 48%	• \$50-<\$100k: 44%	• Rural: 36%
		• \$100k+: 51%	

Standardized tests have a positive impact:			
Race	Education	Income	Area
• White: 39%	• HS or less: 43%	• \$25k: 51%	• Urban: 54%
• AA: 55%	• Some college: 42%	• \$25-<\$50k: 42%	• Suburban: 43%
• Hisp: 52%	• College+: 47%	• \$50-<\$100k: 42%	• Rural: 34%
		• \$100k+: 47%	

Q: In your opinion, do standardized tests provide a fair assessment of how students are performing in math and English?

Q: Do you think standardized tests are a positive thing or a negative thing for education overall?

Most parents say their children are stressed by tests, but the stress is manageable; a third say the stress comes from teachers or schools



Parents most frequently think their child's stress from testing is caused by:

23%	The need to do well/achieve their best
17%	School administrators, staff, and teachers
14%	The school or school district
8%	Evaluations/grades
7%	Themselves
7%	Fear – don't want to fail
7%	Determines their future (grade level, college)

*Only asked among parents who said their child experiences stress from testing. N=728

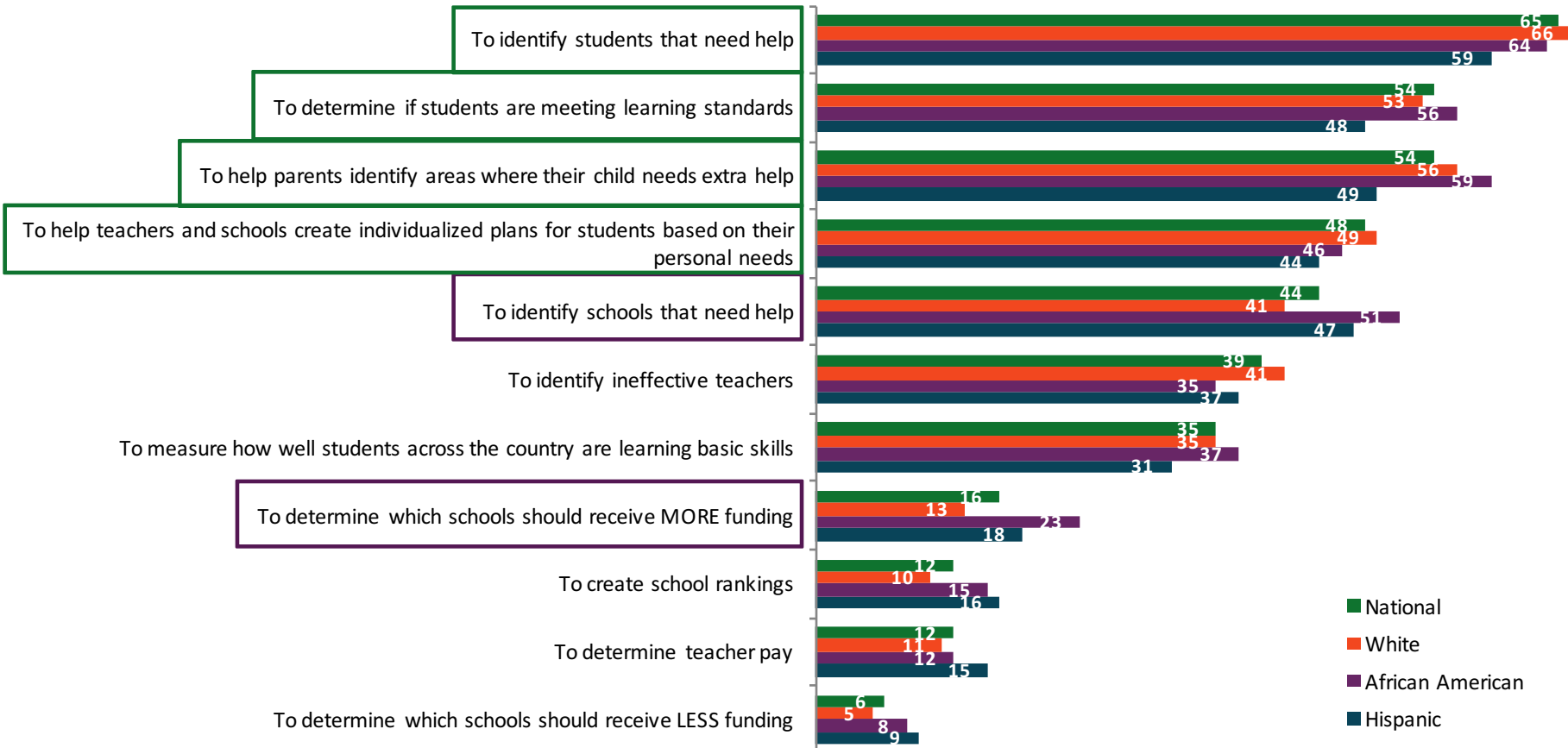
Q: Which of the following statements best characterizes your child's experience with standardized testing?

Q: You indicated that standardized tests are stressful for your child. In your opinion, where is this stress or pressure coming from?

Most parents want tests to be used to help students, parents, and schools

More African American parents want to use tests to improve schools than parents nationally.

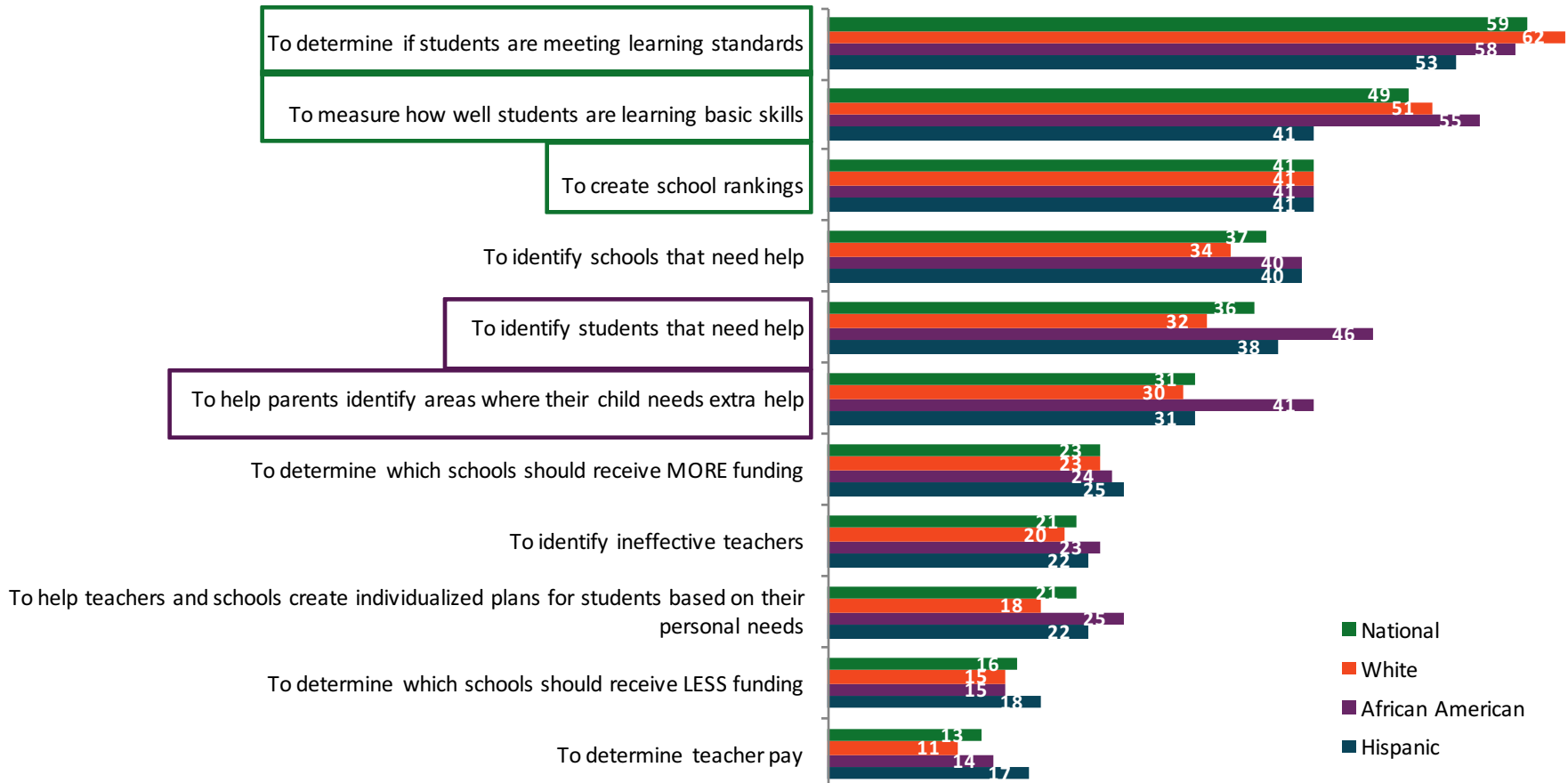
How Parents Want Tests to be Used:



But parents mostly see tests being used for measurement and rankings

African American parents are more likely to see tests being used to advance student progress than parents nationally.

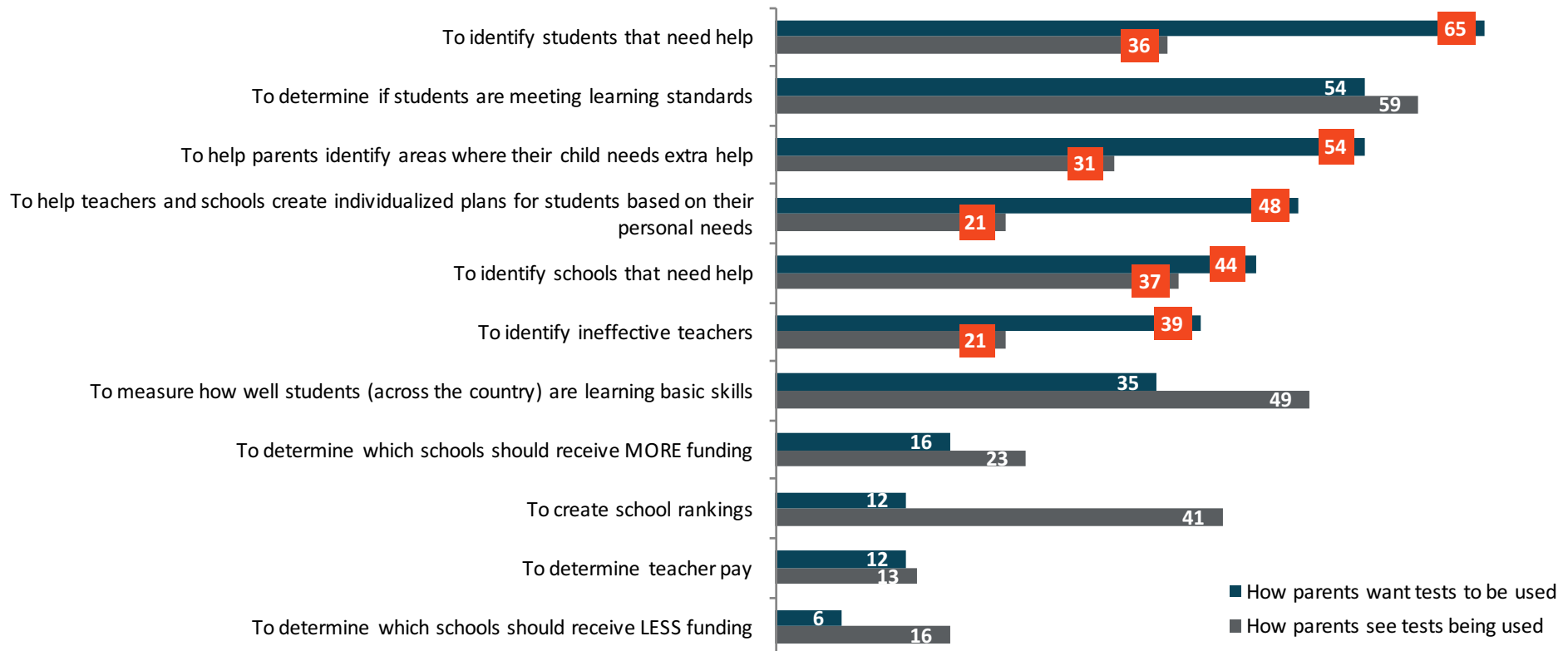
How Parents See Tests Being Used:



There is a disconnect between how parents see tests being used and how they want them to be used

Parents see tests being used for rankings and measuring basic skills, but want them to be used to help parents and students.

(Parents Nationally) How Parents Want Tests to be Used vs. How Parents See Tests Being Used:



Q: Based on your understanding, how do your school district and/or state use the results of standardized tests?

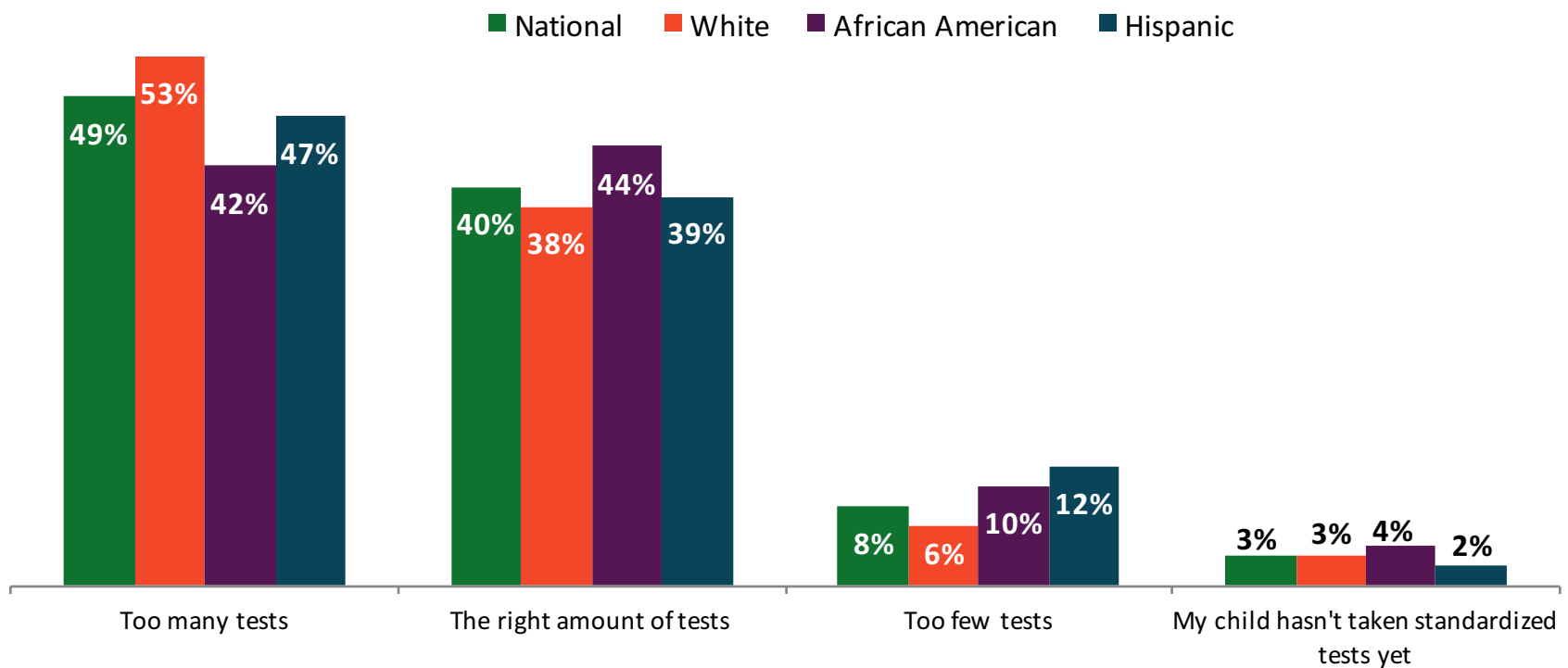
Q: If you could choose, how would you want your school district and/or state to use the results of standardized tests?

*Variation in item wording. "Across the country" was included when parents were asked how they want tests to be used.

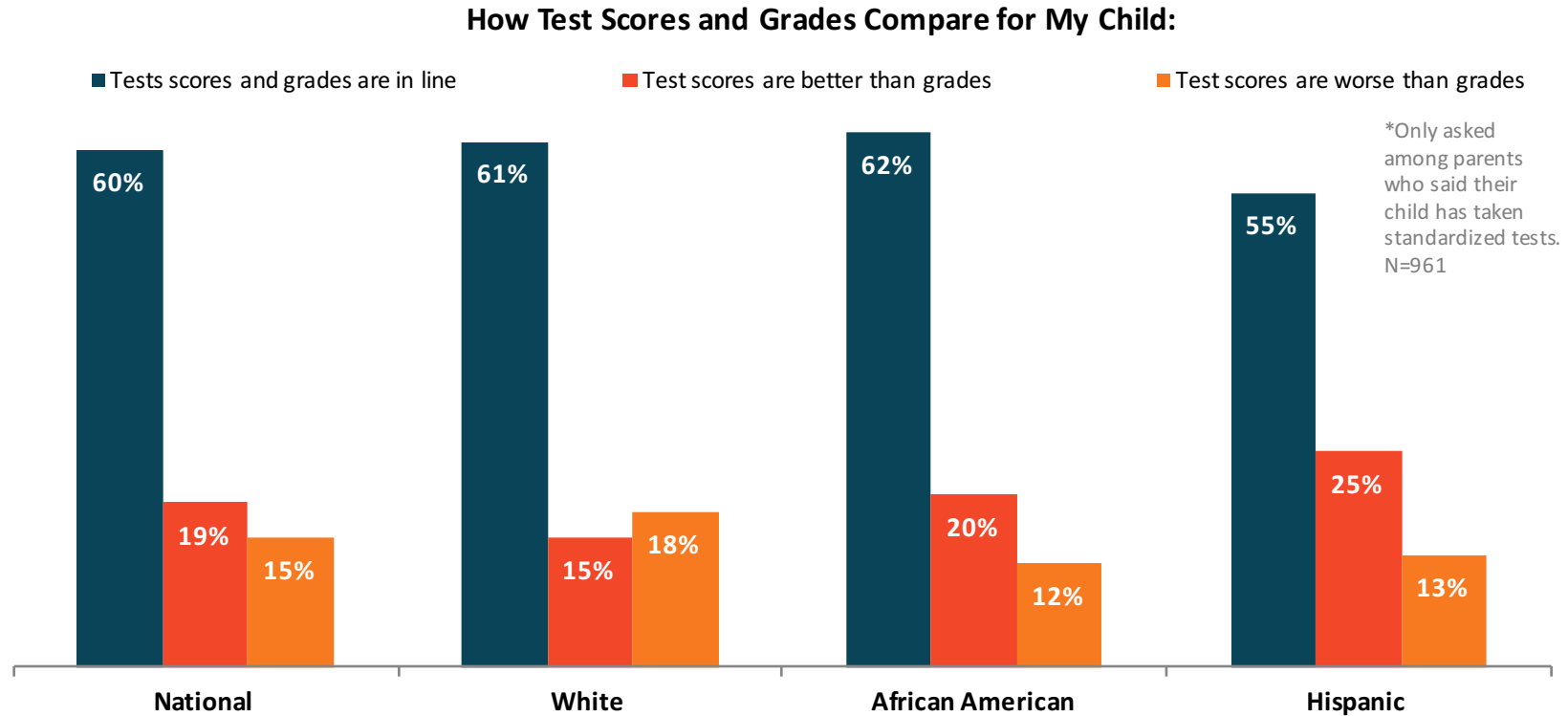
Parents are divided in their attitudes about the amount of testing

African American parents are least likely to think students are taking too many tests compared to White parents.

Parents' View on Amount of Testing:



A majority of parents say their child's test scores and grades are in line

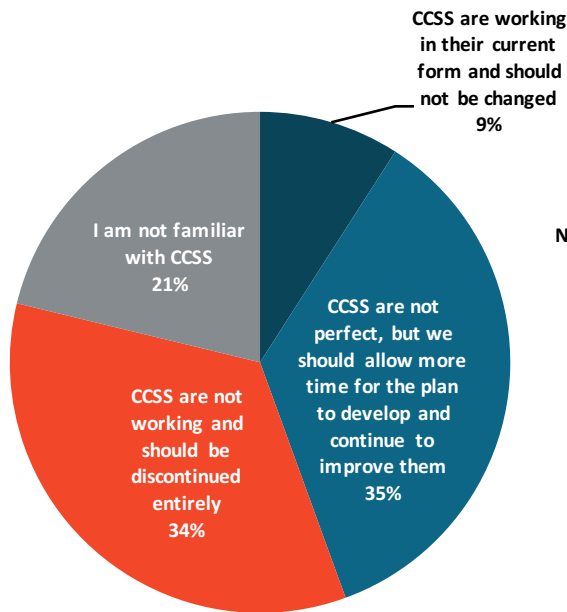




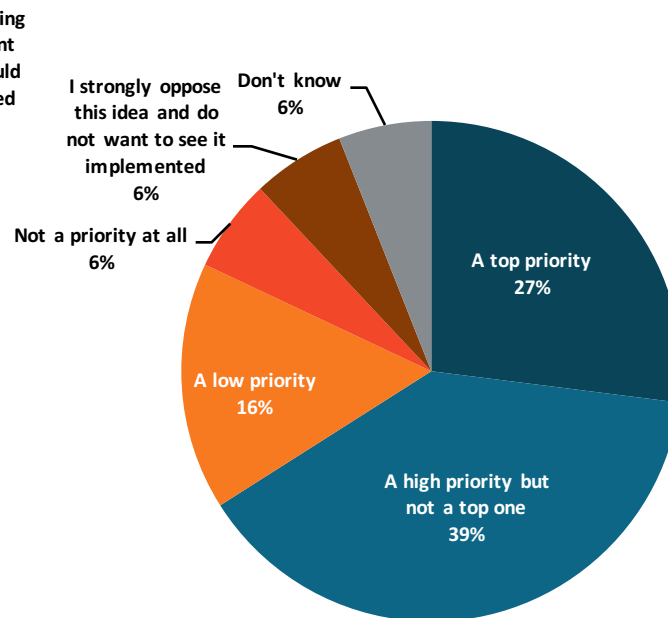
Common Core State Standards

Parents like the idea of common standards and higher standards, but fewer support Common Core

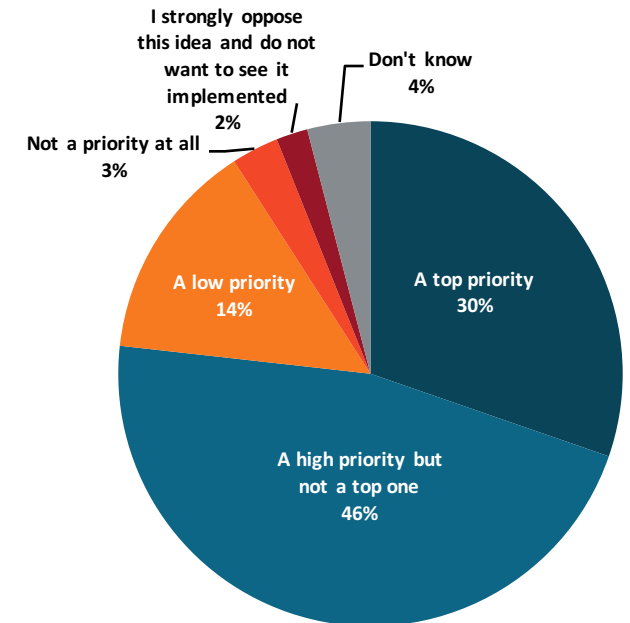
(Parents Nationally) View of CCSS:



(Parents Nationally) Implementing Common Standards:



(Parents Nationally) Creating Higher Standards:

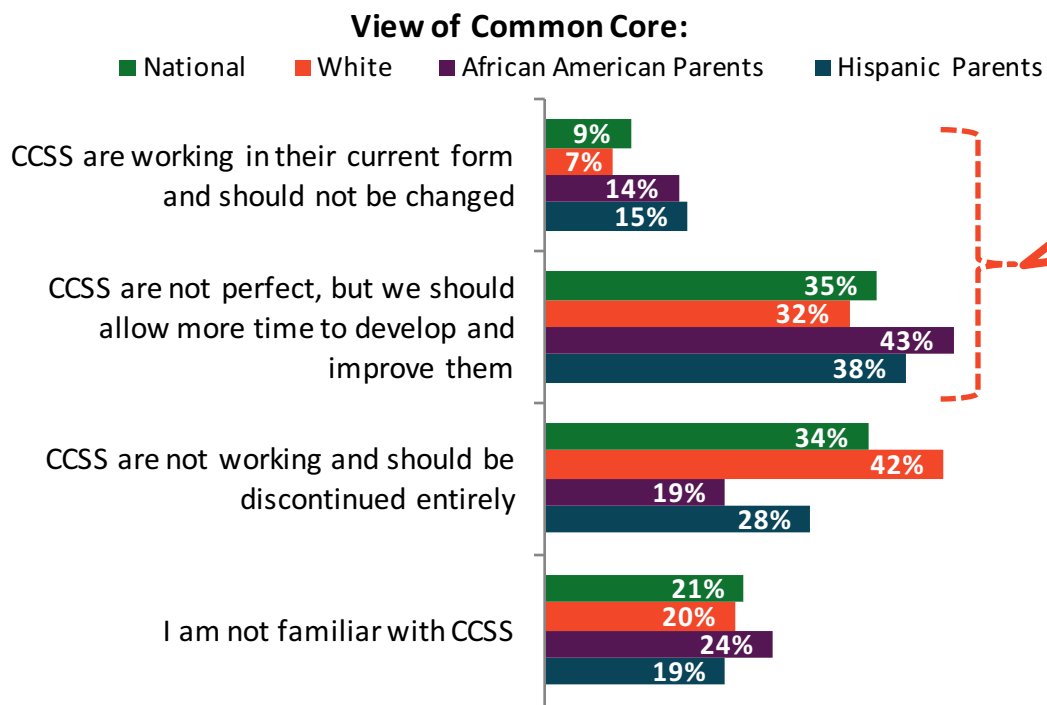


Q: There are a variety of issues people discuss relating to K-12 education in the United States. For each of the items below, please indicate if you personally think it should be a top priority, a high priority, but not a top one, a low priority, or not a priority at all for our country's leaders to address. Alternatively, if you strongly oppose the idea and do not want to see it implemented, please say that. [Implementing common standards of learning across states and school districts] [Creating higher standards of learning and a more challenging curriculum]

Q: Common Core is a set of high-quality academic standards in math and English shared by many states that outlines what students should know before they move on to the next grade in school. Which of the following comes closest to your view on the Common Core?

A plurality of parents believe Common Core is working or should be given time to improve

African American parents are most likely to support continuing CCSS, while White parents are more likely to want it discontinued.



Parents who are more likely to think CCSS is already working OR should be given time to improve:

- **Higher income** (58% of \$100k+ support CCSS vs. 41% of <\$25k)
- **Higher educated** (52% of college+ vs. 39% of HS or less)
- **All non-White parents** (52% of all non-White vs. 39% of White)
- **Democrats** (55% of Dem vs. 43% Ind. vs. 33% of Rep)
- **Liberals** (57% liberal vs. 49% moderate vs. 37% conservative)
- **Urbanites** (55% urban vs. 43% suburban vs. 32% rural)
- **K/Elementary** (49% K/Elementary vs. 43% MS vs. 40% HS)

Q: Common Core is a set of high-quality academic standards in math and English shared by many states that outlines what students should know before they move on to the next grade in school. Which of the following comes closest to your view on the Common Core



Profile of Survey Respondents

Demographic profile of survey respondents

Gender	
Male	43%
Female	57%

Age	
18-29	6%
30-39	28%
40-49	43%
50+	23%

Race	
White	55%
African American	14%
Hispanic	24%
Asian	5%
Other	2%

Education	
High school or less	30%
Some college/ Technical school/ Associate's degree	34%
College graduate	22%
More than a college degree	14%

Region	
Northeast	18%
Midwest	21%
South	37%
West	24%

Area	
Urban	28%
Suburban	49%
Rural	23%

Income	
Less than \$25k	13%
\$25k to less than \$50k	27%
\$50k to less than \$100k	42%
\$100k+	18%