



# School Freedom IS A **WINNING** ISSUE!

n=3,149 Registered Voters for National , MoE=±1.7%

n=517 Registered Voters for Urban , MoE=±4.3%

n=513 Registered Voters for Ex-Urban, MoE=±4.3%

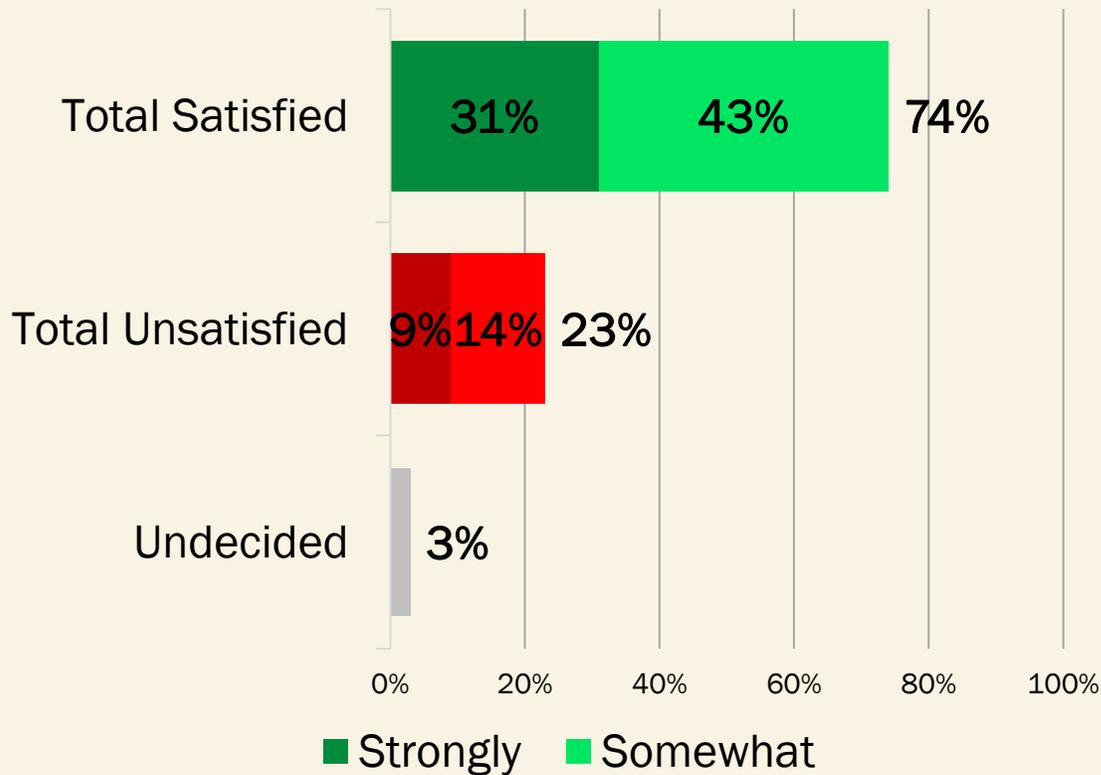
July 31 - August 11, 2021

1. The Covid-19 Pandemic has created a real opportunity to foster school choice options around the country.
2. Opinions over these last six years have shifted in favor of school choice, especially when respondents are described what school choice is.
3. However, we've found the brand “**school choice**,” when tested without leading information has been so well battered by opponents, that it now has a negative effect on the effort.
4. Branding, therefore, needs a new look, a new effort, that, along with features of school choice and supportive messaging, will bring school choice to students AND parents across the country.

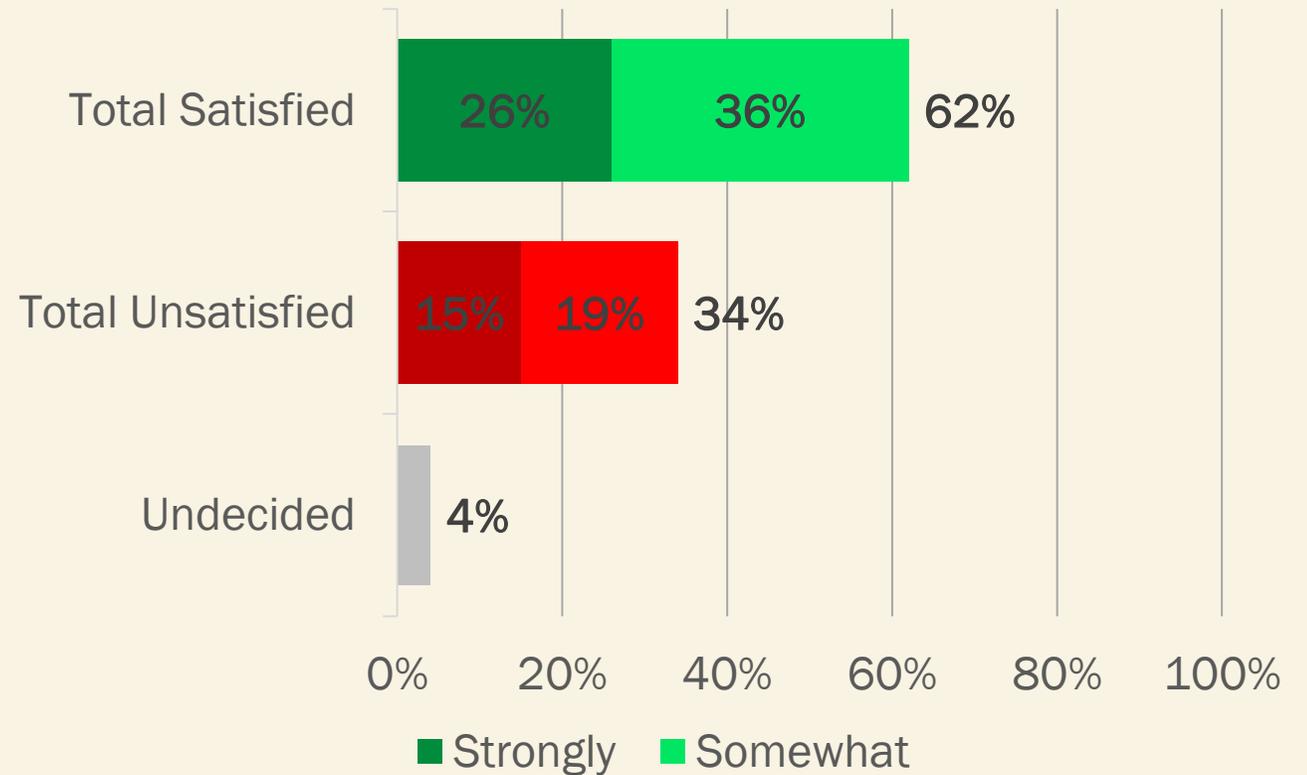
Below is the average of WPAi polls this year asking two different questions to parents: Overall satisfaction and then their satisfaction since the pandemic began. There is a 12-point drop in satisfaction opening a real opportunity for more education freedom.



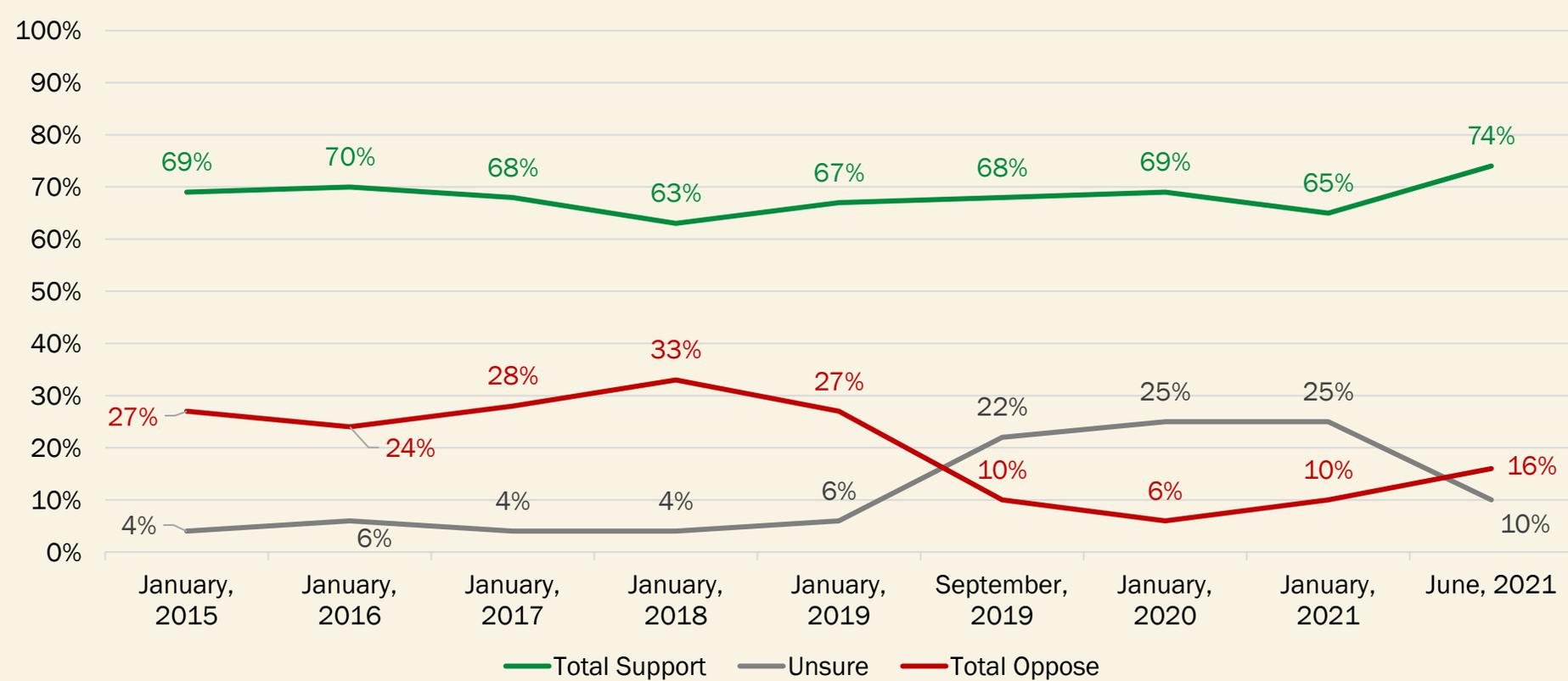
### Overall Satisfaction



### Satisfaction Since COVID



Since January 2015, there has been a five-point jump in support for school choice policies across the country, with Democrats increasing 10-points in their support.



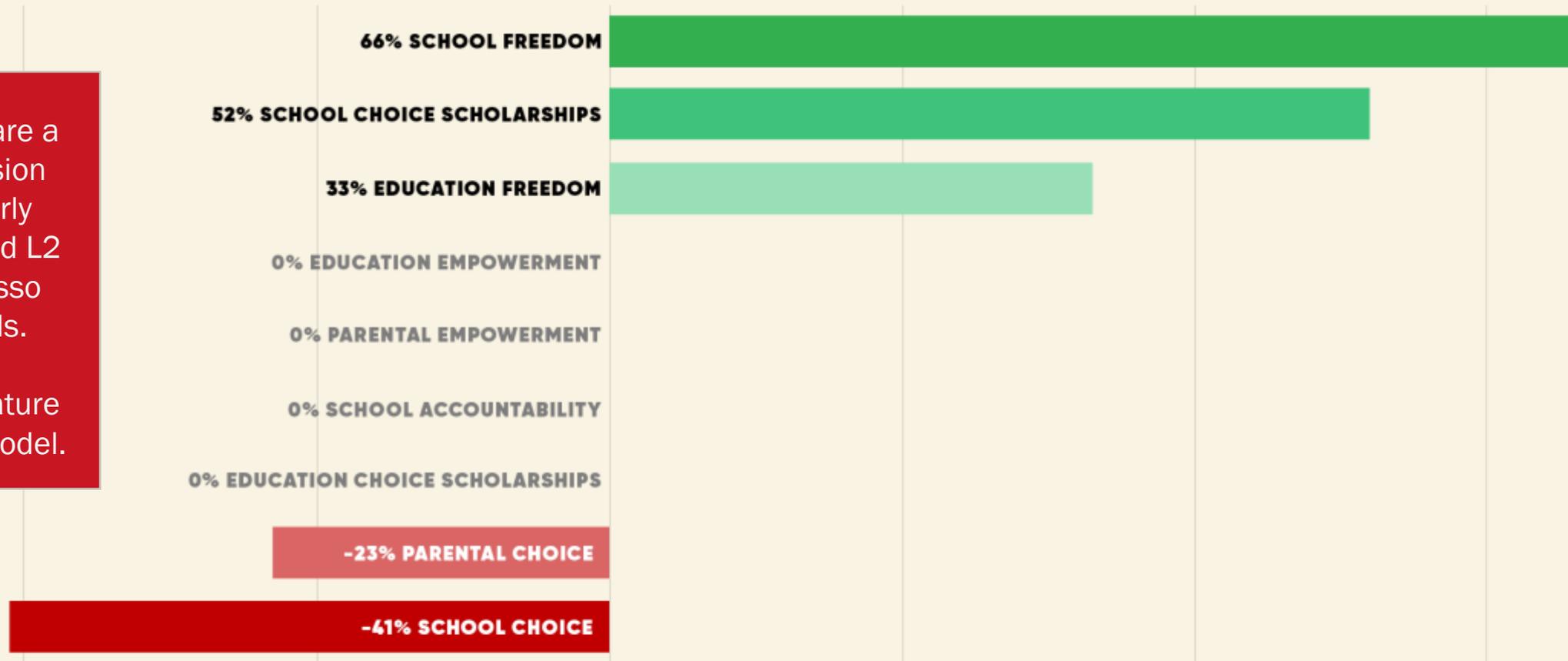
	Jan 2015	Jun 2021	Change
<b>Total Support</b>	69%	74%	5%
GOP	81%	83%	2%
IND	67%	69%	2%
DEM	60%	70%	10%
K-12 Public School Parents	69%	80%	11%
Millennials	79%	75%	-4%
White	68%	76%	8%
Black	78%	73%	-5%
Latino	68%	69%	1%
Rural	75%	73%	-2%
Suburban	72%	73%	1%

In a national discrete choice regression model of Registered Voters, “School Freedom” and “School Choice Scholarships” garner more support than other terms tested. School Freedom should be seen as the *cause* while School Choice Scholarships should be seen as *programs*. School Choice, by itself, now has a negative effect on the effort.



Elastic net models are a regularized regression method that linearly combines the L1 and L2 penalties of the lasso and ridge methods.

The chart shows feature importance in the model.



n=3,149 Registered Voters

5 Conducted July 31-August 11, 2021

◀ **NEGATIVE**    **IMPACT**    **POSITIVE** ▶

While there are several names/labels for school choice that elicit support, each having varying degrees of impact, a regression analysis measuring opinion movement on the issue show there are clearly two names/labels that increase support (while some labels decrease support).

School Freedom unifies urban and ex-urban.



	Non-Urban		Urban	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
School Freedom	75%	24%	74%	21%
School Choice Scholarships	85%	13%	64%	26%
Education Freedom	85%	14%	69%	25%
Education choice Scholarships	75%	20%	84%	14%
Education Freedom Scholarships	72%	21%	72%	19%

“Name” give parents the right to use the tax dollars designated for their child’s education to send their child to the public school or private school which best serves their needs. Generally speaking, would you say you support or oppose the concept of “Name.”

N=513 Registered Voters in Exurban Areas

N=517 Registered Voters in Urban Areas

Conducted August 8-10, 2021

The features of School Freedom vary by party, generally, however, access to education is powerful overall and among both Democratic and Independent voters.



Demographic	Top Feature	Second Feature
Overall	Access to a good education should be something that everybody can enjoy, not just a select few.	Schools will better invest in students rather than protect the current system.
Republicans	Students should not be forced to learn critical race theory, which teaches students to judge based on race, against the wishes of their parents.	Instead of protecting a failing system, it will give more say to teachers.
Democrats	Access to a good education should be something that everybody can enjoy, not just a select few.	Schools will better invest in students rather than protect the current system.
Independents	Access to a good education should be something that everybody can enjoy, not just a select few.	It will offer a variety of educational choices and make science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) classes more widely available.

While access to a good education is powerful in American suburban areas, investing in the student rather than protecting the system is powerful in urban areas. COVID-19 features are only powerful in rural areas.



Region	Top Feature	Second Feature
Suburban	Access to a good education should be something that everybody can enjoy, not just a select few.	Schools will better invest in students rather than protect the current system.
Urban	Schools will better invest in students rather than protect the current system.	It will give parents ability to send their student to the school with the curriculum they deem best.
Rural	COVID-19 gave parents a behind-the-scenes view into education, teaching them that they need more say in their child's education.	Instead of protecting a failing system, it will give more say to teachers.

Regression based message model that identifies the strongest coefficient and memory recall of each message tested. The messages vary strongly based on both party and region.



Demographic	Non-Urban		Urban	
	Best Message	Second Best Message	Best Message	Second Best Message
Republicans	School Freedom will allow students to go to a school that provides the sports and extracurricular activities they love.	School Freedom decreases bureaucracy in education, empowering teachers and parents to better educate students.	Providing School Freedom will stand up to politicians and union bosses that protect failing systems and allow teachers to have a say in education.	We need to stop spreading hate. Political correctness and Critical Race Theory poison students' minds. School Freedom will put parents in charge and ensure students are not treated differently because of their race or ethnic heritage.
Democrats	School Freedom will allow for more advanced learning, making modern technology for advanced classes available to all students.	School Freedom will provide more online classes and better technology for greater variety in educational choices.	School Freedom will lead to more diverse educational options in public schools, allowing students to access the classes that truly help them grow.	School Freedom will cut barriers to effective education and provide more opportunities for students to learn.
Independents	School Freedom will build the community by bringing families into the decision-making process on education.	We should allow parents to unapologetically look out for their children. School Freedom will ensure there are no more victims to the education system.	Money talks. School Freedom will let parents decide where their child's education dollars go, giving them power over their child's education.	School Freedom will allow for more advanced learning, making modern technology for advanced classes available to all students

The strongest messages vary strongly by ethnicity based on region of the country.



Demographic	Non-Urban		Urban	
	Best Message	Second Best Message	Best Message	Second Best Message
Whites	Access to education should be for everyone. School Freedom will provide more opportunities for families of all backgrounds.	We cannot submit ourselves to a failing system. School Freedom provides more opportunities to change the way our children learn and improve our education system.	School Freedom will force schools to compete for our tax dollars, improving educational outcomes for our children.	School Freedom will personalize education for disadvantaged students.
African Americans	School Freedom will provide more online classes and better technology for greater variety in educational choices.	School Freedom will personalize education for disadvantaged students.	School Freedom will cut barriers to effective education and provide more opportunities for students to learn.	School Freedom will provide more academic options, and make STEM—science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—education available to ALL students.
Hispanic	Children are all different. School Freedom will provide more personalized education for better student outcomes.	We need to stop spreading hate. Political correctness and Critical Race Theory poison students' minds. School Freedom will put parents in charge and ensure students are not treated differently because of their race or ethnic heritage.	School Freedom will personalize education for disadvantaged students.	Better education. School Freedom will help students learn the subjects that matter and ensure that the process isn't left to politicians and bureaucrats.

Winning the battle over School Freedom requires developing the right people who are at fault—those who work to stop school choice. This battle also requires caution in targeting the wrong opponents as this will work against education freedom.



Who is at Fault	Overall	GOP	DEM	IND	Suburban	Urban	Rural
Politicians	70%	16%	25%	100%	15%	48%	25%
Union Bosses	53%	39%	12%	38%	16%	14%	38%
System of Bureaucrats	11%	0%	34%	-7%	13%	0%	4%
Dark Money Special Interests	7%	0%	30%	0%	0%	-17%	90%
Bureaucrats	0%	0%	-10%	0%	-7%	-4%	0%
None	0%	-11%	0%	8%	-18%	26%	-5%
School Boards	-7%	2%	-12%	-22%	-13%	0%	-22%
Teachers Unions	-13%	0%	-25%	0%	10%	-44%	-37%
Inadequate Teachers	-100%	-50%	-55%	-60%	-46%	1%	-89%

Critical race theory builds support among Republicans but loses support overall. Making teacher the issue causes loss of support overall and among the different political parties.



Demographic	Do <u>Not</u> Make These Groups Those Who Are At Fault		Do <u>Not</u> Say This
Overall	Inadequate Teachers	Teachers Unions	Students should not be forced to learn critical race theory, which teaches students to judge based on race, against the wishes of their parents
Republicans	Inadequate Teachers		It will force schools to compete for our tax dollars, improving educational outcomes for our children
Democrats	Inadequate Teachers	Teachers Unions	Students should not be forced to learn critical race theory, which teaches students to judge based on race, against the wishes of their parents
Independents	Inadequate Teachers	School Boards	It will provide public education funding through vouchers for students to attend private schools

Attacking teacher's unions or inadequate teachers is damaging to School Freedom efforts just as much as arguments about segregation, critical race theory, or voucher are damaging.



Demographic	Do <u>Not</u> Make These Groups Those Who Are At Fault		Do <u>Not</u> Say This
Suburban	Inadequate Teachers	School Boards	Forcing students into assigned schools is modern-day segregation
Urban	Teachers Unions	Dark Money Special Interests	Students should not be forced to learn critical race theory, which teaches students to judge based on race, against the wishes of their parents
Rural	Inadequate Teachers	Teachers Unions	It will provide public education funding through vouchers for students to attend private schools

# CONCLUSION

1. The Covid-19 Pandemic has diminished parental satisfaction in their child's education.
2. School choice warriors have kept the battle steady, building support nationwide.
  - Educational choice opponents have successfully branded choice as negative or as nothing more than vouchers.
3. School Freedom is the way forward. The issues requires a re-brand (the school choice brand has a negative effect on the effort now).
4. Do not make the fight with teachers (even inadequate ones) or even teachers' unions.
  - Critical Race Theory arguments are effective only among Republicans. With most other groups, this feature and message is more harmful than good.
5. Features and messaging vary by location and/or demographic.
  - A pluralistic feature of access is the strongest among differing groups.
  - Not one single message is the silver bullet.

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# Research Design

WPA Intelligence conducted three studies of registered voters in nationwide: online, live caller in urban areas, and live caller in exurban areas.

For each study, WPAi selected a random sample of registered voters from the voter file using Registration-Based Sampling (RBS) based on the designated region. The sample for this survey was stratified based on geography, age, gender, partisanship, and ethnicity. This methodology allows us to avoid post-survey “weighting” which can reduce the reliability of survey results.

For the online study, respondents were contacted through a voter matched online panel July 31 – August 11th, 2021. The study has a sample size of n=3,149 registered voters with a margin of error of  $\pm 1.7\%$  in 95 out of 100 cases.

For the urban area study, respondents were contacted via a live caller August 8-10, 2021. The study has a sample size of n=517 registered voters with a margin of error of  $\pm 4.3\%$  in 95 out of 100 cases.

For the exurban study, respondents were contacted via a live caller August 8-10, 2021. The study has a sample size of n=513 registered voters with a margin of error of  $\pm 4.3\%$  in 95 out of 100 cases.



**Chris Wilson**  
[csw@wpaintel.com](mailto:csw@wpaintel.com)

For questions or projects, reach out to us anytime.