

# navigator\*



Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>

A Guide for Advocates  
on Education

## Key Takeaways:

- Biden and Democrats lead on education priorities like funding and school quality, though Democrats and Republicans are equally trusted on teaching children what they need to learn in order to succeed, which is seen as the top priority tested.
- Americans are most concerned about Democrats taking away parents' control of what is taught at school.
- Messaging emphasizing Democrats' historic support of education, teachers, and school mask mandates all improve favorability across a range of education issues.

# Biden and Democrats Hold Advantages on Range of Education-Related Issues

Across a range of issues on education, parents trust Biden and Democrats more than Republicans: strongest issues are mask requirements (+15), valuing teachers (+13), student loan debt (+12), and school quality (+12).

Below is a list of issues. Please indicate who you trust more to handle each one.

	Trust			Net Biden and Democrats									
	Biden and the Democratic Party	Don't know	The Republican Party	Overall	Dem	Ind	Rep	Black	Hisp.	White	AAPI	*Parents	
Making decisions about school mask requirements	49	16	35	+14	+77	+17	-59	+67	+46	-1	+37	+15	
Dealing with the issue of student loan debt	47	20	33	+14	+74	+6	-53	+58	+35	+2	+28	+12	
Making sure public schools have the funding to pay for books, building repairs, and other expenses	46	16	38	+8	+74	+7	-65	+56	+33	-5	+37	+5	
Improving the quality of schools	44	18	38	+6	+73	-4	-68	+57	+37	-10	+42	+12	
Making decisions about how public schools should operate during the pandemic	44	15	41	+3	+68	-11	-67	+51	+17	-11	+51	+9	
Helping teachers feel valued for the important job they do	43	21	36	+7	+70	+8	-63	+55	+38	-8	+47	+13	
Dealing with issues around how difficult topics like race and gender are being taught in the classroom	43	20	37	+6	+69	+1	-64	+57	+31	-8	+39	+8	
Making sure public schools teach children the things they need to learn in order to succeed	41	18	41	0	+67	-7	-75	+57	+24	-16	+35	+5	
Making sure parents have input over what's being taught in public school classrooms	37	21	42	-5	+56	-9	-74	+49	+23	-20	+19	+4	

\*Parents\* are defined as respondents who report having a child under the age of 18 living at home with them. Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted December 3-December 6, 2021. For more info, visit [navigatorresearch.org](https://navigatorresearch.org).

# Americans Prioritize Teaching Children What They Need to Learn to Be Successful, Funding, and Quality of Schools

While Biden and the Democratic Party and the Republican Party are equally trusted on the top priority of teaching children what they need to know in order to succeed, Democrats win on top issues like funding and school quality.

Select which of the following three items related to America's schools you think are the most important:

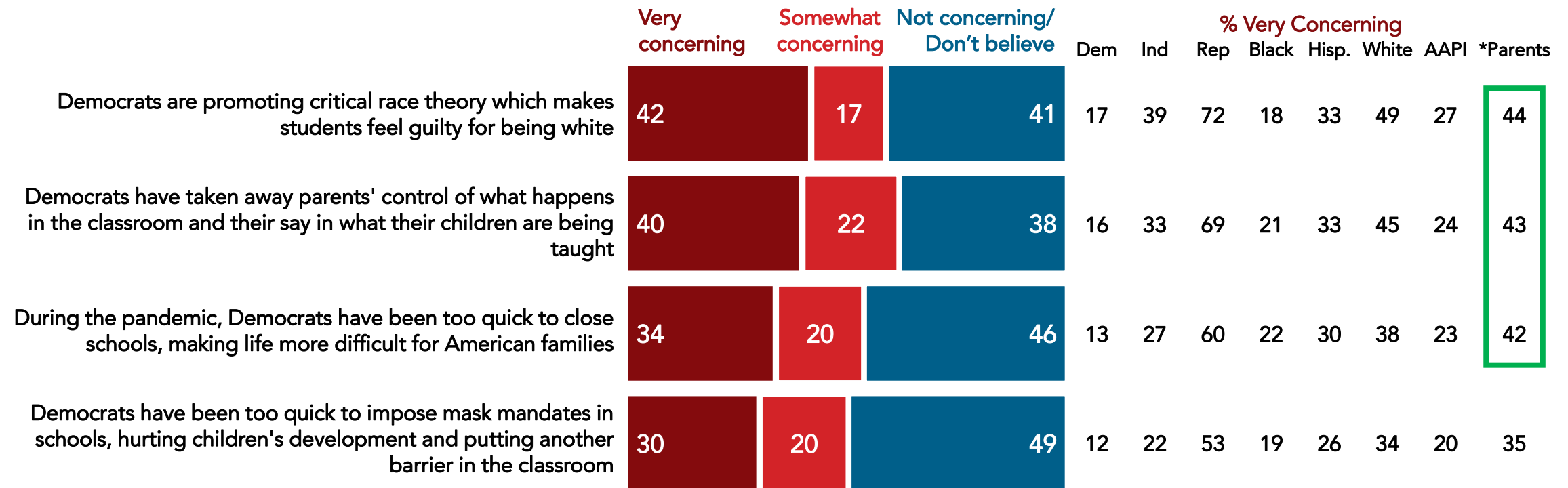
		% Top Three Items on Education								Net Trust Biden and Democrats more to handle
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Black	Hisp.	White	AAPI	*Parents	
Making sure public schools teach children the things they need to learn in order to succeed	57%	51	55	64	50	46	59	63	47	0
Making sure public schools have the funding to pay for books, building repairs, and other expenses	51	53	55	47	42	50	54	39	49	+8
Improving the quality of schools	42	44	41	40	44	39	42	47	40	+6
Making sure parents have input over what's being taught in public school classrooms	34	18	27	54	23	32	36	29	36	-5
Helping teachers feel valued for the important job they do	32	37	30	25	34	39	30	35	34	+7
Dealing with issues around how difficult topics like race and gender are being taught in the classroom	27	29	23	26	27	30	27	26	31	+6
Dealing with the issue of student loan debt	22	29	20	16	28	32	20	26	30	+14
Making decisions about how public schools should operate during the pandemic	22	30	16	15	28	23	21	30	25	+3

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# Top Concerns on Democrats' Handling of Education Are Critical Race Theory and Parental Control of What Students Learn

While no issue is “very concerning” to more than 42% of Americans, Americans have more concerns about Democrats on parental control and critical race theory than pandemic education issues, driven largely by Republicans.

Below is a list of concerns that some have had with how Democrats have handled a few issues related to schools in the last year. Please indicate which of the following have been concerning to you, if any have.

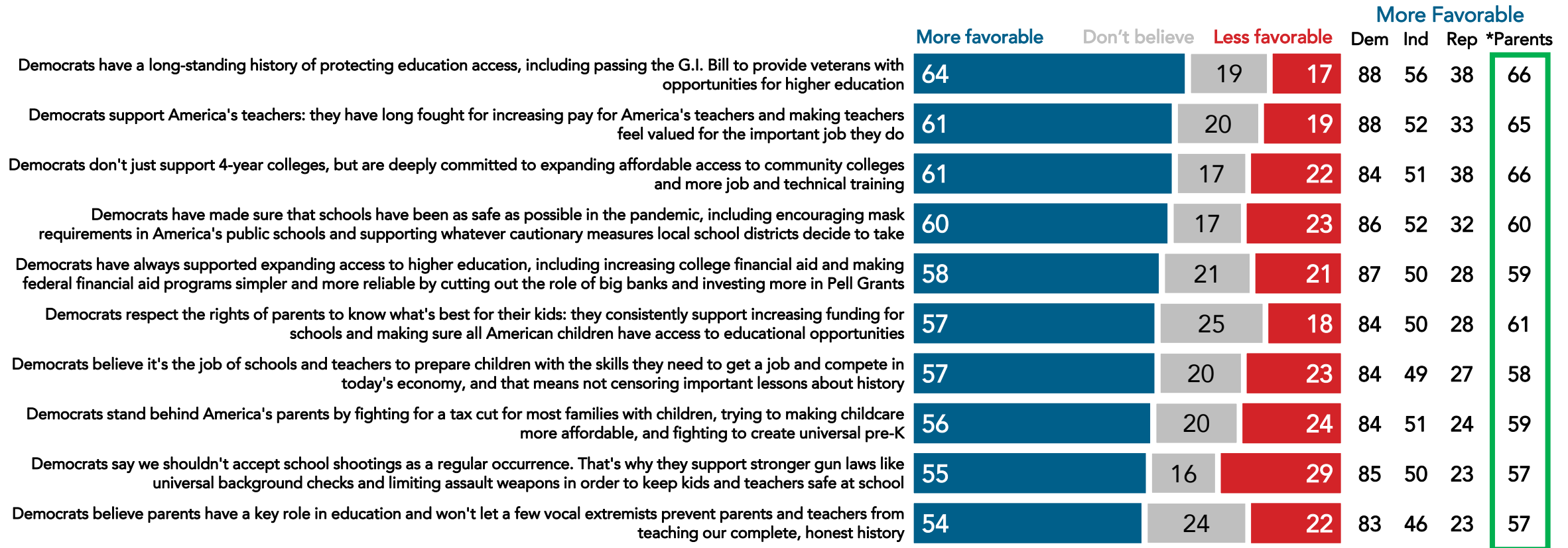


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# Focusing on Democrats' Historic Support of Access to Education, Teachers, and Pandemic Safety Is Strongest

Majorities of parents say each of the education-focused items below make them more favorable to Democrats.

Please indicate whether each statement from supporters of Democrats' approach to handling American schools makes you more or less favorable toward Democrats.



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# Biden and Democrats Can Make Inroads on Education Issues

While Democrats have advantages on many education issues, after messaging, they also win on ensuring children learn what they need to succeed (from 0 to +9) and are tied on making sure parents have input in the classroom (from -5 to 0). They also widen their advantages on school funding (+8 to +16) and helping teachers feel valued (+7 to +19).

Below is a list of issues. Please indicate who you trust more to handle each one.

Pre-Messaging

Issue	Pre-Messaging			Net Biden and Democrats	Post-Messaging			Net Biden and Democrats Post	Net Improvement
	Biden and the Democratic Party	Don't know	The Republican Party		Biden and the Democratic Party	Don't know	The Republican Party		
Making decisions about school mask requirements	49	16	35	+14	52	12	36	+16	+2
Dealing with the issue of student loan debt	47	20	33	+14	50	16	34	+16	+2
Making sure public schools have the funding to pay for books, building repairs, and other expenses	46	16	38	+8	52	12	36	+16	+8
Improving the quality of schools	44	18	38	+6	49	12	39	+10	+4
Making decisions about how public schools should operate during the pandemic	44	15	41	+3	48	13	39	+9	+6
Helping teachers feel valued for the important job they do	43	21	36	+7	52	15	33	+19	+12
Dealing with issues around how difficult topics like race and gender are being taught in the classroom	43	20	37	+6	46	15	39	+7	+1
Making sure public schools teach children the things they need to learn in order to succeed	41	18	41	0	48	13	39	+9	+9
Making sure parents have input over what's being taught in public school classrooms	37	21	42	-5	43	14	43	0	+5

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## About Navigator

In a world where the news cycle is the length of a tweet, our leaders often lack the real-time public-sentiment analysis to shape the best approaches to talking about the issues that matter the most. Navigator is designed to act as a consistent, flexible, responsive tool to inform policy debates by conducting research and reliable guidance to inform allies, elected leaders, and the press. Navigator is a project led by pollsters from Global Strategy Group and GBAO along with an advisory committee, including: Andrea Purse, progressive strategist; Arkadi Gerney, The Hub Project; Joel Payne, The Hub Project; Christina Reynolds, EMILY's List; Delvone Michael, Working Families; Felicia Wong, Roosevelt Institute; Mike Podhorzer, AFL-CIO; Jesse Ferguson, progressive strategist; Navin Nayak, Center for American Progress Action Fund; Stephanie Valencia, EquisLabs; and Melanie Newman, Planned Parenthood Action Fund.

## About the Study

Global Strategy Group conducted public opinion surveys among a sample of 1,000 registered voters from December 3-December 6, 2021. 99 additional interviews were conducted among Hispanic voters. 70 additional interviews were conducted among Asian American and Pacific Islander voters. 99 additional interviews were conducted among African American voters. 99 additional interviews were conducted among independent voters. The survey was conducted online, recruiting respondents from an opt-in online panel vendor. Respondents were verified against a voter file and special care was taken to ensure the demographic composition of our sample matched that of the national registered voter population across a variety of demographic variables.

For Press inquiries contact:

[press@navigatorresearch.org](mailto:press@navigatorresearch.org)

To learn more about Navigator:

<http://navigatorresearch.org>

@NavigatorSurvey on Twitter