

Survey Findings | For Immediate Release  
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NATIONAL  
**SCHOOL CHOICE**  
AWARENESS FOUNDATION

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## **Survey: U.S. Parents Say Children Did Better in School This Year, But Demand for School Choice Remains Strong**

As busy school days make way for summer fun, parents across the country are increasingly optimistic about their children’s educational experiences, but their optimism is not stopping moms and dads from continuing to find schools and learning environments that better meet their children’s needs. In fact, nearly half of parents say that at least one of their children will attend a different school next year.

The seven top findings from a May 2023 survey of U.S. parents, conducted by the National School Choice Awareness Foundation (NSCAF), closely track those of NSCAF’s January 2023 [survey](#), which found that parent satisfaction with education is not incompatible with a desire to continue exploring education options. NSCAF will release additional survey results, focusing on summer learning activities, in late June.

### **Key Findings**

*1. U.S. parents are more optimistic about their children’s schooling.*

As the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic recede, more U.S. parents said that, compared to the previous school year, their children’s schooling experiences were better this year. A plurality (45%) noted that their children had better experiences in school this year, while 34.4% said their children’s experiences were about the same, and 20.6% said that their children’s schooling experiences were worse.

*2. Higher-income parents were the most satisfied with their children’s schooling experiences.*

Parents with higher self-reported household incomes were consistently more likely to indicate that their children had better experiences this school year. For example, 55.6% of parents with household incomes over \$150,000 said that their children had better experiences this year, while just 35.7% of parents with household incomes under \$15,000 said the same.

3. *Nearly half of parents will send at least one child to a different school next year.*

Parents remain very interested in actively choosing the schools their children attend. Nationwide, 45.9% of parents said that at least one child in their household would attend a school that was different from the school they attended this year, whereas 54.1% said that none of their children would switch schools.

4. *Among school-switching parents, many are still considering their options.*

The 45.9% of school-switching parents comprise parents who have already enrolled their children in a new school for next year (13.2%), parents who have applied for their children to attend new schools and are awaiting a response (8.4%), parents who are still actively considering what school to choose (16.9%) and parents who have made firm plans to switch one or more of their children to homeschooling (7.5%).

5. *Parents want better educational environments for their children.*

Why are parents sending their children to different schools? Among school-switching parents, more than half (51%) want to find a better educational experience for their daughter or son, 30.5% have children who are graduating from elementary to middle school or from middle to high school and 18.6% are choosing new schools because they are relocating.

6. *Black, Hispanic, and young millennial parents are the most likely to find new schools.*

Majorities of Black parents (60.6%) and Hispanic parents (52.5%) indicated that at least one of their children would go to a different school next year. Comparatively, 39.3% of white parents said they had a child who would be attending a different school next year. Parents between the ages of 18 and 29 were also most likely to say that one of their children would attend a different school next year (55.4%), compared to 40.8% of parents aged 30–44, 47.7% of parents aged 45–60 and 32.2% of parents over 60.

7. *Parents whose children didn't have positive schooling experiences are switching schools.*

Parents who said that their children had worse experiences in school this year as compared to last year were more likely to indicate that one of their children would attend a different school (64.2%) than parents whose experiences were the same this year as last year (31.9%) or better than last year (48.4%).

## Toplines

Q1. Overall, would you say that your child(ren)'s experiences in school over the past school year were better than their experiences last year, about the same, or worse? (N=2,483)

Better (All)	45.0%
About the same	34.4%
Worse (All)	20.6%

Q2. For the next school year, have you decided to, or are you currently considering, sending any of the children in your household to a school that is different from one he or she attended this year? (N=2,483)

Yes	45.9%
No	54.1%

Q3. In thinking about the child(ren) in your household who will attend, or might attend, a different school next year, which statement is the most accurate? (To "Yes" respondents of Q2, N=1,140)

We have already enrolled our child in his or her new school for the next school year.	28.9%
We have applied for our child to attend a new school but are waiting for a response.	18.2%
We are still considering what school to choose for our child and/or are thinking about homeschooling.	36.7%
We have made plans to homeschool our child.	16.3%

Q4. What is the primary reason that you have decided to send, or are considering sending, your child(ren) to a different school next year? (To "Yes" respondents of Q2, N=1,140)

My child is moving to the next level of his/her education and will be starting elementary, middle, or high school.	30.5%
My family is relocating to a different community, neighborhood, state, or country.	18.6%
I wanted a better, safer, higher quality, or more affordable / convenient / customized education for my child.	51.0%