

Stride Survey:

Ohio Parental Attitudes Regarding Public Schools & Public Education

Since 2000, Stride K12 has been a leader in K–12 online education, putting quality hands-on and online curriculum directly into the homes of the students and families we support. Stride K12-powered learning offers a personalized approach for students through a variety of education experiences. Every family is unique and has different requirements for their child's learning environment.

Stride K12 offers multiple resources for students and families: a vibrant online school community, academic support, and extracurricular activities help students connect, stay motivated, and succeed with online learning. With Stride, families can find answers, information, and inspiration to begin their learning journey or continue it.

This research report, commissioned by Stride and conducted by Pinkston, provides insights into parents' priorities and concerns as they enter the new school year. Interviews for this research were conducted July 7-13, 2022, from a sample of 504 parents or guardians that have children in public school in the state of Ohio, regarding their attitudes towards their child(ren)'s school/education.

Key Findings:

Ohio parents appear to be less concerned about their children's safety and the threat of gun violence in their children's school than parents in the rest of the country. When asked about their children's safety at school, 40 percent of parents express concern. This number is considerably lower than the national average of 50 percent. Similarly, 43 percent of parents say they are "Concerned" or "Very concerned" about the threat of gun violence at their children's school, much lower than the national average of 53 percent.

A majority of parents cite teacher quality as the most important factor when choosing a school for their child (not accounting for financial cost). From a list of potential characteristics that parents could use to choose the best school for their child, 75 percent of Ohio parents say that Quality of teachers is the most important. This is followed closely by Safety (68 percent), Academic excellence (64 percent), Learning support (64 percent), and Good community (55 percent).

In light of concerns, only 36 percent of parents are very satisfied with their child's public school in the state. Though a majority of parents claim to be satisfied with their children's public school education, only about one-third (36 percent) say they are "Very satisfied," indicating some needs among parents and families that are not being met.

Ohio Parents Survey – Results

About the Research: Pinkston conducted a survey of 504 parents (or guardians) who have kids in public school, grades K-12. The sample was recruited from a panel and is representative of Ohio parents by local market and demographically; surveys were conducted in English and administered online, July 7-13, 2022.

Ohio parents are relatively satisfied with their child(ren)’s public school, yet only one-third are very satisfied, indicating some unmet needs.

How satisfied are you with your child(ren)’s public school?	
Base: 504	
Very satisfied	36%
Somewhat satisfied	49%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	8%
Somewhat dissatisfied	6%
Very dissatisfied	1%

SECTION QUESTION: Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

About half (49%) of Ohio parents express some concern about the quality of education their children receive in public school, though they are less concerned than parents nationally.

I am concerned about the quality of education my kids get in public school.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	19%
Agree somewhat	30%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%
Disagree somewhat	20%
Disagree completely	13%

Just over one third (38%) of Ohio parents would prefer to send their child(ren) to a private school, less than the national average (45%).

I would prefer to send my child(ren) to a private school if I could.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	18%
Agree somewhat	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%
Disagree somewhat	19%
Disagree completely	21%

Three in 10 (29%) parents report that their kids struggle in a public school environment.

My child(ren) finds it hard to function well in a typical public school setting.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	10%
Agree somewhat	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	23%
Disagree somewhat	25%
Disagree completely	23%

Most parents recognize that their kids learn better at their own pace. Ohio is slightly higher than the average parent, nationally, in agreement.

My child(ren) learns better when working at their own pace.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	35%
Agree somewhat	43%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%
Disagree somewhat	5%
Disagree completely	0%

Many parents - nearly 8 in 10 in Ohio - want more insight into their kids' education. However, this is lower than the national average.

I want to know more about what my child(ren) are doing in school.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	39%
Agree somewhat	39%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%
Disagree somewhat	4%
Disagree completely	1%

Parents feel relatively good about the way schools are preparing their kids for success.

My child(ren)'s school is adequately preparing them to succeed after they graduate in college or career.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	29%
Agree somewhat	38%
Neither agree nor disagree	20%
Disagree somewhat	10%
Disagree completely	3%

Most parents believe public school gives their children good developmental support.

My kid(s) can get the developmental support they need in public school.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	33%
Agree somewhat	45%
Neither agree nor disagree	13%
Disagree somewhat	7%
Disagree completely	2%

Most parents (70%) agree with school and district policies (slightly higher than the national average (of 64%), though only one-quarter feel very positive.

I support the policies and decisions my child(ren)'s school or district makes.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	22%
Agree somewhat	48%
Neither agree nor disagree	19%
Disagree somewhat	8%
Disagree completely	2%

More than half of Ohio parents (59%) believe in and support public education.

I am a proponent of public education.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	31%
Agree somewhat	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	36%
Disagree somewhat	2%
Disagree completely	2%

While many parents are satisfied with public school curriculum, just under a third are very satisfied.

I am satisfied with the quality of my child(ren)'s curriculum at school.	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	31%
Agree somewhat	43%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%
Disagree somewhat	9%
Disagree completely	3%

While on balance more than half (59%) of parents feel heard, a minority (14%) disagree.

As a parent, I believe my voice is being heard in my child(ren)'s school/school system	
Base: 504	
Agree completely	22%
Agree somewhat	37%
Neither agree nor disagree	26%
Disagree somewhat	9%
Disagree completely	5%

For the following question, a “virtual school program” is defined as an individualized education experience with responsive, online curriculum that allows students to work at their own pace and is taught by state-certified teachers who differentiate instruction through live virtual sessions. This program is delivered online at home.

Four out of 10 Ohio parents believe they would be likely to enroll in virtual school for the upcoming school year, with 16% very likely. However, this is significantly lower than the national average of 50% of parents expressing interest.

If you had access to a free, virtual school program, how likely would you be to enroll your child(ren) in the upcoming school year?	
Base: 504	
Very likely	16%
Somewhat likely	24%
Not sure	22%
Not very likely	38%

Did your child(ren) participate in virtual schooling over the past 2 years?	
Base: 504	
Yes	77%
No	23%

Nearly half (45%) of kids who had virtual school during the pandemic had a bad experience - more so than national (36%). However, 41% of parents said their kids' online experience was at least somewhat positive.

What was your impression of your child(ren)'s experience in virtual schooling?	
Base: 390 (child(ren) experienced virtual schooling in past 2 years)	
Very positive	11%
Somewhat positive	30%
Neither positive nor negative	15%
Somewhat negative	33%
Very negative	12%

Knowing that a virtual school program has strong past experience can change parents' perceptions. Among those with negative experiences over the past two years, at least one-quarter say this would definitely make them more interested, and another quarter are willing to consider.

If a virtual school program was designed and delivered by experienced educators who have been operating a virtual school for over a decade, would you be more interested in virtual school?	
Base: 390 (child(ren) experienced virtual schooling in past 2 years)	
Yes, this would make me more interested	43%
No, it wouldn't make a difference	39%
I'm not sure	17%

Over half of Ohio parents say the most important features in choosing a school are quality of teachers, safety, and academic excellence, (top 3), then learning support, good community and location / accessibility.

Which of the following features are most important in your choice of a school (assuming cost was not a factor)? (Select all that apply)	
Base: 504	
Quality of teachers	75%
Safety	68%
Academic excellence	64%
Learning support	64%
Good community (parents, kids)	55%
Class size	46%
Technology used / taught	45%
Location / accessibility	44%
Quality of facilities	38%
College prep	38%
Career prep	36%
Extracurricular activities	35%
Shapes kids' character	35%
Alignment with my beliefs	21%

Four in 10 Ohio parents are concerned about their children's safety, less than parents nationally (50%).

How concerned are you about your child(ren)'s safety at their school?	
Base: 504	
Very concerned	21%
Concerned	19%
Somewhat concerned	30%
Not very concerned	22%
Not at all concerned	8%

Similarly, Ohio parents are concerned (43%) - but less than the national average (53%) - about gun violence.

How concerned are you about gun violence at your child(ren)'s school?	
Base: 504	
Very concerned	25%
Concerned	18%
Somewhat concerned	24%
Not very concerned	23%
Not at all concerned	10%

DEMOGRAPHICS / PROFILE QUESTIONS

Base for all questions: 504

What grade(s) will your child(ren) be in for the upcoming school year? (Select all that apply)	
Kindergarten-5th grade	54%
6th-8th grade	39%
9th-12th grade	42%

What type(s) of school do your child(ren) attend? (Select all that apply)	
Public school	100%
Parents with at least one other child in these types of schools:	
Private school	3%
Homeschool	1%

At the end of the most recent school year, did your child(ren) attend school... (Select all that apply.)	
In-person	93%
Online	7%
Hybrid	5%

When you vote, which candidates do you tend to vote for?	
Democratic party	29%
Republican party	32%
Other party	4%
It's a mix	19%
Don't typically vote in elections	18%

City live closest to	
Akron	10%
Canton	12%
Cincinnati	14%
Cleveland	17%
Columbus	23%
Dayton	14%
Lorain	2%
Toledo	8%

Area where live is	
Suburban	41%
Urban	25%
Rural	21%
Small town	14%

Respondent's relationship to child(ren)	
Mother	66%
Father	29%
Other	5%

Marital status	
Married	53%
Single, never married	27%
Divorced or separated	17%
Widowed	2%
Prefer not to say	1%

Race / ethnicity (respondents could select multiple):	
White / European or Middle Eastern	85%
African American / Black	11%
Latino / Hispanic	3%
Asian American / Asian / Pacific Islander	2%
Native American	2%

Parent's Age	
18-24 years old	3%
25-34 years old	25%
35-44 years old	43%
45-54 years old	22%
55+	8%

Highest degree or level of school completed	
Some high school	2%
High school diploma / GED	30%
Associate's or technical degree	16%
Some college	24%
Bachelor's degree	18%
Post-graduate degree	10%

Total household income, before taxes	
Less than \$25,000	15%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	30%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	23%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	12%
\$150,000 or more	5%
Prefer not to say	2%