



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA



STATEWIDE SURVEY · APRIL 2026

PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Education

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Key Findings

Californians will make decisions at the ballot box this year with lasting impacts on the state's education system. While California's public school system is making progress through universal transitional kindergarten and dual enrollment in high schools, there are continuing problems with K–12 student test scores, declining school enrollment, and chronic absenteeism. The cost of living in California has also surfaced as an issue as public school teachers strike for higher pay. The actions of the Trump administration are creating uncertainties about federal funding and education policies as well as concerns about the impacts of increased immigration enforcement on students and their families.

These are the key findings of the *Californians and Education* survey on the 2026 election, state policy direction, local public schools, and transitional kindergarten that was conducted March 26–April 3, 2026:

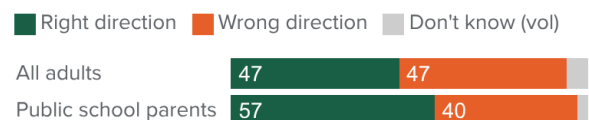
➤ **In our polling conducted before Eric Swalwell suspended his campaign, five gubernatorial candidates have double-digit support in the top-two June primary: Eric Swalwell (D), Steve Hilton (R), Chad Bianco (R), Tom Steyer (D), and Katie Porter (D).** Five Democratic candidates have less than 10 percent support: Xavier Becerra, Matt Mahan, Antonio Villaraigosa, Betty Yee, and Tony Thurmond. Overwhelming majorities across partisan and demographic groups and state regions say that the gubernatorial candidates' positions on TK–12 public education are important to them. None of the 10 candidates for state superintendent of public instruction have 10 percent support, and 32 percent of likely voters are undecided. Forty-five percent of likely voters are interested in having a series of town halls and debates with the candidates for state superintendent of public instruction.

➤ **Sixty-two percent of likely voters would vote yes on a citizens' initiative to extend existing taxes on high incomes to provide permanent funding for education and health care.** Thirty-nine percent would vote yes on a citizens' initiative that limits voters' ability to raise revenues for local government services.

➤ **Forty-seven percent of Californians think the state's TK–12 public education system is headed in the right direction.** Half say the quality of education has gotten worse in the past few years and believe that major changes are needed in California's public schools. Six in ten choose teaching students the basics of academics and life skills as the most important goals of California's

public schools. Fifty-four percent of Californians approve of the way that Governor Newsom is handling the state's TK–12 public education system. Forty-three percent are in favor of the governor's proposal to remove the state superintendent of public instruction as the head of the California Department of Education and have the appointed State Board of Education run the California Department of Education.

Californians are divided on the direction of the state's public education system



➤ **Most Californians and public school parents give their local public schools passing grades.** About half of adults think their local public schools are doing an excellent or good job in preparing students for jobs and the workforce. Forty-nine percent of Californians say that teachers' salaries as compared to their cost of living are a big problem, and 61 percent support public school teachers striking for higher pay. Six in ten are concerned about declining school enrollment and chronic absenteeism in their local public schools. Sixty-seven percent are concerned about the impacts of increased immigration enforcement efforts on undocumented students and their families.

Most Californians give their local public schools a passing grade



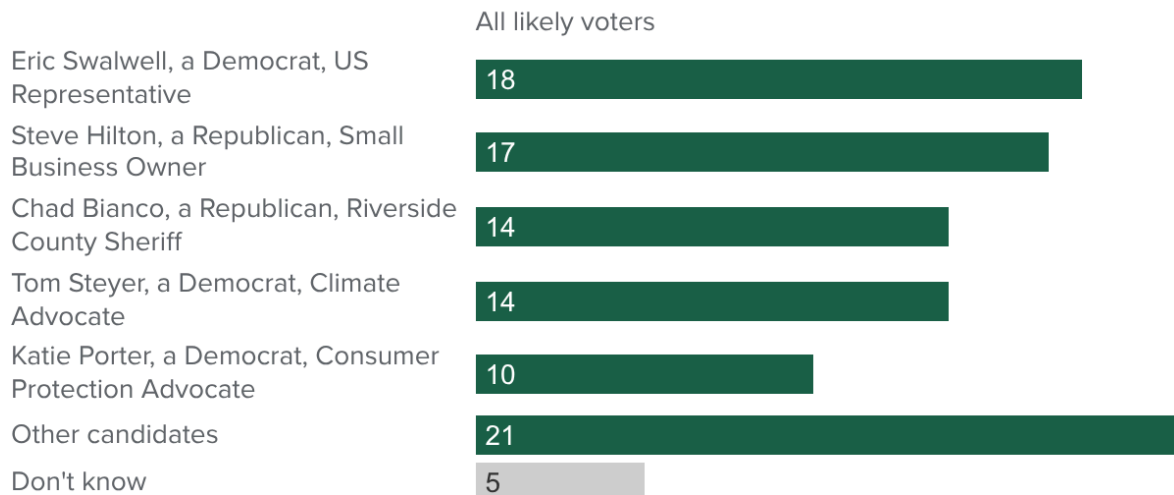
➤ **Sixty-eight percent of Californians are in favor of state-funded universal transitional kindergarten for all four-year-olds in California.** Overwhelming majorities of adults and public school parents think that attending transitional kindergarten is important to a student's success in grades K–12. Four in ten adults and six in ten public school parents think their local schools have raised awareness about the availability and benefits of transitional kindergarten. Majorities of adults and seven in ten public school parents say their local schools have facilities that are appropriate for the developmental needs of four-year-olds in transitional kindergarten.

2026 Elections

California voters will soon be mailed their June 2 primary ballots, and the choices they make will determine the top two candidates running for every statewide office in the November 3 general election. State leadership in education policy for the next four years will be on the ballot, with no incumbents and many candidates running for governor and the state superintendent of public instruction. Some voters will decide the fate of local ballot measures affecting their school districts in the June primary, and it seems likely that California voters will weigh in on state ballot initiatives that impact education funding and policies in the fall.

Gubernatorial primary. In our polling conducted before Eric Swalwell suspended his campaign, five candidates in the top-two governor's primary have double-digit support among likely voters: Eric Swalwell (D), Steve Hilton (R), Chad Bianco (R), Tom Steyer (D), and Katie Porter (D). There are five Democratic candidates with less than 10 percent support, including Xavier Becerra (5%), Matt Mahan (5%), Antonio Villaraigosa (5%), Betty Yee (3%), and Tony Thurmond (2%), and 5 percent of likely voters are undecided. Six in ten Democrats support three Democratic candidates (29% Swalwell, 20% Steyer, 12% Porter), and eight in ten Republicans support two Republican candidates (46% Hilton, 37% Bianco). About two in three liberals support three Democratic candidates (30% Swalwell, 21% Steyer, 17% Porter) while eight in ten conservatives support two Republican candidates (45% Hilton, 35% Bianco). Since our [February survey](#), support for Swalwell (11% to 18%) has increased the most among the top candidates. Since our [December survey](#), support for Porter (21% to 10%) has declined the most among the top candidates.

Top five candidates in the gubernatorial primary race



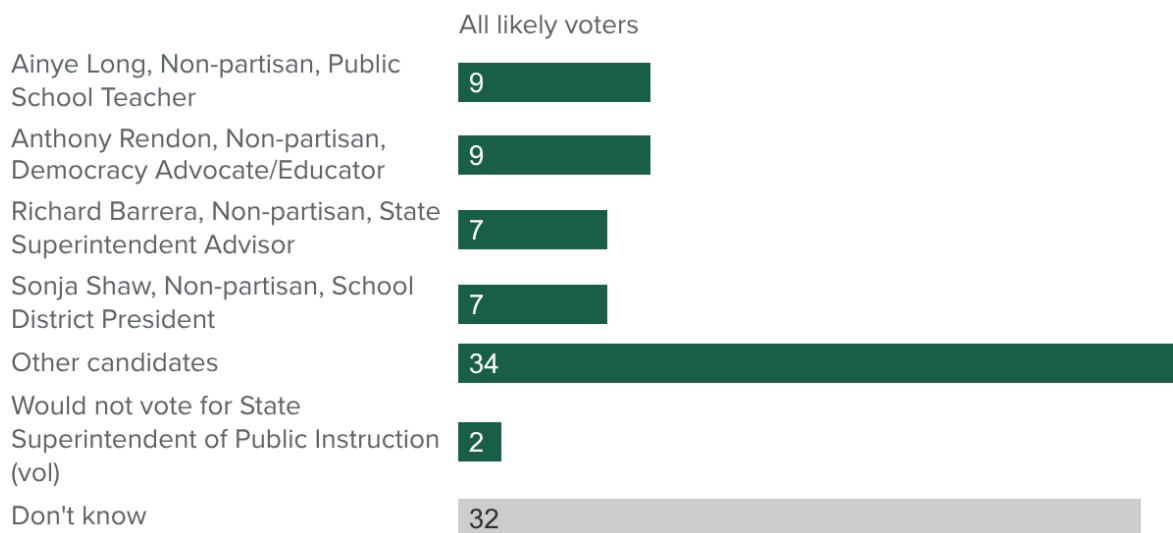
SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

NOTES: Among likely voters only. "Other candidates" includes the "someone else (specify)" response option and any candidates below the top five.

In thinking about the 2026 governor's election, 84 percent of likely voters say that the candidates' positions on TK–12 public education are important (40% very, 44% somewhat) while just 15 percent say this is not too important to them. Overwhelming majorities across partisan and demographic groups and regions say the gubernatorial candidates' positions on TK–12 public education are important. Majorities of likely voters with incomes under \$40,000 (54%), who have children in the household (52%), and who are ages 18 to 34 (51%) say this is very important. Shares who said the gubernatorial candidates' positions on K–12 public education were very important were higher in our [April 2022 survey](#) (51%), [April 2018 survey](#) (64%), [April 2014 survey](#) (58%), and [April 2010 survey](#) (62%).

State superintendent of public instruction. None of the 10 candidates in the nonpartisan race for state superintendent of public instruction has 10 percent support from likely voters, while 32 percent are undecided. One candidate has double-digit support among Democratic likely voters (15% Rendon), and two candidates have double-digit support among Republican likely voters (12% Shaw, 11% Newman); one candidate (20% Long) has double-digit support among independent likely voters. Sizable shares of likely voters are undecided across partisan groups (32% Democrat, 31% Republican, 30% independent) and state regions (23% Los Angeles, 28% Central Valley, 31% Orange/San Diego, 36% San Francisco Bay Area, 40% Inland Empire) and also across age, education, gender, and income groups.

In the primary race for state superintendent of public instruction, many are undecided



SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

NOTES: Among likely voters only. "Other candidates" includes the "someone else (specify)" response option and any candidates below the top five.

Forty-five percent of likely voters say that they are interested (13% very, 32% somewhat) in having a series of town halls and debates with the candidates for state superintendent of public instruction (33% not too, 21% not at all interested). Four in ten or more across regions and partisan groups (47% Democrat, 46% Republican, 41% independent), as well as those who are undecided in this race (43%) are interested in having a series of town halls and debates with the candidates.

Local and state ballot measures. There will be local school bonds and parcel tax measures on both the June and November ballots. There are no state propositions on the primary ballot, but there may be legislative ballot measures and citizens' initiatives on the [November ballot](#) with consequences for education funding and policy. This is in the context of 47 percent of likely voters saying the current level of state funding is "not enough" for their local public schools (19% more than, 31% just enough). Pluralities across demographic groups and state regions hold the view that there is not enough funding, while partisans hold differing opinions.

Still, the share of likely voters who would vote yes (46%) on a local school bond measure falls short of the 55 percent majority needed to pass. The vote threshold for local school bonds among partisan groups is reached among Democrats (62%) but support is much lower among Republicans (18%) or independents (48%), and support falls short of 55 percent across state regions. The share of likely voters who say they would vote yes (40%) on a local parcel tax for local public school funding falls far short of the two-thirds majority needed to pass this local special tax. Support for parcel taxes is below this threshold across partisan and demographic groups and regions.

We also asked about state propositions related to education that might be on the November ballot. Forty-six percent of likely voters would vote yes on a state bond to pay for construction projects in public higher education. Regarding the proposed citizens' initiatives, 39 percent would vote yes on a measure titled "Limits Ability of Voters to Raise Revenues for Local Government Services," 24 percent would vote yes on a measure titled "Requires State Provide Annual Payments to Students Attending Religious or Other Private Schools," and 81 percent would vote yes on a measure titled "Child Safety Requirement for Artificial Intelligence Products. Prohibits Smartphones in Schools." Sixty-two percent would vote yes on a measure titled "Provides Permanent Funding for Schools and Healthcare by extending Existing Tax on High Incomes," with partisans divided and majority support across demographic groups and regions.

Most likely voters would vote yes on a proposed citizens' initiative that would make existing tax rates for high-income Californians permanent

	Yes	No	Don't know (vol)
All likely voters	62	36	3
Public school parents	61	38	1
Democrats	82	14	3
Republicans	30	67	2
Independents	60	38	2
Central Valley	52	46	2
Inland Empire	65	30	5
Los Angeles	66	31	3
Orange/San Diego	60	40	0
SF Bay Area	64	32	3
Men	58	40	2
Women	65	32	3
18 to 34	70	27	3
35 to 54	66	33	1
55 or older	55	41	3
Less than \$40,000	64	30	6
\$40,000 to \$99,999	73	25	2
\$100,000 or more	58	40	2

SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

NOTES: Among likely voters only.

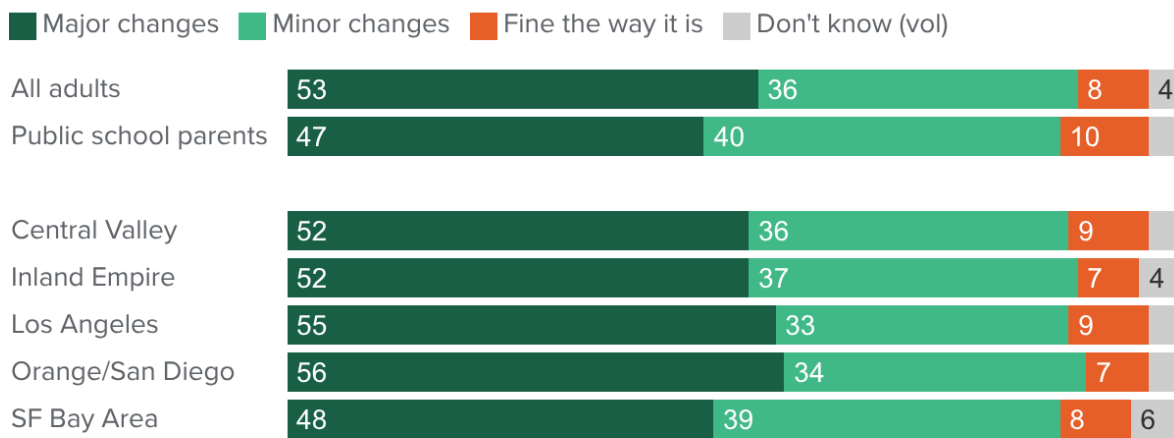
State Policy Direction and Approval Ratings

Californians are divided over the direction of the state's public education system (47% right direction, 47% wrong direction); a majority of public school parents (57%) say the system is headed in the right direction. Californians have been divided on this issue for the past few years. Californians most often name a lack of funding (11%) or concerns about quality (10%) as the most important issue facing the state's TK–12 public schools today—and views are similar among public school parents. When asked about the most important

goal for California’s public schools, nearly four in ten (37%) say it is teaching students the basics and two in ten say it is teaching students life skills (22%), compared to fewer who say it is preparing students to go to college (14%), to be engaged citizens (12%), or to join the workforce (10%).

More than eight in ten adults and public school parents say that the quality of education in California’s TK–12 public schools is a problem, including more than three in ten who say it is a big problem (37% adults, 32% public school parents). These shares were similar a year ago. Half of adults (51%) and fewer public school parents (43%) say the quality of education in California’s public schools has gotten worse; four in ten or fewer say it has stayed the same (37% adults, 41% public school parents), and one in ten say it has improved (8% adults, 14% public school parents). While shares are similar to a year ago, about half or more of adults have said it has gotten worse since 2023. Most adults and public school parents say the state’s public education system is in need of change, including a majority of adults and nearly half of public school parents who say it is in need of major changes. Across most demographic groups and regions, about half or more say major changes are needed.

Nine in ten Californians say the state's TK–12 public education system is in need of change



SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26–April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

California ranked 17th out of the 50 states in per student expenditures for K–12 public education, according to the National Educational Association’s [Ranking and Estimates report](#). Asked where they think the state currently ranks in per pupil spending for TK–12 public schools, California adults are most likely to say it is average (29%). About four in ten say it is near the top (16%) or above average (26%), and fewer say it is near the bottom (7%) or below average (19%). The share saying average is lower today than in recent years, when nearly four in ten have said it is average.

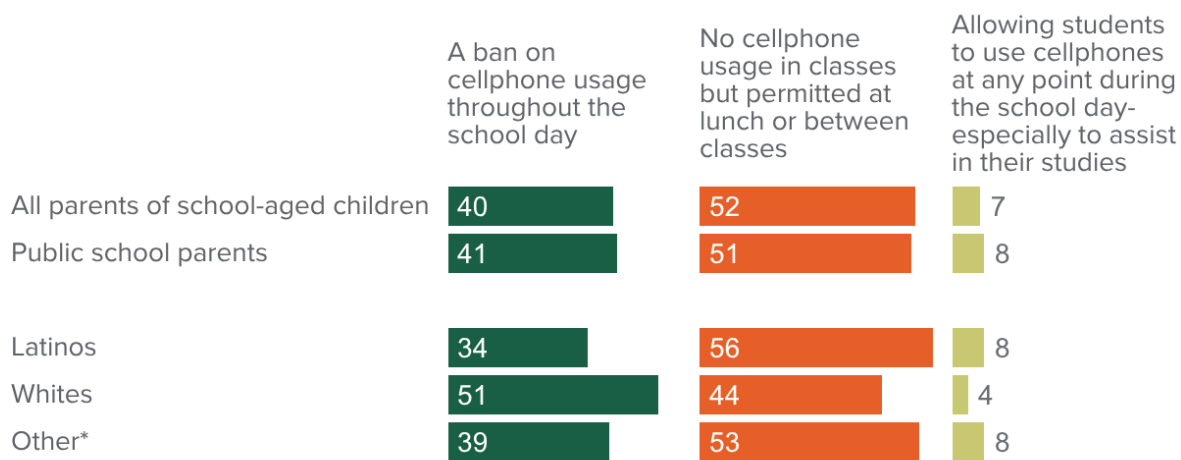
With the primary election for state superintendent of public instruction approaching, about half of adults (47%) and likely voters (50%) oppose the governor’s proposal to remove the elected state superintendent as the head of the California Department of Education and have the appointed State Board of Education run

the department starting in January 2027. About half of public school parents are in favor of this proposal (51% favor, 43% oppose).

California passed AB 1955, the SAFETY Act, in 2024, which bans schools from requiring school staff to disclose a student’s gender identity or sexual orientation to any other person without the child’s permission. While in early March the US Supreme Court reinstated a ruling that requires schools to inform parents of changes to their children’s gender identity, majorities of California adults (57%) and public school parents (59%) say AB 1955 is a good thing. There is a partisan divide on this issue, with majorities of Democrats (76%) and independents (52%) but just a quarter of Republicans (26%) in favor.

In 2024, California also passed AB 3216, the Phone-Free School Act, which requires every school district, charter school, and county office of education to develop a policy limiting or prohibiting student use of cellphones or smartphones by July 1 of this year. Fifty-two percent of parents with school-aged children say they prefer a policy that allows no cellphone usage in classes but permits use at lunch or between classes, while four in ten say they prefer a ban on cellphone usage throughout the school day, and far fewer prefer to allow students to use cellphones at any point in the day and especially to assist in their studies. Opinions among public school parents are similar.

Most parents in the state want at least some restrictions on cellphone usage in schools



SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).
NOTES: Among parents of school-aged parents only.
 *Sample sizes for Asian American and African American parents of school-age children are too small for separate analysis.

Majorities of adults and public school parents approve of the way Governor Gavin Newsom is handling California’s TK–12 public education system. Half or more adults have approved since PPIC began asking this question in 2019. Today, majorities across regions approve, with the exception of Central Valley residents. More than four in ten across demographic groups approve.

When it comes to the state legislature, half of Californians and six in ten public school parents approve. Approval among adults has remained at about half since 2024 (48%). Today, about four in ten or more across demographic and regional groups approve, except for Central Valley residents (44%), those 55 and over (44%), those with some college education (44%), and white residents (43%).

As Tony Thurmond nears the end of his eighth year as state superintendent of public instruction, Californians are divided over the way he has handled the state's TK–12 public education system. Nearly half approve (47% approve, 45% disapprove); a majority of public school parents approve. Around half of adults overall have expressed approval since 2024, when we first asked this question.

Half or more approve of the way the governor, state legislature, and state superintendent of public instruction are handling the TK–12 public education system

% approve

	Governor Newsom	State legislature	Tony Thurmond, state superintendent of public instruction
All adults	54	50	47
Public school parents	65	61	56
Democrats	78	74	68
Republicans	17	18	19
Independents	47	43	41
Central Valley	48	44	42
Inland Empire	55	49	45
Los Angeles	55	51	49
Orange/San Diego	54	53	46
SF Bay Area	61	57	54
Men	51	48	45
Women	56	52	48
African Americans	60	50	45
Asian Americans	51	51	52
Latinos	63	57	52
Whites	45	43	41
Less than \$40,000	57	51	46
\$40,000 to \$99,999	53	48	44
\$100,000 or more	55	51	50

SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

Local Public Schools

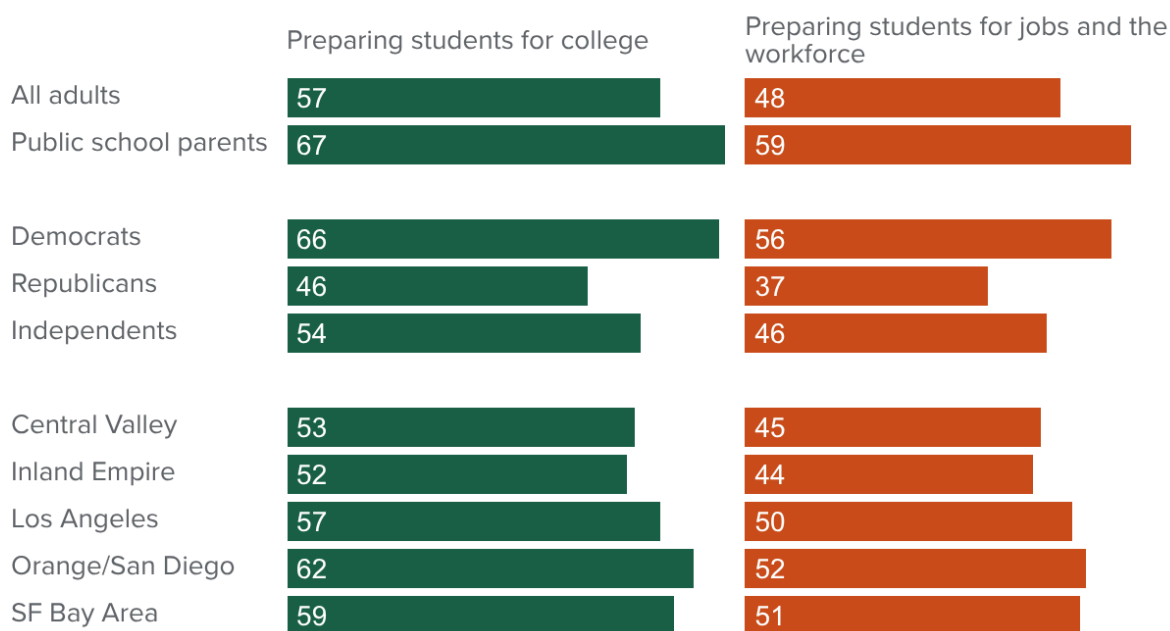
When asked to rate the quality of their local public schools using a letter grade, about two in three adults and public school parents assign a B (32% adults, 36% public school parents) or a C (35% adults, 30% public

school parents). Fewer give an A (11% adults, 17% public school parents), while about one in five say D (11% adults, 8% public school parents) or F (7% adults, 7% public school parents).

Today, majorities of adults and public school parents say their local public schools are doing an excellent or good job preparing students for college (adults: 10% excellent, 47% good; public school parents: 15% excellent, 52% good). Asian Americans (66%) are more likely to hold this view than Latinos (57%), whites (53%), and African Americans (52%). While majorities across all regions share this opinion, the highest levels of confidence are in Orange/San Diego. When asked how local public schools are doing in preparing students for jobs and the workforce, about half of adults (6% excellent, 42% good) and six in ten public school parents (10% excellent, 49% good) express positive opinions. Today, views vary slightly across demographic groups and regions, with Asian Americans (60%) and college graduates (58%) being the most positive.

Many say local schools are doing well at preparing students for college and the workforce

% excellent or good



SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

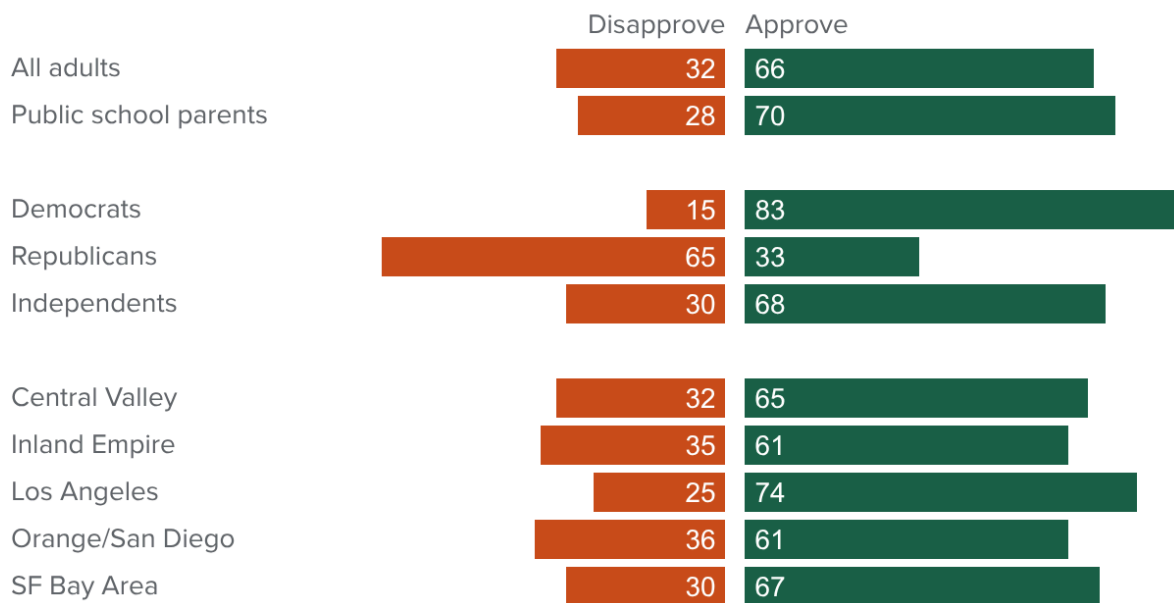
Nearly all adults and public school parents say that a shortage of teachers is at least somewhat of a problem (adults: 49% big problem, 38% somewhat; public school parents: 49% big, 37% somewhat). Fewer than half of residents in the Central Valley and Orange/San Diego (46% each) consider teacher shortages a big problem, compared to majorities in other regions. Overwhelming majorities across political parties and demographic groups say teacher shortages are at least somewhat of a problem. Far fewer say that teacher quality is a big problem (32% adults and public school parents), while almost half say it is somewhat of a

problem (49% adults and public school parents). Fewer than four in ten across parties, regions, and demographic groups consider teacher quality a big problem.

Overwhelming majorities of Californians also say that teacher salaries, relative to the cost of living, are a problem (adults: 49% big, 36% somewhat; public school parents: 50% big, 38% somewhat). Residents of the San Francisco Bay Area (61%) are more likely than those in other regions to view teacher salaries as a big problem (52% Los Angeles, 48% Inland Empire, 42% Orange/San Diego, 41% Central Valley). Four in ten or more across parties, regions, and demographic groups see them as a big problem, except Republicans (36%).

Six in ten Californians support public school teachers striking for higher pay (61% of adults, 65% of public school parents), including majorities across regions and demographic groups. Teachers' unions also receive strong support from adults (66%) and public school parents (70%), with about six in ten or more approving across regions and demographic groups. Eight in ten Democrats and seven in ten independents approve, while about two in three Republicans disapprove. Strong majorities also favor building affordable housing for local teachers on land where public schools have closed (66% of adults, 71% of public school parents).

Two in three Californians approve of teachers' unions



SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

More than six in ten are concerned about declining enrollment affecting funding for their local schools (adults: 23% very, 41% somewhat; public school parents: 26% very, 44% somewhat). Concern is higher in Los Angeles (72%) than elsewhere. Majorities of Californians also express concern about chronic absenteeism in their local public schools (adults: 20% very, 40% somewhat; public school parents: 19% very, 36% somewhat).

Strong majorities of adults and public school parents say they are either very (44% adults, 40% public school parents) or somewhat (23% adults, 35% public school parents) concerned about the impact of increased immigration enforcement on undocumented students and their families in local schools. Concern is highest in Los Angeles, where a majority of residents (53%) say they are very concerned (44% San Francisco Bay Area, 42% Central Valley, 41% Orange/San Diego, 35% Inland Empire). Latinos (50%) are more likely than other racial and ethnic groups to be very concerned (43% African Americans, 41% whites, 36% Asian Americans).

About seven in ten adults (67%) and public school parents (73%) favor their public school district designating itself as a “safe zone” from federal enforcement efforts. Nine in ten Democrats and seven in ten independents favor this, while eight in ten Republicans are opposed. Majorities across regions and demographic groups support the policy, though the shares vary. Support is highest among Los Angeles residents (78%), Latinos (78%), and adults ages 18 to 34 (77%).

Seven in ten adults and three in four public school parents also favor requiring school staff to keep the immigration status of students and their family members confidential. At least six in ten across regions and demographic groups support this policy, including eight in ten Latinos and Los Angeles residents. Overwhelming majorities of Democrats and independents are in favor, while about two in three Republicans are opposed (67%).

Most Californians support immigration protections in their local schools

% favor

	Public school district designating itself as a sanctuary “safe zone” from federal immigration enforcement efforts	Local public schools requiring staff to keep immigration status of students and their family members confidential
All adults	67	70
Public school parents	73	75
Democrats	89	87
Republicans	21	32
Independents	69	72
Central Valley	62	63
Inland Empire	56	66
Los Angeles	78	80
Orange/San Diego	59	65
SF Bay Area	71	71
Men	62	65
Women	71	74
African Americans	73	75
Asian Americans	61	66
Latinos	78	80
Whites	55	60
Less than \$40,000	71	74
\$40,000 to \$99,999	73	75
\$100,000 or more	64	67

SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

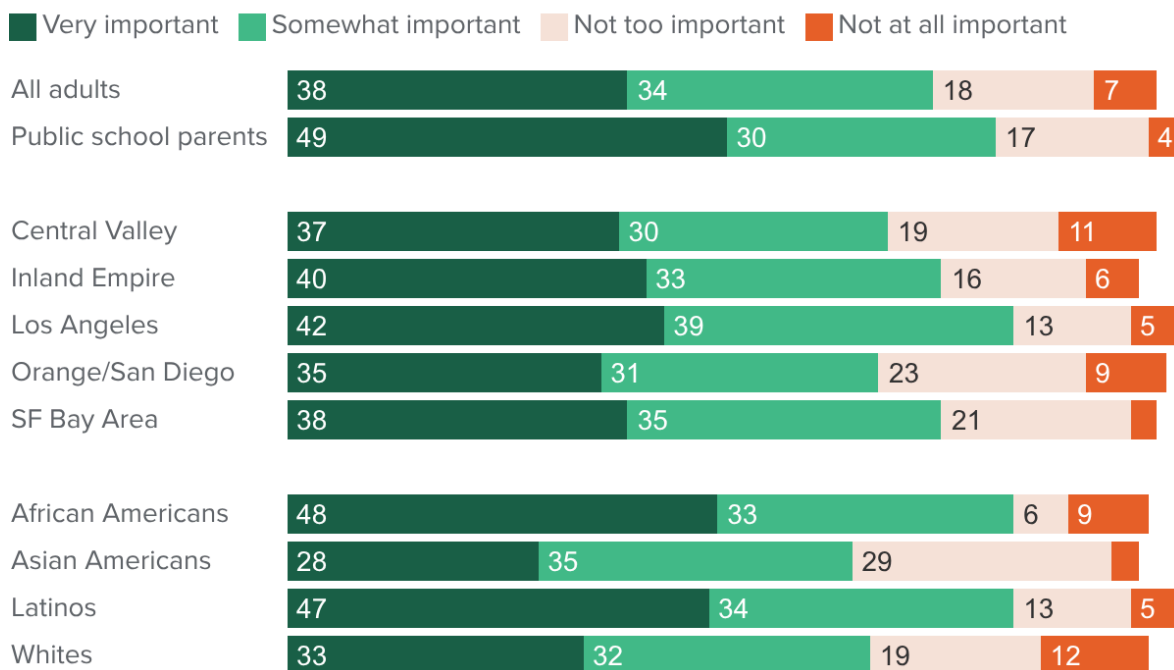
Transitional Kindergarten

As of the 2025–26 school year, transitional kindergarten (TK) is available to all four-year-olds in California’s public schools. Seven in ten Californians think that attending transitional kindergarten is very (38%) or

somewhat important (34%) to a student’s success in kindergarten through grade 12, while one in four say it is not too (18%) or not at all important (7%). Today’s findings are in line with responses to a similar question about the importance of preschool in surveys dating back 20 years to 2006.

Today, as they have been in the past, public school parents are more likely than all adults to say attending preschool is very important. Among adults, the view that TK is important is held by about two in three or more across regions and most demographic groups. However, there are differences across subgroups. Notably, Democrats (45%) are twice as likely as Republicans (22%) to say TK is very important; 37 percent of independents hold this view. African Americans and Latinos are much more likely than Asian Americans and whites to think attending TK is very important.

Most Californians think transitional kindergarten is important for student success in kindergarten through grade 12



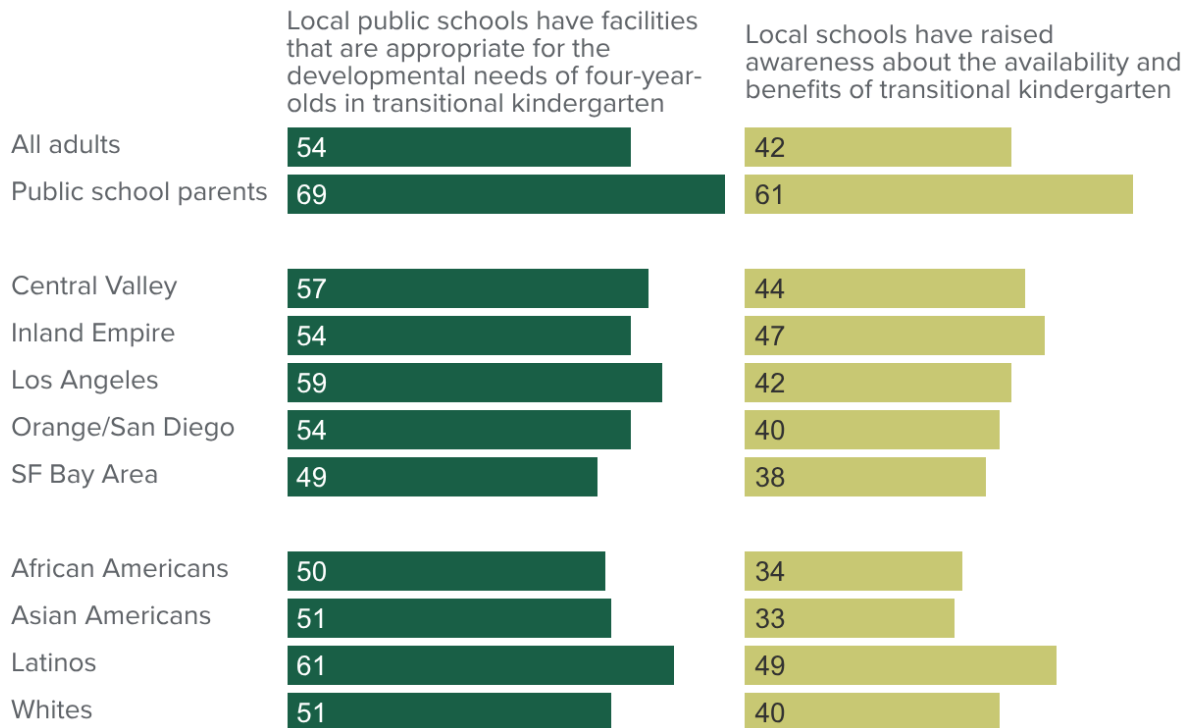
SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

The expansion of TK resulted from the passage of the Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) program (AB 130), which requires public schools with kindergarten to provide free, high-quality, inclusive prekindergarten for all four-year-olds. As the program has expanded, the availability of facilities that are appropriate for the developmental needs of four-year-olds has emerged as a potential challenge. However, when asked about their local public schools, over half of Californians (54%) and seven in ten public school parents (69%) say public schools have appropriate facilities. Democrats (61%) are more likely than independents (50%) and Republicans (47%) to say their public schools have these facilities. About half or more across regions and demographic groups hold this view, with Latinos (61%), residents in Los Angeles (59%), and those with incomes of \$100,000 or more (58%) the most likely to say their schools have appropriate facilities.

Another implementation challenge has been raising awareness of transitional kindergarten. And when asked if their local public schools have raised awareness about the availability and benefits of TK, four in ten (42%) adults and six in ten public school parents (61%) say yes. Fewer than half across parties, regions, and demographic groups say their public schools have raised awareness.

Californians are more likely to say their local public schools have appropriate TK facilities than that their schools have raised awareness of transitional kindergarten

% yes



SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

California’s TK program aims to prepare children for kindergarten by providing an additional year of schooling. Many Californians are concerned that some students are less likely than others to be prepared for kindergarten. Specifically, there is concern that children in lower-income areas (25% very concerned, 44% somewhat concerned) and students who speak English as a second language (20% very concerned, 41% somewhat concerned) are less likely than other children to be ready for kindergarten. Concern has been similar in surveys since 2020, even as the share of students who could access TK has increased.

How do Californians feel about the state government currently funding universal transitional kindergarten (UTK) for all four-year-olds in California? About two in three adults (68%) and three in four public school parents (76%) support funding this program. Support today is in line with responses to a similar question in

earlier surveys about whether state government should fund voluntary preschool programs, such as transitional kindergarten, for all four-year-olds in California.

While there is strong support for UTK, there is a wide partisan divide: eight in ten Democrats and seven in ten independents are in favor, while six in ten Republicans are opposed. Looking beyond partisan differences, there is broad support for UTK, with about six in ten or more across regions and demographic groups in favor. Residents in Los Angeles are the most supportive, and women are more likely than men to be in favor. Notably, those aged 55 and older (59%) are much less likely than those under 55 (73%) to be in favor.

Most Californians support state funding for universal transitional kindergarten

	Favor	Oppose	Don't know (vol)
All adults	68	28	4
Likely voters	68	28	4
Public school parents	76	22	2
Democrats	83	13	4
Republicans	38	60	3
Independents	69	26	5
Central Valley	64	32	5
Inland Empire	65	30	5
Los Angeles	75	22	3
Orange/San Diego	66	31	3
SF Bay Area	67	26	7
Men	63	33	4
Women	72	23	5
African Americans	73	24	3
Asian Americans	65	29	6
Latinos	74	22	4
Whites	61	35	4
Less than \$40,000	67	28	5
\$40,000 to \$99,999	72	23	5
\$100,000 or more	68	29	3

SOURCE: PPIC Statewide Survey, April 2026. Survey was fielded from March 26-April 03, 2026 (n=1,604 adults, n=1,008 likely voters, and n=317 public school parents).

Methodology

The PPIC Statewide Survey on Education was launched in [April 2006](#). The coauthors of the 2026 report include survey director Mark Baldassare, who holds the Miller Chair in Public Policy; associate survey director and research fellow Dean Bonner; survey analyst Lauren Mora; and survey analyst Deja Thomas, who was the project manager for this survey. The Californians and Education survey this year is supported with funding from the Arjay R. and Frances F. Miller Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, and the Windy Hill Fund. The PPIC Statewide Survey invites input, comments, and suggestions from policy and public opinion experts and from its own advisory committee, but survey methods, questions, and content are determined solely by PPIC's survey team. This included informative meetings with colleagues at CSBA, EdSource, EdVoice, the Glenn Price Group, PPIC, and other policy experts. We thank Paul Lewis and Eric McGhee for helpful reviews of an earlier draft.

Findings in this report are based on a survey of 1,604 California adult residents. The median amount of time taken to complete the survey was 21 minutes. Interviews were conducted from March 26–April 3, 2026.

The survey was conducted by Ipsos, using its online KnowledgePanel, in English and Spanish according to respondents' preferences. KnowledgePanel members are recruited through probability-based sampling and include both those with internet access and those without. KnowledgePanel provides internet access for those who do not have it and, if needed, a device to access the internet when they join the panel. KnowledgePanel members are primarily recruited using address-based sampling (ABS) methodology, which improves population coverage, particularly for hard-to-reach populations such as young adults and minority groups. ABS-recruited Latinos are supplemented with a dual-frame random digit dialing (RDD) sampling methodology that targets telephone exchanges associated with areas with a higher concentration of Latinos to provide the capability to conduct representative online surveys with Latinos, including those who speak only Spanish. KnowledgePanel's recruitment was originally based on a national RDD frame and switched to the primarily ABS-based methodology in 2009. KnowledgePanel includes households with landlines and cell phones, including those with cellphones only and those without phones. ABS allows probability-based sampling of addresses from the US Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File (DSF). The DSF-based sampling frame used for address selection is enhanced with a series of refinements—such as the appendage of various ancillary data to each address from commercial and government data sources—to facilitate complex stratification plans. Taking advantage of such refinements, quarterly samples are selected using a stratified sampling methodology that aims to retain the representativeness of the panel. KnowledgePanel recruits new panel members throughout the year to offset panel attrition.

To qualify for the survey, a panel member must be age 18 or older and reside in California. A general population sample of Californians was selected using Ipsos's PPS (probability proportional to size) sampling procedure to select study-specific samples. Briefly, to select such samples, the panel is first weighted to population benchmarks and those panel weights are used as the measure of size for a PPS sample selection that yields a fully representative sample. A total of 1650 respondents completed the survey out of 2,720 panelists who were sampled, for a response rate of 62.3 percent. To ensure the highest data quality, we flagged respondents who sped through the survey, which we defined as completing the survey in one-fourth of the overall median time (less than 5.2 minutes). We also flagged respondents if their self-reported age or gender did not match the data stored in their profile. A total of 46 cases were removed after this review process, resulting in 1,604 total qualified and valid cases.

Accent on Languages, Inc., translated new survey questions into Spanish, with assistance from Renatta DeFever.

Ipsos uses the US Census Bureau’s 2024 American Community Survey’s (ACS) Public Use Microdata Series for California (with regional coding information from the University of Minnesota’s Integrated Public Use Microdata Series for California) to compare certain demographic characteristics of the survey sample—region, age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, and income—with the characteristics of California’s adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the ACS figures. We also used voter registration data from the California Secretary of State to compare the party registration of registered voters in our sample to party registration statewide. The sample of Californians is first weighted using an initial sampling or base weight that corrects for any differences in the probability of selecting various segments of the KnowledgePanel sample. This base weight is further adjusted using an iterative proportional fitting (raking) procedure that aligns sample demographics to population benchmarks from the 2024 ACS data as well as party registration benchmarks from the California Secretary of State’s voter registration file.

The sampling error, taking design effects from weighting into consideration, is ± 3.2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level for the total unweighted sample of 1,604 adults. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 3.2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for unweighted subgroups is larger: for the 1,352 registered voters, the sampling error is ± 3.4 percent; for the 1,008 likely voters, it is ± 3.9 percent; for the 411 parents of children under 18 it is ± 6.0 percent; for the 337 parents of school-aged children it is ± 6.7 percent; and for the 317 public school parents it is ± 6.9 percent. Sampling error is only one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

We present results for five geographic regions, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “San Francisco Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, “Inland Empire” refers to Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and “Orange/San Diego” refers to Orange and San Diego Counties. Residents of other geographic areas are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes for these less-populous areas are not large enough to report separately.

We present results for non-Hispanic whites, who account for 35 percent of the state’s adult population, and also for Latinos, who account for 38 percent of the state’s adult population and constitute one of the fastest-growing voter groups. We also present results for non-Hispanic Asian Americans, who make up about 17 percent of the state’s adult population, and non-Hispanic African Americans, who comprise about 5 percent. Results for other racial/ethnic groups—such as Native Americans—are included in the results reported for all adults, registered voters, and likely voters, but sample sizes are not large enough for separate analysis. Results for African American and Asian American likely voters are combined with those of other racial/ethnic groups because sample sizes for African American and Asian American likely voters are too small for separate analysis. We compare the opinions of those who report they are registered Democrats, registered Republicans, and decline-to-state or independent voters; the results for those who say they are registered to vote in other parties are not large enough for separate analysis. We also analyze the responses of likely voters—so designated per their responses to survey questions about voter registration, previous election participation, intentions to vote this year, attention to election news, and current interest in politics.

Sample sizes and margins of error for each subgroup are presented in the table below.

The percentages presented in the report tables and in the questionnaire may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Numerous questions were adapted from the national surveys by the Pew Research Center, Education Next, Gallup, the Kaiser Family Foundation, the National Parents Union, Phi Delta Kappa/Langer Research, YouGov, NPR/Ipsos, Ipsos/Reuters, CBS News/YouGov, the PACE/USC Rossier School of Education, and the USC/ Understanding America Study. Additional details about our methodology can be found at www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/SurveyMethodology.pdf and are available upon request through surveys@ppic.org.

Unweighted N-size and margin of error

Group	Unweighted N-size	Margin of Error
All adults	1,604	3.2%
Likely voters	1,008	4.0%
Parents	411	6.0%
Parents of school-aged children	337	6.7%
Public school parents	317	6.9%
Democrats	632	5.1%
Republicans	343	6.5%
No party preference/ Independents	346	6.8%
Central Valley	325	6.9%
Inland Empire	201	8.7%
Los Angeles	388	6.4%
Orange/San Diego	222	8.6%
SF Bay Area	328	7.5%
Men	772	4.7%
Women	832	4.4%
African Americans	162	10.5%
Asian Americans	245	8.1%
Latinos	505	5.6%
Whites	652	4.8%
Less than \$40,000	322	7.1%
\$40,000 to \$99,999	515	5.8%
\$100,000 or more	704	4.5%
All likely voters	1,008	4.0%
Parents	184	8.5%
Parents of school-aged children	155	9.2%
Public school parents	141	9.7%
Democrats	469	5.9%
Republicans	278	7.1%
No party preference/ Independents	235	8.6%
Central Valley	183	9.2%
Inland Empire	108	12.3%
Los Angeles	249	8.0%
Orange/San Diego	147	10.5%
SF Bay Area	231	8.3%
Men	501	5.7%
Women	505	5.5%
Latinos	231	8.4%
Whites	509	5.2%
Other	266	8.2%
Less than \$40,000	131	11.7%
\$40,000 to \$99,999	292	7.6%

Questions and Responses

March 26–April 03, 2026

1,604 California adult residents

English, Spanish

Margin of error $\pm 3.2\%$ at 95% confidence level for total sample

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gavin Newsom is handling the state’s transitional kindergarten (TK) through 12th grade public education system?

54% approve

40% disapprove

6% don’t know

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the California Legislature is handling the state’s transitional kindergarten (TK) through 12th grade public education system?

50% approve

44% disapprove

6% don’t know

3. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that California Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tony Thurmond, is handling the state’s transitional kindergarten (TK) through 12th grade public education system?

47% approve

45% disapprove

5% have not heard enough about him to have an opinion (*volunteered*)

4% don’t know

3a. Do you favor or oppose the governor’s proposal to remove the elected state superintendent as the head of the California Department of Education and have the appointed State Board of Education run the California Department of Education starting on January 1, 2027?

43% favor

47% oppose

10% don’t know

Next,

4. Some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote in California?

84% yes [*ask q4a*]

16% no [*skip to q4b*]

4a. Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or are you registered as a decline-to-state or independent voter?

47% Democrat *[ask q5]*
25% Republican *[skip to q5a]*
2% another party *(please specify) [skip to q5b]*
26% decline-to-state/independent *[skip to q5b]*

[likely voters only]

47% Democrat *[ask q5]*
28% Republican *[skip to q5a]*
2% another party *(please specify) [skip to q5b]*
23% decline-to-state/independent *[skip to q5b]*

5. Would you call yourself a strong Democrat or not a very strong Democrat?

58% strong
42% not very strong
– don't know

[skip to q6]

5a. Would you call yourself a strong Republican or not a very strong Republican?

58% strong
42% not very strong
– don't know

[skip to q6]

5b. Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or Democratic Party?

33% Republican Party
60% Democratic Party
6% neither *(volunteered)*
1% don't know

6. *[likely voters only]* As you may know, California now has a top-two primary system for statewide races in which voters can cast ballots for any candidate, regardless of party, and the two candidates receiving the most votes—regardless of party—will advance to the general election. If the June primary for governor were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for?

[randomize candidates]

18% Eric Swalwell, a Democrat, US Representative
17% Steve Hilton, a Republican, Small Business Owner
14% Chad Bianco, a Republican, Riverside County Sheriff

14% Tom Steyer, a Democrat, Climate Advocate
10% Katie Porter, a Democrat, Consumer Protection Advocate
5% Xavier Becerra, a Democrat, Voting Rights Attorney
5% Matt Mahan, a Democrat, Mayor of San Jose
5% Antonio Villaraigosa, a Democrat, Housing Affordability Advocate
3% Betty T. Yee, a Democrat, Family Care Navigator
2% Tony K. Thurmond, a Democrat, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction
1% someone else (please specify)
5% don't know

7. [likely voters only] In thinking about the 2026 governor's election, how important to you are the candidate's positions on TK-12 public education—very important, somewhat important, or not too important?

40% very important
44% somewhat important
15% not too important
1% don't know

8. [likely voters only] If the June nonpartisan primary election for state superintendent of public instruction were being held today, and these were the candidates, who would you vote for?

[randomize candidates]

9% Ainye Long, Nonpartisan, Public School Teacher
9% Anthony Rendon, Nonpartisan, Democracy Advocate/Educator
7% Richard Barrera, Nonpartisan, State Superintendent Advisor
7% Sonja Shaw, Nonpartisan, School District President
6% Wendy Castaneda Leal, Nonpartisan, School District Superintendent
6% Al Muratsuchi, Nonpartisan, Assemblymember/Classroom Educator
6% Josh Newman, Nonpartisan, Educator/Strategic Advisor
5% Nichelle M. Henderson, Nonpartisan, College Trustee/Teacher
5% Frank Lara, Nonpartisan, Teacher/Union VP
2% Gus Mattammal, Nonpartisan, Educator/Executive/Author
2% neither/would not vote for State Superintendent of Public Instruction (*volunteered*)
4% someone else (specify)
32% don't know

9. [likely voters only] How interested, if at all, are you in having a series of debates and town halls with the candidates for state superintendent of public instruction?

13% very interested
32% somewhat interested
33% not too interested
21% not at all interested
– don't know

Next, we have a few questions to ask you about some of the propositions that may be on the November ballot.

[rotate questions 10 through 13]

10. [likely voters only] A proposed citizens' initiative for the November 2026 state ballot is titled "Provides Permanent Funding for Schools and Healthcare by Extending Existing Tax on High Incomes. Initiative Constitutional Amendment." It makes permanent the existing 2012 voter-approved tax rates for high-income Californians, currently set to expire in 2031.

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no?

62% yes
36% no
3% don't know

11. [likely voters only] A proposed citizens' initiative for the November 2026 state ballot titled "Limits Ability of Voters to Raise Revenues for Local Government Services. Initiative Constitutional Amendment." It limits voters' ability to pass voter-proposed local special taxes by raising the vote approval threshold requirement for such ballot measures from a simple majority (over 50%) to two-thirds.

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no?

39% yes
57% no
4% don't know

12. [likely voters only] A proposed citizens' initiative for the November 2026 state ballot is titled "Requires State Provide Annual Payments to Students Attending Religious and Other Private Schools. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute." It requires the state to deposit yearly voucher payments (\$17,000 initially, adjusted annually) into Education Savings Accounts for California residents in grades TK–12 attending religious and other private schools anywhere in the United States.

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no?

24% yes
73% no
3% don't know

13. [likely voters only] A proposed citizens' initiative for the November 2026 state ballot is titled "Child Safety Requirements for Artificial Intelligence Products. Prohibits Smartphones in Schools. Initiative Statute." Requires risk assessments and risk labels for artificial intelligence (AI) products likely to be used by children. Prohibits distribution to children of AI products that present an "unacceptable risk," including certain "companion chatbots" (AI software that simulates humanlike relationships).

If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no?

81% yes
18% no
1% don't know

Onto another topic,

14. Thinking about the transitional kindergarten through 12th grade public education system overall in California today, do you think it is generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

47% right direction
47% wrong direction
6% don't know

15. What do you think is the most important issue facing California's TK–12 public schools today?

11% lack of funding
10% concerns about standards/quality of education
5% concerns about curriculum
5% quality of teachers
4% technology access and digital divide
4% concerns about political ideology influencing education
3% low teacher pay
2% federal government influence, federal funding cuts to education
2% inadequate preparation for college/life
2% lack of discipline/behavior of children
2% large class sizes
2% safety/security
2% teacher retention/shortage
1% bullying
1% lack of classroom resources/supplies
19% other (specify)
27% don't know

16. In your opinion, what is the most important goal of California's TK–12 public schools?

[rotate response options top to bottom/bottom to top with "other" always last]

37% teaching students the basics including math, reading, and writing
22% teaching students life skills
14% preparing students for college
12% preparing students to be engaged citizens
10% preparing students for the workforce
3% other (specify)
2% don't know

17. In thinking about priorities for California's TK–12 public schools, do you think that preparing students to

be engaged citizens should be a...

[rotate response options top to bottom/bottom to top]

19% very high priority
41% high priority
20% medium priority
6% low priority
2% very low priority
2% don't know

18. How much of a problem is the quality of education in California's TK-12 public schools today?

37% big problem
50% somewhat of a problem
11% not much of a problem
3% don't know

19. Over the past few years, do you think the quality of education in California's TK-12 public schools has improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same?

8% improved
51% gotten worse
37% stayed the same
4% don't know

20. Overall, do you think the TK-12 public education system in California is in need of major changes, minor changes, or that it is basically fine the way it is?

53% major changes
36% minor changes
8% fine the way it is
4% don't know

Changing topics,

[rotate questions 21 and 22]

21. How concerned are you that California's TK-12 public schools in lower-income areas have a shortage of good teachers compared to schools in wealthier areas? Are you...

39% very concerned
41% somewhat concerned
12% not too concerned
6% not at all concerned
2% don't know

22. How concerned are you that California’s TK–12 public school students in lower-income areas are less likely than other students to be ready for college when they finish high school? Are you...

- 37% very concerned
- 42% somewhat concerned
- 13% not too concerned
- 7% not at all concerned
- 2% don’t know

23. How concerned are you about improving student outcomes for English language learners in California today? Are you...

- 28% very concerned
- 43% somewhat concerned
- 19% not too concerned
- 8% not at all concerned
- 2% don’t know

24. How important is improving student outcomes for English language learners for California’s future economic well-being and quality of life?

- 45% very important
- 37% somewhat important
- 10% not too important
- 6% not at all important
- 2% don’t know

Next,

[rotate questions 25 and 26]

25. Where do you think California currently ranks in per pupil spending for K–12 public schools? Compared to other states, is California’s spending near the top, above average, average, below average, or near the bottom?

- 16% near the top
- 26% above average
- 29% average
- 19% below average
- 7% near the bottom
- 4% don’t know

26. Where do you think California currently ranks in student test scores for K–12 public schools? Compared to other states, are California’s student test scores near the top, above average, average, below average, or near the bottom?

- 5% near the top
- 14% above average

37% average
27% below average
13% near the bottom
4% don't know

27. Next, overall, how would you rate the quality of public schools in your neighborhood today? If you had to give your local public schools a grade, would it be A, B, C, D, or F? Think of grades A to F as a scale where A is the best and F is failing.

11% A
32% B
35% C
11% D
7% F
4% don't know

[rotate questions 28 through 30]

28. Are your local public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in preparing students for college?

10% excellent
47% good
31% not so good
7% poor
4% don't know

29. Are your local public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in preparing students for jobs and the workforce?

6% excellent
42% good
37% not so good
10% poor
5% don't know

30. Are your local public schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in preparing students to be engaged citizens?

6% excellent
44% good
36% not so good
8% poor
6% don't know

Next,

31. Do you think the current level of state funding for your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

14% more than enough
35% just enough
47% not enough
4% don't know

32. If the state ballot had a bond measure to pay for construction projects in California's public higher education system, would you vote yes or no?

50% yes
45% no
5% don't know

[rotate questions 33 and 34]

33. If your local school district had a bond measure on the ballot to pay for school construction projects, would you vote yes or no?

50% yes
45% no
5% don't know

34. What if there was a measure on your local ballot to increase local parcel taxes to provide more funds for the local public schools? Would you vote yes or no?

41% yes
56% no
4% don't know

Onto another topic,

[rotate questions 35 and 36]

35. Do you think the current level of resources for lower-income students in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

13% more than enough
35% just enough
47% not enough
6% don't know

36. Do you think the current level of resources for English language learners in your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?

16% more than enough
45% just enough
33% not enough

6% don't know

Following are issues people have mentioned when talking about teachers in California's TK–12 public schools today. Please answer if you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not really a problem.

[rotate questions 37 through 39]

37. How about teacher quality?

32% big problem
49% somewhat of a problem
17% not really a problem
2% don't know

38. How about a shortage of teachers?

49% big problem
38% somewhat of a problem
11% not really a problem
2% don't know

39. How about teacher salaries compared to the cost of living in California?

49% big problem
36% somewhat of a problem
13% not really a problem
2% don't know

40. Would you favor or oppose building affordable housing for local teachers and staff on the land where local public schools have closed?

66% favor
32% oppose
3% don't know

41. In general, do you support or oppose public school teachers striking for higher pay?

61% support
36% oppose
2% don't know

42. Do you approve or disapprove of teachers' unions?

66% approve
32% disapprove
3% don't know

Next,

43. In thinking about priorities for California’s public high schools, do you think that preparing students for the future should be a...

[rotate response options top to bottom/bottom to top]

47% very high priority
39% high priority
11% medium priority
1% low priority
1% very low priority
1% don’t know

44. Are your public high schools doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in preparing students for the future?

5% excellent
46% good
35% not so good
9% poor
5% don’t know

45. And how important to you is it that public high schools include ethnic studies classes on the history, contributions, and struggles of California’s African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans?

35% very important
36% somewhat important
16% not too important
12% not at all important
2% don’t know

46. And how important to you is it that public high schools include environment, climate, and sustainability education—very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

40% very important
34% somewhat important
14% not too important
10% not at all important
2% don’t know

Next,

47. [parents of school-aged children only] Thinking about four school types... [rotate] One is [1] traditional public schools. Another is [2] charter schools, which are publicly funded but run outside of the public school system. The third is [3] religious or parochial schools. And the fourth is [4] private schools. Imagine you could

send your youngest child to any one of these four kinds of schools and cost and location were not an issue. All things equal, which would you pick?

- 34% public school
- 19% charter school
- 13% religious school
- 33% private school
- 1% don't know

48. The state created charter schools to offer parents an alternative to traditional public schools. These schools are expected to meet basic state requirements, but are exempt from many state laws and regulations. In general, do you favor or oppose charter schools?

- 55% favor
- 41% oppose
- 4% don't know

49. A community school is a public school that has community partnerships that support improved academic outcomes, whole-child engagement, and family development. Community school strategies include integrated support services, family and community engagement, collaborative leadership practices for educators and administrators, and extended learning time and opportunities.

How important are community schools in improving the outcomes of underserved students?

- 36% very important
- 48% somewhat important
- 9% not too important
- 3% not at all important
- 4% don't know

50. Do you favor or oppose providing parents with tax-funded vouchers to send their children to any public, private, or parochial school they choose?

- 45% favor
- 52% oppose
- 3% don't know

Next,

51. The Local Control Funding Formula provides additional funding to school districts that have more [rotate] [1] [English language learners] [and] [2] [lower-income students] and gives local school districts more flexibility over how state funding is spent. In general, do you favor or oppose this policy?

- 67% favor
- 28% oppose
- 5% don't know

52. [public school parents only] The Local Control Funding Formula requires school districts to seek input from parents in developing and revising their accountability plans for how to allocate resources. Has your child's school or school district provided you with information about how to become involved, or not?

44% yes
54% no
3% don't know

53. On another topic, do you favor or oppose the state government currently funding universal transitional kindergarten (UTK) for all four-year-olds in California?

68% favor
28% oppose
4% don't know

54. How important is attending transitional kindergarten (TK) to a student's success in kindergarten through grade 12?

38% very important
34% somewhat important
18% not too important
7% not at all important
3% don't know

[rotate questions 55 and 56]

55. Do you think your local schools have raised awareness about the availability and benefits of transitional kindergarten (TK)?

42% yes
52% no
6% don't know

56. Do you think your local public schools have facilities that are appropriate for the developmental needs of four-year-olds in transitional kindergarten (TK)?

54% yes
39% no
7% don't know

[rotate questions 57 and 58]

57. How concerned are you that children in lower-income areas are less likely than other children to be ready for kindergarten? Are you...

25% very concerned
44% somewhat concerned
20% not too concerned
9% not at all concerned

2% don't know

58. How concerned are you that students who speak English as a second language are less likely than other children to be ready for kindergarten? Are you...

20% very concerned
41% somewhat concerned
25% not too concerned
12% not at all concerned
2% don't know

59. Next, if you had to choose, which do you think is more important for young people to succeed today—[rotate] (1) earning a college degree from a well-respected university [or] (2) obtaining the knowledge or skills needed to do a specific job?

24% earning a college degree
74% obtaining knowledge or skills
1% neither (*volunteered*)
2% don't know

60. In general, how well do you think your local public schools prepare someone for a well-paying job in today's economy?

5% very well
36% somewhat well
41% not too well
13% not at all well
4% don't know

61. How important to you is it that your local public schools include career technical or vocational education as part of the curriculum?

53% very important
39% somewhat important
5% not too important
2% not at all important
1% don't know

Changing topics,

[rotate questions 62 through 68]

62. How important do you think it should be for students in your local public schools to learn about the Declaration of Independence, which was adopted on July 4, 1776?

61% very important
30% somewhat important

6% not too important
1% not at all important
1% don't know

63. How important do you think it should be for students in your local public schools to learn about the US Constitution?

71% very important
23% somewhat important
4% not too important
1% not at all important
1% don't know

64. How important do you think it should be for students in your local public schools to learn about the Bill of Rights, which are the first ten amendments of the US Constitution on personal freedoms and government limitations?

70% very important
25% somewhat important
3% not too important
1% not at all important
1% don't know

65. How important do you think it should be for students in your local public schools to learn about the California Constitution?

47% very important
40% somewhat important
9% not too important
3% not at all important
1% don't know

66. How important do you think it should be for students in your local public schools to learn about how California elections and the voter registration system work?

58% very important
31% somewhat important
8% not too important
2% not at all important
1% don't know

67. How important do you think it should be for students in your local public schools to learn about how to evaluate and discuss the pros and cons of different political viewpoints?

55% very important
33% somewhat important

8% not too important
4% not at all important
1% don't know

68. How important do you think it should be for students in your local public schools to learn about how to find information and detect disinformation about elections, candidates, and ballot measures online?

57% very important
30% somewhat important
9% not too important
3% not at all important
1% don't know

Onto another topic,

69. How concerned are you about the impacts of increased federal immigration enforcement efforts on undocumented students and their families in your local public schools? Are you...

44% very concerned
23% somewhat concerned
14% not too concerned
17% not at all concerned
1% don't know

70. Do you favor or oppose your public school district designating itself as a sanctuary "safe zone" to indicate it will protect its undocumented students and their families from federal immigration enforcement efforts?

67% favor
31% oppose
2% don't know

71. Do you favor or oppose your local public schools requiring staff to keep information about the immigration status of students and their family members completely confidential?

70% favor
28% oppose
2% don't know

[rotate questions 72 and 73]

72. [parents of school-aged children only] Next, what do you hope will be the highest grade level that your youngest child will achieve?

2% some high school
11% high school graduate
11% two-year community college graduate or career technical training
34% four-year college graduate
41% a graduate degree after college

1% don't know

73. [parents of school-aged children only] How worried are you about being able to afford a college education for your youngest child?

37% very worried
35% somewhat worried
18% not too worried
9% not at all worried
1% don't know

74. According to the California Department of Education, a “chronic absentee” is defined as a student who is absent on 10% or more of the total school days in the school year. How concerned are you about chronic absenteeism in your local public schools? Are you...

20% very concerned
40% somewhat concerned
25% not too concerned
11% not at all concerned
4% don't know

Next,

75. How concerned are you about declining school enrollment affecting funding for your local public schools?

23% very concerned
41% somewhat concerned
23% not too concerned
11% not at all concerned
3% don't know

76. In 2024 California passed AB 1955, which bans schools from requiring school staff to disclose a student's gender identity or sexual orientation to any other person without the child's permission. Do you think this is [rotate] [1] a good thing [or] [2] a bad thing?

57% good thing
40% bad thing
3% don't know

77. Many schools today are updating their policies on the use of cellphones in schools. Which of the following policies come closest to your view, even if none are exactly right?

[randomize response options]

40% a ban on cellphone usage throughout the school
52% no cellphone usage in classes, but permitted at lunch or between classes
7% allowing students to use cellphones at any point during the school day—especially to assist in their studies
1% don't know

77a. Do you think that the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on California’s TK–12 public schools over the next 10 years will be...

[rotate response options top to bottom/bottom to top]

- 3% very positive
- 11% somewhat positive
- 34% equally positive or negative
- 26% somewhat negative
- 24% very negative

Next,

78. Would you consider yourself to be politically:

[rotate order top to bottom]

- 12% very liberal
- 21% somewhat liberal
- 38% middle-of-the-road
- 18% somewhat conservative
- 9% very conservative
- 1% don’t know

79. Generally speaking, how much interest would you say you have in politics?

- 23% a great deal
- 38% a fair amount
- 26% only a little
- 12% none
- don’t know

[d1–d15 demographic questions]

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