

# PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and Education

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# Outline

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- PPIC Statewide Surveys
- General Perceptions
- Fiscal Attitudes and Policy Preferences
- Conclusions



# PPIC Statewide Survey Mission

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- Provide timely, relevant, nonpartisan data on political, social, and economic opinions
- Inform and improve state policymaking, raise awareness, encourage discussion
- Provide a voice for all Californians in important state policy debates
  - 226,000+ Californians since 1998
  - 100+ general, issue, and regional surveys



# Californians and Education

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- Sixth survey on K–12 education
  - Funded by The Hewlett Foundation
- Perceptions, attitudes, and policy preferences on K–12 quality, finance, budget, teachers
- Telephone interviews, April 6–20
  - 2,504 adults, including 1,439 likely voters and 808 public school parents
  - 2,254 landline phones, 250 cell phones
    - $\pm 2\%$  *margin of error for all adults*
    - $\pm 3\%$  *for likely voters*
    - $\pm 3.5\%$  *for public school parents*



# Outline

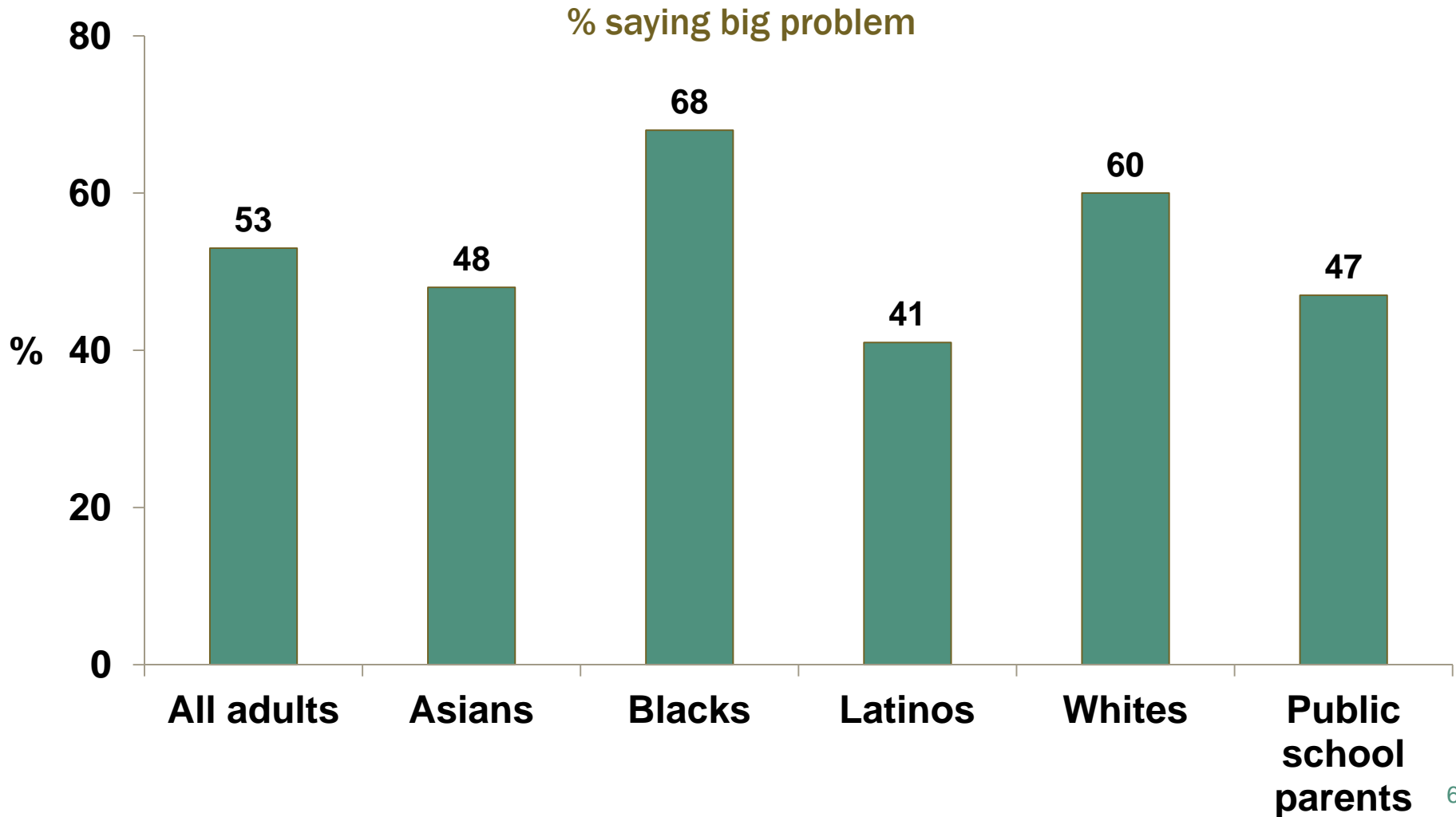
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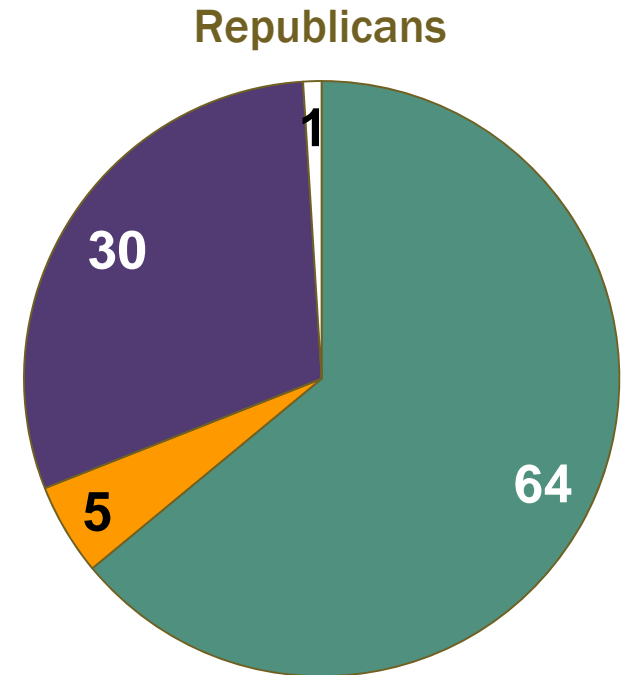
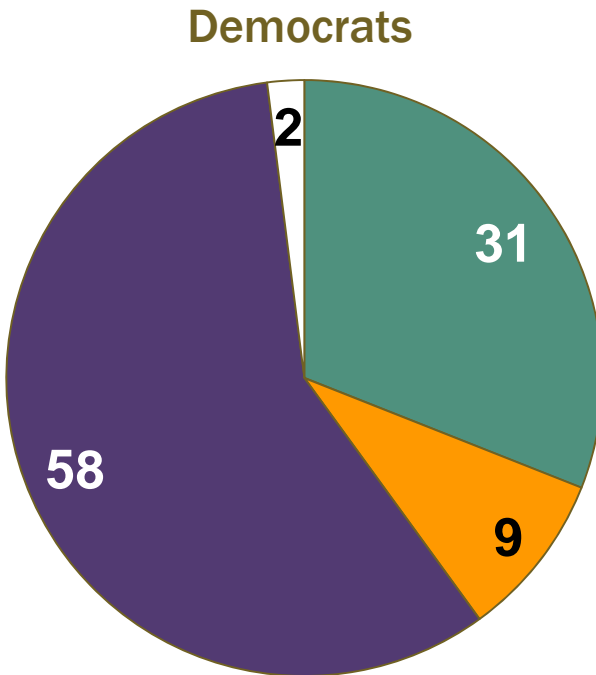
# Quality of Education

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



# Adequacy and Efficiency

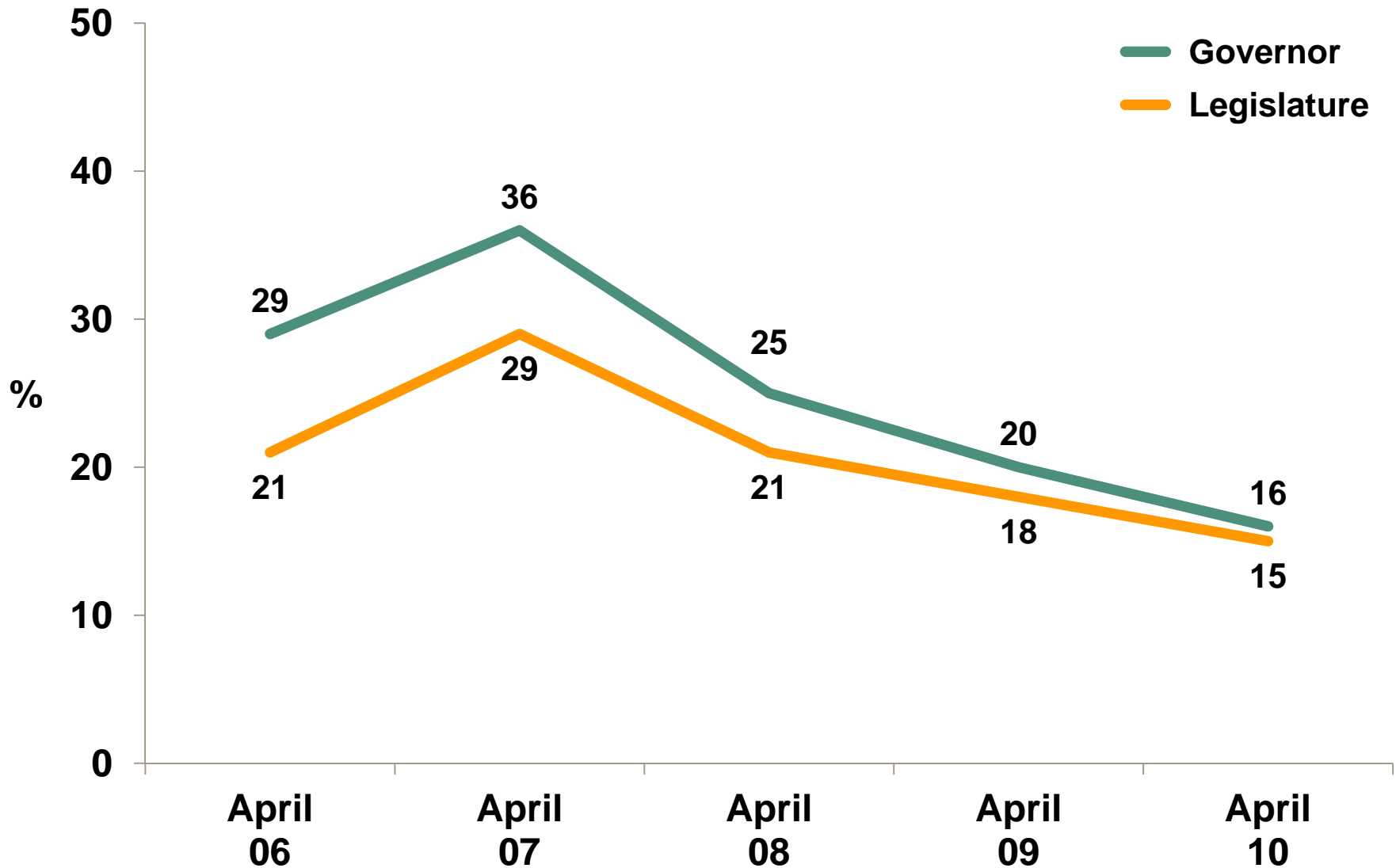
To significantly improve the quality of California's K-12 public schools, which of the following statements do you agree with the most? We need to...



- Use existing state funds more wisely
- Increase the amount of state funding
- Do both
- Don't know



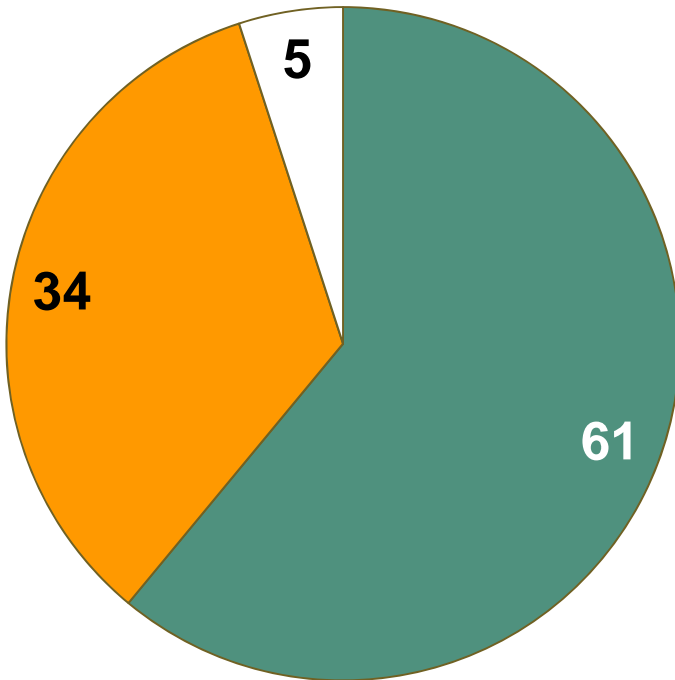
# Approval Ratings of State Elected Officials on K-12 Education



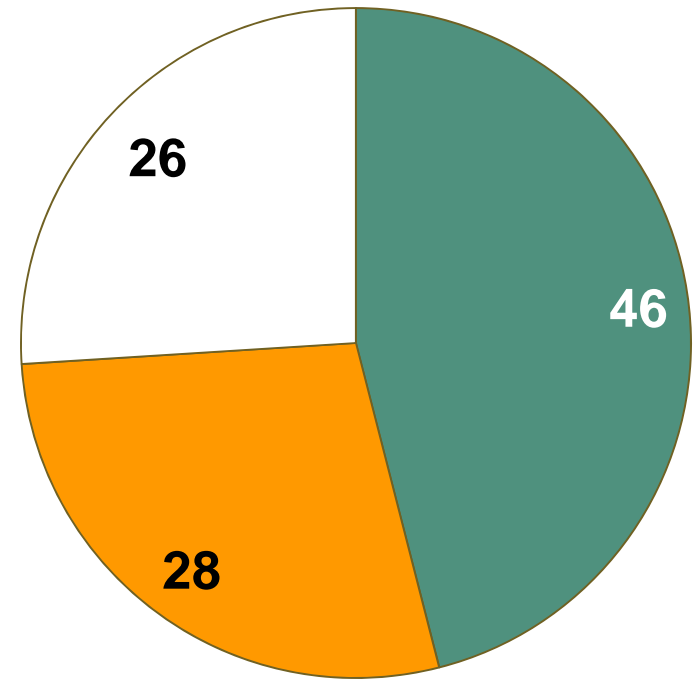


# President Obama and K-12 Education Policy

Overall



Handling K-12 Education Policy



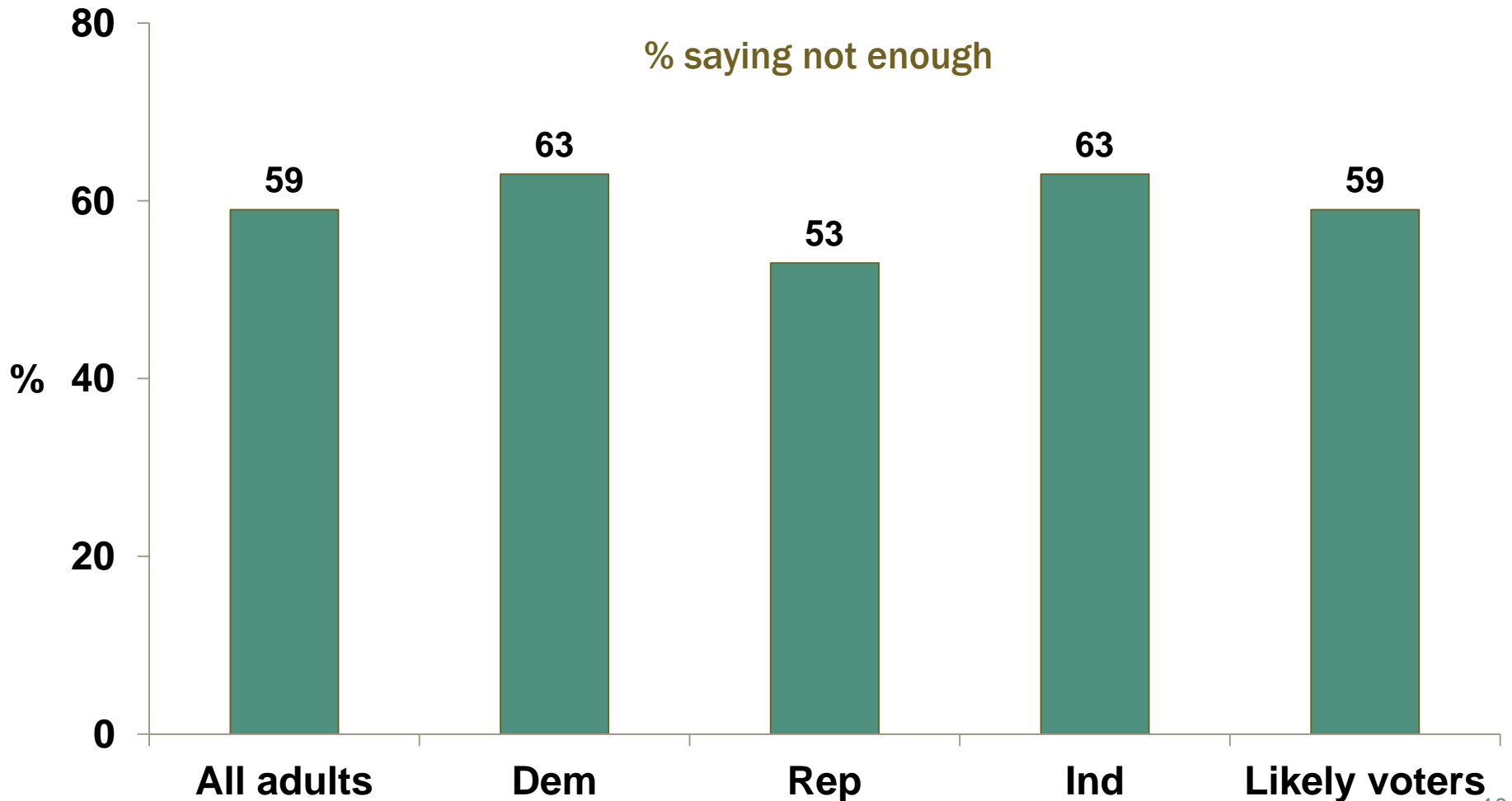
All adults

- Approve
- Disapprove
- Don't know



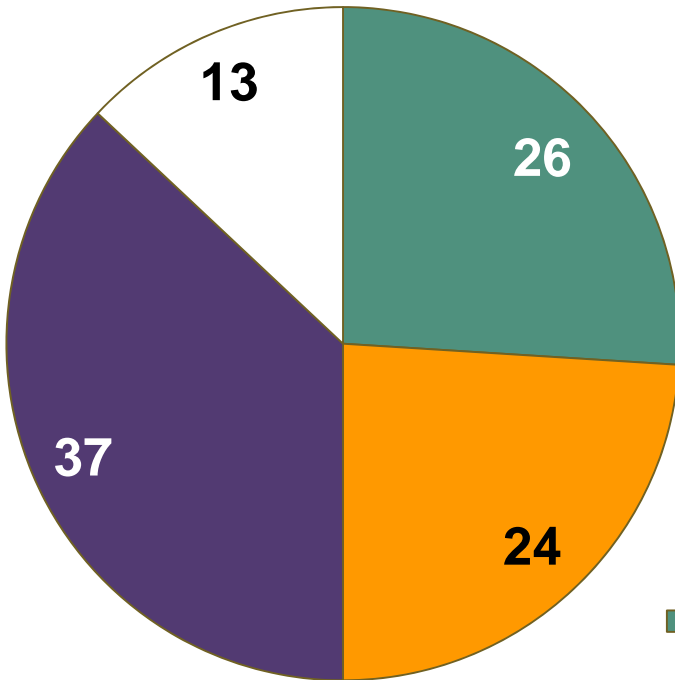
# Assessing Federal Government Role

Do you think that the federal government is doing more than enough, just enough, or not enough to improve the K-12 public education system?



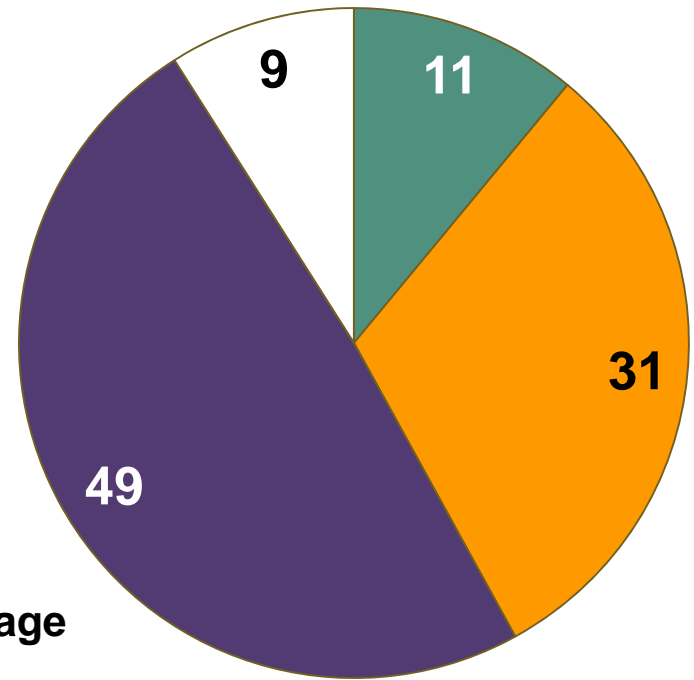
# Beliefs About Spending and Student Test Scores

Per Pupil Spending



Student Test Scores

All adults

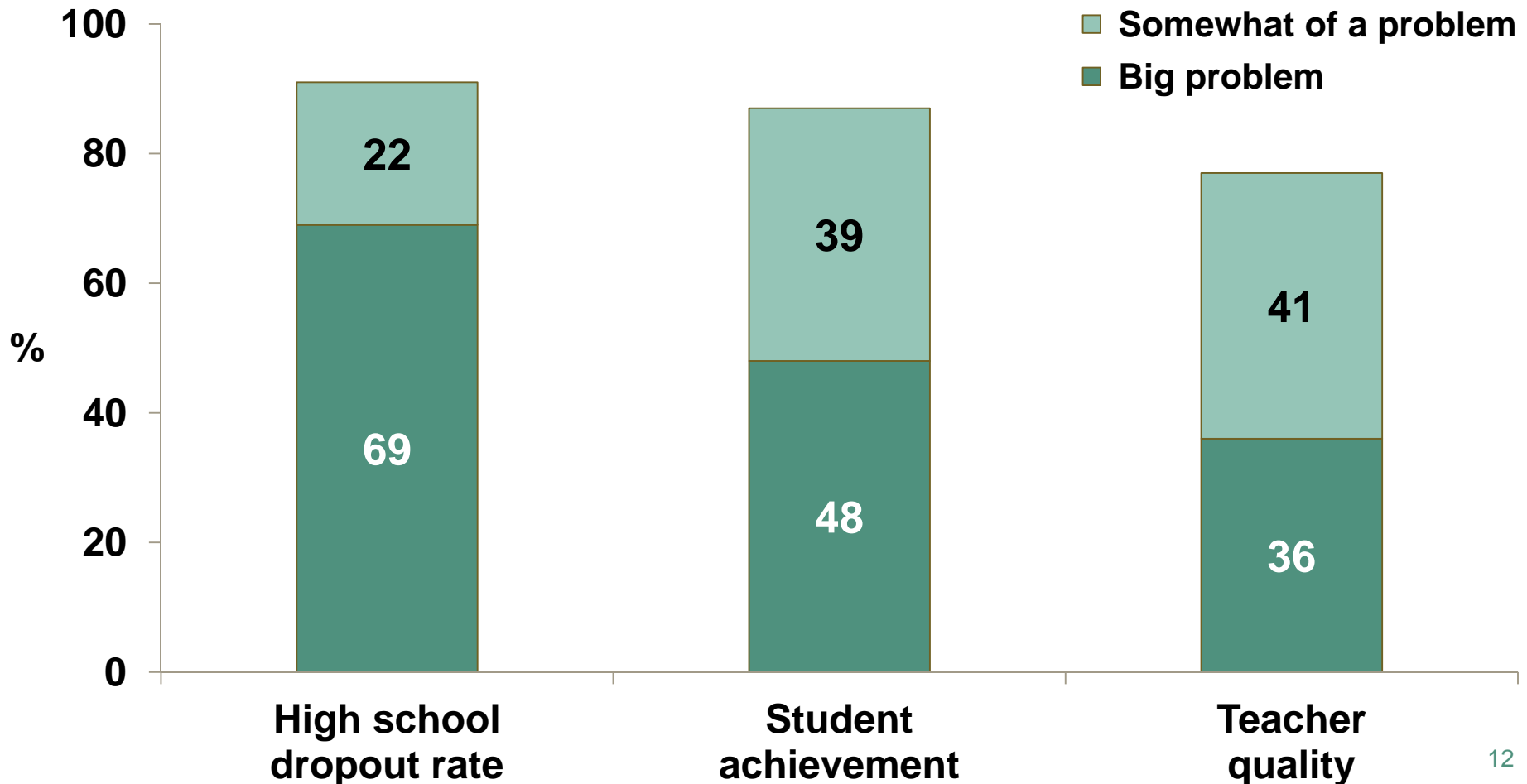


- Above average
- Average
- Below average
- Don't know



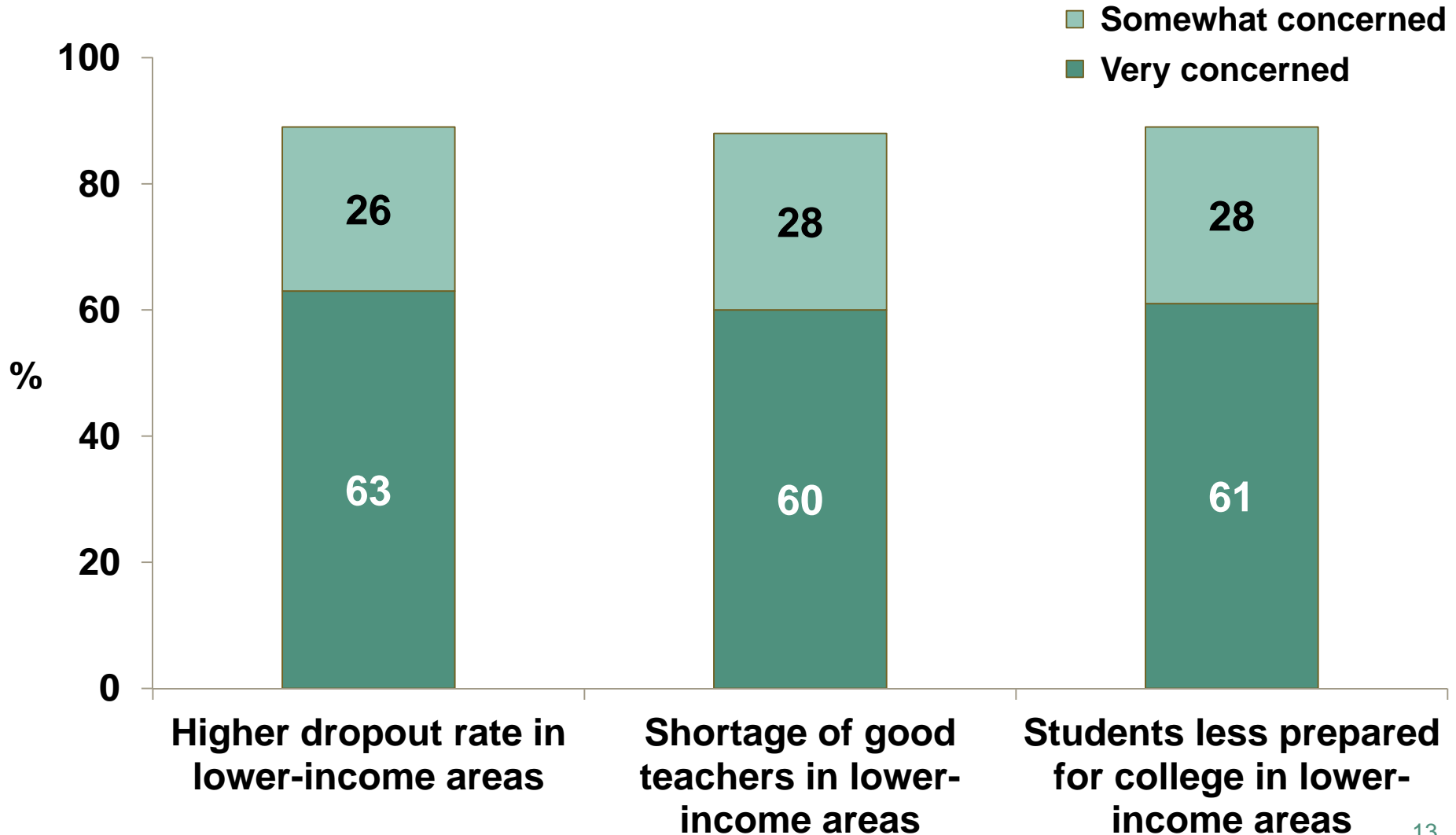
# Challenges in the K-12 System

I'm going to read you a list of issues people have mentioned when talking about California's K-12 public schools today. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not really a problem. How about ...



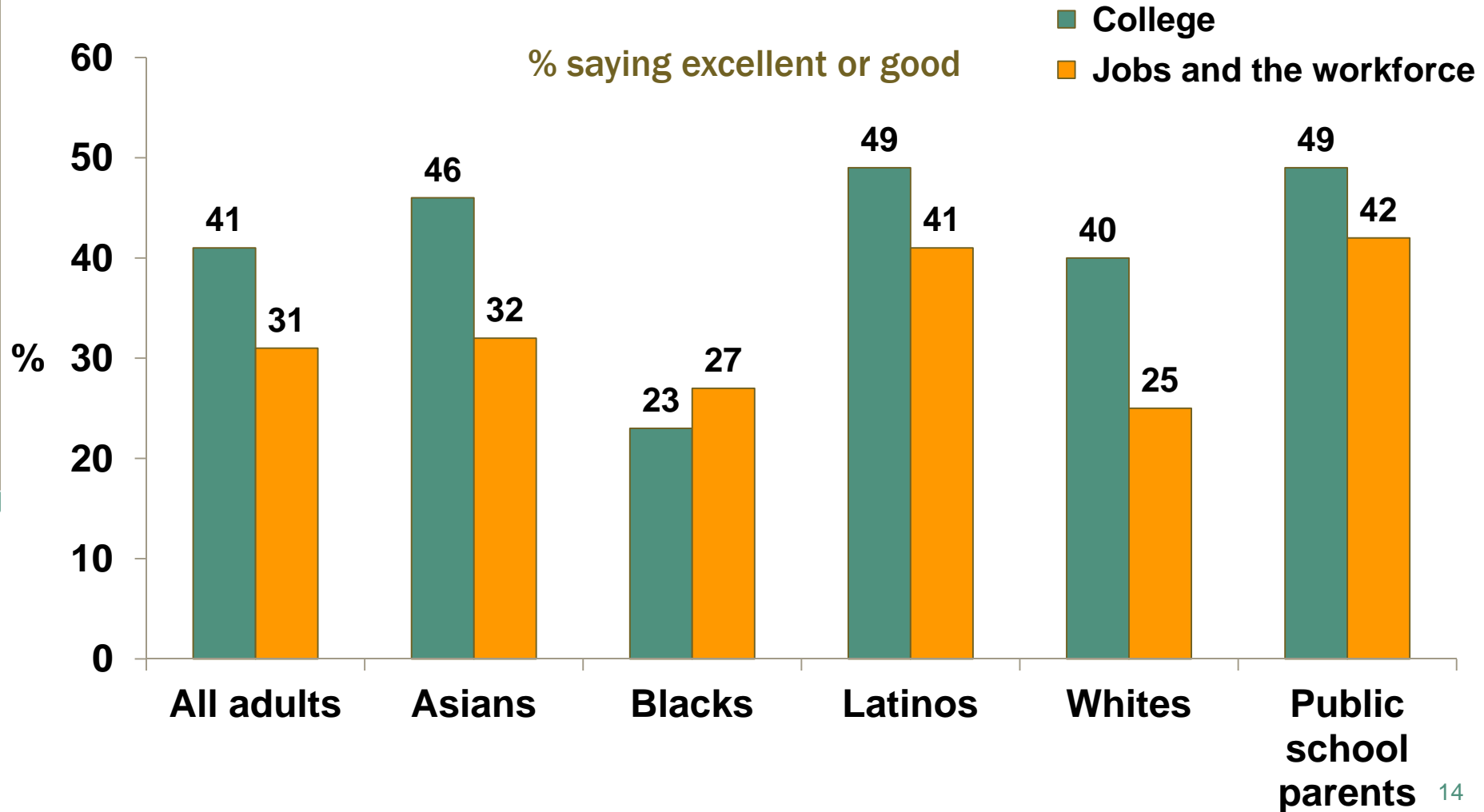
# Schools in Lower-Income Areas

How concerned are you about...?



# Rating California's Schools

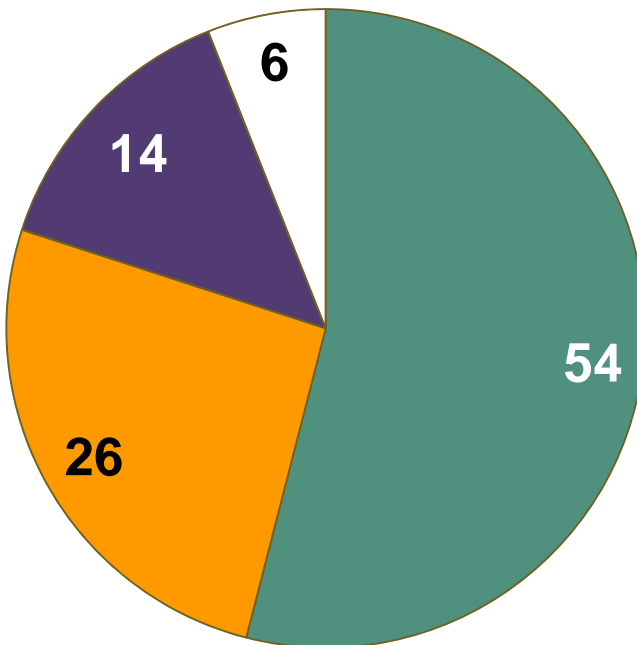
Please tell me if you think California's K-12 public schools are doing an excellent, good, not so good, or poor job in achieving the following goals.  
How about in preparing students for...



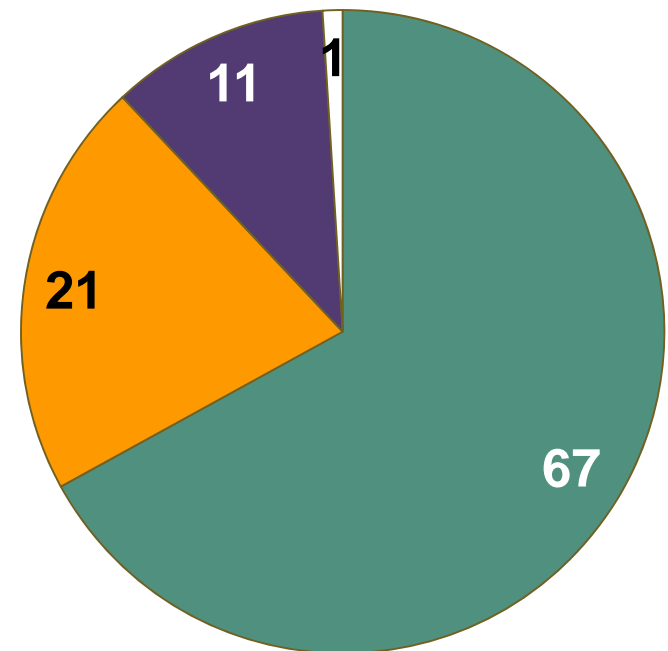
# Rating Local Public Schools

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?

All adults



Public school parents

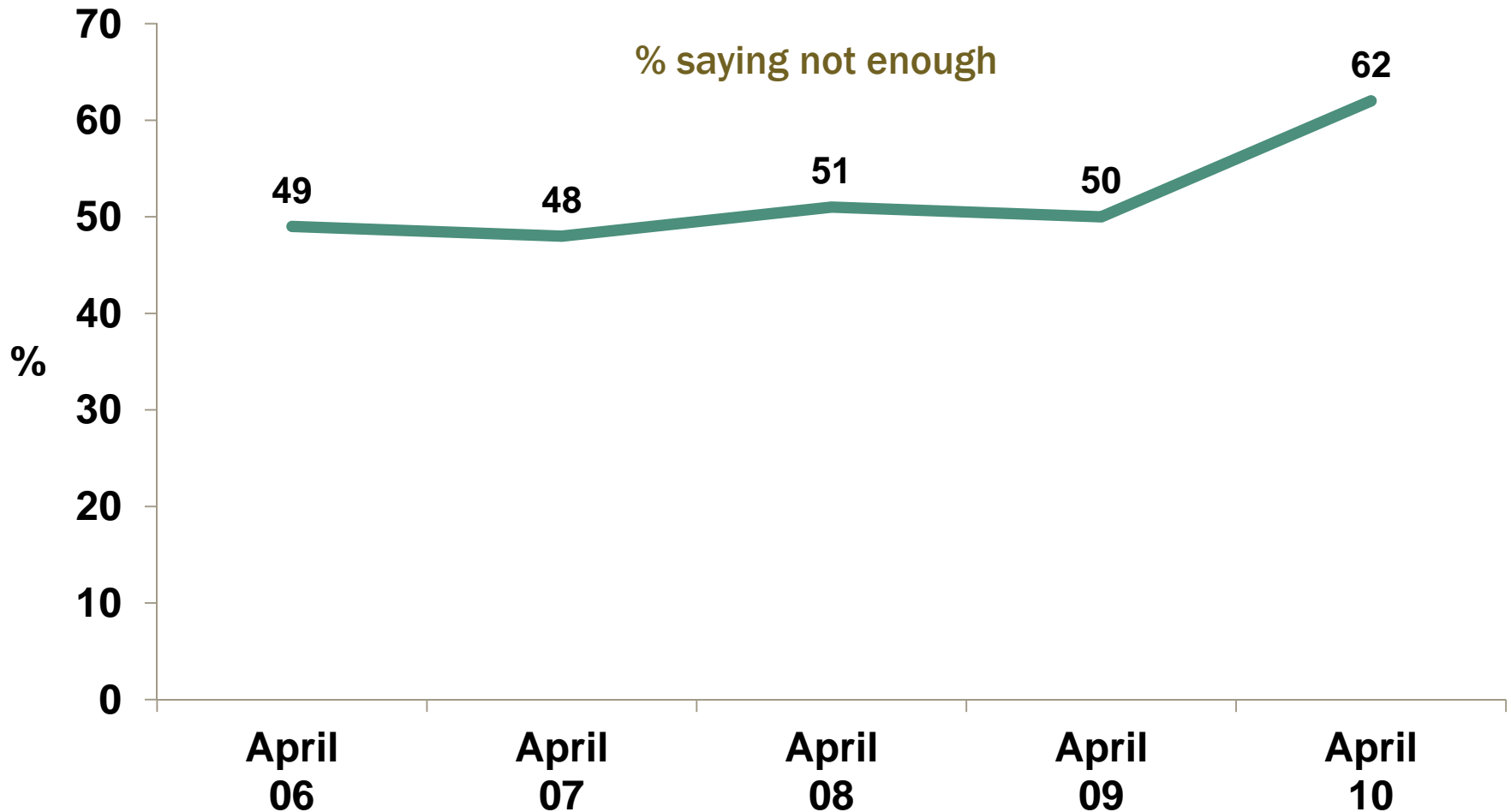


- A or B
- C
- D or F
- Don't know



# Local School Funding Levels

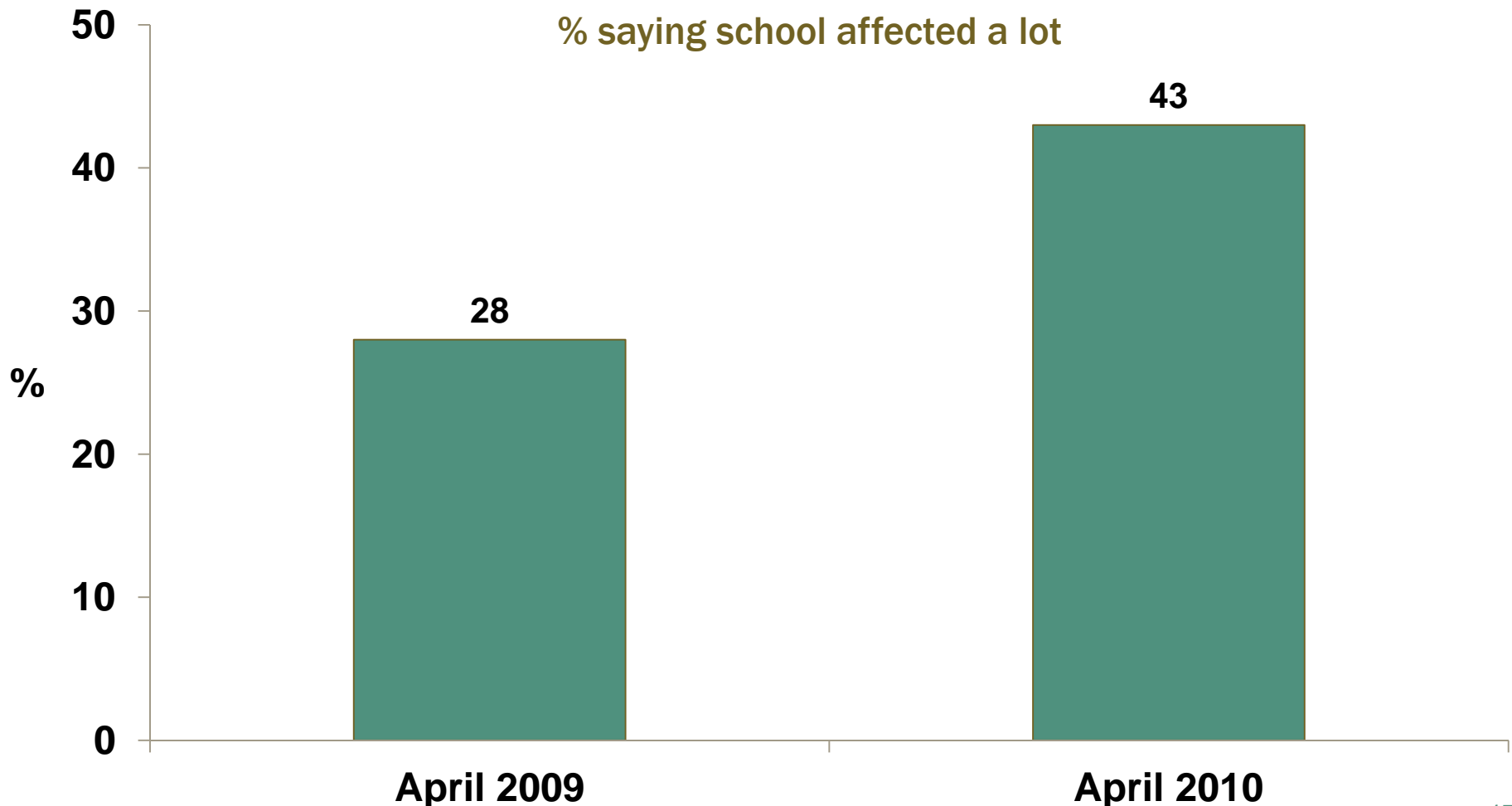
Do you think the current level of state funding for your local public schools is more than enough, just enough, or not enough?





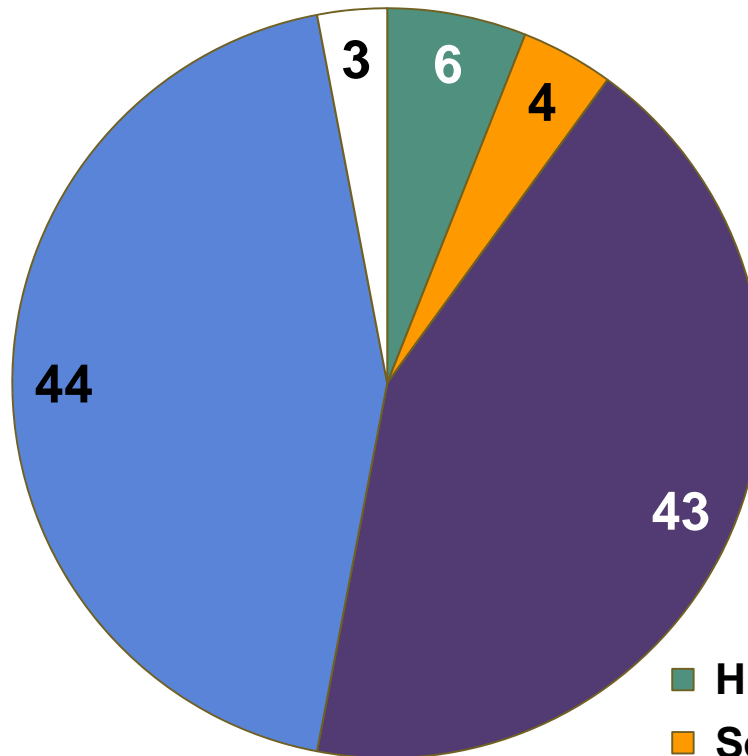
# State Budget Cuts Affecting Child's Public School

Would you say your child's public school has or has not been affected by recent state budget cuts? (*if it has: Has it been affected a lot or somewhat?*)



# Parental Expectations

What do you hope will be the highest grade level that your youngest child will achieve?



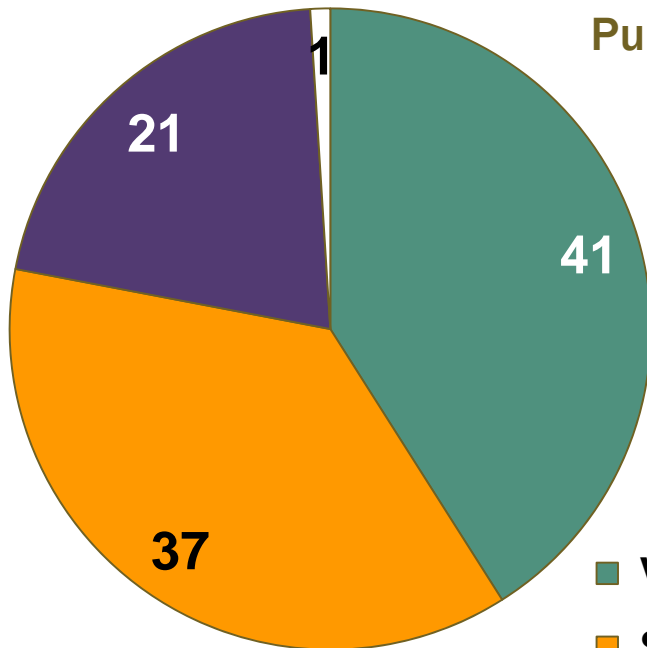
Public school  
parents

- High school
- Some college
- College graduate
- Graduate degree after college
- Don't know



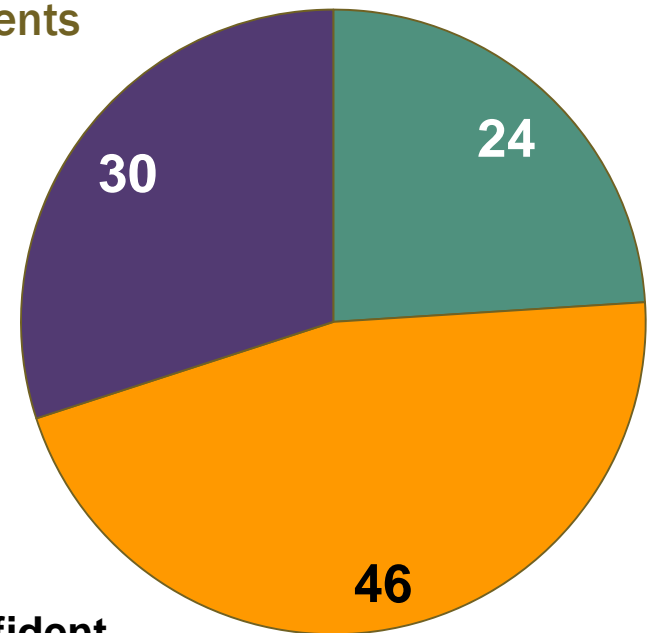
# Parental and School Resources

How confident are you that you have the resources and information needed for this child to reach that grade level?



Public school parents

How confident are you that your local K-12 schools have the resources and information needed to prepare this child for that grade level?



- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Don't know



# Outline

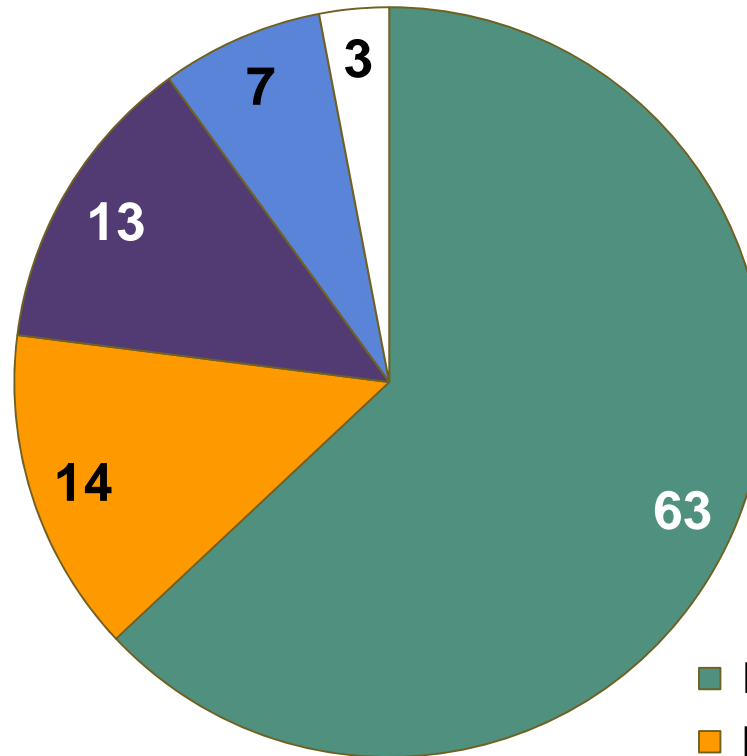
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# Protecting Budget Areas from Spending Cuts

Thinking about these four areas of state spending, I'd like you to name the one you most want to protect from spending cuts.



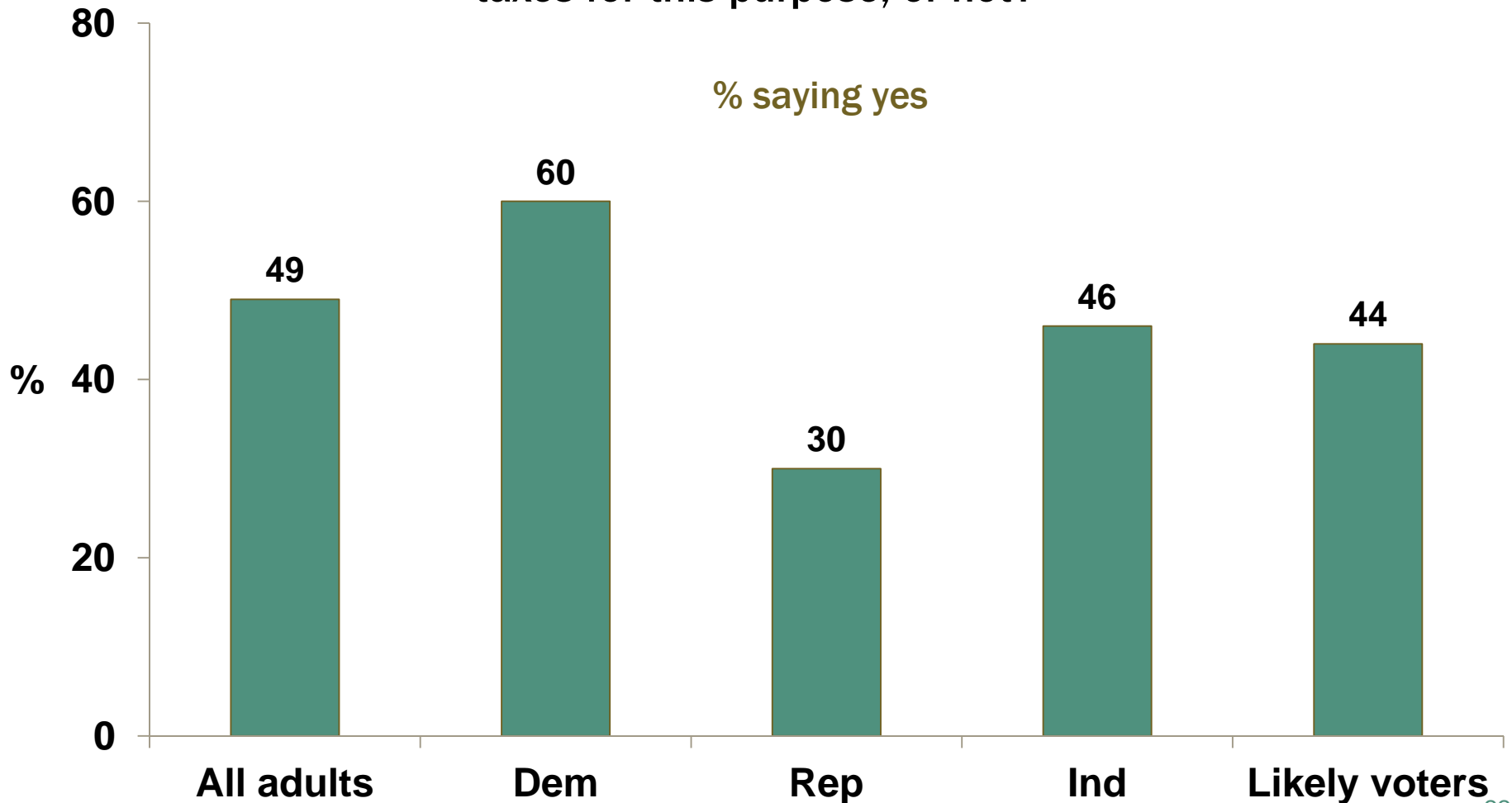
All adults

- K-12 education
- Health and human services
- Higher education
- Prisons and corrections
- Don't know



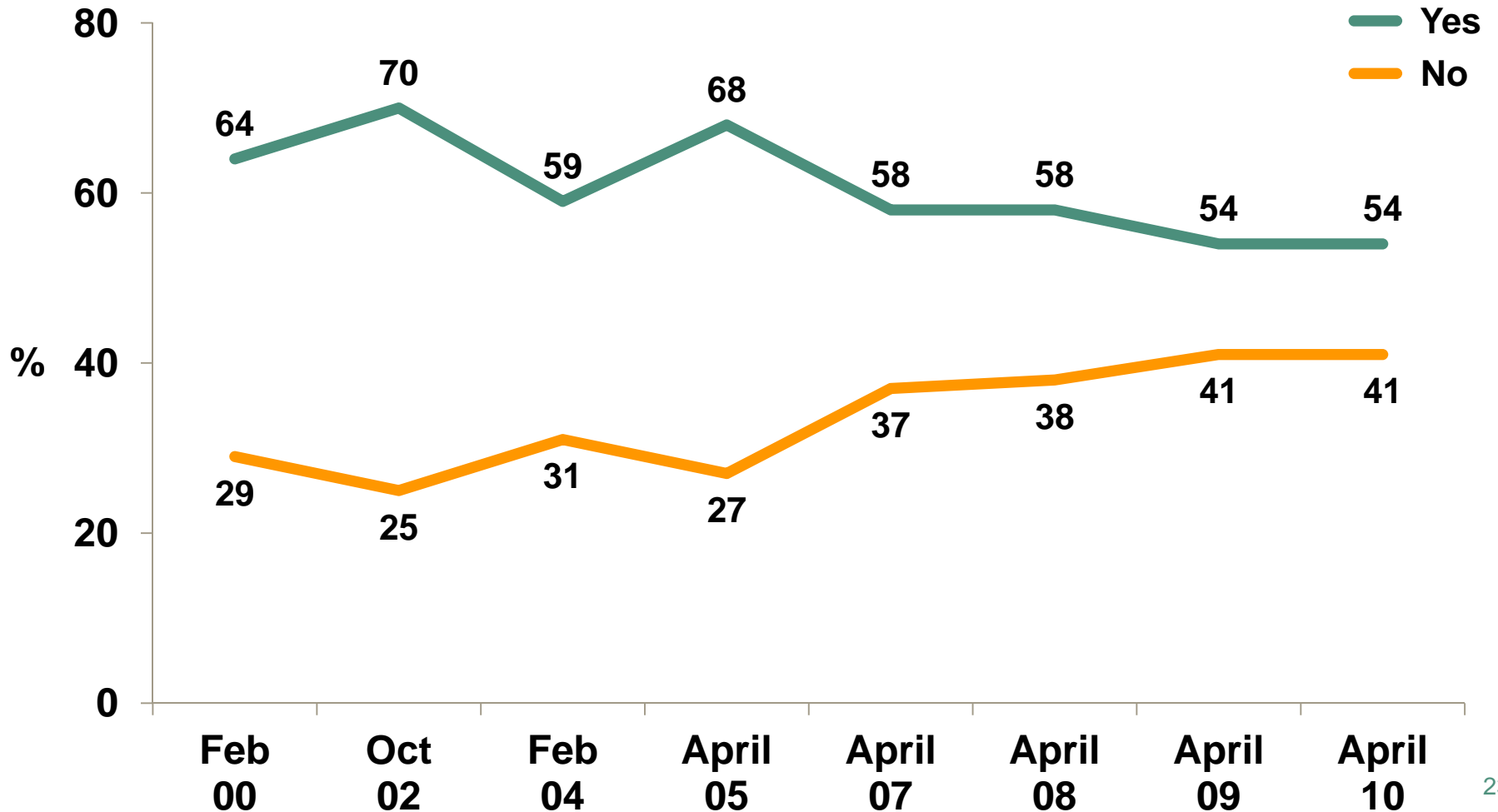
# Willingness to Pay More Taxes

What if the state said it needed more money just to maintain current funding for K-12 public education? Would you be willing to pay higher taxes for this purpose, or not?



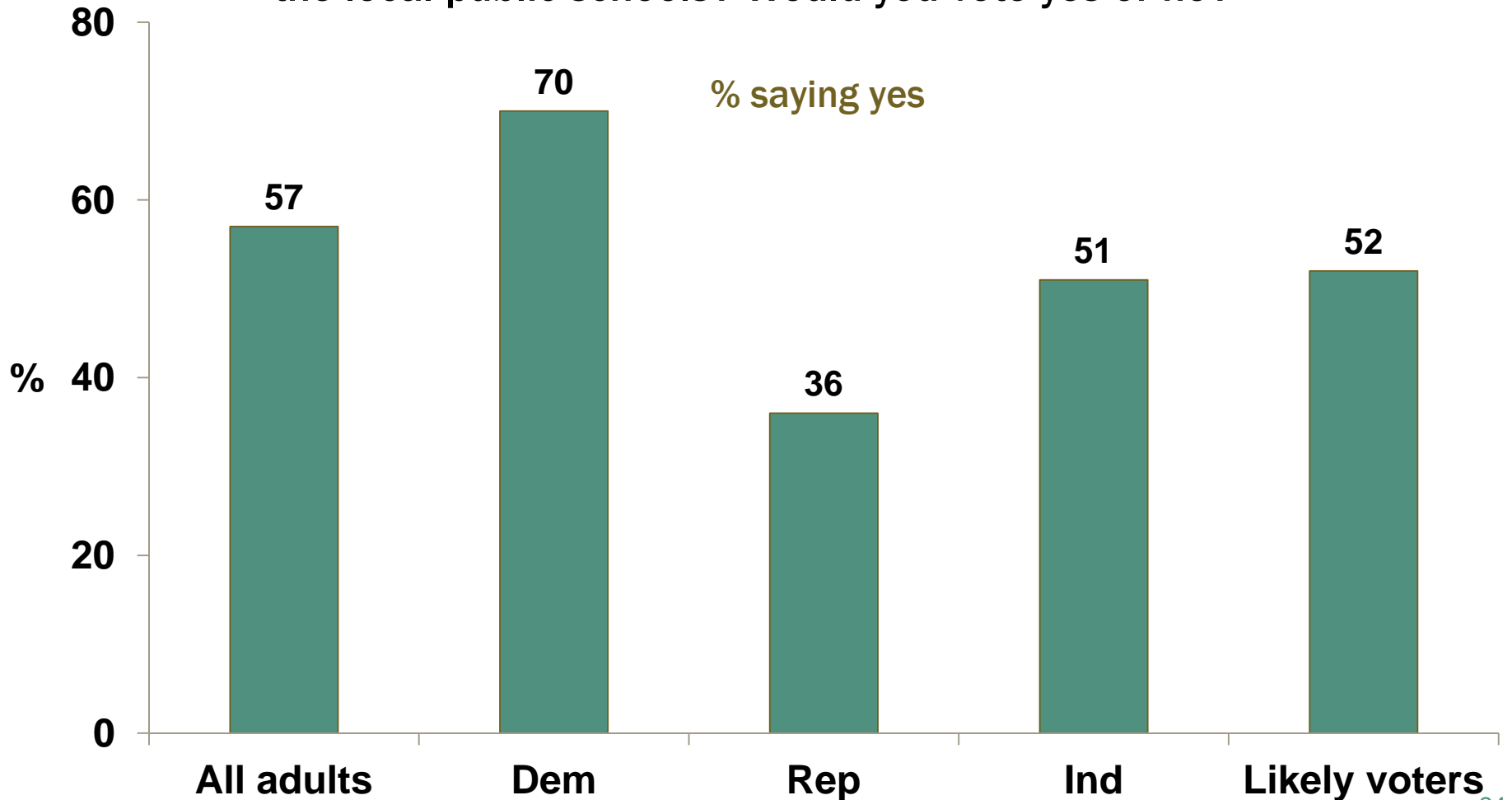
# Willingness to Pass School Bond

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



# Willingness to Raise Parcel Taxes

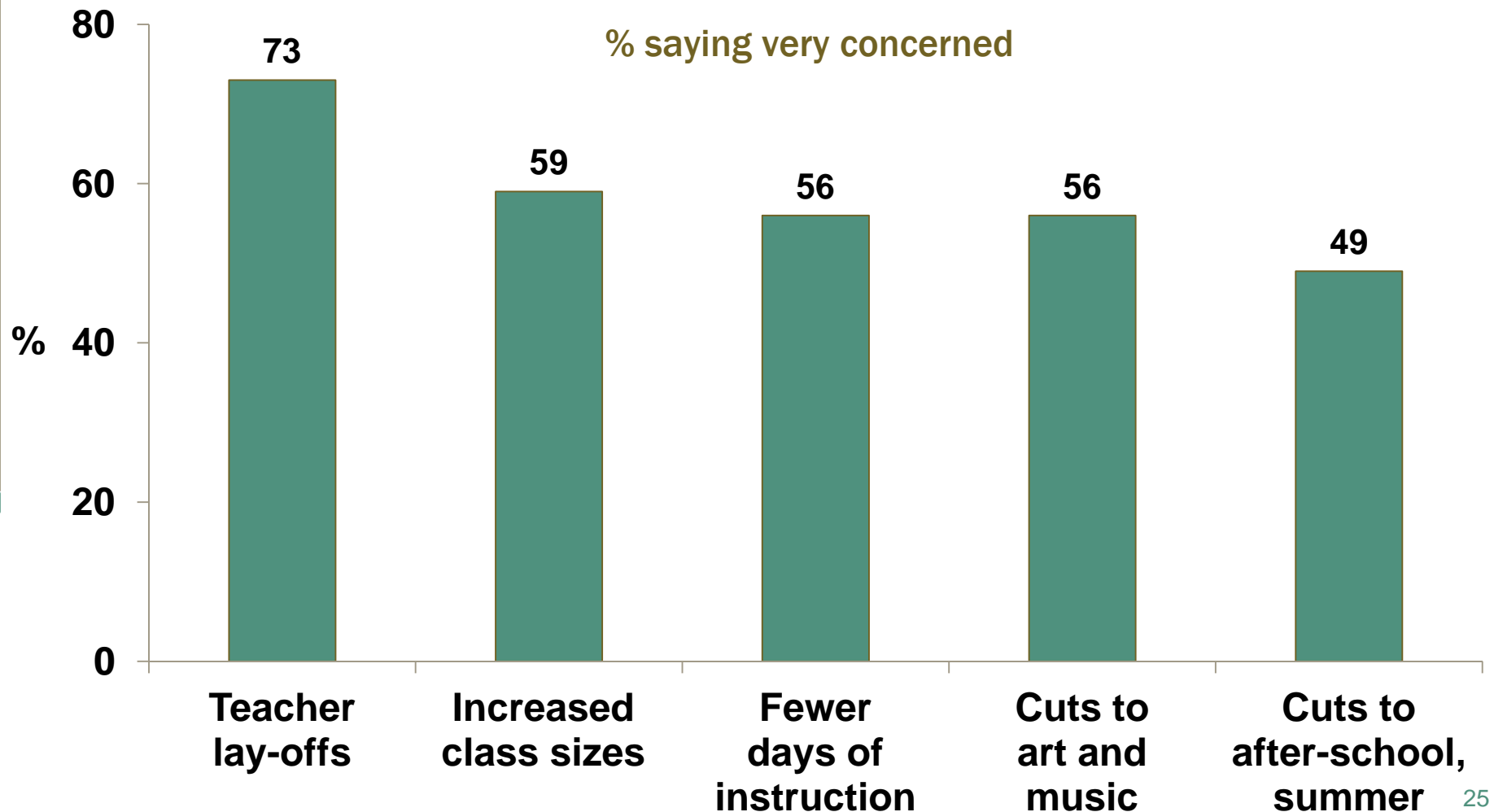
What if there was a measure on your local ballot to increase local parcel taxes to provide more funds for the local public schools? Would you vote yes or no?





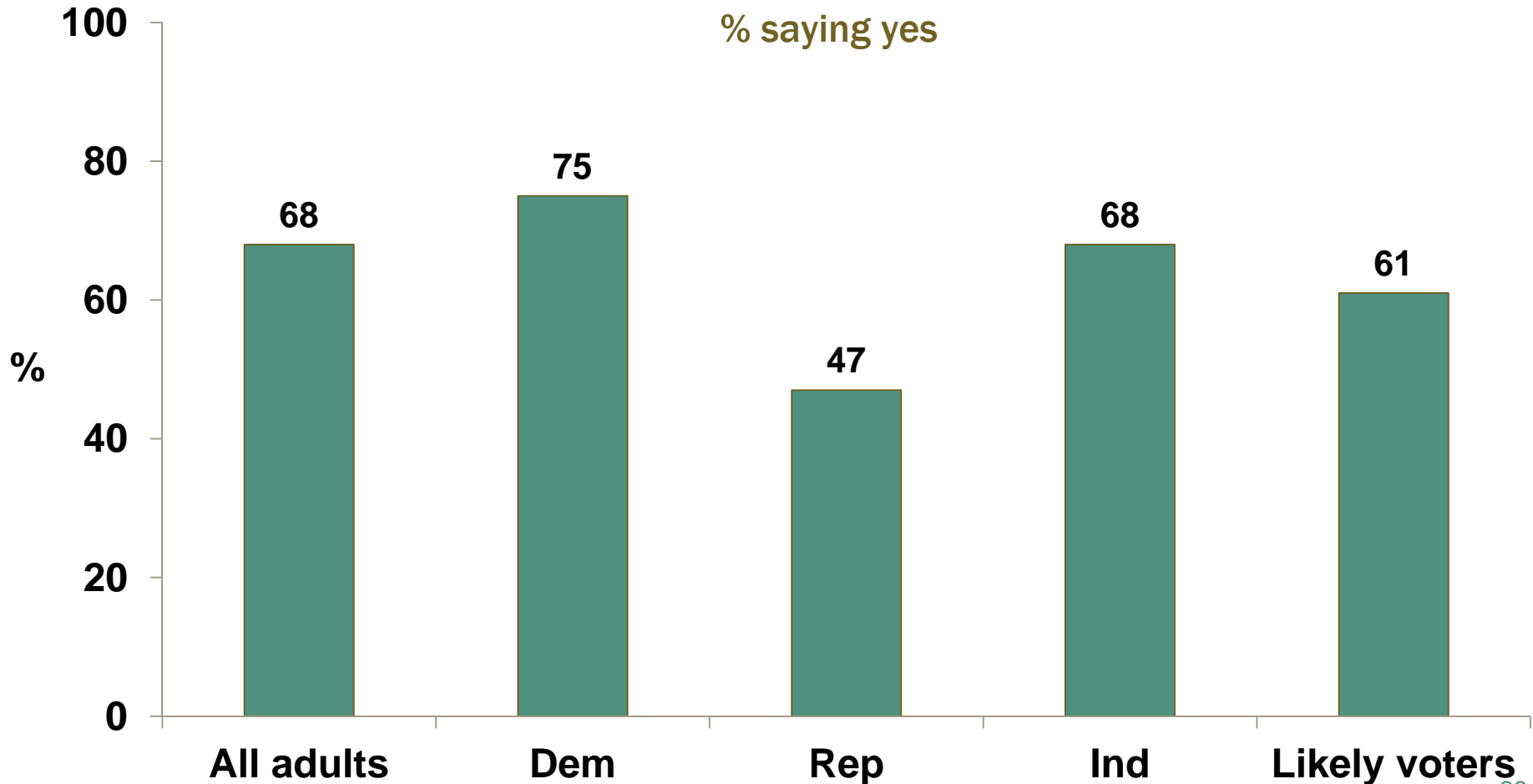
# Concern about Specific Cuts

There are a number of ways for the state's K-12 public schools to cut spending to deal with decreased state and local funding...



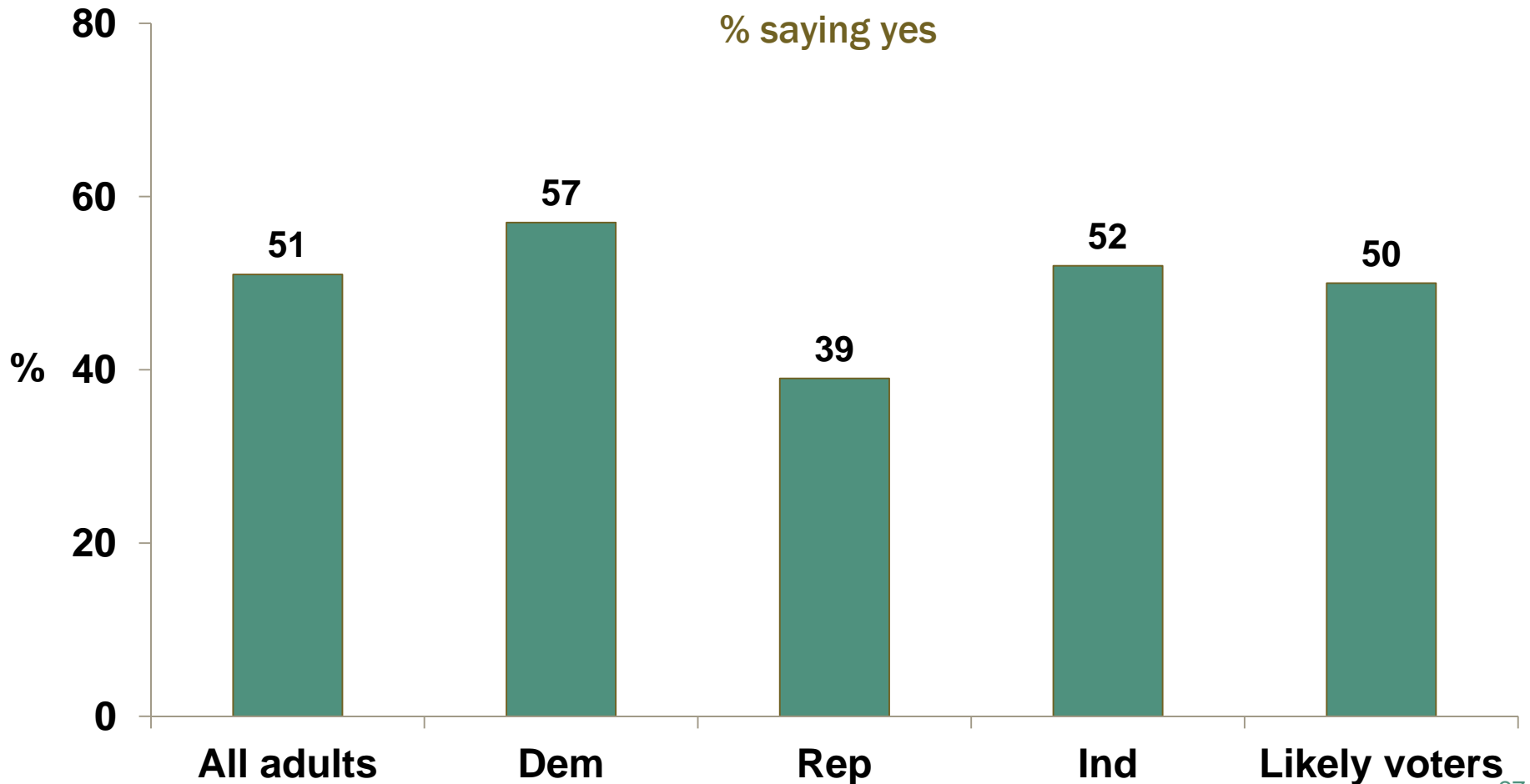
# Funding for Schools in Lower-Income Areas

If new state funding becomes available, should schools in lower-income areas get more of this funding than other schools to help pay for teachers and classroom materials, or not?



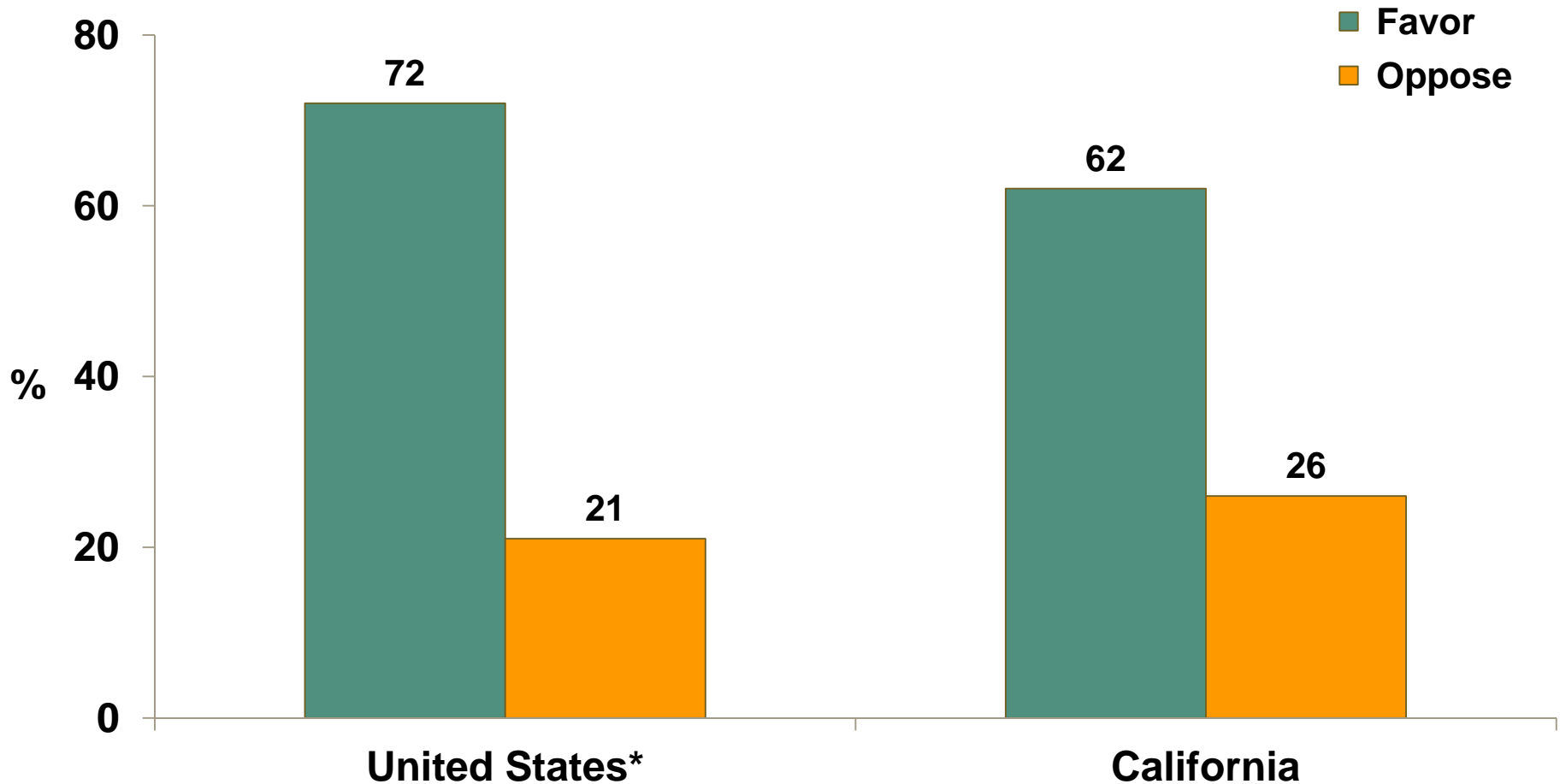
# Teacher Salaries in Lower-Income Areas

Should local schools in lower-income areas pay higher salaries to attract and retain teachers, even if it costs the state more money?



# Merit Pay for Teachers

How do you, yourself, feel about the idea of merit pay for teachers. In general, do you favor or oppose it?

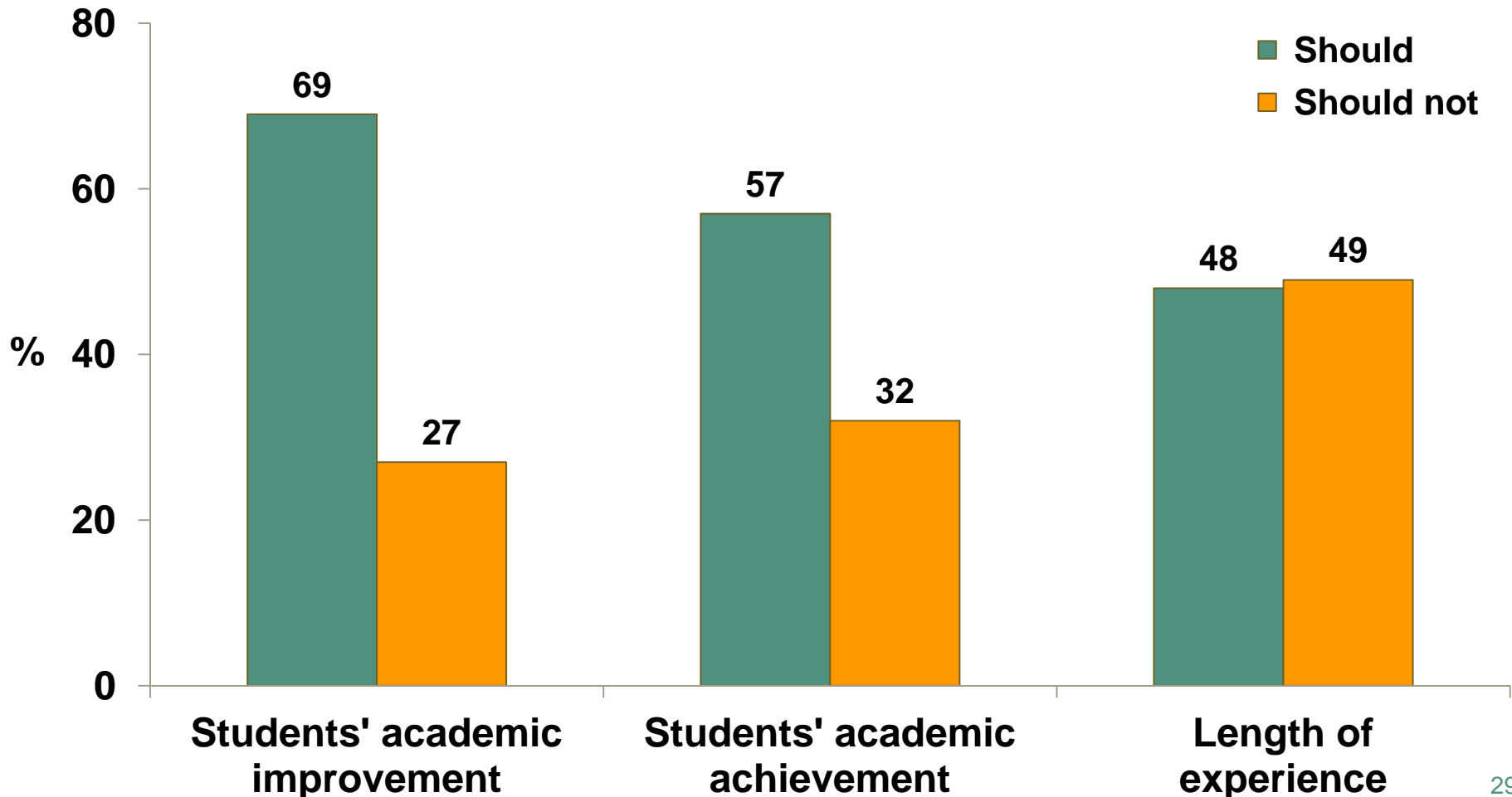


\* Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll, 2009



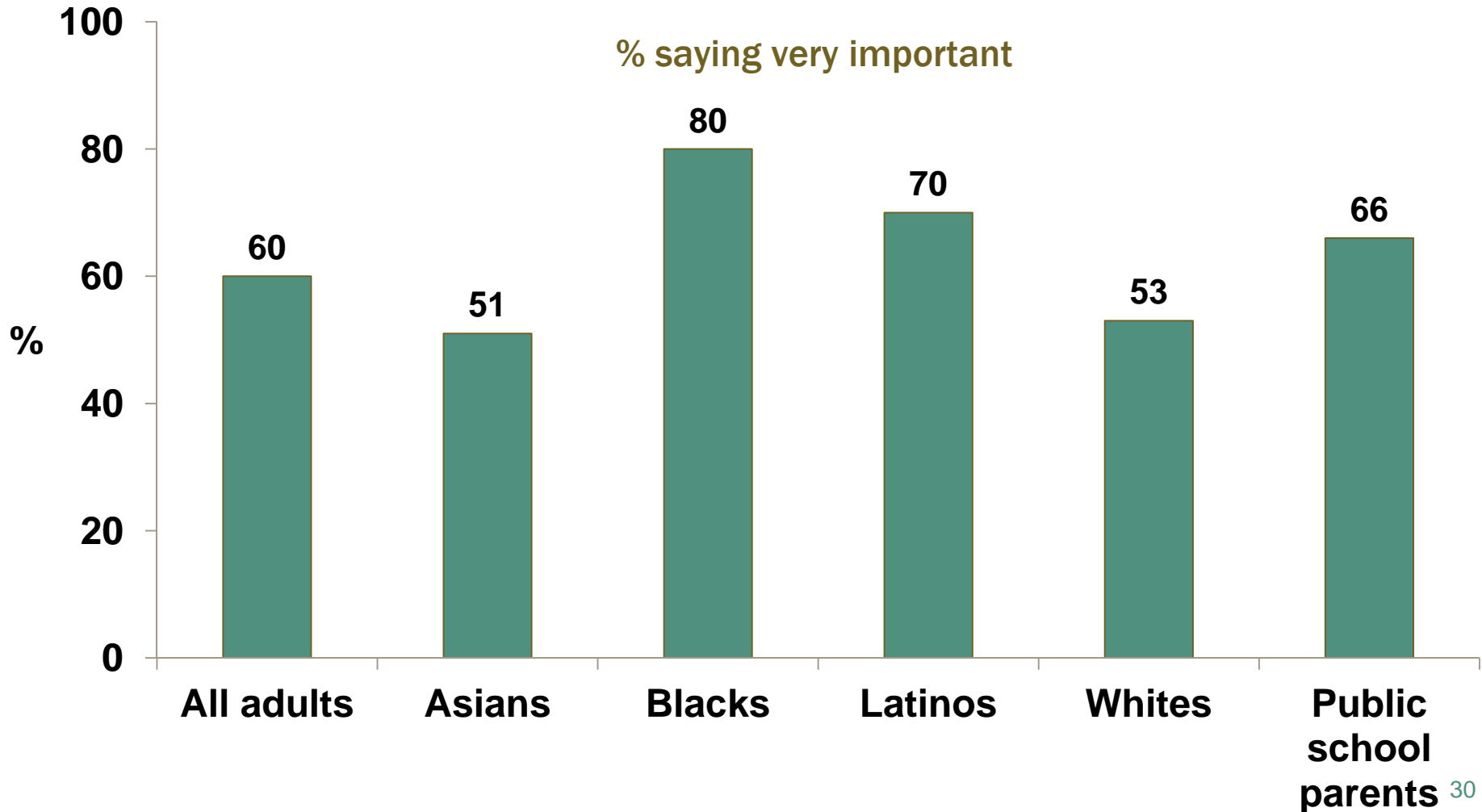
# Criteria for Merit Pay

I am going to read some possible criteria for giving additional pay to teachers for special merit. For each one, please tell me if you think it should or should not be used to determine which teachers receive merit pay. How about...



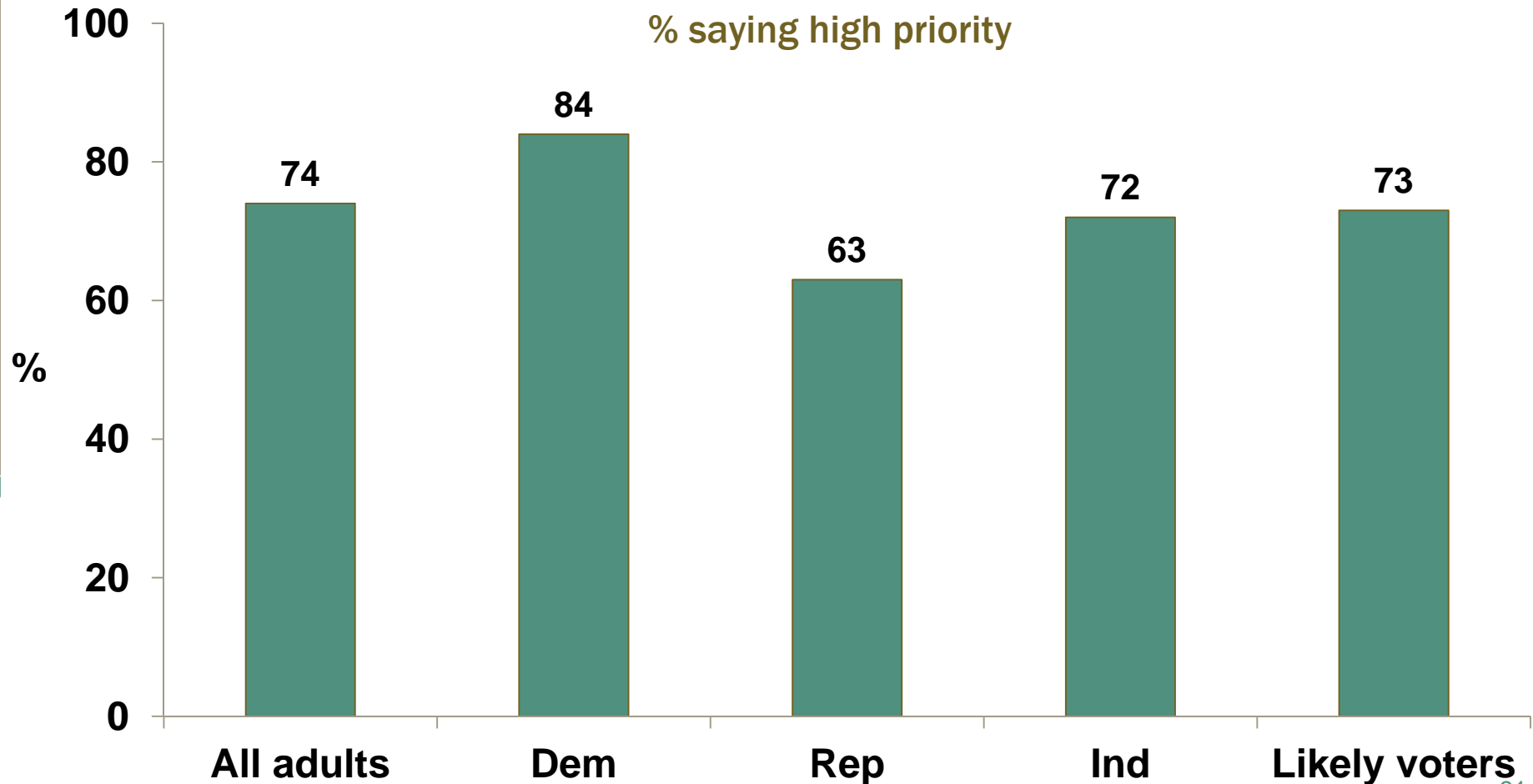
# Data and Information

How important to you is it that the state collect and make available data and information about local K-12 public schools, including resources and student performance?



# Importance of Improving K-12 for Next Governor

In thinking about priorities for the next governor, do you think that improving the state's K-12 public education system should be a...?



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# Conclusions

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- Low and declining approval of state elected officials' handling of K-12 education
- Most residents very concerned about state budget cuts to K-12 and teacher layoffs
- Majorities of adults give not so good/poor ratings on college and workforce preparation
- More willingness to pass local school bonds or increase local parcel taxes than to raise state taxes
- Improving K-12 seen as high priority for next governor and an important issue in 2010 election



# Upcoming PPIC Statewide Surveys

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- May
  - *Californians and Their Government*
- July
  - *Californians and the Environment*
- September
  - *Californians and Their Government*
- October
  - *Californians and Their Government*



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# Notes on the use of these slides

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These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

Mark Baldassare or Sonja Petek:  
[surveys@ppic.org](mailto:surveys@ppic.org)

Thank you for your interest in this work.

April 2010

