



TEACHERS AND K-12 EDUCATION

A National Polling Report

OCTOBER 2024

KEY FINDINGS

1. Teachers' optimism towards K-12 education generally rose sharply at all levels this wave, reversing the decline in positivity since May 2023.
2. Teachers overwhelmingly trust themselves and their colleagues to make good decisions about education. They trust state government officials the least. Teachers are less trusting of government compared to school parents.
3. Teachers think it is most important to instill values of respect, kindness, and responsibility in their students. Similarly, teachers want their schools to emphasize respect, honesty, and responsibility.
4. At least two-thirds of teachers feel a “sense of purpose” and “hopeful” when thinking about the future. Over one-third say they feel “overwhelmed.”
5. This fall, teachers across school types express high levels of pessimism when it comes to the teaching profession. This month, the proportion of teachers who would recommend the teaching profession has risen after falling to significantly lower levels in previous months.
6. Teachers say their biggest motivation for becoming a teacher is their passion for working with children and young people. More than three-fourths of teachers agree that their career aligns with their initial motivations for becoming a teacher.
7. Just over one-third of teachers under the age of 55 have considered leaving the profession, a notable decrease since this time last year. District school teachers are more likely than private school teachers to have considered ending their teaching career.

Methodology:

This poll was conducted between September 20 - 25, 2024 among a sample of 1,034 Teachers. The interviews were conducted online. Results based on the full survey have a measure of precision of plus or minus 3.60 percentage points.

KEY FINDINGS CONTINUED

1. Teachers see communication with their students as the most important way to know if they are having a successful school year. Standardized test scores are the least important metric.
2. Nearly 20% of teachers reported they were absent from school last year because of burnout or lack of motivation. Teachers were most likely to miss school last year due to illness or for an appointment like the doctor or the dentist.
3. More than three-fourths of teachers agree that the government has a role to play in K-12 education accountability systems. Half of those who agree that the government has a role in education accountability think that local school districts should have the most influence in these systems.
4. Teachers believe schools should be held most accountable for student academic learning and student engagement rather than parent engagement or satisfaction.
5. More than half of teachers think student academic progress should be used to judge school performance. They are least likely to view standardized test scores and parent satisfaction as performance metrics.
6. The vast majority of teachers, across different school types, express support for a teacher savings account in K-12 education.
7. Aside from school vouchers, at least half of teachers show support for a range of school choice policies.
 - Education savings accounts (ESAs) – 73%
 - Open enrollment – 63%
 - Charter schools – 50%
 - School vouchers – 41%

Methodology:

This poll was conducted between September 20 - 25, 2024 among a sample of 1034 Teachers. The interviews were conducted online. Results based on the full survey have a measure of precision of plus or minus 3.60 percentage points.

AGENDA

VIEWS ON K-12 EDUCATION

TEACHING PROFESSION AND EXPERIENCES

SCHOOL CHOICE POLICIES

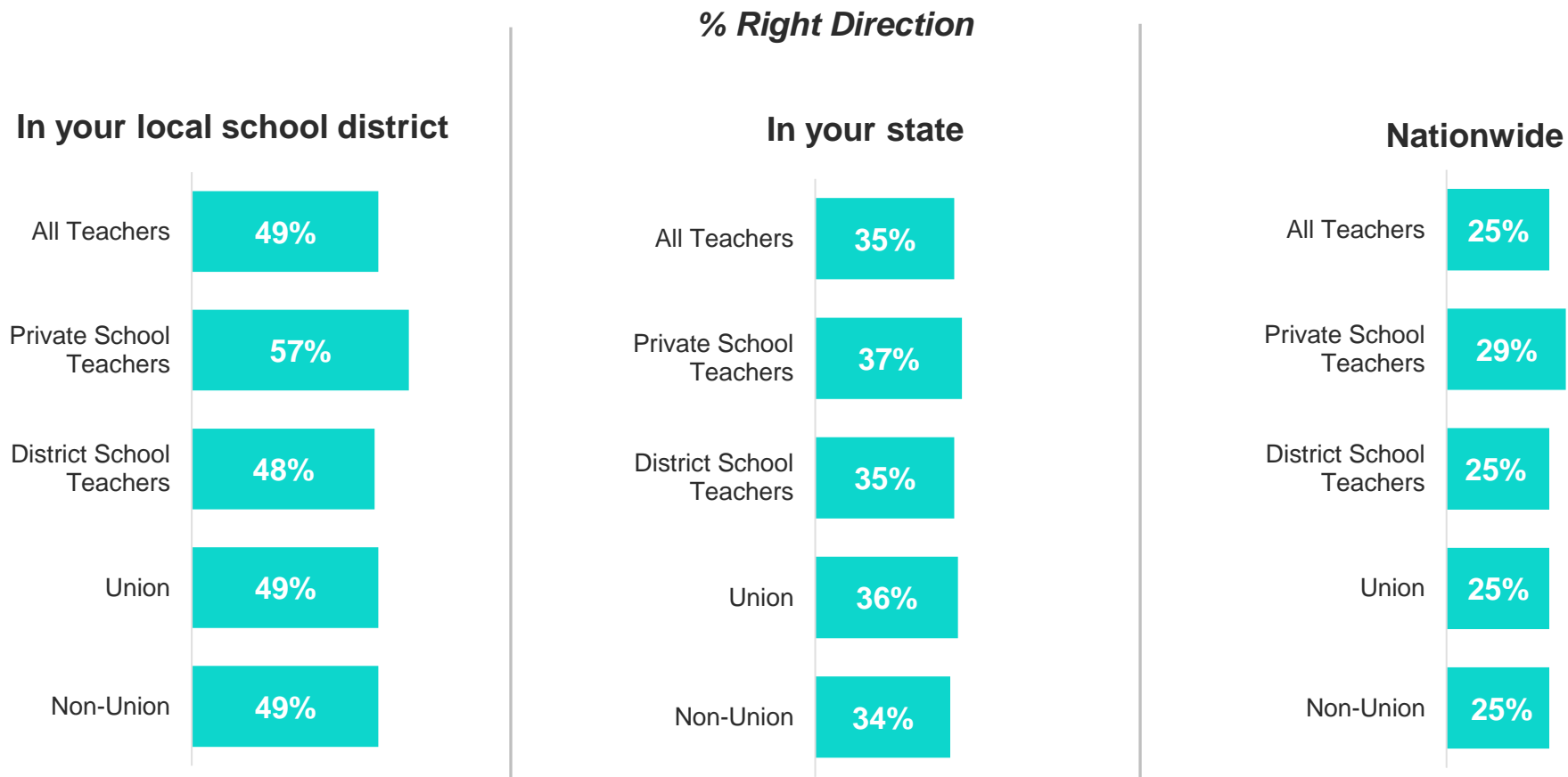
SURVEY PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS



Teacher positivity towards local schools is much higher than towards education at the national and state levels. Private school teachers are more positive about the direction of K-12 education than district school teachers.

Do you feel things in K-12 education are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have generally gotten off on the wrong track?

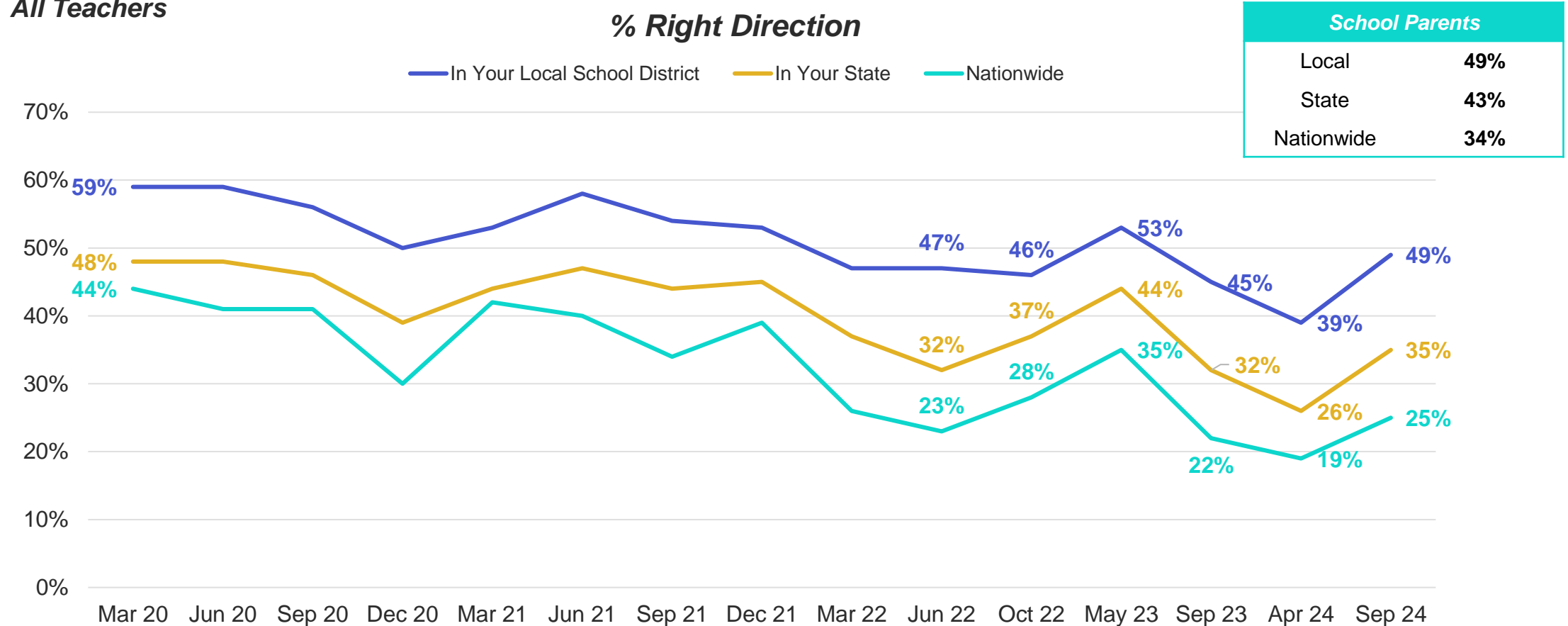
All Teachers



Teachers' optimism towards K-12 education has risen sharply across all levels this month, reversing the decline in positivity since May 2023. They feel just as positive about their local schools as parents do but are more negative towards school nationally and statewide.

Do you feel things in K-12 education are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have generally gotten off on the wrong track?

All Teachers



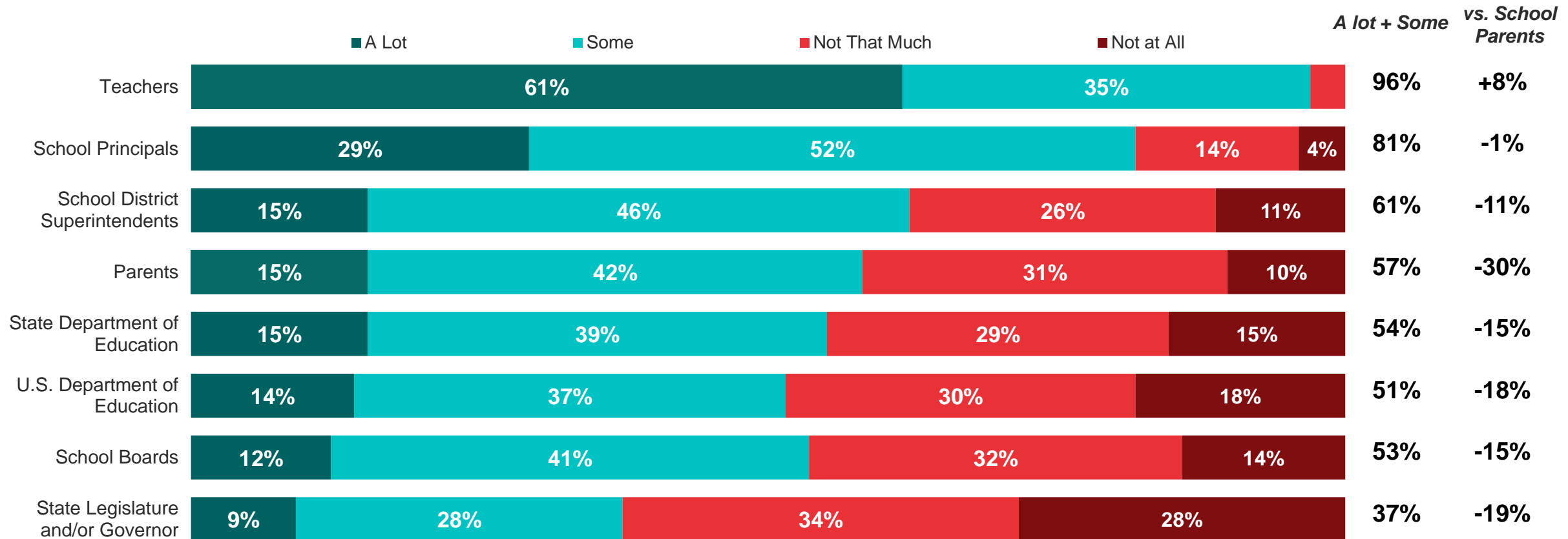
Parents Source: Survey conducted September 12, 2024 – September 15, 2024, among U.S. adults

Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers overwhelmingly trust themselves and their colleagues to make good decisions about education. They trust state government officials the least. Teachers are more less trusting of these officials compared to school parents.

How much, if at all, do you trust the following to make good decisions about education?

All Teachers



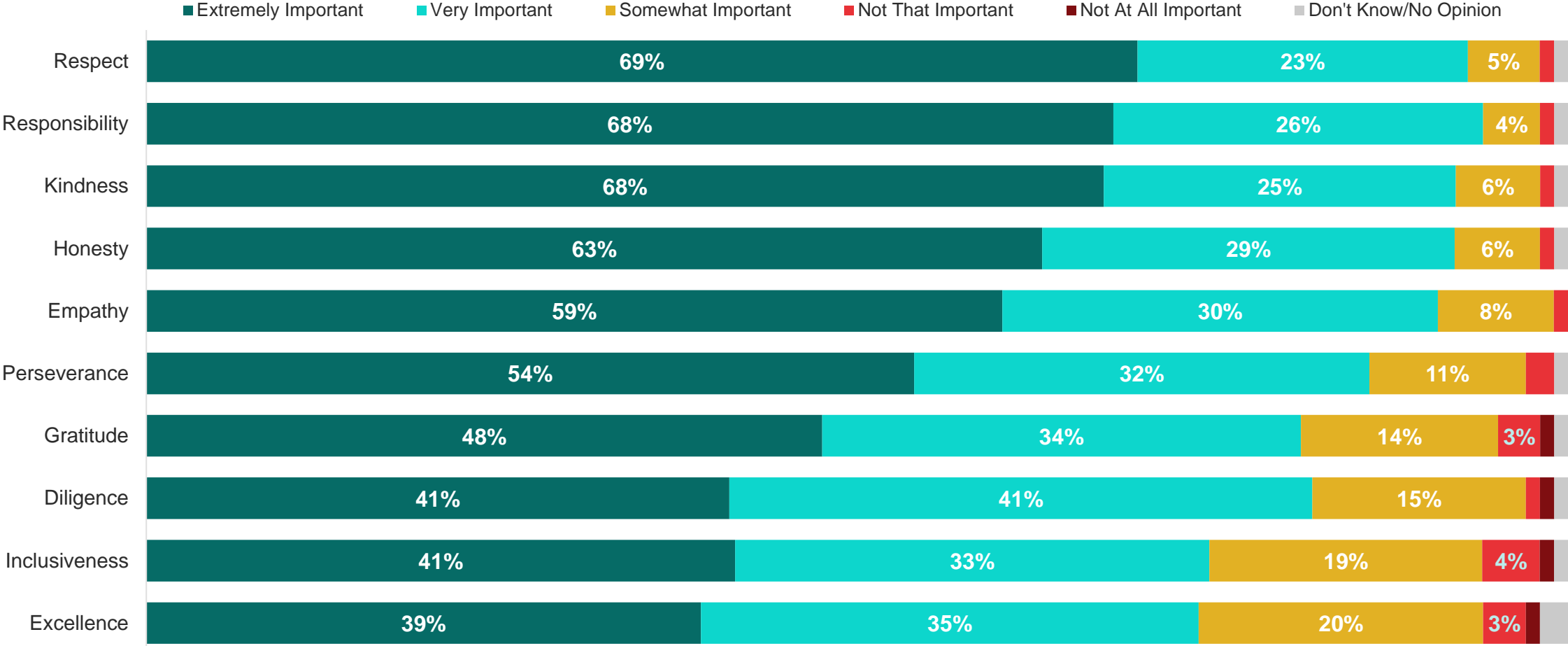
Parents Source: Survey conducted September 12, 2024 – September 15, 2024, among U.S. adults

Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers think it is most important to instill values of respect, kindness, and responsibility in their students.

For this current school year, to what extent is it important that you instill and promote the following values for your students?

Teachers – Top 10 Values

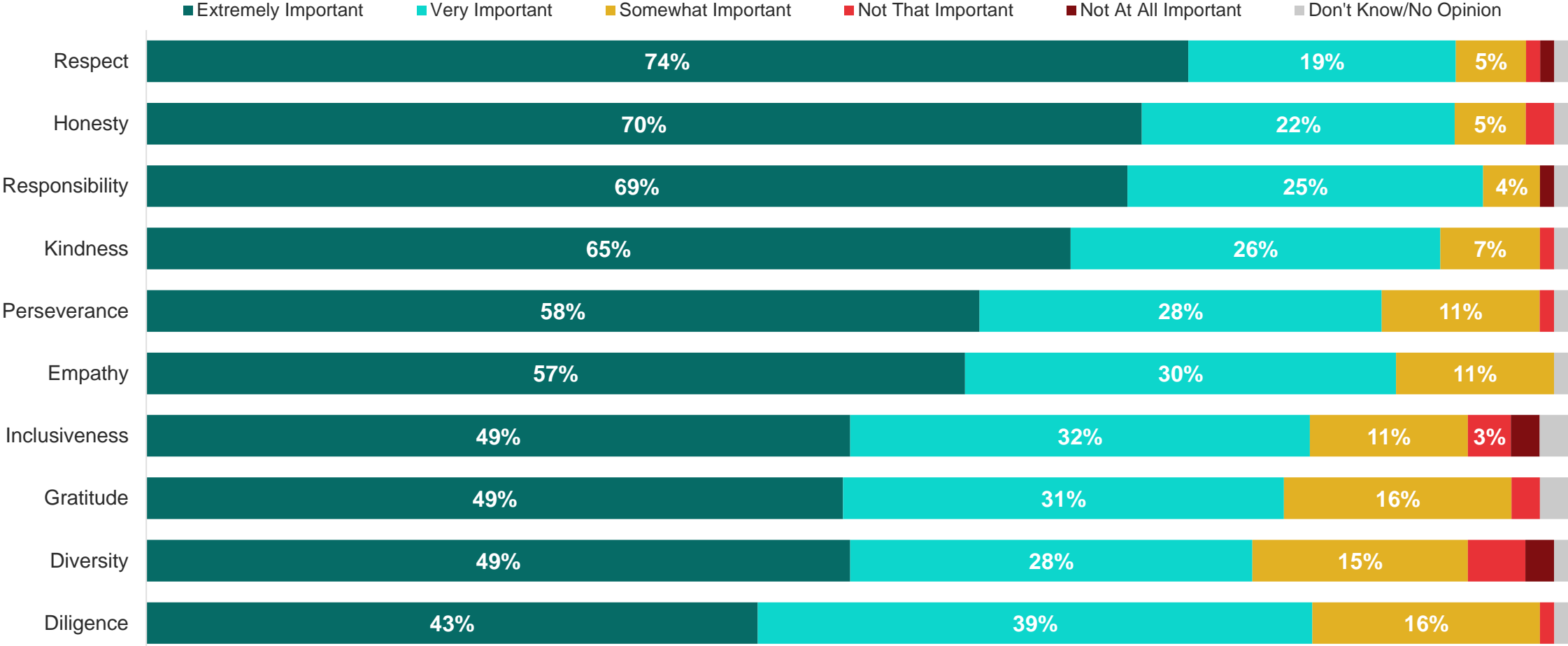


Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Similarly, teachers want their schools to emphasize respect, honesty, and responsibility.

For this current school year, to what extent is it important that your school emphasize the following values for students?

Teachers – Top 10 Values



Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers have a diverse set of views on what should be the main purpose of K-12 education. They are most likely to believe high school should focus on skills for future employment and grades K-8 are important for kids to learn socialization.

What do you believe should be the main purpose of education during Kindergarten through 8th grade/High School? In your opinion, how important is it for students to learn...

All Teachers

% Extremely Important







Grades K-8

Average % selected Extremely Important **50%**

-  Socialization (**63%**)
-  Become independent thinkers (**59%**)
-  How to be good citizens (**57%**)
-  Core academic subjects (**56%**)
-  Skills for future employment (**45%**)
-  Values, moral character, religious virtues (**41%**)
-  To fix social problems (**27%**)

Grades 9-12

Average % selected Extremely Important **49%**

-  Skills for future employment (**64%**)
-  Become independent thinkers (**62%**)
-  How to be good citizens (**53%**)
-  Socialization (**53%**)
-  Core academic subjects (**50%**)
-  Values, moral character, religious virtues (**40%**)
-  To fix social problems (**24%**)

61%
of school parents* believe core academic subjects are most important for Grades K-8

62%
of school parents* believe skills for future employment are most important for Grades 9-12


Bolding indicates 5+ points above the general population's responses

Note: *School parents data comes from the September 2024 Gen Pop Report.

Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers continue to believe that government spending per student is much lower than actual expenditures. Private school teachers make much higher estimates than district school teachers.

How much do you think is spent per year on each student in your state's public schools? Your estimate of the state average—to the nearest thousand dollars—will represent the combined expenditures of local, state, and federal governments.

 = \$1,000

\$10,000

\$5,000

\$0

Median Estimate

\$5,000

All Teachers

\$9,000

Private School Teachers

\$5,000

District School Teachers

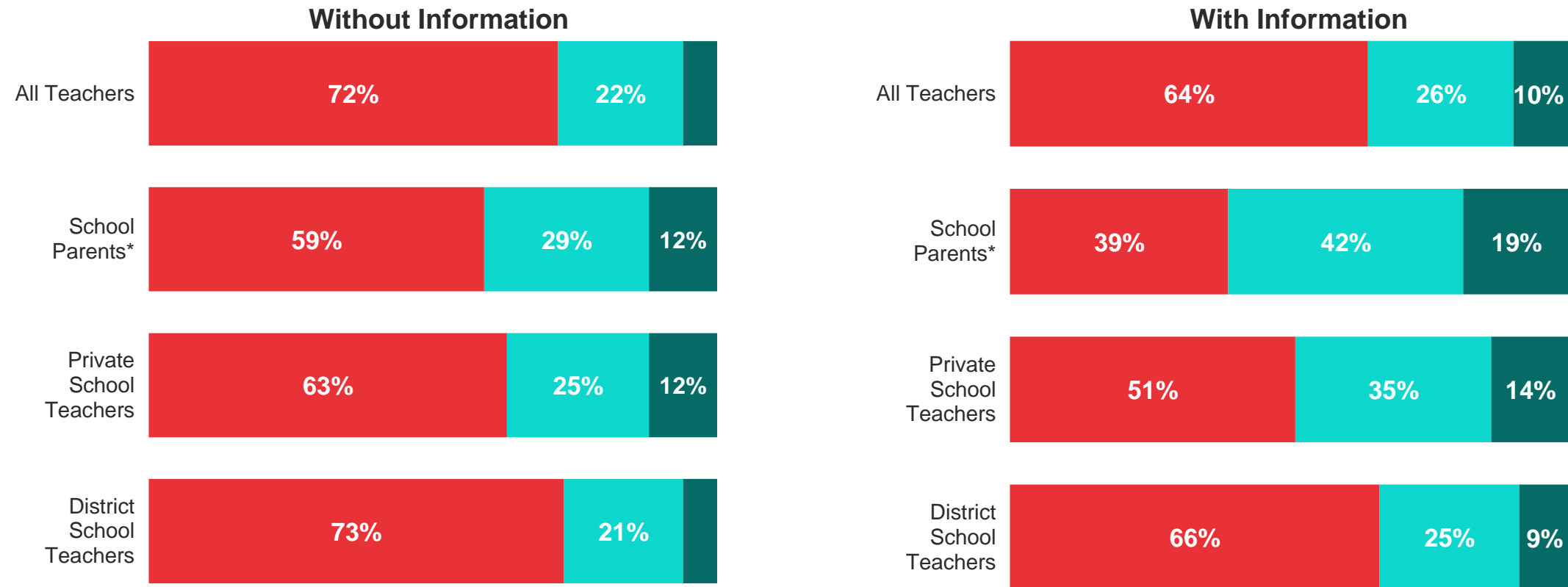
FY22 State Actuals	
Maximum	\$29,284
Mean	\$15,591
Minimum	\$9,496

Teachers are less likely to say their state’s per-student spending is “too low” when given a publicly reported statistic. District school teachers are much more likely than school parents to say spending is too low.

Do you believe public school funding in [STATE] is:

On average, [STATE] spends \$_____ per student attending public school each year. Do you believe public school funding is:

■ Too Low ■ About Right ■ Too High

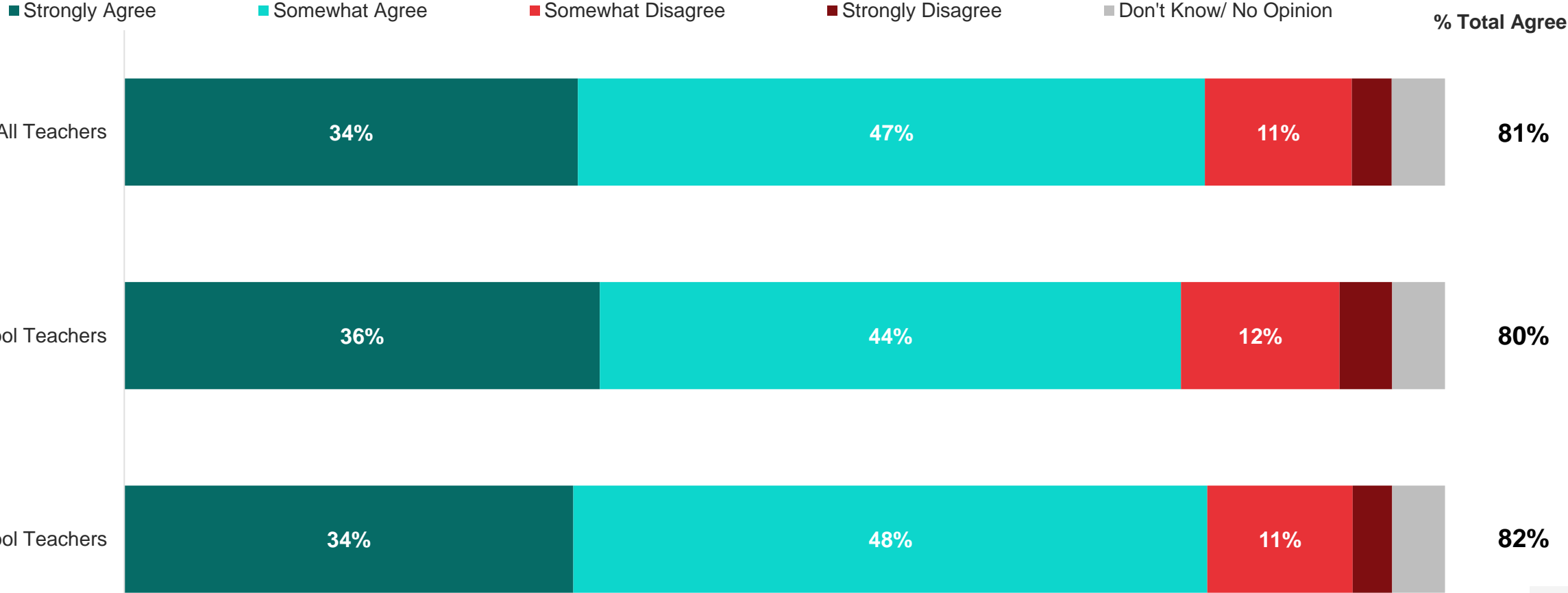


State Per Pupil Spending Source: National Center for Education Statistics
Note: *School parents data comes from the September 2024 Gen Pop Report.
Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

More than three-fourths of teachers agree that the government has a role to play in K-12 education accountability systems.

Do you agree or disagree that the government (state, district, federal) has a role to play in the accountability systems in K-12 education?

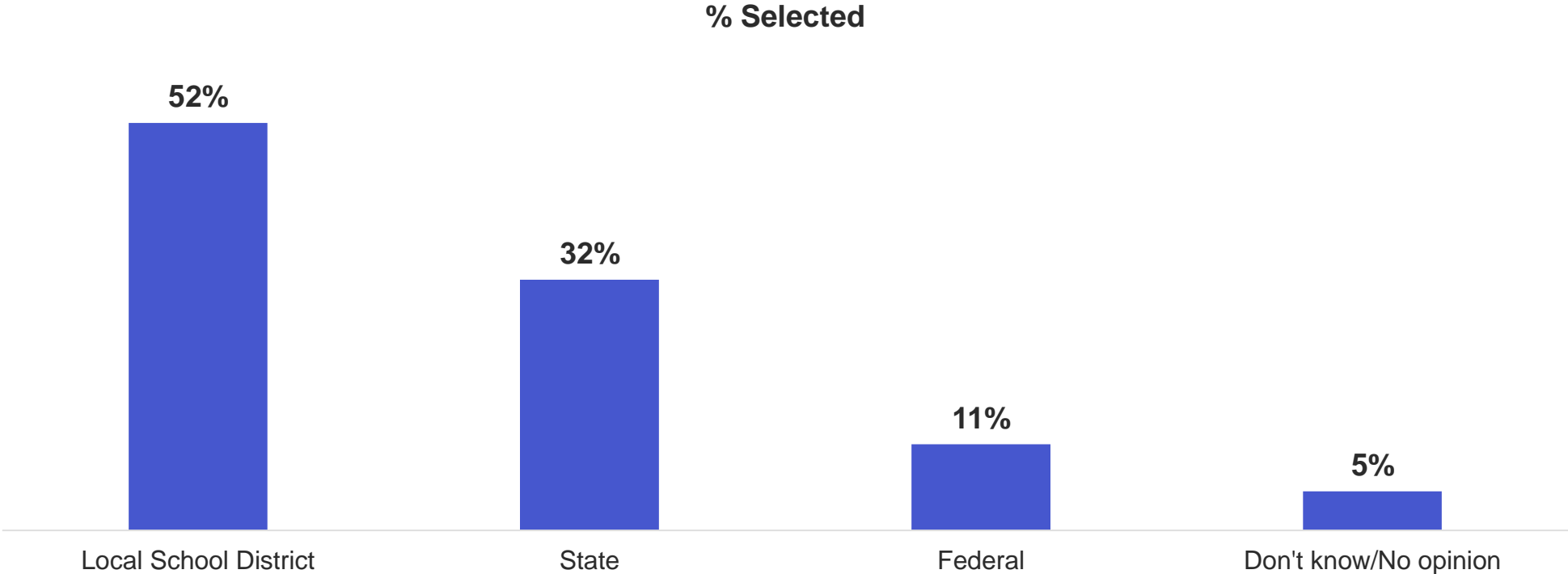
All Teachers



Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

More than half of those who agree that the government has a role in education accountability think that local school districts should have the most influence in these systems.

Which level of government (state, district, federal) should have the most influence on accountability systems in K-12 education? *(Among teachers who agree the gov't has a role to play in the accountability systems in K-12 education; N=841)*

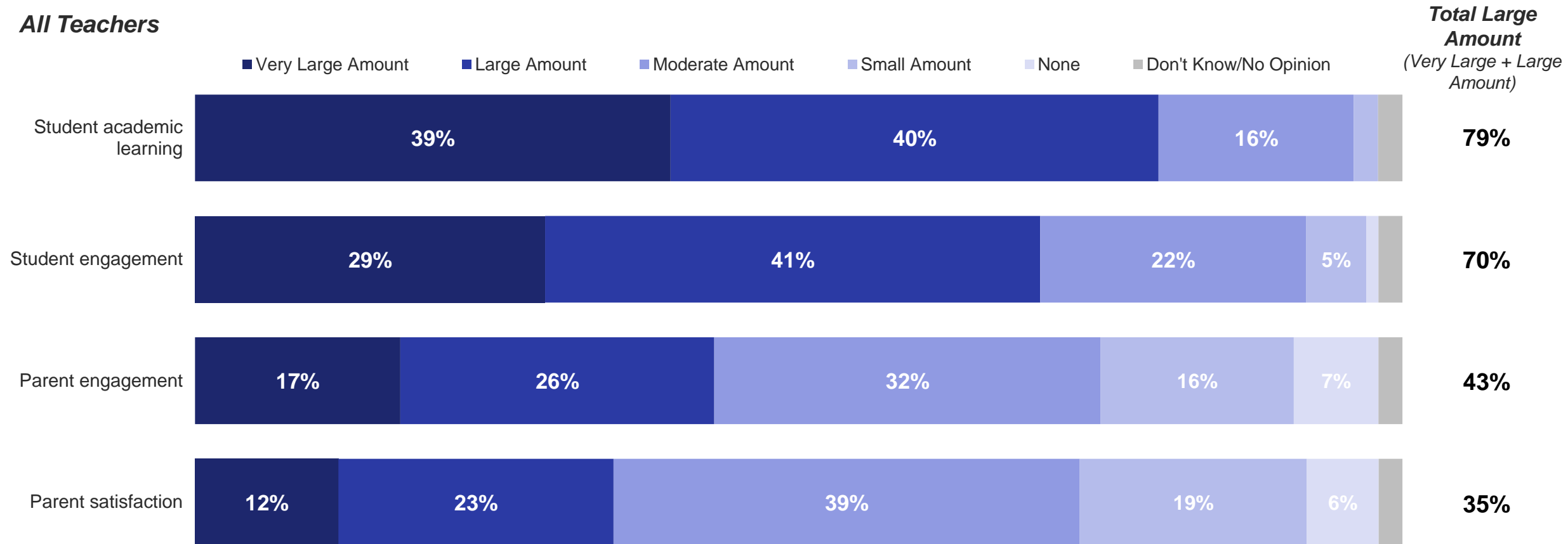


Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers believe schools should be held most accountable for student academic learning and student engagement rather than parent engagement or satisfaction.

To what extent, if at all, should schools be held accountable for the following?

All Teachers

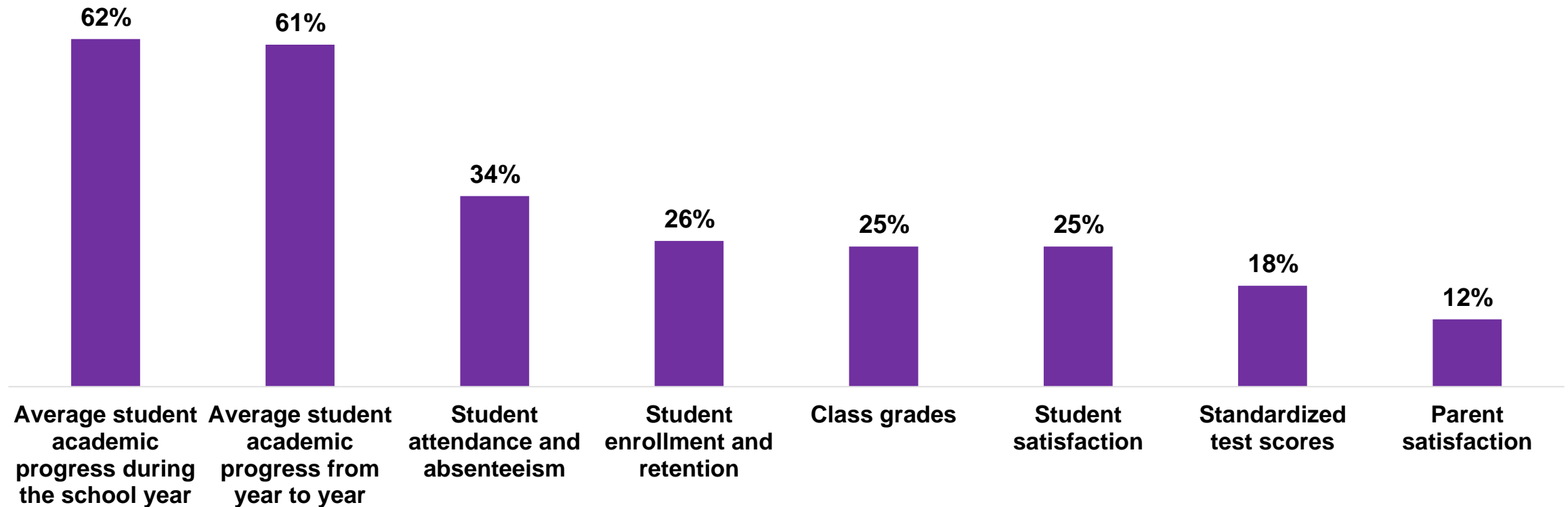


More than half of teachers think student academic progress should be used to judge school performance. They are least likely to view standardized test scores and parent satisfaction as performance metrics.

Which of the following measures should be used to judge school performance? Select up to three.

All Teachers

% Selected



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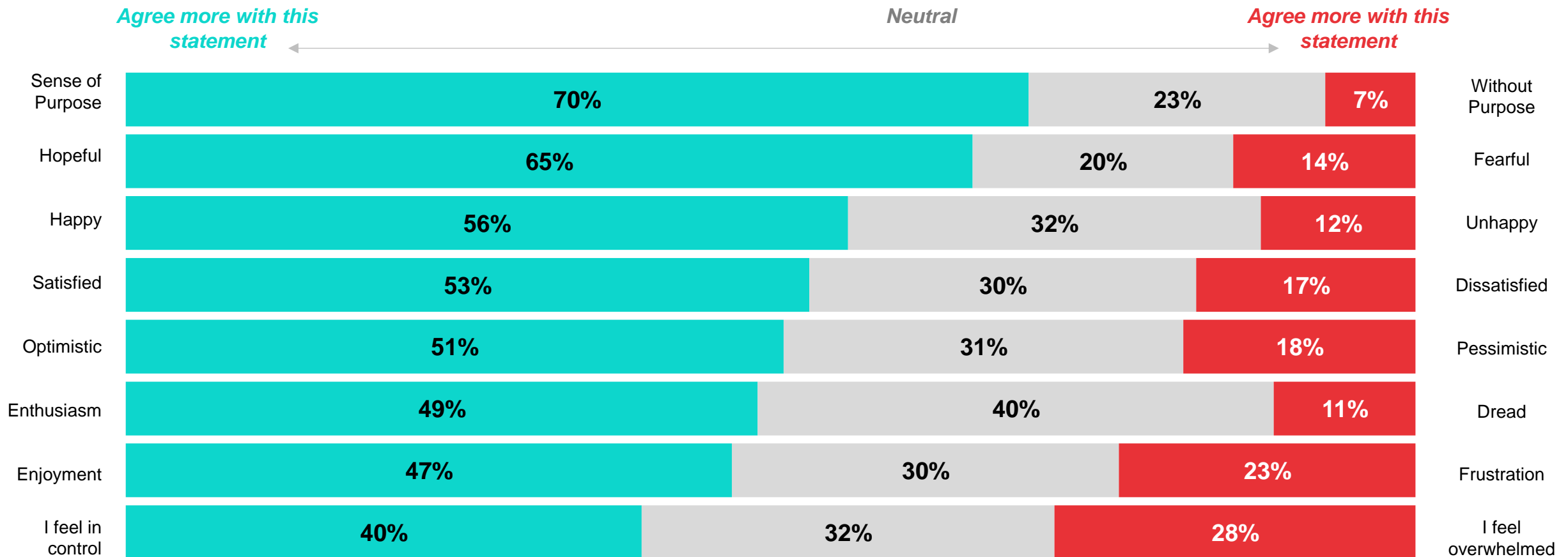
SURVEY PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS



At least two-thirds of teachers feel a “sense of purpose” and “hopeful” when thinking about the future. Over one-third say they feel “overwhelmed.”

When thinking about the future, please select which of these words best describes how you feel right now?

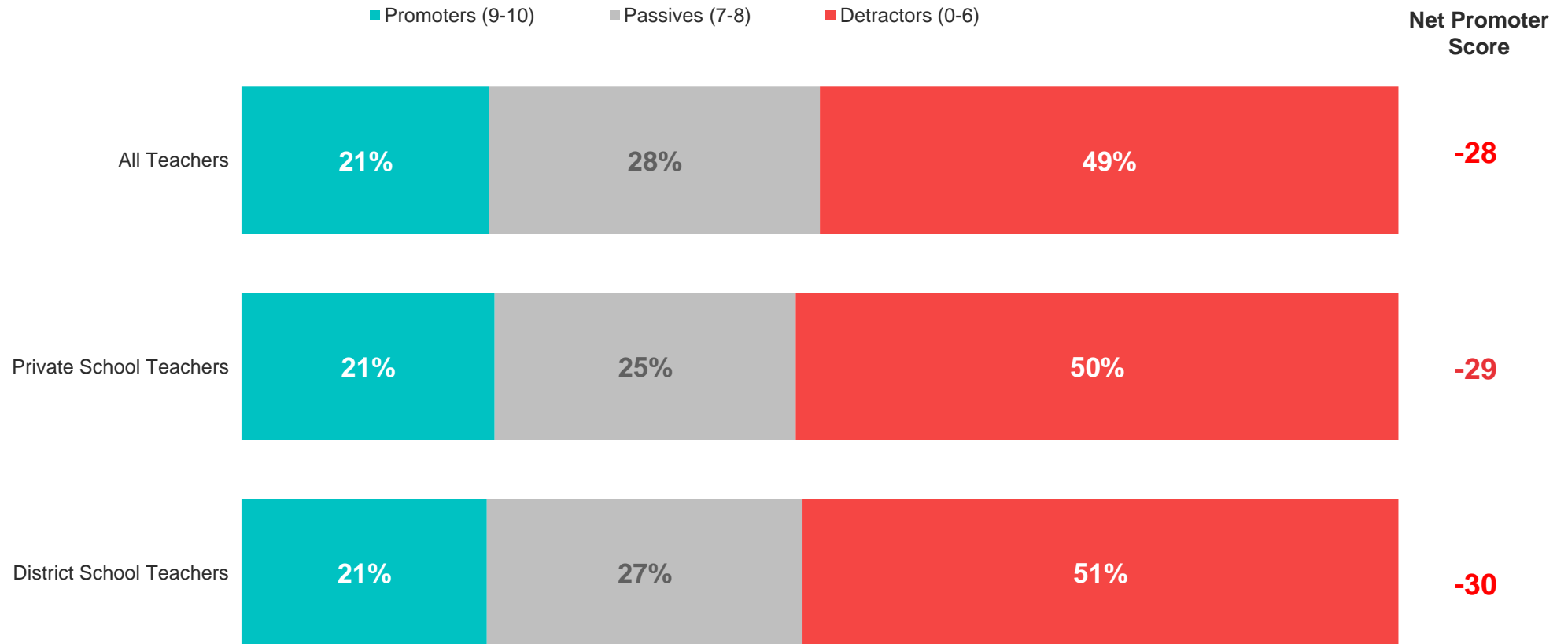
All Teachers



This fall, teachers across school types express high levels of pessimism when it comes to the teaching profession.

On a scale from 0 to 10, where '0' means 'Not at all likely' and '10' means 'Extremely likely'. How likely is it that you would recommend teaching to a friend or family member?

All Teachers

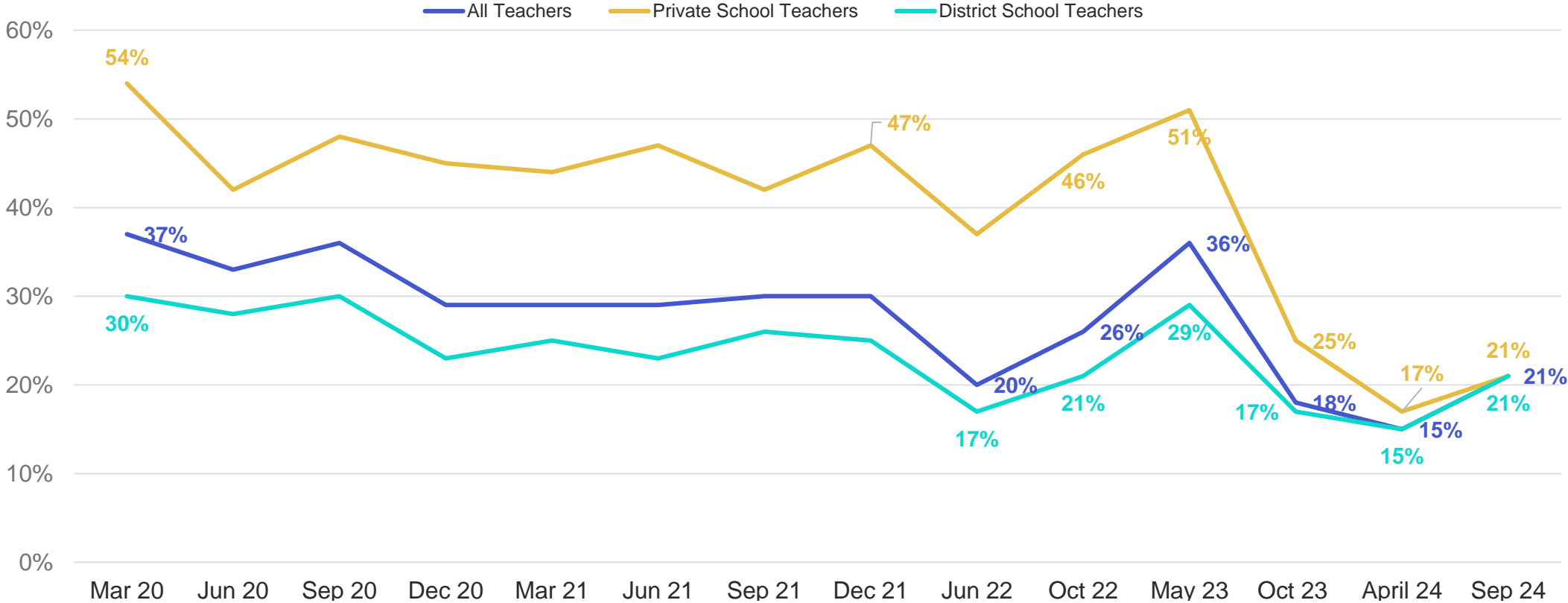


This month, the proportion of teachers who would recommend the teaching profession has risen after falling to significantly lower levels in previous months.

On a scale from 0 to 10, where '0' means 'Not at all likely' and '10' means 'Extremely likely'. How likely is it that you would recommend teaching to a friend or family member?

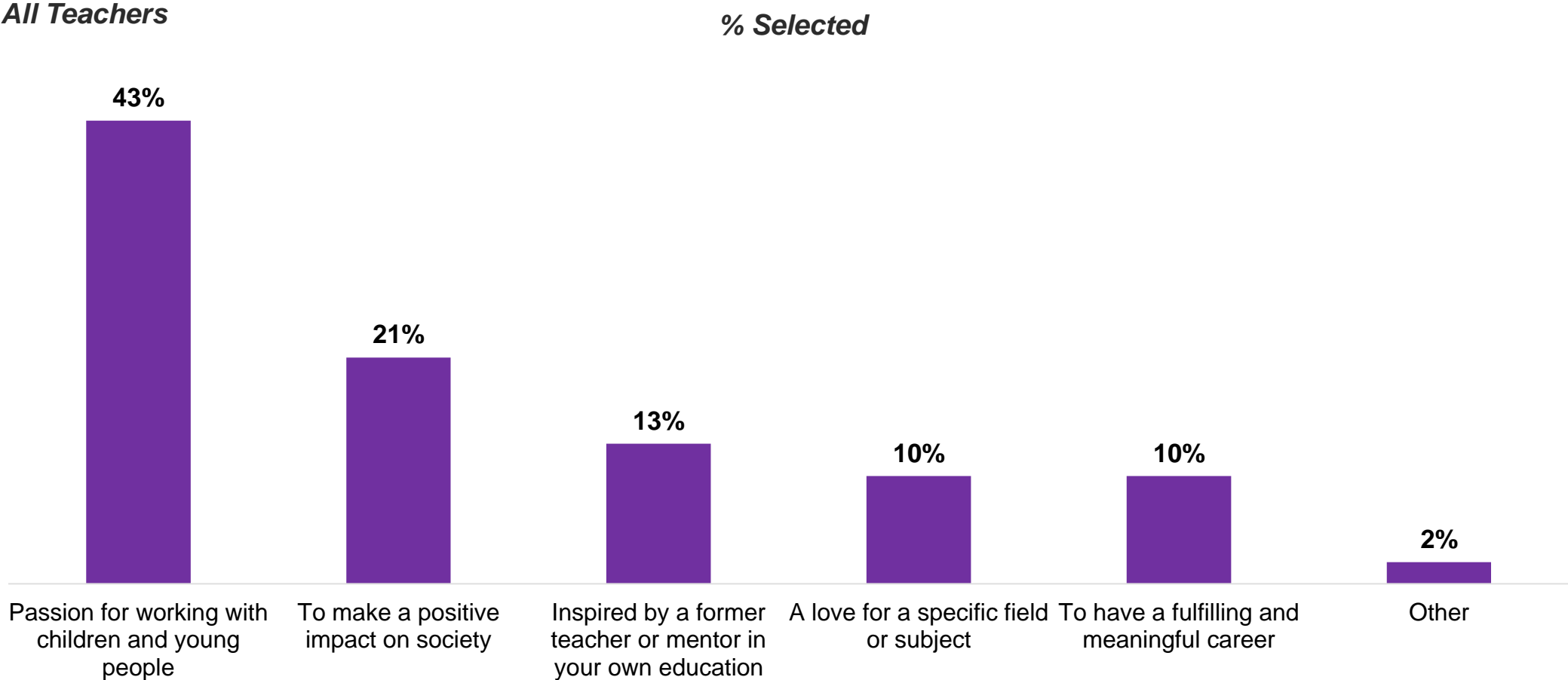
All Teachers

% Promoters (9-10)



Teachers say their biggest motivation for becoming a teacher is their passion for working with children and young people.

What was your primary motivation for becoming a teacher?

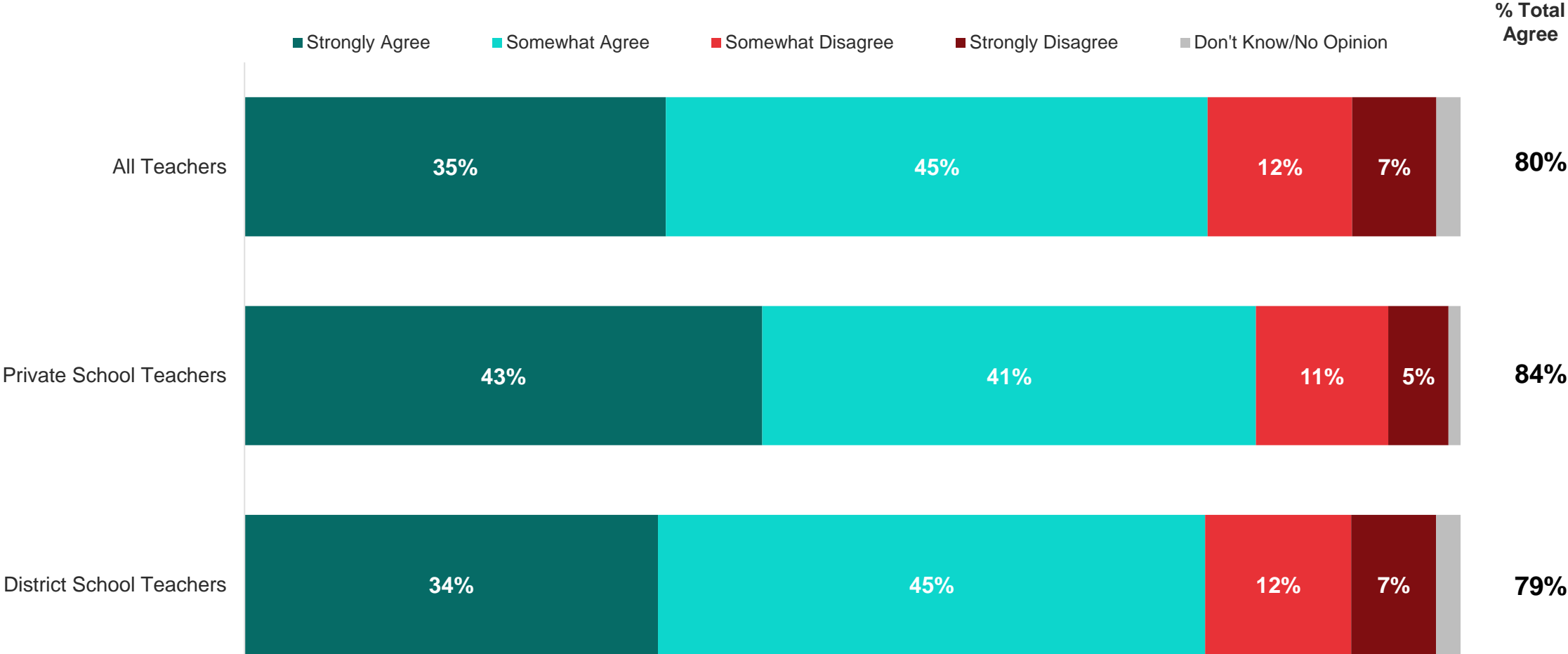


Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

More than three-fourths of teachers agree that their current teaching career aligns with their initial motivations for becoming a teacher.

Do you agree or disagree that your current teaching career aligns with the motivations that inspired you to become a teacher?

All Teachers



Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

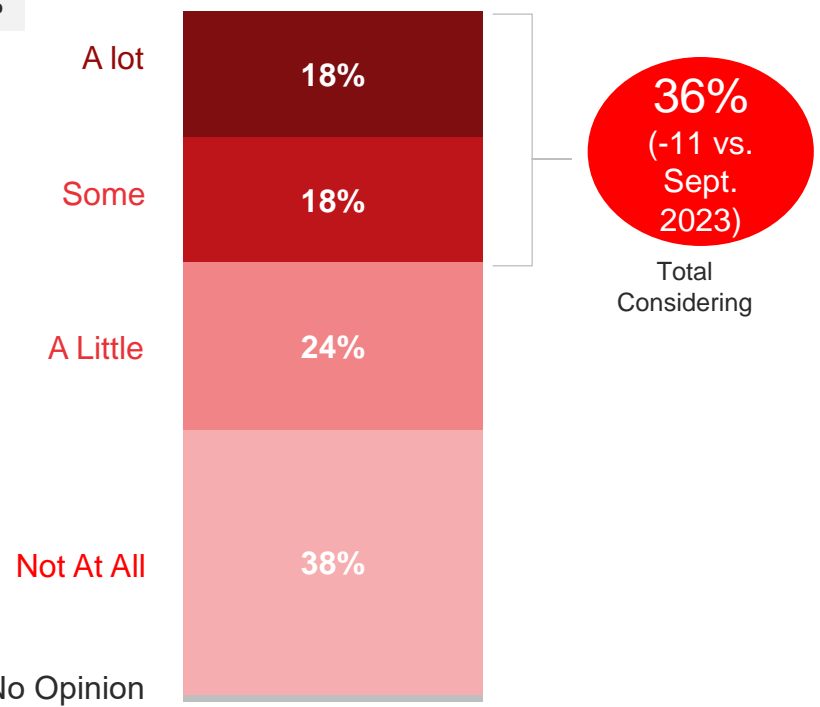
Just over one-third of teachers under the age of 55 have considered leaving the profession, a notable decrease since this time last year. District school teachers are more likely than private school teachers to have considered ending their teaching career.

In the past three months, to what extent have you considered leaving the teaching profession for another career?

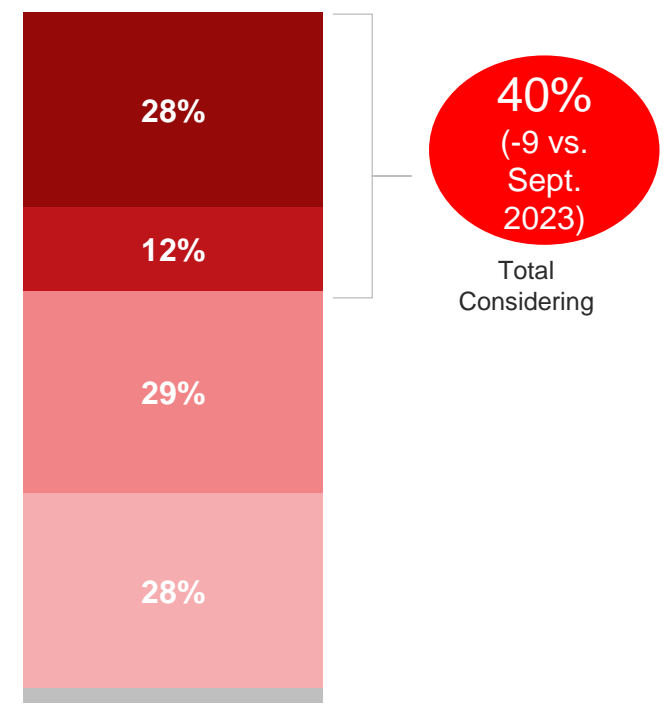
In the past three months, to what extent have you considered retiring from the teaching profession?

Total Considering Leaving based on School Type:
 District School Teachers: 37%
 Private School Teachers: 27%

Teachers Under 55 Years Old Leaving Teaching Profession



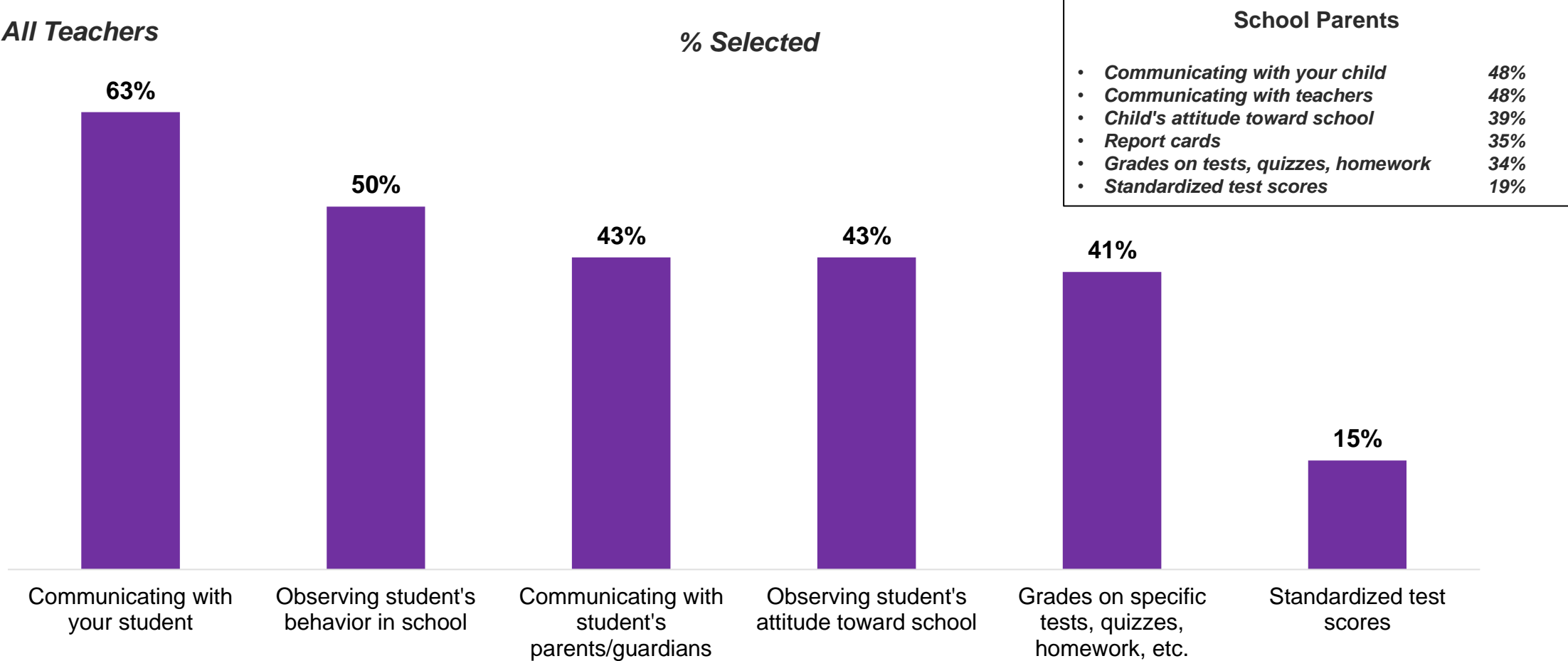
Teachers 55+ Years Old Retiring From Teaching Profession



Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers see communication with their students as the most important way to know if they are having a successful school year. Standardized test scores are the least important metric.

Which of the following are the most important to know if your student has a successful school year? Select up to three.



Note: *School parents data comes from the September 2024 Gen Pop Report.
Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers believe students are progressing better academically, emotionally and socially compared to this time last year. Private school teachers report better student progress.

How do you feel your students are progressing on the following this school year?

All Teachers

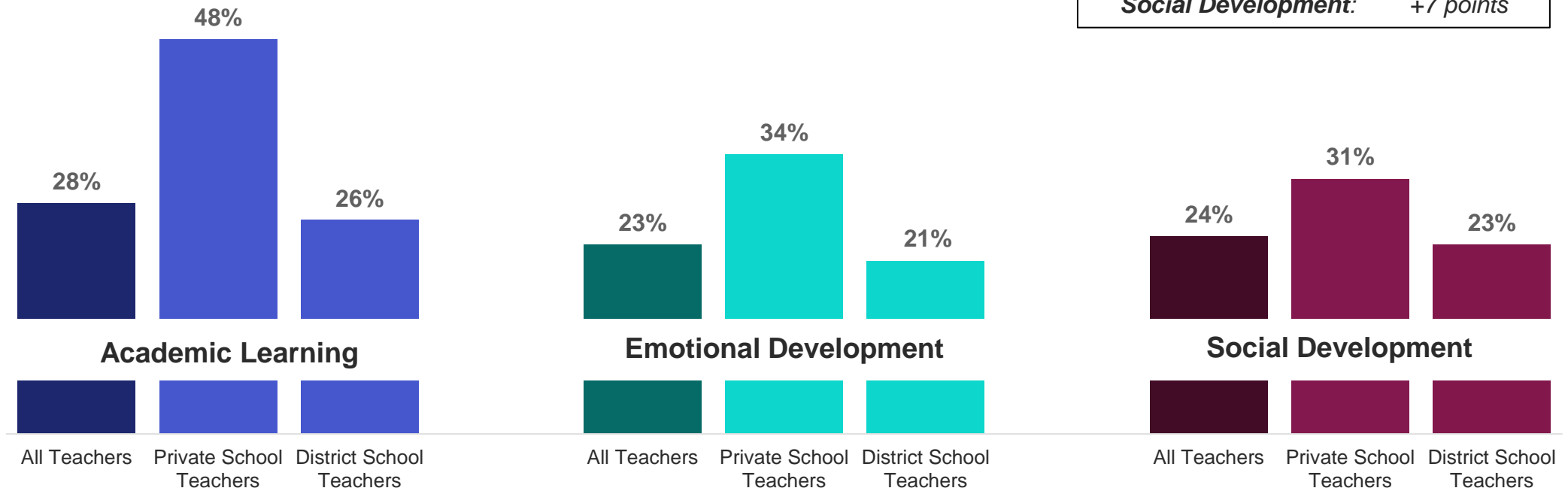
% Very Well

Among All Teachers Since Sept 2023:

Academic Learning: +6 points

Emotional Development: +7 points

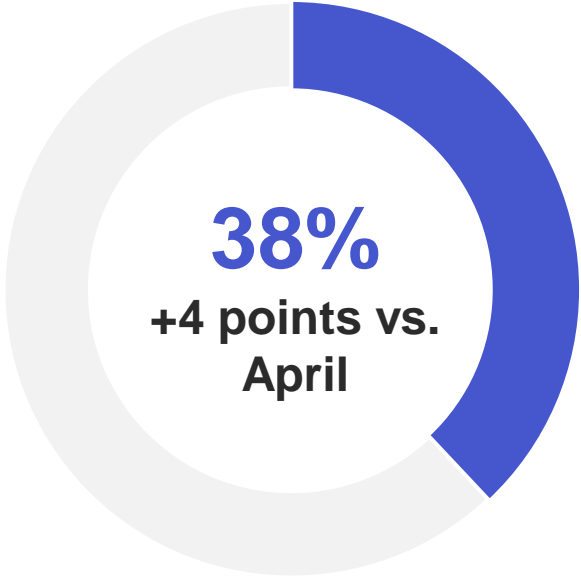
Social Development: +7 points



Teacher concern about violent intruders entering their school has risen since the spring. They express slightly more concern about this issue than teens but slightly less concern than school parents.

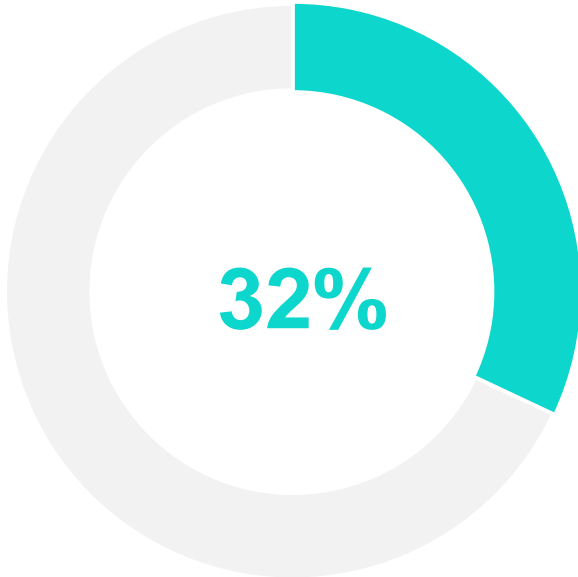
How concerned are you about a violent intruder, like a mass shooter, entering your school?

All Teachers

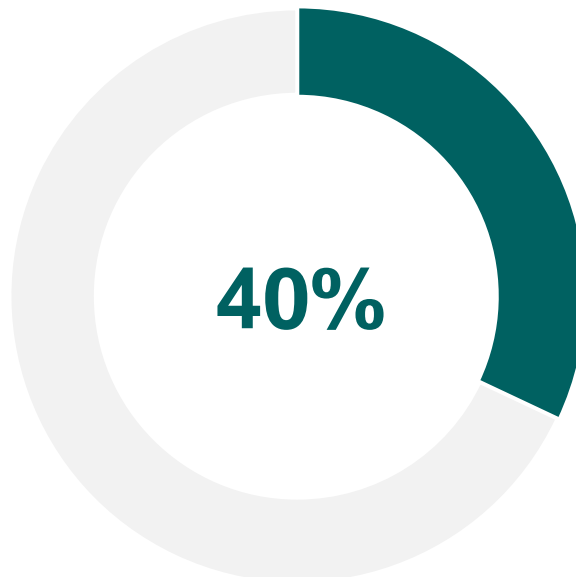


Teachers

Total Concern
(Extremely + Very Concerned)



Teens



School Parents

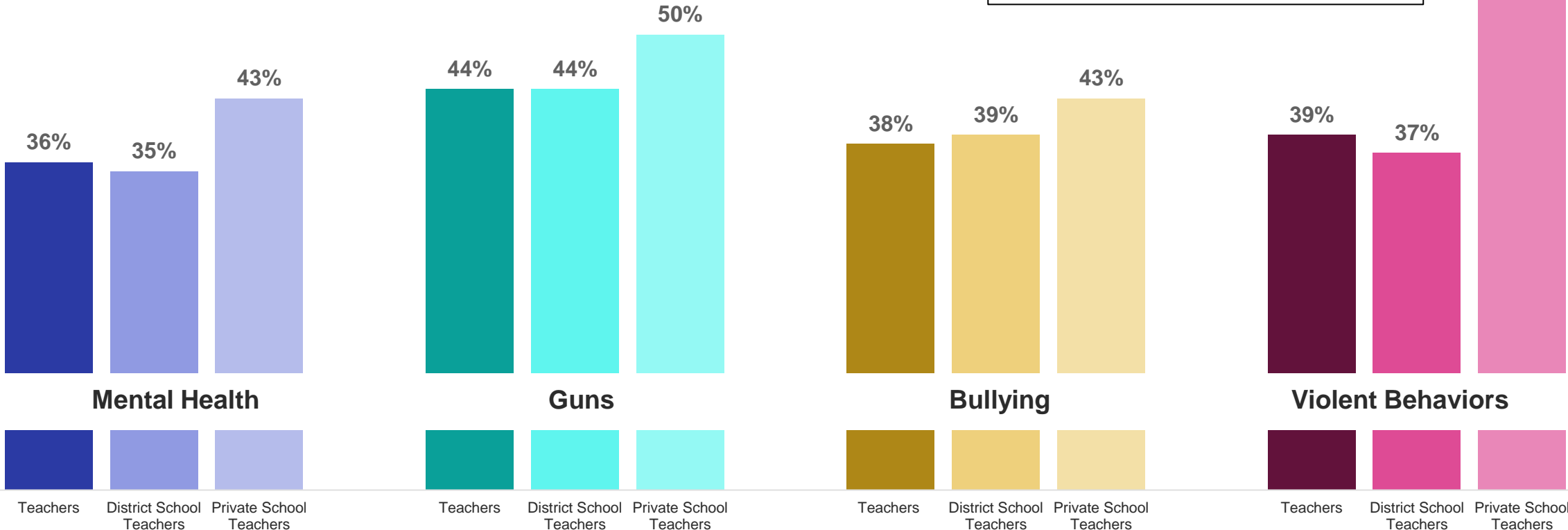
Note: Teens data comes from August 2024 U.S. Teens Report; Parents data comes from June 2024 U.S. Adults Report
Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers are most positive about how their schools handle guns compared to other safety issues. Private school teachers give their schools higher ratings than district school teachers.

How well do you feel your school addresses the following among its students?

Among Teens in August 2024
Guns – 45%
Mental Health – 38%
Violent Behaviors – 37%
Bullying – 33%

Most Positive
(Extremely + Very Well)

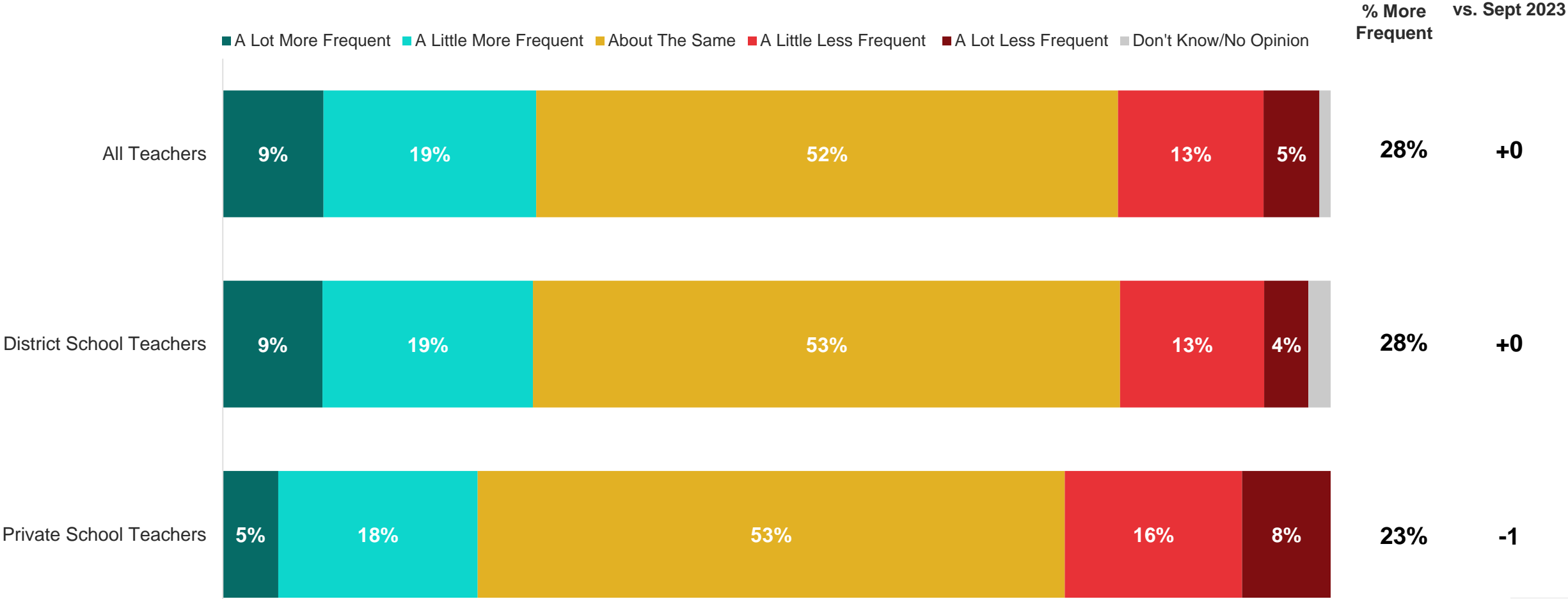


Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

This fall, teachers across different school types report roughly the same frequency of absences among their students compared to a year ago.

Generally speaking, and comparing to this time last school year, do you think **student absences** in your classes are...

All Teachers

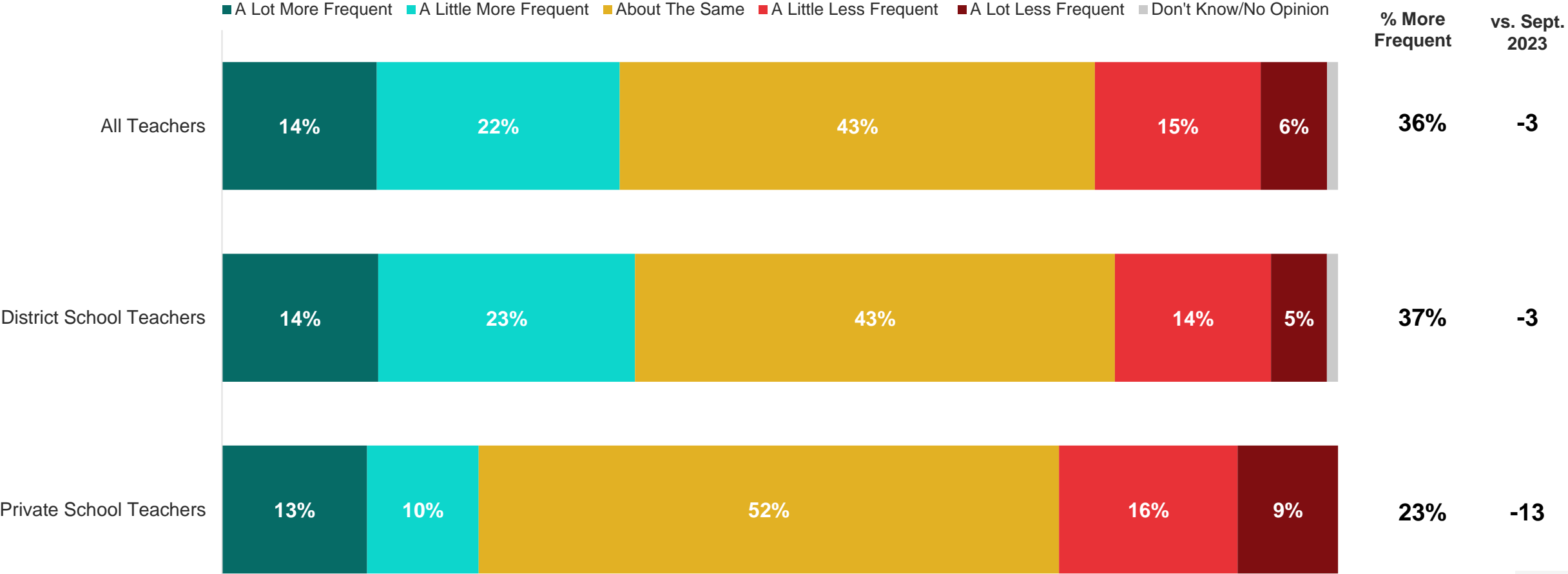


Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Fewer teachers than last year say that student misbehaviors are more frequent this year. District school teachers see more misbehaviors than private school teachers, though frequency has fallen across all levels.

Generally speaking, and comparing to this time last school year, do you think **student misbehaviors** in your classes are...

All Teachers

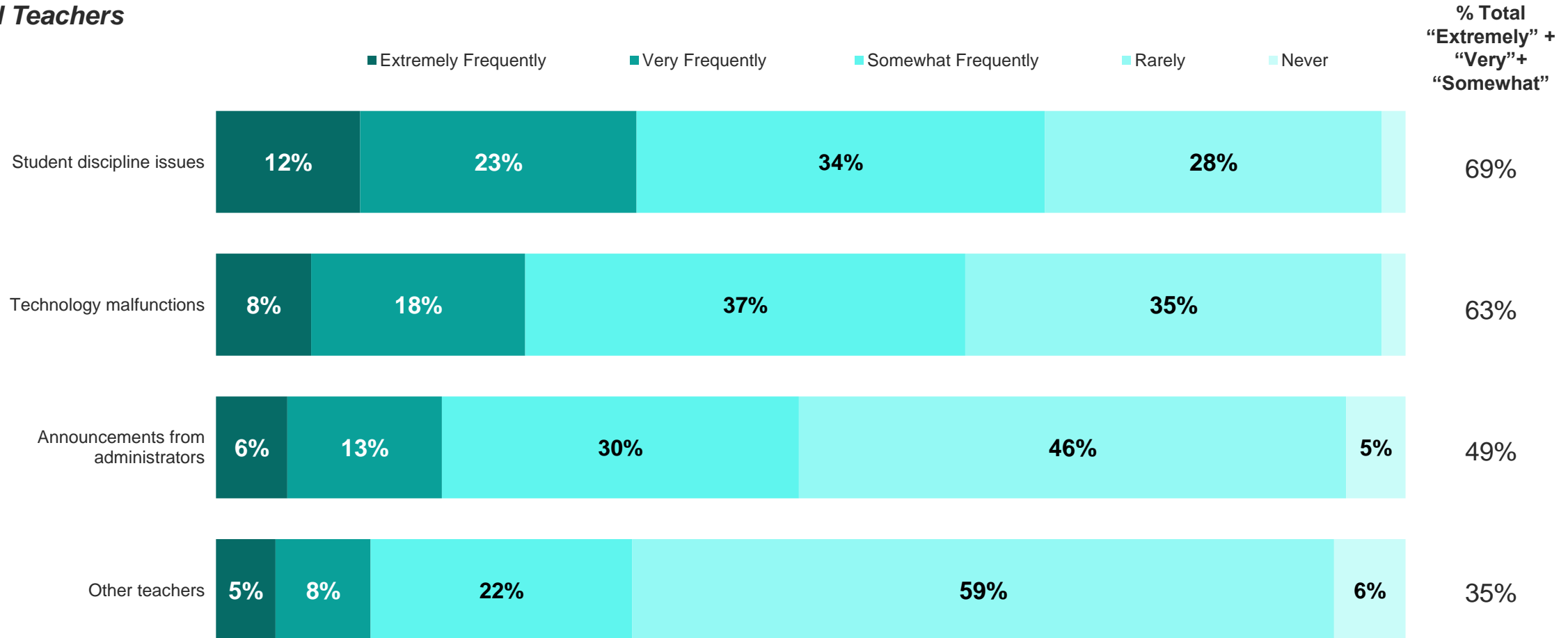


Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Just over two-thirds of teachers say their classes are interrupted by student discipline issues at least somewhat frequently. More than half say technology malfunctions interrupt classes at a similar frequency.

How often would you say that your class is interrupted by the following?

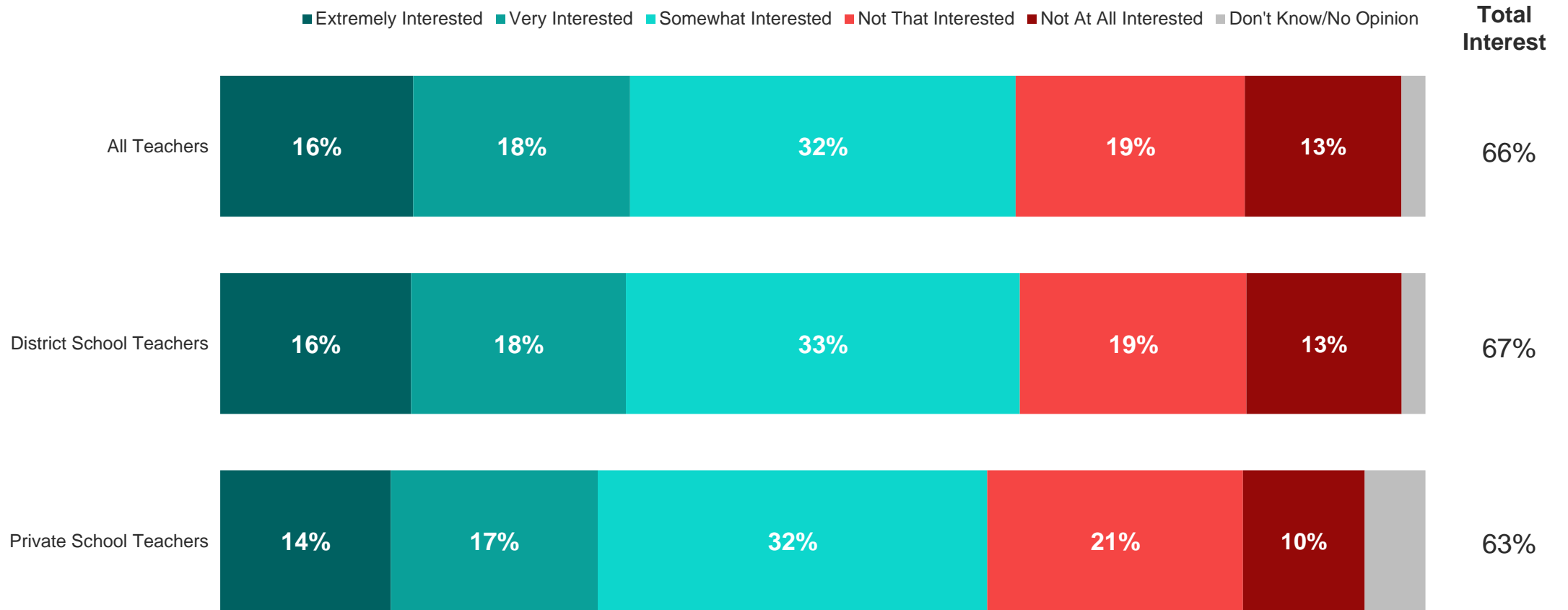
All Teachers



About two-thirds of educators are interested in tutoring outside of schooling hours.

How interested are you in tutoring students outside of school hours?

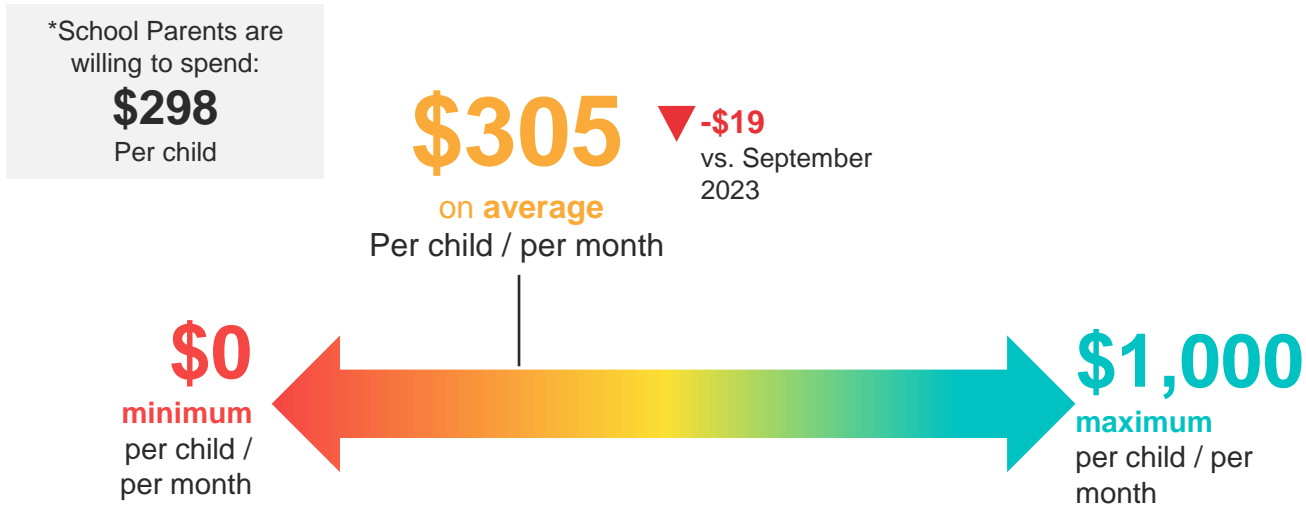
All Teachers



The monthly amount teachers would ask parents to pay for tutoring fell since last fall. Their asking price is slightly higher than the amount parents are willing to spend.

How much would you ask parents to pay per child per month for you to tutor their child outside of school hours?

All Teachers



Average Willing to ask Per Child/Per Month By Demographic		
School Type	Private School Teachers	\$320
	District School Teachers	\$298
Community Type	Urban	\$314
	Suburban	\$319
	Small Town/Rural	\$257
Years Teaching	Less than 4 years	\$328
	4-9 years	\$282
	10-14 years	\$325
	Greater than 15 years	\$303

*Note: *School parents data comes from the September 2024 Gen Pop Report.*

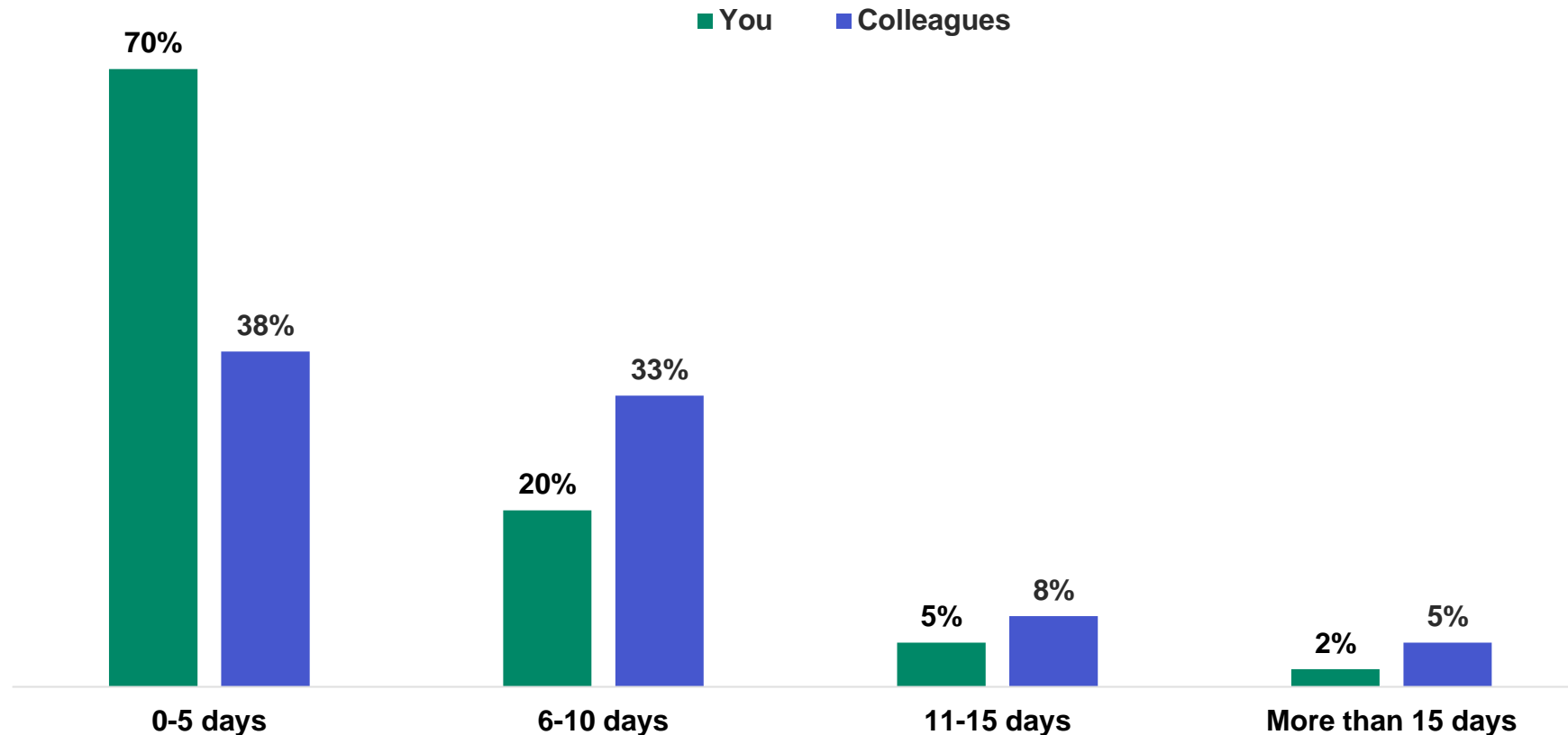
Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers say that nearly half of their colleagues missed more than 5 days of school last year, compared to only around 25% who say they missed the same amount of time.

Thinking about LAST school year, how many WHOLE DAYS of school did you miss and were absent?

Thinking about LAST school year, generally how many WHOLE DAYS of school – on average – have your colleagues missed and were absent?

All Teachers

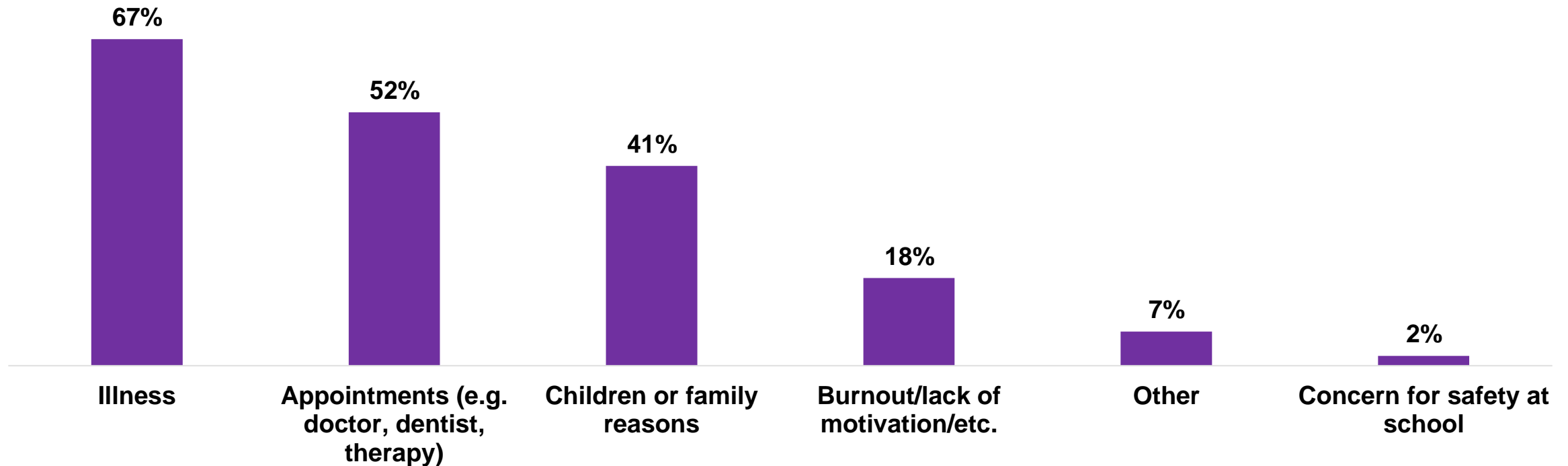


Nearly 20% of teachers reported they were absent from school last year because of burnout or lack of motivation. Teachers were most likely to miss school last year due to illness or for an appointment like the doctor or the dentist.

And what are the reasons why you were absent LAST school year? Select all that apply. *(Among teachers who say they or their colleagues missed at least 1 day of school last year; N=866)*

All Teachers

% Selected



AGENDA

VIEWS ON K-12 EDUCATION

TEACHING PROFESSION AND EXPERIENCES

SCHOOL CHOICE POLICIES

SURVEY PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS



Policy Descriptions Used

Education Savings Accounts

An "education savings account" in K–12 education – often called an ESA – establishes for parents a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple uses for educational purposes. Parents can then use these funds to pay for: school tuition; tutoring; online education programs; therapies for students with special needs; textbooks or other instructional materials; or save for future college expenses.

School Vouchers

A school voucher system allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. If this policy were adopted, tax dollars currently allocated to a school district would be allocated to parents in the form of a 'school voucher' to pay partial or full tuition for the child's school.

Charter Schools

Charter schools are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations.

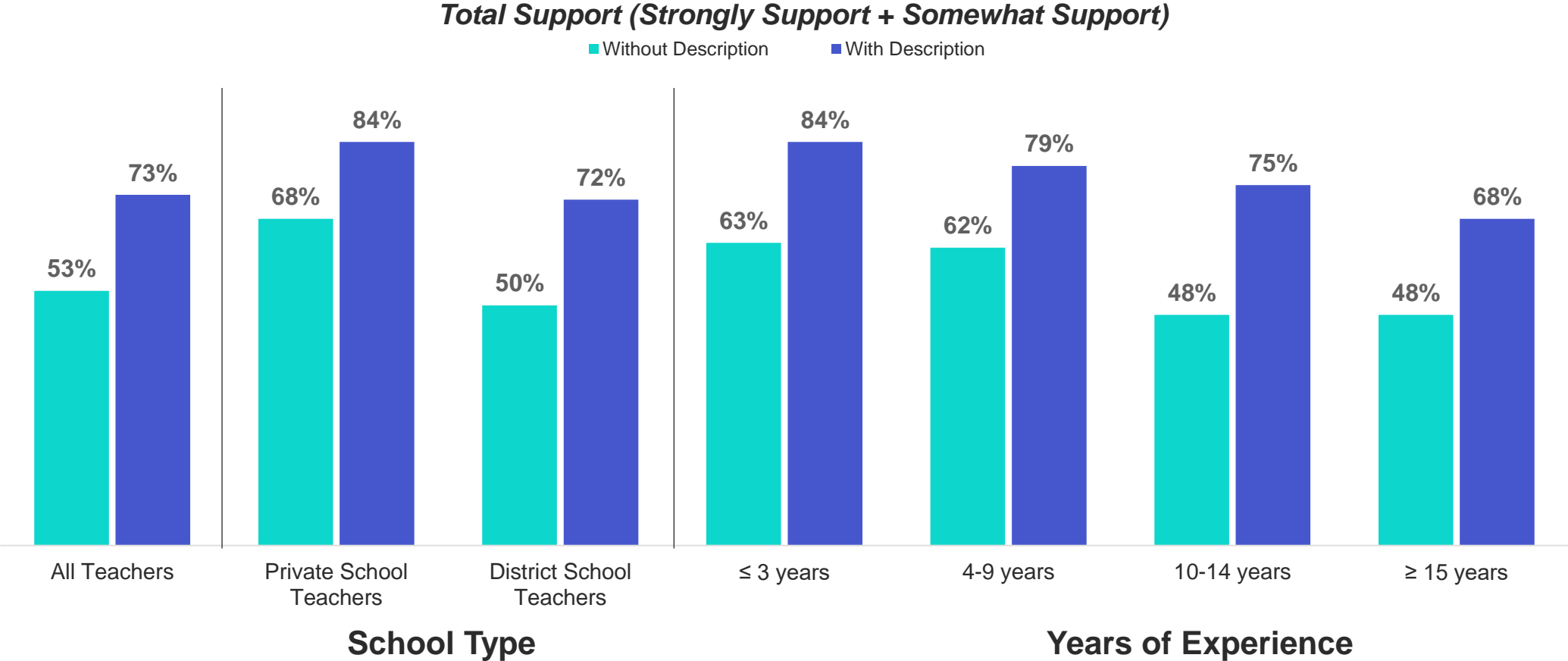
Open Enrollment

An "open enrollment" policy in K-12 education allows a student enrolled in public school to select and transfer to a public school of their choice, rather than attending a school based on where they live. A student can be allowed to transfer to a public school in another district (called "INTER-district"). The policy is based on a first come, first served process until districts are no longer able to accommodate new students.

Roughly three-fourths of teachers support education savings accounts (ESAs). More teachers express support when given a description.

Based on what you know, or have heard from others... In general, what is your opinion of 'education savings accounts' in K-12 education?
An "education savings account" in K-12 education – often called an ESA – establishes for parents a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple uses for educational purposes. Parents can then use these funds to pay for: school tuition; tutoring; online education programs; therapies for students with special needs; textbooks or other instructional materials; or save for future college expenses. In general, what is your opinion of an ESA system?

All Teachers



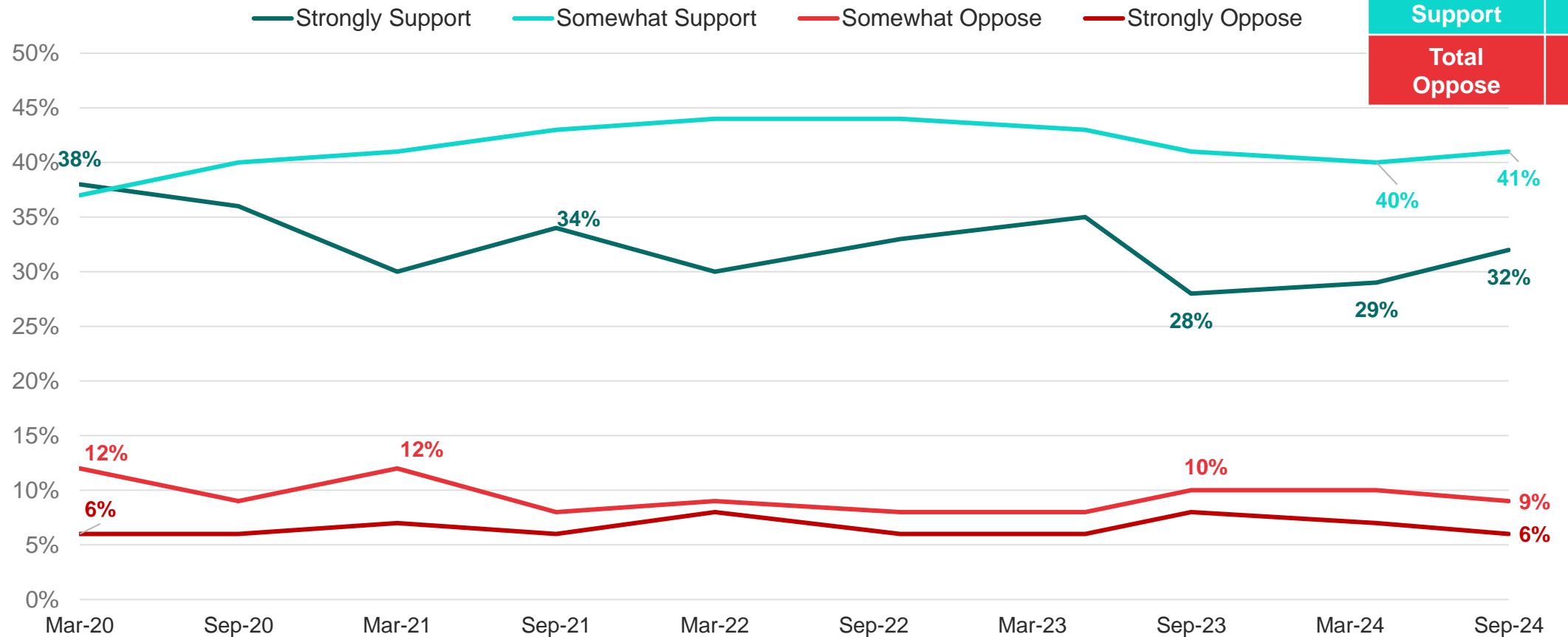
Nearly 75% of teachers generally support education savings accounts (ESAs). Support levels have risen since last fall.

An "education savings account" in K–12 education – often called an ESA – establishes for parents a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple uses for educational purposes. Parents can then use these funds to pay for: school tuition; tutoring; online education programs; therapies for students with special needs; textbooks or other instructional materials; or save for future college expenses. In general, what is your opinion of an ESA system?

All Teachers

September 2024

Total Support	73%
Total Oppose	15%



Note: Don't know/no opinion responses are not shown.

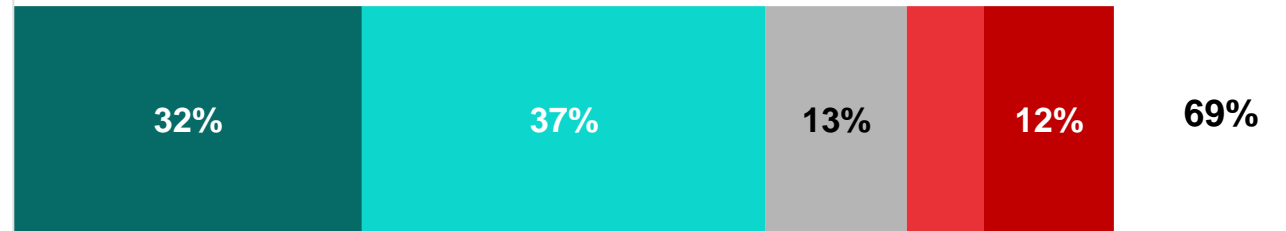
More than two-thirds of teachers believe ESAs should be available to all families regardless of income or special needs. That is more than 25 points higher than the percentage of teachers who want ESA eligibility determined by financial need.

All Teachers

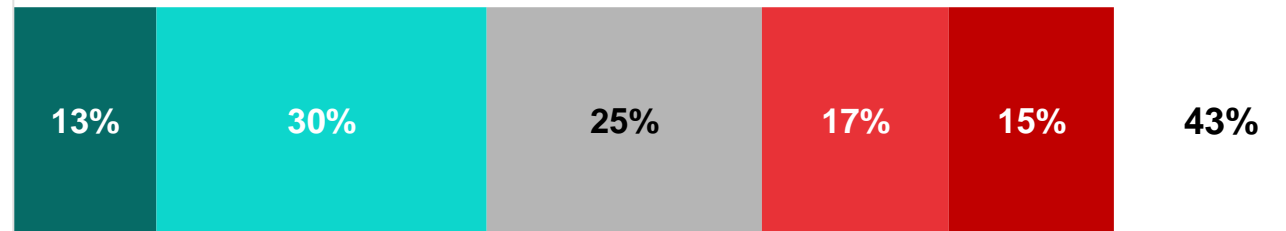
■ Strongly Agree
 ■ Somewhat Agree
 ■ Somewhat Disagree
 ■ Strongly Disagree
 ■ Don't Know/ No Opinion

Total Agree
(Strongly + Somewhat Agree)

Some people believe that ESAs should be available to all families, regardless of incomes and special needs. Do you agree or disagree with that statement?



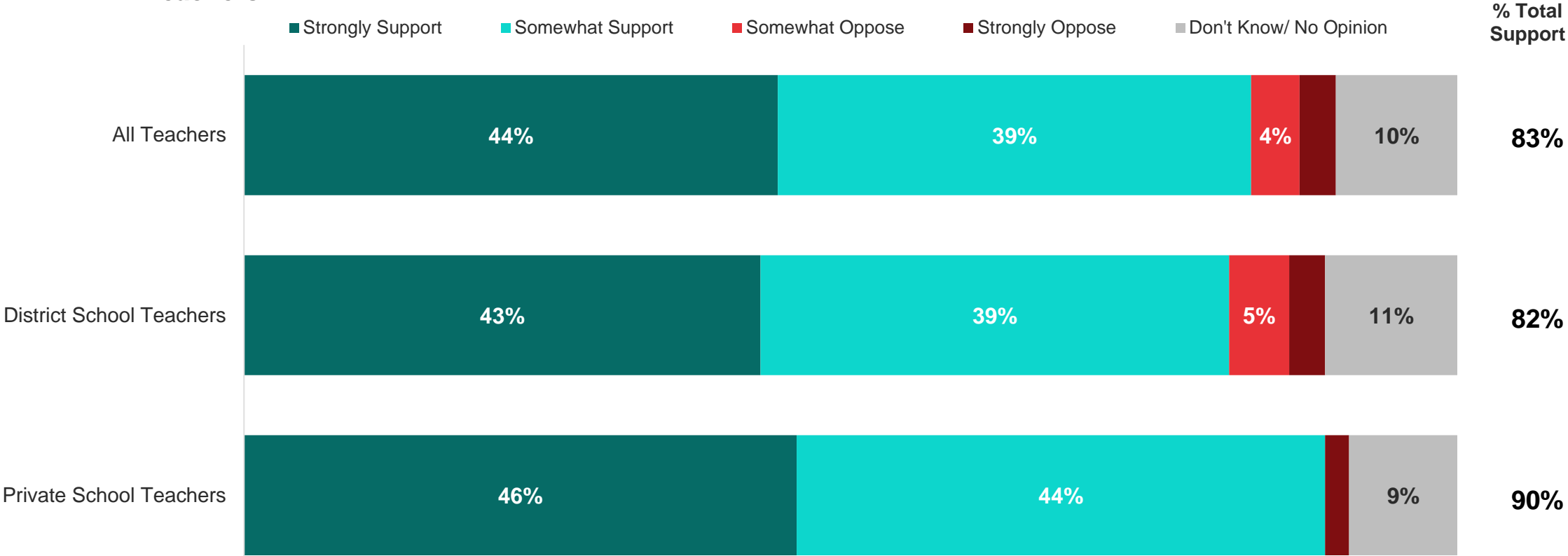
Some people believe that ESAs should only be available to families based on financial need. Do you agree or disagree with that statement?



The vast majority of teachers, across different school types, express support for a teacher savings account in K-12 education.

Some have proposed a "teacher savings account" in K-12 education – which would establish for teachers a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple uses for classroom and professional development purposes. Teachers can then use these funds to pay for: classroom supplies, books/downloads, lesson plans, instructional materials, computer hardware/software or other equipment, or additional training through meetings, conferences, or webinars. Some amount can be saved for future school-year expenses. In general, what is your opinion of this proposed teacher savings account system?

All Teachers



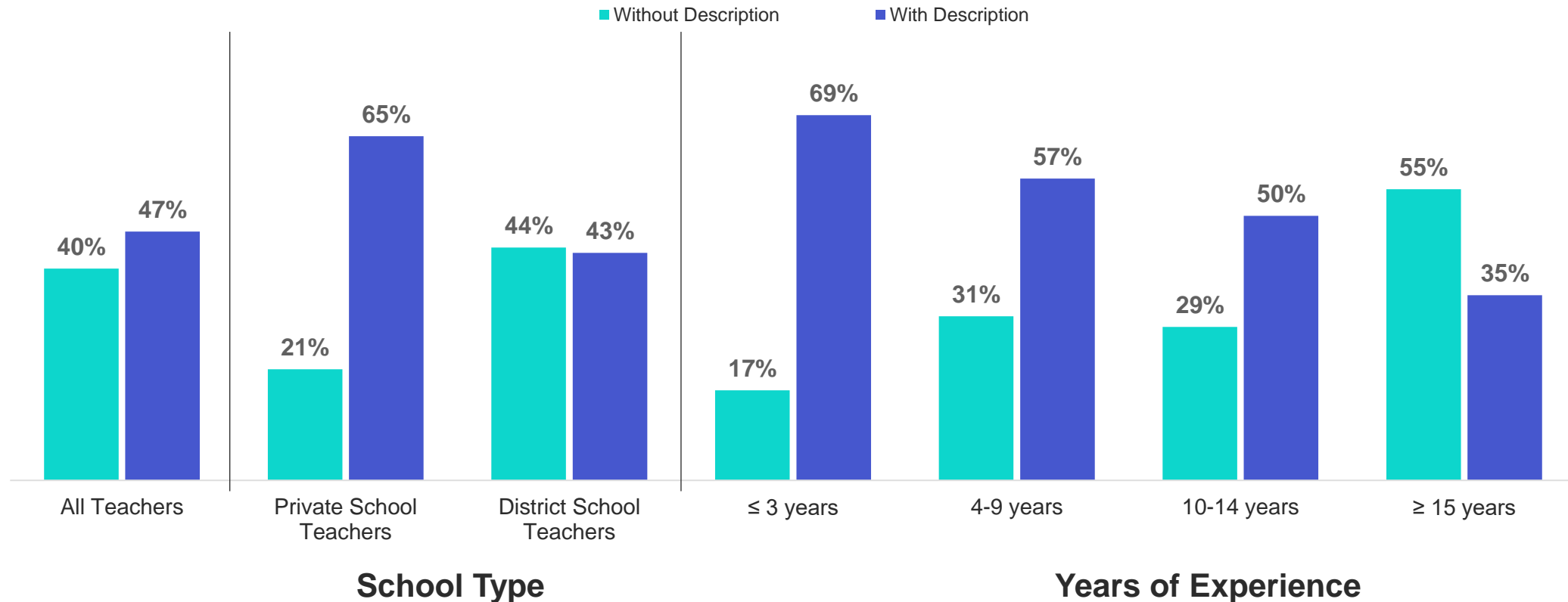
Source: Survey conducted September 20, 2024 – September 25, 2024, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers' support for school vouchers tends to increase when they are given a description. Greatest support comes from private school teachers and those with less teaching experience.

Based on what you know, or have heard from others... In general, what is your opinion of 'school vouchers' in K-12 education? A school voucher system allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. If this policy were adopted, tax dollars currently allocated to a school district would be allocated to parents in the form of a 'school voucher' to pay partial or full tuition for the child's school. In general, what is your opinion of school voucher systems?

All Teachers

Total Support (Strongly Support + Somewhat Support)



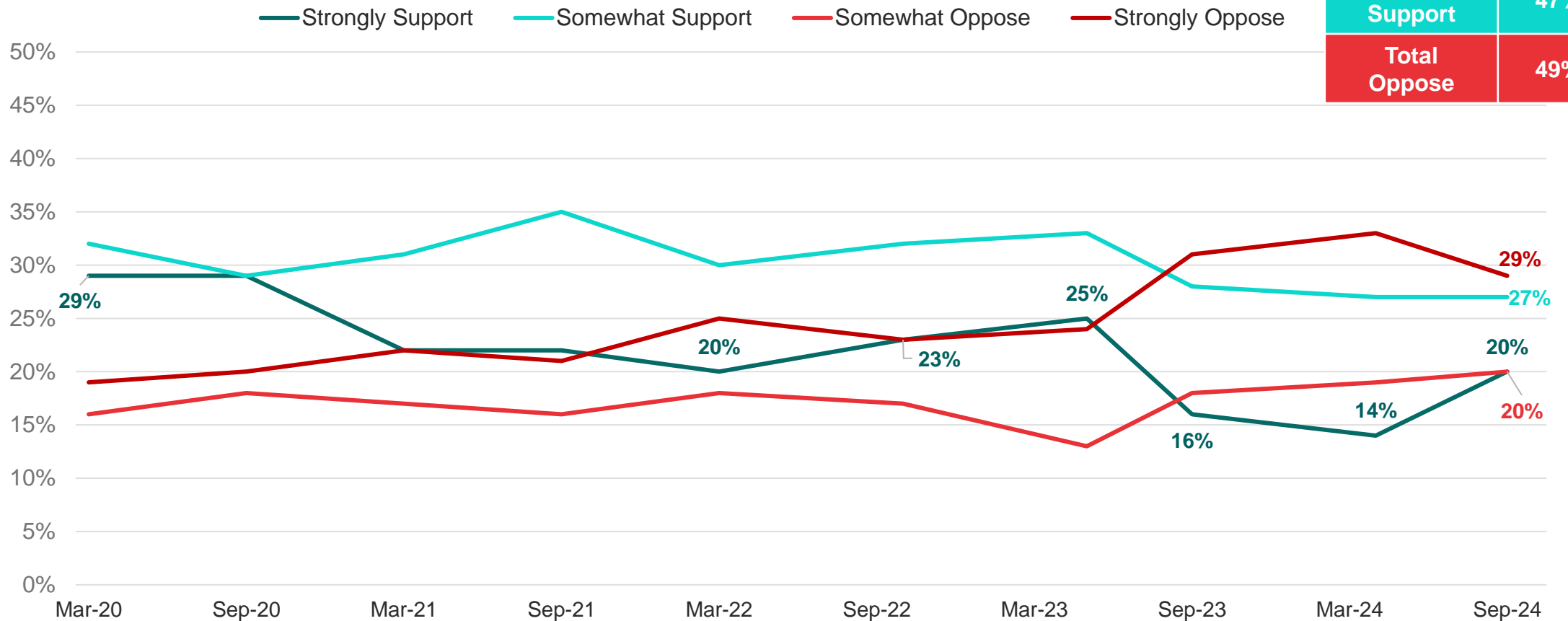
Nearly half of teachers support school vouchers. Teacher support for vouchers has increased since last fall.

A school voucher system allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. If this policy were adopted, tax dollars currently allocated to a school district would be allocated to parents in the form of a 'school voucher' to pay partial or full tuition for the child's school. In general, what is your opinion of school voucher systems?

All Teachers

September 2024

Total Support	47%
Total Oppose	49%



Note: Don't know/no opinion responses are not shown.

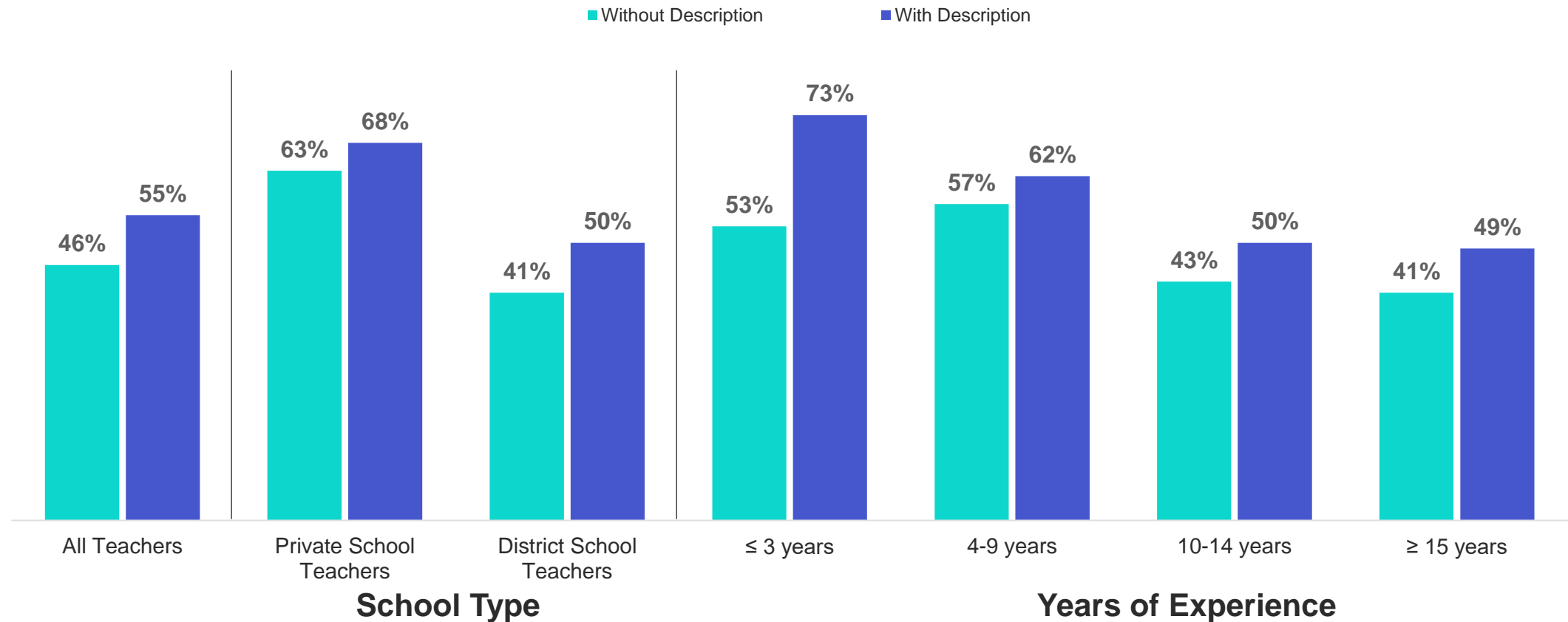
When given a policy description, teacher support increases for charter schools. That is especially the case for those with the fewest years of teaching experience.

Based on what you know, or have heard from others... In general, what is your opinion of 'charter schools' in K-12 education?

Charter schools are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations. In general, what is your opinion of public charter schools?

All Teachers

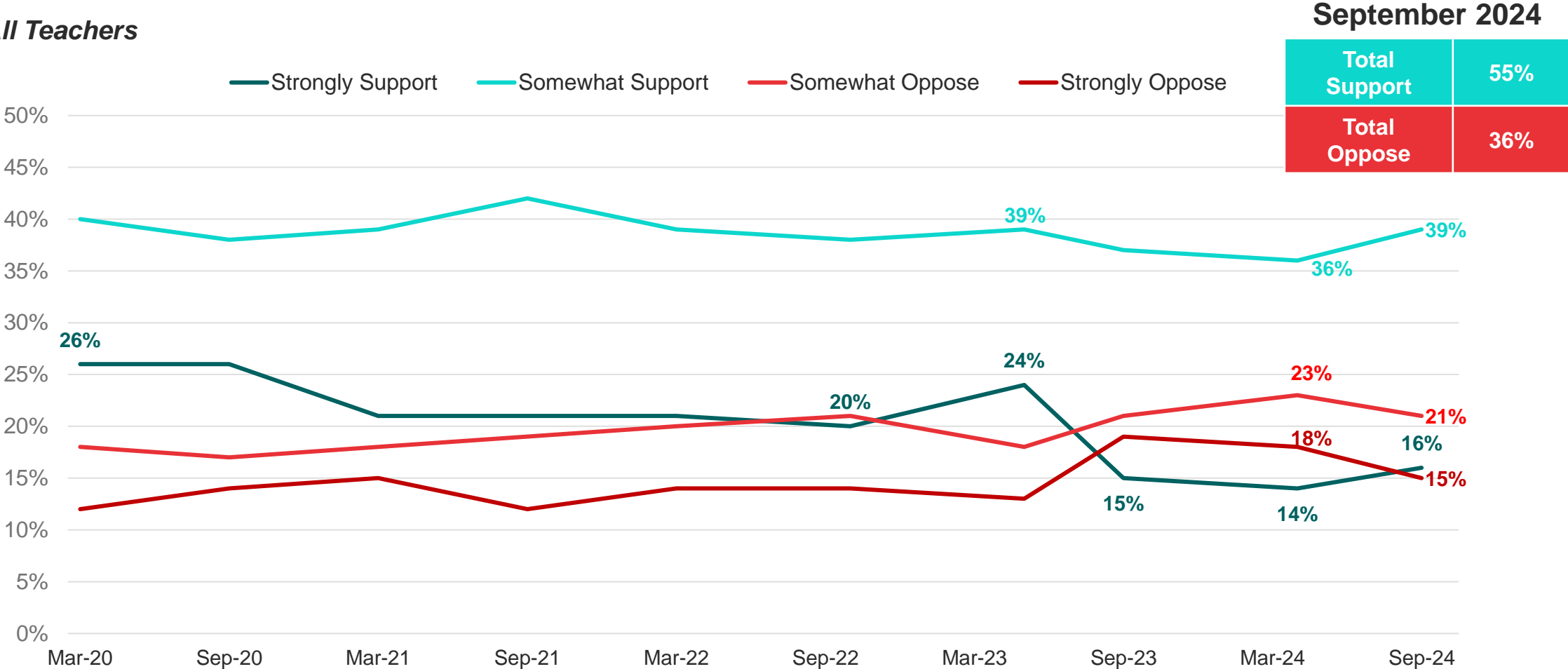
Total Support (Strongly Support + Somewhat Support)



Half of teachers support public charter schools. Support has risen since the fall.

Charter schools are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations. In general, what is your opinion of public charter schools?

All Teachers



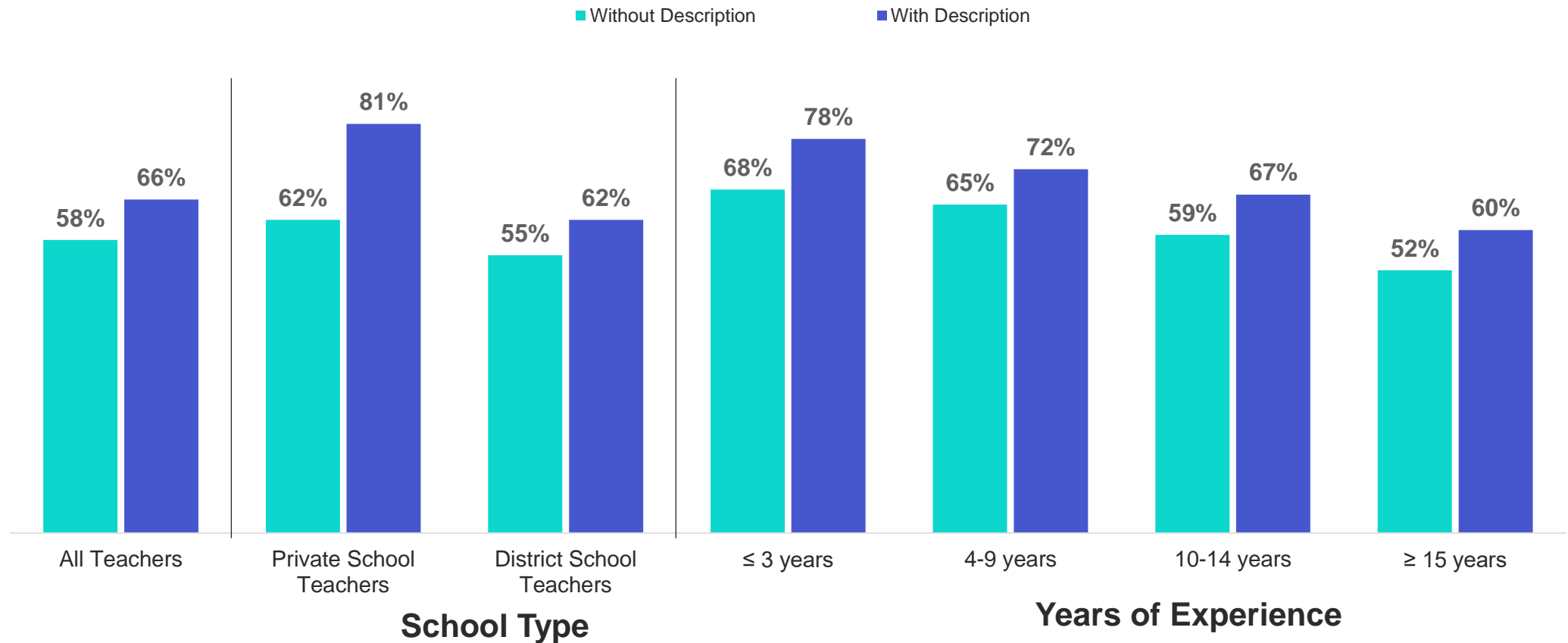
Note: Don't know/no opinion responses are not shown.

Teachers' support is high for inter-district open enrollment. When a policy description is provided, support increases the most among private school teachers.

Based on what you know, or have heard from others... In general, what is your opinion of "open enrollment" policies in K-12 education? An "open enrollment" policy in K-12 education allows a student enrolled in public school to select and transfer to a public school of their choice, rather than attending a school based on where they live. A student can be allowed to transfer to a public school in another district (called "INTER-district"). The policy is based on a first come, first served process until districts are no longer able to accommodate new students. In general, what is your opinion of an open enrollment system?

All Teachers

Total Support (Strongly Support + Somewhat Support)

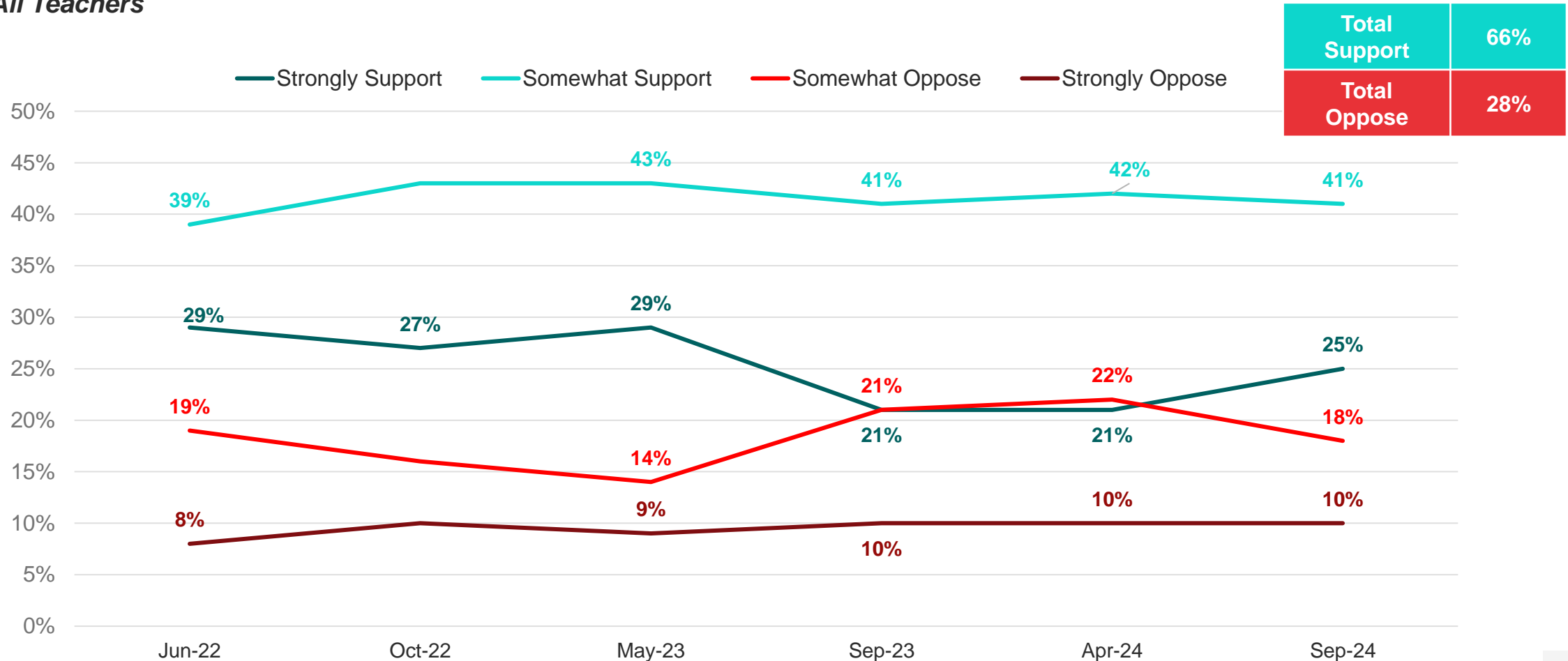


Two-thirds of teachers support open enrollment. Support has risen slightly since a year ago.

An “open enrollment” policy in K-12 education allows a student enrolled in public school to select and transfer to a public school of their choice, rather than attending a school based on where they live. A student can be allowed to transfer to a public school in another district (called “INTER-district”). The policy is based on a first come, first served process until districts are no longer able to accommodate new students. In general, what is your opinion of an open enrollment system?

September 2024

All Teachers



Note: Don't know/no opinion responses are not shown.

AGENDA

VIEWS ON K-12 EDUCATION

TEACHING PROFESSION AND EXPERIENCES

ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE

SCHOOL CHOICE POLICIES

SURVEY PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHICS



Survey Profile, 1

Dates	September 20 – 25, 2024
Survey Data Collection & Quality Control	Morning Consult
Survey Sponsor	EdChoice
Population	K-12 Education Teachers
Sampling Frame States,	National sample of K-12 teachers (age 18+) living in the United States, including the District of Columbia
Sampling Method	Non-Probability, Stratified (based on Gender, Years of Experience)
Mode	Online Survey
Language	English

Survey Profile, 2

Survey Time	Median = 13.12 minutes
Sample Size	Total, N = 1,034
Oversampling?	None
Quotas?	Age, Years of Teaching Experience
Weighting?	Age, Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Teaching Experience
Measure of Precision	± 3.60 percentage points
Participation Rate	48.73%
Project Contact	Paul DiPerna, paul@edchoice.org

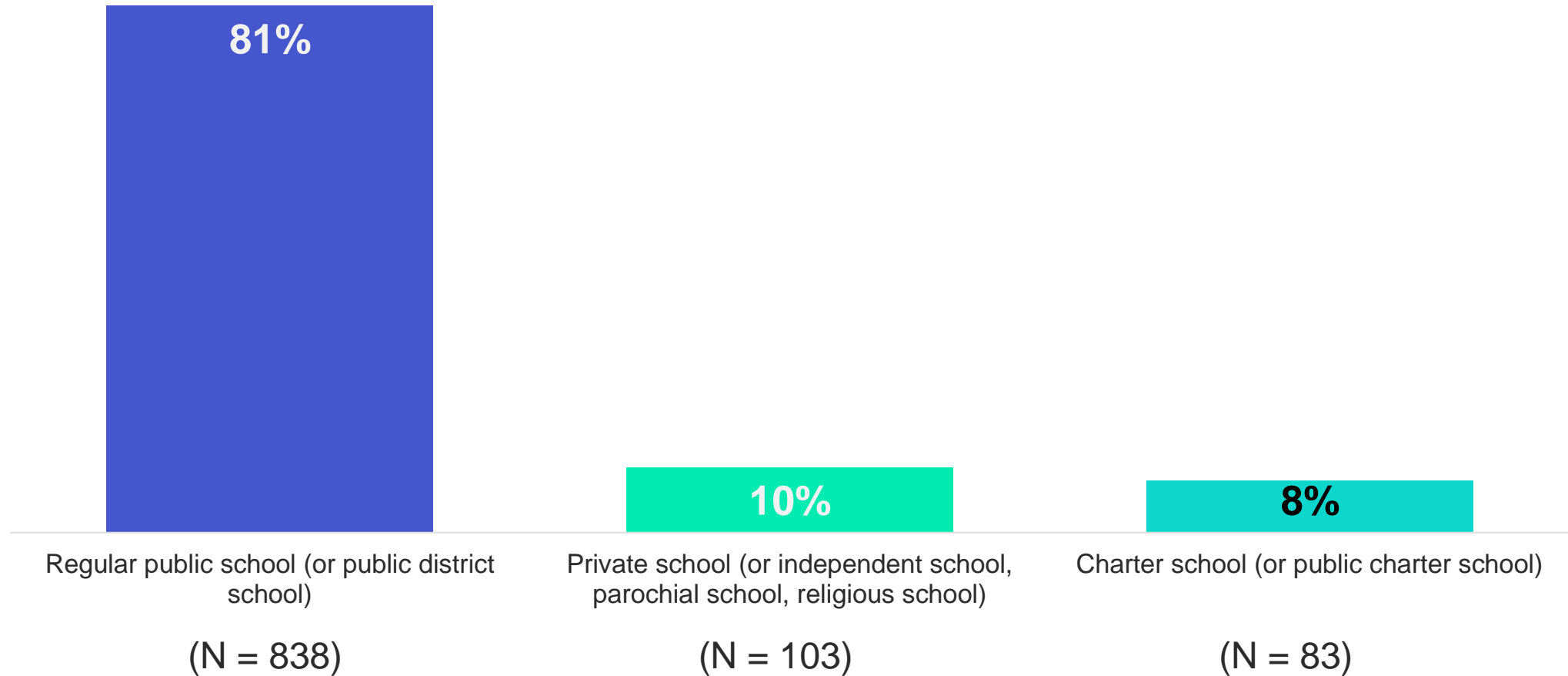
Total Teacher Sample Demographics

Demographics	Unweighted (N =)
Hispanic	113
White	794
Asian American	29
Black	163
Other	28
Generation Z	45
Millennial	517
Generation X	257
Boomers	205
Northeast	220
Midwest	218
South	413
West	183

Demographics	Unweighted (N =)
Male	264
Female	770
Democrat	450
Independent	219
Republican	323
Urban	239
Suburban	513
Small Town	113
Rural	169
Low Income <\$50K	272
Middle Income \$50K to <\$100K	452
High Income \$100K+	310
LGBTQ	113

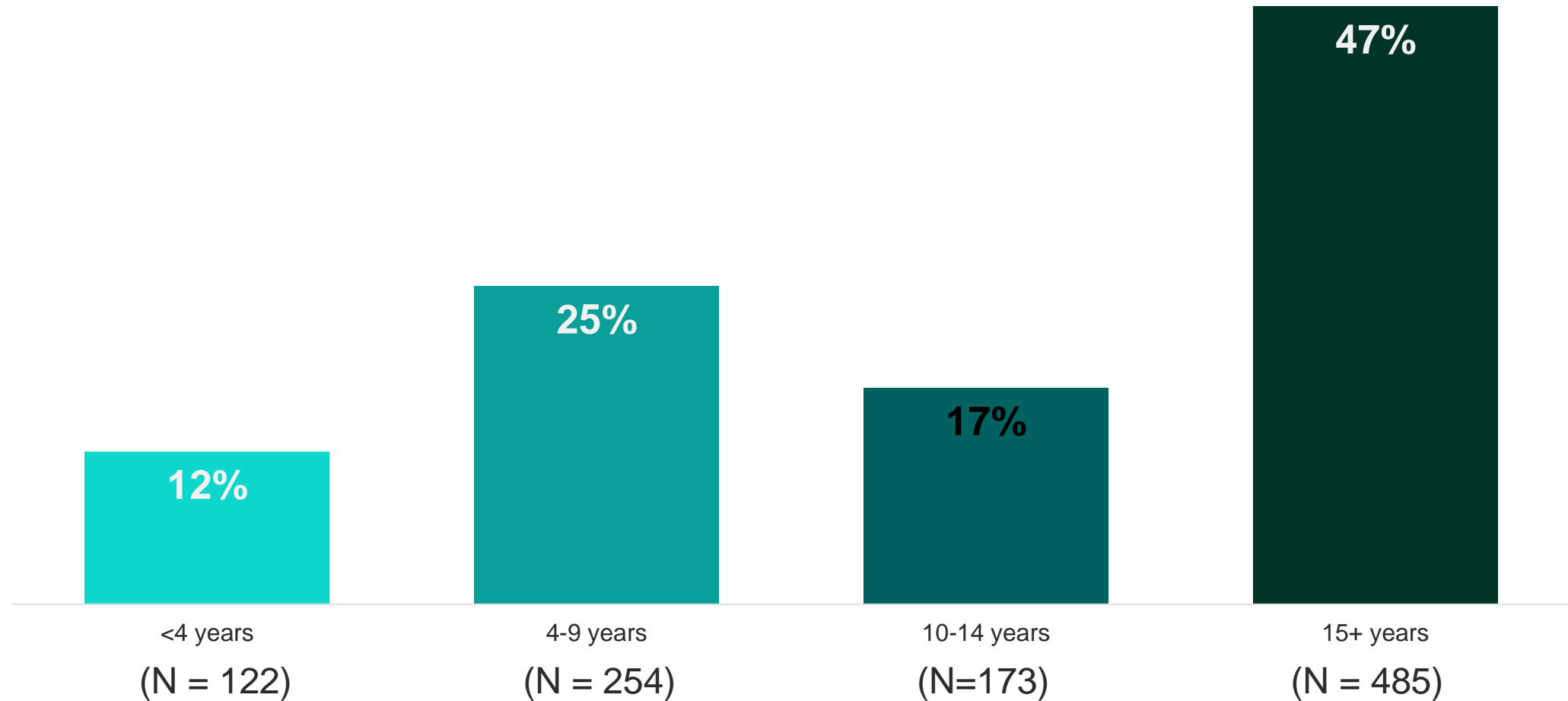
Where do you currently teach?

All Teachers



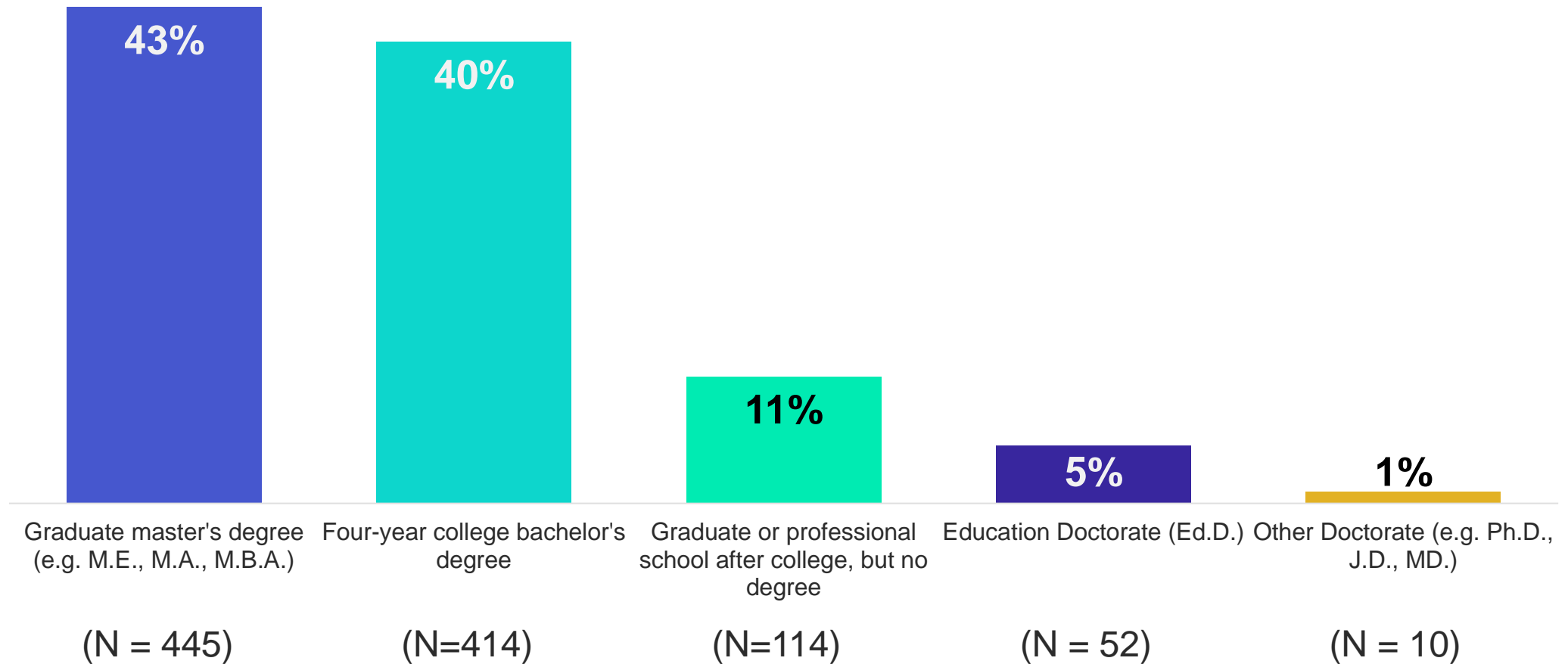
Counting this school year, how many years have you been a school teacher, including part-time teaching?

All Teachers



What is the last grade or class you completed in school?

All Teachers



WHO WE ARE

 **MORNING CONSULT**[®]

Morning Consult is a global data intelligence company delivering insights on what people think in real time.

By surveying tens of thousands across the globe every day, Morning Consult is unmatched in scale and speed: It determines the true measure of what people think and how their decisions impact business, politics and the economy.

Industry leaders rely on Morning Consult's proprietary technology and analysis for real-time intelligence to transform information into a competitive advantage.



 **CHOICE**

EdChoice is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. Our mission is to advance educational freedom and choice for all as a pathway to successful lives and a stronger society. We are committed to understanding and pursuing a K–12 education ecosystem that empowers every family to choose the learning environment that fits their children's needs best.

Learn more at: EDCHOICE.ORG



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