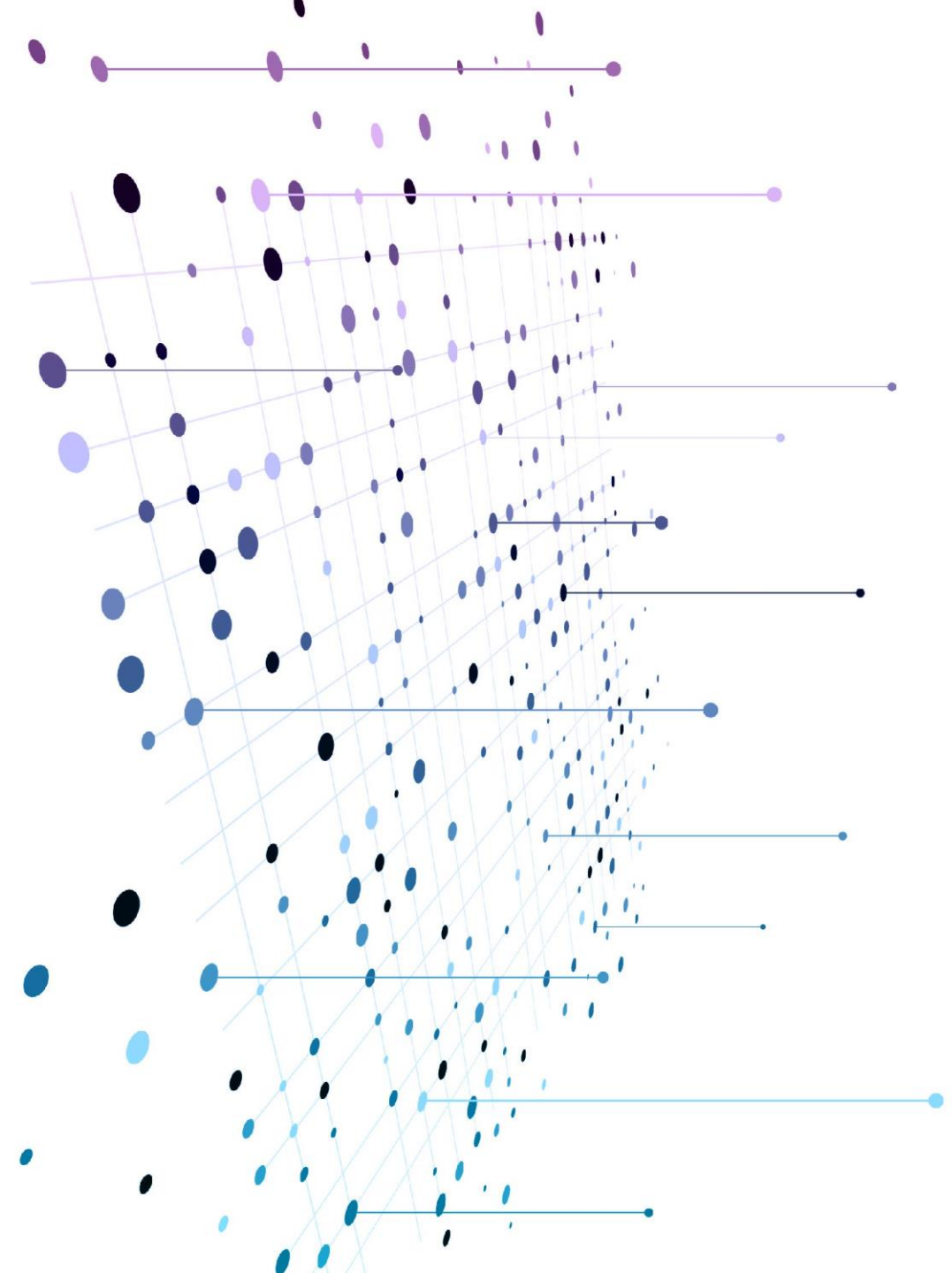




Teachers and K–12 Education

National Polling Report #21

May 2026





Views on K-12 Education



Teaching Profession and Experience



Technology and AI in Schools



Durable Skills



K-12 Choice Policies



Survey Profile and Demographics

KEY FINDINGS

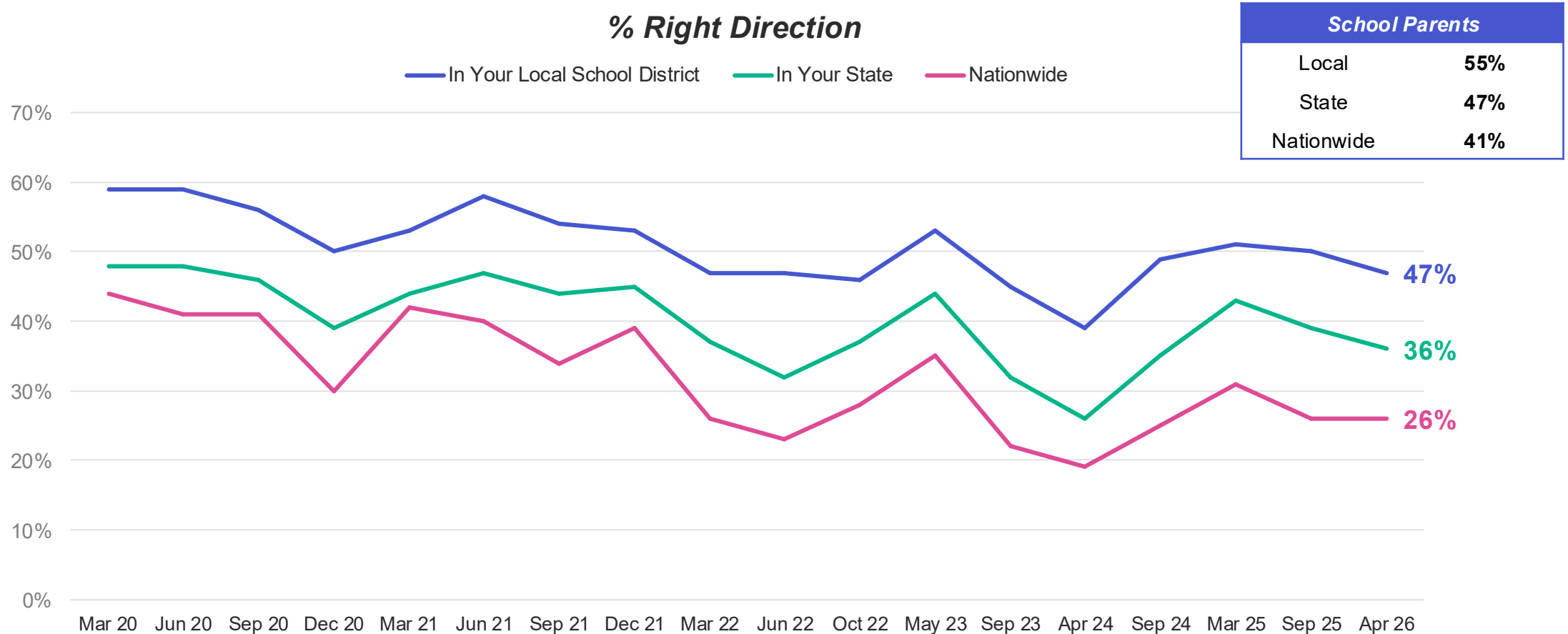
Views on K-12 Education

1. Teachers are less optimistic than parents about K-12 education. Half of teachers believe K-12 education is going well in their local school district. Just 1 in 4 believe it's going well nationwide, consistent with the fall.
2. Teachers generally trust other teachers to make good decisions about education but have less trust in their state legislature and the US Department of Education.
3. About 70% of teachers view employment skills and developing independent thinking as extremely important purposes of education for grades 9-12.
4. Teachers consistently underestimate the amount of money that is spent on students in public schools, especially district school teachers.
5. Teachers are less likely to say their state's spending per-student is "too low" if given a publicly reported statistic. District school teachers are most likely to think spending is too low.

Teachers are less optimistic than parents about K-12 education. Half of teachers believe K-12 education is going well in their local school district. Just 1 in 4 believe it's going well nationwide, consistent with the fall.

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?

Among All Teachers



Note: Data collection frequency decreased from four times annually to two times annually starting in 2023

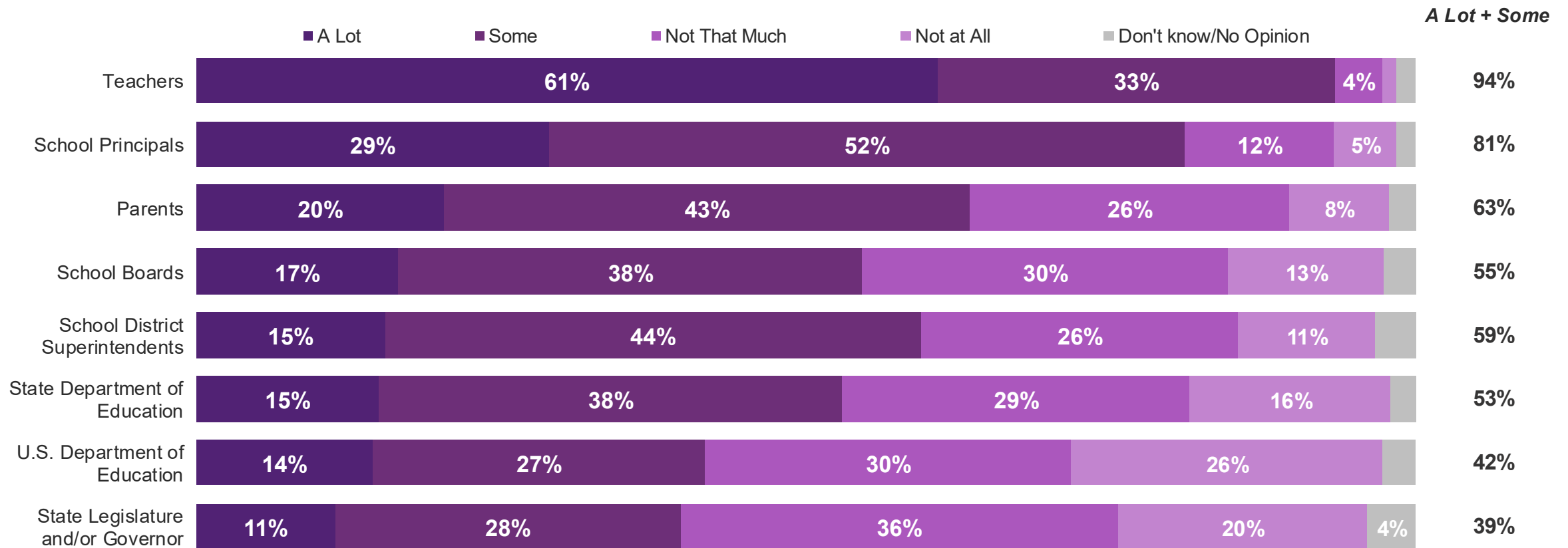
Teachers Source: Survey conducted April 1-9, 2026, U.S. K-12 education teachers

School Parents Source: Survey conducted March 11-13, 2026, among U.S. adults

Teachers generally trust other teachers to make good decisions about education but have less trust in their state legislature and the US Department of Education.

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

Among All Teachers



About 70% of teachers view employment skills and developing independent thinking as extremely important purposes of education for grades 9-12.

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...

Among All Teachers

% Extremely Important

Grades K-8








Average % selected Extremely Important **48%**

-  Become independent thinkers (**58%**)
-  Core academic subjects (**56%**)
-  Socialization (**56%**)
-  How to be good citizens (**52%**)
-  Skills for future employment (**47%**)
-  Values, moral character, religious virtues (**42%**)
-  To fix social problems (**27%**)

60%
of School Parents believe core academic subjects are extremely important for Grades K-8

Grades 9-12

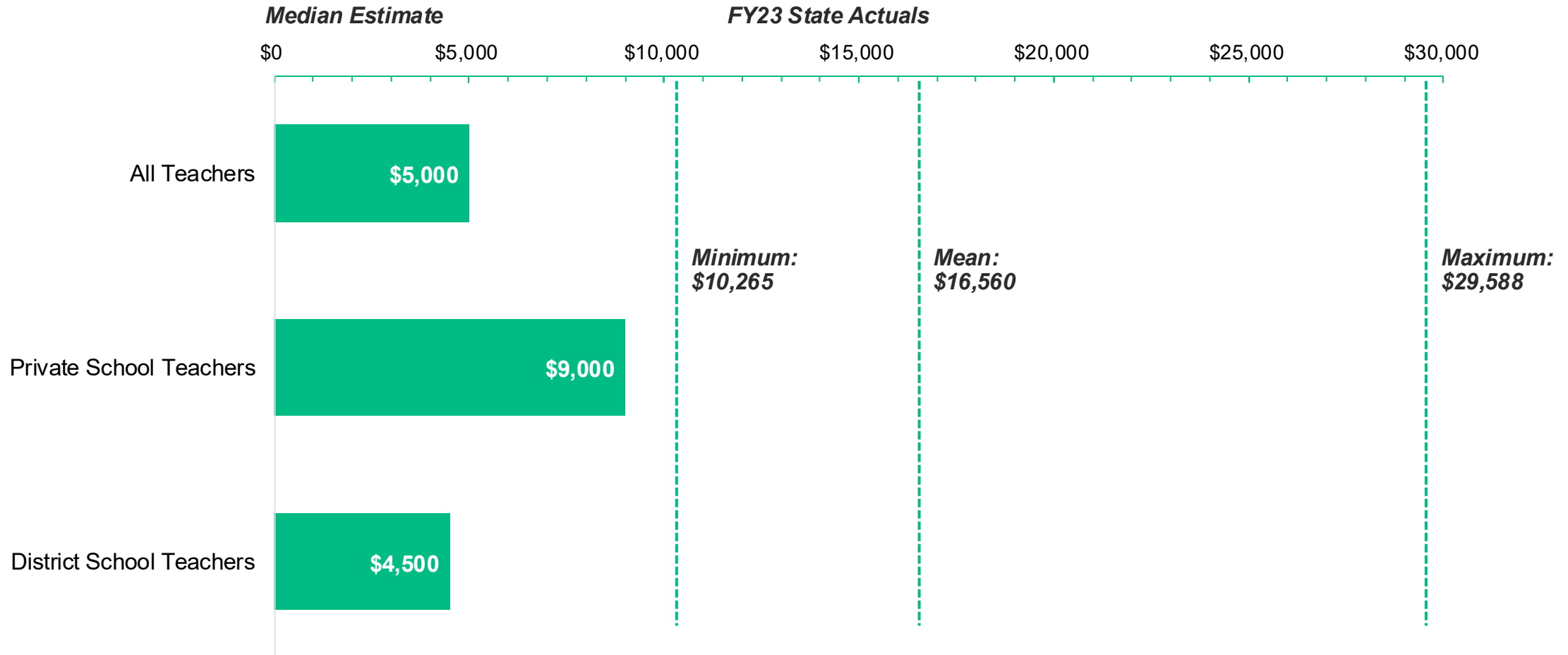
Average % selected Extremely Important **55%**

-  Skills for future employment (**70%**)
-  Become independent thinkers (**64%**)
-  How to be good citizens (**58%**)
-  Socialization (**56%**)
-  Core academic subjects (**56%**)
-  Values, moral character, religious virtues (**45%**)
-  To fix social problems (**35%**)

62%
of School Parents believe skills for future employment are extremely important for Grades 9-12

Teachers consistently underestimate the amount of money that is spent on students in public schools, especially district school teachers.

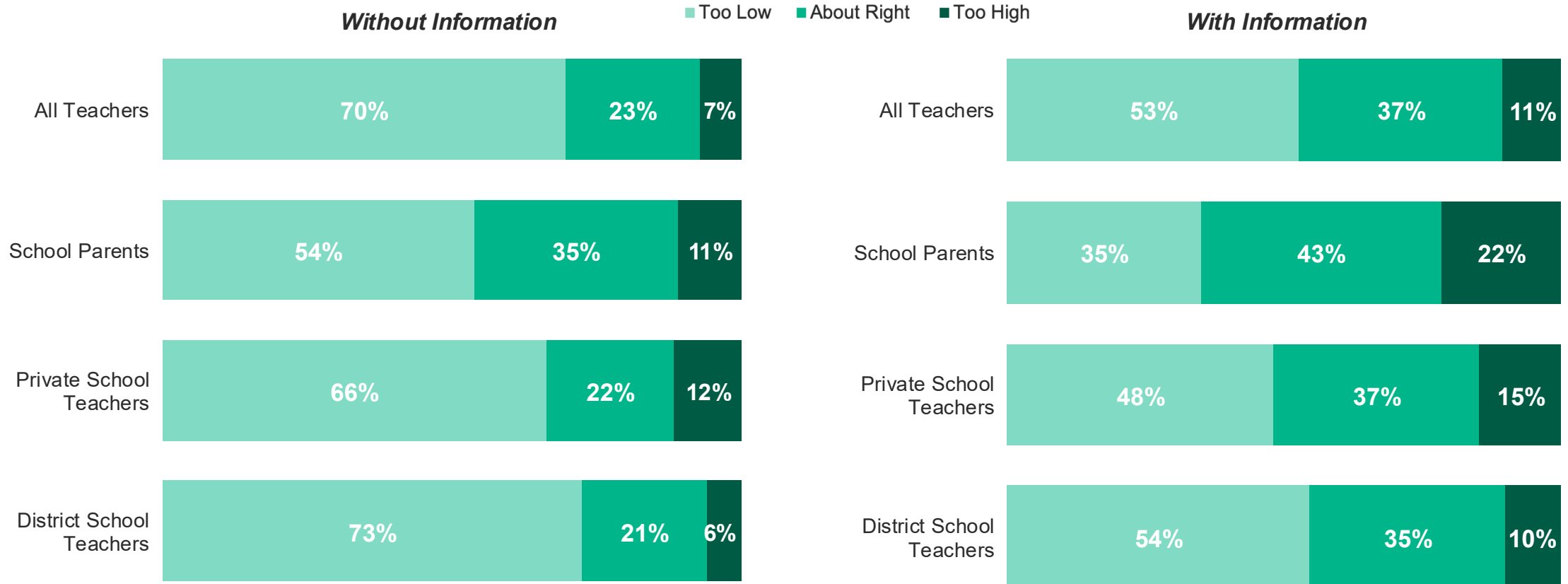
How much do you think is spent per year on each student in your state's **public schools**? Your estimate of the state average—to the nearest thousand dollars—will represent the combined expenditures of local, state, and federal governments.



Teachers are less likely to say their state’s spending per-student is “too low” if given a publicly reported statistic. District school teachers are most likely to think spending is too low.

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

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



Teachers Source: Survey conducted April 1-9, 2026, U.S. K-12 education teachers
 School Parents Source: Survey conducted March 11-13, 2026, among U.S. adults
 State Per Pupil Spending Source: National Center for Education Statistics



Views on K-12 Education



Teaching Profession and Experience



Technology and AI in Schools



Durable Skills



K-12 Choice Policies



Survey Profile and Demographics

KEY FINDINGS

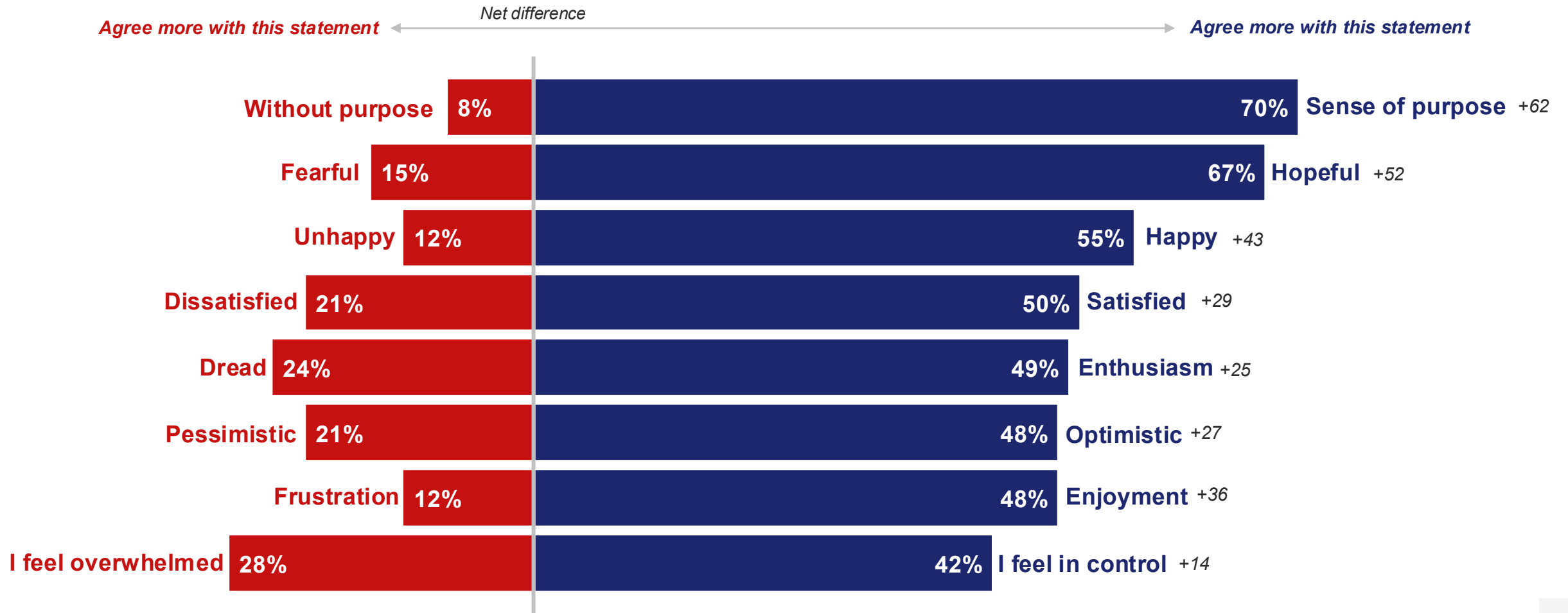
Teaching Profession and Experiences

1. Over two-thirds of teachers feel a “sense of purpose” and “hopeful” when thinking about the future. Far fewer feel in control, with one-fourth feeling “overwhelmed.”
2. Teachers express high levels of pessimism about the teaching profession this spring, with detractors increasing by 11 points compared to this time last year. Teachers’ likelihood to recommend their profession remains low overall but has slightly increased since April 2024.
3. Teachers are generally satisfied with their students’ learning this school year across school types. However, less than one-third of teachers overall feel positively about their students’ progress this year. District school teachers are less likely than private school teachers to believe their students are progressing “very well.”
4. 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.
5. About one-third of teachers report frequent behavioral and technological issues interrupting their class.
6. About 30% of teachers are very concerned about a violent intruder. School parents express higher levels of concern (52%). Half of teachers believe their school addresses the issue of guns well. Fewer believe their school addresses issues of mental health, violent behaviors, and bullying well.
7. Teachers are most likely to believe they have influence over setting performance standards and establishing curriculum. Overall, they believe they don’t have a great deal of influence in any area of school policy.
8. Most teachers believe they have control in their classroom over evaluating and grading students, determining homework amounts, and teaching technique. Fewer have control over textbook selection and other instructional materials.

Over two-thirds of teachers feel a “sense of purpose” and “hopeful” when thinking about the future. Far fewer feel in control, with one-fourth feeling “overwhelmed.”

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

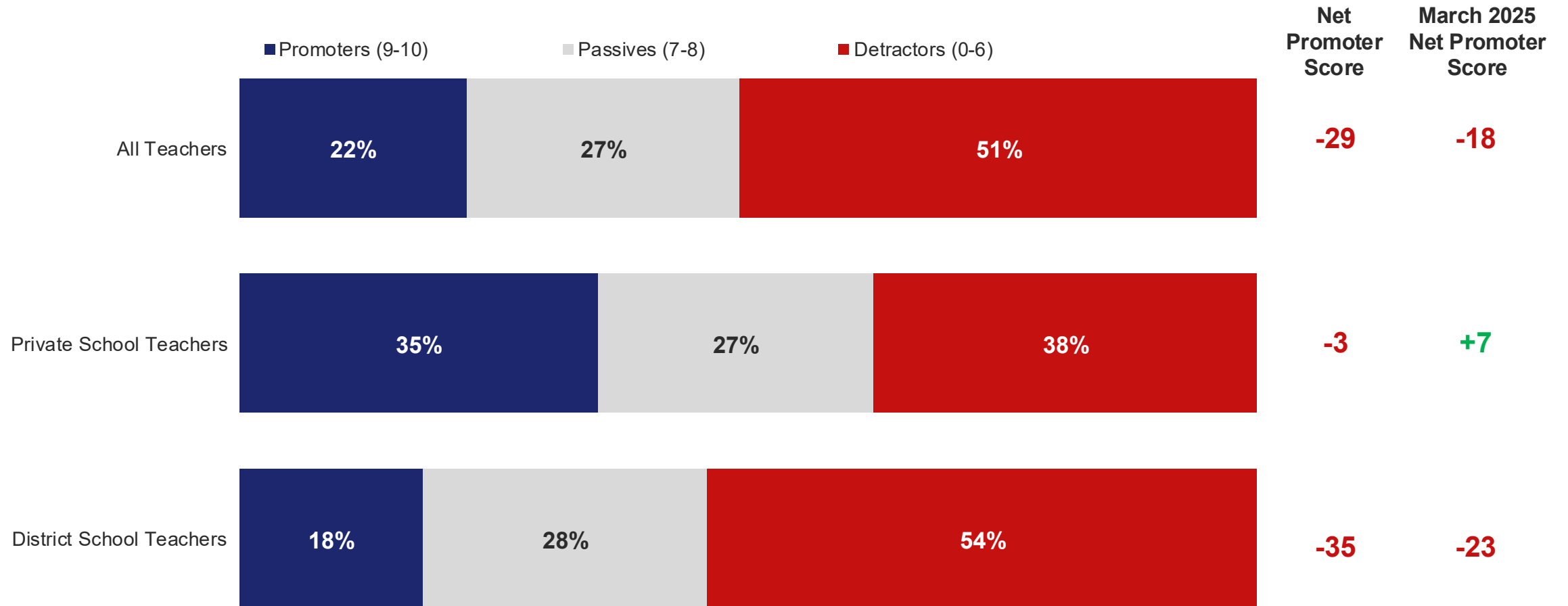
Among All Teachers



Teachers express high levels of pessimism about the teaching profession this spring, with detractors increasing by 11 points compared to this time last year.

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?

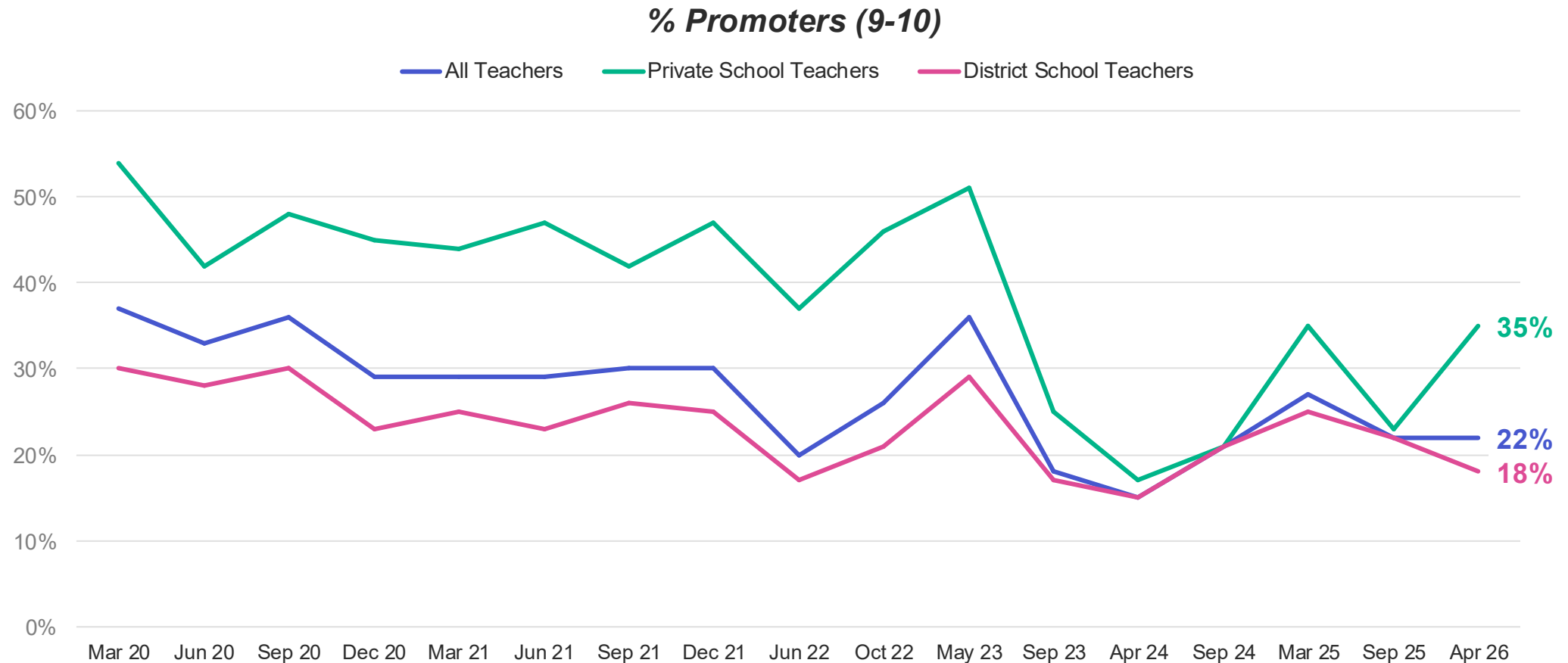
Among All Teachers



Teachers' likelihood to recommend their profession remains low overall but has slightly increased since April 2024.

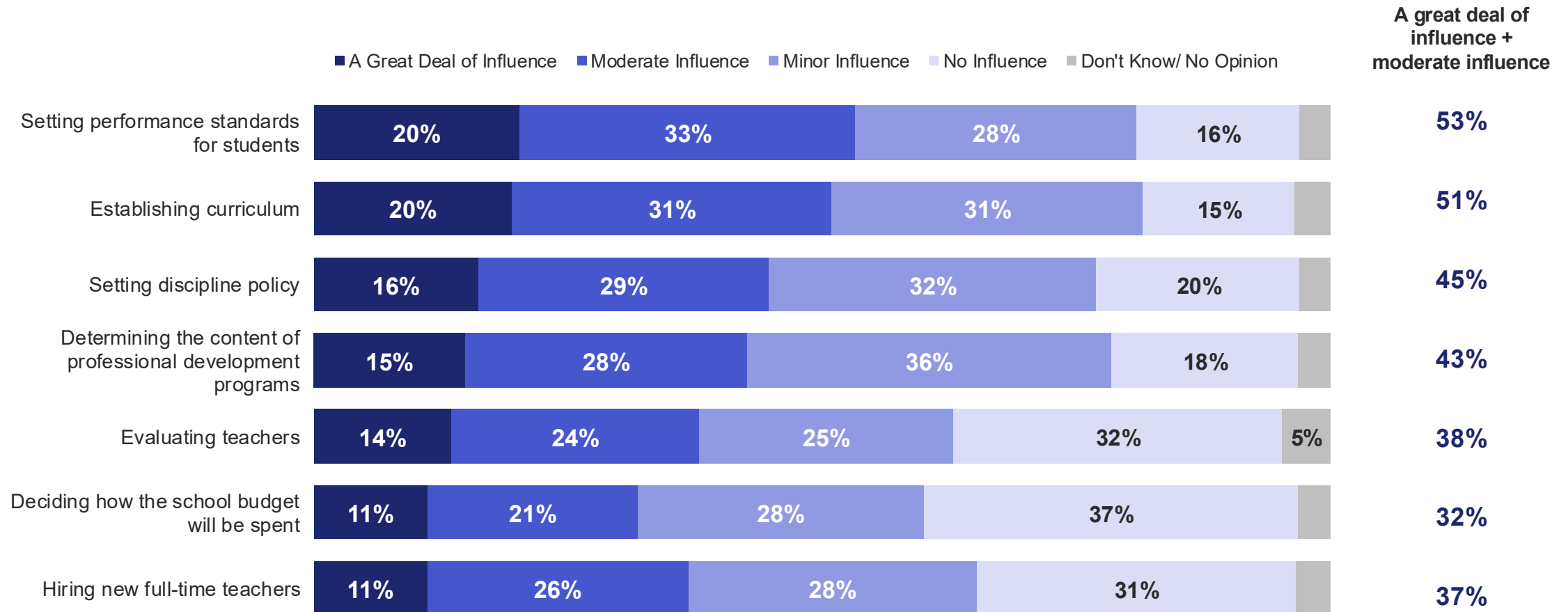
On a scale from 0 to 10, where '0' means 'Not at all likely' and '10' means 'Extremely likely'. How likely is it that you would recommend teaching to a friend or family member?

Among All Teachers



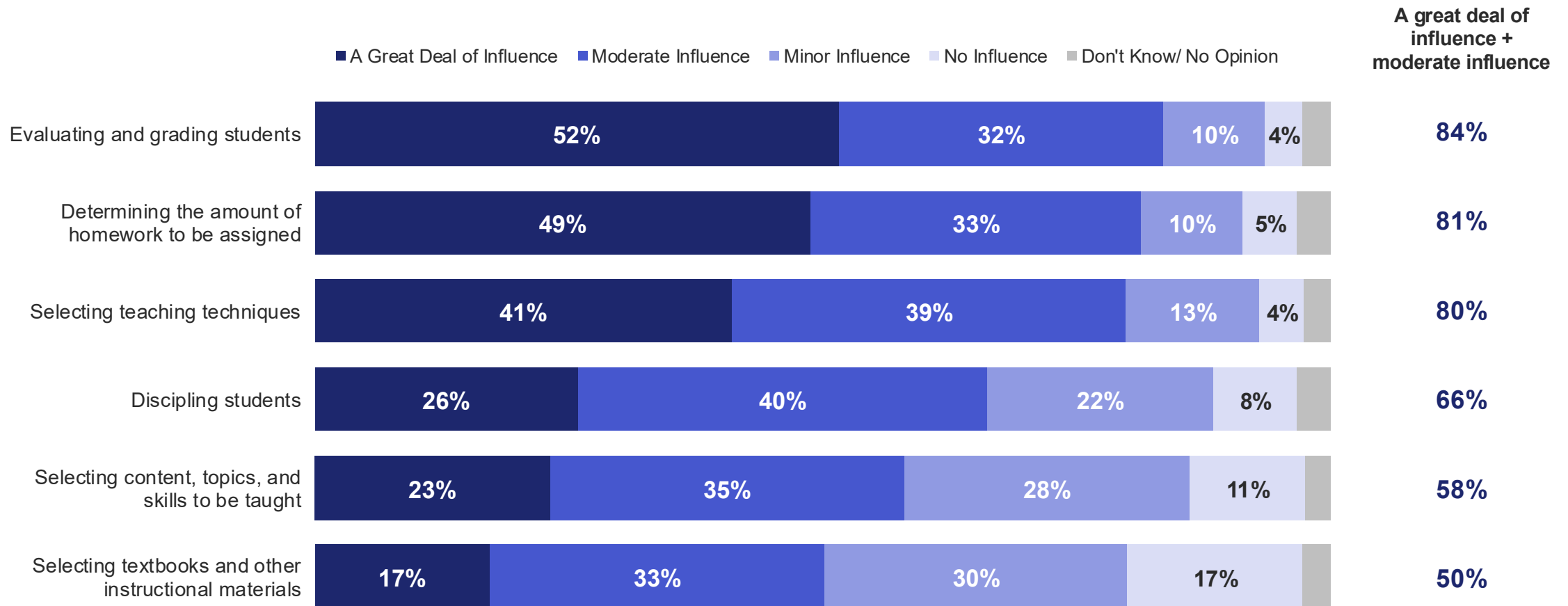
Teachers are most likely to believe they have influence over setting performance standards and establishing curriculum. Overall, they believe they don't have a great deal of influence in any area of school policy.

How much actual influence do you think teachers have over school policy at your school in each of the following areas?



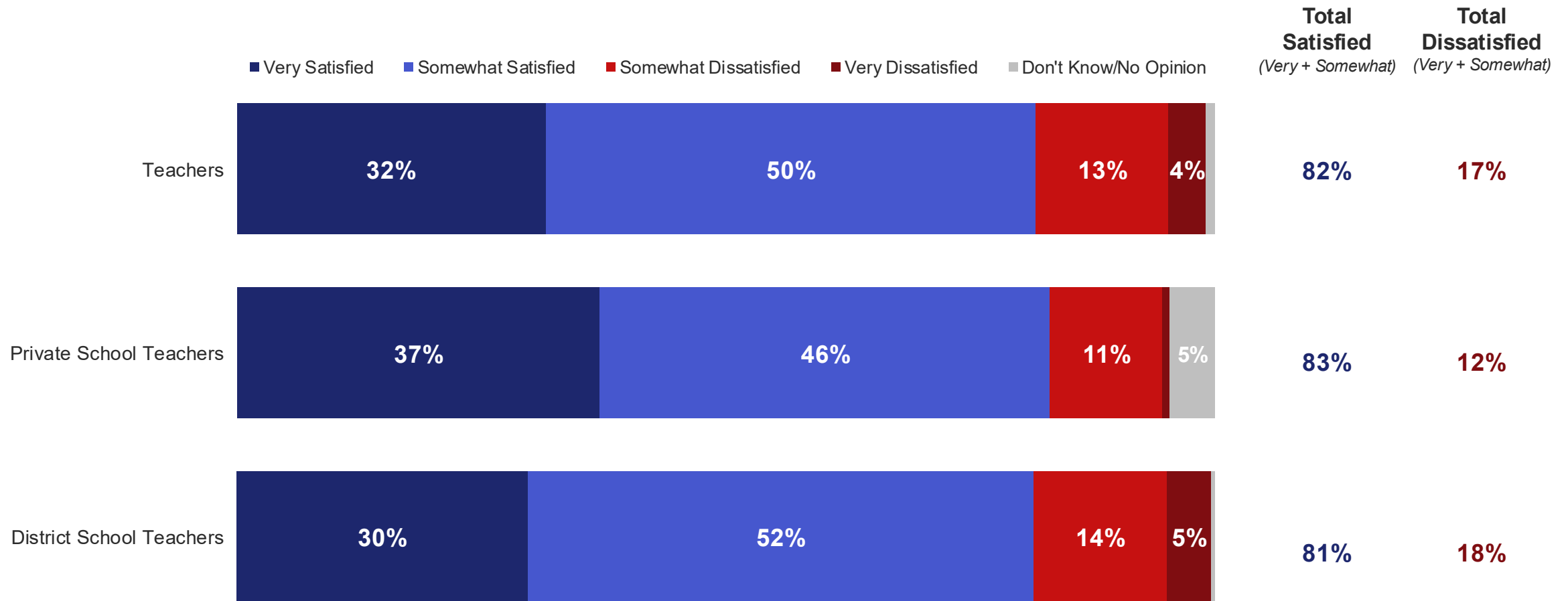
Most teachers believe they have control in their classroom over evaluating and grading students, determining homework amounts, and teaching technique. Fewer have control over textbook selection and other instructional materials.

At your current school, how much actual control do you have in your classroom over the following areas of your planning and teaching?



Teachers are generally satisfied with their students' learning this school year across school types.

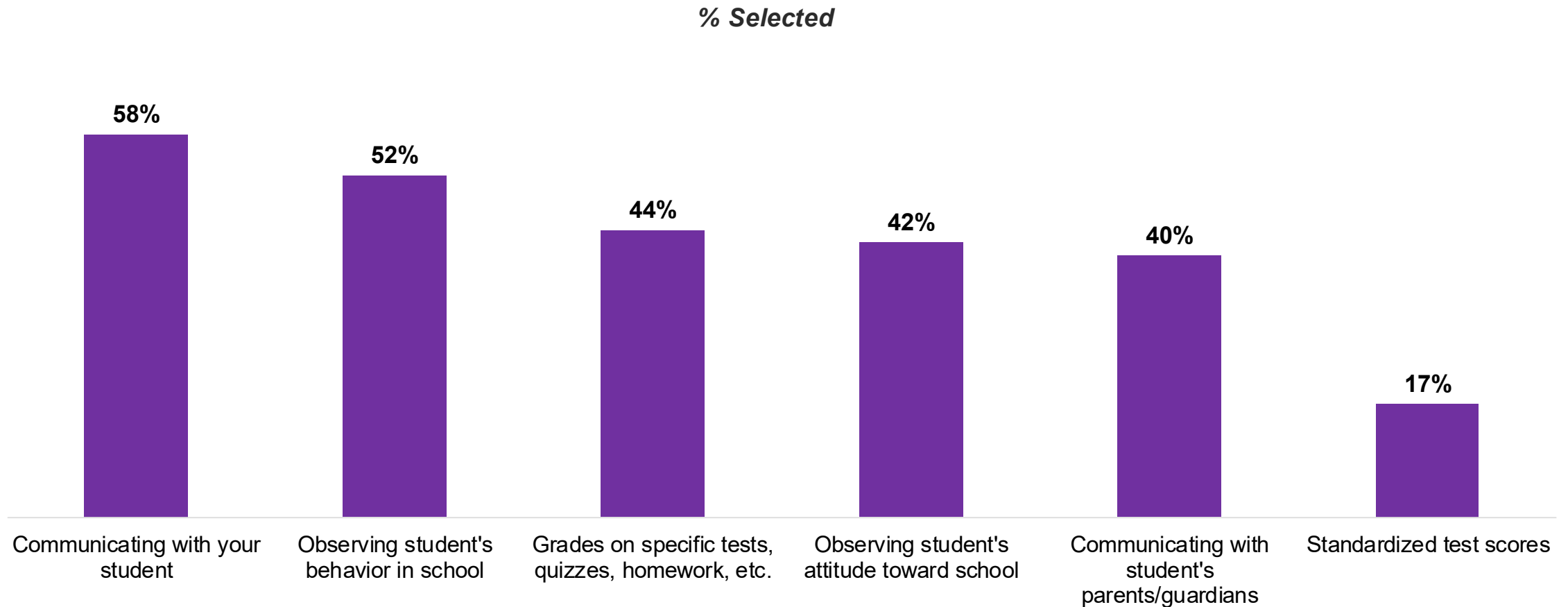
Overall, how satisfied are you with your students' learning this school year?



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.

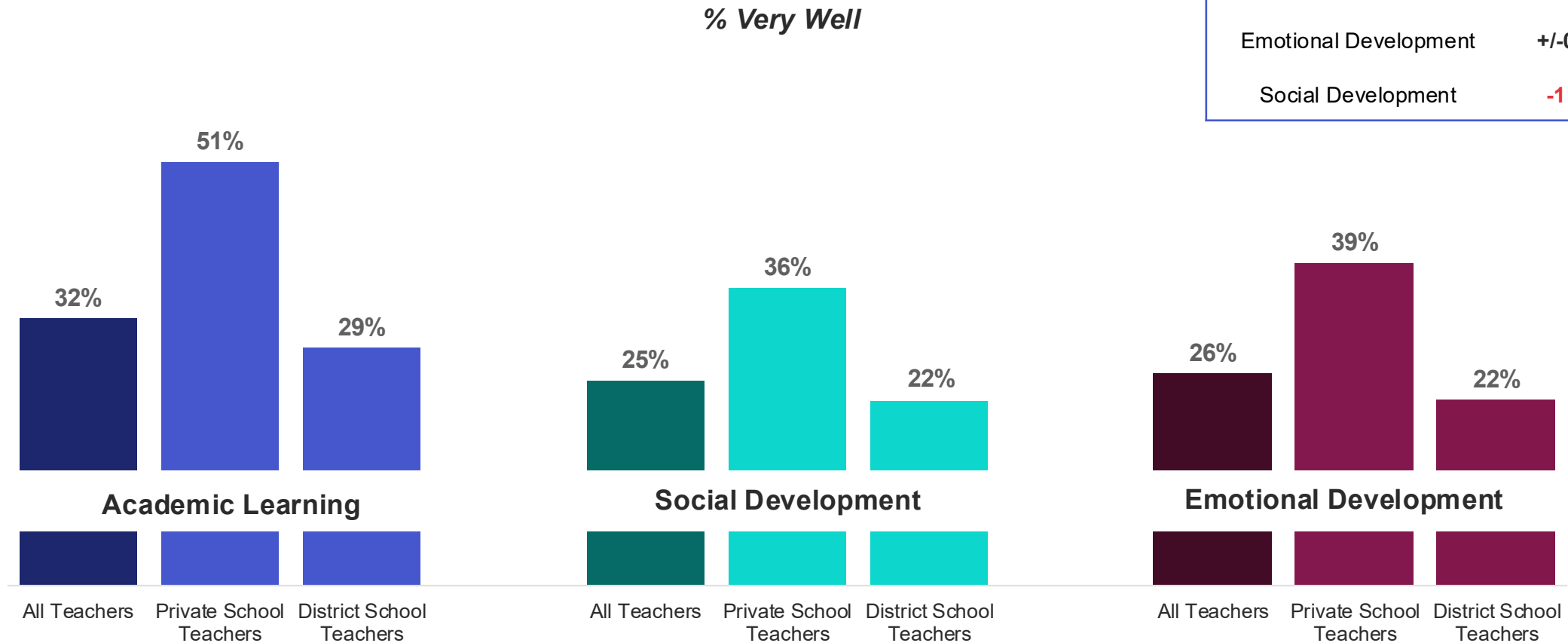
Among All Teachers



Less than one-third of teachers overall feel positively about their students' progress this year. District school teachers are less likely than private school teachers to believe their students are progressing "very well."

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

Among All Teachers

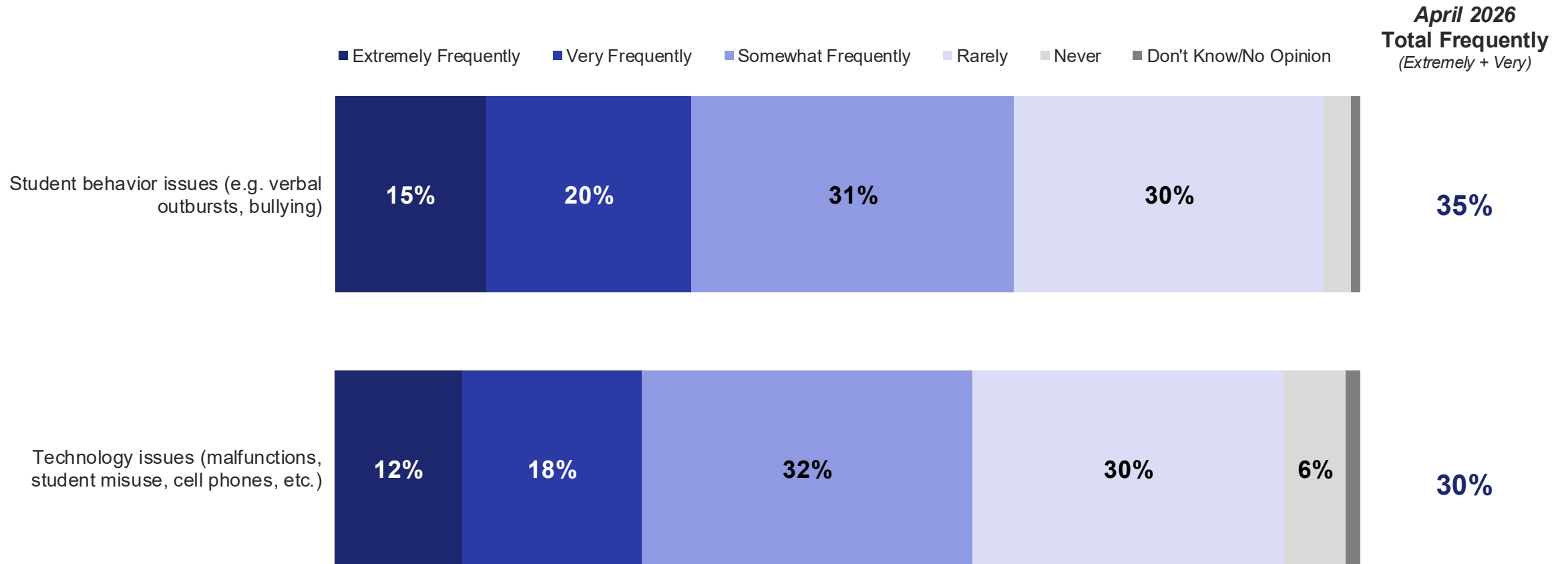


Among All Teachers Since March 2025:	
Academic Learning	-7 points
Emotional Development	+/-0 points
Social Development	-1 points

About one-third of teachers report frequent behavioral and technological issues interrupting their class.

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

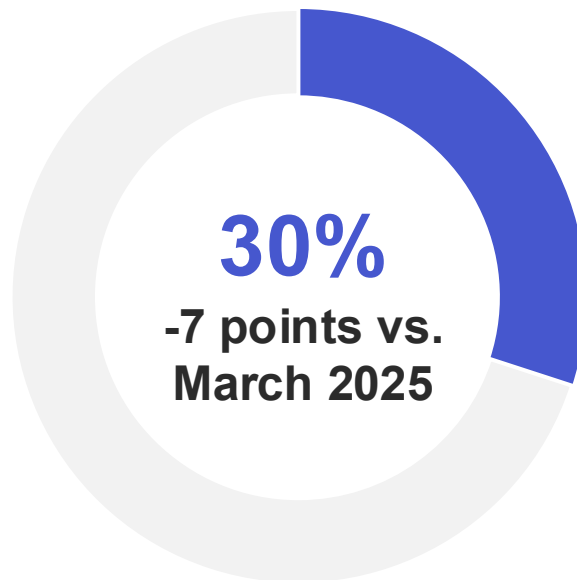
Among All Teachers



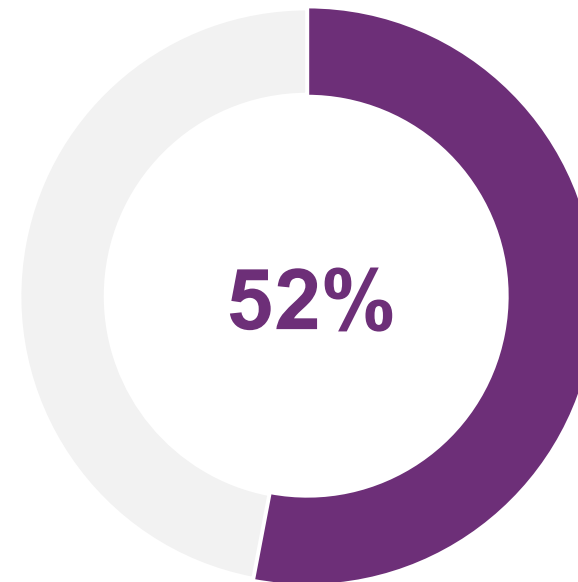
About 30% of teachers are very concerned about a violent intruder. School parents express higher levels of concern (52%).

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

Total Concerned
(Extremely + Very Concerned)



Teachers



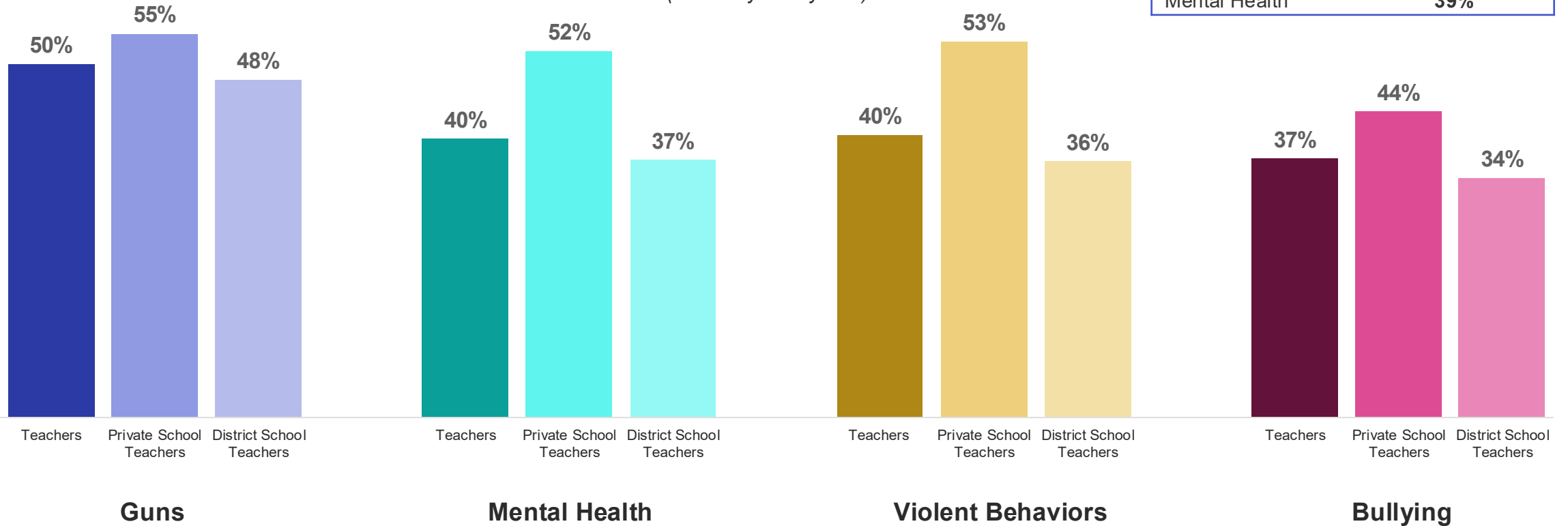
School Parents

Half of teachers believe their school addresses the issue of guns well. Fewer believe their school addresses issues of mental health, violent behaviors, and bullying well.

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

Among Teachers in March 2025	
Guns	51%
Violent Behaviors	41%
Bullying	37%
Mental Health	39%

Most Positive
(Extremely + Very Well)





Views on K-12 Education



Teaching Profession and Experience



Technology and AI in Schools



Durable Skills



K-12 Choice Policies



Survey Profile and Demographics

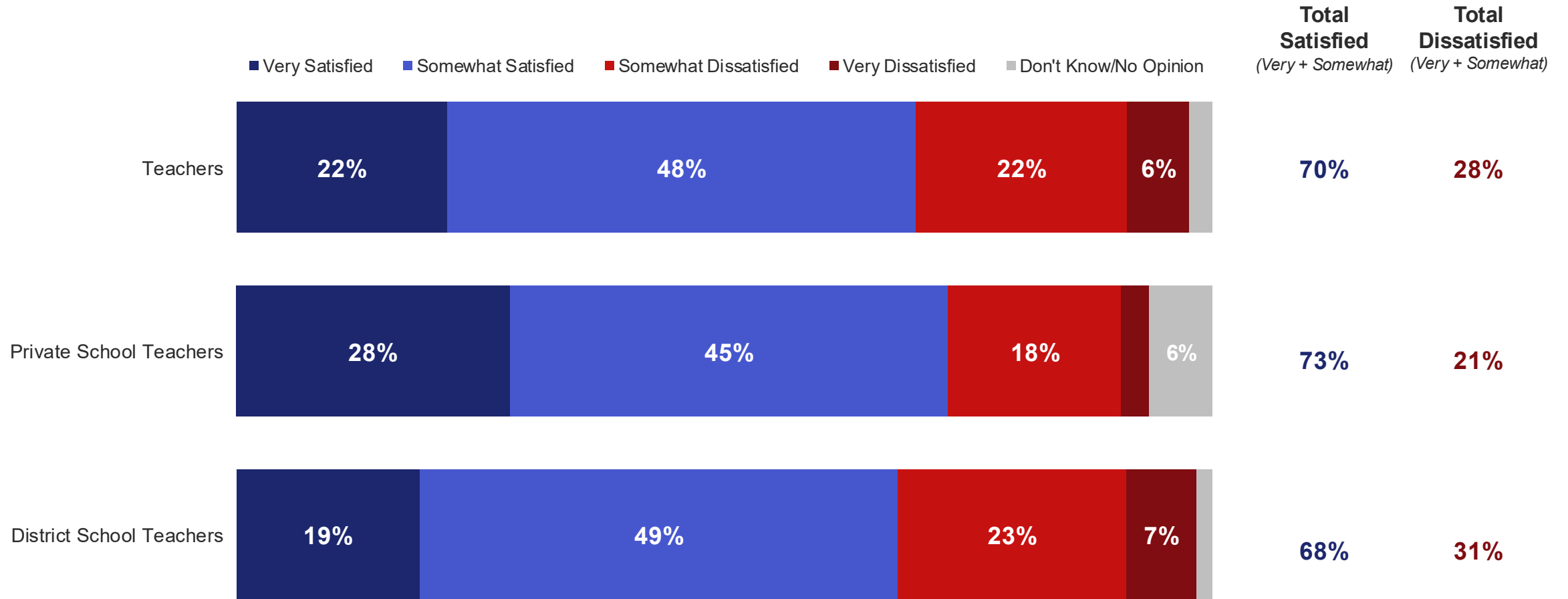
KEY FINDINGS

Technology and AI in Schools

1. Teachers are generally satisfied with their students' use of technology in school, with similar levels of satisfaction in private and public schools overall.
2. District school teachers are more likely to think their students spend too much time using technology compared to private school teachers, who believe their students use it less frequently.
3. Teachers across school types report that laptops have had an overall positive impact on their students' learning experience.
4. Teachers support the use of technologies like online learning platforms and laptops in classes. AI and cell phones face greater opposition.
5. Concern about the effects of AI on the future is high. Teachers are more concerned than both the general population and school parents.
6. Teachers are generally opposed to letting students use AI assistance for schoolwork.
7. Over 40% of teachers are extremely or very concerned about the effects of AI on their students' learning this school year.
8. The vast majority of teachers believe that it is important to help students build the necessary critical thinking skills to appropriately use technology and AI.
9. Over 40% of teachers believe their school needs to change their overall approach "a great deal" or "a lot" to prepare students for the world of AI.

Teachers are generally satisfied with their students' use of technology in school, with similar levels of satisfaction in private and public schools overall.

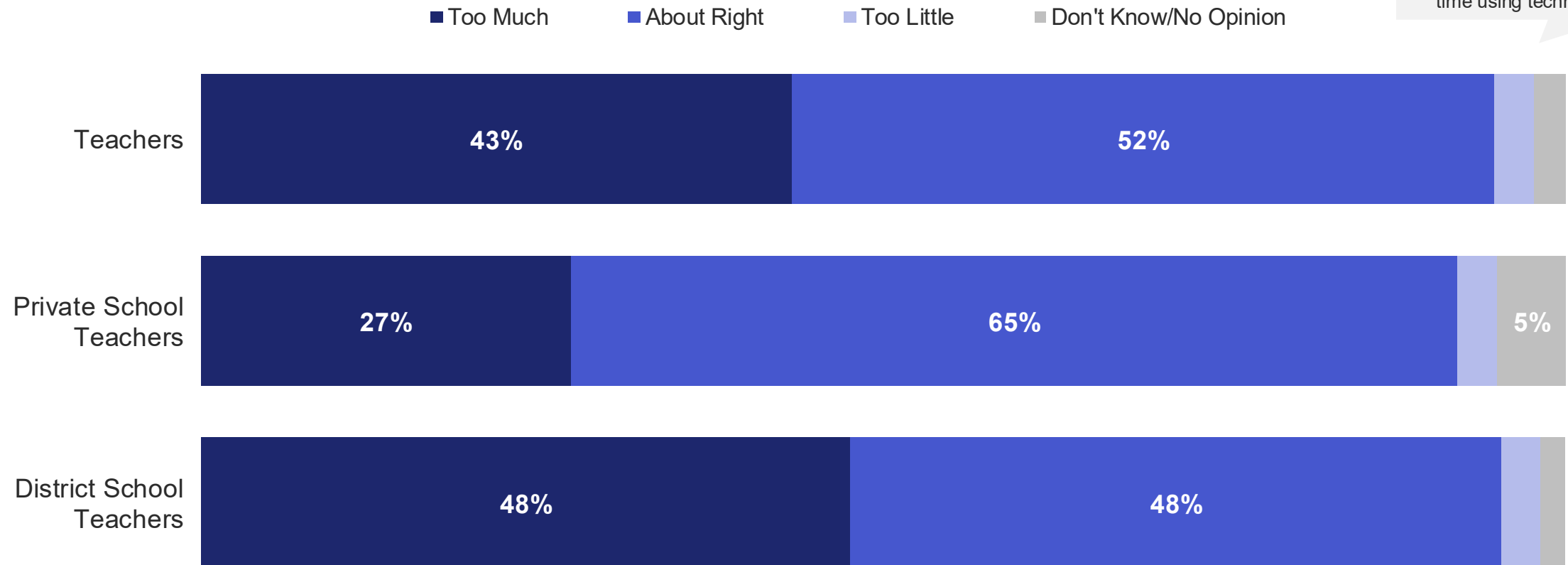
To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your students' use of technology in school?



District school teachers are more likely to think their students spend too much time using technology compared to private school teachers, who believe their students use it less frequently.

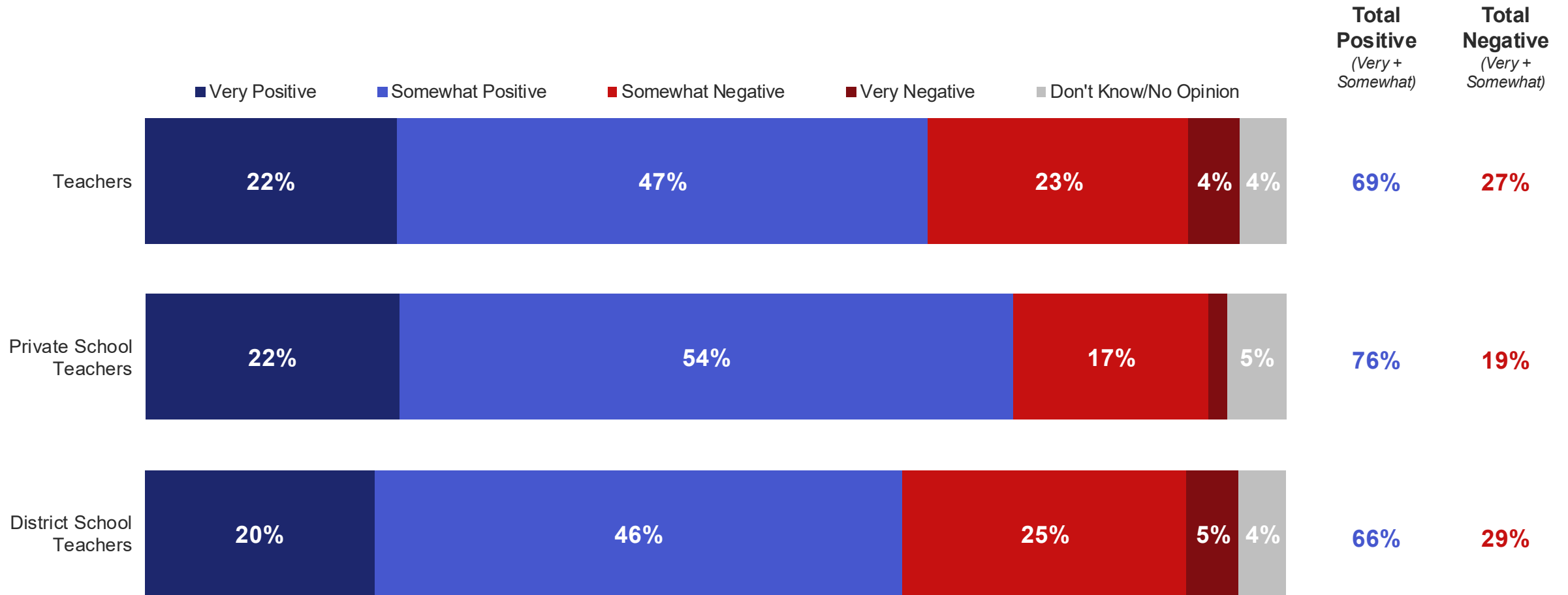
When it comes to how much time your students spend using technology generally, do you think it is...

33%
of School Parents believe their child spends too much time using technology



Teachers across school types report that laptops have had an overall positive impact on their students' learning experience.

How would you describe the impact of your students' computer/laptop use on their learning experience?

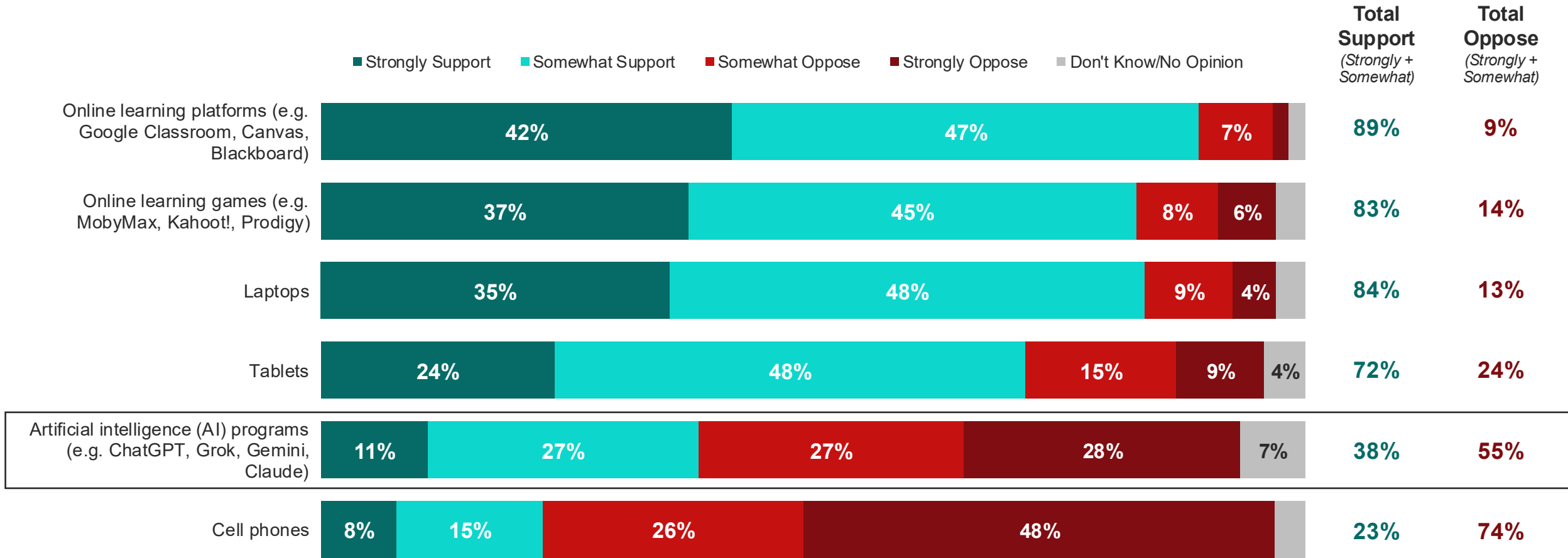


Teachers support the use of technologies like online learning platforms and laptops in classes. AI and cell phones face greater opposition.

To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose the following types of technology being used in your class at school?

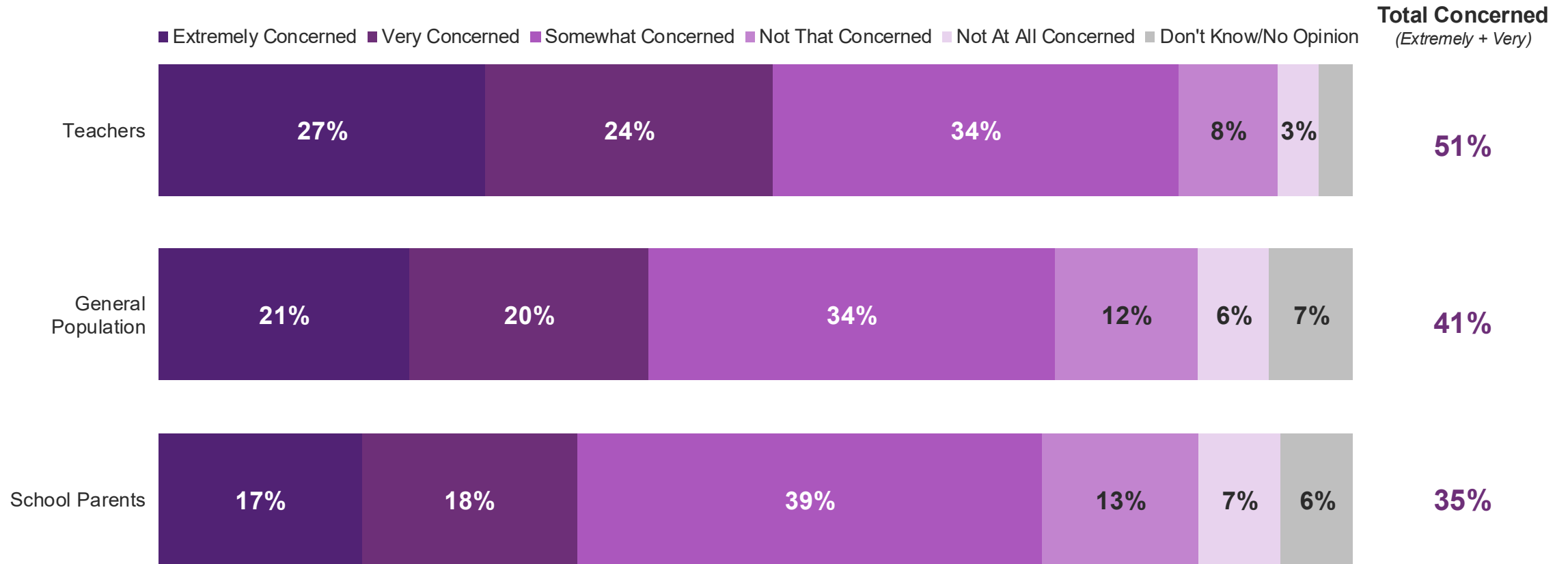
Among All Teachers

Since Fall 2025, there has been an **8-point drop** in support for AI program use in the classroom.



Concern about the effects of AI on the future is high. Teachers are more concerned than both the general population and school parents.

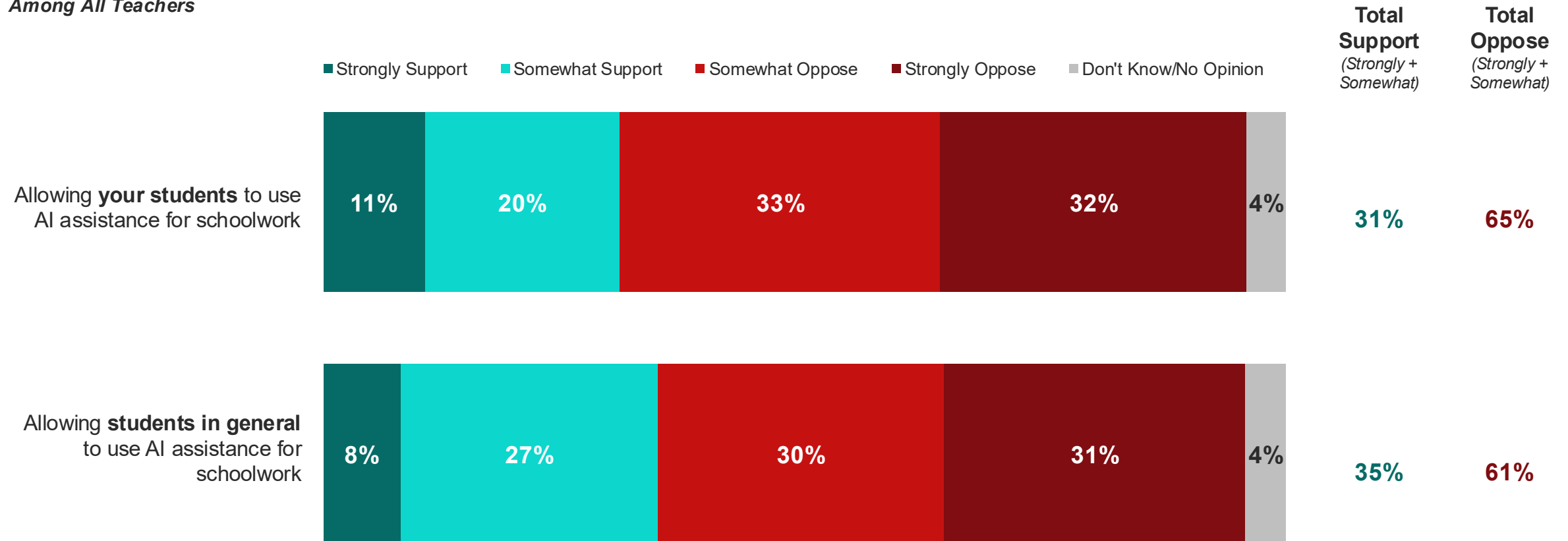
How concerned are you about the effects of artificial intelligence, or AI, on society in the future?



Teachers are generally opposed to letting students use AI assistance for schoolwork.

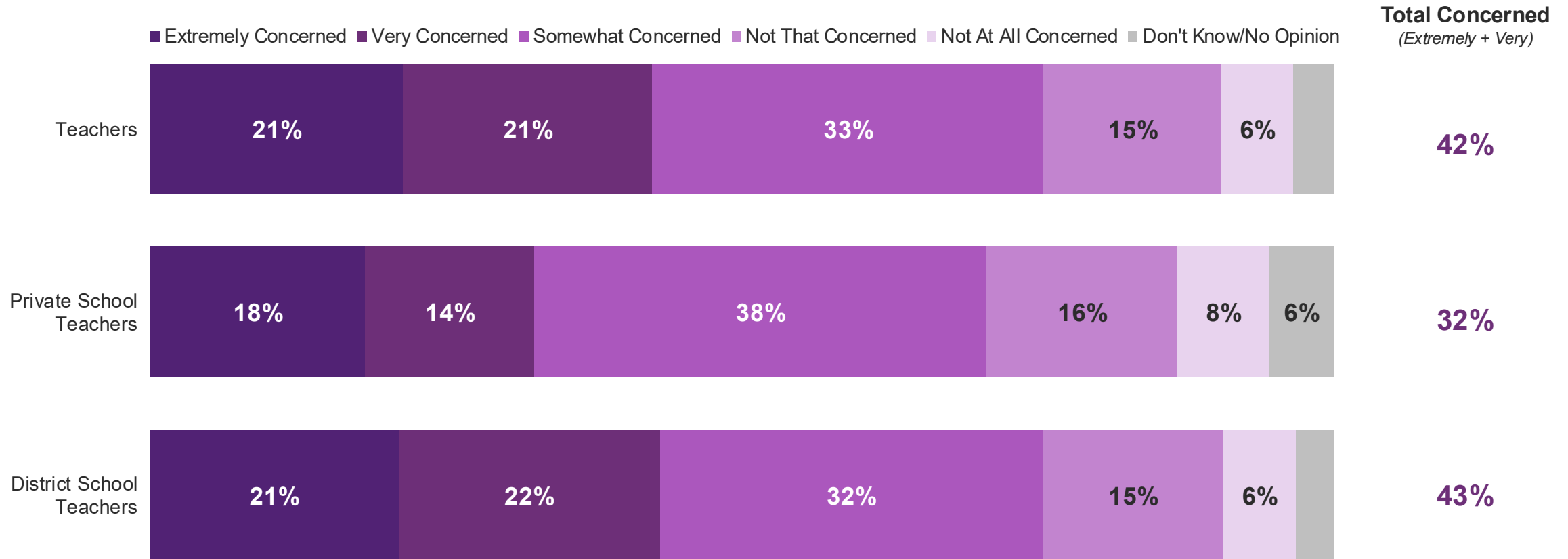
Do you support or oppose allowing **your** students to use AI assistance for schoolwork? / Generally speaking, do you support or oppose allowing students using AI assistance for schoolwork?

Among All Teachers



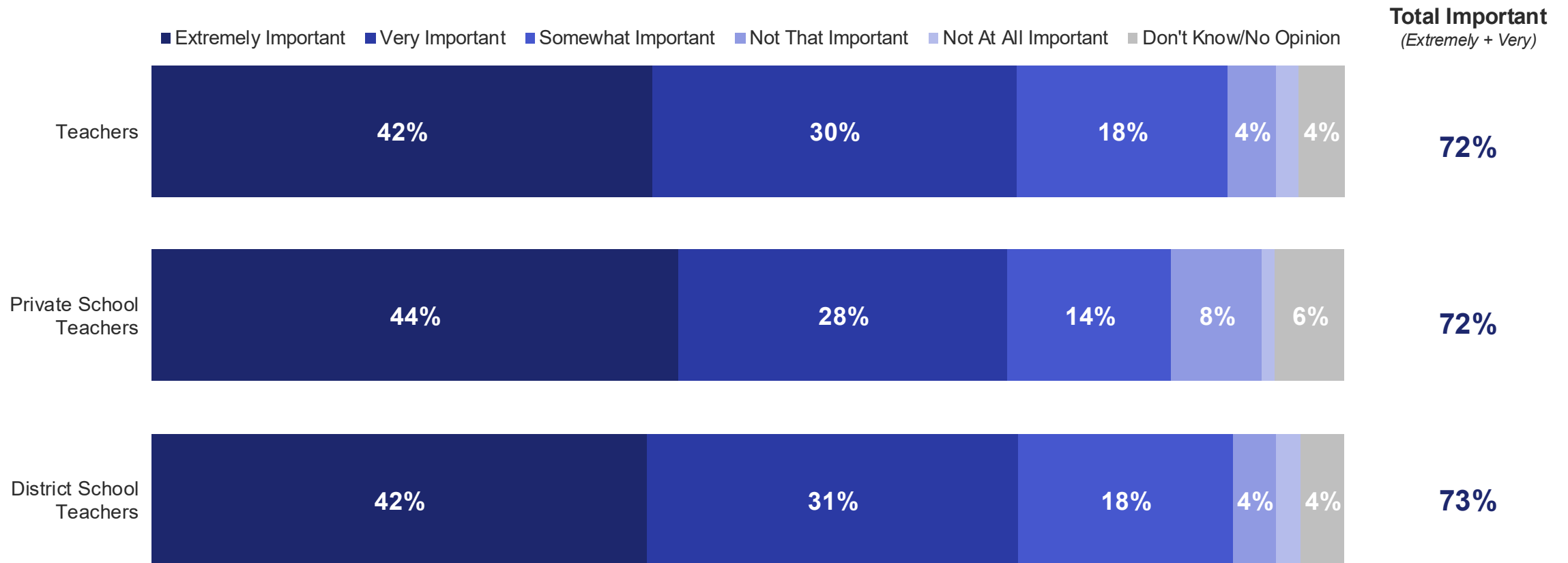
Over 40% of teachers are extremely or very concerned about the effects of AI on their students' learning this school year.

How concerned are you about the effects of artificial intelligence, or AI, on your students' learning this school year?



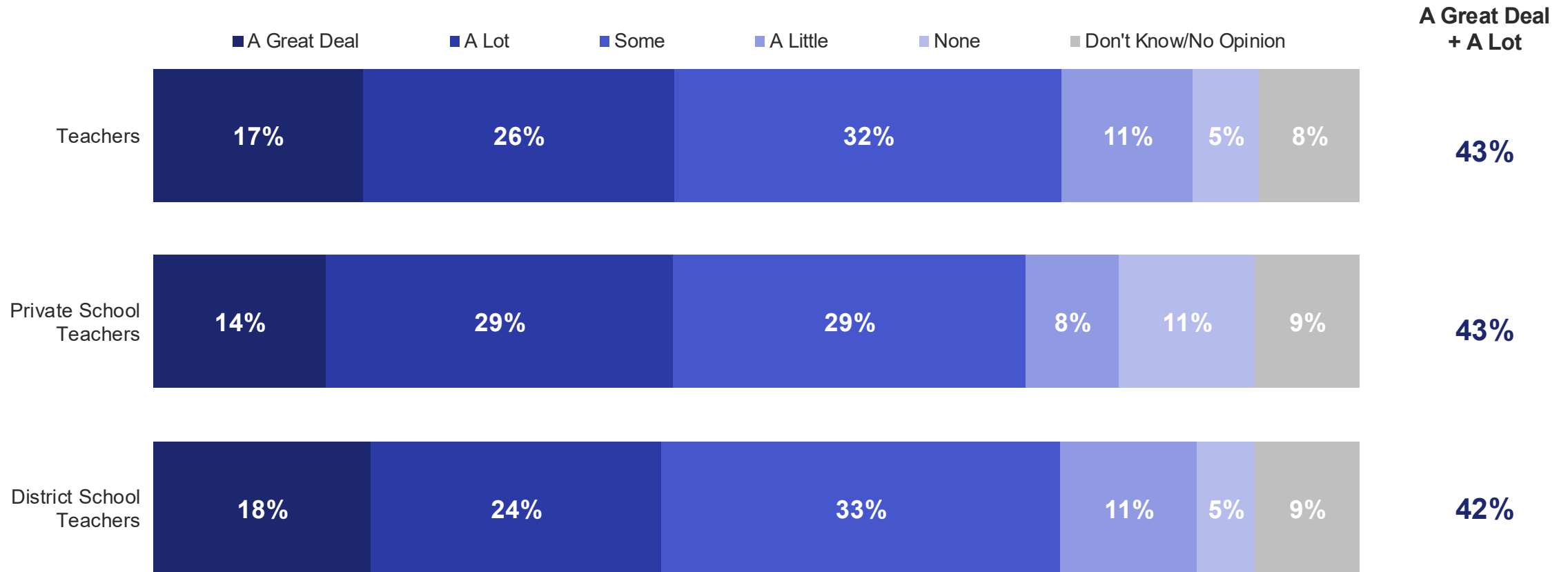
The vast majority of teachers believe that it is important to help students build the necessary critical thinking skills to appropriately use technology and AI.

When it comes to the use of technology and artificial intelligence (AI), how important is it for schools to help students build critical thinking and reasoning skills so they can judge information and appropriate use of technology?



Over 40% of teachers believe their school needs to change their overall approach “a great deal” or “a lot” to prepare students for the world of AI.

To what extent do you feel that your school needs to change its overall approach to prepare students for the world of AI?

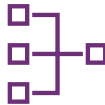




Views on K-12 Education



Teaching Profession and Experience



Technology and AI in Schools



Durable Skills



K-12 Choice Policies



Survey Profile and Demographics

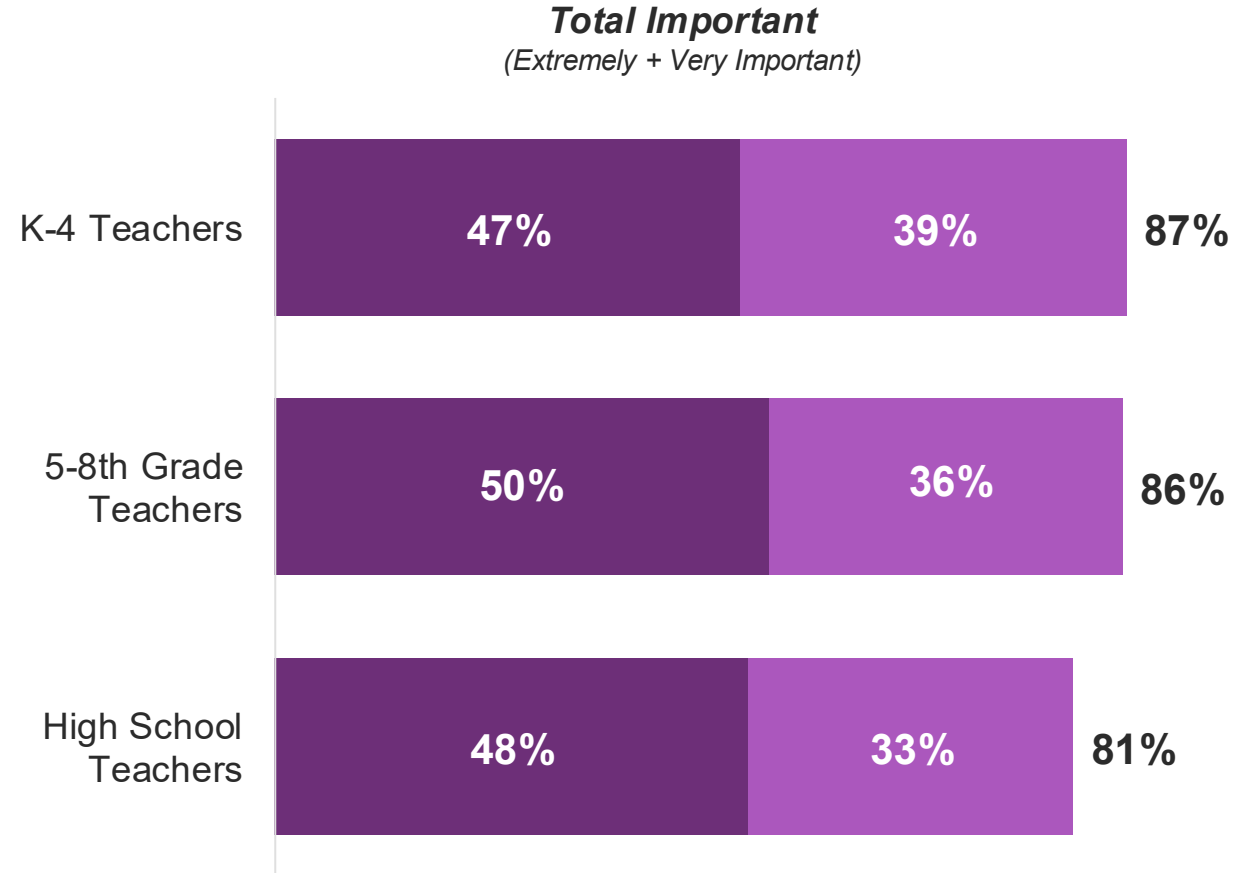
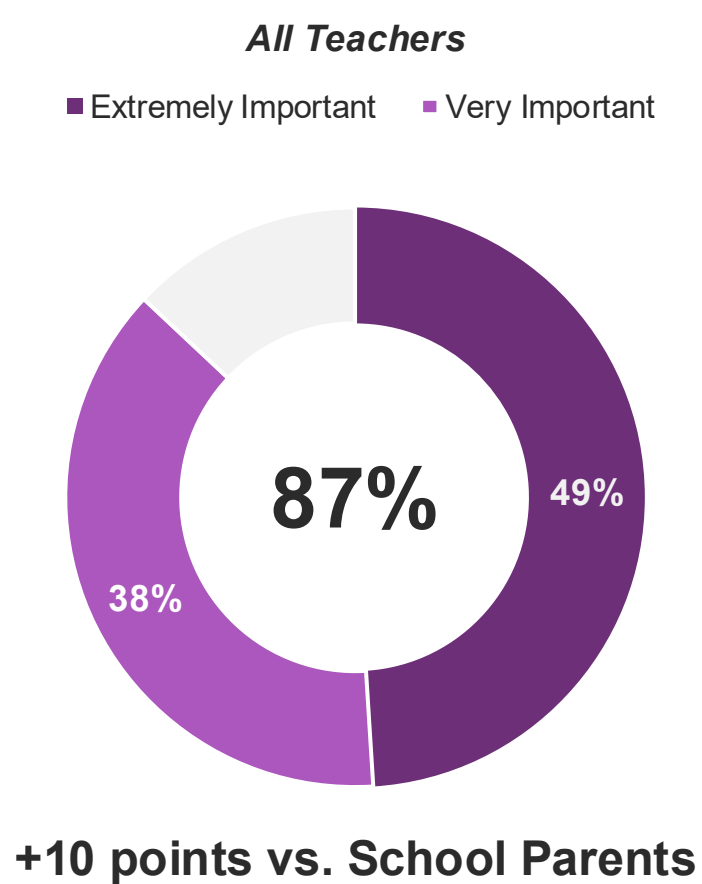
KEY FINDINGS

Durable Skills

1. Teachers view prioritizing durable skills as very important across all grade levels.
2. Private school teachers rate their school higher than district school teachers in teaching durable skills. Parents rate schools higher in teaching durable skills than teachers overall.
3. Teachers generally believe that there is a shared responsibility among all to teach students durable skills, and tend to think parents/families should be more responsible than schools.
4. Teachers are most likely to believe that student reflections and completed projects strongly demonstrate well-developed durable skills. Parents are divided.

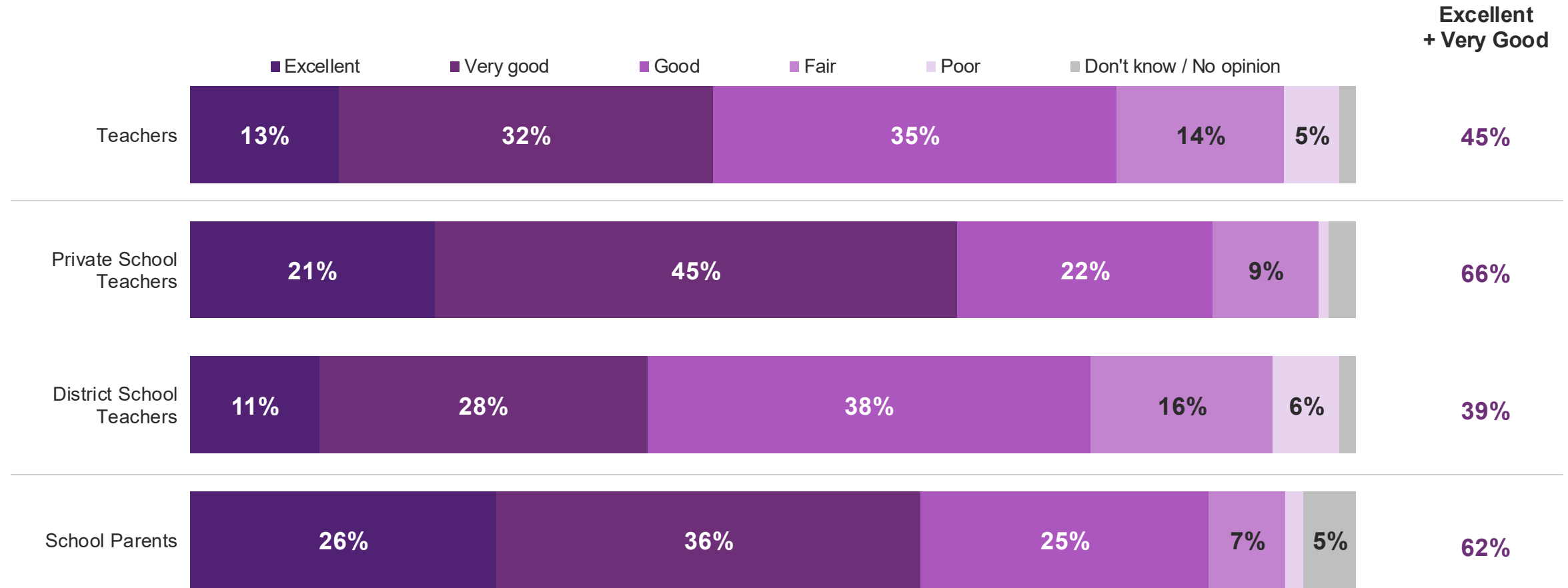
Teachers view prioritizing durable skills as very important across all grade levels.

How important is it that your school prioritizes developing students' **durable skills** (such as communication, critical thinking, teamwork, adaptability, and responsibility)?



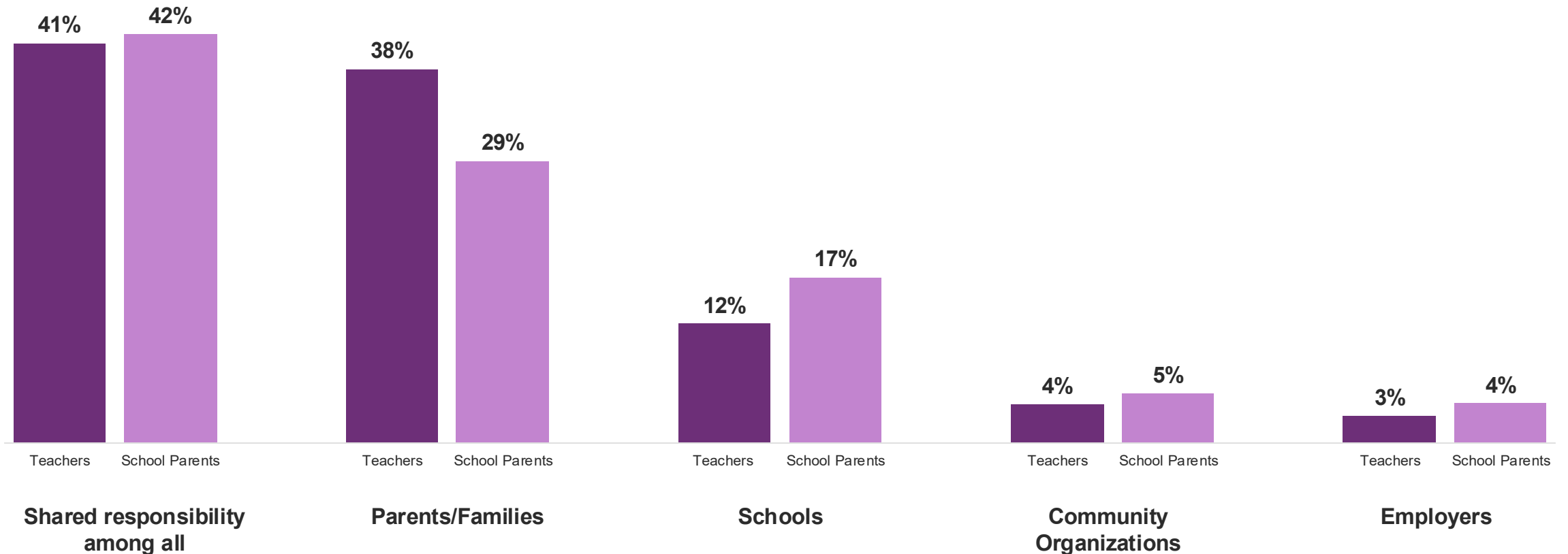
Private school teachers rate their school higher than district school teachers in teaching durable skills. Parents rate schools higher in teaching durable skills than teachers overall.

How would you rate your school in teaching **durable skills** (such as communication, critical thinking, teamwork, adaptability, and responsibility)?



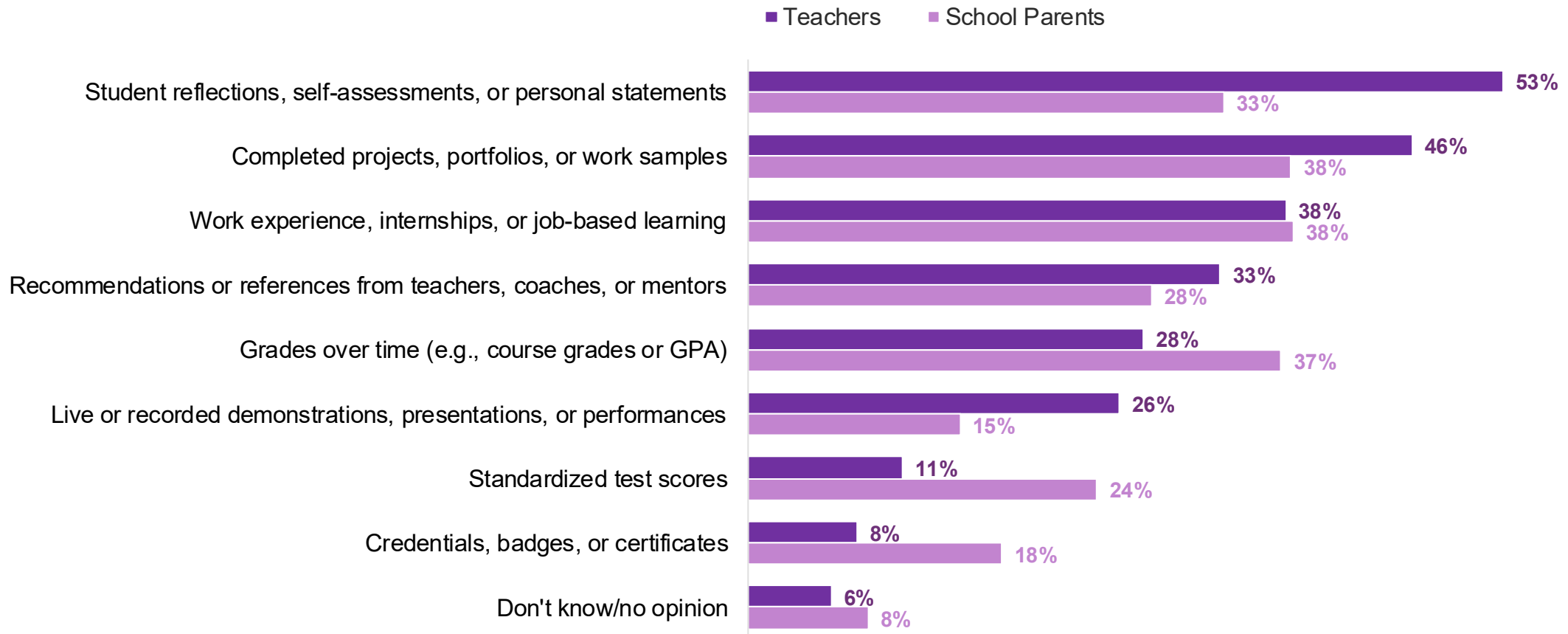
Teachers generally believe that there is a shared responsibility among all to teach students durable skills, and tend to think parents/families should be more responsible than schools.

Who should be most responsible for teaching students durable skills?



Teachers are most likely to believe that student reflections and completed projects strongly demonstrate well-developed durable skills. Parents are divided.

In your opinion, which types of evidence most strongly demonstrate that a student has well-developed **durable skills** (such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving)? Please select up to three.





Views on K-12 Education



Teaching Profession and Experience



Technology and AI in Schools



Durable Skills



K-12 Choice Policies



Survey Profile and Demographics

KEY FINDINGS

K-12 Choice Policies

1. Teachers show support for ESAs, with private school teachers and less experienced teachers generally more supportive.
2. Teacher support for ESAs remains at a high level (75%) since September of last year. High support from teachers is consistent over time.
3. Teachers are more likely to believe that ESAs should be available to all families, regardless of financial need – 22 points higher than the proportion agreeing with means-tested eligibility.
4. Support for “teacher savings accounts” is also high among teachers across school types.
5. When teachers are given a description of school vouchers, support increases the most among those with four or fewer years of experience.
6. About half of teachers support school vouchers. Teacher opposition to vouchers remains relatively steady compared to September.
7. Providing a description of charter schools boosts support among public school teachers and teachers with under 10 years of experience.
8. About 60% of teachers support charter schools. Overall levels of support and opposition have remained steady since September 2025.

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

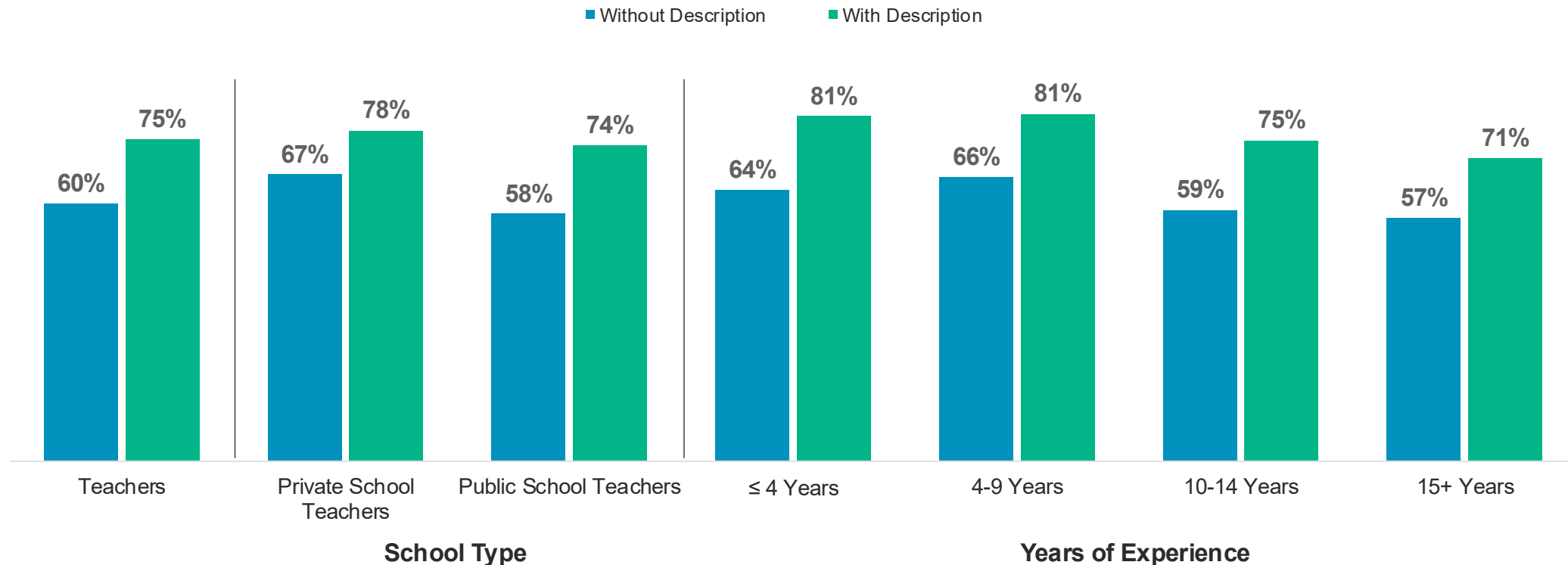
Charter schools are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations.

Teachers show support for ESAs, with private school teachers and less experienced teachers generally more supportive.

Based on what you know, or have heard from others... In general, what is your opinion of "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. In general, what is your opinion of an ESA system?

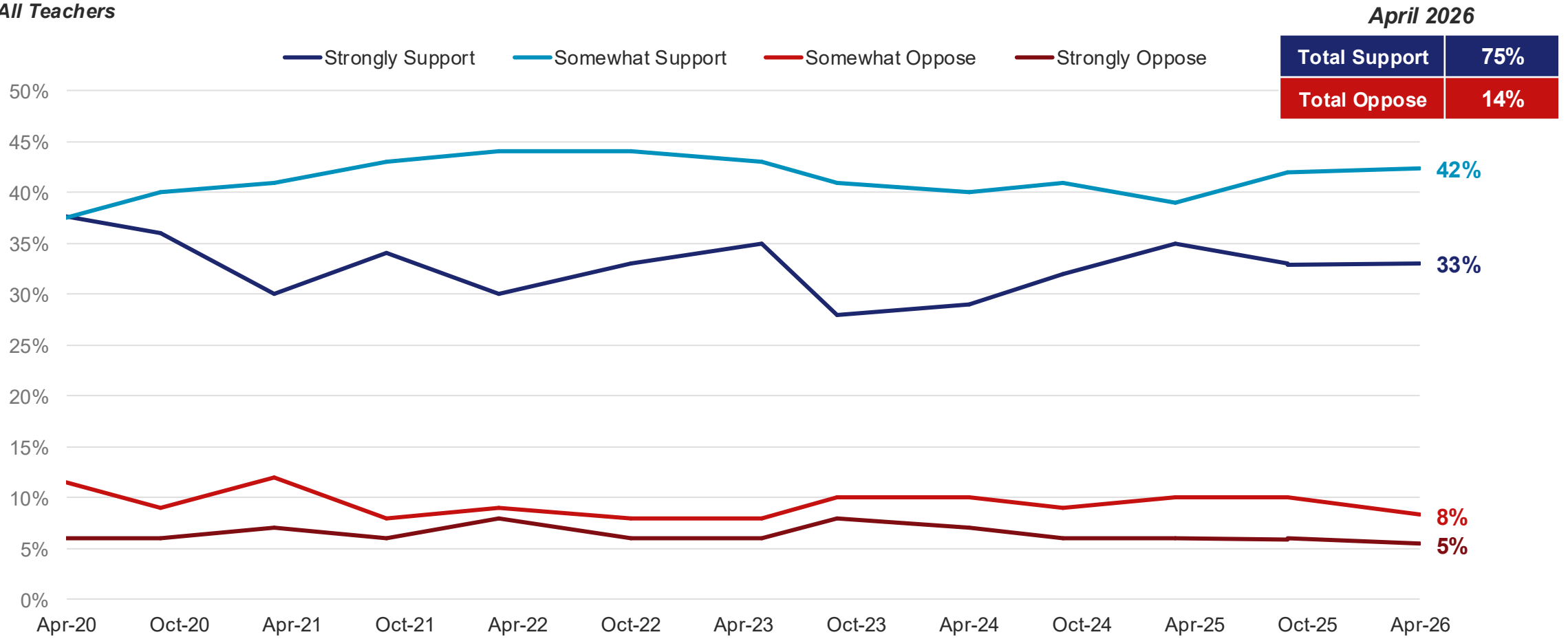
Total Support (Strongly Support + Somewhat Support)



Teacher support for ESAs remains at a high level (75%) since September of last year. High support from teachers is consistent over time.

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?

Among All Teachers



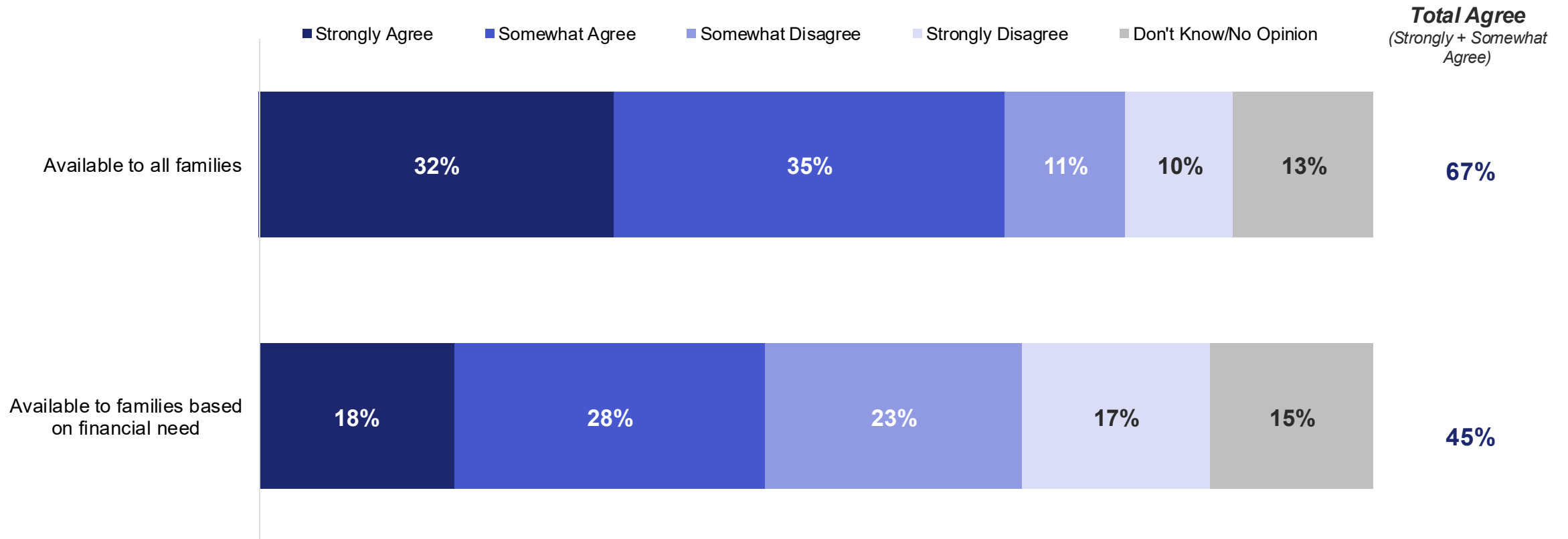
Note: Don't know/no opinion responses are not shown.

Teachers Source: Survey conducted April 1-9, 2026, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Teachers are more likely to believe that ESAs should be available to all families, regardless of financial need – 22 points higher than the proportion agreeing with means-tested eligibility.

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?

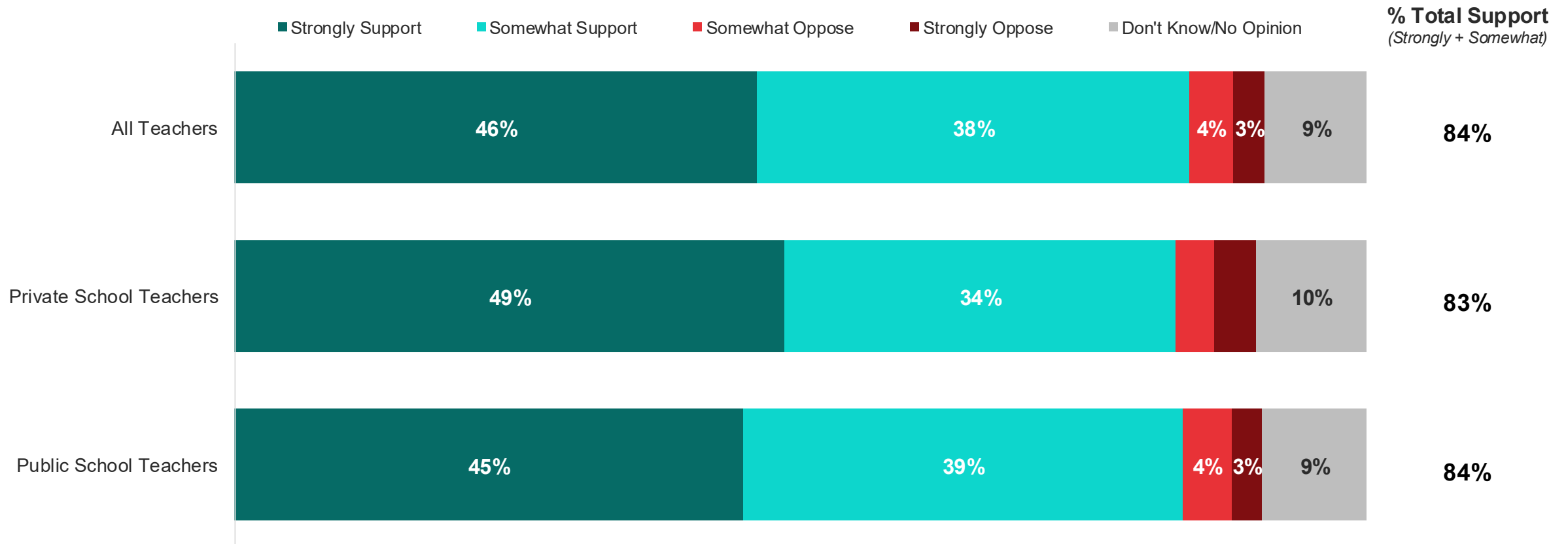
Among All Teachers



Support for “teacher savings accounts” is also high among teachers across school types.

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?

Among All Teachers

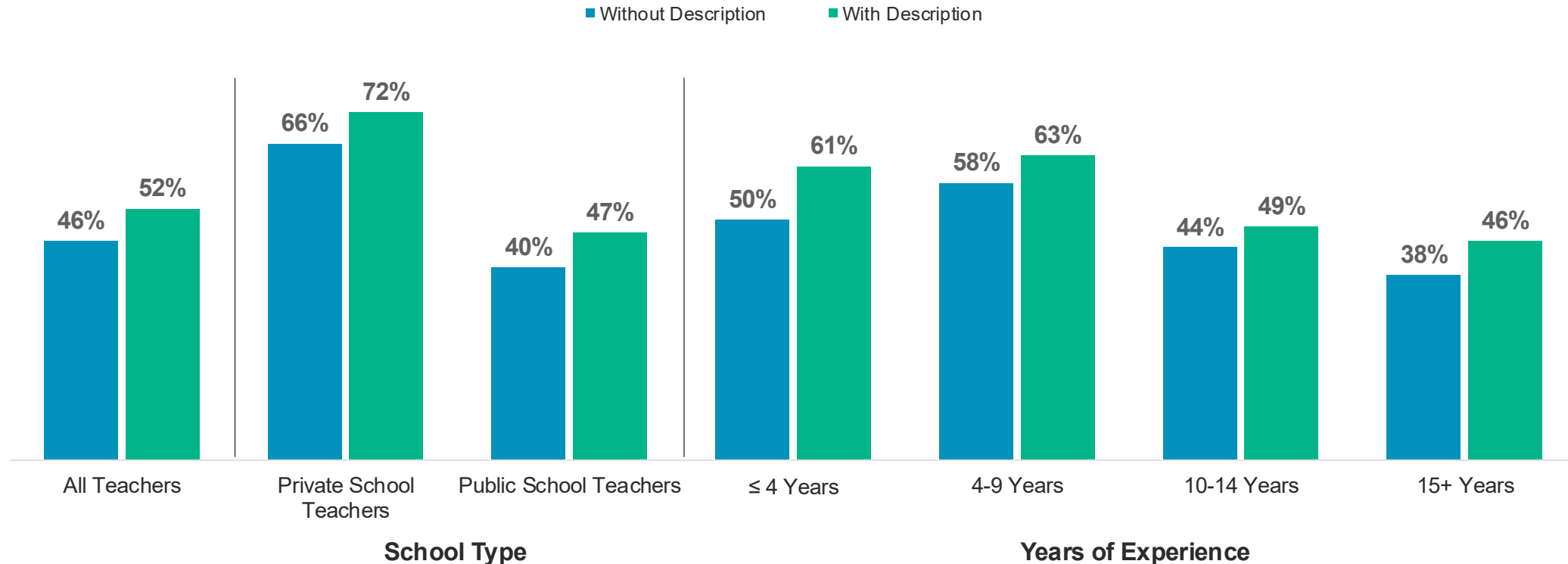


When teachers are given a description of school vouchers, support increases the most among those with four or fewer years of experience.

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?

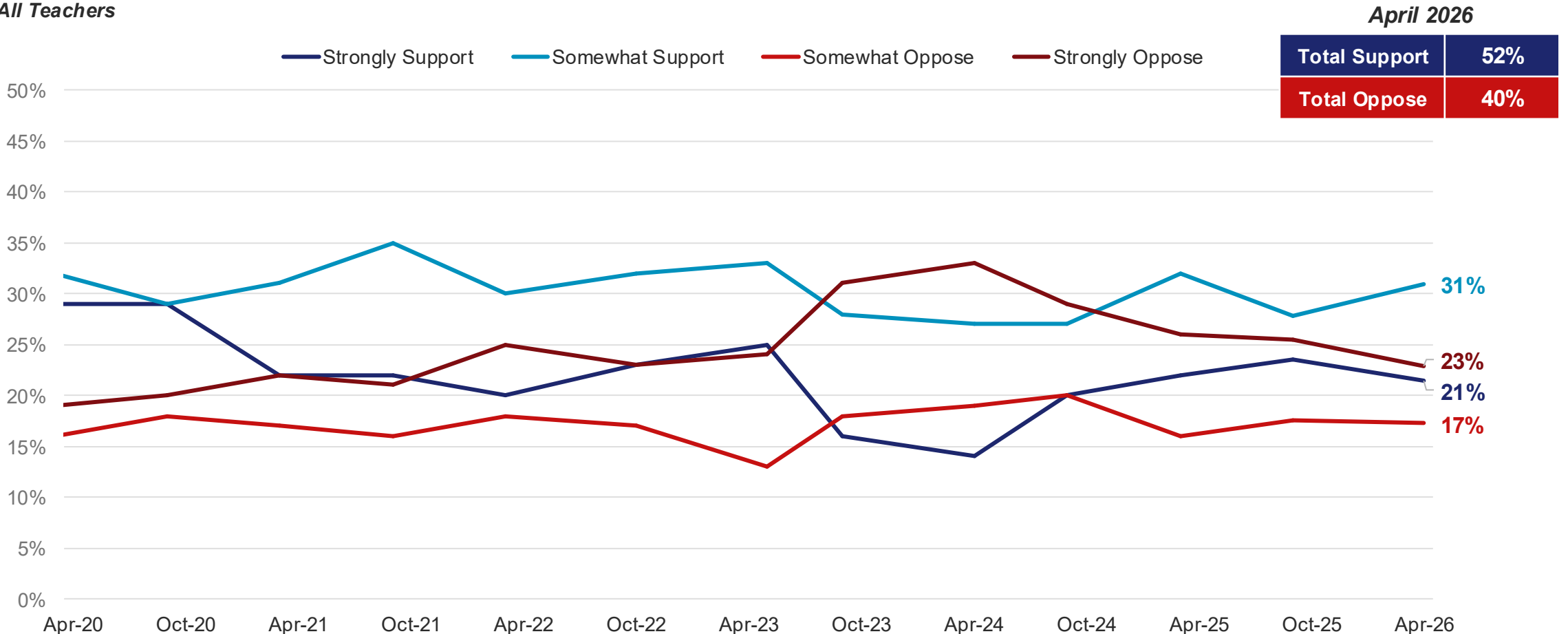
Total Support (Strongly Support + Somewhat Support)



About half of teachers support school vouchers. Teacher opposition to vouchers remains relatively steady compared to September.

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?

Among All Teachers



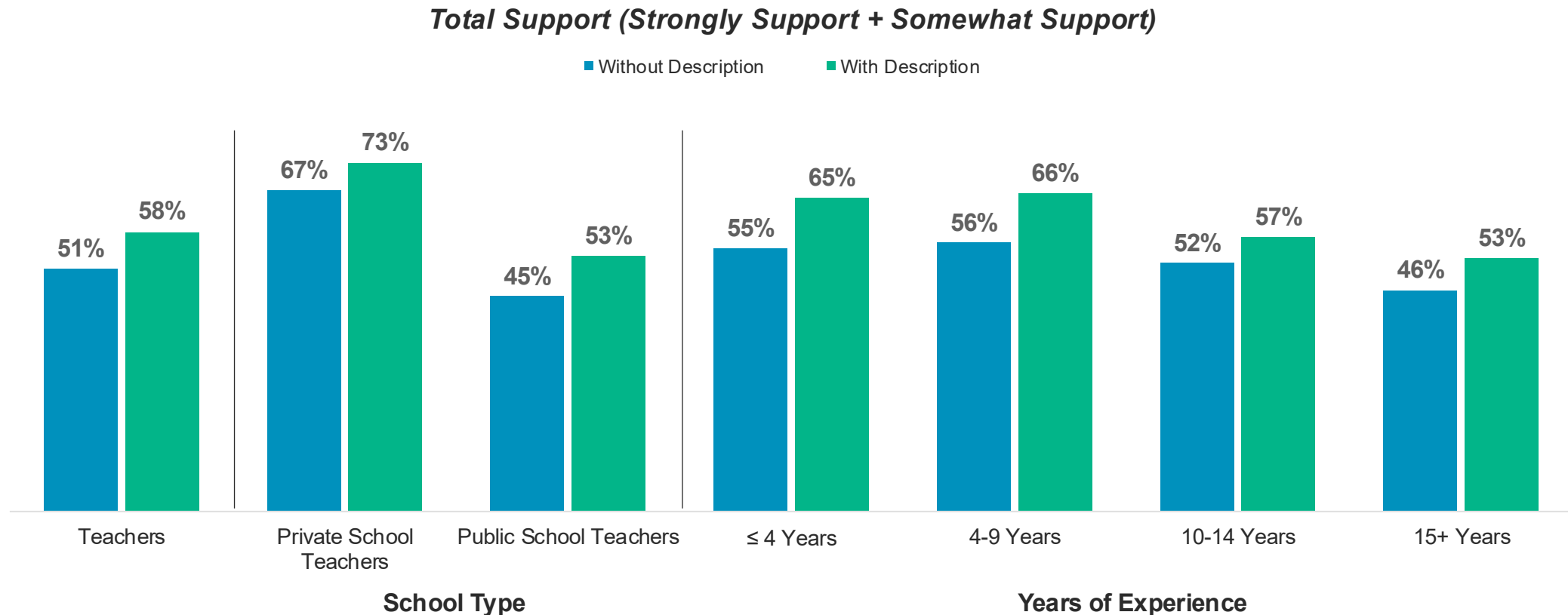
Note: Don't know/no opinion responses are not shown.

Teachers Source: Survey conducted April 1-9, 2026, U.S. K-12 education teachers

Providing a description of charter schools boosts support among public school teachers and teachers with under 10 years of experience.

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

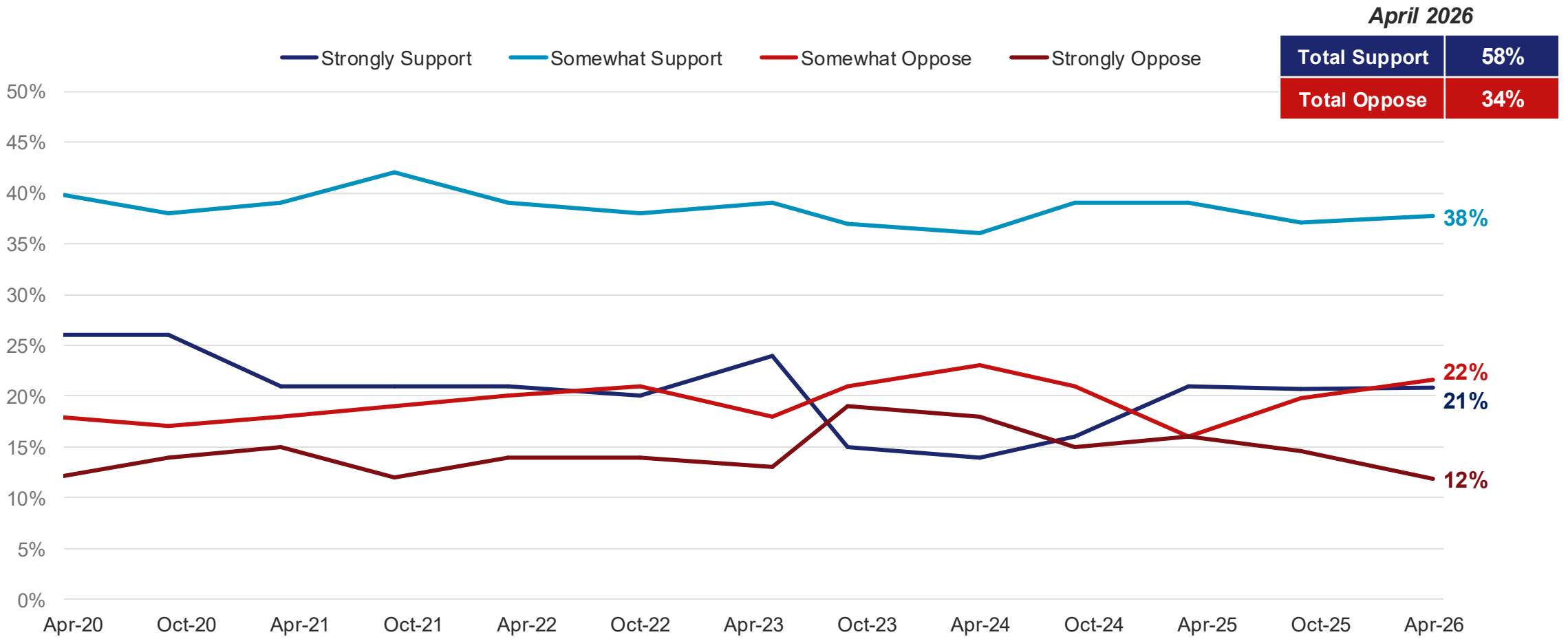
Charter schools are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public-school regulations. In general, what is your opinion of public charter schools?



About 60% of teachers support charter schools. Overall levels of support and opposition have remained steady since September 2025.

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?

Among All Teachers



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Views on K-12 Education



Teaching Profession and Experience



Technology and AI in K-12



Durable Skills Development



School Choice Policies



Survey Profile and Demographics

Survey Profile, 1

Dates	April 1 – 9, 2026
Survey Data Collection & Quality Control	Morning Consult
Survey Sponsor	EdChoice
Population	K-12 Education Teachers
Sampling Frame	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 = 11.8 minutes
Sample Size	Total, N = 1,031
Oversampling?	None
Quotas?	Age, Years of Teaching Experience
Weighting?	Age, Race, Ethnicity, Gender, Teaching Experience
Measure of Precision	± 3.05 percentage points
Participation Rate	51%
Project Contact	Paul DiPerna, paul@edchoice.org

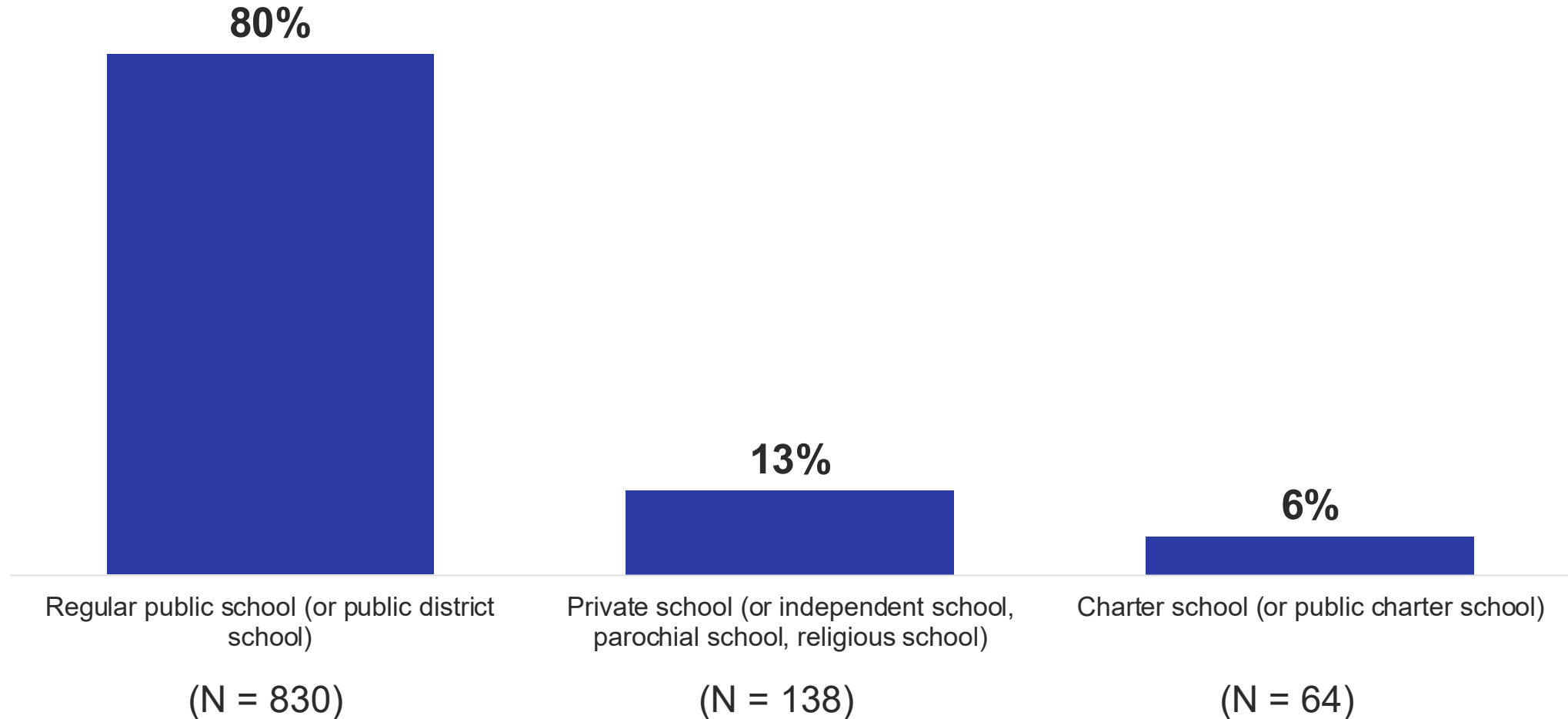
Total Teacher Sample Demographics

Demographics	Unweighted (N =)
Hispanic	124
White	756
Asian American	37
Black	98
Other	101
Age 18-34	289
Age 35-44	243
Age 45-64	392
Age 65+	108
Northeast	197
Midwest	211
South	409
West	214

Demographics	Unweighted (N =)
Male	216
Female	815
Democrat	403
Independent	284
Republican	345
Urban	240
Suburban	519
Small Town	99
Rural	174
Low Income <\$50K	217
Middle Income \$50K to <\$100K	436
High Income \$100K+	378
LGBTQ+	81

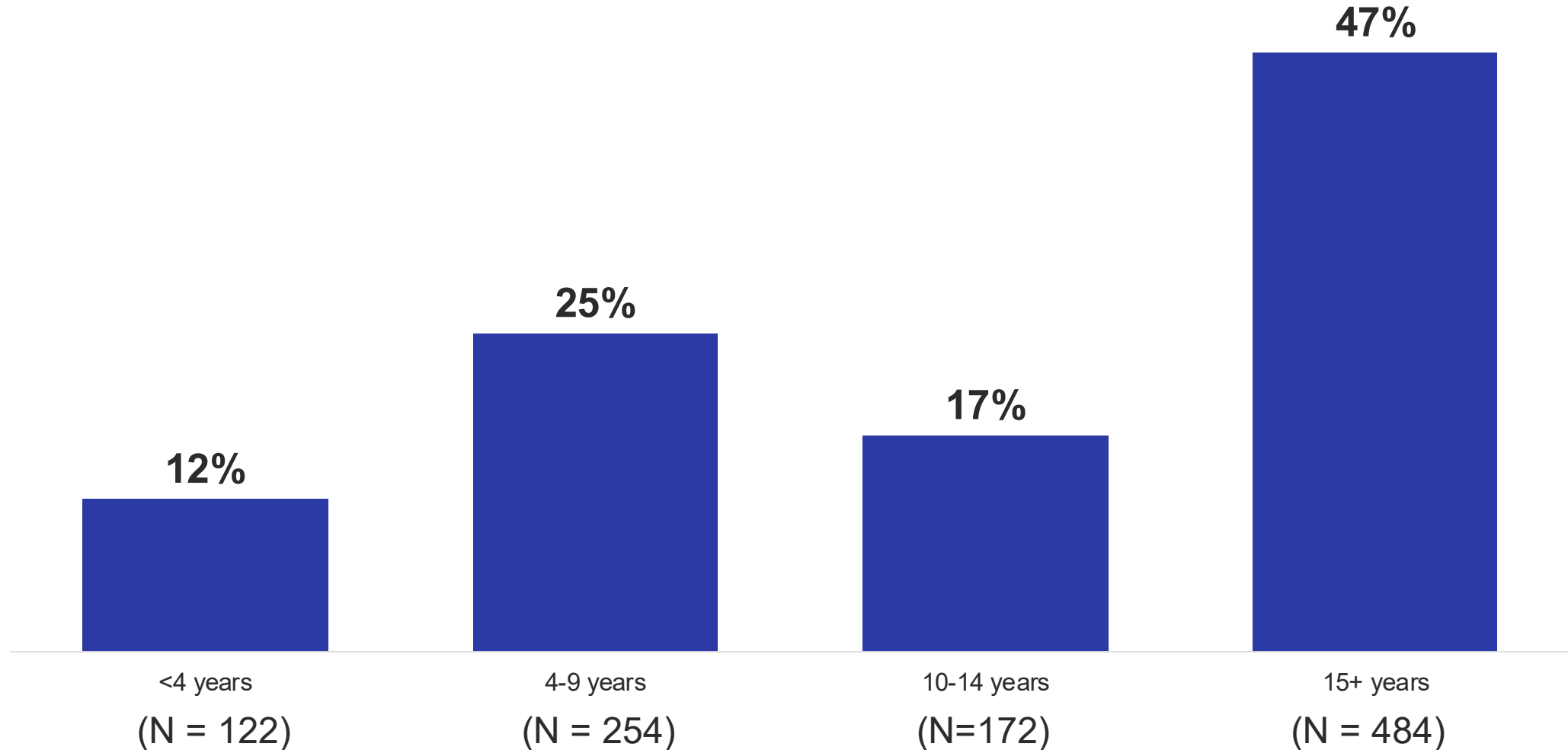
Where do you currently teach?

Among All Teachers



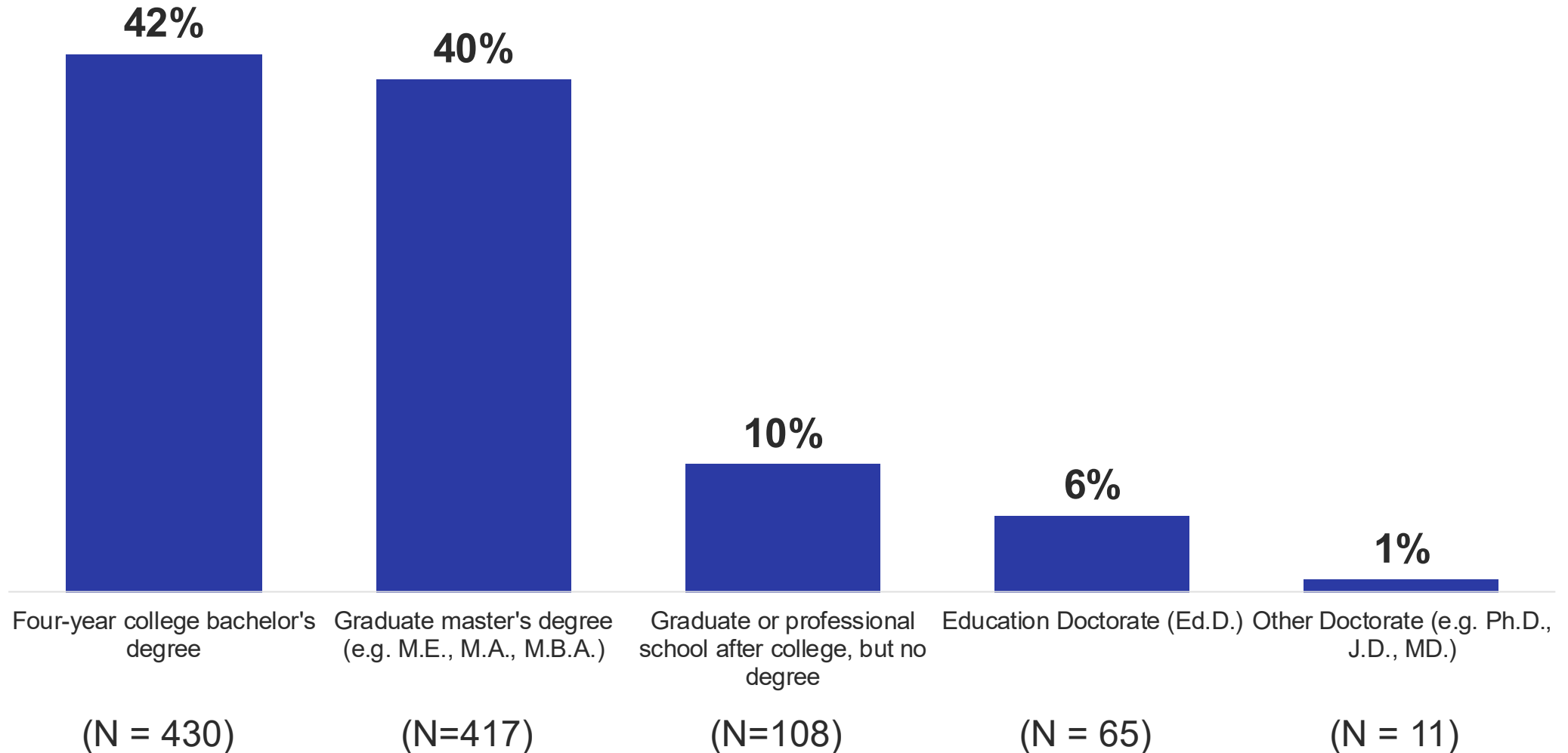
Counting this school year, how many years have you been a school teacher, including part-time teaching?

Among All Teachers



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

Among All Teachers



WHO WE ARE



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.

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[EDCHOICE.ORG](https://www.edchoice.org)