

New Poll Shows Massive Backlash To Anti-LGBTQ School Policies

Republican anti-LGBTQ+ policies in schools are not popular. Now, a new Navigator Research Poll shows that book bans, school sports policies, and Don't Say Gay bills are wildly unpopular.



ERIN REED
AUG 30, 2023

♡ 144

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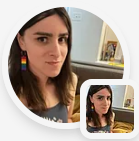
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Over the past two years, over a dozen states—all under Republican governance—have enacted policies that **forcibly disclose** the gender identities of transgender youth to their families, **ban LGBTQ+ literature** in educational settings, and prohibit educators from **discussing LGBTQ+ topics**. Driven by a wave of right-wing anti-trans sentiment,

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ven showing incidental with LGBTQ+ characters ing scrutiny, and students ften instigated by parents victory. Now, a **new** against the GOP's stance

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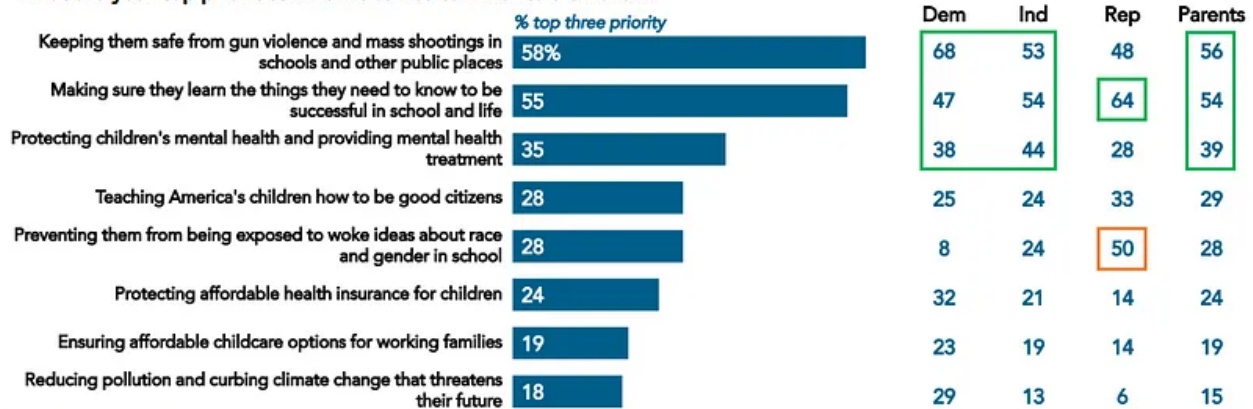
August 17-August 21 to ask ree issues voters care der and race in school” as gun violence, education despread support.

Protecting Children From Gun Violence, Making Sure They Learn What They Need to, Mental Health Care Are Top Priorities

“Keeping them safe from gun violence” is the top priority for Democrats (68%) and parents (56%), followed by “making sure they learn the things they need to know to be successful” (47% and 54%) and “protecting children’s mental health (38% and 39%)”

- Republicans drive the share who say “preventing them from being exposed to woke ideas about race and gender” is a priority (50%).

What are your top priorities when it comes to America’s children?



Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted August 17-August 21, 2023. For more info, visit [navigatorresearch.org](https://www.navigatorresearch.org).



Top three priorities for education policy in recent Navigator Research survey

The survey delved into specific policies enacted in conservative states, revealing broad public disapproval. Policies involving book bans and mandatory genital inspections for youth athletes in order to confirm their sex were especially unpopular, with 92% and 84% opposition, respectively. Additional measures, such as the prohibition of Advanced Placement African-American History, suspensions for teachers who show support for LGBTQ+ students, and bans on classroom discussions about sexual orientation and gender identity, also faced strong opposition—each garnering over 65% disapproval in the survey. Opposition was even widespread among parents, who opposed each of these policies.

See the survey results on specific policies here:

Republican Policies Like Book Bans With Specific Titles/Subjects, Genital Inspection, and Funding Cuts Are Most Concerning

Americans overall (92% concerning) – including independents (94%), Republicans (87%), and parents (91%) – are most likely to say that efforts to ban “books about Anne Frank and MLK, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *1984* from public schools” are concerning.

Below is a list of policies that some lawmakers have recently passed or tried to pass around the country. Please indicate how concerning you find each one

| | *** Split sample | | | Overall | Total Concerning | | | |
|---|------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------|------------------|-----|-----|---------|
| | Very concerning | Somewhat concerning | Not concerning | | Dem | Ind | Rep | Parents |
| *Banning books including books about Anne Frank and MLK, <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> , and <i>1984</i> from public schools | 71 | 20 | 8 | 92 | 95 | 94 | 87 | 91 |
| Inspecting the genitals of kids before they're allowed to play on sports teams | 61 | 23 | 16 | 84 | 93 | 82 | 74 | 83 |
| Defunding public education and moving the money to private schools instead | 60 | 24 | 16 | 84 | 95 | 84 | 70 | 84 |
| Censoring how teachers can teach students the accurate history of the American Civil War, the Revolutionary War, and the Civil Rights movement | 59 | 27 | 14 | 86 | 91 | 85 | 80 | 84 |
| Changing the teaching of slavery to promote the idea that there were benefits for the slaves | 57 | 24 | 19 | 81 | 92 | 82 | 68 | 82 |
| **Banning books that partisan politicians decide they don't like or agree with | 56 | 28 | 16 | 84 | 93 | 85 | 74 | 79 |
| Giving right-wing media outlets and conspiracy theory promoters special access to classrooms to share their content | 53 | 25 | 21 | 79 | 93 | 80 | 63 | 80 |
| Banning the teaching of AP African-American history in high schools | 51 | 28 | 20 | 80 | 93 | 82 | 64 | 83 |
| Suing or suspending teachers if they show support for LGBTQ+ students | 46 | 25 | 29 | 71 | 87 | 74 | 53 | 70 |
| Prohibiting teachers from teaching age-appropriate lessons about sexual orientation or gender identity in schools, including history involving LGBTQ+ figures | 39 | 27 | 34 | 66 | 84 | 63 | 46 | 63 |

Nationwide survey of 1,000 registered voters conducted August 17-August 21, 2023. For more info, visit navigatorresearch.org.



Specific education policies and levels of support in recent Navigator Research survey.

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These findings pose a significant challenge for conservatives who are doubling down on an anti-LGBTQ+ platform. When considered alongside other polls, such as a [Fox News survey](#) in which 86% of respondents identified attacks on transgender children as "a problem," the data suggest that Republicans are experiencing substantial backlash. This is particularly relevant given the considerable focus they have placed on targeting transgender individuals in schools and in personal lives. According to the Navigator survey, a mere 34% of voters indicated trust in the Republican Party on these issues.

Democrats currently enjoy a 10-point advantage on matters related to race and gender in educational settings, buoyed by strong support from independent voters.

Anti-trans politics have not been successful for Republicans in recent elections, either. In Georgia, Herschel Walker featured an anti-trans swimmer, Riley Gaines, in his final election ads to try to make the race about transgender issues - he lost his election bid. Similar defeats happened in Arizona, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania, where millions were spent on anti-trans election ads failed to bring about Republican victories. Most recently, Ohio Republicans spent \$2,000,000 on anti-trans ads to try to convince voters that voting no on a constitutional amendment ballot initiative designed to make abortion protections harder to pass would actually lead to “trans surgeries for kids.” The referendum suffered a massive double-digit defeat.

Despite this, Republicans persist in prioritizing anti-trans and anti-LGBTQ+ policies in their campaigns. To date, 16 states have imposed restrictions on discussing LGBTQ+ topics in schools, while 23 states have enacted sports bans targeting transgender youth. In Georgia, a teacher was recently dismissed for reading the Scholastic Kids book "My Shadow Is Purple" in a showy hearing featuring school administrators grilling her support for LGBTQ+ students. Similarly, in Florida, a teacher lost her job simply for screening a Disney film that included an LGBTQ+ character. In Oklahoma, students who wish to participate in sports must complete "biological sex affidavits." Just this past weekend, Iowa teachers started distributing legal notices and forms to parents seeking permission for nickname use, such as "Joe" for a student named Joseph. These policies starkly contrast with the voter sentiments revealed in the survey, signaling a discord between public opinion and legislative action.

There are indications that Republicans may be recognizing the political liability associated with these issues. During a recent debate, when GOP primary candidate Nikki Haley was questioned about transgender individuals in schools, she quickly shifted the conversation to reading remediation. Other candidates also refrained from extensively discussing the topic, largely sidestepping the issue altogether. It's probable that their internal polling aligns with recent external surveys, revealing both the topic's limited traction and a notable absence of strong support. Nevertheless, the policies continue to be heavily pushed by Republicans in state legislatures, and voters will see their record when they do head to the ballot boxes in 2024.

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TransMutedMaya 9 hrs ago ♥ Liked by Erin Reed

If this leads to a massive win for the Dems, we need to push them as hard as we can to make federal protections for LGBTQ folks and women. We need to undo and prevent the damage that republican supermajorities have done across this country, not just ignore it until the republicans seize power again

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jack 9 hrs ago ♥ Liked by Erin Reed

This types of population rejection and without a far right supreme court that would make ours blush (like they didn't and did have respectively in Weimar republic) is the intraveneous

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