

# 2023 Schooling in America Survey Methods

April 18 to May 2, 2023

**General Population Sample = 1,224**  
**Current School Parents Sample = 1,504**

**EdChoice**, *Survey Sponsor and Developer*

**Braun Research, Inc.**, *Survey Data Collection and Quality Control*

## Online Interviews

Braun Research programmed and hosted the web-based surveys. PureSpectrum assisted with recruitment and providing the panel sample.<sup>1</sup> For the General Population and School Parent oversample, panel administrators initially emailed 5,588 adults from April 18 to May 2, 2023. All of these contacts were randomly selected from the opt-in non-probability online pool of panelists. The measure of precision for the *General Population online* part of this study is +/- 3.42 percentage points. For this non-probability survey, we refer to a measure of precision to convey an estimate of confidence and reliability in data results. The objective is similar to reporting a “margin of error” that is typical for probability-based surveys.

## Contact Procedures

Online contacts with potential respondents generally occur differently than by other modes like phone or mail. Braun Research creates and develops the survey instrument and gives it a title. For this project, the online panel connector (PureSpectrum) takes that survey and, via a link, reaches out to its partners—who are online panel suppliers—to offer opportunities to participate. These online panel partners decide whether to participate and offer to their panelists based on their panel composition, survey topic and screening questions. The panel companies present these opportunities, generally in the form of an online dashboard or mobile app. The platform serves as a direct-to-consumer model – the link is created, sent out, and the panelist clicks on the survey if he/she wants to participate or not. Rather than sending email invitations to initiate contacts, most online panel companies use a dashboard-type platform and process, whereby panelists visit these dashboards (or apps) to see the latest survey offerings.

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<sup>1</sup>For more information about PureSpectrum, see: PureSpectrum [Web page], retrieved from <https://www.purespectrum.com>

## Phone Interviews

Braun Research's live callers conducted all interviews via computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) using a survey instrument developed and scripted by the authors.

The phone questionnaire reflected a shorter, abridged version of the online questionnaire. For the phone portion of this project to achieve the General Population sample, Braun Research made 32,927 total phone calls by landline phone (12,558) and cell phone (20,339). Of these calls 13,235 (4,846 landline, 8,389 cell phone) were unusable phone numbers (disconnected, fax, busy, or non-answers, etc.); 221 (10 landline, 211 cell phone) people terminated as not qualified to complete the survey; and 19,041 (6,642 landline, 11,399 cell phone) phone numbers were usable numbers but eligibility unknown (including callbacks, refusals and voicemail). Twenty-eight people (9 landline; 19 cell phone) did not complete the survey.

## Phone Sample Design

Dynata (formerly Survey Sampling International) used a combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples to represent the General Population (adults age 18+ in the United States and District of Columbia) who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Dynata provided both samples according to BRI specifications.

Dynata starts with a database of all listed telephone numbers, updated on a four- to six-week rolling basis, 25 percent of the listings at a time. All active blocks—contiguous groups of 100 phone numbers for which more than one residential number is listed—are added to this database by Dynata. Blocks and exchanges that include only listed business numbers are excluded.

Dynata draws numbers for the landline sample with equal probabilities from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

## Contact Procedures

Braun Research conducted live telephone interviews from April 18 to May 2, 2023. Their callers made as many as eight attempts to contact every sampled phone number. The sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of contacting potential respondents. Each phone number received at least one daytime call.

We have noticed over the last several years, response rates have been declining for consumer polls. Generally, running survey over a longer period of time will boost these response rates. However, lower response rates do not lead to lower reliability of the data.

The survey's margin of error is the largest 95% Confidence Interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample – the one around 50%. The margin of error for the phone part of this study is +/-4.89%. This means that in 95 of every 100 samples drawn using the same methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 4.89 percentage points away from their true values in the population.

It is critical to note that the Mean Squared Error (MSE) is higher when considering the number of respondents for a given demographic subgroup. For example, the MSE for a subgroup of 150 respondents is  $\pm 8.0$  percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, question wording, ordering, and other practical difficulties when conducting surveys may introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion research.

The phone portion included a separate landline *versus* cell introduction:

## **LANDLINE**

*Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am calling from BR Interviewing. We are calling adults in your part of the United States to ask about some things that have been in the news.*

*I am not selling anything and I will not be asking for money. All of your answers will be kept strictly confidential.*

*May I please speak with the youngest MALE age 18 or older who is now at home? [IF NO] May I please speak with the youngest FEMALE age 18 or older who is now at home?*

*Please know these calls are randomly monitored for quality and training purposes.*

## **CELL PHONE**

*Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am calling from BR Interviewing. We are calling adults in your part of the United States to ask about some things that have been in the news.*

*I am not selling anything and I will not be asking for money. All of your answers will be kept strictly confidential.*

*If you are driving or otherwise doing something requiring your full attention, I will need to call you back.*

*Please know these calls are randomly monitored for quality and training purposes.*

All respondents were asked a series of screener questions to ensure relevance and qualification:

S1. Are you under 18 years old, OR are you 18 or older?

- 1) Under 18 \* Thank, and terminate
- 2) 18 or older
- 9) (Refused) \* Thank, and terminate

S2. What is your ZIP Code?

S3. In what STATE do you currently live?

- 1) [Record U.S. State or District of Columbia]
- 2) Outside of USA \* Thank, and terminate
- 3) (Refused) \* Thank, and terminate

D1. What is your gender?

- 1) Male
- 2) Female

D2. In what year were you born?

**[OPEN END. RECORD. LATER CODE FOR GENERATION]**

## Weighting Procedures

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to compensate for sample designs and patterns of non-response that might bias results. In this study, Braun Research balanced the General Population sample population parameters based on U.S. Census Bureau statistics.

Participation in surveys tends to vary for different subgroups of the population. Subgroup participation and cooperation may also vary because of substantive interest regarding a survey's topics and questions. To compensate for these known and potential biases, the sample data were weighted for analysis.

We decided to weight in the following manner because of questionnaire similarities and the mixed mode approach on the study:

- General Population estimates: Braun Research first combined the initially completed phone sample (N = 402) and online sample (N = 822). The weighting procedure then matched for the total General Population sample (N = 1,224) current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones, based on the Center for Disease Control's *Early Release of Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), January–June 2019*.<sup>2</sup> That total General Population sample was then weighted by using population parameters from the U.S. Census Bureau's *2020 American Community Survey (ACS), 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample with Experimental Weights*, for adults 18 years of age or older living in the United States and the District of Columbia, based on: Age, Census Division, Gender, Ethnicity, Race, and Education.<sup>3</sup>
- We also weighted parents of school-aged children (K–12 School Parents, N =1,504) by their own separate set of statistics and weighted by Age, Census Region, Gender, and Race. We also weighted the Black parent and Hispanic parent oversamples to their respective Census populations for gender and region.

Weighted and unweighted results are available on request.

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<sup>2</sup> Stephen J. Blumberg, Ph.D., and Julian V. Luke. Wireless Substitution: Early Release of Estimates From the National Health Interview Survey, January-June 2019 [National Health Interview Survey Early Release Program], National Center for Health Statistics, retrieved from CDC website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless202005-508.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> United States Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Public Use Microdata Sample with Experimental Weights, retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/experimental-data/2020-1-year-pums.html>

## Online Survey, Dispositions and Response Rate

### Online Dispositions for General Population Sample

<b>Category</b>	<b>Disposition Code Total</b>
Full completes	822
Email bouncebacks	68
Respondent unavailable during field period (web)	3,399
Terminated early/Break-offs	342
Screened out/terminates/disqualified	346
Logged onto survey; did not complete any item.	507
Not intended person	9
Overquota	65
Total	5,558
Response Rate (AAPOR)	16.2%
Cooperation Rate (AAPOR)	49.2%
Refusal Rate (AAPOR)	10.0%

## Phone Survey, Dispositions and Response Rates

### Phone Dispositions for General Population Sample

<u>SUMMARY</u>			<u>DETAIL</u>		
Landline	Cell Phone		Landline	Cell Phone	
12,588	20,339	Total	3,222	4,008	Disconnected
12,588	20,339	Released	9	0	Fax
0	0	Unreleased	24	15	Government/Business
7,642	11,399	Usable	0	-	Cell Phone
4,846	8,389	Unusable	-	0	Landline
70	551	Eligible	3,255	4,023	Unusable
0.9%	2.1%	Est. Response	1,477	4,306	No Answer
			114	60	Busy
			1,591	4,366	Usability Unknown
			81	321	Complete
			9	19	Break-Off
			90	340	Usable/Eligible
			311	688	Refused
			10	18	Language Barrier
			4,337	6,847	Voice Mail
			2,955	3,700	Call Back-Retry
			24	46	Strong Refusal
			5	0	Privacy Manager
			7,642	11,399	Usable/Eligible Unknown
			10	211	Terminates
			10	211	Usable/Ineligible
			0.9%	2.1%	Response Rate
			20.9%	41.4%	Cooperation Rate
			4.3%	6.3%	Refusal Rate