2021 Schooling in America Survey
Survey Methods

June 14 to July 8, 2021

General Population Sample = 1,209
Current School Parents Sample = 1,238

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. Fulcrum assisted with recruitment and providing the panel sample.[1] For the General Population and School Parent oversample, panel administrators initially emailed 10,881 adults from June 14 to July 8, 2021. All of these contacts were randomly selected from the opt-in non-probability online pool of panelists.

Contact Procedures

Contacts with potential respondents generally function 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 (Fulcrum) 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.

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.

[1] For more information about Fulcrum, see: Lucid, Fulcrum [Web page], retrieved from https://luc.id/fulcrum

For the phone portion of this project to achieve the General Population sample, Braun Research made 25,011 total phone calls by landline phone (9,440) and cell phone (15,571). Of these calls 5,770 (2,708 landline, 3,762 cell phone) were unusable phone numbers (disconnected, fax, busy, or non-answers, etc.); 139 (26 landline, 113 cell phone) people terminated as not qualified to complete the survey; and 13,881 (5,272 landline, 8,609 cell phone) phone numbers were usable numbers but eligibility unknown (including callbacks, refusals and voicemail). Thirty-three people (9 landline; 24 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 June 14 to July 8, 2021. 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.

The Hagan-Collier Method guided respondent selection. Braun Research recruited respondents in the landline sample by asking for the youngest adult male who is now at home. If the youngest male was not home, then the next step would be to request an interview with the youngest female at home. Regarding the cell sample, Braun Research callers interviewed the person who answered the phone, as long as that person was an adult 18 years of age or older.

The margin of error for the *phone* part of this study is +/-4.87 percentage points. The survey's margin of error is the largest 95 percent Confidence Interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample – the one around 50 percent. 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 4.87 percentage points away from their true values in the population.

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.

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 = 404) and online sample (N = 805). The weighting procedure then matched for the total General Population sample (N = 1,209) 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.*[2] That total General Population sample was then weighted by using population parameters from the U.S. Census Bureau's *2018 American Community Survey (ACS), Five-year Estimates*, 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, Education, and Phone Usage.[3]

- We also weighted parents of school-aged children (K–12 School Parents, N =1,238) by their own separate set of statistics and weighted by Age, Census Region, Gender, and Race. We also weighted the African-American 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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[2] 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

[3] United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2009-2018), retrieved from https://www.census.gov/data/developers/data-sets/acs-5year.html

Online Survey, Dispositions and Response Rate

Total Online Survey Dispositions (N = 1,771)	
	TOTAL
Full Completes	1,771
Email Bouncebacks	63
Emails Unopened After Reminders	6,992
Terminated Early/Breakoffs	587
Screened Out/Disqualified	578
Refusals	801
Total Contacts	10,881
Response Rate	**17.4%**
Cooperation Rate	**56.1%**
Refusal Rate	**7.9%**

Phone Survey, Dispositions and Response Rates

National General Population Phone Dispositions (N = 404)		
SUMMARY		
Landline	**Cell Phone**	
9,440	15,571	Total
9,440	15,571	Released
1.6%	2.6%	Est. Response (AAPOR)

DETAIL		
Landline	**Cell Phone**	
2,675	3,045	Disconnected
8	0	Fax
25	17	Government/Business
0	.	Cell Phone
.	0	Landline
2,708	3,062	Unusable
1,211	3,398	No Answer
114	61	Busy
1,325	3,459	Usability Unknown
100	304	Complete
9	24	Break-Off
109	328	Usable/Eligible
301	676	Refused
11	23	Language Barrier
2,920	5,027	Voice Mail
2,013	2,842	Call Back-Retry
23	41	Strong Refusal
4	0	Privacy Manager
5,272	8,609	Usable/Eligible Unknown
26	113	Terminates
26	113	Usable/Ineligible
1.6%	2.6%	Response Rate
27.5%	36.0%	Cooperation Rate
6.0%	8.0%	Refusal Rate