

Funding inequality and structural racism in the American education system

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Understanding the American Education System



Structure of U.S. Education



Early childhood
education



Elementary school



Middle school



High school



Postsecondary
education







The U.S. K-12 and Higher Education Overview



K-12

Kindergarten to 12th grade

- 
- Education is primarily the responsibility of the state and federal government
 - US students leave school with a collection of assessments that demonstrate their readiness for either college or work
 - Grade Point Average (GPA)
- 







The U.S. K-12 and Higher Education Overview



Higher Education

- 
- Public and private institutions
 - US federal government does not exercise general control over higher education or serve as its primary funder
 - Accreditation process
 - Higher education associations
- 





Teacher Testing



Effectiveness

- Running into the same issues that we see with SAT and ACT testing
- African americans are half as likely to pass test like “Praxis I” the first time compared to their white peers



Student impact

- There are the less black and brown professors
 - Black and brown men are less likely to apply to teach
- Representation for students in schools is lowered

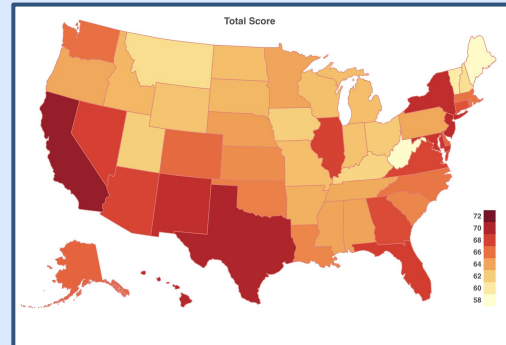
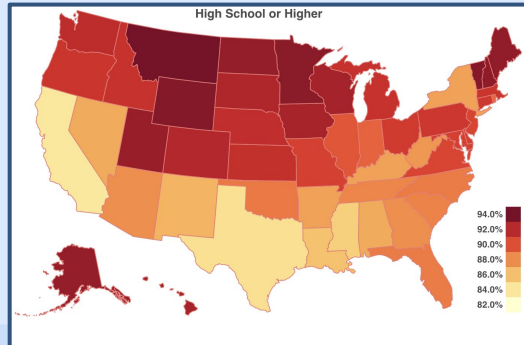


Barriers

- Each test costs about \$140
- Access to study materials
- Discouragement

Diversity in the Classroom

- 79% of teacher in 2020 were white
- Students who have teachers who are of similar racial and ethnic background tend to perform better academically and have higher self esteem.
 - Bigger impact on black and brown students
 - Math scores
- States diversity and their graduation rates.
- Hawaii unique position that is their high staff diversity and low education rates.





Teacher Wages



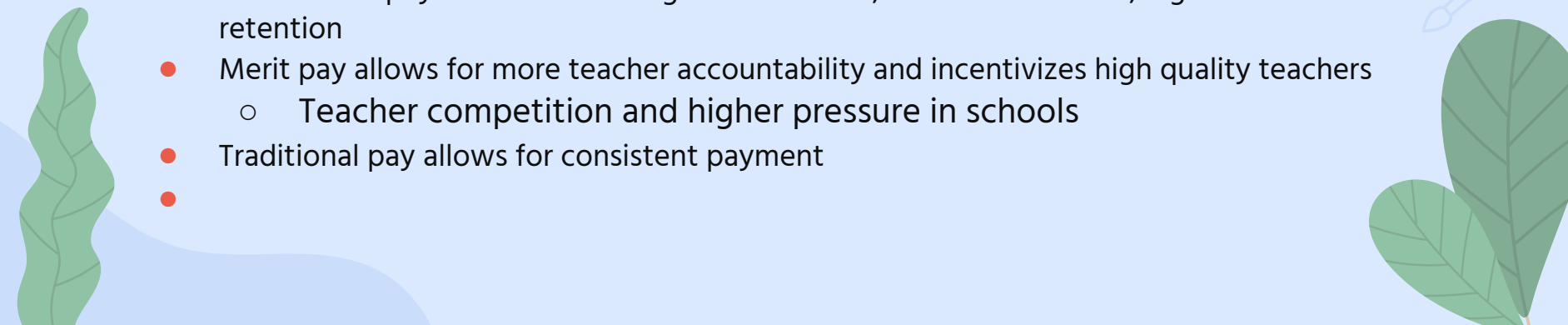
Traditional Pay

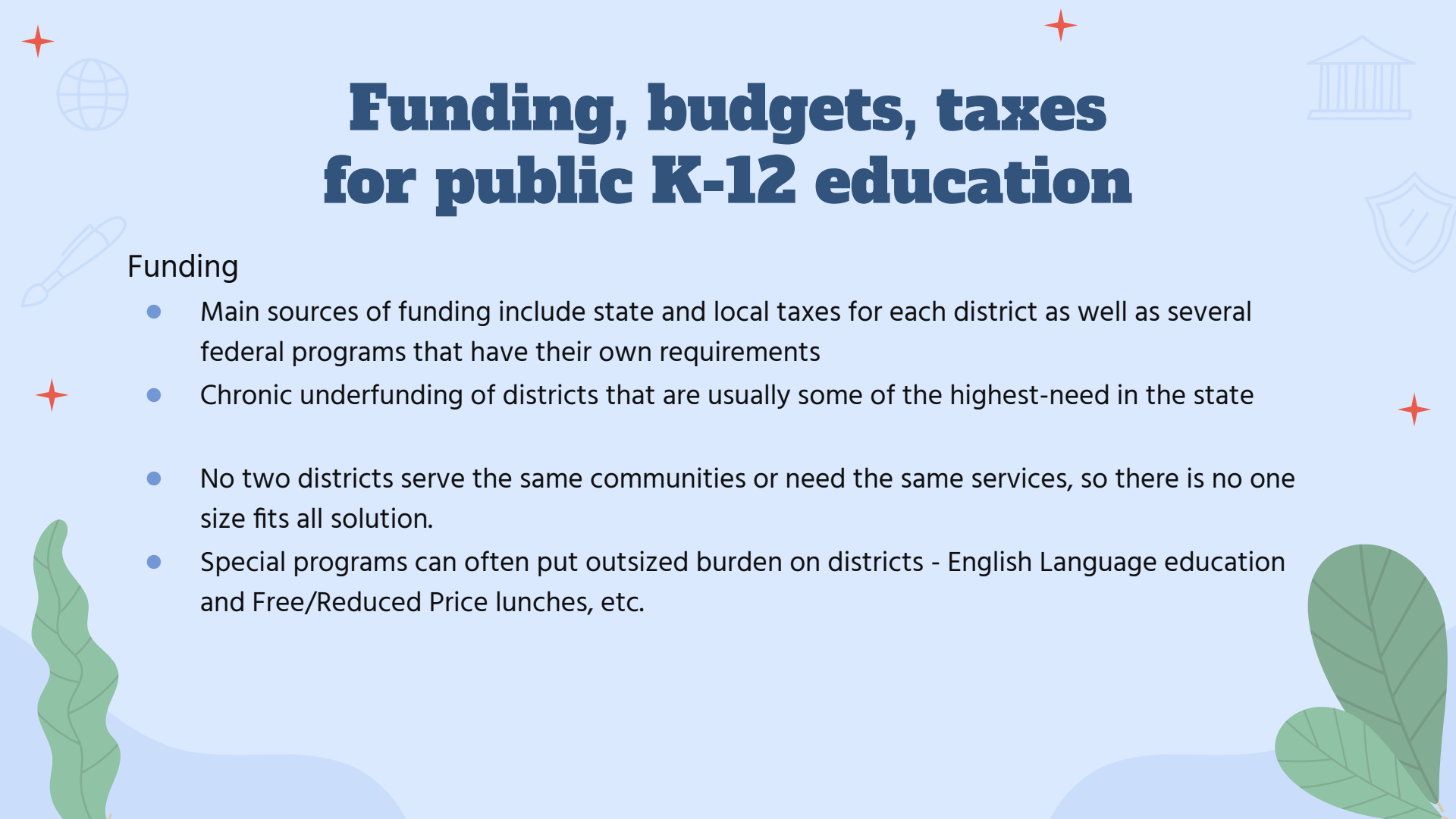
- Classroom experience
- Years of education
- Location of school

Merit Based Pay

- Student test scores
- Classroom observations
- Professional development

Impact on students:

- Merit based pay demonstrated higher test scores, better attendance, higher content retention
 - Merit pay allows for more teacher accountability and incentivizes high quality teachers
 - Teacher competition and higher pressure in schools
 - Traditional pay allows for consistent payment
 -
- 



Funding, budgets, taxes for public K-12 education

Funding

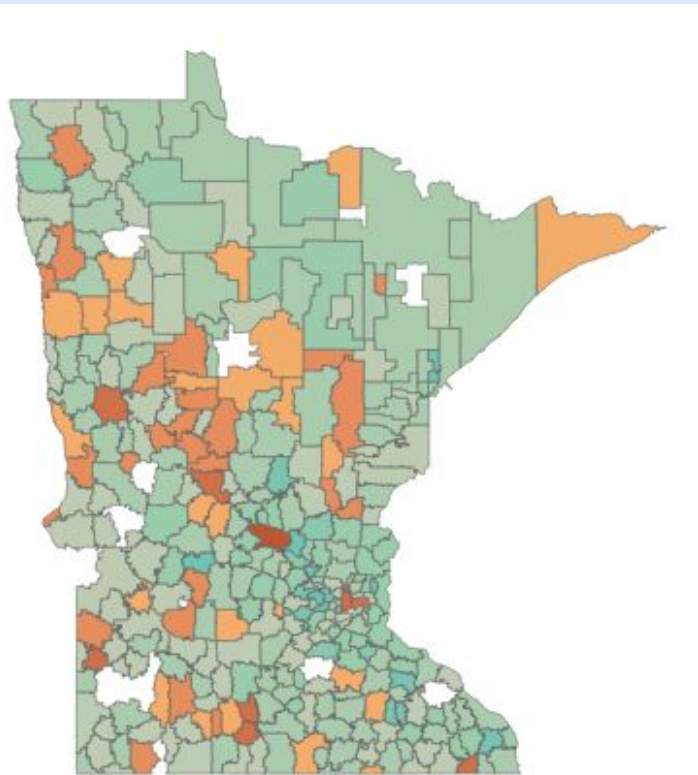
- Main sources of funding include state and local taxes for each district as well as several federal programs that have their own requirements
- Chronic underfunding of districts that are usually some of the highest-need in the state
- No two districts serve the same communities or need the same services, so there is no one size fits all solution.
- Special programs can often put outsized burden on districts - English Language education and Free/Reduced Price lunches, etc.



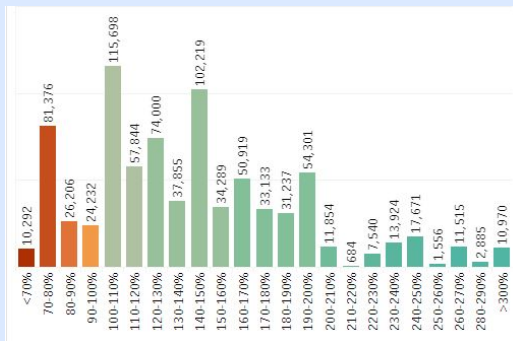
How are Minnesota schools funded?



A Look at Minnesota



“Minnesota students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, the measurement Minnesota uses as a proxy for student poverty, are more than 2.5 times more likely to be enrolled in a school district with below adequate funding than students who do not qualify”

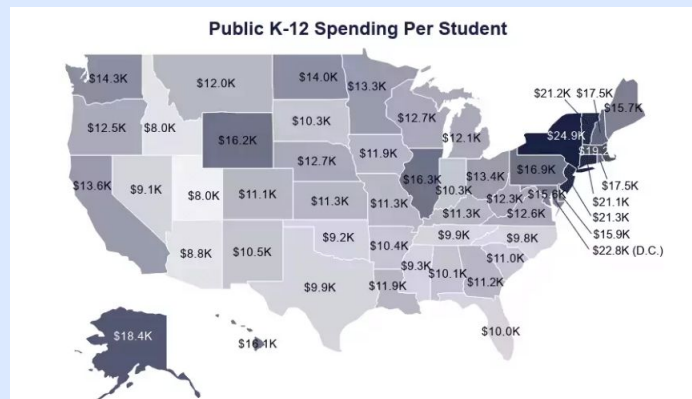
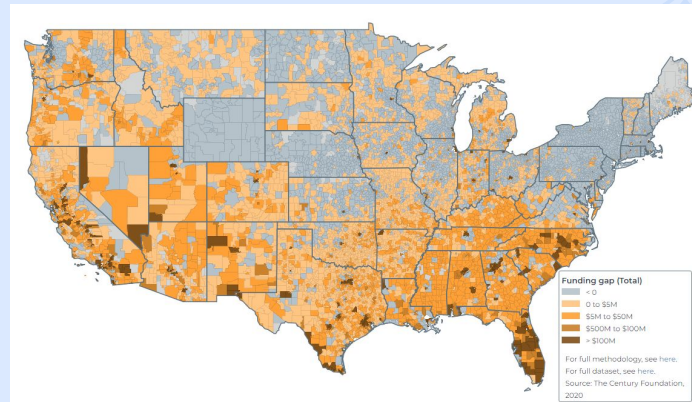


	Districts with Above Adequate Funding	Districts with Below Adequate Funding
American Indian	1.6%	2.1%
Asian	5.3%	10.8%
Hispanic	7.7%	17.1%
Black	7.4%	23%
Two or More Races	5.1%	4.8%
BIPOC	27.2%	57.9%
White	72.8%	42.1%
Low-Income	30.0%	58.7%
English Learners	4.9%	19.9%
Homeless & Highly Mobile	0.7%	1.5%
Special Education	15.7%	17.0%

Funding, budgets, taxes for public K-12 education cont.

Budgets

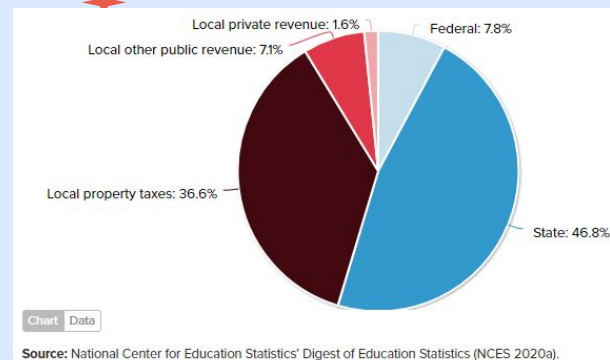
- Not just how much - also about where the money goes
- Teachers that represent the school demographics has positive impact on student performance
- Schools often would like to offer/support extracurricular activities
- State allocations of funding vary wildly across the nation, leaving districts in certain states significantly worse off than others
- Unfunded state programs can eat into budgets further



Funding, budgets, taxes for public K-12 education cont.

Taxes

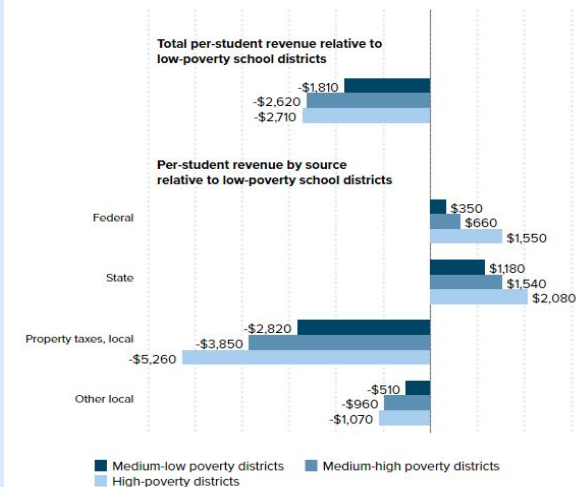
- Tax bases vary wildly from place to place
- White flight in the post-desegregation era still impacts districts today
- Schools are reliant on nearby populations being either rich or okay with high property taxes
- Recessions hit particular areas much, much harder than others
- Downward spiral of dried-up funding in the area creates negative externalities that then push more families and money out of the district to other wealthier areas (discipline issues, lack of teaching support, underfunded special needs dept)



Source: National Center for Education Statistics' Digest of Education Statistics (NCES 2020a).

Federal and state revenues fail to offset the funding disparities caused by relying on local property tax revenues

How much more or less school districts of different poverty levels receive in revenues than low-poverty school districts receive, all and by revenue source, 2017–2018





Funding, budgets, taxes, and income distribution for higher education



- **Support for public colleges and universities comes from government funding, and student tuition and other costs**
- **Tuition subsidization as the main form of government sourced funding for higher education**
- **Revenues from tuition and fees per full-time-equivalent student increased by nearly 30 percent at public institutions between 2009-2010 and 2019-2020**
- **Simultaneously, funding across the U.S. since 2008 has seen significant decreases, on both a state level and a federal level**





Funding, budgets, taxes, and income distribution for higher education



Issues as a result of these funding decreases:

- **Dependence on funding from outside sources with strings attached; threat to “public” colleges remaining public colleges**
- **This means that students and families are the ones bearing this financial burden in the form of higher tuition costs, and resulting student debt and limitation, and possibly inability to attend college all together**
- **Faculty and programming also pay for these funding cuts**

How is state funding for colleges, and federal financial aid for students being allocated? Structural issues here at the college institution level and at earlier stages in our education systems?



Discrimination and Structural Racism in Higher Education

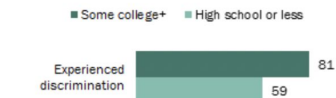


Unequal opportunity: Race and Education

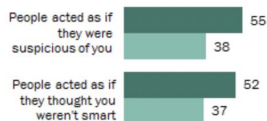
systemic racism explained

Among blacks, those who've attended college are more likely to say they've experienced racial discrimination

% of blacks saying they have ever personally experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly because of their race or ethnicity



% of blacks saying each of the following happened to them in the past 12 months because of their race or ethnicity



Note: Blacks include only non-Hispanics.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 29-May 8, 2016.

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White-black income gap persists across all education levels

Median adjusted household income, 2014

	White	Black
Bachelor's+	\$106,600	82,300
Some college	66,700	46,200
HS diploma	54,100	33,600
Less than HS	31,600	21,700

Note: Education level is that of head of household. Income standardized to a household size of three and is reported for the calendar year prior to the survey year. Race and ethnicity are based upon the race and ethnicity of the head of household. Whites and blacks include only those who reported a single race.

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2015 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (IPUMS).

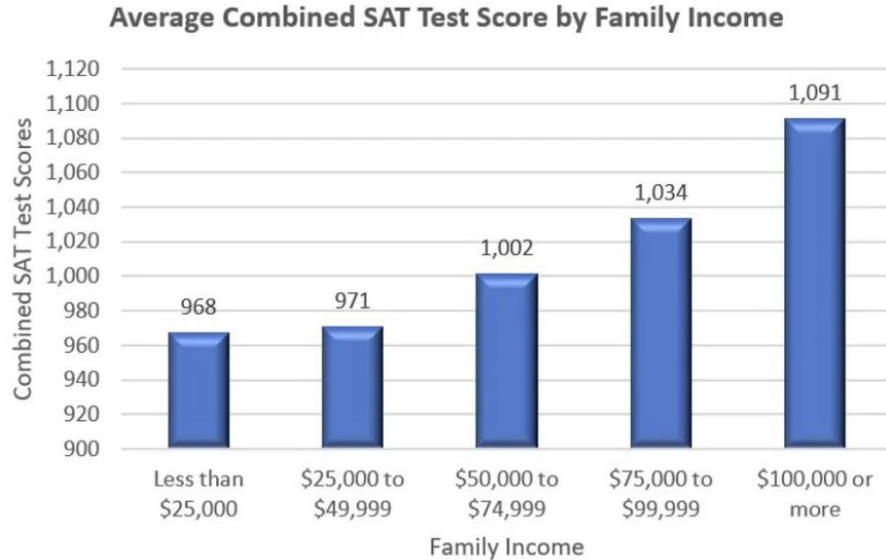
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As late as 1960s, most African-American, Latino, and Native American students were educated in wholly segregated schools funded at rates many times lower than those serving Whites and were excluded from many higher education institutions entirely.

Students in poor or predominantly minority schools are much less likely to have teachers who are fully qualified or hold higher-level degrees.

A study conducted by the University of Chicago found that the quality of instruction given African-American students was much lower than that given White students, thus creating a racial gap in aggregate achievements.

Standardized testing and racial and income biases



The average combined SAT test score grows with increasing family income. MARK

KANTROWITZ

Standardized scores have been shown to correlate with family income, indicating that when a student belongs to a lower-income household, they tend to score lower than their wealthier counterparts.

As a result, BIPOC students are impacted the most because of their racial wage gap that continues to persist.



Affirmative Action

Affirmative action: defined as a set of procedures designed to; eliminate unlawful discrimination among applicants, remedy the results of such prior discrimination, and prevent such discrimination in the future. (Cornell Law School)

According to study conducted by Harvard University, affirmative action acts as an engine for social mobility for its direct beneficiaries. This in turn leads to a more diverse leadership.

Affirmative Action

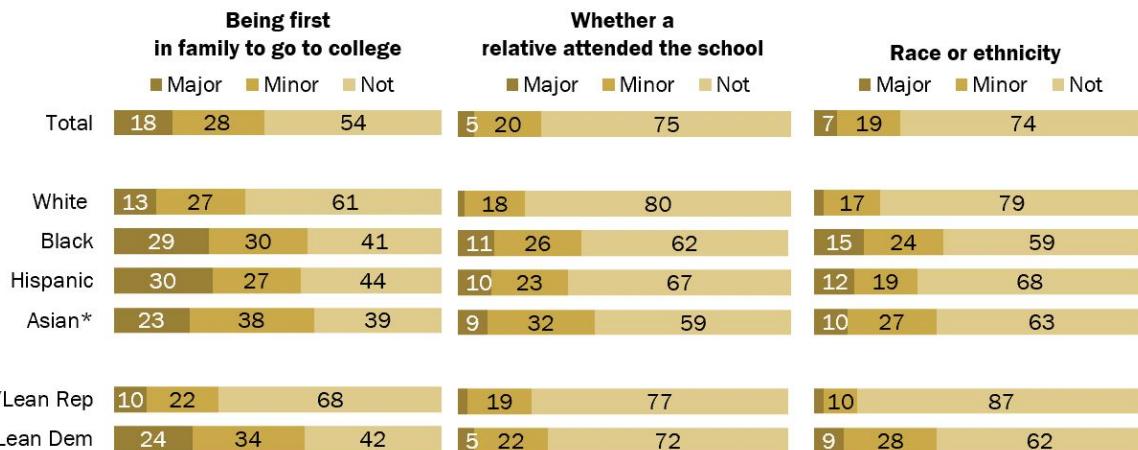
Asian-American Affirmative Action case

Americans Evaluate What Colleges Should Consider

Factor	% Who Believe It Should Be a Major Factor	A Minor Factor	Shouldn't Be Considered
Community service	19%	48%	33%
First in family to go to college	18%	28%	54%
Athletic ability	9%	36%	55%
Race or ethnicity	7%	19%	74%
Whether a relative attended the college	5%	20%	75%
Gender	4%	14%	82%

Black, Hispanic and Asian American adults more likely than White adults to say race or ethnicity, legacy, first-generation status should be factors in college admissions

% who say each of the following should be a ____ factor in college admissions decisions



*Asian adults interviewed in English only.

Note: White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted March 7-13, 2022.

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Discussion Questions

- **What are potential consequences of failing to fully fund public education in your community?**
- **How has COVID-19 exposed the flaws in our current system?**
- **Should the federal government play a larger role than it does currently?**
- **Is privatisation of the school system a valid solution?**

THANKS!

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