

## Highlights of the Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll on Public Schools

I'm curious about what our community results would look like.

In this *Kappan* article, William Bushaw (of PDK International) and Shane Lopez (of Gallup) present the results of the 44<sup>th</sup> annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll of American attitudes and beliefs about the public schools. Some excerpts:

- 35% of this representative slice of Americans says lack of financial support is the biggest problem in their community's schools, followed by lack of discipline, named by only 8%.
- 50% say the Common Core State Standards will improve the quality of education, versus 8% who say they will decrease the quality of education (40% say they will make no difference).
- 89% say it is very or somewhat important to close the racial achievement gap, and 84% think this can be done while maintaining high standards for all children.
- 62% say they are willing to pay more taxes to provide funds to improve the quality of the nation's urban public schools (37% are unwilling).
- 58% oppose providing free public education, school lunches, and other benefits to the children of illegal immigrants (41% favor it).
- 52% are in favor of requiring that teacher evaluations include how well a teacher's students perform on standardized tests (47% are opposed).
- 48% give a grade of A or B to their community's public schools, versus 19% giving a grade of A or B to the nation's public schools.
- 63% say students should be required to stay in school till they are 18 years old.
- 66% favor the idea of charter schools.
- 70% favor laws that allow parents to petition to remove the leadership and staff of failing schools.
- 45% say another student bullied them when they were in school; 16% confess to bullying another student.
- 58% say schools should investigate and discipline students involved in bullying incidents outside of school, including over the Internet.
- 71% say they have trust and confidence in the people who are teaching children in the public schools.

"Public Education in the United States: A Nation Divided" by William Bushaw and Shane Lopez in *Phi Delta Kappan*, September 2012 (Vol. 94, #1, p. 8-25); the full results of 44<sup>th</sup> Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools are available at <http://www.pdkpoll.org>.