

The State of Education in Illinois 2021-2022 Report

March 9, 2022



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Overview



- Illinois values public education
- Illinoisans want teachers and parents to have the largest say in our schools and believe education funding should increase
- The public is very concerned about the teacher and education employee shortages
- The public supports policies that will help attract and retain educators and support staff, which could help combat the teacher and education employee shortages
- Illinoisans largely support teaching about racism and slavery in schools

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Poll details

Conducted by:

- Jill Normington of Normington Petts
- Pat Brady of Next Generation Strategies

Sample:

- 1,000 adults (not just voters) in Illinois

Dates:

- December 2-12, 2021 (2021-2022 school year)

Margin of error:

- +/- 3.1% with 95% confidence

Data weighted:

- U.S. Census data for Illinois

Previous waves were:

- 2018-2019 school year
- 2019-2020 school year
- 2020-2021 school year



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Illinois continues to value public education

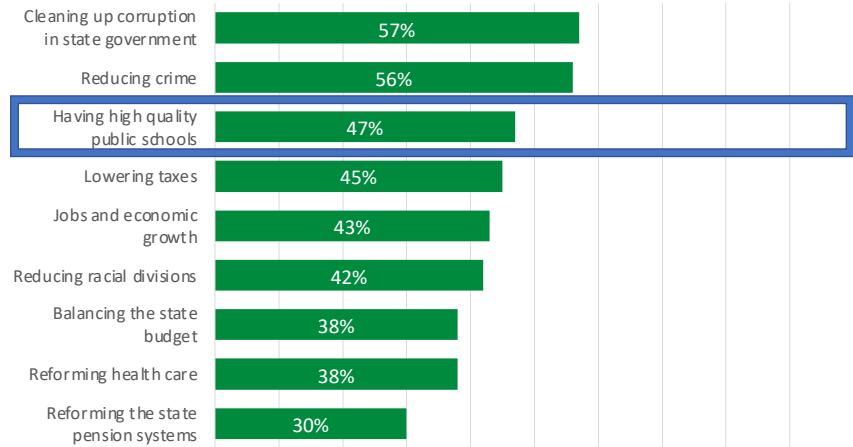


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High quality schools are more important to the public than balancing the state's budget or lowering taxes



"Now, I am going to read you a list of priorities for Illinois. Please tell me how important each one is to you, personally, on a scale of zero to ten where a zero means not a priority at all and ten means it is your top priority. You can choose any number from zero to ten."



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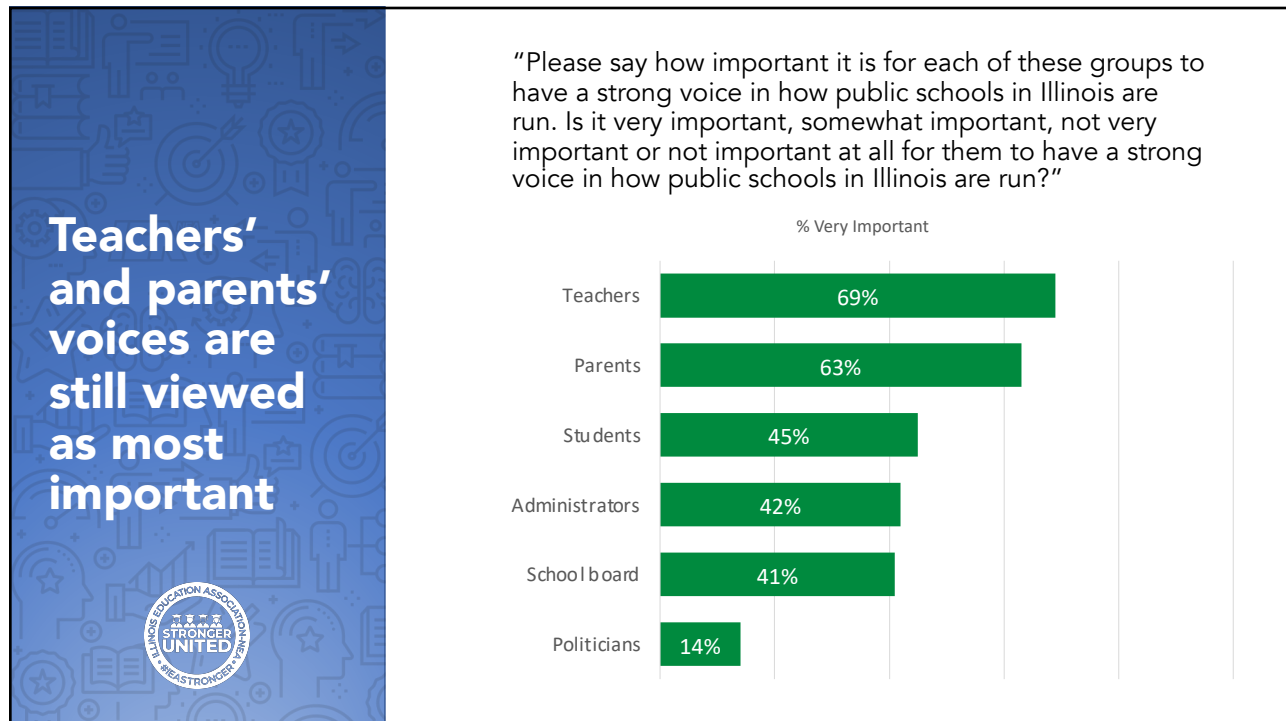
Illinoisans believe teachers and parents should have the largest say in how schools are run and believe education funding should increase



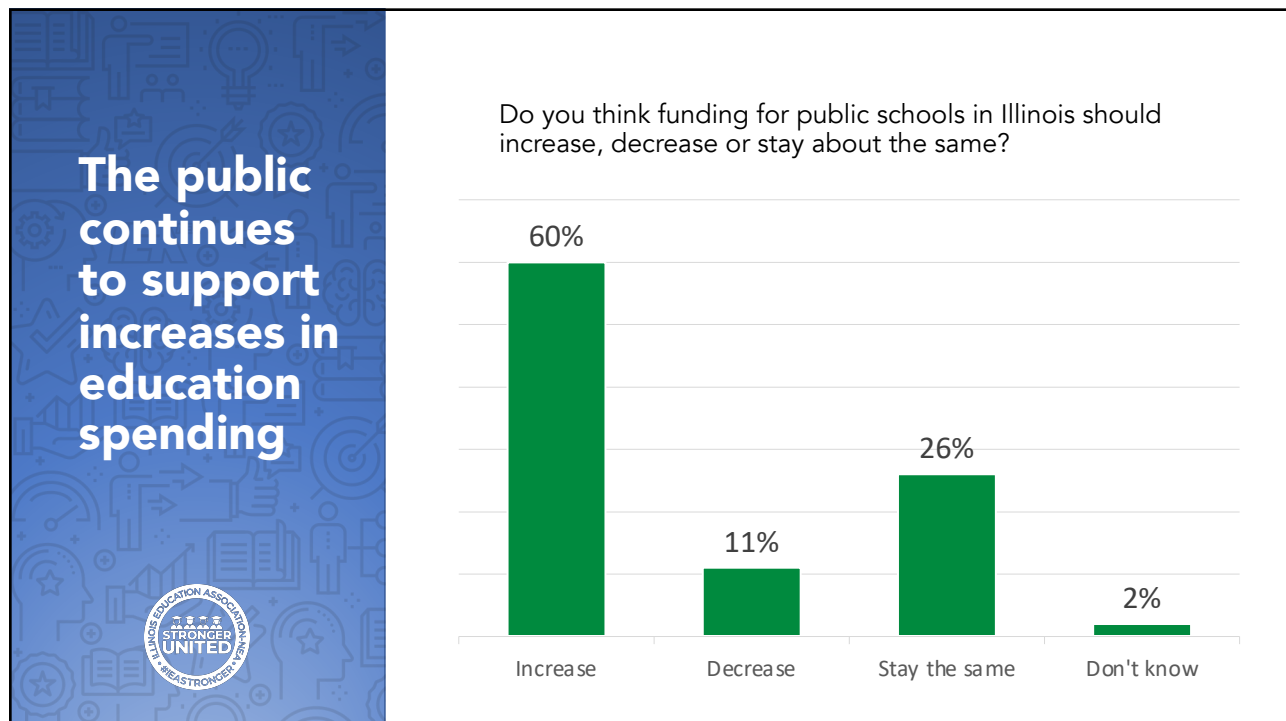
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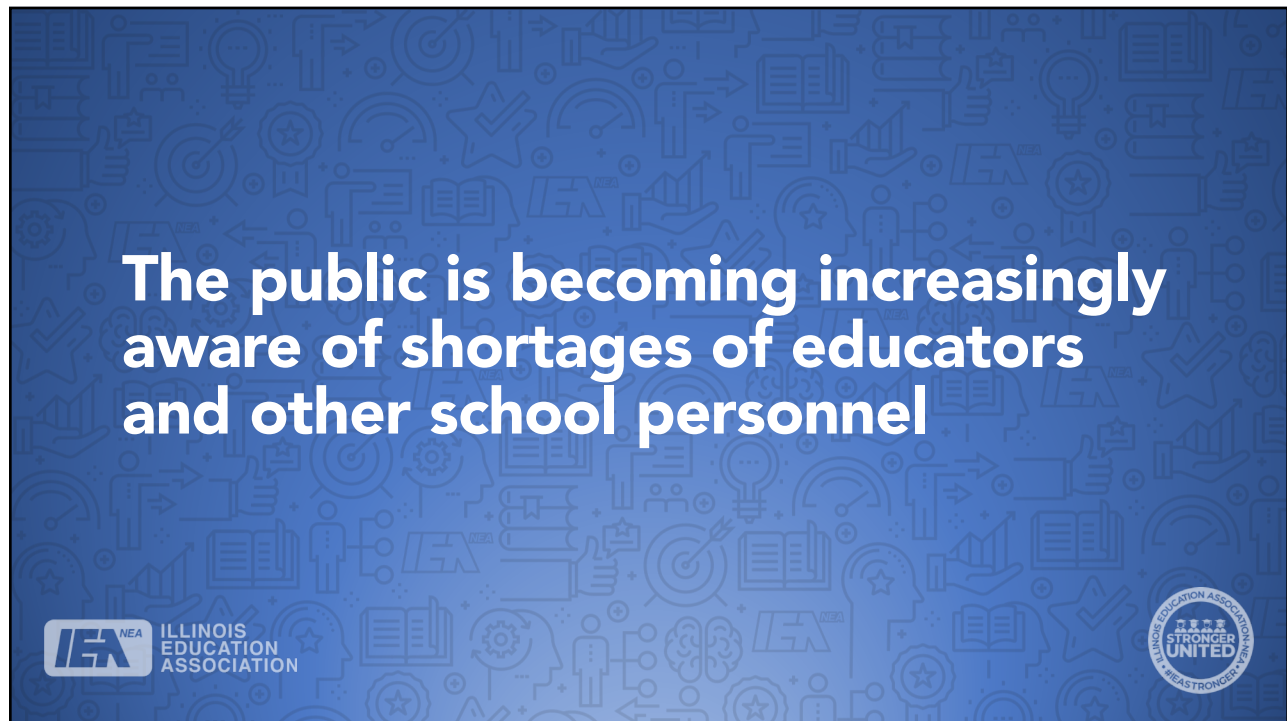
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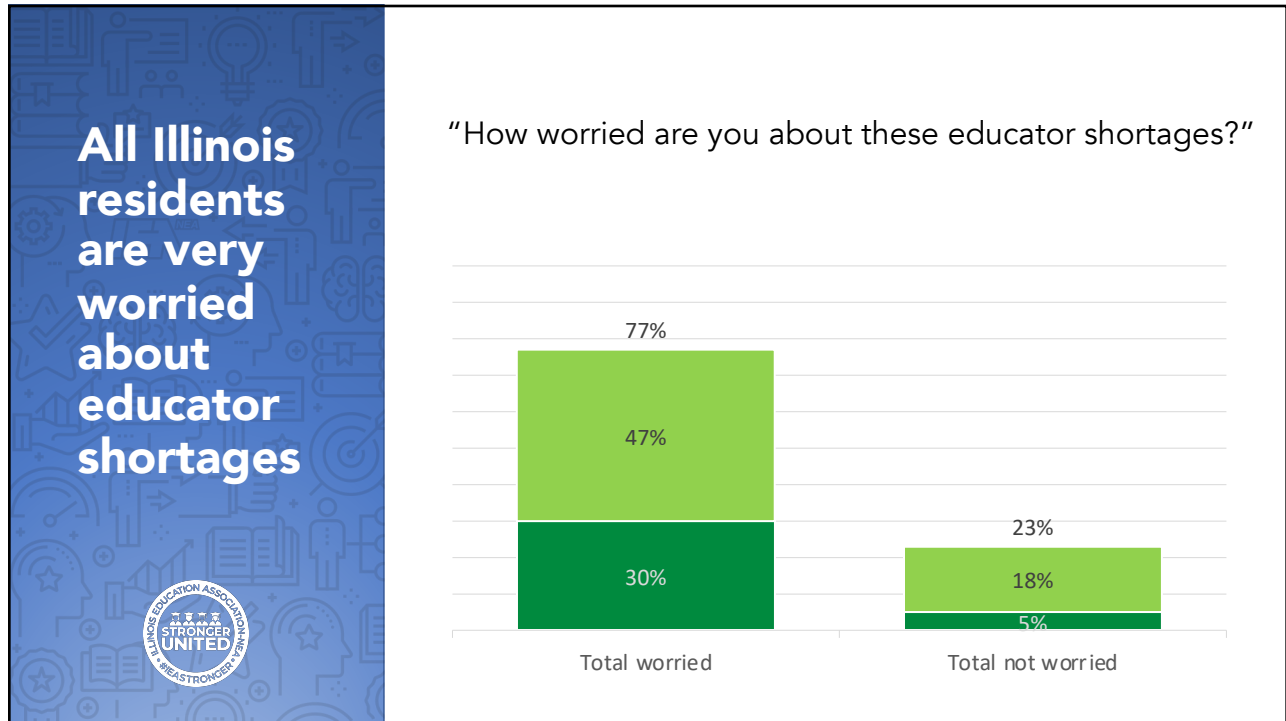
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Data show that COVID-19 is exacerbating the teacher shortage crisis

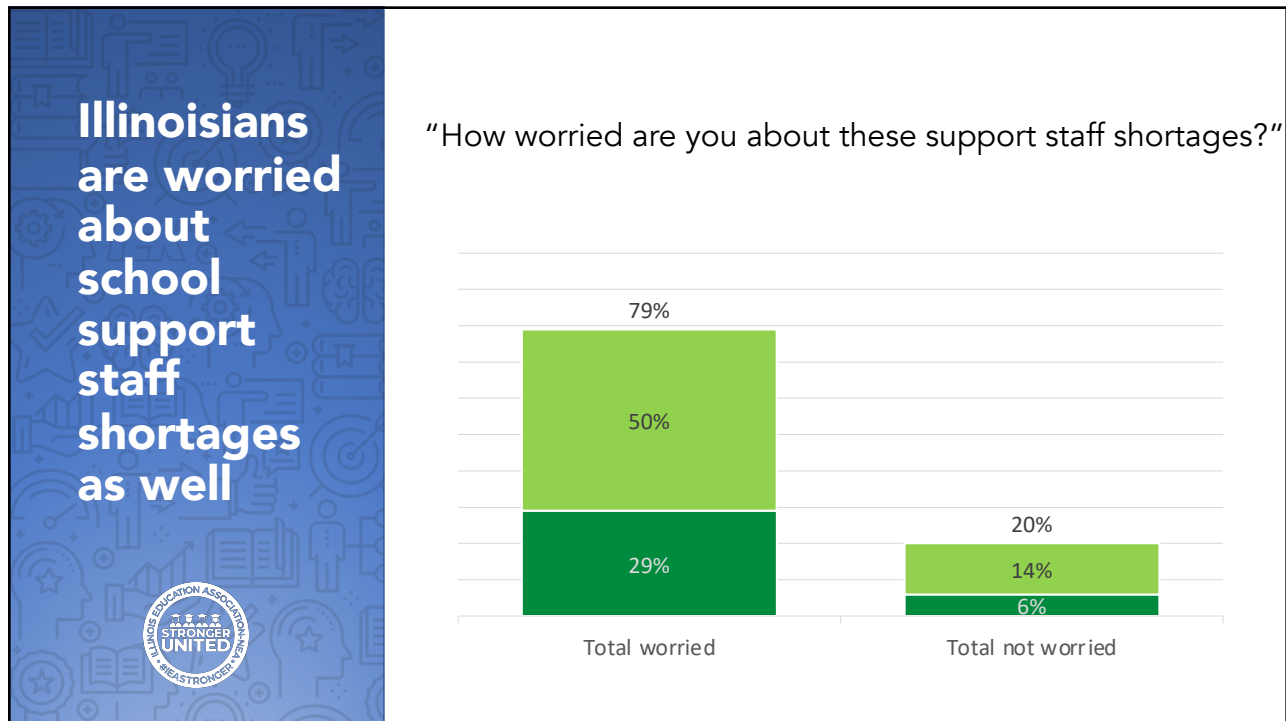


- One-in-three IEA members who were polled in September 2021, stated that they were considering leaving the profession
- That same poll showed two-in-three IEA members felt “more burned out than normal this year”
- TRS reported that retirements increased by 67% in August 2020 compared to August 2019
- This year there were more than twice as many openings this year as there were in 2017 (4,120 vs. 2,006)

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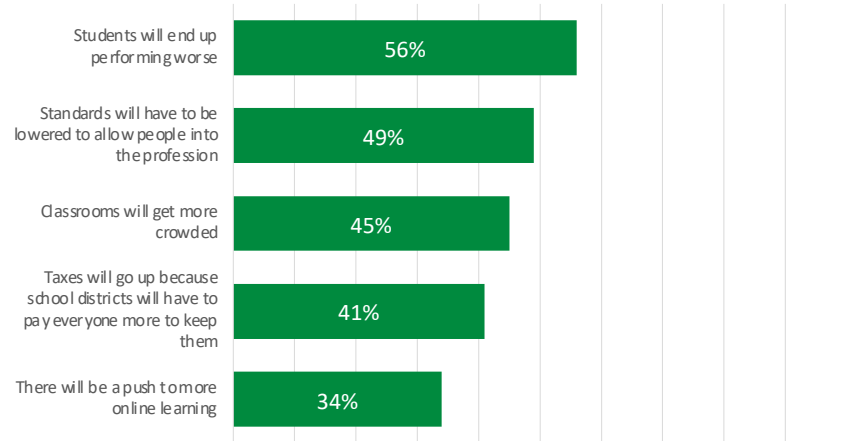


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Fears center around lower student performance and lower standards because of the educator shortage



"If that happens, that one in four teachers, school psychologists and paraprofessionals leave the profession, there are many potential outcomes. For each one, say how worried that outcome makes you—very worried, somewhat worried, not very worried, or not worried at all."



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The public supports policies that will help attract and retain educators and support staff, which could help combat the teacher shortage

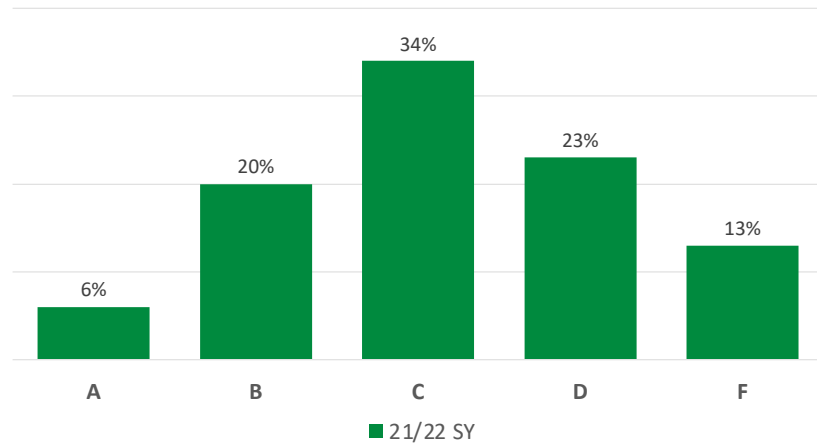


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They generally believe that Illinois could do a better job retaining talent.



“What grade would you give the public schools for attracting and retaining the best educators?”



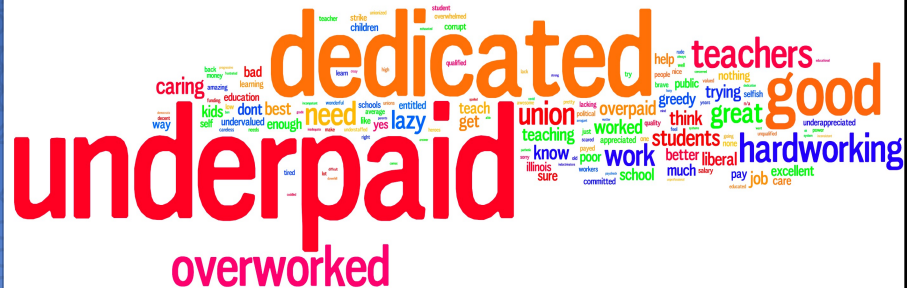
Overall GPA: 1.83

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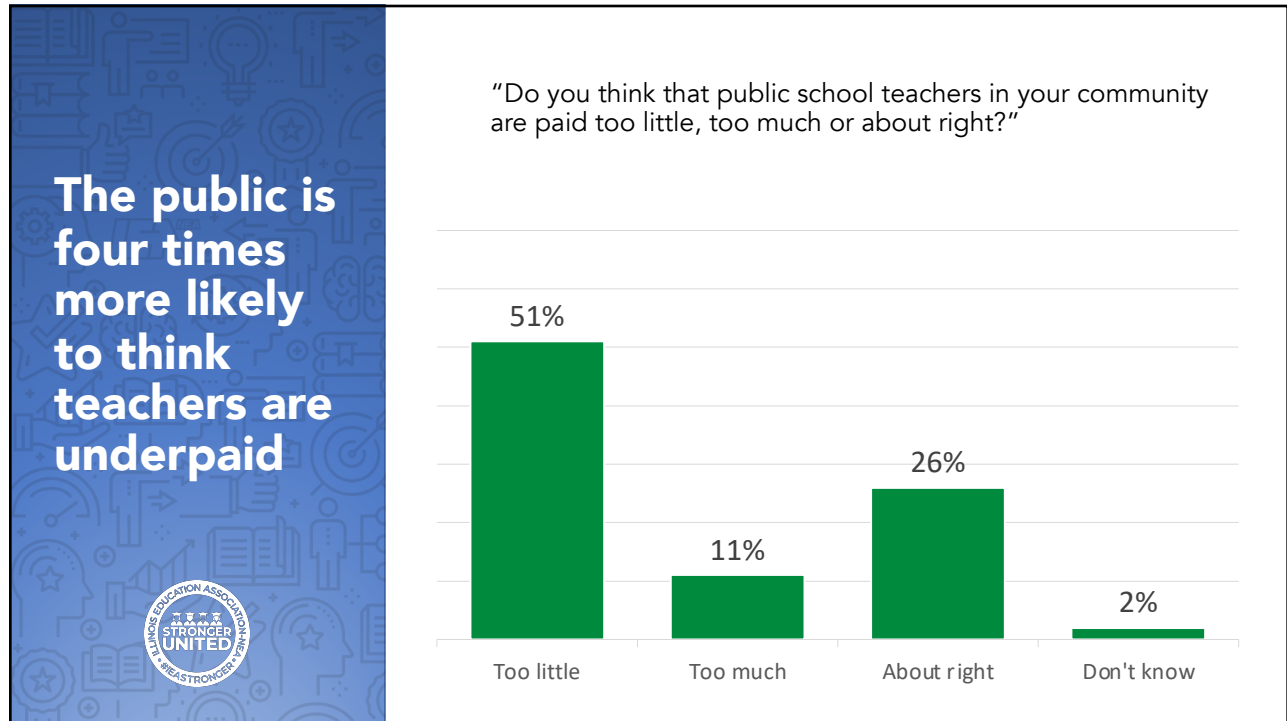
Illinois residents believe that teachers are dedicated, underpaid and hard-working



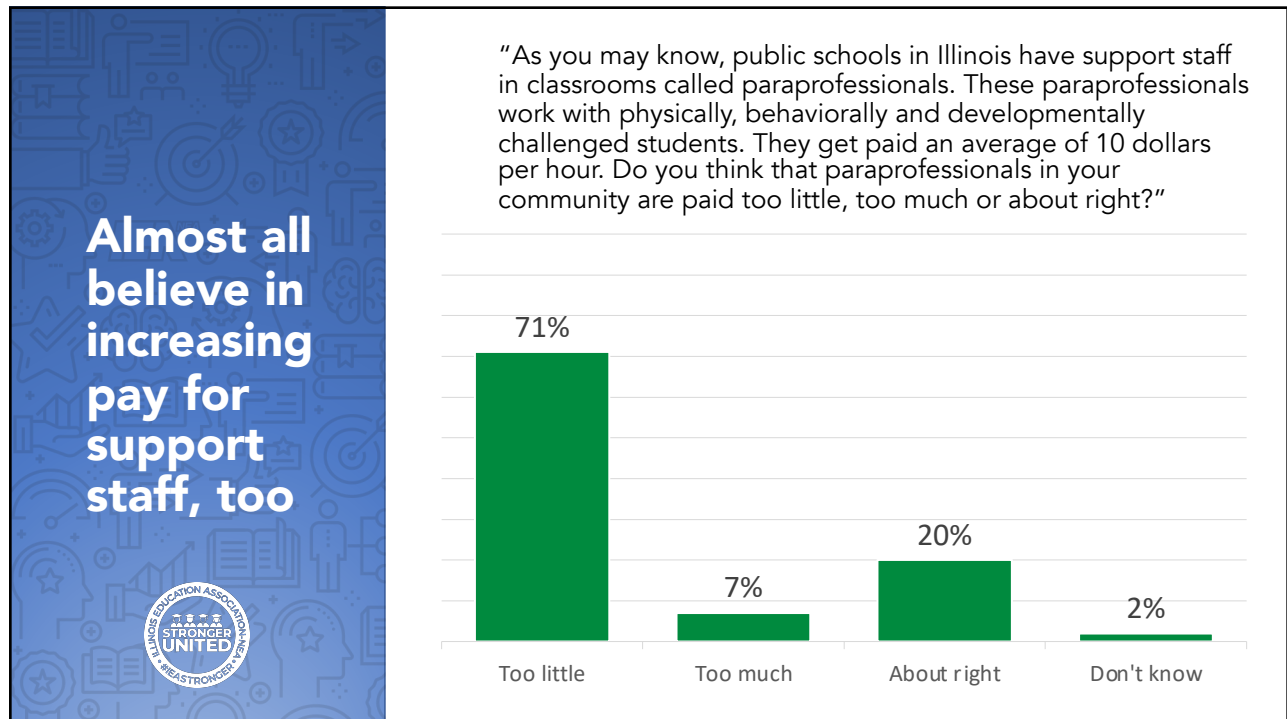
"I want you to think about Illinois public school teachers and I want you to tell me the ONE WORD or phrase that first comes to mind."



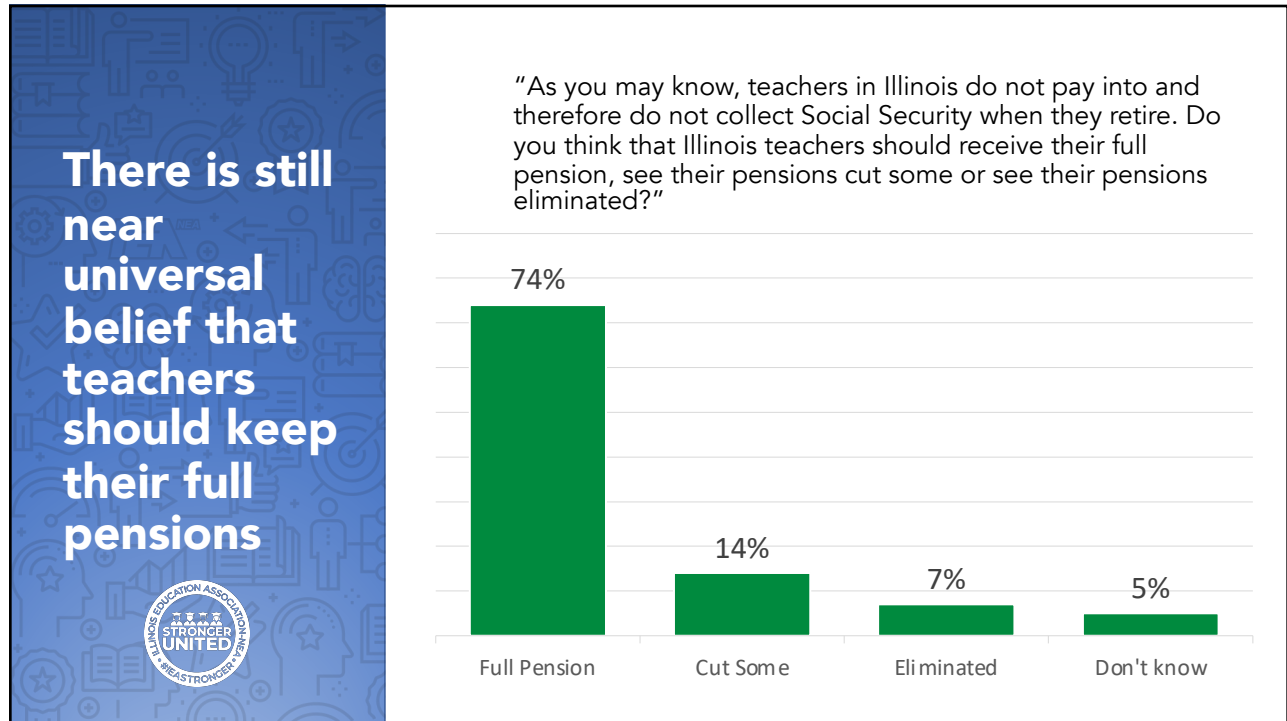
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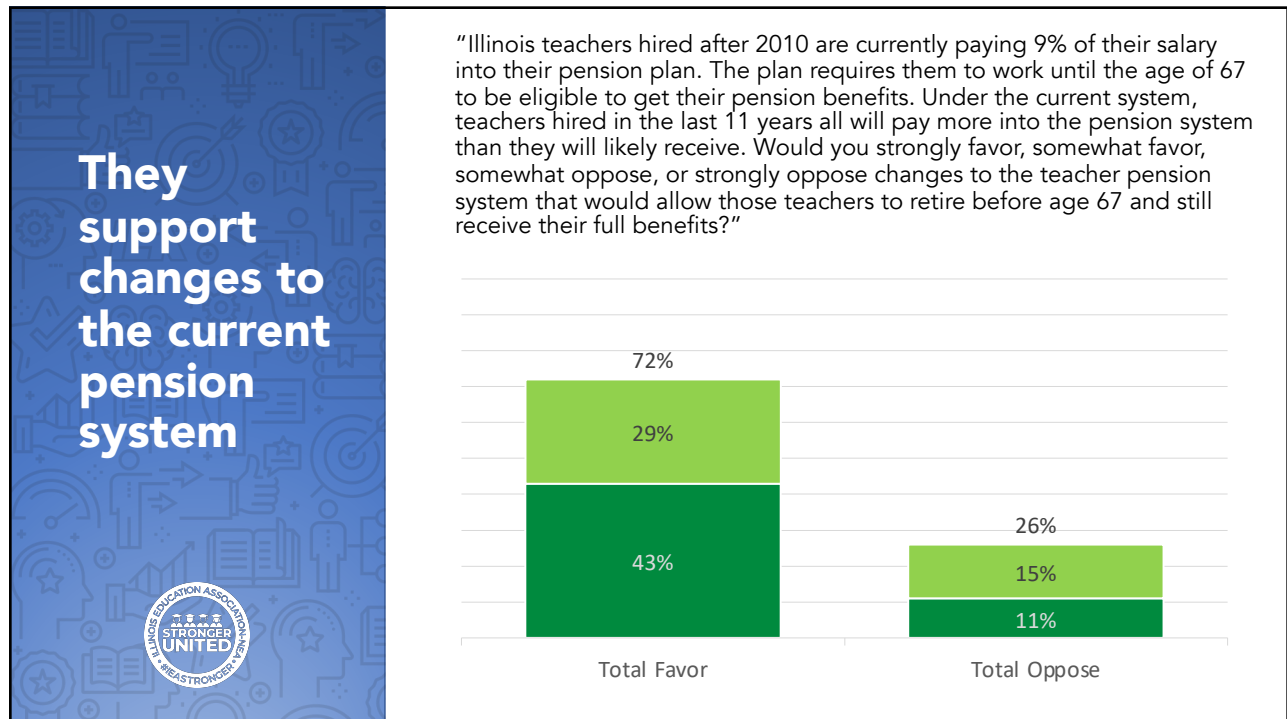
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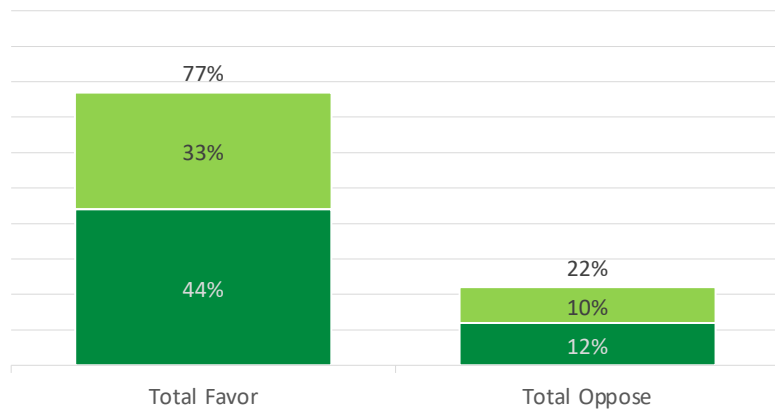


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They strongly support loan forgiveness for teachers from Illinois



"As you may know, public schools in Illinois have had a teacher shortage for several years. To attract new people into the profession, a new law has been proposed that would allow teachers who graduate from Illinois public colleges and universities and who then teach in Illinois public schools for five years to apply for a tax credit for 100% of their student loan debt over the next five years. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this new law?"

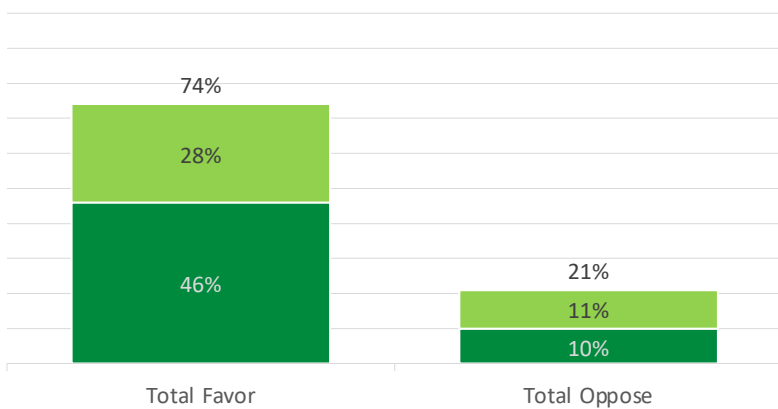


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Support for higher pay for adjunct professors is also broadly popular



"More than 50% of higher education teachers are known as adjunct faculty. That is, they are college professors who are hired on a contract basis per semester and are not eligible for tenure. These adjunct faculty are paid much less than other professors. In fact, more than 25% of adjunct faculty qualify for public assistance. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose a minimum wage for adjunct faculty that would allow them to make ends meet?"

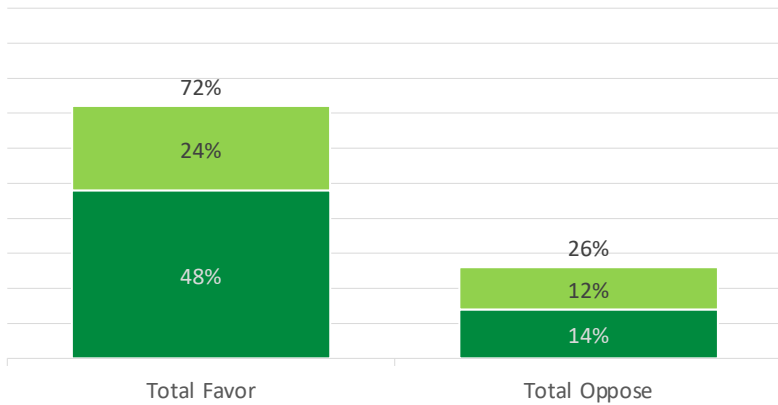


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Support for mental health sick days for public school employees is very popular



"Currently, the definition of a sick day for public school employees does not include mental health. Over the course of the pandemic, if they took a day off due to exhaustion or stress, they could be disciplined. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose broadening the definition of sick day for public school employees to include mental health?"

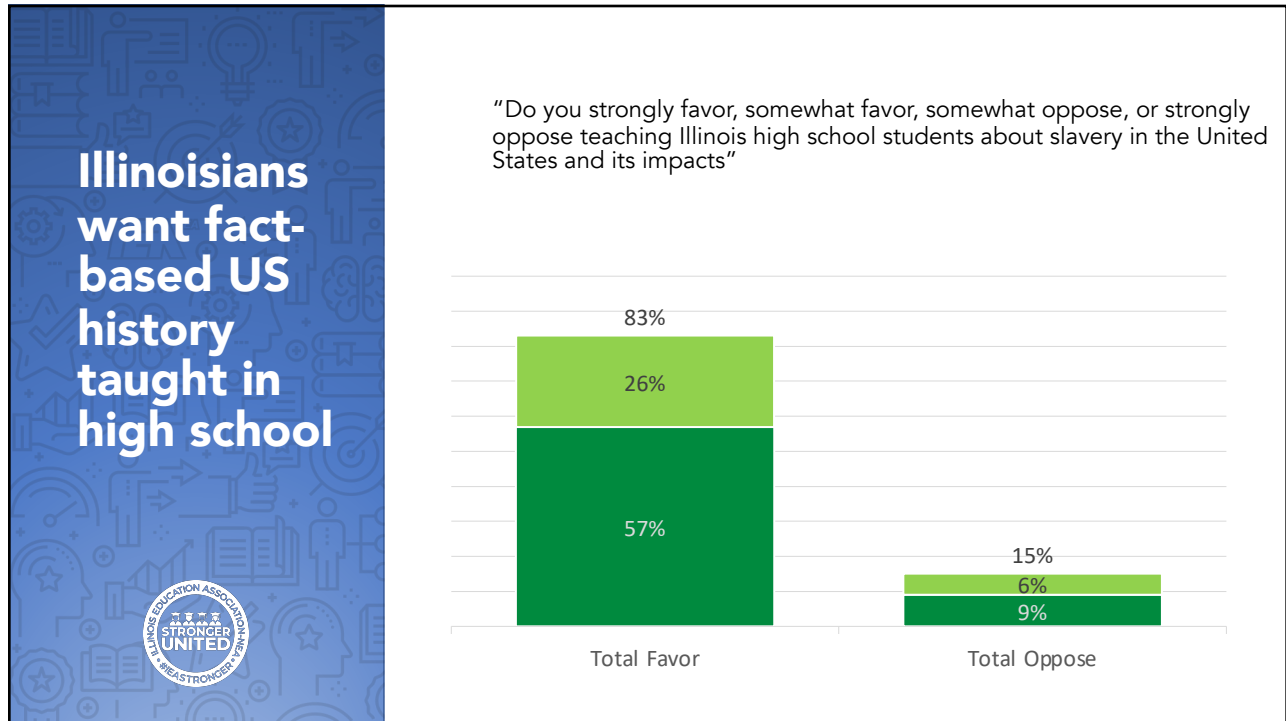


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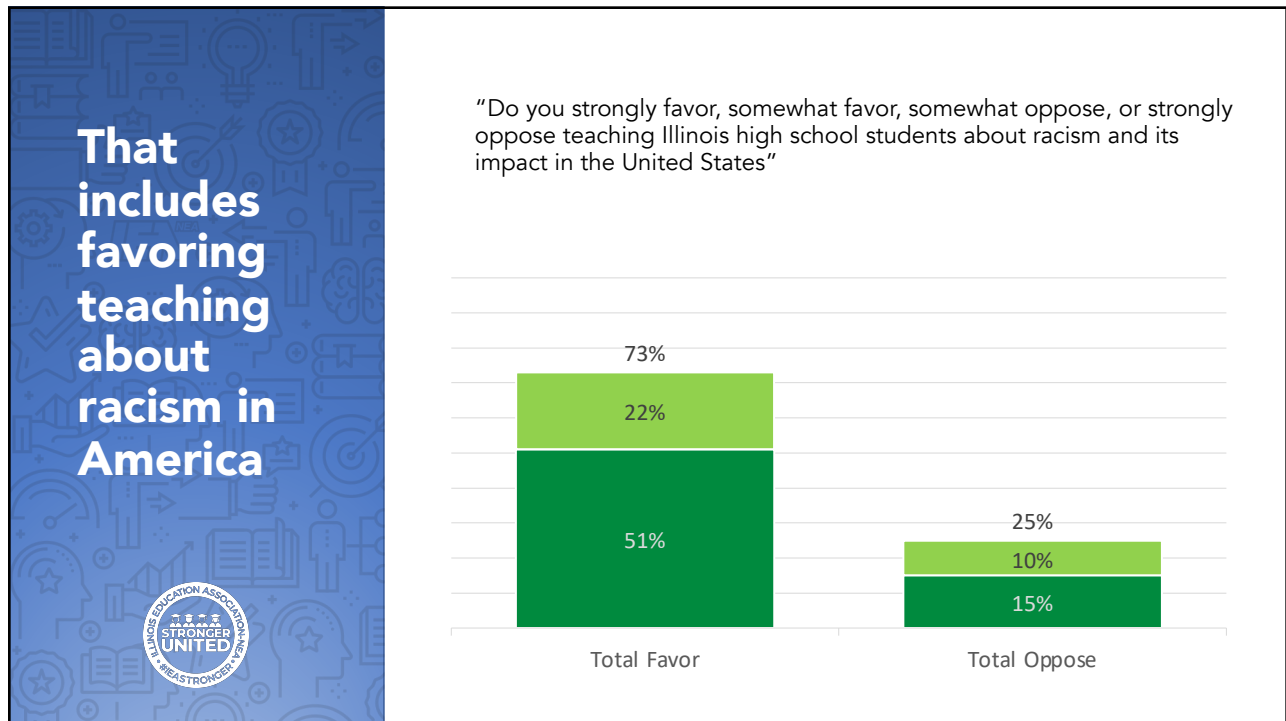
While CRT appears controversial, even those who want to ban it actually favor teaching about racism and slavery



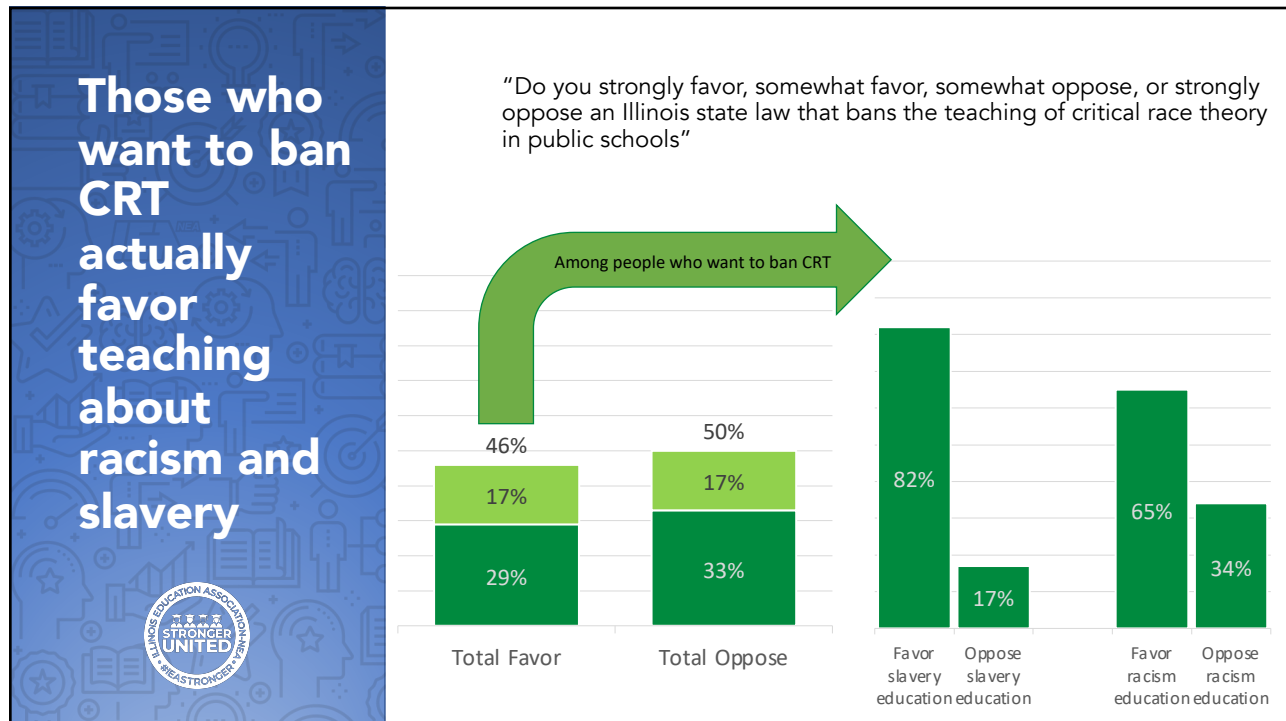
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