

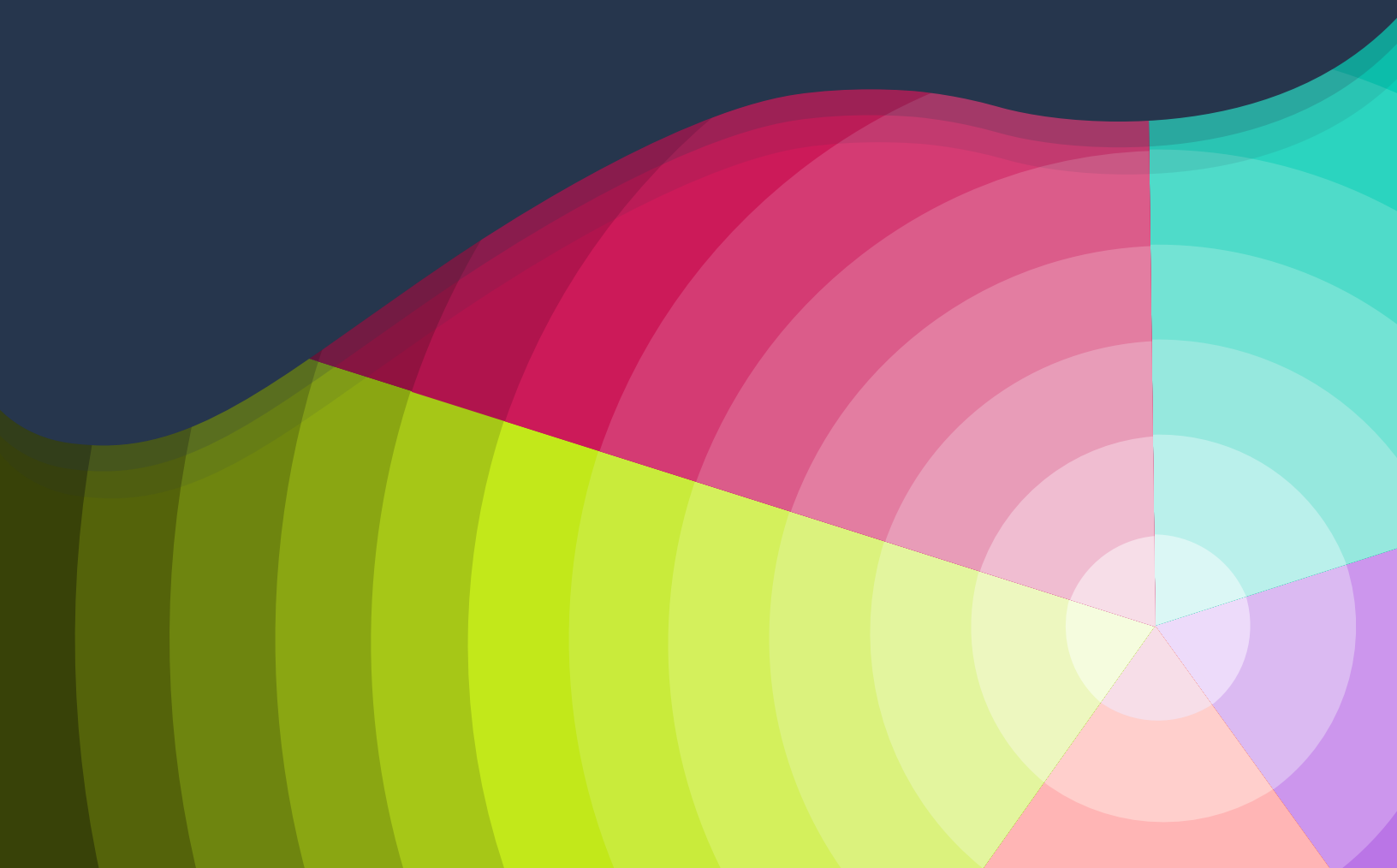


2nd Edition

The State of Educational Opportunity in Connecticut

A Survey of Connecticut Parents

February 2026



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Dear Friends,

Over the last several years, families across Connecticut have shown that education access and opportunity move fastest when parents are at the table as partners and leaders, not as an afterthought. After years of disrupted schooling, a spike in chronic absenteeism, and persistent gaps in opportunity, it is parents and caregivers who see most clearly whether our education system is preparing children for the lives they deserve.

This year, through the second edition of our statewide survey of Connecticut parents, conducted as part of a national effort, we asked again what is working, what is not, and what families most want for their children. In Connecticut, 525 parents and guardians of school-aged children participated in the survey between September 30 and December 1, 2025, contributing to a national research effort that includes responses from more than 23,000 families nationwide, along with representative samples in each state and the District of Columbia that allows for state-by-state comparisons.

Here is what Connecticut parents told us in 2026.



Parents want more time, more support, and smart investment in learning. Nearly nine in ten Connecticut parents favor using public dollars to provide free tutoring for students who fall below grade level in reading and math. A similar share support public funding for free summer camps and programs.



Access to tutoring, structured learning time, and daily reading still lags behind. Despite this broad support, only one in four Connecticut children are getting academic tutoring, and less than half are in supervised afterschool or summer programs. The gap between what families say they want and what the system provides shows up directly in student outcomes, especially in early literacy. These gaps fall hardest on Black, Hispanic, and low-income students. The same communities where reading proficiency and math performance are lowest are also the communities where chronic absenteeism is highest.



Families can choose, but choices are limited. About seven in ten parents say they feel they have a choice in which school their child attends. A similar share say that if they could decide all over again, they would choose the same school. That still leaves roughly a third of families who either do not feel they have meaningful options or are not sure they would pick their child's current school again.

Connecticut parents are generally satisfied with their children's schools, they believe in their kids, and they are asking us to invest in proven supports like tutoring, summer learning, daily reading, strong teaching, and clear pathways to college, careers, and service. Our challenge is to close the distance between what families want and what the system actually delivers, especially for children of color and children from low-income communities.

The full survey report is available at conncan.org. National results, the survey instrument, and the complete dataset can be found at 50can.org.

Sincerely,



Steven Hernández, Esq.

Executive Director

Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now (ConnCAN)

Methodology

Edge Research conducted a nationwide survey of 23,104 U.S. parents and guardians of school-aged children (K-12th grade) in each of the 50 states plus the District of Columbia. **In Connecticut, 525 parents and guardians of K-12 children were surveyed.** Respondents could take the survey in either English or Spanish, based on their preference. The survey was in the field from September 30, 2025, to December 1, 2025.

DATA COLLECTION

The survey used a mixed-mode methodology to reach as many households as possible. First, survey respondents were recruited using online, non-probability samples obtained via national opt-in consumer research panels. These surveys were mobile-optimized (meaning participants can take the survey on a PC or mobile device, which helps reach those who do not have internet access but do have a mobile data plan). In states where Edge Research was not able to collect enough surveys using this method, they obtained supplementary text-to-web interviews.

SURVEY REPRESENTATIVENESS

As respondents entered the survey, they submitted demographic information, and quotas were set to ensure the sample is proportionately distributed in accordance with the most recent U.S. Census and National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data on U.S. parents in each state. Quotas functioned by predetermining the number of desired respondents by gender identity, race, ethnicity, child’s grade, and grade level in each state. Once the desired number was reached with each quota group, it closed, and additional respondents were turned away. After the survey came out of the field, Edge Research reviewed the data and applied additional weights by income, marital status, parent gender, race/ethnicity, school type, and area (e.g., urban, suburban, small town, rural) within states.

The following tables provide the demographics of survey respondents in Connecticut after weighting.

RACE/ETHNICITY							
Hispanic/ Latino of Any Race	White Alone	Black/ African American Alone	American Indian or Alaska Native Alone	Asian Alone	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Alone	Some Other Race Alone	Two or More Races
20%	64%	10%	0.3%	3%	0.3%	0.3%	2%

INCOME DISTRIBUTION		
Low Income	Middle Income	High Income
35%	53%	12%

SCHOOL LEVEL		
K-5th	6th-8th	9th-12th
45%	23%	32%

¹ <https://www.census.gov/>
² <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/tableviewer/acsProfile/2021>

GRADE OF CHILD

K	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
8%	6%	8%	8%	7%	8%	9%	7%	7%	7%	8%	8%	9%

SCHOOL TYPE

Local or Traditional Public School	Public Magnet School	Public Charter School	Private Independent School	Parochial/ Religious School	Virtual/ Online Public School	Homeschool	Microschool	Other Type of School
69%	9%	4%	10%	2%	1%	3%	0.4%	2%

INCOME DEFINITIONS

In the pages that follow, we provide results for low-, middle- and high-income parents. These income buckets were calculated using the Pew Research Center’s study on “The State of the American Middle Class” and their category definitions:

- Middle-income households are defined as those with an income that is two-thirds to double that of the U.S. median household income, after being adjusted for household size.
- Lower-income households have incomes less than two-thirds of the median
- High-income households have incomes that are more than double the median.

Following these definitions, Edge Research adjusted the incomes reported in the survey to reflect a three-person household using the equivalence scales technique. Pulling from the U.S. Census 2023 Annual Social and Economic Supplements, they used the three-person household income breaks of \$61,000 to \$183,000 as middle, and values above and below those thresholds as lower and upper income respectively. Edge Research also adjusted each household income using Regional Price Parities (RPPs)—indexes from the Bureau of Economic Analysis—that compare local prices to the national average. These tell whether an area is more or less expensive than the country overall. RPPs are applied differently based on what is known about the household’s location. If the exact metro area is known, the RPP is used for that metro area. If the household is in a non-metro (rural or small town) area, the RPP for non-metro areas in that state is used.

DATA QUALITY CONTROL AND STANDARDS

Edge Research employed several practices to ensure data quality. The survey platform used reCAPTCHA to screen for bots. They also applied a third-party tool called Research Defender to screen out known bad actors and respondents with high survey-taking rates. In addition, data was monitored regularly while in the field. Once all responses were collected, they applied additional data cleaning processes, clearing data for cheating, speeding, inattentiveness, and AI-generated responses.

Edge Research follows the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Code of Professional Ethics and Practices to maintain the highest standards of competence, integrity, accountability, and transparency in public opinion and survey research work.

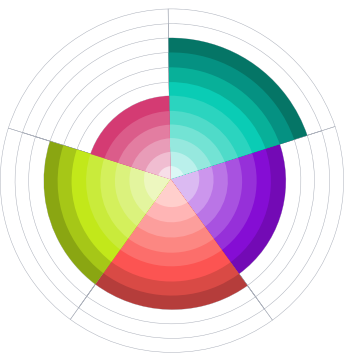
³ <https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/time-series/demo/cps/cps-asec.2023.html#list-tab-165711867>

⁴ Standards and Ethics - AAPOR

How to Read the Results

One challenge with a survey of this size was how to present the results in an accessible way that doesn't sacrifice the depth of insights. We decided to present the answers in two ways: first with an overview of the results across 15 questions for our state and then with a more in-depth look at how our state compared to all the other states for a few key questions.

OUR STATE SUMMARY



To help make it easier to look at our state's full results at a glance, we present the answers from our parents over two pages. At the top of the first page is the number of parents who participated in the survey.

We also provide a way to view our state's **relative strengths and weaknesses through a circle with five wedges**, one for each of the five categories of the survey: 1) School quality and opportunity (**pink**), 2) Tutoring, summer, and mental health (**green**), 3) Out of school activities (**teal**), 4) Information and engagement (**purple**), and 5) College and career readiness (**orange**).

Each of the five categories is made up of three questions. These are presented below each category with **our state's results compared to other states represented by a tier** shown to the right of each question, from low to high. These tiers are scored from 1 (low) to 4 (high) and the scores across the three questions determine how many rows are colored in for the wedge (up to a possible number of 12 rows).

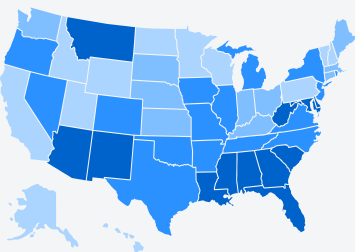
The state results for each question are presented in circles that offer a comparison of the state against the national average and the 2025 results compared to 2024. For yes/no questions, the results are presented as the percentage who said yes, rounded to the nearest whole number. For questions about parents' opinions and attitudes, we utilized a Likert scale and **reported out the percentage choosing the highest option**. For example, on question 1, which measures parents' satisfaction with their child's school, we present the percentage who answered that they were "very satisfied." This helps ground the comparison discussion in a high bar for success.

State Tier



OUR STATE IN CONTEXT

The second section of this report provides comparative results for all 50 states plus D.C., one question at a time.



For the maps, a key provides the scale for the map and explains the numbers behind each of the four shades of blue. The darkest shade of blue is always the highest numbers and the lightest shade of blue is always the lowest numbers. Our state is outlined in red.

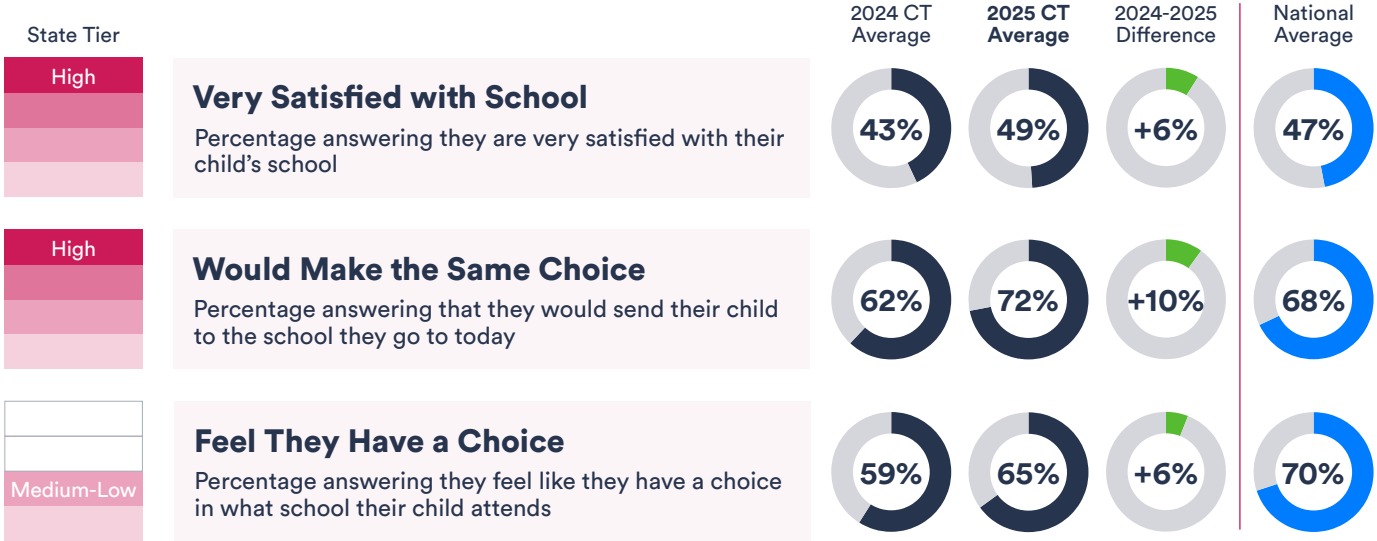
For the list, states are ordered from highest performing states at the top to lowest performing states at the bottom. Our state is identified with a red box to make it easier to spot.

CONNECTICUT

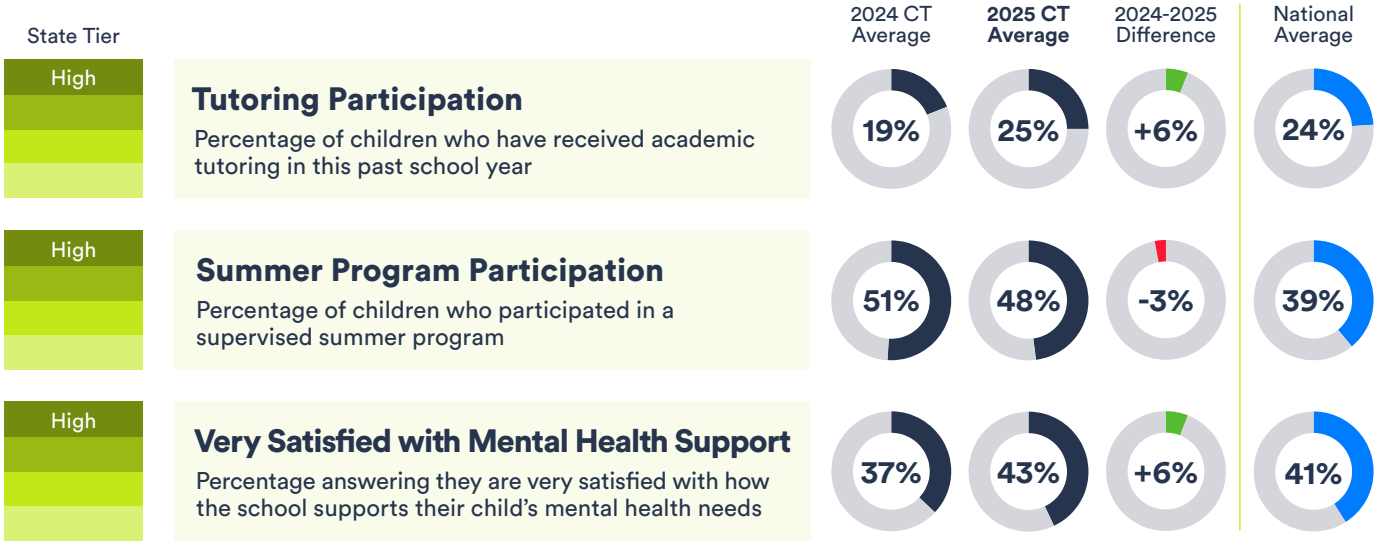
Surveyed September 30 - December 1, 2025
Sample size (N) = 525 parents and guardians



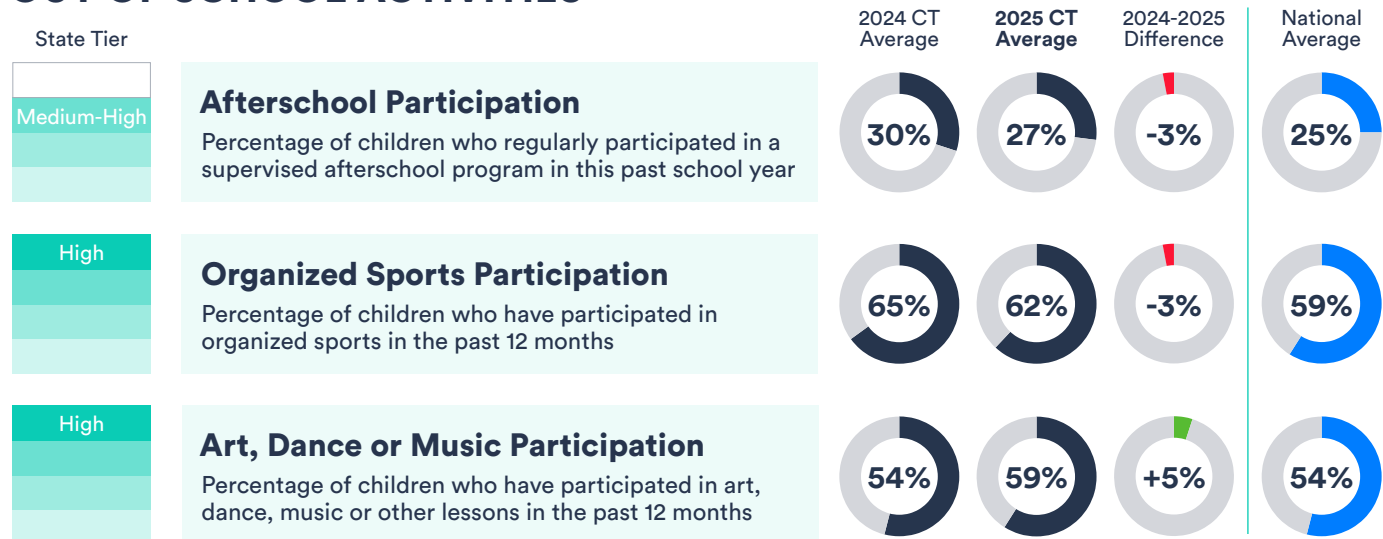
SCHOOL QUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY



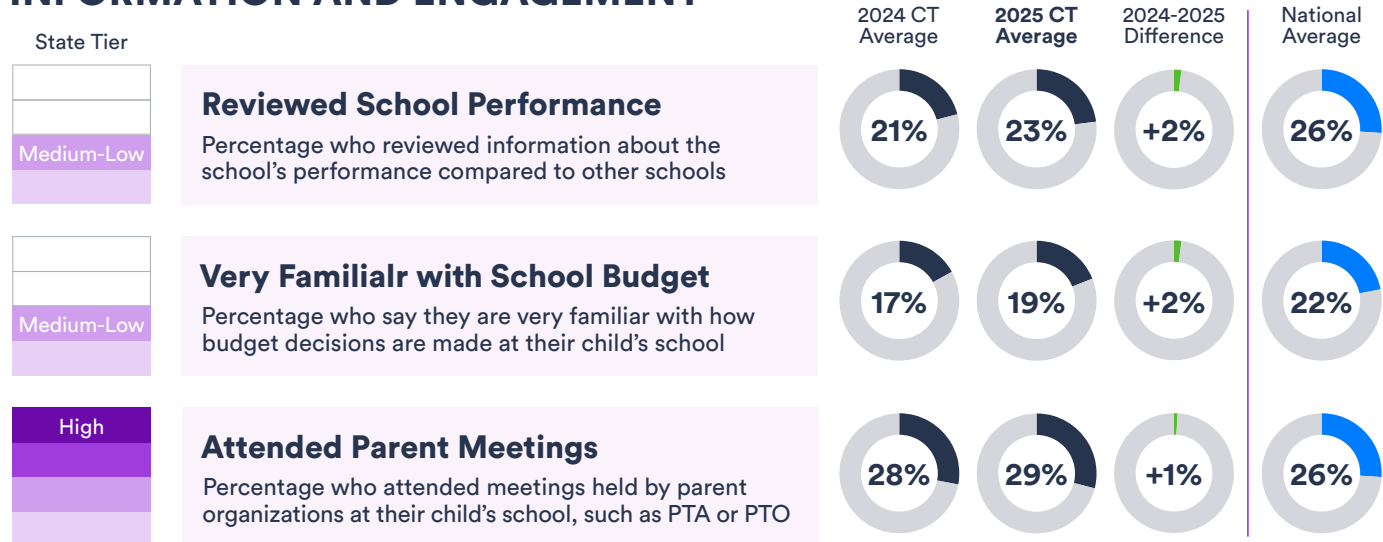
TUTORING, SUMMER AND MENTAL HEALTH



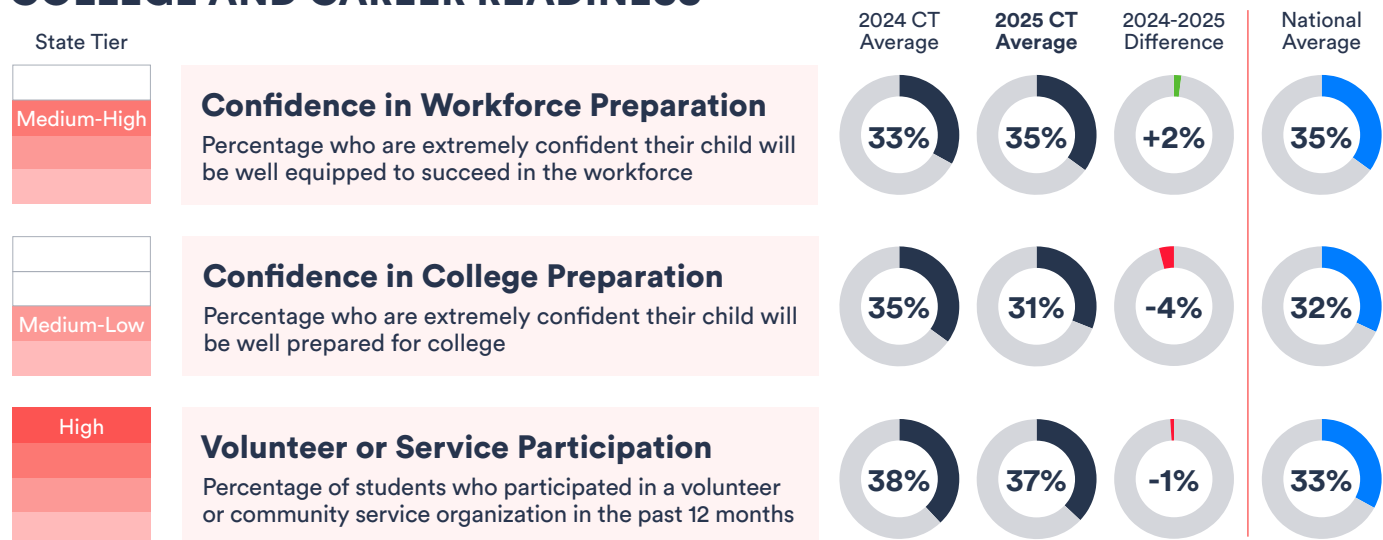
OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES



INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT



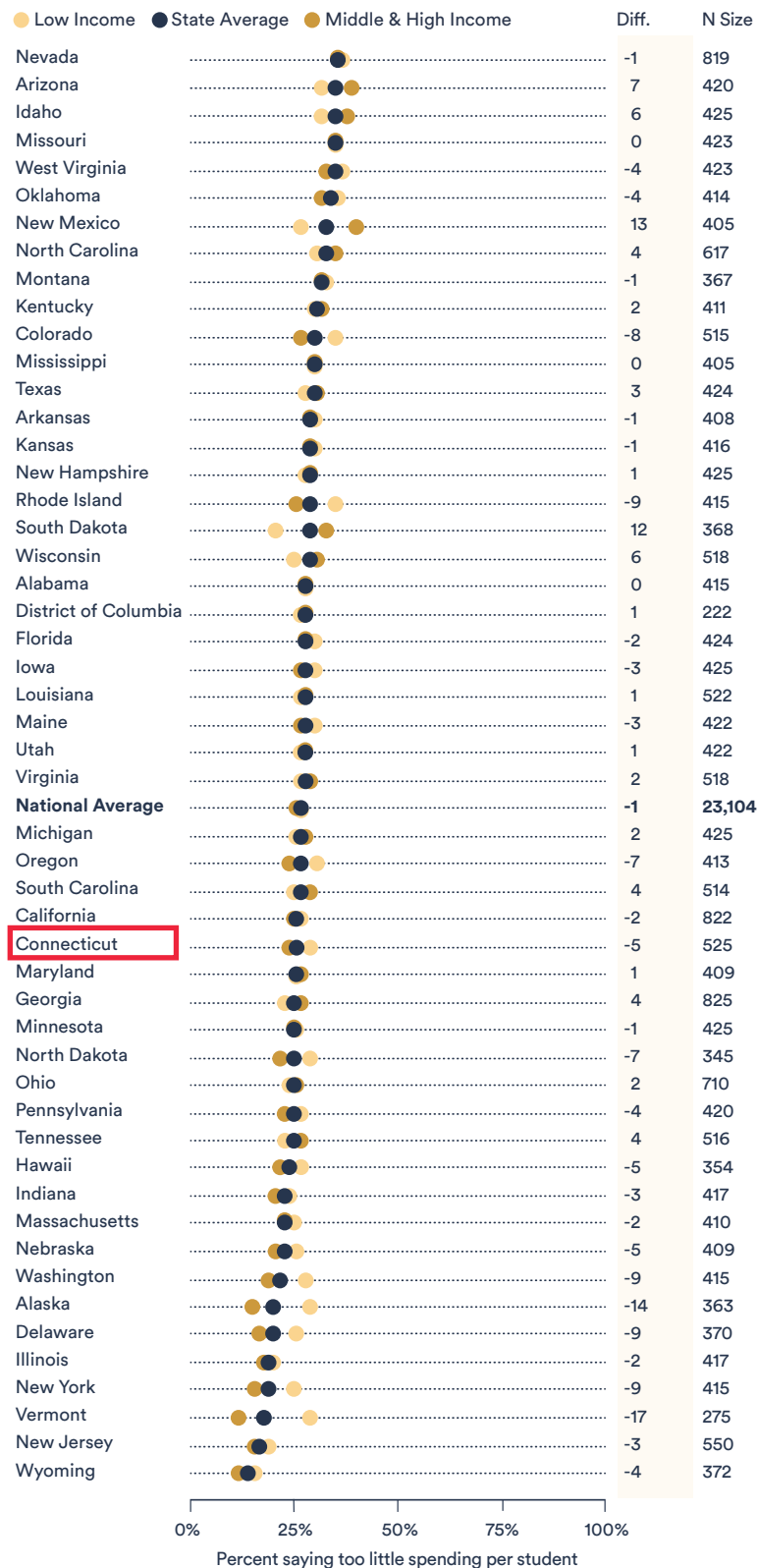
COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS



Connecticut in Context: A 50-State Perspective

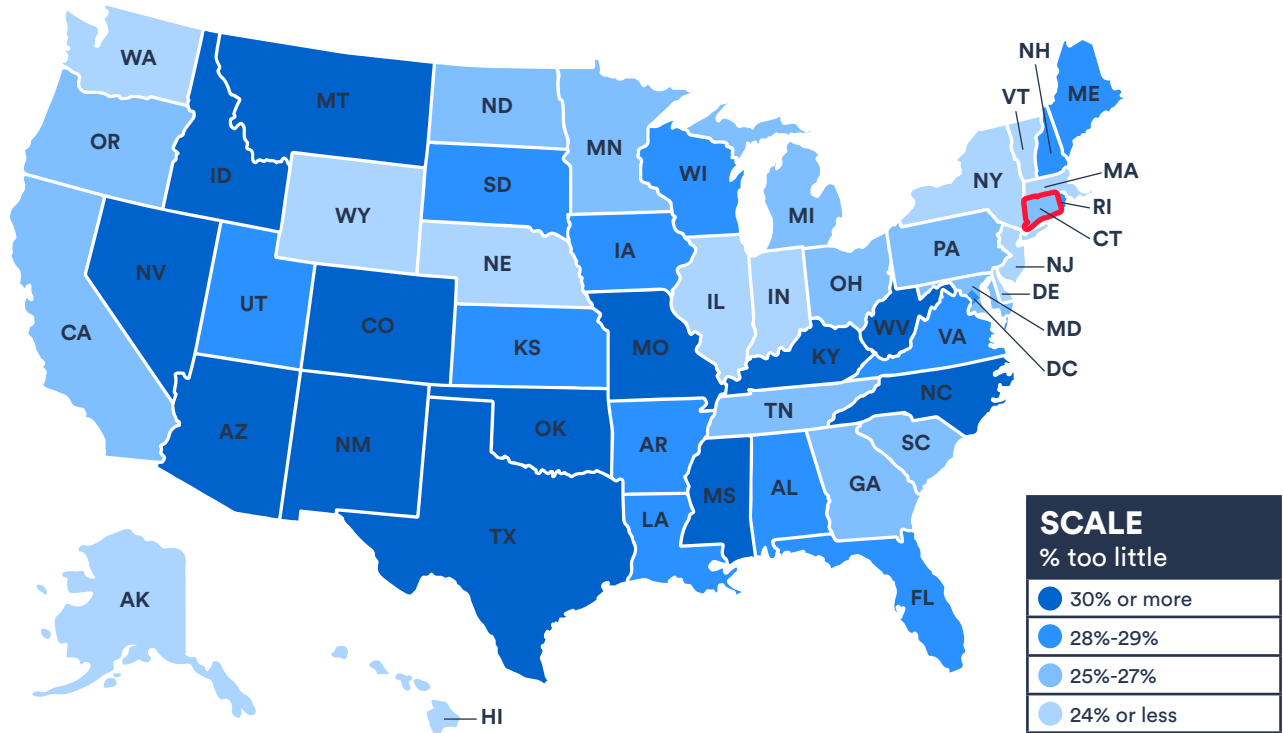
SUPPORT MORE FUNDING BY STATE & INCOME

Percentage who think their state spends too little per public school student after being told how much their state spends per student



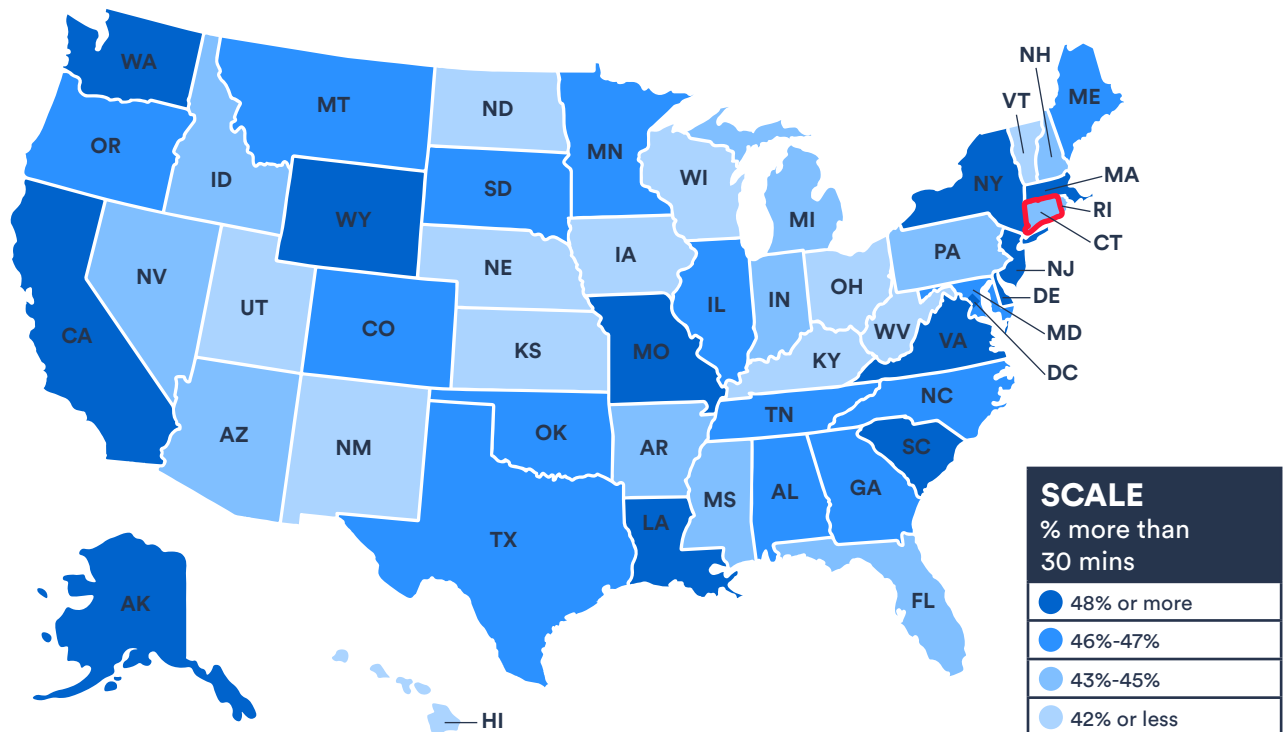
SUPPORT MORE FUNDING BY STATE

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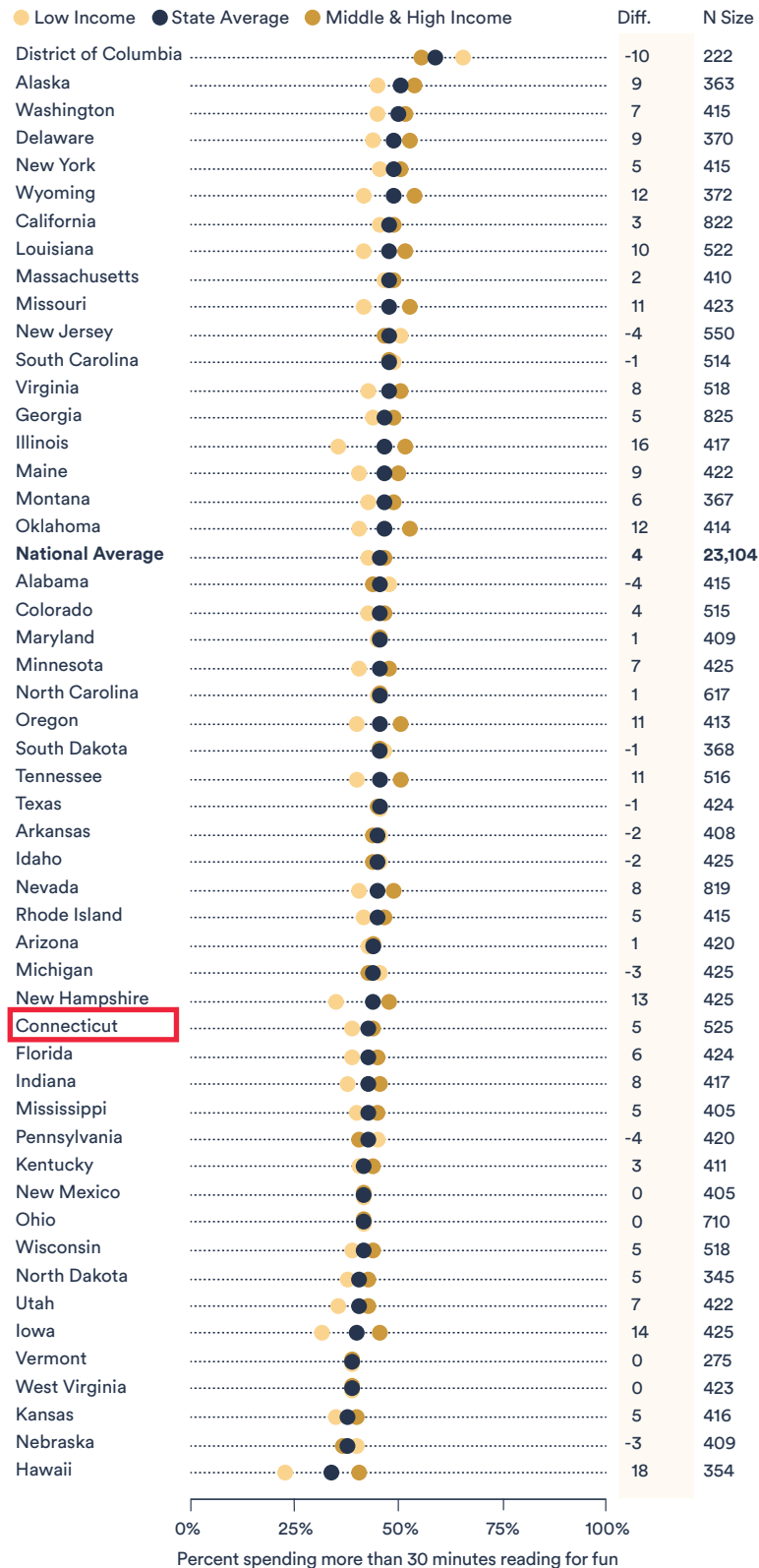
READING FOR FUN TIME BY STATE

Percentage answering their child spends more than 30 minutes reading for fun per weekday



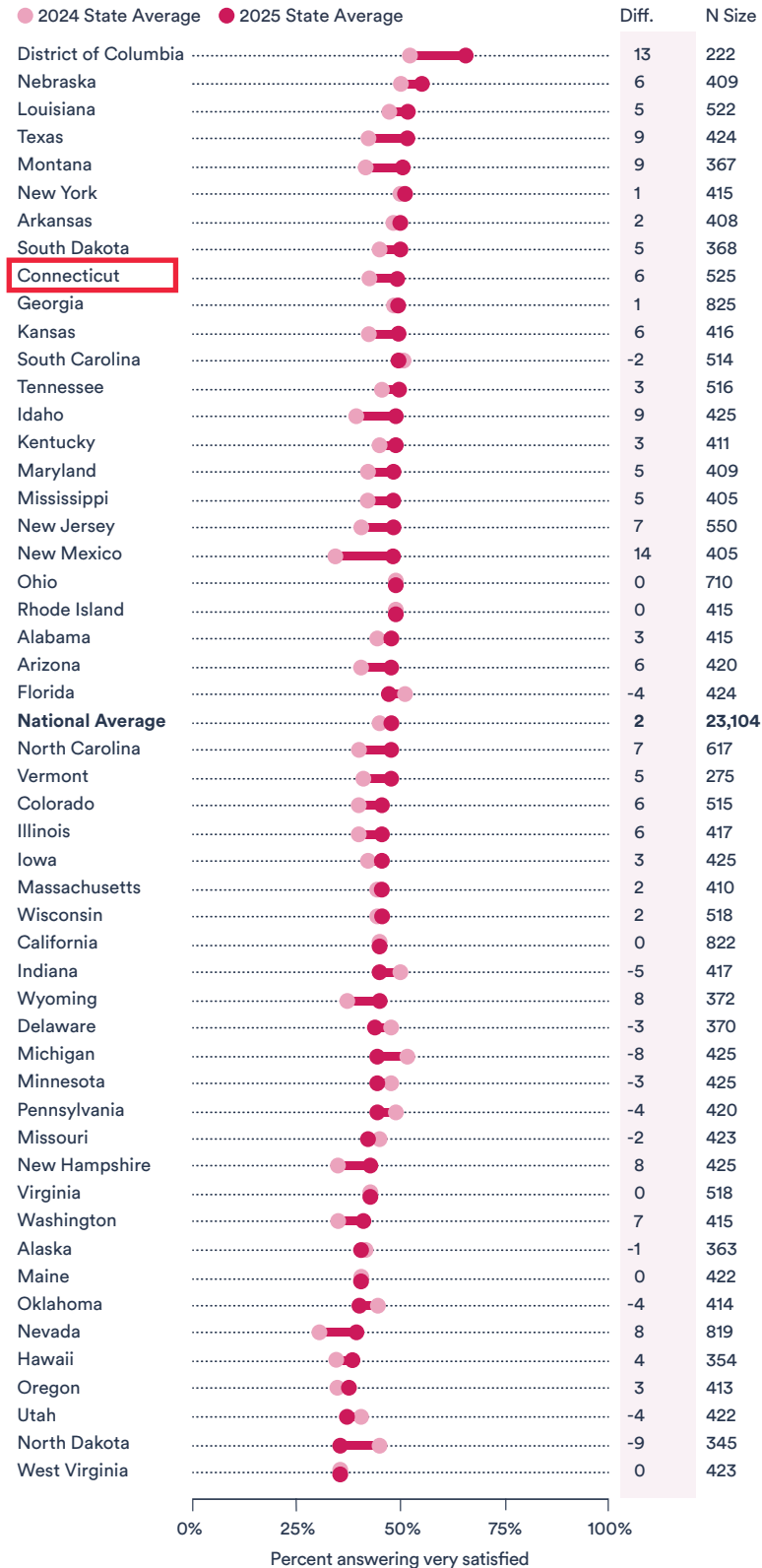
READING FOR FUN TIME BY STATE & INCOME

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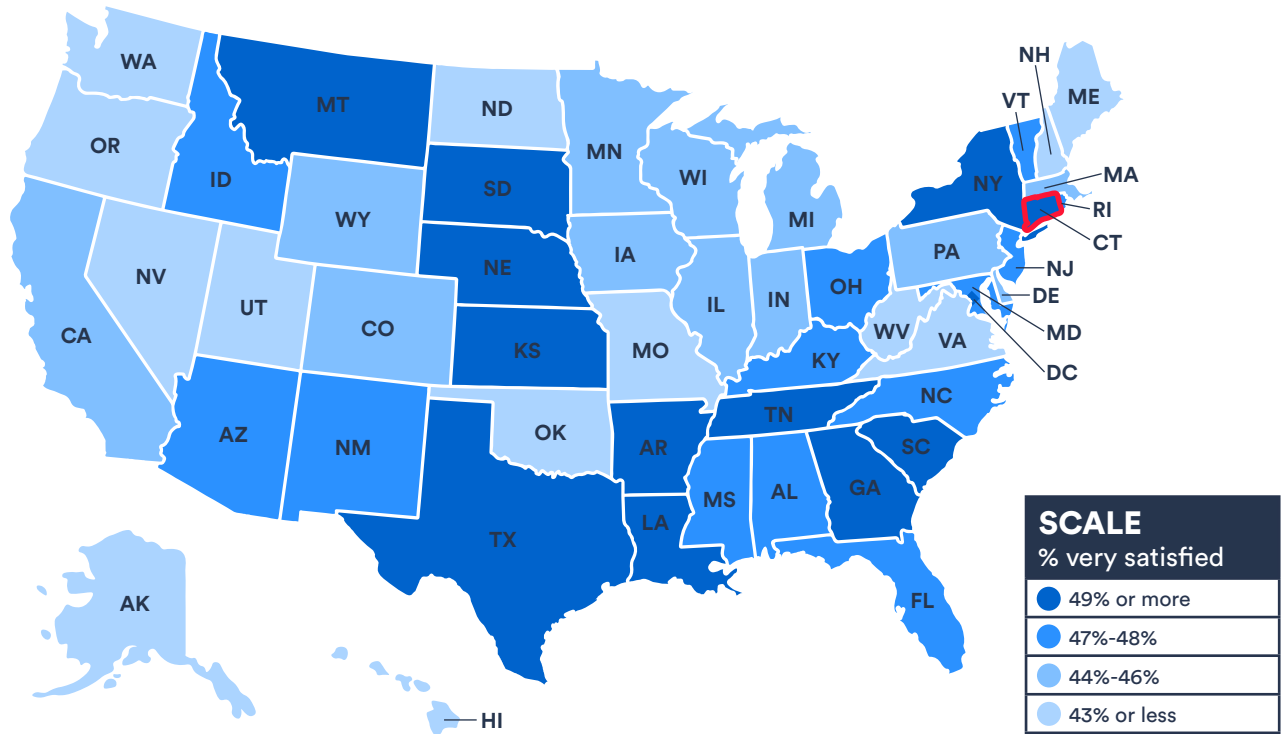
VERY SATISFIED WITH SCHOOL BY STATE & YEAR

Percentage answering they are very satisfied with their child's school



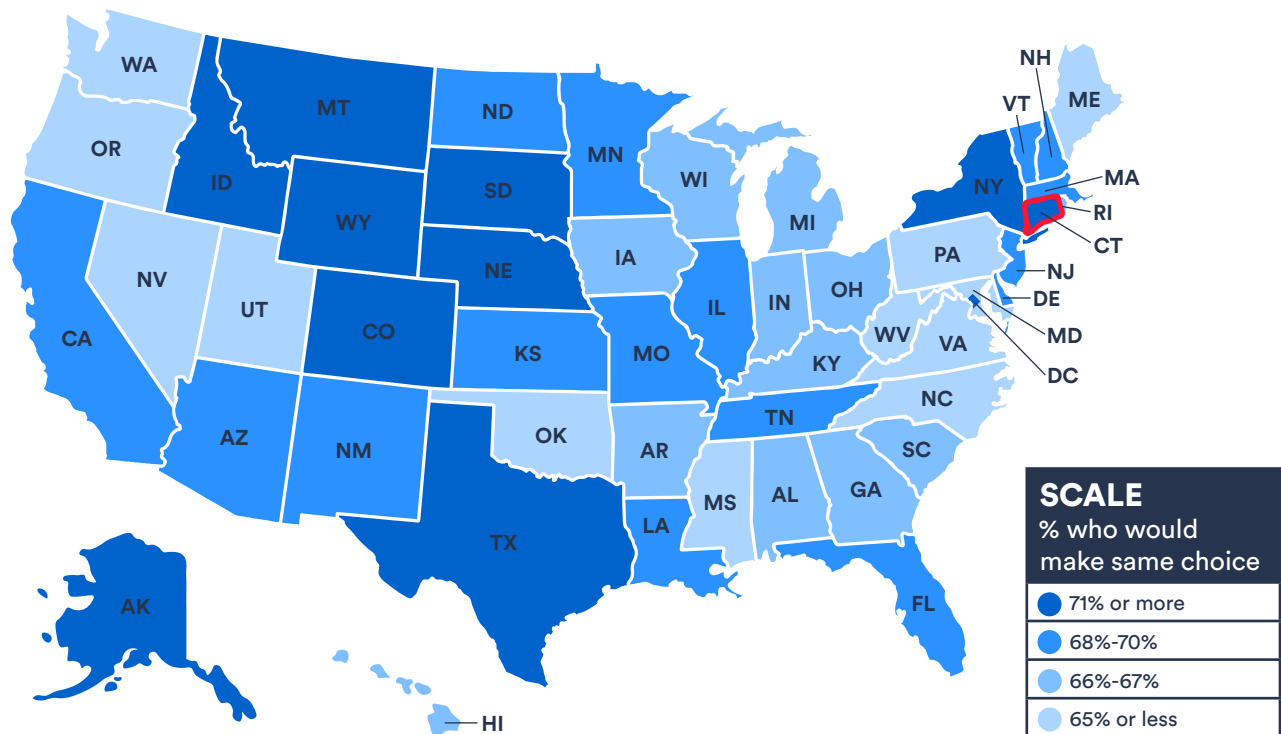
VERY SATISFIED WITH SCHOOL BY STATE

Percentage answering they are very satisfied with their child's school



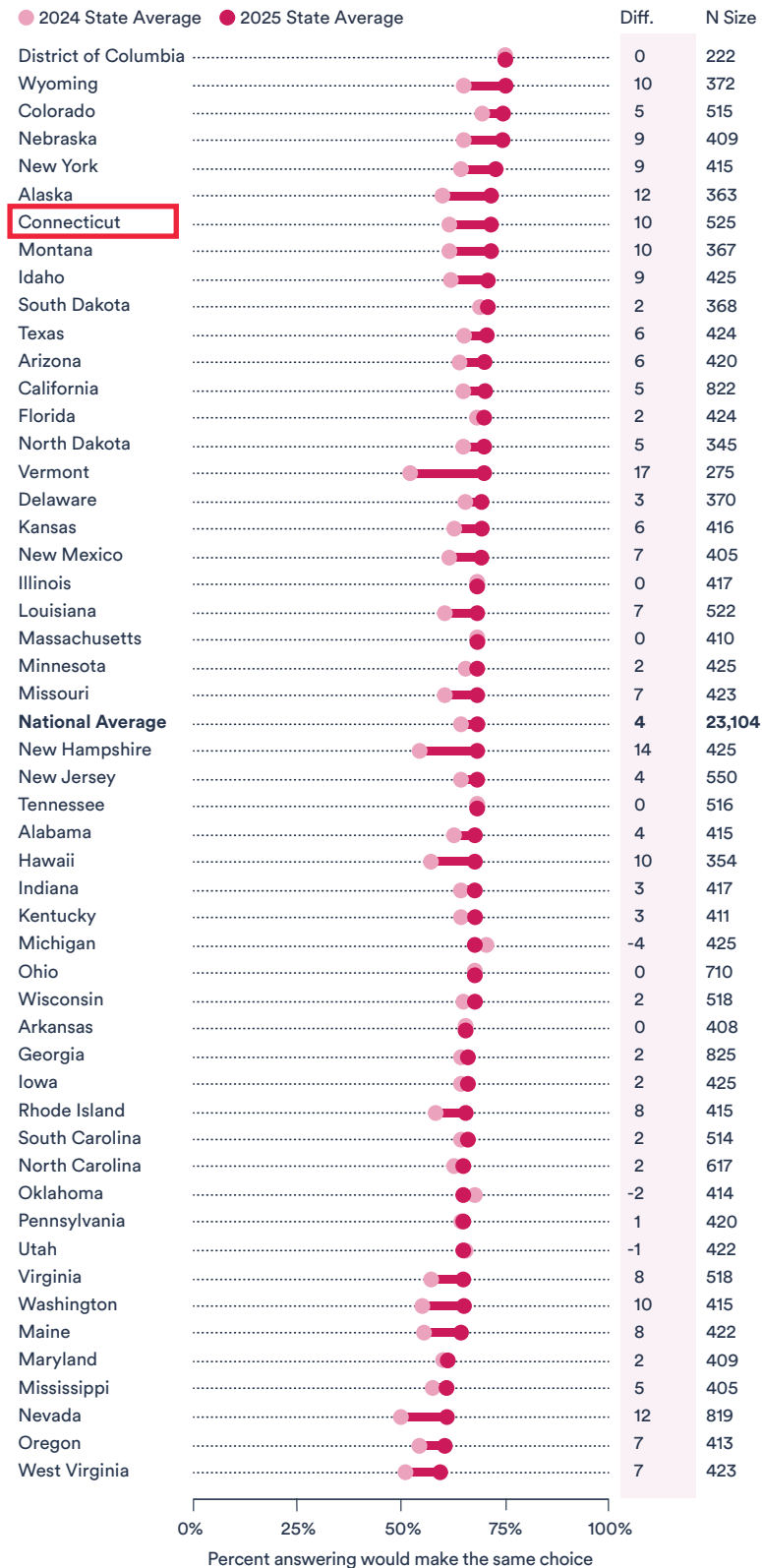
WOULD MAKE THE SAME CHOICE BY STATE

Percentage answering that if they could send their child to any school, they would send their child to the school they go to today



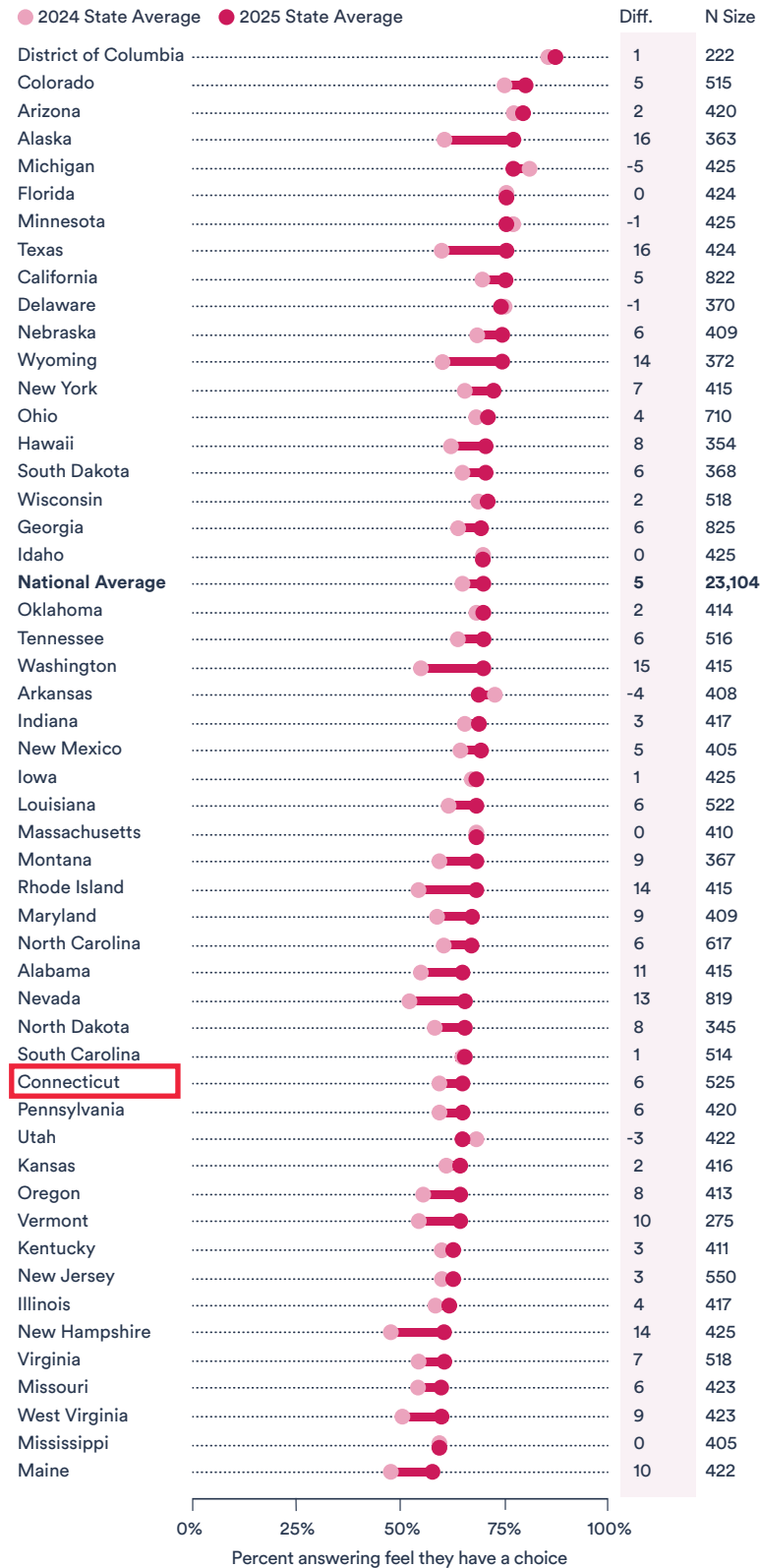
WOULD MAKE THE SAME CHOICE BY STATE & YEAR

Percentage answering that if they could send their child to any school, they would send their child to the school they go to today



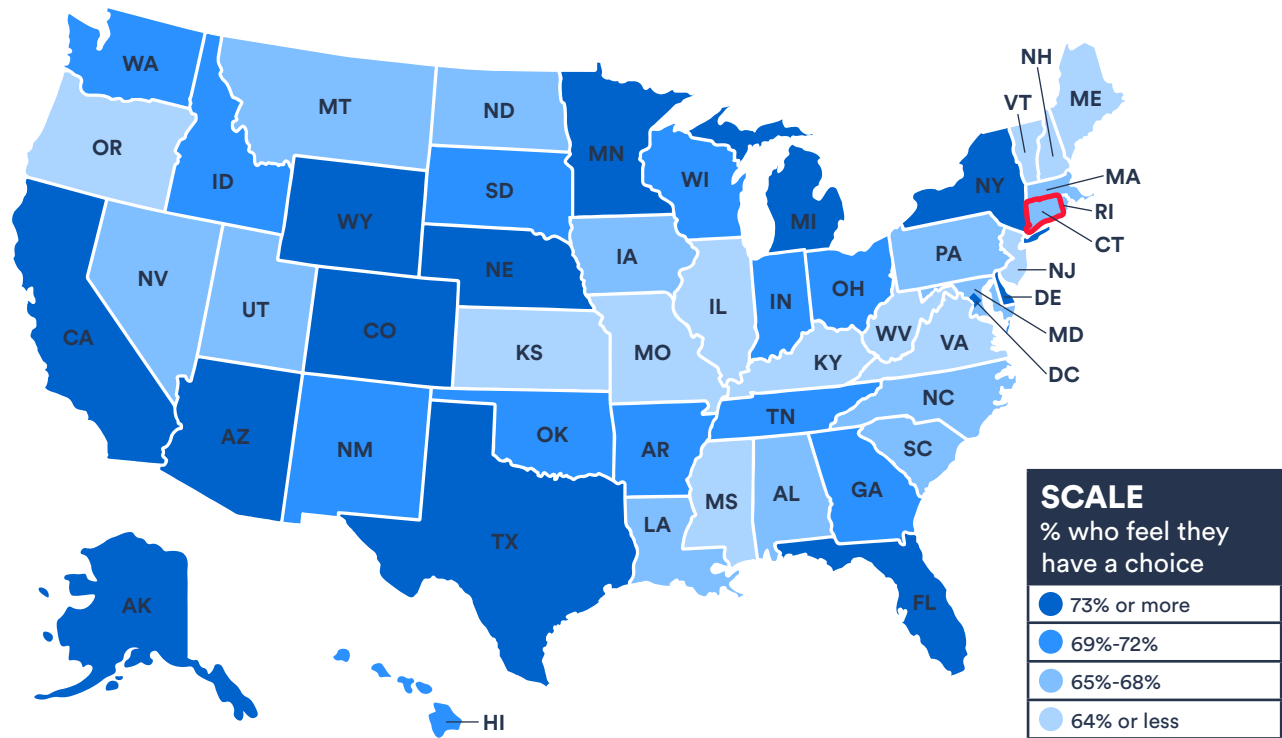
FEEL THEY HAVE A CHOICE BY STATE & YEAR

Percentage answering they feel like they have a choice in what school their child attends



FEEL THEY HAVE A CHOICE BY STATE

Percentage answering they feel like they have a choice in what school their child attends



ABOUT CONNCAN

ConnCAN is a nonprofit advocacy organization committed to a vision of a Connecticut in which every student has access to a high-quality education, regardless of their address. Since 2005, it has united, empowered and mobilized community members—including policymakers, parents and educators—around a shared belief in our students’ potential. This work to improve education in Connecticut springs from a belief in the immense potential found within every child and our responsibility as citizen advocates to do everything we can to ensure we have an education system that lives up to this potential.

ABOUT 50CAN

50CAN is an education advocacy organization focused on building the dynamic, student-centered education system of the future so that all kids, regardless of address, receive a high quality education. At the center of this work is our support for local education advocates who together have secured more than 275 transformative policy wins since our founding in 2011. This advocacy work is complemented by fellowships to spark and amplify the voices of changemakers, support for educational entrepreneurs as they build proof points of a better tomorrow, and efforts to help elected leaders better serve the public through a deeper understanding of education policy.

ABOUT EDGE RESEARCH

Edge Research tells data-driven stories that make our clients’ programs, products, and brands successful. One of Edge’s key verticals is education, which ranges from early childhood development, to K-12 and postsecondary education, to lifelong learning. We work for dozens of foundations, advocacy organizations, curriculum providers, associations, districts, schools and universities. Edge is constantly in the field talking to parents, students, teachers, administrators, and other education decision makers – getting the pulse on the issues that matter most.

