



Cato Institute National Private School Enrollment Survey

OCTOBER 12–31, 2022

1. Did student enrollment at your school this year increase, decrease, or stay the same compared to the last school year?

■ Increased	55%
■ Decreased	20%
■ Stayed the same	25%
■ Total	100%

2. [Ask if saw an INCREASE in enrollment] If you were to estimate, about how many more students do you have this year compared to the last school year?

■ 0–24	64%
■ 25–50	30%
■ 51–75	2%
■ 76–100	3%
■ More than 100	1%
■ Total	100%

3. [Ask if saw a DECREASE in enrollment] If you were to estimate, about how many fewer students do you have this year compared to the last school year?

■ 0–24	82%
■ 25–50	16%
■ 51–75	2%
■ 76–100	0%
■ More than 100	0%
■ Total	100%

4. Did applications for enrollment at your school this year increase, decrease, or stay the same compared to last year?

■ Increase	58%
■ Decrease	11%
■ Stayed about the same	31%
■ Total	100%

5. Did you have more applicants than space available?

■ Yes, more more applicants than space available	49%
■ No, not more applicants than space available	51%
■ Total	100%

6. Does your school require applicants to take an academic entry test for admission to the school?

■ Yes	38%
■ No	53%
■ Other	9%
■ Total	100%

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

We began by electronically “scraping” private school information from Private School Review (PSR), an online database of American private schools. This got us a list of 27,259 schools. Of those, 2,854 were identified as closed, leaving 24,405 open. Using a web-scraping program, we obtained emails for 11,289 of these schools. Removing duplicate emails and schools for which we already had an email address left 10,781 schools without emails. We randomized the order of that list and manually searched for emails from a sample of schools. We found 599 additional emails after looking through 997 schools, providing a total of 11,888 schools with at least one email address.

We sent an invitation to participate in the survey to the first email address we had for each of the 11,888 schools. Of those, 1,744 bounced or failed to deliver and 312 were duplicates. The email was successfully sent to 9,826 unique emails. We sent two reminder emails to the schools. We also had alternative emails for some schools and sent the survey to those addresses for 9,928 of the schools. Of those, 1,411 bounced or failed to send and 296 were duplicates. The email was

successfully sent to 8,225 unique emails. We sent the survey to a second alternative email for 8,678 schools. Of those, 1,313 bounced or failed to send and 103 were duplicates. The email was successfully sent to 7,264 unique emails. We sent the first and second alternative addresses two reminders.

We also called a random sample of schools that did not respond to the email and attempted to administer the survey over the phone. We called 260 schools and were able to administer the survey completely to 52.

Overall, from October 12 to October 31, we emailed and called 10,549 unique schools. We had 298 schools respond to at least some portion of the survey, and 286 provided the data for the primary variable of interest: whether enrollment had increased, decreased, or stayed the same, giving us a response rate of 3 percent. Different variables reported here had slightly different numbers responding, but assuming essentially a random distribution of response, all fell within a ± 6 percent margin of error at the 95 percent confidence interval.