



Cato Institute 2023 Private School Survey

NOVEMBER 21–DECEMBER 11, 2023

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

■ Increased	46%
■ Decreased	25%
■ Stayed the same	30%
■ Total	100%

2. [Ask if school 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?

■ <i>Mean</i>	19 students
■ <i>Median</i>	12 students
■ 1-5	19%
■ 6-10	30%
■ 11-20	22%
■ 21-30	11%
■ 31-50	15%
■ 51-75	3%
■ 76-100	1%
■ 100-150	<1%
■ Total	100%

3. [Ask if school 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?

■ <i>Mean</i>	-17 students
■ <i>Median</i>	-12 students
■ 1-5	31%
■ 6-10	18%
■ 11-20	24%
■ 21-30	19%
■ 31-50	4%
■ 51-75	2%
■ 76-100	2%
■ 100-150	<1%
■ Total	100%

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

■ Increased	50%
■ Decreased	15%
■ Stayed the same	35%
■ Total	100%

5. Did you have more applicants than space available?

■ Yes, more applicants than space available	42%
■ No, not more applicants than space available	58%
■ Total	100%

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

■ Yes	29%
■ No	58%
■ Other	13%
■ Total	100%

7. Thinking about when your school re-opened to in-person education during the COVID-19 pandemic, do you recall if it was in...

■ Spring 2020	18%
■ Fall 2020	70%
■ Spring 2021	4%
■ Fall 2021	6%
■ Spring 2022	<1%
■ Fall 2022	1%
■ Spring 2023	0%
■ Fall 2023	<1%
■ Total:	100%

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Cato 2023 Private School Enrollment Survey was conducted November 22 to December 4 2023 among 25,616 private schools. We used the Private School Review database of institutions and contact information. We began with a list of 27,741 schools with at least one grade in the K-12 span. We sent notifications to each of the schools on the list one week prior to entering the field, letting them know about the survey. We sent an invitation to participate in the survey to the first email address we had for each school. Of those, 2,018 bounced or failed to deliver and 133 were duplicates. The survey invitation email was successfully sent to 25,616 unique addresses. We sent two reminder emails to the schools and

collected data from November 22 to December 4. We had 489 schools respond to at least some portion of the survey, giving us a response rate of 1.8 percent. 462 institutions provided data for the primary variable of interest: whether enrollment had increased, decreased, or stayed the same. A large number of Lutheran-Missouri Synod schools responded to the survey at the request of a national organization and thus weighted responses to be nationally representative. Different variables reported here had slightly different numbers responding, but all fell within a +/- 5 percentage point margin of error at the 95 percent confidence interval.