



# Cato Institute 2024 Private School Survey

CATO INSTITUTE • N = 883

MARGIN OF ERROR  $\pm$  3.3%\*. NUMBERS MAY NOT ADD UP TO 100% DUE TO ROUNDING.

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

■ Decreased	32%
■ Increased	40%
■ Stayed the same	28%
■ Total	100%

2. (a) How much did student enrollment change at your school this year compared to the last school year?

■ Average	3.1 students
■ Standard deviation	24.1 students

2. (b) [If the school saw an INCREASE in enrollment] How much did student enrollment change at your school this year compared to the last school year?

■ <i>Average</i>	<b>20.5 students</b>
■ <i>Median</i>	<b>12.5 students</b>
■ 1–5	20%
■ 6–10	25%
■ 11–20	28%
■ 21–30	10%
■ 31–50	10%
■ 51–75	4%
■ 76–100	2%
■ Over 100	1%

2. (c) [If the school saw a DECREASE in enrollment] How much did student enrollment change at your school this year compared to the last school year?

■ <i>Average</i>	<b>–16.8 students</b>
■ <i>Median</i>	<b>–12.0 students</b>
■ 1–5	16%
■ 6–10	30%
■ 11–20	29%
■ 21–30	14%
■ 31–50	7%
■ 51–75	3%
■ 76–100	1%
■ Over 100	0%

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

■ Decrease	21%
■ Increase	43%
■ Stayed about the same	36%
■ Total	100%

4. Did you have more applicants than space available?

■ No, not more applicants than space available	61%
■ Yes, more applicants than space available	39%
■ Total	100%

5. (a) Do you believe your school saw a bump in enrollment during the COVID-19 pandemic?

■ Saw bump in enrollment	53%
■ Did not see bump in enrollment	47%
■ Total	100%

5. (b) [Ask if the school saw a bump in enrollment] Have you maintained the enrollment level reached during the bump, or has it declined?

■ Maintained	65%
■ Declined	35%
■ Total	100%

6. (a) [Ask if the school's enrollment INCREASED] What reasons do you believe best explain the increase in your school's enrollment? (Select all that apply.)

■ Academic	44%
■ Demographic	24%
■ Financial	18%
■ Competition	32%
■ Political	32%
■ Religious	43%
■ Values	69%
■ Other	24%
■ No response	3%

6. (b) [Ask if the school's enrollment DECREASED] What reasons do you believe best explain the decrease in your school's enrollment? (Select all that apply.)

■ Academic	4%
■ Demographic	29%
■ Financial	48%
■ Competition	47%
■ Political	9%
■ Religious	6%
■ Values	8%
■ Other	36%
■ No response	2%

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Cato Institute 2024 Private School Enrollment Survey was conducted from October 17 to November 1, 2024, among 22,411 private schools. We used the Private School Review database of all institutions and their contact information to reach as many private schools as possible.

We began with a list of 26,704 schools with at least one grade in the K–12 span. We sent notifications about the survey to each of the schools on the list one day prior to entering the field. We then sent an invitation to participate in the survey to the first email address we had for each school. Of those, 3,255 bounced or failed to deliver,

and 1,038 were duplicates. The email was delivered to 22,411 unique addresses. We sent two reminder emails to the schools during the survey period. Of these, 883 schools responded to at least some portion of the survey, giving us a response rate of about 4 percent.

In total, 882 institutions provided data for the primary variable of interest: whether enrollment had increased, decreased, or stayed the same. Different variables reported here had slightly different numbers of responding schools, but all fell within a  $\pm 3.3$  percentage point margin of error at the 95 percent confidence interval.