Parent voices matter. The more parents we hear from, the better we can serve children. That is why The Children's Agenda regularly polls Monroe County parents.

- **Parents are context experts.** We want to understand the policy barriers they face, supports they need, and policy solutions they want.

- **Poll results are scientifically representative of all parents,** not only those who can attend meetings.

- **Hard data points are influential** on policy makers. They also keep the priorities of The Children's Agenda tied to what parents want.

- **Engaging with diverse parents** ensures advocacy efforts and outcomes will contribute to racial equity.

The Fall 2022 poll focused on how our community can better support children academically, socially and emotionally.
School-Based Supports

Parents see both academic and social-emotional supports as necessary for their children’s development. While almost all parents see school-based supports as helpful, confidence that their child’s school will provide those supports is lower.

### Rochester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Helpful</th>
<th>Confidence Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extra social-emotional support</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra academic support</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about if their child is on track</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of school enrichment</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular contact with school counselor</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources for basic needs (food, housing, etc.)</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Suburbs

Most suburban parents also think these supports would be helpful.

However, they are less likely to be looking for schools to help with resources to meet basic needs.

For suburban parents, there is also a gap between how helpful these supports would be and how confident they are their child's school will provide them.

However, those gaps are smaller than in Rochester.

1 out of 3 parents across the county do not feel listened to by administrators at their child's school.
Solutions Not Suspensions

In both Rochester and the suburbs, parents support alternatives to suspension, especially in Pre-K through Grade 3. A notable number of parents worry about their children being suspended for minor infractions.

84% parents support eliminating suspensions in PK - Grade 3 to all but the most extreme cases

up from 61% in February 2022

MONROE COUNTY

Support

Require schools to provide...

- Academic instruction when students are suspended: 90%
- Utilize behavioral interventions: 87%
- Social-emotional support or counseling: 86%
- Utilize mediation: 82%
- Limit suspensions for all grades to no more than 20 days: 64%

17% of all Monroe County parents are concerned their child will be suspended for minor infractions

Higher for

- Hispanic parents: 31%
- Rochester parents: 28%
- Parents of children with disabilities: 28%
- Black parents: 23%
Increasingly, parents think school integration and diversity is important. There is strong support for public Pre-K programs and magnet schools that cross school district boundaries.

**VERY OR SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**

- **Rochester**
  - Your child’s school works to integrate students from different racial and economic backgrounds: **88%**
  - Your child’s school works to increase teacher and staff diversity: **90%**

- **Suburbs**
  - Your child’s school works to integrate students from different racial and economic backgrounds: **73%**
  - Your child’s school works to increase teacher and staff diversity: **68%**

*Parents saying these are "very important" has gone up since February 2022*

**SUPPORT FOR SOLUTIONS**

- **Rochester**
  - Public Pre-K programs with no boundaries on where children live: **88%**
  - Magnet schools that cross district boundaries: **80%**
  - County-wide school district: **76%**

- **Suburbs**
  - Public Pre-K programs with no boundaries on where children live: **62%**
  - Magnet schools that cross district boundaries: **67%**
  - County-wide school district: **41%**
Parents want access to a variety of mental health supports. Supports are viewed as most helpful by BIPOC parents and parents of children with developmental delays or disabilities.

### Very or Somewhat Helpful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BIPOC</th>
<th>Children with Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentors for child</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxation and</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mindfulness</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family counseling</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child support groups</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent support groups</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors for parents</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although these supports are widely viewed as helpful, questions remain about:

- Who has access to these supports?
- Where do they access them?
- What are the barriers to access?
- How are families overcoming those barriers?

We will engage with parents around these questions in the coming months.
Summer Programs

More than half of parents enrolled their children in summer programs. Those who didn't struggled to find an affordable program they could transport their child to.

6 out of 10 parents enrolled their child in a summer program, either this summer or in the past.

MONROE COUNTY

Reasons Why Did Not Enroll

- Parents not interested: 28%
- Child not interested: 26%
- Cost too high: 26%
- Hours didn't work: 12%
- Transportation difficult: 11%
- Program not high quality: 8%
- No space available: 8%

Rochester

Cost, transportation and no space available are the major barriers in Rochester.

Suburbs

Cost is the major barrier in the suburbs.

Whether they live in Rochester or the suburbs, Hispanic families face a much greater barrier due to transportation. 34% say transportation was too difficult to enroll their child in a summer program.
PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

What families have told us calls for bold action that provides for the needs of the whole child and the whole family. Our education system may distinguish between "academic" and "social-emotional" development, but parents don’t. Children and families need integrated, holistic supports so children can thrive in all ways. The supports and structural changes parents are looking for can be provided by changes in public policy and smart use of public funds. Based on what parents have said, the following policy changes are needed:

1. Investing in both academic and social-emotional supports in schools that include ongoing communication with families, direct supports for students, and enrichment opportunities.

2. Changing state law and local practices to prohibit suspensions for the youngest children, replacing them with supportive interventions and restorative practices.

3. Integrating students and strengthening teacher/staff diversity across districts in Monroe County.

4. Changing mental health delivery systems to ensure children and families have access to supports when and where they need them, including in schools.

5. Decreasing the cost of and investing in transportation to summer programs so all children in Monroe County can be supported in their social, emotional and intellectual development throughout the year.

You can support these efforts by joining The Children's Agenda's Action Network at www.thechildrensagenda.org. Rochester parents and families are invited to join our Very Invested Parents advocacy group by calling (585) 256-2620.
SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The goal of this poll was to document family experiences in a way that provides compelling evidence to county and state legislators for supporting public policies that help children thrive. This survey of 600 Monroe County parents was conducted by Global Strategy Group on behalf of The Children's Agenda from August. Parents were contacted by phone call or text, and respondents had the option of taking the survey in either English or Spanish.

The margin of error at the 95% confidence level is +/- 4.9%. The margin of error for sub-groups is greater.

Weighted targets were generated by using data from the 2015-2019 American Community Survey-Education Tabulation (ACS-ED), a collaboration between the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

The ACS-ED includes data on characteristics of the parents of school-age children. Data were aggregated for every school district entirely or mostly within the geographic lines of Monroe County.

Special care was taken to ensure the sample matched the target population as closely as possible across demographic variables including age, education status, gender, geography, gender, party registration, and race/ethnicity.