

# FAMILY VOICES:

## SUPPORTING CHILDREN ACADEMICALLY, SOCIAL & EMOTIONALLY

*Results of a countywide survey of 600 Monroe County parents about their children's education and solutions they support*

**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*



*Solutions Not Suspensions*



*Diversity in Schools*



*Mental Health Supports*



*Summer Programs*



# 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

## Suburbs

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

**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%



# Diversity in Schools

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	Suburbs
Your child's school works to integrate students from different racial and economic backgrounds	88%	73%
Your child's school works to increase teacher and staff diversity	90%	68%

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

## SUPPORT FOR SOLUTIONS

	Rochester	Suburbs
Public Pre-K programs with no boundaries on where children live	88%	62%
Magnet schools that cross district boundaries	80%	67%
County-wide school district	76%	41%



# Mental Health Supports

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

	Rochester	Suburbs	BIPOC
Mentors for child	<b>97%</b>	<b>75%</b>	These supports are seen as helpful by 82% - 90% of parents
Relaxation and mindfulness	<b>93%</b>	<b>75%</b>	
Family counseling	<b>93%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>Children with Disabilities</b> These supports are seen as helpful by 82% - 90% of parents
Child support groups	<b>91%</b>	<b>73%</b>	
Parent support groups	<b>90%</b>	<b>74%</b>	
Mentors for parents	<b>85%</b>	<b>71%</b>	

*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

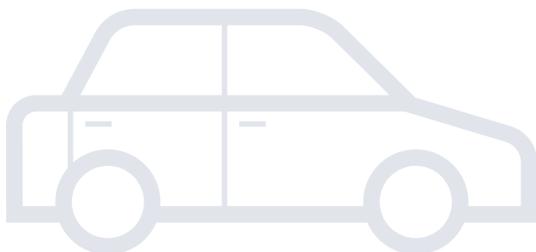
Parents not interested	<b>28%</b>
Child not interested	<b>26%</b>
Cost too high	<b>26%</b>
Hours didn't work	<b>12%</b>
Transportation difficult	<b>11%</b>
Program not high quality	<b>8%</b>
No space available	<b>8%</b>

## 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](http://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.

	Survey Sample	
	600	%
<b>Rochester</b>	273	46%
<b>Suburbs</b>	327	55%
<b>Parent Race</b>		
Black/African-American	146	} 41%
Hispanic/Latino	83	
Asian-American/Other	16	
White	355	59%
<b>Parent Gender</b>		
Female	337	56%
Male	263	44%
<b>Family Income</b>		
Under \$50,000	158	26%
\$50,000 - \$100,000	183	31%
Above \$100,000	201	34%
<b>Parent Education</b>		
Did not complete high school	21	} 54%
Graduated high school	84	
Some college or technical school	120	
Associate's degree	97	} 23%
Bachelor's degree	138	
Advanced degree	139	23%
Have a child with a developmental delay or disability	155	26%