

SCHOOL CONTEXT MATTERS: PUBLIC VIEWS ON BOOK REMOVALS AND RELIGIOUS OPT-OUTS

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July 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prior to the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in *Mahmoud v. Taylor*—a case centered on whether parents have a First Amendment right to opt their children out of public school lessons that conflict with their religious beliefs—Florida State University’s [Institute for Governance and Civics](#) conducted a nationally representative survey of 1,004 U.S. adults. The survey, conducted between May 21 and June 3, 2025, gauged public views on the issues involved in the case, including: parental rights, religious accommodations, and public support for prohibiting and removing school books that contain transgender characters or storylines. Below, we highlight some of the key findings from the poll.

- **The public supports religious opt-outs.** Roughly 6 in 10 Americans support allowing parents to opt their children out of elementary school lessons that conflict with their religious beliefs. Support remains high across most demographic groups and is largely unaffected by whether the lesson involves gender identity specifically.
- **Democrats and Republicans see the issues very differently.** While Republicans overwhelmingly support opt-out rights (80.3%), Democrats are more divided (45.7%). The partisan gap is even wider when it comes to prohibiting and removing transgender-themed books from public schools, with 74.5% of Republicans in favor compared to just 22.8% of Democrats.
- **The public treats elementary schools and high schools differently.** Support for prohibiting and removing transgender-themed books is much higher when students at issue are elementary students rather than high school students (53.5% vs. 40.3%).
- **K-12 parents are more sensitive to trans-themed books in elementary schools.** Americans with children in K–12 schools are more likely to support trans-themed book prohibitions and removals (54.0%) than are non-parents (44.1%). Democratic K–12 parents are far more supportive of transgender-themed book removals in elementary schools (47.0%) than Democratic non-parents (19.8%).

INTRODUCTION

On June 27, 2025, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a landmark decision in [Mahmoud v. Taylor](#), ruling in favor of religious parents who objected to their elementary-school children being required to participate in lessons that included pro-LGBTQ+-themed storybooks. In a 6–3 opinion, the Court held that

Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland violated the First Amendment by denying parents the ability to opt their children out of instruction that conflicted with their religious beliefs. The ruling has far-reaching implications for religious liberty,



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parental rights, and the future of curriculum policy in public education.

The dispute arose after the district added several books—such as *Uncle Bobby’s Wedding* and *Pride Puppy*—to its elementary reading list in 2022. The books clearly supported LGBTQ+ positions. Though the District initially allowed parents to request that their children be exempt from such lessons, it later rescinded that opt-out policy. The parents then filed a legal challenge. The Court sided with the parents.

The Court’s majority opinion reaffirmed that the Constitution protects parents’ rights to guide their children’s religious upbringing, especially in matters of moral and ideological sensitivity. When schools force students—against their parents’ wishes—to participate in and take sides on such morally unsettled issues, they violate parents’ free exercise rights to direct their children’s religious upbringing. Just as schools cannot require students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, they cannot require students to support LGBTQ+ positions. Schools must provide advance notice to and accommodate parents who object to content on religious grounds.

The Court has spoken, but what is public opinion on these issues? Who supports giving parents the right to opt their children out of lessons that conflict with their religious beliefs? How do Americans view the broader question of whether such content should be required in classrooms?

A clear majority of Americans support allowing opt-outs based on religious objections—a view that spans most demographic groups and cuts across party lines more than expected.

This report draws on a nationally representative survey of U.S. adults to answer those questions. Among the key findings: a clear majority of Americans support allowing opt-outs based on religious objections—a

view that spans most demographic groups and cuts across party lines more than expected. Support drops off sharply, however, when it comes to removing LGBTQ-themed books from school. While Republicans are broadly in favor of such removals and Democrats strongly opposed, support for removal rises significantly when the policy applies to elementary rather than high school students. This suggests that age-appropriateness, and not just ideology, plays a significant role in shaping public attitudes.

THE PUBLIC BROADLY SUPPORTS RELIGIOUS OPT-OUTS

A central issue in *Mahmoud v. Taylor* was whether public schools must accommodate parents’ requests to exempt their children from lessons that conflict with their religious beliefs. To understand public sentiment better on this question, we conducted a randomized survey experiment embedded within a nationally representative survey of U.S. adults. We randomly assigned respondents to one of two versions of a question: one version asked: “Do you support or oppose allowing parents to opt their children out of public school lessons that conflict with their religious beliefs?” The other asked: “Do you support or oppose allowing parents to opt their children out of public school lessons focused on gender identity that conflict with their religious beliefs?”

Figure 1 shows that Americans express broad support for opt-out rights under both versions of the question. Sixty-two percent support allowing parents to exempt their children from gender identity–focused lessons, while 61 percent support opt-outs when the conflict is described in more general religious terms.

The near-identical support across both framings suggests that Americans tend to view religious opt-outs favorably, regardless of whether the lessons in question are explicitly about gender identity or are more broadly defined.

Figure 1: Public support for allowing parents to opt their children out of public school lessons by framing condition



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

OPT-OUT ATTITUDES FRACTURE ALONG PARTY LINES

Although the public broadly supports parental rights to opt their children out of such morally unsettled lessons for religious reasons, specific partisan divisions are substantial, with Republicans on one side and Democrats on the other. Among Republicans, 80% favor allowing parents to exempt their children from lessons that conflict with their religious beliefs. By contrast, support among Democrats is significantly lower at 46%.

The framing of the question—whether it references religious conflict in general or specifically mentions gender identity—has only a modest effect on overall support levels but reveals a telling partisan pattern. Republican support increases slightly when the question mentions gender identity (rising from 78% to 82%), while support among Democrats declines (falling from 47% to 44%).

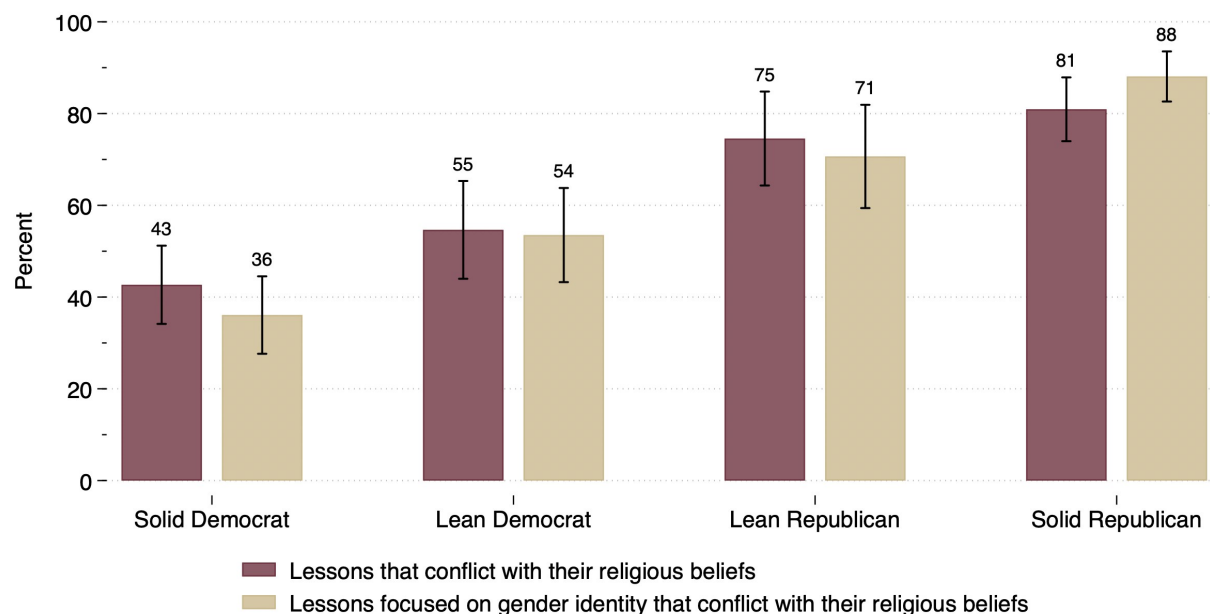
As shown in Figure 2, these effects are even more pronounced among solid partisans.

[Note: In this report, we distinguish between *solid partisans* (those who self-identify as Democrats or Republicans) and *leaners* (those who initially identify as Independent but say they lean toward one party). Unless otherwise specified, references to “Democrats” or “Republicans” refer to the combined group of solid identifiers and leaners.]

While neither difference is statistically significant, both move in the expected direction. Among solid Republicans, support jumps 7 points—from 81% to 88%—when the question mentioned gender identity. Among solid Democrats, support drops by the same amount—from 43% to 36%.

These differences suggest that solid partisans are more influenced by gender identity cues in these debates. By contrast, support among partisan leaners stays relatively steady.

Figure 2: Support for allowing parents to opt their children out of public school lessons by strength of party identification and framing condition



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

SUPPORT FOR OPT-OUTS SPANS DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS—BUT PARTISANSHIP STILL DOMINATES

Support for religious opt-outs remains relatively consistent across most demographic groups—but significant differences emerge once partisanship is taken into account.

Broadly speaking, men (65%) express greater support for opt-outs than do women (59%). As Figure 3 shows, however, the direction and size of this “gender gap” varies by party. Republican men (84%) are significantly more supportive of religious opt outs than are Republican women (75%). Conversely, Democratic women (48%) are slightly but not significantly more supportive than Democratic men (44%). These patterns hold regardless of whether respondents observed the general opt-out question or the specific opt-out question related to gender identity.

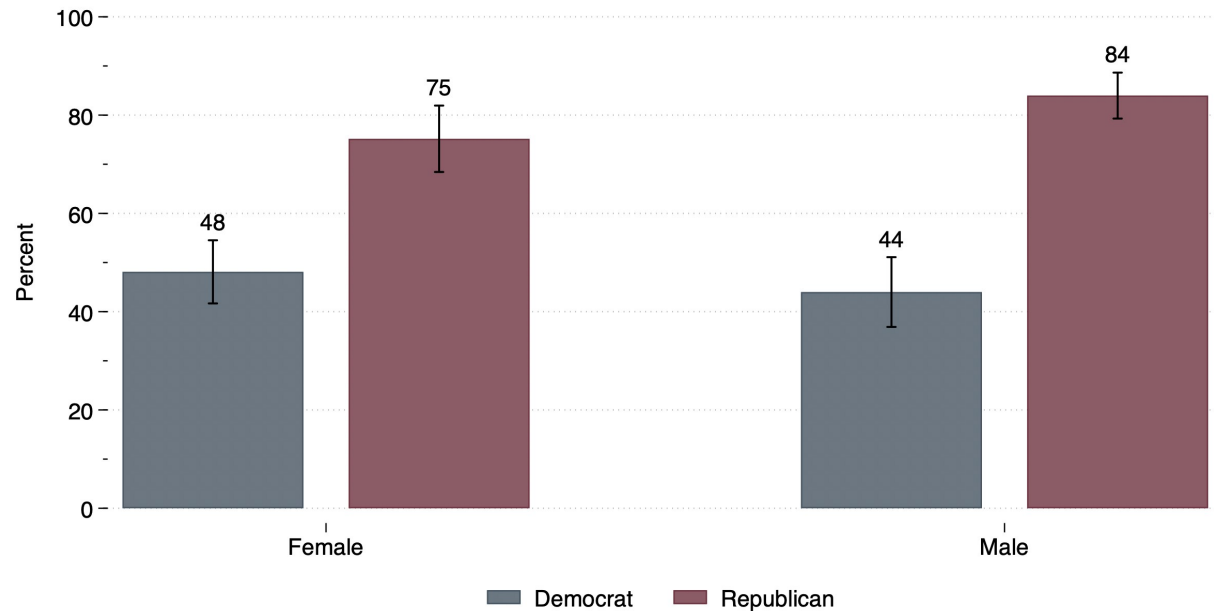
Support does not meaningfully differ by age. Young adults (ages 18–29) express the lowest (though still a majority) support for

religious opt-outs (58%). Support peaks among those aged 50–64 (65%) and remains relatively high among those 30–49 (63%) and seniors 65 and older (60%).

What modest differences are observed mostly reflect the underlying party distribution within each age group. As shown in Figure 4, Republican support for religious opt outs remains high across all age cohorts—from 73% among 30–49-year-olds to 86.5% among both the youngest and oldest respondents. In contrast, Democratic support is consistently lower, ranging from just 39% among seniors to 53% among 30–49-year-olds. Once again, framing has minimal effect within partisan-age subgroups.

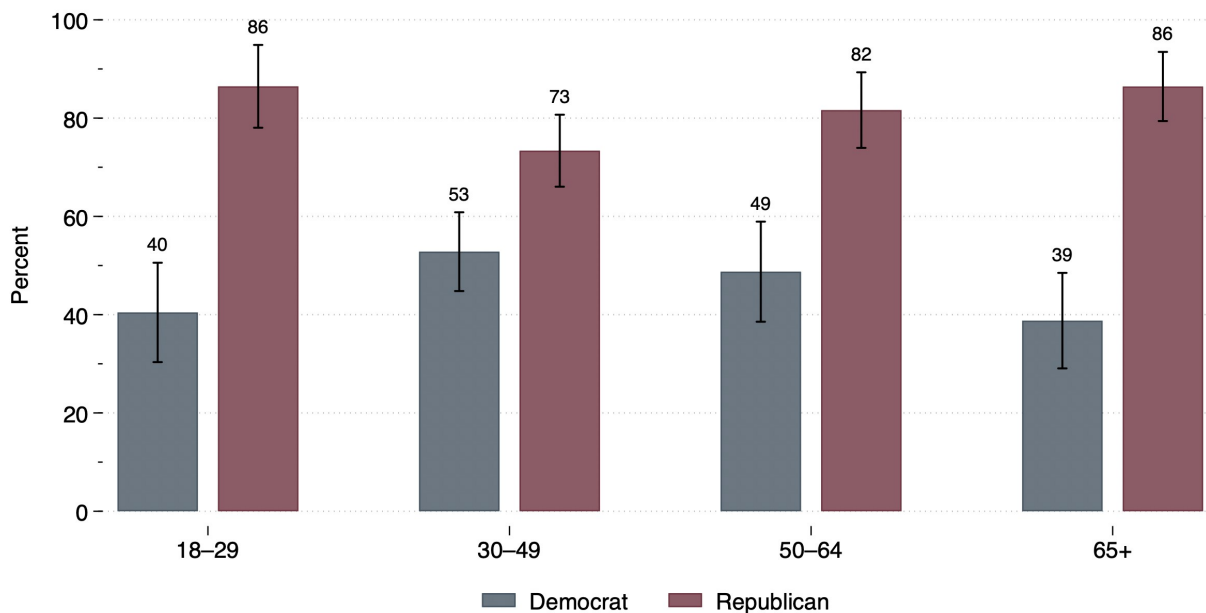
Race and ethnicity correlate with support for religious opt-outs. Non-Hispanic White (66%) and Black (63%) respondents show similar levels of support. Hispanic respondents are significantly less supportive (47%) as are respondents who identified as multiracial or “Other” (55%).

Figure 3: Overall support for religious opt-outs by sex and political party



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

Figure 4: Overall support for religious opt-outs by age and political party



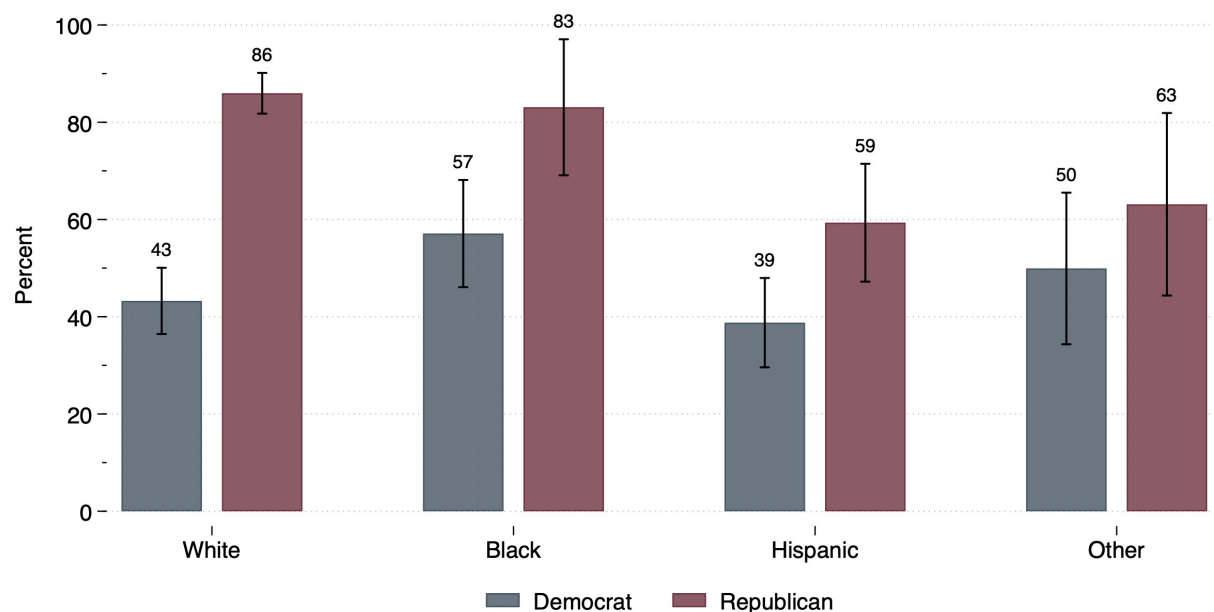
Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

Some of these racial disparities reflect underlying partisan differences. But as Figure 5 illustrates, racial gaps persist even within the two parties. Among Republicans, support for opt-outs ranges from 86% among White Republicans to just 59% among Hispanic Republicans. Among Democrats, support remains lower overall but is significantly higher among Black Democrats (57%) than among their White (43%) or Hispanic (39%) counterparts.

Supplemental analyses (not shown) confirm that these patterns remain even after controlling for factors such as age, sex, education, and income.

These findings further speak to the central role of political ideology in shaping attitudes toward religious opt-outs. At the same time, they suggest that racial and cultural context may independently influence how different communities within each party interpret the meaning and implications of such policies.

Figure 5: Overall support for religious opt-outs by race/ethnicity and political party



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

PARENTS AND NON-PARENTS SUPPORT RELIGIOUS OPT-OUT RIGHTS

One of the more surprising findings is the near-identical level of support for religious opt-outs among parents of K–12 children (63%)—who arguably have the most direct stake in such policies—and non-parents (61%). As shown in Figure 6, the way the question is framed—whether it references religious conflict in general or specifically mentions gender identity—has no significant effect on overall support.

More distinct and statistically meaningful patterns emerge when we examine parent

status within partisan groups. Among Democrats, overall support for opt-outs is somewhat but not significantly higher among K–12 parents (51%) than non-parents (44%). Figure 7 shows that this difference is larger and statistically significant among solid Democrats (49% vs. 36%). Among Democratic leaners, in contrast, support is virtually identical for K–12 parents (54%) and non-parents (54%).

For Republicans, the opposite pattern appears: K–12 parents are significantly *less* supportive of religious opt-outs (73%) overall than non-parents (84%). But this gap is almost

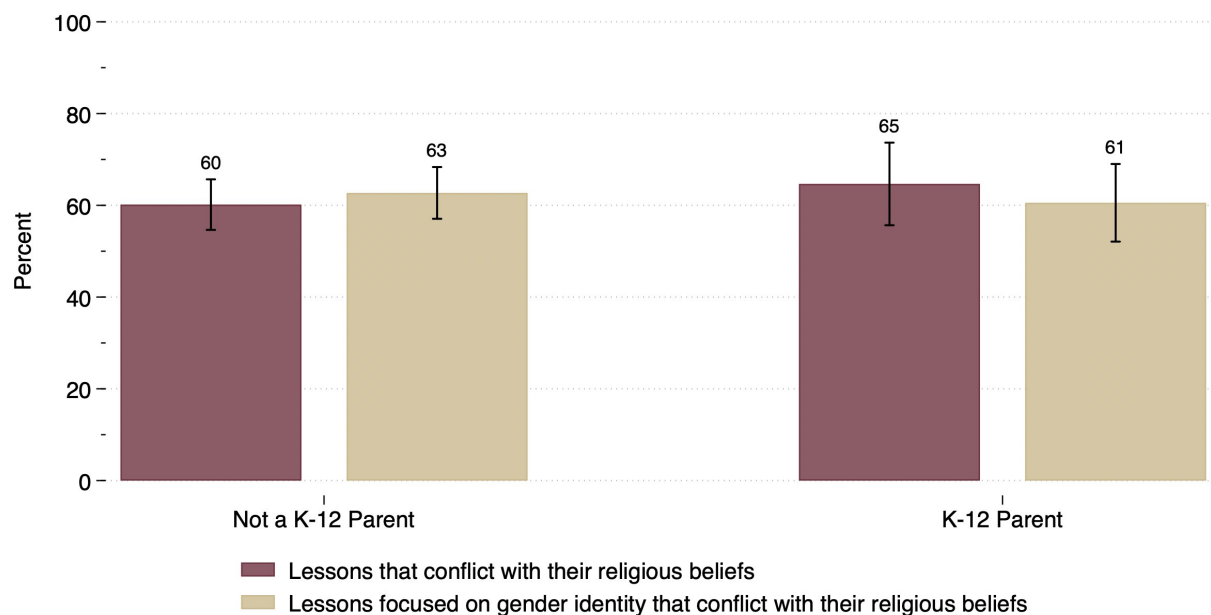
entirely driven by Republican leaners, for whom support drops from 82% from among non-parents to just 58% among parents. In contrast, solid Republicans show equal levels of support regardless of parent status: 85% among non-parents and 85% among K-12 parents.

As Figure 8 illustrates, framing appears to play a greater role for Democratic K-12 parents than for Democratic non-parents. In the general religious conflict condition, support among Democratic K-12 parents overall rises to 58%—including 57% among solid Democrats and 60% among Democratic leaners. When the question references gender identity, however, support drops to 45% overall—42% among solid Democrats and 50% among Democratic leaners.

Partisan strength also appears to shape how Republican K-12 parents respond to question framing. Among solid Republicans, support for opt-outs rises from 79% under the general religious conflict frame to 91% when the question specifically mentions gender identity—though this 12-point increase is within the survey’s margin of error and may not reflect a meaningful difference. By contrast, support among Republican-leaning K-12 parents is both substantially lower and shows a slight decline across frames, dropping from 61% to 55%.

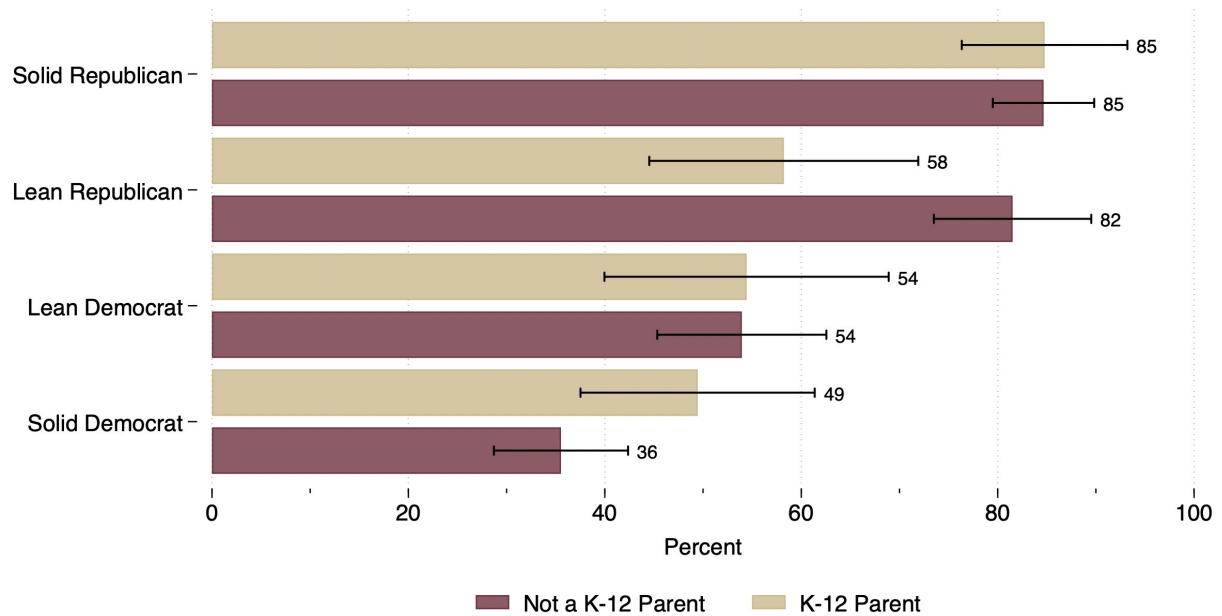
These results suggest that among directly affected groups like K-12 parents, gender identity functions as a politically sensitive cue that tempers or enhances support for theoretical opt-out rights, particularly among solid partisans.

Figure 6: Support for religious opt-outs by K-12 parent status and question frame



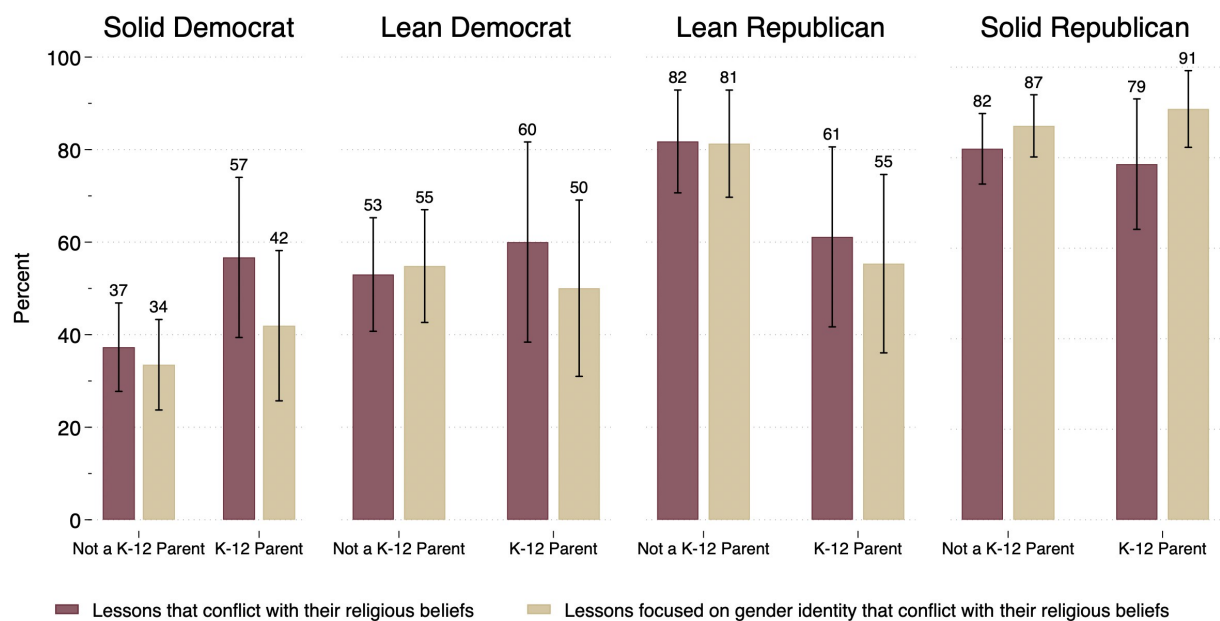
Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

Figure 7: Overall support for religious opt-outs by K-12 parent status and strength of party identification



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

Figure 8: Support for religious opt-outs by K-12 parent status, strength of party identification, and question frame



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

PROHIBITION AND REMOVAL OF TRANSGENDER BOOKS

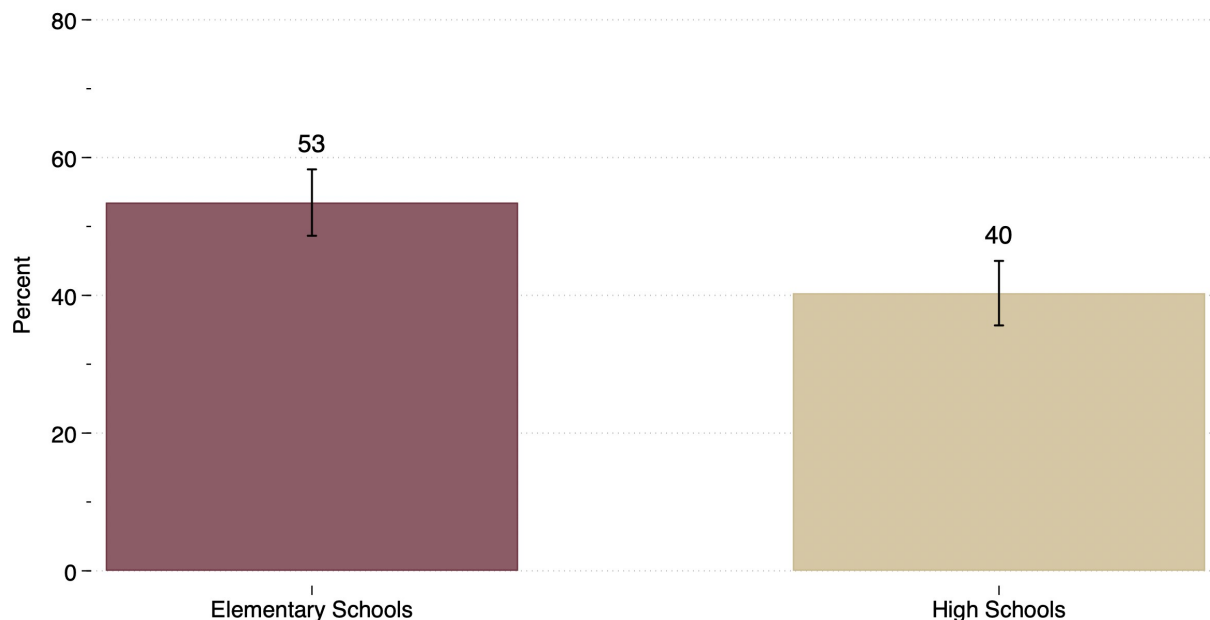
We also asked respondents whether they support or oppose “prohibiting and removing certain books from public school [elementary/high school] classrooms and libraries” if those books “contain transgender characters or storylines.” To gauge the role of age-appropriateness in shaping public opinion, we randomly assigned each respondent to one of two versions of the question—one referencing elementary schools, the other high schools.

Overall support for prohibiting and removing transgender-themed books from

schools is significantly lower than support for religious opt-outs. Fewer than half of Americans (47%) favor such removals in any context, reflecting a broader public reluctance to endorse outright content prohibitions.

The topline figure, as seen in Figure 9, conceals important differences. Americans support book prohibitions and removals in elementary schools (53%) significantly more so than in high schools (40%). This roughly 13-point framing gap suggests that public support for restrictions may be driven less by blanket opposition to transgender content and more by concerns about age-appropriateness.

Figure 9: Public support for prohibiting and removing books that contain transgender characters or storylines from public [elementary schools / high schools]



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

PARTY DIVISIONS OVER REMOVING TRANS MATERIALS AND RELIGIOUS OPT-OUTS

As Figure 10 shows, all partisan groups show stronger support for prohibiting and removing transgender-themed books from elementary schools than from high schools. That said, the size of the differences varies significantly by party and partisan intensity.

Among Democrats overall, support for prohibiting and removing books that contain transgender characters or storylines is relatively low but is significantly higher in the elementary school context (27%) than in the high school context (18%). This framing gap appears in both solid and leaner Democrats, though it is somewhat larger among Democratic leaners (32% elementary,

vs. 21% high school) than among solid Democrats (23% elementary vs. 16% high school). Democratic leaners—those closer to the political center—consistently express greater support for content checks in both elementary and high school settings than solid Democrats, though these differences are modest and may not reflect meaningful gaps in opinion.

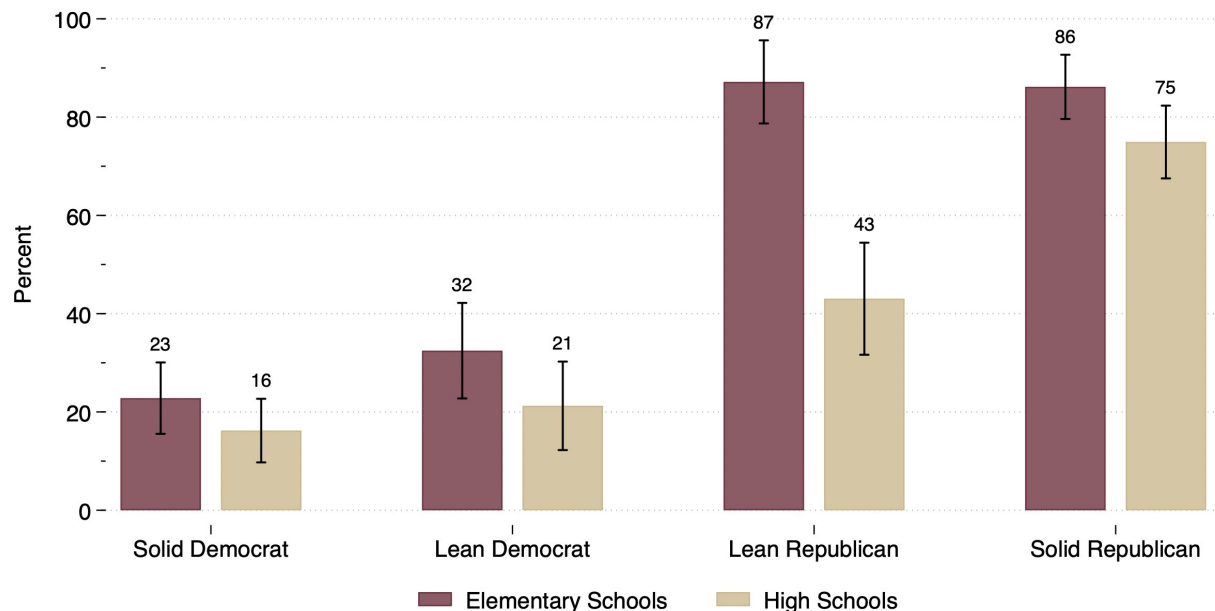
Republican support for prohibitions and removals of books dealing with transgender topics is naturally much higher. Overall, 87% of Republicans support prohibiting and removing transgender-themed books in elementary schools, while 63% support doing so in high schools—a significant 23-point gap. But among solid Republicans, support declines more modestly—from 86% in elementary schools to 75% in high schools (a statistically significant 11-point drop). Among

Republican leaners, the drop is significantly steeper: from 87% to just 43%—a striking 44-point difference.

Overall, 87% of Republicans support prohibiting and removing transgender-themed books in elementary schools, while 63% support doing so in high schools

These findings suggest that partisan leaners—particularly Republican leaners—tend to hold more conditional or situational views on schoolbook restrictions. Solid partisans—especially Republicans—distinguish between school levels to some extent, but their position on prohibitions and removals remains consistent.

Figure 10: Support for prohibiting and removing books from public [elementary schools / high schools] that contain transgender characters or storylines by strength of party identification



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

SEX DIFFERENCES ARE SIGNIFICANT BUT LARGELY PARTISAN

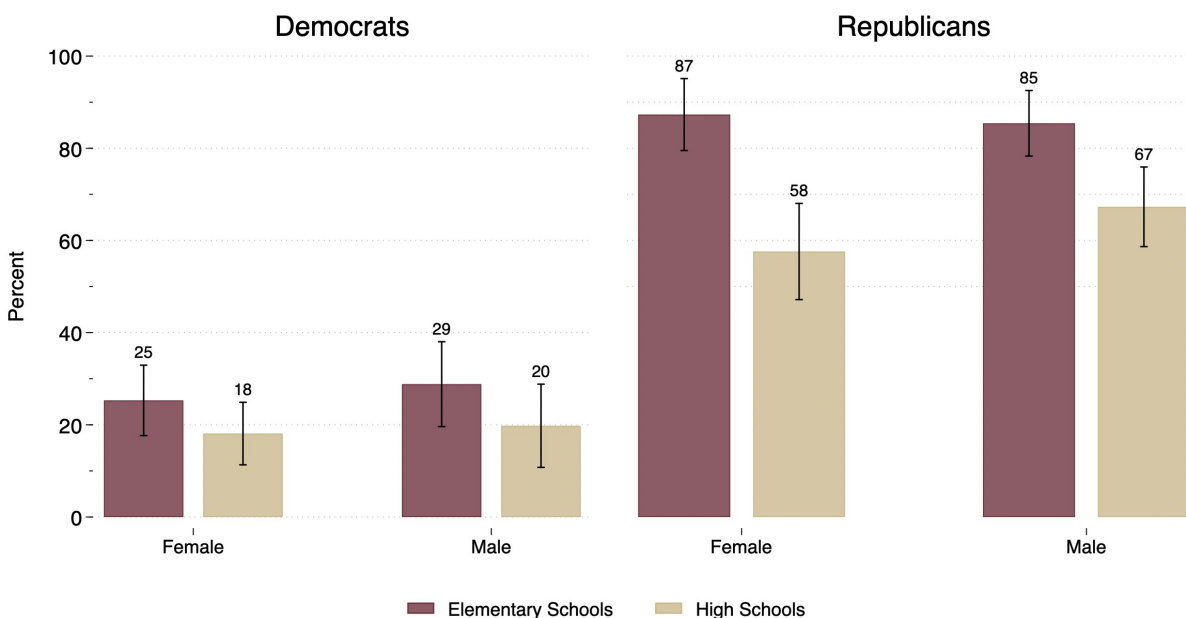
Men are significantly more likely than women to support prohibiting and removing books that contain transgender characters or storylines from schools. Roughly 52% of male respondents favor such removals, compared to 43% of female respondents—a nearly 10-point gap. But this difference shrinks considerably and is no longer statistically meaningful once we consider party affiliation. Republican women (72%) and Republican men (76%) express similarly high levels of support for prohibiting and removing transgender-themed books from public schools, while Democratic women (22%) and Democratic men (25%) show lower support.

Despite this sharp partisan divide, school context continues to shape views within each sex-by-party group. As Figure 11 shows, support is consistently higher when asked about removing transgender-themed materials

from elementary schools versus high schools. Among Republican women, support jumps significantly from 58% in the high school context to 87% in elementary schools. Among Republican men, support significantly rises from 67% (high school) to 85% (elementary school). Democratic women increase from 18% (high school) to 25% (elementary school), and Democratic men from 20% (high school) to 29% (elementary school)—shifts that move in the expected direction but are too small to draw firm conclusions.

In sum, although men show greater overall support for transgender school book prohibitions and removals, much of the observed gender gap is attributable to underlying party differences. Within each party, men and women express similar levels of support—and both sexes consider student age when they assess the appropriateness of such policies.

Figure 11: Support for prohibiting and removing books from public [elementary schools / high schools] that contain transgender characters or storylines by sex and party



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN YOUNGER AND OLDER DEMOCRATS

Public support for prohibiting and removing transgender-themed books from public schools varies somewhat by age. Young adults (ages 18–29) are the least supportive (42%). Support then increases among those aged 30–49 (51%) before dipping among adults aged 50–64 (47%) and seniors 65 and older (46%).

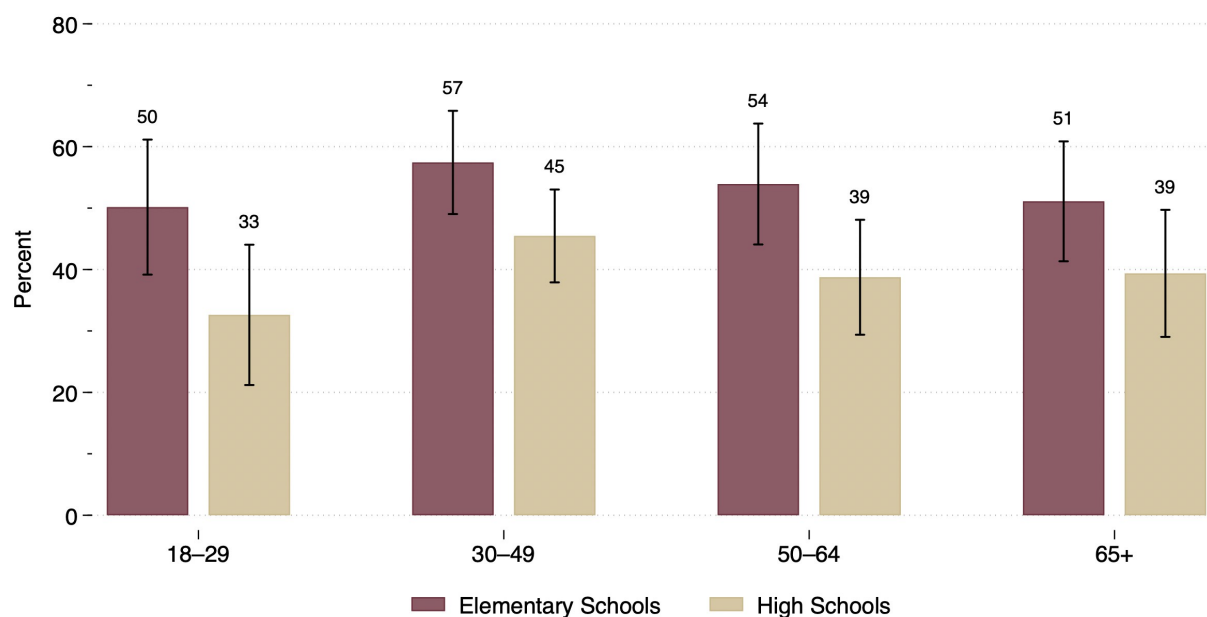
Despite these minor differences, whether the policy targets elementary or high schools has a significant effect across all age groups. As shown in Figure 12, support for book prohibitions and removals increases when the context is elementary education. Among 18–29-year-olds, support rises from 33% for high schools to 50% for elementary schools. Similar increases appear among 30–49-year-olds (from 45% to 57%), 50–64-year-olds (39% to 54%), and seniors (39% to 51%). This consistent pattern underscores that concerns about age-appropriateness cut across generational lines. Even younger adults become more cautious when transgender-

themed materials are introduced in early education.

Younger Democrats (including leaners) are significantly more supportive of transgender-themed book prohibitions and removals than their older counterparts. Roughly 28% of Democrats under age 50 support removal (Figure 13), compared to just 16% among those 50 and older. This runs counter to the typical generational pattern observed in other cultural issues—such as views on same-sex marriage, racial inequality, and gender identity—where younger Democrats tend to be more liberal than their older counterparts.

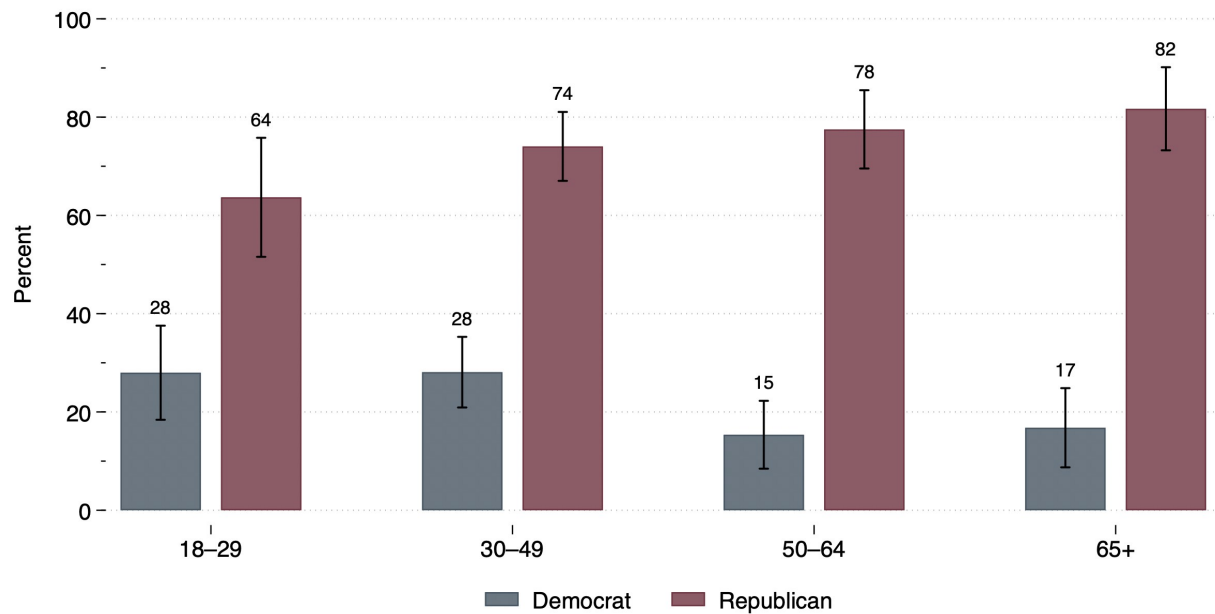
Among Republicans, the age trend is reversed: support for prohibitions and removals significantly increases with age, from 64% among 18–29-year-olds to 82% among seniors. This finding, however, comes almost entirely from solid Republicans whose support climbs significantly from 63% in the youngest group to 86% among the oldest. Republican leaners show no statistically meaningful age variation. With the exception of those in the 50–64 age group (73%), their support holds steady, ranging from 61% to 64%.

Figure 12: Support for prohibiting and removing books from public schools by age group and political party



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

Figure 13: Overall support for prohibiting and removing books from public schools by age group and party



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

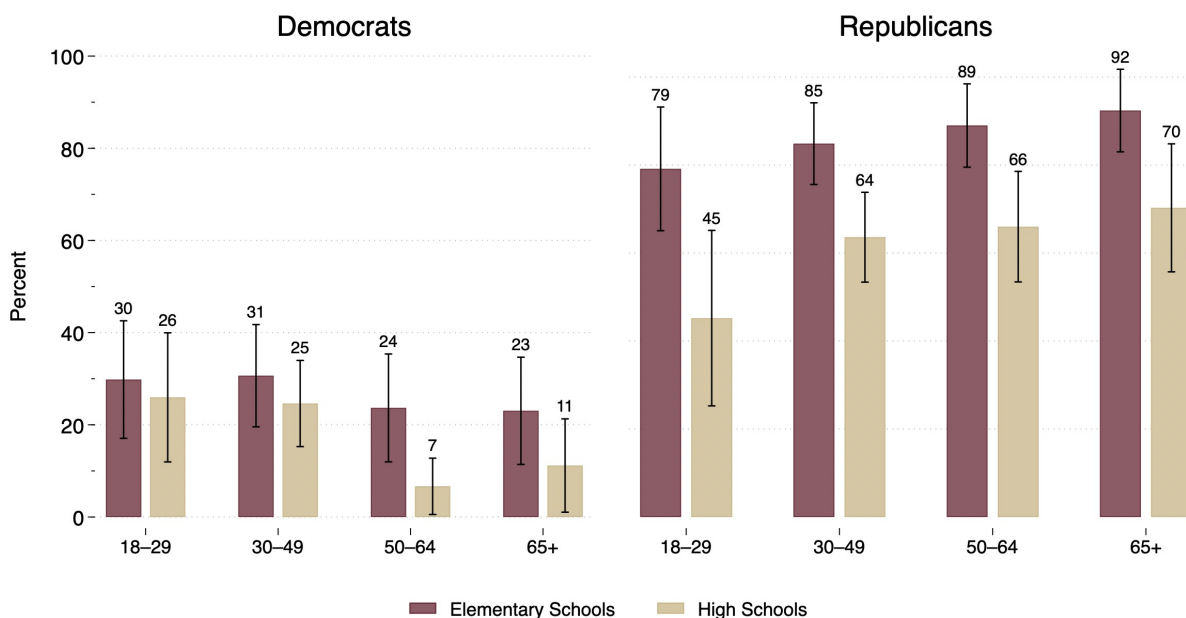
Finally, while smaller subgroup sizes counsel caution when interpreting any single estimate, Figure 14 affirms the broader trend: concerns about age-appropriateness span both generational and partisan boundaries. Support for book prohibitions increases among both younger and older Democrats when the policy targets elementary schools. But this shift is more pronounced—and only statistically meaningful—among those 50 and older (23% vs. 8%) than among those under 50 (30% vs. 25%).

Among Republicans across all age groups, support for removing transgender-themed books is significantly higher when the policy targets elementary rather than high schools.

Among Republicans across all age groups, support for removing transgender-themed books is significantly higher when the policy targets elementary rather than high schools. For example, support rises from 45% to 79% among 18–29-year-olds, from 64% to 85% among those 30–49, and from 66% to 89% among those 50–64. While the gap is nominally largest among the youngest group, differences in gap size across cohorts are not statistically meaningful.

Taken together, these findings lend further support to the conclusion that perceptions of age-appropriateness—not just ideology—shape attitudes toward school library content.

Figure 14: Support for prohibiting and removing books from public [elementary schools / high schools] that contain transgender characters or storylines by age and party



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

WHITE DEMOCRATS STAND OUT

More pronounced differences emerge when views are disaggregated by both race and party affiliation. Figure 15 shows that Democratic support for prohibiting and removing books that contain transgender characters or storylines varies significantly by race. Non-Hispanic White Democrats are by far the least supportive. Only 11% support prohibition and removal efforts. In contrast, support is significantly higher among Black Democrats (45%), Hispanic Democrats (27%), and Democrats of multiracial or “other” backgrounds (26%).

Responses are far more consistent among Republicans. Support remains uniformly high across racial groups—76% among White Republicans, 75% among Hispanic Republicans, and 74% among those who identify as “Other.” While support among Black Republicans is somewhat lower at 63%, this difference is not statistically meaningful.

Whereas Figure 15 shows overall opinion towards book bans by race within each party,

Figure 16 examines whether that support shifts based on school context—elementary versus high school. Due to small sample sizes among non-White Republicans in each school-level subgroup, these respondents are grouped together to produce more stable estimates.

Non-Hispanic White Democrats are by far the least supportive. Only 11% support prohibition and removal efforts. In contrast, support is significantly higher among Black Democrats (45%), Hispanic Democrats (27%), and Democrats of multiracial or “other” backgrounds (26%).

Once again, the findings affirm that school level matters: across all racial subgroups and both parties, support for book removals is at least nominally higher—and in some cases statistically so—when the content is located in

elementary rather than high schools. Among Democrats, however, the size of this gap varies considerably. Support rises by roughly 14 points among Black Democrats (from 38% to 52%) and by 10 points among Hispanic Democrats (from 23% to 33%) when the focus shifts to elementary schools. Among White Democrats, in contrast, support is low regardless of context—14% for elementary schools and just 9% for high schools, a minor 5-point difference.

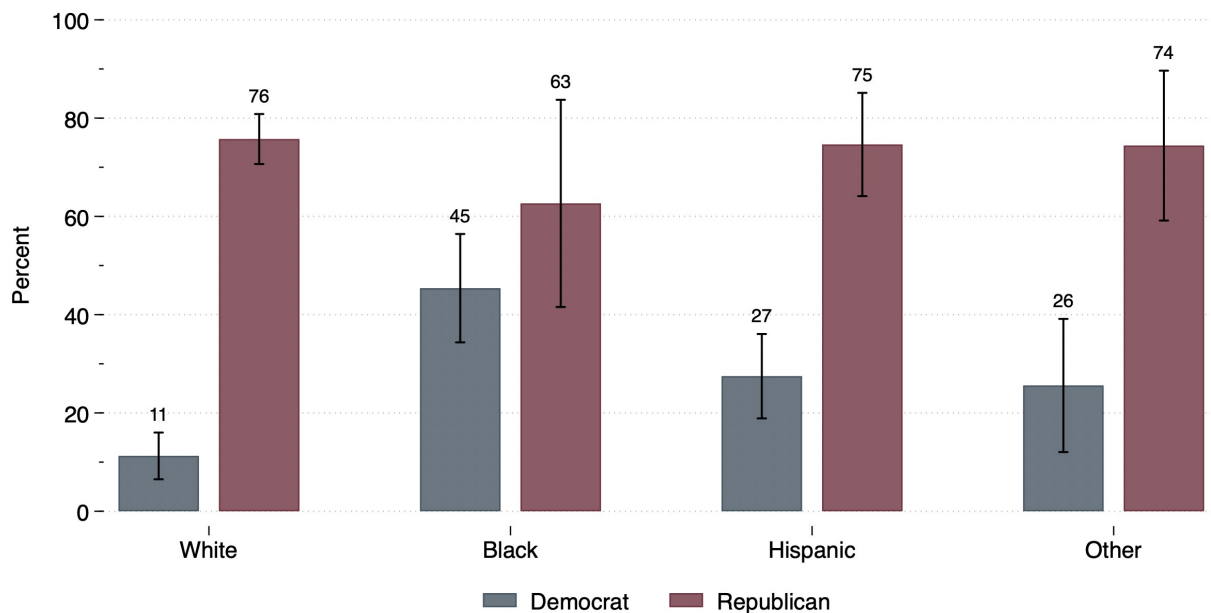
White Democrats are especially resistant to prohibition and removal efforts in any educational setting.

Republican responses are, once again, more uniform across racial groups. Among non-Hispanic White Republicans, support increases from 63% in the high school context

to 88% when the focus shifts to elementary schools. Among non-White Republicans, support levels—83% and 61%, respectively—move in the same direction and are not statistically distinguishable from those of their White counterparts.

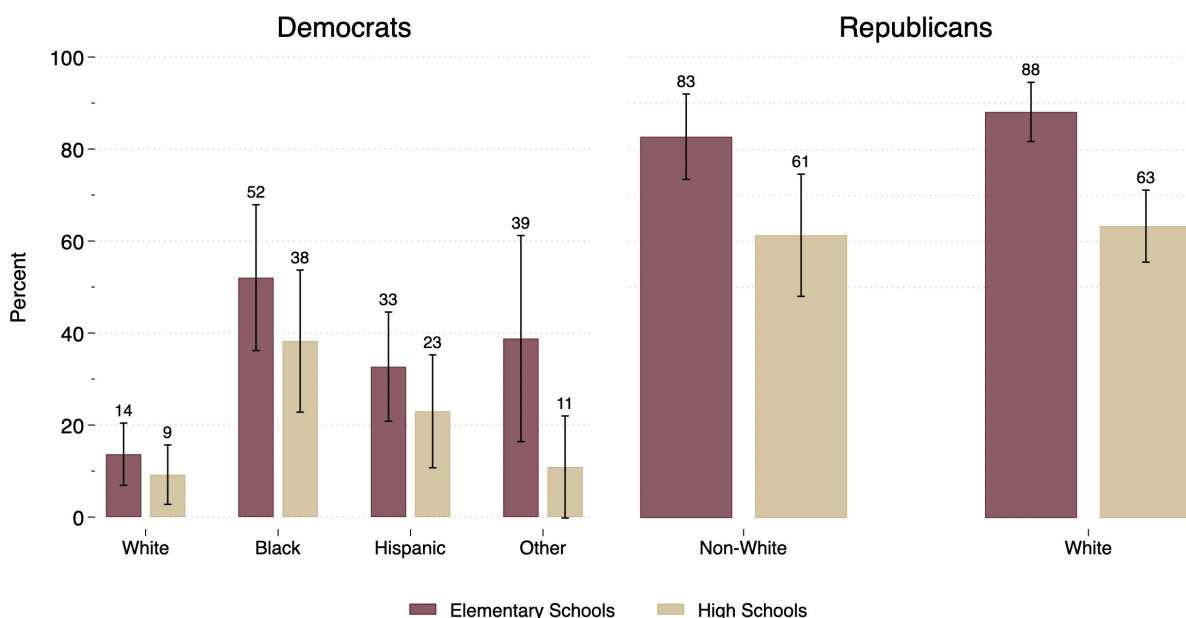
These findings suggest that while race and ethnicity correlate with views on transgender-themed book removals, their influence—particularly among Democrats—is closely mediated by partisanship and ideology. White Democrats are especially resistant to prohibition and removal efforts in any educational setting. By contrast, while the estimated differences are too imprecise to draw firm conclusions, Black and Hispanic Democrats appear at least nominally more responsive to the age of the students involved. This suggests that concerns about age-appropriateness may coexist with—and at times temper—broader partisan commitments.

Figure 15: Overall support for prohibiting and removing books from public schools by race/ethnicity and party



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

Figure 16: Support for prohibiting and removing books from public [elementary schools / high schools] that contain transgender characters or storylines by race and party



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

AGE-APPROPRIATENESS MATTERS FOR K-12 PARENTS ACROSS PARTY LINES

Support for prohibition and removal of transgender-themed books from public schools varies significantly by parental status. Americans with children currently enrolled in K–12 schools are significantly more likely to favor such removals: 54% of K–12 parents express support, compared to just 44% of non-parents—a significant 10-point gap. This suggests that actively raising school-aged children may heighten sensitivity to classroom and library content.

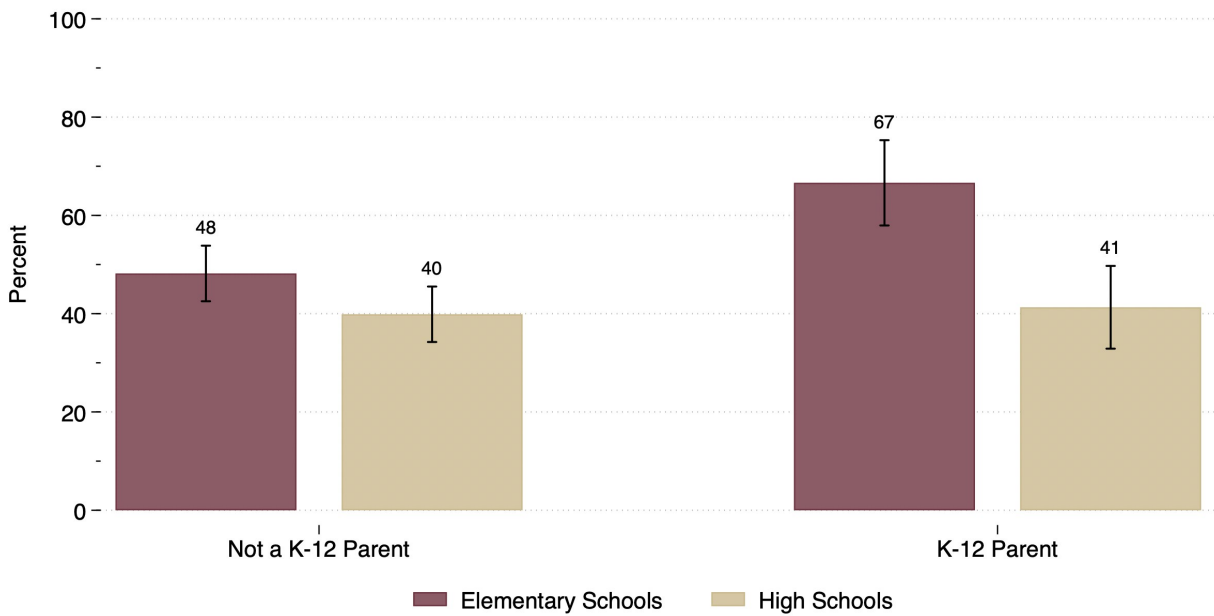
As shown in Figure 17, this divide becomes even more apparent when school context is considered. Both K–12 parents and non-parents express significantly stronger support for removals when the books are described as part of elementary school curricula rather than high school materials, but the effect is notably larger among K–12 parents. Among K–12 parents, support drops from 67% in the elementary school condition to just 41% in the high school condition—a significant 26-

point decline.

Among non-parents, the drop is more modest but still significant—from 48% to 40%, or 8 points. These patterns highlight how concerns about age-appropriateness are especially strong among parents with children in school.

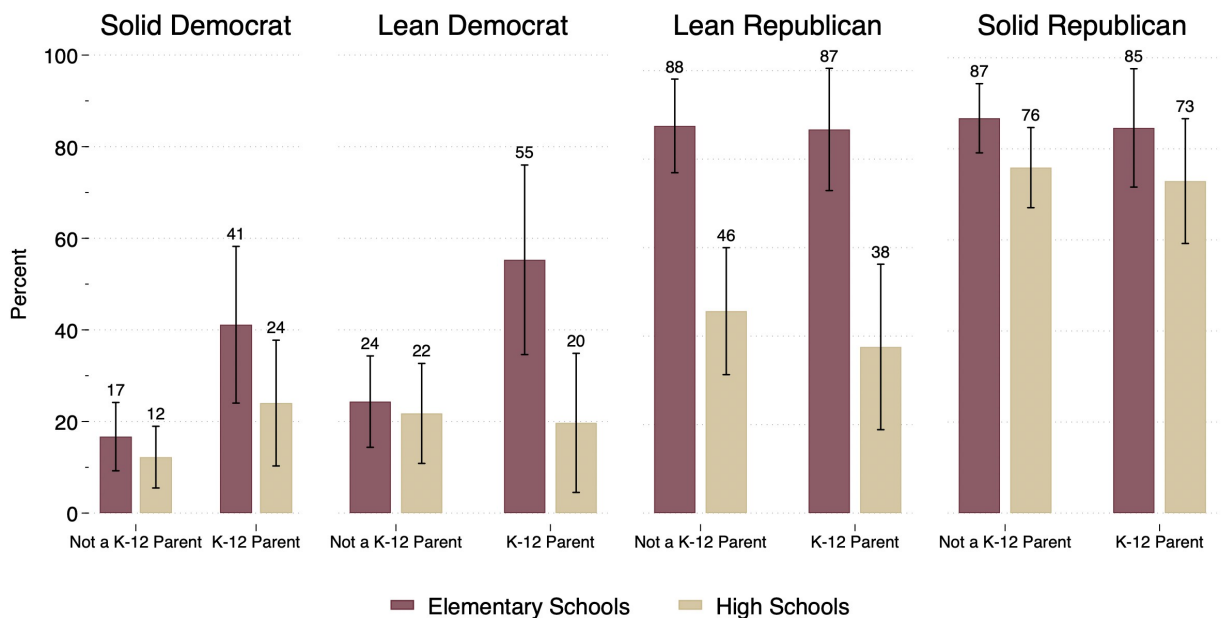
When partisanship is factored in, the picture becomes more nuanced. Figure 18 shows that while Democratic support for book prohibition and removal remains low overall, Democratic K–12 parents—particularly leaners—respond more strongly to age framing. Among Democratic K–12 parents overall, support rises to 47% when the policy targets elementary schools (41% among solid Democrats and 55% among leaners) but falls significantly to just 22% when applied to high schools (24% and 20%, respectively). Among Democratic non-parents, support is lower and more stable: 20% versus 17% overall, with only minor movement among solid Democrats (17% to 12%) and leaners (24% to 22%).

Figure 17: Support for prohibiting and removing books from public [elementary schools / high schools] that contain transgender characters or storylines by K-12 parent status



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

Figure 18: Support for prohibiting and removing books from public [elementary schools / high schools] that contain transgender characters or storylines by strength of party identification and K-12 parent status



Note: Error bars show 95% confidence intervals, reflecting the level of uncertainty (i.e., margin of error) around each estimate.

Republicans, in contrast, express high levels of support for book prohibition and removal regardless of parental status, but school grade effects still matter. Support among Republican K-12 parents significantly drops from 86% to 60% when the policy shifts from elementary to high school materials; among non-parents, support significantly falls from 87% to 65%. These shifts, however, are largely driven by Republican leaners. For Republican leaning K-12 parents, support drops sharply—from 87% in the elementary condition to just 38% in the high school condition. Among Republican leaning non-parents, the decline is similarly steep—from 88% to 46%. In contrast, support among solid Republicans is relatively more stable; it declines from 85% to 73% among K-12 parents, and from 87% to 76% among non-parents.

Taken together, these findings highlight the broad bipartisan resonance of age-appropriateness concerns—particularly in the context of early education. They also reveal a moderating effect of parenthood on Democratic opposition: while Democratic non-parents remain consistently resistant to book removals, Democratic K-12 parents—especially Democratic leaners—are more open to restrictions when schools expose young students to trans materials. Among Republicans, already-high support intensifies further in the elementary school context, especially among leaners—which reinforces the distinctions among school ages.

Concerns about age appropriateness may represent a rare point of cross-partisan commonality in an otherwise polarized policy landscape. And to the extent that the public observes the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Mahmoud v. Taylor* as focused on protections for elementary school students, the data suggest the Court is likely to command broad public support.

POLL INFORMATION

This study was conducted online between May 21 and June 3, 2025 by Social Science

Research Services (SSRS) using a Probability-Based Opinion Panel. The sample consisted of 1,004 respondents age 18 or older. The margin of error for total respondents is +/- 3.4% at the 95% confidence level. Weighted demographic characteristics of the survey group are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive characteristics of poll participants

Category	Percent
Sex	
Male	49.3
Female	50.7
Age	
18 to 29	19.6
30 to 49	34.2
50 to 64	23.4
65 or older	22.8
Race/Ethnicity	
Non-Hispanic White	60.9
Black	12.3
Hispanic	17.5
Asian	6.7
Income	
Less than \$50,000	43.9
\$50,000-\$74,999	14.9
\$75,000-\$99,999	13.6
\$100,000 and over	27.7
Education	
Less than HS	9.4
HS Graduate	28.7
Some college	26.9
BA Degree	20.4
Postgrad / Prof. Degree	15.7
Parent Status	
K-12 Parent	29.7
Not a K-12 Parent	70.3
Stated Party	
Democrat	30.7
Republican	29.3
Independent	31.1
Stated & Leaned Party	
Democrat	30.7
Lean Democrat	22.5
Lean Republican	17.0
Republican	31.6

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