



Missouri Voters' Opinions on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Schools

The following document summarizes the opinions of likely voters in Missouri on issues related to DEI in schools. These results are from SLU/YouGov Polls conducted from June 2020 to February 2025.

Full demographic crosstabs and raw data for independent analyses of SLU/YouGov Polls are available at slu.edu/poll.

Key Missouri Findings

- Fewer than 38% of voters support schools being allowed to ban books with stories about gay or lesbian youth or transgender youth
- When asked if schools should be allowed to teach Critical Race Theory, only 37% agreed. However, when asked if schools should be allowed to teach about how racism can exist in society and its institutions, 48% agreed.
- Only 18% of voters favored public schools allowing discussion of sexual orientation issues with students in elementary schools. However, 56% of voters favored allowing such discussions in high schools.
- 18% of voters support allowing transgender student-athletes to play on sports teams that match their gender identity, rather than the gender they were assigned at birth.

Media Inquiries

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Missouri Voters' Public Opinion on DEI in Schools

Critical Race Theory and School Curriculum

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...schools should be allowed to teach about how racism can exist in society and its institutions	48%	85%	16%	54%
<i>Reporting percent agree. Source: July 2021 SLU/YouGov Poll, 477 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±6.02%</i>				
...schools should be allowed to teach Critical Race Theory	37%	74%	8%	29%
<i>Reporting percent agree. Source: July 2021 SLU/YouGov Poll, 473 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±5.81%</i>				
Respondents were randomly assigned to see only one of the two above questions.				

Do you favor or oppose the following policies...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...expanding public schools' curricula related to racial and ethnic groups	41%	77%	15%	35%
<i>Reporting percent favor. Source: Feb. 2023 SLU/YouGov Poll, 457 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±5.04%</i>				
...limiting public schools' curricula related to racial and ethnic groups	35%	10%	60%	34%
<i>Reporting percent favor. Source: Feb. 2023 SLU/YouGov Poll, 443 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±5.50%</i>				
Respondents were randomly assigned to see only one of the two above questions.				

Transgender Athletes

Do you favor or oppose the following policies...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...allowing transgender student-athletes to play on sports teams that match their gender identity, rather than the gender they were assigned at birth	18%	41%	2%	15%
<i>Reporting percent favor. Source: Aug. 2023 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±4.02%</i>				

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...allowing transgender student athletes to play on sports teams that match their gender identity, rather than the gender they were assigned at birth	22%	46%	5%	20%
<i>Reporting percent agree. Source: Aug. 2022 SLU/YouGov Poll, 447 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±5.93%</i>				

LGBTQ+ Issues in Public Schools

Do you favor or oppose public schools being allowed to...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...discuss sexual orientation issues with students in elementary schools	18%	39%	3%	15%
...discuss sexual orientation issues with students in middle schools	38%	70%	11%	40%
...discuss sexual orientation issues with students in high schools	56%	86%	31%	60%
...discuss gender identity issues with students in elementary schools	19%	40%	3%	16%
...discuss gender identity issues with students in middle schools	34%	69%	7%	34%
...discuss gender identity issues with students in high schools	51%	85%	23%	52%
<i>Reporting percent favor. Source: Aug. 2023 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±4.02%</i>				

Do you favor or oppose the following policies...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...expanding public schools' curricula related to sexual orientation	29%	57%	11%	20%
<i>Reporting percent support. Source: Feb. 2023 SLU/YouGov Poll, 457 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±5.04%</i>				
...limiting public schools' curricula related to sexual orientation	49%	11%	76%	49%
<i>Reporting percent favor. Source: Feb. 2023 SLU/YouGov Poll, 443 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±5.50%</i>				

Book Bans

Do you favor or oppose public schools being allowed to...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...ban books with stories about gay or lesbian youth	33%	7%	61%	25%
...ban books with stories about transgendered youth	38%	10%	64%	33%
<i>Reporting percent favor. Source: Aug. 2023 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±4.02%</i>				

Higher Education

Do you favor or oppose the following policies...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...colleges being allowed to consider an applicant's race among other factors when making decisions on admissions	22%	47%	6%	18%

Reporting percent favor. Source: Aug. 2023 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±4.02%

Do you support or oppose the following policies...	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...allowing undocumented immigrants to be eligible for the in-state college tuition rate if they graduated from high school in your state	43%	78%	14%	41%

Reporting percent strongly/somewhat support. Source: June 2020 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.95%

School District Funding

Local school districts receive local, state, and federal funding. State funding in Missouri is primarily determined by a funding formula. Do you agree or disagree that this funding formula should do the following...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...provide more funds for each student who is learning English as a non-native language	44%	74%	23%	42%

Reporting percent agree. Source: Feb. 2024 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.74%

About the SLU/YouGov Poll

The SLU/YouGov Poll is a biannual survey of likely Missouri voters aiming to inform policymakers, citizens, and researchers of Missourians' opinions on important issues facing the state. No other academic institution regularly conducts a non-partisan, scientific survey of Missouri voters and makes results and raw data publicly available. For questions or suggestions concerning the SLU/YouGov Poll, contact poll director Steven Rogers, Ph.D., at steven.rogers@slu.edu.

About Saint Louis University

Founded in 1818, Saint Louis University is one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious Catholic institutions. Rooted in Jesuit values and its pioneering history as the first university west of the Mississippi River, SLU offers more than 15,200 students a rigorous, transformative education of the whole person. At the core of the University's diverse community of scholars is SLU's service-focused mission, which challenges and prepares students to make the world a better, more just place.

About YouGov

Saint Louis University has partnered with YouGov to conduct its annual survey of Missouri voters. YouGov conducts surveys for multiple academic institutions and is the primary, trusted survey firm for media organizations, including CBS News and The Economist. An independent Pew Research Center study of online survey firms in 2016 further concluded that YouGov "consistently outperforms competitors."

The SLU/YouGov Poll is funded by the PRiME Center in SLU's School of Education.