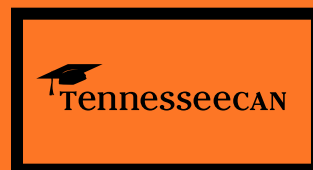


# DISTRICT LEADERS SURVEY 2017

A TennesseeCAN Statewide Poll

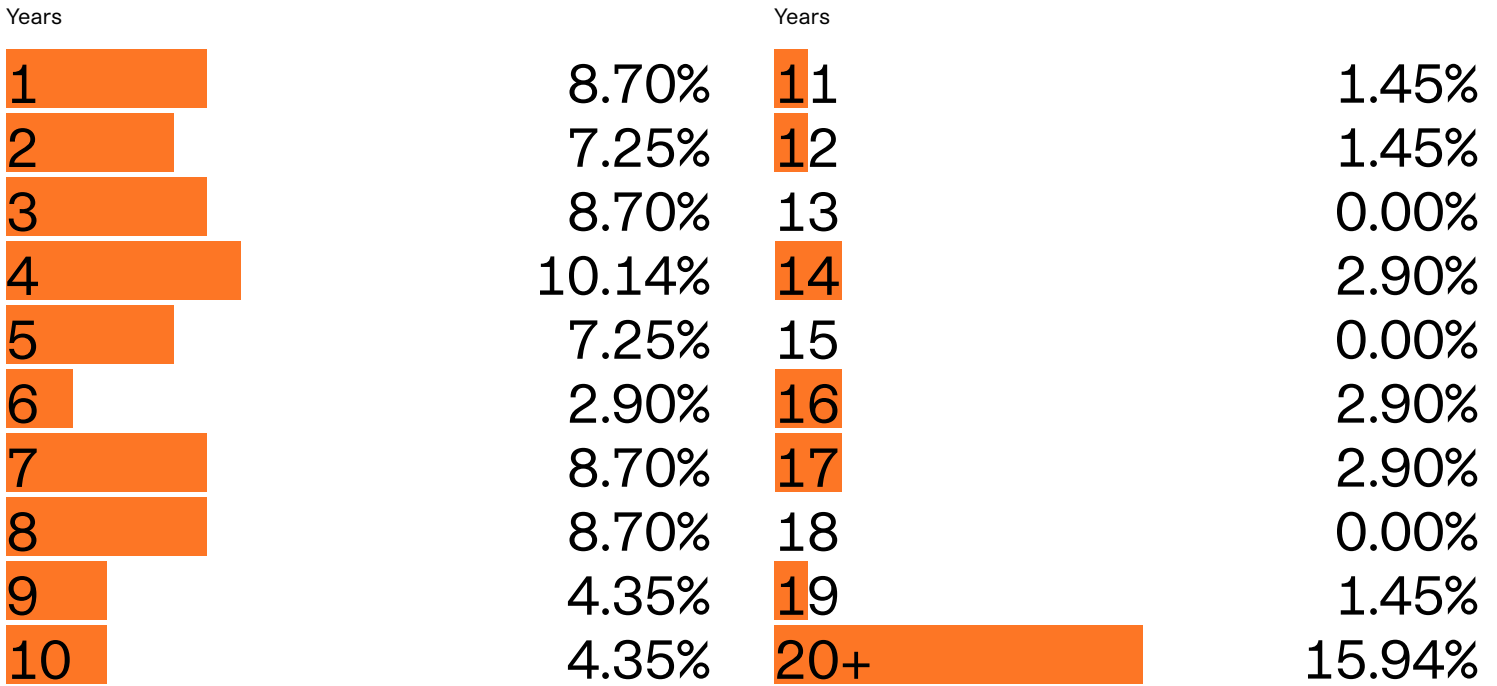


**146 surveys were administered in late July/early August 2017 via emailed survey to all current Tennessee Directors of Schools.**

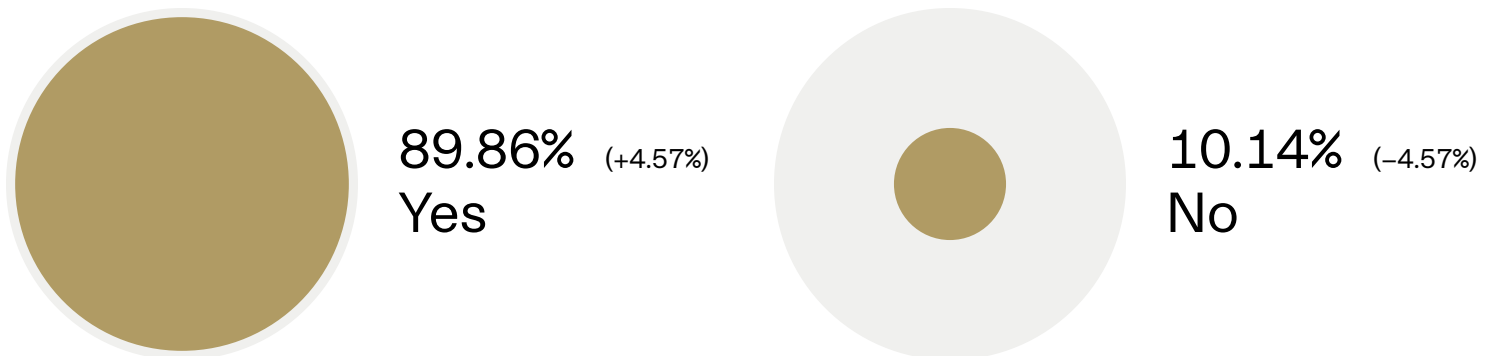
**69 respondents (47.26%) +0.66%\* answered the survey: 146 email addresses found, 0 bounce-back, 4 opt-out.**

1. We continue to engage a greater number of district leaders from across the state representing a diverse set of districts.
2. The majority of district leaders perceive the state of education in Tennessee is improving than compared to 2016.
3. Budget and Staffing continue to be the largest perceived impediments to student success, though Scheduling has increased compared to 2016.
4. The majority of district leaders believe that teachers do not have enough time in their day and school year to meet student needs, and the vast majority of district leaders would support extending the school day and/or year if given the necessary resources to do so.
5. Half of district leaders now support removing mandatory class-size restrictions, an increase compared to 2016.
6. The vast majority of district leaders do not believe they have adequate resources to build and maintain adequate facilities, though this number decreased slightly compared to 2016.
7. The vast majority of district leaders do not believe they receive adequate funding for special needs students.
8. The majority of District leaders support the idea of weighting funding based on student need for at-risk categories of students, though many respondents were “unsure” or noted that they needed more information to decide.

How many years have you been a district leader?\*



Were you a school leader/principal before leading a district?



\* Most distributions held steady since 2016, but we had a decrease in 1st year district leaders and an increase in school leaders with 20+ years' experience.

Have you been a classroom educator in the past?

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Yes	100.00%	(+1.47%)
No	0.00%	(-1.47%)

Have you ever led a district other than the one you currently lead?

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Yes	18.84%	(-6.16%)
No	81.16%	(+6.16%)

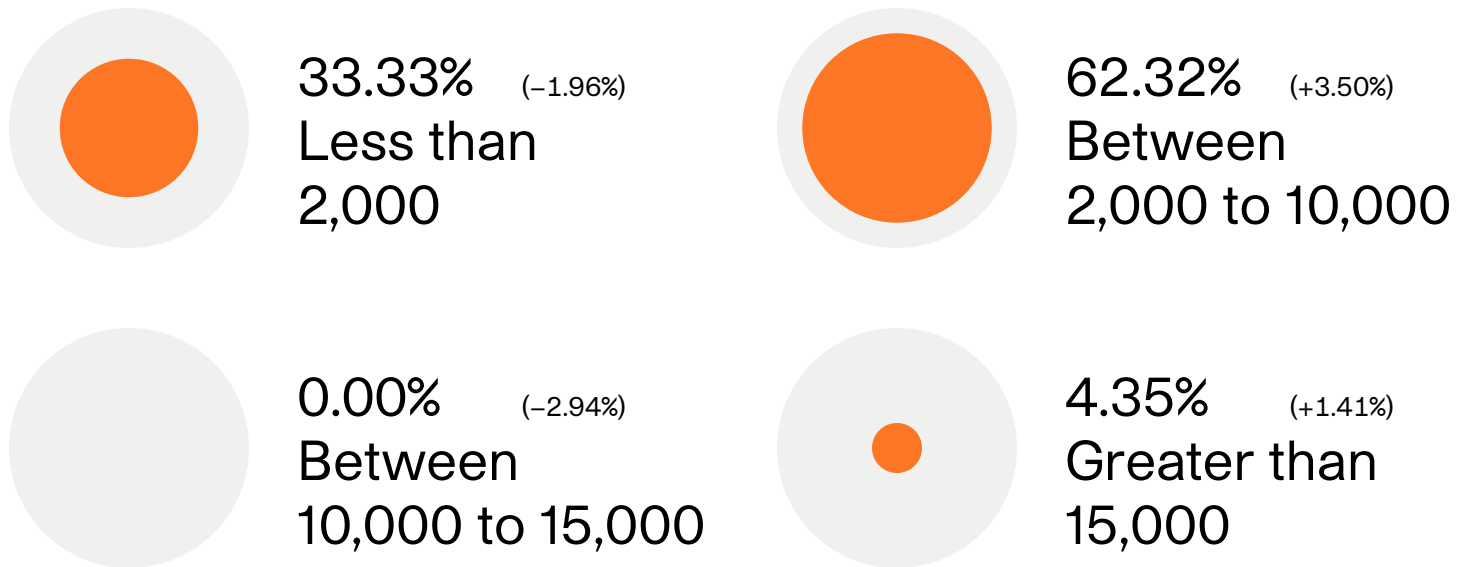
Have you ever led a district in another state?\*

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Yes	7.25%	(N/A)
No	92.75%	(N/A)

\*This question was not asked in the 2016 survey.

Approximately how many students are enrolled in your district?



What is your perception of the state of education in Tennessee?



\* "Neutral" was added as a response category for the 2017 survey.

What limitations or constraints do you feel hinder your ability to improve student outcomes?

(Choose all that apply.)\*

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Budget	82.76%	(+1.63%)
Staffing	68.97%	(+2.93%)
Scheduling	24.14%	(+9.05%)
Transportation	3.45%	(-5.98%)
Other	20.69%	(+15.03%)

Some of the most common “Other” responses included:

1. Poverty
2. Funding for federal and state mandates
3. Shifting political landscape
4. Finding quality educators
5. Mandates for how school time is spent

What areas of policymaking do you feel are outside of your influence? (Check all that apply)

State-level policy and law	82.76%	(-11.47%)
State-level programming	56.90%	(+1.13%)
District-level policy	0.00%	(0.00%)
District-level programming	0.00%	(0.00%)
Other	13.79%	(+11.87%)

Some of the most common “Other” responses included:

1. Federal policy
2. Implementing policies without examining unintended consequences
3. Lack of educator input in policymaking

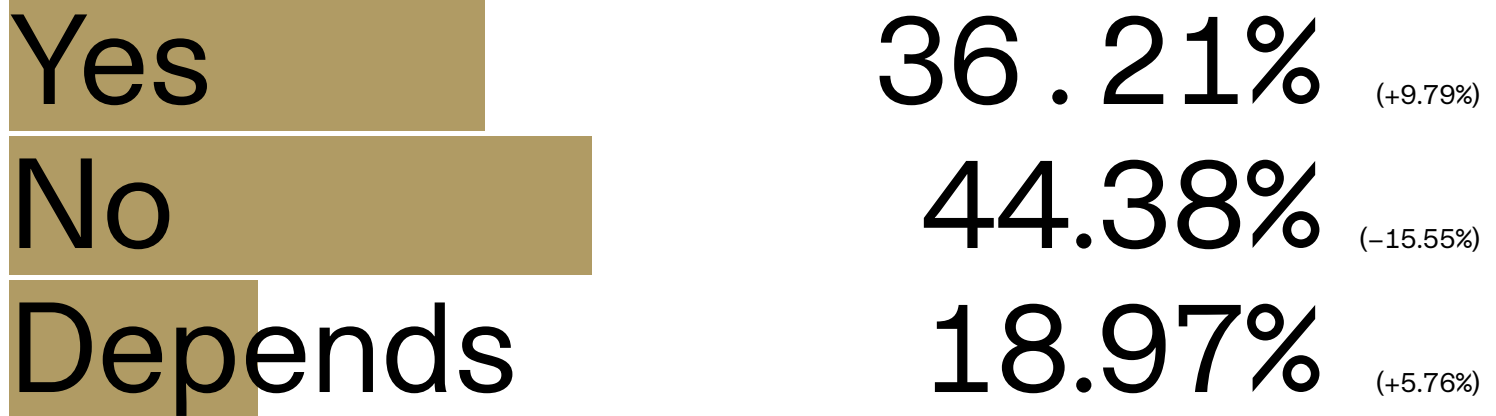
How would you describe your relationship with your school board?

Excellent	67.24%	(+3.09%)
Good	27.59%	(-4.49%)
Neutral	5.17%	(+1.40%)
Poor	0.00%	(0.00%)
Very Poor	0.00%	(0.00%)



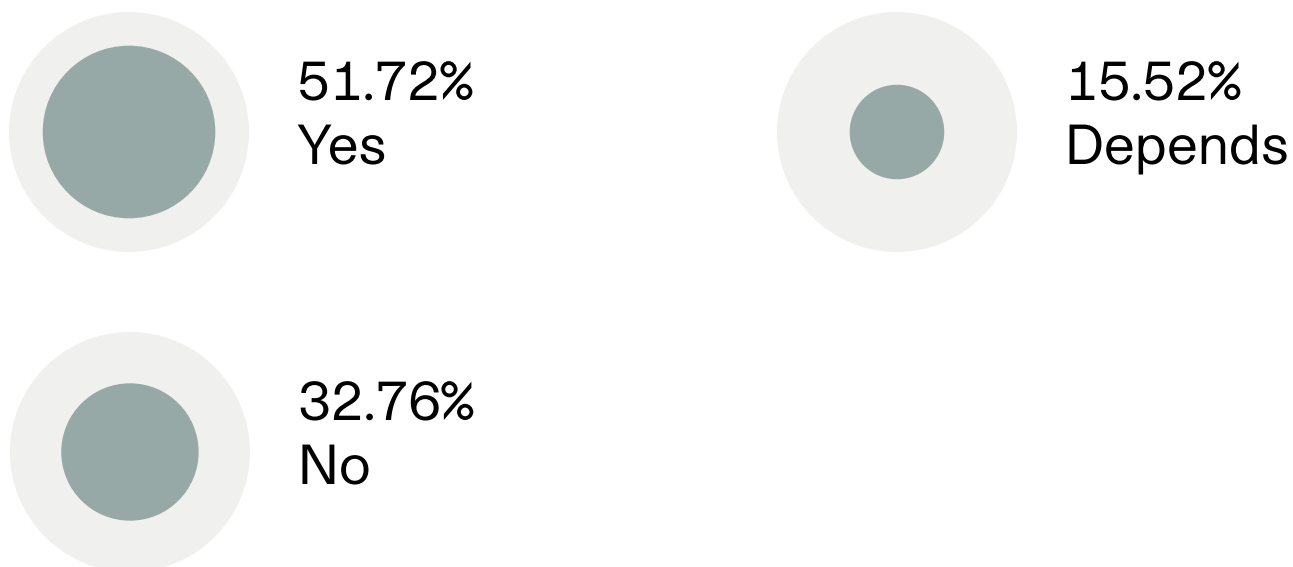
Do you have the resources and support from the state to attract and retain quality school leaders?

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Do you have the resources and support from the state to get quality materials and equipment?\*

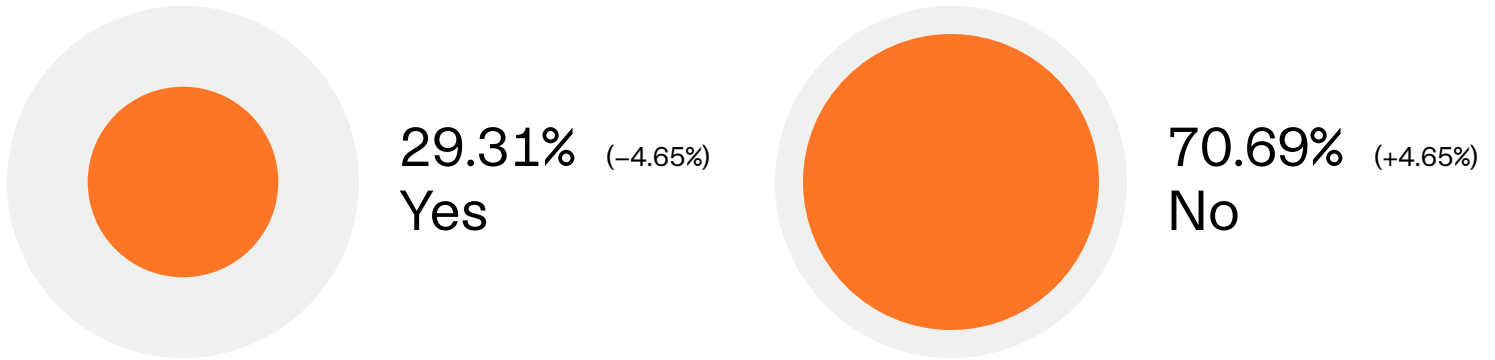
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\* This question was not asked in the 2016 survey.

Do you have the resources and support to build and maintain adequate facilities?

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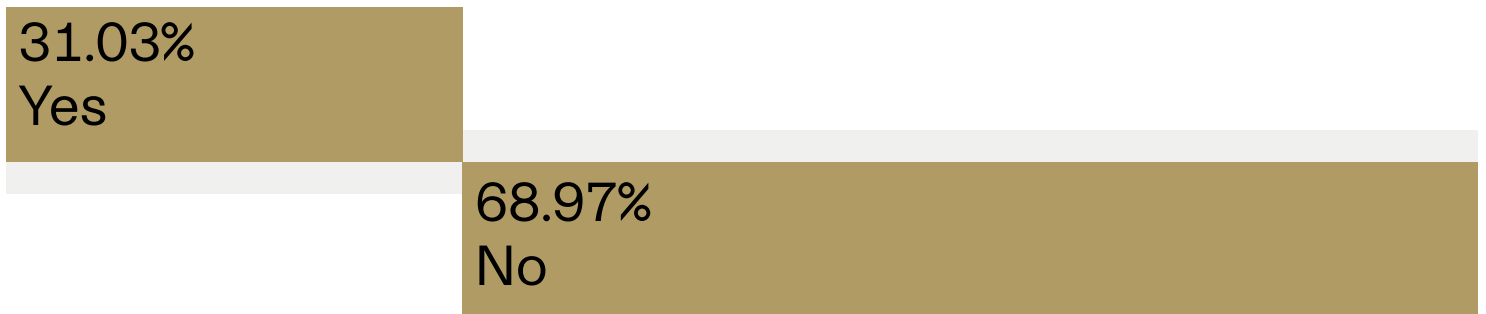
Would you support removing class-size mandates in order to receive more funding flexibility?\*

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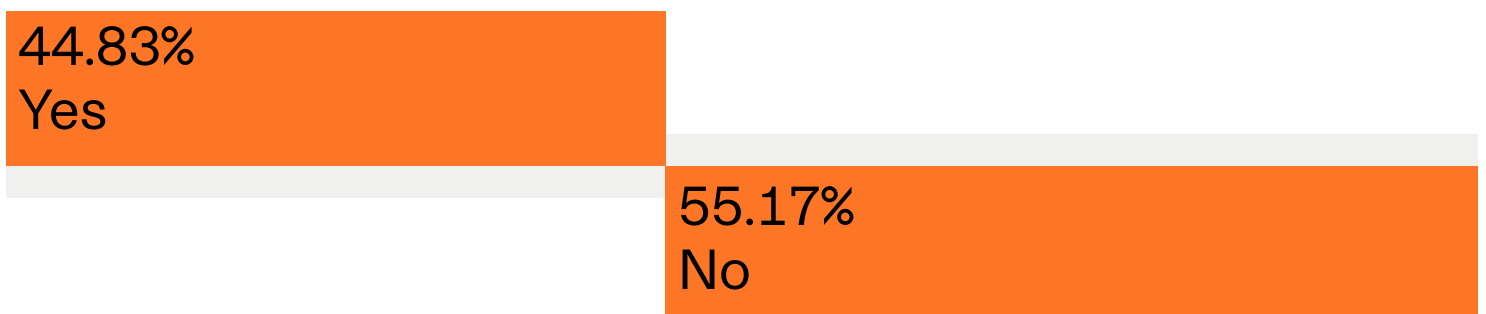
Do you agree that teachers and schools have enough time in their day to meet the needs of our students?\*

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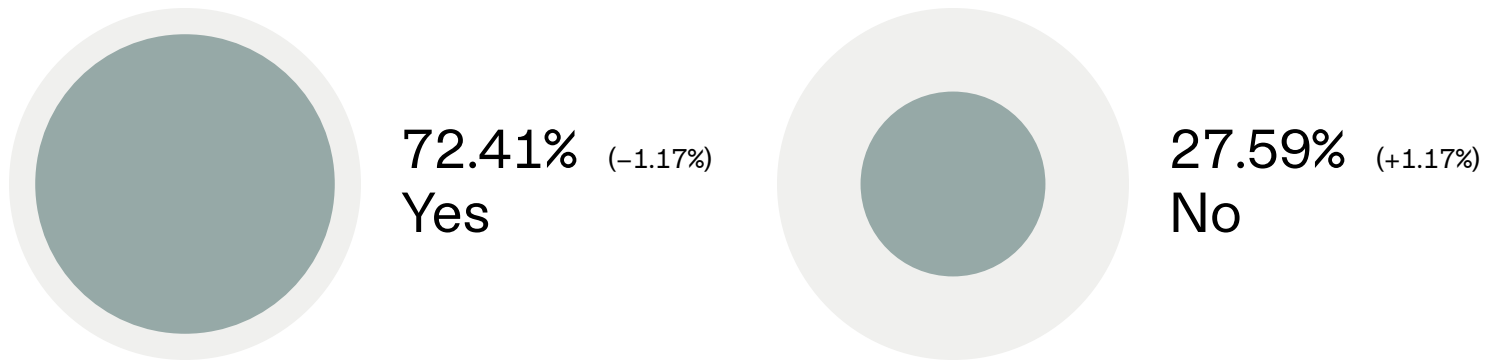
Do you agree that teachers and schools have enough time in the year to meet the needs of our students?\*

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\*In the 2016 survey the question combined "enough time in their day" and "enough time in the year" into a single question. In the 2017 survey it was split into two questions.

Would you support an extended school year or school day given the necessary resources and state support?



Student assignment/placement decisions in my district are mad primarily by...\*

Me (The Director of Schools)	3.45%	(N/A)
The School Board	0.00%	(N/A)
School leaders	87.93%	(N/A)
Teachers	3.45%	(N/A)
Other	5.17%	(N/A)
Unsure	0.00%	(N/A)

\*Response categories for "Teachers", "Other", and "Unsure" added to 2017 survey.

When assigning students to classrooms, do you consider the effectiveness of the teacher/classroom the student had the previous year relative to the effectiveness of the teacher/classroom you would place them in for the coming year?

Yes	65.52%	(+5.14%)
No	1.72%	(-15.26%)
Not applicable (I do not make student assignment decisions)	32.76%	(+10.12%)

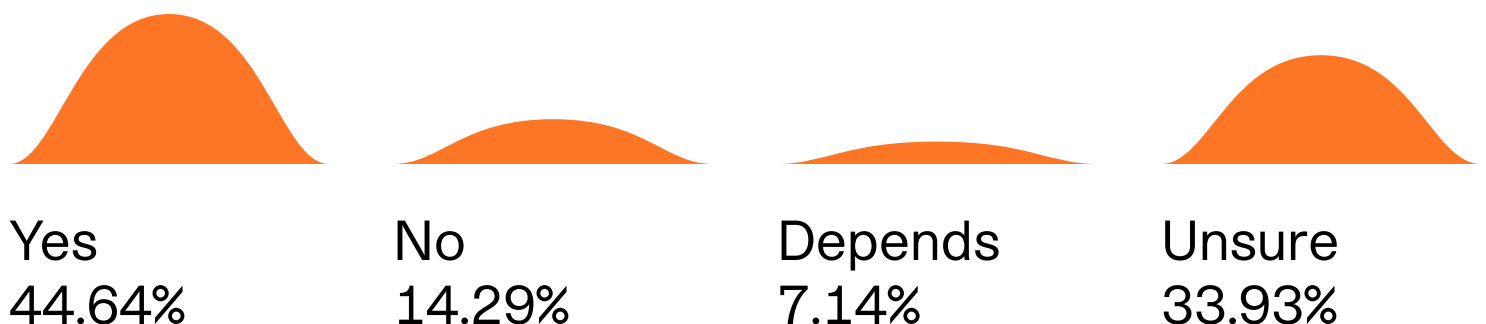
Alternatively, when assigning students to classrooms, do you give consideration to the student's individual achievement levels from the previous year relative to the teacher/classroom performance where they will be assigned? (Ex: Student is somewhat behind from the past year so they should be placed in one of your higher performing classrooms in the coming year.)

Yes	58.62%	(-3.64%)
No	10.34%	(-2.87%)
Not applicable (I do not make student assignment decisions)	31.03%	(+6.50%)

Do you feel that you receive an adequate amount of funding for students with special needs?\*



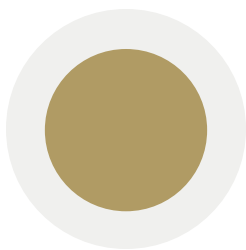
Would you support the state weighting special education funding based on individual student needs rather than dispersing an average amount to all students with special needs?\*



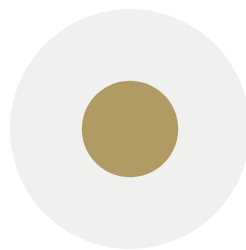
\*This question was not asked in the 2016 survey.

Would you support the state weighting per pupil funding for additional student characteristics (e.g. economically disadvantaged status, English Learner status, etc.) rather than dispersing an average per pupil amount regardless of individual student needs?\*

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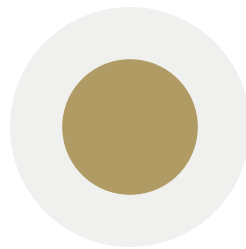
46.43%  
Yes



16.07%  
No



3.57%  
Depends



33.93%  
Unsure

\*This question was not asked in the 2016 survey.