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MassINC
Polling Group

With support from Barr
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5 Years Post-Pandemic:

What Mass. Parents Want Schools to Know

Steve Koczela
President, The MassINC Polling Group

Zayna Basma-Doyle
Research Director, The MassINC Polling Group



Survey Background

- Results are based on a statewide survey of 1,126 Massachusetts parents with K-12 children, including oversamples of Black, Latino, and Asian parents.
- The survey was conducted from April 7 – 21, 2025.
- Data was weighted to known population parameters by parental age, gender, race, education, and region.
- This survey is the 12th wave in a series of polls of K-12 parents in Massachusetts that began in May 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Results in the following slides make comparisons across prior waves where applicable.
- This project was sponsored by EdTrust in Massachusetts with support from The Barr Foundation.

Key Findings

- **Five years after COVID, digital equity gaps persist for low-income and Latino families.** While a large majority of parents report having sufficient internet (91%) and enough devices (87%), device access gaps have widened---with Latino parents and lower-income parents less likely to report having enough devices compared to 2020.
- **There has been a modest overall rise in academic concerns from 2022-2025, with larger increases among certain groups.** Overall, 43% of parents express concern about their children's academics, up from 36% since 2022, with larger increases among parents of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and parents of English Language Learners (ELLs).
- **Moreover, parental perceptions of their child's reading and math levels differ by income, education, and IEP status.**
 - Reading and math: More parents think their children are doing well in reading than they are in math.
 - Parents with higher income and education levels are more likely to say their children are doing well in both.
 - Parents of children with IEPs or who receive ELL services are more concerned about academics across the board.
- **Parents continue to express confidence in their children's teachers, though that trust has slightly diminished in recent years among certain racial groups.** Meanwhile, trust in schools and districts has declined more sharply.

Key Findings

- **Significant gaps remain in postsecondary plans and expectations across race, income, and education levels.**
 - Overall, 48% of parents of children in grades 6-12 think their child will want to start a bachelor's degree post-HS. However, Black (39%) and Latino (31%) parents are less likely than parents overall and white parents (49%) to say the same, while Asian parents (66%) are more likely to say so.
 - There are also stark differences in postsecondary expectations across education level and income—only 30% of those with annual incomes of less than \$100K say they expect their child to pursue a Bachelor's degree, compared to 62% of those earning more than \$100K.
- **Concerns about safety, fairness, and discrimination remain, especially among certain demographic groups.**
 - More parents of ELLs (46%) and students on IEPs (50%) say their children have been disciplined this year compared to 31% of parents overall.
 - Black (30%), Latino (37%), and Asian parents (39%) are more likely to say their child has been treated unfairly due to their race or ethnicity compared to white parents (21%). Parents of color are also less likely to say their children are very safe from discrimination.

Academic concerns have grown since 2022

- In '22, '23, & '25, academic concern has been highest among parents with children on an IEP or who receive ELL services.
- Concern has also grown the most from 2022-2025 among parents with children on an IEP and those who receive ELL services- with 60% & 69% respectively expressing concern in 2025.
- Concern has also increased among Black parents from 2022 (31%) to 2025 (41%).

Academic concerns are highest among parents of IEP and ELL students

% who say they are very / somewhat concerned with their child's academics

	Nov-22	Apr-23	Apr-25	Change 2022-25
Overall	36%	37%	43%	+7%
White	35%	35%	42%	+7%
Black	31%	45%	41%	+10%
Latino	37%	44%	44%	+7%
Asian	47%	35%	46%	-1%
IEP	49%	55%	60%	+11%
ELL	52%	60%	69%	+17%

Q: Thinking about your GRADE LEVEL child's academics this year, would you say you are very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

Gaps in concern over reading, math performance

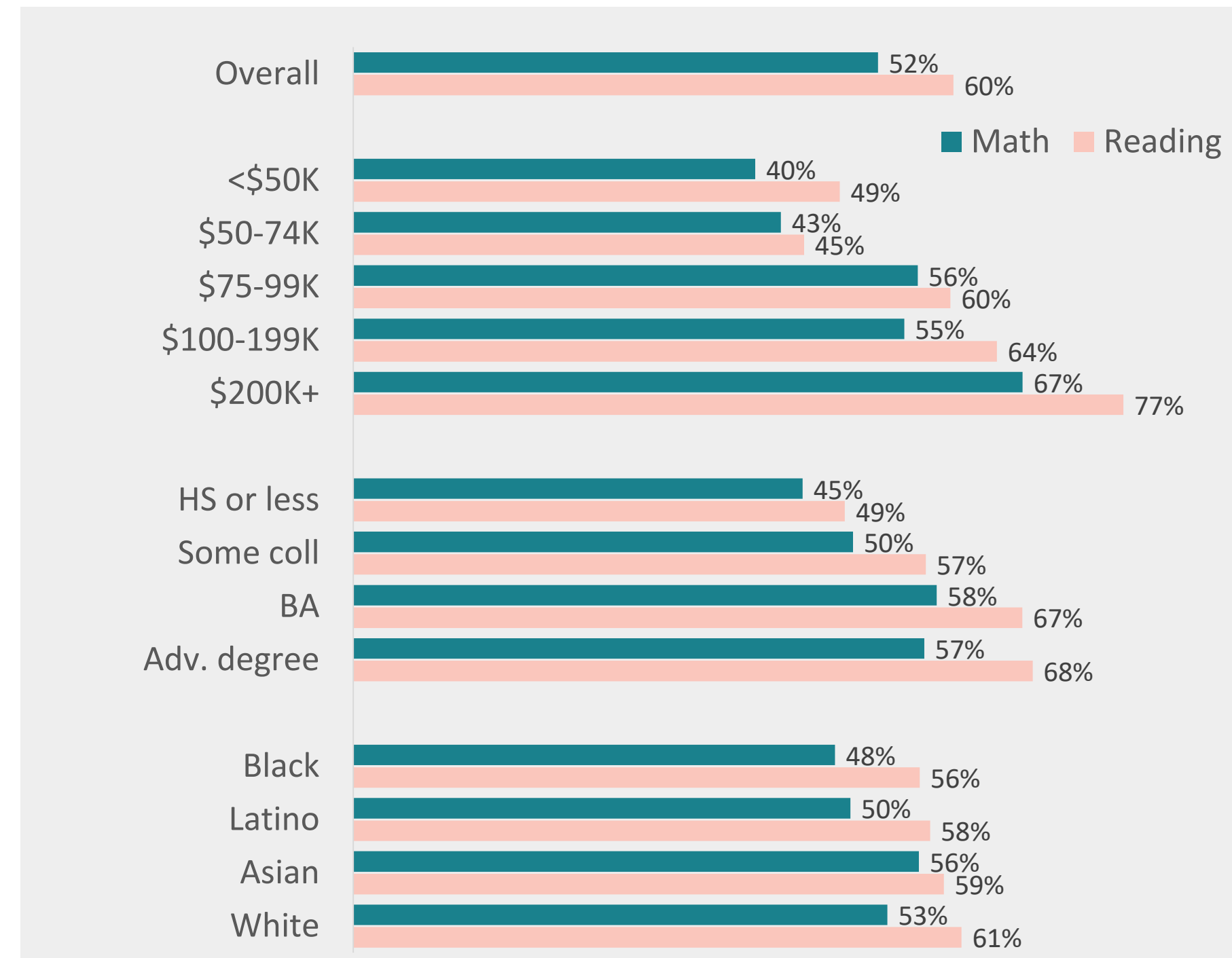
- Fewer parents think their children are “doing well” in math than reading.
- There are also differences in education and income; with higher income/education, parents are more likely to say their children are “doing well.”

Q: How would you say your GRADE LEVEL child is doing in reading right now?

Q: How would you say your GRADE LEVEL child is doing in math right now?

Fewer parents say child is doing well in math than reading

% in 2025 who say their child is doing well in math / reading

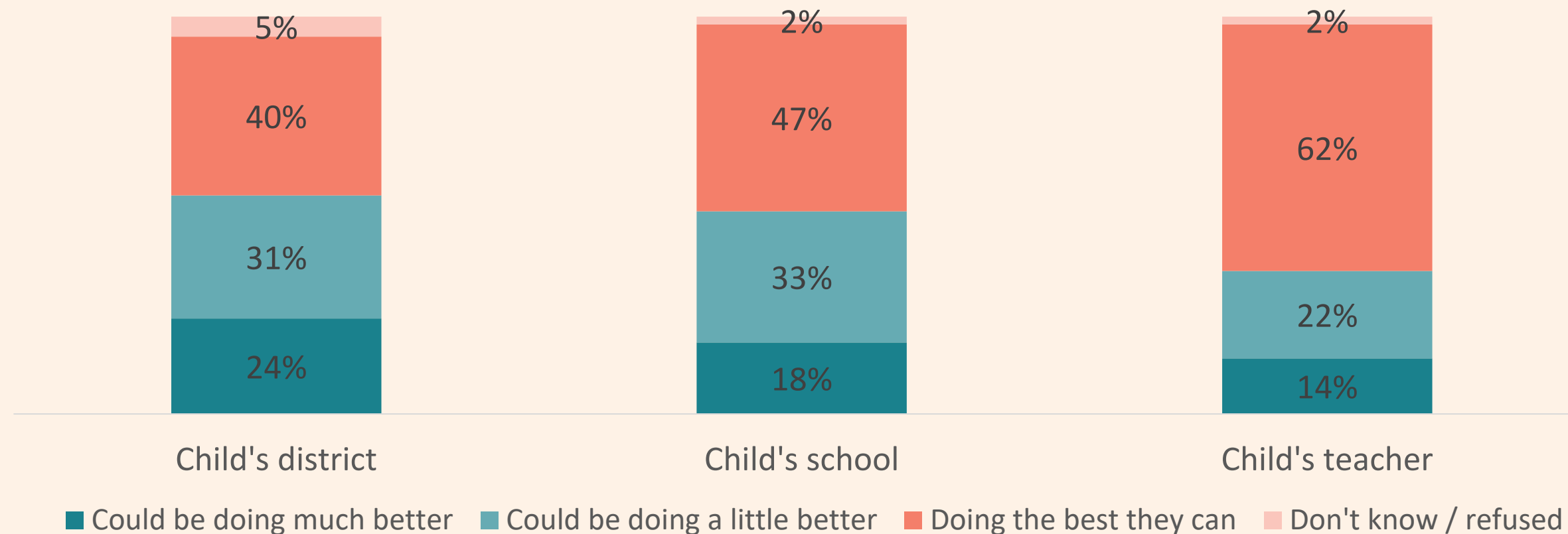


Parents express highest confidence in teachers

- In 2025, over half of parents (62%) rate their child's teacher as doing the best they can, compared to the school (47%) and district (40%).

Parents rate child's teacher higher than district or school

% who say their child's school / teacher / district _____

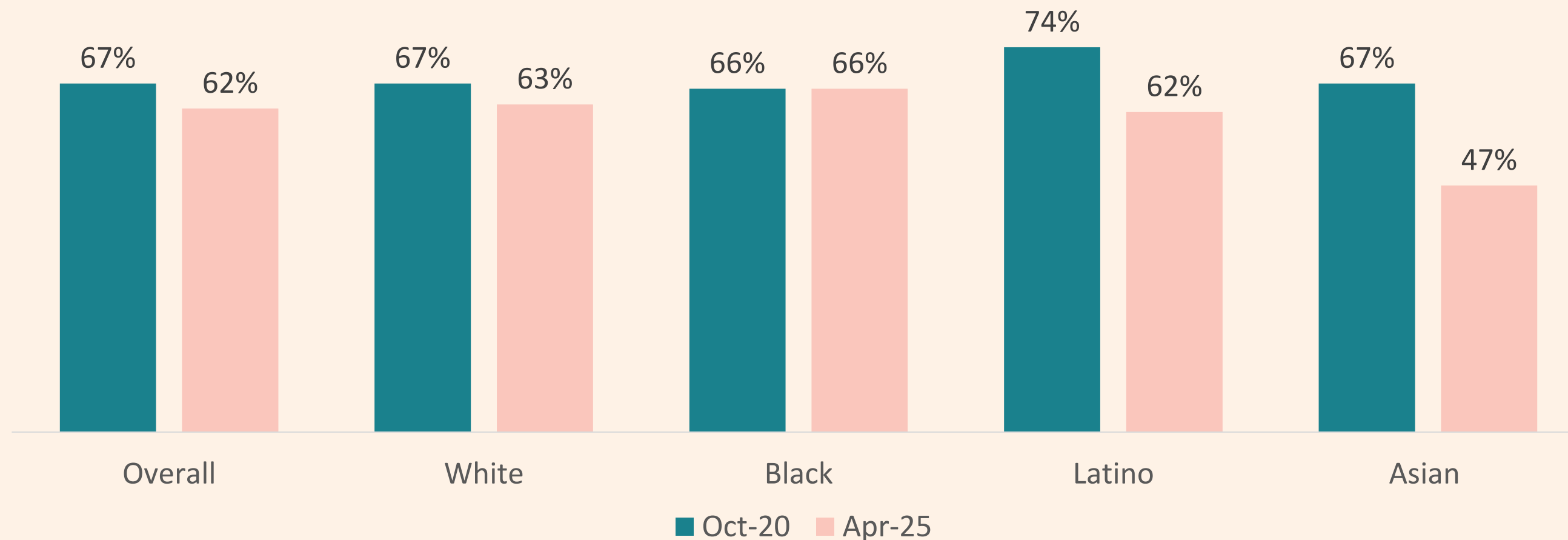


*Q: Thinking about this school year, do you think **READ FIRST ITEM** could be doing much better, could be doing a little better, or are they doing the best they can? What about **READ NEXT ITEM**?*

Changes in confidence in teachers

- Most remain confident that teachers are "doing the best they can," though Latino parents and Asian parents were less likely to say so than in 2020.

Decrease among Latino and Asian parents' perceptions of their child's teacher
% who say their child's teacher is doing the best they can



*Q: Thinking about this school year, do you think **READ FIRST ITEM** could be doing much better, could be doing a little better, or are they doing the best they can? What about **READ NEXT ITEM**?*

Confidence in districts, schools decreased

Trends in ratings for teachers, districts, schools

Change from 2020 -25 in % who say each is “doing the best they can”

- Perceptions from 2020 to 2025 have shifted the most among different racial groups.
- Most change in grading is seen among Asian and Latino parents and parents in Gateway Cities.

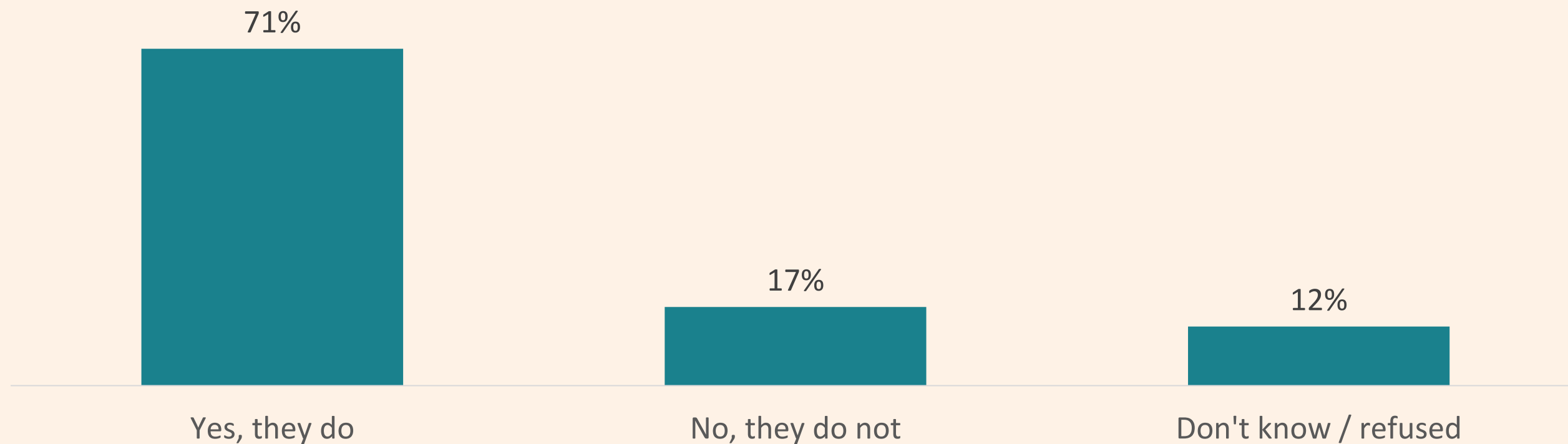
Q: Thinking about this school year, do you think **READ FIRST ITEM** could be doing much better, could be doing a little better, or are they doing the best they can? What about **READ NEXT ITEM**?

	Teacher	District	School
Overall	-5%	-10%	-10%
White	-3%	-11%	-10%
Black	1%	-7%	-4%
Latino	-12%	-6%	-10%
Asian	-19%	-18%	-18%
HS or less	1%	-8%	-1%
Some college	-5%	-11%	-11%
BA	-9%	-11%	-13%
Adv. Degree	-8%	-11%	-14%
<\$50K	-7%	-9%	-5%
\$50-74K	5%	-7%	-9%
\$75-99K	5%	-7%	-7%
\$100K+	-2%	-13%	-14%
Gateway City	-11%	-12%	-8%
Non-GC	-3%	-10%	-11%

Most see enough academic support resources

- A majority of parents (71%) in 2025 say their child's school has enough resources to help those who need it. However, only 58% of parents without enough devices at home say the same.

The majority say school has enough academic resources to help those who need it
% who say ____ regarding schools having enough academic resources for those who need them



Q: Does your GRADE LEVEL child's school have enough academic resources to offer help to students who need it?

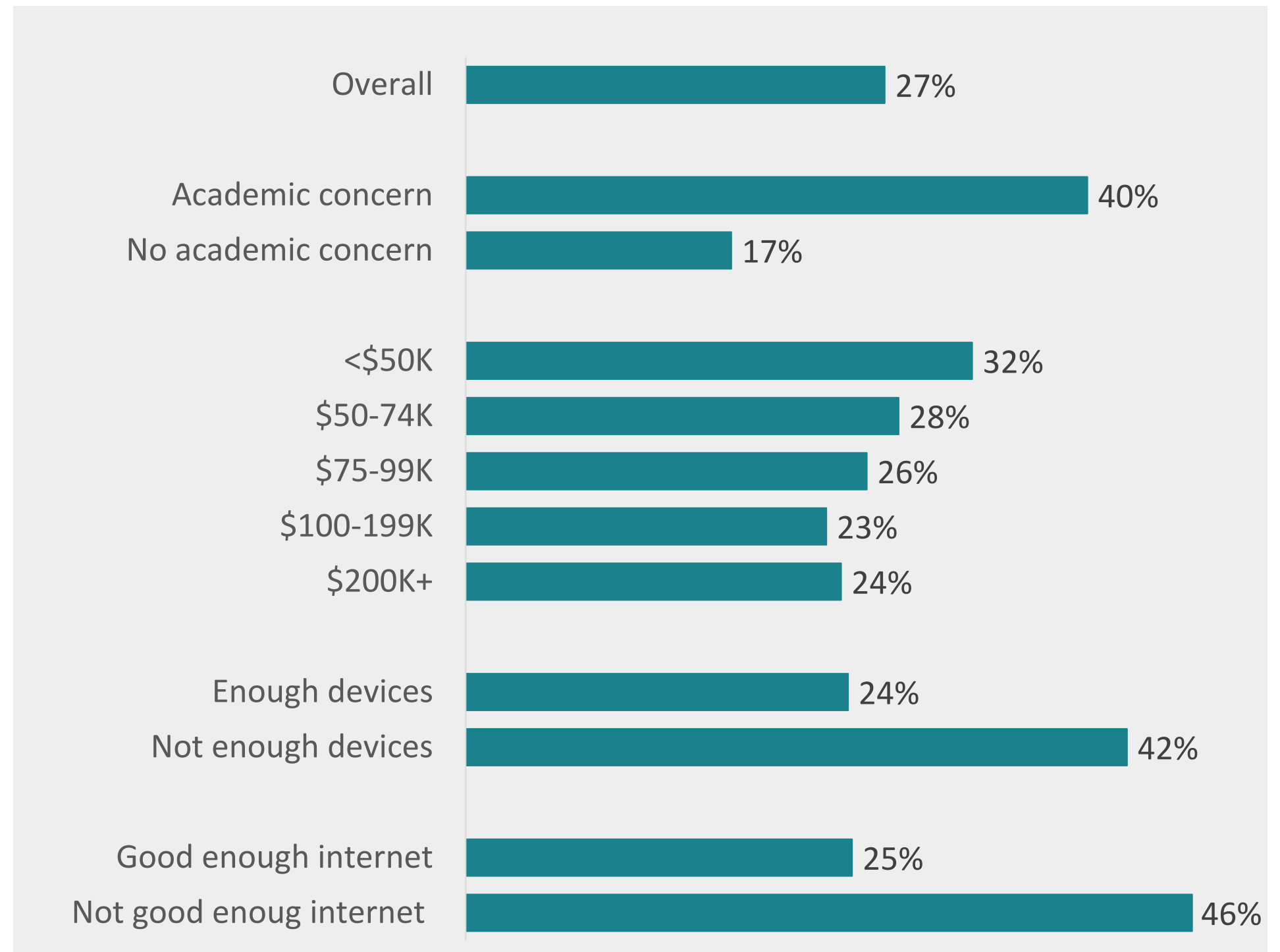
Supporting students who need help

- Overall, in 2025, 27% of parents give their child's school a C-F for supporting students who need academic help.
- This number jumps to 40% among parents concerned about their child's academics.
- C-F grades on supporting those who need it are also higher among those who say they don't have access to enough devices or quality internet.

*Q: Students are often graded on the quality of their work using the letters A, B, C, D, and F. Suppose your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school was graded in the same way. How would you grade your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school on each of the following? "Students who need help get it".*

Some parents rate child's school a C-F on supporting students

% who gave their child's school a C-F on supporting students who need help



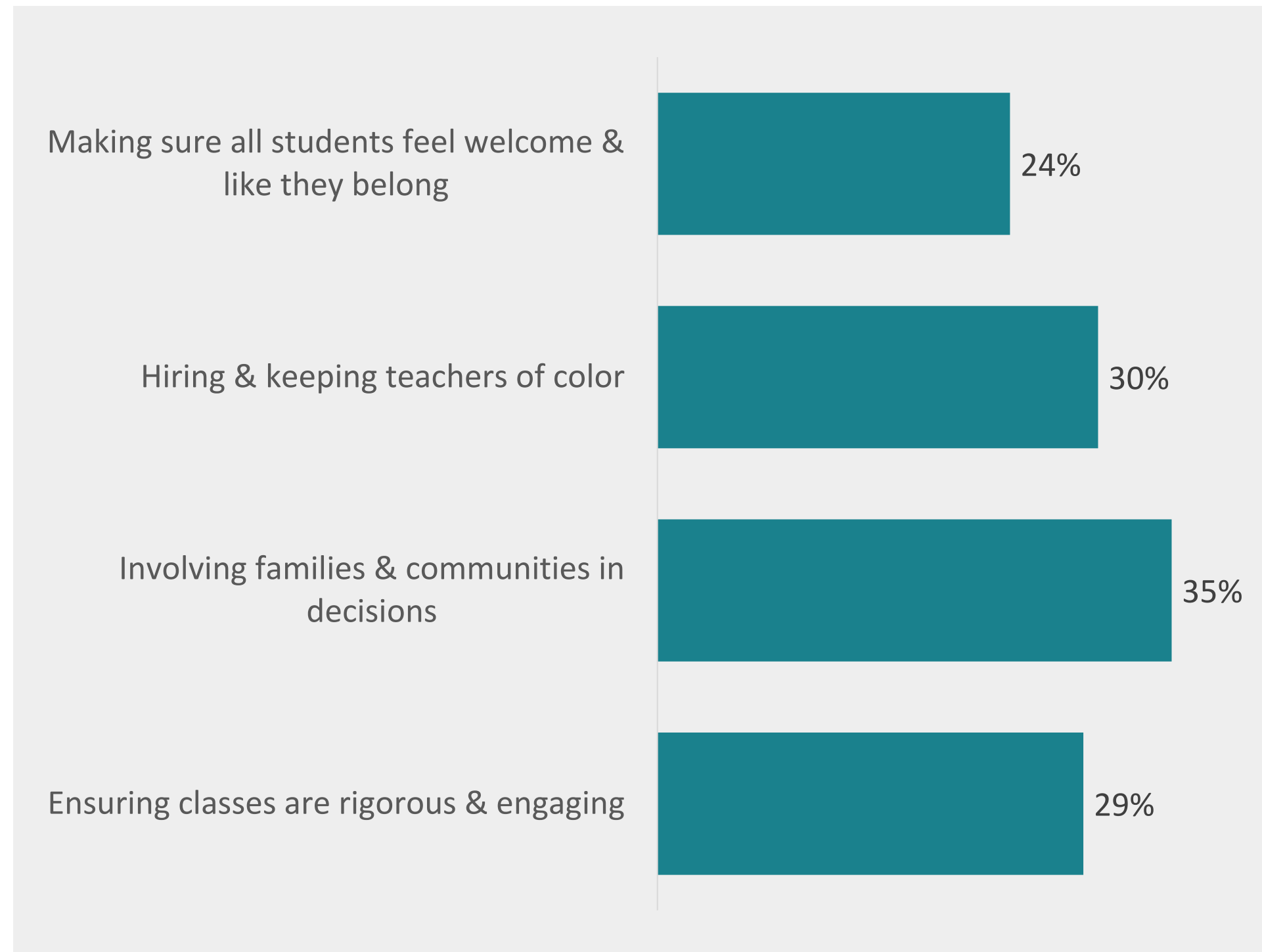
Grading schools on key measures

Some parents give low grades on key measures

% of parents in 2025 who grades schools a C-F on _____

- Nearly a third of parents graded their child's school a C-F on key measures such as: hiring and keeping teachers of color (30%), involving families in decisions (35%), and ensuring classes are rigorous and engaging (29%).

*Q: Students are often graded on the quality of their work using the letters A, B, C, D, and F. Suppose your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school was graded in the same way. How would you grade your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school on each of the following?*

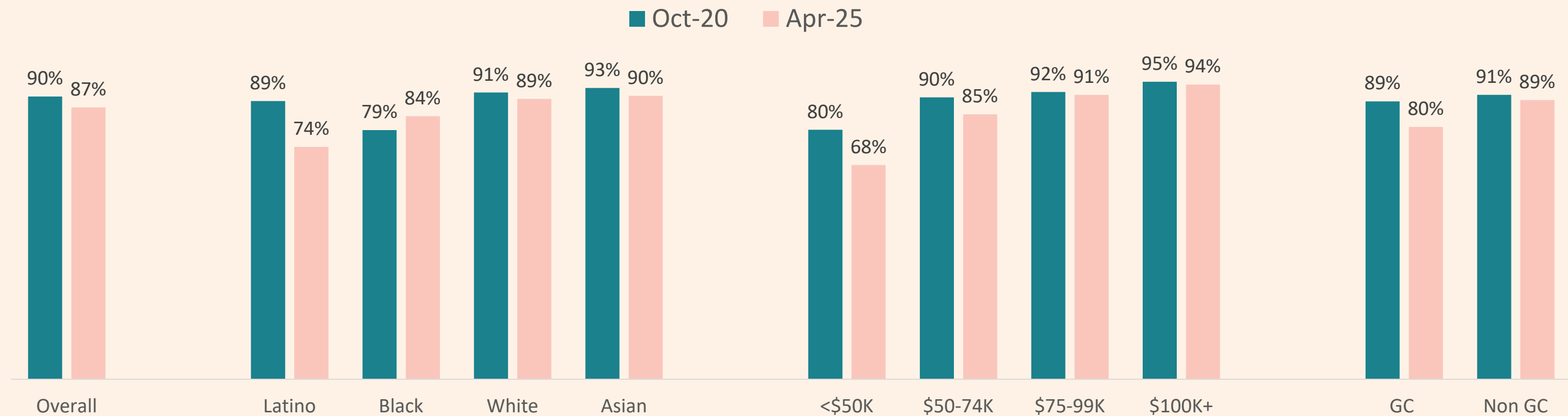


Device access slides, gaps grow

- Gaps in device access have grown since 2020, with fewer lower income parents, Latino parents, & parents from Gateway cities now reporting sufficient devices.

Lower-income and Latino families report less access to devices

% who say their family has enough devices for everyone who needs one



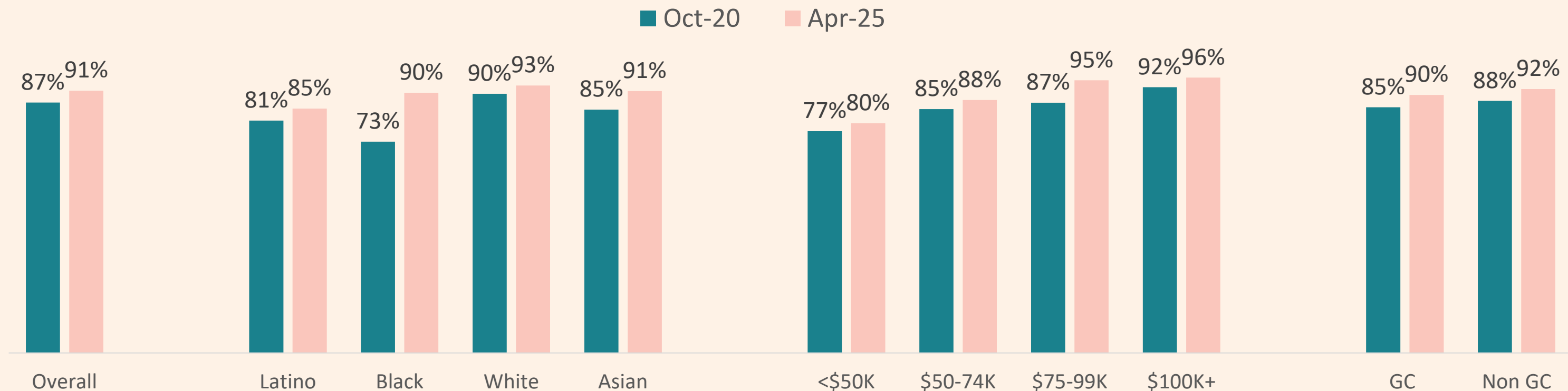
Q: Does your family have access to enough devices such as computers and tablets for everyone who needs one for work or school tasks, or do you not have enough?

Internet access improves, but gaps remain

- Since 2020, access to sufficient internet has grown and some gaps have shrunk. Even so, there remain large gaps between parents across income levels.

Lower-income parents less likely to say they have access to quality internet

% who say they have good enough internet access



Q: Does your family have good enough internet access to keep up on school and work tasks, or is it not good enough for what your family needs?

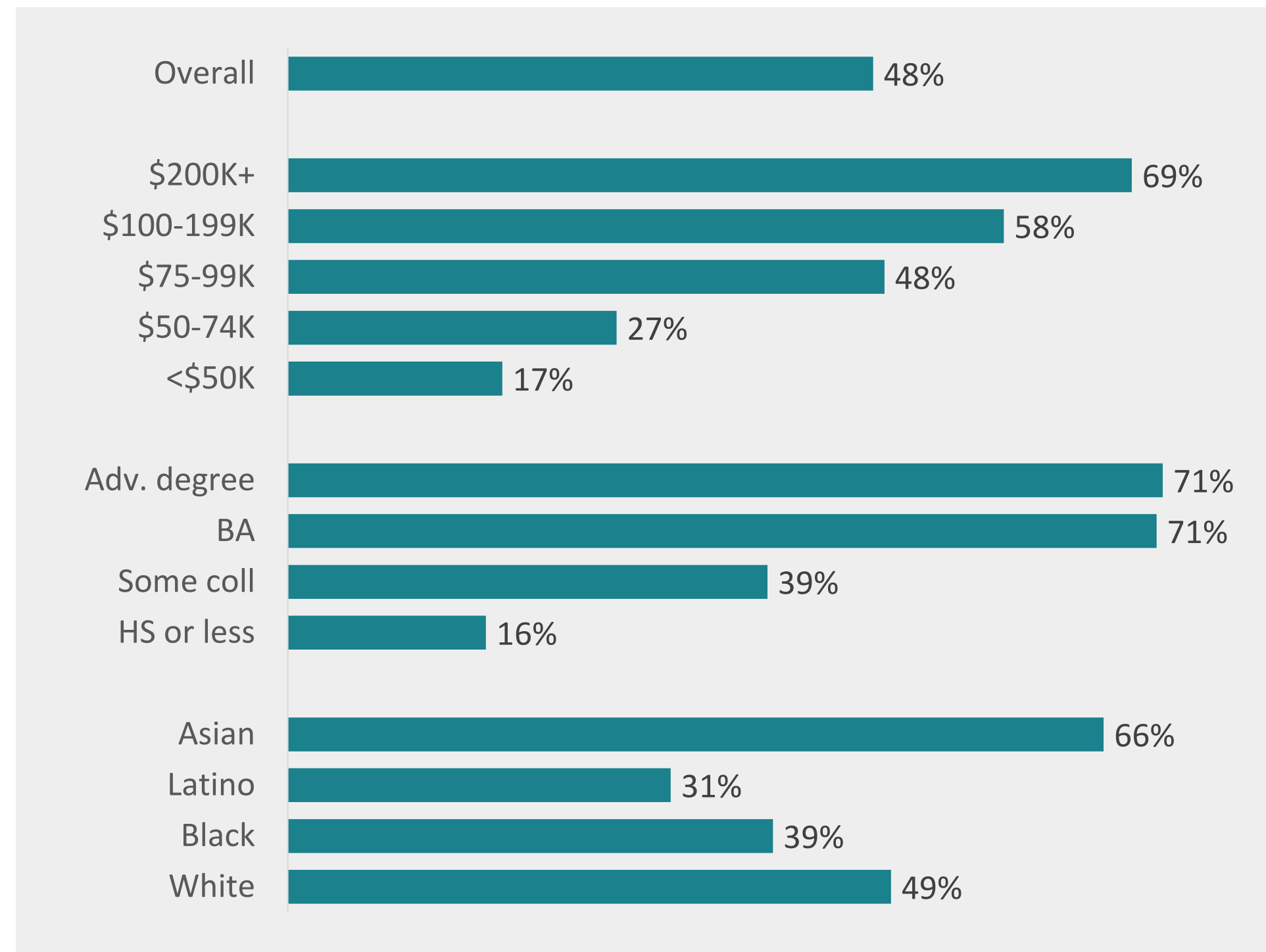
Gaps in postsecondary plans remain high

- Parents are most likely to think their children will follow in their footsteps when it comes to plans for after high school.
- Significant gaps remain in postsecondary expectations across race, income, and education level.

Q: What would your GRADE LEVEL child most like to do after high school? (Asked of 6th-12th grade)

Large gaps in anticipated college plans post-high school

% in 2025 who say their children are likely to start a bachelors after high school

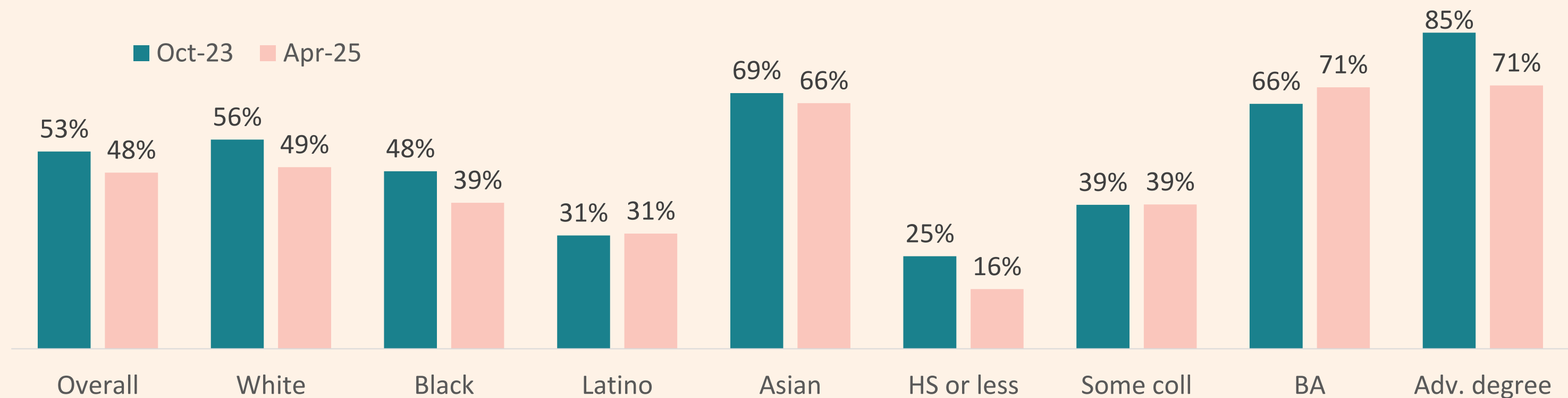


Fewer see immediate college plans

- From 2023 to 2025 there are a modest changes among some parents in assessing the likelihood of obtaining a bachelor's degree.

Some parents less likely to say child will pursue a BA from 23-25

% who say they think their kids are most likely to start a bachelor's degree after HS



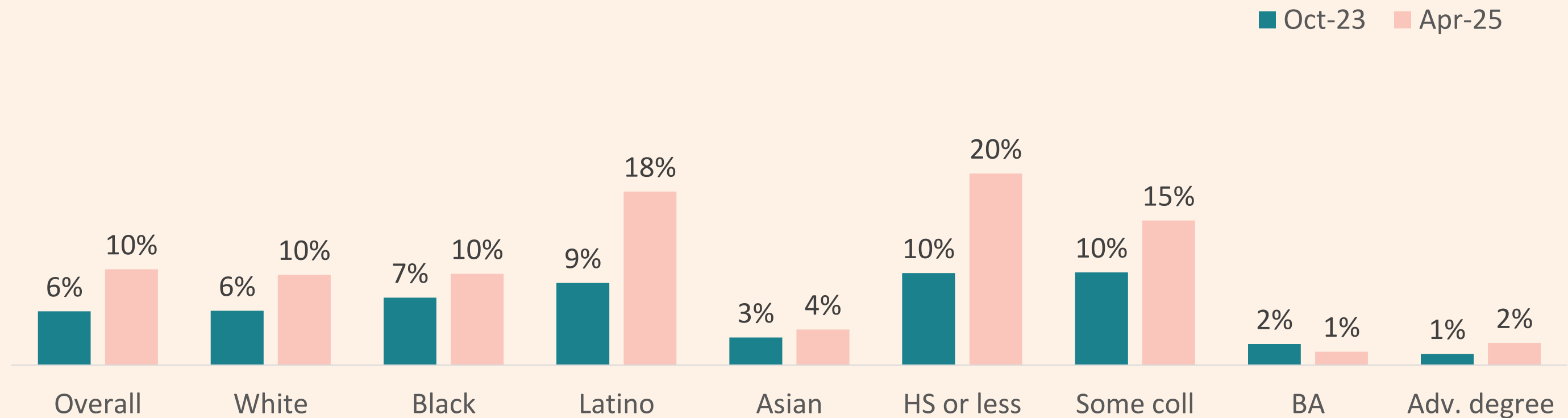
Q: What would your GRADE LEVEL child most like to do after high school? (Asked of 6th-12th grade)

Increased interest in workforce

- More Latino parents and those without degrees are now more likely to say their children will enter the workforce.

Some groups shift toward interest in workforce

% of parents who say their child would most like to enter the workforce post-HS



Q: What would your GRADE LEVEL child most like to do after high school? (Asked of 6th-12th grade)

Mental health concerns down

- Although mental health concern has decreased from 60% in 2021 to 45% today, it remains relatively high and warrants continued attention and support.

Mental health concerns have declined, but remain high
% who say they are concerned/not concerned about their child’s mental health

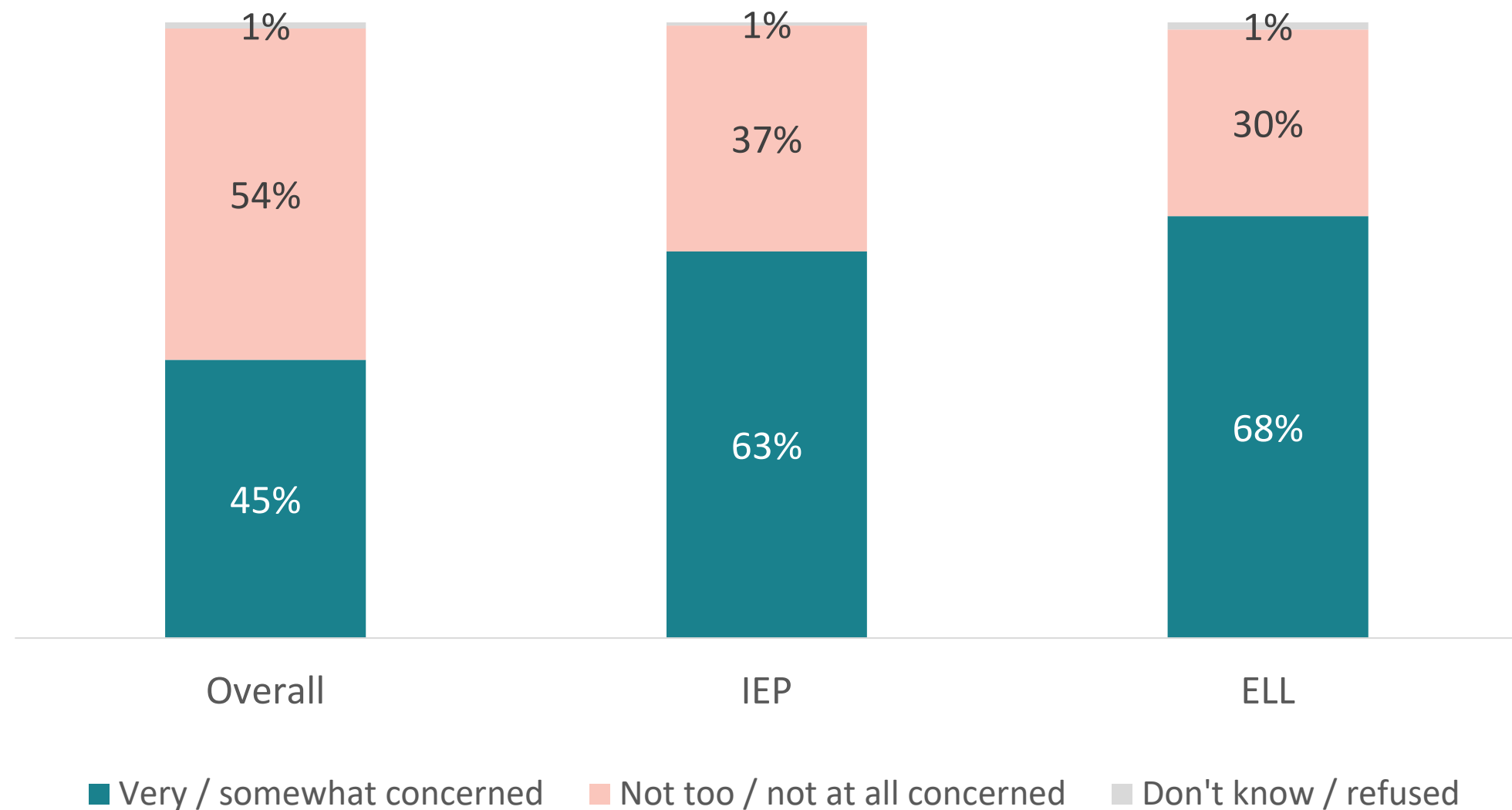
	Concerned	Not concerned
April 2025	45%	54%
October 2023	39%	60%
April 2023	45%	54%
November 2022	44%	55%
March 2022	48%	50%
February 2021	60%	38%

Q: Thinking about your GRADE LEVEL child’s mental and emotional health this year, would you say you are ____?

Concerns highest among IEP and ELL parents

- This year, 45% of parents report concern for their child's mental health.
- Concern is higher among parents of children on IEPs (63%) and children who receive ELL services (68%)

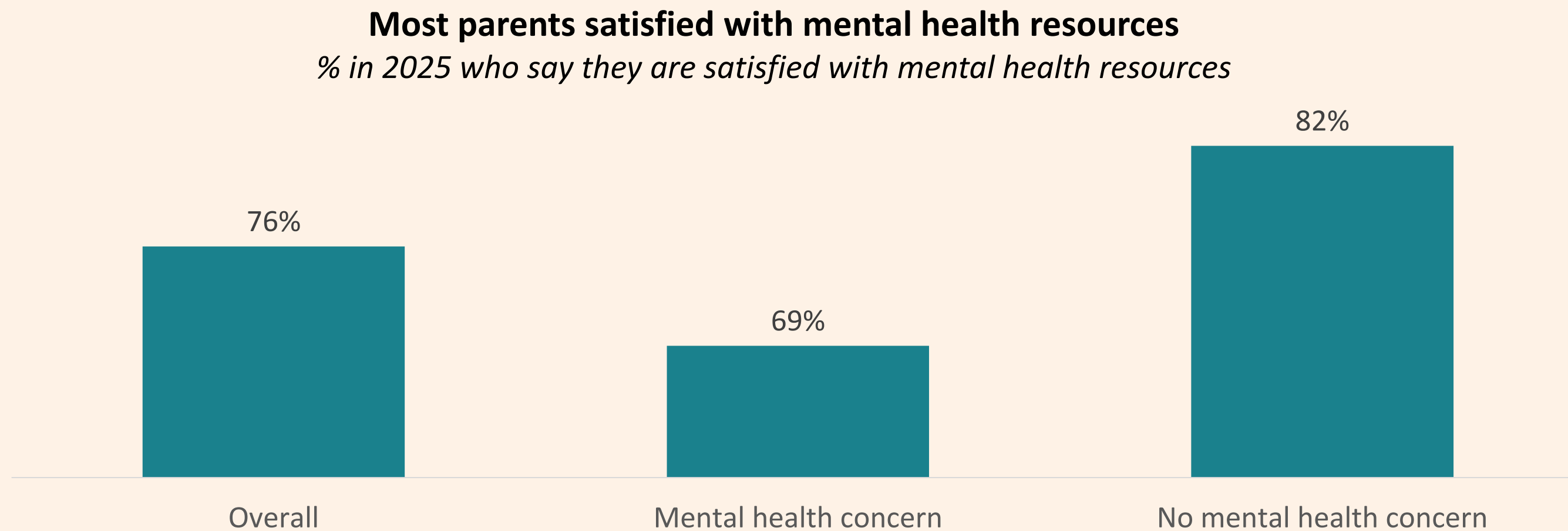
Mental health concern highest among ELL and IEP parents
% who say they are concerned / not concerned about their child's mental health



Q: Thinking about your GRADE LEVEL child's mental and emotional health this year, would you say you are ____?

Satisfaction with mental health resources

- Despite concerns, most parents overall are satisfied (76%) with the school's mental health resources. Satisfaction is lower among parents with concerns compared to those without.



Q: Overall, how satisfied are you with the mental and emotional health resources offered by your GRADE LEVEL child's school?

Safety from violence, discrimination, bullying

- In 2025, parents are least likely to say their child is “very safe” from bullying.
- Parents of color less likely to say their children as safe from discrimination.

Parents perceived safety of their children while at school

% who say their child is very safe from _____ at school

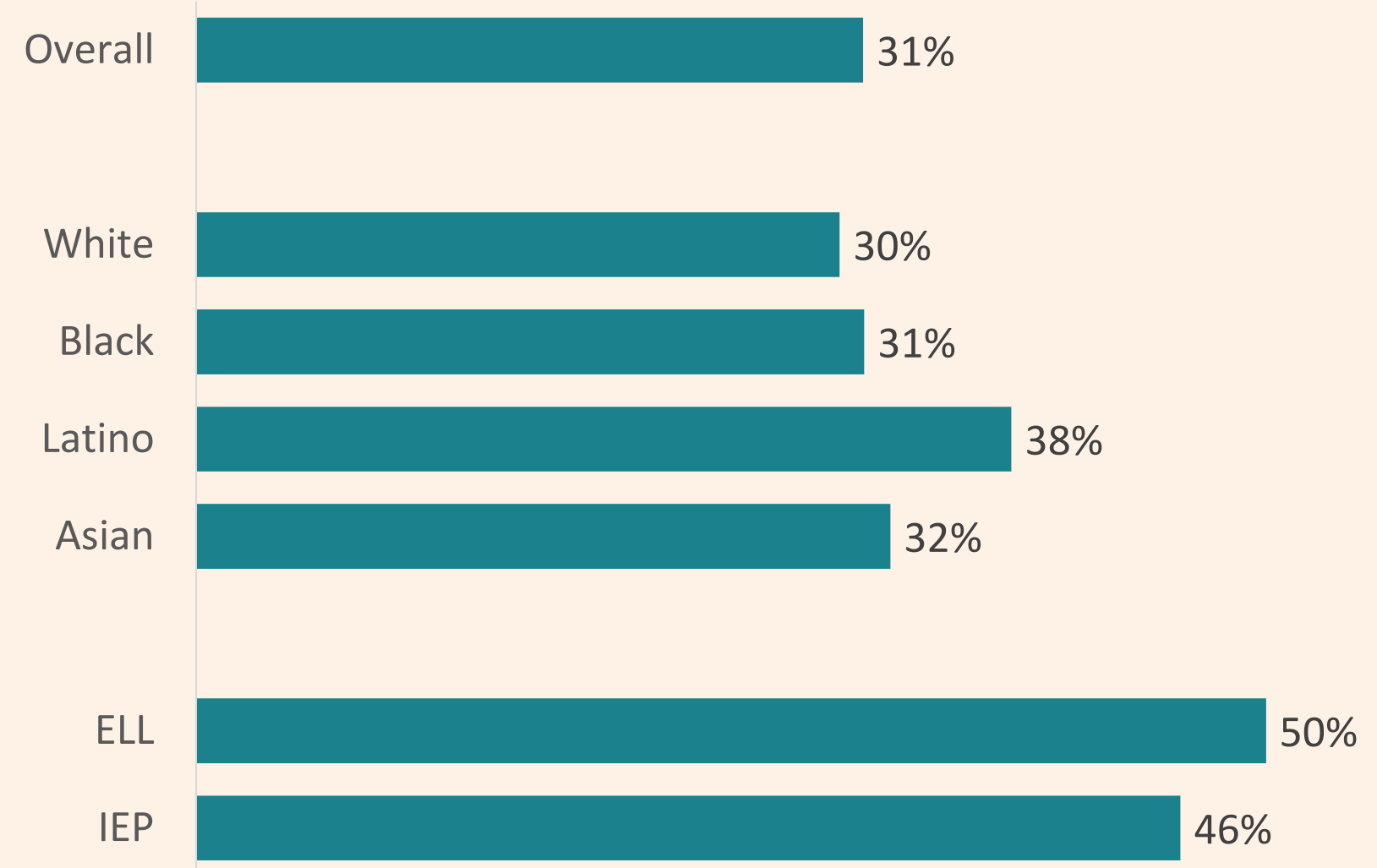
	Discrimination based on race and ethnicity	Violence	Discrimination based on other personal factors	Bullying
Overall	60%	55%	50%	37%
Black	45%	50%	45%	37%
Latino	49%	53%	50%	37%
Asian	54%	63%	45%	40%
White	65%	56%	53%	36%
<\$100K	54%	50%	46%	33%
\$100K+	67%	61%	55%	41%
GC	54%	48%	50%	34%
Non-GC	63%	58%	50%	38%

Q: When your GRADE LEVEL child is at school, how safe would you say they are from READ FIRST? How about READ NEXT? READ ITEMS.

Discipline highest among ELL & IEP parents

- Overall, 31% of parents say their child has been disciplined this school year.
- Discipline is highest among parents of ELLs (50%) and students on IEPs (46%).

Highest discipline reported this year among IEP, ELL parents
% their child has been disciplined this year



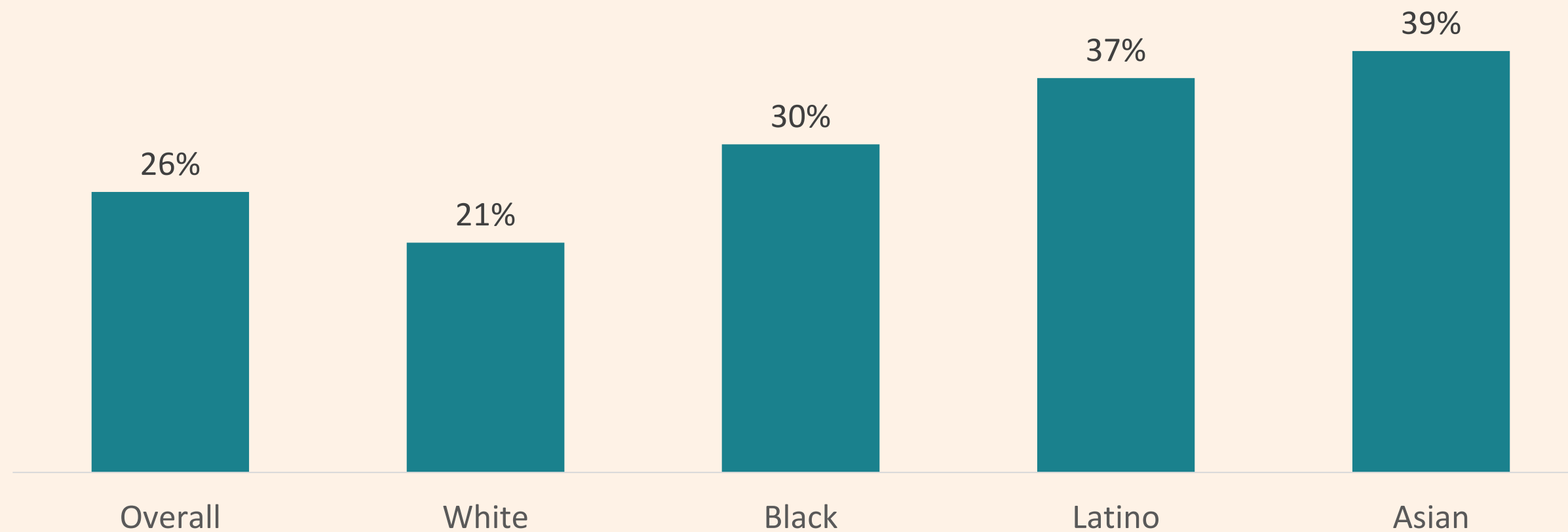
Q: Thinking about disciplinary actions like being sent to the principal's office, detentions, or suspensions, how often was your **GRADE LEVEL** child disciplined **READ FIRST ITEM?** **FOR PHONE:** Was that frequently, sometimes, rarely, or never?

Treatment by race/ethnicity

- Black, Latino, and Asian parents are more likely to say their child has been treated unfairly due to their race or ethnicity.

More parents of color perceive unequal treatment at school

% who say their child has been treated unfairly at school this year due to their race/ethnicity



*Q: Do you think your GRADE LEVEL child has ever been treated unfairly at school because of their race or ethnicity? FOR PHONE
PROBE IF YES: Would you say it occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely?*

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