

Press contacts: Eric Young, [young-eric@norc.org](mailto:young-eric@norc.org) or (703) 217-6814 (cell) and Nicholas Turton, [press@aapidata.com](mailto:press@aapidata.com) or (213) 343-5264 (cell).

## Most Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders View K-12 and Higher Education as Important for Economy, Democracy

*Skills development, critical thinking, and the free exchange of ideas all receive high marks*

**Chicago, May 29, 2024** - As the nation engages in debates over classroom content, a new AAPI Data/AP-NORC poll reveals strong support among Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AAPI) adults for teaching historical topics such as slavery, racism, and segregation (71%) along with the history of AAPI communities (71%) in K-12 public schools. There is less consensus on teaching issues related to sex and sexuality, with 53% in favor and 19% opposed.

AAPI adults also tend to favor giving educators more of a say in curricular decisions. Fifty-six percent oppose individual school boards restricting specific subjects and classroom discussions, and 35% feel local school boards have too much influence on K-12 curricula. Nearly half believe parents (47%) and teachers (48%) have too little influence on curriculum in public schools.

Levels of satisfaction with school quality are mixed. Four in ten AAPI adults rate both public and private K-12 schools in their state positively, and about half feel the same about public community colleges or 2-year institutions. Public 4-year colleges and universities receive higher marks, with 65% deeming them excellent or good.

Asked about the factors that lead to future success for children, most AAPI adults say hard work is critical (85%), followed by the amount of time children spent with a parent (79%). These views largely mirror those of the general population who were last asked in [March 2021](#), though AAPI adults are more likely to believe neighborhoods (63% vs. 49%) and parental income (57% vs. 44%) play a major role in a child's future success.

"These findings highlight the perspectives of AAPI adults on a range of educational issues, from curriculum content to the purpose of higher education," says Jennifer Benz, deputy director of The AP-NORC Center. "Many in the community want to see their local schools addressing the history of underrepresented groups in the classroom, and they think teachers and parents should have greater input on those kinds of decisions."

Majorities of both AAPI communities and the general public, who were last asked in [September 2023](#), see imparting workplace-relevant skills (83% vs. 82%) and teaching critical thinking (80% vs. 76%) as a major purpose of universities. About two thirds see fostering the free exchange and debate of ideas and values (69% AAPI adults vs. 62% all adults) and a bare majority views advancing equity and inclusion (51% vs. 46%) a major purpose for colleges.

Nearly half (48%) of AAPI adults consider a four-year college degree essential for securing a job that comfortably supports a family, although this sentiment drops slightly for its role in wealth accumulation (43%) and citizen engagement (42%). Forty-eight percent perceive a degree as important, albeit not essential, for facilitating job mobility over the long term.

Roughly eight in ten AAPI adults support college admission criteria based on high school grades (79%) and 65% think consideration of standardized test scores is fair. About four in ten believe experiences with hardship or

adversity should be considered. Other factors are more likely to be viewed as unfair than fair including athletic ability (42% unfair), ability to pay full tuition (48%), or race and ethnicity (53%). Additionally, most feel lineage-based considerations, such as legacy admissions (69%) or being a first-generation college student (54%), are unfair.

“These findings challenge prevailing stereotypes of AAPIs as solely prioritizing hard skills and economic advancement in regard to higher education,” says Karthick Ramakrishnan, founder and director of AAPI Data. “This study reveals a more nuanced and fuller portrait, illustrating that AAPI individuals value education not only for its practical applications but also for fostering critical thinking and nurturing a more informed citizenship.”

### **About the Study**

The nationwide study was conducted from April 8-17, 2024, using the Amplify AAPI Monthly survey drawing from [Amplify AAPI](#), a national probability panel of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, built and hosted by NORC at the University of Chicago. Online and telephone interviews were offered in English, the Chinese dialects of Mandarin and Cantonese, Vietnamese, and Korean with 1,068 Asian American and Pacific Islanders aged 18 and older living in the United States. The margin of sampling error is +/- 4.7 percentage points.

### **About the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research**

The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

The Associated Press (AP) is an independent global news organization dedicated to factual reporting. Founded in 1846, AP today remains the most trusted source of fast, accurate, unbiased news in all formats and the essential provider of the technology and services vital to the news business. More than half the world’s population sees AP journalism every day. [www.ap.org](http://www.ap.org)

NORC at the University of Chicago is one of the oldest objective and nonpartisan research institutions in the world. [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org)

The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals. Learn more at [www.apnorc.org](http://www.apnorc.org).

### **About AAPI Data**

AAPI Data is a leading research and policy organization producing accurate data to shift narratives and drive action toward enduring solutions for Asian American (AA) and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (NHPI) communities across the nation. AAPI Data aspires to transform public and private systems to ensure that all AA and NHPI communities are recognized, valued, and prioritized. Learn more at [apidata.com](http://apidata.com). Email [press@apidata.com](mailto:press@apidata.com) for more questions.

###

Contacts: Eric Young, [young-eric@norc.org](mailto:young-eric@norc.org) or (703) 217-6814 (cell) and Nicholas Turton, [press@apidata.com](mailto:press@apidata.com) or (213) 343-5264 (cell).