

For Immediate Release: September 12, 2017

Contact: Mia Jacobs, mjacobs@rabengroup.com, 201-9191-0333

Millennials Believe American Education Needs to Change, but Whites, Blacks, Latinxs and Asian Americans Differ on How Race Matters

New GenForward data provides first-ever deep dive into Millennials' views on education by race and ethnicity

(Washington, DC) Millennials believe the American education system is leaving students behind, but differ by race and ethnicity on why, according to new data from the GenForward survey at the University of Chicago. Majorities of Millennials give their own education an “A” or “B” grade, but the nation’s public schools score lower. Only 26% of African Americans, 31% of Asian Americans, 32% of Latinxs and 20% of whites give public schools an “A” or “B”.

Millennials differ on the role of race in educational performance.

- African Americans (59%) and Asian Americans (56%) say students of color get a worse education than whites, but majorities of Latinxs (55%) and whites (51%) say race plays very little role in determining the quality of education.
- African American Millennials (34%) cite lack of sensitivity among teachers and administrators to issues confronting Black and Hispanic students as the primary reason these students are suspended at higher rates than other students. Asian Americans (35%), Latinxs (39%) and whites (40%) attribute disproportionate suspensions to Blacks and Hispanics attending schools with fewer resources that have to rely on strict discipline. Still 31% of white Millennials believe Black and Hispanic students have more behavioral problems than others, twice the number of African American and Latinx students who believe that statement.
- Overall, a majority (55%) of Millennials agrees that U.S. schools are not held accountable for the performance of students of color, including strong majorities of African Americans (69%) and Asian Americans (67%).

Millennials won’t settle the debate between school choice advocates and supporters of traditional public schools. They like proposals from both camps.

- A majority of Millennials supports charter schools, including 65% of African Americans, 61% of Asian Americans, 58% of Latinxs, and 55% of whites. Support is even higher for voucher programs, especially those that single out using government funds to pay some of the tuition of low-income students.
- At the same time, majorities of Millennials across racial and ethnic groups agree the best way to improve K-12 education is to increase school funding.

“Millennials are split on how race impacts U.S. education,” said researcher Dr. Vladimir Medenica, **“but they agree fixing schools requires increases in school funding and teacher pay, improving teacher training and support for charter schools.”**

College education views are just as complex.

- Asian American (62%) and Latinx (57%) Millennials believe a college degree is essential to success today, while white (55%) and African American (51%) young adults are more likely to say there are many ways to succeed without a college degree.
- Over 70% of Millennials in each racial/ethnic group support free tuition at public colleges.

More key findings from the new survey, conducted between June 23 and July 10, 2017 can be found [here](#).

###

Led by Dr. Cathy J. Cohen at the University of Chicago and fielded by NORC, the GenForward Survey is the first of its kind—a nationally representative survey of over 1,836 young adults ages 18-30 conducted monthly that pays special attention to how race and ethnicity shape how respondents experience and think about the world.

www.GenForwardSurvey.com