

Summary of New Jersey Parental Rights Survey September 2025

Conducted by:



Summary Report: Parental Rights in Education and Healthcare Survey Findings

Key Takeaways:

The 2025 New Jersey Parental Rights Survey reveals a resounding mandate from NJ parents: they want greater **transparency, consent, and choice** in both education and healthcare. Across nearly every category, large majorities expressed dissatisfaction with current practices and voiced strong support for reforms that restore parental authority.

This survey delivers a powerful message from nearly 1,000 constituents across all regions, income levels, political affiliations, and religious backgrounds. Voters are not just asking—they are demanding—to be at the heart of decisions that shape their children's lives.

Most Striking Findings:

1. Parental Notification in Schools

- **82%** strongly agree parents must be informed about all issues affecting their child, including gender identity changes.

Why it matters: This overwhelming majority underscores parents' expectation to be partners—not bystanders—in decisions that affect their child's well-being.

2. Student Privacy & Consent

- **88%** oppose schools administering surveys about behavior and social issues without express parental permission.
- **94%** reject lowering the age of consent for behavioral health services from 16 to 14.

- **96%** oppose children accessing school-based healthcare without parental involvement.

*Why it matters: These numbers show parents want **ironclad protections for consent**, reinforcing their role as primary decision-makers in their children's lives.*

3. Transparency in Education

- **88%** want curricula, materials, and library catalogs fully available online.
- **72%** don't know how their district reviews age-inappropriate content.

Why it matters: Why it matters: Parents feel locked out of vital information and are demanding open access to what their children are being taught.

4. Concerns About Government Overreach

- **95%** are deeply concerned about custody loss tied to gender-affirming care bills.
- **89%** believe COVID-19 mandates went too far and want legal safeguards against repeats.
- **92%** oppose automatic enrollment in the state vaccine database without consent.

Why it matters: Families want assurance that their parental rights cannot be bypassed by state agencies or policies.

5. Educational Performance & Options

- **77%** recognize declining academic outcomes (ELA 52.2%, Math 39.6%, Science 24.8%).
- **85%** support expanding educational choices—charters, homeschooling, ESAs, and private schools.

Why it matters: Parents are alarmed by poor student performance and clearly support alternatives that could better serve their children's needs.

6. Healthcare Transparency

- **72%** report they did not receive balanced or sufficient information before consenting to medical interventions.
- **76%** want public health to emphasize natural and preventive approaches over medical mandates.

Why it matters: Parents want honesty and balanced information to make fully informed health decisions for their families.

Why These Results Matter for Parents:

- They reveal a **broad crisis of trust** between families and both schools and public health institutions.
- Parents feel **excluded from critical decisions** about their children's education and healthcare.

- There is a strong call for **laws and policies** that ensure parental rights are respected, transparency is prioritized, and educational and health systems become accountable to families.

Recommendations for Legislators:

1. **Strengthen Parental Notification Laws:** Enact policies ensuring parents are informed about all aspects of their child's education and health, including gender identity changes and medical services.
2. **Protect Homeschooling Freedoms:** Reject bills imposing burdensome regulations on homeschooling families to preserve parental choice.
3. **Enhance Transparency in Schools:** Mandate that school districts publish all curricula and materials online and improve communication about review processes for challenged materials.
4. **Revisit Consent Policies:** Restore opt-in consent for student surveys and ensure parental involvement in all school-based healthcare services.
5. **Address Funding Concerns:** Explore alternative funding for universal preschool to avoid increasing property taxes, aligning with public sentiment.
6. **Safeguard Against Overreach:** Oppose bills like A1710 and A1852 that undermine parental rights and privacy, and consider legal safeguards to prevent future mandate oversteps.
7. **Promote Holistic Public Health:** Invest in public health initiatives that emphasize nutrition, immunity, and preventive measures, reflecting residents' preferences.

Final Assessment:

The survey results highlight a clear, unified demand: **Parents want to be informed, involved, and empowered.**

Across education, healthcare, and public policy, the findings show that New Jersey families are not asking for minor adjustments—they are calling for systemic reforms that **re-center parental authority** as the foundation of child well-being.

Results by Question:

1. Parental Notification in Schools

An overwhelming 82% strongly agree that parents have a right to be informed about all issues affecting their child’s mental and physical well-being, including changes in name, gender identity, or expression in pre-K through 12th grade. Only 16% expressed disagreement, underscoring a clear mandate for transparency and parental involvement in schools.

2. Awareness of the *Freedom to Read Act*

The survey revealed that **48%** of respondents are aware of the *Freedom to Read Act*, which mandates that schools retain age-inappropriate, sexually explicit materials during parental challenges, while **42%** are unaware, and **10%** are unsure. This indicates a significant portion of the population may not fully understand the implications of this law, necessitating greater public education.

3. Knowledge of Material Review Processes

A concerning **72%** of respondents are unaware of their school district’s procedure for reviewing age-inappropriate materials, with only **15%** aware and **13%** unsure. This highlights a critical gap in transparency and communication between school districts and parents.

4. Awareness of Declining Student Performance

A strong majority, **77%**, are aware of the steady decline in student assessment scores in English Language Arts (52.2% proficiency), Math (39.6% proficiency), and Science (24.8% proficiency). This awareness underscores the urgency of addressing educational outcomes while involving parents in solutions.

5. Parental Consent for Student Surveys

An overwhelming **88% strongly disagree** and **5% somewhat disagree** with school districts collecting behavioral and social data through student surveys

without express parental consent. Only **4%** agree, signaling strong opposition to the current opt-out policy and a demand for reinstating opt-in consent.

6. Transparency in Curricula

A resounding **88%** support requiring school districts to make curricula, class materials, textbooks, and online library catalogs publicly available on their websites. Only **4%** oppose this, reflecting a clear call for transparency in educational content.

7. Support for Expanded Educational Opportunities

A significant **85%** support efforts to expand educational options, such as Education Savings Accounts, inter-district choice, homeschooling, charter schools, and private schools. Only **5%** oppose, indicating broad support for policies that empower parental choice.

8. Awareness of Restorative Justice Practices

Only **13%** are aware of restorative justice practices in schools, with **67%** unaware and **20%** unsure. This suggests a need for greater public awareness about programs like Kean University's pilot to reshape school discipline.

9. Concerns About Homeschooling Regulations

A large majority, **63% strongly agree** and **8% somewhat agree**, that proposed bills imposing new homeschooling requirements (e.g., annual reporting, mandatory meetings, state oversight) represent excessive government interference. Only **24%** disagree, signaling significant concern about encroachments on parental rights in homeschooling.

10. Universal Preschool Funding

Only **4%** support universal preschool if it increases local property taxes, while **61%** oppose tax increases for this purpose, and **26%** support preschool access, but not through higher taxes. This indicates a preference for alternative funding mechanisms to avoid burdening taxpayers.

11. Lowering Consent Age for Behavioral Health Services

A striking **94%** oppose lowering the age for minors to consent to behavioral health services without parental knowledge from 16 to 14 years old, with only **4%** in support. This reflects strong resistance to policies reducing parental oversight in healthcare decisions.

12. School-Based Healthcare Clinics

An overwhelming **96%** oppose children using school-based healthcare clinics without parental participation, with only **2%** in support. This indicates a clear demand for parental involvement in all healthcare decisions made on school grounds.

13. Concerns About Custody Removal for Gender-Affirming Care

A striking **95%** are very concerned about proposed bills (e.g., A1710) that could allow the state to remove custody from parents refusing consent for “gender-affirming care” services. Only **2%** are unconcerned, highlighting deep apprehension about government overreach in family matters.

14. Perspectives on COVID-19 Response

A significant **89%** believe government and school mandates during COVID-19 overreached and support legal safeguards to prevent future oversteps. Only **4%** support maintaining masking and vaccine mandates, indicating a strong desire for policies that respect individual and parental rights.

15. Awareness of Vaccine Database

56% are aware of New Jersey’s vaccine database (NJIIS), while **39%** are unaware, and **5%** are unsure. This suggests a need for increased transparency about data collection practices.

16. Automatic Vaccine Database Registration

A strong **92%** oppose automatic registration in the vaccine database without consent (A1852), with only **4%** in support. This reflects widespread concern about privacy and parental consent.

17. Transparency in Medical Information

Only **5%** feel they received thorough and balanced information before consenting to vaccinations or medical interventions, while **72%** report feeling uninformed, and **12%** received basic but insufficient information. This highlights a critical need for improved transparency in medical decision-making.

18. Public Health Priorities

A strong **76%** believe public health should focus more on natural and preventive health measures (e.g., nutrition, immunity), with **22%** favoring a mix of natural and medical approaches. Only **0.32%** prioritize vaccines and medicine, signaling an overwhelming preference for holistic health strategies.