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## Chapter 1. Executive Summary and Key Findings

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The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation's High School Initiative seeks to encourage students to use the news media, including student journalism, and to better understand and appreciate the First Amendment. As part of the initiative, the foundation funded this "Future of the First Amendment" research project, focusing on the knowledge and attitudes of high school students, teachers and administrators. Specifically, the study seeks to determine whether relationships exist - and, if so, the nature of those relationships - between what teachers and administrators think, and what students do in their classrooms and with news media, and what they know about the First Amendment. Ultimately, the project surveyed more than 100,000 high school students, nearly 8,000 teachers and more than 500 administrators and principals at 544 high schools across the United States.

High school students' attitudes about the First Amendment are important because each generation of citizens helps define what freedom means in our society. The words of the First Amendment - *Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances* - do not change, but how we interpret them does. In recent years, in fact, annual surveys of adult Americans conducted by The Freedom Forum show that public support for the First Amendment is neither universal nor stable: it rises and falls during times of national crisis. In the wake of the 2001 terrorist attacks, the nation was almost evenly split on the question of whether or not the First Amendment "goes too far in the rights it guarantees." Not until 2004 did America's support for the First Amendment return to pre 9-11 levels, when it received support from only about two-thirds of the population. Even in the best of times, 30 percent of Americans feel that the First Amendment, the centuries-old cornerstone of our Bill of Rights, "goes too far."

How will America's high school students affect this balance? "The Future of the First Amendment" findings are not encouraging. It appears, in fact, that our nation's high schools are failing their students when it comes to instilling in them appreciation for the First Amendment. This study, the most comprehensive of its kind, shows that nearly three of every four students do not think about the First Amendment or say they take its rights for granted.

The study suggests that First Amendment values can be taught - that the more students are exposed to news media and to the First Amendment, the greater their understanding of the rights of American citizens. But it also shows that basics about the First Amendment are not being taught, that 75 percent of the students surveyed think flag burning is illegal, that nearly 50 percent believe the government can censor the Internet, and that many students do not think newspapers should publish freely.

Administrators say student learning about the First Amendment is a priority, but not a high priority.

Below are the key findings.

1. **High school students tend to express little appreciation for the First Amendment. Nearly three-fourths say either they don't know how they feel about it or take it for granted.**
2. **Students are less likely than adults to think that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions or newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of stories.**
3. **Students lack knowledge and understanding about key aspects of the First Amendment. Seventy-five percent incorrectly think that flag burning is illegal. Nearly half erroneously believe the government can restrict indecent material on the Internet.**

4. Students who do not participate in any media-related activities are less likely to think that people should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag. Students who have taken more media and/or First Amendment classes are more likely to agree that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.
5. Students who take more media and/or First Amendment classes are more willing to answer questions about their tolerance of the First Amendment. Those who have not taken the classes say they “don’t know” to First Amendment questions at a much higher rate.
6. Most administrators say student learning about journalism is a priority for their school, but less than 1 in 5 think it is a high priority, and just under a third say it is not a priority at all. Most, however, feel it is important for all students to learn some journalism skills.
7. Most administrators say they would like to see their school expand existing student media, but lack of financial resources is the main obstacle.
8. Students participating in student-run newspapers are more likely to believe that students should be allowed to report controversial issues without approval of school authorities than students who do not participate in student newspapers.
9. Student media opportunities are not universally offered in schools across the country. In fact, more than 1 in 5 schools (21 percent) offer no student media whatsoever.
10. Of the high schools that do not offer student newspapers, 40 percent have eliminated student papers within the past five years. Of those, 68 percent now have no media.
11. Low-income and non-suburban schools have a harder time maintaining student media programs than wealthier and suburban schools.
12. Interestingly, virtually the same percentage of students participate in media activities in schools that offer a high volume of student media, as in those schools with no media programs. Apparently, students interested in journalism find a way to participate in informal media activities, even if their school does not offer formal opportunities.

Each of these key findings is explored in some detail in the section that follows, with supporting comments from scholastic journalism and First Amendment experts.

For more information about this project, go to [firstamendmentfuture.org](http://firstamendmentfuture.org).

1. High school students tend to express little appreciation for the First Amendment. Nearly three-fourths (73 percent) either say they don't know how they feel about the First Amendment, or they take it for granted.

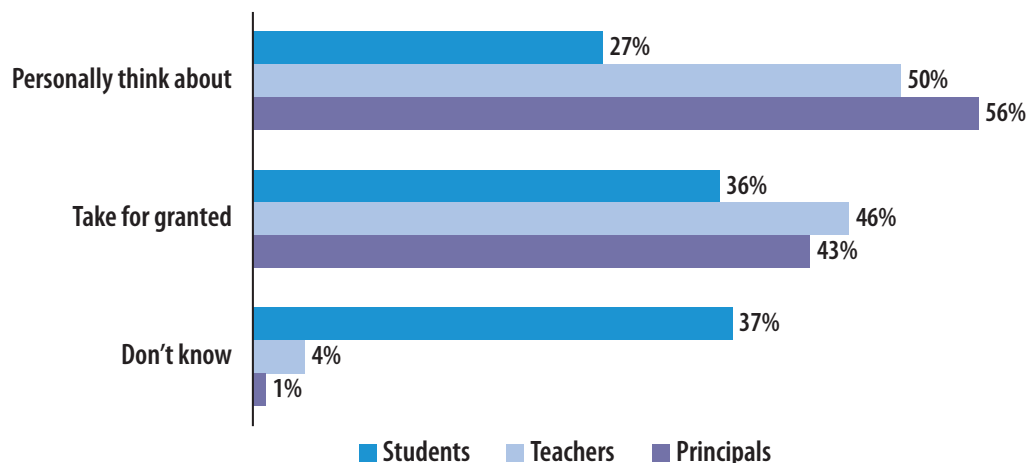
*“Schools don’t do enough to teach the First Amendment. Students often don’t know the rights it protects. This all comes at a time when there is decreasing passion for much of anything. And, you have to be passionate about the First Amendment.”*

—Linda Puntney  
Executive Director, Journalism Education Association

After the text of the First Amendment was read to students, more than a third of them (35 percent) thought that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees. Nearly a quarter (21 percent) did not know enough about the First Amendment to even give an opinion. Of those who did express an opinion, an even higher percentage (44 percent) agreed that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

The graphic shows that teachers and principals are more likely to personally think about their First Amendment rights rather than take them for granted, but just 27 percent of students personally think about them. Thirty-seven percent of students either have not yet formed an opinion or are unwilling to express their opinion.

**The rights guaranteed by the First Amendment: Do you “personally think about them?” Do you “take them for granted?”**



2. Students are less likely than adults to think that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions or newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of stories.

*“The First Amendment is the cornerstone of our democratic society. Unfortunately, young people don’t live it enough. It becomes like the granite monument in the park that we never visit.”*

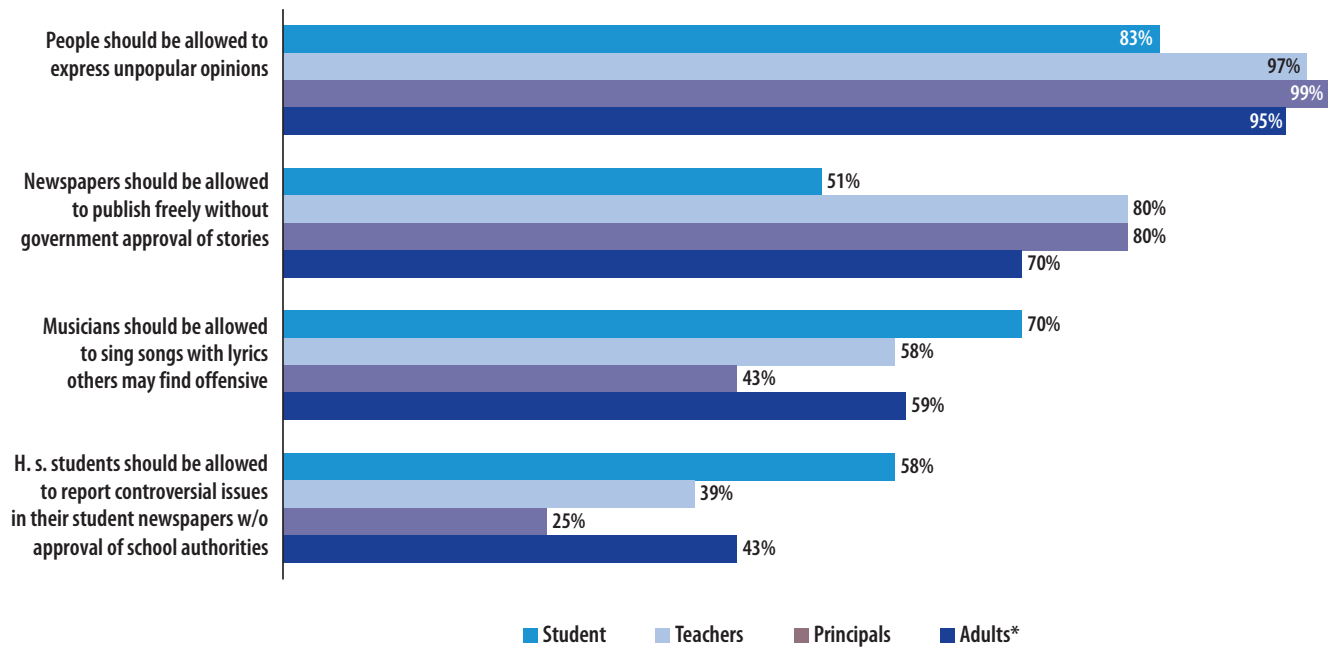
—Sandy Woodcock, Director  
Newspaper Association of America Foundation

Adults, teachers and principals are more apt to agree with the traditional forms of expressing one’s First Amendment rights. For example, up to 80 percent think newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of stories.

The graphic, however, shows that when it comes to situations more relevant to students’ own concerns, students agree at higher rates than adults that certain forms of expression should be allowed (i.e., musicians singing songs with lyrics some may find offensive, and students reporting controversial issues in their papers without approval from school authorities).

**Do you agree or disagree that ...**

**Percent who agree with each statement is shown**



\*Adult data is based on findings from the State of the First Amendment (SOFA) survey conducted each year by the Freedom Forum in Nashville, Tenn., and the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut. Data listed is from the most recent SOFA survey in which the question was asked. In the chart above, the breakdown of SOFA data is as follows: People should be allowed to express... (2003); Newspapers should be allowed to publish... (2003); Musicians should be allowed to sing songs... (2004); High school students should be allowed to report... (2000).

3. **Students lack knowledge and understanding about key aspects of the First Amendment. Seventy-five percent think that flag burning is illegal. Nearly half believe the government can legally restrict indecent material on the Internet.**

*“Schools are not teaching the principles of the First Amendment broadly enough. That’s in part because civics education has all but disappeared. It’s odd that we’re in the second great era of immigration to this country and these groups are not being exposed to the basics of our Constitution and democratic society.”*

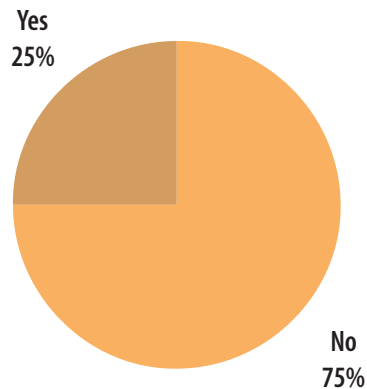
—Richard Lee Colvin, Director, Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media, Columbia University

Students are, on the whole, unclear about constitutionally protected First Amendment rights. For example, they were evenly split over whether government can legally restrict indecent material on the Internet: 49 percent erroneously said yes, while 51 percent correctly said no.

This graphic shows that just 25 percent of students correctly believe that flag burning as a means of political protest is legal.

**Under current law, do Americans have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest?**

**Students’ responses** (correct answer is “yes”)



4. Students who do not participate in any media-related activities are less likely to think that people should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement. Students who have taken more media and/or First Amendment classes are more likely to think that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

*“Sadly, most principals think their schools are doing a good job teaching the First Amendment, but it is clear that too few understand or value the ideas within the First Amendment that they claim to teach.”*

—Scott Olson, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Minnesota at Mankato; and former Dean, Ball State University’s College of Communications

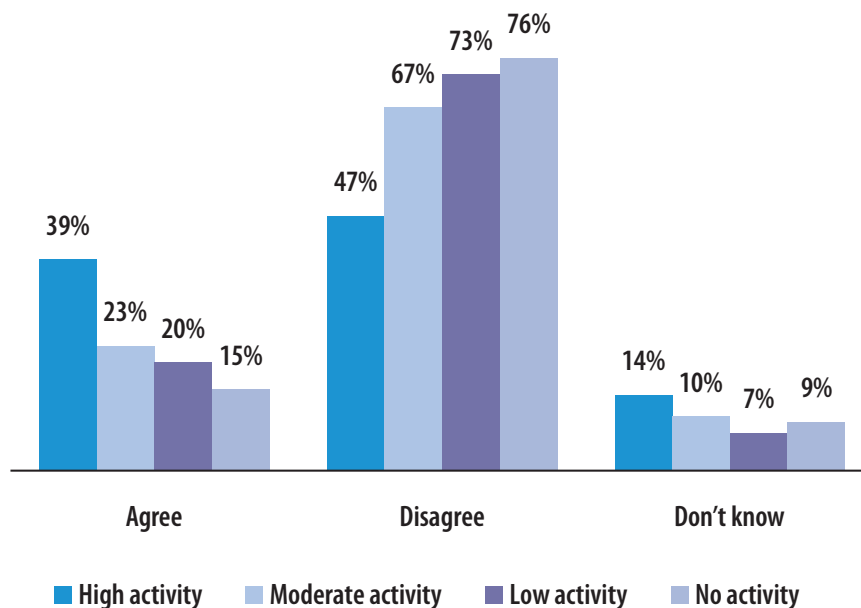
Most students (86 percent) do not participate in any media-related activities. The 14 percent that do participate were classified into three groups:

- 8 percent are “low activity” students (they participate in one activity);
- 3 percent are “moderate activity” students (they participate in two activities);
- 3 percent are “high activity” students (they participate in three or more activities).

In general, the more students participated in media-related activities, the more they appreciated certain First Amendment rights.

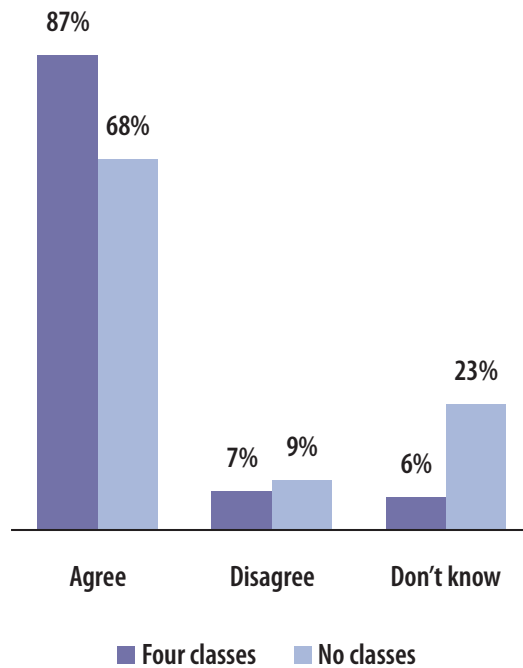
For example, this graphic shows that 39 percent of high activity students think that people should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement. However, just 15 percent of no activity students felt that way.

**People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement—agree or disagree?**



This graphic shows that 87 percent of students who have taken at least four classes dealing with the media and/or First Amendment think people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions, while nearly 20 percent fewer (68 percent) who have not taken any of those classes agree with that right.

**People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions—agree or disagree?**



5. Students who take more media and/or First Amendment classes are more willing to answer questions about their tolerance of First Amendment rights. Those who have not taken the classes say they “don’t know” to First Amendment questions at a much higher rate.

*“Being able to question authority and have a voice in how government runs is positively essential. Citizens who don’t appreciate that won’t even realize when their freedoms are eroding. Students who learn to blindly accept situations they really could and should change will not be the voting, thinking citizens we need in our country.”*

—Candace Perkins Bowen, Scholastic Media Coordinator

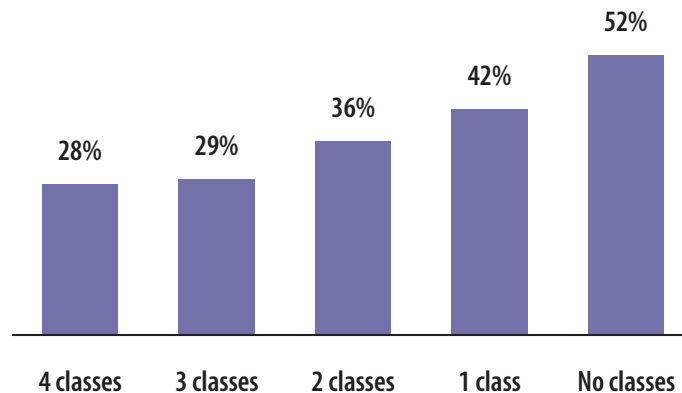
School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Kent State University

While significant percentages of students in all categories of class participation said they “don’t know” if First Amendment rights are something they personally think about or take for granted, it is clear that the more classes a student has taken, the more willing they are of expressing an opinion about First Amendment issues.

This graphic shows that more than half, or 52 percent, of the students who have not taken these classes said they “don’t know” to First Amendment questions.

**Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?**

**Percentage who responded “don’t know” by number of classes taken**



6. Most administrators say student learning about journalism is a priority for their school, but less than 1 in 5 think it is a high priority, and just under a third say it is not a priority at all. Most, however, feel it is important for *all* students to learn some journalism skills.

*“The First Amendment gets some attention in schools, but often not enough attention... Increased graduation requirements have limited the opportunity for students to pursue electives in the curriculum.”*

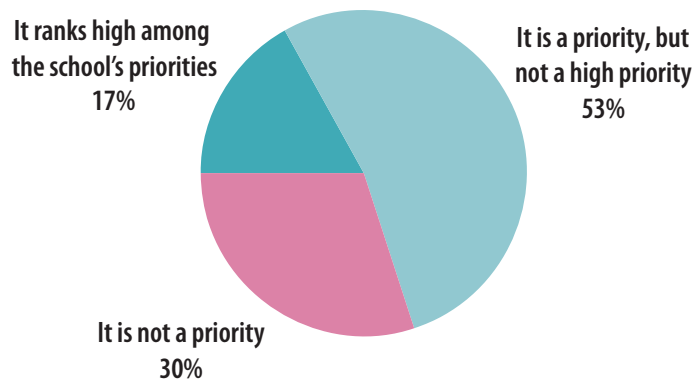
—Richard Johns, Executive Director, Quill and Scroll Society  
School of Mass Communication, University of Iowa

While a small percentage of high school administrators say that student learning about media and journalism is a high priority for their school (17 percent), the vast majority of principals (91 percent) feel it is important for *all* students to learn some journalism skills.

However, this graphic shows that journalism is not a priority for just under a third (30 percent) of our nation’s high schools. In all, a slight majority (53 percent) said that it is a priority, but not a high priority.

**Where does student learning about media and journalism rank among your high school’s list of priorities?**

**Answered by high school administrators**



7. Most administrators say they would like to see their school expand existing student media, but lack of financial resources is the main obstacle.

*“Support for the teaching of student media and First Amendment has to come from the top down, from the superintendent of schools to the principal to the adviser to the student. Too often the newspaper adviser is “the new kid on the block” who is far more interested in getting tenure than rocking the boat. Support among fellow teachers often is lacking as well. It gets disheartening very quickly when you’re one person fighting against many.”*

—Richard Holden, Executive Director  
Dow Jones Newspaper Fund

*“Given the information age explosion, it seems logical for schools to offer a solid understanding of the news media as part of the overall school curriculum. With it, students would also become more aware of their Constitutional rights.”*

—Jack Dvorak, Director, High School Journalism Institute  
Professor, School of Journalism, Indiana University

*“The report is a call to action. . . . Scholastic media training organizations must also focus on principals and administrators. They can make or break programs. One suggestion: let’s develop for-credit courses in the student media and First Amendment and tailor them for the principals. This would show them how they can balance all their concerns AND encourage student media and expression.”*

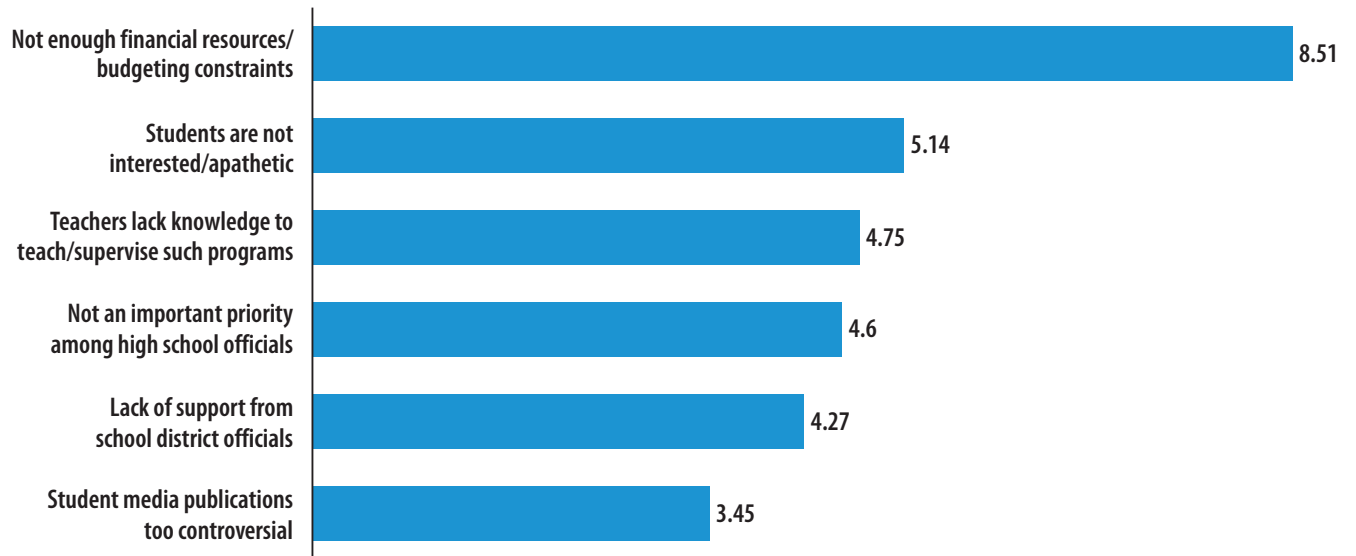
—Warren Watson, Director, J-Ideas  
Ball State University

An overwhelming majority (85 percent) of administrators say they would like to see their schools expand existing student media programs. However, they also feel that many obstacles stand in the way.

The following graphic shows that after budgeting constraints, the No. 2-ranked obstacle is student apathy. Additionally, because student media is not a priority among high school officials and there’s a lack of support from school district officials, even among extracurricular activities, journalism is not often recognized as an important priority. The potential controversy that student media might generate was considered less of an obstacle.

What current obstacles stand in the way of your school expanding its student media programs?

Mean rating on scale from 0–10: 0 = not an obstacle and 10 = major obstacle



8. Students participating in student-run newspapers are more likely to believe that students should be allowed to report controversial issues without approval of school authorities than students who do not participate in student newspapers.

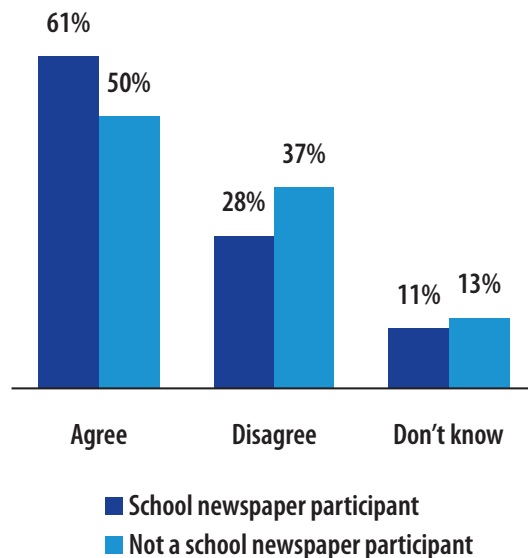
*“The biggest obstacle to practicing First Amendment principles in schools is the undemocratic, repressive way in which many schools are run. If schools want to take the First Amendment seriously, they must give students and all members of the school community a meaningful voice in shaping the life of the school. The biggest obstacle to teaching student media are budget cuts and the myopic focus on high-stakes testing.”*

—Charles Haynes, Senior Scholar  
Freedom Forum First Amendment Center

While participation in media-related activities has some impact on appreciation for the First Amendment, certain types of activities, such as the student newspaper, have a noticeably greater effect. Students who worked on school newspapers appreciated and understood the media and the First Amendment more than students as a whole. Not surprisingly, 64 percent of students participating in their school papers said students should be free to report controversial issues while 58 percent of non-participants agree.

Similarly, when looking at the broader issue of press freedom, the following graphic shows that school newspaper participants are more tolerant. Sixty-one percent of newspaper participants said newspapers should be able to publish freely without government approval of a story. Just half (50 percent) of students who do not participate in a school paper agreed that newspapers should have that right.

**Newspapers should be able to publish freely without government approval of a story—agree or disagree?**



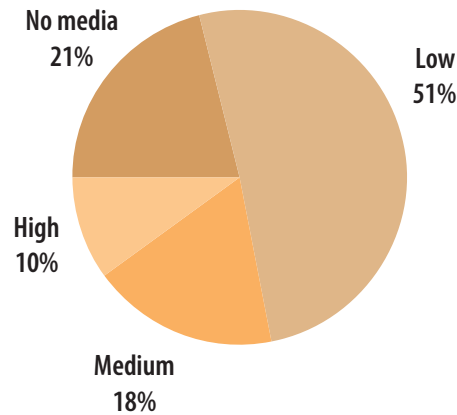
9. **Student media opportunities are not universally offered in schools across the country. In fact, more than 1 in 5 schools (21 percent) offer no student media whatsoever.**

*“I think the number of students (and probably teachers too) who could list all of the rights afforded by the First Amendment is probably frightening.”*

—Ann Akers, Associate Director  
National Scholastic Media Association

Nearly a quarter of high schools in the United States do not offer any media-related extracurricular activities. This graphic shows that another 51 percent of the schools surveyed only offer one form of media, and just 28 percent offer two or more types of media.

**Amount of media activities currently offered at high schools**

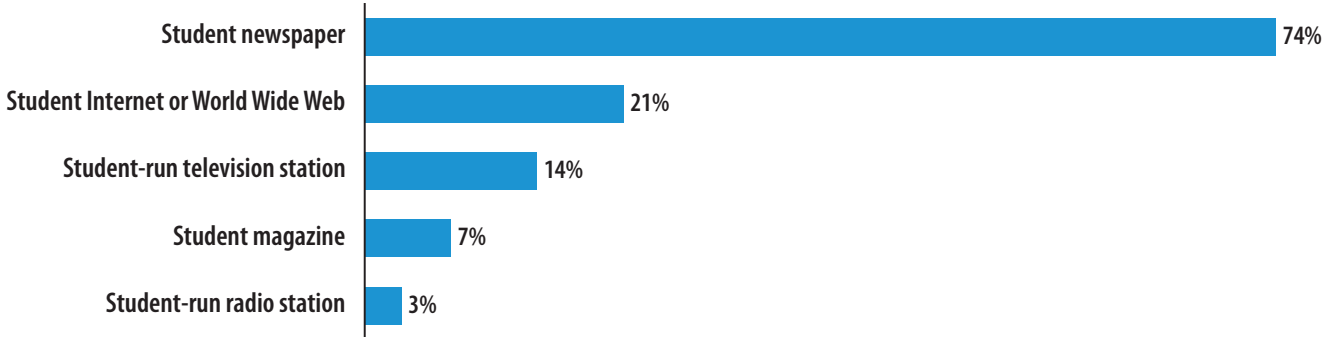


No media-school offers no student media activities; Low-school offers one student media activity; Medium-school offers two or three student media activities; High-school offers four or more student media activities.

Looking at specific types of media, this graphic shows that student newspapers are the clear winner; 74 percent of schools offer some kind of a student paper. Other types of student media such as the Internet, television, magazine and radio do not fare nearly as well.

Regardless of whether or not your school provides formal coursework in journalism, please indicate whether your school offers the following student media activities...

**Currently offered**



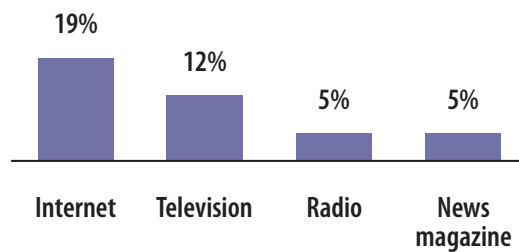
10. Of the high schools that do not offer student newspapers, 40 percent have eliminated student papers within the past five years. Of those, 68 percent now have no media.

*“Clearly, greater participation in student media will be a big help, but also, more frequent and more general conversations about our first freedom can make a difference. It’s something that all of us—not just those in the journalism community, but all who care about education—should advocate.”*

—Rosalind Stark, Retired Executive Director, Radio and Television News Directors Foundation, where she oversaw the high school journalism program; board member, Student Press Law Center

Twenty-six percent of schools surveyed do not offer an official school newspaper. This graphic shows that of the schools that dropped their newspapers in the past five years, 41 percent still have at least one student media activity.

**Continued student media offerings by schools that have dropped their student newspapers in the past five years**



**11. Low-income and non-suburban schools have a harder time maintaining student media programs than wealthier and suburban schools.**

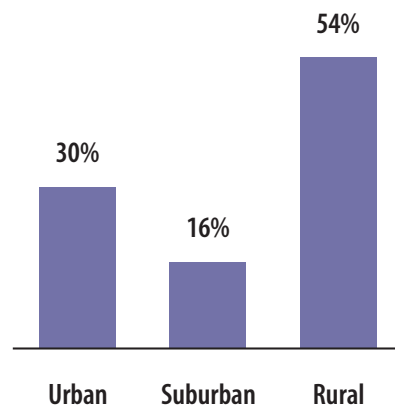
*“I find students are really not very informed. They have a very narrow view of what the First Amendment is, perhaps. Why I think that, is because in many cases they have not enjoyed First Amendment rights yet in their lives. And it’s very hard for them to understand what the First Amendment is about when they haven’t been given that freedom yet. Schools don’t encourage and nurture free thinking and free expression.”*

—Marilyn Weaver, Chairwoman  
Department of Journalism, Ball State University

Schools in lower-income areas had a larger drop in student newspapers over the past five years than wealthier schools. There was a 37 percent decrease in school papers in lower middle income schools in the past five years, compared to a 28 percent drop in middle income schools and a 16 percent drop in upper income schools.

This graphic shows that while 54 percent of rural schools and 30 percent of urban schools that do not offer a student newspaper dropped them in the past five years, just 16 percent of suburban schools dropped theirs during the same period.

**Percentage of schools that dropped student newspaper in the past five years**



Percentages in chart reflect percent of schools in each category that dropped their student newspapers in the past five years among those schools that do not currently offer a student newspaper.

12. Interestingly, virtually the same percentage of students participate in media activities in schools that offer a high volume of student media, as in those schools with no media programs. Apparently, students interested in journalism find a way to participate in informal media activities, even if their school does not offer formal opportunities.

*“What kind of citizens do we want in 10 or 20 or 30 years? Do we want citizens that will blindly accept whatever the government tells them, or do we want a citizenry that expects the government to operate openly and transparently?”*

—Barbara Thill, Publications Adviser/Journalism Teacher, Chicago

In one of the more interesting findings in this survey, there was no significant difference in student media participation in schools where different amounts of media were offered. The following graphic shows that virtually the same percentage of students participate in media activities in schools that offer a high amount of sanctioned student media as compared with those that offer none.

#### Participation in student media activities by school type

	None	Low	Medium	High
Newspaper	7%	8%	8%	6%
Magazine	3	3	4	3
Radio station	3	3	3	5
TV station	4	3	6	6
Internet	5	4	5	5
Other	5	4	5	6

None-school offers no student media activities; Low-school offers one student media activity; Medium-school offers two or three student media activities; High-school offers four or more student media activities.

This suggests there may be a number of ways to increase participation in student media, beyond simply offering more sanctioned programs. The quality of the student media offered may well play a significant role in the process. Moreover, any other means of getting students interested in journalism and the media is likely to have a greater impact on students’ level of interest and participation. Once that interest is generated, offering activities that are supported by the school may help sustain their interest and participation over time.

*“Wouldn’t it be incredible if we could figure out a way to help people really understand and value our First Amendment? Just think how far we’d have come, as Americans, if every student left school understanding—and believing—that a truly democratic society is premised on all of its people having the freedom to think, write and speak freely. So, I hope what comes out of this (report) is a push for more education on the First Amendment.”*

—Rosalind Stark, Retired Executive Director, Radio and Television News Directors Foundation; Board Member, Student Press Law Center

*“This report illuminates an untenable gap in our education system in teaching and understanding the First Amendment and the freedoms we cherish. Therefore, it’s no surprise the health of scholastic journalism is in jeopardy. One effective remedy is to build and nurture quality student media that operates freely and without censorship. Media by and for students engages and energizes the school community. It is democracy in action.”*

—Diana Mitsu Klos, Senior Project Director, American Society of Newspaper Editors Foundation, oversees high school journalism program

*“The report shows that young people in America are conscious that they are being denied their First Amendment rights. A great harm is being done to a generation of young adults by withholding the full access of their constitutional rights while in high school, then expecting them to be full participants in a democratic society when they are older.”*

—Gene Policinski, Executive Director  
First Amendment Center

## Chapter 2. Profile of Student Attitudes

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### Introduction

The “Future of the First Amendment” research project is the most comprehensive survey ever conducted on knowledge and attitudes about the First Amendment in American high schools. Many of the findings provide baseline information about media programs in American high schools that, for perhaps the first time ever, provides a clear picture of the levels of student participation and how they use media in classrooms. Especially interesting are the findings linking the effect of participation in media activities and First Amendment or journalism-related classes on student levels of tolerance and knowledge of the First Amendment. Comparisons of the different groups in the study, teachers and principals versus students, for example, also provide telling differences in tolerance and knowledge levels.

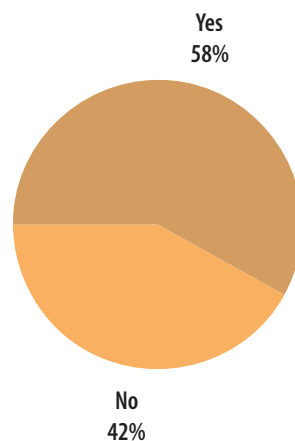
### A profile of students

#### *Classes:*

Students were asked a series of questions regarding the specific types of courses they’ve taken dealing with aspects of the First Amendment and/or the media. While many students have taken general courses dealing with those general subjects, significantly fewer have taken courses that deal specifically with learning journalism skills. There are also some differences across school type (public versus private, suburban versus rural versus urban, etc.).

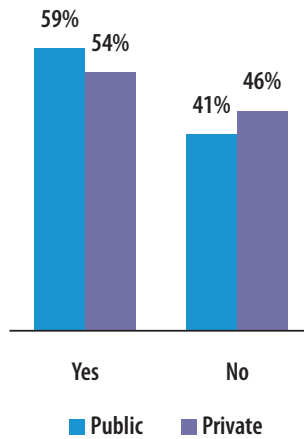
The majority (58 percent) of students surveyed have taken classes in high schools that dealt with the First Amendment. A slightly higher percentage of public school students (59 percent) than private school students (54 percent) have taken classes that dealt with the First Amendment. Students in rural areas (61 percent) are slightly more likely to have taken these types of classes than students in suburban (58 percent) and urban (56 percent) areas.

#### Taken classes in high school that dealt with the 1st Amendment?



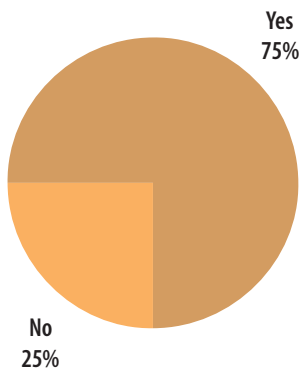
## Classes dealing with First Amendment

### Public vs. private

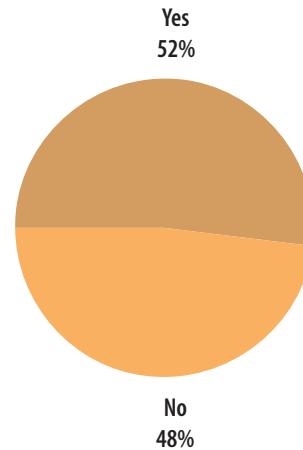


While the vast majority of students have had some experience in the classroom with using the media for specific class assignments, fewer have taken classes that specifically discussed the media's role in our society. Three-quarters (76 percent) of students say they have taken a course in which the teacher required them to read a newspaper or watch television news as a class assignment. However, when it comes to courses that study the role of the media and how it impacts our society in various ways, fewer still (52 percent) have taken courses. Of course, the latter is a more specialized type of course and would probably fall into an elective category at most high schools.

### Taken a course where teacher required you to read a newspaper or watch TV news as a class assignment?

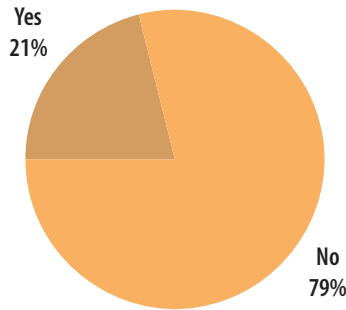


### Taken a course discussing the role of media in society?



Significantly fewer students overall have taken courses that teach journalism skills. Less than a quarter (21 percent) have taken classes in high school that dealt primarily with journalism skills. A greater percentage of students from economically disadvantaged areas (26 percent) have taken such courses than students from higher income areas—lower middle income (22 percent), middle income (19 percent), upper income (21 percent).

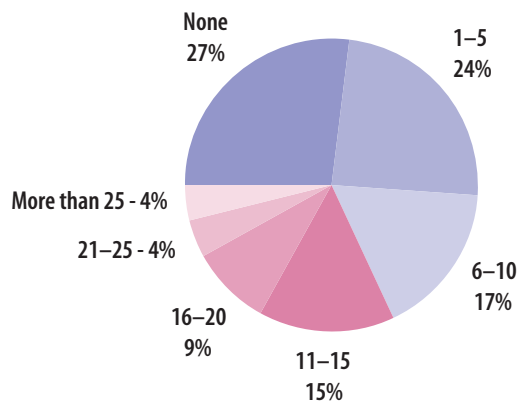
**Taken classes in high school that dealt primarily with journalism skills?**



**Activities:**

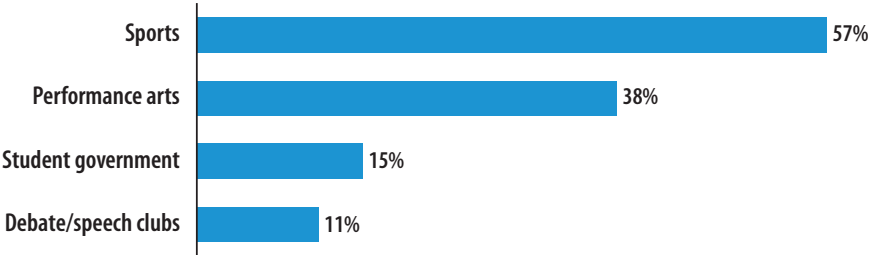
Nearly all principals (99 percent) and teachers (97 percent) surveyed feel that it is important for ALL students to participate in some extracurricular activities or clubs. However, over a quarter (27 percent) of the high school students surveyed say they do not spend any time during an average week participating in extracurricular activities. On the other hand, the majority of students (73 percent) do spend some time participating in various extracurricular activities. And a full majority (56 percent) of students say they spend between one and 15 hours engaging in such activities during an average week.

**Extracurricular activities—average hours per week**



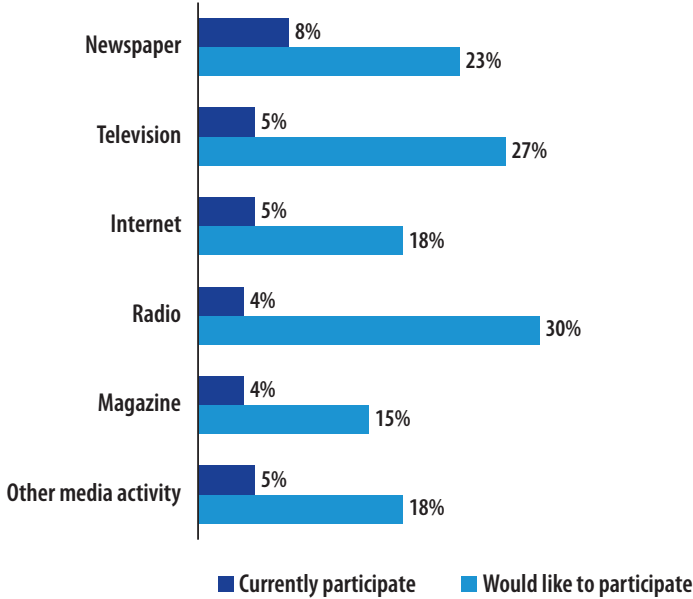
Students participate in a wide variety of clubs and activities ranging from sports to performance arts to school newspapers. However, when it comes to extracurricular activities, sports are the clear favorite among high school students; in fact, sports are the only activities in which the majority (57 percent) of all students participate. Many students (38 percent) participate in performance arts activities and considerably fewer participate in student government (15 percent) or debate/speech (11 percent).

**Participation in extracurricular activities**



By contrast, when it comes to media-related extracurricular activities, a fairly low percentage of students participate. Higher percentages (ranging from 17 and 32 percent depending on the activity) say they would like to participate if the activity eventually became available at their school. Access to media-related activities is more scarce than it is for many other activities. Whereas nearly all high schools offer some type of sports program, fewer offer media-related activities.

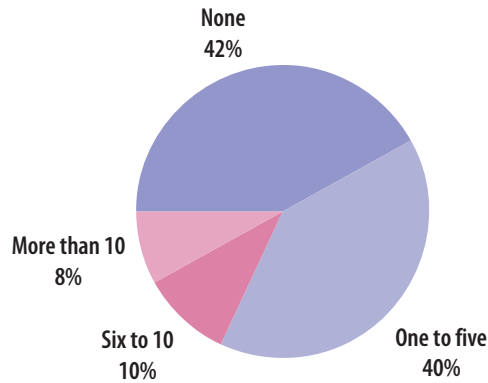
**Participation in media-related extracurricular activities**



**Community participation:**

Most students do not limit their activities to those offered at their high school; many are active in their communities as well. The majority (58 percent) of high school students surveyed spend time during an average week participating in community related activities.

**Community activities—average hours per week**



These students who participate in their communities do so in several ways. Thirty-five percent volunteer for community service organizations, 32 percent volunteer for service at religious organizations, and 28 percent participate in community social clubs or organizations.

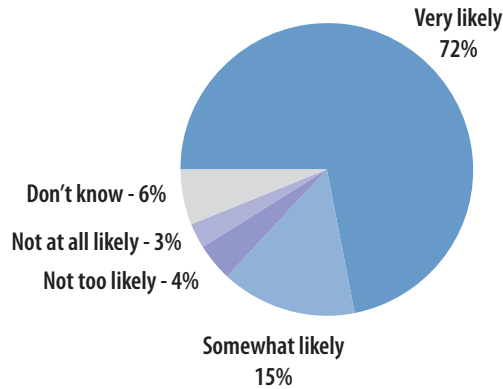
**Community activities**



**College plans:**

Overall, most students (72 percent) say they are very likely to go to college after high school. Fifteen percent say it is somewhat likely they will attend college, 4 percent say not too likely, 3 percent say not at all likely and 6 percent are not sure if they will attend college or not.

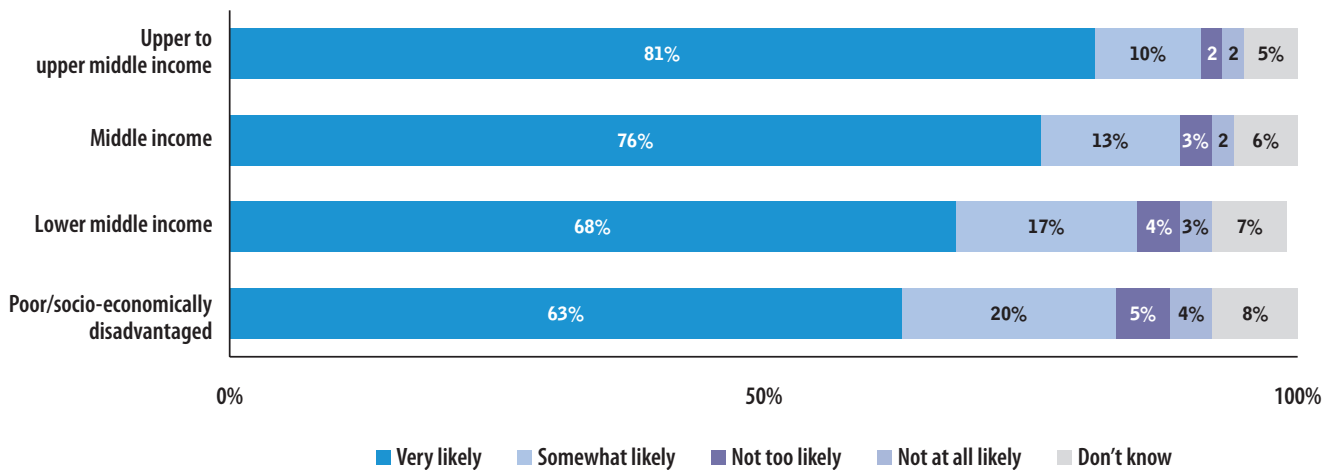
**Likelihood of attending college**



Although most high school students say they are likely to go to college, some categories of students are more sure than others. A greater percentage of students attending private schools (85 percent) say they are very likely to go to college after high school. By way of comparison, 71 percent of students attending public schools say they are very likely to go to college. Additionally, a greater percentage of students attending schools in higher income areas say they are very likely (81 percent) to go on to college. A smaller percentage of students in lower income areas say college is very likely for them—76 percent of middle-income students, 68 percent of lower middle-income students and 63 percent of poor income students say it is very likely. Suburban students also say they are slightly more likely to go on to college (77 percent) than urban (73 percent) and rural (68 percent) students.

**Likelihood of attending college**

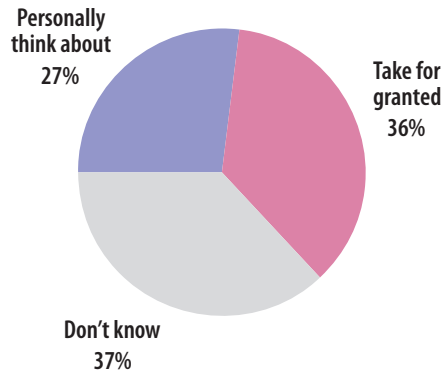
**By income level**



## Tolerance and knowledge of the First Amendment

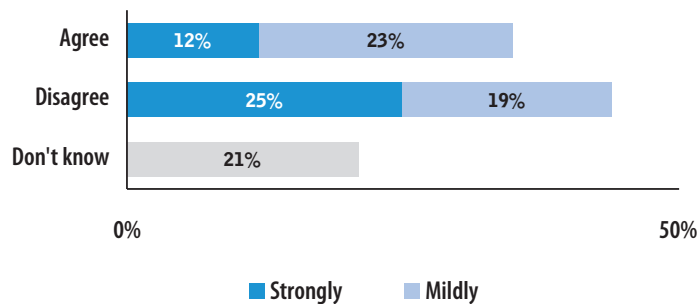
High school students overall tend to express little appreciation for the First Amendment. When asked about whether they take the First Amendment for granted, nearly three quarters (73 percent) of the students surveyed say either they do not know how they feel, or agree that they take it for granted. And a mere 27 percent of students say they personally think about these rights.

### Personally think about or take for granted First Amendment rights?



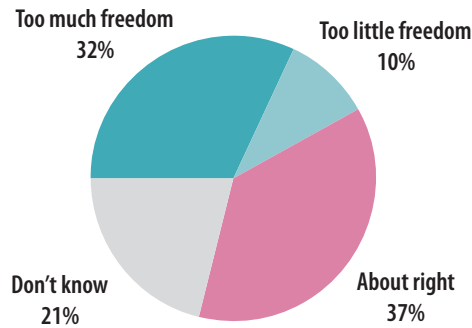
Similarly, over a third of high school students (35 percent) agreed after having the First Amendment read to them that it goes too far in the rights it guarantees; less than half (44 percent) disagreed. Again, many students were not even sure of their opinion on this statement—21 percent of students say they don't know if they agree or disagree that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

### The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees—agree or disagree?



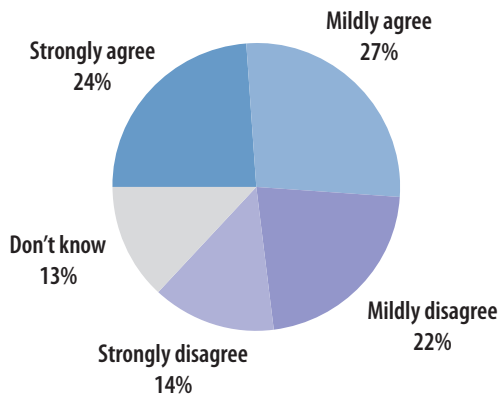
Since over a third of high school students think the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees, it is not surprising that nearly the same percentage (32 percent) thinks the press in America has too much freedom. Still, a slightly greater percentage (37 percent) thinks the amount of freedom the press in America has is about right. Very few (just 10 percent) think the press in America has too little freedom and again, many are unsure of how they feel about this issue (21 percent say don't know).

Overall, do you think the press in America has too much freedom to do what it wants, too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?

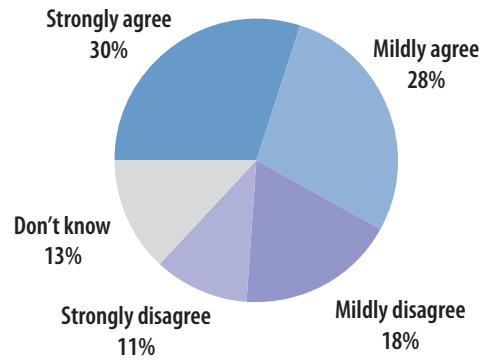


Although many students think the press in America has too much freedom, a narrow majority agree that newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story. Still, more than a third (36 percent) disagree that newspapers should be able to publish freely. And not surprisingly, an even larger majority of students (58 percent) agree that high school students should be allowed to report on controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

**Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.**

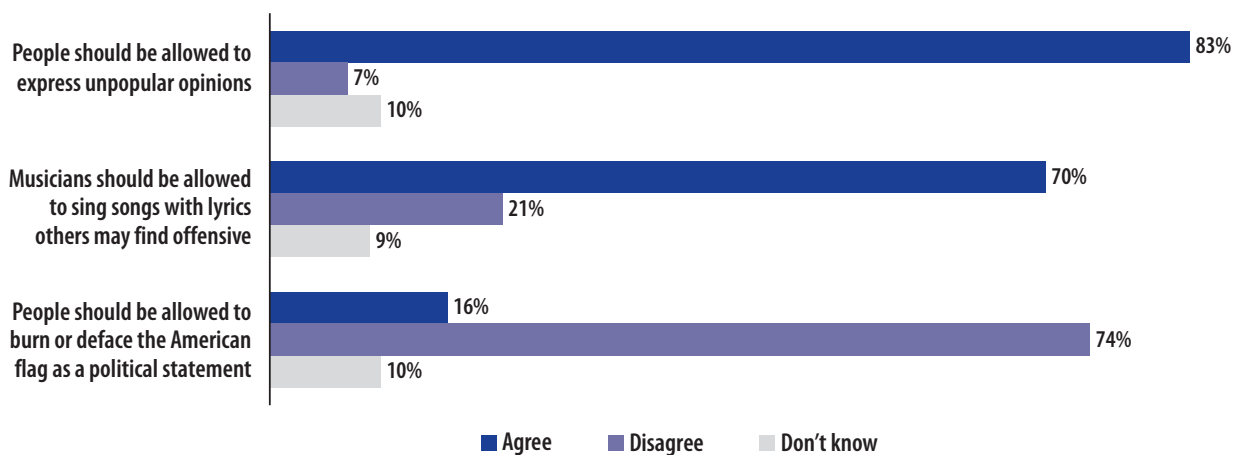


**High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.**



Students are more conflicted when it comes to their tolerance for the expression of specific First Amendment rights. As was already noted, while a slight majority supports the right of newspapers to publish freely without government approval of stories, many do not support that right. Students are similarly conflicted when it comes to different ways in which one may express First Amendment freedoms. A strong majority (83 percent) agrees that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions. However, when it comes to specific exercises of the right to express such an opinion, such as burning or defacing the American flag as a political statement, just 16 percent agree that people should be allowed to do it.

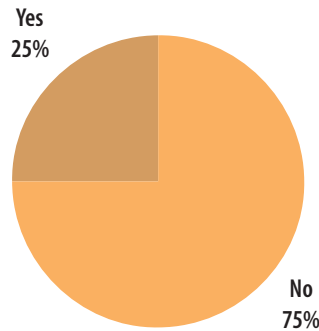
### Expression of First Amendment rights



When it comes to students' knowledge of the First Amendment, high school students apparently have much to learn. To be sure, more than three quarters (77%) of students correctly disagreed that under current law, a person has the legal right to shout "fire" in a crowded arena as a prank. A weaker majority (62 percent) also correctly stated that public high school authorities have the right to prevent student newspapers published at their high schools from publishing material they deem controversial.

However, other actions relating to the First Amendment are not so clearly understood. When asked if the government has the right under current law to restrict indecent material on the Internet, students are split in their responses. While 51 percent correctly said the government is not allowed to do it, nearly as many, 49 percent, said this was allowed. The biggest misunderstanding of current law, however, comes on the controversial issue of burning the American flag as a means of political protest. Just a quarter of high school students (25 percent) correctly answered that under current law, Americans do have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest. The majority in this case (75%) answered incorrectly.

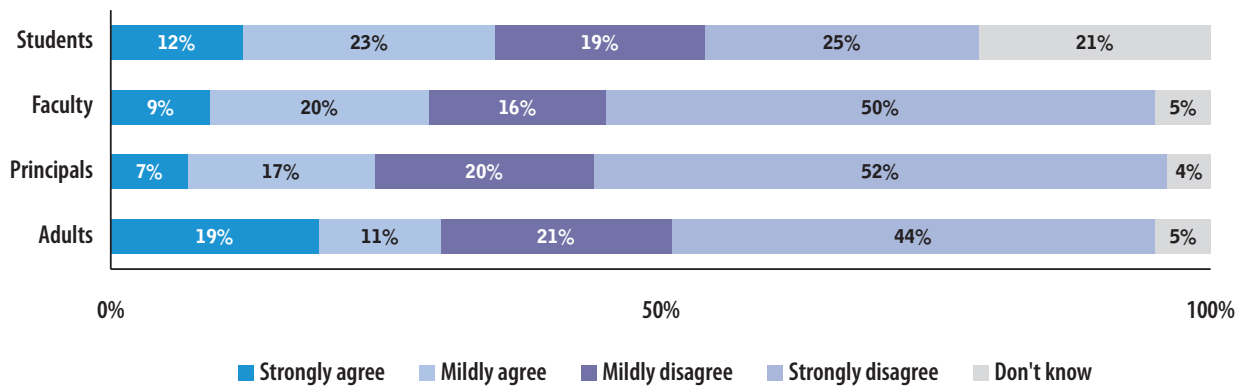
Under current law, do Americans have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest?



### Differences among students, teachers, principals, and adults

Students differ significantly from faculty and principals as to whether or not the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees. Less than half (43 percent) of the students asked disagree that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees. However, the majority of both teachers (66 percent) and principals (72 percent) disagree that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees. Based on the 2004 State of the First Amendment survey, the national adult population lines up much closer to the teachers and faculty, with 65 percent disagreeing that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

### Agree or disagree: "The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees"



### **Freedom of speech:**

Students also differ from teachers, principals and adults in their tolerance of various forms of expressing First Amendment rights. Certainly students appreciate the First Amendment in different ways and to differing degrees than adults. Adults, including both the teachers and the principals surveyed, are more apt to agree with the traditional forms of expressing one's First Amendment rights (expressing unpopular opinions and publishing newspapers freely without government approval of stories). However, when it comes to more modern issues such as (1) whether or not musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics some may find offensive; and (2) whether or not high school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their papers without approval from school authorities, students agree at higher rates than adults that such forms of expression should be allowed.

### **Expression of First Amendment rights**

#### **Percent who agree (except where noted)**

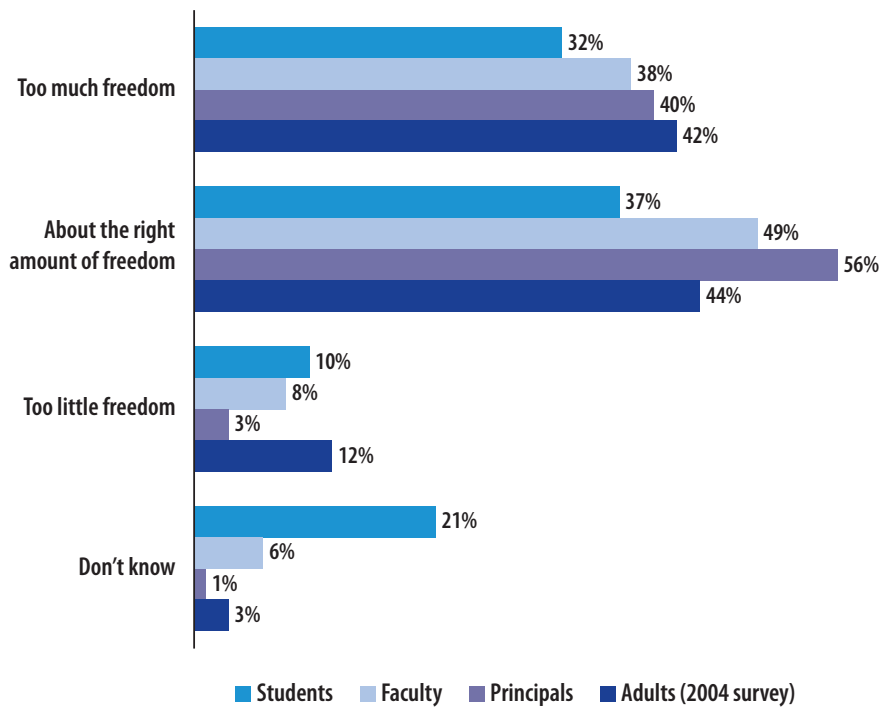
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Principals</b>	<b>Adults*</b>
Should be allowed to express unpopular opinion	83%	97%	99%	95% (2003)
Should be allowed to burn/deface flag in protest (% disagree)	74	70	75	74 (2001)
Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics others may find offensive	70	58	43	59 (2004)
Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of stories	51	80	80	70 (2003)
High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues without approval of school authorities	58	39	25	43 (2000)

\*The adult population is surveyed annually in the State of the First Amendment survey conducted by the Freedom Forum. Data listed is from most recent Freedom Forum survey in which the question was asked.

**Freedom of the press:**

The majority of principals (56 percent) and a plurality of teachers (49 percent) think the press in America has about the right amount of freedom to do what it wants. About 4 in 10 teachers and principals think the press in America has too much freedom to do what it wants. Students, on the other hand, are more conflicted in their opinion as to whether there is too much or the right amount of freedom of the press. Thirty-seven percent of high school students think the press has about the right amount of freedom to do what it wants. About a third (32 percent) of students think the press in America has too much freedom and 21 percent say they are not sure how they feel about this issue. The opinions of the national adult population fall between those expressed by the principals and teachers and those expressed by the students. Adults are fairly split between thinking the press in America has about the right amount of freedom (44 percent) and that the press has too much freedom (42 percent). Smaller percentages of each group think the press in America has too little freedom to do what it wants (12 percent of adults, 8 percent of faculty, 3 percent of principals and 10 percent of students).

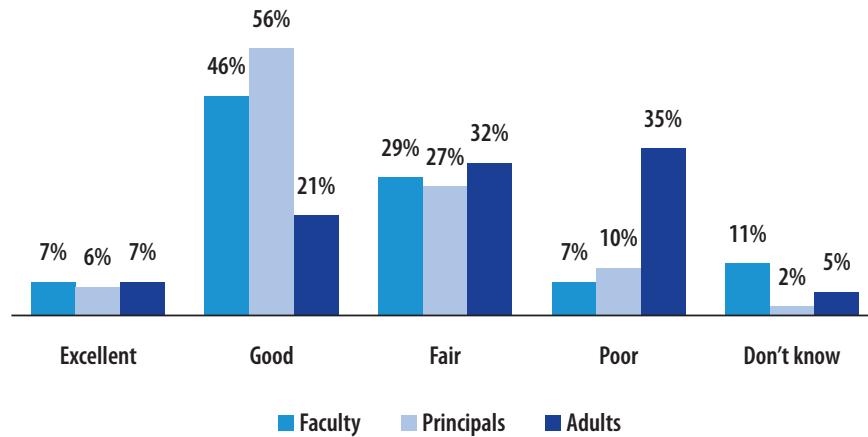
**Overall, do you think the press in America has too much freedom to do what it wants, too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?**



**First Amendment education:**

Most teachers (75 percent) and principals (83 percent) think that the United States educational system does a good or fair job teaching students about First Amendment freedoms. Interestingly, only 7 percent of teachers and 6 percent of principals think the U.S. educational system does an excellent job in this area. A significantly smaller majority (53 percent) of the national adult population believes the U.S. educational system does a good or fair job teaching students about First Amendment freedoms. In fact, more than a third (35 percent) say the educational system does a poor job in this area.

**Overall, how would you rate the job that the American educational system does in teaching students about First Amendment freedoms?**



**Understanding of the law:**

Most (76 percent) of the high school students surveyed think that it is illegal to burn or deface the United States flag as a form of protest. However, this controversial practice is currently protected as a form of free speech under the First Amendment (i.e., it is not currently illegal to burn or deface the American flag as a means of political protest). Four in 10 teachers (40 percent) and 3 in 10 (31 percent) principals also believe that Americans do not have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest. In comparison, a majority of the national adult population (58 percent) believe it is illegal to burn the flag as a means of political protest.

## Understanding of Current Laws

Issue	Students		Teachers		Principals	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do Americans have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest? <b>(Yes)</b>	25%	76%	60%	40%	69%	31%
Do the courts have the right to send reporters to jail for refusing to reveal a news source? <b>(Depends on state)</b>	31	69	54	46	67	33
Does the government have the right to restrict indecent material on the Internet? <b>(No)</b>	49	51	50	50	50	50
Does someone have the legal right to shout "fire" in a crowded arena as a prank? <b>(No)</b>	23	77	8	92	2	98

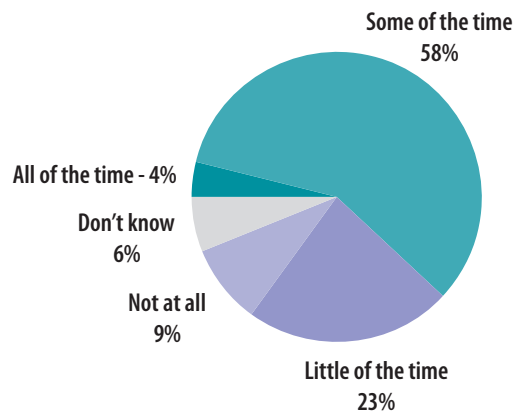
Correct answer is in bold after question.

**Trust in journalists:**

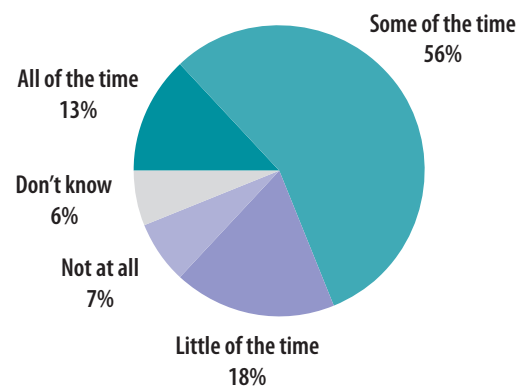
Overall, high school students seem to be less trusting of journalists than teachers. While just 62 percent of students think journalists tell the truth all or some of the time, 83 percent of teachers think they do. Still, just 4 percent of both students and teachers believe journalists tell the truth all of the time. When we take a look at certain groups of students we see a very different trend. Students who participate in student newspapers (13 percent) and students who are high on the Activity Participation Index\* (17 percent) are more likely to believe that journalists tell the truth all of the time. Still, overall, teachers have more trust in journalists to tell the truth than students.

**How much do you trust journalists to tell the truth? Do you believe they tell the truth...**

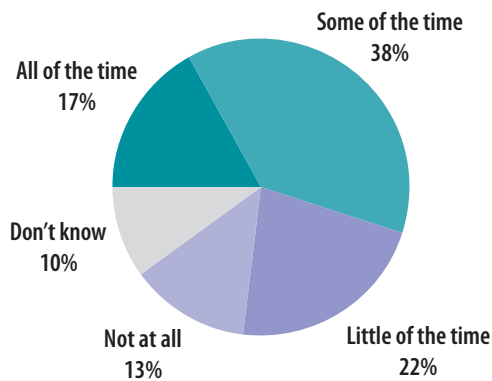
**Students**



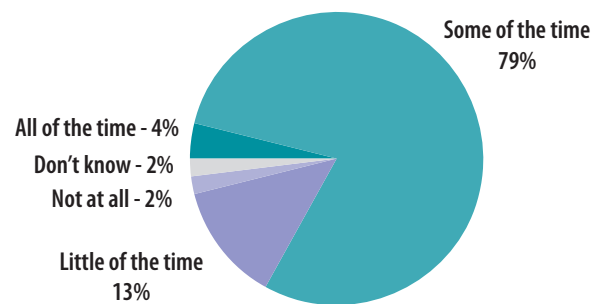
**Student newspaper participants**



**High API students**



**Teachers**



\*See page 36 for API definition.

**Sources of news:**

Students get their news from different places than teachers and principals do. While television is the most common place for students to get their news everyday (41 percent), radio is the most common source for everyday news for both teachers (72 percent) and principals (74 percent). Newspapers are nearly as common as the radio as a news source for principals—70 percent read a paper everyday. However, for teachers, local television news (63 percent watch everyday) is more frequently used than newspapers (55 percent read everyday).

How often, if at all, do you get news from each of the following sources?

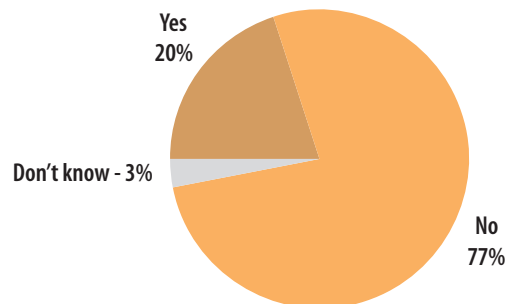
	<b>Students</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Principals</b>
<b>Source</b>	<b>% every day</b>	<b>% every day</b>	<b>% every day</b>
Newspaper	13%	55%	70%
Radio	29	<b>72</b>	<b>74</b>
Television	<b>41</b>	63*	59*
National TV	38	49	46
Internet	20	32	29

\*Local TV; number one source of news for each population is in bold.

While the majority (62 percent) of principals read a weekly news magazine, fewer teachers (47 percent) do. Students, not surprisingly, are less likely to read a weekly news magazine, as just 2 in 10 (20 percent) say they read one of the three weeklies. However, when we isolate students who participate in student newspapers or fare high on the Activity Participation Index, a third or more students read the weekly news magazines (33 percent of student newspaper participants and 35 percent of students high on the API).

Do you read any weekly news magazine such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, or *U.S. News & World Report*?

**All students**



## Chapter 3. Participation and the First Amendment

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Not surprisingly, since high schools offer different types and amounts of student media activities, students themselves vary in their participation in student media activities. In some cases, the amount of activities students participate in appears to influence their opinion on certain issues. In other cases, the specific type of activity the student participates in may have the greatest influence over their opinion. This chapter explores the relationships between school media characteristics, student participation in school media, school course offerings in journalism and the First Amendment and attitudes about journalism and the First Amendment.

### School Media Index (SMI)

To begin to assess how, if at all, participation in student media activities affects knowledge, tolerance and attitudes about the media and the First Amendment, a media index was created. Each school was classified into a high, medium, low, or no-media school. A “no media” school does not offer any student media activities (21 percent). Eleven percent of the students in the study attend a no-media school. Forty-seven percent of high school students attend schools that are classified as low media, offering one media activity (51 percent of schools fall into this category). Schools that offer two or three media activities are labeled as medium media schools (18 percent). Those that offer four or more are considered high-media schools (18 percent).

Regardless of the media index level of the school, students tend to participate in media activities at virtually the same rate. For example, looking at participation in student newspapers, at low and medium media index level schools, 8 percent of students say they participate in a student newspaper and at high media index schools, 6 percent participate. Most interestingly, at schools where no formal student media activities are offered, 7 percent of students say they participate in a student newspaper. We can observe similar participation patterns across different forms of student media:

### School Media Index level

	None	Low	Medium	High
Newspaper	7%	8%	8%	6%
Magazine	3	3	4	3
Radio station	3	3	3	5
TV station	4	3	6	6
Internet	5	4	5	5
Other	5	4	5	6

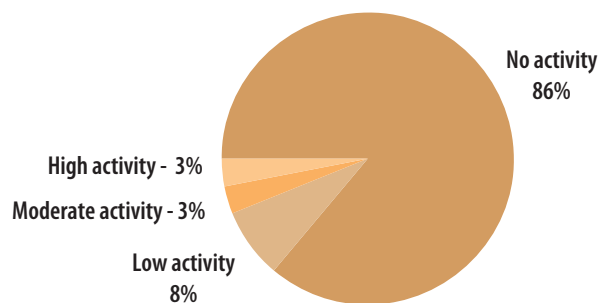
Simply offering more sanctioned media activities at the schools may not affect the level of participation by students in those activities. The quality of the student media offered may play a significant role. In addition, generating greater interest among students about journalism and media activities might have a greater impact on the level of interest and participation. Of course once the interest is generated, having the proper facilities and offering activities that are sanctioned and supported by the school would likely help sustain that interest and participation. Once students become engaged in media-related activities, to varying degrees and depending on

the amount and type of activity, their knowledge of and tolerance for the First Amendment may be influenced. There are clear differences among students when comparing those who do versus those who do not participate in a school newspaper, which will be discussed as well.

### Activity Participation Index (API)

While the School Media Index addresses what is offered by the schools, the Activity Participation Index (API) deals specifically with the amount and types of activities the students participate in. The API categorizes students based on the number of media-related activities they participate in at their school. Six activities comprise this index: newspaper, magazine, radio, television, Internet and other media activities. Three categories were created for students, depending on the level of their participation in student-run media-related activities. The majority of students (86 percent) do not participate in any media-related activities and are therefore designated as “no activity” on the index. Among the students who do participate in media-related activities, 8 percent participate in one activity (or “low activity”), 3 percent participate in two activities (“moderate activity”), and 3 percent participate in three or more activities (“high activity”).

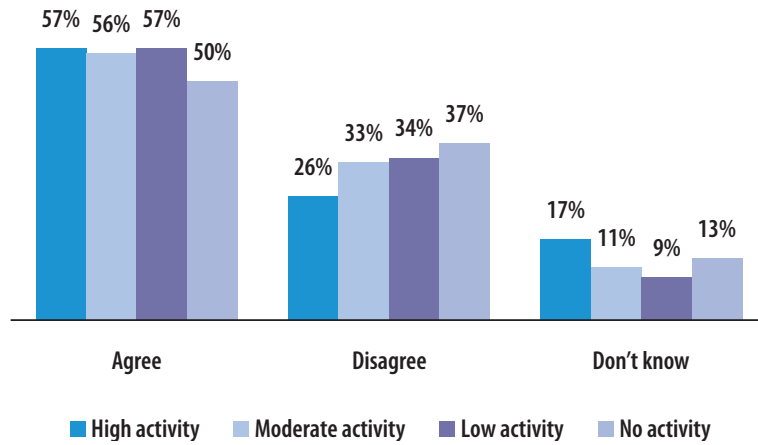
#### Activity Participation Index



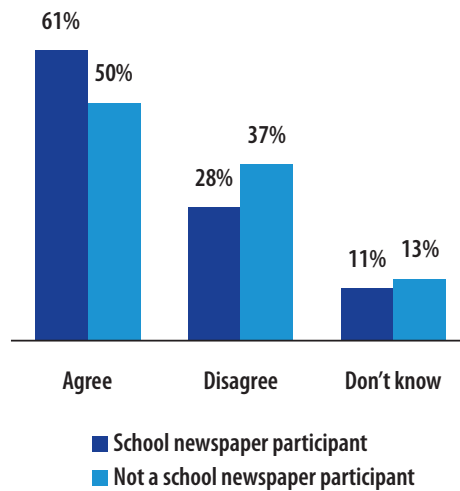
Although a comparison of these three activity level groups can provide us with some general information about the possible relationship between participation in activities and knowledge, tolerance and appreciation for the First Amendment, more specific conclusions can be drawn by looking at participation levels in each specific activity compared to the First Amendment issues that most directly correspond.

Consider the effect of participation in media activities on attitudes toward the freedom to publish. Just half (50 percent) of the *no activity* students agree that newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story; however, 56 to 57 percent of *low*, *moderate* and *high* activity students agree. While this range of agreement level across the API is significant, the deviation is even more pronounced when students who participate in a student newspaper (61 percent agree) are compared to those who do not participate in one (50 percent agree). Obviously students who participate in student newspapers are particularly sensitive to this issue.

**Newspapers should be able to publish without government approval of a story**

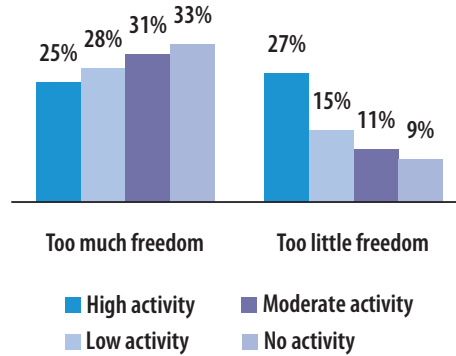


**Newspapers should be able to publish without government approval of a story**



The activity level of high school students does appear to affect their feelings about the press in America. As the activity level increases, so does the sentiment that the press in America has too little freedom to do what it wants. On the flip side, the lower the activity level of a student, the greater the sentiment that the press in America has too much freedom to do what it wants. More than a quarter (27 percent) of *high activity* students think the press has too little freedom, but smaller percentages of *moderate activity* (15 percent), *low activity* (11 percent), and *no activity* (9 percent) students feel this way. A third (33 percent) of *no activity* students think the press in America has too much freedom to do what it wants. Again, the percentage of students who feel this way decreases as their activity level increases (*low activity*-31 percent, *moderate activity*-28 percent, and *high activity*-25 percent). A significant percentage (16 to 21 percent depending on activity level) did not express an opinion either way to this question (i.e., answered “don’t know”). However, when those “don’t know” cases are removed, the trend remains the same among those students who expressed an opinion one way or the other.

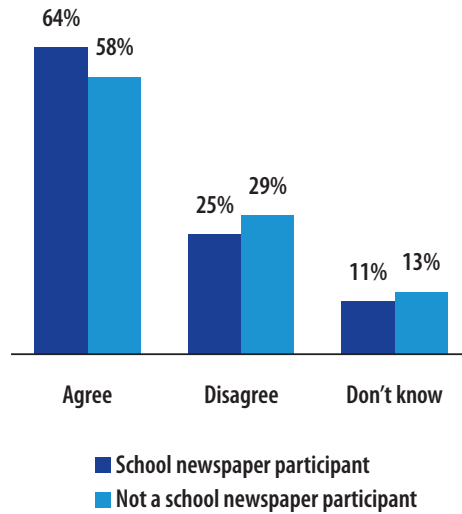
## Press in America have too much/too little freedom



The issue of whether or not students should be permitted to report controversial issues in their publications without approval from school administrators appears to hit home for many of the students surveyed. Perhaps this is why there is so little variance across media participation levels in students' attitudes on this one issue. Across media levels the majority of students agree that they should be allowed to report controversial issues without approval. Fifty-eight percent of *no activity* students, 64 percent of *low activity* students, 62 percent of *moderate activity* students and 56 percent of *high activity* students agree on this issue. Again, significant percentages of students across activity levels did not express any opinion at all on this issue (between 9 and 18 percent said they don't know). Yet among those who did express an opinion, the margin of variance is even narrower with just a three-percentage point difference between the highest and lowest percentage.

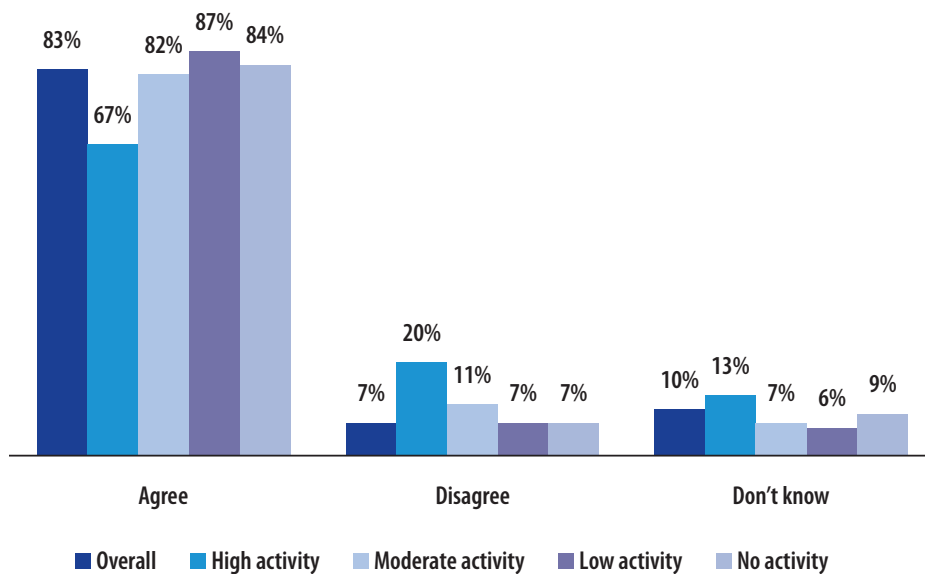
Again, even greater differences can be found when examining those students who participate in a student-run newspaper in particular. Whereas 64 percent of those who participate in a paper agree that high school students should be allowed to report controversial issues without approval of school authorities, fewer (58 percent) of those who do *not* participate in a newspaper agree with that right. Logically, those students who participate in a student-run newspaper would have stronger feelings about reporting practices in these papers. Still, all high school students remain somewhat sensitive on this issue, recognizing that even if they do not participate in the student newspapers at their schools, they would like for those papers to be able to report on controversial issues without the approval of the administration.

High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their papers without approval of school authorities.



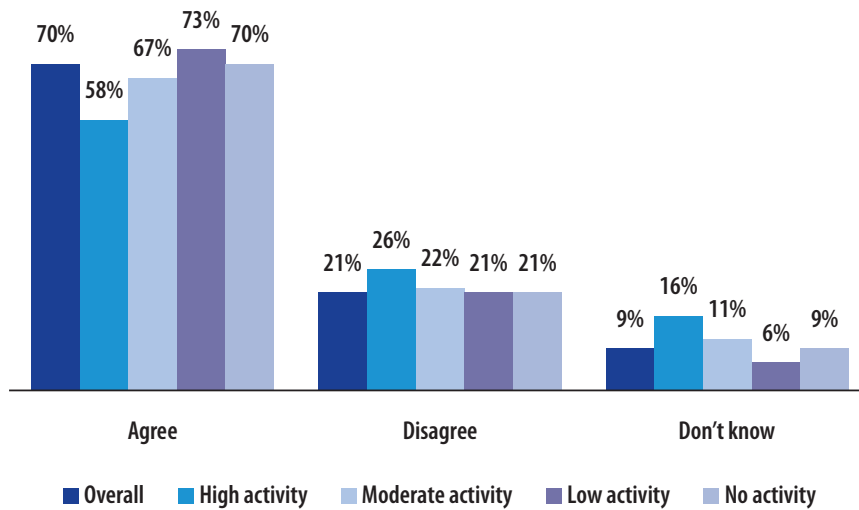
Appreciation for the freedom of the press portion of the First Amendment may be influenced positively by student participation in media-related activities. However, an altogether different result occurs with regard to issues of tolerance for more controversial exercises of freedom of speech. Whereas 84 percent of *no activity* students agree that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions, just 67 percent of *high media* students agree. Further, while only 7 percent of all students disagree that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions, 20 percent of *high activity* students disagree with such forms of free speech expression.

People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions



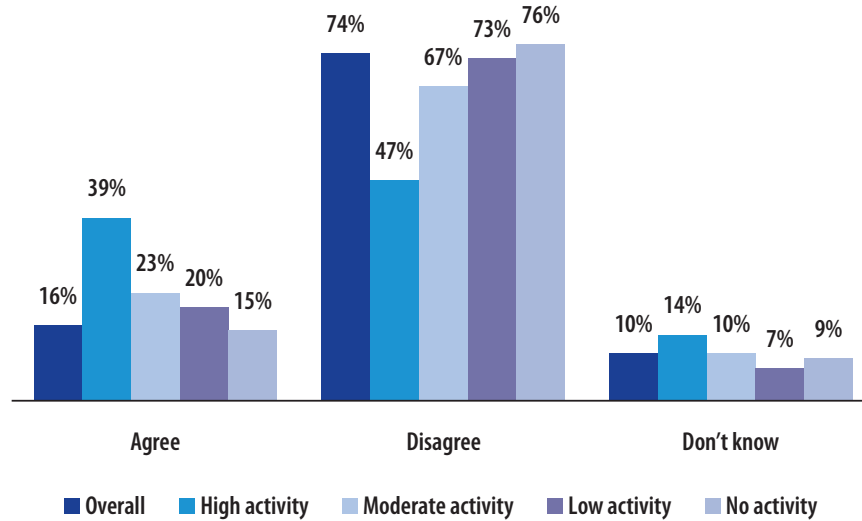
A similar pattern emerges on another free speech issue: whether or not musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive. While 70 percent of students overall agree that musicians should be allowed to sing such songs, a significantly smaller majority (58 percent) of *high activity* students agree. A greater percentage of *high activity* students than students at lower activity levels did not express an opinion either way on this issue (i.e., said “don’t know”). Looking at just those students who expressed an opinion, the same pattern remains, but the gap is significantly narrowed; only eight percentage points separate the *high activity* students (69 percent agree) from the *no activity* students (77 percent agree).

**Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics some my find offensive**



A quite different pattern emerges when we explore one of the most controversial free speech issues of all: whether or not one should have the right to burn the American flag as a form of protest. The students who participate in media-related activities significantly differ from the general student population on this issue. The vast majority (74 percent) of high school students overall disagree that people should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement. However, just 47 percent of *high activity* students disagree. Furthermore, the majority of students overall (63 percent) as well as majorities of *no activity* (65 percent), *low activity* (60 percent), and *moderate activity* (54 percent) **strongly** disagree while just a third (33 percent) of *high activity* students strongly disagree. And while 4 in 10 (39 percent) of *high activity* students agree that people should be allowed to burn the flag as a political statement, just 23 percent of *moderate activity*, 20 percent of *low activity*, and 15 percent of *no activity* students agree.

## People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement

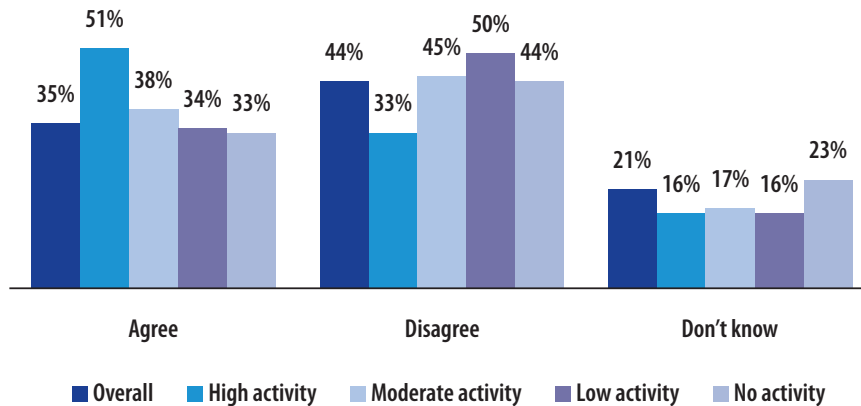


Activity Participation Index levels often influence the degree of tolerance expressed for freedom of the press and freedom of speech, but the impact is not universal. Apparently that impact depends in part on the specific issue under consideration and how that issue relates to the students. Specific freedom of press issues are impacted by API level: the more media-related activities a student participates in, the more tolerance that student has for press freedom. The impact on specific freedom of speech issues is less clear. Tolerance for the very controversial issue of flag burning as a political statement increased as API increased, but tolerance for expressing unpopular opinions and for musicians' lyrics that may be offensive to some actually decreased as API increased. Clearly students may still be forming their opinions on many of these particular First Amendment issues. What about the opinions of students on more general First Amendment issues? Do students think the First Amendment goes too far? Do they personally think about their First Amendment rights? Do they think Americans appreciate the amendment the way they ought to?

While just over a third of all high school students (35 percent) thinks the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees, half (51 percent) of *high activity* students agree. The level of agreement decreases as activity levels decrease (38 percent-*moderate activity*, 34 percent-*low activity*, 33 percent-*no activity*). Again though, those who do not participate in any activities are less likely than those who participate in at least one activity to express an opinion one way or another. Nearly a quarter (23 percent) of the *no activity* students did not express an opinion/said don't know, whereas fewer (16–17 percent) of those who participate did not express an opinion. This trend remains and may even be more pronounced when we isolate those who expressed an opinion. Overall, it appears that many high school students are still forming their opinion on this issue.

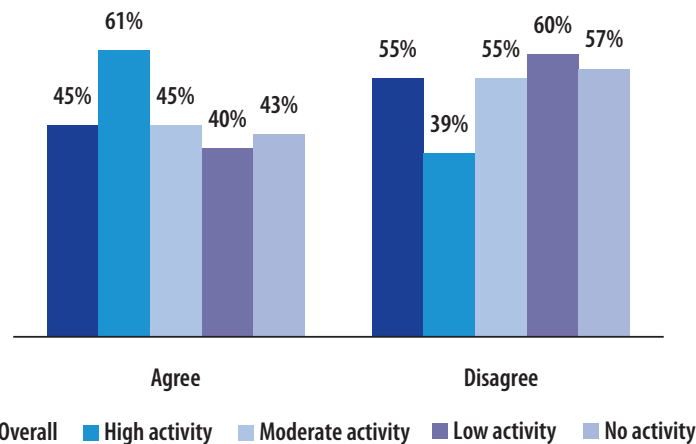
## The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees

### Overall



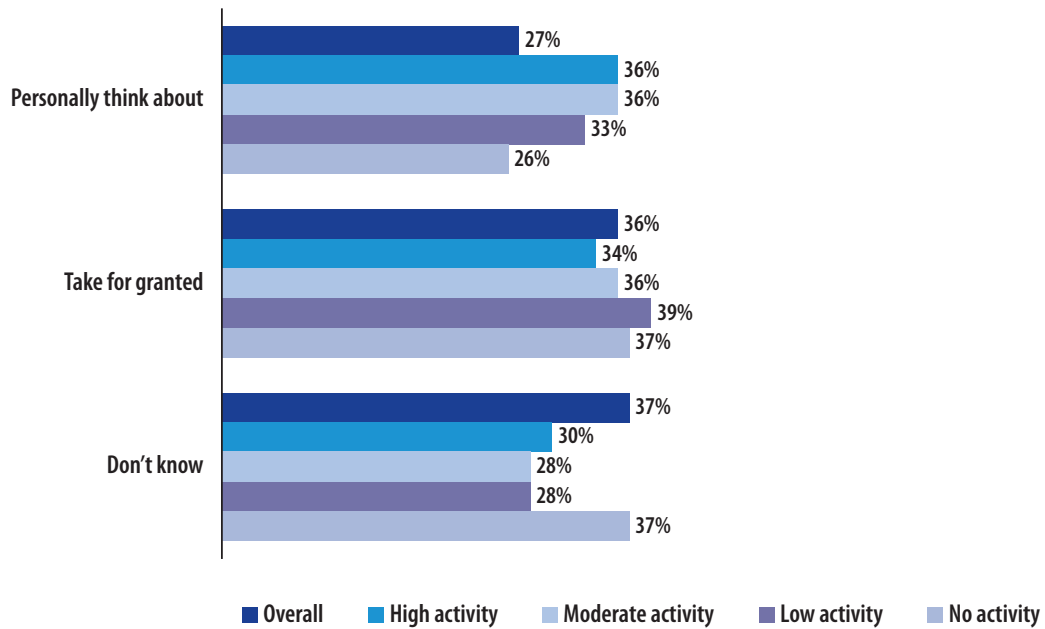
## The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees

### Only those who expressed an opinion



Those who participate in more media-related activities are slightly more likely to agree that Americans do not appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to. However, when examining only those who expressed an opinion, students across activity participation levels feel similarly on this issue. When asked specifically if the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment are something they personally think about or something they take for granted, a greater percentage of students who participate in activities say they personally think about these rights. Again, substantial percentages (28 to 37 percent) of students did not express an opinion one way or the other on this question. When we remove those who said “don’t know” and just look at those who expressed an opinion, the trend holds, as 51 percent of *high activity* students say they personally think about the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, whereas just 42 percent of *no activity* students say they do.

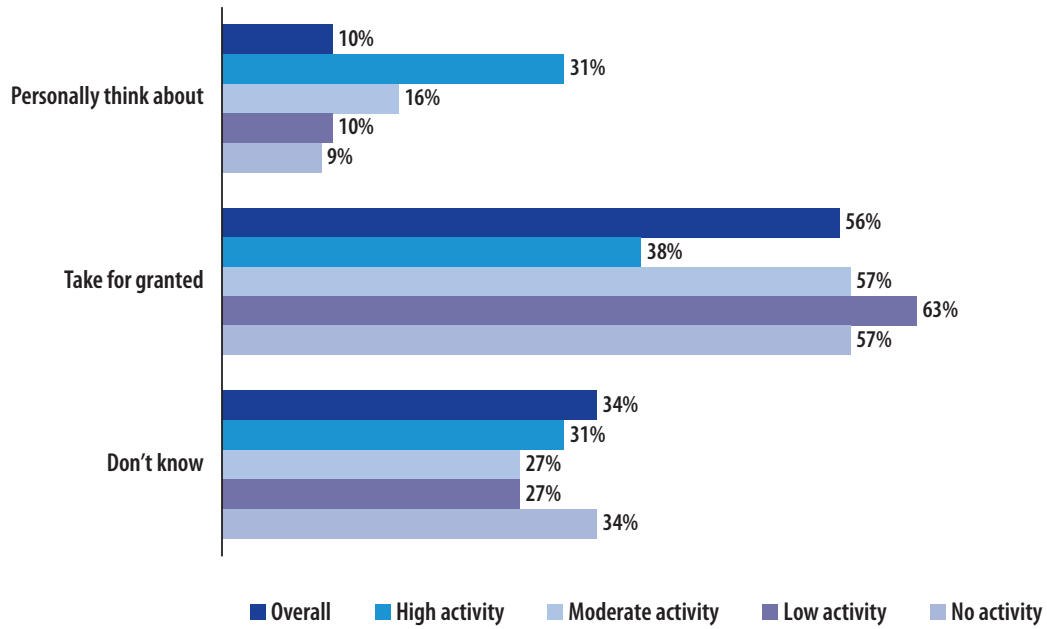
**Personally think about or take for granted rights guaranteed by the First Amendment?**



It appears therefore that students who participate in media-related activities think about their First Amendment rights far more than those who do not participate in activities. However, a lot of students do not know if they think about this issue. Those high activity students who say they personally think about these rights also think the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees, whereas those who do not personally think about the rights do not think it goes too far. Also, those with more experience with media activities are also more apt to think most people personally think about their First Amendment rights than those with little or no experience.

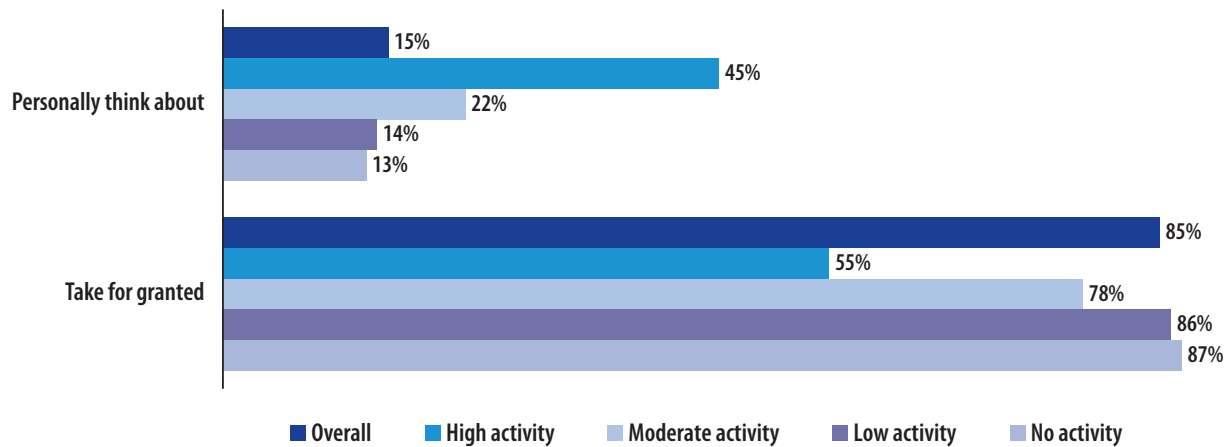
Most people in the United States personally think about or take for granted rights guaranteed by the First Amendment

**Overall**



Most people in the United States personally think about or take for granted rights guaranteed by the First Amendment

**Only those who expressed an opinion**



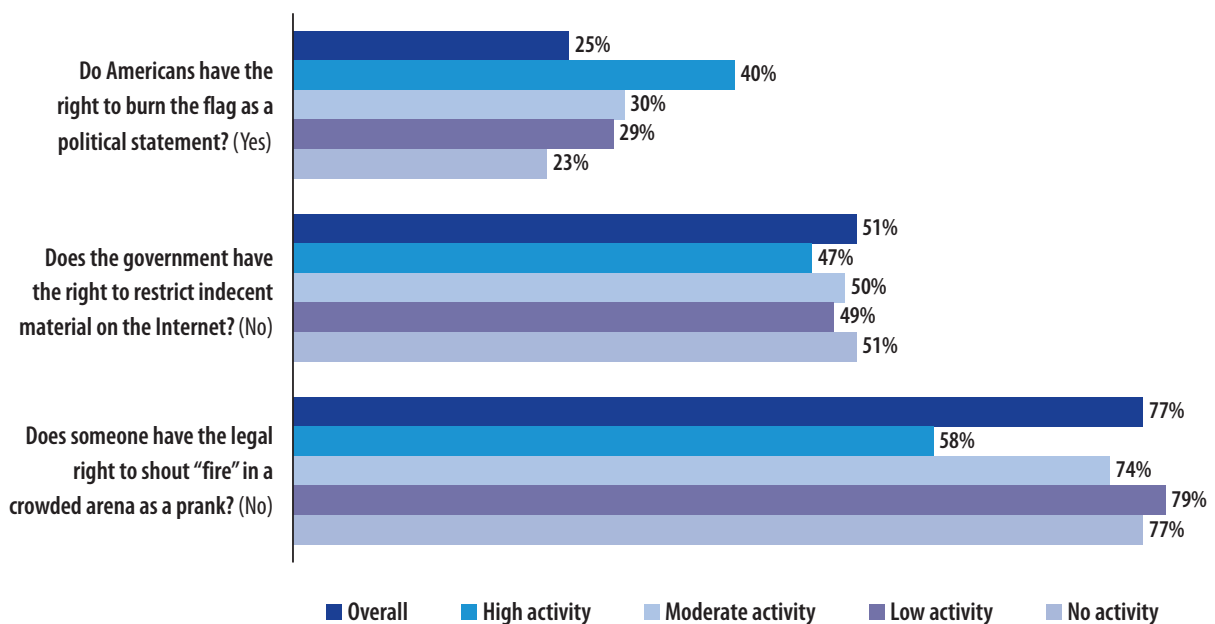
All of this points to the possibility that high activity students personally think about their First Amendment rights to a greater degree than those lower on the API. However, a higher percentage of these *high* activity students also think the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees. *High activity* students are also more tolerant of burning the flag as a political statement than lower activity students, but are less tolerant of people expressing unpopular opinions and of musicians singing songs with lyrics that might be offensive to some.

Student API level not only has an effect on attitudes and tolerance toward the First Amendment as discussed above, but it also has an effect on knowledge and understanding of current laws. Like the effects on attitudes and tolerance, the effect on knowledge levels varies depending on the specific legal issue in question. No specific pattern emerges when we look at the effect of API on knowledge of current laws dealing with the First Amendment. For example, a greater percentage of *high activity* students (40 percent) correctly stated that under current law, Americans have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest, whereas less than a quarter (23 percent) of *no activity* students know that this is currently legal (29 percent of *low activity* and 30 percent of *moderate activity* students know it is legal). However, when it comes to understanding the legality of the government’s right to restrict indecent material on the Internet, those with less exposure to media activities register as slightly more knowledgeable. Whereas 51 percent of *no activity* students know that under current law the government does not have the right to restrict material on the Internet, a smaller percentage, 47 percent, of *high activity* students know that law.

Another law that no/low activity students express more familiarity with than higher activity students is the legality of shouting “fire” as a prank in a crowded arena. Whereas around three-quarters of no activity students (77 percent), low activity students (79 percent) and moderate activity students (74 percent) answered correctly on that issue, just 58 percent of high activity students did.

### Knowledge of current laws

#### Percent who answered correctly



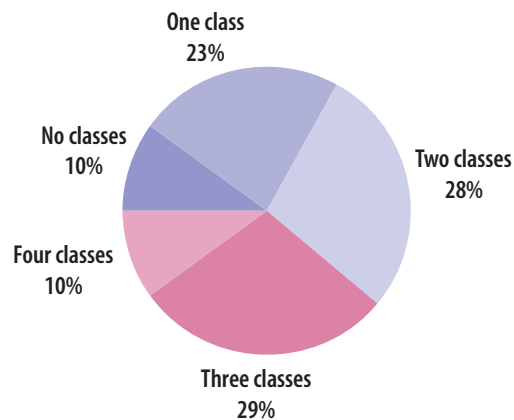
Correct answer is in parentheses after question.

## Class Participation Index (CPI)

As with participation in media-related extracurricular activities, the degree to which students have taken classes that deal with media and/or the First Amendment clearly has an effect on their attitudes, tolerance, and knowledge of related issues. Like the API, the Class Participation Index (CPI) deals specifically with participation levels of students. This index is comprised of four types of courses students may have taken: classes dealing with the First Amendment, classes addressing the role of media in society, classes dealing primarily with journalism skills, and classes requiring an assignment to read a newspaper or watch television news. As with the media-related activities in the API, one must note that not all schools offer all, a few, or, in some cases, any of these courses in the first place.

The first thing that sets the CPI apart from the API is that most students have taken at least one of these types of courses in high school. Whereas 86 percent of students were classified as *no activity* students on the API, just 10 percent of students fall into the *no classes* category on the CPI. Just under a quarter of students (23 percent) have taken one class and just over quarter have taken two (28 percent) or three (29 percent) classes. A smaller, but still significant, percentage of students (10 percent) have taken all four types of classes.

### Class Participation Index

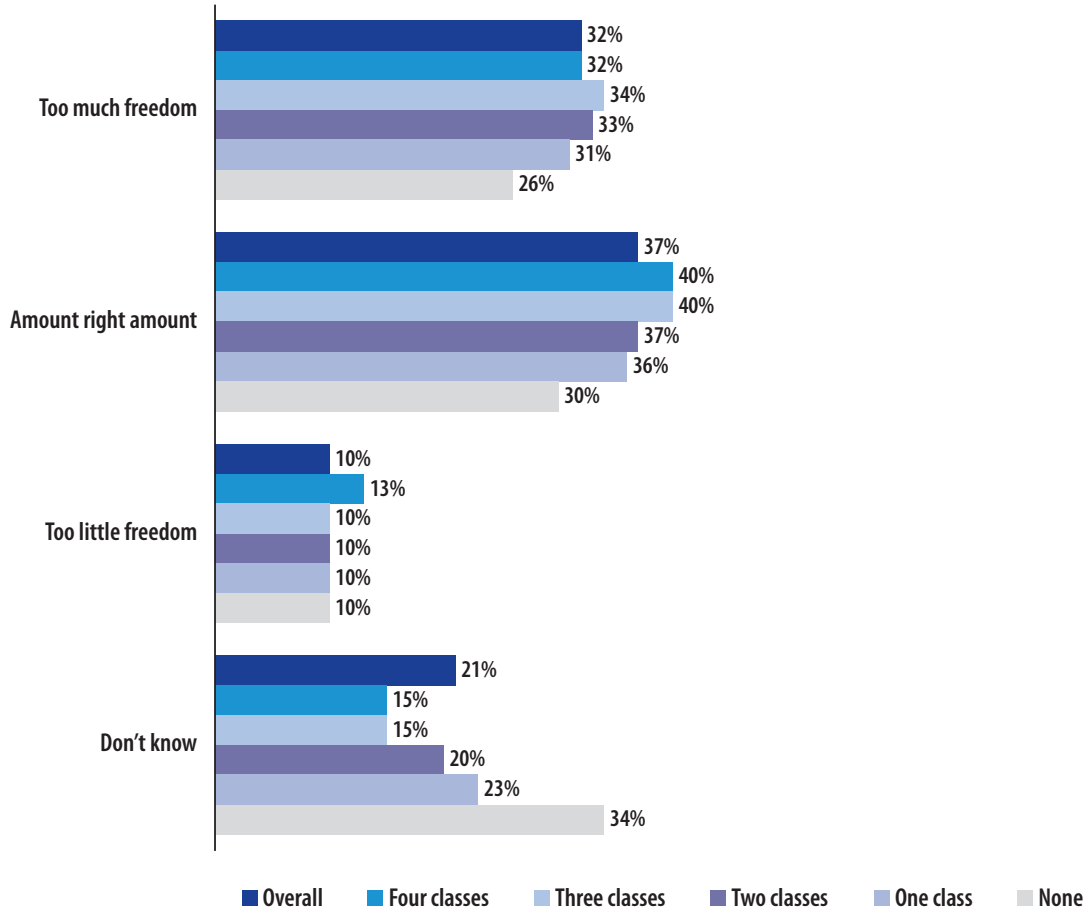


A pattern that emerges with regard to the CPI comes in the “don’t know” response category. Whereas in the API, various groups did not express an opinion on many questions, when it comes to the CPI there is an even more consistent trend. As one might well predict, across all types of questions, students who took none of the classes answer “don’t know” at a much higher rate than those who have taken classes. Just having some experience in the classroom with media and First Amendment issues correlates with the ability of students to express an opinion either way on questions dealing with these issues.

The propensity of students who have not taken any of the classes on the CPI to respond “don’t know” is apparent when assessing reactions to how much freedom the press has in America. Overall, students across the CPI feel similarly about the level of freedom the press in America has. However, those who took at least one course were more likely to express an opinion either way (34 percent of students in the *none* category said “don’t know” compared with just 15 percent of those who have taken three or four classes). Therefore, although students who did express an opinion feel similarly on this issue, the high “don’t know” percentage for those who

have not taken any of these classes demonstrates the point that those with more classroom experience dealing with these issues are more willing and/or able to express an opinion.

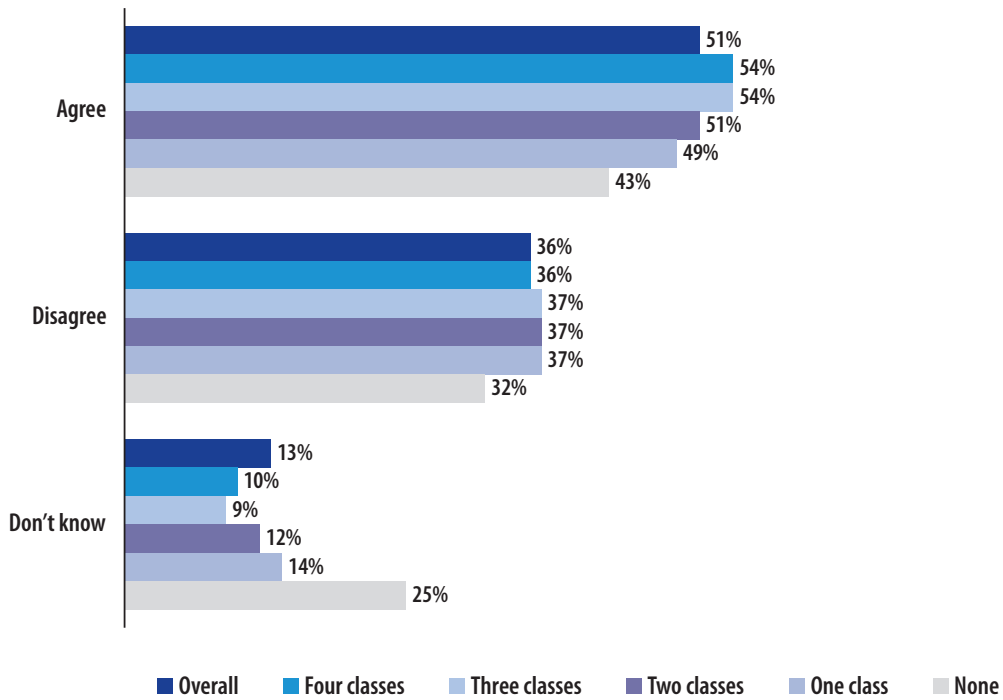
**Press in America too much/too little freedom**



Since overall the plurality of students think the press in America has about the right amount of freedom to do what it wants, it is not surprising that most think newspapers should be able to publish freely without government approval of a story. The more classes a student has taken (or, the higher the CPI level) the higher percentage that agrees newspapers should be able to publish freely without government approval of a story. While 54 percent of those who have taken either three or four classes agree, 51 percent of those who have taken two classes agree, 49 percent of those who have taken one class agree and just 43 percent of those who have not taken any classes agree. Again, a significant percentage of students who have not taken any of these courses (25 percent) did not express an opinion. When we isolate those who did express an opinion, this variance across CPI level significantly decreases.

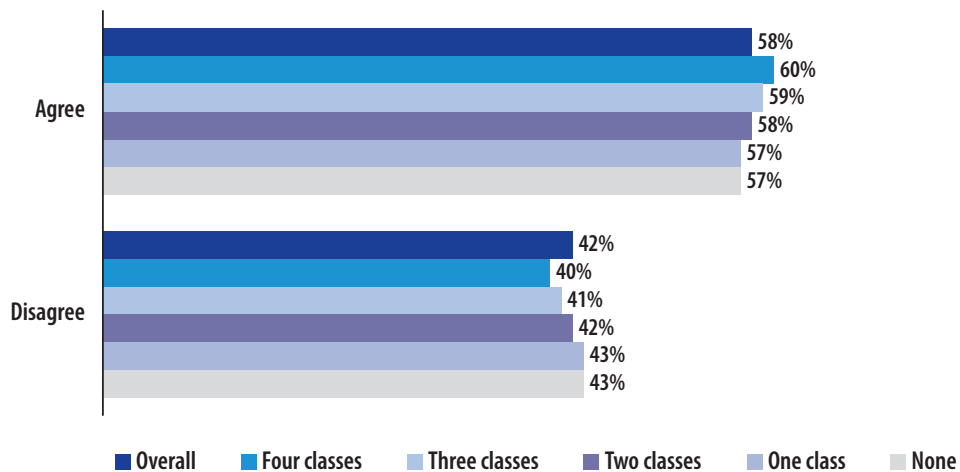
Newspapers should be able to publish freely without government approval of a story

All students



Newspapers should be able to publish freely without government approval of a story

Only students who expressed an opinion

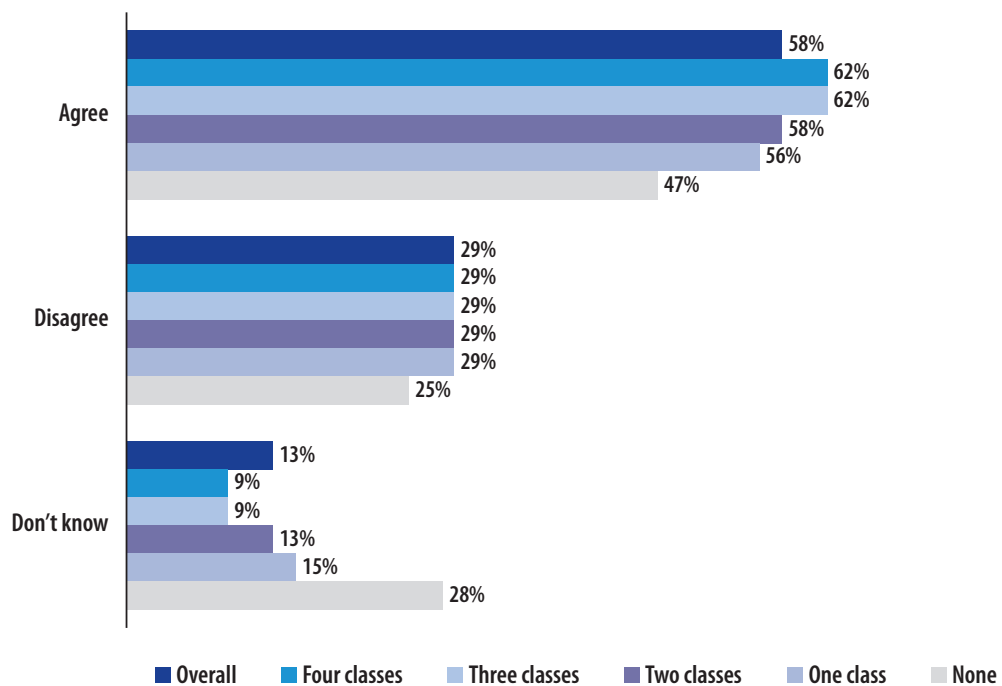


Looking specifically at students who have taken classes dealing with the First Amendment, the majority (53 percent) say newspapers should be able to publish freely, while fewer (48 percent) of those who have not taken such courses agree.

When it comes to student opinions as to whether or not high school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without approval of school authorities, we see a very similar pattern. Initially, it appears as though students who have taken more classes are more likely to agree; 56 to 62 percent of those who have taken at least one course agree compared to 47 percent of those who have not taken any CPI courses. Again, however, a large percentage (27 percent) of students who have not taken any of these courses responded that they “don’t know.” When those who expressed an opinion are isolated, the range narrows from 15 percentage points separating those who have taken four classes from those who haven’t taken any, to just a three-point range.

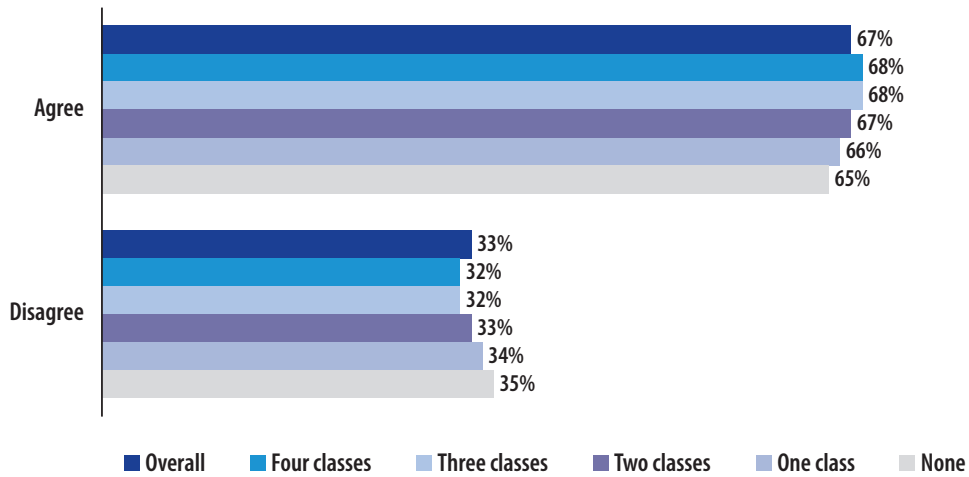
**High school students should be allowed to report on controversial issues in their student papers without approval of school authorities**

**All students who expressed an opinion**



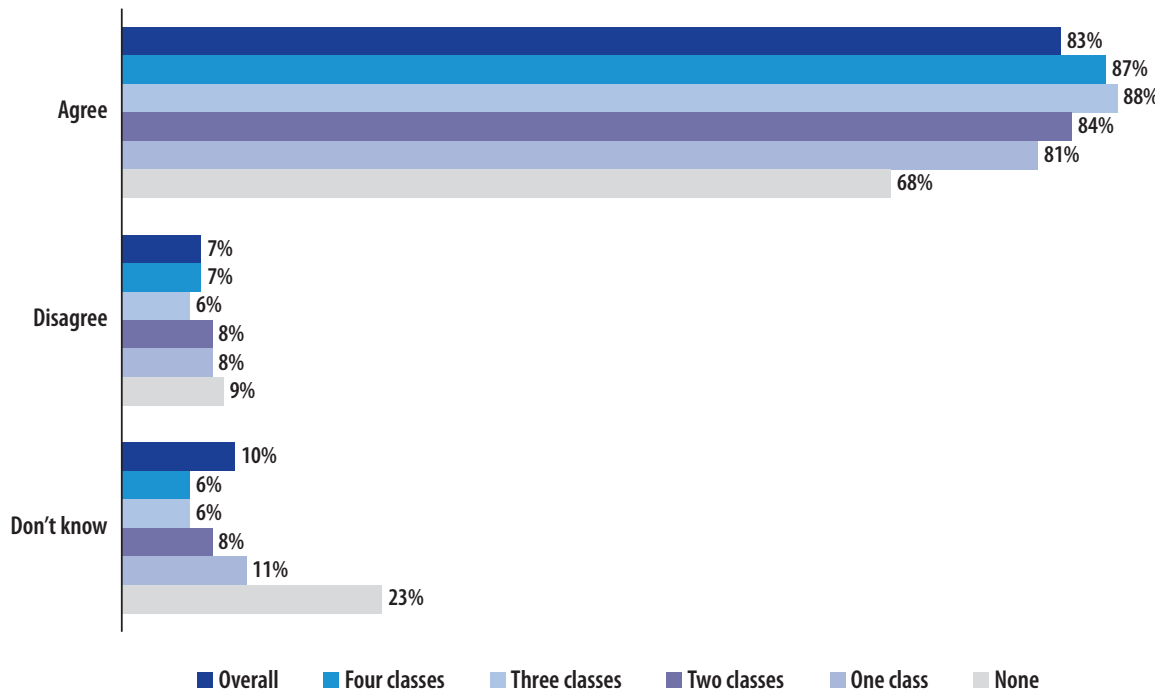
## High school students should be allowed to report on controversial issues in their student papers without approval of school authorities

### All students



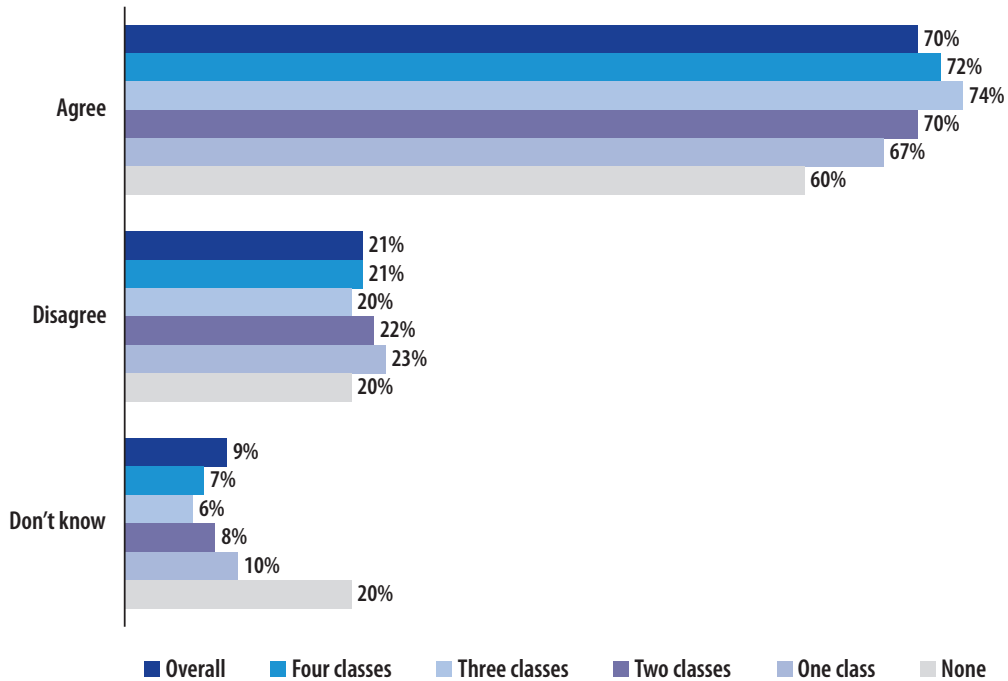
Similar to the freedom of press issues, students who have not taken any classes are also less likely to express an opinion on various questions dealing with freedom of speech. While just 6 to 11 percent of those who have taken at least one class say they do not know if people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions, nearly a quarter (23 percent) of students who have not taken any of these classes say they do not know. Still, a majority (68 percent) of students who haven't taken any classes say they agree that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions. Stronger majorities (81 to 88 percent) of students who have taken at least one class agree, however. Again, when taking out those who didn't answer, this difference diminishes from a maximum 20-percentage point difference to a maximum 5-percentage point difference between those who have classes and those who have not taken any classes. It is important to keep in mind that the fewer classes a student has taken, the less likely they are to have answered this question in the first place.

## People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions



A nearly identical pattern emerges when we look at students' attitudes toward musicians singing songs with lyrics that some may find offensive across the CPI. Again, a much higher percentage of those who have not taken any courses (20 percent) do not express an opinion than those who have taken courses (6 to 10 percent). A greater level of tolerance for this form of expression is indicated among students who have taken more of the CPI courses. Nearly three-quarters of those who have taken three (74 percent) or four (72 percent) classes agree that musicians should be able to sing such songs. A smaller percentage of those who have taken fewer classes on the media and the First Amendment agree (70 percent among those who have taken two CPI classes, 67 percent among those who have taken just one CPI class). The smallest level of agreement with this form of expression came from students who have not taken any CPI courses at all—just 60 percent agreed with that right.

**Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that some might find offensive.**

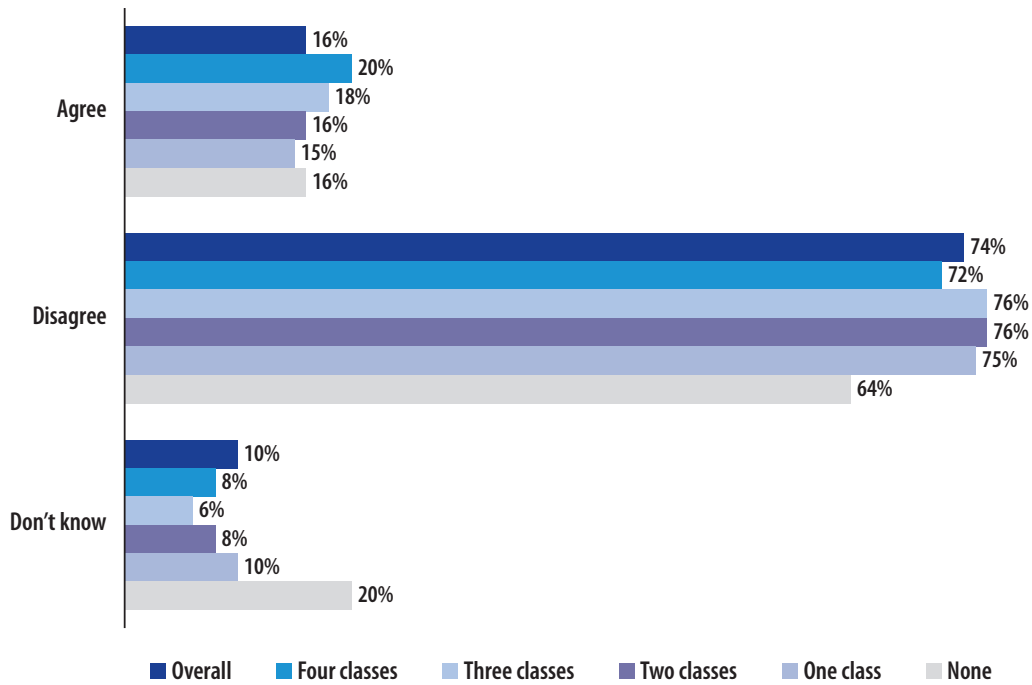


This 14-percentage point difference across levels of the CPI again narrows to a five-point variance when we look only at those who expressed an opinion. Those who have formed their opinion appear to feel similarly on this issue, regardless of how many classes on the CPI they may have taken. However, if students have not been at all exposed to any First Amendment or media issues in the classroom, the likelihood that they have actually formed an opinion is weaker.

There are also indications of a major difference between the effects of classes and the effects of activities on high school students' opinions on one issue in particular: burning the American flag as a political statement. While students who registered high on the API were more likely to agree that Americans should be allowed to burn their flag as a form of protest, that is not the case with students who register high on the CPI. A high percentage of students who have taken none of the courses on the CPI again did not express any opinion at all. However, unlike with other free speech and expression questions, the variance between high CPI and no CPI students does not change when we just look at those who expressed an opinion.

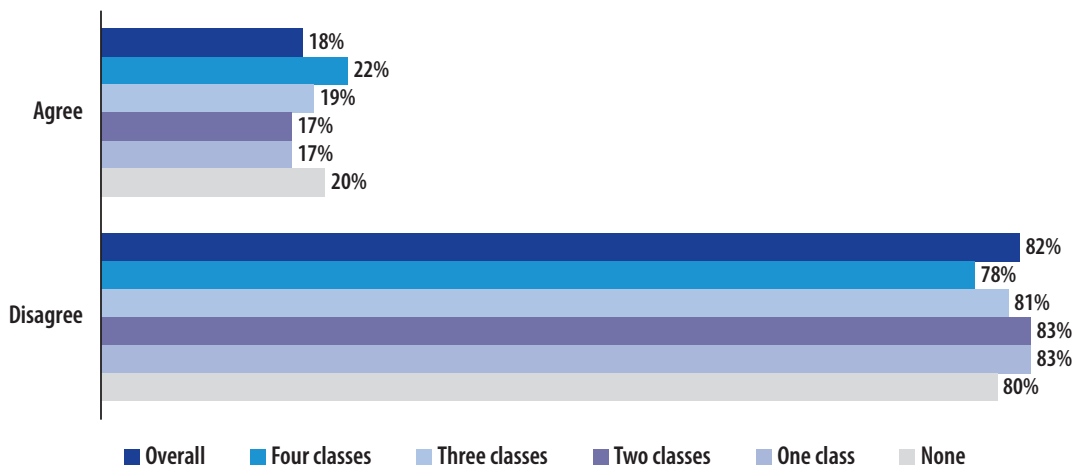
People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement

Overall



People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement

Among students who expressed an opinion

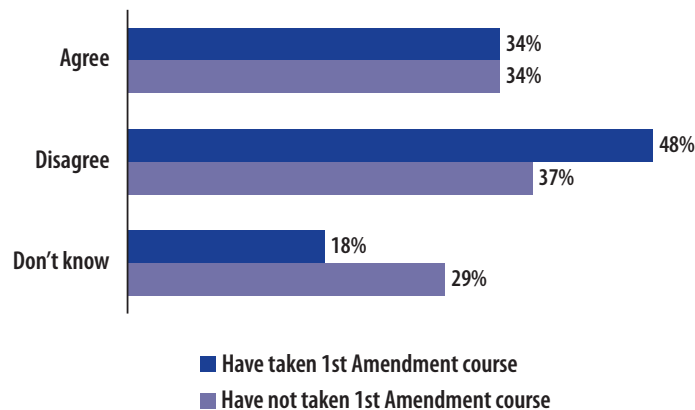


How then, if at all, does the CPI affect students' overall tolerance for the First Amendment freedoms? What about the degree to which they personally think about those freedoms? As we might expect, greater percentages of students who have taken three or four of the CPI courses disagree that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees. Nearly 4 in 10 (37 percent) students who haven't taken any CPI courses said they did not

know, which was more than double the percentage of students who had taken all four classes who responded that way. Because so few of the students who hadn't taken any CPI classes expressed an opinion, higher percentages of students who took three or four of the CPI courses also agree that the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees. The trend again decreases when just those who did express an opinion are compared.

However, simply comparing students who have taken a course dealing with the First Amendment in particular with those who have not, we do see variation in opinion. Nearly half (48 percent) of those who have taken such a course do not think the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees. Fewer, however, of the students who have not taken this type of course say the First Amendment does not go too far (37 percent).

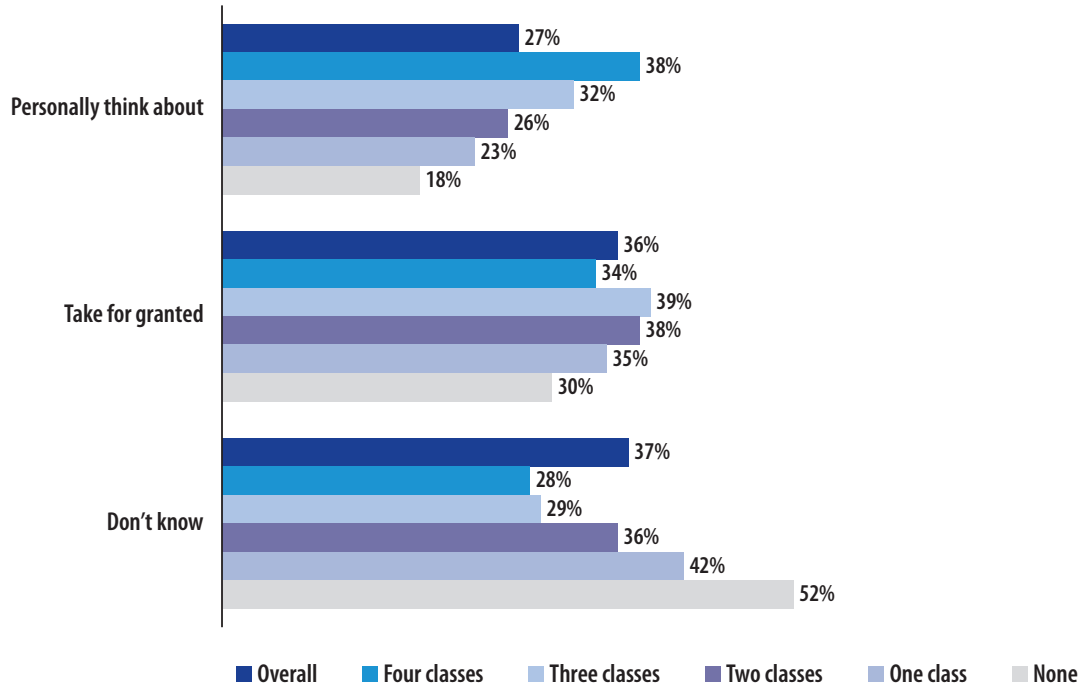
**The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.**



Students who register higher on the CPI personally think more about the First Amendment than those who are low on the CPI; they also think Americans in general do not appreciate the First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to. To an even greater degree than we observed on other issues, students who have not taken any CPI courses generally have not formed opinions on these matters. Regarding the question of whether or not Americans appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they should, just 60 percent expressed an opinion either way. On the more specific question of whether they personally think about the First Amendment or take it for granted, less than half (48 percent) expressed an opinion. This is significant. Unlike with other questions, the trends we observe initially hold true when we isolate only those who ventured an opinion.

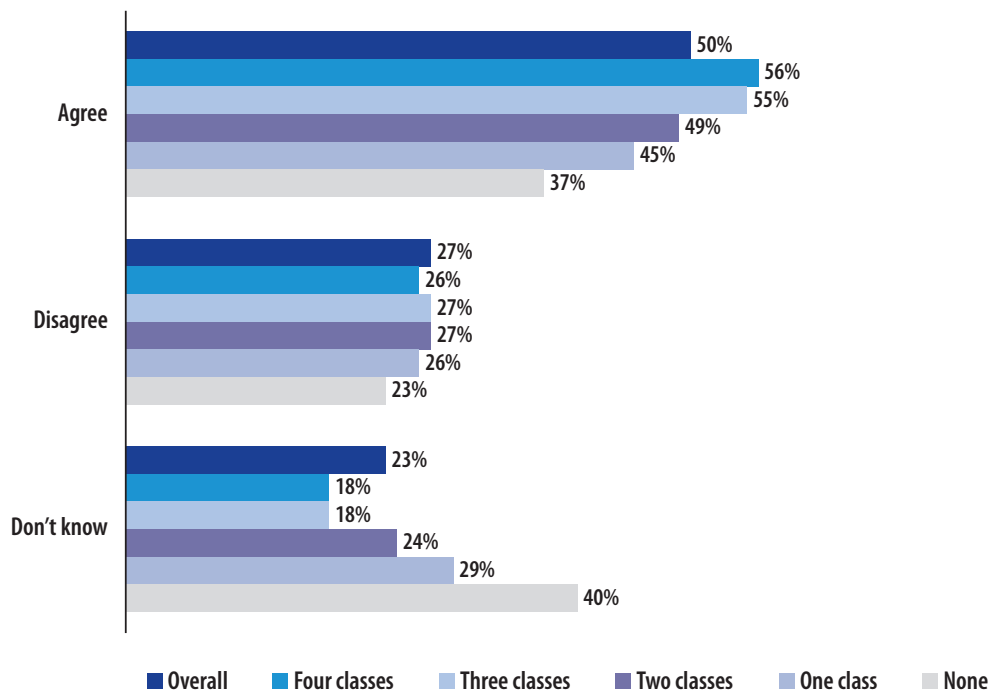
Personally think about or take for granted the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment?

Overall



Americans do not appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to.

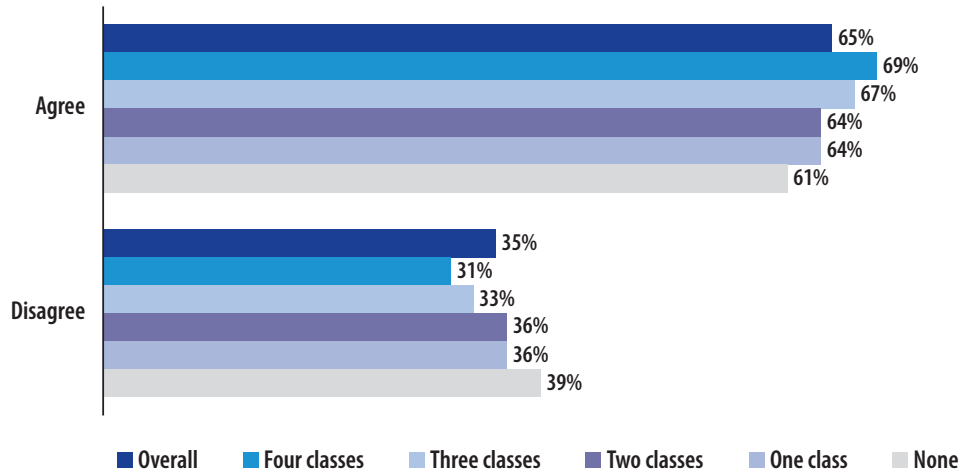
Overall



Similarly, the students who register higher on the CPI are more apt to think that Americans do not appreciate the First Amendment the way they should. This pattern remains when we isolate those who expressed an opinion. Since not many students did express an opinion on this issue, the chart below shows just the students who did.

**Americans do not appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to.**

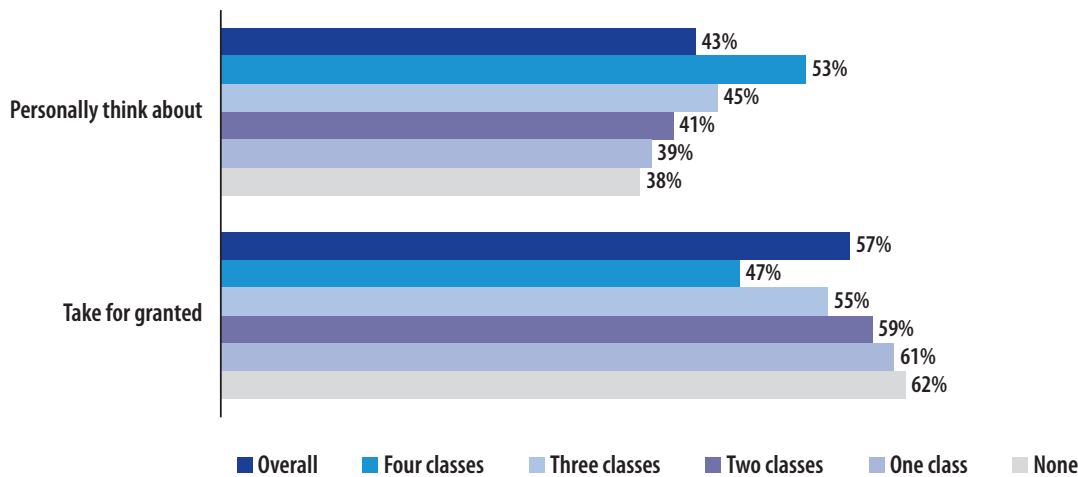
**Only those who expressed an opinion**



Among those students who expressed an opinion as to whether they personally think about the rights of the First Amendment or they take them for granted, a much higher percentage of those who have taken classes on the CPI say they personally think about these rights. Whereas just 39 percent of those who have not taken any CPI courses say they personally think about these rights, a much higher 53 percent of those who have taken all four types of CPI classes personally think about them.

**Personally think about or take for granted the First Amendment freedoms**

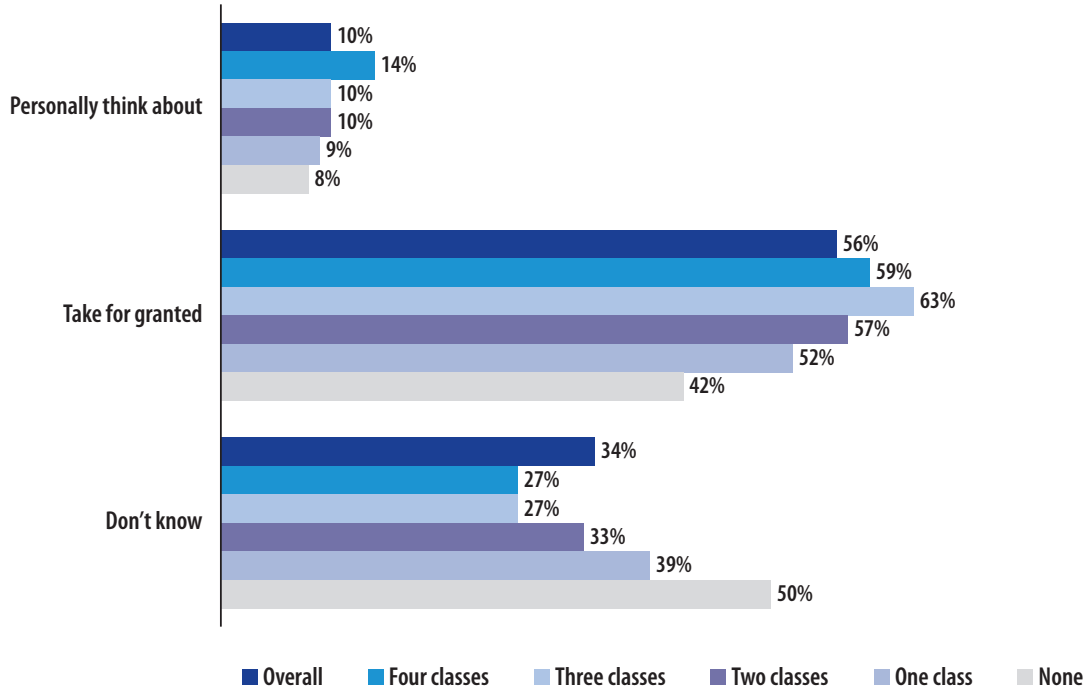
**Only those who expressed an opinion**



Across CPI levels, few students think that most people in the United States personally think about the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment. Again, one finds an extremely high percentage of students who have not taken any such classes answering “don’t know” to this question. Just half (50 percent) of those students surveyed expressed an opinion. A slightly higher percentage of students who have taken more classes believe people personally think about these rights. Once again though, when isolating those who expressed an opinion, the pattern changes a bit.

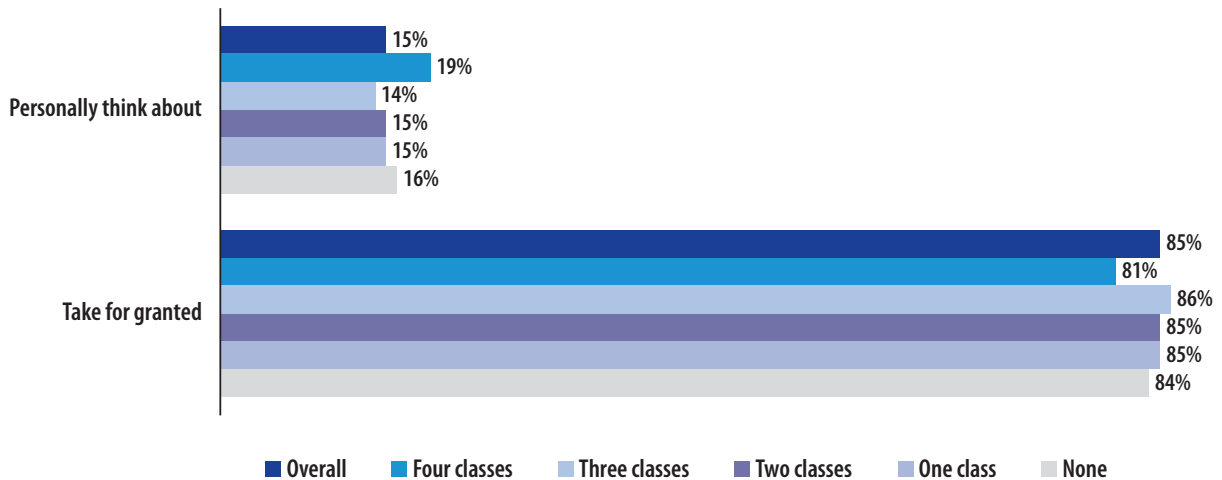
**Most people in the United States—do they personally think about or take for granted the First Amendment freedoms?**

**Overall**



**Most people in the United States—do they personally think about or take for granted the First Amendment freedoms?**

**Among students who expressed an opinion**



The effect of CPI on tolerance and attitudes varies significantly. When it comes to knowledge of current laws, in most cases, those who have taken First Amendment or media classes are more knowledgeable than those who have not. In some cases the margin of difference is slight and in one striking instance a greater percentage of those who have not taken any classes know the law better than those who have taken classes. Specifically, students who took fewer classes answered correctly at a higher rate the question as to whether the government has the right to restrict indecent material on the Internet. (It does not.) While 60 percent of students who have not taken any CPI classes correctly stated that the government does not have the right to restrict indecent material on the Internet, fewer of those who have taken CPI types of classes answered that correctly.

**Does the government have the right to restrict indecent material on the Internet?**

**Percent who answered correctly (i.e., said “no”)**



The legality of shouting “fire” as a prank in a crowded place was another area when higher CPI level did not seem to influence knowledge in any significant way. The majority of students across the board (75 to 78 percent) correctly determined that under current law a person does not have the right to shout “fire” as a prank. Roughly three-quarters of students across CPI levels know the correct answer and about a quarter did not.

**Does someone have the right to shout “fire” in a crowded arena as a prank?**

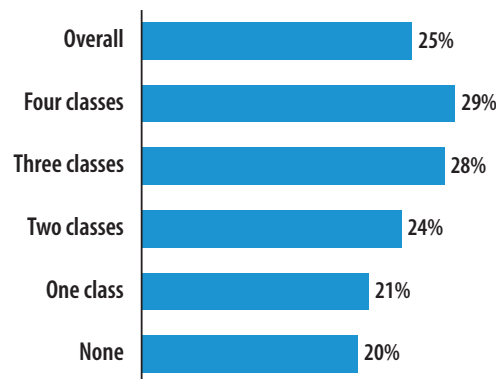
**Percent who answered correctly (i.e., said “no”)**



Still, there were other questions about the state of current laws where it appeared that taking more CPI type classes increased knowledge. One such question dealt with the legality of burning the American flag as a form of political protest. Overall most students felt that this is something that Americans should not be allowed to do. The strong personal feelings exhibited by students on this issue may well have impacted their answers on the question of legality. The majority of students across the CPI incorrectly stated that Americans do not have the right to burn the flag as a means of political protest. However, larger percentages of those who have taken CPI types of classes answered the question correctly. Not surprisingly, students who have taken courses that specifically dealt with the First Amendment in particular answered that question correctly (27 percent) at a significantly higher rate than those who did not take this type of course (21 percent). But as a general matter, no group of students could be characterized as well informed on this controversial issue.

### Do Americans have the right to burn the flag as a means of political protest?

Percent who answered correctly (i.e., said “yes”)





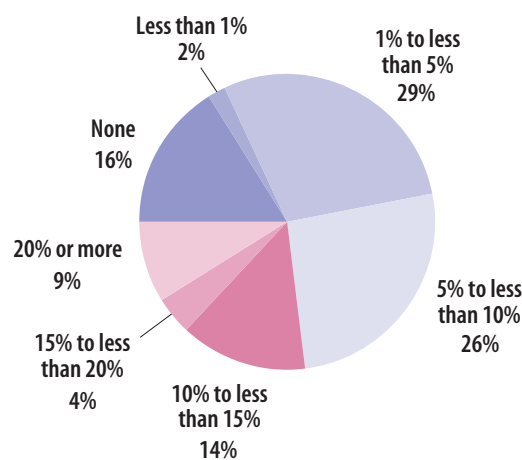
## Chapter 4. Profile of the High Schools

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The surveys conducted in this study provide an opportunity to profile the activities of high schools across the country, vis-à-vis the journalism curriculum, First Amendment instruction and media-related student activities. This chapter highlights some of these high school profile findings.

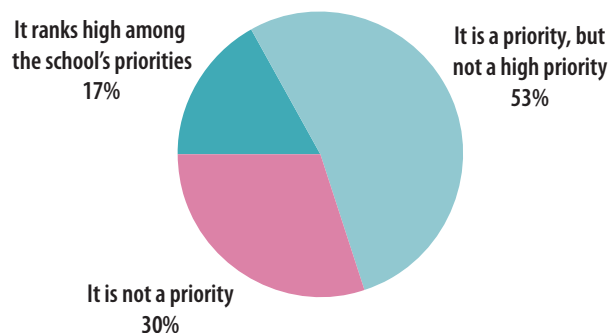
Student journalism has not yet become a staple of most high school curriculums. Less than 1 in 10 (9 percent) administrators of the 544 schools initially profiled in this study indicated that 20 percent or more of their students are currently enrolled in classes primarily dedicated to teaching journalism skills. And 16 percent of the administrators indicated that none of the students in their schools are currently enrolled in such classes.

### Enrollment in journalism skills courses



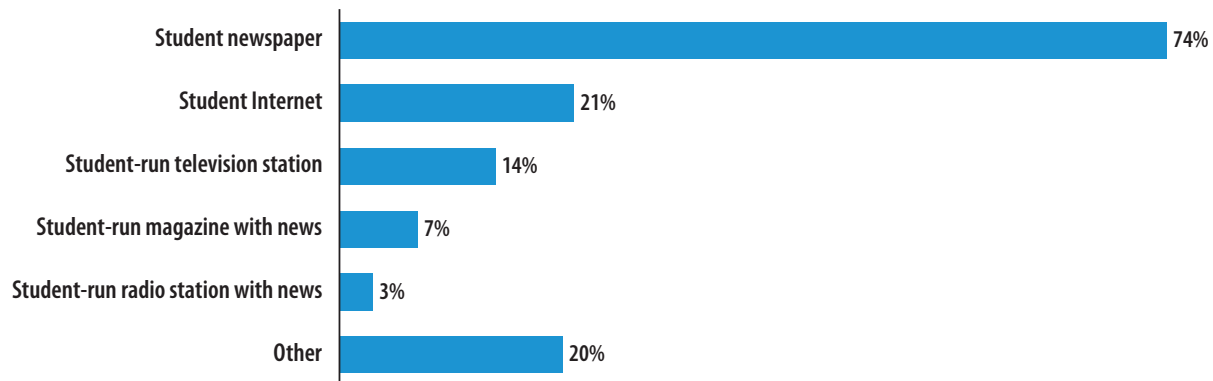
Most schools (70 percent) indicated that student learning about media and journalism is a priority. Yet just 17 percent of those saying it was a priority identified it as a high priority. And nearly a third (30 percent) of the high schools profiled said that student learning about media and journalism was not a priority for their school.

### Priority of student learning about media and journalism



Of those schools that do offer some type of student media activity, by far the most commonly offered type of journalism club or activity is the student-run newspaper. In fact, three quarters (74 percent) of all the high schools in the United States indicated that they currently offer a student newspaper. By contrast, other types of media activities are offered by significantly fewer schools; less than a quarter offer any of the other activities.

### Journalism activities and clubs currently offered in high schools



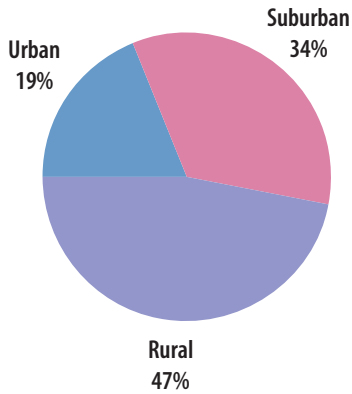
Of the schools that do not currently offer student newspapers, a substantial percentage (40 percent) say they have eliminated their student papers within the past five years. Further, among the 40 percent of schools that have dropped their student newspapers in the past five years, the majority (68 percent) now offer no student media activities at their school. The remaining third of those schools that have eliminated student newspapers in the past five years still have at least one student media activity offered and several of these schools have added different types of media activities since 1998:

- 19 percent have Internet media (13 percent added since 1998)
- 12 percent have television (8 percent added since 1998)
- 3 percent have radio station (2 percent added since 1998)
- 5 percent have magazine (2 percent added since 1998)

As might be expected, a larger drop in school newspapers was found in lower-income schools over the past five years; a 16-percent decrease was found among upper income schools, as compared to a 28-percent decrease among middle income schools and a 37-percent decrease among lower middle income schools. Although just a 19-percent decrease in school newspapers occurred among the most socio-economically disadvantaged schools, many of this latter category represent schools that most likely did not even have a newspaper to begin with. Additionally, suburban schools felt the drop to a significantly lesser degree than either the urban or the rural schools.

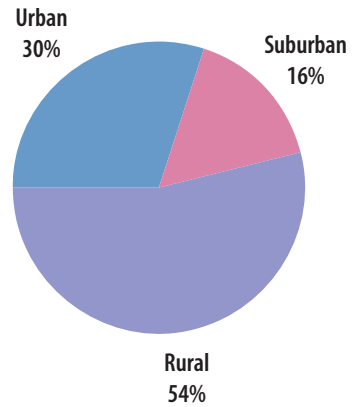
Overall percentage of schools

School setting



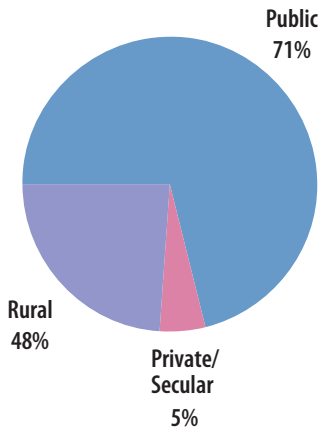
Percentage that dropped student newspaper in past five years

School type

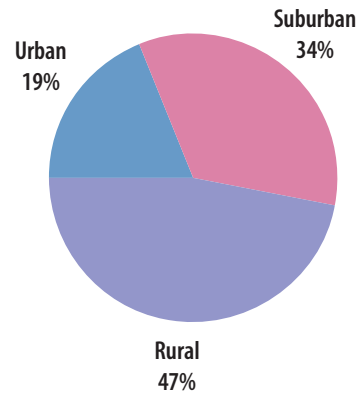


The high schools that were included in this study are representative of the national high school demographic. The charts below show the percentage breakdown of the schools in the study across types of schools and types of communities.

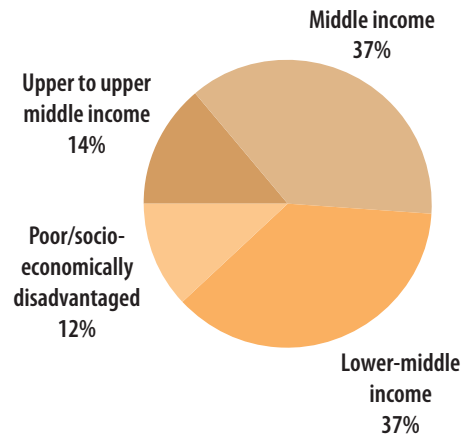
Type of school



Type of community



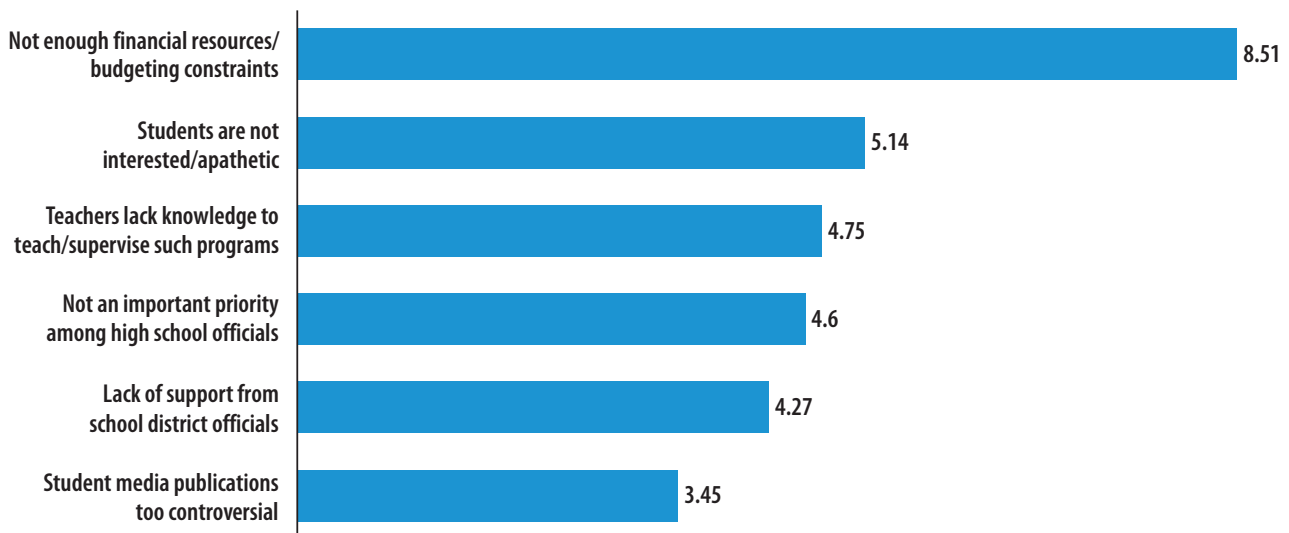
### Student body income demographics



The majority (85 percent) of high school administrators say they would like to see their school expand its existing student media programs. However, several obstacles cited by these administrators stand in the way of these types of expansions. By far, the greatest obstacle currently faced by the schools is the lack of financial resources or budgeting constraints. Another main obstacle, according to administrators, is student apathy or lack of interest in participating in media programs.

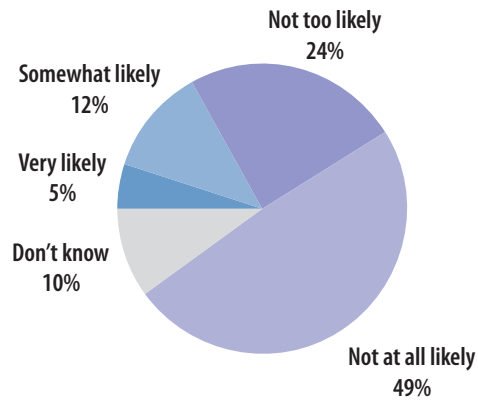
### Current obstacles preventing expansion of student media programs

Based on 0–10 scale, 0 = not an obstacle and 10 = major obstacle, average rank shown)



Half (49 percent) of high school students in this study say they are not at all likely to pursue a career in journalism upon completion of their formal schooling. Ten percent don't know if they will pursue a journalism career or not. Out of the remaining 41 percent, 5 percent say they are very likely, 12 percent say they are somewhat likely and 24 percent say they are not too likely to pursue a career in journalism.

#### Likelihood of students pursuing a career in journalism





## Appendix A. Methodology

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The Department of Public Policy at the University of Connecticut was commissioned by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to conduct this study of high school students, faculty and administrators at a representative sample of high schools across the country to assess whether a relationship exists between the presence and nature of media programs in high schools and levels of appreciation and knowledge of First Amendment rights. The Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) in the Department of Public Policy conducted the data collection. The principal investigators for the project were Dr. David Yalof and Dr. Kenneth Dautrich, both on the faculty at the University of Connecticut. Christopher Barnes of CSRA oversaw the data collection, and Chase Harrison of CSRA was responsible for the sampling. Under the direction of Drs. Yalof and Dautrich, Erin St. Onge helped to analyze the findings and draft the report, which was edited by Knight Foundation journalism program officer Denise Tom.

The Department of Public Policy's emphasis on conducting complex and policy-relevant research is in part a function of its educational mission. The Department includes the Graduate Program in Survey Research Methods, which offers graduate degrees in survey research. Students and faculty are regularly involved in conducting original research to improve survey research methodologies and to make professional contributions to the field.

The Department and CSRA conduct approximately 100 survey research projects per year. All of these projects are externally funded and range from large-scale, complex national policy evaluation projects to local community surveys. The Department specializes in designing and implementing survey projects that require complex methodologies and rigorous standards of data quality. Clients are state agencies (*in Connecticut, New Jersey, Minnesota and Washington*), federal agencies and commissions (*U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Department of Education, National Institutes of Health, EPA, U.S. Department of Labor, the Commission on Philanthropy and Civic Renewal*), private and public foundations (*the Ford Foundation, the Freedom Forum, the Chase Foundation, the First Amendment Center, the Criminal Justice Policy Foundation*), and news media organizations (*The Hartford Courant*).

### CSRA's data collection facilities

CSRA maintains a variety of in-house resources for designing and implementing high quality, complex survey research. The professional staff consists of 12 full-time researchers, including a statistician, two computer-assisted-telephone-interviewing (CATI) system programmers, a telephone center operations manager, a business manager, and seven professionally trained survey research analysts (several of whom hold doctorates with specialized training in survey research methodology). CSRA also employs 12 to 15 graduate research assistants annually, all of whom are studying in the Department of Public Policy's Graduate Survey Research Methods Program.

### Questionnaire design

Dr. David Yalof and Dr. Kenneth Dautrich served as Principal Investigators for the study. These scholars led a team that included CSRA researchers and outside scholars and experts to develop the questionnaires and survey methods.

The mode of administration was a key factor in the design of the survey instrument. The study utilized self-administered questionnaires administered in schools around the country. Questions were designed with this method in mind and rigorously tested to ensure that all respondents would understand each question the same

way. Four high school based populations were surveyed with a unique questionnaire. These populations included students, teachers, principals, and school buildings. For the school building survey, the principal identified the most appropriate administrator at the school to answer questions about characteristics of the school building.

Prior to being administered to the total sample, the questionnaire and field protocols were pre-tested with three schools. This exercise provided researchers with valuable feedback from respondents, which was used to modify and finalize the questionnaires.

The four questionnaires used in the study are included in the appendix to this report.

### **Sample design**

The survey consisted of a multi-stage cluster sampling design conducted in two stages across three separate units of analysis: schools, students, and faculty. Four separate surveys were administered. Initially, a survey was administered to a random sample of 544 separate high school buildings around the country. In the second wave of the study, 327 of the initial set of school buildings completed a more intensive level of data collection. In these schools, separate surveys were administered to administrators, faculty, and students. The samples of schools, school principals, teachers, school administrators, and high school students are representative of the populations from which they were drawn.

The sample for this project was based on a database licensed from Educational Directories of Schaumburg, Illinois. This database, published in print format as “Patterson’s American Education,” is a comprehensive single-source database of both public and private high schools in the US. Table 1 displays the characteristics of the sample frame:

**Table 1. Knight High School Journalism Survey  
Characteristics of High Schools in the United States**

Size and Type	Population Estimates			
	Number of schools	Percent	Number of students	Percent
Total	20,375	100.0%	14,875,773	100.0%
Total Public	14,579	71.6	12,870,778	86.5
Total Private (incl. Catholic)	5,412	26.6	2,004,995	13.5
Total < 100	1,870	9.2	107,516	0.7
Total Public < 100	765	3.8	50,652	0.3
Total Private < 100	1,105	5.4	56,864	0.4
Total 100 to < 500	8374	41.1	2,267,306	15.2
Total Public 100 to < 500	5,059	24.8	1,451,450	9.8
Total Private 100 to < 500	3,315	16.3	815,856	5.5
Total 500 to < 1,000	4,670	22.9	3,337,286	22.4
Total Public 500 to < 1,000	3,593	17.6	2,596,177	17.5
Total Private 500 to < 1,000	1,077	5.3	741,109	5.0
Total 1,000 to < 1,500	2,606	12.8	3,195,119	21.5
Total Public 1,000 to < 1,500	2,363	11.6	2,914,289	19.6
Total Private 1,000 to < 1,500	243	1.2	280,830	1.9
Total 1,500 to < 2,000	1,587	7.8	2,734,048	18.4
Total Public 1,500 to < 2,000	1,547	7.6	2,668,122	17.9
Total Private 1,500 to < 2,000	40	0.2	65,926	0.4
Total Size 2,000+	1,268	6.2	3,234,498	21.7
Total Public Size 2,000+	1,252	6.1	3,190,088	21.4
Total Private Size 2,000+	16	0.1	44,410	0.3

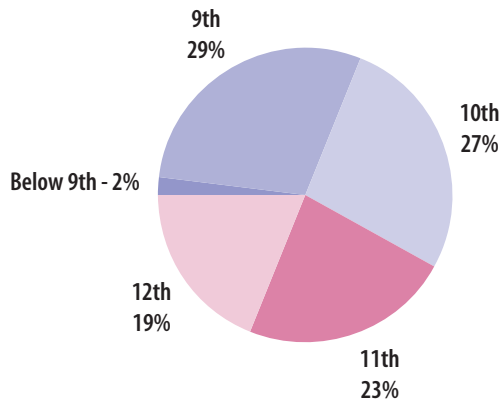
Source: Patterson's High School Database

The sample was stratified to proportionately represent public and non-public schools of different sizes. In the first stage of the sample design, schools were selected with equal probabilities of selection. In the second phase, the survey was designed to interview all faculty and students at these schools. Consequently, the sample was designed to provide self-weighting data at the institutional level for schools and at the individual level for faculty and students.

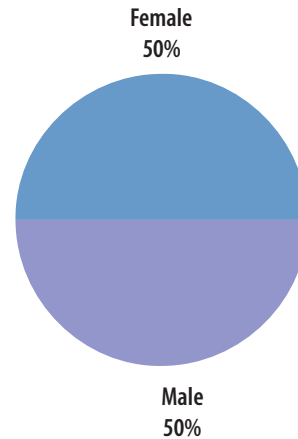
**General student demographics:**

The general demographics of the students surveyed—a representative sample of the national population of high school students—were as follows:

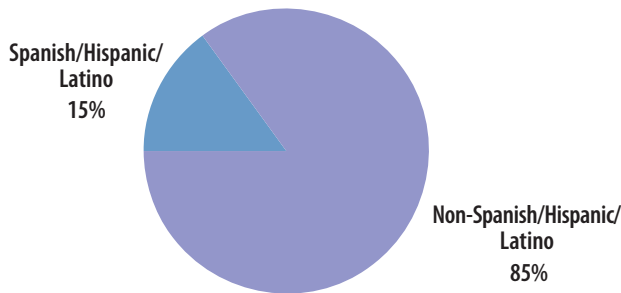
**Grade level**



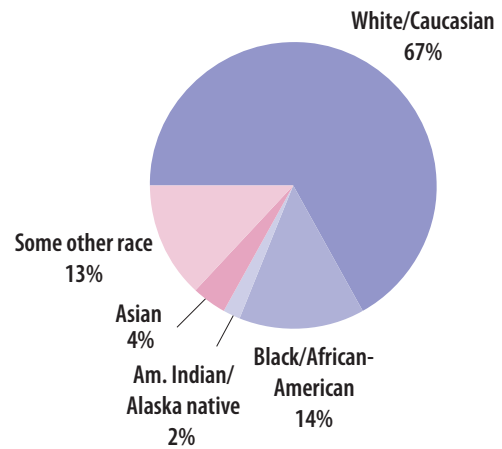
**Gender**



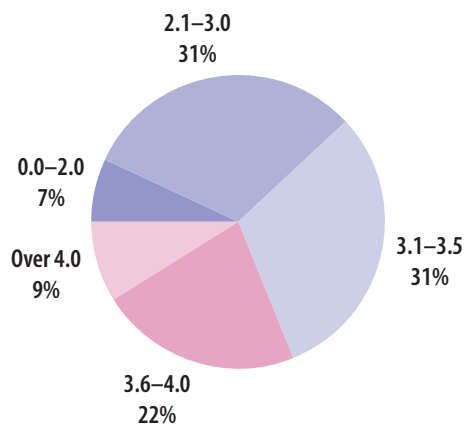
**Ethnicity**



**Race**



**Overall high school GPA**



## Appendix B. Annotated Questionnaires

### High School Profile Survey

(544 schools)

This survey should be filled out either by the school's principal, assistant principal, or another administrator with access to information about the school's programs and the surrounding community.

#### Journalism Activities and Clubs

1. Regardless of whether or not your school provides formal coursework in journalism, please indicate whether your school offers the following student media activities, and what year the activity was first initiated. If the activity is not being offered, please indicate whether the activity was eliminated/dropped in the past 5 years. (Your best guesses are fine.)

Currently offered? % Yes	If no: eliminated in past 5 yrs? % Yes		Year activity started				
			2001– 2004	1981– 2000	1961– 1980	1941– 1960	1940 or earlier
74%	40%	<b>Student newspaper</b> that requires students to make judgments about what is newsworthy	19%	28%	26%	18%	9%
7	3	<b>Student magazine</b> with a news component that requires students to make judgments about what is newsworthy—Category does <b>not</b> include yearbooks or student literary magazines	22	39	23	13	3
3	2	<b>Student-run radio station</b> with a news component that requires students to make judgments about what is newsworthy	24	29	40	8	-
14	7	<b>Student-run television station</b> with a news component that requires students to make judgments about what is newsworthy	32	55	13	-	-
21	3	<b>Student Internet or World-Wide Web</b> publication with a news component that requires students to make judgments about what is newsworthy	53	46	1	-	-
20	3	<b>Any other form</b> of student media with a news component that requires students to make judgments about what is newsworthy. (Please describe on the lines below.)	48	25	9	14	3

2. Does your school currently assign one or more faculty members to serve as formal advisors to any of the publications or broadcast media in your school?

84% Yes    If yes, how many?    Mean: 1.65

#### Journalism Classes and Electives

3. Approximately what percentage of students (grades 9–12) at your school are currently enrolled in classes primarily dedicated to teaching journalism skills? (Your best guess is fine.)

16% None  
 2 Less than 1%  
 29 1% to less than 5%  
 26 5% to less than 10%  
 14 10% to less than 15%  
 4 15% to less than 20%  
 9 20% or higher

4. What is the total number of students (grades 9–12) at your school who are currently enrolled in classes primarily dedicated to teaching journalism skills? (Your best guess is fine.)

- 16% None
- 29 1–10
- 39 11–40
- 9 41–70
- 4 71–100
- 3 100 or more

5. Please list the names of courses offered in your school (if any) that are primarily dedicated to the teaching of journalism skills.

Course title (top mentions):

- 30% Yearbook
- 26 Journalism II
- 16 Newspaper/newspaper writing
- 12 Journalism III
- 8 Intro to Journalism
- 6 Publication/publishing
- 6 Broadcasting (TV, radio)
- 5 Journalism IV

6. Where does student learning about media and journalism rank among your high school’s list of priorities? (Please check just one box.)

- 17% It ranks high among the school’s priorities
- 53 It is a priority, but not a high priority
- 31 It is not a priority.

7. Would you like to see your school expand its existing student media programs?

85% Yes

If YES:

What current obstacles stand in the way of your school expanding its student media programs? (Please circle one number.)

Not an obstacle		Moderate obstacle				Major obstacle				
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Mean

- 8.51 Not enough financial resources/budgeting constraints
- 4.60 Not an important priority among high school officials
- 3.45 Student media publications too controversial
- 5.14 Students are not interested/apathetic
- 4.75 Teachers lack knowledge to teach/supervise such programs
- 4.27 Lack of support from school district officials

8. Is your school a public school, a private secular school, or a private religious school? (Please check one category.)

- 71% Public
- 5 Private/secular
- 24 Private/religious

9. Is your school a charter school?

1% Yes

10. What type of school is it? (Please check the category that best describes your school.)

- 92% **Regular school**
- 6 School with a **special program emphasis** (such as a science/math school, performing arts school, talented/gifted school, foreign language immersion school, etc.)
- **Special education** school (primarily serves students with disabilities)
- **Vocational/technical** school—primarily serves students being trained for specific occupations
- 3 **Alternative**—offers a curriculum designed to provide alternative or nontraditional education. If so, please describe below:

**11. Grade levels at your school.** (Please check all appropriate categories.)

- 25% Below 7th
- 35 7th
- 38 8th
- 96 9th
- 99 10th
- 98 11th
- 97 12th

**12. Around the first of October, what was the total number of students enrolled in your school in grades 9–12 and comparable ungraded levels?** (Do not include postsecondary or adult education students.)

- 31% Less than 200
- 18 201–400
- 11 401–600
- 9 601–800
- 5 801–1000
- 6 1001–1200
- 4 1201–1400
- 5 1401–1600
- 3 1601–1800
- 3 1801–2000
- 6 2001 or more

**Around the first of October, how many male students were enrolled in your school in grades 9–12 and comparable ungraded levels?** (Do not include postsecondary or adult education students.)

- 34% Less than 100
- 16 100–199
- 10 200–299
- 9 300–399
- 5 400–499
- 6 500–599
- 5 600–699
- 3 700–799
- 3 800–899
- 2 900–999
- 8 1000 or more

**Around the first of October, how many full-time and/or full-time equivalent teachers were employed at your school?**

- 9% Less than 10
- 18 10–19
- 14 20–29
- 12 30–39
- 9 40–49
- 4 50–59
- 5 60–69
- 5 70–79
- 6 80–89
- 3 90–99
- 15 100 or more

**13. During the most recently completed academic year, what percentage of 12th grade students in your high school graduated with a diploma?** (DO NOT INCLUDE certificates of completion or attendance. Your best guess is fine.)

- 3% Less than 75%
- 1 75% to less than 80%
- 2 80% to less than 85%
- 5 85% to less than 90%
- 10 90% to less than 95%
- 43 95% to less than 100%
- 36 100%

**14. Of those who graduated during the most recently completed academic year, approximately what percentage went to:** (Your best guess is fine.)

- Four-year colleges
- 6% 10% or less
  - 1 11% to 20%
  - 2 21% to 30%
  - 5 31% to 40%
  - 10 41% to 50%
  - 43 51% to 60%
  - 36 61% to 70%
  - 36 71% to 80%
  - 36 81% to 90%
  - 36 91% to 100%

Two-year colleges  
 11% 5% or less  
 15 6% to 10%  
 11 11% to 15%  
 18 16% to 20%  
 18 21% to 30%  
 13 31% to 40%  
 8 41% to 50%  
 7 51% or more

Technical or specialized schools  
 45% 5% or less  
 29 6% to 10%  
 8 11% to 15%  
 9 16% to 20%  
 9 21% or more

**15. Approximately what percentage of students (grades 9–12) enrolled at your school are classified as Spanish/Hispanic/Latino? (Your best guess is fine.)**

Spanish/Hispanic/Latino  
 22% None  
 20 1% or less  
 24 2% to 5%  
 11 6% to 10%  
 9 11% to 20%  
 9 21% to 50%  
 5 51% or more

Black/African-American  
 17% None  
 24 1% or less  
 22 2% to 5%  
 11 6% to 10%  
 7 11% to 20%  
 12 21% to 50%  
 6 51% or more

**16. Approximately what percentage of students (grades 9–12) enrolled at your school are classified as one of the following racial or ethnic minorities? (Your best guess is fine.)**

American Indian or Alaskan native  
 48% None  
 33 1% or less  
 12 2% to 5%  
 3 6% to 10%  
 1 11% to 20%  
 3 21% to 50%  
 1 51% or more

Asian  
 24% None  
 32 1% or less  
 27 2% to 5%  
 7 6% to 10%  
 6 11% to 20%  
 3 21% to 50%  
 1 51% or more

**17. How would you characterize the surrounding community? (Please check one.)**

19% Urban  
 34 Suburban  
 47 Rural

**18. How would you characterize the population demographics of the student body? (Please check one.)**

14% Upper to Upper Middle Income  
 37 Middle Income  
 37 Lower-Middle Income  
 12 Poor/Socioeconomically disadvantaged

**19. Approximately what percentage of students (grades 9–12) enrolled at your school qualifies for government-sponsored free lunch programs?**

11% None  
 10 1% to 5%  
 11 6% to 10%  
 16 11% to 20%  
 14 21% to 30%  
 19 31% to 50%  
 18 51% or more

**20. Does your school maintain some form of partnership or association with any of the following organizations? (Please check all applicable.)**

% Yes

- 5% American Society of Newspaper Editors
- 1 Radio, Television News Directors Association
- 1 The First Amendment Center
- 2 Washington Post

**21. How many high schools (including your own) are currently located in this school district?**

- 55% 1
- 11 2
- 16 3 to 5
- 10 6 to 10
- 8 11 or more

**Thank you for your participation.**

## High School Student Survey

(112,003 students)

### 1. What grade are you currently in?

- 2% Below 9th
- 29 9th
- 27 10th
- 23 11th
- 19 12th

People tend to get their news and information from many different sources. How often, if at all do your parents or guardians get news from each of the following sources?

### 2. From the newspaper?

- 35% Every day
- 22 Several times a week
- 19 About once a week
- 9 Less than once a week
- 6 Never
- 8 Don't know

### 3. From the radio?

- 36% Every day
- 28 Several times a week
- 11 About once a week
- 8 Less than once a week
- 7 Never
- 10 Don't know

### 4. From television?

- 66% Every day
- 21 Several times a week
- 5 About once a week
- 2 Less than once a week
- 2 Never
- 4 Don't know

### 5. From the Internet?

- 14% Every day
- 22 Several times a week
- 15 About once a week
- 16 Less than once a week
- 21 Never
- 12 Don't know

### 6. Do your parents read any weekly news magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek* or *U.S. News & World Report*?

- 25% Yes
- 51 No
- 24 Don't know

Think about where you get news, including news about your school. How often, if at all, do YOU get news from each of the following sources?

### 7. From the newspaper?

- 13% Every day
- 20 Several times a week
- 23 About once a week
- 21 Less than once a week
- 18 Never
- 5 Don't know

### 8. From the radio?

- 29% Every day
- 23 Several times a week
- 13 About once a week
- 12 Less than once a week
- 17 Never
- 5 Don't know

### 9. From television?

- 41% Every day
- 26 Several times a week
- 12 About once a week
- 9 Less than once a week
- 8 Never
- 4 Don't know

### 10. From the Internet?

- 20% Every day
- 22 Several times a week
- 16 About once a week
- 16 Less than once a week
- 21 Never
- 5 Don't know

**11. Do YOU read any weekly news magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek* or *U.S. News & World Report*?**

- 20% Yes
- 77 No
- 4 Don't know

**12. How much news and information do you get about what is going on at your high school?**

- 21% A lot
- 45 Some
- 26 Not much
- 6 None at all
- 2 Don't know

**13. How much do you trust journalists to tell the truth? Do you believe they tell the truth...**

- 4% All of the time
- 58 Some of the time
- 23 Little of the time
- 9 Not at all
- 6 Don't know

**14–17. Do you currently or have you recently participated in each of the following extra-curricular/after-school programs or activities?**

- |         |        |   |
|---------|--------|---|
| 38% Yes | 62% No | a) Performance Arts (including Music, Band, Dance, Theatre, Acting) |
| 57 Yes  | 43 No  | b) Sports   |
| 11 Yes  | 90 No  | c) Debate or speech clubs/competitions                              |
| 15 Yes  | 85 No  | d) Student Council or other forms of student government             |

**18. During an average week, how many total hours do you spend participating in extra-curricular/after-school activities? (Your best guess is fine.)**

- 24% 1–5
- 17 6–10
- 15 11–15
- 9 16–20
- 4 21–25
- 4 More than 25
- 27 None

**19. Have you ever taken classes in high school that dealt with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution?**

- 58% Yes
- 42 No

**20. Have you ever taken classes in high school that discuss the role of media in society?**

- 52% Yes
- 48 No

**21. Have you ever taken classes in high school that dealt primarily with journalism skills?**

- 21% Yes
- 79 No

**22. Have you ever taken a class in high school where the teacher required as a class assignment that you read a newspaper or watch television news?**

- 75% Yes
- 25 No

**23. How frequently do you discuss issues in the news with friends and/or family members?**

- 18% All of the time
- 44 Some of the time
- 28 Little of the time
- 8 Not at all
- 2 Don't know

24–35. Please indicate whether or not you have been actively involved in any of the following activities at your high school, and if not, whether you would like to be involved in such activities.

	Participant?		If NO: Would you like to be?			
24.	8%	Yes	92%	No	25. 23% Yes 77% No	Student newspaper
26.	4	Yes	96	No	27. 15 Yes 85 No	Student magazine with a news component (Category does <i>not</i> include student literary magazines or yearbook)
28.	4	Yes	96	No	29. 30 Yes 70 No	Student-run radio station with a news component
30.	5	Yes	95	No	31. 27 Yes 73 No	Student-run television station with a news component
32.	5	Yes	95	No	33. 18 Yes 82 No	Student Internet or World-Wide Web publication with a news component
34.	5	Yes	95	No	35. 18 Yes 82 No	Any other form of student media with a news component

36–38. Do you currently...

35%	Yes	65%	No	Volunteer for a community service organization
32	Yes	68	No	Volunteer for service activities in a religious organization
28	Yes	72	No	Participate in community social clubs or organizations

39. During an average week, how many total hours do you spend participating in community related activities?

40%	1–5
10	6–10
3	11–15
2	16–20
1	21–25
2	More than 25
42	None

40. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. This is what it says:

*“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”*

Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

12%	Strongly agree
23	Mildly agree
19	Mildly disagree
25	Strongly disagree
21	Don't know

41. Overall, do you think the *press in America* has too much freedom to do what it wants, too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?

32%	Too much freedom
10	Too little freedom
37	About right
21	Don't know

For each of the following statements, please circle if you agree or disagree that someone should be allowed to do it...

42. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

51%	Strongly agree
32	Mildly agree
5	Mildly disagree
2	Strongly disagree
10	Don't know

43. People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement.

8%	Strongly agree
8	Mildly agree
11	Mildly disagree
63	Strongly disagree
10	Don't know

44. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.

- 40% Strongly agree
- 30 Mildly agree
- 14 Mildly disagree
- 7 Strongly disagree
- 9 Don't know

45. Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.

- 24% Strongly agree
- 27 Mildly agree
- 22 Mildly disagree
- 14 Strongly disagree
- 13 Don't know

46. High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

- 30% Strongly agree
- 28 Mildly agree
- 18 Mildly disagree
- 11 Strongly disagree
- 13 Don't know

47. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

*"Americans don't appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to."*

- 17% Strongly agree
- 33 Mildly agree
- 18 Mildly disagree
- 9 Strongly disagree
- 23 Don't know

48. Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?

- 27% Personally think about
- 36 Take for granted
- 37 Don't know

49. What about most people in the United States—do you think the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment are something people specifically think about or are they something they take for granted?

- 10% Personally think about
- 56 Take for granted
- 34 Don't know

Below is a series of statements about how people might try to exercise their rights under the First Amendment. In each case please indicate whether you think under current law Americans have the legal right or not to do these things:

50. Under current law, do Americans have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest?

- 25% Yes
- 75 No

51. Under current law, do the courts have the right to send reporters to jail for refusing to reveal a news source? (Correct answer depends on state.)

- 31% Yes
- 69 No

52. Under current law, does the government have the right to restrict indecent material on the Internet?

- 49% Yes
- 51 No

53. Under current law, does someone have the legal right to shout "fire" in a crowded arena as a prank?

- 23% Yes
- 77 No

Finally, please answer the following questions for classification purposes only...

**54. How likely are you to pursue a career in journalism once your formal schooling has been completed?**

- 5% Very likely
- 12 Somewhat likely
- 24 Not too likely
- 49 Not at all likely
- 10 Don't know

**55. How likely are you to go on to college after high school?**

- 72% Very likely
- 15 Somewhat likely
- 4 Not too likely
- 3 Not at all likely
- 6 Don't know

**56. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ years old.**

**57. What is your gender?**

- 50% Male
- 50 Female

**58. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?**

- 15% Yes
- 85 No

**59. What is your race?**

- 68% White/Caucasian
- 14 Black/African-American
- 2 American Indian or Alaska native
- 4 Asian
- 12 Some other race

**60. Thinking about your family's current financial situation do you consider yourself to be rich, upper income, middle income, lower income, or poor?**

- 5% Rich
- 23 Upper income
- 59 Middle income
- 10 Lower income
- 4 Poor

**61. What is your approximate overall high school GPA?**

- 7% 0.0–2.0 (or 0–75)
- 31 2.1–3.0 (or 76–85)
- 31 3.1–3.5 (or 86–90)
- 22 3.6–4.0 (or 91–95)
- 9 Over 4.0 (over 95)

**62. Which of the following grades is closest to your current overall grade point average?**

- 28% A
- 42 B
- 23 C
- 4 D
- 2 F

**63. Which of the following best describes you?**

- 90% I was born a U.S. citizen
- 5 I was born in another country, but became a U.S. citizen
- 5 I was born in another country, and I am not a U.S. citizen

**Thank you for your participation.**

## High School Faculty Survey

(7,889 faculty members)

**1. For how many years have you been teaching at this high school?**

44% Less than 5 years  
19 6–10 years  
10 11–15 years  
27 More than 15 years

**2. For how many total years have you been teaching at the high school level? (Include all high schools taught at.)**

28% Less than 5 years  
20 6–10 years  
13 11–15 years  
39 More than 15 years

**3. What grade level do you currently teach primarily? (Please check only one.)**

6% Below 9th  
36 9th  
25 10th  
21 11th  
13 12th

**4. Do you teach one subject primarily or a variety of subjects?**

54% One subject  
46 Variety

**5. What subject or subjects do you currently teach? (Please check all responses that apply.)**

(Responses add up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions. Total number of responses = 10748)

8% Art/Music/Drama  
21 English  
8 Foreign Language (e.g. Spanish, French)  
11 History  
2 Journalism  
17 Math (Algebra/Calculus/Geometry)  
6 Physical Education  
14 Physical sciences (e.g. Biology/Chemistry, Physics)  
2 Psychology  
12 Social Studies  
9 Special Education  
26 Other

**6. During the past year, have you taught any classes that dealt primarily with journalism skills?**

7% Yes  
93 No

**7. During the past year, have you taught any classes that deal with the First Amendment?**

24% Yes  
76 No

**8. During the past year, have you taught any classes that discuss the role of media in society?**

42% Yes  
58 No

**9. During the past year, have you required as an assignment that your students read a newspaper or watch the television news, and if so, how often were they required to do so?**

44% Never (GO TO QUESTION 11)  
12 Once per year  
17 On a quarterly basis  
12 On a monthly basis  
14 On a weekly basis

**10. If you did require that students read a newspaper or watch the television news, which (if any) of the following activities did you require as part of that class assignment? (Check all that apply.)**

(Responses add up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions. Total number of responses = 5906)

48% Students wrote reports  
8 Students wrote a letter to the editor/station manager  
39 Students gave oral presentations to the class  
9 No activities required  
34 Other

**11. Do you currently serve as a faculty adviser or coach for any extra curricular clubs or activities?**

56% Yes  
44 No (GO TO QUESTION 18)

**12–17. If YES, do you currently serve as faculty adviser to any of the following clubs or activities? (Please circle Yes or No.)**

4%	Yes	96%	No	Student newspaper
1	Yes	99	No	Student magazine (Category does <i>not</i> include student literary magazines or yearbooks)
0	Yes	100	No	Student-run radio station with a news component
1	Yes	99	No	Student-run television station with a news component
2	Yes	98	No	Student Internet or World-Wide Web publication with a news component
5	Yes	95	No	Any other form of student media with a news component

**18–22. People tend to get their news and information from many different sources. How often, if at all, do you get news from each of the following sources?**

**From the newspaper?**

55%	Every day
23	Several times a week
13	About once a week
7	Less than once a week
2	Never
0	Don't know

**From the radio?**

72%	Every day
17	Several times a week
4	About once a week
4	Less than once a week
2	Never
1	Don't know

**From local television newscasts?**

63%	Every day
22	Several times a week
6	About once a week
6	Less than once a week
3	Never
0	Don't know

**From national television newscasts?**

49%	Every day
28	Several times a week
11	About once a week
9	Less than once a week
3	Never
1	Don't know

**From the Internet?**

32%	Every day
24	Several times a week
12	About once a week
18	Less than once a week
13	Never
1	Don't know

**23. Do you read any weekly news magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek* or *U.S. News & World Report*?**

47%	Yes
52	No
1	Don't know

**24. How important do you feel it is that ALL students participate in some extracurricular activities or clubs?**

73%	Very important
24	Somewhat important
2	Not too important
1	Not important at all
0	Don't know

**25. How important do you feel it is that ALL students learn some journalism skills?**

35%	Very important
52	Somewhat important
10	Not too important
1	Not important at all
1	Don't know

26. Do you feel that your school's administration is very supportive, somewhat supportive, not too supportive, or not supportive at all of students participating in extracurricular activities or clubs?

- 70% Very supportive
- 24 Somewhat supportive
- 3 Not too supportive
- 1 Not at all supportive
- 2 Don't know

27. Do you feel that your school's administration is very supportive, somewhat supportive, not too supportive, or not supportive at all of the teaching and learning of journalism skills?

- 33% Very supportive
- 37 Somewhat supportive
- 8 Not too supportive
- 1 Not at all supportive
- 21 Don't know

28. How often, if at all, do you encourage students in your classes to think about pursuing a career in journalism?

- 2% All of the time
- 18 Some of the time
- 34 Little of the time
- 42 Not at all
- 5 Don't know

29. How much do you trust journalists to tell the truth? Do you believe they tell the truth...

- 4% All of the time
- 79 Some of the time
- 13 Little of the time
- 2 Not at all
- 2 Don't know

30. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. This is what it says:

*"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."*

Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

- 9% Strongly agree
- 20 Mildly agree
- 16 Mildly disagree
- 50 Strongly disagree
- 5 Don't know

31. Overall, how would you rate the job that the American educational system does in teaching students about First Amendment freedoms?

- 7% Excellent
- 46 Good
- 29 Fair
- 7 Poor
- 11 Don't know

32. Overall, do you think the press in America has too much freedom to do what it wants, too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?

- 38% Too much freedom
- 8 Too little freedom
- 49 About right
- 6 Don't know

For each of the following statements, please circle if you agree or disagree that someone should be allowed to do it. . .

**33. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.**

- 72% Strongly agree
- 25 Mildly agree
- 2 Mildly disagree
- 1 Strongly disagree
- 1 Don't know

**34. People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement.**

- 15% Strongly agree
- 13 Mildly agree
- 11 Mildly disagree
- 59 Strongly disagree
- 2 Don't know

**35. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.**

- 28% Strongly agree
- 30 Mildly agree
- 19 Mildly disagree
- 21 Strongly disagree
- 2 Don't know

**36. Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.**

- 53% Strongly agree
- 27 Mildly agree
- 12 Mildly disagree
- 6 Strongly disagree
- 2 Don't know

**37. High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.**

- 13% Strongly agree
- 26 Mildly agree
- 27 Mildly disagree
- 33 Strongly disagree
- 1 Don't know

**38. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:**

*"Americans don't appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to."*

- 30% Strongly agree
- 43 Mildly agree
- 14 Mildly disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree
- 7 Don't know

**39. Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?**

- 50% Personally think about
- 46 Take for granted
- 4 Don't know

**40. What about most people in the United States—do you think the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment are something people specifically think about or are they something they take for granted?**

- 7% Personally think about
- 86 Take for granted
- 7 Don't know

Below are a series of statements about how people might try to exercise their rights under the First Amendment. In each case please indicate whether you think under current law Americans have the legal right or not to do these things:

**41. Under current law, do Americans have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest? (Please circle Yes or No.)**

- 60% Yes
- 40 No

**42. Under current law, do the courts have the right to send reporters to jail for refusing to reveal a news source? (Please circle Yes or No.) (Correct answer depends on state.)**

- 54% Yes
- 46 No

**43. Under current law, does the government have the right to restrict indecent material on the Internet? (Please circle Yes or No.)**

- 50% Yes
- 50 No

**44. Under current law, does someone have the legal right to shout “fire” in a crowded arena as a prank? (Please circle Yes or No.)**

8% Yes  
92 No

Finally, please answer the following questions for classification purposes only...

**45. What is the highest level of education that you have attained?**

1% High School diploma  
41 Bachelors  
52 Masters  
3 ABD (all but dissertation)  
1 Doctorate  
0 Post-doctorate  
2 Don't know

**46. Have you ever received any formal instruction in the First Amendment?**

51% Yes  
49 No (GO TO QUESTION 49)

**47. IF YES, would that have been before high school, during high school, and/or after high school? (Circle all that apply.)**

(Responses add up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions. Total number of responses = 5947)

21% Before high school  
75 During high school  
54 After high school  
1 Don't know

**48. What year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_**

Age

11% 18–28  
27 29–39  
27 40–50  
32 51–61  
3 62–72  
0 73+

**49. Are you male or female?**

42% Male  
58 Female

**50. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?**

3% Yes  
97 No

**51. What is your race?**

92% White/Caucasian  
4 Black/African-American  
0 American Indian or Alaska native  
1 Asian  
2 Some other race

**Thank you for your participation.**

## High School Principal Survey

(308 principals)

**1. For how many years have you worked in your current position at this high school?**

61% Less than 5 years  
22 6–10 years  
8 11–15 years  
8 More than 15 years

**2. For how many years have you worked at this high school as some type of administrator?**

46% Less than 5 years  
26 6–10 years  
12 11–15 years  
16 More than 15 years

**3. How important do you feel it is that ALL students participate in some extracurricular activities or clubs?**

87% Very important  
12 Somewhat important  
1 Not too important  
0 Not important at all  
0 Don't know

**4. How important do you feel it is that ALL students learn some journalism skills?**

33% Very important  
58 Somewhat important  
9 Not too important  
0 Not important at all  
0 Don't know

**5. Do you feel that school district officials are very supportive, somewhat supportive, not too supportive, or not supportive at all of students participating in extracurricular activities or clubs?**

72% Very supportive  
21 Somewhat supportive  
2 Not too supportive  
1 Not supportive at all  
5 Don't know

**6. Do you feel that school district officials are very supportive, somewhat supportive, not too supportive, or not supportive at all of the teaching and learning of journalism skills?**

29% Very supportive  
56 Somewhat supportive  
9 Not too supportive  
1 Not supportive at all  
6 Don't know

**7. Would you say that during your tenure in your current position the total number of extra-curricular activities or clubs has increased, decreased, or remained about the same? (Your best guess is fine.)**

65% Increased  
3 Decreased  
33 Remained about the same  
0 Don't know

**8. Would you say that during your tenure in your current position the total number of student media clubs or publications has increased, decreased, or remained the same? (Your best guess is fine.)**

36% Increased  
5 Decreased  
59 Remained about the same  
0 Don't know

**9. Would you say there during your tenure in your current position the total number of courses primarily dedicated to the teaching of journalism has increased, decreased, or remained about the same? (Your best guess is fine.)**

25% Increased  
5 Decreased  
70 Remained about the same  
0 Don't know

**10. Do you think that your high school currently offers too many, not enough, or about the right amount of extra-curricular clubs or activities?**

1% Too many  
34 Not enough  
65 About the right amount  
0 Don't know

**11. Do you think your high school currently offers too many, not enough, or about the right amount of student media clubs or publications?**

- 0% Too many
- 46 Not enough
- 53 About the right amount
- 1 Don't know

**12. Do you think your high school currently offers too many, not enough, or about the right amount of courses primarily dedicated to the teaching of journalism?**

- 0% Too many
- 46 Not enough
- 53 About the right amount
- 1 Don't know

**13–17. People tend to get their news and information from many different sources. How often, if at all, do you get news from each of the following sources?**

**From the newspaper?**

- 70% Every day
- 20 Several times a week
- 7 About once a week
- 1 Less than once a week
- 1 Never
- 0 Don't know

**From the radio?**

- 74% Every day
- 17 Several times a week
- 5 About once a week
- 4 Less than once a week
- 0 Never
- 0 Don't know

**From local television newscasts?**

- 59% Every day
- 26 Several times a week
- 6 About once a week
- 6 Less than once a week
- 3 Never
- 1 Don't know

**From national television newscasts?**

- 46% Every day
- 33 Several times a week
- 12 About once a week
- 5 Less than once a week
- 3 Never
- 1 Don't know

**From the Internet?**

- 29% Every day
- 32 Several times a week
- 13 About once a week
- 16 Less than once a week
- 9 Never
- 1 Don't know

**18. Do you read any weekly news magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek* or *U.S. News & World Report*?**

- 62% Yes
- 38 No
- 0 Don't know

**19. Do you feel that your school's administration is very supportive, somewhat supportive, not too supportive, or not supportive at all of students participating in extracurricular activities or clubs?**

- 90% Very supportive
- 8 Somewhat supportive
- 1 Not too supportive
- 0 Not supportive at all
- 0 Don't know

20. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. This is what it says:

*"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."*

Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

- 7% Strongly agree
- 17 Mildly agree
- 20 Mildly disagree
- 52 Strongly disagree
- 4 Don't know

21. Overall, how would you rate the job that the American educational system does in teaching students about First Amendment freedoms?

- 6% Excellent
- 56 Good
- 27 Fair
- 10 Poor
- 2 Don't know

22. Overall, do you think the *press in America* has too much freedom to do what it wants; too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the press has about right?

- 40% Too much freedom
- 3 Too little freedom
- 56 About right
- 1 Don't know

For each of the following statements, please circle if you agree or disagree that someone should be allowed to do it. . .

23. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

- 71% Strongly agree
- 28 Mildly agree
- 1 Mildly disagree
- 0 Strongly disagree
- 0 Don't know

24. People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement.

- 9% Strongly agree
- 14 Mildly agree
- 13 Mildly disagree
- 62 Strongly disagree
- 1 Don't know

25. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.

- 18% Strongly agree
- 25 Mildly agree
- 28 Mildly disagree
- 28 Strongly disagree
- 1 Don't know

26. Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.

- 56% Strongly agree
- 24 Mildly agree
- 14 Mildly disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree
- 2 Don't know

27. High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

- 8% Strongly agree
- 17 Mildly agree
- 29 Mildly disagree
- 46 Strongly disagree
- 1 Don't know

28. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

*"Americans don't appreciate First Amendment freedoms the way they ought to."*

- 27% Strongly agree
- 47 Mildly agree
- 16 Mildly disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree
- 6 Don't know

**29. Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?**

- 56% Personally think about
- 43 Take for granted
- 1 Don't know

**30. What about most people in the United States—do you think the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment are something people specifically think about or are they something they take for granted?**

- 5% Personally think about
- 92 Take for granted
- 3 Don't know

Below are a series of statements about how people might try to exercise their rights under the First Amendment. In each case please indicate whether you think under current law Americans have the legal right or not to do these things:

**31. Under current law, do Americans have the legal right to burn the American flag as a means of political protest?**  
(Please circle Yes or No.)

- 69% Yes
- 31 No

**32. Under current law, do the courts have the right to send reporters to jail for refusing to reveal a news source?**  
(Please circle Yes or No.) (Correct answer depends on state.)

- 67% Yes
- 33 No

**33. Under current law, does the government have the right to restrict indecent material on the Internet?** (Please circle Yes or No.)

- 50% Yes
- 50 No

**34. Under current law, does someone have the legal right to shout "fire" in a crowded arena as a prank?** (Please circle Yes or No.)

- 2% Yes
- 98 No

Finally, please answer the following questions for classification purposes only. . .

**35. What is the highest level of education that you have attained?**

- 0% High School diploma
- 6 Bachelors
- 68 Masters
- 13 ABD (all but dissertation)
- 7 Doctorate
- 2 Post-doctorate
- 3 Other
- 0 Don't know

**36. Have you ever received any formal instruction in the First Amendment?**

- 69% Yes
- 32 No (GO TO QUESTION 39)

**37. IF YES, would that have been before high school, during high school, and/or after high school?** (Circle all that apply.)

(Responses add up to more than 100% due to multiple mentions. Total number of responses = 294)

- 19% Before high school
- 60 During high school
- 73 After high school
- 0 Don't know

**38. What year were you born?** \_\_\_\_\_

- Age
- 12% 28–38
  - 33 39–49
  - 47 50–60
  - 8 61–71
  - 0 72+

**39. Are you male or female?**

- 75% Male
- 25 Female

**40. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?**

3% Yes

97 No

**41. What is your race?**

92% White/Caucasian

7 Black/African-American

0 American Indian/Alaska native

0 Asian

1 Some other race

**Thank you for your participation.**