What is it like for parents to choose a public school in cities that provide multiple options? According to a survey of 4,000 public school parents in eight “high-choice” cities, including Baltimore, parents’ experiences vary widely. More than half of Baltimore families reported that they have another good public school option available to them besides their current school. But only 32% reported that the city’s schools are getting better, compared to 65% of parents in nearby D.C. Parents with a high school diploma or less in Baltimore were far less likely to choose a non-neighborhood-based public school for their child compared to parents with a bachelor’s degree or more, a gap that was among the largest observed across the eight cities surveyed. Along with New Orleans and Philadelphia, Baltimore families also reported the lowest levels of trust and confidence in the school system to provide all neighborhoods with great public schools. For the full report comparing all eight cities, visit crpe.org.

### How Parents Choose a School

**What types of schools do parents choose?**
- 55% Choose a non-neighborhood public school
- 45% Parents with a high school diploma or less
- 62% Parents with a bachelor’s degree or more

**What is most important to parents in choosing a school?**
- 73% Academics
- 56% Safety
- 82% Location

### How Parents Perceive Their Options

- 32% Report the schools are getting better
- 53% Report that another good option was available to them

### Parents’ Trust and Confidence in City Leaders

**How much trust and confidence do parents have in the school system to make sure all neighborhoods have great schools?**
- 45% Blacks
- 46% Hispanics
- 43% Whites

**How much trust and confidence do parents have in city leaders to address public problems?**
- 37% Blacks
- 51% Hispanics
- 38% Whites

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Children in non-neighborhood public schools traveled longer (8 minutes longer than those in neighborhood public schools).

Parents use on average 3 information sources.

52% of parents say visiting the school is the most useful information source.

25% of parents report driving their child to and from school.

25% of parents say difficult or confusing paperwork is the most difficult aspect of the process.

47% of parents say finding transportation for their child to and from school is the most difficult aspect of the process.

Available schools weren’t a good fit:
- 42% report difficulty
- 11% report difficulty
- 11% report difficulty

Understanding which schools their child was eligible to attend:
- 32% report difficulty
- 19% report difficulty

Different application deadlines:
- 19% report difficulty
- 19% report difficulty

Finding transportation for their child to and from school:
- 21% report difficulty
- 22% report difficulty

Understanding which schools their child was eligible to attend:
- 32% report difficulty
- 19% report difficulty

Difficult or confusing paperwork:
- 11% report difficulty
- 47% report difficulty

Number of applications:
- 11% report difficulty
- 19% report difficulty

HOW PARENTS BECOME INFORMED ABOUT THEIR OPTIONS

HOW PARENTS GET THEIR CHILD TO SCHOOL