

racial  
attitudes

in pulaski county

*the fourth annual study  
by the  
Institute of Government*

*Focus on Education*



University of Arkansas at Little Rock  
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## **Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County**

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# Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of the fourth annual survey of racial attitudes in Pulaski County by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR).

The mission of UALR includes the application of knowledge and research skills to the ever-changing human condition. As a metropolitan university, UALR seeks to utilize its research capabilities to address issues of vital importance. Chancellor Joel E. Anderson initiated the annual survey of racial attitudes and experiences in Pulaski County in 2003 and continues to stress that black-white race relations is one of the biggest factors impacting the progress and future of our state. In his inauguration speech in September 2003, the chancellor stated, "Race, particularly white-black race relations, has been a major problem, indeed *the* major problem, the biggest obstacle to progress, in our state since it was founded in 1836."

Previous reports focused on 1) assessing interracial perceptions and experiences in a variety of life situations, 2) comparing attitudes of blacks and whites to local government issues, and 3) the examination of the ideas of community and trust. The central focus of this year's study is the examination of attitudes about and experiences with education. In addition to asking new questions in this area, the Year 4 report revisits a number of questions asked in the previous surveys in order to track changes.

Because education is of great importance to our county and 2007 marks the 50th anniversary of the historic desegregation of Little Rock Central High School, education is the focus of the Year 4 survey. The survey examines experiences with and attitudes about kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) and higher education among blacks and whites.

The annual telephone survey is generally conducted between October and December with findings released in March of the following year. The report refers to the surveys as Year 1 (2003-2004), Year 2 (2004-2005), Year 3 (2005-2006), and Year 4 (2006-2007).

The Year 4 report is organized with an executive summary, a description of the study's methodology, the survey findings, and an appendix of demographic statistics and analysis. The survey's findings are presented in two major sections, 1) Education and 2) Interracial Perceptions.

This study was funded entirely by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to provide information, enhance thoughtful discussion, and improve race relations in our community. A number of community groups, especially religious organizations, have responded to the *Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County* annual surveys by inviting UALR to present survey results and to engage in dialogue about racial perceptions and attitudes in Pulaski County. Reports are available at no cost. Copies for viewing and circulation may be obtained at the following web address:

<http://www.ualr.edu/iog/racialattitudes.htm>

# Executive Summary

Year 4 of UALR's *Racial Attitudes in Pulaski County* study presents data collected from an annual telephone survey. The study examines attitudes about and experiences with education. In addition, it revisits selected topics addressed in previous years, such as trust between the races.

The following are some of the major findings of the Year 4 study:

- ◆ Nine (9) out of 10 blacks, compared with 6 to 7 out of 10 whites, think that it is “very important” for children to socialize with children of different races.
- ◆ Nearly two-thirds of blacks and around one-half of whites “strongly agree” that school integration benefits both blacks and whites.
- ◆ Blacks are more likely than they were three years ago to believe that black children have as good a chance as white children to get a good education.
- ◆ Just under one-half of blacks, compared to two-thirds of whites, report being “completely satisfied” with the quality of their K-12 education.
- ◆ Whites are approximately twice as likely as blacks to express “a lot” of trust in school officials to decide and implement policies that are equally fair to blacks and whites.
- ◆ Whites are more than twice as likely as blacks to express “a lot” of trust in teachers to treat black and white children with equal fairness.
- ◆ Significantly more black respondents than white respondents report being dissatisfied with their current level of education.
- ◆ For both blacks and whites, the most common reasons given for not pursuing education after high school are family obligations or children, expensive cost of education, and the need to go to work.
- ◆ A large majority of both blacks and whites believe a college education is “very important” for success.
- ◆ The majority of blacks and whites believe that college applicants should be admitted solely on the basis of merit, even if that results in few minority students being admitted.
- ◆ Blacks express the same level of trust for whites as for other blacks.
- ◆ Whites express the same level of trust for blacks as for other whites.
- ◆ Most blacks and whites believe that “only a few” people in each race dislike members of the other race.
- ◆ Fewer respondents believe that blacks and whites dislike each other than was reported in the survey two years ago.
- ◆ The majority of both blacks and whites believe that the historic events at Central High are still impacting race relations in Pulaski County.
- ◆ Blacks are significantly more likely than whites to think that the continuing impact of the historic events at Central High on Pulaski County black/white relations is “positive.”

# Study Methodology

This study is based on a land-line telephone survey conducted by the UALR Institute of Government Survey Research Center (SRC) between September 29 and November 27, 2006.

A total of 1,696 interviews were conducted with a stratified random sample of all residents age eighteen and older living in Pulaski County, Arkansas. Since the study primarily focuses on black/white relations, the data analysis is divided into four geo-racial groups with a total of 1,666 white and black respondents:

<b>LR blacks</b>	Black respondents living <b>within</b> the city limits of Little Rock
<b>OLR blacks</b>	Black respondents living <b>outside</b> the city limits of Little Rock
<b>LR whites</b>	White respondents living <b>within</b> the city limits of Little Rock
<b>OLR whites</b>	White respondents living <b>outside</b> the city limits of Little Rock

Each geo-racial group contains between 401 and 425 respondents, providing a potential for sampling error of  $\pm 5$  percent at the conventional 95 percent confidence level. In theory, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results of surveying a sample of a geo-racial group differ no more than 5 percent in either direction from results that would have been obtained by interviewing all Pulaski County residents within a geo-racial group.

The response rate for the Year 4 survey is 50 percent with a cooperation rate of 80 percent, based on standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations.

Research shows that responses to racial issue questions can be influenced by whether interviewers and respondents perceive themselves to be of the same or a different race as one another. For the Year 4 study, the SRC used the same methodology as in previous years whereby the races of the respondents and the telephone interviewers were matched. This allows for more consistent comparisons among groups and between years.

Several of the questions used in the Year 4 survey are based upon questions developed, tested, and used by The Gallup Organization in a series of studies on black/white relations in the United States (c1997-2007 The Gallup Organization. All rights reserved. Reprinted

with permission from [www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com)). We gratefully acknowledge The Gallup Organization for allowing UALR to utilize questions from their Minority Relations trend surveys.

The study primarily analyzes black/white relations in Pulaski County. Although the county has a growing Hispanic population, the percentage of Hispanics is still relatively small at less than 3 percent. Because of the small number of Hispanics in the county, the survey does not yield sufficient interviews with Hispanics to make valid comparisons of their responses to the other racial groups.

No cell phone numbers are eligible for this survey. This protocol has the effect of creating a specific demographic group organized around the kind of telephone used by members in this group. This group's members may or may not share other identifying characteristics. Thus, in addition to sampling error, the wording of the questions, and practical issues associated with conducting a survey, the cell-phone versus home-phone issue can introduce bias into the findings of any public opinion survey.



# Education

Education is the subject of a series of new questions in the Year 4 survey. Pulaski County residents were asked about their experiences with K-12 education and their perceptions and opinions of K-12 and higher education. Respondents who reported having school-aged children at home were asked to share some thoughts about their children’s K-12 education.

## Personal Experiences of K-12 Education

A series of questions addresses the following topics regarding personal K-12 educational experiences:

- ◆ Perception of the quality of the respondent’s education
- ◆ Perceptions of unfair treatment in school because of race
- ◆ Proportions of black and white students, teachers, and administrators at K-12 schools attended
- ◆ Level of educational attainment and satisfaction with education level
- ◆ Reasons for the decision about whether or not to pursue education after high school

Overall, the results suggest that whites had more positive educational experiences and obtained higher levels of education than blacks. Blacks are more likely than whites to be dissatisfied with the quality of the K-12 education they received and to be dissatisfied with their current level of education. More blacks than whites report that they were treated unfairly in school because of their race and blacks report more incidents of unfair treatment in school. Blacks are much more likely than whites to report that they attended K-12 schools where there were few or no teachers and administrators of the same race.

Among those who did not pursue additional education after high school, blacks and whites cite the same top three reasons for not continuing their education: family obligations or children, expensive cost of education, and the need to go to work.

## *Characteristics of K-12 Experiences*

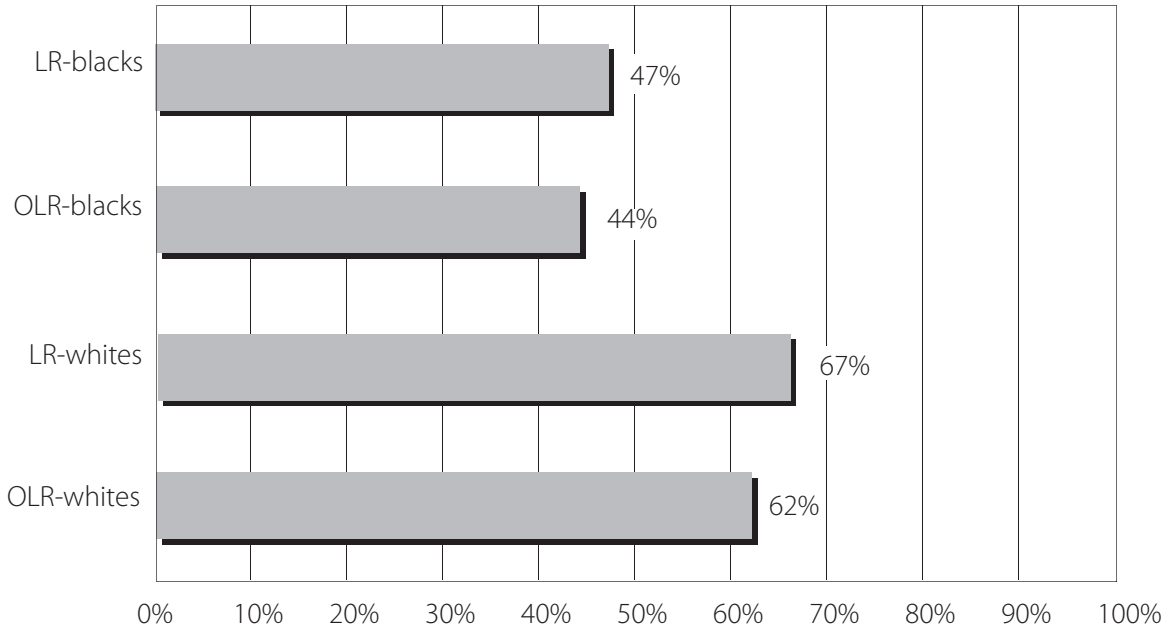


*Overall, how would you rate the quality of education you personally received from kindergarten through 12th grade? Would you say you are completely satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied?*

- ◆ **Two-thirds of whites report being “completely satisfied” with the quality of their K-12 education, compared to just under one-half of blacks.**

Differences are found between blacks’ and whites’ evaluation of the quality of the K-12 education they received. About two-thirds of whites and just under one-half of blacks report being “completely satisfied” with the quality of their K-12 education, as shown

**Exhibit 1**  
**Percentages who report being “completely satisfied” with their K-12 education**



in Exhibit 1. At the other end of the satisfaction scale, more blacks (17 to 19 percent) than whites (8 to 12 percent) report being either “somewhat” or “completely dissatisfied” with the quality of the K-12 education they received.



*Overall, in the kindergarten through 12th grade schools you attended, would you say there were many, some, few, all or no white students?*



*Overall, in the kindergarten through 12th grade schools you attended, would you say there were many, some, few, all or no black students?*

- ◆ **About two-thirds of blacks attended K-12 schools where “all,” “many,” or “some” of the students were white.**
- ◆ **About one-half of whites attended K-12 schools where “all,” “many,” or “some” of the students were black.**

Each respondent was asked the above two questions regarding the overall proportions of black and white students in the K-12 schools he or she attended. Answers to this question provide information about the extent to which blacks were exposed to whites and whites exposed to blacks during their K-12 education.

Blacks are more likely than whites to have attended K-12 schools where “all,” “many,” or “some” of the students were of a different race. About one-half of white students

report that they attended K-12 schools where “all,” “many,” or “some” of the other students were black. A larger number of black students, about two-thirds, report that they attended K-12 schools where “all,” “many,” or “some” of the other students were white.



*Overall, in the kindergarten through 12th grade schools you attended, would you say there were many, some, few, all or no <SAME RACE> teachers and administrators?*



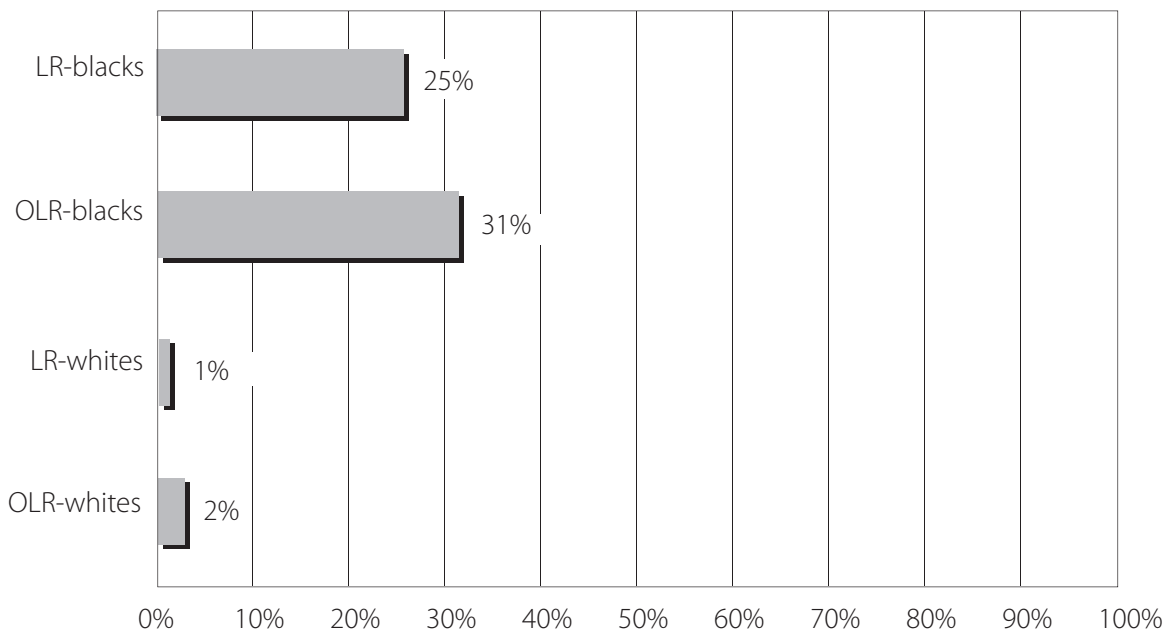
*Overall, in the kindergarten through 12th grade schools you attended, would you say there were many, some, few, all or no <DIFFERENT RACE> teachers and administrators?*

- ◆ **Blacks are much more likely than whites to have attended K-12 schools where there were “few” or “no” teachers and administrators of the same race.**

Exposure to same-race teachers and administrators, serving as role models, is believed to be a factor as a child determines which career opportunities are possible and appropriate. Some research concludes that it is considered less than optimal for a child to attend a school where there are few or no teachers or administrators of the child’s race.

Approximately 3 out of 10 blacks and virtually no whites report that they attended K-12 schools where there were “few” or “no” teachers and administrators of the same race as the respondent. Exhibit 2 shows these percentages.

**Exhibit 2**  
**Percentages reporting they attended K-12 schools with “few” or “no” teachers & administrators of the SAME race**





*When you were in kindergarten through 12th grade, did you ever feel you were treated unfairly because you were <BLACK/WHITE>?*



*[If “yes”] Did you feel you were treated unfairly rarely, sometimes or often?*

- ◆ **Blacks are more than three times more likely than whites to report that they were treated unfairly because of their race during their K-12 education.**

There are significant racial differences in perceptions of race-related unfair treatment in K-12 education. As shown in Exhibit 3, about 3 out of 10 blacks (29 to 32 percent) and fewer than 1 out of 10 whites (7 to 8 percent) report feeling that they had been treated unfairly because of their race at least once during their K-12 education. About one-fourth of blacks who report that they were treated unfairly say that the unfair treatment happened “often”.



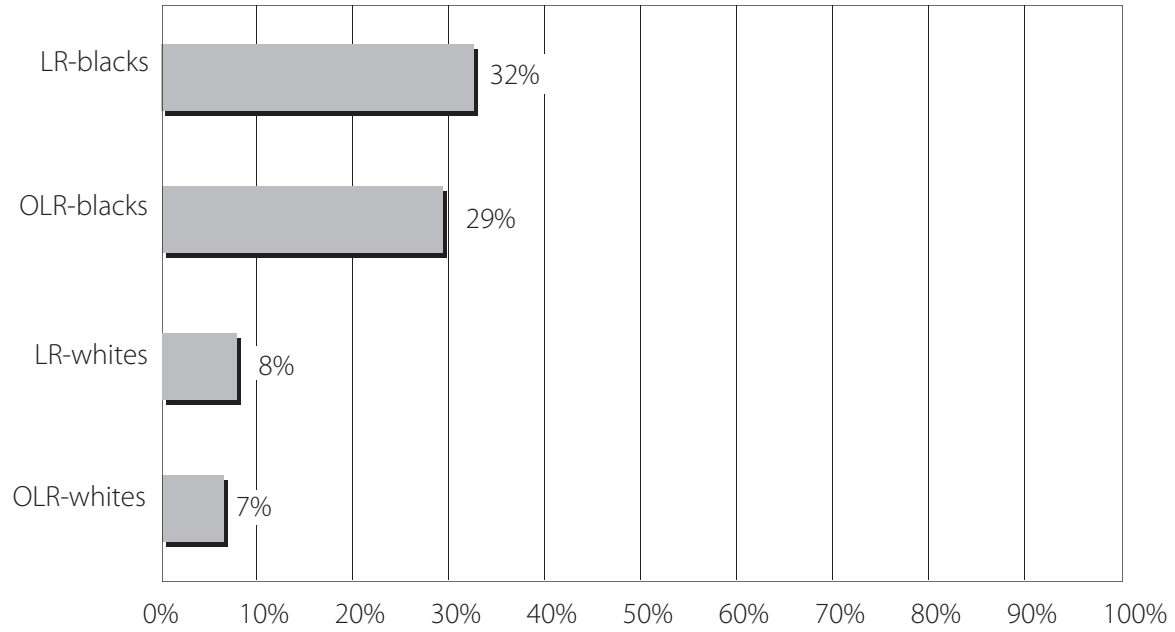
*Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your current level of education? Very or somewhat?*

- ◆ **Significantly more black respondents than white respondents report being dissatisfied with their current level of education.**

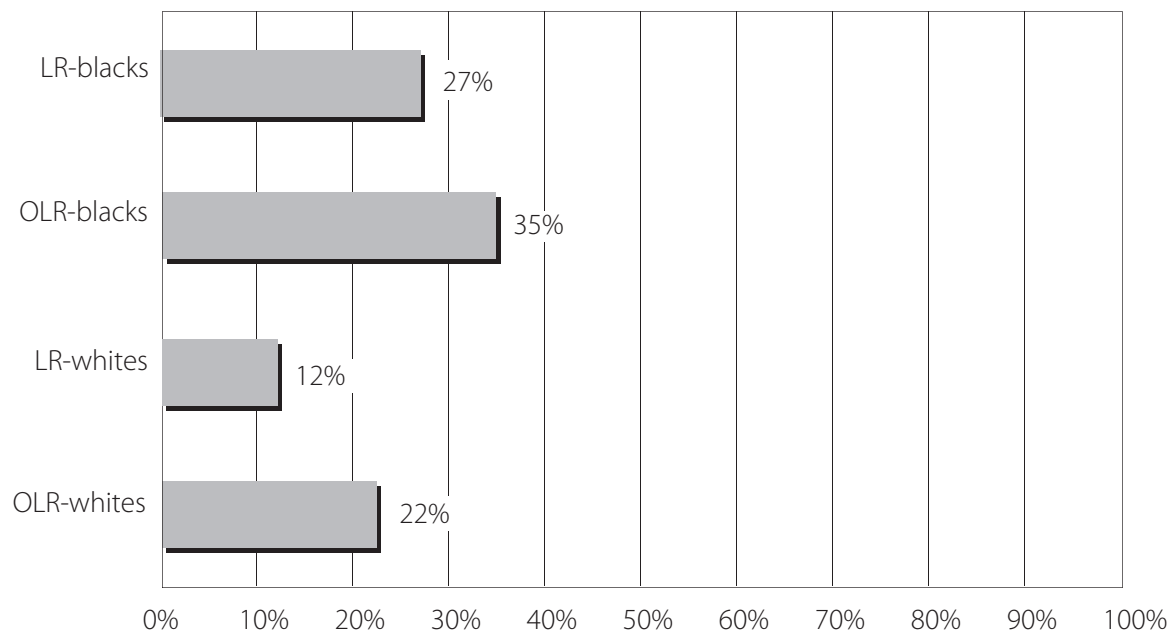
While most blacks and whites are generally satisfied with their current level of education, significantly more blacks than whites report being dissatisfied with their current education level. It should be noted that whites in the study sample are twice as likely as blacks to report having a college degree.

In addition to differences between blacks and whites, differences also exist between Little Rock respondents and respondents living in Pulaski County outside Little Rock in regard to satisfaction with their current level of education. More respondents who live outside of Little Rock report dissatisfaction with their current level of education. Exhibit 4 shows the total percentages who responded “very dissatisfied” or “somewhat dissatisfied.”

**Exhibit 3**  
**Percentages who report being treated unfairly because of race during their K-12 education**



**Exhibit 4**  
**Percentages who report dissatisfaction with their current level of education**



## *Deciding Whether to Pursue Education After High School*

The survey includes two questions about pursuing education after high school. Respondents who had not gone to college were asked for the main reason they had not pursued additional education. Likewise, respondents who had gone to college were asked to give the main reason they had pursued additional education.



*What is the main reason you did not pursue additional education after high school?*

- ◆ **The most common reasons given for not pursuing education after high school are family obligations or children, expense, and the need to go to work.**

The most common reasons given by all four groups for not pursuing additional education are family obligations or children, expensive cost of education, and the need to go to work. These three reasons account for approximately one-half of the main reasons mentioned by all four groups. Small percentages of respondents cite a wide variety of other reasons.

Blacks mention family obligations most often, with 24 percent of both LR-blacks and OLR-blacks giving this reason. Whites mention most often that additional education was too expensive. Twenty-nine (29) to 32 percent of whites give expense as the main reason they did not pursue additional education.

Eight (8) percent of LR-blacks report going into the military, followed by 5 percent of OLR-whites, 4 percent of OLR-blacks, and 1 percent of LR-whites.

Around 1 out of 10 residents outside of Little Rock say that going to college was not expected of them. Thirteen (13) percent of OLR-blacks and 9 percent of OLR-whites say something to the effect of "It was not expected of me." Few Little Rock residents of either racial group (1 to 4 percent) give this response.



*What is the main reason you decided to pursue additional education after high school?*

- ◆ **The most common reasons given for the decision to pursue education after high school are to improve quality of life, to obtain a higher paying job, to pursue a specific career, and to obtain a more satisfying job.**

Four reasons account for 73 to 83 percent of the main reasons respondents cite for pursuing higher education: to improve the respondent's quality of life, to obtain a higher paying job, to pursue a specific career, and to obtain a more satisfying job.

LR-blacks mention two reasons most frequently – a better quality of life (29 percent) and a higher paying job (27 percent). LR-whites agree with LR-blacks about those two reasons and also mention pursuing a specific career, with 20 to 24 percent citing each of the three reasons.

OLR-blacks are most likely to mention a better quality of life (34 percent), followed by a higher paying job (19 percent) and a more satisfying job (17 percent). OLR-whites mention a higher paying job most frequently (30 percent), followed by a better quality of life (24 percent) and to pursue a specific career (20 percent).

Exhibit 5 shows the most commonly mentioned reasons for the decision of whether or not to pursue education after high school.

**Exhibit 5**  
**Most common reasons for deciding whether or not to pursue education after high school**

<b>Did NOT pursue education</b>	<b>Did pursue education</b>
Family obligations/children Too expensive Had to go to work	Improve quality of life Higher paying job To pursue a specific career Obtain a more satisfying job

## Perceptions and Opinions of Education

A series of questions focus on perceptions and opinions of education, including the following topics:

- ◆ Opinions about equal access to “a good education” and to higher education
- ◆ Levels of trust in K-12 school officials and teachers to treat black and white children with equal fairness
- ◆ Opinions of the quality of public and private K-12 education in Pulaski County
- ◆ Perceptions of the main reasons families send their children to public or private schools
- ◆ Opinions about the importance of a college education to succeed in life

The majority of all respondents think that black children have as good a chance as white children to get a good education in their communities. In responses to questions asked about trust in educators, a statistically significant racial difference is found.

The most common rating for the quality of education provided by *public* schools in Pulaski County is “fair.” The most common rating for the quality of education provided by *private* schools in Pulaski County is “good.”

Most respondents believe that families decide to send their children to private schools because private schools are perceived to have a better academic reputation. Most respondents believe that families send their children to public schools because they cannot afford private schools.

In regard to higher education, survey results suggest that blacks are more likely than whites to believe that completing a college degree is “very important” for success in life. The majority of respondents in all four geo-racial groups think that college admissions should be based solely on the basis of merit rather than taking race into consideration.

## *Equal Chance*



*In general, do you think black children have as good a chance as white children in your community to get a good education, or do you NOT think they have as good a chance?*

- ◆ **Blacks are more likely than they were three years ago to believe that black children have as good a chance as white children to get a good education.**
- ◆ **The majority of both blacks and whites think that black children and white children stand an equal chance of receiving a good education.**

This question asks respondents to give their personal opinions about children’s access to a good education. Respondents were asked if they think black and white children stand an equal chance in the education system, whether or not they have children in K-12 schools themselves. The same question was asked in the Year 1 racial attitudes survey and some changes can be noted.

The majority of all respondents think that black children have as good a chance as white children to get a good education in their communities. When this question was asked in the Year 1 survey, fewer than one-half of LR-blacks (48 percent) and just over one-half of OLR-blacks (56 percent) held this opinion. In Year 4 the figures are higher, with 60 percent of LR-blacks and 70 percent of OLR-blacks believing that black and white children stand an equal chance of receiving a good education.

The responses of white participants vary less between Year 1 and Year 4. In Year 1, 63 percent of LR-whites and 83 percent of OLR-whites felt that blacks stood as good a chance as whites in the education system, compared to 68 percent of LR-whites and 77 percent of OLR-whites in Year 4.

## *Fairness and Trust in Schools*

In previous years the Pulaski County racial attitudes survey included questions about trust, an important factor in racial attitudes. The Year 4 survey includes two new education-spe-



cific trust questions probing the level of trust in school officials and teachers to treat blacks and whites with equal fairness. These questions were asked of all respondents whether or not they have children who are currently in K-12 schools. The questions were designed to 1) examine people’s perception of the kind of treatment black and white children might receive in the K-12 educational system, and 2) assess if people’s confidence in the fairness of the system is influenced by their race.



*How much trust do you have in school board members, administration, and principals to decide and implement policies that are equally fair to whites and blacks? Would you say you trust them a lot, trust them some, trust them only a little, or not at all?*

- ◆ **Whites are approximately twice as likely as blacks to express “a lot” of trust in school officials to decide and implement policies that are equally fair to blacks and whites.**

Blacks are significantly less likely than whites to trust the fairness of school officials. Only 10 percent of LR and OLR-blacks say they trust school officials “a lot,” compared to 18 percent of LR-whites and 22 percent of OLR-whites.

Correspondingly, blacks are more likely to report lower levels of trust, with nearly 40 percent of blacks saying that they trust school officials “only a little” or “not at all,” compared to only 23 to 27 percent of whites.



*How much trust do you have in teachers to treat black and white children with equal fairness? Would you say you trust them a lot, trust them some, trust them only a little, or not at all?*

- ◆ **Whites are more than twice as likely as blacks to express “a lot” of trust in teachers to treat black and white children with equal fairness.**

Statistically significant differences exist between races at the upper and lower levels of the trust scale. Blacks are far less likely than whites to have a high level of trust in teachers, as shown in Exhibit 6.

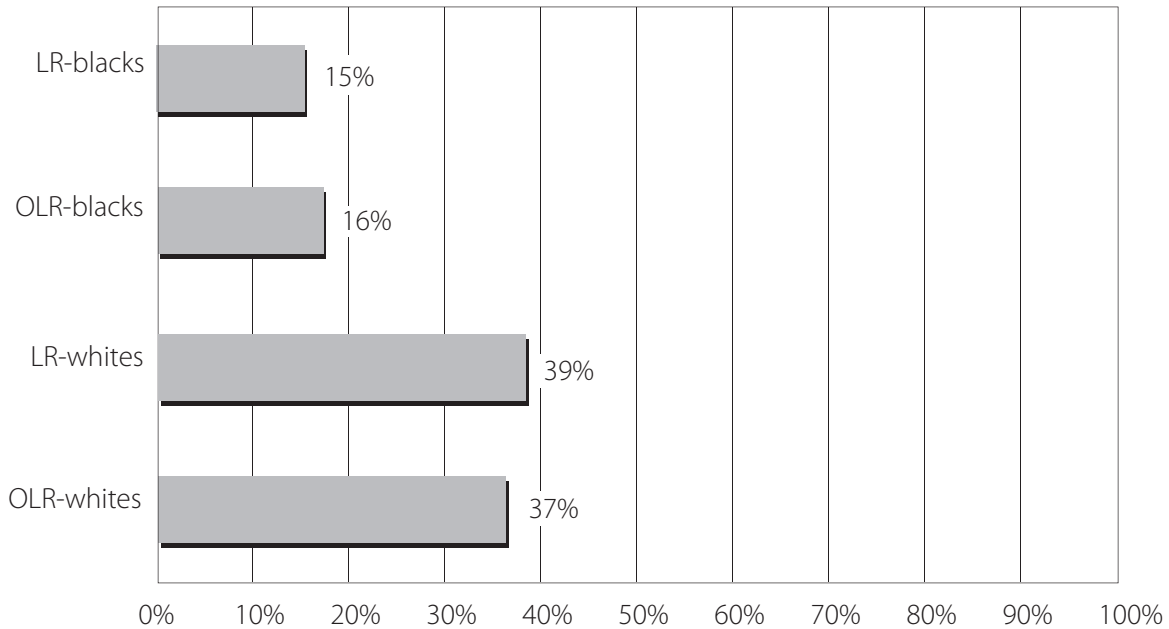
## ***Perceptions of Public and Private K-12 Schools***

The questions in this section examine respondents’ general opinions of the current quality of education in Pulaski County from kindergarten to 12th grade, including differences in perceptions of public and private schools.

These questions were designed to assess respondents’ personal beliefs about the quality of education in today’s public and private schools, regardless of their own experiences in the past. The questions were asked of all respondents, whether they had children or not.

Overall, blacks and whites appear to have similar opinions about the quality of education in public and private schools. Across all geo-racial groups, more than one-third of respondents say that the quality of education in public schools is “fair”. In each of the geo-racial

**Exhibit 6**  
**Percentages who express “a lot” of trust in teachers to treat black and white children with equal fairness**



groups except OLR-blacks, “fair” is the most common rating of the quality of education in public schools. Among OLR-blacks, “good” is the most common rating of the quality of education in public schools. In each of the geo-racial groups, the most common rating of the quality of education from private schools is “good.” The findings suggest that respondents have a higher opinion of the quality of education in private schools than in public schools.

**Public Schools**

*We are interested in your opinions about schools. For the next set of questions, please think about ALL schools located in Pulaski County including the Little Rock, North Little Rock, and Pulaski County school districts AND all private schools.*



*Overall, what is your opinion of the quality of education children are now receiving in public kindergarten through 12th grade schools? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, or poor?*

- ◆ **Across all geo-racial groups, more than one-third of respondents say they think the quality of education in public schools is “fair.”**

Overall, there are few differences to be found among the groups in regard to their opinions of the quality of education in Pulaski County public schools. More than one-third of blacks and whites rate the quality of education in public schools as “fair.” In each of the geo-racial groups except OLR-blacks, “fair” is the most common rating of the quality of education in public schools. Among OLR-blacks, “good” is the most common rating of the quality of education in public schools.

## Private Schools



Overall, what is your opinion of the quality of education children are now receiving in private kindergarten through 12th grade schools? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, or poor?

- ◆ In each of the geo-racial groups, “good” is the most common rating of the quality of education in Pulaski County private schools.

The majority of blacks and whites report that their opinion of the quality of education in Pulaski County private schools is “excellent” or “good,” with “good” being the most common rating of the quality of education.

The findings suggest that all geo-racial groups have a higher opinion of the quality of education in private schools than in public schools. Exhibit 7 lists the quality ratings given most frequently to education in public and private schools by the four geo-racial groups.

**Exhibit 7**  
**Most common quality rating of education in private and public schools**

	PRIVATE	PUBLIC
LR-blacks	GOOD	FAIR
LR-whites	GOOD	FAIR
OLR-blacks	GOOD	GOOD
OLR-whites	GOOD	FAIR

## Reasons for Choosing Public or Private Schools



What do you think are the main reasons a family decides to send their children to private schools?

- ◆ Most respondents believe that families decide to send their children to private schools because private schools are perceived to have a better academic reputation.

Few differences are found among the groups when they were asked about the reasons a family might choose a private school. The reason mentioned most frequently by all four geo-racial groups is academic quality. Approximately 5 out of 10 respondents (47 to 52 percent) mention reasons such as a better academic reputation, better classes, or a better curriculum.

More than 1 in 10 respondents mention issues related to safety/location in better neighborhoods (13 to 16 percent) and better racial fit (13 to 19 percent). Around 1 in 10 respondents also mention class sizes and teacher quality.



*What do you think are the main reasons a family decides to send their children to public schools?*

- ◆ **Most respondents believe that families send their children to public schools because they cannot afford private schools.**

When asked about the reasons a family might send their children to public schools, the majority of all respondents say that families send their children to public schools because they cannot afford private schools. However, some differences can be noted between blacks and whites in this category. Whites are more likely than blacks to believe that an inability to afford private schools results in a family sending their children to a public school, with approximately 70 percent of whites and approximately 57 percent of blacks naming this as a reason.

Other reasons are mentioned much less often. More racial diversity is the second most popular reason for sending children to public schools, with 13 to 17 percent of whites and blacks selecting this option. Roughly 1 in 10 respondents in each of the geo-racial groups say people choose public schools for academic reputation/better classes/better curriculum. This is the third most popular perceived reason for choosing a public school, whereas it is the top perceived reason for choosing a private school.

Exhibit 8 summarizes the top three reasons mentioned by respondents for sending children to private and to public schools.

**Exhibit 8**  
**Top three cited reasons families send their children to private or public schools**

PRIVATE	PUBLIC
Academic reputation/Better curriculum Safety Better racial fit	Cannot afford private school More racial diversity Academic reputation/Better curriculum

## Higher Education

Three survey questions directly address higher education. One question asks about the importance of a college education for success in life. Two others focus on opinions and perceptions of college admissions practices and policies in regard to applicants of different races.

### Importance of College Education



*These days, how important is it for a person to have a college education to succeed in life? Would you say very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?*

- ◆ **A large majority of both blacks and whites believe a college education is “very important” for success.**

Seven (7) out of 10 whites and 8 out of 10 blacks believe that having a college education is “very important” to succeed in life.

### College Admissions Policies and Practices

Two questions about college admissions policies and practices were asked in Year 1 of the survey and again, three years later, in Year 4. The questions address perceptions of college admissions practices and preferences for college admissions policies. The results show a gap in beliefs and perceptions between blacks and whites. However, this gap narrowed between Year 1 and Year 4 in opinions about admissions policies.



*If two equally qualified students, one white and one black, applied to a major U.S. college or university, who do you think would have the better chance of being accepted to the college – the white student, the black student, or would they have the same chance?*

- ◆ **The majority of whites believe that equally qualified black and white students have the same chance of being accepted to a major college or university.**
- ◆ **The majority of blacks believe that white students stand a better chance than black students of being accepted to a major college or university.**

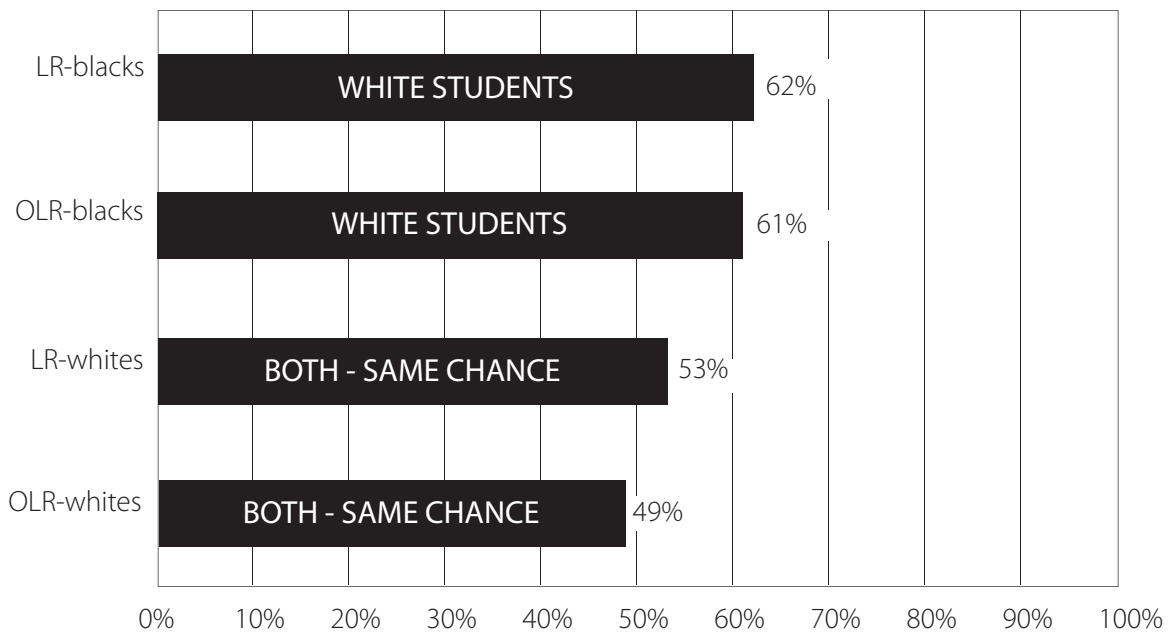
Black and white Pulaski County respondents have different opinions about college admission practices. One-half of whites say that equally qualified students have the same chance of being accepted, regardless of their race. Considerably fewer blacks—only one-third—say that equally qualified students have the same chance of being accepted.

Six (6) out of 10 blacks, both LR-blacks and OLR-blacks, think that a white student would be more likely to be accepted than an equally qualified black student. Virtually no blacks (2 percent) think a black student would have a better chance of being accepted.

The opinions of whites are less extreme. Three (3) out of 10 whites believe a black student would have a better chance. Eleven (11) percent of LR-whites and 17 percent of OLR-whites believe that a white student would have a better chance.

Exhibit 9 shows the most frequent response of each geo-racial group to this question.

**Exhibit 9**  
**Groups with the “better chance” for admission to college**



The opinions of LR-blacks and LR-whites, but not of the OLR groups, have changed since Year 1. In Year 4 both Little Rock groups are more likely than they were three years ago to believe that equally qualified black and white students would have the same chance. In Year 1, 21 percent of LR-blacks and 42 percent of LR-whites said that both students would have the same chance. In Year 4, 33 percent of LR-blacks and 53 percent of LR-whites say that both students would have the same chance.

This question asks for respondents’ perceptions of how college admissions decisions *are* made. The next question asks for opinions on how college admissions decisions *should be* made.



*Which comes closer to your view about evaluating students for admission into a college or university: 1) applicants should be admitted solely on the basis of merit, even if that results in few minority students being admitted; or 2) an applicant’s racial and ethnic background should be considered*

*to help promote diversity on college campuses, even if that means admitting some minority students who otherwise would not be admitted?*

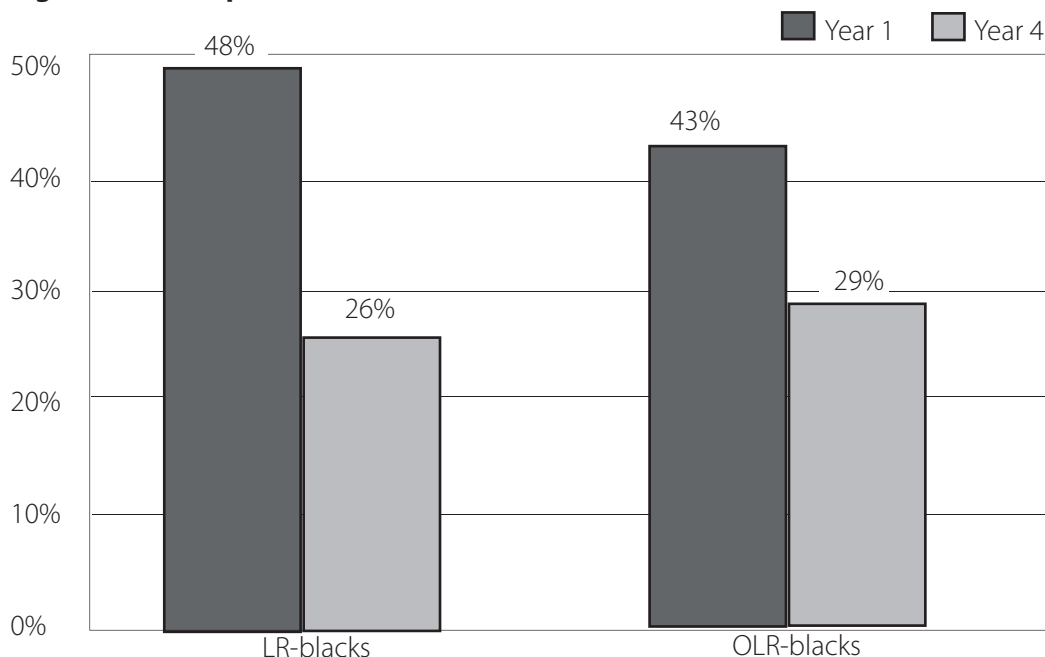
- ◆ **The majority of blacks and whites believe that college applicants should be admitted solely on the basis of merit, even if that results in few minority students being admitted.**
- ◆ **A lower percentage of blacks in Year 4 than in Year 1 believe that race should be a factor in college admissions policies.**

Should admission depend on merit, or should racial/ethnic background be considered? In a change from Year 1, the majority of all four geo-racial groups in Year 4 believe that admissions should be merit-based.

As shown in Exhibit 10, in Year 4 blacks were much less likely than in Year 1 to say that an applicant’s racial and ethnic background should be considered in evaluating students for admission into a college or university. The opinions of whites did not change over the three-year period. Changes in the opinions of blacks resulted in less difference between blacks and whites in Year 4, although the black/white differences are still statistically significant.

In contrast to Year 1, Year 4 results suggest that the majority of all groups believe that college admissions should be based solely on merit. Sixty-five (65) to 66 percent of blacks say admissions should be based on merit. Seventy-five (75) percent of LR-whites and 84 percent of OLR-whites express the same view.

**Exhibit 10**  
**Change in percentages of blacks who believe race should be considered in college admissions policies**



## Parents' Thoughts about their Children's K-12 Education

Respondents were asked if they had any children under the age of 18 who attend school in Pulaski County. Twenty-three (23) to 25 percent of whites and 43 to 44 percent of blacks answered "yes." Those respondents were asked subsequent questions about their children's education. They were asked whether their children attend public or private schools. They were asked if they would change their children's schools if it were possible for their children to attend any school, anywhere. Those who indicated that they would send their children to different schools were asked what kind of schools they would choose.

Racial differences can be observed in the numbers of black and white children who attend public or private schools and in the number of respondents who would change the schools their children attend if they could.



*Do these children attend public schools, private schools, or both?*

Previously, all respondents were asked their beliefs about the reasons families send their children to public or private schools. Here, only respondents with children under age 18 who attend K-12 school within Pulaski County were asked what types of schools the children *actually* attend.

- ◆ **Children from black families are significantly more likely to attend public school than children from white families.**

Statistically significant racial differences can be found between blacks and whites and between the two groups of whites regarding the types of schools their children attend. The vast majority (98 percent) of children from black families attend public schools. Children from white families are less likely to go to public schools than children from black families. Of the children from LR-white families, only 61 percent go to public schools. This number jumps to 78 percent for children from OLR-white families, as shown in Exhibit 11.

Of all school types listed, home schooling is the least represented (1 percent or less).



*If it were possible for these children to go to any other school, anywhere, public or private, would you send them to a different school?*

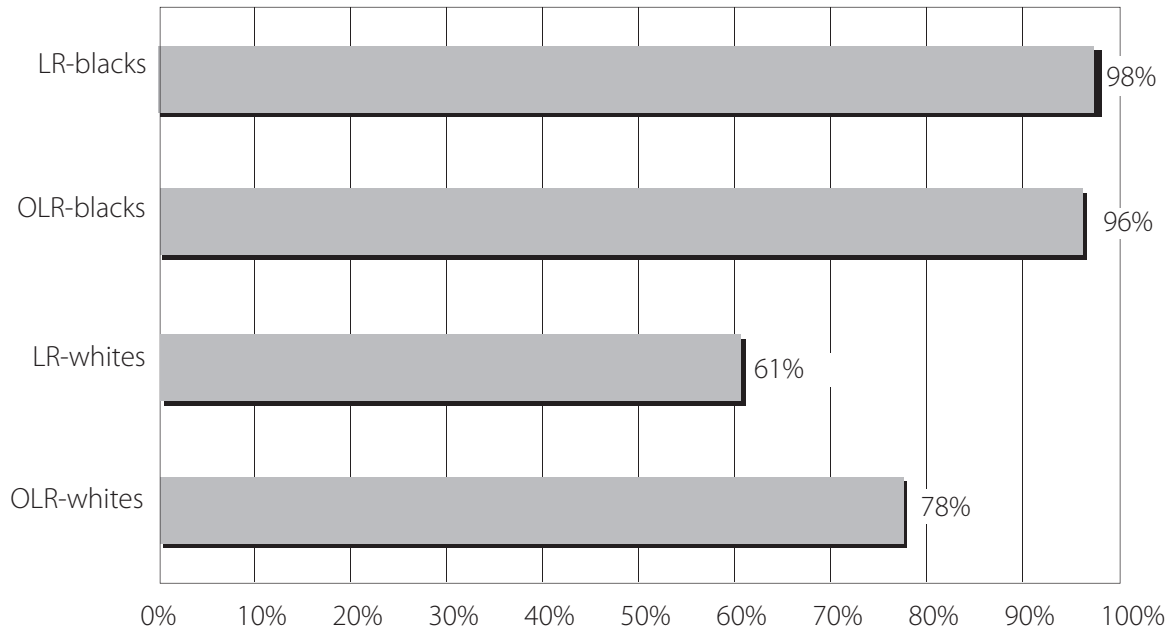
- ◆ **More black families than white families would send their children to different schools if it were possible.**

Overall, there are statistically significant differences between blacks and whites, with more blacks than whites wanting to change the schools their children attend.

Of LR-blacks, nearly one-half (45 percent) of families report that they would change



**Exhibit 11**  
**Percentages who report having their children in public schools in Pulaski County**



their children’s schools if they could, compared to only one-fourth (25 percent) of LR-whites. Outside Little Rock, a similar pattern can be observed. Only 32 percent of white families, compared to over one-half of black families (56 percent), want to change their children’s schools.



*What type of school would it be?*

This question was asked only of respondents who said they would send their children to different schools if possible. A greater number of blacks than whites responded to this question, owing to the fact that a greater number of blacks would change the schools their children attend if it were possible.

Private school proves to be the most popular choice across all geo-racial groups. Approximately three-fourths (74 percent) of LR-blacks and over one-half (53 percent) of OLR-blacks say they would choose a private school. Similar results can be seen for the white respondents, with 50 percent of LR-whites and 85 percent of OLR-whites selecting private school.

# Interracial Perceptions and Race Relations

The second major section in the Year 4 report is devoted to interracial perceptions and race relations, vitally important areas in the study of racial attitudes. Respondents were asked questions designed to examine their perceptions about what blacks and whites think about each other, as well as questions about race relations in Pulaski County. Two questions about the impact of the desegregation of Central High were also asked.

## Interracial Perceptions

Perceptions can influence how people of different races get along with each other, positively or negatively. Perceptions form attitudes, and attitudes influence actions.

Two of the most fundamental and important interracial perceptions are those of trust and disliking. Understanding issues of trust and dislike between blacks and whites is vital to an understanding of the nature of interracial perceptions as a whole. Repeating standard questions such as these from year to year makes it possible to compare results over time, tracking whether attitudes and perceptions have changed and, if so, in what direction.

Overall, the results suggest that blacks are much less likely than whites to trust people in general and to trust specific groups. However, blacks trust whites as much as they trust other blacks. Likewise, whites trust blacks as much as they trust other whites.

When questioned about their perceptions of their race's dislike for the other race, most respondents report the belief that "only a few" or no people in each race dislike members of the other race. This marks a change from the Year 2 responses to this question, with fewer Year 4 respondents perceiving that blacks and whites dislike each other.

### *Trust*



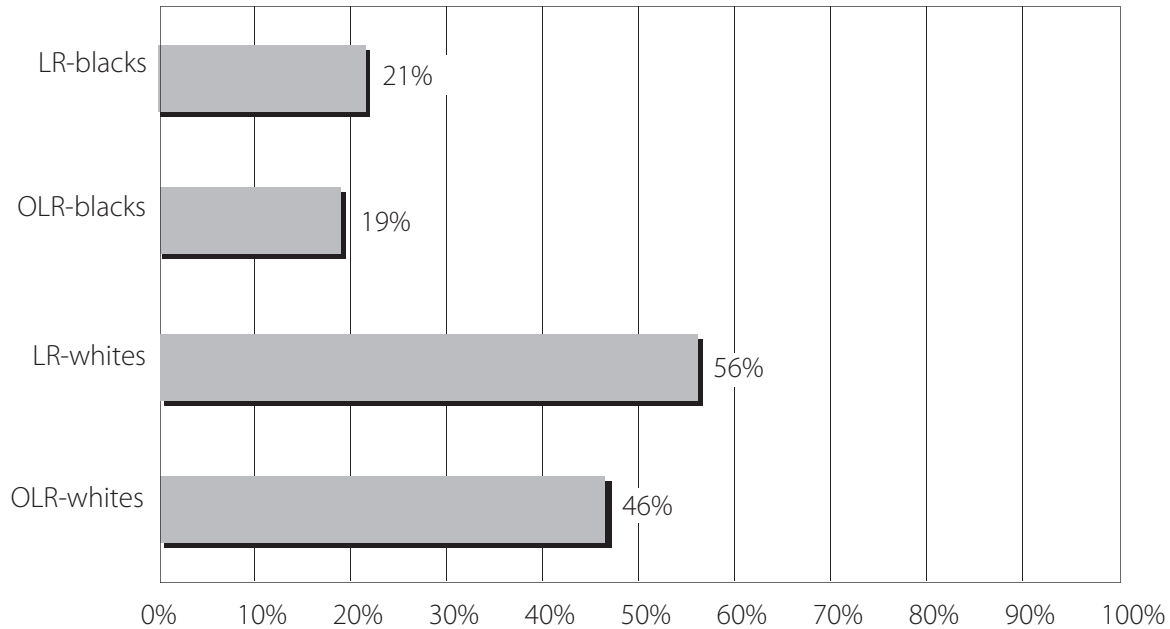
*Generally speaking, would you say that people can be trusted or that you cannot be too careful in dealing with people?*

- ◆ Whites are more than twice as likely as blacks to say, "People can be trusted."
- ◆ LR-whites are more likely than OLR-whites to be trusting of other people.
- ◆ Seven (7) out of 10 blacks say, "You cannot be too careful in dealing with people."

There are no significant differences between the two groups of blacks on this question. However, LR-whites are more likely than OLR-whites to say, "People can be trusted."

Sixty-nine (69) to 70 percent of blacks say, “You cannot be too careful in dealing with people,” in comparison to 40 to 47 percent of whites.

**Exhibit 12**  
**Percentages who say, “People can be trusted.”**



*Next, we’d like to know how much you trust different groups of people. Generally speaking, would you say that you can trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all? White people? Black people? People in your neighborhood? People at your church or place of worship?*

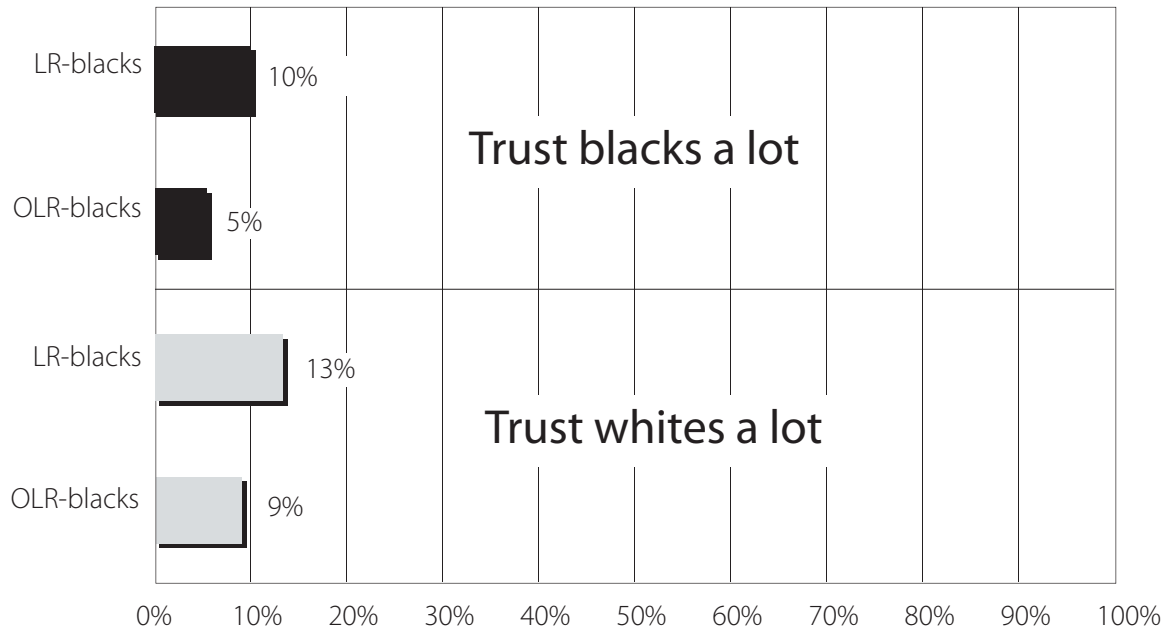
- ◆ **Blacks express the same level of trust for whites as for other blacks.**
- ◆ **Whites express the same level of trust for blacks as for other whites.**

Overall, the patterns revealed by the general trust question are repeated in the responses about specific groups. That is, LR-whites are the most likely to express trust, OLR-whites are the next most likely, and both groups of blacks are considerably less likely than whites to trust any group.

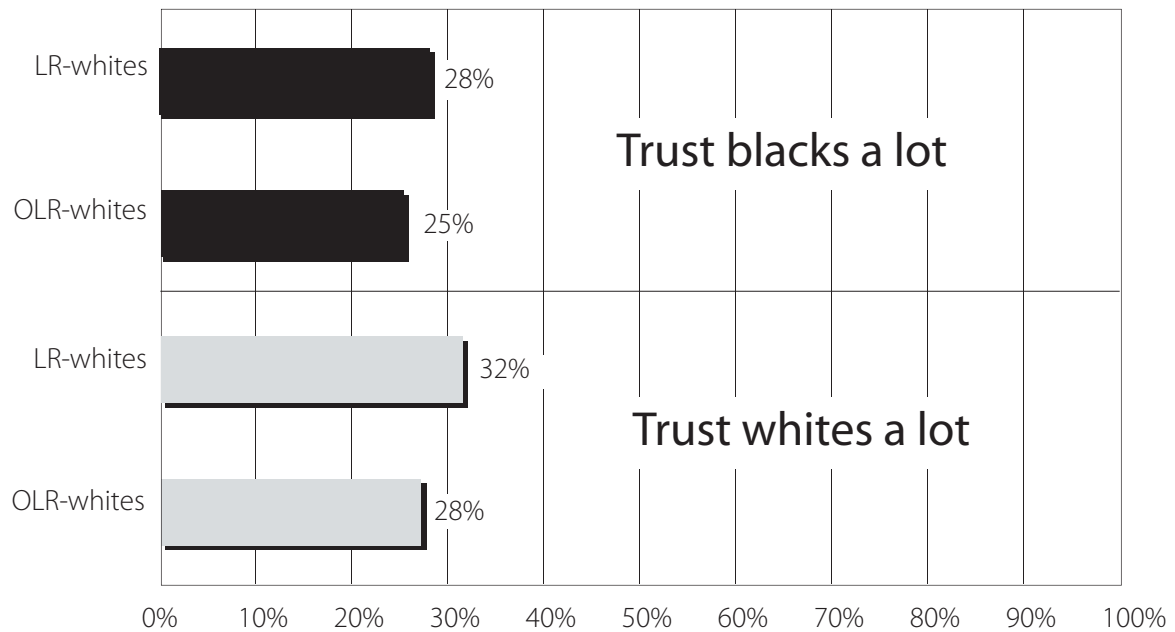
Although blacks are less likely than whites to trust in general, this trust does not appear to be based on race. Survey results show that blacks trust whites as much as they trust blacks. Likewise, whites trust blacks as much as they do whites. Exhibits 13 and 14 show percentages who say they trust blacks or whites “a lot.”

Both blacks and whites have more trust in their neighbors than in members of any specific racial group. Twenty (20) to 23 percent of blacks express “a lot” of trust in people in their neighborhood, as do 52 percent of OLR-whites and 66 percent of LR-whites. Nevertheless, substantial numbers of blacks show little trust in people in their neighborhoods, as Exhibit 15 demonstrates.

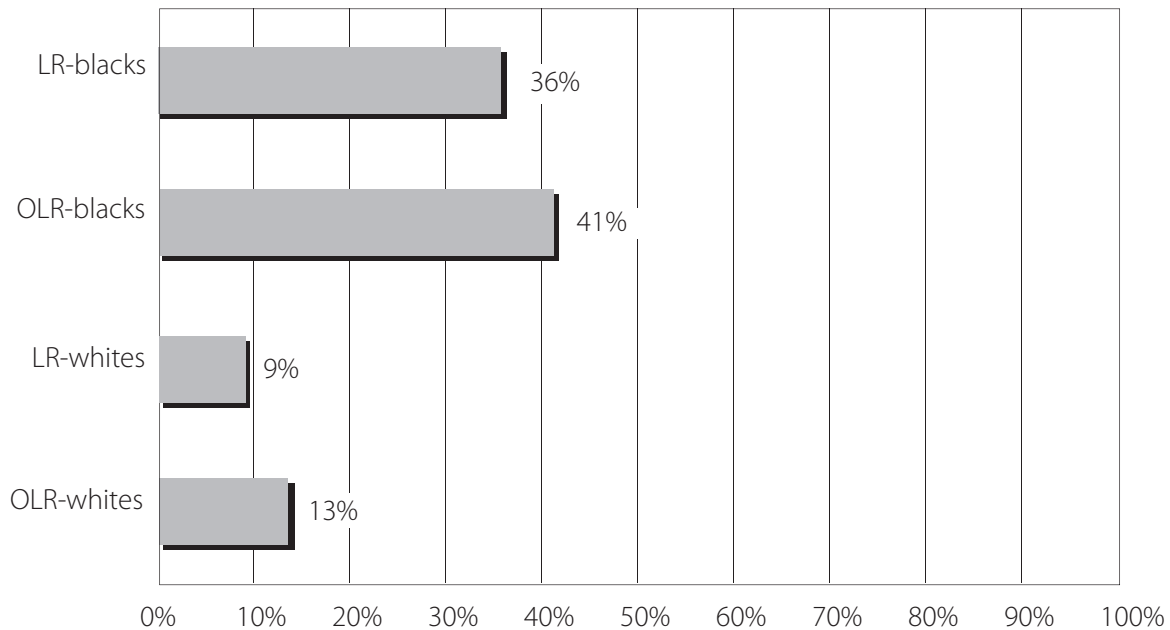
**Exhibit 13**  
**Percentages of BLACKS who trust blacks or whites “a lot”**



**Exhibit 14**  
**Percentages of WHITES who trust blacks or whites “a lot”**



**Exhibit 15**  
**Percentages who trust people in their neighborhood “only a little” or “not at all”**



## Dislike

Whereas the trust questions ask about respondents’ actual levels of trust, the dislike questions ask about respondents’ perceptions about whether people of different races dislike each other.



*Do you think only a few white people dislike blacks, many white people dislike blacks, or almost all white people dislike blacks?*



*Do you think only a few black people dislike whites, many black people dislike whites, or almost all black people dislike whites?*

- ◆ **Most blacks and whites believe that “only a few” people in each race dislike members of the other race.**
- ◆ **More blacks than whites think that white people dislike blacks.**
- ◆ **Fewer respondents believe that blacks and whites dislike each other than was reported in the survey two years ago.**

A majority of all groups believe that “only a few” or no whites dislike blacks. Correspondingly, a majority of all respondents believe that “only a few” or no blacks dislike

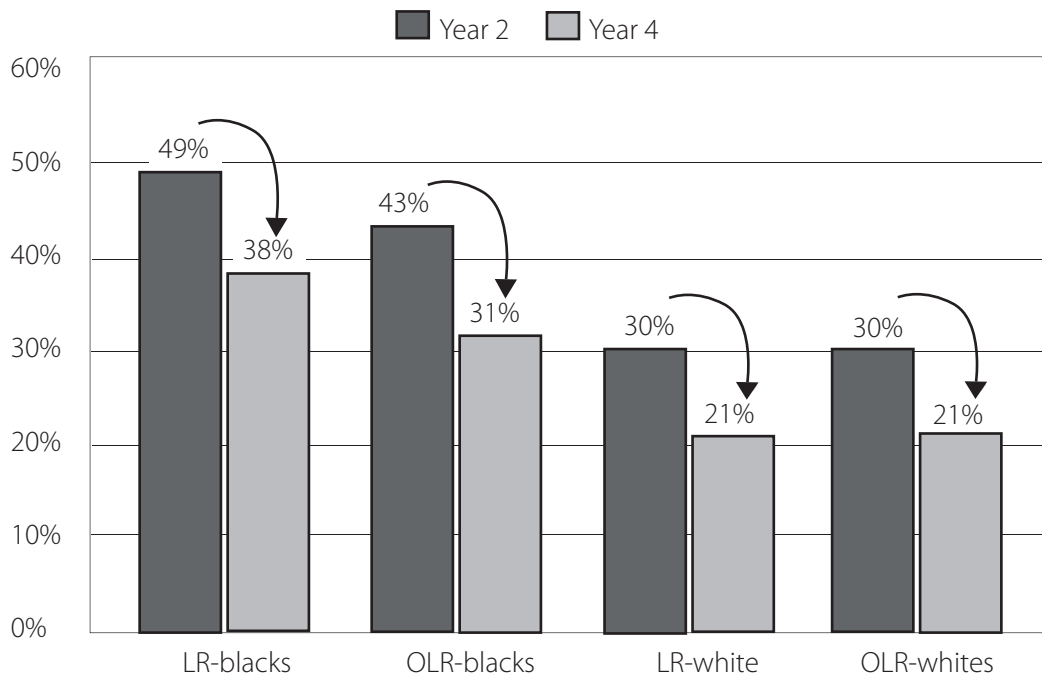
whites. A minority in each group holds the opposite view – that “many” or “almost all” white people dislike blacks and vice versa.

In Year 4, blacks and whites have different perceptions about whether whites dislike blacks. Two (2) out of 10 whites and 3 to 4 out of 10 blacks hold the view that “many” or “almost all” whites dislike blacks. More LR-blacks than OLR-blacks believe that “many” or “almost all” whites dislike blacks.

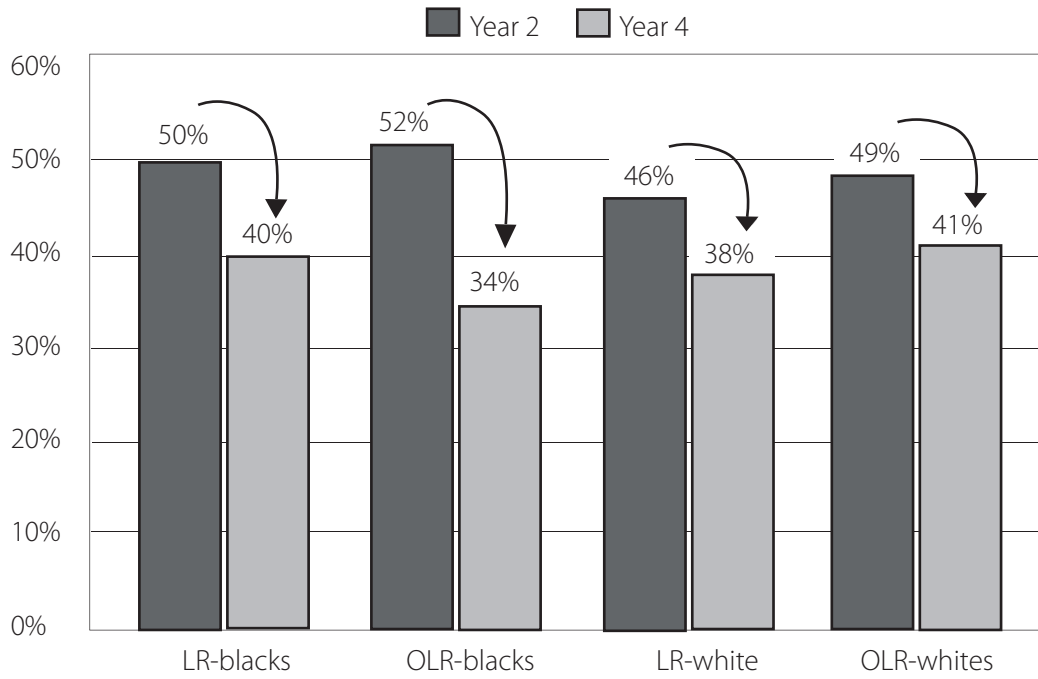
In contrast to the question of whether whites dislike blacks, there are no significant differences among the four groups about whether blacks dislike whites. Thirty-four (34) to 41 percent of all respondents believe that “many” or “almost all” blacks dislike whites.

Encouragingly, perceptions about dislike became more positive in the two years between Year 2 and Year 4 as shown in Exhibits 16 and 17.

**Exhibit 16**  
**Change in percentages who say “many” or “almost all” WHITES dislike blacks**



**Exhibit 17**  
**Change in percentages who say “many” or “almost all” BLACKS dislike whites**



## Race Relations

An examination of race relations involves consideration of the ways people of different races interact. In order to get an overview of the quality of race relations in Pulaski County, the Year 4 survey includes questions designed to examine people’s opinions about race relations in their community. Respondents were asked whether race relations have changed over time, whether they feel it is important for children of different races to interact, and if they think school integration benefits both blacks and whites.

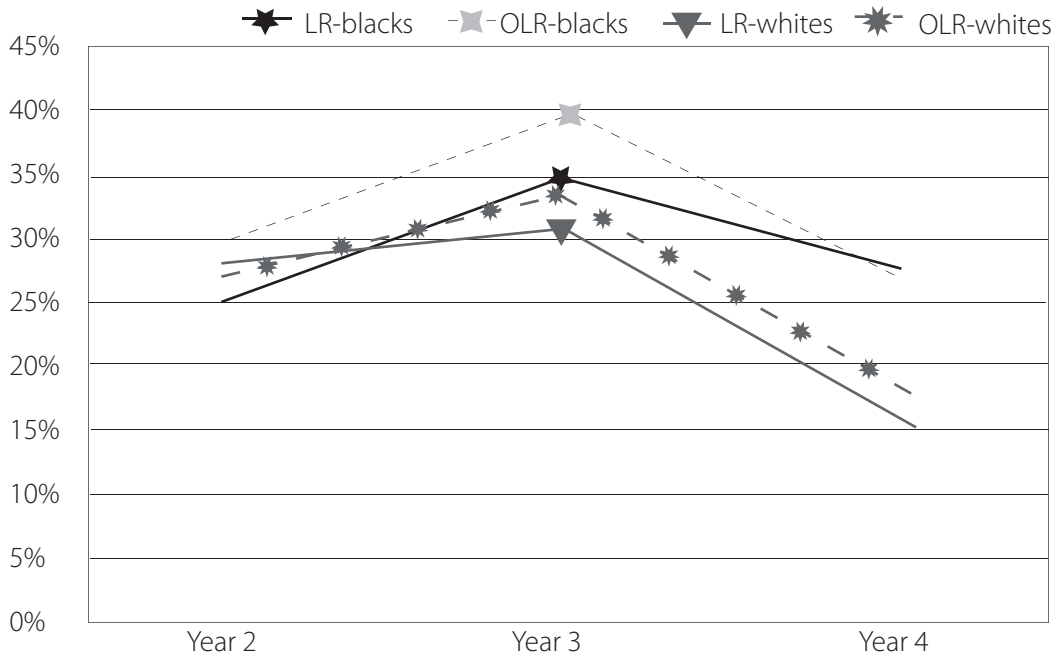
Overall, the findings suggest that the majority of blacks and whites think that race relations have remained the same over the past year. Blacks are more likely to place a high value on racial interaction between children than whites and to report that they believe strongly that school integration benefits both blacks and whites.



*Over the past year, do you think that relations between blacks and whites in Pulaski County have improved, remained about the same, or have gotten worse?*

- ◆ **The majority of all respondents, regardless of residence, think that relations between blacks and whites have “remained about the same” in Pulaski County over the past year.**
- ◆ **In Year 4, three of the four geo-racial groups are less likely to believe that race relations have “improved” than in previous years.**

**Exhibit 18**  
**Percentages reporting race relations have “improved”**



The majority of blacks (63 to 64 percent) and whites (64 to 73 percent) think that race relations have “remained about the same.” Blacks are somewhat more likely than whites to believe that race relations have “improved.” Nearly 3 out of 10 black respondents (27 percent) think that race relations have actually “improved” compared to fewer than 2 out of 10 white respondents (15 to 18 percent).

Interestingly, when the responses are isolated to those who answered that race relations have “improved”, the percentages for all four geo-racial groups decline in Year 4 after increasing in Year 3. The drop in percentages among three of the geo-racial groups (OLR-blacks, LR-whites, and OLR-whites) place the percentages of those reporting “improved” relations at their lowest levels since the question was first asked three years ago. Exhibit 18 plots the percentages of respondents across the three years.



*In general, how important do you think it is that children socialize with children of different races? Would you say very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?*

- ◆ **Blacks are significantly more likely than whites to think that it is “very important” for children to socialize with children of different races.**

Nearly 90 percent of all black respondents think that interracial youth interaction is “very important” as compared to 72 percent of LR-whites and 64 percent of OLR-



whites. Such findings indicate a significant difference not only between blacks and whites, but also between LR-whites and OLR-whites.



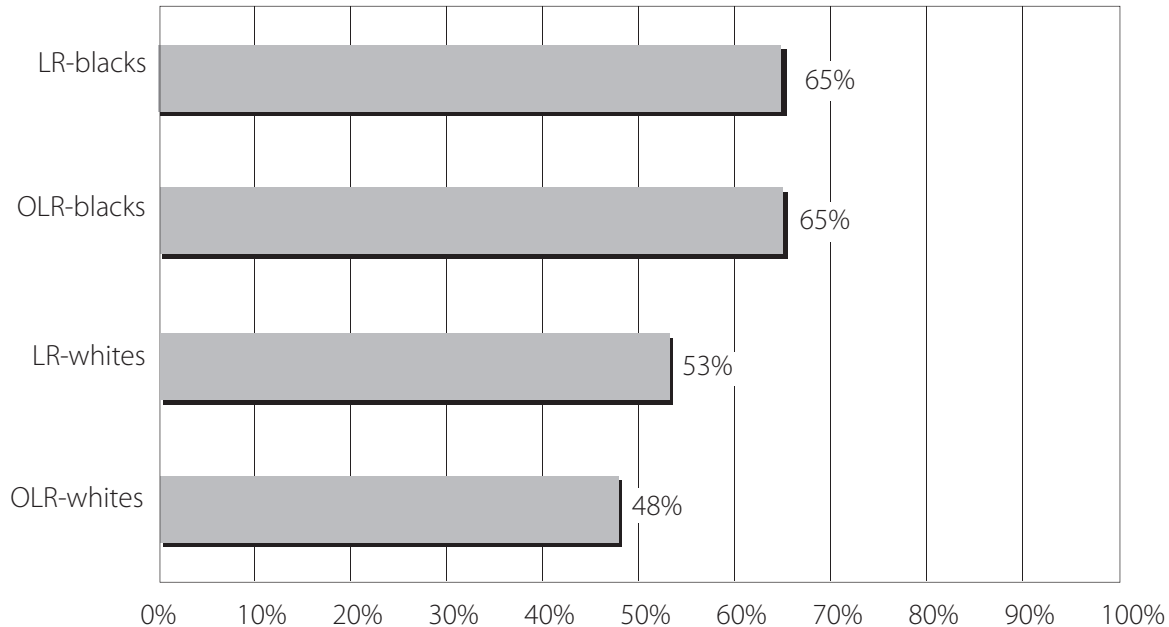
*Would you say you agree or disagree with the following statement: Racial integration of schools benefits both whites and blacks. Strongly or Somewhat?*

- ◆ **Blacks are significantly more likely than whites to “strongly agree” that school integration benefits both races.**

While the vast majority of blacks and whites agree that the racial integration of schools benefits both blacks and whites, blacks are more likely than whites to “strongly agree.” Nearly two-thirds of black respondents “strongly agree” compared to just around one-half of white respondents, as shown in Exhibit 19.

At the other end of the scale, nearly one-fourth (23 percent) of OLR-whites disagree with the statement that school integration benefits both races, as compared to 16 percent or less in all other geo-racial groups.

**Exhibit 19**  
**Percentages who “strongly agree” that racial integration benefits both whites and blacks**



## Little Rock Central High Impact

The survey asks two questions regarding the perceived impact of the desegregation of Little Rock Central High. The questions were included to mark the 50th anniversary of the landmark events of 1957, to acknowledge their importance, and to investigate their influence.

Respondents were asked if the events at Central High are still impacting race relations in Pulaski County today, and if so, whether they feel the impact is “positive” or “negative.” The majority of blacks and whites believe that the events at Central High are still impacting race relations in Pulaski County. Among those who perceive a continuing impact, the majority believe that the impact is “positive.” Blacks are more likely than whites to view the impact as “positive.”

*In 1957 nine black students enrolled at the all-white Little Rock Central High School. There were riots and threats against the black students. Governor Faubus called the Arkansas National Guard to block the black students from entering the school. President Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock to ensure the rights of the black students.*



*Now it is 50 years later. In your opinion, are the events at Central High still impacting black/white race relations in our Pulaski County community today?*



*[If “yes”] Overall, do you think the continuing impact on race relations is positive or negative?*

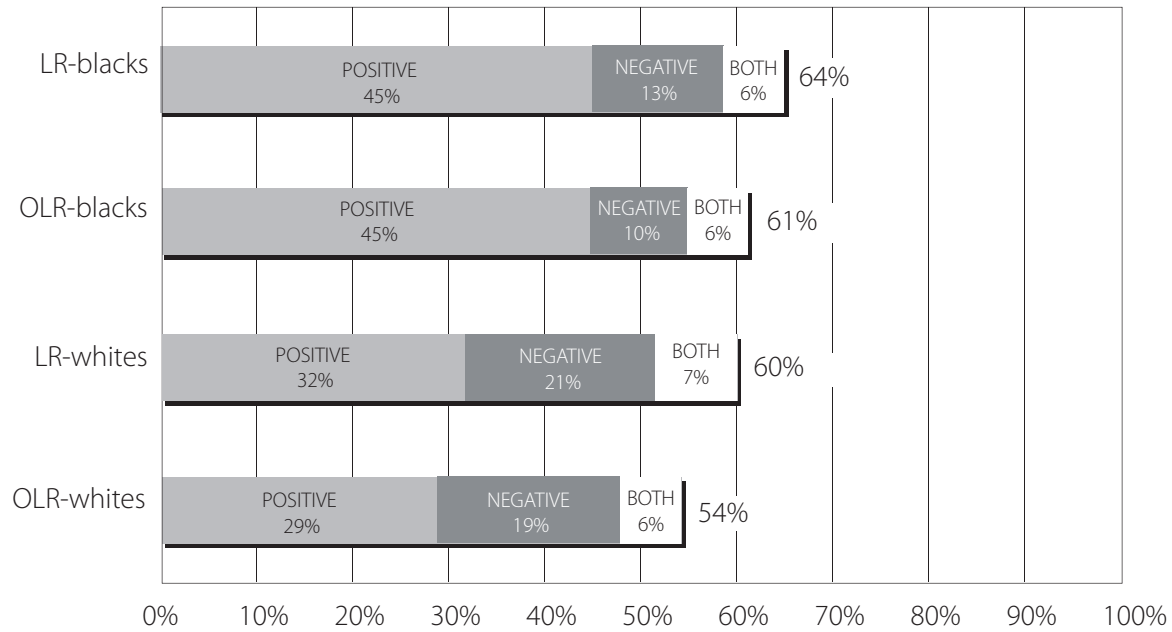
- ◆ **The majority of both blacks and whites believe that the historic events at Central High are still impacting race relations in Pulaski County.**
- ◆ **Blacks are significantly more likely than whites to think that the continuing impact of the historic events at Central High on Pulaski County black/white relations is “positive.”**

Approximately 6 out of 10 respondents in each of the four geo-racial groups think that the desegregation of Central High School continues to impact Pulaski County race relations. Most respondents who believe that the events at Central High are still impacting race relations think that the impact is positive, with blacks being more likely than whites to hold this view. Forty-five (45) percent of all blacks and 29 to 32 percent of all whites believe that the historic events at Central High positively impact race relations.

Six (6) to 7 percent of all groups volunteer the view that events at Central High continue to impact race relations BOTH positively and negatively.

Exhibit 20 shows the percentages who believe that the events at Central High are still impacting race relations in Pulaski County.

**Exhibit 20**  
**Percentages who believe that the events at Central High are still impacting race relations in Pulaski County**



racial	
	attitudes



# Appendix: Data Analysis and Demographics

Descriptive data analysis included frequency distributions and cross-tabulations. Statistical significance was determined by chi-square analyses and t-tests on valid responses. All data analysis was conducted using SPSS. Because of the size of the data set, the level of statistical significance was designated to be 0.05.

The data were weighted in order to bring the sample representations in line with the actual population proportions in Pulaski County. The data were weighted for age and gender for each of four geo-racial groups. The 2000 Census Summary File 1 provided the sample estimates that formed the basis for weighting. There were 5 age groups: 18 to 24 years of age, 25 to 39, 40 to 54, 55 to 64, and 65 and over. This resulted in a total of 40 weighted groups (5 age groups x 2 gender categories x 4 geo-racial groups). Weighting values ranged from 0.30 for black women aged 55 to 64 living in outside the city limits of Little Rock to 5.69 for black men aged 18 to 24 living outside the city limits of Little Rock.

The Appendix Tables 1 & 2 display the basic demographic characteristics of each geo-racial group sample. The tables show the sample breakdown for the weighted variables (age and gender). Tables A3 – A5 display both the sample and 2000 Census figures for the unweighted variables (education, income, and child status).

## Appendix 1: Age

	LR-blacks	OLR-blacks	LR-white	OLR-whites
18 to 24 years	18%	18%	9%	10%
25 to 39 years	31%	33%	29%	28%
40 to 54 years	30%	29%	29%	30%
55 to 64 years	8%	8%	12%	13%
65+ years	9%	9%	20%	17%

## Appendix 2: Gender

	LR-blacks	OLR-blacks	LR-white	OLR-whites
Male	43%	44%	47%	49%
Female	57%	56%	53%	51%

### Appendix 3: Education

	LR-blacks		OLR-blacks		LR-whites		OLR-whites	
	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census
Less than High School	9%	23%	10%	26%	2%	9%	6%	15%
High School Graduate	30%	28%	35%	34%	14%	19%	23%	32%
Some post-high school	37%	31%	36%	29%	23%	27%	33%	30%
College Degree or more	25%	18%	18%	11%	60%	45%	37%	23%

### Appendix 4: Income

	LR-blacks		OLR-blacks		LR-whites		OLR-whites	
	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census
\$0 - \$19,999	31%	39%	34%	40%	11%	17%	15%	18%
\$20,000 - \$34,999	17%	25%	20%	25%	12%	20%	16%	21%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	18%	15%	18%	15%	13%	16%	17%	20%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	14%	13%	11%	12%	16%	19%	18%	22%
\$75,000 or more	10%	8%	9%	7%	42%	28%	26%	19%
Don't Know/Refused	11%		9%		7%		9%	

### Appendix 5: Children in Home

	LR-blacks		OLR-blacks		LR-whites		OLR-whites	
	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census
Yes	53%	41%	56%	46%	36%	23%	35%	29%
No	45%	59%	44%	54%	64%	77%	65%	71%
Refused	2%		0%		0%		0%	

Source: US Census Bureau. 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Copies of this report may be obtained at the following web address:

**<http://www.ualr.edu/iog/racialattitudes.htm>**



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