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ANCES **AMENDMENT**

**2018 Survey of high school  
students and teachers**

**Kenneth Dautrich**  
The Stats Group



**KNIGHT  
FOUNDATION**

DECEMBER 2018

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# Executive Summary

The 2018 “Future of the First Amendment” study marks the seventh time since 2004 that Knight Foundation has commissioned a survey of high school students and teachers to understand their attitudes toward First Amendment issues. The 2018 survey, conducted by Kenneth Dautrich of The Stats Group, included core questions used in past surveys to monitor trends as well as new questions about topical issues regarding the First Amendment. The survey also incorporated questions from Gallup’s Knight-commissioned First Amendment survey of college students released in March 2018, so high school and college student attitudes could be compared.



The 2018 Future of the First Amendment (FOFA) survey polled national samples of 9,774 high school students and 498 teachers.

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# First Amendment and Censorship

## Steady support for First Amendment

High school student support for First Amendment freedoms remains high since the inception of the survey in 2004. Only about one-quarter of students say the First Amendment goes too far in the rights that it guarantees, down from 45 percent in 2006. Worryingly, fewer students report taking a class in high school dealing with the First Amendment, which past surveys have shown is associated with higher levels of First Amendment support.

## Students favor limits to free speech

Students distinguish between the right to express “unpopular opinions” and “offensive speech.” While an overwhelming majority of students supports the right to express unpopular opinions (89 percent), only half as many believe people have the right to speech that others consider offensive (45 percent). Still, when forced to choose which is more important, students by a 5-to-1 ratio say protecting free speech is more important than protecting people from offensive speech.

## Questioning social media’s impact on expression

The survey demonstrates students’ concerns with how social media is affecting free expression. About half of students believe social media stifles expression because people block those with opposing views and because the fear of vitriolic encounters makes people less apt to share their views. A large majority (70 percent) also believes the internet is responsible for a rise in hate speech.

## Growing comfort in government censorship

Fewer students than in the 2016 survey agree that the government should not be able to block what people say on social media. Furthermore, a growing minority of students (28 percent) says journalism “keep[s] leaders from doing their job” as opposed to “keeps leaders from doing things that shouldn’t be done” when asked to select which statement more closely reflects their views.



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# News Environment

## Declining news engagement and trust

Student consumption of, and trust in, local TV news and cable TV news declined significantly. Meanwhile, student consumption and engagement with news on social media slightly decreased.

## Encountering and recognizing “fake news”

This year’s survey asked questions about “fake news”—inaccurate or made-up stories presented as journalism. Less than a quarter of students view fake news as a significant threat to democracy. Most students say they have come across fake news stories, yet only 20 percent say they are very confident in their own ability to recognize inaccurate news. A majority of students believes that both the government and social networking site operators bear some responsibility to prevent fake news.

The appendixes of this report contain information about the survey methodology and summarize results for the 2018 student and teacher surveys.



## FINDING 1

# Steady support for the First Amendment

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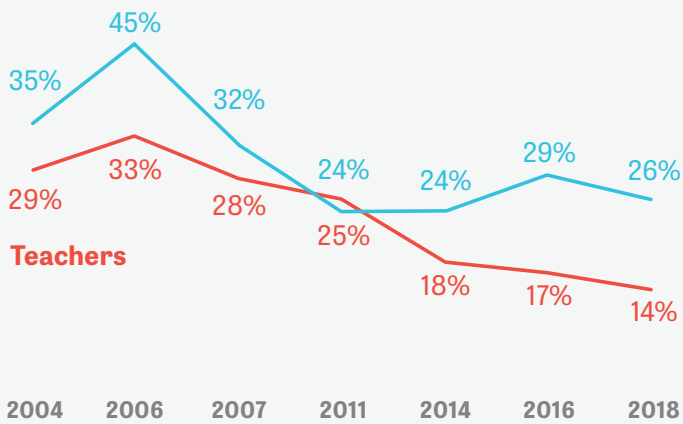


High school student support for First Amendment freedoms remains high relative to historical levels of support in prior iterations of the survey. Only 26 percent believe the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees, which is about the same as it has been in surveys since the start of the decade and well below the 45 percent of students who felt this way in 2006. Student attitudes meaningfully diverge by race/ethnicity, with an 18-point gap between black and white students (40 percent vs. 22 percent, respectively).

### Steady support for the First Amendment

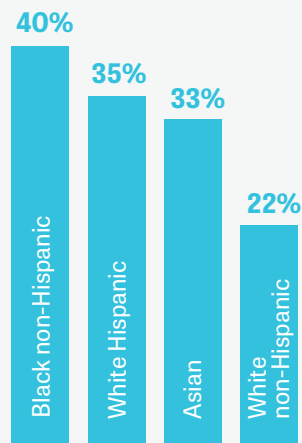
Believe "the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees"

#### Students



#### Teachers

Believe "the First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees" by race/ethnicity



Similarly, an even proportion of students report that they personally think about their First Amendment freedoms (32 percent) as opposed to taking those freedoms for granted (33 percent). This parallels the near-even split in the past few surveys but is a higher level of support than in the earliest surveys (e.g., in 2006, 24 percent said they personally think about freedoms vs. 42 percent who reported taking them for granted). By contrast, 59 percent of high school teachers now say they personally think about their First Amendment freedoms, which represents a 9-point increase over the past two years and the highest mark since the survey began in 2004.

Students who report having taken a high school class dealing with the First Amendment are more likely to personally think about their freedoms than those who have not taken such a class (35 percent to 27 percent) and disagree that the First Amendment goes too far (55 percent to 50 percent). That said, only 64 percent of students say they have taken a class dealing with the First Amendment, which is down from 68 percent in 2016 and a high of 72 percent in 2006.

## FINDING 2

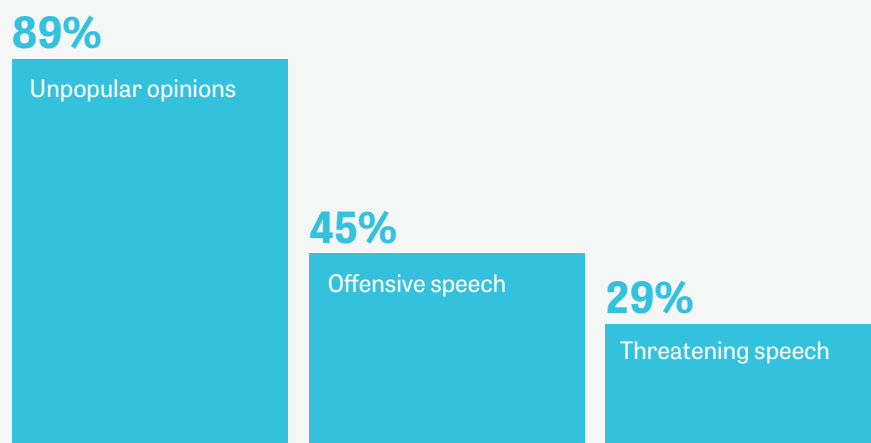
# Students distinguish between unpopular and offensive speech



Student support for free speech very much depends on the nature of the speech. Nearly 9 in 10 students agree that people should have the right to express unpopular opinions, a high level of support consistent with the past several surveys. However, only half as many students (45 percent) agree that people should be allowed to say what they want if what they say is offensive to others, and only a third as many (29 percent) support the right to speech that could be seen as threatening to others. Male students are more likely than female students to agree that people have the right to make potentially offensive speech (53 percent vs. 36 percent) and generally report higher levels of support for First Amendment rights across most survey questions.

Still, when forced to choose between protecting free speech and protecting people from being offended by others' speech, students overwhelmingly pick the former by a 5-to-1 ratio (65 percent to 12 percent). The priority to protect people's free speech varies by race/ethnicity, with white students (70 percent) being most likely to prioritize free speech, followed by Hispanic students (60 percent), Asian students (54 percent) and black students (52 percent).

**Student support for free speech based on content characterization**





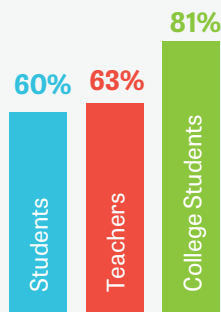
This year's high school survey incorporated several questions from Gallup's Free Expression on Campus<sup>1</sup> survey of college students about the First Amendment in order to compare the two. Asked to choose which is more important, 57 percent of high school students select "protecting citizens' free speech rights," compared with 43 percent who select "promoting an inclusive society that is welcoming to diverse groups." College students, on the other hand, are more likely to choose promoting inclusion over protecting free speech rights (53 percent vs. 46 percent).

High school students are also more likely than college students to believe hate speech should be protected by the First Amendment. Though less than half (46 percent) of high school students believe hate speech constitutes expression protected by the First Amendment, this is significantly greater than the share of college students (35 percent).

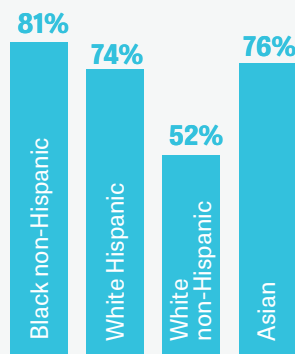
Finally, both the high school and college surveys included a question stemming from recent events in the NFL about the rights of athletes to protest during the national anthem. In this instance, more college students than high school students (81 percent to 60 percent) believe professional athletes have the right to protest during the national anthem. Among high school students, opinions vary by race, with 81 percent of black students agreeing this is a First Amendment right, compared with 52 percent of white non-Hispanic students.

### High school students less supportive than college students of pro athletes' right to protest during anthem

Agree professional athletes have the First Amendment right to protest during the national anthem



Agree professional athletes have the First Amendment right to protest during the national anthem by race/ethnicity



## FINDING 3

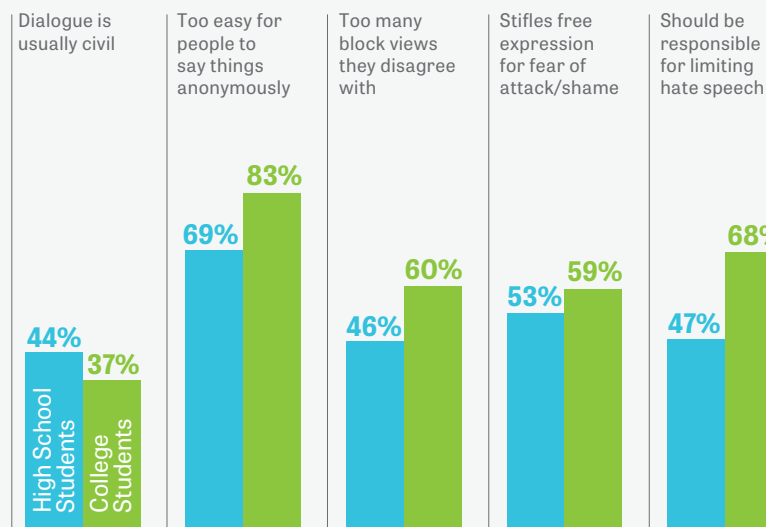
# Students' concerns about social media's influence on free expression



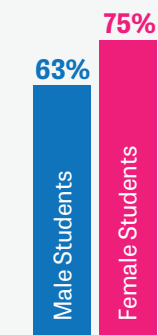
High school students express concerns about the dialogue that occurs on social media. Less than half (44 percent) report that the dialogue on social media is usually civil, and over two-thirds (69 percent) agree that it's too easy for people to anonymously say things on social media. Female students tend to be more critical of social media than male students; e.g., 75 percent of female students say it's too easy for people to anonymously say things on social media, compared with 63 percent of male students.

### Negative experiences using social media

Student agreement with statements about social media use



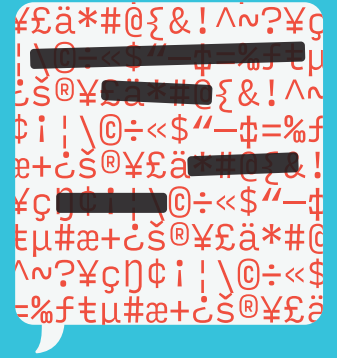
Agree is too easy for people to say things anonymously, by gender



High school students are fairly split when it comes to possible negative ramifications of social media on free expression. Around half of students agree that social media stifles free expression because too many people block views they disagree with (46 percent) and because people are afraid of being attacked or shamed by those who disagree with them (53 percent). A greater share of college students in the Gallup survey agree about these negative effects on free expression.

Meanwhile, a clear majority (70 percent) of high school students believes the internet is responsible for a significant increase in hate speech, though college students are more likely to think this way (82 percent). Over two-thirds of college students (68 percent) but less than half of high school students (47 percent) believe social media sites, like Facebook and Twitter, have a responsibility to limit hate speech on their platforms.

# Growing minority of students favors censorship



Student opposition to censorship has remained fairly consistent in recent years. But by no means is this opposition universal, and there are some indications that students are finding censorship more acceptable.

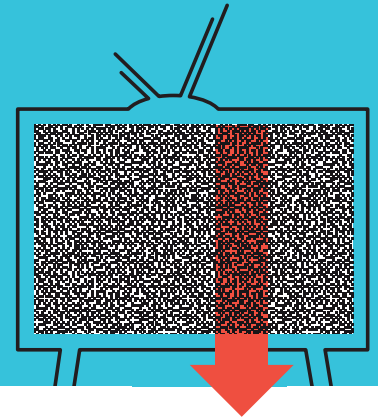
About 6 in 10 students believe print and online newspapers should be allowed to publish any story without government censorship. This support has declined by 2 points since 2016. Similarly, more students say journalism “keep[s] leaders from doing things that shouldn’t be done” (72 percent) than say “keeps leaders from doing their job” (28 percent) when asked to choose, but in 2016 the split was 79 to 21 percent.

This declining opposition to government censorship also applies to the expression of individuals on social media. From 2016 to 2018, agreement that people should be allowed to say what they want on social media without the government having the ability to block them declined to 61 percent from 66 percent.

Over two-thirds of students (67 percent) agree that people should be allowed to photograph or video the activities of the police in public as long as they do not interfere with what the police are doing. But less than half (47 percent) agree that journalists should be allowed to photograph or video whatever/whomever they want in public and publish the images in a news story, and even fewer (38 percent) agree that people should be allowed to photograph or video whatever or whomever they want in public and freely post those images on social media. Over half of teachers (57 percent) support the rights of journalists to record public events and publish stories about them, an 11-point increase since 2016.

## FINDING 5

# Declining news consumption, engagement and trust

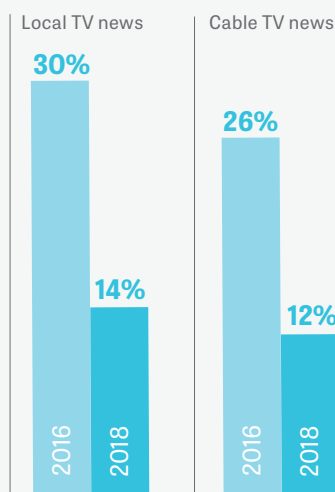


Students report lower levels of news consumption and engagement across most channels over the past two years. The sharpest drops were reported for consumption of local TV news and cable TV news (16- and 14-point declines, respectively). Now only 14 percent use local TV news often, and 12 percent use cable TV news often.

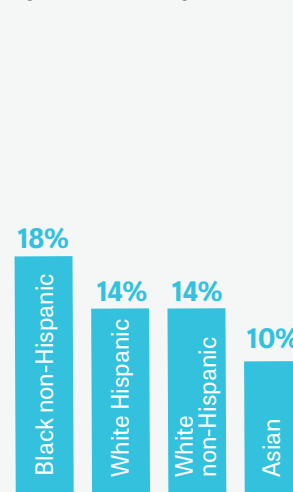
Engagement with news on social media has also dipped. Only 46 percent of students say they often use social media to get news, compared with 51 percent in 2016. Meanwhile, 64 percent of students say they hardly ever or never share or repost links to news stories, up from 53 percent in 2016. The number who report hardly ever or never commenting on news on social media increased from 76 percent in 2016 to 81 percent in 2018. Perhaps the earlier finding that less than half find the discussions on social media to be civil is contributing to lower levels of engagement.

### Declines in use of local and cable TV news

Watch local and cable TV often

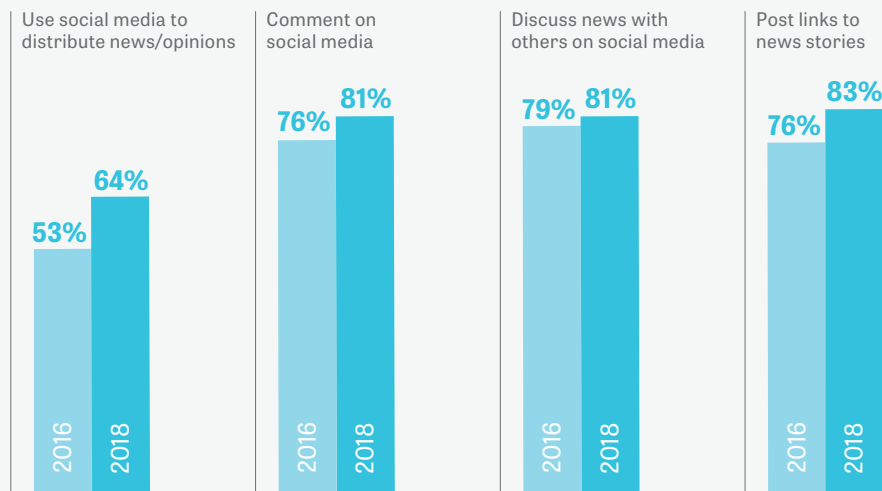


Watch local TV news often, by race/ethnicity



## Decline in use of social media for news and opinion distribution

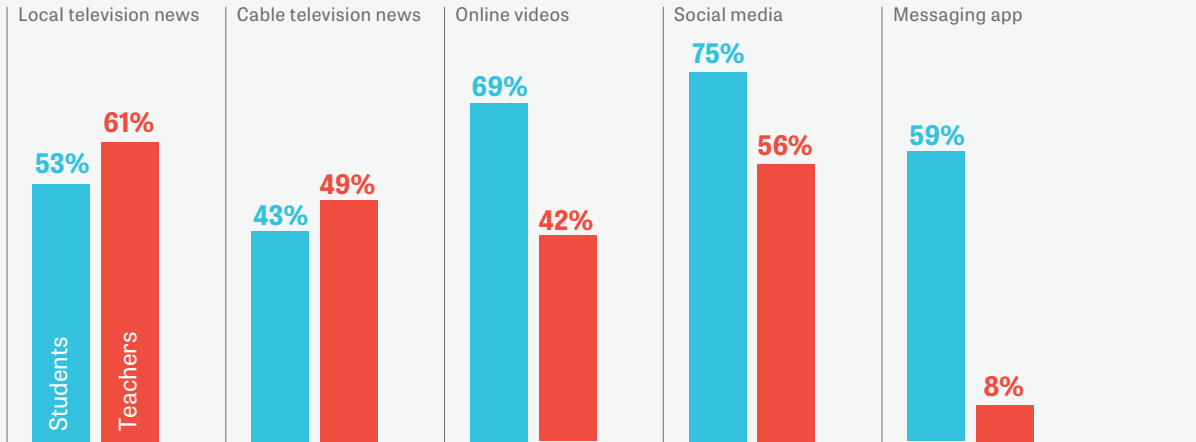
Students hardly ever or never doing the following



The declines in news consumption and engagement coincide with lower levels of reported trust in the news. About half of students report a great deal (5 percent) or a fair amount (46 percent) of trust in the news media to report news accurately and fairly, with the other half saying they have not much (39 percent) or not any (10 percent) trust in the news. Black students (59 percent) are more likely than white students (48 percent) to report a great deal or fair amount of trust in the news media. The largest declines in trust were for cable TV news, where students reporting either a lot or some trust dropped to 65 percent from 78 percent in 2016.

As one might anticipate, people who more frequently consume news through a certain medium report higher levels of trust in that medium than less frequent consumers. For example, trust in cable television news is 84 percent for students who often get news from cable television and much lower (55 percent) for students who rarely or never do. Similarly, trust in news received on social media varies tremendously between students who often use it for news and students who rarely or never do (60 percent vs. 24 percent, respectively).

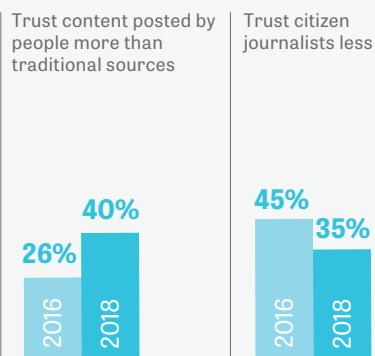
### Use news source often or sometimes



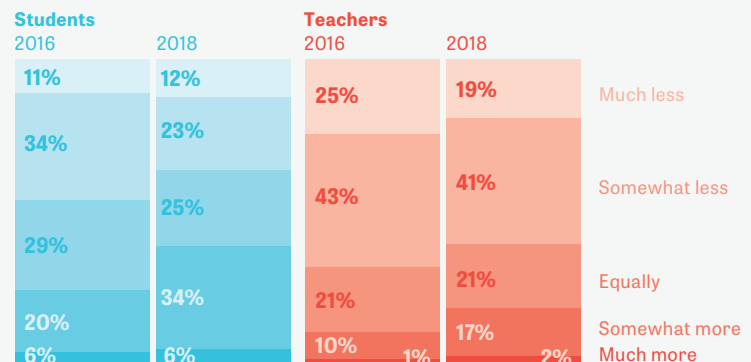
Comparatively, students demonstrated a sharp rise in their trust of citizen journalist reporting compared with traditional news sources. In 2016, 26 percent of students said they trusted “pictures, videos and accounts captured and posted by people” more than traditional news sources, while 45 percent trusted citizen journalists less. In 2018, however, 40 percent report trusting citizen journalists more than traditional sources, compared with 35 percent who trust them less. Meanwhile, teachers demonstrate large increases in trust for citizen journalism efforts.

### Increased trust in citizen journalism

Student trust of personal vs. professional news sources

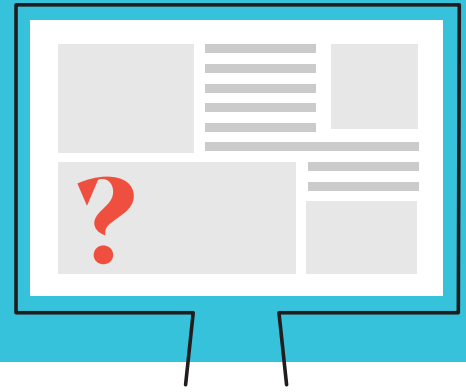


Student and teacher perceived trustworthiness of citizen journalism



## FINDING 6

# The problem of “fake news”



This year’s survey asked questions about “fake news”—inaccurate or made-up stories presented as journalism. Over 8 in 10 students say they often or sometimes encounter news stories on politics and government they believe to be inaccurate. However, just 2 in 10 students say they are very confident in their own ability to identify fake news compared with 25 percent who report being not very or not at all confident they can spot made-up news stories.

Only half as many students as teachers view fake news as a “very serious threat” to democracy (21 percent to 40 percent). Most high school students (72 percent) believe the government has at least some responsibility to prevent made-up stories from gaining attention, but only 27 percent thought the government has “a great deal” of responsibility to do so, compared with 45 percent of U.S. adults surveyed in a recent Pew Research Center poll.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, 26 percent of students compared with 42 percent of U.S. adults surveyed by Pew say that internet platforms and social media companies have a great deal of responsibility to prevent made-up stories from gaining attention.



## APPENDIX A

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# SURVEY METHODOLOGY

This project was designed by Kenneth Dautrich of The Stats Group, who is also responsible for the survey analysis and writing of this report.

This is the seventh in a series of surveys of high school students and teachers sponsored by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Prior surveys were conducted in 2004, 2006, 2007, 2011, 2014 and 2016. The initial survey sampled more than 300 high schools in the United States. For the 2006, 2007, 2011, 2014 and 2016 surveys, schools were randomly sampled from the list of schools that participated in the 2004 survey.

The overall design for conducting this project featured a multistage cluster sampling methodology. Employing this technique produced a scientific and thus generalizable survey of students and teachers in public and private high schools in the United States. This technique involved drawing a representative national sample of 50 high schools in the United States. Survey questions were vetted with high school educators and those familiar with media literacy.

For each of these 50 schools, a phone call was placed to the principal, asking if the school would be willing to participate in the project. Thirty principals agreed—a high response rate of 60 percent, thus enhancing our confidence that the sample is a highly representative one. The principals coordinated the administration of surveys to all students and teachers in their schools.

The field period for the survey was from February 2018 to June 2018. In total, 9,774 students and 498 teachers completed the questionnaires. For the student survey, the results are accurate to within plus or minus 1 percentage point at the 95 percent level of confidence. For the teachers, the results are accurate to within plus or minus 4 percentage points.



## APPENDIX B

# QUESTIONNAIRE AND FULL SURVEY FINDINGS

## 2018 FOFA Survey

Our school has been selected to participate in an important national poll on where you get news and information and what you think about the First Amendment. Please take about 10 minutes to answer the following questions. Read each question carefully and put a check mark in the box to the left of your answer. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions. We are only asking for your opinions. Please don't talk to anyone else while you are answering the survey.

### (1) NEWS HABITS

First, we are going to ask you some questions about the news you get. By news we mean information about events and issues that involve more than just your friends or family.

#### 1. How often do you get news on a mobile device (such as a smartphone or tablet)?

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	61%	52%	59%	67%
Sometimes	27	32	24	18
Hardly ever	7	12	9	9
Never	4	5	8	7



**2. How often do you do the following?**

a. Watch local television news (such as the morning or evening news produced by the local stations for ABC, CBS, Fox or NBC)?

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	28%	14%	47%	41%
Sometimes	39	37	25	20
Hardly ever	22	34	18	25
Never	11	15	10	14

b. Watch cable television news (such as CNN, Fox News or MSNBC)?

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	22%	12%	27%	25%
Sometimes	35	31	28	24
Hardly ever	28	38	28	30
Never	15	20	17	20

c. Get news by watching videos online (on a website such as YouTube)?

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	32%	31%	13%	14%
Sometimes	34	38	32	28
Hardly ever	22	21	34	33
Never	11	11	21	25

d. Get news from social media (such as Facebook or Twitter)?

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	51%	46%	26%	26%
Sometimes	27	29	31	30
Hardly ever	11	13	17	17
Never	11	12	26	27

e. Get news from a messaging app (such as Snapchat, Kik or WhatsApp)?

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	30%	33%	3%	3%
Sometimes	25	26	7	5
Hardly ever	19	18	16	13
Never	26	22	75	79

**3. Thinking about when you are on social media (such as Facebook or Twitter), how often, if at all, do you do the following?**

a. Share or repost links to news stories that were originally posted by someone else

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	18%	12%	7%	7%
Sometimes	29	25	30	25
Hardly ever	24	28	26	28
Never	29	36	37	40

b. Post links to news stories

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	7%	4%	4%	5%
Sometimes	18	12	24	19
Hardly ever	33	31	29	31
Never	43	52	43	45

c. Comment on news stories

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	7%	5%	3%	3%
Sometimes	17	14	17	13
Hardly ever	31	28	30	31
Never	45	53	50	53

d. Discuss issues in the news with others on that site

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Often	7%	6%	3%	4%
Sometimes	15	14	11	9
Hardly ever	28	26	29	27
Never	51	55	57	60

## (2) FIRST AMENDMENT TRACKING QUESTIONS

Now, let's turn to some questions that ask about the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and your thoughts on free speech rights in the U.S.

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

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2011	2007	2006	2004
Yes	64%	68%	64%	68%	72%	58%
No	36	32	36	32	28	42

**2. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. Here 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."**

a. Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, how do you feel about the following statement: The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004	TEACHERS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004
Strongly Agree	8%	9%	8%	7%	12%	18%	12%	Strongly Agree	2%	3%	4%	6%	8%	12%	9%
Mildly Agree	18	20	16	17	20	27	23	Mildly Agree	12	14	14	19	20	21	20
Mildly Disagree	22	23	22	22	21	16	19	Mildly Disagree	19	20	20	18	20	12	16
Strongly Disagree	31	32	33	31	25	21	25	Strongly Disagree	61	58	57	49	43	50	50
Don't Know	21	17	21	23	21	19	21	Don't Know	6	5	6	9	8	5	5

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

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004	TEACHERS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004
Personally Think About	32%	33%	34%	29%	25%	24%	27%	Personally Think About	59%	50	48%	53%	49%	49%	50%
Take for Granted	33	35	39	38	38	42	36	Take for Granted	36	44	46	52	47	47	46
Don't Know	35	32	27	33	36	34	37	Don't Know	5	6	6	5	5	4	4

### 4. For each of the following statements, please indicate how much you agree or disagree:

a. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004	TEACHERS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004
Strongly Agree	56%	57%	56%	52%	43%	52%	51%	Strongly Agree	67%	68%	61%	65%	62%	75%	72%
Mildly Agree	33	34	34	36	33	33	32	Mildly Agree	28	27	35	30	32	21	25
Mildly Disagree	4	5	4	5	8	5	5	Mildly Disagree	3	3	2	3	3	3	2
Strongly Disagree	1	1	1	1	4	2	2	Strongly Disagree	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Don't Know	5	4	5	6	12	10	10	Don't Know	1	1	1	2	2	0	1

b. People should be allowed to say whatever they want in public, even if what they say could be seen as threatening to others.

	STUDENTS 2018	TEACHERS 2018
Strongly Agree	9%	7%
Mildly Agree	20	16
Mildly Disagree	35	29
Strongly Disagree	30	48
Don't Know	6	0

d. People should be allowed to say whatever they want on social media, even if what they say could be seen as threatening to others.

	STUDENTS 2018	TEACHERS 2018
Strongly Agree	7%	5%
Mildly Agree	16	14
Mildly Disagree	34	26
Strongly Disagree	37	54
Don't Know	6	1

c. People should be allowed to say whatever they want in public, even if what they say is offensive to others.

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	19%	18%	23%	24%
Mildly Agree	26	27	30	29
Mildly Disagree	29	30	24	27
Strongly Disagree	22	20	21	19
Don't Know	5	5	2	0

e. People should be allowed to say whatever they want on social media, even if what they say is offensive to others.

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	18%	19%	22%	23%
Mildly Agree	25	26	29	29
Mildly Disagree	27	28	23	27
Strongly Disagree	26	22	25	20
Don't Know	5	5	2	0

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

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004	TEACHERS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004
Strongly Agree	32%	34%	36%	39%	33%	37%	40%	Strongly Agree	41%	37%	37%	32%	25%	35%	28%
Mildly Agree	34	32	32	31	30	32	30	Mildly Agree	32	34	32	33	30	29	30
Mildly Disagree	19	19	18	17	15	16	14	Mildly Disagree	16	17	16	17	21	19	19
Strongly Disagree	8	8	7	7	9	7	7	Strongly Disagree	11	9	14	16	22	15	21
Don't Know	8	7	7	6	13	8	9	Don't Know	1	2	1	2	3	2	2

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

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004	TEACHERS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004
Strongly Agree	8%	8%	7%	6%	8%	7%	8%	Strongly Agree	23%	16%	16%	16%	12%	16%	15%
Mildly Agree	10	9	7	6	8	9	8	Mildly Agree	16	16	13	13	12	13	13
Mildly Disagree	13	12	11	12	12	12	11	Mildly Disagree	12	10	10	11	11	11	11
Strongly Disagree	60	64	66	67	60	64	63	Strongly Disagree	49	56	57	58	61	58	59
Don't Know	10	8	9	9	11	8	10	Don't Know	1	3	3	3	3	2	2

h. Print newspapers should be allowed to publish any story without the government having the ability to block or censor them.

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004	TEACHERS	2018	2016	2014	2011	2007	2006	2004
Strongly Agree	31%	33%	33%	30%	26%	26%	24%	Strongly Agree	49%	44%	57%	52%	48%	57%	53%
Mildly Agree	28	28	28	29	28	28	27	Mildly Agree	30	29	26	26	28	22	27
Mildly Disagree	20	20	20	21	21	23	22	Mildly Disagree	15	19	10	11	15	13	12
Strongly Disagree	10	11	9	10	11	13	14	Strongly Disagree	4	6	5	8	5	7	6
Don't Know	10	8	10	10	14	10	13	Don't Know	1	2	2	3	3	1	2

i. Online news providers should be allowed to publish any story without the government having the ability to block or censor them.

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2014	2011	TEACHERS	2018	2016	2014	2011
Strongly Agree	30%	33%	30%	28%	Strongly Agree	45%	41%	48%	40%
Mildly Agree	29	28	29	30	Mildly Agree	32	31	30	30
Mildly Disagree	21	20	21	21	Mildly Disagree	17	18	13	16
Strongly Disagree	10	11	9	10	Strongly Disagree	6	7	8	10
Don't Know	10	9	10	11	Don't Know	1	3	2	4

j. A person should be allowed to say what they want on social media without the government having the ability to block or censor them.

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	34%	31%	35%	37%
Mildly Agree	32	30	34	33
Mildly Disagree	19	21	20	21
Strongly Disagree	9	9	9	8
Don't Know	7	9	3	1

k. Websites should be punished for publishing comments from the public that many people would consider offensive.

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	8%	7%	6%	6%
Mildly Agree	20	19	15	13
Mildly Disagree	37	36	38	38
Strongly Disagree	25	25	38	40
Don't Know	10	13	4	4

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

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2014	2011	TEACHERS	2018	2016	2014	2011
Strongly Agree	29%	30%	29%	29%	Strongly Agree	18%	11%	13%	11%
Mildly Agree	31	33	32	32	Mildly Agree	27	26	28	24
Mildly Disagree	21	20	22	20	Mildly Disagree	29	32	30	29
Strongly Disagree	8	6	7	8	Strongly Disagree	25	29	27	33
Don't Know	12	10	10	11	Don't Know	2	2	2	2

m. Students should be allowed to express their opinions about teachers and school administrators on Facebook or other social media without worrying about being punished by teachers or school administrators for what they say.

STUDENTS	2018	2016	2014	2011	TEACHERS	2018	2016	2014	2011
Strongly Agree	25%	27%	32%	40%	Strongly Agree	14%	9%	8%	12%
Mildly Agree	27	27	29	29	Mildly Agree	23	23	21	24
Mildly Disagree	23	23	21	17	Mildly Disagree	30	31	25	23
Strongly Disagree	15	14	13	9	Strongly Disagree	31	35	42	38
Don't Know	10	9	5	5	Don't Know	2	3	4	4

n. Schools should be allowed to discipline students who post material on social media outside of school that school officials say is offensive.

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	10%	9%	17%	21%
Mildly Agree	18	19	35	35
Mildly Disagree	26	27	27	22
Strongly Disagree	36	34	15	17
Don't Know	10	11	6	6

**5. Next, I'd like you to think about the trade-offs between allowing people the freedom to say whatever they want and the possibility that what they say could be offensive to others. If you had to choose, which do you think is more important?**

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
To protect people's ability to say what they want	64%	65%	75%	81%
To protect people from hearing things that offend them	15	12	10	7
Don't know	21	23	15	12

**6. Thinking generally about how people interact on social media, do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements? [Gallup college survey]**

a. The dialogue that occurs on social media is usually civil.

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
Strongly agree	8%	4%	5%
Mildly agree	36	35	32
Mildly disagree	29	34	39
Strongly disagree	11	17	24
Don't know	16	10	0

b. It is too easy for people to say things anonymously on social media.

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
Strongly agree	36%	56%	51%
Mildly agree	33	25	32
Mildly disagree	17	8	12
Strongly disagree	5	4	5
Don't know	9	6	0



c. Social media stifles free expression because too many people block views they disagree with.

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
Strongly agree	15%	5%	18%
Mildly agree	31	22	42
Mildly disagree	21	31	29
Strongly disagree	8	26	11
Don't know	24	17	0

e. Social media platforms, like Facebook and Twitter, should be responsible for limiting hate speech on their platforms.

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
Strongly agree	17%	33%	32%
Mildly agree	30	39	36
Mildly disagree	22	13	18
Strongly disagree	15	8	14
Don't know	17	6	0

d. Social media stifles free expression because people are afraid of being attacked or shamed by those who disagree with them.

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
Strongly agree	20%	8%	18%
Mildly agree	33	31	41
Mildly disagree	19	27	27
Strongly disagree	8	20	14
Don't know	21	15	0

**7. If you had to choose, which do you think is more important?** [Gallup college survey]

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
Promoting an inclusive society that is welcoming to diverse groups	43%	53%	53%
Protecting citizens' free speech rights	57	47	46

**8. Do you think professional athletes have the First Amendment right to protest during the playing of the national anthem?** [Gallup college survey]

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
Yes, should be able to	60%	63%	81%
No, should not be able to	40	37	19

**9. Do you think hate speech is a form of expression that should or should not be protected by the First Amendment?** [Gallup college survey]

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
Yes, should be protected	46%	34%	35%
No, should not be protected	54	67	64

**10. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement: The internet is responsible for a significant increase in hate speech.** [Gallup college survey]

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
Strongly agree	23%	43%	43%
Somewhat agree	47	42	39
Somewhat disagree	13	5	10
Strongly disagree	8	4	7
Don't know	8	5	0

### (3) MEDIA TRUST AND FAKE NEWS

**1. How much do you trust the news media to report the news accurately and fairly: a great deal, a fair amount, not much or not at all?** [Gallup college survey]

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	COLLEGE
A great deal	5%	6%	6%
A fair amount	46	45	44
Not much	39	35	39
Not at all	10	13	11

**2. How much, if at all, do you trust the information you get from the following?**

a. Cable television news (such as CNN, Fox News or MSNBC)

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
A lot	30%	18%	22%	10%
Some	48	47	56	57
Not too much	17	24	17	24
Not at all	6	11	5	9

c. President Donald Trump

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
	2018	2018
A lot	13%	3%
Some	28	26
Not too much	24	26
Not at all	35	45

b. Social media (such as Facebook or Twitter)

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
A lot	11%	8%	3%	1%
Some	38	38	31	21
Not too much	39	40	40	44
Not at all	12	14	25	34

d. Members of Congress

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
	2018	2018
A lot	14%	1%
Some	43	40
Not too much	27	43
Not at all	16	16

**3. How often do you come across news stories about politics and government online that you think are not fully accurate?** [Pew]

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	U.S. ADULTS
Often	30%	49%	51%
Sometimes	52	46	27
Hardly ever	14	5	8
Never	5	1	10

**4. As you may have heard, there have recently been some instances of so-called “fake news stories” circulating widely online. How confident are you in your own ability to recognize news that is made up? [Pew]**

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	ADULTS
Very	20%	27%	39%
Somewhat	55	60	45
Not very	20	13	9
Not at all	5	1	6

**5. How much responsibility does each of the following have in trying to prevent made-up stories from gaining attention? [Pew]**

The government, politicians and elected officials

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	ADULTS
A great deal	27%	37%	45%
A fair amount	45	40	25
Not much	21	19	15
Not at all	7	4	12

Social networking sites, like Facebook and Twitter, and search sites like Google

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	ADULTS
A great deal	26%	38%	42%
A fair amount	40	41	29
Not much	24	16	12
Not at all	9	5	13

**6. How much of a threat do you believe so-called “fake news” is to our democracy? [Gallup Views on Media]**

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS
A very serious threat	21%	40%
A somewhat serious threat	59	48
Not much of a threat	20	13

## (4) JOURNALISM AND THE ROLE OF CITIZENS

These questions ask about the role of news in our lives, and what you think about things like ordinary people taking pictures or videos of news events themselves.

**Some people think that by criticizing leaders, journalists and news organizations keep political leaders from doing their job. Others think that such criticism is worth it because it keeps political leaders from doing things that should not be done. Which position is closer to your opinion?**

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Keeps leaders from doing their job	21%	28%	14%	20%
Keeps leaders from doing things that shouldn't be done	79	72	87	80

As you may know, sometimes people use cellphone cameras, video recorders and other technologies to capture and post pictures, stories and videos of news events. The following questions ask about your attitudes about these practices.

**2. For each of the following statements, please indicate how much you agree or disagree:**

a. Journalists should be allowed to photograph or video whatever or whoever they want to in public and publish them in a news story.

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	17%	16%	16%	21%
Mildly Agree	27	31	30	36
Mildly Disagree	31	29	32	28
Strongly Disagree	18	17	21	13
Don't Know	7	8	2	2

c. People should be allowed to photograph or video the activities of the police in public as long as they don't interfere with what the police are doing.

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	38%	35%	33%	36%
Mildly Agree	30	32	40	40
Mildly Disagree	15	16	15	13
Strongly Disagree	8	9	10	9
Don't Know	8	9	2	2

b. People should be allowed to photograph or video whatever or whoever they want to in public and freely post those images on social media.

STUDENTS	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	14%	12%
Mildly Agree	26	26
Mildly Disagree	33	32
Strongly Disagree	21	21
Don't Know	7	8

TEACHERS	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	10%	12%
Mildly Agree	24	31
Mildly Disagree	32	31
Strongly Disagree	32	25
Don't Know	2	1

d. Someone who posts a picture, video or account of a public event on social media has the same right to do so as a journalist publishing the same story in a newspaper.

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Strongly Agree	31%	27%	22%	23%
Mildly Agree	33	33	32	34
Mildly Disagree	16	19	25	24
Strongly Disagree	7	8	15	15
Don't Know	12	13	5	4

**3. How much do you trust pictures, videos and accounts captured and posted by people as a source of information about news or current events?**

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
A lot	7%	8%	1%	3%
Some	48	47	38	46
A little	38	37	48	40
Not at all	8	9	12	11

**4. Compared to the reporting done by traditional news sources like a newspaper or TV news, how much do you trust pictures, videos and accounts captured and posted by people as a source of information about news or current events?**

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Much more trustworthy	6%	6%	1%	2%
Somewhat more trustworthy	20	34	10	17
Equally trustworthy	29	25	21	21
Somewhat less trustworthy	34	23	43	41
Much less trustworthy	11	12	25	19

**5. If you were to witness a news event happening, how likely is it that you personally would use technology such as your cellphone camera or video recorders to post pictures, stories or videos related to what happened on social media?**

	STUDENTS		TEACHERS	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Very likely	22%	19%	6%	7%
Somewhat likely	42	41	21	24
Not too likely	26	29	44	45
Not at all likely	9	11	29	25

## (5) DEMOGRAPHICS

### What grade are you currently in?

9th	30%
10th	24
11th	26
12th	20

### Are you:

Male	52%
Female	48

### Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?

Yes	14%
No	86

### Are you:

White/Caucasian	74%
Black/African-American	10
American Indian	3
Asian	6
Other race	7

### What is your family's current financial situation?

Upper income	14%
Middle income	74
Lower income	12

### Which of the following is closest to your overall grade point average?

A	40%
B	38
C	18
D	3
F	2

#### ENDNOTES

- <https://www.knightfoundation.org/reports/free-expression-on-campus-what-college-students-think-about-first-amendment-issues>
- [http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2016/12/14154759/PJ\\_2016.12.15\\_fake-news\\_TOPLINE.pdf](http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2016/12/14154759/PJ_2016.12.15_fake-news_TOPLINE.pdf)

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