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## **New Marquette Law School Poll national survey finds Trump and DeSantis leading Biden in head-to-head matches, DeSantis losing ground to Trump in primary, majorities having unfavorable views of all three, and a majority of Democrats continuing to disfavor a Biden run**

*Please note: Complete Poll results and methodology information can be found online at [law.marquette.edu/poll](http://law.marquette.edu/poll)*

MILWAUKEE – A new Marquette Law School Poll national survey finds that, as the race for president in 2024 now stands, Democratic President Joe Biden trails Republican former President Donald Trump by 5 percentage points among registered voters, with 52% for Trump and 47% for Biden. Biden also trails Republican Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis by 4 percentage points, with 52% for DeSantis and 48% for Biden.

Many voters demonstrate reluctance to choose between either pair of candidates. When voters are given the choice of Biden, Trump, someone else, or not voting, 34% say Biden, 41% say Trump, 19% say someone else, and 7% say they won't vote. When voters are given the same choices involving Biden and DeSantis, 37% say Biden, 38% say DeSantis, 18% say someone else, and 7% say they won't vote.

This means that, with the options to vote for someone else or not to vote included in the question, 26% avoid choosing between Biden and Trump and 25% avoid picking Biden or DeSantis. In both matchups, the fact of relatively high percentages saying they would vote for "someone else" or would not vote indicates the potential for volatility in coming months as candidate choices are clarified.

Just among those who initially avoid choosing between Biden and Trump, when they are asked whom they would choose if they had to choose, 51% prefer Biden and 47% pick Trump. Just among those reluctant to choose between Biden and DeSantis, when pushed to make a choice, 42% support Biden and 58% back DeSantis.

The latest Marquette Law School Poll's national survey was conducted May 8-18, 2023. The survey interviewed 1,010 adults nationwide and has a margin of error of +/-3.7 percentage points. The sample includes 833 registered voters, with a margin of error of +/-4.1 percentage points. The sample size for registered Republican primary voters is 377, with a margin of error of +/-6.1 percentage points. The sample size for registered Democratic primary voters is 344, with a margin of error of +/-6.3 percentage

points. In the May poll, primary voters are those who say they will vote in each party’s primary. In earlier surveys, registered voters who identified with a party or are independents who leaned to a party were asked the primary-vote questions. For simplicity hereafter, these are referred to simply as registered Republican or Democratic voters.

Both Biden and Trump are seen more unfavorably than favorably among registered voters nationwide, with Biden at 37% favorable and 60% unfavorable. Trump is seen favorably by 38% and unfavorably by 59%. While Biden and Trump are virtually universally familiar to voters, 23% say they haven’t heard enough to give a favorability rating for DeSantis, who is viewed favorably by 30% and unfavorably by 47%.

Partisans are quite positive toward their party’s candidates and very negative to the other party’s candidates. Independents regard all three candidates more unfavorably than favorably. [Table 1](#) shows the favorability to Biden, Trump, and DeSantis, by party.

*Table 1: Favorability to Biden, Trump, and DeSantis, by party identification, among registered voters*

*(a) Biden*

Party ID	Favorable opinion	Unfavorable opinion	Haven’t heard enough
Republican	5	94	1
Independent	22	66	12
Democrat	77	21	2

*(b) Trump*

Party ID	Favorable opinion	Unfavorable opinion	Haven’t heard enough
Republican	72	26	2
Independent	20	73	8
Democrat	8	91	1

*(c) DeSantis*

Party ID	Favorable opinion	Unfavorable opinion	Haven’t heard enough
Republican	58	16	26
Independent	18	44	37
Democrat	3	81	16

**Republican primary choices**

Trump leads among registered Republican voters, drawing support from 46%, with DeSantis the choice of 25%. Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley receives 5%, businessperson Vivek Ramaswamy is the choice of 3%, and former Vice President Mike Pence is supported by 2%. South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott receives 1%, as do talk radio host Larry Elder and New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu. Former governors Chris Christie and Asa Hutchinson received less than .5% support, while 16% said they were undecided. [Table 2](#) shows the full results.

*Table 2: Here are some potential candidates for the Republican presidential nomination. If the primary were today, who would you vote for? Among registered Republican voters.*

Candidate	Percent
Donald Trump	46
Ron DeSantis	25
Nikki Haley	5
Vivek Ramaswamy	3
Mike Pence	2
Tim Scott	1
Larry Elder	1
Chris Sununu	1
Chris Christie	*
Asa Hutchinson	*
Undecided	16
*=less than .5%	

In the March 2023 Marquette poll, Trump was supported by 40% and DeSantis was the choice of 35%, while Pence was the choice of 5% in that survey.

When asked to choose between only Trump and DeSantis, Trump is the choice of 52% and DeSantis is the choice of 48%. Trump has gained support since November while DeSantis has lost support. The trend is shown in [Table 3](#).

*Table 3: If it were a choice between just the two of them, who would you prefer as the Republican nominee for president in 2024: Donald Trump or Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis? Among registered Republican voters.*

Poll dates	Donald Trump	Ron DeSantis
11/15-22/22	40	60
1/9-20/23	36	64
3/13-22/23	46	54
5/8-18/23	52	48

When asked to choose between only Trump and DeSantis, DeSantis picks up 70% or more of the support of those who had previously chosen a candidate other than DeSantis or Trump or were undecided in the multi-candidate question. A handful of respondents shift away from their first choice of Trump or DeSantis in the subsequent two-candidate question.

*Table 4: Choice between Trump or DeSantis only, by first choice in multi-candidate question, among registered Republican voters*

Multi-candidate choice	Donald Trump	Ron DeSantis
Trump	96	4
DeSantis	2	98
Other candidate	23	77
Undecided	30	70

Republican support for a Trump candidacy rose in May to 62%, while 38% would not like him to run. In January, 52% wanted him to run. The full trend is shown in [Table 5](#).

*Table 5: Would you like to see Donald Trump run for president in 2024, or not? Among registered Republican voters.*

Poll dates	Yes	No
11/1-10/21	60	40
1/10-21/22	56	44
3/14-24/22	61	39
5/9-19/22	61	38
7/5-12/22	64	35
9/7-14/22	60	40
11/15-22/22	55	45
1/9-20/23	52	48
5/8-18/23	62	38

Trump's favorability rating among Republican voters rose in May to 72%, up from 66% in March. The full trend is shown in [Table 6](#).

Table 6: Trump favorability trend, among registered Republican voters.

Poll dates	Favorable opinion	Unfavorable opinion	Haven't heard enough
11/1-10/21	70	29	1
1/10-21/22	71	28	1
3/14-24/22	75	23	1
5/9-19/22	75	22	2
7/5-12/22	76	22	2
9/7-14/22	74	25	1
11/15-22/22	67	32	1
1/9-20/23	70	28	2
3/13-22/23	66	31	2
5/8-18/23	72	26	2

DeSantis' favorable rating has declined among Republican voters from a high of 71% in January to 56% in the May poll. This reversed a year of steadily rising favorability in 2022, as shown in [Table 7](#).

Table 7: DeSantis favorability trend, among registered Republican voters.

Poll dates	Favorable opinion	Unfavorable opinion	Haven't heard enough
1/10-21/22	57	9	34
3/14-24/22	57	7	35
5/9-19/22	58	15	27
7/5-12/22	62	9	29
9/7-14/22	65	10	25
11/15-22/22	68	10	22
1/9-20/23	71	10	19
3/13-22/23	69	15	15
5/8-18/23	56	20	24

DeSantis is viewed favorably by Republicans who are also favorable toward Trump, but this has fallen to 64% in May from 80% in March. His favorability among those unfavorable to Trump has also declined. [Table 8](#) shows favorability to DeSantis by favorability to Trump in May and in March.

Table 8: DeSantis favorability, by Trump favorability, among registered Republican voters.

(a) May 2023

Trump favorability	Favorable opinion of DeSantis	Unfavorable opinion	Haven't heard enough
Favorable opinion	64	15	20
Unfavorable opinion	37	33	30

(b) March 2023

Trump favorability	Favorable opinion of DeSantis	Unfavorable opinion	Haven't heard enough
Favorable opinion	80	8	12
Unfavorable opinion	51	32	17

### Favorability toward potential GOP candidates

While Trump is nearly universally known, and former Vice President Mike Pence and DeSantis are fairly well known, most other potential Republican candidates are far less familiar to Republican voters. [Table 9](#) shows the favorable, unfavorable, and haven't-heard-enough responses to eight current or potential candidates.

Table 9: Favorability ratings of potential Republican candidates, among registered Republican voters

Name	Net favorable	Favorable opinion	Unfavorable opinion	Haven't heard enough
Trump	46	72	26	2
Pence	5	47	42	11
DeSantis	36	56	20	24
Christie	-22	18	40	42
Haley	18	35	17	47
Scott	15	28	13	59
Elder	13	25	12	64
Ramaswamy	8	20	12	68
Sununu	-6	10	16	74
Hutchinson	-11	7	18	75

### Democratic nomination

Among registered Democrats, Biden leads the presidential primary field with support of 53%. He is followed by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. at 12% and Marianne Williamson with 7% support, while 28% say they are undecided. This is the first time this question has been asked in the Marquette Law School Poll.

While Biden's lead is substantial, a majority of registered Democrats wish he would not run in 2024. In May, 57% say they would not like him to run, while 43% would like him to do so. Biden leads in the primary field even among those who don't wish him to run, but over 40% of this group say they are undecided, as shown in [Table 10](#).

Table 10: Democratic primary choice, by wish Biden to run in 2024, among registered Democratic voters,

Biden run	Joe Biden	Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.	Marianne Williamson	Undecided
Yes	82	6	1	11
No	30	17	12	42

The trend in support for a Biden candidacy among Democrats is shown in [Table 11](#).

Table 11: Would you like to see Joe Biden run for president in 2024, or not? Among registered Democratic voters.

Poll dates	Yes	No
9/7-14/22	44	56
11/15-22/22	49	51
1/9-20/23	49	51
3/13-22/23	43	57
5/8-18/23	43	57

Those Democrats reluctant to see Biden run are nonetheless strongly supportive of him over Trump in the November election, as shown in [Table 12 \(a\)](#). For comparison, vote choice is also shown among Republicans for those who wish Trump would or would not run in [Table 12 \(b\)](#). Both candidates suffer modest crossover losses among their partisans reluctant for them to run.

Table 12: Vote choice, by whether voters want to see Biden or Trump to run, among registered Democratic voters or among registered Republican voters.

(a) Vote by want Biden to run, among registered Democratic voters.

Biden run	Donald Trump	Joe Biden
Yes	3	97
No	15	85

(b) Vote by want Trump to run, among registered Republican voters.

Trump run	Donald Trump	Joe Biden
Yes	99	1
No	80	18

Favorability ratings for the three Democratic candidates and Vice President Kamala Harris are shown in [Table 13](#).

Table 13: Favorability ratings of Democratic candidates, plus Kamala Harris, among registered Democratic voters.

Name	Net favorable	Favorable opinion	Unfavorable opinion	Haven't heard enough
Biden	54	76	22	3
Harris	44	68	24	8
Kennedy	-5	29	34	37
Williamson	-9	10	19	70

### Presidential approval

Among all adult respondents, approval of Joe Biden's handling of his job as president held even from March to May at 39%, with 61% disapproving. Biden's approval in May is the second lowest of his presidency in the Marquette poll. The full trend for Biden approval in Marquette Law School Poll national surveys is shown in [Table 14](#).

Table 14: Biden job approval, among all adults

Poll dates	Approve	Disapprove
7/16-26/21	58	42
9/7-16/21	48	52
11/1-10/21	49	51
1/10-21/22	46	53
3/14-24/22	44	55
5/9-19/22	42	57
7/5-12/22	36	64
9/7-14/22	45	55
11/15-22/22	45	55
1/9-20/23	43	56
3/13-22/23	39	61
5/8-18/23	39	61

### Attention to recent news

Donald Trump's indictment in New York topped news stories getting the most attention in recent weeks. Sixty-six percent of those polled said they had read or heard a lot about the indictment, while 29% heard a little and 5% heard nothing at all about this.

The second most attention was paid to the trial in a civil lawsuit against Trump over sexual assault and defamation, a case Trump lost as the survey began. Fifty-one percent said they had heard a lot about this, 37% had heard a little, and 12% had heard nothing at all.

A bit less noticed were news stories of shootings involving knocking on the wrong door and driving into the wrong driveway, about which 45% heard a lot, 37% heard a little, and 18% heard nothing at all.



A slightly smaller total, 42%, said they had heard a lot about DeSantis signing a Florida law banning abortions after six weeks of pregnancy, with 40% saying they had heard a little and 17% having heard nothing at all.

## Policy issues

### Abortion

Opinion about abortion policy has fluctuated only slightly since May 2022, as shown in [Table 15](#). Currently, 68% say abortion should be legal in all or most cases, while 32% say it should be illegal in all or most cases.

*Table 15: Do you think abortion should be legal in all cases, legal in most cases, illegal in most cases, or illegal in all cases? Among all adults.*

Poll dates	Legal in all cases	Legal in most cases	Illegal in most cases	Illegal in all cases
5/9-19/22	29	38	24	8
7/5-12/22	28	36	27	8
9/7-14/22	31	37	26	6
11/15-22/22	29	36	26	9
1/9-20/23	26	38	28	8
3/13-22/23	28	39	27	6
5/8-18/23	32	36	25	7

As states have adopted widely varying laws concerning abortion following the Supreme Court’s *Dobbs* ruling, public opinion has strongly favored allowing abortion in cases of rape or incest, with 89% in favor and 11% opposed. Opinion on this has remained stable since September 2022, as shown in [Table 16](#).

*Table 16: Do you think your state should or should not allow a woman to obtain a legal abortion if she became pregnant as the result of rape or incest? Among all adults.*

Poll dates	Should allow	Should not allow
9/7-14/22	90	10
3/13-22/23	88	11
5/8-18/23	89	11

A large majority, 75%, oppose states making it illegal for a woman to get and fill prescriptions for medication from out-of-state providers to induce an abortion, while 25% favor making this illegal; the trend is shown in [Table 17](#).

*Table 17: Should a state be able to make it illegal for a woman to get and fill a prescription from out-of-state providers for medication that will induce an abortion, sometimes called “medication abortion” or “abortion pills”? Among all adults.*

Poll dates	Yes	No
7/5-12/22	26	73
9/7-14/22	23	76
3/13-22/23	26	74
5/8-18/23	25	75

The public is opposed to restrictions on travel to another state to obtain an abortion, with 80% saying states should not be able to make such travel illegal and 20% saying states should be able to ban out-of-state travel for abortions. The trend on this item is shown in [Table 18](#).

*Table 18: Should a state be able to make it illegal for a woman to have an abortion by traveling to a different state where abortion is legal? Among all adults.*

Poll dates	Yes	No
5/9-19/22	22	78
7/5-12/22	21	78
9/7-14/22	18	82
3/13-22/23	19	81
5/8-18/23	20	80

The public remains divided over policy views about when during a pregnancy abortions should be banned.

Policy preferences are sensitive to the specific limitations proposed on abortion. Several state legislatures have enacted or debated laws that would ban abortions (with some exceptions) at various stages of pregnancy. The May survey asked a series of questions about support or opposition to bans reflecting these state proposals. Each question included an exception for “medical emergencies.”

The question asked:

“Here are some limits on when during pregnancy an abortion might be banned, except in cases of medical emergencies, that some states are considering. How much do you favor or oppose each of these proposals?”

The results for the five alternative policies are shown in [Table 19](#). There is majority opposition to bans at 15 weeks or less, majority support for bans after 6 months, and majority opposition to no restrictions at any point during a pregnancy.

Table 19: Favor or oppose abortion bans, by when ban would take effect, among adults

Ban when	Favor	Oppose
Ban at any time during pregnancy	25	75
Ban after 6 weeks	35	65
Ban after 15 weeks	47	53
Ban after 6 months	56	44
No restrictions at any point	39	61

### Schools

A number of states are considering changes to education policy, including universal vouchers for students attending private or religious schools.

We asked:

“How would you rate the quality of education provided by the following types of K-12 schools in your community?”

Few respondents rate any of five types of school as “excellent,” though many rate them as “good.” Public schools fare the worst, with 45% rating them excellent or good, 32% rating them fair, and 23% giving them a poor rating. Private, non-religious schools receive the highest rating. The ratings for five types of school are shown in [Table 20](#).

Table 20: How would you rate the quality of education provided by the following types of K-12 schools in your community? among all adults

Type of school	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Public schools	10	35	32	23
Catholic schools	11	48	29	11
Non-Catholic religious schools	8	47	34	11
Private non-religious schools	15	54	25	6
Home schooling	14	37	33	16

Several states have passed or are considering providing state funding for vouchers to pay for tuition for K-12 students to attend private or religious schools of their choice. Opinion is closely divided on this among adults nationally, with majorities of Republicans and independents in favor and a majority of Democrats opposed, as shown in [Table 21](#).

Table 21: Provide state funding for vouchers to pay for tuition for K-12 students to attend private or religious schools of their choice instead of public schools, among all adults.

Party ID	Favor	Oppose
Total	55	45
Republican	64	36
Independent	66	33
Democrat	41	59

Support for such vouchers is stronger among those with school-age children in the home than those without such children, shown in [Table 22](#).

Table 22: Provide state funding for vouchers to pay for tuition for K-12 students to attend private or religious schools of their choice instead of public schools, by school-age children in home, among all adults.

School-age children	Favor	Oppose
Yes, kids at home	65	35
No kids at home	50	50

Those who say they are born-again Protestants are most in favor of vouchers, followed by Catholics and by members of non-Christian groups. Opinion is closely divided among mainline Protestants and those without a religious affiliation, as shown in [Table 23](#).

Table 23: Provide state funding for vouchers to pay for tuition for K-12 students to attend private or religious schools of their choice instead of public schools, by religious identification, among all adults.

Religion	Favor	Oppose
Born-again Protestant	71	29
Mainline Protestant	46	54
Roman Catholic	55	45
No religion	49	51
Other religion	56	44

## Guns

A majority of the public, 60%, favor laws that allow most people to obtain a license to carry a concealed handgun, while 40% are opposed. However, a larger majority, 76%, oppose allowing concealed carry without requiring a license, with 24% favoring such a law. Currently, 25 states allow concealed carry without requiring a license or permit, with Florida set to become the 26th such state in July. A majority of the public in these “permitless” states which do not require a license say they are opposed to this policy, as shown in [Table 24](#). In states that require permits, most have “shall issue” laws that assume a permit will be issued except for members of certain groups such as felons, while eight states have “may issue” laws allowing somewhat greater discretion in issuing permits.

Table 24: Favor or oppose permitless concealed carry, by state gun law, among all adults.

State gun law	Favor	Oppose
Permitless	35	65
Shall issue	21	79
May issue	14	85

While a majority oppose permitless concealed carry, a majority of those in states with such laws are unaware that this is the law in their state. Of respondents in the 25 states with permitless carry laws, 44% say they know this is the law, while 22% erroneously say their state requires a license and 34% say they don't know what the law is. These results are shown in [Table 25](#).

Table 25: Does your state's law allow most people to carry concealed handguns without needing to obtain a license? By state gun law, among all adults.

State gun law	State does allow concealed handguns without a license	State does NOT allow concealed handguns without a license	Don't know
Permitless	44	22	34
Shall issue	17	55	28
May issue	4	76	20

A large majority, 85%, favor so-called "red flag" laws that allow police to remove guns from people who have been found by a court to be a danger to themselves or others, while 15% are opposed. This law is strongly favored both by those in households with guns and those without guns, as shown in [Table 26](#).

Table 26: Would you favor or oppose a law allowing the police to take guns away from people who have been found by a judge to be a danger to themselves or others? By gun households, among all adults.

Gun household	Favor	Oppose
Gun household	83	17
Not gun household	88	12

A majority of the public, 62%, favor a ban on the sale of "AR-15 style" semiautomatic rifles, while 38% are opposed. On this item, a slight majority of gun households oppose such a ban, while a large majority of non-gun households favor it, as shown in [Table 27](#).

Table 27: Ban the sale of "AR-15 style" semiautomatic rifles in your state, by gun households, among all adults

Gun household	Favor	Oppose
Gun household	46	54
Not gun household	70	30

### Transgender issues

Views concerning sports competition for transgender athletes find a majority, 71%, in favor of requiring that transgender athletes compete on teams that match the sex they were assigned at birth, not the gender they identify with, while 28% are opposed to this.

A majority, 56%, also support bans on “gender-affirming” care such as hormone therapy or surgery for transgender minors under 18, while 44% are opposed.

### Racial issues

A majority, 54%, say that recent killings of Black Americans by the police are part of a larger pattern of police treatment of Black people, while 46% say these are isolated incidents. Such opinions vary sharply by race and ethnicity, as shown in [Table 28](#).

*Table 28: Do you think recent killings of Black Americans by police are isolated incidents or part of a larger pattern in the police’s treatment of Black Americans? by race, among all adults*

Race and ethnicity	Isolated incidents	Part of a larger pattern
White	58	42
Black	16	84
Hispanic	31	69
Other/Multiple	33	67

Racism is seen as very big problem by 41% of adults, as a moderately big problem by 33%, and a small problem or not a problem at all by 25%. Differences in views by race and ethnicity are shown in [Table 29](#).

*Table 29: How much of a problem do you think racism is in the country today? By race, among all adults.*

Race and ethnicity	A very big problem	A moderately big problem	A small problem	Not a problem at all
White	32	36	25	7
Black	73	16	9	2
Hispanic	48	31	17	3
Other/Multiple	50	42	5	3

### Aid to Ukraine

U.S. military aid to Ukraine has emerged as an issue with a partisan divide in recent months. In May, 34% say the U.S. is providing too much support to Ukraine, 23% say the U.S. is not giving enough support, and 43% say the U.S. is giving the right amount of aid. The percentage saying “too much support” is unchanged since March, as shown in [Table 30](#).

*Table 30: When it comes to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, do you think the United States is providing too much support to Ukraine, not enough support to Ukraine, or about the right amount of support to Ukraine? Among all adults.*

Poll dates	Too much support	Not enough support	About the right amount of support
11/15-22/22	32	23	45
1/9-20/23	29	24	46
3/13-22/23	34	24	41
5/8-18/23	34	23	43

[Table 31](#) shows partisan differences on aide to Ukraine in the May poll. Half of Republicans say the U.S. is providing too much aid, while 38% of independents and 16% of Democrats agree.

*Table 31: When it comes to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, do you think the United States is providing too much support to Ukraine, not enough support to Ukraine, or about the right amount of support to Ukraine? By party identification, among all adults.*

Party ID	Too much support	Not enough support	About the right amount of support
Total	34	23	43
Republican	50	17	33
Independent	38	23	38
Democrat	16	29	55

On the more general question of U.S. involvement in world affairs, 55% say it is better for the country to take an active part, while 45% say the U.S. should stay out of world affairs. Independents are especially skeptical of U.S. involvement in the world, with 64% saying we should stay out and a minority, 35%, saying we should take an active part. Republicans are evenly split on international involvement, and Democrats are substantially in favor of a U.S. role in the world, as shown in [Table 32](#).

*Table 32: Do you think it will be better for the future of the country if we take an active part in world affairs, or if we stay out of world affairs? Among all adults.*

Party ID	Take an active part in world affairs	Stay out of world affairs
Total	55	45
Republican	49	51
Independent	35	64
Democrat	69	31

### About the Marquette Law School Poll

The latest Marquette Law School Poll’s national survey was conducted May 8-18, 2023. The survey interviewed 1,010 adults nationwide and has a margin of error of +/-3.7 percentage points. The sample includes 833 registered voters, with a margin of error of +/-4.1 percentage points. The sample size for registered Republican primary voters is 377, with a margin of error of +/-6.1 percentage points. The sample size for registered Democratic primary voters is 344, with a margin of error of +/-6.3 percentage points.

Certain other data from this survey (those about public views of the Supreme Court) were released yesterday, on May 24. All results may be found on the [Marquette Law School Poll website](#).

Interviews were conducted using the SSRS Opinion Panel, a national probability sample with interviews conducted online. The detailed methodology statement, survey instrument, topline results, and crosstabs for this release are [available online](#).

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