

# Ladue in Focus

Students and staff reflect on politics, the election and the future

## Describe the Election in One Word.



Mina F.

"Tense."



Jennifer H.

"Important."



Danielle C.

"Funny."



Shana B.

"Nail-biter."



Chloe L.

"Concerning."



Charles R.

"Polarized."



Emma L.

"Exciting."

By **Celina Zhou**  
In-Depth Editor


One of the greatest strengths of democracy is giving people a voice, whether through voting, polling, rallies or protests. However, in the masses, the voice of a single person can be drowned out by the force of the people.

To discuss politics, Panorama created a focus group of students and staff. One of the questions we asked was, "Do you think your voice is heard in politics?"

Students reported a sense of voicelessness as minors, despite being drastically affected by politics. Staff described feeling neglected in Missouri, a deeply partisan state, as media hones in on swing states.

In a polarized world, the focus group spoke about their fears

stemming from national division, keeping an open mind and engaging with people across the political spectrum. From disagreements at the dinner table to anxieties during debates and fears about the future, all described a want to bridge these divisive gaps.

Some were frustrated with systems like the electoral college, the opacity of the political process and what they perceived as the self-serving tendencies of politicians, culminating in a general hesitance towards wholly trusting the government. Most of the focus group described their attitudes towards the future as cautiously optimistic, detailing the need to, at the very least, make an effort to make change. 

**CURIOUS?**  
Scan here to read the full participant interviews



## What's One Issue That's Important to You on the Ballot in November?



Chloe L.

"Abortion and gun laws."



Emma L.










"The environment."



Alex Z.

"Inflation."

## Participants Illustration by Kelly Zhang

Name	age	
 Emma L., 30	 Chloe L., 16	 Charles R., 18
 Alex Z., 15	 Jennifer H., 47	 Gabriella B., 15
 Henry M., 14	 Jacari H., 18	 Danielle C., 18
 Shana B., 37	 Ayden H., 15	 Mina F., 17

## Do You Have Any Hopes or Fears Surrounding the Election?



Gabriella B.

"I really hope it just gets better and more fair. I think the backlash, party-to-party, should just try to be as considerate as possible."



Ayden H.

"I hope that whoever wins, they'll at least be more competent than previous presidents."



Jacari H.

"My biggest fear is that whoever wins will just let resources go to waste and not try to help the world."

## Do You Trust Politicians?



Ayden H.

"No. They always have a motive. There's been a lot of corruption scandals recently, too. Like with George Santos and Eric Adams."



Mina F.

"Not really. Sometimes politicians get caught up in winning over the people instead of thinking about what's going to better our country."



Shana B.

"I don't know if I really think about it that way. Just because someone's a politician doesn't make them any more or less trustworthy than anyone else."

## Is Your Voice Is Heard In Politics?



Henry M.

"No, of course not. Electoral college-wise, no Democrat in Missouri or any red state really has influence on politics."



Danielle C.

"No. If I went on the internet and talked about my views on politics, I don't think anyone would care. If you're not famous, then you probably won't get heard."



Jennifer H.

"Yeah, because I make sure to vote, all up and down, every single election."

## What Is the Biggest Challenge Facing Us as a Country?



Gabriella B.

"Having older people in the government."



Emma L.

"The pettiness of politics. The 'us versus them' mentality."



Jennifer H.

"Getting a shared sense of what's true and what isn't."



Charles R.

"Making sure we have a strong middle class."



Danielle C.

"We're in debt. Like, crazy, trillions of dollars debt."

## Are You Optimistic for the Future?



Gabriella B.

"Yes."



Chloe L.

"No."



Henry M.

"Yes."



Jacari H.

"Yes."



Charles R.

"Yes."



Alex Z.

"No."



Mina F.

"Yes."