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School Education Through the Eyes of Parents

Data from surveys of parents of students in Russian schools of various types in the years 2006 to 2011 show a high level of desire to invest in their children's education. There has been a high degree of stability in aspirations and investment in spite of the economic problems caused by global recession.

While the main customers of educational services are children, adolescents, preschoolers, school students, and college students, the main decisions on all levels of the educational cycle are made for them (except for college students) by parents—of course, taking account of children's opinions and desires. To a large extent the parents' human and cultural capital determines the direction and content of the education that the child acquires, and also shapes the requirements that parents demand of the different levels of the system of education. For this reason, the parents' opinions are used when obtaining information about motives for the choice of school,

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educational trajectories, and choice of various educational services and payment strategies.

Enrollment and the choice of the place of schooling

The criteria that motivated the choice of school among parents of school students did not change much in the five years. The most important factor was its nearness to the home. In second place (rising to 42.2 percent in 2011) was the presence of well-qualified teachers. Third in importance was how well the parents knew the school (from relatives, acquaintances, or friends' children who had gone there). This was selected by 25 percent of parents in 2006 and by about 20 percent in 2011.

A number of other characteristics considered more important in the choice of a school in 2006 declined in importance. For example, fewer parents said these qualities were as important to them: a school's prestige, availability of intensive study of certain subjects, and the possibility of getting good training for later enrollment in an institution of higher learning. However, every year quite a few parents noted that they did not have the chance to choose a particular school, since it was the only one in their community. The percentage of such families went up to 17 percent in 2011, an indication of the worsening of educational opportunities in rural areas.

We see considerable differences in the criteria that motivate the choice of a school between families with children in state schools or nonstate schools. For example, the parents of students in private schools are hardly concerned about how close the school is to their home; they focus on the presence of good teachers, a high reputation, and good preparation for enrollment in college. The importance of the school's specialization declined for these families. The parents had more concern about a good contingent of students in private schools.

In the state schools there is still significant concern about the school's proximity to the home, as well as the absence of choice because there is just one school in the vicinity; a significant motive for choosing a state school is the affordability of the tuition, or a free education.

In 2010, half the schools required that applicants be interviewed or take entrance exams; in 2011 the figure was 68.9 percent. In 2010 this was usually necessary to get into a gymnasium in an oblast center (72 percent of parents) and in schools offering intensive study of certain subjects, or in an ordinary school located in a prestigious raion, or in oblast centers. But in 2011 the percentage of ordinary schools in an oblast center, where children had to be interviewed in order to enroll, and in the larger rural schools, went up substantially. Entrance exams were necessary in the case of 71 percent of children from private schools (in 2011), compared to 42.6 percent of those in state-run schools.

Paying tuition

In the past few years, the percentage of school students who went to school free of charge went up to 81.4 percent in 2011: this increase was a result of the decline in the percentage of students who paid full tuition and those who only paid for certain educational services. In 2011, however, even in the private schools 9 percent of parents reported that their children went to school free of charge, while 8.5 percent reported that they only paid partial tuition. In such schools, 82.4 percent of students pay full tuition. A rise in tuition was observed both in private schools (from 92,000 to 103,400 rubles per year) and in state-run schools (in places where the families paid tuition), from 6,800 to 19,400 rubles per year.

Every year the parents were asked whether they would be willing to pay more tuition under certain circumstances, and if so, what would be the maximum amount they would agree to pay. About one-third of the families (including 37.5 percent in state schools and 9.9 percent in private schools) would not be willing to pay (or to pay more if tuition was required).

At the same time, many families, even if potentially willing to pay tuition (or to pay more) for school, were not able to state the limit of their material abilities (15 percent of parents in state schools and 37.3 percent in private schools). At the same time, in nonstate schools parents would be willing to pay about 100,000 rubles per year for tuition (the maximum amount was 600,000). In state

schools, parents were not willing to pay so much, even if the quality of the education were to improve. The average cost they could take on was 11,300 rubles per year. This is quite a broad spread, and the maximum amount given is also quite large—240,000 rubles [for parents of children in state schools]. Compared to 2006, the potential demand for fee-charging services in state schools went up, while it went down slightly in private schools.

Under what conditions would parents be willing to pay for their child's tuition in school (or to pay more)? It is obvious that the parents impose the highest effective (consumer) demand on specialized or supplementary academic programs: 35.6 percent of parents whose children are in state schools would be willing to pay for this, compared to 30.3 percent of those in private schools. At the same time, the demand for such programs is highest in ordinary schools in an oblast center (40 percent). In second place was "if the material base is improved" (19.9 percent of parents in state schools and 32.4 percent in private schools), and also "if the classes are smaller" (18.4 percent in state schools and 9.2 percent in private schools). A total of 13.8 percent of parents in state schools and 12 percent in private schools would be willing to pay for upgrading teachers' qualifications; 12.9 percent and 19 percent, respectively, would pay to improve the school's food services. Many fewer parents are concerned about increasing the roster of teachers and strengthening school security. At the same time, more parents in state schools are willing to pay to strengthen school security, very likely because in private schools security is already provided anyway.

Supplementary educational services

In addition to the training provided to school students in the required school programs, all schools also offer a number of supplementary services, from providing textbooks to preparing for enrollment in a college. The data show that the demand for such services went down in the five years, even though the structure of the demand did not change much. A total of 23 percent of the families did not use any of these services in 2011.

The youngsters use the services of the school library most often:

38 percent took textbooks home (51 percent in 2006). Also prevalent is the students' enrollment in supplementary classes, electives, and courses in particular subjects. About one-quarter of the students preferred creative classes including drawing, music, and so on; a smaller percentage preferred sports. The demand for remedial classes on certain subjects went down from 26.4 percent to 15.9 percent. In 2011, 13 percent of the families of school students used the services of the extended-day groups. Fewer youngsters used the school computer rooms because home computers are very common, but more students are logging onto the Internet from school computers (8 percent instead of 5.5 percent). Very few youngsters are taking school courses to prepare for enrollment in college (about 6 percent in both 2006 and 2011), and the same numbers are enrolling in science clubs and special-interest circles. About 12 percent were studying an additional foreign language in school in 2006, compared to only 8 percent in 2011. The students made more frequent use of photocopying and printing materials.

Regarding differences between state and private schools, in 2011 it was especially notable that in regard to just about all the items the demand was substantially higher in private schools. This difference also existed in 2006, but the gap was smaller. The private schools are especially far ahead in demand for supplementary classes to catch up on particular subjects (32 percent compared to 14 percent), the study of a foreign language (27.5 percent compared to 5.4 percent), and creative classes (44 percent compared to 24 percent). In 2011, these kinds of services were used free of charge by 5.4 percent of students in state schools, compared to 11 percent of those in private schools. Among those who did so on a fee basis, under half the parents could say how much they spent on such classes. The average amount per month (for those requiring a fee) came to 5,300 rubles per month in private schools and 1,400 rubles in state schools. The percentage of school students who did not take part in special-interest courses and activities outside school also fell between 2006 and 2011 (from 39.9 percent to 34.2 percent). The youngsters tend to prefer creative classes such as music, dancing, and drawing; just over one-quarter attended such classes in 2006 to 2009, and in 2011 the percentage rose to

29.6 percent. There was a comparable increase of those active in sports (31 percent in 2011). The number of students who attend outside courses in a foreign language went down from 11.6 percent to 10.6 percent. Amateur hobby classes (household management, photography, etc.) and professional courses are attended by only 2 percent, while 9 percent attended other kinds of classes.

In contrast to supplementary school classes, there is a small difference in demand for special-interest groups or classes outside school between state schools and private schools. Youngsters in private schools are more likely to attend only fitness centers and sports sections. It is likely that private schools offer a broader array of services than state schools, and are better able to meet the demand. The parents of students in state schools are more likely to seek the needed special-interest circles and sections outside of school. Among students who attended such classes in 2011, 38 percent did so free of charge (of whom 24.7 percent were in private schools and 40 percent in state schools). On the average, monthly payments came to 2,100 rubles in state schools, compared to 4,600 rubles in private schools.

According to the parents' assessments, the main reason for such supplementary classes outside school is the child's desire. In private schools, parents consider the goal of the child's harmonious development to be even more important, whereas in state schools one-third of parents focus on that concern. The parents of children in private schools are also more highly motivated to ensure that their child does better in school thanks to these classes. On the other hand, they are less concerned with the goal of making it easier to enroll in an institution of higher learning or a vocational school.

A substantial percentage of school students (about 28 percent every year, with minor fluctuations) work with a tutor. This figure is the same in Moscow and the regions; the lowest percentage is in rural schools and ordinary schools in an oblast center (about 20 percent). In 2011, 30 percent of those in private schools worked with a tutor; in the state schools the figure was 27 percent.

Among students who work with a tutor, most are trying to catch up on some subject. One-quarter of those who did so in 2011, and one-fifth in 2006, were preparing for school exams, including the

Unified State Examination [USE]. A much smaller group would like to study some subject in greater depth. About 8–9 percent of youngsters work with a tutor for their overall development. In the five years the demand for tutoring in order to prepare to enroll in an institution of higher learning went down from 14.4 percent to 2.4 percent in the case of working with instructors from the particular institution (that the student was getting ready to enroll in), and from 17.3 percent to 6.2 percent in the case of working with instructors from a different institution. Hardly anyone is being tutored to prepare to enroll in a technicum or a vocational school.

In the case of private schools, in 2011 there was higher demand for tutors in order to catch up on some subject, or for intensive study. In state schools, students most often worked with tutors to prepare for the USE and also for their overall development.

Regarding monthly spending on such private classes, the differences between the costs incurred by families of students in state schools or private schools are minor, with the exception of tutors “for overall development” and “for the intensive study of some subject.” Monthly classes for the purpose of catching up on some subject costs 2,000–2,200 rubles; in the case of preparation for the USE, 3,500–3,800 rubles; in the case of preparing to enroll in an institution by working with a tutor from the same institution the cost is 4,000–4,100 rubles; in the case of an instructor from a different institution it is 2,900–3,300 rubles. There is a tendency for tutoring costs to increase with respect to all kinds of classes, although it can fluctuate. This is probably because there were not enough answers to questions about amounts of the spending.

Families’ spending for the educational process

In addition to paying for educational services per se, families of school students also spend money to provide for their child’s educational process in school and at home. The percentage of households with various kinds of such costs does not change yearly. Only 2–4 percent of families do not have such expenditures. Virtually all families purchase school supplies and stationery. More than four-fifths spend money on athletic clothing, shoes, and training acces-

sories. The percentage of families that purchased textbooks from 2008 through 2011 remained at 75 percent in private schools and rose from 54 percent to 69 percent in state schools. More families whose children are in state schools are purchasing uniforms. About one-third are purchasing specialized accessories (for example, for classes in creative activities) and computer accessories and devices, and pay for an Internet access fee and transportation. At the beginning of the school year alone (August and September 2011) for a student in a state school an average of 14,500 rubles was spent on such things; in the case of private schools, over 25,000.

A somewhat smaller percentage of households spend money to pay for “school needs,” which very often serves as a disguised form of tuition. Families usually buy gifts for teachers in both private and state schools. From 2008 through 2011 there was a substantial decline in the percentage of families who paid additional money for the school’s security in private educational institutions, while in state institutions the percentage went up. As regards families paying for school food services and the repair of the facilities, the percentage went down in private schools while it rose in state schools. About one-fifth of families spend money on school supplies, and about 15 percent make donations for specific activities (in 2011, almost 19 percent in private schools). Not more than 5 percent of the families in 2008 and not more than 3 percent in 2011 paid for additional personnel and special equipment, as well as library books.

The average spending in August and September 2011 to pay for the needs of the educational institution came to 2,800 rubles in state schools and 12,400 rubles in private schools.

Characteristics of school and the educational process

Regarding the level of support for the educational process and teacher qualifications, there is frequently a substantial difference between different types of schools and between urban and rural schools. And since it is generally higher-status families that have access to the best schools, this reinforces the inequality of preschool children’s preparation and abilities.

Of the parents surveyed, 53 percent in state schools and 40 per-

cent in private schools in 2011 reported that there was no specific specialization in the school or the grade. Among specializations in private schools (and grades), most widely prevalent were foreign languages and culture, and the arts, while in state schools it was foreign languages and mathematics. It is not surprising that the least specialized schools are in the countryside (especially low-enrollment schools) and in ordinary schools in raion centers. In gymnasiums or specialized schools in the oblast centers, an orientation toward foreign languages and mathematics predominates.

There is a large difference in class sizes between state and private schools: in the former the average class size in 2011 was twenty-three students (in both specialized schools and gymnasiums, and fewer in the countryside), compared to only twelve students in private schools. Yet the level of academic progress in private schools is a bit lower than in state schools: while the percentage of “excellent” students [grades of 1, or A] is comparable (3.5 percent), the percentage of “good” students [2, or B] is 39 percent (compared to 42 percent in state schools). It is likely, however, that this is due to the more complex programs in these [state] schools—programs that may be more difficult to master with high results.

As a rule, a high quality of education entails a certain amount of freedom to choose what to take, making it possible for those who wish to acquire more thorough knowledge in a subject.

The data of the survey show that according to parents, the number of optional courses went up a bit, although usually they comprise under 10 percent of all disciplines. About one-third of the parents know that such courses exist, but could not estimate the percentage. A comparable number of parents answered that there are elective courses in their school: 10 percent of all subjects offered. Parents’ low level of knowledgeability on this topic indicates that they are not much interested in elective instruction.

The prevalence of optional instruction is different in private and state schools: in 2011, 84 percent of the parents of children in private schools reported availability of elective courses, and 88 percent mentioned the availability of electives; in state schools, the respective figures were 63.5 percent and 76.2 percent.

The difference between private and state schools in the number

of available optional courses is not large (10–14 percent). Parents of youngsters in private schools seem to have even less knowledge about their number and content than parents of youngsters in state schools.

Extracurricular events such as association with peers, celebrations, field trips, and visits to the theater are essential to a child's intellectual and cultural development. This is understood in the schools: only 2–3 percent do not include such events, and 40 percent of schools of all types hold such events about once every quarter. Comparing state and private schools, we find that both in 2010 and in 2011, 20 percent of private schools held such events every week; another 40 percent held one every month, whereas in state schools the corresponding figures were 6–7 percent and 30–31 percent. A majority of state schools arrange for extracurricular events about once per quarter or less frequently.

The knowledge and skills of school students

The parents of students in the eighth through eleventh grades were asked to rate their children's mastery of the skills essential for their subsequent work and education, as well as for their socialization.

The percentage of parents who rate their children's knowledge of a foreign language as *very good* stood at 18 percent in 2011; the percentage who estimated that level as *good* went down, but by 2011 it reached the former level of 44 percent. Thus both these categories together comprise 60–62 percent of upper-grade students. The percentage of low ratings did not fluctuate much. We do not observe obvious progress in this sphere, although these are the subjective impressions of parents. At the same time, parents of children in private schools rate the knowledge of their children more highly; the gap in 2011 was higher than in 2006. In 2011, two-thirds of parents of children in private schools rated their children's knowledge of a foreign language as good or very good, whereas among those in the state schools the figure was only 60 percent.

Very definite progress is seen in mastery of computer programs. The percentage of students who have mastered the main programs went up to 41 percent in 2011, while the percentage of those who

mastered specialized programs went up to 43.6 percent. Again, parents of children in private schools tended to rate their children's knowledge more highly than parents of children in state schools, but this difference is not large: all the students, in both state and private schools, made a big leap in the five years.

When it comes to the upper-grade students' mastery of special computer programs (for example, programming, processing of photographs and data), we also find a considerable leap from 2006 through 2011, and the gap between private and state schools is wider in this regard. For example, 23 percent of children in private schools, according to their parents' assessments, had good and very good skills in the use of these programs in 2006, and in 2011 the figure was 54 percent. In state schools these figures were 21 percent and 44.5 percent, respectively.

The era of "computer children" is rapidly approaching: in 2006, 66.6 percent of upper-grade students used a computer almost every day; in 2011 the figure was 91.6 percent, and the percentage of daily users of the Internet and email had risen to 83.3 percent. While in 2006 there was still an observable difference between youngsters in private schools and state school, by 2011 the percentage of daily users had become equal, at 92–93 percent. The percentage of active users of computers and the Internet is higher in Moscow than the provinces, and higher in cities than in the countryside, but the growth everywhere is substantially expanding people's access to the information space, educational resources and opportunities for interaction—in other words the accumulation of social capital.

The youngsters use both the computer and the Internet most often at home: the percentage of those who work on a computer at home rose to 95.8 percent in 2011; for the Internet, 91.7 percent. This indicates that more and more families of upper-grade school students are purchasing computers and logging on to the Internet. In the villages, children are often the conduits, since they are the first to try out the new "toys" in computer science classes in school.

In 2006, 86 percent of students in private schools used a computer at home, and 52 percent used the Internet, whereas their peers in the state schools had figures of only 70 percent and 32 percent, respectively; by 2011 the difference had just about disappeared.

And this was in spite of the fact that children in private schools are more likely to use both a computer and the Internet in the institution, compared to those in state schools, even if they have that opportunity in the home.

Up to 20 percent of children also use a computer and the Internet in the homes of friends and acquaintances, although this tends to indicate not an inability to do so at home but rather that information resources crowd out other activities, including during the time they are interacting with each other.

However, the Internet cannot totally take the place of live interaction, which is very important for socialization and for the construction of nonvirtual social networks. The data have shown that one out of five students in the lower grades has practically no interaction with classmates outside school, and the same is true of one out of ten in regard to interaction with his other peers. With age the frequency of interaction does rise, but the percentage of youngsters who are not very sociable does not change much. A total of 58 percent of students in the first through fourth grades, and 61 percent of those in the eighth through eleventh grades, interact with their classmates fairly frequently (at least three or four times per week), and 60 percent and 55 percent, respectively, do so with other friends. Students in rural schools also interact more frequently than their urban peers: in the oblast center only half the children of all ages get together with friends outside of school; in the villages the figure is 75 percent.

We can see that in the state schools children are much more likely to interact outside school both with classmates and with other friends. In 2011, for example, 64 percent of youngsters in state schools, compared to only 45 percent of those in private schools, interacted with classmates three or four times a week; 60 percent and 42 percent, respectively, interacted with other friends.

The educational plans of school students

When they get to tenth grade, students have to make the important strategic decision of whether to continue their schooling in the tenth and eleventh grades: this is the option that, as a rule, has to

be chosen by the ones who intend to enroll in a higher educational institution later on. The percentage of students in secondary school who do plan to continue to tenth and eleventh grades is quite stable; from 2006 through 2010 it hovered around 77–78 percent; the same was true of those who did not plan to continue (6–7 percent) and the undecided (12–14 percent). In 2011 there was a slight rise in the percentage of those who did not plan to continue in tenth grade; those who wanted to stay in the tenth grade remained at 76 percent. However, there is quite a large difference between types of schools: in 2011, 85 percent of students in high-status schools, 72 percent in the general city schools, and 69 percent in rural schools definitely planned to continue their schooling in tenth and eleventh grades. There was a substantial decline in the orientation to continue into the upper grades in private educational institutions: in 2006, 81 percent planned to go on with their schooling, compared to just 73 percent in 2011. But this decline was seen primarily among the undecided. Only 7.2 percent of the students in the private schools were definitely certain that they would not go into the tenth grade, compared to 12.5 percent of the students in the state schools.

The percentage of school students in the eighth through eleventh grades who intended to enroll in an institution of higher learning (including college by correspondence, going to school while working, and so on) was quite stable: 79–81 percent in 2006 through 2010, and 76 percent in 2011. Another 9–11 percent planned to obtain a primary or secondary professional education, while the rest had not yet decided (they were considering working, serving in the armed forces, and so on), but that figure is quite small. The plans of school students in 2011, like the other years, differ a great deal in different types of schools: in the high-status schools 85 percent of students in the eighth through eleventh grades plan to obtain a higher education immediately after graduating from school; in the general city schools the figure is 73.4 percent, and in the rural schools, 61.3 percent. A number of studies in the West and Russia show that these unequal intentions are influenced by different human capital in the family, the student's characteristics, and academic performance.

Students in private educational institutions are slightly more

oriented toward enrollment in a higher educational institution, while a substantially smaller percentage are oriented toward secondary and primary professional educational institutions, but also are more uncertain.

In the five years there was a decline, by several times in the percentage of schools that maintain agreements with an institution of higher learning, meaning that to some extent they offer profile training in the upper grades. In 2006, 20 percent of the parents of upper-grade school students reported that their school had such an arrangement (although about one-third of the students were attending profile classes). In 2011 this percentage of parents fell to 7 percent.

In 2011, nonetheless, 20 percent of parents of students in private schools reported that their schools had an arrangement with an institution of higher learning, and half the students were attending profile classes. Of the students in state schools who were attending profile classes, about half had plans to enroll in that institution; in the case of private schools, over 80 percent.

In 2011, compared to 2006, among school students in the eighth through eleventh grades there was a decline in the percentage of those who had not decided what higher educational institution to choose (22.2 percent); there was not much change in the percentage of those who chose just one institution, and there was a rise in the percentage of those who chose two or three options, which is probably linked to the possibilities of applying simultaneously to a number of different institutions of higher learning, as provided for by the USE.

The parents of upper-grade students have flexible strategies of paying for education: 61 percent in 2006 and 58.4 percent in 2011 were prepared to pay tuition, but stated that they would have to try to get a free education. The percentage of families that would never be willing to pay tuition in an institution of higher learning rose from 18.9 percent to 29.7 percent in 2011. The popularity of the option of agreeing immediately to pay tuition fell to 4.8 percent in 2011.

As might have been predicted, the orientation toward the strategy of “a free education, but if the applicant makes it through the competition, then tuition is all right,” is equally popular among students in both state and private schools. But among private schools

a much higher percentage are immediately willing to enroll on a tuition basis (13.2 percent).

The percentage of those oriented toward a higher education on a tuition basis went down a bit in 2009 through 2011; the willingness to pay tuition continued to rise. In 2011, 10 percent of the parents stated that they were willing to pay tuition, but they had a hard time naming an amount.

In 2006, 33.6 percent of the students in the eighth through eleventh grades were attending some kind of preparatory courses to prepare to enroll in an institution of higher learning; in 2011, the figure was only 18.9 percent, and more students in state schools attended such courses in 2011 than in private schools. In 2006, a majority of students in preparatory courses preferred to pay for courses in the same institution that they intended to attend; in 2011, other fee-charging preparatory courses began to experience the same level of demand.

Characteristics of the families of school students

In 2009 through 2011, the mothers of 63 percent of school students had a higher or an incomplete higher education; in private schools they were more highly educated: in 2011, 78 percent had a higher education, whereas in state schools the figure was 55 percent.

In 2011, 15.8 percent of respondents reported that the father was not living with the child. As a rule, children in troubled families (those that are incomplete, those with low incomes, those in which the parents are not highly educated) have substantially worse educational opportunities than do their peers who have a high social position. This has an impact both on the quality of the school education and on their educational achievements, on their intentions to go on with their schooling and how realistic their chances are to obtain a higher education. The percentage of children from incomplete families is lower in private schools.

There are also substantial differences in the professional status of parents. Among the mothers of students in private schools there are more entrepreneurs, specialists, and unit managers.

There has been a decline in the percentage of the families in

which home libraries include over 500 volumes. This may be because information on paper is being replaced by information available on electronic media, and people can download books from the Internet instead of taking up space in the home. It also might provide evidence of a gradual decline in the culture of book reading and a transition to the culture of video clips and blogs. The size of libraries is larger among the families of children in the private schools (especially in 2006, and smaller by 2011). There was a substantial increase in the percentage of families with a computer. The percentage of families that consider themselves quite well off materially (the first and second answer choice) rose, but there are large differences between the families of children in private schools and state schools: in the former, 73 percent of families say they are well off; in the case of state schools the figure is 42 percent.

In 2011, the average monthly per capita income was under 10,000 rubles for only 15.9 percent of families with children in private schools; the respective figure was 46.8 percent for those in state schools. A high per capita income (over 20,000 rubles per month) was reported by 42 percent of parents of children in the private schools, compared to only 14 percent in state schools.

Conclusions

The longitudinal monitoring survey of the economics of education has shown that the structure of people's motives for choosing educational institutions did not change much in the four years. The main criteria for parents' choice of a school were proximity to the home and highly qualified teachers.

Even though the percentage of school students who attended school completely free of charge did increase, there was a rise in tuition for families that paid for education. At the same time, two-thirds of the families are willing to pay more for their children's school education. The parents impose the highest effective (consumer) demand on specialized or additional academic programs.

In the five years, there was practically no dynamic change in the consumption of supplementary school services. The highest level of demand had to do with the ability to take textbooks home; in

second place was the opportunity to attend supplementary classes, elective courses, and courses in particular subjects.

In 2011 there was an increase in the percentage of school students attending various kinds of special-interest circles, courses, and sections outside of school. The main reason for such supplementary activities outside of school was the child's own wishes. The parents were increasingly willing to invest more in education, if not money then at least time, since most students generally attend such activities accompanied by adults. More than a quarter of the students study with a tutor, for the most part to catch up on some subject.

A fairly large percentage of households spend money on what are called the "needs of the educational institution," which very often represents a disguised form of tuition, but 85 percent of parents are willing to pay more provided that the quality of the education is improved.

If we look at the differences between the high-status schools and general schools, the differences are manifested in the possibilities of optionality of instruction, as well as in the parents' satisfaction with the quality of training.

The percentage of secondary-school students who plan to continue in the tenth and eleventh grades is quite stable at 78 percent. The percentage of students in the eighth through eleventh grades who intend to enroll in an institution of higher learning after graduating from school (including via correspondence, working while going to school, and so on) has also not changed very much: about four-fifths of all students. The percentage of families oriented toward paying for a higher education went down a bit in 2009 and 2011, but their willingness to pay college tuition continued to rise.

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