

June 2024

From Discord to Dialogue: Exploring the Impact of Campus Protests on Higher Ed Brands

641

High school juniors (36%) and seniors (64%) were surveyed.

1,000

Parents of college-bound high school juniors (51%) and seniors (49%) surveyed.

78%

of students are planning to enroll at a 4-year college or university.

7%

of students are planning to enroll at a 2-year school or technical school and are unsure of their plans afterwards.

15%

of students are planning to enroll at a 2-year school or technical school as a pathway to a 4-year school.

55%

of parents said their highest level of education is some college/associate's /bachelors.

18%

of parents said their highest level of education is high school or lower.

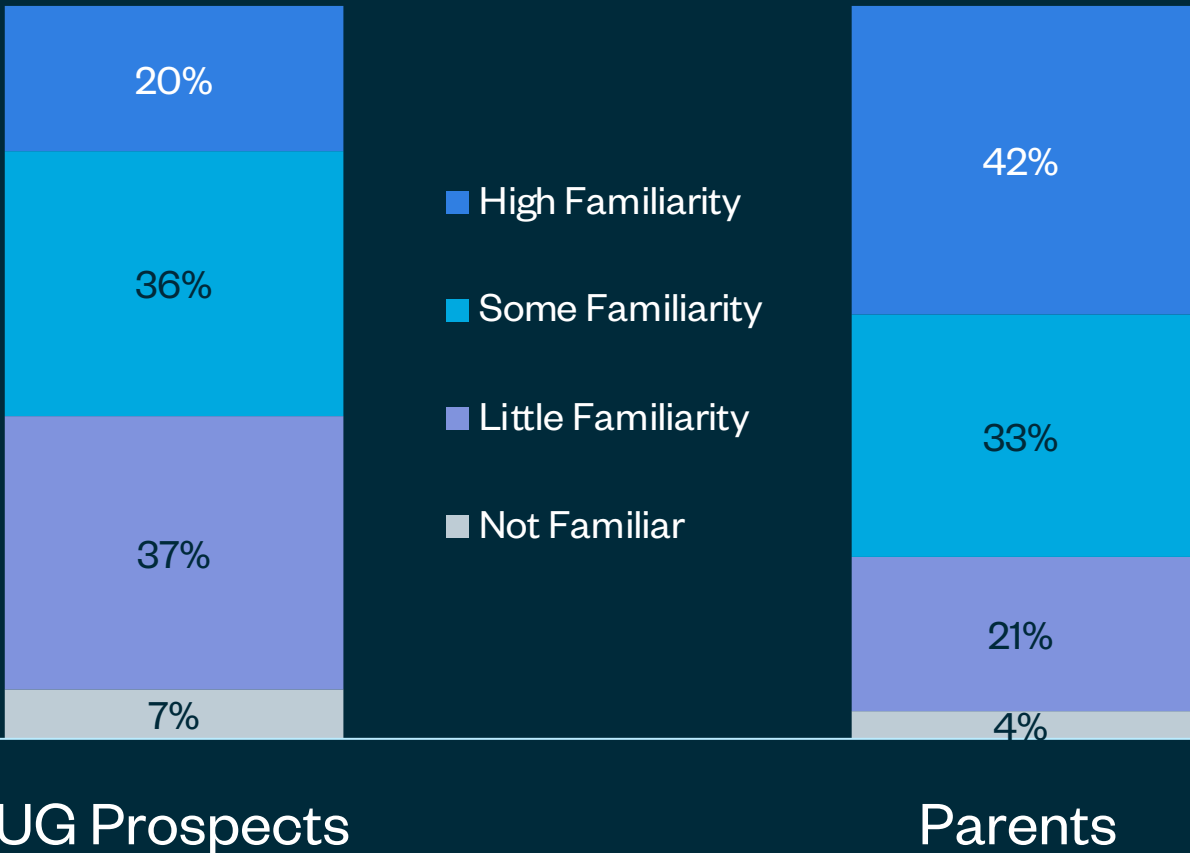
26%

of parents said their highest level of education is some post-grad / Master's / Doctorate / PhD.

The campus protests and Capitol Hill testimony were not just news events. Prospective students and, especially their parents, were paying attention.

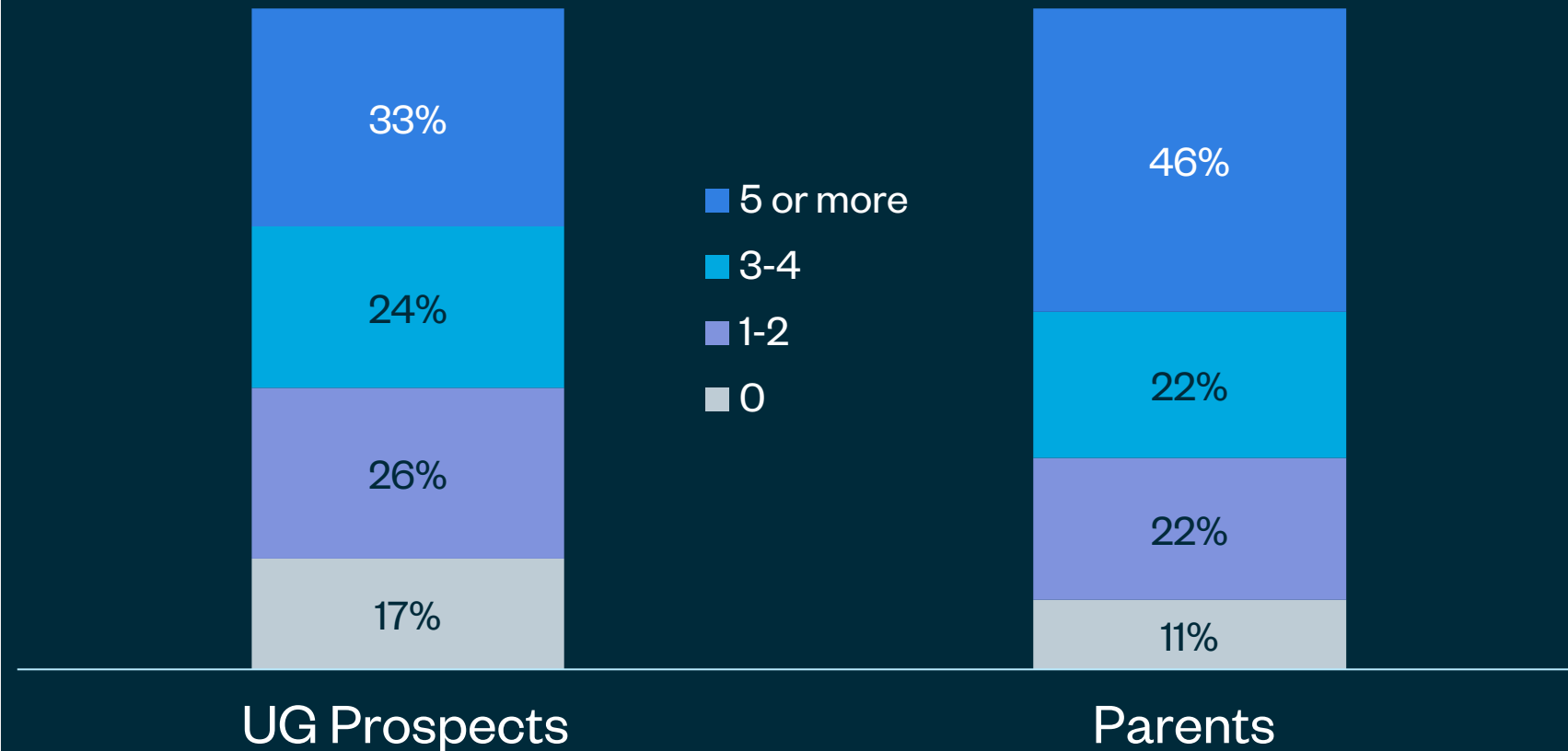
Parents were 2x more likely than prospective students to say they were highly familiar with the recent protests.

What is your level of familiarity with the recent protests on college and university campuses in the U.S.?



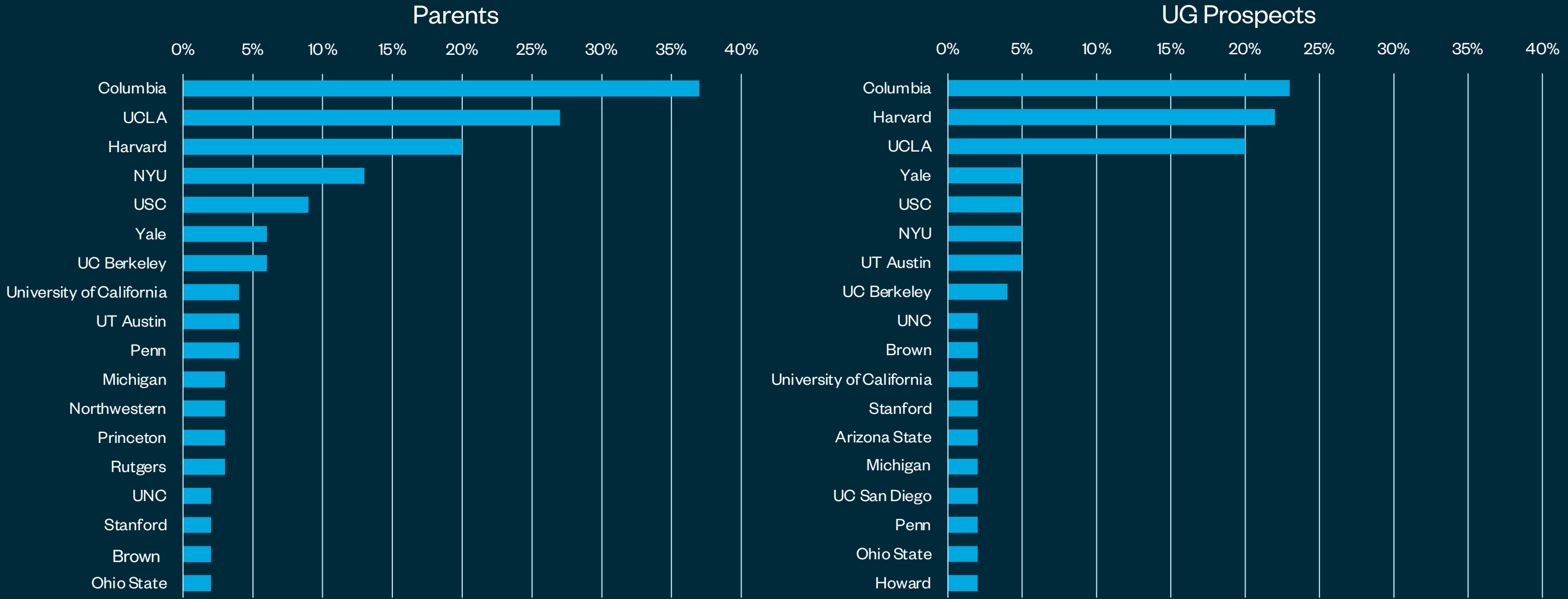
9 in 10 parents have heard of at least one campus that has experienced a recent protest and about 8 in 10 prospective students could recall hearing about protests on at least one campus.

Approximately how many schools have you heard about experiencing campus protests recently?



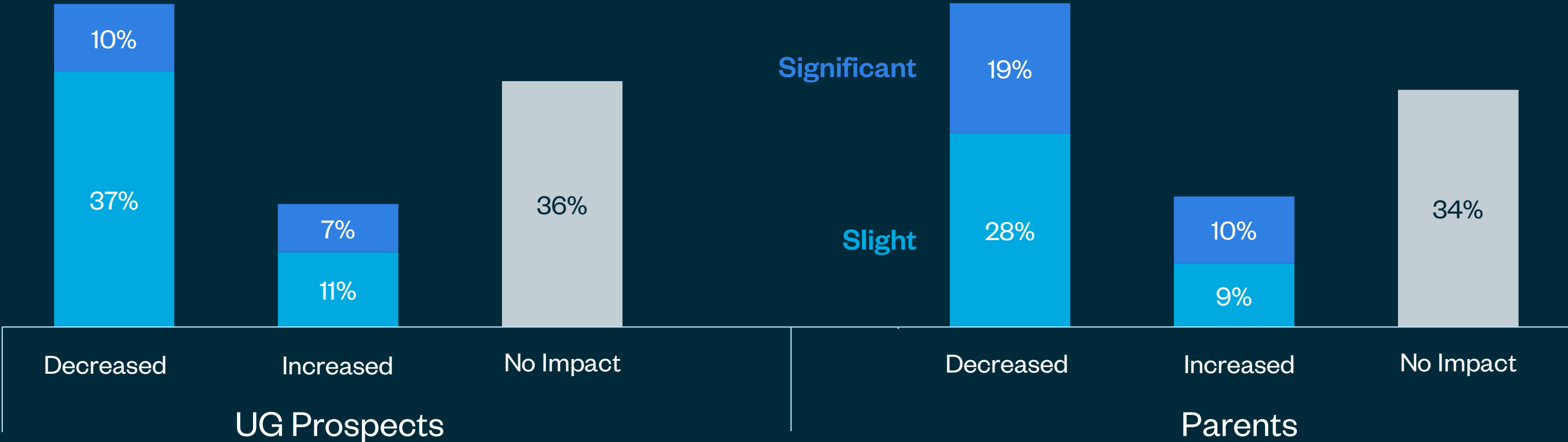
Columbia, UCLA, Harvard, and NYU are mentioned by a significant number of parents. Among students, only Columbia, Harvard, and UCLA are mentioned by more than 5%.

What is the college or university that comes to mind when you think about the protests on campuses?



Impact on Trust in Higher Ed

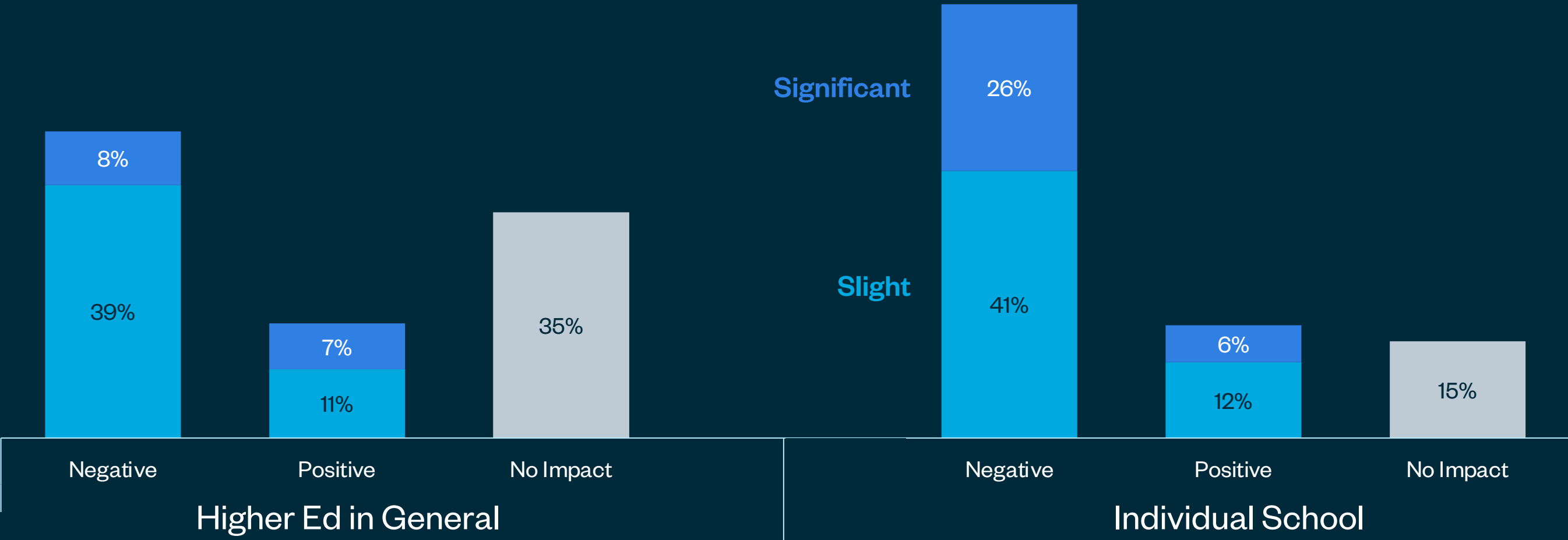
How have the recent protests affected your trust in higher education?



Impact of Protests on Perceptions: UG Prospects

How have the recent protests affected your opinion of higher education in general?

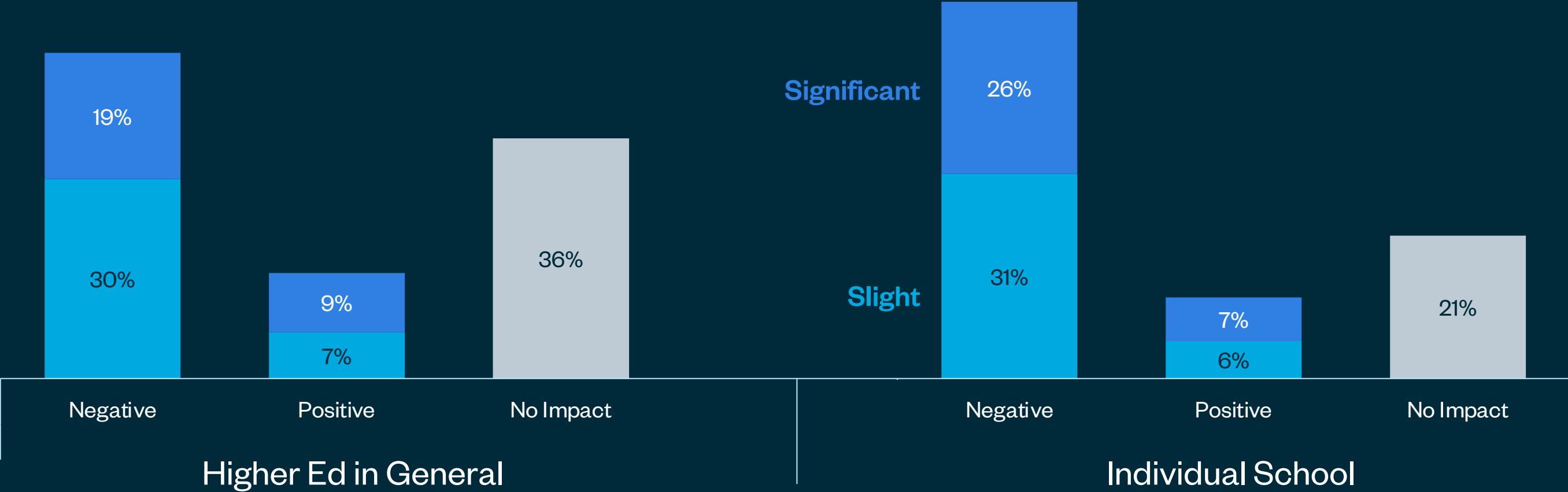
In your opinion, how has the reputation of [school names] been affected by the protests?



Impact of Protests on Perceptions: Parents

How have the recent protests affected your opinion of higher education, in general?

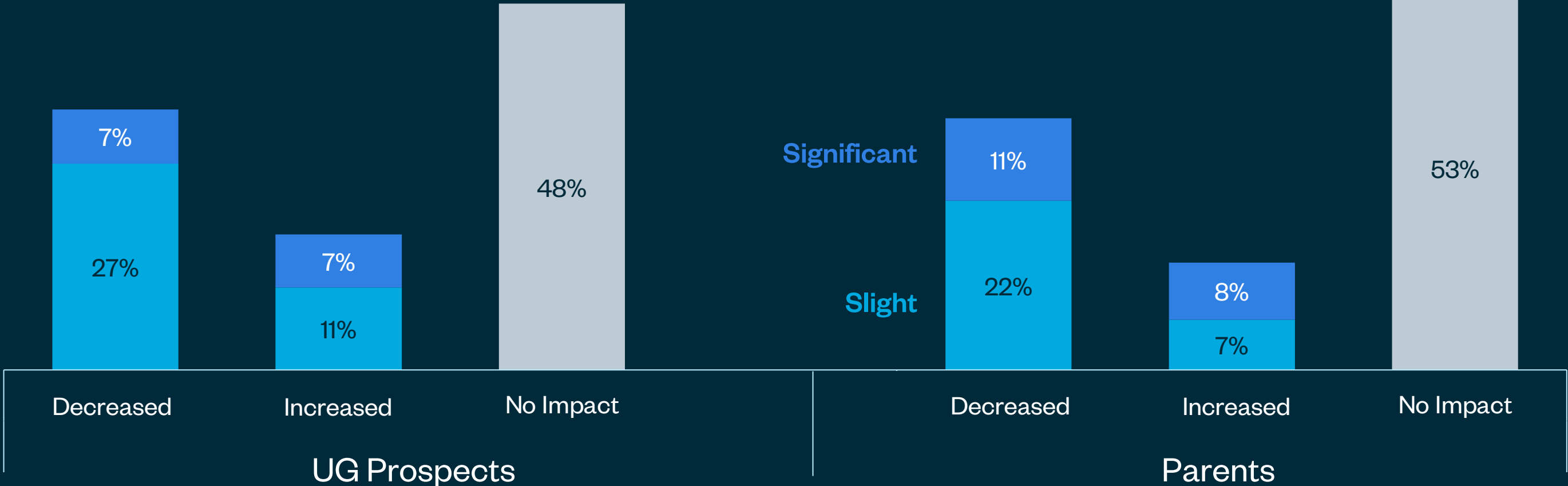
In your opinion, how has the reputation of [school name] been affected by the protests?



Impact on Interest of Attending College/Child Attending College

How have the recent protests on college campuses impacted your interest in attending college?

How have the recent protests on college campuses impacted your interest in your child attending college?

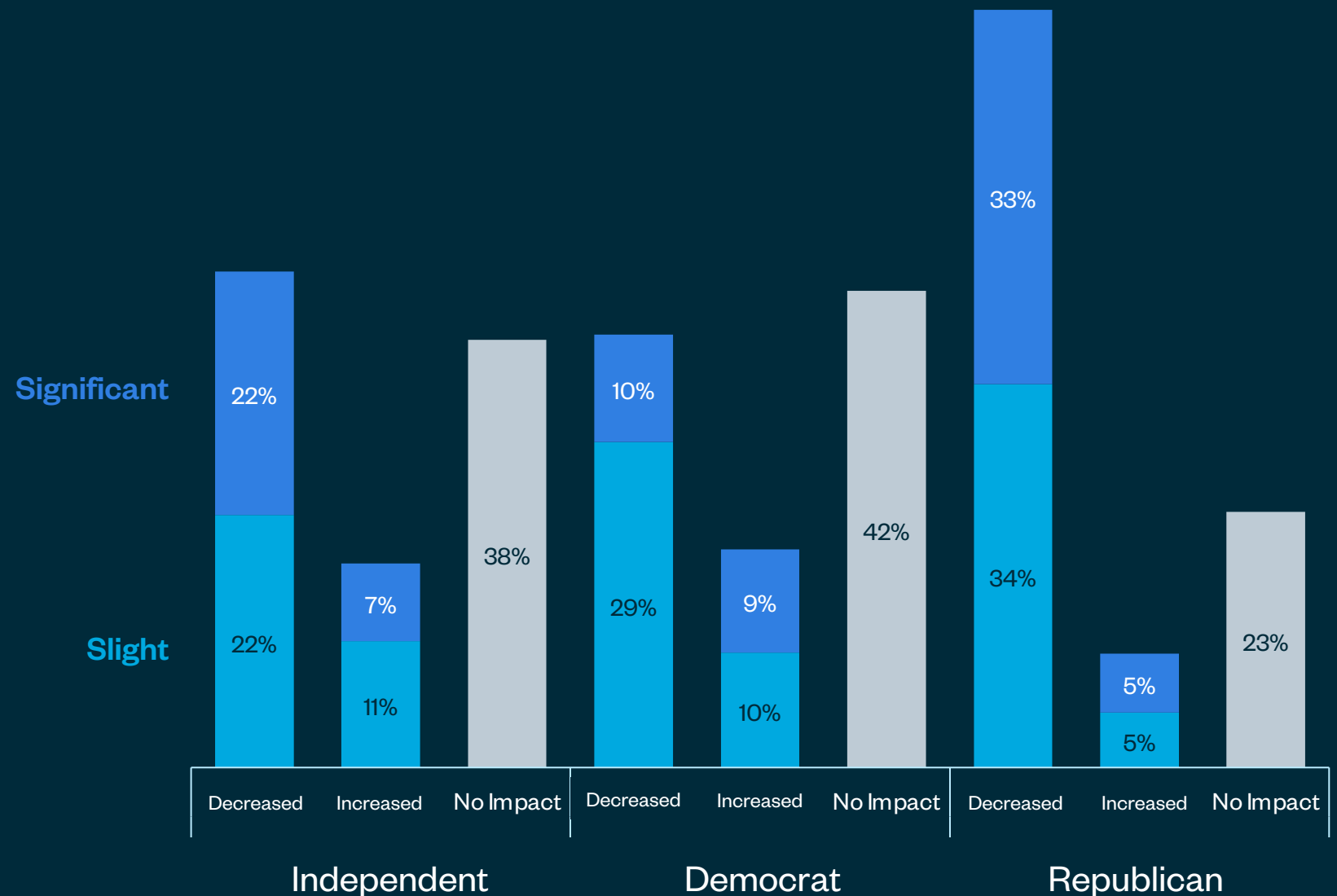


The story gets **more complex**
when we look at the findings
by political beliefs.

PARENTS BY POLITICAL BELIEFS
(IMPACT ON TRUST IN HIGHER ED)

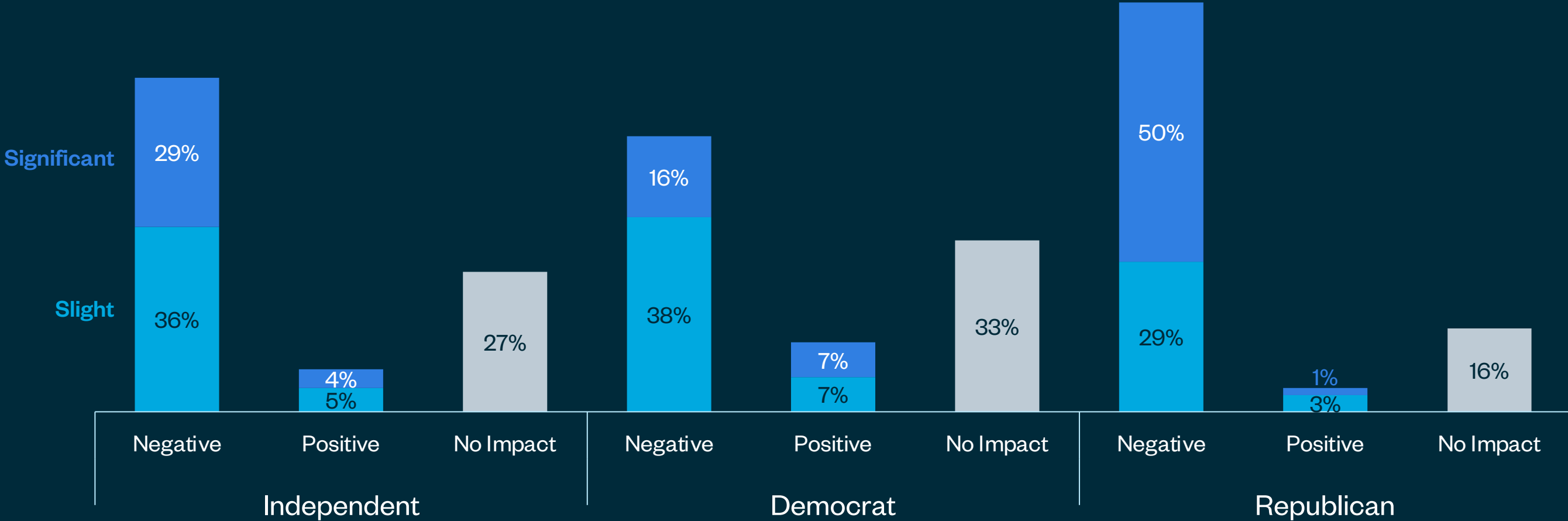
Recent campus protests have had a more significant negative impact on Republican parents' trust and opinion of higher ed in general.

How have the recent protests affected your trust in higher education?



Parents by Political Beliefs (Impact on Perception of Campuses)

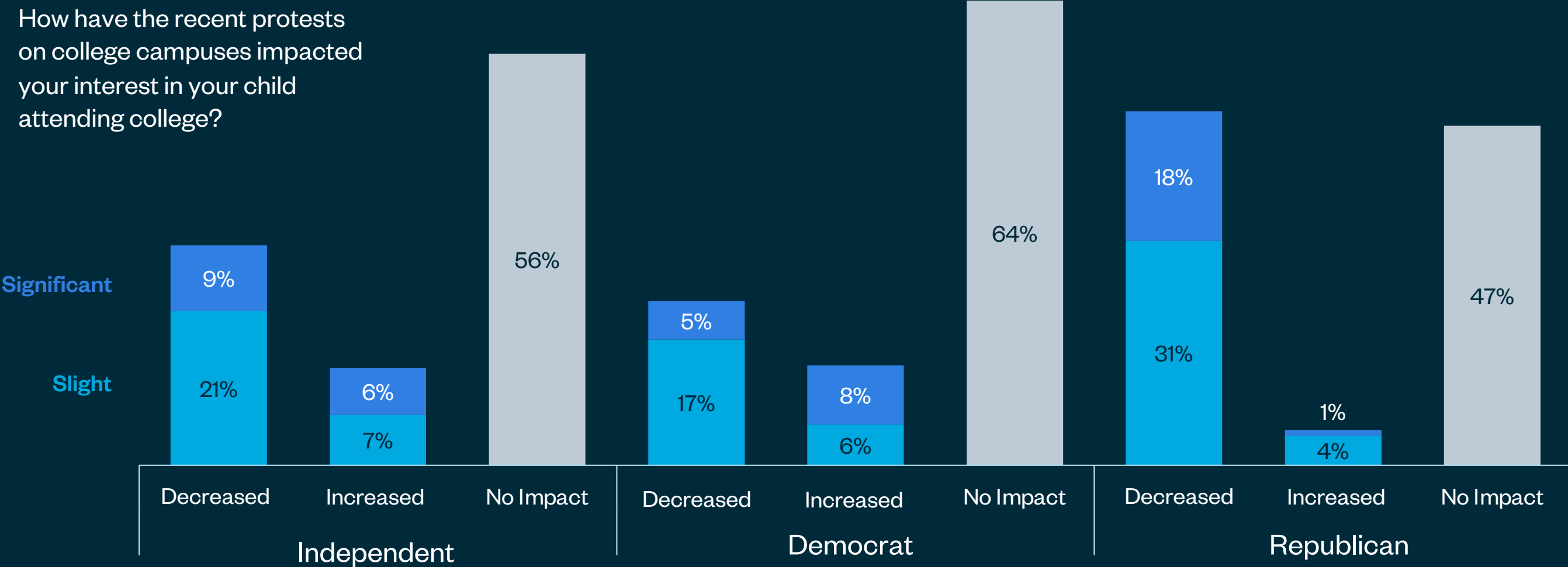
In your opinion, how has the reputation of [school name] been affected by the protests?



Parents by Political Beliefs

(Impact on Interest in Child Attending College)

How have the recent protests on college campuses impacted your interest in your child attending college?



Key Takeaways

Parents and students are highly aware of the protests but associate them with a small subset of schools.

Interest in attending college is somewhat affected. Both the duration and impact on specific schools is to be determined.

Every issue continues to chip away at positive sentiment and support for higher education.

On behalf of our Alexandria, Oakland, and Columbus offices,

Thank you.

Offices —

Washington, DC
1737 King St, Ste 110
Alexandria, VA 22314

Oakland, CA
4008 Ardley Ave
Oakland, CA 94602

Columbus, OH
45 E Lincoln St
Columbus, OH 43215

Ownership —

Elizabeth Johnson
Chairman & Partner
esj@simpsonscarborough.com

Jason Simon
CEO & Partner
js@simpsonscarborough.com



SimpsonScarborough is a woman-owned firm.

simpsonscarborough.com →