

# Assessing Online Learning Methods Used in Wisconsin During the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic

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## Executive Summary

The goal of the research reported in this working paper was to try to understand what worked and what didn't when primary and secondary schools were forced by the COVID-19 pandemic to switch from traditional in-person instruction to fully remote instruction starting in March 2020. With new waves of the virus circulating in mid-2021, we may face the challenge again, this report is intended to help us to be better prepared.

## Hypotheses to Be Tested

To do so, the team developed questionnaires for teachers, administrators, and parents. We hoped to use the data to test a number of hypotheses:

- Were the experiences in public and private schools different?
- Did younger students have a more difficult time adapting to online education?
- Did teachers whose subject matter required more direct, hands-on experiences have greater challenges adapting to online instruction?
- Did students and teachers in more rural areas have more difficulty adapting to online instruction because the internet infrastructure in rural areas is often less robust than in urban or suburban areas.
- Did special needs students or those who typically receive below average grades have greater difficulty in the online environment?
- Did students from households with lower incomes have greater challenges, perhaps because their internet connection or access to a computer were more limited?
- Did people of color have greater challenges than white students with online learning?

## The Data

To attempt to answer these questions, surveys were developed and sent to the following:

- A link to an online survey was included in the electronic newsletters the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators sends to over 3,000 administrators in the state.
- Emails were sent to 916 private schools included in a list from the Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools, encouraging their administrators, teachers and parents to complete an online survey.
- A link to an online survey was included in multiple editions of the Wisconsin Education Association Council's (WEAC) electronic newsletter, which is sent to nearly 30,000 teachers in Wisconsin,
- Emails were sent to 188 classroom teachers who work with student teachers from the UWRF College of Education and Professional Studies inviting them to complete an online survey.

- Paper surveys were mailed to 3,600 addresses of households believed to have school-aged children; the list included an oversampling of addresses for households of color and with lower household income.
- 5,000 parents were invited via email to complete an online survey,

Despite these efforts, the number of completed responses was disappointing:

- 66 administrators completed surveys
- 289 teachers completed surveys
- 499 parents completed surveys

Because the response rates were so low, the results reported in this working paper should be seen as preliminary, rather than definitive.

### Summary of Results from Administrators

A majority of the administrators who responded to the survey had been in their position for at least six years (Figure 1). Most of the administrators oversaw elementary schools (80%) or middle schools (70%), with only about one-third working in a high school (Figure 2). Many administrators' responsibilities encompassed multiple levels, which is why these numbers sum to more than 100%. The proportion of students from rural areas, averaged across all administrators, was 43%, 40% were from suburban areas, and only 17 from urban areas (Figure 3). Administrators were almost evenly split between public and private schools (Figure 4).

Almost all administrators (94%) said their school offered remote-only instruction in the spring 2020 semester after mid-March 2020. In contrast, nearly one-quarter said they were offering in-person only instruction in the fall of 2020 (23%) and most of the remainder were offering a hybrid type of instruction with some in-person and some on-line instruction (69%) (Figure 5). Administrators of private school and elementary schools were significantly more likely to be offering in-person only instruction during the fall of 2020.

Large majorities of administrators were at least somewhat satisfied with the support they received from their teachers during spring 2020 pandemic (95%), the support they received from the parents of their students (86%), and the decision to move to remote-only instruction (76%). A substantial minority were at least somewhat dissatisfied with their students' academic progress (36%) (Figure 6).

The most common ways administrators communicated with their teachers during the pandemic shut-down were individual emails (92% used this), group emails (92%), and phone calls (84%). The ways they communicated with their parents during the spring pandemic were similar; individual emails (97%), group emails (97%), group video chats (94%), and phone calls (89%) (Figure 7). Public school administrators, on average, used significantly more communication mechanisms than their private school peers.

More than 80% of administrators said their teachers used the following means of instruction during the spring: emailed assignments (95%), group video discussions with students (94%), individual video chats with students (87%), paper assignments teachers prepared and left for their students/parents to pick up (87%), and recorded lectures or messages (85%) (Figure 8).

Based on feedback they received from their teachers, administrators said the most effective teaching methods during the spring of 2020 were individual video chats (89% said this was effective), group video discussions (79%), and recorded lectures/messages (78%) (Figure 9).

Administrators who said that teachers found a particular teaching approach was somewhat or very ineffective were asked to indicate why it had failed. While few administrators provided this feedback (fewer than 10), the most common reason an approach didn't work was that students failed to engage with the material presented and the second most common reason was students' lack of technology (Figure 10).

Administrators were also asked to assess the effectiveness of the teaching methods based on feedback they received from parents. The three most effective approaches, from their parents' perspectives, were the same as identified by their teachers; individual video chats (78% effective), group video discussions (77%), and recorded lectures/messages (73%) (Figure 11).

The few administrators who provided feedback from parents as to why a given approach didn't work (12 or fewer) mostly said lack of student engagement or students' lack of technology were to blame (Figure 12).

When asked about their satisfaction with the technology at their disposal during the pandemic, a majority were very satisfied with Zoom (70% very satisfied) and their own internet connection (61%) (Figure 13). The areas with the highest level of dissatisfaction were with their teachers' internet connections (27% somewhat or very dissatisfied) and their own technological training 38% at least somewhat dissatisfied).

When asked what Colleges of Education might do to better prepare school administrators for future emergencies similar to the one they experienced from March 2020 through the 2020-21 academic year, the themes that emerged diverged somewhat depending on the type of school in which they worked. Administrators covering elementary grades felt future administrators would benefit from more training in how to use distance education technologies, best practices for online instruction and best practices for communicating with teachers and parents. Middle school administrators also felt more technology training and in best communication practices would benefit administrators in future crises. The primary thing administrators at high schools seemed to be looking for was more training in best online instruction practices (Table 1).

## Summary and Analysis of Results from Teachers

The SRC used the 289 responses received from teachers to test four hypotheses:

1. The experiences and opinions of public and private school teachers differ.
2. The experiences during the spring were different for elementary teachers than for middle or high school teachers because younger children had a more difficult time adapting to the fully on-line instruction model.
3. The experiences of teachers whose subject matter is more experiential (science, music, art, vocational, etc.) were different than teachers teaching things that may require less hands-on experiences (English, social studies, mathematics, etc.). Because elementary teachers teach both experiential and less experiential classes, this analysis will focus on middle and high school teachers.
4. Because the online infrastructure is believed to be less robust in rural areas, teachers with higher proportions of students living in rural areas had a different experience than those teaching more urban or suburban-based students.

In this section of the Executive Summary, we will first describe the overall responses of teachers, then summarize the support, or lack thereof, for these four hypotheses.

About three-quarters of the teachers' responses received were from WEAC members and one-quarter from teachers who oversee student teachers in cooperation with UWRF (Figure 14). Nearly three-quarters of the teachers had at least a decade of experience in the classroom (Figure 15). In terms of grade levels, they teach, 61% were elementary school teachers, 35% taught in middle school and 31% in high school (Figure 16). These figures sum to more than 100% because some teachers taught at multiple levels. Substantial proportions of responding teachers taught English (37%), science (34%), math (34%) and social studies (33%) (Figure 17). Subjects taught in middle or high school that likely required specialized laboratories/classrooms and/or had a performance aspect were identified as "experiential." The SRC included science, art, music, vocational and family science in this experiential group. On average, responding teachers said 40% of their students live in rural areas, 37% in suburban areas and 22% in urban areas (Figure 18). Most of the teachers in the dataset work in a public school system (83%) (Figure 19).

As was the case for administrators, the vast majority of teachers said the instruction they offered in the spring 2020 was remote only after mid-March (96%) (Figure 20). In fall 2020, two-thirds were using hybrid models (partially in-person and partially remote instruction), with roughly equal proportions being remote only (15%) and in-person only (17%).

Teachers were mostly at least somewhat satisfied with the decision to move to remote-only instruction in the spring of 2020 (84% very or somewhat satisfied), the support they received from administrators (73%) and the support they received from the parents of their students (71%) (Figure 21). They were equally divided with respect to the academic progress of their students; 49% were at least somewhat satisfied and 51% at least somewhat dissatisfied.

On average teachers identified 3.7 different communication methods as very important in their communications with their students during the spring 2020 pandemic. At least 75% said that individual email (91%), group video discussions (87%), individual video chats (86%), phone calls (85%), group emails (81%), recorded video messages/lectures, in-person visits, and individual texts were very important means of communication with students (Figure 22).

Four instructional methods were used by a majority of teachers: group online discussions (75% said they used this approach), recorded lectures/messages (55%), individual online chats (53%), and assignments they emailed to their students (52%) (Figure 23).

The most intensely used online teaching methods were group online discussions (67% used this 11 times or more during the spring 2020 pandemic), emailed assignments (66% 11+ times), recorded lectures/messages (63% 11+ times), and online individual video chats (63% 11+ times) (Figure 24).

When asked to assess the effectiveness of different online teaching methods, teachers felt that online individual video chats (90% of teachers rated as effective), group online discussions (81%), and recorded lectures/messages (79%) were the best options (Figure 25).

As with administrators, relatively few teachers provided input about why they thought a given online teaching approach failed (22 or fewer), lack of student engagement was the primary factor identified (Figure 26). Students' lack of technology/internet connection was frequently seen as a reason group and individual video chats worked at least somewhat poorly.

In terms of teacher satisfaction with technology during the pandemic, relatively high proportions were at least somewhat satisfied with Zoom (93% somewhat or very satisfied), Google Hangout (89%), and their own internet connection (82%) (Figure 27). In contrast, nearly half were at least somewhat dissatisfied with their students' internet connections (46% somewhat or very dissatisfied) and their own technology training (48%).

With respect to our hypothesis tests:

**Public vs. Private School Teachers.** There were a few minor differences between the backgrounds of public and private school teachers; public school teachers had more years of experience and private school teachers were more likely to teach experiential subjects. We found that the experiences of public and private school teachers were somewhat different and that private school teachers were somewhat more positive about them.

**Elementary vs. Middle/High School Teachers.** There were no significant differences in the backgrounds of elementary vs. middle or high school teachers in terms of their years of teaching, whether they taught in public or private schools, etc. Our results did not support the hypothesis that elementary teachers had a more challenging experience during the pandemic.

Teaching Experiential Subjects at Middle or High School. There were no statistically significant differences in the backgrounds of teachers of subjects with a more experiential focus and those teaching other subjects. These data do not support the hypothesis that those teaching more experiential subjects had a more challenging experience in adapting to the spring 2020 pandemic, used different approaches to teaching their subjects and found different approaches to be effective.

Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Teachers. There were no important differences in the backgrounds of those teaching in more rural areas and those in more urban/suburban areas. These data do not support the hypothesis that rural areas were seriously disadvantaged during the COVID pandemic by a less robust internet system.

How Colleges of Education Could Better Prepare Future Teachers. Comments from teachers were analyzed based on whether the respondents taught in elementary, middle or high school.

Elementary school teachers said that Colleges of Education should expose their students to more online learning software options and instruct them in best practices using those technology options and for communicating with their students, the parents of those students, and administrators (Table 2).

Teachers said that aspiring middle school teachers should also be exposed to more online learning software options. Middle school teachers felt understanding how distance education technologies can be used to engage parents and students is critical (Table 3).

High school teachers, like middle and elementary school teachers, identified expanded technology training as the thing that would best prepare new teachers for situations that force schools to move from in-person to distance education. The challenge of engaging students in an online environment was another key theme from high school teachers (Table 4).

## Summary and Analysis of Results from Parents

The SRC used the 499 surveys from the parents of school-aged children to test six hypotheses:

1. The experiences and opinions of parents of children in public and private school differ.
2. The experiences during the spring were different for elementary students than for middle or high school students because younger children had a more difficult time adapting to the fully on-line instruction model.
3. The experiences of students with special needs or who generally receive below-average grades were different than students who generally have average or better grades. Moving to remote-only instructions might have been more difficult for students with special needs or who have more challenges mastering material generally.
4. Because the online infrastructure is believed to be less robust in rural areas, students living in rural areas had a different experience than those teaching more urban or suburban-based students.
5. Students from households with lower income levels may have had less access to computers and internet connections and, hence, had a more challenging time during the spring pandemic. This analysis will compare the responses of parents in households with less than \$75,000 in annual household income to responses from parents in households earning more than that.
6. Students of color may have also had more challenges adapting to the online environment, either because of lack of access to technology or, in some instances, language barriers.

In this section of the Executive Summary, we will first summarize the responses of parents before summarizing the extent to which the data supported or failed to support these hypotheses.

Approximately two-thirds of the parents in this survey identified as female (Figure 28) and were between the ages of 35 and 54 (Figure 29). A substantially higher proportion of parents in this data set had at least a four-year college degree (53%) than is true for the total adult population in the state (31%) (Figure 30). A majority of parents in this dataset (60%) live in households with at least \$75,000 in annual income, which is somewhat higher than Wisconsin's median annual income of \$64,168 (Figure 31). The racial/ethnic composition of the parents who responded to the survey is fairly similar to the composition of Wisconsin's population (Figure 32). In terms of the residence of parents, it is similar to the distributions we saw for teachers and administrators with 40% rural, 41% suburban and 20% urban (Figure 33).

Many of the parents who responded to this survey had children in multiple grades; 41% had elementary students, 24% had middle schoolers and 28% had children in high school (Figure 34). There were only 32 students, across all grade levels, who were identified as having special needs (Figure 35) and only between 7% and 8% of parents said their children typically receive below average grades (Figure 36). The proportion of parents with students enrolled in private schools was higher for elementary (35%) and middle (29%) schools than for high schools (12%) (Figure 37). Overall, 12% of Wisconsin primary and secondary students are enrolled in private schools, so such students are over-represented in our dataset.

During the spring of 2020, large majorities of students experienced remote-instruction only at the elementary (85%), middle (89%) and high (91%) school levels (Figure 38). In the fall of 2020, much lower proportions of high school students in this dataset were experiencing in-person only instruction (11%) than was the case at the middle (31%) and elementary (42%) school levels.

A majority of parents are at least somewhat confident that their elementary (65%) or middle (70%) school children would learn efficiently during the fall 2020 semester (Figure 39). In contrast, nearly as many parents of high school students were at least somewhat unconfident (43%) as were at least somewhat confident (54%) their children would learn effectively in fall 2020.

Substantial minorities of parents were at least somewhat dissatisfied with the decision to move to remote-instruction only in the spring of 2020; 48% of elementary school parents, 40% of middle school parents and 41% of high school parents (Figure 40). Similarly, large minorities were at least somewhat dissatisfied with their children's academic progress during the pandemic; 49% of elementary school parents, 43% for middle school parents, and 47% of high school parents (Figure 41).

Parents were much more satisfied with the support they/their students received from teachers during the pandemic ranging from a low of 66% of the parents of high school students to 79% of parents of students in middle school (Figure 42). Parents had similar levels of satisfaction with school administrators (Figure 43).

Despite their somewhat higher levels of dissatisfaction with the decision to offer remote-only instruction in the spring of 2020 and with their children's academic progress, about two thirds of parents at all three grade levels were at least somewhat satisfied with the quality of instruction their children received (Figure 44).

In terms of communications from teachers and administrators, the average parent at all three levels said they were contacted using four different methods. Group emails were received by about three-quarters or more of parents with children at all levels (Figure 45). Group video discussions and individual emails were the only other communication methods used to contact a majority of parents.

In terms of teaching methods, the three most effective from parents' perspectives were:

- At the elementary school level: individual video chats (75%), paper assignments left by teachers for parents/students to pick up (70%), and recorded lectures (65%) (Figure 46).
- At the middle school level: individual video chats (80%), recorded lectures (73%), and online group discussion (73%) (Figure 47).
- At the high school level individual video chats (71%), recorded lectures (66%), and online group discussion (63%) (Figure 48).

Majorities of parents said that multiple people could use the internet in their home without problems (61%) and household members could easily work or do homework from home (57%) (Figure 49). Though relatively few parents said that internet access during the pandemic had been difficult (13%), internet access had been a financial burden (7%), or that they lacked internet access in their home (4%), for such households the shift to online instruction posed major challenges.

With respect to our hypotheses:

**Public vs. Private Schools:** The experience of parents who send their children to private schools differed in many ways from their public school counterparts. Private school parents were, in general, less satisfied with the decision to move to remote-only instruction in the spring of 2020 and there are some, relatively weak, indications that they were more satisfied with support they received from teacher and administrators and with the quality of instruction their children received.

**Special Needs or Below Average Grades:** Comparisons between students with special needs or below average grades was hampered by the relatively few observations for such students. Thus, the reliability of results for this hypothesis is uncertain. There was some support for the hypothesis that these students had a more difficult time during the COVID pandemic. Parents of these students were less confident their children would learn effectively in the fall, less satisfied with academic progress, and indicated that some teaching approaches (group, online discussions) didn't work as well for their kids.

**Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students:** There is some evidence that teachers used less technologically demanding forms of communicating with rural-based students (e.g. the mail or phone calls). All in all, however, these data do not support the hypothesis that rural students had different and inferior educational experiences during the COVID pandemic relative to students in urban/suburban areas.

**Lower vs. Higher Income Households:** While there is some evidence that teachers made greater use of less technological demanding communication strategies for the students from less wealthy households, the effectiveness of different teaching methods were rated similarly by lower and higher income respondents. There is little for this hypothesis in the data.

**White vs. People of Color:** These data suggest, if anything, parents of color were more satisfied with the educational experiences their children received during the pandemic than their white peers were. Hence, these data do not support the hypothesis that parents of color felt their children were disadvantaged relative to their white peers during spring 2020 pandemic.

**Elementary vs. Middle/High School Students:** While there were a smattering of differences between the experiences of parents with elementary vs. middle/high school students, there was not a clear pattern suggesting that elementary-aged children had a more difficult time than older

children. Again, the data from the parents do not support the hypothesis that elementary students suffered disproportionately during the spring 2020 pandemic.

**Parent's Open-Ended Question Responses.** As with teacher comments, the SRC split the comments received from parents by the grade level(s) of their children.

Many comments received from the parents of elementary school students talked about the appropriate use of instructional technologies. Many parents stressed the need for teachers to make one-on-one connections with their young children and a desire to be kept in the loop in terms of expectations and due dates. The challenges of trying to learn at a distance, away from the classroom environment with its structure and socialization benefits was particularly challenging for elementary school-aged students (Tables 5 and 6).

A number of comments received from the parents of middle school students called for more synchronous online instruction to boost student engagement and interactions with teachers and other students. A number of parents of middle schoolers also mentioned technological challenges such as a poor internet connection or software that crashed as additional challenges their children faced during this time (Tables 7 and 8).

A number parents of high school students also called for more synchronous online instruction to boost student engagement and interactions with teachers and other students. Compared to parents with students in elementary or middle school, there was a somewhat lower proportion of concerns about technology among the parents of high schoolers, but poor student engagement in the online instructional environment was a common theme (Tables 9 and 10).

### Comparison of Parents' and Teachers' Assessment of Teaching Method Effectiveness

At the elementary school level, significantly higher proportions of teachers, relative to parents, said individual online chats and online group discussions worked well during the spring of 2020 (Table 11). While both teachers and parents said individual online chats was the most effective teaching technique, parents said paper assignments prepared by the teacher and left for parents/the student to pick up was the second most effective teaching method. This was seen as the fourth most effective approach by teachers.

At the middle school level, significantly higher proportions of teachers, compared to parents, again rated individual online chats as effective (Table 12). Parents, relative to teachers, rated paper assignments prepared by teachers and left for student/their parents to pick up significantly more effective.

The differences between the efficacy ratings of parents and teachers were even greater at the high school level. Compared to parents, teachers rated individual online chats, online group discussions, and video messages/lectures significantly higher. Though not statistically significant, paper assignments were, again, assessed more positively by parents than teachers (Table 13).

Taken together, the results summarized in Tables 11 – 13 suggest:

- Teachers, relative to the parents of their students, may have higher expectations regarding the effectiveness of most of the remote learning approaches available to them.
- Individual online chats were seen as the most effective approach by both groups at all three grade levels. As noted, this is most time-intensive of all the approaches included in Tables 1, 2 and 3 and is unlikely to be practical for middle and high school teachers. Very small group discussions in a pod format, three to six of the same students involved in the group discussion, may be an alternative worth exploring.
- Lower tech approaches, like preparing and leaving paper assignments to, be retrieved by the student/their parents may be more efficacious than teachers believe.

## Summary and Conclusions

The basic conclusions from this research are:

1. The response to our surveys by administrators, teachers and parents was insufficient to do what we had hoped to do in terms of identifying best practices for different subsets of students.
2. Teachers seem to have adapted their instructional approaches to fit the types of students they were serving. In particular, those serving students who might be hampered by weak internet or lack of access to a computer appear to have utilized more and somewhat less technologically demanding approaches to working with their students. Parents seemed to evaluate paper assignments left for their children relatively more positively than did teachers.
3. There was scant numeric support for the hypotheses that younger students, those living in rural areas, those from lower income groups, and people of color had a more negative experience during the pandemic than their counterparts. Parent comments from students in elementary school suggests that some of these students had a very difficult time adapting to the online mode of instruction and would have benefited from more synchronous time with their teachers and fellow students.
4. Individual online chats were seen by all parties as the most effective instructional method. Though the heavy demands this approach puts on teachers' time might be overcome via small, online student pods, this approach might still suffer from problems associated with the digital divide.

## Project Overview

During the spring of 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic spread across Wisconsin, the educational experiences of students in pre-kindergarten to high school changed dramatically as almost all schools moved to remote learning. Parents and teachers had to adjust rapidly to this unforeseen event and anecdotal evidence suggests that some instructional methods might have worked better for children in different grades and from different socio-demographic backgrounds. The intent of the research that is the focus of this report was to gather preliminary data that would allow us to see if any of these anecdotes are supported statistically.

## The Data

The Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin at River Falls, working with Steve Parliament and his advisory committee, developed questionnaires for school administrators, teachers and parents. Appendices B1 – B3, which provides a numeric summary of responses received from the three groups, are facsimiles of the questionnaires used to gather the data.

Administrators of elementary, middle and high schools were invited to participate in an online survey by means of a link provided in the electronic newsletters of the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators. This association has more than 3,000 subscribers. In addition, the SRC sent emails to 916 private schools included in a list received from the Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools asking that they encourage their administrator(s) to participate in the survey. Despite multiple requests for participation by administrators, only 66 administrators completed the survey. While these data will be summarized below, the SRC did not subject the data to statistical analysis because there were so few observations.

Teachers in pre-kindergarten through high school were invited to participate in the survey via three mechanisms. First, a link to the survey was included in multiple editions of the Wisconsin Education Association Council's (WEAC) electronic newsletter. This newsletter is sent to nearly 30,000 teachers in Wisconsin. Second, 188 classroom teachers who work with student teachers from the College of Education and Professional Studies at UWRF were invited to complete the online survey. Finally, as with administrators, the 916 private schools contacted were asked to encourage their teachers to participate in the survey. A total of 289 responses from teachers were included in the final data set.

We also attempted to contact parents of primary and secondary school students in multiple ways. Paper surveys were mailed to 3,600 addresses of households believed to have school-aged children. The SRC also asked the list broker that provided the addresses to include higher proportions of people of color and households earning less than \$40,000 per year. The broker made some errors in applying these filters, so it is probable that only about 2,000 of the mailed surveys arrived in households with children in the target age group. To compensate, the broker provided a list of 5,000 email addresses of parents with school children, again with an over-sample of people of color and lower income households. And, as with administrators and

teachers, the 916 private school contacts were asked to encourage the parents of their children to participate in the survey. A total of 499 responses from parents were included in the data set.

The number of responses from all three populations was substantially lower than anticipated. Given this, the results summarized in this report should be seen as preliminary, not definitive.

This report will include four parts:

- Summary of the data received from administrators.
- Summary of the data received from teachers and the results of the tests of four hypotheses about teachers' and their experiences during the pandemic.
- Summary of the data received from parents and the results of the tests of six hypotheses about parents' and their children's experiences during the pandemic.
- Comparison of feedback from parents and teachers regarding the efficacy of different teaching approaches during the pandemic.

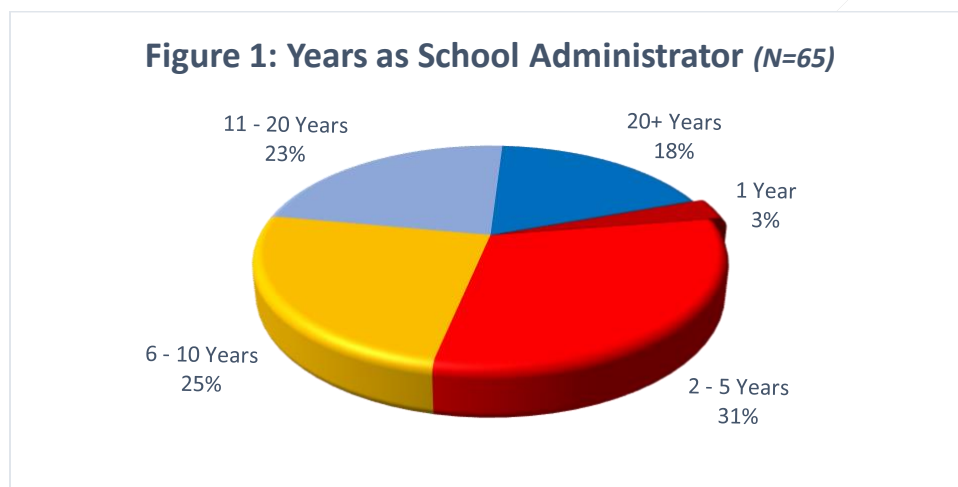
*In this report, the SRC used statistical tests to identify questions with statistically significant differences across sub-sets of respondents. In statistics, a result is **statistically significant** if it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Statistical significance is expressed as a probability that the observed difference between two groups' averages is not real. A commonly used probability standard is .05 (5%). Statistical significance at the .05 level indicates there is only a 5 in 100 probability that the average values for the two groups are actually equal. **Response patterns that vary at statistically significant levels ( $p < .05$ ) are noted in this summary.***

## Summary of Results from Administrators

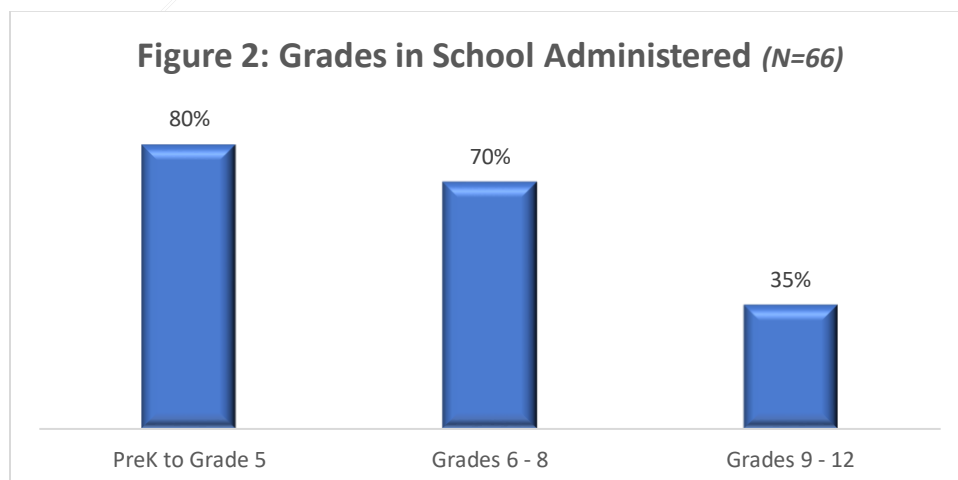
While we will not formally test hypotheses using the data from administrators because of the relatively small number of data points, the SRC will note differences in responses of public vs private school administrators and those serving primarily rural students and those that have a minority of students from rural areas.

### Profile of Respondents

As Figure 1 indicates, there was a fair amount of variability in the number of years of experience among the 65 administrators who answered this question in the survey. While about one-third had been in their administrative position for five or fewer years, more than 40% had more than 10 years of experience.



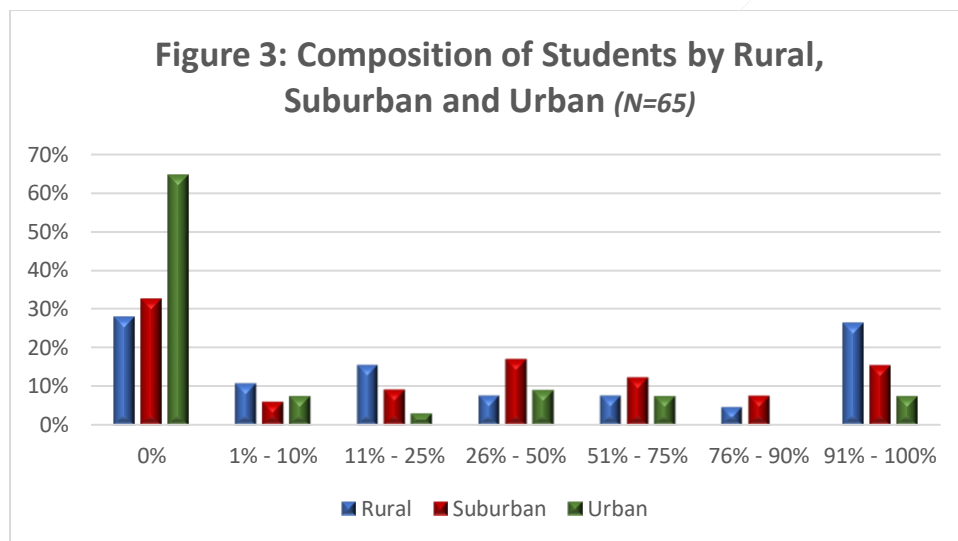
A substantial proportion of administrators had responsibilities for pre-Kindergarten through middle school and a few had responsibilities for pre-kindergarten through high school. Because of responsibilities spanning multiple school levels, Figure 2 results sum to more than 100%.



Four of five respondents were administrators for elementary students and seven of ten administered middle schools. Only about one-third had responsibilities at the high school level.

In terms of differences in the types of schools administered, a significantly higher proportion of administrators of private schools oversaw elementary schools (94% vs. 67% for public schools) and middle schools (91% vs. 49% public schools). In contrast, a significantly higher proportion of public school administrators oversaw high schools (52% vs. 16% for private schools). Since many private schools do not include the high school grades, these results are not surprising.

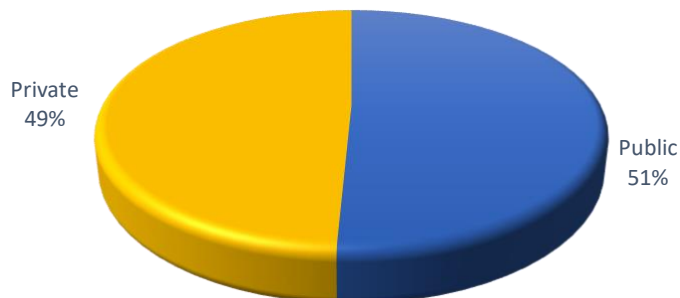
Administrators were asked to indicate the proportion of students in their school who reside in rural, suburban and urban areas. The results of their responses are summarized in Figure 3. On average, the administrators said that 43% of their students live in rural areas, 40% in suburban areas and 17% in urban ones. Hence, the schools represented by these administrators appear to be substantially more rural than would be typical for the state.



Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (65%) said that none of the students in their schools lived in urban areas and slightly more than one-quarter (26%) said that more than 90% of their students were from rural areas.

Figure 4 indicates that respondents were about equally likely to be administering a public school (51%) or a private school (49%). Since roughly 85% of Wisconsin students attend a public school, private school administrators are over-represented in this sample.

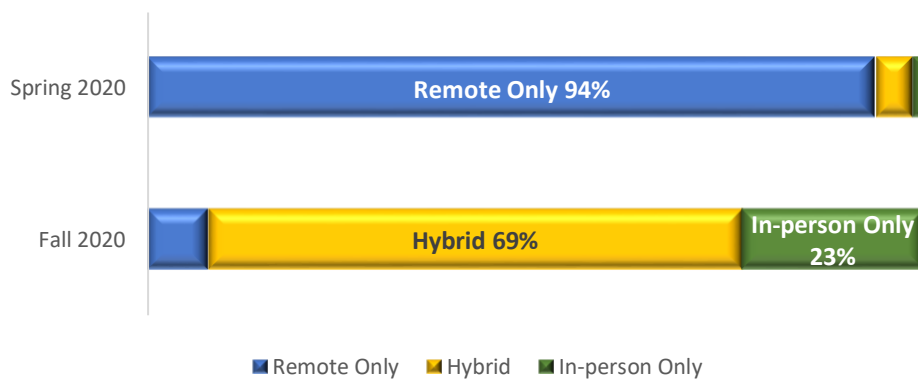
**Figure 4: Type of Schools Administered by Respondents (N=65)**



#### Administrators' Pandemic Experiences and Responses

Figure 5 indicates that nearly all administrators said that their school moved to exclusively remote instruction from mid-March 2020, when Governor Tony Evers enacted the “Safer at Home” regulations, to the end of the school year.

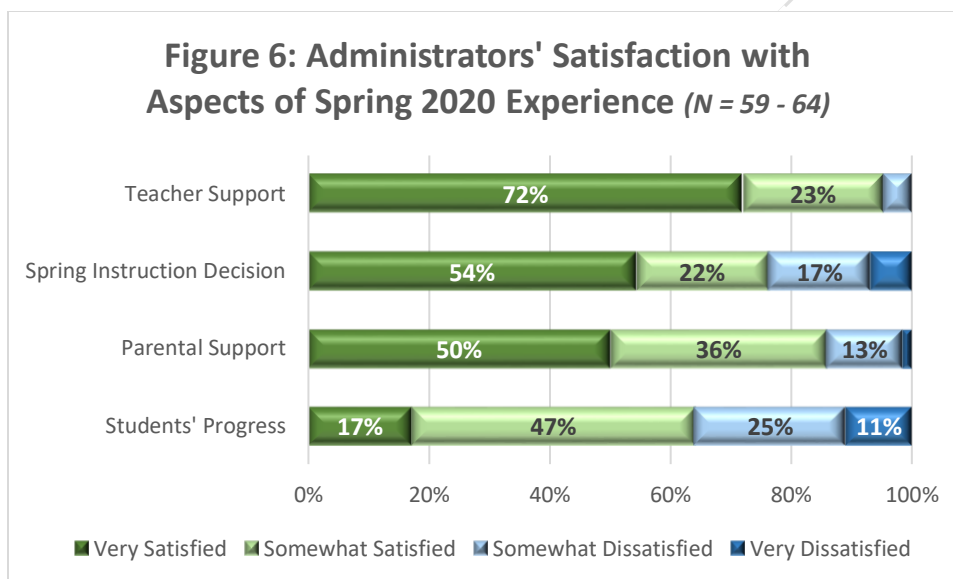
**Figure 5: Type of Instruction Offered Spring and Fall 2020 (N=64)**



There was a good deal more variation in how instruction was being conducted during the Fall of 2020 (Figure 5). More than two-thirds of the respondents (69%) said their schools used a mix of remote and in-person instruction (hybrid models) and about one-quarter offered only in-person instruction. Because the administrators who responded to this survey were disproportionately overseeing elementary schools, and because elementary schools were allowed to resume at least some in-person instruction sooner than was true for Wisconsin high schools, only 8% of these administrators said their schools were offering remote instruction only in the fall of 2020.

Private school administrators were significantly more likely to say they were offering in-person only instruction in the fall (44% vs. 3% of public school administrators). Public school administrators were more likely to say their fall schedule included both in-person and remote instruction (84% vs. 53% of private school administrators).

Administrators were asked to what extent they were satisfied with the decision to go to remote only instruction in the spring of 2020, the support they received from their teachers and their parents, and with their students' academic progress. Their responses are summarized in Figure 6. A majority of administrators were at least somewhat satisfied with all four of these factors. They were most satisfied with the support they received from their teachers; 95% were either very satisfied (72%) or somewhat satisfied (23%) with their teachers' support. The support administrators received from parents was nearly as strong, with 86% at least somewhat satisfied. Nearly one-quarter of the administrators were at least somewhat dissatisfied with the decision to end in-person instruction in the spring of 2020. More than one-third of administrators were somewhat (25%) or very (11%) dissatisfied with their students' academic progress.

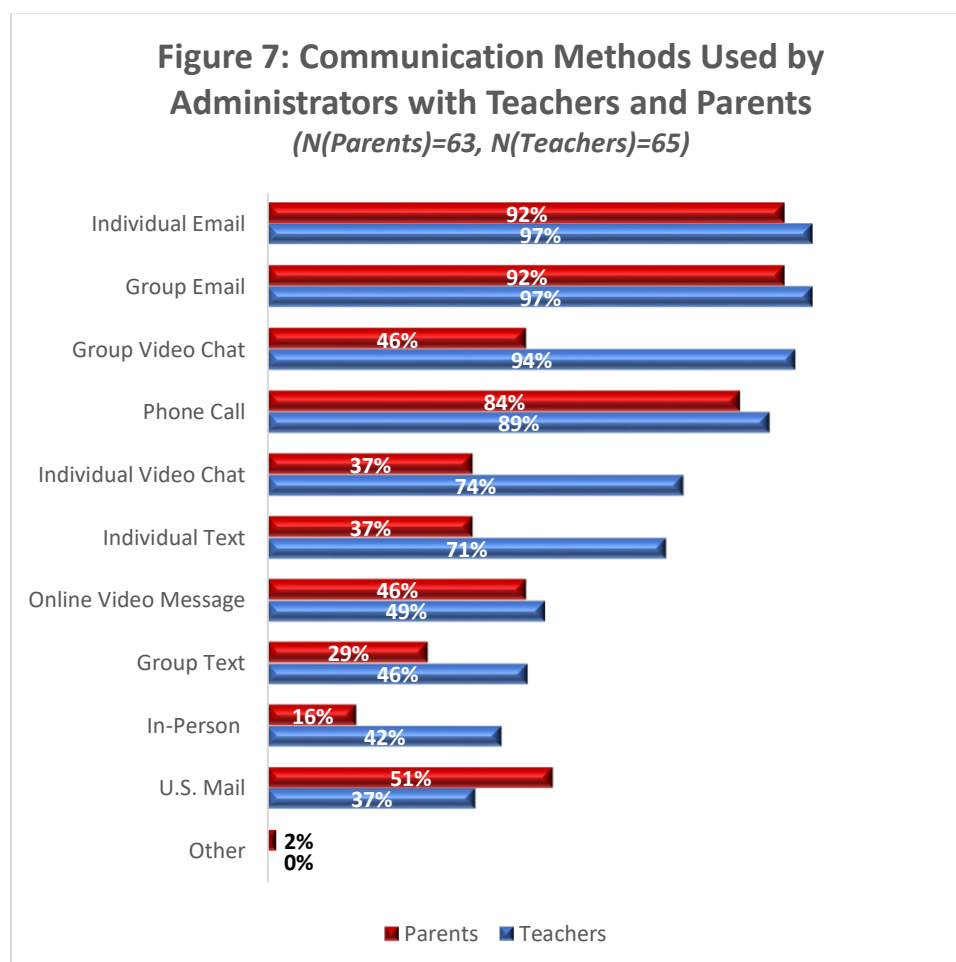


Public school administrators were significantly more satisfied with the decision to stop in-person instruction in the spring of 2020 (93% were very or somewhat satisfied vs. 57% of private school administrators).

In terms of teachers' support, private school administrators were significantly more variable in their assessment than their public school counterparts; 84% of private school administrators were "very satisfied" with the support they got from their teachers (vs. only 61% of public school administrators), but 10% were "somewhat dissatisfied with that support (vs. 0% of public school administrators).

There were no statistically significant differences based on whether students were drawn primarily from rural vs. suburban/urban areas.

Administrators were asked to indicate the methods they used to communicate with both their teachers and the parents of children in their school. Ten communication methods were included in the questionnaire and administrators also had an “other, please specify option. Their responses are summarized in Figure 7 with communications with parents in the red/upper bars and with teachers the blue/lower bars. Administrators, on average, used more methods to communicate with their teachers (an average of 6.8 methods) than with the parents of students in their school (an average of 5.4 methods).



Other key points from Figure 7 include:

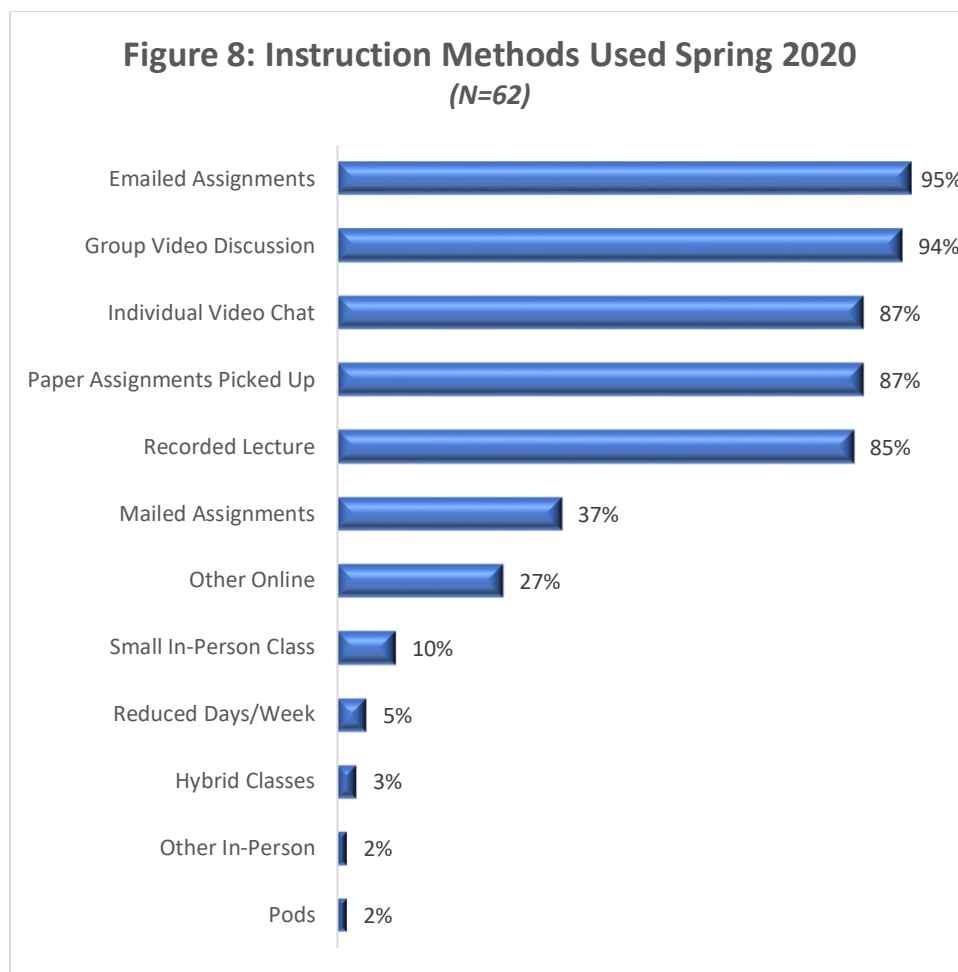
- More than 90% of administrators used individual and group emails to communicate with both parents and teachers.
- About 90% of administrators communicated with their teachers using group online video chats and phone calls.

- Roughly three in four administrators used individual online video chats and individual texts to communicate with their teachers.
- Other than email (group and individual), the only communication methods that a majority of administrators used to communicate with their parents were phone calls (84%) and the U.S. mail (51%).

There were a number of significant differences between public vs. private school administrators with respect to communication methods they used with their teachers and parents.

- With respect to communicating with teachers: public school administrators used more communication vehicles (61% used 7 or more vs. 41% of private school administrators), were more likely to have had video chats with individual teachers (91% vs. 54% for private school administrators), sent recorded video messages to them (70% vs. 28% of private school administrators), and sent them things via the mail (49% vs 25% of private school administrators).
- With respect to communicating with parents: public school administrators were more likely to have had a group video chat with parents (58% vs. 31% for private school administrators), send them a recorded video message (64% vs. 25% for private school administrators), and to have phoned them (94% vs. 69% of private school administrators). In contrast, private school administrators were more likely to have sent parents a group email (97% vs. 82% of public school administrators).

Given that broadband in rural areas is often less robust, it is surprising that administrators from predominantly rural areas were more likely to have had individual video chats with parents (48% vs. 16% of administrators with less than a majority of students from rural areas). Rural-based administrators were less likely to have used the mail to communicate with their teachers (23% vs. 60% of non-rural administrators).



Administrators were asked to identify the instructional methods they knew their teachers used during the spring of 2020 pandemic (mid-March to the end of the school year). Their responses are summarized in Figure 8.

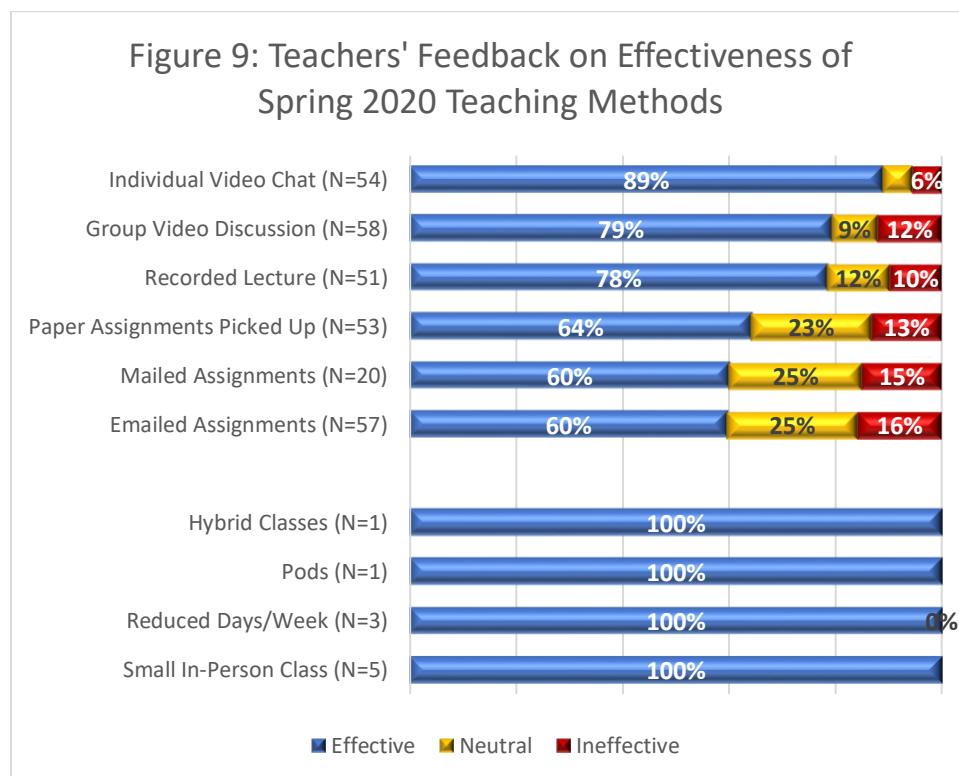
On average, administrators identified five teaching methods used by teachers in their schools. According to these administrators, five methods were used in more than 80% of schools during the pandemic: emailing assignments to students, organizing online video discussions for groups of students and with individual students, creating paper assignments that were left to be picked up by the student/parent, and recording lectures that were posted for students.

Other notable points in Figure 8 include:

- More than one-third of the respondents said their teachers used the U.S Postal Service to mail assignments to students.
- Few administrators said their teachers used any of the in-person teaching strategies (small classes, fewer days per week in class, hybrid classes or pods of students).

There were no significant differences in the frequency with which administrators of public vs. private or rural vs. urban/suburban schools said their teachers used different instruction approaches.

In addition to cataloging the instructional methods their teachers used during the spring 2020 pandemic, administrators were asked to characterize the feedback they received from their teachers regarding the effectiveness of the methods used. In Figure 9, the first/blue portion of the bars show the percentage of administrators who said a given teaching method was very effective or somewhat effective, the middle/yellow portion the proportion who were non-committal regarding the method's effectiveness, and the last/red portion the proportion who said the technique was somewhat or very ineffective.



Interestingly, a majority of administrators assessed all the techniques used as at least somewhat effective. While very few administrators said their teachers used any in-person teaching methods during spring semester, all who did (100%), said all these approaches were at least somewhat effective.

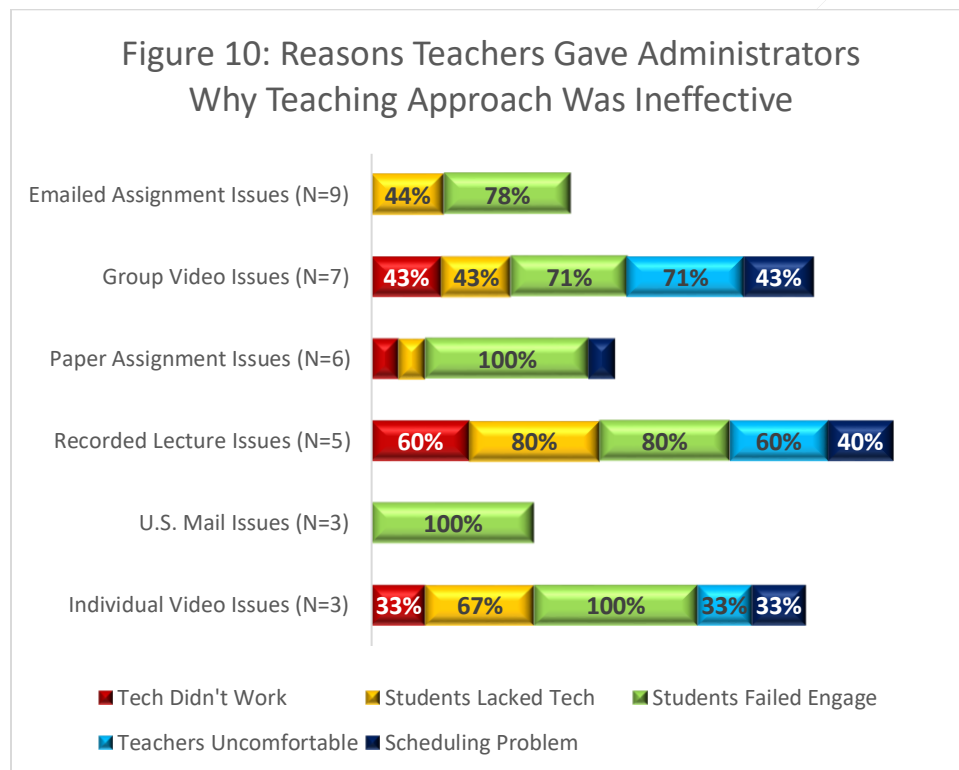
With respect to the five most common remote teaching methods (see Figure 8):

- nearly 9 of 10 administrators felt that individual video chats were effective
- more than three-quarters felt that way about group video discussions and recorded lectures

- about two-thirds said paper assignments left by teachers to be picked up by students/their parents were effective.
- Interestingly, the most common teaching method used in the spring according to these administrators, email assignments, was seen as effective by only 60% and ineffective by about one-in-six respondents.

There were no statistically significant differences between public/private or rural/urban-suburban administrators with respect to how effective teachers said these approaches were.

Administrators who said a given approach was somewhat or very ineffective were asked to indicate the reason teachers thought the approach didn't work. Reasons the approach might not have worked included a failure of the instructors' technology, students' lack of an internet connection or a computing device, students' failure to engage, the teachers discomfort with the technology, or scheduling/logistical problems. Their responses are summarized in Figure 10.

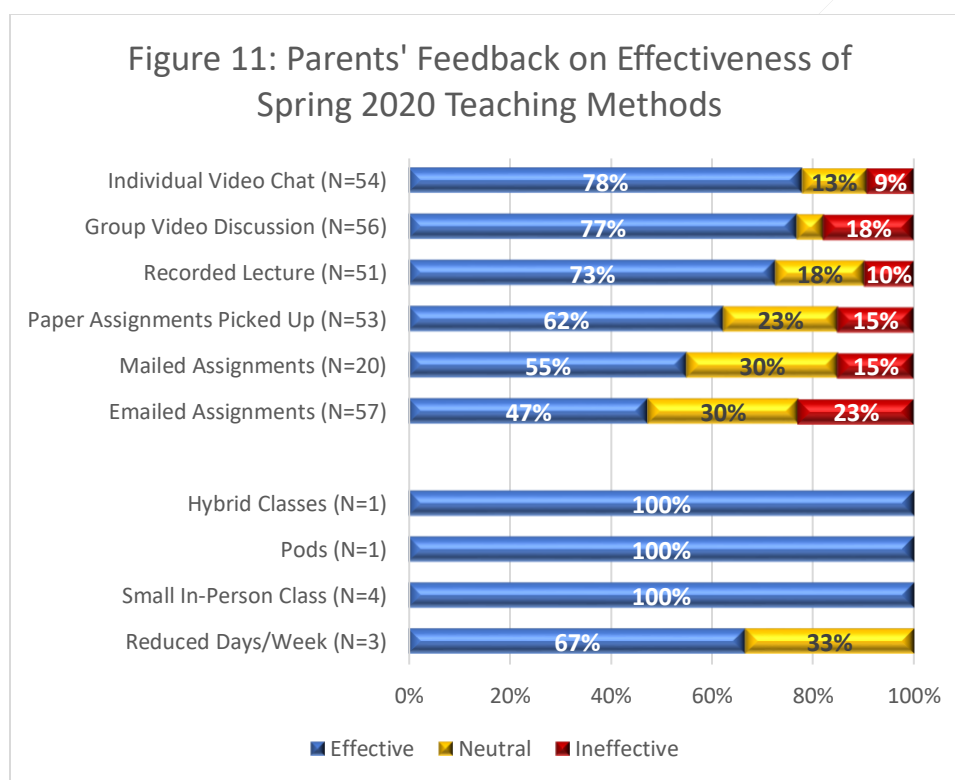


The first thing to note about Figure 10 is that very few administrators provided feedback as to why a given instructional approach was ineffective; fewer than 10 administrators provided feedback about any given approach. The second thing to note is that the most common factor cited for the ineffectiveness of all six approaches was students' failure to engage with the material presented (the green segments in Figure 10). The second most common problem was the students' lack of technology (a computer and/or an internet connection) (yellow segments).

A majority of administrators felt that group video chats (e.g. Zoom) and recording and posting lectures were ineffective because teachers were not comfortable with the technology. This potentially suggests a need for additional training with this tool.

Perhaps the most interesting result of comparing opinions about why different remote teaching approaches didn't work across subsets of administrators is what we DIDN'T find. Our implicit hypothesis was that administrators working primarily with students from rural areas would have more technical challenges in delivering instruction remotely. However, there were no statistically significant differences between administrators working primarily with students from rural areas and those with students from more urban or suburban backgrounds.

Administrators were also asked to summarize feedback they received from the parents of children in their schools regarding the effectiveness of different teaching approaches used during the spring pandemic. Their responses are summarized in Figure 11.



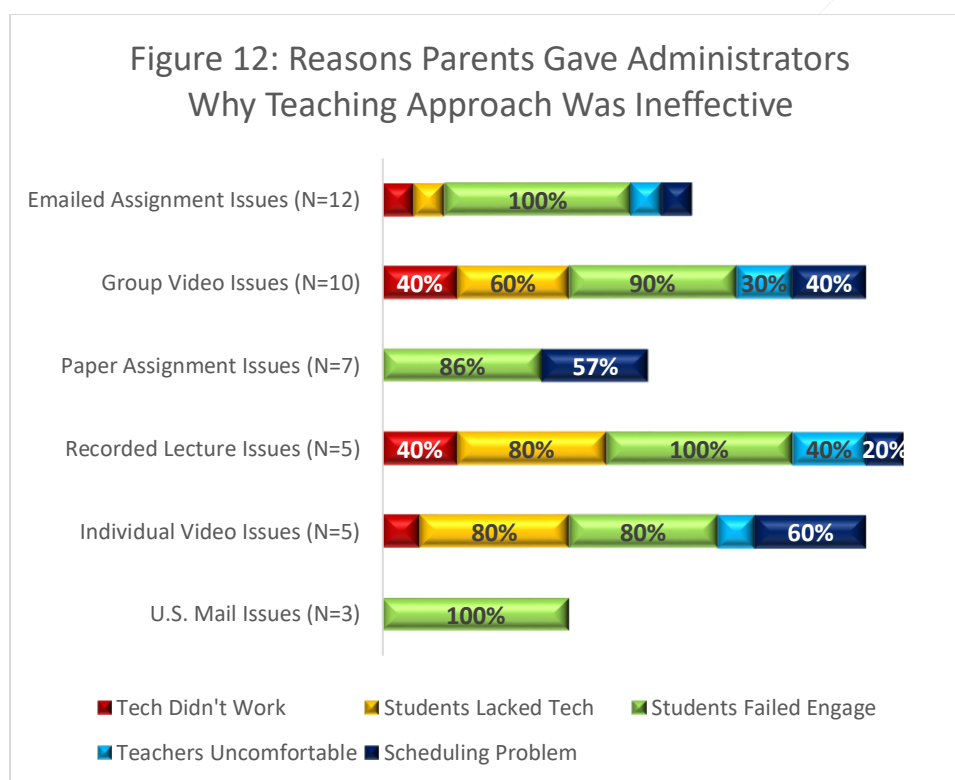
As in Figure 9, we combined the very effective and somewhat effective into a single “effective” category (first/blue segment) and the somewhat and very ineffective into a single “ineffective” category (last/red segment).

The order of the remote teaching approaches, in terms of the proportion deemed at least somewhat effective from parents’ perspectives, are the same as for teachers (Figure 9). The proportion of parents, according to administrators, who found these approaches at least somewhat effective was similar to the feedback from teachers with a couple of exceptions.

Parents were less impressed with the efficacy of individual, online video chats than were teachers (78% of parents said this was effective vs. 89% of teachers). Parents were also even less impressed with the effectiveness of emailed assignments (47% at least somewhat effective vs. 60% of teachers).

Again, few administrators offered in-person approaches during the spring and, thus, didn't receive much feedback about them from parents. Interestingly, the approach that was probably the most common in the fall of 2020 (in-person instruction for a reduced number of days per week with online instruction during other days), was seen as less effective than the other in-person approaches.

As with feedback from teachers, administrators who said that their parents had said a given approach was somewhat or very ineffective were asked to indicate why it hadn't worked. Again, relatively few administrators responded to this question for any of the methods (Figure 12).

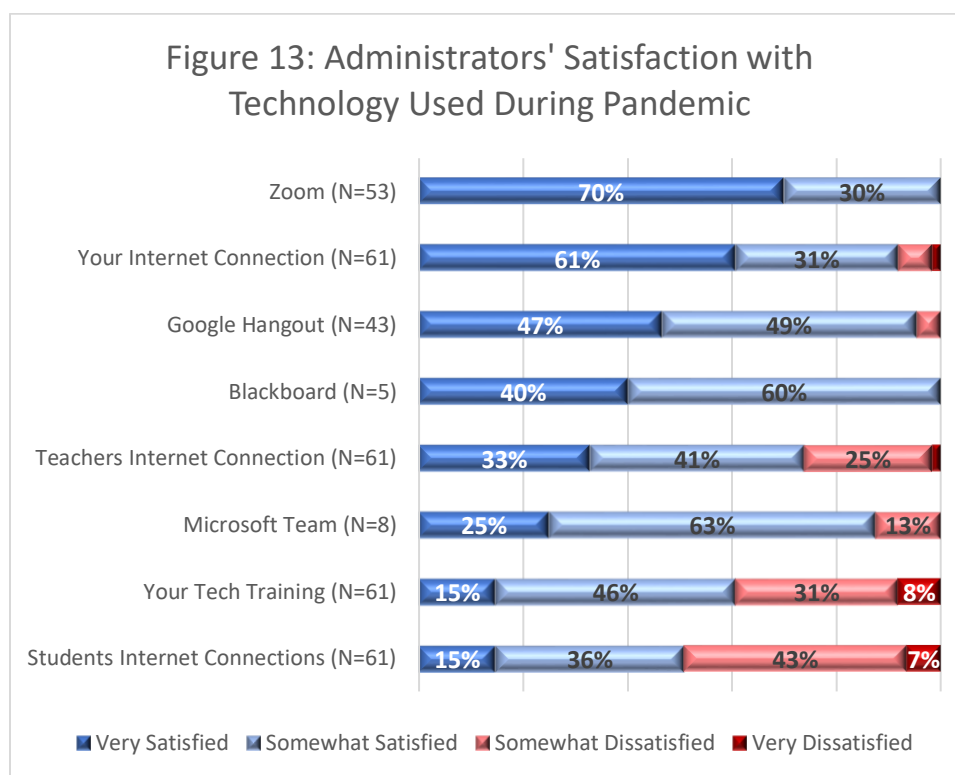


According to these administrators, the reasons parents gave for why these teaching approaches failed were similar to the feedback from teachers; first and foremost because students failed to engage with the material and, secondarily because of students' lack of an internet connection or computer.

Administrators serving more urban/suburban students were more likely to say that assignments sent via the mail were at least somewhat ineffective (12% vs. 0% of those with a majority of students from rural areas).

Public school administrators were more likely to say that students' lack of technology or an internet connection made recorded lectures ineffective (12% vs. 0% of private school administrators).

The final quantitative question posed to administrators asked them to assess their satisfaction with a variety of technologies they/their teachers might have used during the spring 2020 pandemic, with their technical training, and with the internet connections of students at their school. Their responses are summarized in Figure 13. In the figure, the first/dark blue segment of each bar is the proportion who were very satisfied, the second/light blue segment the proportion somewhat satisfied, the third/light red segment the proportion slightly dissatisfied and the final/dark red segment the proportion who were very dissatisfied.



All administrators who responded to this question were very or somewhat satisfied with Zoom and Blackboard (though very few used Blackboard). More than 90% of administrators were at least somewhat satisfied with their internet connection and Google Hangout.

In terms of dissatisfaction, at least one-quarter of administrators were somewhat dissatisfied or worse with their teachers' internet connection, their own tech training and their students' internet connection. The relatively high level of dissatisfaction among administrators with their technology training would seem to suggest a need to develop and offer administrators in-service technology training.

Private school administrators were more satisfied with their students' internet connections (29% were very satisfied vs. 3% of public school administrators).

Again, contrary to expectations, administrators whose student body was primarily drawn from rural areas were more satisfied with their students' internet connections (62% were at least somewhat satisfied vs. 36% of urban/suburban administrators).

### How Colleges of Education Could Better Prepare Administrators for Remote Learning Situations

In addition to the quantitative questions summarized above, administrators were asked, “. . . what is one thing you think Colleges of Education could do to better prepare you and future administrators for situations that limit or eliminate in-person instruction?”

Comments were received from 51 administrators. The SRC split the comments into those who administer elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. The SRC then identified the topical clusters of comments shown in Table 1. The total number of comments shown in Table 1 exceeds 51 because there were a substantial proportion of administrators who had responsibilities at multiple levels and those comments appear in more than one grade grouping.

Table 1: Administrator Comments by Grade Level and Theme			
	Elementary School (41 Total)	Middle School (36 Total)	High School (19 Total)
Expanded Technology Training	13	14	4
Best Practices for Distance Learning	11	7	6
Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Teachers/Parents	9	7	3
Other	4	4	4
Expand Teachers' Adaptability	2	2	2
Maintain In-Person Instruction	2	2	0

Expanded Technology Training. For both elementary and middle school administrators, expanded technology training would better prepare administrators for remote learning situations. Comments typical of this cluster include:

From an administrator with elementary and middle school responsibilities

*Great question!!! It would be extremely beneficial if future administrators would prepare themselves for all of the technology training their teachers would be using. I made certain*

*that I, along with my entire Administrative team, participated in all of the trainings that our teachers needed, so that we would be extremely helpful when coaching our teachers.*

From an administrator with middle school responsibilities:

*Preparing teachers and administrators with instructional design skills & tools that are platform agnostic & can support in-person and remote learning.*

Best Practices for Distance Learning. The cluster of comments focused on best practices for distance education was important at all three levels.

One administrator with responsibilities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels suggested:

*I believe that teacher and administrative preparation programs should include content around virtual instruction/blended learning/ and multiple ways of family engagement in the virtual world.*

Middle school administrators offered the following:

*Professional development of effective instructional methods for live virtual teaching. How should a lesson be structured? How do you engage students? What does assessment look like? How do you hold students accountable?*

*Teach more about the technology that is available and what has been successful in other schools.*

*Training in being able to teach in person and virtually at the same time. A class on how to build a relationship with a student that is remote.*

A high school administrator suggested that College of Education should:

*Require students to take at least one online course so that they experience what it is like as a student. Always include the thought process how could you make an activity virtual if necessary?*

Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Teachers/Parents. Elsewhere in this report, we will note that student engagement was a substantial challenge after the spring 2020 move to distance learning.

An administrator with elementary and middle school responsibilities suggested:

*How to better support our staff when we are not face-to-face for instruction. What does that look like? how often do we check? Do we have regular meetings? Is there a set scheduled? How do we support staff when students aren't doing anything? if there*

*anything we can take off the plate when things are so stressful? All of this really falls into one thing.*

A middle and high school administrator suggested that:

*Teachers need to be trained in ways to engage students remotely and to balance engagement with standards.*

Though it was not a cluster that had a large number of comments, the idea of trying to enhance the adaptability of teachers included some interesting food for thought.

From an administrator with elementary, middle and high school responsibilities:

*Provide experiences where future teachers can receive exposure to the variety of online programs that they may encounter in the future. Also, provide experiences where future teachers need to be resourceful...for example, having to find information and educate themselves on the use of an online program (finding educational videos on YouTube), find ways to connect with kids who are disconnected during virtual learning opportunities, finding ways for teachers to think creatively about how they can have students complete assignments that typically need certain materials while the students are home with limited materials (how can they change the activity to ensure that all students have what they need in order to complete the activity), have teachers learn about ways of connecting with parents while teaching remotely if all they have are their cell phones and computers (without giving the parents their cell phone number), etc. I think any experience that takes them off guard and makes them think on their feet is valuable (going from the discomfort of not knowing to the energy that comes from the plan). The one thing I've learned in my 21 years is that you don't always have time to consider all options thoroughly so what sets great teachers apart from good teachers is their ability to evaluate the situation and take a little time to consider all aspects, and then begin working on putting a plan into action. This can be for changes like we experienced last spring or for when a group of students has not mastered a concept. Time is of the essence and they cannot sit back and appreciate the problem...they need to analyze and respond.*

The complete list of comments by administrators is included in Appendix A1 and the reader is encouraged to read through them.

## Summary and Analysis of Results from Teachers

As noted in the overview, the SRC received responses from 289 teachers. In this section of the report we will summarize their responses and test to see if the data provide support for the following hypothesis:

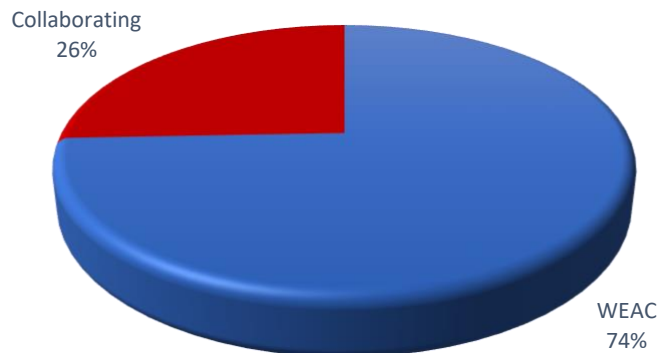
1. The experiences and opinions about the spring 2020 pandemic of public and private school teachers differ.
2. The experiences during the spring were different for elementary teachers than for middle or high school teachers because younger children had a more difficult time adapting to the fully on-line instruction model.
3. The experiences of teachers whose subject matter is more experiential (science, music, art, vocational, etc.) were different than teachers teaching things that may require less hands-on experiences (English, social studies, mathematics, etc.). Because elementary teachers teach both experiential and less experiential classes, this analysis will focus on middle and high school teachers.
4. Because the online infrastructure is believed to be less robust in rural areas, teachers with higher proportions of students living in rural areas had a different experience than those teaching more urban or suburban-based students.

### Profile of Respondents

Prior to testing the hypotheses posed, we need to examine the profile of respondents. Ideally, the respondents from the sub-groups will have broadly similar backgrounds in terms of the grade level at which they teach, their years of experience and so on. We would, for example, like to find that teachers whose students come from predominantly rural areas are as likely to teach experiential subjects, to have similar number of years of teaching experience, be as likely to teach at the elementary, middle and high school levels, and as likely to teach in a private school as those serving more urban/suburban students. If this is the case, any differences in their opinions about teaching during the pandemic are more likely to be the result of these differences (rural vs. urban, experiential vs. less hands on subjects, public vs. private, elementary vs. middle or high school) than differences in their background.

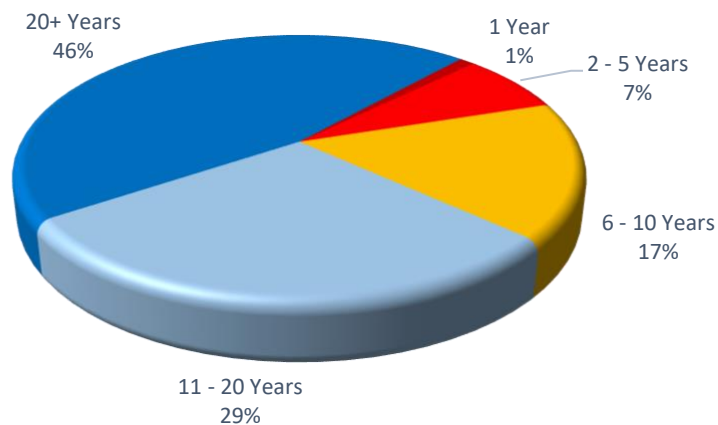
Input from teachers was sought by reaching out to classroom teachers who host UW-River Falls student-teachers and to members of the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC). Figure 14 shows that about three-quarters of the respondents were WEAC members and the other quarter were cooperating teachers.

**Figure 14: Pools of Responding Teachers**  
(N=289)



Most of the teachers who responded to this survey were very experienced with three-quarters having taught for more than a decade; only 1% were in their first year of teaching during the spring of 2020 (Figure 15).

**Figure 15: Years as Teacher**  
(N=287)



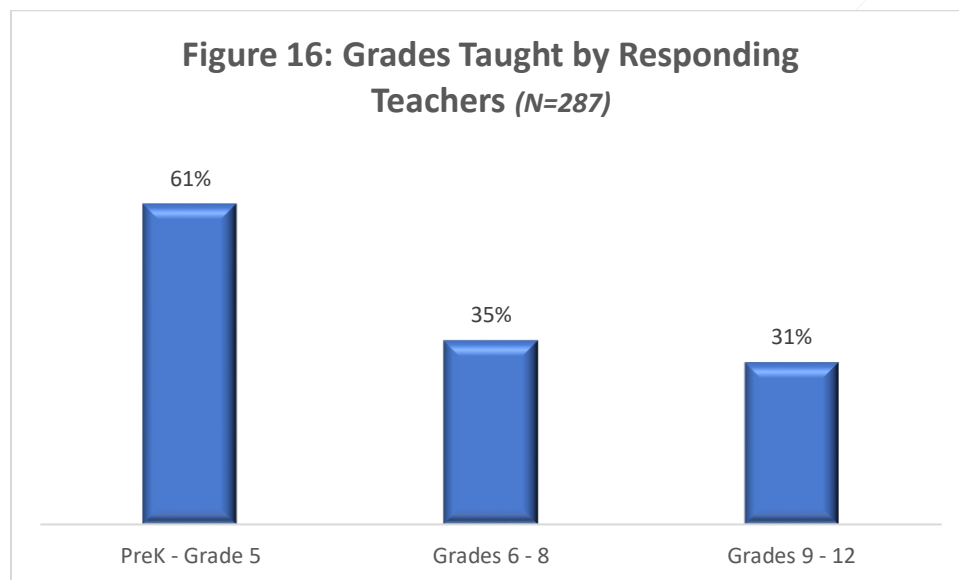
Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine:

- Public vs. Private Schools: Public school teachers had significantly more years of teaching experience.
- Elementary vs Middle or High School: There were no significant differences between the years of experience across these grade levels.

- Experiential at Middle or High School: There were no significant differences between the years of experience of teachers focused on more experiential subjects and those without such a focus.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban: There were no significant difference between the years of experience of those teaching more rural students and those with more urban/suburban students.

Thus, in general, the years of experience of the teachers who responded to this survey are similar.

Figure 16 indicates that a majority of responding teachers work in elementary schools and about one-third work in both middle schools and high schools. Because some teachers work with students across multiple grade levels, the bars sum to more than 100%.

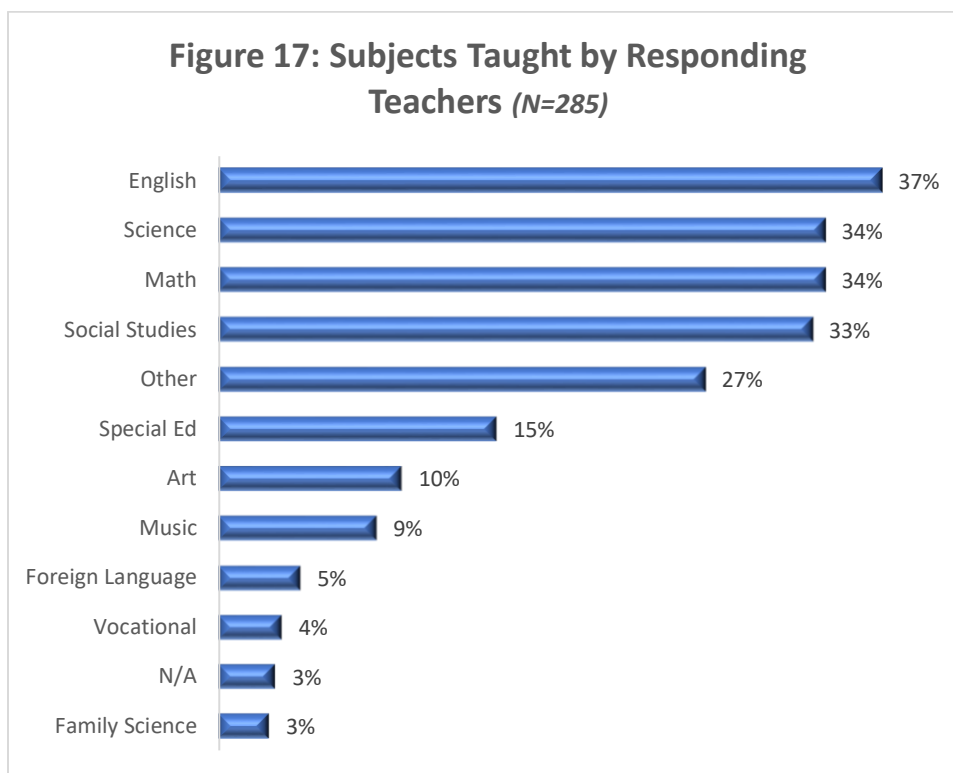


Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine:

- Public vs. Private Schools: There was a significantly higher proportion of private school teachers among those teaching in middle schools and a higher proportion of public school teachers at the high school level. Since many private schools do not include high school grades, the second result is not surprising.
- Experiential at Middle or High School: There were no significant differences between teachers focused on more experiential subjects and those without such a focus based on the grade level at which they teach.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban: Teachers in middle schools were significantly more likely to be teaching in schools with a majority of students drawn from rural areas.

The differences in public and private school teachers at the high school level aligns with expectations, but it is unclear why private schools were over-represented at the middle school level and among schools serving primarily rural residents.

Figure 17 indicates that about one-third of respondents teach English, science, math, or social studies. Many teachers, particularly those at the elementary level, teach multiple subjects, so the percentages in Figure 17 sum to more than 100%. More than one-quarter of the respondents selected “Other” and most provided information about what they teach. The largest categories of courses in this “Other” category were multiple subjects (21% of these responses), health and physical education (18%), and bilingual education or English as a second language (ESL) (14%). The complete list of responses in the other category is included in Appendix A2.



For teachers at the middle and high school levels, where teachers are more specialized, the SRC divided these responses into two groups. One group included subjects that were more experiential meaning they were likely to require a specialized laboratory/classroom or have a performance aspect. The experiential group included science, art, music, vocational and family science. The other subjects were grouped into one characterized by being somewhat less “hands-on.”

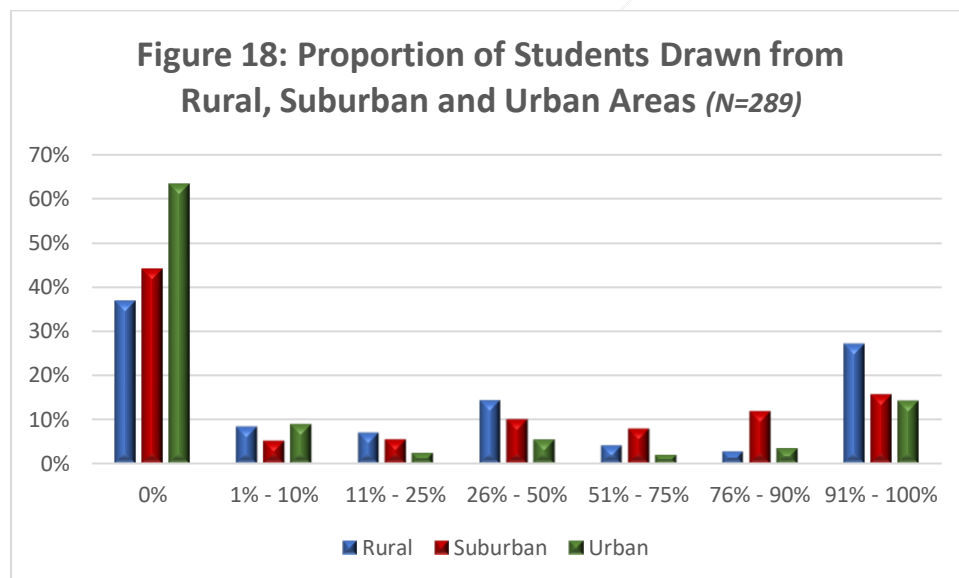
Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine:

- Public vs. Private Schools: Private school teachers were significantly more likely to be teaching more experiential subjects.

- Elementary vs Middle or High School: There were no significant differences between the proportion of respondents teaching experiential subjects across these grade levels.
- Experiential at Middle or High School: There were no significant differences between the proportion of teachers focused on more experiential subjects and those without such a focus at either the middle or high school level.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban: There were no significant difference between the proportion teaching experiential topics in rural vs. urban/suburban areas.

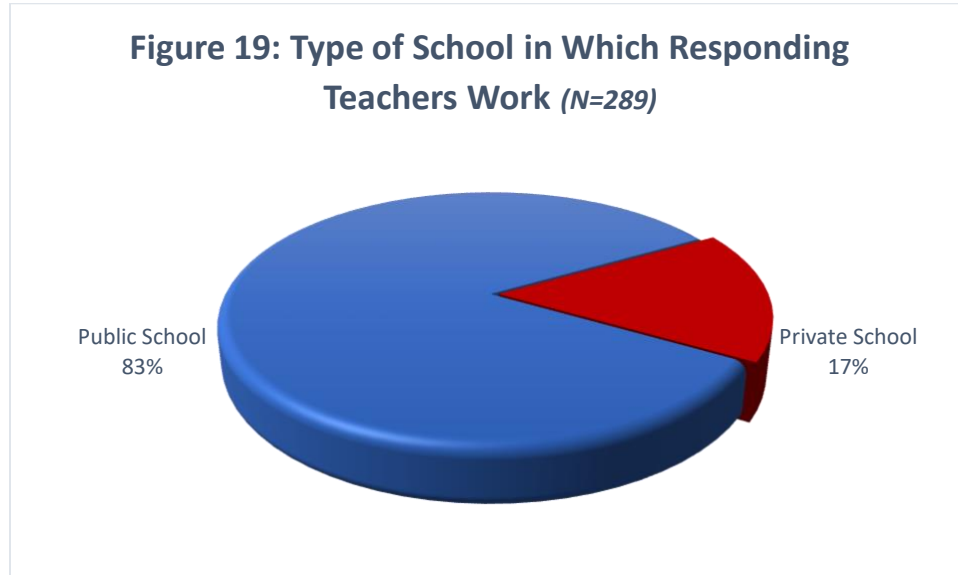
The general similarity of the proportion of respondents teaching experientially-focused classes across our sub-groups of teachers a positive result.

On average, 40% of students taught by responding teachers lived in rural areas, 37% in suburban areas, and 22% in urban areas. Figure 18 shows that there is a certain degree of concentration with respect to where the students taught by responding teachers live. Only about 37% of the teachers had no students living in rural areas, 44% had no suburban students and 63% had no students living in urban areas. At the other end of the spectrum, about one-in-four teachers said that between 91% and 100% of their students live in rural areas, 16% said 90% or more of their students were from suburban areas, and 14% said 90% or more live in urban areas.



As noted, for whatever reason, a significantly higher proportion of middle school teachers teach in areas with a majority of students drawn from rural areas.

Slightly more than four-in-five responding teachers work in a public school (Figure 19). Since approximately 15% of Wisconsin primary and secondary school students attend private schools, the proportions of public and private school teachers shown in Figure 19 align well with this distribution of students.

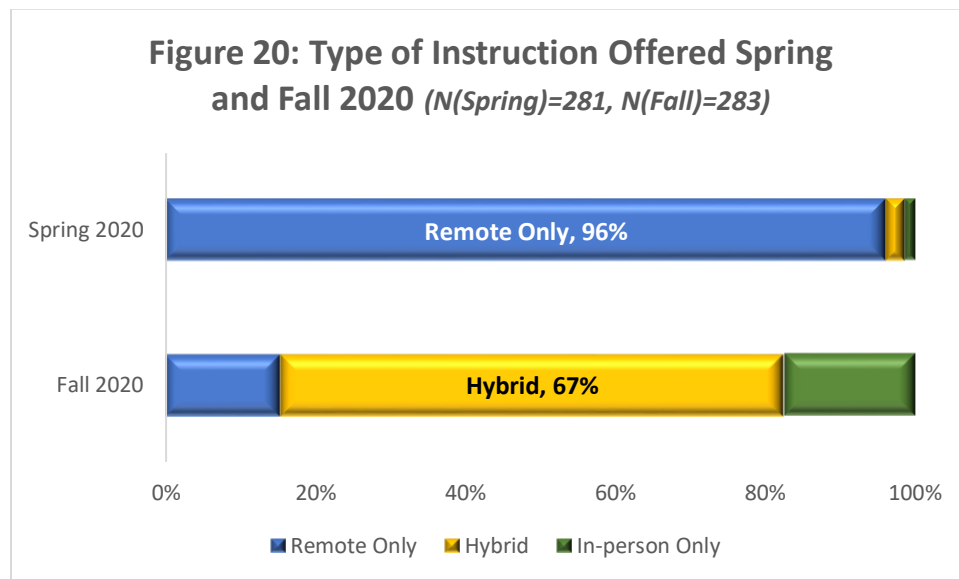


In terms of our hypotheses, we noted above that a higher proportion of private school teachers were in the middle grades and that such teachers disproportionately taught experiential-type classes such as science or art. In other aspects (rural vs. urban/suburban, teaching at elementary vs. middle or high school), there were no significant differences between public and private school teachers.

Across these various dimensions of the teachers (years of experience, grade levels and subjects taught, type of school that employs them), there were some significant differences in the teachers in the dataset. But for the most part, the teachers' backgrounds appear to be fairly similar. Thus, any differences we see in their experiences, responses, and opinions about teaching during the pandemic may be associated with the different environment in which they were working more than inherent differences in the teachers' backgrounds.

## Teachers' Pandemic Experiences and Responses

Figure 20 shows that the vast majority of teachers who responded to this survey were teaching remotely exclusively during the spring 2020 COVID pandemic. While two-thirds of teachers were using a hybrid model of instruction (some face-to-face teaching and some distance education) in the fall of 2020, substantial minorities of teachers were either continue to use remote instruction only (15%) or in-person teaching exclusively (17%).

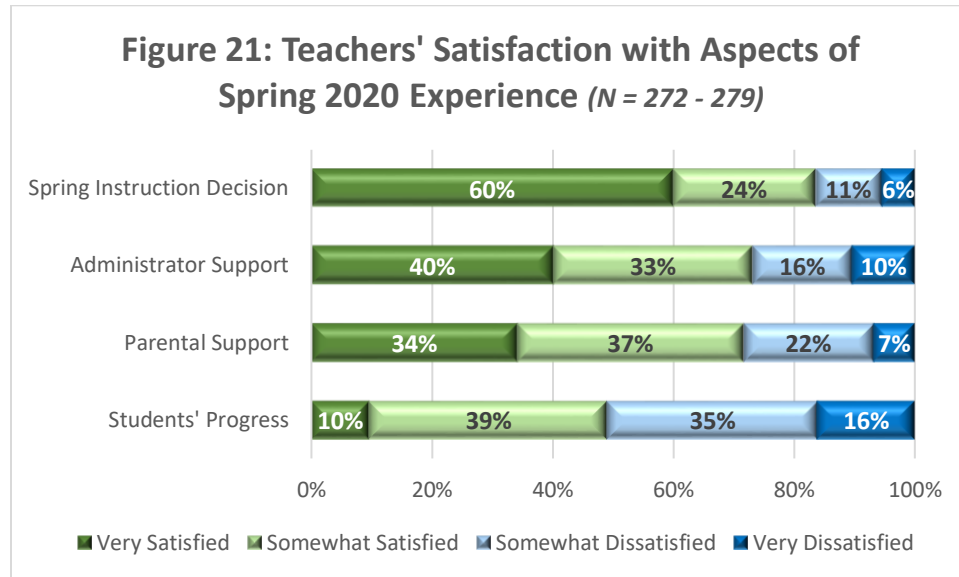


Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine, in the fall of 2020:

- **Public vs. Private Schools:** Private school teachers were significantly more likely to be teaching face-to-face only in the fall (40% vs. 13% of public school teachers).
- **Elementary vs Middle or High School:** Elementary schools were significantly more likely to be offering instruction face-to-face (21%) and high schools less likely to do so (10%). Since a significantly lower proportion of high school teachers in this dataset work in private schools, this result reflects, in part, the private vs. public school divide just discussed.
- **Experiential at Middle or High School:** There were no significant differences in the instructional mode used during the fall 2020 semester by teachers focused on more experiential subjects and those without such a focus.
- **Rural vs. Urban/Suburban:** The higher the proportion of students drawn from rural areas, the more likely instruction in the fall was face-to-face. For instance, 26% of schools with at least 50% of their students living in rural areas were holding exclusively in-person instruction compared to only 11% of schools serving urban/suburban districts.

Figure 21 suggests that a majority of teachers were at least somewhat satisfied with the decision to move to remote-only instruction in the spring of 2020 (84% very or somewhat satisfied), and

with the support they received from their administrators (73%) and the parents of their students (71%). They were equally divided between satisfaction (49% very or somewhat satisfied) and dissatisfaction (51% very or somewhat dissatisfied) with respect to their students' academic progress during the pandemic.



Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine, in terms of the decision to move to remote-only instruction in the spring of 2020:

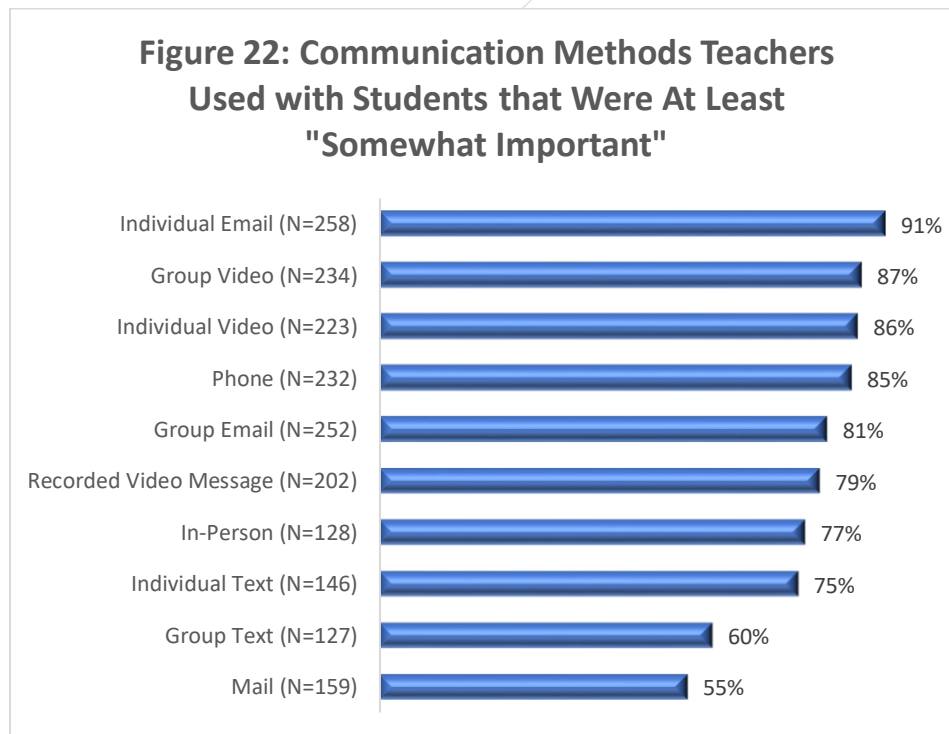
- Public vs. Private Schools: There were no significant differences regarding the spring 2020 decision.
- Elementary vs Middle or High School: There were no significant differences regarding the spring 2020 decision.
- Experiential at Middle or High School: There were no significant differences regarding the spring 2020 decision.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban: Teachers with primarily rural students were somewhat less enthusiastic about the spring 2020 decision (53% strongly agreed vs. 65% of teachers with a minority of students from rural areas).

There were no statistical differences across the four hypotheses we are testing with respect to support from administrators or parents.

Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine, in terms of teacher satisfaction with student progress during the pandemic:

- Public vs. Private Schools: Significantly higher proportions of public school teachers were “very dissatisfied” with student progress during the pandemic (18% vs. 4% of private school teachers).
- Elementary vs Middle or High School: Significantly lower proportions of elementary teachers were very dissatisfied with their students’ academic progress during the spring (13%) than was the case for high school teachers (22% very dissatisfied). This result is contrary to the hypothesis that younger students would have a more difficult time with remote learning.
- Experiential at Middle or High School: There were no significant differences regarding satisfaction with students’ academic progress. This suggests that those with more experiential subjects were not disadvantaged, relative less hands-on subjects, in terms of successfully transmitting these materials
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban: There were no significant differences regarding satisfaction with students’ academic progress. This suggests connectivity issues did not disadvantage rural students compared to urban/suburban ones in the view of these teachers.

Figure 22 suggests that there were a number of communication methods used by most teachers (large N) and judged to be at least somewhat important means of communicating with their students. On average, teachers identified 3.7 of the communication methods as very important to them; more than one-third identified five or more communication methods as very important. Given differences in digital access, communication preferences and other factors, using multiple communication pathways is probably important.



At least three-quarters of the respondents said that individual and group emails, individual and group video connections, phone calls, and recorded video messages were at least somewhat

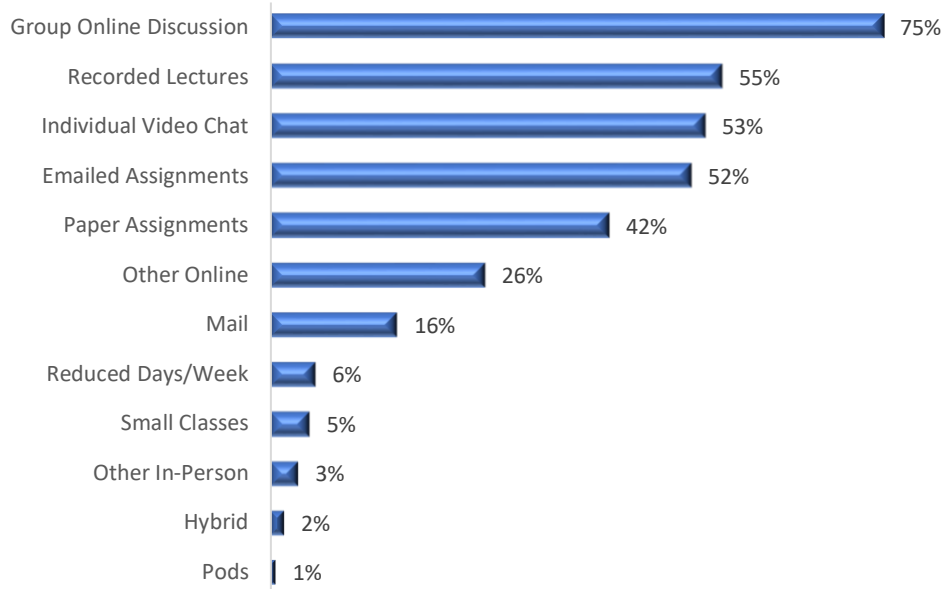
important means of communicating with their students. In-person visits were also seen as somewhat important by most teachers who used them, but only about half as many used this approach as the other options toward the top of Figure 22.

Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine, in terms of communication mechanisms used:

- Public vs. Private Schools: There were no significant differences regarding the communication methods used.
- Elementary vs Middle or High School: Teachers in elementary school assigned higher level of importance to group video chats with their students (71% said this was a very important method vs. 54% of teachers at middle and high schools) and recorded video messages/lectures (48% rated this as very important vs. 40% of teachers at other levels). High school teachers were significantly less likely to say recorded video messages/lectures were very important (28% rated this as very important vs. 51% of teachers at other levels). The heavier reliance on online communication methods for younger students is at least somewhat at odds with the expectations of this hypothesis.
- Experiential at Middle or High School: There were no significant differences regarding the communication methods used.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban: Fewer teachers whose students were primarily rural rated communication with their students via the postal service as an important method (11% said this was very important vs. 28% of teachers with more urban or suburban students). One might have expected a less robust internet infrastructure in rural areas might have led to greater use of the U.S. Postal Service to touch base with their students, but this appears not to be the case.

Teachers were provided a list including the list of methods included in Figure 23 and asked to identify all the approaches they used during the spring of 2020 when instruction went fully remote. The average teacher reported using 3.6 different instructional methods during the spring pandemic; 90% of the teachers used five or fewer methods.

**Figure 23: Instruction Methods Used by Teachers, Spring 2020 (N=289)**



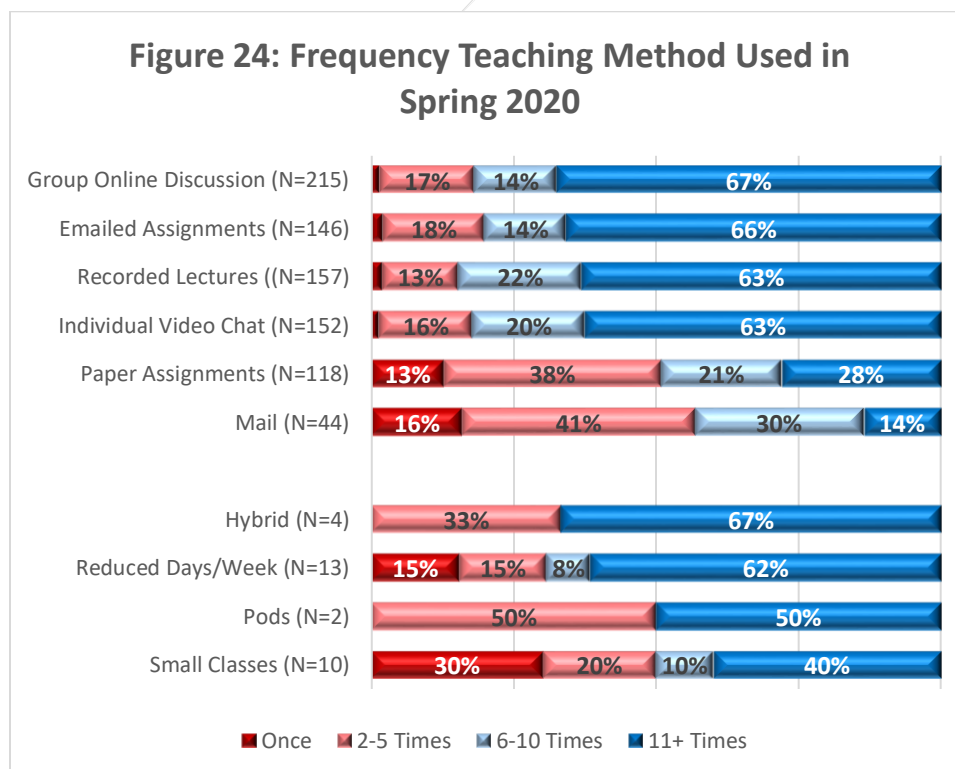
Three-quarters of the teachers used online group discussions using Zoom or another program and about half used recorded lectures, individual video chats, and emailed assignments. Very few reported using any sort of in-person instruction and given the small numbers, these approaches will not be statistically assessed.

There were no significant differences in the number of teaching methods used by different subsets of teachers (e.g. public vs. private, rural vs. urban/suburban, etc.). No subgroup averaged using fewer than 3.5 approaches and none more than 3.9 approaches. This is a positive result in that all teachers were, seemingly, trying to reach their students using a variety of means.

Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine, in terms of instructional methods used:

- **Public vs. Private Schools:** Public school teachers were more likely to use recorded lectures/messages (58% vs. 42% of private school teachers) and assignments mailed to students (17% vs. 6% of private school teachers).
- **Elementary vs Middle or High School:** Teachers in elementary school were less likely to say they emailed assignments to their students (45% vs. 69% of middle school and 60% of high school teachers). Elementary teachers were, in contrast, significantly more likely to have created paper assignments that their students/parents picked up (49% vs. 27% of high school teachers using this method). The heavier reliance on traditional paper assignments by elementary teachers supports this hypothesis.
- **Experiential at Middle or High School:** There were no significant differences regarding instructional methods used by teachers of more experiential subjects.
- **Rural vs. Urban/Suburban:** Teachers with a majority of students living in rural areas were more likely to email assignments (61% vs. 45% of teachers with more urban/suburban students) and producing paper assignments to be picked up by students/parents (50% vs. 35% of those serving less rural-based students).

Teachers that used a given teaching method were also asked to indicate how frequently they employed that method during the spring 2020 pandemic. Their responses are summarized in Figure 24 with the first/dark red segment showing approaches used only once, the lighter red/second segment approaches used two to five times, the light blue/third segment approaches used six to ten times and the dark blue/fourth segment approaches used at least 11 times.



Not only was online group discussion (e.g. using Zoom) the most commonly used teaching method used (Figure 23), it was also used the most intensively; two-thirds used this method more than 10 times during the pandemic and another 14% used it between 6 and 10 times. More than 80% of the teachers who used emailed assignments, recorded lectures, and live individual video chats employed them at least 6 times during the pandemic. ). These results suggest that if a teacher used a particular technique for connecting with their students, they tended to use that method frequently.

Half or fewer of the teachers who used them, left paper assignments for students/their parents to pick up or sent assignments to students via the mail.

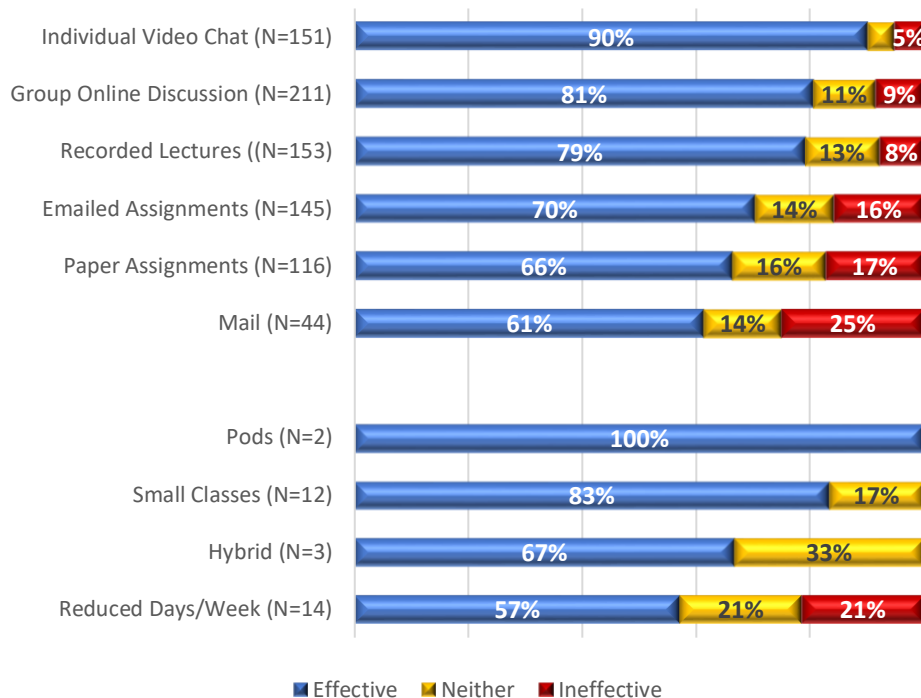
Though few teachers used in-person instruction, those who did so tended to employ them at least six times. Because so few used in-person instruction they will not be included in the statistical analysis.

Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine, in terms of the frequency of use of instructional methods:

- Public vs. Private Schools: Private school teachers used the method of preparing paper assignments to be picked up by parents/students with significantly greater intensity (77% used this approach at least six times compared to 43% for public school teachers).
- Elementary vs Middle or High School: Teachers in elementary school prepared paper assignments to be picked up by parents/students less frequently than middle school teachers (49% did this at least six times compared to 61% of middle school teachers). Elementary teachers also were less-intensive users of recorded lectures than their high school counterparts (83% used this approach six or more times compared to 92% of high school teachers). These results do not fully support the hypothesis that elementary-aged students might have more challenges with the online environment. However, the less intense use of paper assignments may just reflect less intense use of homework in those elementary grades.
- Experiential at Middle or High School: There were no statistically significant differences in the frequency with which teachers focused on experiential subjects used different teaching methods.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban: There were no statistically significant differences in the frequency with which rural and urban/suburban teachers used different teaching methods.

Perhaps the most important question we asked teachers was to assess the effectiveness of both online and in-person approaches to instruction during the pandemic. Answer options were very effective, somewhat effective, neutral, somewhat ineffective, and very ineffective. In Figure 25, we combined the two responses indicating effectiveness into a single “effective” category and the two ineffective response options into a single “ineffective” category. Of note is that a majority of teachers rated all teaching methods they used as at least somewhat effective.

**Figure 25: Teachers' Assessment of Effectiveness  
Teaching Methods During Spring 2020 Pandemic**



By a substantial margin, the teaching method judged to be most effective was live, individual video chats; 90% rated this approach as at least somewhat effective with 50% rating it very effective. This is also the method that would place the greatest demands on teachers' time, particularly for middle and high school teachers who might meet with considerably more than 100 students in the course of a typical day.

Group online discussions (e.g. via Zoom) and recorded lectures were seen as at least somewhat effective by about four-of-five respondents; similar proportions (22% - 23%) rated these approaches as very effective.

About two-thirds of the respondents rated emailed assignments and paper assignments left for the student/their parent to pick up as at least somewhat effective; fewer than 15% of respondents rated these methods as very effective.

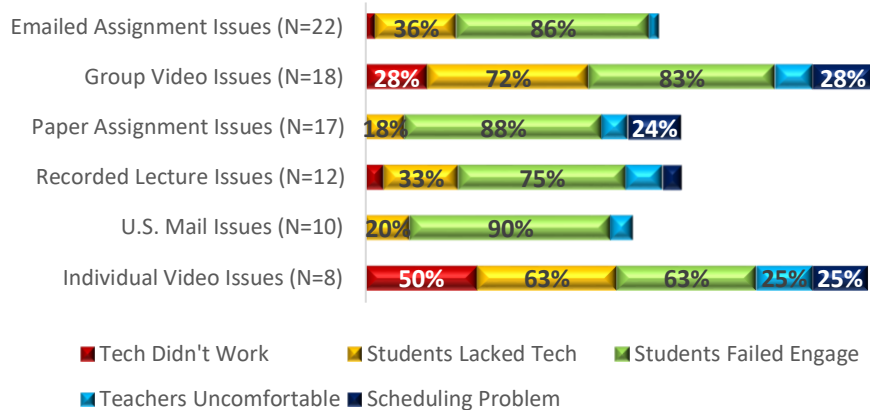
Again, though few used them, a majority said all in-person instruction approaches were at least somewhat effective; interestingly, the model used most commonly for the fall 2020 semester, reduced numbers of days/week of in-person instruction was deemed the least effective approach. Given small number of teachers who rated in-person teaching approaches, they will not be included in the statistical analysis.

Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine, in terms of the efficacy of instructional methods:

- Public vs. Private Schools: Private school teachers rated several approaches more highly than public school teachers, including group video (41% of private school teachers rated this as very effective vs. 20% of public school teachers), emailed assignments (31% very effective vs. 5% of public school teachers) and paper assignments left for students/parents to pick up (41% very effective vs. 7% of public school teachers).
- Elementary vs Middle or High School: The only significant difference was with respect to the effectiveness of paper assignments left for students/parents to pick up (18% of elementary school teacher said this was very effective vs. 3% of middle school teachers felt this way and 0% of high school teachers). This result aligns with the hypothesis that younger students might not adapt to the online environment as well as older students. However, the lack of significant differences between elementary teachers and those in middle and high school with respect to the effectiveness of the more internet-intense approaches (group video chats, individual chats, emailed assignments, recorded lectures/methods), does not support the hypothesis.
- Experiential at Middle or High School: There were no statistically significant differences in the efficacy that teachers with more experiential subject matter assigned different teaching methods and teachers of subjects with less need for hands-on work. This lack of significant differences is contrary to the hypothesis. We would have, for example, expected teachers of experiential courses to rate individual and group online video approaches more highly since this would allow them to, for example, assess progress toward mastering a musical instrument or their understanding of a given biology laboratory experiment.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban: There were no statistically significant differences in how rural vs. urban/suburban teachers rated these approaches. This lack of differences does not support the hypothesis that rural students might have less robust internet connections that precluded them from fully benefiting from more internet-intensive instructional approaches.

If a teacher rated a given teaching approach as very or somewhat effective, they were asked to indicate why they thought the approach had not worked. Answer options were that their technology didn't work, students lacked technology or an internet connection, the method failed to engage their students, they were not comfortable with the technology, and scheduling or logistical problems. Their responses are summarized in Figure 26. Fifty-one teachers identified at least one reason a given on-line teaching approach was either somewhat or very ineffective; 77% of these teachers identified 3 or fewer reasons these approaches were ineffective.

**Figure 26: Reasons Teachers Said Teaching Approach Was Ineffective**



We noted earlier that about half of the teachers were at least somewhat dissatisfied with the academic progress of their students during the pandemic. Figure 26 provides a start toward understanding why they feel academic progress was less than expected.

Overall, students failing to engage (green segments) was, by far, the most common reason given for an approach being ineffective; 84% of the teachers who said at least one approach was ineffective, said students' failure to engage was a reason. Students' failure to engage accounted for more than half of the reasons for ineffectiveness for all six online teaching methods, ranging from 63% for individual video chats to 88% for paper assignments.

Students' lack of a computer or reliable internet connection (yellow segments) also accounted for a substantial portion of the failings of many online teaching approaches, ranging from one-third for recorded lectures to 72% for group, online, video chats. Students' lack of a computer/internet connection was selected as a reason for instruction being ineffective by 45% of the teachers who said at least one approach was ineffective.

Emailing assignments to students was the approach with the most teachers who said it was an ineffective approach with their students; emailed assignments accounted for 43% of the teachers who found at least one approach to be ineffective. Almost all of these teachers attributed the ineffectiveness of emailed assignments to students' failure to engage with the material when distributed this way. Students' lack of technology/an internet connection was also a significant problem with this approach. Given that emailing assignments was one of the most common and frequently used instructional methods used by teachers in the spring of 2020 (Figures 23 and 24), this result is troubling.

Group video discussions and leaving paper assignments to be picked up by students/their parents were also identified by a one-third or more of the teachers who found at least one approach to be ineffective. For group video chats, students' lack of technology/internet connection was quite

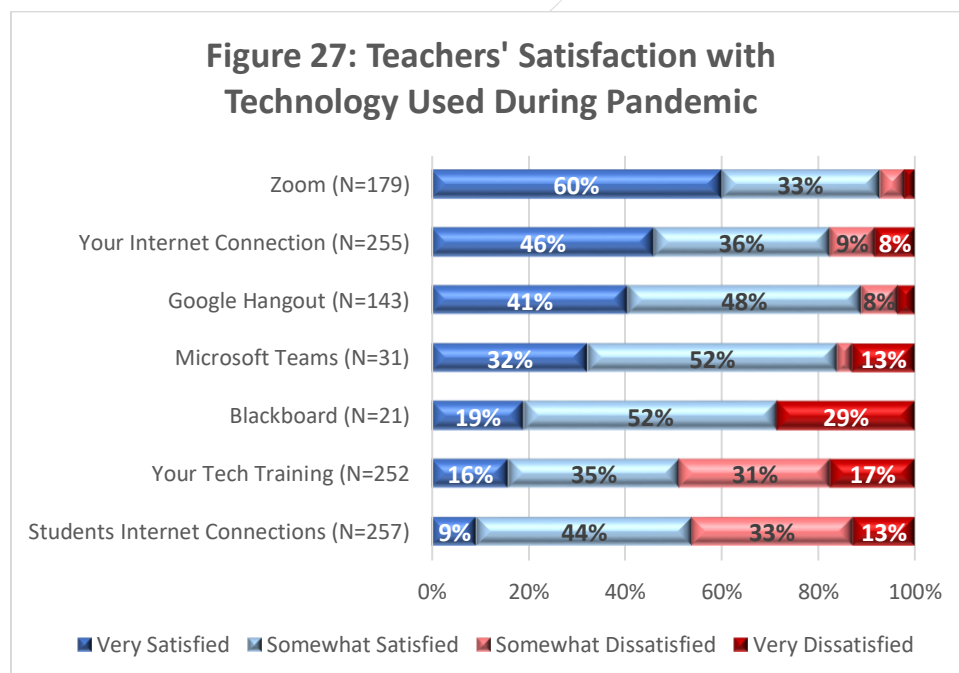
important as was, somewhat surprisingly, lack of student engagement. We don't know how group videos were implemented but, they might be more engaging for students if online "pods" of six or fewer of the same students were included in a group discussion. If everyone in a class of 25 is included in a group chat, the likelihood of technological problems goes up as does the potential for a given student fail to actively engage, making this approach less effective.

Relatively few teachers said that their lack of comfort with a given teaching method contributed to that approach being at least somewhat ineffective (3 for group video chats, 2 for leaving paper assignments to be retrieved, recorded lectures, and individual video chats, and 1 for using the mail to send students assignments).

Similarly, few faulted their own technology (5 said this contributed to group video chats and 4 for individual video chats being ineffective) or scheduling/logistical problems (5 for group video chats, 4 for paper assignments left for students/their parents, and 2 for individual video chats).

There were too few responses to this question to use in testing our four hypotheses.

The final quantitative question asked teachers to rate their satisfaction with a variety of on-line technologies. Answer options were not applicable (which were excluded from analysis), very satisfied (first/dark blue segment of Figure 27), somewhat satisfied (second/light blue segment), somewhat dissatisfied (third/light red segment) and very dissatisfied (final/dark red segment).



More than 90% of the teachers who used Zoom for online video connections to their students were at least somewhat satisfied with this tool. At least 80% were at least somewhat satisfied with their internet connection, Google Hangout, and Microsoft Teams.

Nearly half the teachers were at least somewhat dissatisfied with the technological training they'd received prior to the pandemic and with their students' internet connections.

Though used by few teachers, more than one-quarter of Blackboard users were very dissatisfied with this tool.

Relative to the hypotheses we want to examine, in terms of teacher satisfaction with technology:

- Public vs. Private Schools: Private school teachers were significantly more satisfied with Zoom (81% very satisfied vs. 55% of public school teachers) and with their students' internet connections (24% very satisfied vs. 7% of public school teachers).
- Elementary vs Middle or High School: Satisfaction with the internet connection decreased from teachers at the elementary (50% very satisfied) to middle school (46% very satisfied) to high school (38% very satisfied). This result aligns with the hypothesis that elementary school teachers might not use internet technology as intensively as those at middle or high school levels.
- Experiential at Middle or High School: There were no statistically significant differences in technology satisfaction between teachers with more experiential subject matter and those teaching subjects with less need for hands-on work. We expected satisfaction with technology might be lower among teachers of experiential subjects given the greater demands we expected such teachers to put on online technologies.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban: The only statistical difference was that teachers in more rural areas were more satisfied with their technology training (63% were at least somewhat satisfied vs. 43% of urban/suburban teachers).

### Overall Results of Hypotheses Tests

Public vs. Private School Teachers. There were a few minor differences between the backgrounds of public and private school teachers; public school teachers had more years of experience and private school teachers were more likely to teach experiential subjects. Despite the similarity of teachers in these two types of schools there a number of differences in their experiences and opinions about teaching during the COVID pandemic. In general, private school teachers were somewhat more satisfied with their experiences – they were more likely to be teaching face-to-face in the fall 2020 semester, they were more satisfied with the academic progress of their students, and with the technology they used (Zoom) and their students' technology/internet connection. Private school teachers made greater use of paper assignments left to be picked up by students/their parents more and recorded lectures/messages, but mailed assignments less than their public school counterparts. Private school teachers were more satisfied with the impact of group online video chats, emailed assignments and the paper assignments they prepared. In sum, the experiences of public and private school teachers were somewhat different with private school teachers more positive about them.

Elementary vs. Middle/High School Teachers. We expected elementary teachers to have had a more challenging experience during the spring pandemic because their students might have been less adaptable to the shift to fully-remote learning. There were no significant differences in the backgrounds of elementary vs. middle or high school teachers in terms of their years of teaching, whether they taught in public or private schools, etc. Elementary teachers, compared to those at middle or high schools, were more likely to be back teaching face-to-face, at least part of the time, in the fall of 2020, and were more satisfied with their students' academic progress. Elementary teachers rated group online video chats and recorded video message as more important means of communicating with their students, but were less likely to use the internet for instruction (less use of emailed assignments and less intense use of video messages) and more dependent on paper assignments they left for their students/their parents to pick up. These results do not support the hypothesis that elementary teachers had a more challenging experience during the pandemic. In part, this appears to be because they employed less technological approaches to instructing their students, technologies their charges may not have been ready to use effectively.

Teaching Experiential Subjects at Middle or High School. There were no statistically significant differences in the backgrounds of teachers of subjects with a more experiential focus and those teaching other subjects. Nor were there any significant differences in the experiences and opinions of those teaching experiential subjects and those teaching other subjects. In sum, these data do not support the hypothesis that those teaching more experiential subjects had a more challenging experience in adapting to the spring 2020 pandemic, used different approaches to teaching their subjects and found different approaches to be effective.

Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Teachers. There were no important differences in the backgrounds of those teaching in more rural areas and those in more urban/suburban areas. Those teaching in more rural areas were more likely to be teaching in-person at least some of the time in the fall of 2020. There were few differences in the methods used to communicate with or to teach their students between rural and urban/suburban teachers. In sum, these data do not support the hypothesis that rural areas were seriously disadvantaged during the COVID pandemic by a less robust internet system.

## How Colleges of Education Could Better Prepare Teachers for Remote Learning Situations

In addition to the quantitative questions summarized above, teachers were asked, “. . . *what is one thing you think teacher training programs could do to better prepare you and future teachers for situations that limit or eliminate in-person instruction?*” The SRC split the comments into those received from Pre-K to Grade 5 teachers, Grade 6 – 8 teachers, and Grades 9 – 12 teachers.

### Comments from Pre-K to Grade 5 Teachers

A total of 165 comments were received from pre-k to grade 5 teachers and all their comments are included in Appendix A2. The SRC grouped the comments into the 15 categories shown in Table 2. Clearly, teachers would encourage Colleges of Education to expand the degree to which they expose would-be elementary teachers to instructional software that can be used to deliver instruction remotely; 41% of all responses from elementary school teachers were focused on expanded technology training.

Table 2: Elementary School Teachers’ Suggestions for Improving Teacher Training	
Comment Category	Number
Expanded Technology Training	67
Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Students/Parents/Administration	24
Best Practices for Distance Learning/Online/Virtual Methods & Lesson Planning	22
Techniques/Variety of Online Teaching Methods for Specific Topics/Needs	10
Expand Teachers’ Adaptability	7
Tech Resources/Training for Students and Parents	6
Be Prepared/Proactive/Have a plan	4
Emotional/Mental Health Awareness/Preparedness/Training	4
Student Teacher Comments	4
Maintain In-Person Instruction	3
How to Work with Language and Cultural Issues	2
Non-tech Teaching Methods/Variety	2
Students Access to Technology	2
Hybrid Teaching	1
Miscellaneous	7

The comments in the “Expanded Technology Training” category frequently talked about exposing education majors to software, including learning management systems like Canvas, and hardware options. Examples of comments in this category include:

*“I think teacher prep programs should make sure teacher candidates are up to date on technology such as Google Suite, Seesaw, Google Classroom, Screencastify or other video recording software.”*

*“Technology usage, specifically video recording. Exposure to more options for recording and for preparing and presenting written lessons. And how to alter lessons*

*for remote learning. Things like lighting, microphones, set up, etc., had to be learned by trial and error. This will be easier for younger people, though. Most of us had our teenagers help us.”*

Elementary teachers also emphasized the need to use communication techniques that would engage others, particularly students and their parents. The age of elementary students, who

often have relatively short attention spans, puts a premium on effective communication strategies. Comments typical of this group included:

*“For the younger elementary level, it would be very beneficial to have a class that would offer tools, instructional ideas, or activities that can be done over video call. With young students, it is very difficult to engage them without being in-person.”*

*“Teaching is all about the building of relationships with students and parents. Continual focus and attention on the importance of partnering with families to work as a team and how to communicate honestly and clearly with them is the foundation of educating a child.”*

Similarly, feedback from elementary teachers emphasized the need to identify and instruct education majors in best practices for planning, developing and delivering online instruction. Comments typical of this set of suggestions include:

*“Creating a distance learning plan. In addition, they should think through a distance learning day. The day will be much different than in person instruction. Have them think through a week of distance learning instruction and start making plans. Having these things already in place if the pivot to online happens will save your sanity.”*

*“Provide instruction for best practices about virtual large group, small group, and one-on-one instruction in all subject areas.”*

Clearly, the pandemic disrupted standard teaching approaches, practically overnight, and many of the comments received from elementary teachers indicated a desire for a stronger background in distance education technologies and, of course, more time to adjust to their new reality. So, their comments encourage Colleges of Education to expand their students’ exposure to these technologies, provide the opportunity to use and get comfortable with them, and develop their teaching plans in such a way that switching from in-person to distance instruction can be done more easily.

## Comments from Grade 6 – Grade 8 Teachers

A total of 89 comments were received from teachers instructing at the middle school level (grades 6 – 8). In some instances, teachers had responsibilities at multiple levels in their school district and in those cases, comments are included in multiple sections of this report.

As Table 3 indicates, technology was a pre-occupation for middle school teachers, as it was for their elementary school colleagues. However, expanded technology training represented only 34% of middle school teachers' comments compared to 41% of those provided by elementary

Table 3: Middle School Teachers' Suggestions for Improving Teacher Training	
Comment Category	Number
Expanded Technology Training	31
Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Students/Parents/Administration	14
Best Practices for Distance Learning/Online/Virtual Methods & Lesson Planning	12
Expand Teachers' Adaptability	7
Techniques/Variety of Online Teaching Methods for Specific Topics/Needs	4
Tech Resources/Training for Students and Parents	4
Maintain In-Person Instruction	2
Emotional/Mental Health Awareness/Preparedness/Training	2
Non-tech Teaching Methods/Variety	2
Be Prepared/Proactive/Have a Plan	2
Students Access to Technology	2
Student Teacher Comments	2
Miscellaneous	5

school teachers. Middle school teachers encouraged Colleges of Education to ensure their graduates have a firm handle on many of the same hardware and software options noted by elementary school teachers. Examples of comments about expanding education majors' exposure to technology included:

*"Making sure that teachers have at least some familiarity/use of common online platforms such as Google Classroom and screen recording sites like Flipgrid, Screencastify, etc."*

*"Having a technology class. Where you learn about various apps and*

*programs, but you actually apply them to a classroom setting with students."*

Student and parent engagement, the second most common comment topic for middle school teachers, included comments about the need for training in this area for education majors and frustrations about the difficulty of achieving engagement. Examples of this set of comments include:

*"Educators have to be creative, resourceful, and have a growth-mindset when it comes to teaching in situations that are not in-person. Prepare future educators by arming them with strategies that explicitly teach and build STUDENT agency, initiative and ownership in their learning, in addition to teaching content!"*

*"I believe new teachers would have the expectations that they would have more parent support, in reality, I believe that parent disengagement in education is a leading cause of student disengagement."*

The other category with a substantial number of comments asked Colleges of Education to identify best practices for distance education for middle school students. Examples of comments in this category were:

*"Learning how to use various online activities to engage in group discussion, games, online atmosphere. Structuring and timing in a virtual class is very important to keep a flow of ideas going. The biggest challenge is students believing that their time is well used to make connections to teachers, each other and the content."*

*"Virtual learning is different. Lots of teachers assume/assumed that the main shift to virtual was to take their in-person lesson, and present it online. That produces very lacking virtual lessons, even if the in-person lesson was great. Virtual learning has big barriers with appropriate technology and internet for students and staff, but a created barrier is that teachers were trying to do the same thing they did in-person, but now through a screen. Virtual teaching has to be different to be effective. Beyond just changing how to teach and interact with the main content delivery, teachers have to adjust how they assess and evaluate students. It is even easier for students to fall through the cracks because it is so much hard to monitor engagement understanding, and development through the tiny rectangular views all crammed together on one Meet screen. I'm not pretending there is ample time or an abundance of energy that will easily allow this, but it is critical. And, just as their needs to be time spent teaching and re-teaching classroom behavior norms, there has to be time spent with virtual norms as well as learning environment changes. It is different teaching. But, probably teaching to enhance virtual engagement and student development could only also enhance in-person. They won't look the same, but maybe the principles that would enhance virtual could also be translated to strengthen in-person: things like increased front and backloading, personalizing instruction and progress monitoring, building independence and self-drive (along with self-awareness/self-assessment), the role of family/community/culture towards developing a whole child, and increasing freedom to remove unnecessary barriers such as sitting in a desk or not having text-to-speech software available."*

## Comments from Grade 9 – Grade 12 Teachers

Teachers in Wisconsin high schools who responded to the survey offered 72 suggestions for improving teacher training. Table 4 shows the number of comments for each category and, as with elementary and middle school teachers, expanding education majors' technology training was the most common suggestion. High school teachers were similar to middle school teachers in

Table 4: High School Teachers' Suggestions for Improving Teacher Training	
Comment Category	Number
Expanded Technology Training	22
Best Practices for Distance Learning/Online/Virtual Methods & Lesson Planning	13
Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Students/Parents/Administration	12
Emotional/Mental Health Awareness/Preparedness/Training	4
Expand Teachers' Adaptability	4
Be Prepared/Proactive/Have a Plan	3
Comments about Student Teachers	3
Techniques/Variety of Online Teaching Methods for Specific Topics/Needs	3
Maintain In-Person Instruction	2
Hybrid Teaching	1
Non-tech Teaching Methods/Variety	1
Tech Resources/Training for Students and Parents	1
Miscellaneous	3

that about one-third (31%) identified expanded technology training as the thing that would best prepare new teachers for situations like the COVID-19 pandemic forcing schools to go to distance education. Some responses identified specific technologies (Google, Zoom, Screencastify, Nearpod, etc.), many of which had also been identified by elementary and middle school teachers. Examples of comments included in this set topic category included:

*"Teachers should be well-rehearsed in online platforms like Canvas or Google*

*Classroom to prepare for these situations. In all honesty, having Canvas this year has allowed me to do things I wouldn't usually get to do. I think it's something our school will use regularly even once things open back up safely!*

*"Technology training sessions that use the tools that schools actually use. Train to run a Google Meet on the school's network. Live remote learning was the only effective lesson format we had last spring. Teachers who did not meet every day with their students online reported steep drop-offs in assignment completion, student engagement, and learning."*

The next most common set of responses called for Colleges of Education to identify and teach education majors best practices for distance teaching. Many of the comments in this category focused on specific aspects of online teaching such as assessment strategies, suggestions for transforming lessons developed for in-person instruction to the online environment, effective use

of technology tools and security/privacy practices in a remote learning environment. Some of the more broadly focused comments in this section included:

*“Planning and pacing for online instruction are much different than when you are with students in a classroom - you get verbal and non-verbal cues from students that indicate their comprehension of content. Having a variety of ways to formatively assess high school students and keep them engaged in virtual learning when they have so many other digital distractions would be helpful.”*

*“Teach technology tools. Teach online teaching standards in addition to in person. Teach best practices for students who are online to ensure learning is able to happen and be verified through valid, reliable assessments.”*

Teaching education majors best practices for communication and engagement in an online environment was the only other topic area that garnered a substantial number of comments. Many comments noted that keeping high school students engaged is challenging when instruction is in-person and even more so in an online environment. A couple of examples of this set of comments include:

*“The virtual environment is different enough from the on-line environment to warrant attention, but the technology and tools change so rapidly, that it would be impossible to predict in advance what it will look like. Fortunately, just going to school exposes future teachers to much of these technologies. I think that flexibility, innovation, organization and, above all else, communication should be prioritized. Infuse the curriculum in every class with problem solving tasks and LOTS of written, oral (video) and visual communication tasks. Focus much less on the “what” we teach and much more on the “how”.”*

*“How to keep those unmotivated students to stay engaged and working. Too many distractions in the home. I would sometimes tell them to get into a closet to work so they were not distracted. Other times, students were using their technology inappropriately, then parents would take away the computer instead of something else more suitable to the situation. Really, no matter how many times I contacted students and parents, some students simply did nothing. They were on a vacation. My High school students did much better than my middle school students.”*

The complete set of teachers’ suggestions for improving teacher education programs are included in Appendix A2, Question 14. Readers are encouraged to read the complete set of comments, focusing on the school level (elementary, middle or high school) of greatest individual interest.

## Summary and Analysis of Results from Parents

As noted in the overview, the SRC received responses from 499 parents of children in pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. In this section of the report we will summarize their responses and test to see if the data provide support for the following hypothesis:

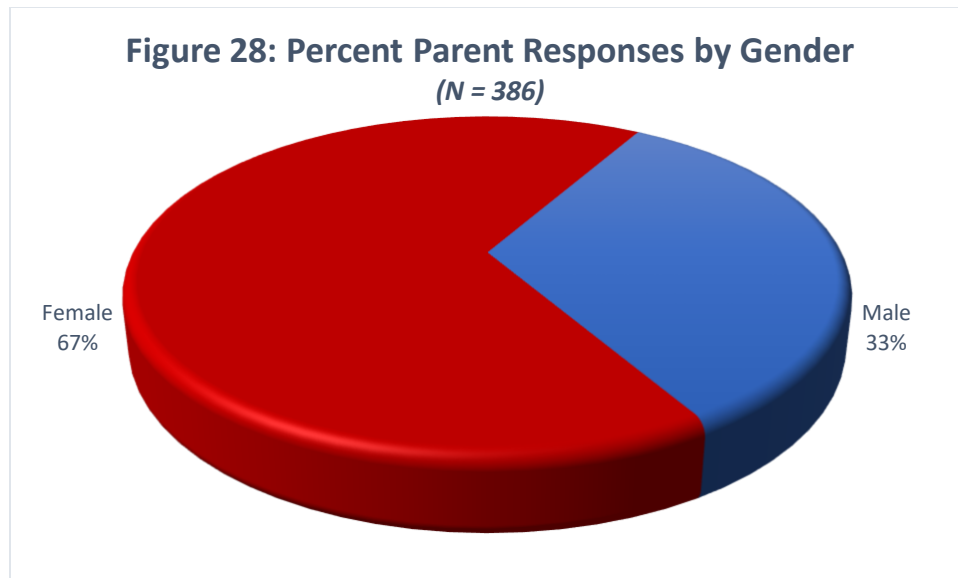
1. The experiences and opinions of parents of children in public and private school differ.
2. The experiences during the spring were different for elementary students than for middle or high school students because younger children had a more difficult time adapting to the fully on-line instruction model.
3. The experiences of students with special needs or who generally receive below-average grades were different than students who generally have average or better grades. Moving to remote-only instructions might have been more difficult for students with special needs or who have more challenges mastering material generally.
4. Because the online infrastructure is believed to be less robust in rural areas, students living in rural areas had a different experience than those teaching more urban or suburban-based students.
5. Students from households with lower income levels may have had less access to computers and internet connections and, hence, had a more challenging time during the spring pandemic. This analysis will compare the responses of parents in households with less than \$75,000 in annual household income to responses from parents in households earning more than that.
6. Students of color may have also had more challenges adapting to the online environment, either because of lack of access to technology or, in some instances, language barriers.

When we get to the portion of the survey that asks for parents' feedback about the impact of the pandemic on their children's education, hypothesis number 2 (differential impact on elementary vs. middle or high school students), will be discussed as part of the other five hypotheses.

### Profile of Respondents

As with the other populations discussed in this report, we start by describing the parents who responded to this survey. It is important to determine if there are significant differences in demographic profile of the sub-sets of parents in the hypotheses to be tested. For instance, if there were significant differences in the income levels of parents in public vs. private schools, differences in the effectiveness of teaching approaches between these two types of schools may be more attributable to differences in the parents' income levels than the type of school.

Figure 28 shows that of the 386 parents who answered this question, about one-third identify as female and one-third as male. Respondents could identify as non-binary or other, but less than 1% selected those options. In the analysis to follow, we will include males and females only.

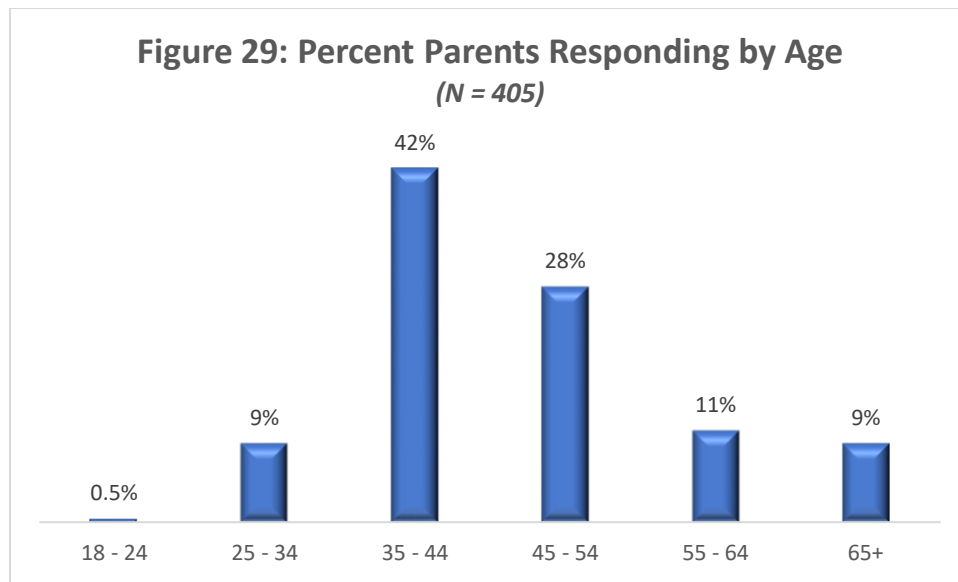


Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, the gender of parents with children in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: there were no statistically significant differences in the gender of respondents.
- Elementary vs. Middle or High School Students: women were a significantly higher proportion of respondents with children in elementary school (73% vs. 62% at middle or high school).
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: There were no statistically significant differences in the gender of respondents with children with special needs or who receive below average grades and those whose children get average or better grades.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: women comprised a larger proportion of respondents from rural areas (80% vs. 64% of those from urban/suburban settings).
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: women were a higher proportion of lower income households for students in middle school (76% reported household incomes under \$75,000 vs. 53% of men) and high school (77% reported lower incomes vs. 53% of male respondents).
- White vs. People of Color: a significant higher proportion of women of color had children in high school (90% vs. 59% of white women).

Thus, women are disproportionately represented in some of the sub-sets of parents relevant to our hypotheses.

Figure 29 indicates that more than two-thirds of the parents who responded to the survey were between 35 and 54 years of age. Given that we were seeking input from parents of children between the ages of 3 or 4 and 17 or 18, this age distribution aligns with expectations.

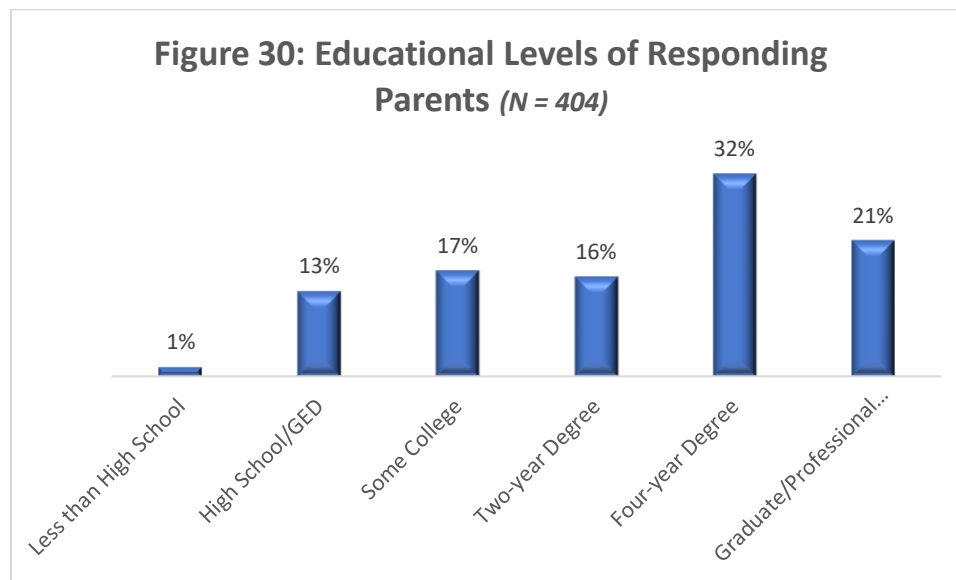


Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, the age of parents with children in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: parents with children in private middle schools were significantly younger than parents with children in public middle schools
- Elementary vs. Middle or High School Students: as we'd expect, parents with children in elementary school were significantly younger than those with children in middle or high school.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: There were no statistically significant differences in the age of parents of children with special needs or who receive below average grades and those whose children get average or better grades.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: there were no significant differences between the age of parents from rural areas and those from urban/suburban settings.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: older respondents with children in high school were more likely to live in households with higher incomes (those over 45 made up 69% of households with incomes of \$75,000 or more but only 58% of those earning less than that).
- White vs. People of Color: there were no significant differences in the ages of white and people of color in this data set.

There was no pattern of differences in the age of respondents across the sub-sets of parents relevant to our hypotheses.

As shown in Figure 30, more than half the parents who responded to this survey have at least a bachelor's degree (53%). According to the Census, in 2019 31% of Wisconsin residents 25 and older have at least a 4-year degree.<sup>1</sup> Thus, relative to Wisconsin adults as a whole, these respondents have above average levels of formal education, which is typical of survey respondents.



Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, the educational attainment of parents with children in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: parents with children in private middle schools had significantly more years of education than parents with children in public middle schools
- Elementary vs. Middle or High School Students: there were no statistically significant differences in the educational levels of parents with children in elementary vs. middle/high school.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: there were no statistically significant differences in the educational levels of parents of children with special needs or who receive below average grades and those whose children get average or better grades.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: parents from rural areas with children in elementary school had significantly less formal education than their urban/suburban counterparts.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: those with more formal education had significantly higher levels of household income.
- White vs. People of Color: white parents of children in elementary school had significantly more years of formal education than parents of color.

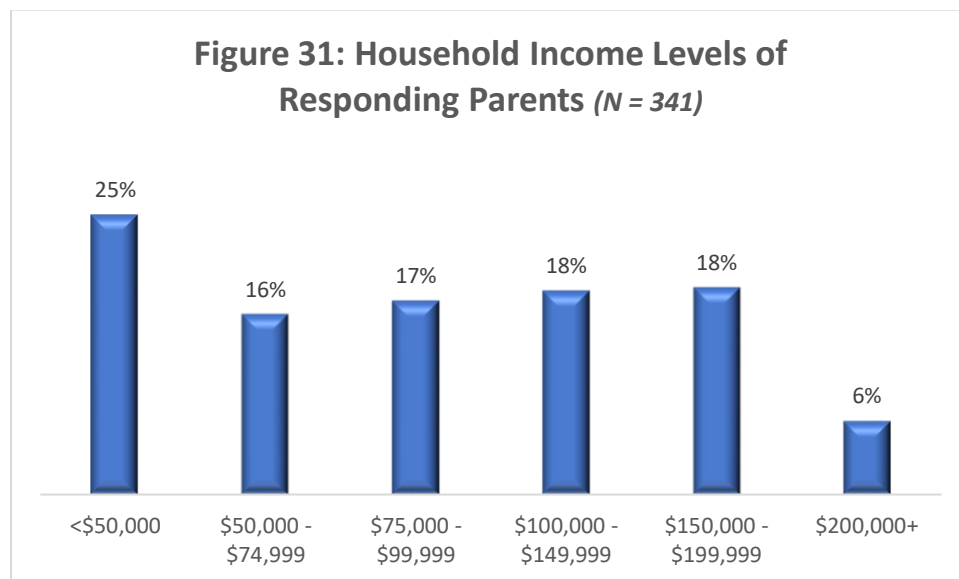
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1

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?t=Educational%20Attainment&g=0400000US55&y=2019&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S1501&hidePreview=false>

Other than the relationship between income and the educational level of parents, there was no pattern of differences in the educational level of respondents across the sub-sets of parents relevant to our hypotheses.

More than 60% of the parents who responded to this survey reported household income of \$75,000 or more per year (Figure 31). According to the Census, the median family income in 2019 was \$64,168 and only 42% of Wisconsin households had annual incomes of \$75,000 or more.<sup>2</sup> Thus, parents who responded to the survey were from families with slightly higher than average annual incomes.



Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, the incomes of parents with children in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: parents with children in private middle schools had significantly higher incomes than parents with children in public middle schools
- Elementary vs. Middle or High School Students: there were no statistically significant differences in the income levels of parents with children in elementary vs. middle/high school.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: parents of elementary students with special needs or who receive below average grades had significantly lower incomes than those whose children get average or better grades.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: parents from rural areas with children in elementary school had significantly lower incomes than their urban/suburban counterparts.

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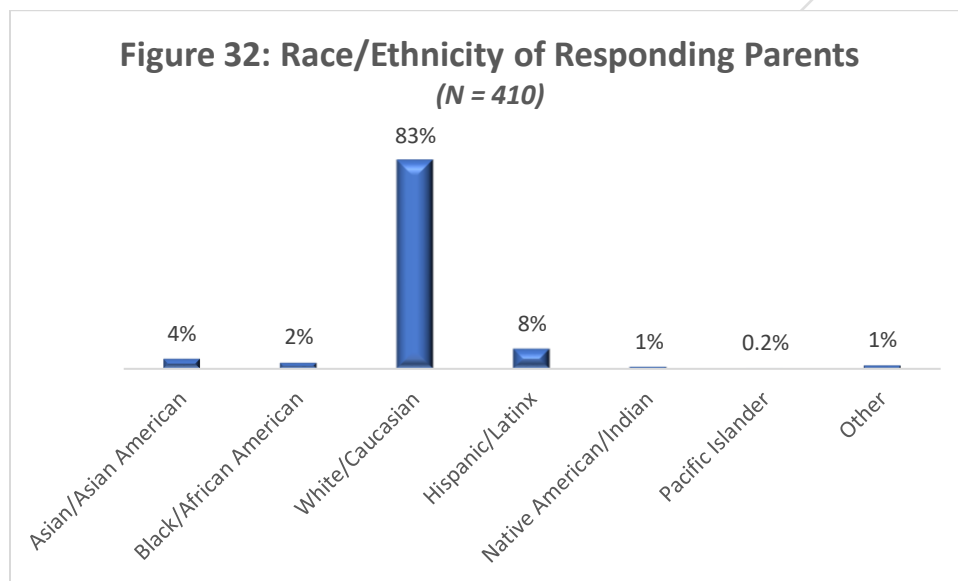
2

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?t=Income%20and%20Poverty&g=0400000US55&y=2019&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S1901&hidePreview=false>

- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: not applicable.
- White vs. People of Color: white parents of children in elementary, middle and high school had significantly higher incomes than parents of color.

Other than the relationship between income and the race of parents, there was no pattern of differences in the income level of respondents across the sub-sets of parents relevant to our hypotheses.

According to the Census, non-Hispanic white people account for 81% of the Wisconsin population, Hispanics account for 7%, Black/African Americans for 6.4%, and Asian Americans for 2.9%.<sup>3</sup> Figure 32 indicates that, other than having fewer African Americans than expected, the sample of parents aligns well with the underlying population of the state.



Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, the race of parents with children in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: parents with children in private elementary schools had significantly lower proportions of parents of color than those with children in public elementary schools.
- Elementary vs. Middle or High School Students: there were no statistically significant differences in the proportion of white parents and parents of color with children in elementary vs. middle/high school.

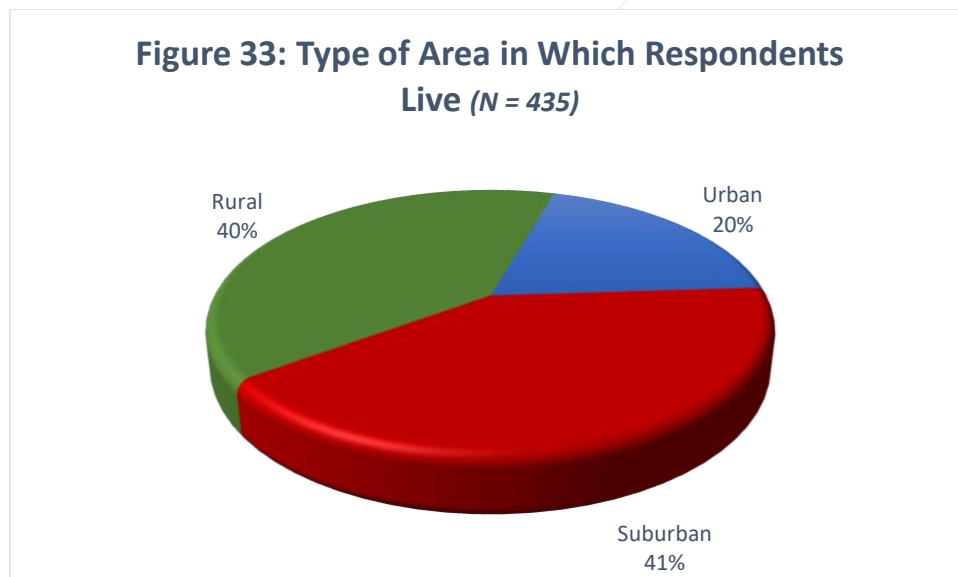
<sup>3</sup>

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?t=Populations%20and%20People&g=0400000US55&y=2019&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S0601&hidePreview=false>

- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: there were no statistically significant differences in the proportion of white parents and parents of color with children with special needs or who receive below average grades.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: surprisingly there were significantly higher proportions of parents of color in rural elementary, middle and high school than in their urban/suburban counterparts.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: as noted above, parents of color were disproportionately represented in elementary, middle and high school with respect to households with incomes less than \$75,000 per year.
- White vs. People of Color: not applicable.

People of color make up significantly higher proportions of rural and lower income respondents with children in elementary, middle and high school. In other sub-sets of parents, there were no patterns with respect to the distribution of parents of color.

One-in-five respondents said they live in an urban environment and approximately two-in-five live in either a rural or a suburban area (Figure 33). Since more than 70% of Wisconsin's population lives in a standard metropolitan statistical area, respondents from rural areas appear to be somewhat over-represented in this dataset.



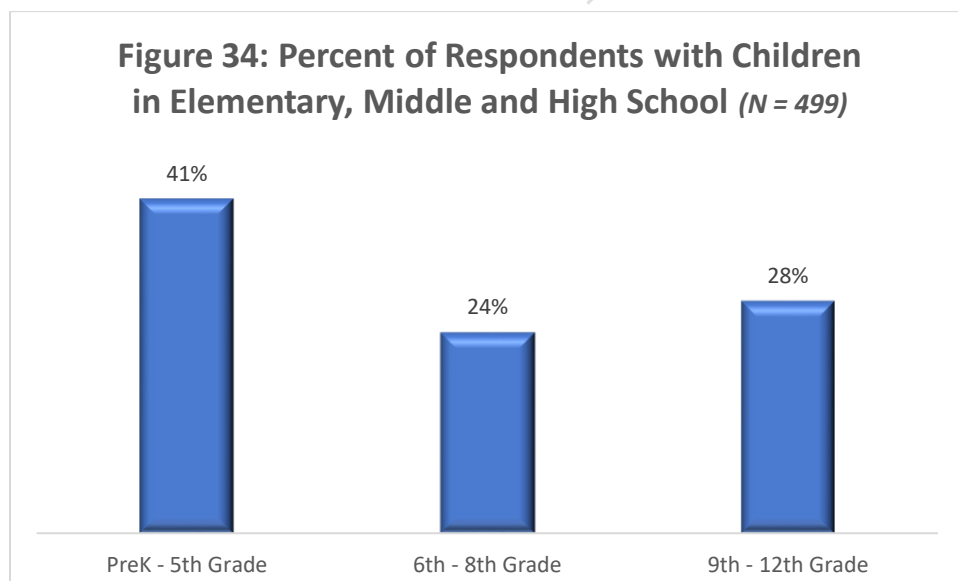
Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, the residence of parents with children in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: rural parents comprised a significantly larger percentage of children in public middle schools.
- Elementary vs. Middle or High School Students: there were no statistically significant differences in the proportion of rural vs. urban/suburban respondents with children in elementary vs. middle/high school.

- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: there were no statistically significant differences in the proportion of rural and urban/suburban parents with children with special needs or who receive below average grades.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: not applicable.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: parents from rural areas were disproportionately represented in elementary and high school with respect to households with incomes less than \$75,000 per year.
- White vs. People of Color: as noted parents of color were disproportionately drawn from rural areas for children in elementary, middle and high school.

Rural parents make up significantly higher proportions of lower income and people of color. In other sub-sets of parents, there were no patterns with respect to the distribution of parents of color.

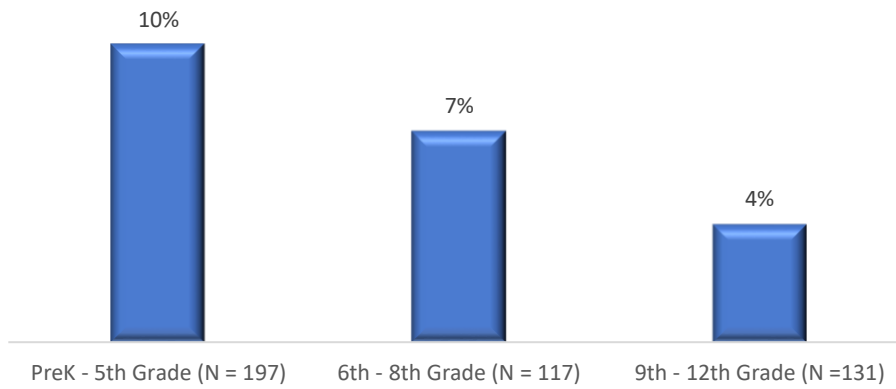
Many of the parents who responded to this survey had children in multiple grades. For these parents, the SRC created a unique record for each child. Because elementary school includes more class levels, it is not surprising that the largest number of responses (203) were received for children in the pre-kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade (Figure 34). Similar numbers of responses came from parents with children in middle school (122) and in high school (141). The distribution across the three groups of students aligns well with expectations.



In the analysis to follow, we will examine the responses of parents across these three grade groupings

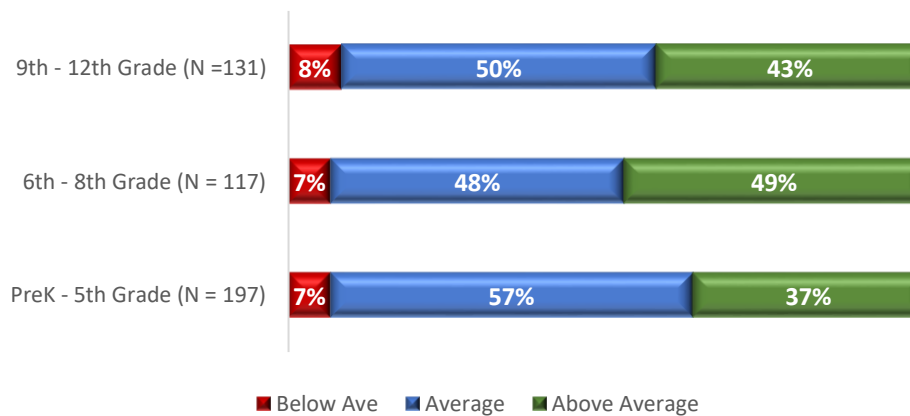
Parents were asked if their child was a special needs student and to indicate if that child typically gets below average, average or above average grades. Figure 35 indicates that relatively few of the students about whom parents provided feedback were identified as having special needs; only 32 students across all grade levels; more than half (17) were elementary age students.

**Figure 35: Percent of Special Needs Students by Elementary, Middle and High School**

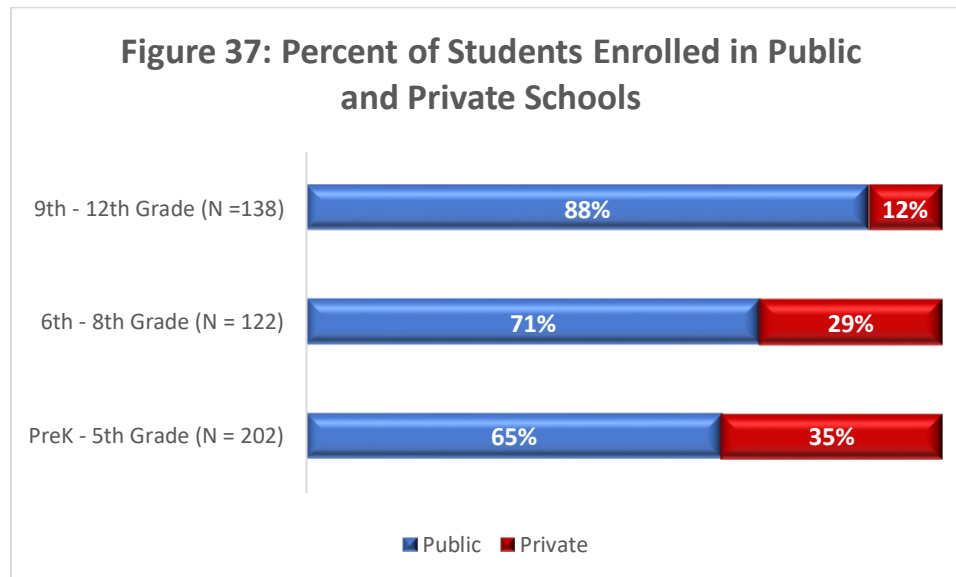


In terms of grades, few of the parents from which we received feedback said their children received below average grades (Figure 36). About half the parents, across the three grade groupings, said their children got average grades; substantial minorities of the students in this dataset get above average grades according to their parents.

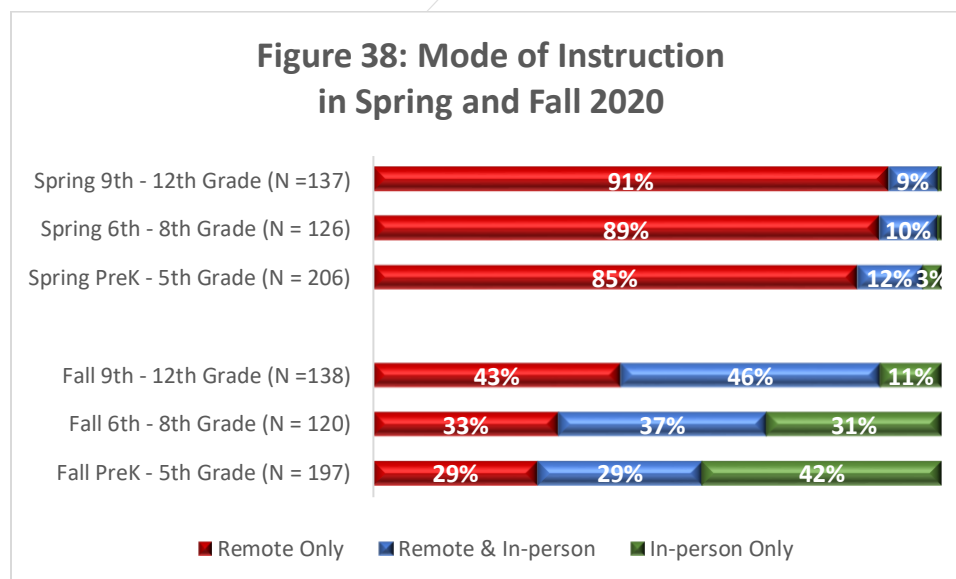
**Figure 36: Percent Students with Below Average, Average, and Above Average Grades**



According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 12% of K-12 students in Wisconsin are enrolled in private schools.<sup>4</sup> Figure 37, therefore, indicates that private school respondents are over-represented in this sample at the elementary and middle school levels, and probably at the high school level.



While large majorities of parents at all levels said their children's spring instruction was completely remote, about 10% said there was at least some in-person instruction (Figure 38).



There is a good deal of variability in the mode of instruction during fall 2020 across all levels.

<sup>4</sup> [https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/eis/pdf/schools\\_at\\_a\\_glance.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/eis/pdf/schools_at_a_glance.pdf)

- A plurality of parents of pre-kindergarten to fifth grade students said their children were receiving completely in-person instruction, but slightly less than one-third said their children were still receiving completely remote/online instruction.
- Parents of middle school children were almost equally split between instruction that was completely remote (33%), a mix of remote and in-person (37%), and completely in-person (31%).
- Only slightly more than one-in-ten parents of high school students said their children were receiving in-person instruction only; roughly equal proportions said their children's instruction was completely remote (43%) or that it was a mix of remote and in-person (46%).

Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, the fall schedule for children in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: according to parents, private schools were significantly more likely to offer in-person only instruction at all levels; elementary school (67% vs. 28% of public schools), middle schools (78% vs. 15% public schools) and high schools (43% vs. 8% of public schools).
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: there were no statistically significant differences in fall schedules at any level.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: according to parents, rural schools were less likely to offer in-person only instruction at all levels; elementary schools (20% vs. 46% for urban/suburban), middle schools (5% vs. 39% urban/suburban), and high schools (3% vs. 15% urban/suburban).
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: there were no statistically significant difference in fall schedules.
- White vs. People of Color: parents of color with children in high school were significantly more likely to say their child was receiving remote instruction only (76% vs. 39% of white parents).

All the subsets of parents reported similar spring schedules, but for the fall, parents with children in private schools were more likely to be experiencing in-person instruction. If rural students are at a disadvantage because of relatively poor infrastructure, their greater reliance on distance education should be apparent in the analysis subsequent questions.

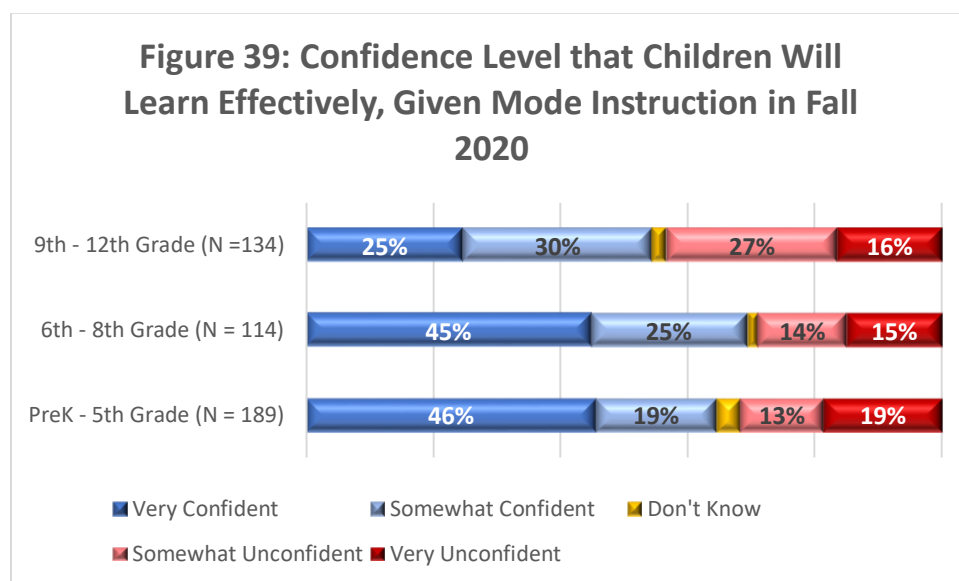
Parents were asked to indicate their level of confidence that their child would learn effectively, given the type of instruction they were receiving in the fall of 2020. Their answers are summarized in Figure 39. Answer options included very confident (first/dark blue segment), somewhat confident (second/light blue segment), unsure (third/yellow segment), somewhat unconfident (fourth/light red segment), and very unconfident (final/dark red segment).

Figure 39 indicates that roughly two-thirds of parents with students in elementary (65%) and middle school (69%) are at least somewhat confident their children will learn effectively in the fall of 2020 given the mode of instruction they are experiencing. In contrast, there are nearly as

many parents of high school students who are at least somewhat unconfident their children will learn effectively in the fall of 2020 (43%) as there are who are at least somewhat confident about that (54%).

We noted in the preceding graph that a much higher proportion of high school students experienced at least some remote/online learning during fall semester (89% were completely or partially remote), than was the case for elementary (58%) or middle school (69%) students. This difference might account for the relatively low level of confidence among parents that their high school-aged children will learn effectively in the fall of 2020.

Few parents had no opinion about the efficacy of the mode of instruction used in their children's schools during fall 2020.



Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' confidence that their children learn effectively in the fall of 2020 in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: private school parents were significantly more confident their children will learn effectively in the fall; elementary school (67% very confident vs. 34% of public school parents), middle schools (75% very confident vs. 33% public school parents) and high schools (67% vs. 34% of public school parents).
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: parents of children in elementary school who have special needs or received below average grades were less confident their children will learn effectively in the fall (9% were very confident vs. 34% of parents whose children usually get average or better grades)
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: there were no statistically significant differences.
- White vs. People of Color: there were no statistically significant differences.

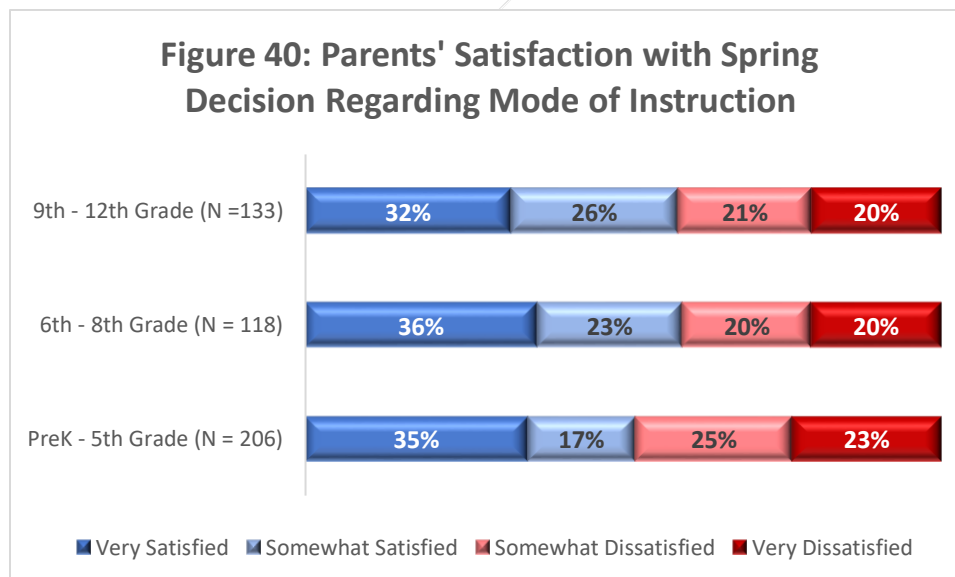
Again, private school parents appear to have substantially different expectations for their children's academic experience in the fall of 2020. The lack of difference between rural and urban/suburban parents is contrary to expectations based on the assumption of a weaker internet system in rural areas. These results suggest that younger students with special needs or a history of less academic success might be at greater risk in the online environment that has prevailed since March of 2020.

Parents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with five things associated with the changes engendered by the spring 2020 pandemic:

- The decision to move to remote learning.
- Their child's academic progress during the pandemic.
- The support they/their child received from teachers.
- The support they/their child received from administrators.
- The quality of instruction during the pandemic.

Answer options included very satisfied (dark blue/first segment), somewhat satisfied (light blue/second segment), somewhat dissatisfied (light red/third segment), and very dissatisfied (dark red/last segment).

Figure 40 indicates that many parents were at least somewhat dissatisfied with the decision to move to remote-only instruction; at least 40% were dissatisfied at all three grade levels.



Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' satisfaction with the decision to move to remote-only instruction in the spring of 2020 in:

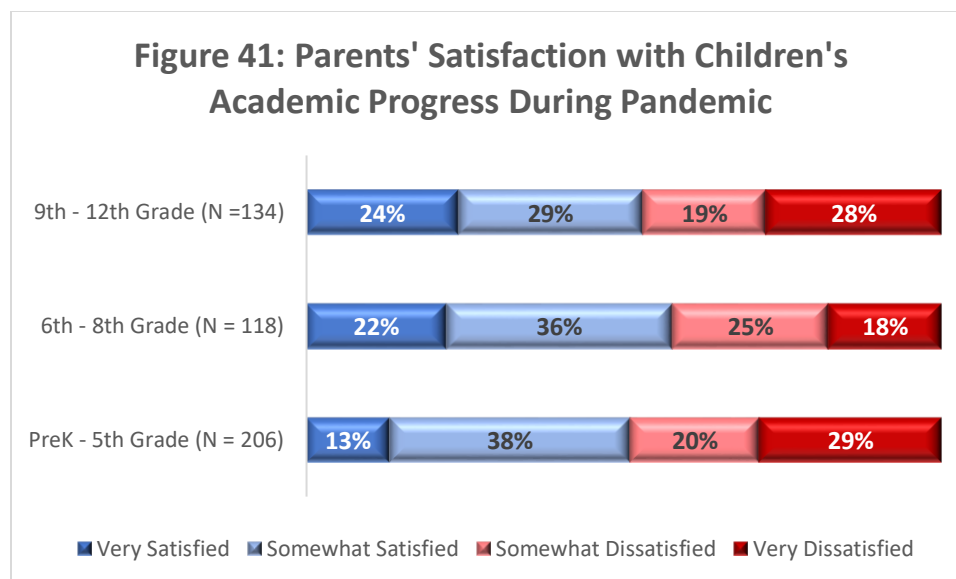
- Public vs. Private Schools: private school parents with children in elementary or high school were significantly less satisfied with the decision to go to remote learning;

elementary school (23% were very satisfied vs. 42% of public school parents) and high schools (25% were at least somewhat satisfied vs. 63% of public school parents).

- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: parents of children in high school who have special needs or received below average grades were less satisfied with the decision to end in-person instruction in the spring of 2020 (7% were very satisfied vs. 35% of parents whose children usually get average or better grades)
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: there were no statistically significant differences.
- White vs. People of Color: there were no statistically significant differences.

Again, private school parents appear to have been less satisfied with the decision to move instruction online during the spring of 2020. There were only 16 high school students with special needs or below average grades, so it is not clear how stable that result is. But, the result does align with the hypothesis.

More than 40% of parents, at all three school levels, said they were at least somewhat dissatisfied with the academic progress of their children during the pandemic (Figure 41).



Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' satisfaction with the academic progress of their children during the spring of 2020 in:

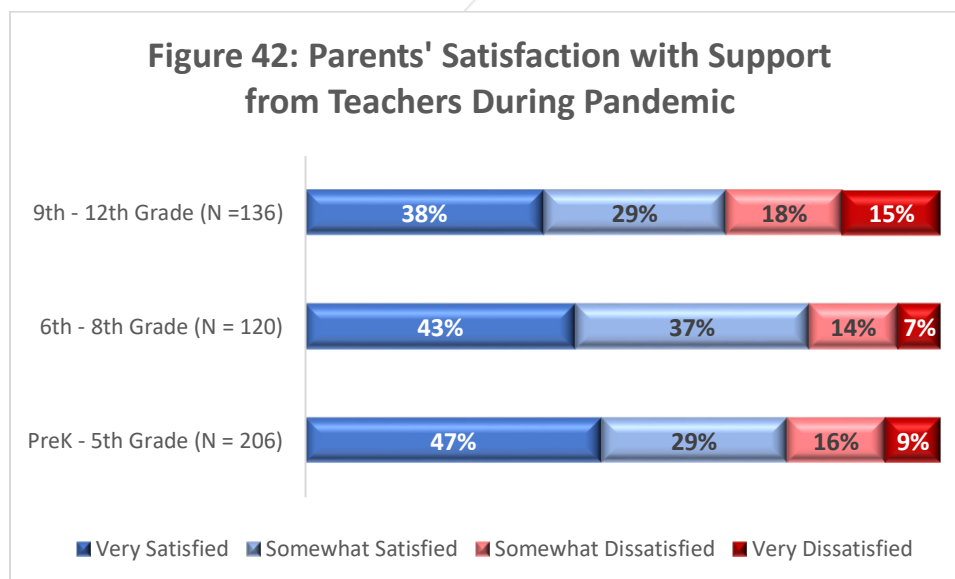
- Public vs. Private Schools: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: parents of children in elementary and high school who have special needs or received below average grades were less satisfied with their children's academic progress during the pandemic of spring 2020; 29% of elementary parents were at least somewhat satisfied vs. 54% of parents whose children usually get average or better grades and 23% of high school parents were at least

somewhat satisfied vs. 56% of parents whose children usually get average or better grades.

- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: the responses of rural parents with children in elementary school split from those with students in middle school; 47% of rural parents with kids in elementary school were at least somewhat dissatisfied with academic progress vs. 61% of urban/suburban parents, but 40% of rural parents with children in middle school were very satisfied with academic progress vs. 18% of urban/suburban parents..
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: there were no statistically significant differences.
- White vs. People of Color: parents of color with children in middle school were more satisfied with their child's academic progress (50% were very satisfied vs. 17% of white parents).

As noted, there were relatively few students with special needs or below average grades, so it is not clear how stable this result is, but it does align with the hypothesis. The lack of consistency when comparing rural and urban/suburban parents provides mixed messages relative to the hypothesis. The fact that parents of color were more satisfied with their middle schoolers' academic progress is counter to the hypothesis, but is based on relatively few observations (N = 20).

Substantial majorities of parents were satisfied with the support they/their children received from their teachers during the pandemic, ranging from 66% of parents of high school students at least somewhat satisfied to 79% of the parents of middle school children (Figure 42).

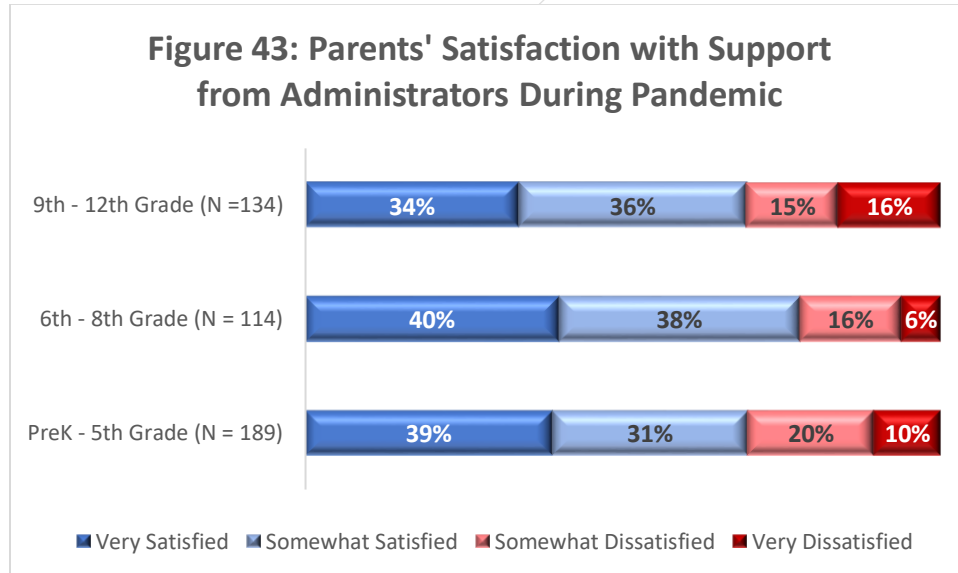


Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' satisfaction with the support they/their children received from teachers during the spring of 2020 in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: 100% of parents in private middle schools were very satisfied with the support they received from teachers compared to 28% of public school parents. However, there were only 16 private school parent responses, so this result may not be stable.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: parents from households with less than \$75,000 in annual income who had children in middle or high school were more satisfied with the support they received from teachers than parents from households with \$75,000 or more in annual income.
- White vs. People of Color: there were no statistically significant differences.

If households with lower annual incomes were at a disadvantage during the spring 2020 pandemic because of less access to computing technology or less robust internet connections, at least some of that presumed disadvantage may have been off-set by the support they received from teachers. The lack of data undermines the significance of the difference in satisfaction with support noted for public and private school parents of middle schoolers.

Parents' satisfaction with the support they/their children received from school administrators was similar to their feedback for teachers; between 69% and 78% were at least somewhat satisfied with their administrators (Figure 43).

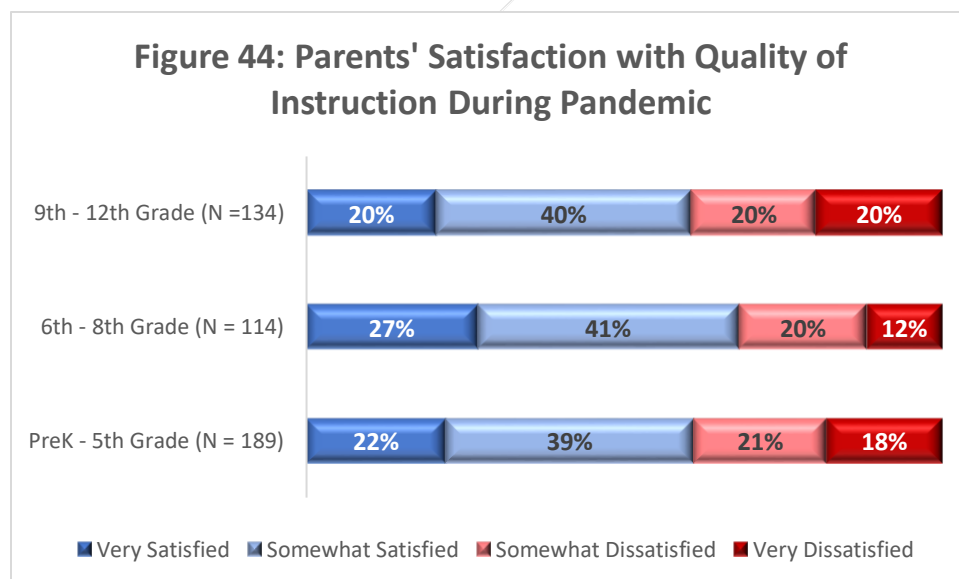


Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' satisfaction with the support they/their children received from administrators during the spring of 2020 in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: 100% of parents in private high schools were very satisfied with the support they received from teachers compared to 23% of public school parents. However, there were only 16 private school parent responses from the high school level, so this result may not be stable.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: parents from rural areas with children in high school were more satisfied with the support they received from administrators (54% very satisfied vs. 27% of parents from urban/suburban areas).
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: there were no statistically significant differences.
- White vs. People of Color: there were no statistically significant differences.

Similar to the summary about support from teachers, if households rural areas were at a disadvantage during the spring 2020 pandemic because of less access to computing technology or less robust internet connections, at least some of that presumed disadvantage may have been off-set by the support they received from administrators. The lack of data undermines the significance of the difference in satisfaction with support noted for public and private school parents of high schoolers.

Figure 44 indicates that approximately two-thirds of the respondents across the three school levels were at least somewhat satisfied with the quality of instruction their children received during the pandemic. This is a higher level of satisfaction than we might have expected.

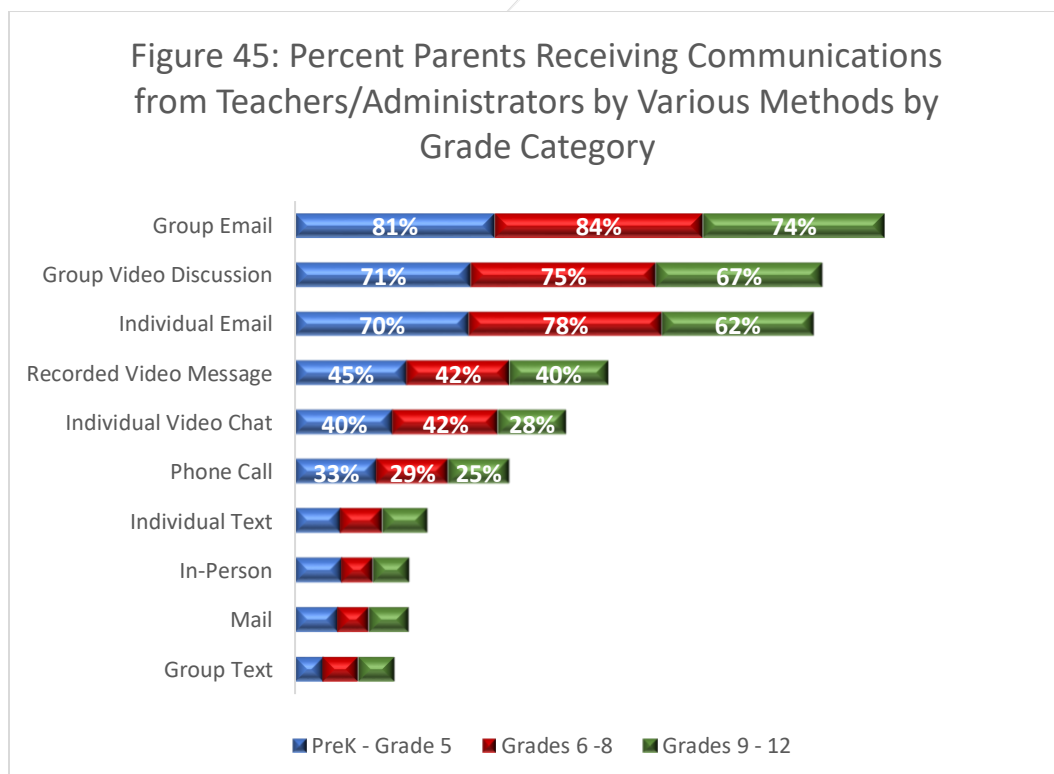


Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' satisfaction with the instructional quality their children received during the spring of 2020 in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: there were only 16 responses from parents with children in private high schools, so the result is not terribly reliable, but a higher percentage of those parents were satisfied with instructional quality than were public school parents.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: there were no statistically significant differences.
- White vs. People of Color: parents of color with children in middle or high school appear to be happier with instructional quality than their white counterparts, though there were relatively few responses from parents of color at either level.

Based on our hypotheses, we would have expected satisfaction with instruction to be lower among parents with special needs children or children who generally receive below average grades, rural students, students from lower-income households and students of color. None of those hypotheses were supported by these data.

On average, parents at all three levels said they/their student received communications from teachers/administrators using four different methods. Figure 45 indicates that group emails were the most common form of communication noted by parents. Group, online video discussions and individual emails were also received by a majority of parents/their children across all grade categories. Between about one-third and one half of parents said they/their student received recorded videos messages, an individual online video chat, or a phone call from teachers/administrators. Fewer than one-in-five parents said they/their student received an individual or group text, an in-person visit, or a mailing from a teacher/administrator.



Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' satisfaction with the types of communication their children received during the spring of 2020 in:

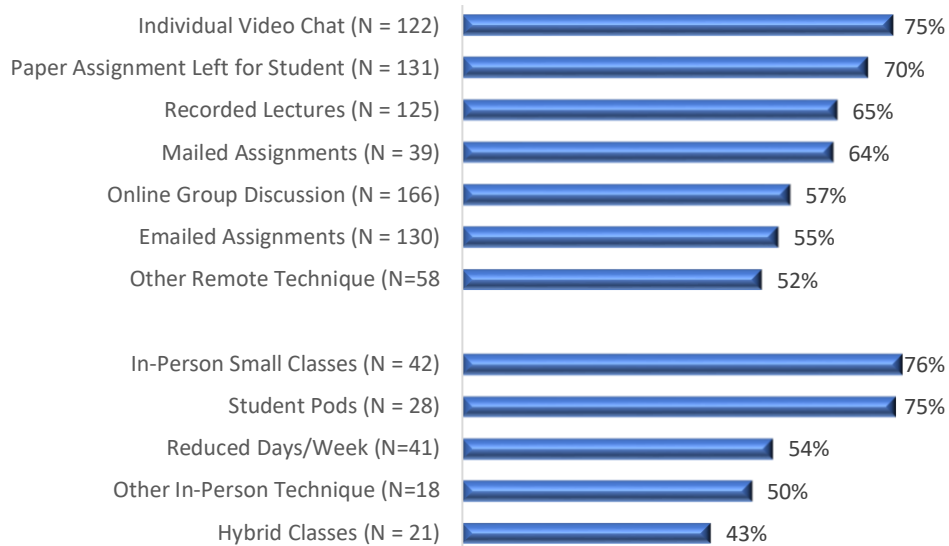
- Public vs. Private Schools: again, there were only 16 responses from parents with children in private high schools, so the result is not terribly reliable, but a higher percentage of those parents said they/their child received group emails, had group video chats, and recorded video messages than was the case for parents with kids in public high schools. In contrast, higher percentages of public middle school parents said their child had an in-person visit and elementary parents said their child had a recorded video message from their teacher. Evidence that public and private school teachers used different means of communicating with their students is relatively weak and inconsistent.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: higher proportions of the parents with middle school children with special needs or who usually get below average grades said their child had an individual video chat with their teacher and these children had communications by a larger number of mechanisms than parents with children who typically receive average or better grades. Parents of high school students with special needs/lower grades were more likely to say their child had an in-person visit from their teacher. These results suggest that teachers tried to reach out to special needs/below average students in more personal ways and using more mechanisms.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: rural parents of middle school children were more likely to report their child received a phone call or something in the mail from the teacher than was the case for their urban/suburban counterparts. There were relatively few respondents who received communications these ways, so this result may not be stable. Rural parents with high school students were more likely to say their child received an individual text from the teacher. Though the results are not particularly strong, these results suggest teachers may have contacted their rural students in less technologically-intensive ways.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: respondents from households with incomes of under \$75,000 with children in elementary school, compared to those with incomes greater than that, were more likely to report their child's teacher communicated via group texts and phone calls, but less likely to say their child had received a recorded video message or had an individual video chat. With respect to the parents of middle school students, lower income households were more likely to say their child's teacher visited them in-person. For the parents of high school students, respondents from households with less than \$75,000 in annual income were more likely to say their child received individual texts and mailed items from their teachers. In general, then, it seems that lower income households tended to receive more communications in less technologically intensive methods.
- White vs. People of Color: There were a fairly large number of differences in the communications received by parents of color compared to their white peers. Parents of color were more likely to say their child received in-person visits (middle and high school), group texts (elementary and high school), individual texts (elementary, middle and high school), phone calls (elementary and high schools), and mailings (high school) from their

teachers. Parents of color reported receiving communications from a larger average set of communication mechanisms (elementary and high school). These results suggest teachers stepped up communication efforts to their students of color and, for the most part, using methods that required less access to technology.

Based on our hypotheses, we would have expected communication efforts aimed at populations with less access to a robust internet system would make greater use of less technologically-demanding forms of communications. Our results, though in some cases based on a relatively small number of observations, largely support this hypothesis. These stepped-up communication efforts may explain the relatively high levels of satisfaction with the quality of instruction during the spring 2020 pandemic (Figure 44).

In perhaps the most important question on the parent's survey, they were asked to assess the effectiveness of instructional methods used by their child's teacher during the spring 2020 pandemic. Only parents who said their child experienced a given instructional method were asked to rate that method. Answer options were worked well, not applicable, and worked poorly. Not applicable responses were excluded from our analysis. Because of the centrality of this question to this research project, the results will be analyzed at the elementary, middle and high school levels separately.

**Figure 46: Percent Parents with PreK - Grade 5 Children Saying Instruction Method Worked Well**



With respect to elementary schools, 205 parents rated at least one instructional method and, on average, rated 4.5 methods. Figure 46 indicates that more than half the parents said every instructional technique worked well, but were most positive about individual video interactions between the teacher and their child. Individual video chats, though still time consuming, would seem to be a more feasible means of communicating with students for an elementary school teacher, given the number of students they are likely to have in their classroom.

Approximately two-thirds of the parents said paper assignments left by the teacher to be picked up by the parent and recorded lectures, worked well. Though very few parents received assignments through the mail, that approach was also rated as effective by nearly two-thirds of parents. Emailed assignments and online group discussions were regarded less positively by these parents.

Relatively few parents rated in-person instruction methods but small, in-person classes and classes involving specified pods of children were seen as effective by about three-quarters of parents.

Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' assessment of the effectiveness of different teaching methods experienced by their elementary-aged children during the spring of 2020 in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: parents of children with special needs or below-average grades were less likely to say that group online work (23% vs. 64% of parents with

children who typically get average or better grades) or emailed assignments (21% vs. 62%) worked well.

- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: there were no statistically significant differences.
- White vs. People of Color: there were no statistically significant differences.

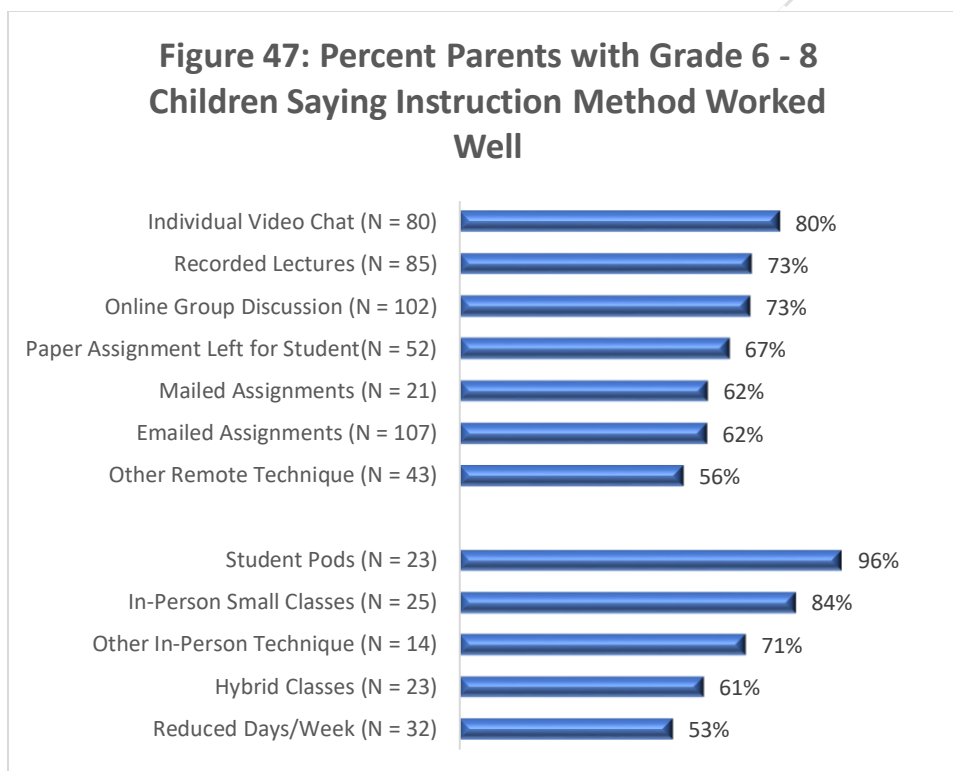
Based on our hypotheses, we would have expected parents with special needs children or children who generally receive below average grades, rural students, students from lower-income households and students of color might have rated less technologically demanding teaching approaches more highly than their counterparts did. That expectation might be behind the differences noted for parents of students with special needs/lower average grades, but these results might also just suggest that these approaches lack the individual attention their children need.



With respect to middle school, 127 parents rated at least one instructional method and, on average, rated 4.8 methods. Figure 47 indicates that, like the parents of elementary school students, a majority of parents with middle school aged children said all instructional methods were effective.

As was the case for parents with elementary school children, individual video interactions between the teacher and their child was seen as effective by the highest proportion of parents. Nearly three-quarters of parents said the recorded lectures and online group discussions were effective with their children.

Assignments sent via email, as with parents of elementary-aged students, were seen as somewhat less effective than other approaches by the parents of middle school children. Again, few parents rated in-person techniques but almost all of those who did found defined pods of children to be effective and a high proportion also felt small, in-person classes were effective.



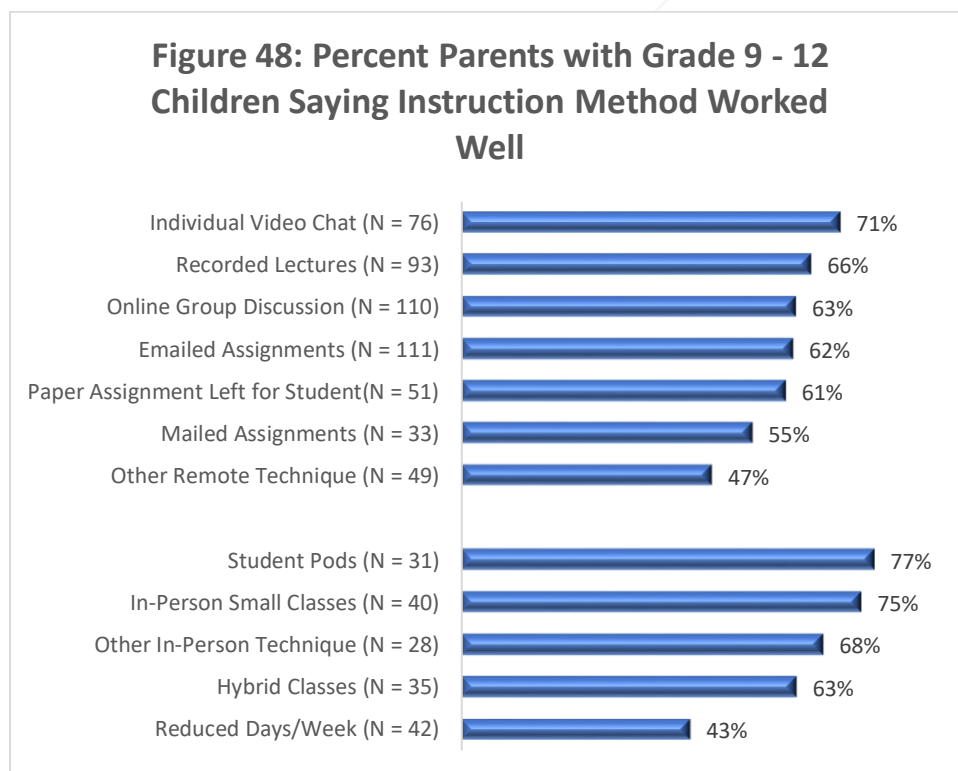
Again, because of the number of respondents, the SRC limited its analysis of sub-sets of parents to individual online video chats, emailed assignments, recorded messages/lectures, online group discussions, and paper assignments left for parents/students to pick up.

Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' assessment of the effectiveness of different teaching methods experienced by their middle school-aged children during the spring of 2020 in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: a higher proportion of private school parents said group on-line work was effective with their children (88% vs. 67% of private school parents).
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: there were no statistically significant differences.
- White vs. People of Color: there were no statistically significant differences.

The responses of parents of middle school-age children do not support the hypotheses tested. Because only parents who said their child experienced a given instructional approach were asked to rate them, the number of parents in many of these sub-groups were too small to produce reliable statistically significant results.

With respect to high school, 143 parents rated at least one teaching method and, on average, rated 4.9 approaches. Figure 48 indicates that, compared to parents of elementary and middle school aged children, those with children in high school tended to rate all teaching methods somewhat lower.



Similar to parents of elementary and middle school aged children, parents of high school students gave the relatively high marks to individual video interactions between the teacher and their child and recorded lectures.

Emailed assignments were somewhat more effective with high school students than was true for elementary school students and equally effective as for middle school students.

Few parents rated in-person instructional approaches. However, it is worth noting that in-person classes held fewer than five times per week was the only approach rated as working well by a minority of parents of high schoolers. Given that for many high school students, this approach was being used during the fall 2020 semester, this rating is somewhat disturbing.

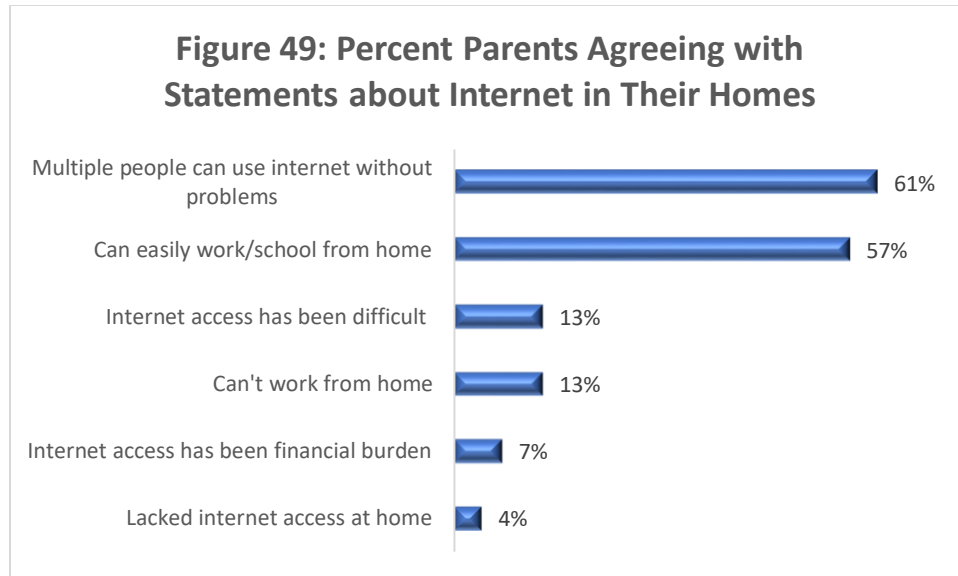
Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' assessment of the effectiveness of different teaching methods experienced by their high school-aged children during the spring of 2020 in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: there were no statistically significant differences.
- White vs. People of Color: there were no statistically significant differences.

The responses of parents of high school-age children do not support the hypotheses tested. Because only parents who said their child experienced a given instructional approach were asked to rate them, the number of parents in many of these sub-groups were too small to produce reliable statistically significant results.

The final substantive question on the parent's survey asked a series of questions about the situation in their home with respect to internet access and working from home. Their responses are summarized in Figure 49.

About six of ten parents said their internet connection was sufficiently robust that multiple people could access the web without creating issues and that it was easy for them to work from home and for their children to do their schoolwork from there (Figure 49). Internet issues were a problem for a minority of parents; 13% said internet access is difficult from their home, 7% said their internet connection created a financial burden for the family, and only 4% said they didn't have internet access in their home.



Relative to the hypotheses we want to test, parents' feedback about internet issues in their home, in:

- Public vs. Private Schools: lower proportions of private school parents with high school students said it was easy for members of their household to work from home or do schoolwork there.
- Special Needs or Below Average Grades: higher proportions of parents of high school students with special needs or children who typically get below average grades said it was difficult for multiple people to use their internet without problems. Higher proportions of respondents with these type of students in elementary school said that accessing the internet was a financial burden.
- Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students: there were no statistically significant differences.
- Lower vs. Higher Income Households: Parents from families with less than \$75,000 in annual income with children at all three levels (elementary, middle and high school) were less likely to say that multiple people in their household could use their internet without problems and more likely to say that accessing the internet from their home was difficult. Those with elementary students were more likely to say accessing the internet was a financial burden.
- White vs. People of Color: there were no statistically significant differences.

The responses of parents indicate that household income can be an impediment to many children's academic success when instruction is remote and teaching approaches are based on access to the internet.

## Overall Results of Hypotheses Tests from Parent Feedback

**Public vs. Private Schools:** The experience of parents who send their children to private schools differed in many ways from their public school counterparts. Private schools were more likely to be offering in-person instruction during the fall of 2020 and parents with children in these schools were more confident that their children would learn effectively that semester. Private school parents were, in general, less satisfied with the decision to move to remote-only instruction in the spring of 2020 and there are some, relatively weak, indications that they were more satisfied with support they received from teacher and administrators and with the quality of instruction their children received. Teachers in both types of schools appear to have used communication vehicles and instruction methods in similar proportions and parents rated those approaches similarly in terms of their effectiveness.

**Special Needs or Below Average Grades:** comparisons between students with special needs or below average grades was hampered by the relatively few observations for such students, particularly when considered separately at the elementary, middle and high school levels. There was some support for the hypothesis that these students had a more difficult time during the COVID pandemic. These students' parents were less confident that they would learn effectively during the fall (elementary students), were less satisfied with the spring decision to move to remote-only instruction (high school students), and were less satisfied with the academic progress of their child (elementary). Parents of these students at the middle and high school levels said teachers used somewhat more individual communication methods with their children. Some said that group online work was much less effective with their children (elementary level). These families of these students also seemed to face more technological challenges (an internet connection insufficient to allow multiple users or a financial burden).

**Rural vs. Urban/Suburban Students:** compared to students in urban/suburban areas, rural students were more likely to be experiencing all or some of their fall instruction remotely. If a less robust internet system in rural areas was placing students from those areas at a distinct disadvantage, we would expect that parents in rural areas would have many differences of opinion relative to their peers in urban or suburban areas. In fact, there were very few differences between the opinions of rural vs. urban/suburban parents. There is some evidence that teachers used less technologically demanding forms of communicating with rural-based students (e.g. the mail or phone calls). All in all, however, these data do not support the hypothesis that rural students had different and inferior educational experiences during the COVID pandemic.

**Lower vs. Higher Income Households:** the hypothesis regarding income was that lower income households might have less access to computing devices and/or a less robust connection to the internet and might, therefore, have had a more daunting time with the onset of the pandemic in the spring of 2020. While there is some evidence that teachers made greater use of less technological demanding communication strategies for the students from less wealthy

households, the effectiveness of different teaching methods were rated similarly by lower and higher income respondents. In sum, there is little support for this hypothesis in the data.

White vs. People of Color: similar to rural and lower income students, the hypothesis was that households of color might be disadvantaged by the COVID pandemic because their internet connection and/or their access to computers might be less than for white households. There were relatively few observations from parents of color, limiting the confidence we can have in these results. However, these data suggest, if anything, parents of color were more satisfied with the educational experiences their children received during the pandemic than their white peers were. Hence, these data do not support the hypothesis that parents of color felt their children were disadvantaged relative to their white peers during spring 2020 pandemic.

Elementary vs. Middle/High School Students: anecdotal evidence has appeared in the popular press that younger children, perhaps because they lack the experience with and patience for online learning had a particularly difficult time when instruction went fully remote in March of 2020. While there were a smattering of differences between the experiences of parents with elementary vs. middle/high school students, there was not a clear pattern suggesting that elementary-aged children had a more difficult time than older children. The fact that a significantly higher proportion of elementary-aged children were back to receiving in-person only instruction in the fall may account for these results. Again, the data from the parents do not support the hypothesis that elementary students suffered disproportionately during the spring 2020 pandemic.

## Parents Comments about What Worked Well or Poorly

Parents were given the opportunity to expand on the experiences their family had with online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic by responding to the following open-ended questions:

- Thinking about the experiences you and your child/children had during the spring of 2020, what is one thing that you would like the educational system to improve when dealing with a future situation that limits or eliminates in-person instruction?
- If you had more than one child in elementary school, or middle school, or high school in spring 2020 who had very different experiences with online education last spring, please tell us the method of instruction or software that was problematic and why. Also, please, tell us the ages of your children.

The SRC split the comments to both questions by grade level. Comments from parents who had children in elementary school were grouped, as were comments from parents with children in middle and/or high school. In cases in which the respondent had children in multiple levels of the Pre K-12 school system, the SRC tried to determine if the comment was intended for their child in elementary, middle, or high school. In some instances, it was impossible to determine the level of school to which the comment pertained; in those cases, the SRC repeated the question for all relevant grade groupings. Some comments included multiple topics and the SRC split those comments into separate, single ideas. In this summary, we will summarize the comments of parents with children in elementary school to both open-ended questions, then do the same for parents with children in middle school, then high school.

### Comments from Parents of Elementary School Students

Table 5: Suggested Improvement – Elementary Parents	
Category	Number
Teaching Pedagogy Comments	24
Connections with Teacher	20
Maintain In-Person Instruction	15
Technology/Software Comments	15
Parent Needs	9
Communication Comments	8
General Positive Comments	8
Connections with Friends/Socialization	7
General Negative Comments	6
Engagement Concerns	4
Special Needs Students Comments	3
Lack of Preparation/Coordination	3
Miscellaneous	9

The first open-ended question asked parents of elementary students what is one thing they would have changed about their child's educational experience during the pandemic. Table 5 provides a quantitative summary of the number of comments received in each of twelve thematic categories. Of the 131 comments, 18% were associated with teaching or pedagogic suggestions. Most of the comments were about specific approaches (the use of workbooks, recorded lectures, live virtual instruction, etc.) that parents

thought worked well, or would have worked well if their children's teachers had employed them.

Some of the more interesting parent comments were about connections to teachers, the category with the second most comments. Parents stressed the need for teachers to establish a connection with their children, to ensure everyone understands what is expected of them, and to partially redress students' loss of opportunities to socialize with their teacher and other children. Examples of comments in this category include:

*"For the younger kids and parents who aren't computer savvy there should have been a day that the teacher and the student could meet up in person to catch up on assigned work."*

*"If virtual instruction must happen, it is essential that teachers have an online presence with the children via online chats, etc. Paper packets for younger children are okay but the teachers still need to be instructing via video."*

*"My older child thrives on consistency and positive feedback from her teachers. Socializing isn't just peer interaction. Socializing thru teacher communications should also remain a priority."*

Of the 15 comments from parents stressing the need for in-person instruction, some felt that online instruction was simply not appropriate for students in elementary school, particularly those in the earliest grades. These parents felt that too much was demanded of their attention spans, technological expertise, and ability to work independently. Remote instruction also deprived them of opportunities to develop socialization skills. An example of this group of comments is:

*"We hope there is never another occurrence. Remote education for young children is not realistic, as most learning at this age is social-emotional. At the very minimum, we would expect 1:1 time with the teacher in short increments, or with a small cohort like one other child at a time. We would also like varied activities that are not just worksheets. We'd also like large group time when the kids would simulate circle time."*

As with the comments about teaching approaches/pedagogy, most of the comments about technology and software were comments about technology that worked well for their children/them during the pandemic (Zoom, Google docs, Chromebook, etc.). There was also recognition that teachers sometimes didn't have the technical support they needed.

The second open-ended question asked parents to comment on things that did not work well for their children when schools went to remote instruction in the spring of 2020. The SRC placed each of the 70 comments received from parents of elementary school students into one of the 11 categories shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Pandemic Problems – Elementary Parents	
Category	Number
Technology Comments	22
Learning at Home/Outside Classroom/Engagement	21
Structure/Instruction/Expectation Comments	9
Insufficient Content/Not Challenging Enough	8
Communication Comments	7
General Negative Comments	6
Ineffective Instructional Approaches	6
Parent Challenges	4
Special Needs Students	3
General Positive Comments	2
Miscellaneous	2

A majority of the 70 comments fell into one of two categories: those about technology and about the challenges their young children had learning from home.

With respect to technology issues, several parents mentioned spotty internet connections and that their children’s schools used multiple computer applications, which was confusing. Some parents felt that the technology was too much for their children (*“My 7 year old first*

*grader cried before and after each Zoom group meeting.”*).

Learning at home, according to many parents, resulted in students who were unable to focus on the material being presented, particularly among students in the early years of elementary schools. Lack of motivation was another issue noted by parents of elementary students.

*“It was difficult for my 1st grader to watch instructional videos.”*

*“My 4-year-old in kindergarten cannot focus staring at the computer. She’s not paying attention to her teacher.”*

*“My oldest never did his e schooling. It was more work to harass him every day to log on and do his work.”*

Parents of some elementary students also felt that the amount of work expected of their children was not sufficiently challenging.

*“4th grader - In spring; teacher did very little, less than one hour of schoolwork per day intervention semi-disappeared.”*

## Comments from Parents of Middle School Students

With respect to one thing that parents of middle school students would have changed about their child's educational experience during the pandemic, Table 7 indicates that more than half of the 70 comments received fell into three categories: comments about teaching pedagogy, communications, and technology or software.

Within the largest category of responses, teaching/pedagogy suggestions, a key theme was to move away from asynchronous presentation of material and toward more live interactions

Table 7: Suggested Improvement – Middle School Parents	
Category	Number
Teaching Pedagogy Comments	18
Communication Comments	13
Technology/Software Comments	8
Parent Needs	6
Lack of Preparation/Coordination	6
Maintain In-Person Instruction	5
General Positive Comments	5
Connections with Friends/Socialization	3
Engagement Concerns	1
General Negative Comments	1
Miscellaneous	4

between teachers and students. An example of this type of comment:

*"Classes have to be live online. It doesn't work to have asynchronous classes. Our kids spent a couple of hours per day watching videos and doing homework instead of the 7-8 hours they were in school. Absolutely not an equivalent experience."*

Scheduling suggestions were also of concern to some parents, many of whom wanted a

schedule similar to that followed when instruction was in-person with, for example, a set time on a given day for math instruction, English at another and so on. The issue of holding students accountable by not going to a pass/fail system was also raised.

With respect to comments in the "communications" category, most parents of middle schoolers were asking for more and clearer communications from their children's teachers. Parents were seeking clarifications about assignments and due dates. Though more challenging for a middle school teacher who often has many dozens of students in the various classes they teach through a typical day, some parents would have liked to have had an opportunity for one-on-one conversations with their child's instructor. An example of this type of comment includes:

*"Scheduling and understanding the schedule was messed up and confusing for the kids and parents and limited access to those with the answers or that should know was limited and hard to get through."*

Middle school parents provided 41 comments about problems they/their child experienced during the online portion of spring semester 2020. Their comments were sorted into the nine categories shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Pandemic Problems – Middle School Parents	
Category	Number
Technology Comments	9
Learning at Home/Outside Classroom/Engagement	7
Structure/Instruction/Expectation Comments	6
Communication Comments	5
Parent Challenges	5
Ineffective Instructional Approaches	4
General Negative Comments	3
General Positive Comments	1
Miscellaneous	1

Most of the specific technological problems mentioned by the parents of middle schoolers revolved around a poor internet connection. As with the parents of elementary school students, some parents of middle schoolers found the use of multiple platforms and applications to be problematic for their children.

In terms of the problems associated with learning at home, outside the standard classroom, many of the comments talked about the challenge of getting their children to engage with the material. Parents also noted that some types of subject matter are much more difficult to cover online. Examples of comments in this category include:

*“I have an 8th grade boy who just simply struggles with school at home. He doesn't take it as seriously. I tried several attempts to get him organized and it was a huge struggle.”*

*“Music, gym, and art classes were most difficult for our children (4th, 7th, 9th grades). The absence of face to face for these subjects created little/no motivation for our children to complete assignments. They did the work assigned, but it just wasn't as excited as in-person. The teachers in all of these areas are not to blame. These subjects are such that learning is more fun, and often more meaningful, in person. This continues to be our struggle for all of our children during this school year (2020-21).”*

## Comments of Parents of High School Students

Parents of high school students offered 76 suggestions for improving their children's online experience. The largest category, teaching/pedagogy, were quite varied. Some parents felt there

Table 9: Suggested Improvement – High School Parents	
Category	Number
Teaching/Pedagogy Comments	20
Maintain In-Person Instruction	10
Connections with Teacher	10
General Positive Comments	10
Connections with Friends/Socialization	6
General Negative Comments	4
Technology/Software Comments	4
Communication Comments	2
Special Needs Students Comments	2
Parent Needs	1
Engagement Concerns	1
Lack of Preparation/Coordination	1
Miscellaneous	5

was too much work assigned once classes went online and others felt there was too little assigned. There were a number of comments stressing the need for more synchronous instruction. Typical of these types of comments is:

*“There were no live class sessions scheduled for regular classes. The instructors were available through Google group office hours only if kids needed help. I think it would have been better to have had regular scheduled live sessions so that they still had interaction with peers and the teacher.”*

The proportion of parents who said the best thing that could have been done in the spring was to maintain face-to-face instruction from parents of high school students (13% of all comments) was substantially higher than for middle school students (7% of comments), and slightly higher than for elementary school students (11% of comments). This is somewhat surprising in that one would expect high school students to be better prepared for online learning. They would likely have been exposed to much more technology-mediated learning than elementary students and could be expected to have greater maturity and longer attention spans than elementary students.

Many of the comments in the “better connections with teachers” category relate closely to the teaching/pedagogy category in that parents of high school students felt their child needed more direct contact with their teachers in real time. There was also a sentiment that, in some cases, their children were given assignments with minimal directions. For example, one parent wrote:

*“In-person will always be best, but merely assigning something without the child ever seeing or hearing from the teacher in any way will never work. There was a definite difference in the quality of my child's education, and it all depended upon the quality of the teacher. The teachers who were great before March, continued to be great (despite the limitations they were facing), and those who were not up to snuff before the pandemic were even worse once everything changed.”*

The number of positive comments from parents of high schoolers (13% of all comments) was also substantially higher than for parents of middle school students (7%), and parents of elementary

students (6%). This result supports the idea that distance learning was less of an imposition for high school students than their younger brothers and sisters.

With respect to problems encountered by their high school students, slightly more than one-quarter of the 35 responses noted the difficulty their children had learning at home, away from the standard classroom environment. Some of this difficulty was associated with extracurricular

Table 10: Pandemic Problems – High School Parents	
Category	Number
Learning at Home/Outside Classroom/Engagement	9
Structure/Instruction/Expectation Comments	8
Technology Comments	6
General Negative Comments	4
General Positive Comments	3
Ineffective Instructional Approaches	2
Special Needs Students	1
Insufficient Content/Not Challenging Enough	1
Miscellaneous	1

activities (e.g. team sports), some with classes that are difficult to present successfully in an online environment (e.g. those with labs), and some with the heightened need for self-discipline when taking an online class. As one parent put it,

*“It is difficult for students to focus outside of a school environment.”*

Comments in the “structure/instruction/expectation” category included several about the disincentivizing impact of pass/fail grading had on their high school children. A couple of comments reiterated the need for more real-time interaction between their children and the teachers. An example of this type of comment is:

*“Teachers need to be on the computer and teach. Kids learn better, kids cannot just get papers and teach themselves.”*

The comments about technology mainly focused on difficulty logging into classes, programs crashing, and the challenge of taking advanced placement tests online.

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Parent Needs	1
Engagement Concerns	1
Lack of Preparation/Coordination	1
Miscellaneous	5

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The comments about technology mainly focused on difficulty logging into classes, programs crashing, and the challenge of taking advanced placement tests online.

## Comparison of Parents' and Teachers' Assessments of Teaching Method Effectiveness

One of the goals of this research was to try to identify teaching approaches that were more effective with students at different age-levels. For the most part, the data have not been able to make such distinctions. The key question intended to address this issue asked teachers and parents to assess the effectiveness of a set of instructional approaches. Teachers had five answer options: very effective, somewhat effective, neutral, somewhat ineffective and very ineffective. Parents, asked about the same approaches had the three options: worked well, no opinion, and worked poorly. For this analysis, the SRC dropped the no opinion responses from both groups and combined the very and somewhat effective responses from teachers into a single “worked well” category and the very and somewhat ineffective responses into a single “worked poorly” category.

The SRC also split the responses of teachers based on the level(s) at which they taught. For example, we compared the responses of teachers who taught in elementary school to the parents who said they had children in elementary school.

Because there were very few ratings of in-person instructional practices by either teachers or parents, the SRC did not compare those ratings.

Table 11 shows that elementary school teachers and parents of children in these schools differ somewhat in their assessment of the efficacy of these instructional approaches. In general, teachers appear to rate these approaches more positively than parents. The differences are statistically significant with respect to individual online chats and group online discussions. Even though a significantly higher proportion of teachers rated individual online chats as effective, this was also seen as the most effective approach by parents. It is interesting that a substantially higher proportion of parents felt paper assignments prepared by the teacher and picked up by parents/teachers were more effective than individual online group discussions.

Table 11: Percent Elementary Teachers and Parents Saying Instructional Approach Worked Well		
Teaching Approach	Teachers	Parents
Individual Online Chat	91%**	75%**
Online Group Discussion	83%**	57%**
Video Message/Lecture	75%	65%
Paper Assignments	72%	70%
Emailed Assignments	66%	55%
Mailed Assignments	63%	64%
** - significantly different at the 5% level		
* - significantly different at the 10% level		

There were also several differences in how middle school teachers and parents rated the efficacy of different instructional approaches (Table 12). Significantly higher proportions of teachers rated online individual chats as effective than was the case for parents, though parents did say this was the most effective of these approaches. Parents were significantly more positive about paper assignments prepared by the teacher to be picked up by the student/parent than were the teachers who prepared those assignments.

Table 12: Percent Middle School Teachers and Parents Saying Instructional Approach Worked Well		
Teaching Approach	Teachers	Parents
Individual Online Chat	95%**	80%**
Video Message/Lecture	82%	73%
Online Group Discussion	78%	75%
Mailed Assignments	69%	62%
Emailed Assignments	66%	62%
Paper Assignments	49%*	67%*
** - significantly different at the 5% level		
* - significantly different at the 10% level		

Table 13 shows that there were somewhat more differences between high school teachers and parents with respect to how effective these approaches were. As in the previous two tables, teachers were generally more positive in their assessment of the efficacy of these approaches, significantly so with respect to individual and group online approaches and video messages/lectures. Though not statistically significant, paper assignments were, again, assessed more positively by parents than teachers.

Table 13: Percent High School Teachers and Parents Saying Instructional Approach Worked Well		
Teaching Approach	Teachers	Parents
Individual Online Chat	88%**	71%**
Online Group Discussion	81%**	63%**
Video Message/Lecture	80%*	66%*
Emailed Assignments	67%	62%
Mailed Assignments	64%	55%
Paper Assignments	48%	61%
** - significantly different at the 5% level		
* - significantly different at the 10% level		

The results of Tables 11, 12 and 13 appear to point toward the following conclusions:

- Teachers, relative to the parents of their students, may have higher expectations regarding the effectiveness of most of the remote learning approaches available to them.
- Individual online chats were seen as the most effective approach by both groups at all three grade levels. As noted, this is most time-intensive of all the approaches included in Tables 11, 12 and 13 and is unlikely to be practical for middle and high school teachers. Very small group discussions in a pod format, three to six of the same students involved in the group discussion, may be an alternative worth exploring. Video office hours at different times on different days of the week may also be an option.
- Lower tech approaches, like preparing and leaving paper assignments to be retrieved by the student/their parents may be more efficacious than teachers believe.

## Summary and Conclusions

One conclusion is that it is unfortunate that the response to these surveys was so sparse. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated an unprecedented shift in the mode of instruction experienced by the vast majority of Wisconsin's primary and secondary students. Everyone concerned, administrators, teachers, parents, and teachers had to adapt to dramatically different conditions with almost no time to prepare. It is almost certain that some groups adapted to these new circumstances better than others. Unfortunately, the data received was too sparse to tease out these differences, for the most part.

A second conclusion is that it does appear that teachers adapted their approaches to the conditions in which they found themselves. Those teaching students who might be hampered by a less robust internet connection or inadequate computer access, seem to have adapted by experimenting with more instruction approaches and using less technologically-dependent approaches. This research, interestingly, suggests that one low-tech approach that may have been underappreciated by teachers is preparing paper assignments for their students to retrieve.

A third conclusion is that, perhaps because of the adaptations noted in the preceding paragraph, there was scant support for the hypotheses that younger students, those living in rural areas, those from lower income groups, and people of color had a more negative experience during the pandemic than their counterparts. With respect to public vs. private schools, the differences noted seem concentrated more in modes of instruction and satisfaction with the decision-making process than with the efficacy of teaching approaches.

Finally, there seems to be broad agreement that the most effective teaching approach involved individual online video chats. This approach is both immediate and more likely to build bonds between student and instructor. It is, however, the most demanding in terms of teachers' time and potentially creates one of the largest digital divides between the technological haves and

have notes. We have suggested that one solution to the issue of teachers time, particularly at the middle and high school levels, is to utilize small online pods (3 – 6 of the same students) to try and capture the intimacy of individual video chats while being manageable from the perspective of the teacher's time. This approach would not, however address the digital divide concern.

There are a number of outcomes from this research that are intriguing, and all should be seen as provisory given the relatively small samples on which they are based.



## Appendix A1 – Open-ended Comments from Administrators

Question 7 - During the spring of 2020 pandemic, which of the following communication methods did you use to keep in touch with your teachers and your parents? Other, please describe (3 Comments)

- S'More Newsletters
- Social Media
- Weekly newsletters for both *[teachers and parents]*

Question 7 - During the spring of 2020 pandemic, which of the following instructional methods and strategies do you know that your teachers used? Other online/Other in-person

Other online methods used (15 Comments)

- Google Classroom (4X)
- Asynchronous lessons available on Blackboard/Google Classroom
- Flipgrid; padlet, Screencastify, Google Meets
- Google Classroom, Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Google Voice, etc.
- Google Classroom, SeeSaw
- Google Classroom, Seesaw
- Google classroom, Zoom
- Google Meets
- Paper assignments teachers prepared and delivered
- Seesaw
- SeeSaw, Google Classroom
- Subscription-based learning platforms such as Study Island, etc

Other in-person methods used (1 Comment)

- If students need extra help they came in for one on one instruction.

Question 13 - In terms of technology you used during the COVID-19 pandemic, how satisfied were you with the following? Other, please specify (2 Comments)

- Seesaw
- WebEx Team

Question 14 - Thinking about your experiences during the spring of 2020, what is one thing you think Colleges of Education could do to better prepare you and future administrators for situations that limit or eliminate in-person instruction? (51 Administrators - 96 Comments)

Note, many administrators covered multiple grade levels, so there are a considerable number of comments that appear multiple times in the lists below.

### Elementary School Administrators (41 Comments)

#### Expanded Technology Training (13 Comments)

- Provide guidance in planning for unforeseen, long-term shut-downs. Direct administrators in creating technology networks for learning and guiding teachers in multiple e-learning platforms.
- Great question!!! It would be extremely beneficial if future administrators would prepare themselves for all of the technology training their teachers would be using. I made certain that I, along with my entire Administrative team, participated in all of the trainings that our teachers needed, so that we would be extremely helpful when coaching our teachers.
- "Moving/Hosting instructional materials to online services -- Google Classroom, Schoology, etc. Training in an LMS such as Google Classroom, Schoology, Blackboard. Teaching remotely using Zoom, Google Meet or other such software.
- Prepare new students to leverage various modes of instruction. Understand hotspots, stress importance of getting know students' families well - poverty, education background (to determine the level of support that student will have from home if virtual learning is to occur).
- Preparation on online meeting formats and tools staff will need to use to provide online instruction. Zoom/SeeSaw/Google Classroom.
- Sorting through the varieties of on-line instruction platform options that might be cost effective for small schools
- Synchronous learning - training on multiple platforms. Make sure everyone is proficient.
- Technology and virtual engagement strategies
- Technology instruction/use. Effective communication. Online instruction and meeting facilitation. Technology resources
- Training in appropriate technology so that children can continue to learn even while remote
- Use of online tools and platforms.
- We have a seasoned staff. None of us had ever received any training about the use of online programs that could assist with distance learning. We hired an outside IT company to come to our building and simplify the entire distance learning process. Once he completed his work, our distance learning became more efficient and effective. Now that the world has experienced a pandemic, colleges and universities really need to examine

their graduation requirements for education majors and teach future teachers about effective distance learning.

- Teach administrators how to use online teaching platforms that they in turn could teach their staff.

#### Best Practices for Distance Learning (*11 Comments*)

- Effective virtual teaching methods which enhance student learning.
- Every school should have one person who is well-trained in virtual instruction -- someone who is well-trained and confident in up-to-date instructional platforms, applications, and even apps. I am not sure if a degree or certificate exists for someone who might work for a school in that capacity.
- I believe that teacher and administrative preparation programs should include content around virtual instruction/blended learning/ and multiple ways of family engagement in the virtual world.
- Learn best tech programs that support teaching and learning.
- Preparing teachers and administrators with instructional design skills & tools that are platform agnostic & can support in-person and remote learning.
- Professional development of effective instructional methods for live virtual teaching. How should a lesson be structured? How do you engage students? What does assessment look like? How do you hold students accountable?
- Teach more about the technology that is available and what has been successful in other schools.
- Training in being able to teach in person and virtually at the same time. A class on how to build a relationship with a students that is remote.
- Training on best practices for teaching young students virtually.
- We need to train all new teachers and administrators on the newest and best way to teach remotely.
- Teachers and administrators had little if any knowledge or training on teaching remotely. (The same can be said for most businesses and professions that shifted from in person to a work at home arrangement.) I assume you are adding to your curriculum in teacher preparation to get them more ready for this.

#### Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Teachers/Parents (*9 Comments*)

- Constant checking in with teachers... remember to let them know there is NO perfect lesson or delivery. They are doing a great job within the circumstances...They need to hear they are doing a good job especially because it was so new that they felt inadequate. Fall virtual learning is 100 times better than spring. Schools have worked hard all summer to be ready. Our students are getting a better experience with more "live" teacher lessons.
- Emphasize to parents and students the importance of attending class on-line, participating, and completed needed work.
- Engagement strategies for families and students.

- Have students prepare and deliver online lessons to students and focus on effective engagement, effective use of tools, and formative assessments ongoing to ensure learning.
- How to better support our staff when we are not face-to-face for instruction. What does that look like? how often do we check? Do we have regular meetings? Is there a set scheduled? How do we support staff when students aren't doing anything? if there anything we can take off the plate when things are so stressful? All of this really falls into one thing.
- How to build relationships with kids in virtual situations. If there's a good relationship, kids will show up to learn (barring logistics like reliable internet connections).
- Methods of engaging community virtually
- Teachers need to be trained in ways to engage students remotely and to balance engagement with standards.
- The importance of communication/connections and relationships with families (phone calls, not repeated unanswered e-mails).

#### Expand Teachers' Adaptability (*2 Comments*)

- Provide experiences where future teachers can receive exposure to the variety of online programs that they may encounter in the future. Also, provide experiences where future teachers need to be resourceful...for example, having to find information and educate themselves on the use of an online program (finding educational videos on YouTube), find ways to connect with kids who are disconnected during virtual learning opportunities, finding ways for teachers to think creatively about how they can have students complete assignments that typically need certain materials while the students are home with limited materials (how can they change the activity to ensure that all students have what they need in order to complete the activity), have teachers learn about ways of connecting with parents while teaching remotely if all they have are their cell phones and computers (without giving the parents their cell phone number), etc. I think any experience that takes them off guard and makes them think on their feet is valuable (going from the discomfort of not knowing to the energy that comes from the plan). The one thing I've learned in my 21 years is that you don't always have time to consider all options thoroughly so what sets great teachers apart from good teachers is their ability to evaluate the situation and take a little time to consider all aspects, and then begin working on putting a plan into action. This can be for changes like we experienced last spring or for when a group of students has not mastered a concept. Time is of the essence and they cannot sit back and appreciate the problem...they need to analyze and respond.
- Teach them how to manage a crisis -- what is a priority for teaching, connecting with students, parents, how to direct the team in a positive direction, how to learn something extremely quickly

#### Maintain In-Person Instruction (2 *Comments*)

- Strive to continue in-person instruction, before trying all other avenues of learning, particularly, with Elementary Grades.
- There is just no replacement for in person learning. There was a great lack of accountability for students doing/completing/handing in work. There was a great strain on working parents, working all day and then trying to do a full day's instruction coming home.

#### Other (4 *Comments*)

- I don't think there is one thing that would help us prepare for something we did not know was coming.
- Extensive focus on Trauma Sensitive Schools training
- How to create crisis plans in advance
- Unsure

## Middle School Administrators (36 Comments)

### Expanded Technology Training (14 Comments)

- Provide guidance in planning for unforeseen, long-term shut-downs. Direct administrators in creating technology networks for learning and guiding teachers in multiple e-learning platforms.
- Great question!!! It would be extremely beneficial if future administrators would prepare themselves for all of the technology training their teachers would be using. I made certain that I, along with my entire Administrative team, participated in all of the trainings that our teachers needed, so that we would be extremely helpful when coaching our teachers.
- Knowledge of systems/structures that transcend the platform. Maintaining PLCs, grade level teams, and continuing to build community and promote professional development throughout all "storms".
- Learn best tech programs that support teaching and learning.
- Moving/Hosting instructional materials to online services -- Google Classroom, Schoology, etc. Training in an LMS such as Google Classroom, Schoology, Blackboard. Teaching remotely using Zoom, Google Meet or other such software.
- Prepare new students to leverage various modes of instruction. Understand hotspots, stress importance of getting know students' families well-poverty, education background(to determine the level of support that student will have from home if virtual learning is to occur).
- Preparing teachers and administrators with instructional design skills & tools that are platform agnostic & can support in-person and remote learning.
- Sorting through the varieties of on-line instruction platform options that might be cost effective for small schools
- Teacher administrators how to use online teaching platforms that they in turn could teach their staff.
- "Teachers and administrators had little if any knowledge or training on teaching remotely. (The same can be said for most businesses and professions that shifted from in person to a work at home arrangement.)
- I assume you are adding to your curriculum in teacher preparation to get them more ready for this."
- Use of Google Classroom and Google Meets. Effective and valid testing methods when assessments must be given on-line
- Use of online tools and platforms.
- We have a seasoned staff. None of us had ever received any training about the use of online programs that could assist with distance learning. We hired an outside IT company to come to our building and simplify the entire distance learning process. Once he completed his work, our distance learning became more efficient and effective. Now that the world has experienced a pandemic, colleges and universities really need to examine

their graduation requirements for education majors and teach future teachers about effective distance learning.

- We need to train all new teachers and administrators on the newest and best way to teach remotely.

#### Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Teachers/Parents (7 Comments)

- Administrators need to have a deep working knowledge of highly effective engagement strategies to support virtual instruction, and must be adept at connecting with families. It is also essential to communicate in multiple ways. I feel strongly that the success my school is having is in part due to the willingness of staff to knock on doors of those students who have not engaged, and then meet with them in person (outside, socially distanced) to emphasize that opting out of their education is not an option. We have also worked tirelessly to drop off materials and ensure that students have working technology.
- Emphasize to parents and students the importance of attending class on-line, participating, and completed needed work.
- How to better support our staff when we are not face-to-face for instruction. What does that look like? how often do we check? Do we have regular meetings? Is there a set scheduled? How do we support staff when students aren't doing anything? if there anything we can take off the plate when things are so stressful? All of this really falls into one thing.
- How to build relationships with kids in virtual situations. If there's a good relationship, kids will show up to learn (barring logistics like reliable internet connections).
- Methods of engaging community virtually
- Teachers need to be trained in ways to engage students remotely and to balance engagement with standards.
- The importance of communication/connections and relationships with families (phone calls, not repeated unanswered e-mails)

#### Best Practices for Distance Learning (7 Comments)

- Effective virtual teaching methods which enhance student learning.
- Every school should have one person who is well-trained in virtual instruction -- someone who is well-trained and confident in up-to-date instructional platforms, applications, and even apps. I am not sure if a degree or certificate exists for someone who might work for a school in that capacity.
- I believe that teacher and administrative preparation programs should include content around virtual instruction/blended learning/ and multiple ways of family engagement in the virtual world.

- Professional development of effective instructional methods for live virtual teaching. How should a lesson be structured? How do you engage students? What does assessment look like? How do you hold students accountable?
- Teach more about the technology that is available and what has been successful in other schools.
- Training in being able to teach in person and virtually at the same time. A class on how to build a relationship with a student that is remote.
- Training on best practices for teaching young students virtually.

#### Expand Teachers' Adaptability (2 Comments)

- Provide experiences where future teachers can receive exposure to the variety of online programs that they may encounter in the future. Also, provide experiences where future teachers need to be resourceful...for example, having to find information and educate themselves on the use of an online program (finding educational videos on YouTube), find ways to connect with kids who are disconnected during virtual learning opportunities, finding ways for teachers to think creatively about how they can have students complete assignments that typically need certain materials while the students are home with limited materials (how can they change the activity to ensure that all students have what they need in order to complete the activity), have teachers learn about ways of connecting with parents while teaching remotely if all they have are their cell phones and computers (without giving the parents their cell phone number), etc. I think any experience that takes them off guard and makes them think on their feet is valuable (going from the discomfort of not knowing to the energy that comes from the plan). The one thing I've learned in my 21 years is that you don't always have time to consider all options thoroughly so what sets great teachers apart from good teachers is their ability to evaluate the situation and take a little time to consider all aspects, and then begin working on putting a plan into action. This can be for changes like we experienced last spring or for when a group of students has not mastered a concept. Time is of the essence and they cannot sit back and appreciate the problem...they need to analyze and respond.
- Teach them how to manage a crisis -- what is a priority for teaching, connecting with students, parents, how to direct the team in a positive direction, how to learn something extremely quickly.

#### Maintain In-Person Instruction (2 Comments)

- Strive to continue in-person instruction, before trying all other avenues of learning, particularly, with Elementary Grades.
- There is just no replacement for in person learning. There was a great lack of accountability for students doing/completing/handing in work. There was a great strain

on working parents, working all day and then trying to do a full day's instruction coming home.

Other (4 Comments)

- Focus on best practices in instructional design and delivery, driven by essential standards. It is difficult for teachers to focus on student learning more than content they want to cover. No amount of technology will replace good instructional strategy.
- How to create crisis plans in advance
- I don't think there is one thing that would help us prepare for something we did not know was coming.
- Unsure

## High School Administrators (19 Comments)

### Best Practices for Distance Learning (6 Comments)

- I believe that teacher and administrative preparation programs should include content around virtual instruction/blended learning/ and multiple ways of family engagement in the virtual world.
- I think they could help us with the following: 1. We need to be able to think through and evaluate what the "gotta knows" (power standards) are. 2. We need to be trained how to collect and utilize formative assessments to inform our instruction. 3. We need to be able to focus our instruction and assessments on what is most important to learn. 4. We need to be able to have our grades reflect the amount of learning that the students have demonstrated instead of how many points they have earned or how many assignments that they have turned in. 5. Less is more....eliminate busy work. 6. Inquiry based learning where kids have a choice in what they are learning about as they demonstrate their skills.
- Require students to take at least one online course so that they experience what it is like as a student. Always include the thought process how could you make an activity virtual if necessary?
- Teach more about the technology that is available and what has been successful in other schools.
- The things that were needed this spring could not have been foreseen. I think that better instruction regarding the tools that are used to hire staff remotely. Also, the legal implications of moving the classroom to the living room. IE: What things are "in school" behaviors when they are done at home? Etc.
- Training on best practices for teaching young students virtually.

### Expanded Technology Training (4 Comments)

- Prepare new students to leverage various modes of instruction. Understand hotspots, stress importance of getting to know students' families well-poverty, education background(to determine the level of support that student will have from home if virtual learning is to occur).
- Preparing teachers and administrators with instructional design skills & tools that are platform agnostic & can support in-person and remote learning.
- Use of Google Classroom and Google Meets. Effective and valid testing methods when assessments must be given on-line
- Utilize the online or virtual software as they go through the Administrator program. Give them the real experience of using it themselves. Multiple types and disciplines.

### Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Teachers/Parents (3\_Comments)

- Methods of engaging community virtually
- Teachers need to be trained in ways to engage students remotely and to balance engagement with standards.
- The importance of communication/connections and relationships with families (phone calls, not repeated unanswered e-mails)

### Expand Teachers' Adaptability (2\_Comments)

- Be ready to be more flexible. In the past, changes in education happened very slowly; now we are seeing major changes at warp speed. It's important to be able to "roll" with the punches, so to speak.
- Provide experiences where future teachers can receive exposure to the variety of online programs that they may encounter in the future. Also, provide experiences where future teachers need to be resourceful...for example, having to find information and educate themselves on the use of an online program (finding educational videos on YouTube), find ways to connect with kids who are disconnected during virtual learning opportunities, finding ways for teachers to think creatively about how they can have students complete assignments that typically need certain materials while the students are home with limited materials (how can they change the activity to ensure that all students have what they need in order to complete the activity), have teachers learn about ways of connecting with parents while teaching remotely if all they have are their cell phones and computers (without giving the parents their cell phone number), etc. I think any experience that takes them off guard and makes them think on their feet is valuable (going from the discomfort of not knowing to the energy that comes from the plan). The one thing I've learned in my 21 years is that you don't always have time to consider all options thoroughly so what sets great teachers apart from good teachers is their ability to evaluate the situation and take a little time to consider all aspects, and then begin working on putting a plan into action. This can be for changes like we experienced last spring or for when a group of students has not mastered a concept. Time is of the essence and they cannot sit back and appreciate the problem...they need to analyze and respond.

### Other (4\_Comments)

- Focus on best practices in instructional design and delivery, driven by essential standards. It is difficult for teachers to focus on student learning more than content they want to cover. No amount of technology will replace good instructional strategy.
- How to create crisis plans in advance
- Teach about equity
- Unsure

## Appendix A2 – Open-ended Comments from Teachers

Question 3 - In which subject area(s) do you primarily teach? Other, please specify (77 Comments)

Subject Area	Number Teaching in this Area
4K	2
Agriculture	5
Religion	4
Bilingual Ed/ESL	11
Health/Physical Education	14
Multiple Subjects/Elementary	16
Computer/Technology-related	6
Speech/Language	6
Counselor	5
Co-Curricular	3
Alternative Education	1
Literacy	1
LMC	1
Spanish Language Arts	1
Special Ed-Speech	1

Question 8 - During the spring of 2020 pandemic, how important were the following communication methods in terms of keeping your students engaged and learning? Other, please specify (23 Comments)

- Google classroom (4x)
- School pick up (2x)
- Google Classroom
- Deliver materials
- Delivery of food/worksheets
- Facebook videos
- Flipgrid, Google Classroom, & Zoom
- Home Deliveries
- Interpreters
- Materials deliver/picked up to/from students
- Non-contact resource pick ups
- Online communication application (Class DoJo)
- Porch visits
- See Saw activities and materials emailed to parents
- Seesaw
- Text messages
- Tutor
- Well organized asynchronous online work system
- Zoom recording

Question 9 - During the spring of 2020 pandemic, which of the following instructional methods and strategies did you use? Other online/Other in-person

Other online method (75 Comments)

- Google Classroom (22x)
- Seesaw (12x)
- Learning Management System/Canvas (6x)
- Blackboard (2x)
- Google Drive (2x)
- 1 to 1 individual email conversing included
- 1:1 Google Meet
- Aimsweb, Readtheory, Readworks
- AP Classroom Materials
- Assignments given via Google Classroom
- Assignments via blackboard and google classroom
- Boom Cards
- Class website
- Desmos
- EdPuzzle, Google Classroom, simulations, web-quests
- EdPuzzle, NearPod
- Flipgrid & Google Classroom
- Google Classroom/YouTube Videos
- Google forms
- Google forms, docs and sheets
- Google meets
- Google site and Classroom
- Infinite Campus assignment, rubrics, and instructions
- Interactive activities using GSuite
- Kami
- Khan Academy, Newsela, Flocabulary
- Moodle was used to deliver curriculum to our chemistry students
- Oral stories (by me or other)
- Phone
- ReadWorks
- Recorded stories
- Schoology
- Sharing books with DOC Camera
- Voice recorded messages
- Weekly template lesson plan with links to my lesson.
- You Tube

Other in-person method (10 Comments)

- Home visits
- Individual speech therapy held live via Zoom
- Lms. Digital assignments
- Met kids on the sidewalk at home
- Printed materials delivered and picked up via lunch staff
- Recorded Messages
- Seesaw
- Tutoring
- Unemployed
- Zearn Math

Question 13 - In terms of technology you used during the COVID-19 pandemic, how satisfied were you with the following? Other, please specify (35 Comments)

- Google Meets (9x)
- Google Classroom (3x)
- Seesaw (2x)
- AP Classroom
- Curriculum planning prior to distance learning
- Facebook posts
- Free resources made available online
- Google Classroom & Flipgrid
- Google Meets and Classroom
- Grading policy
- Group chat space
- I was never taught. I guess admin thought we were on our devices 24/7
- Learning Seesaw
- No training
- Not technically versed with computers
- Ongoing, just-in-time professional development as needed.
- Parent accountability
- Roll out and adjustment to change
- Schoology
- Screencast-o-matic
- Time to download files from hard drive
- Training self and kids and parents simultaneously
- WebEx
- Webex, Google Meet

Question 14 - Given your experiences, what are your recommendations in terms of best practices for education during a pandemic?

### Pre-K – Grade 5 Teachers (165 Comments)

#### Expanded Technology Training (67 Comments)

- Actually, have the teachers use the technology so they know how to use it.
- Be comfortable with using Google Classroom
- Being able to teach live via zoom/google for students to still have interaction with teacher and other classmates.
- Cover the most used platforms - like google suite and zoom - so there is a foundation of understanding how those programs work and how to integrate the online tools into their teaching.
- Emphasize how to use an iPad to teach
- Experience with LMS platforms
- Explore a variety of technology apps/pieces so that all are able to adjust or attempt to use any types of technology.
- Exploring online applications/extensions and finding ones that you are comfortable with and actually try them out. Each persons' list will look different based on what they intend to teach. There are too many resources available and hard to have the time to explore and try them out.
- Expose students to some format of online teaching platforms and/or some experiences with virtual learning so that they will have some background knowledge.
- Formats like Google Meet are widely used in pandemic and in non-pandemic times, so it would be beneficial in training future teachers to use its features.
- Fully trained in the expected means of technology.
- Give teachers uninterrupted time to plan and play with the new technology. Give them time to play and reach out to other experienced teachers. Don't waste their time making them sit through general software training.
- Have student teachers lead Zoom meetings as part of preparation.
- Help people become familiar with WebEx, Zoom, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams.
- How to use a variety of technology.
- I believe having teachers trained in multiple computer applications that would support their teaching; therefore, be more effective in their instructions.
- I feel like I am pretty competent with technology but there are so many amazing tools that I was not aware of until I was forced to teach my instruction online - and some of that stuff could be used regardless. So, any sort of introduction to technology resources type of class would be amazing!
- I know many schools use a parent communication/assignment platform such as Seesaw and Class Dojo (mainly Seesaw), so I would suggest teaching about Seesaw and how to use it and how to make assignments on Seesaw. This would also give a future teacher a good

talking point in interviews, as there are questions that I have been asked in interviews about technology and parent communication. Also, I think technology in general needs to be taught better such as Google drive, Google docs, iPad apps, etc.

- I think teacher prep programs should make sure teacher candidates are up to date on technology such as Google Suite, Seesaw, Google Classroom, Screencastify or other video recording software.
- If video instruction is best, is this simply the teaching reviewing the concept or actually directing the student through the assignment? Is it realistic to require primary students to be live with teachers when their parents are at work and they are at daycare? How do we make an equitable educational model? These are things our district is currently struggling with and we do not have enough devices for all students due to a budget deficit.
- It would also be helpful for teacher candidates to know how to use classroom management strategies during live meetings."
- I think training on how to do prerecorded lessons would have been a big help.
- I wish I had been given the online platform to "play with" over the week. It would have been my choice to do it or not. One day of training prior to the students returning online was definitely not enough time.
- Instruct them on the use of an online platform such as Google Classroom, Seesaw, etc.
- Instruction in different platforms available: SeeSaw, google classroom, etc.
- Introducing the platforms and products that are out there and mini lessons on how to use them.
- It is hard to answer this. Nothing can prepare a person for teaching in school one day and then shut down the next. Training needs to take place to implement any technology program that is used BEFORE having to use it. We just plundered along and tried to do the best we could with really no instruction whatsoever. So, better training in a school wide program would be beneficial.
- Just to be exposed to a variety of on-line instructional platform options. Canvas, XLI, etc.
- Knowing other platforms of instruction and teaching problem-solving strategies on how to teach without face to face instruction.
- Learning Management Systems - have an understanding of what they are capable of doing for you/your class in a remote learning situation.
- Learning more about educational technology
- Making sure that teachers have at least some familiarity/use of common online platforms such as Google Classroom and screen recording sites like Flipgrid, Screencastify, etc.
- Mastery of Google classroom and Meet plus all the vital extensions needed to run them (i.e, dualless, slides, grid,etc.)
- More exposure to online learning platforms, and the use of Google Classroom verses Canvas.
- More technology training
- More training with a variety of technology applications would be beneficial.

- More trainings in Zoom, Google Meets, or Google Hangouts.
- More workshops on Jamboard, Google Meet and platforms the district wants us to use.
- Online programs and how to use them.
- Please train future teachers with the most popular on-line teaching tools. Have them practice using them until they are comfortable using them and review throughout the semester to keep skills fresh.
- Prepare for using and managing kids use of online technology programs. How to use email and teach kids to utilize these programs effectively.
- Present more info on teletherapy, pros/cons of paid subscriptions such as: boom cards, super duper etc.
- Provide some training on programs that have evidence of online learning success as well as understanding Learning Management Systems.
- Teach about the platforms available
- Teach different platforms that may be used for instruction. Teach how to do synchronous and asynchronous lessons.
- Teach several formats for virtual instruction so students are prepared.
- Teach students how to use technology before they have to be able to use it on their own at home.
- Teach us the programing to use.
- Teachers should be trained in all the modern programs used in teaching. From simple software for games to use in the classroom to software to organize student data to Google Classroom to use of Zoom and all forms of social media.
- Teaching them how to use the computer to create dynamic lessons.
- Tech tools
- Technology is such an important factor when it comes to virtual learning. In the past 6-8 months I have had to learn about Google Hangouts, Google Classroom, How to use an external camera, How to present and share a screen, Screencastify to film lessons, SeeSaw to interact with my kindergarteners etc. Once you learn all of these components, you are then able to focus on teaching. It is/was a HUGE hurdle to jump!
- Technology options for various age levels, online resources targeted to a smaller age/grade level,
- Technology training (2X)
- Technology training, Google Classroom & Zoom, all staff knowing how to use the same platform
- Technology usage, specifically video recording. Exposure to more options for recording and for preparing and presenting written lessons. and how to alter lessons for remote learning. Things like lighting, microphones, set up, etc., had to be learned by trial and error. This will be easier for younger people, though. Most of us had our teenagers help us.

- This is a difficult question because school districts use a multitude of different online learning platforms. Perhaps an overview of the most popular (like Seesaw, Canvas, etc). And some general characteristics of each. Like an introduction to online learning course.
- Train teachers in technologies of instruction. We were blindsided with no training.
- Training (maybe even entire classes) on some of the major platforms used for delivering content. In the case of Minnesota, Schoology for older grades, Seesaw for younger.
- Training and working knowledge of LMS learning management systems.
- Training in a variety of technology options so you are prepared for various situations (poor internet/technology, family accountability, video recording and uploading, linking videos, communication tools, balancing workload, and mental health)
- Training on our online instructional program (Schoology).
- Updates with all technology
- Virtual platform trainings.
- We didn't know what we didn't know. I had never heard of Zoom or Loom and they quickly became my best friends. Students need to be exposed to the technology platforms.
- We have had much more training over the summer and at the start of the school year to prepare for distance learning. Last year was a very unusual situation, with no blame on anyone. I am still not totally comfortable because I do not use a lot of technology in my everyday teaching, but I have acquired enough knowledge and skills to be successful. We are using Google Classroom and Seesaw as our platforms.
- We were not trained on any online resources for teaching online. It would have been helpful to have a training in Google classroom or Zoom ahead of time. We had to figure out how to use it and if it shuts down again, I still have not learned how to use Google classroom as a resource.
- Yes, there will need more training in computer technology. I did not feel the teachers were fully prepared to undergo this enormous task. There should have people are specially trained in computer technology. They should be available for questions. I felt that they were not there to answer questions for us.

**Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Students/Parents/Administration (24 Comments)**

- Also give time for individual connections with students via online video calls.
- Communication and training in hybrid teaching. Communication with admin. and parents. Know your students.
- Communication
- Emphasize family relationships
- For the younger elementary level, it would be very beneficial to have a class that would offer tools, instructional ideas, or activities that can be done over video call. With young students, it is very difficult to engage them without being in-person.

- Have a good behavior plan in place because students will blurt out a lot and interrupt your teaching and when peers are sharing.
- How to increase parent's understanding and involvement in distance learning.
- How to keep students engaged while presenting a lesson!
- How to make connections with students when they are online to motivate them to continue learning
- How to manage students, present information, expectations for level of work and assignments, how to give feedback without having to work 14-16 hour days.
- I also think it's important for educational institutions to gather data on what is best practice for distance learning and teach this model to teacher candidates. For example, is it best to do primarily paper-pencil? Or is it best to do some paper-pencil with instructional videos? Or is it best to do live class sessions?
- I think it is imperative to have experience in all areas of communication.
- I think it is imperative to have experience in all areas of communication.
- Keeping the relationship with the families/students intact. It's all about the relationship.
- Making connections with parents is vital for virtual instruction
- Online teaching requires so much more than just technology skills. We can work on making connections with our students and their families. We can work on fostering student to student connections every day. Active Learning will support retention and engagement. Integrating music into many activities will provide soothing and energizing times for our students.
- Teach them how to connect with your students!! Find meaningful ways to engage them (i.e. scavenger hunts, etc.).
- Teachers need training/preparation for using the technology they will use to connect with students. They need to be prepared to think about what is in the background when doing online video programs like Zoom. Who or what is behind and to the sides of you? Whatever is there may be seen by the students. Make sure to have space for your materials to be nearby. What are you wearing? Remember students and their families will be seeing you each day. This also means you really have to be mindful of the words you are choosing when speaking online.
- Teaching is all about the building of relationships with students and parents. Continual focus and attention on the importance of partnering with families to work as a team and how to communicate honestly and clearly with them is the foundation of educating a child.
- The best way to prepare is to develop purposeful ways to connect individually with young children. Group singing, storytelling and lessons were fun, but the one on one connections had the biggest impact (according to parent feedback).
- Train future teachers how to connect and build relationships with students and their families.
- Training teachers that you may need to reach out to students in unusual ways.

- Trying to hook students and help parents navigate the many pitfalls of online learning.
- Whew. I don't think any of us saw this coming. If only we knew! If I had to pick one thing, I would recommend training in virtual engagement strategies.

#### Best Practices for Distance Learning/Online/Virtual Methods & Lesson Planning (22

##### *Comments)*

- A technology course that addresses learning and the applications for online learning
- Add effective remote teaching/learning skills into the program for greater ease moving forward.
- Better structure with clear time set aside for additional services
- Creating a distance learning plan. In addition, they should think through a distance learning day. The day will be much different than in person instruction. Have them think through a week of distance learning instruction and start making plans. Having these things already in place if the pivot to online happens will save your sanity.
- Have training about best online tech to use with teaching lessons
- Having a common platform among elementary groups k-2 using the same platform , 3-5 using the same platform. The district did recognize and address this problem over the summer
- How to best use technology to reach students.
- How to conduct online classes, how to plan and prepare materials for online classes, learn various teaching platforms - this better not happen again!
- More virtual lesson design
- One thing that helped me a lot was 5Es of Online Learning Lesson Planning. It helped guide me through lesson plans and identify what were the important components and needed parts of a lesson. The 5Es helped me stay grounded and realistic about lesson planning.
- Perhaps have seminars that would offer instruction to both experienced and new teachers that would target various ways of instruction for situations such as the pandemic or future problems that would arise . Teachers need to feel confident if this were to ever happen again.
- Perhaps some remote experience as part of student teaching.
- Provide instruction for best practices about virtual large group, small group, and one-on-one instruction in all subject areas.
- Show teachers the most effective online methods and resources to successfully reach and motivate students while learning virtually.
- Teach how formal online instruction is not simply putting your in-person materials in some digital format. Show how to teach online curriculum online!
- Teach teachers how to make better/ more engaging recorded videos
- Teaching lesson planning from an electronic standpoint.
- Teaching students expectations for online virtual learning.

- Teaching teachers how to turn in person lessons, worksheets, learning materials into online instruction
- Teaching the general aspects of virtual teaching/learning. Lessons should not be specific to a learning platform, since those are subject to change, but understanding the best methods to distribute lessons and the best way to communicate when in-person communication is not possible, would be very helpful.
- They need practice in how to create/prepare lessons for teaching on Zoom = prioritizing the most important and making sure it is a "just-right" amount for students.
- Worksheets were fun for a while, but parent's shared that it was just too hard to keep their kindergartener engaged without the connection with the teacher. No one really gained from my Seesaw lessons except the children with very actively involved parents (printing out and helping child work through the activities). For me, providing families with hands on materials (e.g. Montessori maps, number chains, tracing shapes) from our classroom ended up having the best results. Young children learn best from manipulating materials not just looking at paper and a screen.

#### Techniques/Variety of Online Teaching Methods for Specific Topics/Needs *(10 Comments)*

- For speech-language pathologists, the district needs to buy online, virtual materials to replace my in-person materials that I use on a daily basis, such as speech cards and games. These are not effective in online sessions.
- Have a site where teachers can go and search by subject matter online curricula/apps/etc they can use for free to help teach their classes (i.e. advanced math, ESL, instrumental music).
- How to deliver reading interventions online
- How to utilize guided reading and instruction that is typically given in-person in a virtual way.
- It would also be nice for districts and teachers to have more training on how to successfully include the arts in virtual learning (our district was worried about too much screen time and so the arts were asked to provide choice boards for students to use) and it would also be helpful to have knowledge of technology that can be used successfully in a music program to make the online learning experience more fulfilling.
- More options/resources involving online instruction
- Specific tools and strategies to use when delivering speech, occupational or physical therapy remotely. Different models that could be used to address student's IEP goals.
- Teach us useful technology skills that work at the level of our students. Apps and new programs are introduced but always for a higher level of skill development than our kindergarten students.
- They could share and provide access to training on a variety of virtual tools so teachers can make the best decision for their grade level and their personal preference.

- This really isn't applicable to me, because I am not a classroom teacher, but I felt like I was left totally on my own to figure out how to work with my students, get them scheduled and find resources to use during the distance learning (specifically for Speech students).

#### Expand Teachers' Adaptability (7 Comments)

- Flexibility is key in this situation. So many things happen that you can't prepare for. Holding on to a toolbox of tried and true lessons, experiences, and literature is helpful because it brings a sense of calm to you as the instructor so that you can slowly try new things.
- Flexibility. Thinking about being a problem solver instead of a complainer.
- How to be flexible with teaching style because in the middle of class, there is always going to be hiccups in technology.
- It seems like this is the "new normal" for awhile. The biggest challenge I see would be that new teachers and teachers in training still have to be able to adapt back and become familiar to whole group in-person instruction as well as these new distance and hybrid models.
- Just preparing new teachers to be able to switch at a moments notice to different formats of teaching.
- Teach how to pivot on a moment's notice.
- Teacher training programs could teach more resources (curriculum, online tools) that can be used virtually or in the classroom with students. This doesn't need to be an entire class, but could be incorporated in the teacher training classes that are already available. As we know, in-person teaching is most effective for most kids, but knowing and understanding these resources could be beneficial to use within a classroom as multiple modes of learning, and if anything like this is to arise again, or if virtual learning becomes the expectation instead of snow days.

#### Tech Resources/Training for Students and Parents (6 Comments)

- I think the teachers are prepared. I don't think the students or parents are as well familiar with the technology.
- Experience working with students and families who struggle with technology
- Have tech support ready for teachers AND families. Teachers can't serve as tech support to families.
- How to prepare the students to access information online -- details if difficulties with connections -- training of parents as well
- More tech training with troubleshooters accessible at all times (especially for students and parents)...hotlines?
- Student and family tech issues should not have fallen on the teacher's shoulders as we were trying to teach. Lessons would be interrupted constantly, and I'd get constant texts and phone calls from parents, asking log-in questions that I didn't know the answers to. I

would have loved to have a tech support administrator those first few weeks so I could focus on lessons.

#### Emotional/Mental Health Awareness/Preparedness/Training *(4 Comments)*

- Assisting with emotional issues/support for students and parents
- Building relationships with students should be number one and their health and mental well-being should be number one especially during a pandemic. Taking the time to meet with students individually who need it, makes such a big difference! Also, take time for yourself and step away from work and your computer often; it is okay; give yourself permission!
- Making sure that the students who live in poverty have equitable access and are given more mental health support.
- The students I worked with needed emotional support more than they needed academic support. So, did the parents. They were really struggling. That is not to say they didn't need academic support. But they needed/wanted someone to listen.

#### Be Prepared/Proactive/Have a Plan *(4 Comments)*

- Being prepared ahead of time and staying planned weeks ahead.
- Front load work and preparation so can just send out the materials online and not have to recreate new lessons on the fly.
- Give time to prepare and prep.
- Have a plan!

#### Student Teacher Comments *(4 Comments)*

- After just having a student teacher from your school, I think it is best that the student teacher comes with an open mindset and to be ready for anything at the drop of a hat. One thing that has proved true this fall is that you don't know what is coming from one minute to the next. Remind your students before they go out on their placements to be up front with their cooperating teachers and ask for clear and concise expectations for in-person classes and virtual classes. Every school is different, with technology and programs used, so having the tools provided and understanding how to use them right away is extremely important. Not only will the student teacher feel more successful, but it will lead to the success of the students he or she is teaching as well.
- "I was lucky. We decided to be co-teachers because we started distance learning together. I was learning from my student teacher probably more than she was learning from me. It is an odd situation we are in and we just needed to help each other. I am currently with another student teacher (not from UWRF) and we are working on classroom management. She isn't sure how to deal with situations like when someone won't participate, a student tells her this is stupid, or just walks out of the room, etc. In those types of situations, I know exactly what to do. I enjoy learning together and there is no perfect solution, but together we were stronger.

- I'm not sure how much in person/in class time students have for student contact - but more amounts of time is beneficial.
- Talk with school districts about how to help student teachers be incorporated in a virtual setting. With the privacy protection of students, it was difficult to find ways that the student teacher could be involved.

#### Maintain In-Person Instruction *(3 Comments)*

- Early childhood education should never be taught virtually or online. It is not age appropriate and does not meet the needs of a child's social and emotional development.
- Hands on, in person learning is the best form of learning for students, parents, teachers, administration; etc. NOTHING could compete with that. It ensured everyone had the same opportunities. Even if we were well trained in the technology, students and parents were not and it was chaotic.
- No idea. I am 67 and have substituted in 4 school districts since 2007. I refuse to wear a mask. I need my whole face to teach effectively. Closing schools was a bad idea. The kids in my town are clinically depressed. I have been helping the homeschool families in my church. I have thought about moving to Sweden or South Dakota. We recently drove through South Dakota which has never had a mask mandate. The people there are so happy and friendly and normal. I hope Kristi Noem runs for president in 2024!

#### Non-tech Teaching Methods/Variety *(2 Comments)*

- Early childhood educators need to have a lot of non-tech repertoire. They need index cards on a ring with finger songs, hand poems, 2 minute movement activities, calm down stretches, energizers. Something they can model and the students can do. As I've had student teachers, I've noticed this is lacking.
- Find a way to engage students during virtual instruction, give LOTS of hands-on ideas that kids can do. Watching a video stream of a lecture all day is terrible.

#### How to work with language and cultural issues *(2 Comments)*

- Experience with students and families that don't speak English.
- More classes on Family/Community Engagement and communication, especially when language and culture are perceived as barriers.

#### Students access to technology (2 Comments)

- In order to be on-line in rural areas, internet connectivity needs to be better
- Making sure that the students who live in poverty have equitable access to technology

#### Hybrid teaching (1 Comment)

- Training in hybrid teaching.

#### Miscellaneous (7 Comments)

- I think all student teachers need to know how to find the helpers in the schools. By this I mean librarians, technology teachers, custodians, office staff, and specialists. These people are important not only for the success of the students, but are available to support you. Find these people. Build relationships with these people. Team with these people.
- I would not dumb down the process or expectations as instructed by administration in the future. I still ran into difficulty expecting 30 minutes of work compared to 120 minutes if they were in school.
- In the spring it took us awhile to connect with all of the technology that was available. We were much better prepared in the fall and have done amazing things with our kids. They were ready for this new way of learning.
- In the spring, I worked as a school librarian and teacher at a rural K-8 school. I took a new position this year and am now a high school librarian. My main advice is to use your resources and cultivate a professional learning network. As school librarians, we are uniquely equipped to offer advice and training. A solid PLN will help you curate great ideas that will work no matter what happens. It was hard to prepare for something that had never happened before. We were just trying to make it work the best way we knew how. By working as a team and seeking help from our networks, we were able to find new ideas to make things work, tutorials to help us understand how to use technology, and just generally gain support from colleagues during an extremely difficult time.
- My student SLP and I were lucky that we were able to build rapport together in person prior to the pandemic closures. This time was helpful because we were able to focus on the format of our speech-language sessions and this was easily transferred to online sessions.
- Provide teachers with time to create their virtual classes.
- Whole school system in the county needs to be on same program and schedule, in order for this to work smoothly

## Grade 6 – Grade 8 Teachers (90 Comments)

### Expanded Technology Training (31 Comments)

- Allow teachers the time to learn about using the online resources!
- Be comfortable with using Google Classroom
- Be sure the training programs include training on Google Classroom, Meet and any other technology that would be helpful.
- Better practice/ repetition for using the computer effectively. Making sure students know how to check email, use zoom, Google Meets, etc.
- Education on a variety of different platforms: instruction on zoom, google meets, flipgrid, etc.
- Exposure to online learning platforms.
- Fortunately, we were able to work all summer preparing for 100% virtual instruction. We took classes, p d, collaborated with each other, and made sure to set up everything virtually in case the pandemic persisted. If not for our administration fighting to make sure we were prepared this Fall would have been miserable for everyone involved. It was voluntary, but has made me learn technology that I never knew existed. On one hand, the summer gave us time to devote to our learning. On the other hand, most of what we needed was in relation to virtual technology. Therefore, the one thing that would have to be done would be to teach them as much as possible about the technology their district will be using. After that it is imperative that they practice, practice, practice. Yes, there will still be a learning curve, but at least it will get easier with time because they have been fully trained technologically.
- Have a plan to use the same platform of communication with students and train teachers on this.
- Having a technology class. Where you learn about various apps and programs, but you actually apply them to a classroom setting with students.
- How to most effectively use ALL technology for my specific subject. I had to learn on my own or on the fly. I spent MANY hours trying to figure it out as we went along and that made the whole process very cumbersome and frustrating.
- I believe having teachers trained in multiple computer applications that would support their teaching; therefore, be more effective in their instructions.
- In the spring it took us awhile to connect with all of the technology that was available. We were much better prepared in the fall and have done amazing things with our kids. They were ready for this new way of learning.
- It is imperative that the teachers are familiar with all forms of technology and have numerous resources to use to help supplement instruction.
- Just to be exposed to a variety of on-line instructional platform options. Canvas, XLI, etc.
- Knowing how to use Google Classroom and Google Meets, having practice instructing virtually, assessment practices/giving feedback virtually

- Learning Management Systems - have an understanding of what they are capable of doing for you/your class in a remote learning situation.
- Learning more about educational technology
- Making sure that teachers have at least some familiarity/use of common online platforms such as Google Classroom and screen recording sites like Flipgrid, Screencastify, etc.
- More exposure to online learning platforms, and the use of Google Classroom verses Canvas.
- More preparedness in the use of technology. This should also include substitute teachers.
- More training with a variety of technology applications would be beneficial.
- More workshops on Jamboard, Google Meet and platforms the district wants us to use. "
- Need to be able to practice how to use and present different types of software depending on the district with questions to ask to make sure all students can see. Different ways to make on-line learning interactive.
- Offer training in teaching platforms such as Google Classroom or Schoology.
- Please train future teachers with the most popular on-line teaching tools. Have them practice using them until they are comfortable using them and review throughout the semester to keep skills fresh.
- Teach about the platforms available
- Teach them about a variety of technology and the tools that will help prepare online lessons.
- Teachers need to be taught the best way to use the available technology for the school. It would be good for all the teachers in the same school to use the same technology.
- Technology training, Google Classroom & Zoom, all staff knowing how to use the same platform
- Train teachers in technologies of instruction. We were blindsided with no training.
- Training on using ZOOM

#### Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Students/Parents/Administration (14 Comments)

- Educators have to be creative, resourceful, and have a growth-mindset when it comes to teaching in situations that are not in-person. Prepare future educators by arming them with strategies that explicitly teach and build STUDENT agency, initiative and ownership in their learning, in addition to teaching content!
- Engaging students online
- How to better encourage remote/virtual students and parents to check emails, watch videos, and engage in content and livestreamed classes
- How to engage students effectively in any instructional environment. How to cope with challenges -- spotty internet, need for one-on-one time, etc.
- How to engage students right away and build relationships with them from a distance, before anyone starts to struggle.

- How to keep those unmotivated students to stay engaged and working. Too many distractions in the home. I would sometimes tell them to get into a closet to work so they were not distracted. Other times, students were using their technology inappropriately, then parents would take away the computer instead of something else more suitable to the situation. Really, no matter how many times I contacted students and parents, some students simply did nothing. They were on a vacation. My High school students did much better than my middle school students.
- I believe new teachers would have the expectations that they would have more parent support, in reality, I believe that parent disengagement in education is a leading cause of student disengagement.
- I would like to have learned more about how to create engaging and effective on-line instruction.
- Show teachers the most effective online methods and resources to successfully reach and motivate students while learning virtually.
- Students were accessing social media more than schoolwork and students were up into the late hours of the night, then sleeping all day.
- There is a huge difference in delivery through live instruction in person via on screen remote. Training in engagement and being on screen would be helpful.
- Train future teachers how to connect and build relationships with students and their families.
- Training teachers that you may need to reach out to students in unusual ways.
- Trying to hook students and help parents navigate the many pitfalls of online learning.

#### Best Practices for Distance Learning/Online/ Virtual Methods & Lesson Planning (12 Comments)

- A technology course that addresses learning and the applications for online learning
- Consider how students (sick or otherwise not in your live classroom) can access your lessons seamlessly.
- How to manage students, present information, expectations for level of work and assignments, how to give feedback without having to work 14-16 hour days.
- Learning how to use various online activities to engage in group discussion, games, online atmosphere. Structuring and timing in a virtual class is very important to keep a flow of ideas going. The biggest challenge is students believing that their time is well used to make connections to teachers, each other and the content.
- Perhaps have seminars that would offer instruction to both experienced and new teachers that would target various ways of instruction for situations such as the pandemic or future problems that would arise . Teachers need to feel confident if this were to ever happen again.

- Prepare future teachers and offer more training for current teachers in all areas of virtual teaching/learning.
- Teach effective blended learning strategies and future teachers should also take a course in online teaching methods.
- Teach how formal online instruction is not simply putting your in-person materials in some digital format. Show how to teach online curriculum online!
- Teach the principles of online instruction, not specific platforms.
- Teaching students expectations for online virtual learning.
- Teaching teachers how to turn in person lessons, worksheets, learning materials into online instruction
- Virtual learning is different. Lots of teachers assume/assumed that the main shift to virtual was to take their in-person lesson, and present it online. That produces very lacking virtual lessons, even if the in-person lesson was great. Virtual learning has big barriers with appropriate technology and internet for students and staff, but a created barrier is that teachers were trying to do the same thing they did in-person, but now through a screen. Virtual teaching has to be different to be effective. Beyond just changing how to teach and interact with the main content delivery, teachers have to adjust how they assess and evaluate students. It is even easier for students to fall through the cracks because it is so much hard to monitor engagement understanding, and development through the tiny rectangular views all crammed together on one Meet screen. I'm not pretending there is ample time or an abundance of energy that will easily allow this, but it is critical. And, just as their needs to be time spent teaching and re-teaching classroom behavior norms, there has to be time spent with virtual norms as well as learning environment changes. It is different teaching. But, probably teaching to enhance virtual engagement and student development could only also enhance in-person. They won't look the same, but maybe the principles that would enhance virtual could also be translated to strengthen in-person: things like increased front and backloading, personalizing instruction and progress monitoring, building independence and self-drive (along with self-awareness/self-assessment), the role of family/community/culture towards developing a whole child, and increasing freedom to remove unnecessary barriers such as sitting in a desk or not having text-to-speech software available.

#### Expand Teachers' Adaptability (*7 Comments*)

- Also, recommend they join teacher work groups through Facebook or Twitter. They were a life saver!
- I think that Special Education teachers need to be flexible. The good thing about the pandemic is that we are used to thinking outside of the box in order to meet each student's needs. Having a strong working relationship with your students is vital, and that is the most important thing you can do to prepare for an unexpected situation. Thinking back on this experience, It wasn't a disaster, but it wasn't the best either. However, I did everything in my power to stay connected to my students. I'm proud of my colleagues and

I who stayed connected to the kids during the entire time. I have 12 kids on my caseload and all of them were engaged in online instruction as much as they were able to. I consider that a win!

- Just preparing new teachers to be able to switch at a moments notice to different formats of teaching.
- Other technology which would prove helpful is a document camera.
- Teach how to pivot on a moment's notice.
- Technology training for parents, students and staff.
- Think about how each lesson could be easily transitioned to online (if not already) in the event that the next day in class will be virtual.

#### Techniques/Variety of Online Teaching Methods for Specific Topics/Needs *(4 Comments)*

- Have a site where teachers can go and search by subject matter online curricula/apps/etc they can use for free to help teach their classes (i.e. advanced math, ESL, instrumental music). Cover the most used platforms - like google suite and zoom - so there is a foundation of understanding how those programs work and how to integrate the online tools into their teaching.
- How to deliver reading interventions online
- I would also have liked to have learned how to create good, self-standing videos that students could use to learn and a way to get those videos to students who do not have internet access.
- Providing a resource that hits major tools the schools that students may be student teaching in are using. All schools vary, but if there was a resource spot with links with how-to videos or information for the student teachers to go to instead of having to sift through materials themselves. Maybe a specific Tech support person(s) that would be able to find specific resources for student teachers so they could focus on teaching their subject and not on the delivery method.

#### Tech Resources/Training for Students and Parents *(4 Comments)*

- I think the teachers are prepared. I don't think the students or parents are as well familiar with the technology.
- I believe it is nearly impossible to be successful when eliminating in-person instruction for public school students. Our school district tried asynchronous instruction in the spring of 2020, and it was highly unsuccessful. The students had low requirements, in general, in terms of attendance and "checking-in" with the instructor. In order to make online teaching in a virtual environment successful, I believe you need to educate the students more than providing more training for teachers.
- I retired in July, 2020. It was planned before the pandemic hit. I keep in touch with the teachers I worked with. So, my suggestion comes as much from their experience as my own. There should be a uniform program set up ahead of time for everyone to follow, so you don't have families trying to figure out multiple systems. Having it known and in place

ahead of time will give families a chance to understand it before the hammer falls. Last March when this happened, teachers, parents, and students had 2 days to figure it all out. I am amazed at how well our school did. Personally, I gave it my all, and am proud of myself, even though it was a lousy way to retire and say good-bye to the place and the people who defined a huge part of my life for 20 years.

- Student and family tech issues should not have fallen on the teacher's shoulders as we were trying to teach. Lessons would be interrupted constantly, and I'd get constant texts and phone calls from parents, asking log-in questions that I didn't know the answers to. I would have loved to have a tech support administrator those first few weeks so I could focus on lessons.

#### Maintain In-Person Instruction *(2 Comments)*

- Hands on, in person learning is the best form of learning for students, parents, teachers, administration; etc. NOTHING could compete with that. It ensured everyone had the same opportunities. Even if we were well trained in the technology, students and parents were not and it was chaotic.
- I'm not sure how much in person/in class time students have for student contact - but more amounts of time is beneficial.

#### Emotional/Mental Health Awareness/ Preparedness/Training *(2 Comments)*

- Also, the importance of physical health, time on and off the computer.
- Helping teachers be better coaches and connect emotionally with their students to help them through traumatic times - like a pandemic.

#### Non-tech Teaching Methods/Variety *(2 Comments)*

- Find a way to engage students during virtual instruction, give LOTS of hands-on ideas that kids can do. Watching a video stream of a lecture all day is terrible.
- More independent, hands on projects that connect to the lesson without being in front of a computer

#### Be Prepared/Proactive/Have a Plan *(2 Comments)*

- Front load work and preparation so can just send out the materials online and not have to recreate new lessons on the fly.
- Have a plan!

#### Students Access to Technology *(2 Comments)*

- Schools must do more to support students in households that lack internet access.
- Training with video recordings and downloading to offline for students with limited access. But I have to say YouTube has it all now and that helped me through.

#### Student Teacher Comments (2 Comments)

- After just having a student teacher from your school, I think it is best that the student teacher comes with an open mindset and to be ready for anything at the drop of a hat. One thing that has proved true this fall is that you don't know what is coming from one minute to the next. Remind your students before they go out on their placements to be up front with their cooperating teachers and ask for clear and concise expectations for in-person classes and virtual classes. Every school is different, with technology and programs used, so having the tools provided and understanding how to use them right away is extremely important. Not only will the student teacher feel more successful, but it will lead to the success of the students he or she is teaching as well.
- Allow and encourage the type of instruction necessary to teach in different situations. I had a student teacher--he taught two sections of class the entire time. His interviewing principal called me for a reference check, he wanted to make sure he had taught the time. He said he would have been reluctant to hire him if he had not.

#### Miscellaneous (6 Comments)

- Helping to focus on the core reasons for the things we do so that you can best problem solve how to do it.
- I would not dumb down the process or expectations as instructed by administration in the future. I still ran into difficulty expecting 30 minutes of work compared to 120 minutes if they were in school.
- In the spring, I worked as a school librarian and teacher at a rural K-8 school. I took a new position this year and am now a high school librarian. My main advice is to use your resources and cultivate a professional learning network. As school librarians, we are uniquely equipped to offer advice and training. A solid PLN will help you curate great ideas that will work no matter what happens. It was hard to prepare for something that had never happened before. We were just trying to make it work the best way we knew how. By working as a team and seeking help from our networks, we were able to find new ideas to make things work, tutorials to help us understand how to use technology, and just generally gain support from colleagues during an extremely difficult time.
- Provide teachers with time to create their virtual classes.
- Something the teachers vented to me about: In the Fall semester our school was in-person with option to stay home, which meant the teachers were on camera all day while they taught the students in the classroom. It is a tremendous amount of pressure, a tremendous amount of work, and is asking way too much of teachers. Excellent teachers in their prime are burning out fast. Young people who see/hear about it won't go into teaching as a career (they were already dropping out of programs in WI because of the DPI's handling of licensing [PDPs, requirements, certification, etc.]). It's important to have a remote system in place, but it has to be pragmatic.

## Grade 9 – Grade 12 Teachers (72 Comments)

### Expanded Technology Training (22 Comments)

- Be sure the training programs include training on Google Classroom, Meet and any other technology that would be helpful.
- Better practice/ repetition for using the computer effectively. Making sure students know how to check email, use zoom, Google Meets, etc.
- Better training of the use and functionality of Google classroom and Google suite in general.
- Exposure to online learning platforms.
- Familiar with Google programs, online tools like Ed puzzle, Kami, Google classroom, Schoology. They do not need to completely understand the many virtual tools, but at least be exposed to them. Instructors should use programs that schools use and model how they are used in 4K-12 schools.
- Give more specific platform training. We use Schoology and there are many different things teachers can use in this app but it has been more trial and error:
- Also, there are so many extensions available to use with applications but rarely do we have time to participate in in depth training.
- Streamline the options rather than have so many and make teachers feel overwhelmed."
- Have a site where teachers can go and search by subject matter online curricula/apps/etc they can use for free to help teach their classes (i.e. advanced math, ESL, instrumental music). Cover the most used platforms - like Google suite and Zoom - so there is a foundation of understanding how those programs work and how to integrate the online tools into their teaching.
- How to most effectively use ALL technology for my specific subject. I had to learn on my own or on the fly. I spent MANY hours trying to figure it out as we went along and that made the whole process very and frustrating.
- Learn how to effectively use tools like Nearpod.
- Make mandatory in training programs at least one class on alternate service deliveries.
- Make sure that all teachers are familiar with ONE platform to deliver lessons. We need to decide as a district to purchase or use one online system, so students know where to go and how to use the platform.
- More hands-on training that goes at an individual teacher's pace. Not everyone is adept with technology, so everyone's learning curve is different.
- More preparedness in the use of technology. This should also include substitute teachers.
- Proper lms training
- Provide paid time to be trained. And do NOT start using a new learning platform at the beginning of a pandemic year!
- Resources and strategies for facilitating group discussion/work i.e. jamboard, breakout rooms, nearpod, etc.
- Specific training about the online platforms your school is choosing to use ( ie Google classroom , Zoom, fliggrid, Peardeck, etc).
- Teach them the technology!

- Teachers should be well-rehearsed in online platforms like Canvas or Google Classroom to prepare for these situations. In all honesty, having Canvas this year has allowed me to do things I wouldn't usually get to do. I think it's something our school will use regularly even once things open back up safely!
- I would also include tech training in recording services like Screencastify or Knovio to make those videos (plus tips for making the videos engaging and not dull). "
- Tech tools for online learning PD
- Technology needs to be up to date in all school districts prior to eliminating any in-person learning. Many teachers only use books, paper, pens...they need to be trained in using Internet tools and how to teach students how to use these tools. Even now in Dec, 2020. I show students daily how to do simple computer steps, such as opening Google docs. Clearly urban students don't have the technology literacy other students have.

#### Best Practices for Distance Learning/Online/Virtual Methods & Lesson Planning (13 Comments)

- A technology course that addresses learning and the applications for online learning
- Assessment strategies: -What to assess? -How to assess? Re-evaluate grading district grading policies regarding formative and summative student work.
- How to digitalize assignments (not just how to have an e-copy)
- How to effectively transition materials to online learning. BUT not assume that you should teach that way in person! Having a digital lesson while in person is lazy lesson planning.
- I highly recommend taping your lectures. My students like them so much that we have switched over to that type of teaching even when we are in person. It frees up my time so students can ask questions. They always have me available. They can watch my lecture as many or as few times as they need. My students love it and I love that I can help them with more specific questions as they move their way through the chapter. Also, if you can get the videos uploaded a week at a time, the students can work ahead if they want.
- Never having imagined this when I began teaching, I would have to say that preparing teachers for adapting lessons to a virtual environment. Knowing how to use a variety of platforms/technology has really come in handy and allowed me to vary my teaching and keep students engaged. Additionally, preparing teachers for virtual classroom management is huge.
- Planning and pacing for online instruction are much different than when you are with students in a classroom - you get verbal and non-verbal cues from students that indicate their comprehension of content. Having a variety of ways to formatively assess high school students and keep them engaged in virtual learning when they have so many other digital distractions would be helpful.
- Prepare future teacher and offer more training for current teachers in all areas of virtual teaching/learning.
- Real time interaction through programs like Peardeck are super helpful. We all diagnose student understanding for natively on our classrooms and that gets lost quite a bit in the online environment. Higher order thinking questions are important in a virtual

environment because they can too easily copy and paste lower level answers. Teachers need to be efficient or they can get overwhelmed with prepping and grading online coursework. Be realistic on what can be done.

- Specific techniques & strategies for virtual instruction. Is there research yet to support certain strategies?
- Teach effective blended learning strategies and future teachers should also take a course in online teaching methods.
- Teach technology tools. Teach online teaching standards in addition to in person. Teach best practices for students who are online to ensure learning is able to happen and be verified through valid, reliable assessments.
- Zoom security. Respecting students privacy. Mandatory reporting as it applies to video instruction. Care for students well-being when instructing online. It is very different and very stressful for students. Camera on and off policies. Even microphones - can be inappropriate language and sound - how is that addressed? How do you solve a bad internet connection?

#### Best Practices for Communications/Engagement with Students/Parents/Administration (12 Comments)

- Ask around to see if you were having difficulty. I had another teacher help me.
- Engagement activities when you can't be there in person. How do we get kids [to be] in class and engaged?
- Engagement! More emphasis needs to be placed on how to engage students. Simple classroom management tools no longer work. Teachers are not the focus of a student's attention, and many have little desire to attend school. This is only amplified when going virtual.
- Find a way to engage students during virtual instruction, give LOTS of hands-on ideas that kids can do. Watching a video stream of a lecture all day is terrible.
- How to better encourage remote/virtual students and parents to check emails, watch videos, and engage in content and livestreamed classes
- How to keep those unmotivated students to stay engaged and working. Too many distractions in the home. I would sometimes tell them to get into a closet to work so they were not distracted. Other times, students were using their technology inappropriately, then parents would take away the computer instead of something else more suitable to the situation. Really, no matter how many times I contacted students and parents, some students simply did nothing. They were on a vacation. My High school students did much better than my middle school students.
- It's all about trying to connect with the students. Reaching out in an appropriate amount of time, being clear on instruction (just like in the classroom: written/verbal/etc.) and having clear expectations for teachers, students and families.
- Keeping students engaged in the material.

- Need to be able to practice how to use and present different types of software depending on the district with questions to ask to make sure all student can see. Different ways to make on-line learning interactive.
- The virtual environment is different enough from the on-line environment to warrant attention, but the technology and tools change so rapidly, that it would be impossible to predict in advance what it will look like. Fortunately, just going to school exposes future teachers to much of these technologies. I think that flexibility, innovation, organization and, above all else, communication should be prioritized. Infuse the curriculum in every class with problem solving tasks and LOTS of written, oral (video) and visual communication tasks. Focus much less on the "what" we teach and much more on the "how".

#### Emotional/Mental Health Awareness/Preparedness/Training *(4 Comments)*

- Focus on allowing teachers to be creative in creating learning that integrates adolescent mental health into all subject areas. Using content area purpose vs. the linear progression of standards and skills.
- Mental health training would always be helpful as well.
- Provide instruction in how to engage students electronically and how it's important to check in with students on their mental health.
- Teachers need to be trained in their own mental health and/or self-care.

#### Expand Teachers' Adaptability *(4 Comments)*

- A great diversity of instructional techniques will prepare teachers for more than just a pandemic.
- Ability to be flexible and effective communication strategies in multiple formats.
- Exposing teachers and students to the types of technology so procedures and norms can be established in-person before everyone needs to use it remotely.
- Just preparing new teachers to be able to switch, at a moment's notice, to different formats of teaching.

#### Be Prepared/Proactive/Have a Plan *(3 Comments)*

- Always have a general outline prepared for a class from beginning to end. Be flexible. Maintain diversified assignments. Know your resources to prepare last minute assignments. Have a support system. You don't have to know everything.
- Front load work and preparation so can just send out the materials online and not have to recreate new lessons on the fly.
- I guess we could practice online meetings, and also have an expectation that we record an emergency substitute lesson plan (right now we have to have a paper emergency lesson plan to put in our sub folder). We could also have PD on making lesson plans for sub days or other unprecedented situations.

#### Comments about Student Teachers (3 Comments)

- Allow and encourage the type of instruction necessary to teach in different situations. I had a student teacher--he taught two sections of class the entire time. His interviewing principal called me for a reference check, he wanted to make sure he had taught the time. He said he would have been reluctant to hire him if he had not.
- I'm not sure how much in person/in class time students have for student contact - but more amounts of time is beneficial.
- Student teachers need to take full charge of their classes as soon as possible and for as long as possible, given the lack of in-person time with their students.

#### Techniques/Variety of Online Teaching Methods for Specific Topics/Needs (3 Comments)

- Education on a variety of different platforms: instruction on zoom, google meets, flipgrid, etc. Providing a resource that hits major tools the schools that students may be student teaching in are using. All schools vary, but if there was a resource spot with links with how-to videos or information for the student teachers to go to instead of having to sift through materials themselves. Maybe a specific Tech support person(s) that would be able to find specific resources for student teachers so they could focus on teaching their subject and not on the delivery method.
- For speech-language pathologists, the district needs to buy online, virtual materials to replace my in-person materials that I use on a daily basis, such as speech cards and games. These are not effective in online sessions.
- We had no preparation time for this. We didn't know what to expect or how to teach online. We didn't have any rigor for students, as their grades didn't count, therefore many didn't do anything, and now know none of the info they need to in order to be in the next level of our language class.

#### Maintain In-Person Instruction (2 Comments)

- "Allow all teachers & retired with compromised immune issues & over 60 to be trained as online curriculum planners & online educators or tutors to conduct virtual/Zoom classes. All recent graduates & all other teachers need to teach students in a classroom setting. Kids need to be back in the classroom to add to lifetime skills in educating the whole person...intellectually, mentally, morally, physically, socially, emotionally & spiritually! The decision to close down the schools, churches; yet allow for protests & large rallies, political events, & sports/concerts/movie theater mass groups is totally un-constitutional as it totally violates the rights of others. Insofar as the state/national education curriculum is concerned IT IS A FAILED SYSTEM & NEEDS TO BE REVISED PER A FULL CALENDAR YEAR, WITH 2WK. BREAK BETWEEN EACH QUARTER! HOLIDAYS WILL BE TREATED IN THE SAME MANNER PER EMPLOY-MENT HOLIDAYS. THERE SHOULD ALSO BE INCENTIVES-i.e. PERFECT ATTENDANCES, NON-BEHAVIORAL ISSUES, LEADERSHIP/VOLUNTEER RECOGNITIONS, ARTS, ACTIVITIES, THEATER & SCHOOL CLUB, AND SPORTS AWARDS ....EACH & ALL OF WHICH WOULD HELP BUILD & ENHANCE SELF ESTEEM & SELF WORTH!

IF THE WI. DEPT. OF ED. DOESN'T IMPLEMENT MAJOR CHANGES, PARENTS SHOULD HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO CHOOSE THAT TYPE of EDUCATION THAT BEST SUITS THEIR CHILD'S LEARNING AND INTERESTS W/GOV'T VOUCHERS FOR SCHOOLS WITH: "LEARNING OPTIONS w/ CHOICE KNOWLEDGE & ENRICHMENT DEVELOPMENT." aka "L.O.C.K.E.D."" into learning!!"

- Side note... I do not believe in person instruction will ever be eliminated. Based on feedback from many high school students this fall they do not like online learning.

#### Hybrid teaching (1 Comment)

- They could actually teach us how to be effective remotely and in a hybrid environment.

#### Non-tech teaching methods/variety (1 Comment)

- More independent, hands on projects that connect to the lesson without being in front of a computer

#### Tech resources/training for students and parents (1 Comment)

- Students (k-12) need to be taught how to learn online. They need instruction on the tools schools are utilizing and need to be re-taught the importance of classroom expectations. Students need to know how to check email and respond appropriately.

#### Miscellaneous (3 Comments)

- Better structure with clear time set aside for additional services
- I would not dumb down the process or expectations as instructed by administration in the future. I still ran into difficulty expecting 30 minutes of work compared to 120 minutes if they were in school.
- Schools are NOT funded for the work they are doing. Ed leaders have not addressed inequities and accessibility issues. The success of teaching during COVID is NOT on teachers, but on a system that has not changed in decades. We cannot prepare students for the future if Ed leaders want to keep structures in the past.

## Appendix A3 – Open-ended Comments from Parents

Question 9 - Your child/children may have received instruction during the spring of 2020 pandemic via the following methods and strategies. For each method, please indicate if you think it worked well, was not applicable, or didn't work well for the children you have at the three grade levels shown. Other online/Other in-person

### Other Online (11 Comments)

- 5k- Seesaw, 9-12- Google Classroom
- App learning
- Canvas
- Chrome Book
- Drive up
- Google classroom
- Library computer
- Morning meeting (was live not interactive)
- Seesaw and Canvas
- Seesaw app
- Zoom meets and Google classrooms

### Other In-person (6 Comments)

- Other In-Person Method
- CNA lab for AP
- Didn't have any in-person option in spring 2020
- I wish
- Online video
- Paper and Books

### PreK – Grade 5

Question 10a - Thinking about the experiences you and your child/children had during the spring of 2020, what is one thing that you would like the educational system to improve when dealing with a future situation that limits or eliminates in-person instruction?

### Teaching Pedagogy Comments (24 Comments)

- 1st grade: work textbooks
- 2- Reading books on online app, Math online app
- 2nd- lots of time to accomplish assignments
- 2nd- nothing is working particularly well. Workbooks maybe have been most effective
- 3k & 4k; Great packets directions.
- 3rd and 4th graders combination of pre-recorded instructional videos and Zoom calls worked online
- 3rd grade- structured assignments.
- 4K- Book read aloud on Facebook (better than nothing)
- 4K small projects
- 4th- live virtual instruction worked pretty well
- 5K Video recording of teacher instructing
- 5th grade: workbooks, textbooks

- Give teachers training in online teaching so they addressed properly the kids
- Individual lessons being sent email
- It would have helped a lot to have prerecorded videos of the teacher guiding the student through the work. Getting our schedule to line up to make it exactly to a Zoom call was hard and interrupted the flow of our day. Having students do pre-recorded videos on their own in the morning and then check with a Zoom call in SMALL groups of 3-5 of similar ability students to discuss questions and answers would have been more effective.
- K-4: worksheets to practice writing, tracing, coloring, cutting, etc.
- Online teaching strategies
- PreK and 1st. Homework was very organized and introductions easy to follow
- Smaller groups online, submitting work via Seesaw and Canvas
- The combination of online and in-person classes works pretty good for them.
- This fall option in-person or virtual has worked well after our district so far.
- To be better organized.
- Video instruction and engagement as a class would have made this more successful and less stressful for our kids.
- Work was well planned out, could do the work at anytime.

#### Connections with Teacher (20 Comments)

- 1-1 meetings
- 2nd- student received a lot of feedback
- 4th grade- 1:1 time with teachers.
- 5K- communication between parent and teacher is amazing. Our teachers were extremely responsive to emails, even at night. The teachers are bending over backwards to ensure their students need were being met.
- 5k- short (30-40 min) daily Zoom meeting for review of day.
- 5th grade- teacher were available 24/7 (our school is Amazing)
- A better way to handle one on one situations so students do not fall behind.
- Emails to parents knowing due dates for assignments, weekly morning meetings with teachers
- For the younger kids and parents who aren't computer savvy there should have been a day that the teacher and the student could meet up in person to catch up on assigned work.
- Having the teacher actually do online learning, the other pre k teacher did weekly individual check ins, weekly group chats, daily emails with links. Mine did a couple of printed packets and one group show and tell Zoom call.
- If virtual instruction must happen, it is essential that teachers have an online presence with the children via online chats, etc. Paper packets for younger children are okay but the teachers still need to be instructing via video.
- More individual & group Google Meets with the teachers to teach the lessons live.
- More live streaming so students can interact with teachers if needed
- More one and one time. Engaging the kids differently. My child loses focus after 40 min of being online. She is overwhelmed with the amount of homework she has and is not able to ask the next day or during recess or other kids to help her out.
- More one on one instruction or small group lessons
- My older child thrives on consistency and positive feedback from her teachers. Socializing isn't just peer interaction. Socializing thru teacher communications should also remain a priority.
- Pre-recorded, personalized message from our teacher

- Require children to be logged in with class and teachers teaching lessons.
- Teacher checks in each day at a specific time

#### Maintain In-Person Instruction *(15 Comments)*

- We hope there is never another occurrence. Remote education for young children is not realistic, as most learning at this age is social-emotional. At the very minimum, we would expect 1:1 time with the teacher in short increments, or with a small cohort like one other child at a time. We would also like varied activities that are not just worksheets. We'd also like large group time when the kids would simulate circle time.
- (K) going to school
- 3rd- in person
- At least try in person learning
- Elementary students are not old enough to stay home or independent to do online schooling.
- I believe that students need to interact with the teachers and other students. I do not think that closing the schools was a good idea. I also believe that it was a political pandemic.
- I don't have any issues with the staff/teachers. My concern is the fact that my 5 and 7 year old have a more difficult time focusing on their work when they have to learn remotely.
- In classroom - Gr 2
- In person education without restrictions, social distancing, or masks. All are a hindrance to education.
- In school with friends and teachers!
- In-person instruction is NEEDED for kids under the age of 10. This is a critical time for young minds and they need to be shaped by those specialized to teach them.
- Keep in person
- Keep these children in school. This is more traumatic to children than getting a simple virus.
- PERIOD
- Make in-person instruction optional.
- Offer in person instruction

#### Technology/Software Comments *(15 Comments)*

- Zoom is great, but my children would rather be in school than home to be around their peer and to get that up close and personal teaching (Me too :))
- 1st grade: Google meets, Google sheets/docs.
- 2nd- small group Zoom meeting for math
- 4K- Zoom meetings were good, 2nd: Zoom meetings were good
- 5th grade: Google meets, and Google docs.
- Access to all apps used for learning
- Access to Chromebook.
- Child has own space and Chrome Book, we owned a Chrome book however school provided one as well
- I think they need more technical support people available. It seems too often that it's TEACHERS who are dealing with technical issues. The teachers are dealing with a really tough situation and shouldn't be expected to learn technical details. They should be able to focus solely on lesson plans and instruction. I had tech issues one of the first days, called the support line, and received a reply phone call FOUR DAYS LATER. That's... not great! I understand they're busy, but speaks to the issue of how there's not enough tech support available.

- iPads for each student made a huge difference as each kid could have their own rather than sharing
- It would be helpful if we had reliable internet that could support multiple users simultaneously.
- K-4: Google meets
- My 3rd graders Chromebook does not work for online schooling I've tried everything to make it work but doesn't work...he has missed out on so much learning this year!! When he can get on, he does not know what is going on. And is confused because he has missed so much. He really needs to be in school he is a smart kid but this virtual learning is no good and I haven't had much help from his teacher!
- People without internet access cannot work from home efficiently. The hot spots do not work well for the kids. Especially if there are more than one kid in the house
- Zoom meeting for 2nd
- Zoom meeting with class/teacher

#### Parent Needs *(9 Comments)*

- Be mindful of the parents that are working.
- Better resources or options for working parents, such as providing a space where students can be supervised by teachers or staff while safely distanced, like the gym.
- How to help parents manage in-home learning.
- It is very hard to teach a young student when working at my full time job. I don't mind the online learning for my older girl, but it is very, very hard with a young student who listens well at school, but not at home.
- K- Activities done with a parent.
- Parents need some sort of presentation or easy short guide to deal with technology and schooling to help with students
- Perhaps a big picture outline of what will be covered for parents, to make sure the key points are being touched on.
- The teachers did quite well transitioning to recorded lessons, but parents didn't transition well to implementing the lessons consistently with having to also transition to working from home. This set up requires too much from parents. The Answer would be different if you asked how the district did the fall 2020 during distance learning. Teaching and Zoom/Google meet utilization. The district would score higher than what was previously scored.
- Was able to focus on teaching material to our k student as only one of parents work

#### Communication Comments *(8 Comments)*

- 3k & 4k; Received organized calendar on what to complete each week. Great packets directions.
- Better communication
- Clear communication on what is expected of students and clear due dates for assignments.
- Clearer expectations of what work should be done and by when
- Communication which my son's school did a very disgustingly poor job of. By rights every child should have to repeat the yr!
- Have packets and lesson plans ready and more organized. This was the first time the school system was handed this situation, so I cut the process a little slack. But in the future, lesson plans are easily made ahead of time and packets can be sent out.
- I needed specifically the math portions to be done live, via Zoom or something instead of Zearn or in addition to

- I would have liked to have seen scheduled times to be doing math, science etc. Maybe having the teacher go live online and instruct versus recording ahead of time.

#### General Positive Comments (8 Comments)

- 4th grade student for the most part he did well.
- Coordination
- Kindergarten child is excited for her classes each day. The classes do not last longer than 1/2 hr due to the ages of students.
- Nothing. I think they did a good job considering the fact that we are in the middle of a global pandemic.
- SMSA Fendy great job!!
- Support for teachers and instructors. Most of them are working their tails off to give/get children what they need and are not being recognized and supported by administrators in their efforts.
- They made some great changes in virtual learning days from Spring of 2020 to fall of 2020 when students returned. In spring, the kids did not have classes to attend online and were not really held accountable for their work. They rushed through their assignments that were given in the morning and were done with their work by 9:30 am with nothing left to do and me trying to work from home. Now, when they have virtual days, they have to login to classes all day for virtual instruction and are on a schedule when doing virtual work.
- Wrigstown is great people

#### Connections with Friends/Socialization (7 Comments)

- Figure out how to replace the loneliness and despair the children are experiencing.
- He misses his friends and a structured school day.
- Perhaps let the kids use apps that let them interact with each other on a personal level so that they don't feel too distanced from each other. Not during class time of course.
- Seeing classmate in Zoom, small groups
- Some way for students to connect with others. They are too isolated
- Think about children who do not have siblings in the home, the isolation from friends was hard on my son
- What can be done for younger children who need socialization?

#### General Negative Comments (6 Comments)

- 2nd grade student for the most part didn't do well.
- For younger students like mine I felt there was too much time tied to the iPad/Zoom session and not enough encouragement to keep the kids physical activity level up. Breaks were given they called 'recess' but I feel kids were just left to sit around and play video games during the so-called recess times. I wish I knew the solution but given the circumstances it is difficult. Perhaps encouraging kids to do outdoor assignments during recess.
- Have enough resources to help kids if they have questions.
- I don't agree with kindergartners getting really low grades doing virtual as this is all new to them and have to do online learning by themselves
- Our spring school was Montessori and it really failed to transition well to the virtual environment. We since switched to public and the learning /achievement has been substantially more.
- Still continue to issue grades. There was no accountability with pass/fail. My kids still worked hard and others were rewarded for not putting in the time.

#### Engagement Concerns (4 Comments)

- I know this has been a new frontier for teaching and it has been very challenging for teachers. They have been doing a great job and I see they are dedicated and trying very hard. Some of the work I've seen seems a little like busy work and not really learning. I wonder what the children are learning from this, and I'm concerned they are learning less than in-person school. It is very difficult to keep kids engaged with this busy work and they seem to lose interest quickly. I know kids like to watch instructional material because I've supplemented virtual school with having the kids watch documentaries on tv such as with Curiosity Stream. This actually keeps the kids deeply engaged and they ask questions about the material after watching. Maybe if we had more lecture teaching with some possible visual aids, the kids might maintain their focus on school and could learn a lot more than with the busy work such as taking a picture or writing a sentence about what they did. I believe that kids have the ability to absorb a lot of information because I see them do this when watching these documentaries, and I think we can learn from this and use some of the same ideas in virtual school to teach our children more effectively.
- My kindergartner has no interest in watching 30 alphabet videos and doing some follow up questions when he can go outside and play in the snow.
- The duration of the school day is too long if remote learning. Elementary school aged children do not have the stamina to sit on a screen for as long as they are required, nor is it recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- There are way too many distractions at home.

#### Special Needs Students Comments (3 Comments)

- More guidance for parents with special needs children, less online homework. The online homework seemed never-ending and was very overwhelming and difficult to get my child to do at home.
- There was a total chaos at the beginning, it took 9 months, 9 MONTHS to make a decision, establish a program, nobody communicate to me anything, I was the one that pick up the phone and decide to call, the teacher, the principal, the school, the special needs supervisor, even asked for an emergent IEP revision, nobody had any plan for the special needs children, like they were completely forgotten, like nobody cared if they were not progressing, I am a physician so I had to pay out of pocket someone to stay at home ( and still do it) to be with my daughter, who cannot be home alone, as I am the one going to treat the COVID patients. What did I get from people? " Oh... thanks for your service!" Honestly, I don't care to hear this, I would prefer the hundred of teachers who stay home instead of being exposed every day to the infection, to develop a plan ALSO for our special needs kids!!! What? are their education not important? Why? because does not matter if she spend days at home doing nothing, anyway she is going to be disable the rest of her life so 7-8 month more or not does not make a difference??? YES, DOES ...FOR ME... FOR HER!! HONESTLY, a high school kid that stop going to school for even 12 months will be late in his life of 1 year... yeah, like the ones that take a gap year just because don't want to go to college right away, a special needs that stops ALL HER THERAPIES for 1 year LOOSES LIFE SKILLS!!!
- There needs to be a better attempt to satisfy the IEP needs of special education students to meet their allotted amount of minutes given for speech, resource, etc.

#### Lack of Preparation/Coordination (3 Comments)

- Lack of consistency in learning within district and compared to other districts. No social studies or science curriculum is unacceptable!
- Not panic when illness arises

- Was not prepared. We understood it was a pandemic and the school did what they could. We are very disappointed with 2020-21 had a summer to work on things and it hasn't changed much. No consistent message with the school district across Wisconsin. Living in Dane county has hurt my kids ability to learn and the school board and superintendent plus team should be ashamed with themselves.

#### Miscellaneous (9 Comments)

- 5K- Learning platform (P.S. We personally chose to keep children at home due to my wife was able to work from home)
- 5th grade- independence.
- Being home
- Having a parent having an educational background/degree helped tremendously/ It helped met expected standards to be met.
- I think MPS should be able to have class a couple days a week. And online the rest of the days.
- I was able to help my son
- Kids knew how to log on and complete work
- Lunch
- Safety of the kids

#### Pre-K – Grade 5

Question 10b - If you had more than one child in elementary school, or middle school, or high school in spring 2020 who had very different experiences with online education last spring, please tell us the method of instruction or software that was problematic and why. Also, please, tell us the ages of your children.

#### Technology Comments (22 Comments)

- 2nd- daily apps as math/reading homework. Quickly became a game to beat without learning involved-just get the right answer if multiple failed attempts and move on
- 2nd grade child just didn't get the computer at all!
- 2nd- too many different platforms used by different teachers
- Apps
- Class Zoom lessons where entire class was there
- Facebook groups did not progress in learning past school stoppage
- Google classroom was difficult but mostly because the teacher and students were all learning on the fly.
- I didn't know how the Google system operated.
- I had 3 children in the Spring of 2020. One used Google Classroom and that worked well once she learned it. She is 12. The other student used Seesaw... Seesaw is only as good as the person who creates the lessons though, and many teachers Seesaw lessons were useless and produced no learning in our 7 year old, 2nd grade student. Now in 3rd grade, and in a new school, we see her using Google Classroom, Flipgrid, Padlet and a few others. Padlet is not very good without the full package and its ability to pronounce words in a foreign language being taught at school is dismal. At a new school with different teachers we see Seesaw lessons being much more creative and better geared towards effective learning our kindergarten student.

- Internet
- Internet connection
- It was problematic for our family to have two children (ages 9 and 11) who needed to access limited internet on devices that were not fully sufficient during the same time frame. Due to adults in the home working (one from home and one away from home) there was not adequate adult guidance to assist in mediating this and school work that required assistance.
- My 10 year old fourth grader tolerated the Zooms but learned very little from asynchronous lessons in this format
- My 7 year old first grader cried before and after each Zoom group meeting.
- My kindergartener and my second grader had problems switching between computer programs. They had to frequently switch from Zoom to Raz kids to Prodigy to their class link. All the websites had different log in information set up by the teachers.
- My sons school used Google and it was a complete fiasco! Our children deserve better than what they are getting!
- Spotty internet, all virtual.
- Technology issues
- Technology issues
- Too many apps/pieces to find homework
- Zoom was a problem with large groups as very little could be communicated and took a long time.
- Zoom with entire class

#### Learning at Home/Outside Classroom/Engagement (21 Comments)

- 3rd- at home
- At home learning for 2nd
- Children have lost motivation
- He found it hard to engage
- It is difficult for students to focus outside of a school environment.
- It was difficult for my 1st grader to watch instructional videos.
- K- keeping students attention
- K-4: not having classroom experience. My child's attention span is not long especially at his age and stage.
- Music, gym, and art classes were most difficult for our children (4th, 7th, 9th grades). The absence of face to face for these subjects created little/no motivation for our children to complete assignments. They did the work assigned, but it just wasn't as excited as in-person. The teachers in all of these areas are not to blame. These subjects are such that learning is more fun, and often more meaningful, in person. This continues to be our struggle for all of our children during this school year (2020-21).
- My 11 year old had a hard time staying focused and on track and had a really hard time.
- My 3rd grader needs people
- My 4 year old in kindergarten cannot focus staring at the computer. She's not paying attention to her teacher.
- My 9 year old cannot focus online she is really shy and doesn't ask the teacher for help. In the class setting the teacher can give her more individual time versus online.

- My child was in kindergarten last spring. It was very difficult to get her to do what little work they had. Was poorly organized. I know it's not anyone's fault given the circumstance. No one was prepared
- My oldest never did his e schooling. It was more work to harass him every day to log on and do his work.
- Online classes for pre-school and kindergarten doesn't work, you need too much help from parents and if they don't. They kids won't attend.
- Online instruction does not work for Kindergarten and early literacy students
- Online Learning with other kids didn't work as well as one on one.
- Online school does NOT work!
- The fact that they have to be at home, in general. They need the classroom structure, otherwise they tend to not want to do their work.
- This entire situation is problematic. Children NEED to be in class with their peers, teachers, etc. Without masks or social distancing!!!!

#### Structure/Instruction/Expectation Comments (9 Comments)

- (K) not having school all 5 days,
- 4K- No formal process
- 5k+4th- kids used to be in a structure. Format to learn effectively. Last spring was a disorganized (a Joke)
- 5th grade-not a lot of guided instruction.
- All was self-paced, 2nd grader sent homework paper packets with no instructions. Her math is taught different than mine learned in the 80's. We gave up handing in assignments. Children were 7 and 11.
- No actual class. nothing explained, seemed to have to figure things out on your own
- Poor teacher instruction
- PreK he did not understand and homework was not well instructed. It was all sent home paperwork no online.

#### Insufficient Content/Not Challenging Enough (8 Comments)

- Problem was kindergarten and protocols online works poorly due to their lack of consistency. Not sustainable to expect them to learn in front of a screen. Teachers did their best. Because of teachers and other factors choose to home-school for 2020-2021 vs. consistent plan. In teacher defense, how could they possibly be prepared?
- 4th in spring; teacher did very little, less than one hour of schoolwork per day intervention semi-disappeared
- 5k- my student were often done with their online work in 5 hours, which I felt wasn't giving them the best education. I would have more teacher interaction live or recorded video lessons. Instead, students received more general assignments through the Seesaw app, as well as links to instruction of videos online that were recorded by some other person other than the teacher. My kids would have like to see their teacher instead
- 5K- simple lessons
- 5th- did not have enough work

- I feel there was less effort for my 4th grader for assignments to complete. My 7th grader had more
- Kids were provided answers to homework therefore they check their work when done and copied the correct answer.
- My 7 year old did well with virtual school in spring, though didn't have enough work for the day.
- Received only suggested learning activities which didn't challenge our child. Needed live instruction and Seesaw is much better this year

#### Communication Comments (7 Comments)

- 5th- grade student did not receive Feedback
- Access to teachers when needed
- Communication
- Communication and guidance from the teacher
- I didn't know how they were doing, what they were missing.
- Poor communication between teachers and parents of what is expected.
- Teachers office hours were during the day when I am at work

#### General Negative Comments (6 Comments)

- Everything was poor
- In the beginning to school resuming it was a disaster, the children couldn't log on to their classes!
- Kindergarten. This whole situation has pushed us toward homeschooling.
- No software can replace in-person instruction at any grade level. They may work on a very limited basis, but coupled with in-person instruction.
- Nothing beats in person schooling. I am not a teacher, but I did my best. But we made the choice to send in person for the fall of 2020.
- Poor with all 3

#### Ineffective Instructional Approaches (6 Comments)

- 3rd grade- it was all over the place. 4th grade- it was all over the place.
- Assignments
- Everything changes often
- Lessons were pre-recorded no opportunity for questions.
- Recorded lessons have received the least enthusiasm
- The method of education that was the most problematic was lengthy pre-recorded videos for elementary kids. Young kids have short attention spans so after a few minutes, they lose interest & start to zone out. Our elementary kids are 7 & 9.

#### Parent Challenges (4 Comments)

- I work full-time and cannot be a proper teacher. I have no education and I feel my kids lag on learning
- One parent unable to work
- Teaching with a one year old at home
- Timing of school and work at home parents made it stressfull to accomplish both. Motivation to get things completed

#### Special Needs Students *(3 Comments)*

- I have only 1 daughter, she is 11 y/o and is in a self contained special needs class at Gaenslen school.
- K-5 I have an autism disabled-son 1 grade- learning disabled son
- Our fifth grader is dyslexic and has ADHD. She has troubles with all aspects of school, making learning extremely difficult. She doesn't like to sit at the computer for long stretches, computer programs can be difficult to follow. We took her out of her normal school at the end of the spring 2020 term and enrolled her in a school that was remote based thinking they were familiar with how that methodology works. I don't know that it has gone better because we are essentially home schooling her now, which causes friction for Dad and daughter

#### General Positive Comments *(2 Comments)*

- Child in 4th grade did well!
- My daughters are ages 7 and 13. I don't think any of the methods of teaching are problematic.

#### Miscellaneous *(2 Comments)*

- He also missed speech.
- No other children.

## Grade 6 – Grade 8

Question 10a - Thinking about the experiences you and your child/children had during the spring of 2020, what is one thing that you would like the educational system to improve when dealing with a future situation that limits or eliminates in-person instruction?

### Teaching Pedagogy Comments (18 Comments)

- Balancing online homework with online class. It was a LOT of computer time and the kids were fried by the end of the day.
- Be easy on the children like mine that are not structured enough to have online classes. Right now he has two that are completely failing. I don't think he'll be able to dig himself out of those holes. When they were in school, he was getting A's and B's when everything went online he failed 2 classes.
- Classes have to be live online. It doesn't work to have asynchronous classes. Our kids spent a couple of hours per day watching videos and doing homework instead of the 7-8 hours they were in school. Absolutely not an equivalent experience.
- Find ways to present all material
- For high school students its 9-12 lecture worked quite well. 7-8 grade didn't do so well.
- Give teachers training in online teaching so they addressed properly the kids
- Have a virtual option in place. It seems like we were just one of a few areas that didn't offer virtual.
- Have more live lecturing instead of relying on email communication. There was more of this in the fall than the spring, so it moved in the right direction.
- Homework too easy in my opinion.
- I think MPS should be able to have class a couple days a week. And online the rest of the days.
- I think the kids need more breaks other than sitting in front of the computer 7 hours a day.
- Live stream classes with teachers would be helpful instead of just given assignments.
- Maintain the same schedule as they would have had for in-person school
- MAKE kids login to learn at certain times each day. i.e.) Math is from 9am-9:50am and all kids must be logged in.
- More individual & group Google Meets with the teachers to teach the lessons live.
- Require children to be logged in with class and teachers teaching lessons.
- Still continue to issue grades. There was no accountability with pass/fail. My kids still worked hard and others were rewarded for not putting in the time.
- That they have a set schedule for classes and hold classes via Zoom. Our school is doing this now if we cannot have in-person and it is working much better than for my 8th grader than just having a daily sheet to go off of.

### Communication Comments (13 Comments)

- Better teacher/student help. Teachers being available online for a one hour block in the morning and a one hour block in the afternoon for an entire high school that is doing school from home is absolutely ridiculous. And when they pick a distance learning provider for the kids who do virtual only, they need to do their homework, because my youngest decided to do all virtual and then had NO teachers for almost a month because the package her school picked suddenly told them they didn't have the staff to cover teaching our children

- Better communication with both children and parents
- Better communication with teachers about assignments
- Better communication.
- Clear communication on what is expected of students and clear due dates for assignments.
- Have enough resources to help kids if they have questions
- Individual communication from teachers
- One on one video conference were the most helpful for my child, other than in-person learning.
- Phone calls, Emails
- Scheduling and understanding the schedule was messed up and confusing for the kids and parents and limited access to those with the answers or that should know was limited and hard to get through.
- Teacher checks in each day at a specific time
- Week of homework in advance
- Zoom meeting with class/teacher

#### Technology/Software Comments (8 Comments)

- Teachers need to use excellent audio equipment help deliver quality instruction.
- Access to Chromebook.
- Better internet or back to school
- Emailed assignments or accessing them on the internet made it easy to complete and learn assignments.
- Glitches on their Chromebook
- Google classroom
- It would be helpful if we had reliable internet that could support multiple users simultaneously.
- The teachers weren't fully ready or equipped to do online learning. A few of them had trouble learning Google meet, classroom, etc. I feel this happened because we shut down so suddenly.

#### Parent Needs (6 Comments)

- Better resources or options for working parents, such as providing a space where students can be supervised by teachers or staff while safely distanced, like the gym.
- How to help parents manage in-home learning.
- I would like to see kids stay in person. That said, if impossible, then communication that is easy for both students and parents to understand. I know the teachers tried to help in the spring, but they often used "short hand" that they may use in class, but it meant nothing to me as a parent (ie., "Do S.L 1-2 and S.R #14 by Monday).
- More affordable options for parents
- Parents need some sort of presentation or easy short guide to deal with technology and schooling to help with students
- Perhaps a big picture outline of what will be covered for parents, to make sure the key points are being touched on.

#### Lack of Preparation/Coordination (6 Comments)

- Better planning
- Better preparedness

- Coordination
- He is a strong independent learner, Fall 2020 has gone much better and more organized. Still feel like they aren't learning enough.
- Preparing and making sure that teachers uploaded teachings work properly (sound, visual).
- Was not prepared. We understood it was a pandemic and the school did what they could. We are very disappointed with 2020-21 had a summer to work on things and it hasn't changed much. No consistent message with the school district across Wisconsin. Living in Dane county has hurt my kids ability to learn and the school board and superintendent plus team should be ashamed with themselves.

#### Maintain In-Person Instruction (5 Comments)

- Do in person instruction. The vulnerable should isolate. The sick should quarantine. The rest should live normally. Government eagerness to impede human freedom worsened the health issue, and affirmed selfishness in society.
- In school with friends and teachers!
- KIDS BELONG IN SCHOOL. SCHOOLS SHOULD HAVE NEVER BEEN CLOSED. COVID IS NOT A CONCERN.
- Kids need to be back in school.
- Zoom is great, but my children would rather be in school than home to be around their peer and to get that up close and personal teaching (Me too :) )

#### General Positive Comments (5 Comments)

- 8th grade- works well at home and in person.
- I know this has been a new frontier for teaching and it has been very challenging for teachers. They have been doing a great job and I see they are dedicated and trying very hard.
- Nothing. I think they did a good job considering the fact that we are in the middle of a global pandemic.
- The combination of online and in-person classes works pretty good for them.
- Work was well planned out, could do the work at any time.

#### Connections with Friends/Socialization (3 Comments)

- Figure out how to replace the loneliness and despair the children are experiencing.
- Some way for students to connect with others. They are too isolated
- They need more interaction with their teachers and classmates, even if it is only virtual.

#### Engagement Concerns (1 Comment)

- Some of the work I've seen seems a little like busy work and not really learning. I wonder what the children are learning from this, and I'm concerned they are learning less than in-person school. It is very difficult to keep kids engaged with this busy work and they seem to lose interest quickly. I know kids like to watch instructional material because I've supplemented virtual school with having the kids watch documentaries on tv such as with Curiosity Stream. This actually keeps the kids deeply engaged and they ask questions about the material after watching. Maybe if we had more lecture teaching with some possible visual aids, the kids might maintain their focus on school and could learn a lot more than with the busy work such as taking a picture or writing a sentence about what they did. I believe that kids have the ability to absorb a lot of information

because I see them do this when watching these documentaries, and I think we can learn from this and use some of the same ideas in virtual school to teach our children more effectively.

#### General Negative Comments (1 Comment)

- Our school was not prepared for remote learning and there is no question that all they did was try to maintain what had been taught before. There really was no new learning and in my opinion we lost ground on education

#### Miscellaneous (4 Comments)

- 6th grade- likes being home, more video time.
- 8th grade- independence
- If our kids are forbidden from going to school. Then cancel school all together.
- Safety of the kids

#### Grade 6 – Grade 8

Question 10b - If you had more than one child in elementary school, or middle school, or high school in spring 2020 who had very different experiences with online education last spring, please tell us the method of instruction or software that was problematic and why. Also, please, tell us the ages of your children.

#### Technology Comments (9 Comments)

- Difficulties w/ technical aspects.
- Doing online school only sucked because of poor internet connection. We have internet but CenturyLink service is the only service we can get and its very slow so you can't have multiple people using it at one time otherwise they wouldn't be able to get anything done.
- Each instructor using different platforms 8 & 12
- In the beginning to school resuming it was a disaster, the children couldn't log on to their classes!
- It was problematic for our family to have two children (ages 9 and 11) who needed to access limited internet on devices that were not fully sufficient during the same time frame.
- My children are 17, 15 and 13. The internet was a huge problem. Once the school got us a hotspot, it wasn't working for all of them, they told me the kids needed to sit closer to the hotspot, umm, then they can't all be on their Zoom meetings and pay attention.
- The Chrome book technology and Canvas did not work for my high school student. (Ahad)
- The many different websites being used is confusing. Work is getting submitted to the wrong website...
- Zoom sometimes crashes

#### Learning at Home/Outside Classroom/Engagement (7 Comments)

- 6th grade- feel he does better in person
- I have an 8th grade boy who just simply struggles with school at home. He doesn't take it as seriously. I tried several attempts to get him organized and it was a huge struggle. I have a senior who in spring 2020, as a Junior, had mostly elective classes that were easy for him to do from home. Much different than my 8th grader.
- Music, gym, and art classes were most difficult for our children (4th, 7th, 9th grades). The absence of face to face for these subjects created little/no motivation for our children to complete assignments. They did the work assigned, but it just wasn't as excited as in-person. The teachers in all of these areas are not to blame. These subjects are such that learning is more fun, and often more meaningful, in person. This continues to be our struggle for all of our children during this school year (2020-21).
- My child had a very difficult time working independently
- My child is doing far worse in school virtually.
- No software can replace in-person instruction at any grade level. They may work on a very limited basis, but coupled with in-person instruction.
- Online school does NOT work!

#### Structure/Instruction/Expectation Comments (6 Comments)

- 7th- had too much work
- 8th grade- no clear instruction.
- Assignments and apps and everything changes often
- Grades was capped - minimal at previous quarter grades. Causing disincentive to keep up.
- Not clear for due dates and how to turn in online or in school. Location is different for each class as in modules, assignments, and announcements. NO CONSISTANCY WITH CLASSES . (6th/7th)
- Pass/fail grade give no incentive for the children to do well so they didn't.

#### Communication Comments (5 Comments)

- My 7th grader had no interaction, was just assigned work and told to complete it.
- Not explaining assignments. Majority of the time teachers just posted assignments and didn't explain how to do it. Expect them to know how to do it. Not every child learns at the same pace. 8th grade
- Poor access to teachers input or feedback when learning something. My child misses the one-on-one feedback from his teachers and peers while learning virtually.
- Several different types of communication- Zoom and classroom, email, school email, private email, etc. Lack of clear communication regarding expectations and assignments
- Teachers not responsive in adequate times.

#### Parent Challenges (5 Comments)

- 11 years old first year in Middle School and this confused as well as left several parents fighting to find a balance between life, work, and helping their children with school as well as issues throughout their day.
- Due to adults in the home working (one from home and one away from home) there was not adequate adult guidance to assist in mediating this and schoolwork that required assistance.
- Only 1 child
- Only one child in school
- Two children one 13 one 16. My 8th grader only had class in the afternoon and it didn't reinforce a routine very well with parents at work. I believe a schedule could have been made for instruction to last from 0800 to 1300.

#### Ineffective Instructional Approaches (4 Comments)

- Group video chat/lectures
- My children have not learned a thing. They have wasted a year and I feel like my kids are no smarter than they were before. What a waste of their and my time. I am not a teacher and not paid to teach my kids. I work 60 hrs a week and have no time to sit and teach them stuff I don't know. What a waste of time. Put these kids back in school
- No actual class. Nothing explained, seemed to have to figure things out on your own.
- The virtual learning that basically had zero teacher support or ease of use for my 8th grader... she excels at school every other year and the first half of this year she failed, miserably. So, I sent her back to in school learning, then she got Covid and had to do distance learning again.

#### General Negative Comments (3 Comments)

- It has just been a nightmare this year. I'm calling the end of last year a wash only because no one really knew how to handle it, but they should've gotten it together by the beginning of this year and, sadly, failed in my opinion.
- My 7th grader is failing every subject!
- Poor with all 3

#### General Positive Comments (1 Comment)

- My daughters are ages 7 and 13. I don't think any of the methods of teaching are problematic.

#### Miscellaneous (1 Comment)

- I feel there was less effort for my 4th grader for assignments to complete. My 7th grader had more

## Grade 9 – Grade 12

Question 10a - Thinking about the experiences you and your child/children had during the spring of 2020, what is one thing that you would like the educational system to improve when dealing with a future situation that limits or eliminates in-person instruction?

### Teaching Pedagogy Comments (20 Comments)

- 12- Google class videos
- Classes have to be live online. It doesn't work to have asynchronous classes. Our kids spent a couple of hours per day watching videos and doing homework instead of the 7-8 hours they were in school. Absolutely not an equivalent experience.
- Didn't have a lot of work: reduced work load
- Don't assign so much necessary work to complete
- For high school students its 9-12 lecture worked quite well. 7-8 grade didn't do so well.
- Give teachers training in online teaching so they addressed properly the kids
- Have a virtual option in place. It seems like we were just one of a few areas that didn't offer virtual.
- Have enough resources to help kids if they have questions
- Have more live lecturing instead of relying on email communication. There was more of this in the fall than the spring so it moved in the right direction.
- Having live classes where kids must be there is one thing I would have liked to see happen - but due to how things happened I understand the issues.
- Holding kids accountable
- Make set plans. These kids cannot be shifted day to day or week to week. It was ridiculous trying to keep up which is why I pulled mine all together.
- Most of the previous questions didn't apply. I'm hoping N/A meant "not applicable" and not "something in between." There was nothing that "worked well" or "worked poorly" for my child, as all was less than stellar but not horrible for her. Also, spring 2020 was far different from fall 2020. Teachers (or at least those my child has) have adapted, and her education is not a complete wash this year; it's still not perfect, though. Actual communication with the students via Zoom or Teams or whatever format is chosen is far better than what occurred in spring when there was no real communication. Seeing the teacher and being able to respond to the teacher is best. So, I guess my "one thing" is that schools ensure they have actual communication with each child at some point, and it may include group contact.
- My main concern is how cohorts are handled at her school. They were in cohorts since mid-October, but went completely virtual over the holidays. They will go back to cohorts next week. They receive a lesson in person and the next day work on their own from home while the other cohort gets the same lesson. I'm concerned they cannot cover all of the material needed for the year. I wish they had instruction each day at school or virtually depending on their cohort.
- Not every student is an "online" learning student. They all are different and all deserve the best education.
- Online Classes
- Online teaching strategies
- Please avoid surprise assignments

- Should have been daily instruction with Wed being virtual from the beginning. We know risk is not high with children.

#### Maintain In-Person Instruction *(10 Comments)*

- Be realistic about the actual dangers or lack thereof.
- Being in school
- Going to school
- I do not think that closing the schools was a good idea. I also believe that it was a political pandemic.
- In regards to a pandemic that was shown to minimally affect children, closing schools was not, in my opinion, a wise decision. I would like to see choices made based on solid scientific evidence.
- Kids need to be back in school.
- Kids needs in person school
- Kids should have been back in school the first week in May 2019 once the science determined the risk to be very low for children.
- These kids need to be in school full time. I am very lucky to have a bright self-driven child. Too many kids have fully checked. Our students were graded fully with pass/fail option. You can't expect kids to try hard and push themselves if there is not a reward.
- Zoom is great, but my children would rather be in school than home to be around their peer and to get that up close and personal teaching (Me too :) )

#### Connections with Teacher *(10 Comments)*

- 10- worked independently with coaching at times
- 12 - one on one with teachers
- Better teacher/student help. Teachers being available online for a one hour block in the morning and a one hour block in the afternoon for an entire high school that is doing school from home is absolutely ridiculous. And when they pick a distance learning provider for the kids who do virtual only, they need to do their homework, because my youngest decided to do all virtual and then had NO teachers for almost a month because the package her school picked suddenly told them they didn't have the staff to cover teaching our children
- I think this was poorly done. Kids taking test had no clue what it was. Also taking a test and Googling answer is poorly thought. The teachers were short with him and not helpful at all. I was surprised with this set up very sad to see how the lack of teaching is gonna hurt these poor kids shameful.
- In-person will always be best, but merely assigning something without the child ever seeing or hearing from the teacher in any way will never work. There was a definite difference in the quality of my child's education, and it all depended upon the quality of the teacher. The teachers who were great before March, continued to be great (despite the limitations they were facing), and those who were not up to snuff before the pandemic were even worse once everything changed.
- Phone calls, Emails
- Teacher check-ins
- Teachers need to be able to see the students in person one on one if the students request it. Also, they need to have more time to meet online with the students who request help. It took too long for my son to get his meetings.

- Wasn't too bad, but has difficulty understanding without personal [contact].
- Zoom meeting with class/teacher

#### General Positive Comments *(10 Comments)*

- 10th grade at her own pace
- 12- SELF SUFFICIENT, DISCIPLINED, ABLE TO GET WORK DONE 10- SELF SUFFICIENT, DISCIPLINED, ABLE TO GET WORK DONE
- 9-12: Ability to work at own pace
- 9-12: Ability to work at own pace (P.S. We personally chose to keep children at home due to my wife was able to work from home)
- Freshman H.S. student= student seems to enjoy online instruction. Senior h.s. student seemed to enjoy online instruction.
- Make sure it's safer to have in person classes before adopting. I'm happy to not have to deal with this & school is almost over for now.
- Nothing. I think they did a good job considering the fact that we are in the middle of a global pandemic.
- Pretty much satisfied
- School is more of a challenge and the teachers are working very hard
- This fall has been great and teachers were set up to do either in person or remote with a clear plan.

#### Connections with Friends/Socialization *(6 Comments)*

- 11th - loves the social part of school.
- Figure out how to replace the loneliness and despair the children are experiencing.
- I believe that students need to interact with the teachers and other students.
- I feel the kids should at the very least do the 2 days in class 2 days online. Keeping the kids home does not work. So many kids including mine have formed depression and are on medication now. Kids are sleeping during class and not getting anything out of it. My child stated she is learning nothing and would pay more attention and benefit more In a classroom.
- If school has to be remote, at least offer a mental health course or two that assists these children to cope with their feelings, new adaptations, and personal struggles they may have. Some children and families have faced major crises from school being shut down so it would have been beneficial to have a backup for mental health services, even if it was remote, just to talk about their feelings, frustrations, hopes, and dreams.
- They need more interaction with their teachers and classmates, even if it is only virtual.

#### General Negative Comments *(4 Comments)*

- Kids are allowed to have cameras off and my child's grades have declined significantly since virtual education began.
- More accountability by the teachers
- My child was a great student before the pandemic. Loved school and got average to good grades. When teachers tell the students they can't teach them all that they are supposed to learn this year and that it won't matter. It gets students upset and discouraged. My daughter wants to quit school

- The public school system is shit. This proves it. The teachers unions have taken over with the aid of the half ass school boards and their incestual relationship. Everyone else in the world has worked to solve problems - not these idiots. What they have done is nothing short of child abuse. If they would have put half the effort that they put into walking out of work and protesting during Act 10 into finding solutions now, we would have been fine. I am going to make it my life mission to raise money and actively recruit kids out of the public schools and get them into private schools. They suck.

#### Technology/Software Comments (4 Comments)

- Google classroom
- Google Meets
- People without internet access cannot work from home efficiently. The hot spots do not work well for the kids. Especially if there are more than one kid in the house
- We are fortunate we have computers and internet I can imagine the struggle it is for those without the proper tools.

#### Communication Comments (2 Comments)

- I feel the spring 2020 was pretty useless but it was new for everyone. My child did get assignments but could go days without getting a response to a question. There was no teaching to go along with the assignments received, so had to figure it out on his own. I am very pleased with the fall semester where there has been actual instruction with virtual classes. There is one class where questions can take days to answer but it seems all other teachers are quick to respond or are willing to meet during their available times.
- Make sure communication is top priority for the parents to be informed and the students are informed and learn to their best of their ability with technology.

#### Special Needs Students Comments (2 Comments)

- Better communication and instruction for SPED students
- I have a special needs student who has autism. This was very difficult for him having his routine completely taken away so quickly. I would have liked to have seen some other way to connect him to his class on a more daily basis to help him with that routine. He talked with his teacher once a week and it wasn't until school was almost over that he was able to go onto Google classroom and be able to see his classmates.

#### Parent Needs (1 Comment)

- Most emails about my kid's grades/incomplete assignments were sent to him. I would have like to been emailed at the same time.

#### Engagement Concerns (1 Comment)

- My son pretty much gave up on online learning. There was no way of trying to get him to engage in Zoom meetings, or anything else. I felt teachers didn't care who showed up for Zoom meets. I feel the counselor was the only one interested in helping my son. Need to improve teacher student communication!

#### Lack of Preparation/Coordination (1 Comment)

- Was not prepared. We understood it was a pandemic and the school did what they could. We are very disappointed with 2020-21 had a summer to work on things and it hasn't changed much. No consistent message with the school district across Wisconsin. Living in Dane county has hurt my kids ability to learn and the school board and superintendent plus team should be ashamed with themselves.

#### Miscellaneous (5 Comments)

- And nice lunches.
- Basic interruption suggestions.
- Being home
- If our kids are forbidden from going to school. Then cancel school all together.
- Very tough situation in spring of 2020, you can not prepare for this and no one was. It happened quickly and there wasn't time to plan, give expectations etc. and there was the chance they would go back - or so they thought.

#### Grade 9 – Grade 12

Question 10b - If you had more than one child in elementary school, or middle school, or high school in spring 2020 who had very different experiences with online education last spring, please tell us the method of instruction or software that was problematic and why. Also, please, tell us the ages of your children.

#### Learning at Home/Outside Classroom/Engagement (9 Comments)

- 12- student wasn't disciplined enough to work on his own while we were at work 10- not focused enough without instruction from interaction with teacher
- Everything except in-person learning
- He is extremely down about no football.
- It is difficult for students to focus outside of a school environment.
- Music, gym, and art classes were most difficult for our children (4th, 7th, 9th grades). The absence of face to face for these subjects created little/no motivation for our children to complete assignments. They did the work assigned, but it just wasn't as excited as in-person. The teachers in all of these areas are not to blame. These subjects are such that learning is more fun, and often more meaningful, in person. This continues to be our struggle for all of our children during this school year (2020-21).
- No software can replace in-person instruction at any grade level. They may work on a very limited basis, but coupled with in-person instruction.
- Not being in person and doing hands on things
- Not going to school
- Remote learning was inconsistent.

#### Structure/Instruction/Expectation Comments (8 Comments)

- 11th- He gets more work than he can complete in an average school day. He is in AP and advanced classes.
- 17 yr old struggled to get caught up with Jedi because she started late due to public schools not figuring out what they were doing.
- 9-12- Lack of teacher interaction, inconsistent online learning platform. Less structure than needed.
- Grades was capped minimal at previous quarter grades. Causing disincentive to keep up.
- It was very difficult not striving in class, not having anybody going step by step on assignments
- Pass/fail grade give no incentive for the children to do well so they didn't.
- Pass/fail spring 2020
- Teachers need to be on computer and teach. Kids learn better, kids cannot just get papers and teach themselves.

#### Technology Comments (6 Comments)

- 12-AP TESTS ONLINE WAS CUMBERSOME (NERVE RACKING)
- In the beginning to school resuming it was a disaster, the children couldn't log on to their classes!
- Internet and communication
- Most time the Zoom meeting where not working for instruction, this really frustrated my daughter
- The Chrome book technology and Canvas did not work for my high school student. (Ahad)
- Zoom sometimes crashes

#### General Negative Comments (4 Comments)

- Everthing!! what a joke
- Give me a break. It all sucks and you know it. It's not just about education. The social consequences are huge. These schools suck, they're lazy, and this is child abuse. Any other opinion is wrong.
- My children have not learned a thing. They have wasted a year and I feel like my kids are no smarter than they were before. What a waste of there and my time. I am not a teacher and not paid to teach my kids. I work 60 hrs a week and have to time to site and teach them stuff i dont know. What a waste of time. Put these kids back in school
- Poor with all 3

#### General Positive Comments (3 Comments)

- I have a senior who in spring 2020, as a Junior, had mostly elective classes that were easy for him to do from home. Much different than my 8th grader.
- My 10th grader had daily time with each teacher and was supported in online learning.
- Two children one 13 one 16. It seems that high school instruction went more smoothly. My 8th grader only had class in the afternoon and it didn't reinforce a routine very well

with parents at work. I believe a schedule could have been made for instruction to last from 0800 to 1300.

Ineffective Instructional Approaches *(2 Comments)*

- Giving interactive projects
- Groups discussion on Zoom do not work.

Special Needs Students *(1 Comment)*

- Remote learning, doesn't work for special needs children

Insufficient Content/Not Challenging Enough *(1 Comment)*

- 10-LIMITED CLASS TIME (ABOUT 2 HOURS OF ONLINE INST OF REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS)

Miscellaneous *(1 Comment)*

- So busy wages even the problem

## Appendix B1 – Numerical Summary of Administrator Responses

1. For how many years have you been a school administrator?					
0	1	2-5	6-10	11-20	20+
0	2	20	16	15	12

2. Which grade level(s) does your school include? (select all that apply)													
Pre K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
49	50	51	51	51	50	50	46	45	44	23	23	23	23

3. About what proportion of the students in your school are from the following areas?	
	Average
Rural	43
Suburban	40
Urban	17
Total	100

4. My school is a:	
Public school	Private school
33	32

5. Which of the following best describes instruction at your school:			
	Remote Instruction Only	Remote and In-Person Instruction	In-Person Instruction Only
During the pandemic last spring (mid-March 2020 through the end of your school year)	60	3	1
The start of fall 2020 classes	5	44	15

6. Overall, how satisfied were you with the following in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic last spring?					
	Not Applicable	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Your school's decision when to stop in-person instruction	6	32	13	10	4
Your students' academic performance	1	11	30	16	7
The support you received from your teachers	1	46	15	3	0
The support you received from the parents of your students	1	32	23	8	1

7. During the spring of 2020 pandemic, which of the following communication methods did you use to keep in touch with your teachers and your parents? Select all that apply			
	Teachers		Parents
In-person Contact	27		10
Group Emails	63		58
Individual Emails	63		58
Group Texts	30		18
Individual Texts	46		23
Group online video chats	61		29
Individual online video chats	48		23
Video messages (asynchronous)	32		29
Phone Calls	58		53
U.S. mail	24		32
Other (please describe) <i>See Appendix A1</i>	0		1

8. During the spring of 2020 pandemic, which of the following instructional methods and strategies do you know that your teachers used? (select all that apply)			
58	Computerized group discussion (e.g. using Zoom or other software)	6	Small in-person classes with students socially distanced
59	Emailed assignments	3	Reduced number in-school days per week for each student
54	Paper assignments teachers prepared and left to be picked up	1	In-school learning pods with a limited number of students in each pod
54	One-on-one, live video interaction with my students	2	Hybrid classes combining limited in-person instruction with online instruction
23	Online/Video recorded lectures	1	Other in-person method used (please describe) <i>See Appendix A1</i>
53	U.S. mail to send/receive assignments		
17	Other online method used (please describe) <i>See Appendix A1</i>		

9. Based on feedback you received from your teachers, how effective were each of the following during the Spring of 2020 in terms of students' learning?					
	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Neutral	Somewhat Ineffective	Very Ineffective
Computerized group discussion (e.g. using Zoom)	7	39	5	6	1
Emailed assignments	3	31	14	7	2
Paper assignments teachers prepared/ left to be picked up	4	30	12	4	3
One-on-one, live video interaction with my students	18	30	3	2	1
Online/Video recorded lectures	1	11	5	3	0
U.S. mail to send/receive assignments	4	36	6	4	1
Other online method used	2	8	0	0	0
Small in-person classes with students socially distanced	3	2	0	0	0
Reduced number in-school days per week for each student	1	2	0	0	0
In-school learning pods	1	0	0	0	0
Hybrid classes combining limited in- person instruction with online instruction	0	1	0	0	0
Other in-person method used	0	0	0	0	0

10. You indicated that your teachers felt the following were somewhat ineffective or worse in terms of student learning in the Spring of 2020, why did they feel that way? (select all that apply for each method)						
	My Technology Didn't Work Well	Students Lacked Computer/ Internet Connection	Students Didn't Engage	I Wasn't Comfortable with the Strategy	Scheduling or Logistical Problems	Other (specify)
Computerized group discussion (e.g. using Zoom)	3	3	5	5	3	7
Emailed assignments	0	4	7	0	0	9
Paper assignments teachers prepared/ left to be picked up	1	1	6	0	1	6
One-on-one, live video interaction with my students	1	2	3	1	1	3
Online/Video recorded lectures	0	0	3	0	0	3
U.S. mail to send/receive assignments	3	4	4	3	2	5

11. Based on feedback you received from your parents, how effective were each of the following during the Spring of 2020 in terms of students' learning?					
	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Neutral	Somewhat Ineffective	Very Ineffective
Computerized group discussion (e.g. using Zoom)	10	33	3	5	5
Emailed assignments	5	22	17	12	1
Paper assignments teachers prepared/ left to be picked up	5	28	12	6	2
One-on-one, live video interaction with my students	19	23	7	3	2
Online/Video recorded lectures	1	10	6	2	1
U.S. mail to send/receive assignments	3	34	9	2	3
Other online method used	2	6	2	0	0
Small in-person classes with students socially distanced	3	1	0	0	0
Reduced number in-school days per week for each student	1	1	1	0	0
In-school learning pods	1	0	0	0	0
Hybrid classes combining limited in- person instruction with online instruction	0	1	0	0	0
Other in-person method used	0	0	0	0	0

12. You indicated that your parents felt the following were somewhat ineffective or worse in terms of student learning in the Spring of 2020, why did they feel that way? (select all that apply for each method)						
	My Technology Didn't Work Well	Students Lacked Computer/ Internet Connection	Students Didn't Engage	I Wasn't Comfortable with the Strategy	Scheduling or Logistical Problems	Other
Computerized group discussion (e.g. using Zoom)	4	5	6	3	3	6
Emailed assignments	2	2	7	0	1	7
Paper assignments teachers prepared/ left to be picked up	0	0	3	0	2	3
One-on-one, live video interaction with my students	1	3	3	1	2	3
Online/Video recorded lectures	0	0	2	0	0	2
U.S. mail to send/receive assignments	1	3	3	1	1	3

13. In terms of technology you used during the COVID-19 pandemic, how satisfied were you with the following?					
	Not Applicable	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Zoom	8	37	16	0	0
Microsoft Team	53	2	5	1	0
Google Hangout	18	20	21	2	0
Blackboard	56	2	3	0	0
Your internet connection	0	37	19	4	1
Students' internet connections	0	9	22	26	4
Your teachers' internet connections	0	20	25	15	1
Your technology training prior to having to use it	0	9	28	19	5
Other, please specify <i>See Appendix A1</i>	59	1	0	0	1

14. Thinking about your experiences during the spring of 2020, what is one thing you think Colleges of Education could do to better prepare you and future administrators for situations that limit or eliminate in-person instruction?
<i>See Appendix A1</i>

## Appendix B2 – Numerical Summary of Teacher Responses

1. For how many years have you been teaching?					
0	1	2-5	6-10	11-20	20+
0	3	21	48	83	132

2. Which grade level(s) do you teach? (select all that apply)													
Pre K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
37	58	64	60	75	73	82	68	76	82	74	82	78	79

3. In which subject area(s) do you primarily teach? (select all that apply)			
9	Not Applicable	25	Music
96	Math	29	Art
96	Science	44	Special Ed
94	Social Studies	10	Vocational
105	English	8	Family and Consumer Science
13	Foreign Language	77	Other <i>See Appendix A2</i>

4. About what proportion of your students are from the following areas? Please enter as a number with the total adding to 100 (e.g. rural = 10, suburban = 75, and urban = 15)	
	Average
Rural	40
Suburban	37
Urban	22
Total	100

5. The school I teach in is a:	
Public school	Private school
241	48

6. Which of the following best describes instruction at your school:			
	Remote Instruction Only	Remote and In-Person Instruction	In-Person Instruction Only
During the pandemic last spring (mid-March 2020 through the end of your school year	272	7	4
Fall 2020 classes	43	189	49

7. Overall, how satisfied were you with the following in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic last spring?					
	Not Applicable	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Your school's decision when to stop in-person instruction	163	64	30	15	163
Your students' academic performance	27	110	97	45	27
The support you received from administration	112	92	46	29	112
The support you received from the parents of your students	95	104	60	19	95

8. During the spring of 2020 pandemic, how important were the following communication methods in terms of keeping your students engaged and learning					
	Not Applicable	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant
In-person Contact	161	67	31	16	14
Group Emails	37	106	97	26	23
Individual Emails	31	176	59	14	9
Group Texts	162	40	36	18	33
Individual Texts	143	75	35	17	19
Group online video chats	55	150	53	16	15
Individ online video chats	66	138	54	17	14
Recorded video messages	87	90	70	23	19
Phone Calls	57	114	83	19	16
U.S. Mail	130	34	54	32	39
Other See Appendix A2	272	16	0	1	0

9. During the spring of 2020 pandemic, which of the following instructional methods and strategies did you use? (select all that apply)			
217	Computerized group discussion (e.g. using Zoom or other software)	76	Other online method used <i>See Appendix A2</i>
149	Emailed assignments	14	Small in-person classes with students socially distanced
120	Paper assignments I prepared and left to be picked up	16	Reduced number in-school days per week for each student
154	One-on-one, video interaction with my students	2	In-school learning pods with a limited number of students in each pod
45	Mailed assignments	5	Hybrid classes combining limited in-person instruction with online instruction
160	Online/Video lectures	10	Other in-person method used <i>See Appendix A2</i>

10. During the pandemic in the Spring of 2020, how frequently did you employ the following				
	Once	2 – 5 Times	6 – 10 Times	11 or More Times
Computerized group discussion	3	36	31	145
Emailed assignments	3	26	21	96
Paper assignments I prepared and left to be picked up	15	45	25	33
One-on-one, video interaction with my students	2	25	30	95
Mailed assignments	7	18	13	6
Online/Video lectures	3	21	34	99
Small in-person classes	1	1	3	38
Reduced number in-school days per week for each student	3	2	1	4
In-school learning pods	2	2	1	8
Hybrid classes combining limited in- person instruction with online instruction	0	1	0	1

11. Based on your experience in the Spring of 2020, how effective were each of the following in terms of your students' understanding of the material you were teaching					
	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Neutral	Somewhat Ineffective	Very Ineffective
Computerized group discussion	48	122	23	14	4
Emailed assignments	15	87	20	17	6
Paper assignments I prepared and left to be picked up	16	61	19	15	5
One-on-one, video interaction with my students	76	60	7	5	3
Mailed assignments	4	23	6	8	3
Online/Video lectures	34	87	20	8	4
Small in-person classes	5	5	2	0	0
Reduced number in-school days per week for each student	3	5	3	1	2
In-school learning pods	2	0	0	0	0
Hybrid classes combining limited in- person instruction with online instruction	1	1	1	0	0

12. You indicated that the following were somewhat ineffective or worse in terms of student learning in the Spring of 2020, why do you feel that way? (select all that apply for each method)						
	My Technology Didn't Work Well	Students Lacked Technology/ Internet Connection	Students Didn't Engage	I Wasn't Comfortable with Strategy/ Technology	Scheduling or Logistical Problems	Other
Computerized group discussion	5	13	15	3	5	5
Emailed assignments	1	8	19	1	0	1
Paper assignments I prepared and left to be picked up	0	3	15	2	4	0
One-on-one, video interaction with my students	4	5	5	2	2	4
Mailed assignments	0	2	9	1	0	0
Online/Video lectures	1	4	9	2	1	1

13. In terms of technology you used during the COVID-19 pandemic, how satisfied were you with the following?					
	Not Applicable	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Zoom	108	107	59	9	4
Microsoft Teams	256	10	16	1	4
Google Hangout	144	58	69	11	5
Blackboard	266	4	11	0	6
Your Internet Connection	32	117	93	24	21
Your Students' Internet Connections	30	24	114	86	33
Your technology training prior to having to use it	35	40	89	79	44
Other <i>See Appendix A2</i>	253	18	8	2	6

14. Given your experiences, what are your recommendations in terms of best practices for education during a pandemic? See Appendix A2
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## Appendix B3 – Numerical Summary of Parent Responses

### 1. During the spring of 2020, did you have children in:

	Yes	No
Pre-Kindergarten – 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	203	296
6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	122	377
9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	141	358

### 2. Which of the following apply to the child(ren) for whom you're answering this survey? (select all that apply for each grade level)

For Your Child In	Not Applicable	Special Needs	Below Ave Grades	Ave Grades	Above Ave Grades
Pre K – 5	302	19	13	113	72
6 – 8	382	8	8	56	57
9 – 12	368	5	11	66	56

### 3. Which of the following best describes where you live?

Urban Area	Suburban Area	Rural Area
85	178	172

### 4. The school(s) my children attended last spring was(were):

	Not Applicable	A Public School	A Private School
For Pre K – Grade 5	297	132	70
For Grades 6 – 8	377	87	35
For Grades 9 – 12	361	122	16

### 5. Which of the following best describes instruction at your school?

	For Your Child in:	Remote Instruction Only	Remote and In- Person Instruction	In-Person Instruction Only
<u>During the pandemic last spring (mid-March 2020 through the end of your school year</u>	Pre K – 5	175	24	7
	6 – 8	112	13	1
	9 – 12	124	12	1
Fall 2020 classes	Pre K – 5	57	57	83
	6 – 8	39	44	37
	9 – 12	60	63	15

6. With respect to the type of instruction at your child(ren)'s school(s) for fall 2020, how confident are you that your child(ren) will learn effectively?

For Your Child In	Not Applicable	Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Don't Know	Somewhat Unconfident	Very Unconfident
Pre K – 5	310	86	36	7	25	35
6 – 8	385	51	28	2	16	17
9 – 12	365	33	40	3	36	22

7. Overall, how satisfied were you with the following in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic last spring?

	For Your Child In	Not Applicable	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
When your school(s) decided to stop in-person instruction	Pre K - 5	293	72	35	51	48
	6 – 8	381	43	27	24	24
	9 – 12	366	43	35	28	27
Your child(ren)s' academic progress during the pandemic	Pre K – 5	293	27	78	42	59
	6 – 8	381	26	42	29	21
	9 – 12	365	32	39	26	37
The support you/your student received from teachers	Pre K – 5	293	96	60	32	18
	6 – 8	379	51	44	17	8
	9 – 12	363	51	39	25	21
The support you/your student received from school administrators	Pre K – 5	298	78	62	40	21
	6 – 8	386	45	43	18	7
	9 – 12	368	44	47	19	21
The quality of instruction your child(ren) received	Pre K – 5	294	45	80	43	37
	6 – 8	380	32	49	24	14
	9 – 12	362	28	55	27	27

8. During the spring of 2020 pandemic, which of the following communication methods were used by the teachers or administrators to touch base with your children? (select all that apply for each grade level)

	Pre K – Grade 5	Grades 6 - 8	Grades 9 - 12
In-person Contact	38	15	20
Group Emails	161	99	102
Individual Emails	140	92	85
Group Texts	23	17	20
Individual Texts	37	20	25
Group Live Online Video Chats	142	88	93
Individual Live Online Video Chats	79	50	38
Recorded Video Messages	90	49	55
Phone Calls	66	34	34
U.S. Mail	35	15	22

9. Your child/children may have received instruction during the spring of 2020 pandemic via the following methods and strategies. For each method, please indicate if you think it worked well, was not applicable, or didn't work well for the children you have at the three grade levels shown.

	Grade Level	Worked Well	N/A	Worked Poorly
Online Group Discussion (e.g. using Zoom or other software)	Pre K – 5	94	333	72
	6 – 8	74	397	28
	9 – 12	69	389	41
Emailed Assignments	Pre K – 5	71	369	59
	6 – 8	66	392	41
	9 – 12	69	388	42
Paper Assignments the Teacher Prepared and Left to Be Picked Up	Pre K – 5	92	368	39
	6 – 8	35	447	17
	9 – 12	31	448	20
One-on-One, Live Video Interaction with Teachers	Pre K – 5	91	377	31
	6 – 8	64	419	16
	9 – 12	54	423	22
Assignments Received/Returned via U.S. Mail	Pre K – 5	25	460	14
	6 – 8	13	478	8
	9 – 12	18	466	15

Question 9 (continued)	Grade Level	Worked Well	N/A	Worked Poorly
Online/Video Recorded Lectures	Pre K – 5	81	374	44
	6 – 8	62	414	23
	9 – 12	61	406	32
Other distance education method used - <i>See Appendix A3</i>	Pre K – 5	30	441	28
	6 – 8	24	456	19
	9 – 12	23	450	26
Small in-person classes with students socially distanced	Pre K – 5	32	457	10
	6 – 8	21	474	4
	9 – 12	30	459	10
Reduced number in-school days per week for each student	Pre K – 5	22	458	19
	6 – 8	17	467	15
	9 – 12	18	457	24
In-school learning pods with a limited number of students in each pod	Pre K – 5	21	471	7
	6 – 8	22	476	1
	9 – 12	24	468	7
Hybrid classes combining limited in- person instruction with online instruction	Pre K – 5	9	478	12
	6 – 8	14	476	9
	9 – 12	22	464	13
Other in-person method used - <i>See Appendix A3</i>	Pre K – 5	9	481	9
	6 – 8	10	485	4
	9 – 12	19	471	9

10. Which of the following describes the Internet service in your home during the COVID-19 pandemic? (mark all that apply)

214	Household members can easily work from home and/or do schoolwork	48	It has been difficult to access the Internet at home for work or school
229	Multiple people can use our home Internet at the same time without issues	26	It has been a financial burden to access the Internet at home for work or school
48	My work cannot be done from home, even with the Internet	15	We needed to access the Internet at home, but didn't have it

11. In the spaces below could you tell us what worked well and what didn't for each of your children? Please indicate the grade level of the child for each comment.

Worked well:

*See Appendix A3*

Worked poorly:

*See Appendix A3*

12. With which gender do you identify?

Male	Female	Non-binary	Other	Prefer not to say
128	258	0	2	12

13. What is your age?

18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and older
2	38	170	113	44	38

14. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

No High School or GED	High School or GED	Some Tech or College	2-Yr/ Associate Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Professional or Grad Degree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. What is your household's annual income range?

Prefer not to say	Less than \$50,000	\$50,000 - \$74,999	\$75,000 – \$99,999	\$100,000 – \$149,999	\$150,000 – \$199,999	\$200,000+
95	6	54	67	63	128	86

16. Please tell us how you identify your ethnicity. Mark all that apply.

16	Asian American	3	American Indian or Alaska Native
10	Black or African American	1	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
339	White or Caucasian	19	Prefer not to say
32	Hispanic/Latino/Latinx	5	Other, please specify: <i>See Appendix A3</i>