Engagement with Stakeholders

Reopening school plans will differ from state to state, city to town and even from school to school, because each state may have additional guidelines, requirements and timelines. The media will continue to report on the closures of districts, schools, universities and colleges amidst new breakouts of COVID-19. All this will undoubtedly create more confusion for families as they decide to send children back to school, and often to different schools.

The need to engage with students, families, teachers and staff cannot be overstated. Recent public opinion polls suggest that parents are considering various school options when schools do reopen, to include continuing to homeschool. Staff members, including teachers, may be contemplating a career change based on health or safety concerns. Forthright and transparent communication with school stakeholders is key to a successful reopening.

It is also imperative to stay updated on the planning processes undertaken by state education officials, local school districts and other schools. This will help the school respond to questions and concerns raised by staff and families and more important, help establish and maintain trust with parents who are fearful about their children returning to school. Share decision making authority when appropriate with students, families, teachers, staff, board members, local community leaders and other stakeholders to ensure cooperation and compliance with the school reopening plan.

Survey Questions to Gauge Stakeholder Concerns and Questions

The following survey questions may support efforts to seek feedback from key stakeholders. Also provided are links to recent public survey polls which may also provide sample questions for the survey.

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) has extensive experience with developed a bank of survey questions based on their extensive experience doing surveys with thousands of schools. The COVID-19 Support Survey is designed to help district and charter network leaders gather fast and frequent feedback from stakeholders about the resources and support that will make the biggest difference in helping their school community manage the current challenges of the outbreak—and plan for when schools reopen. Download the survey questions on the TNTP website and contact TNTP for help with creating a survey and/or a dashboard that automatically updates the latest poll results. Contact insight@tntp.org. for more information.

- Learning Heroes (www.bealearninghero.org) conducted a poll of 3,600+ parents regarding school closures and COVID. Results are here.
- Both EdChoice and American Federation of Children (AFC) have published survey and opinion poll results about the impact of the pandemic on education and school choice matters. AFC has compiled a large number of polls/surveys regarding school choice more broadly here.
- Ed Trust West also conducted a poll in California regarding schooling and the pandemic.

Please see page 6 of this document for additional polls/surveys and results from a variety of organizations.

Survey Questions about School Closures and Reopening
Below are a few questions that school leaders may use to seek input from various stakeholder groups.[1]

School Closure and General Concerns about COVID Impact on Family

1. Regarding the current coronavirus situation, how much do you worry about each of the following as a parent or guardian?

1. Worry a lot	2. Worry some	3. Worry a little bit	4. Do not worry much	5. Do not worry at all	6. Unsure

   a. School closures will have a negative impact on your child's education
   b. You or someone in your family getting the coronavirus
   c. Being able to make ends meet
   d. Figuring out what to do with your kids during the day
   e. Making sure your child or children stay on track in school so they are ready for the next grade
   f. Your kids missing important social interactions at school or with friends
   g. How the situation is affecting your mental health and emotional wellbeing
   h. How the situation is affecting your children's mental health and emotional wellbeing
   i. Your children spending too much time on screens (watching TV, playing video games, or using a computer, tablet, or smart phone)
   j. Your children being exposed to more of the negative aspects or risks of online social interaction, such as cyberbullying

2. Overall, how would you rate the job our school is doing in providing resources and support to help your child continue learning?
   a. Excellent
   b. Good
   c. Average
   d. Only fair
   e. Poor
   f. Unsure

3. Overall, how confident do you feel about being able help your child continue learning?
   a. Very confident
   b. Somewhat confident
   c. Not that confident
   d. Not at all confident
   e. Unsure

4. Is your child <u>doing more schoolwork</u> during this time while they are at home, doing less schoolwork, or do they have about the same amount of schoolwork to do as they normally would?
   a. More schoolwork
   b. Less schoolwork
   c. About the same amount
   d. Unsure

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[1] The poll and its results, conducted by Echelon Insights on behalf of the National Parents Union (NPU), are publicly available at www.nationalparentsunion.org.

5. Do you think your child is <u>learning more</u> during this time while they are at home, learning less, or are they learning about the same amount as they normally would when attending school?
    a. Learning more
    b. Learning less
    c. About the same amount
    d. Unsure

6. Thinking about the next couple of months, which of the following would you say concerns you more?
    a. That my children missing important social interactions with friends could negatively affect their emotional wellbeing
    b. That allowing my children to hang out with friends could put them at risk of being exposed to the coronavirus
    c. Unsure

7. As a result of the coronavirus situation and school closures, have your children been spending more time, less time, or about the same amount of time doing each of the following activities?

1. A lot more time	2. A little more time	3. About the same as before	4. A little less time	5. A lot less time	6. Unsure

    a. Watching television, movies, or shows online
    b. Playing video games or online games
    c. Using social media websites or apps such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or Snapchat
    d. Communicating with friends online or using a smartphone
    e. Using a computer or device to do schoolwork
    f. Playing outside or doing outdoor activities
    g. Being active or exercising
    h. Hanging out with their friends
    i. Helping with household chores

8. Thinking about how your children have been using technology and the internet during the coronavirus situation, do you feel technology and the internet have had a positive or negative effect on each of the following?

1. Very positive	2. Somewhat positive	3. Neither positive nor negative	4. Somewhat negative	5. Very negative	6. Unsure

    a. Their mental health and emotional wellbeing
    b. Their social connections with friends
    c. The quality of their education

9. Has your child reacted to the situation in any of the following ways? Please select all that apply.
    a. Experienced depression
    b. Had suicidal thoughts
    c. Felt anxious
    d. Felt scared
    e. Misbehaved
    f. Acted out of character or behaved unusually
    g. Felt lonely
    h. Reacted another way (Please specify)

      i. Has not reacted in any of these ways
      j. Unsure

10. To cope with the coronavirus crisis, which of the following would be the most helpful for you to have as a parent right now? Please choose NO MORE THAN THREE. (NOTE to school leader: Make sure you list items here that your school can either assist with or may be able to find community partners)
    a. More hours in the day
    b. More money to spend on necessities
    c. More tablets or computers in the house
    d. Someone to run errands for me to pick up essentials
    e. Childcare
    f. Help keeping my children engaged in good activities
    g. Paid time off work from my job
    h. High speed internet access
    i. More information about how to support my child's learning
    j. Something else (Please specify)

School Reopening Questions

1. Even if neither one perfectly describes your views, which of the following statements do you agree with more?
    a. Schools should reopen as soon possible so students don't fall too far behind and can receive the educational support they need
    b. Schools should remain closed until they are certain there is no health risk, even if means students fall farther behind
    c. Unsure

2. Even if neither one perfectly describes your views, which of the following statements do you agree with more?
    a. Schools should be focused on trying to get back to the way things were before the COVID-19 crisis as soon as it is safe to do so
    b. Schools should be focused on rethinking how we educate students, coming up with new ways to teach children moving forward as a result of the COVID-19 crisis
    c. Unsure

3. Who would you trust most to establish and evaluate school safety procedures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your children's schools? (NOTE to school leaders: you may want to add in specific names to each of these options)
    a. My children's school principal (LIST NAME)
    b. Local school district leaders (school board, superintendent)
    c. Local public health officials
    d. State public health officials
    e. State Department of Education
    f. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
    g. U.S. Department of Education
    h. State governor (LIST NAME)
    i. State legislature
    j. U.S. Congress
    k. President Donald J. Trump
    l. Independent/non-government medical associations
    m. Other (Please specify)

n. Unsure

4. How important would it be to you personally to have your children's schools do each of the following?

1. Extremely important	2. Very important	3. Somewhat important	4. Not too important	5. Not important at all	6. Unsure

   a. Provide face masks to all students and staff and replace the masks regularly
   b. Have a full-time nurse or health worker at school
   c. Stagger schedules so that there are fewer students in classrooms and desks can be spaced six feet apart
   d. Limit the number of students who are in common areas like the hallway, library, cafeteria, or playground at the same time to maintain social distancing
   e. Provide an individualized education plan for each student based on an assessment of their academic and mental health needs, as well as input from their parents or guardians
   f. Provide free breakfast and lunch programs for students in need even when schools are closed
   g. Send out notices to parents of students who may have been exposed to a student or staff member who has tested positive for COVID-19
   h. Require students and staff members who may have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 to stay home for 14 days before returning to school
   i. Provide all students with the technology needed for online learning at the beginning of the year in case they become ill or schools close again, including laptops or tablets and internet access
   j. Provide mental and emotional health assessments and counseling for students and staff
   k. Other (please specify)

1. Which of the following would be necessary for you to feel safe sending your children to school, meaning you would <u>not</u> send your children to school without this happening? Please select all that apply.
   a. Schools providing face masks to all students and staff and replacing the masks regularly
   b. Schools having a full-time nurse or health worker at school
   c. Schools staggering schedules so that there are fewer students in classrooms and desks can be spaced six feet apart
   d. Schools limiting the number of students who are in common areas to maintain social distancing
   e. Schools requiring students and staff members who may have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 to stay home for 14 days before returning to school
   f. A COVID-19 vaccine being available to the public
   g. No new cases of COVID-19 being reported in your local area
   h. Testing for COVID-19 being available to anyone in your local area
   i. Something else (Please specify)
   j. None of these
   k. Unsure

6. Even if neither one perfectly describes your views, which of the following statements do you agree with more?
   a. Schools should be focused on trying to get back to the way things were before the COVID-19 crisis as soon as it is safe to do so
   b. Schools should be focused on rethinking how we educate students, coming up with new ways to teach children moving forward as a result of the COVID-19 crisis
   c. Unsure

June 2, 2020

Polling and Surveys during the Pandemic about School Choice and Public Education

(source: PIE Network email to members included information about the results related to parents, the National Alliance added in the results from any of those surveys that also posed questions around school choice as well as additional surveys reported in the media)

Surveys have been posted to Box here. The organization name is hyperlinked to the poll results on their website.

Summary of Key Findings

American Federation for Children

- A RealClear Opinion Research survey of 2,122 registered voters shows that support for educational choice is strong.
- 40% of families are more likely to homeschool or virtual school after lockdowns.
- 64% support school choice.
- Summary of additional school choice polls available at AFC website: www.SchoolChoicePolling.com

EdChoice:

- Conducting a monthly tracking poll.
- 68% of parents surveyed are concerned that their child is missing instructional time due to COVID-19; and 66% are concerned about their child getting exposed to COVID at school.
- Bottom left chart shows respondent answers without a definition of charter schools, ESAs and vouchers over time. The chart on the right, provides a definition then poses the question again about support.

Do Americans support school choice policies?

Charter schools are public schools that have more control over their own budget, staff, and curriculum, and are exempt from many existing public school regulations.

A school voucher system allows parents the option of sending their child to the school of their choice, whether that school is public or private, including both religious and non-religious schools. If this policy were adopted, tax dollars currently allocated to a school district would be allocated to parents in the form of a 'school voucher' to pay partial or full tuition for the child's school.

An "education savings account" in K–12 education – often called an ESA – establishes for parents a government-authorized savings account with restricted, but multiple uses for educational purposes. Parents can then use these funds to pay for: school tuition; tutoring; online education programs; therapies for students with special needs; textbooks or other instructional materials; or save for future college expenses.

Based on what you know, or have heard from others… In general, what is your opinion of charter schools, school vouchers, and education savings accounts (ESAs)?
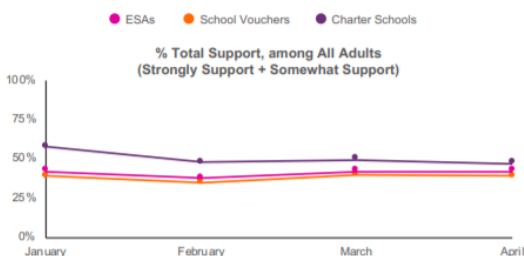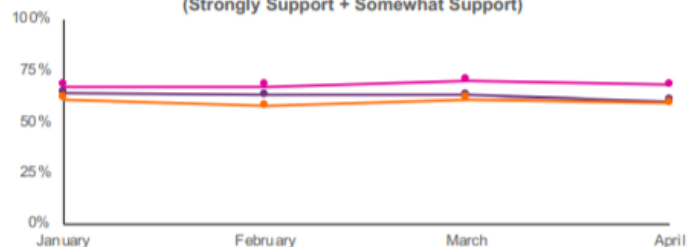
[Real Clear Opinion Research](#)

- We asked 626 registered voters, "*Are you more or less likely to enroll your son or daughter in a home school, neighborhood home school co-op, or virtual school once the lockdowns are over?*" In response, 40.8% said they were more likely to choose one of the alternative schooling methods, while 31.1% said they were less likely to do so.
- While home schooling is often associated with conservative or religious families, surprisingly, there seems to be no significant difference here with respect to party affiliation. In fact, Democrats were slightly more likely (45.7%) to express increased interest in home schooling, compared to Republicans (42.3%).
- Only 36.3% of whites said they were more likely to choose home schooling, and just 38.2% of Hispanics. That number was much higher for blacks (50.4%) and Asian Americans (53.8%).

[The New Teacher Project (TNTP)](#)

- The New Teacher Project (TNTP) has extensive experience with developed a bank of survey questions based on their extensive experience doing surveys with thousands of schools.
- The COVID-19 Support Survey is designed to help district and charter network leaders gather fast and frequent feedback from stakeholders about the resources and support that will make the biggest difference in helping their school community manage the current challenges of the outbreak—and plan for when schools reopen. Download the survey questions on the [TNTP website](#) and contact TNTP for help with creating a survey and/or a dashboard that automatically updates the latest poll results. Contact [insight@tntp.org](#). for more information.
- TNTP has also just released a survey bank of questions about regarding school reopening.
- Both sets of survey are available on Box [here](#).

[Politico/Morning Consult](#)

- No questions about school choice, but they asked about schools and day care centers reopening.
- 41% of voters said it's a bad idea to reopen K-12 schools in the fall, and 44% felt it was a bad idea to open daycare centers.

[National Parents Union (NPU)](#)

- Conducting weekly tracking poll of 500 parents nationally (April-June 2020).
- Topline results available here on [Box](#).
- The survey is not asking about support for school choice, but two relevant questions are below.

Parents Still Believe Schools Should Err On Side Of Staying Closed

Q. Even if neither one perfectly describes your views, which of the following statements do you agree with more?

- ■ Schools should remain closed until they are certain there is no health risk, even if it means students fall farther behind.
- ■ Schools should reopen as soon possible so students don't fall too far behind and can receive the educational support they need.
- ■ Unsure

Week 3	71%	11%	18%
Week 4	64%	11%	25%

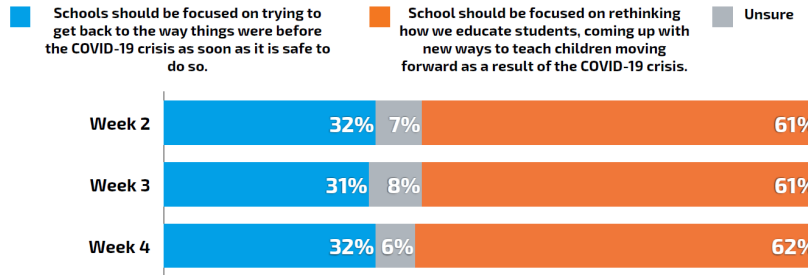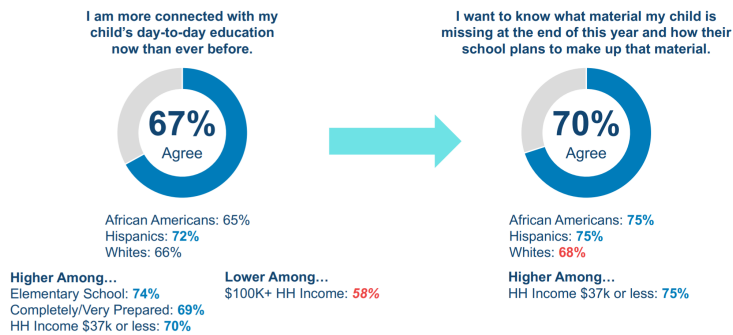## Parents Continue To Say School Should Be Re-Imagined

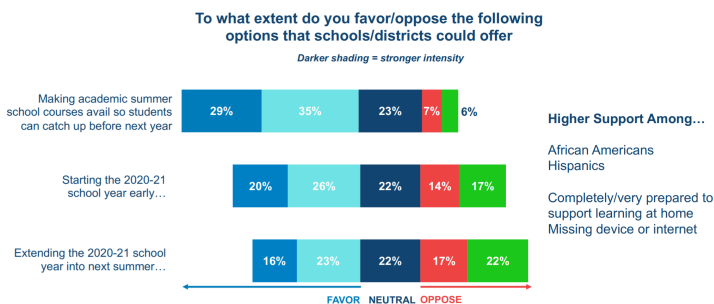**Q. Even if neither one perfectly describes your views, which of the following statements do you agree with more?**

- **Schools should be focused on trying to get back to the way things were before the COVID-19 crisis as soon as it is safe to do so.**
- **School should be focused on rethinking how we educate students, coming up with new ways to teach children moving forward as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.**
- **Unsure**

Week 2	32%	7%	61%
Week 3	31%	8%	61%
Week 4	32%	6%	62%

[Learning Heroes](#):

- Nationwide sample of 3,645 parents and guardians with children in public school, grades K-12.
- Survey does not ask questions about school choice but does ask many about how schools are doing now with closures and what parents expect in the future.
- Most parents want more personalized tools to support their child's learning; 7 out of 10 parents said they plan to get a better understanding of what their children are expected to learn next year; and 92% of parents report their children are at or above grade level in reading and math, even though data from NAEP shows the figure is closer to 37% of students performing on grade level.

Parents Feel More Connected to Schooling and Want Answers for What Happens Next

I am more connected with my child's day-to-day education now than ever before.

67% Agree

African Americans: 65%
Hispanics: **72%**
Whites: 66%

Higher Among…
Elementary School: **74%**
Completely/Very Prepared: **69%**
HH Income $37k or less: **70%**

Lower Among…
$100K+ HH Income: *58%*

I want to know what material my child is missing at the end of this year and how their school plans to make up that material.

70% Agree

African Americans: **75%**
Hispanics: **75%**
Whites: **68%**

Higher Among…
HH Income $37k or less: **75%**

Most Parents Want the *Option* of Summer School Over Definitive Adjustments to the 20-21 School Calendar

To what extent do you favor/oppose the following options that schools/districts could offer

Darker shading = stronger intensity

Making academic summer school courses avail so students can catch up before next year	29%	35%	23%	7%	6%
Starting the 2020-21 school year early…	20%	26%	22%	14%	17%
Extending the 2020-21 school year into next summer…	16%	23%	22%	17%	22%

FAVOR NEUTRAL OPPOSE

Higher Support Among…

African Americans
Hispanics

Completely/very prepared to support learning at home
Missing device or internet

LEARNING HEROES: Parents 2020   30

Parents Activated to Redefine Relationships Between Schools & Homes

Likelihood to Do During Upcoming School Year…

(% very/somewhat likely)

■ Somewhat likely ■ Very likely

	Very likely	Total	African American	Hispanic	White
Get a better understanding of what my child is expected to learn at his/her new grade level.	33%	73%	80%	81%	69%
Find more time to talk to my children about their everyday assignments.	33%	72%	80%	80%	69%
Seek a better understanding of where my child is academically.	32%	69%	81%	80%	64%
Talk to the teacher about what I noticed regarding my child's learning/schoolwork during the school closure.	28%	64%	72%	73%	61%
Develop a stronger relationship with my child's teacher(s) than I've had in the past.	25%	60%	66%	72%	55%
Demand a better understanding of where my child is academically.	25%	57%	65%	67%	53%
Demand that the school provide better support for students' mental health and emotional well-being going forward.	20%	45%	56%	58%	39%
Lower my academic expectations for my child due to this year's disruption of my child's education.	12%	34%	35%	46%	32%

LEARNING HEROES: Parents 2020   31

ParentsTogether Action

- Survey of more than 1,594 families around the country conducted via Facebook Messenger regarding the impact the coronavirus crisis is having on kids' education. The results reveal huge disparities in the success of remote learning depending on family income and show that remote learning is jeopardizing the education of our most vulnerable students. This crisis has exposed and exacerbated existing inequities and millions of families have been left without the resources they need to help their kids succeed.
- Comparing responses of parents with a household income of less than $25,000 a year vs. those who make more than $100,000 reveals stark inequities in remote learning opportunities. For example:
  - Parents from low-income homes are ten times more likely to say their kids are doing little or no remote learning (once a week or less) (38% vs. 3.7%)
  - Kids from low-income homes are three times more likely not to have consistent access to a device (32% vs 10%) and five times more likely to go to a school not offering distance learning materials or activities at all (11% vs 2%).
  - Parents from low income homes are twice as likely to say remote learning is going poorly or very poorly (36% vs. 18%) and are more likely to say their kid's work is mostly or entirely busy work (35% vs. 19%).
- Additionally, the survey also revealed that the kids in need of individualized support are also facing major challenges.
  - Just 20% of parents whose children have an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) or are entitled to other special education services say that they are receiving those services.
  - 39% are not receiving any support at all.
  - Children who qualify for individual learning plans are also:
    - Twice as likely as their peers to be doing little or no remote learning (35% vs. 17%).
    - Twice as likely to say that distance learning is going poorly (40% vs. 19% for those without IEPs).
    - Almost twice as concerned about their kids' mental health (40% vs. 23% for those without IEPs).

EdTrust New York

- Global Strategy Group partnered with The Education Trust New York to conduct a survey of 1,200 parents in New York State public schools, from March 25-April 1, 2020.
- No questions about school choice, questions were very similar to other parent polls and provide further evidence of how parents are reacting to the pandemic and what they need most both now and in the future.

- 95% of parents surveyed would like regular contact with or access to their child's teacher, while only 52% say schools are doing this already; and 92% of parents surveyed would also appreciate examples of resources to use to teach their child, while only 34% parents say their school is doing this already.

EdTrust West

- *Global Strategy Group partnered with The Education Trust–West to conduct a survey among 1,200 parents of children in California public schools from March 26th to April 1st, 2020.*
- No questions about school choice; the survey appears to be similar or the same as the EdTrust New York.
- 89% of parents surveyed are most concerned about their child falling behind academically as a result of not being in school; 84% of parents with high school students are concerned about ensuring their child is on track to graduate; and 82% are concerned about ensuring their child is on track to go to college.

EdTrust Washington

- Nearly 1 in 5 (17%) parents reported receiving little to no information about academic or other resources from their school or district, including 19% of Black and Latino parents
- About 53% of parents reported challenges with distance learning
- Roughly 1 in 5 parents who reported having challenges with distance learning reported that they didn't have reliable high-speed internet access or enough devices at home
- More than 3 in 4 (76%) public school parents report higher levels of stress than usual. Families earning less than $50,000 annually are experiencing more acute levels of stress – nearly half (47%) of those families report stress levels that are much higher

Parents Amplifying Voices in Education (PAVE)

- Surveyed parents in D.C. thru a variety of means.
- No questions about school choice, but the survey really got deep on specific issues families were facing and the stress they are feeling.
- 59% of parents cite managing their child's homeschooling as a top challenge. 52% of parents surveyed reported that they get the majority of their information from local government websites, 45% from Facebook, and 44% from their school website. This data also looks at how the stress of this crisis has disproportionately impacted low-income families.

TN Score

- SCORE, in partnership with Public Opinion Strategies, polled 500 registered voters in Tennessee, two-thirds of them parents with children who are living at home or graduated high school within the past two years.
- No questions on school choice.
- 52% of parents and 62% of voters overall support starting the 2020-21 school year early to make up for lost instruction; and three-fourths of those surveyed support using a statewide measure this fall to understand student learning loss.

DE Rodel

- Survey of 859 respondents in State of Delaware.
- No questions about school choice, but a lot of questions for parents and teachers about what is needed now and in the future.

- 53% of community members surveyed identified wi-fi and broadband infrastructure as the most immediate learning support for educators and the students they serve; 53% want clear expectations communicated to all school and district staff about their roles and responsibilities; and 50% said educators needed more assistance meeting students' specific learning needs (such as students with disabilities, English learners, homeless students).

###