

---

## SURVEY ANALYSIS

---

**TO:** RUSTY TURNER  
**FROM:** ROBERT COON  
**SUBJECT:** STATEWIDE EDUCATION SURVEY  
**DATE:** 11/17/20

---



### **Executive Summary**

The majority of households contacted in this survey have their students participating in in-person learning this fall, with 18% fully virtual. 89% have students enrolled in a traditional public school, 8% at a public charter school, and 3% in a combination of traditional public and public charter schools.

The overall sentiment towards student learning experiences this year is positive, regardless of the type of educational delivery method, as parents and guardians are generally pleased with the quality of education, the amount of direct instruction, and the quality of direct instruction their students are receiving. Student interaction with their peers (socialization) is a slight concern. Despite being satisfied with how learning is being conducted, however, the majority of virtual learning households believe their students' learning is worse than it would be in a classroom environment.

Overall, parents and guardians have confidence that schools are following COVID protocols and that they are safe environments for students. Despite that, more than a third of families surveyed indicated that they have had a student pivot to online learning due to a coronavirus case in their class or their school.

There are a number of contrasts in the results driven by socio-economic differences including race and household income. Black parents and guardians demonstrated lower confidence in school COVID protocols and student safety and preferred more frequent testing than their white counterparts.

### **Methodology**

This public opinion survey was conducted among 605 Arkansas residents between Nov 5<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and has a margin of error of +/- 4.15%. Certain subgroups within the survey have higher margins of error, as noted below. 80.41% of respondents were contacted via cellular telephone, and 19.59% were contacted by a landline phone.

Respondents were screened with 100% of respondents identifying themselves as a parent or guardian of a child enrolled in a K through 12 traditional public school or public charter school. Results have been weighted based on ethnicity and are balanced by Congressional District.

### **School Enrollment**

Q2. "In which of the following level of schooling are the students in your household enrolled in currently - Elementary, Middle or High School?"

Elementary only	26.58%
Middle School only	10.40%
High School only	22.88%
Elementary, Middle, & High	7.50%
Elementary & Middle	14.24%
Elementary & High	8.07%
Middle & High	10.16%
Unsure/Refused	0.16%

### **School Type**

Q3: "What type of school or schools do students in your household attend?"

Traditional Public School	88.53%
Public Charter School	8.05%
Traditional & Charter	2.78%
Unsure/Refused	0.64%

### **Educational Delivery**

Q4: "How are the students in your household receiving their education this semester?"

In person at their school	53.76%
Online/virtually at home only	18.15%
A combination of in-person/virtual	28.09%

Overall, 54% of parents/guardians indicated their students are learning in-person only, with 36% saying their students are learning virtually full time or have a combination. Elementary only families exceed the average for in-person learning by 11 percentage points (65%), while middle school (44%) and high school only (42%) families fall below the in-person average. Conversely, families with middle and high school students only have higher rates of both full time virtual learning (25% and 23%) as well as combination

learning (31% and 35%). These findings are likely due to the ability of older students to learn more independently and stay at the home without the same level of parental supervision necessary for elementary school aged children.

In addition to school level, educational delivery varies somewhat by the type of public school students are attending. Public charter school students lean slightly more towards virtual learning than their traditional public school peers. 41% of charter school families in this survey are full time in-person, compared to 56% of traditional public school students, while 35% are full time virtual learners – more than twice the rate of their traditional school peers (16%).

Along ethnic lines, Black families are participating in virtual learning at a higher percentage than white families. 34% of Black families in this survey indicated their students are full time in-person learners, with 33% learning virtually full time, and 33% in a combination. Similarly, families with household incomes above \$46,000 have their students enrolled full time (57%) at higher levels than those making less than \$46,000 (40%).

### ***Full Time Virtual or Combination Learners***

(\*MoE = +/- 6.09%)

#### **Parental Confidence**

Q5: “Regarding students in your home that are learning virtually, how confident are you in your ability to assist them with their online learning and school responsibilities?”

Very Confident	36.18%
Somewhat Confident	40.31%
Not Too Confident	13.14%
Not Confident At All	9.36%
Unsure/Refused	1.00%

Overall, parents and guardians of virtual learners are mostly confident in their ability to help with their students’ online learning (76%). Confidence is higher among those with students in elementary school only (87%) than with middle (72%) and high school (81%) only families, while charter school parents and guardians are slightly more confident (90%) than their traditional public school peers (75%).

Parental confidence does not vary significantly among white (82%) and Black (88%) households, however confidence is notably lower among households making less than \$46,000 (72%) and among parents and guardians without a college degree (68%).

Geographically, confidence is lower among families in CD1 (75%) and CD4 (69%) compared to CD2 (81%) and CD3 (85%), which may be reflective of the income and college degree dynamics mentioned previously.

### **Quality of Education**

Q6: "For virtual learners in your household, how satisfied are you with the quality of education those students are receiving?"

Very Satisfied	20.45%
Somewhat Satisfied	48.09%
Somewhat Unsatisfied	17.65%
Very Unsatisfied	11.85%
Unsure/Refused	1.96%

While 69% of full and combination families are satisfied with the quality of education their students are receiving, nearly half are only somewhat satisfied (48%).

Satisfaction is notably lower among middle school only families (61%), especially in regard to those that are very satisfied (5%). Overall satisfaction is the same among both traditional public school families (68%) and public charter school families (68%), with the percentage of those that are very satisfied being marginally higher among charter school families (26%).

Notably, full time virtual families are more satisfied with the quality of education (74%) than those who are in a combination of virtual and in-person (65%).

### **Amount of Instruction**

Q7: "For virtual learners in your household, how satisfied are you with the AMOUNT of direct teacher instruction that those students are receiving?"

Very Satisfied	22.03%
Somewhat Satisfied	39.48%
Somewhat Unsatisfied	20.09%
Very Unsatisfied	15.85%

Unsure/Refused 2.54%

While 60% of families are satisfied with the amount of direct teacher instruction, 36% are unsatisfied. Lower income households (72%) and parents/guardians without a college degree (64%) are slightly more satisfied than higher income households (58%) and those with a degree (59%).

As with quality of education, full time virtual families are more satisfied with the amount of direct teacher instruction (68%) than those who are in a combination of virtual and in-person (57%).

### **Quality of Instruction**

Q8: "For virtual learners in your household, how satisfied are you with the QUALITY of direct teacher instruction that those students are receiving?"

Very Satisfied	24.98%
Somewhat Satisfied	42.78%
Somewhat Unsatisfied	16.92%
Very Unsatisfied	12.46%
Unsure/Refused	2.86%

Views on the quality of direct teacher instruction exceed those relating to the amount of direct teacher instruction by 7 percentage points. While views among white (66%) and Black (65%) parents/guardians are roughly the same overall, the percentage of white families who are very satisfied (29%) exceeds that of Black families (18%) by 11 percentage points.

Consistent with findings on the amount of instruction, full time virtual families are more satisfied with the quality of direct teacher instruction (76%) than those who are in a combination of virtual and in-person learning (57%).

As we saw with parental confidence, satisfaction in the quality of direct teacher instruction varies somewhat by geography. Satisfaction is higher in CD2 (70%) and CD3 (75%), and lower in CD1 (62%) and CD4 (64%).

### **Peer Interaction**

Q9: "For virtual learners in your household, how satisfied are you with level of interaction that those students are having with their fellow students?"

Very Satisfied	17.67%
----------------	--------

Somewhat Satisfied	39.28%
Somewhat Unsatisfied	16.10%
Very Unsatisfied	22.95%
Unsure/Refused	4.01%

The highest level of dissatisfaction among virtual learners comes in the form of peer interaction. 39% of families are unsatisfied with the level of interaction that virtual learners are having with their fellow students.

Concern over peer interaction is noticeably higher among white families (42%) than with Black households (20%). Views on this question are consistent among education, income, and geography.

### **Online/In-Person Comparison**

Q10: “How well do you think virtual students in your household are learning online compared to how they would learn in their normal school environment?”

Significantly better than in a regular classroom	4.35%
Somewhat better than in a regular classroom	10.68%
The same as in a regular classroom	24.77%
Somewhat worse than in a regular classroom	36.36%
Significantly worse than in a regular classroom	21.31%
Unsure/Refused	2.54%

Despite the fact that a majority of virtual families are satisfied with the quality of education, amount of direct instruction, and quality of direct instruction their students are receiving, more than half (58%) believe their students are learning somewhat or significantly worse than in a regular classroom. This sentiment is higher among both middle school only (66%) and high school only (60%) households.

The view that virtual students are learning worse than they would in a regular classroom is higher among those in a combination of virtual learning and in-person (65%) than full time virtual families (55%).

Parental confidence appears to have some bearing on the views of how successful virtual learning is for students. Among parents and guardians who are very confident in their ability to assist students learning virtually 63% believe their students are learning the same or better than in a regular classroom. However, among all other levels of parental confidence, a majority think their students level of learning is worse.

Geographically, views among families in CD2 are more negative than elsewhere in the state, with 64% indicating that the results of virtual learning are worse than in person, compared to 55% in CD1, 57% in CD3, and 54% in CD4.

## **Full Time In-Person or Combination Learners**

(\*MoE = +/- 4.58%)

### **Confidence in COVID protocols**

Q11: "For students in your home that are attending in-person classes at school, how confident are you that your child's school is following prescribed health and safety guidelines such as physical distancing and mask wearing?"

Very Confident	63.93%
Somewhat Confident	25.74%
Not Too Confident	5.33%
Not Confident At All	3.17%
Unsure/Refused	1.84%

Confidence in COVID health protocols among parents and guardians with in-person students is extremely high, with 90% saying they're very or somewhat confident that their students' school is following the prescribed guidelines. These findings are consistent across school enrollment level and school type.

While similar overall, the percentage of those saying very confident is noticeably lower among Black households (37%) than white (69%).

### **Safety in Schools**

Q12: "Thinking more about in-person schooling, how safe from the coronavirus do you feel your student or students are at their school?"

Very Safe	45.12%
Somewhat Safe	42.40%
Somewhat Unsafe	8.28%
Very Unsafe	2.13%
Unsure/Refused	2.07%

Consistent with views on COVID protocols, 88% of parents and guardians believe their in-person students are safe from the coronavirus at school. Parents and guardians of full time in-person learners are slightly more optimistic (89%) than those who are in a combination of in-person and virtual learning (84%).

As we observed with COVID protocols, white families are more optimistic in their outlook on safety (90%) than Black families (76%). Further, the majority of Black families indicated their students are somewhat safe (59%), with only 17% saying they were very safe.

### **Online Pivot**

*Q13: "Has your child had to pivot to online learning away from school this school year, due to a coronavirus case in his or her class or school?"*

Yes	36.57%
No	62.56%
Unsure/Refused	0.87%

37% of families surveyed indicated that they have had a student pivot to online learning due to a coronavirus case in their class or their school. This rate was notably higher among middle school (38%) and high school (44%) students than with elementary (20%).

Incidents where students have had to pivot to online learning do not appear to have a measurable impact on how parents and guardians view COVID protocols at their schools. Among those who have had to pivot to online learning, 85% are still confident that COVID protocols are being followed, and 79% believe their schools are safe.

Geographically, CD1 leads with 42% of families surveyed experiencing an online shift, with CD4 second at 39%.

## ***All Learners***

### **Group Activities**

*Q14: "Are your students in your household participating in group activities such as sports, band, choir as they have in previous years or has their participation changed due to coronavirus?"*

As in previous years	61.51%
Changed	31.67%
Unsure/Refused	6.82%



70% of full time in-person students are participating in group activities as they have in previous years, compared to only 37% of full time virtual learners.

While 64% of white families say they're participating in group activities as they have in previous years, that rate falls to 51% among Black families.

### **School Communication**

*Q15: "How well do you think your local schools have done in communicating with parents about coronavirus since the school year started?"*

Excellent	43.15%
Good	27.47%
Average	17.19%
Poor	7.77%
Very Poor	3.95%
Unsure/Refused	0.46%

Overall, 71% of those surveyed rated the communication from their schools regarding coronavirus as excellent or good. Charter school families (79%) rated communication from their schools slightly higher than those in traditional public schools (70%).

A majority of full time in-person learners rated school communication as excellent, compared to only 31% of full time virtual and 36% of those doing a combination of virtual and in-person learning.

There is a notable gap in how Black and white families view school communication. While 48% of white families indicated that communication has been excellent, only 23% of Black families have the same view.

### **Overcoming Obstacles**

*Q16: "How well do you think your local schools have done helping students and families overcome obstacles to online or in-person learning this fall?"*

Excellent	32.97%
Good	29.26%
Average	23.94%
Poor	7.37%

Very Poor	3.75%
Unsure/Refused	2.71%

While the majority of families surveyed (62%) believe their schools have helped them overcome obstacles this fall, views differ significantly between full time in-person families and those learning virtually. 72% of in-person families rated their schools as excellent or good, compared to 48% of full time virtual and 52% of combination families.

As noted in other areas of the survey, the views of white and Black families differ again on this question. 67% of white families rate assistance as excellent or good, compared to 38% of Black families. Similar divisions are present along income level lines, with 66% of those making more than \$46,000 rating assistance as excellent or good compared to 48% making less than \$46,000.

### **Device Loans**

*Q17: "Have your schools offered families the use of a technology device at home, such as a laptop, tablet, computer, or hotspot?"*

Yes	91.91%
No	7.16%
Unsure/Refused	0.93%

Devices appear to be widely available for families at all school levels and among both in-person and virtual learners. Device availability is consistent across racial, income, and geographic lines.

### **Device Borrowing**

*Q18: "Did you borrow a technology device, like a laptop, tablet, computer, or hotspot from your local school?"*

Yes	69.22%
No	29.65%
Unsure/Refused	1.15%

While readily available, only 69% of families surveyed indicated that they borrowed a technology device from their local school. Borrowing rates were lower among high school students (59%) and charter school students (61%). As to be expected, rates were higher among those participating in full time (75%) or combination (75%) learning and families making less than \$46,000 per year (76%).

### **Student COVID Testing**

Q19: "Thinking about coronavirus testing...do you think schools should require students to be tested for coronavirus on a regular schedule or only when symptomatic or a positive case is confirmed at the school?"

Regular Schedule	18.13%
Symptoms/Positive Case	65.28%
Neither/No Requirements	12.31%
Unsure/Refused	4.29%

The majority of respondents indicated that schools should require students to be tested for coronavirus only when symptomatic or a positive case is confirmed at their school. These findings are consistent across school level and school type. The view that students should be tested on a regular schedule was higher among parents and guardians of full time virtual learners (36%). Views on this question were not affected based on whether families had experienced a pivot to online learning.

Views on testing differed dramatically by race. 48% of Black families indicated that students should be tested on a regular schedule, compared to only 13% of white families.

### **Teacher COVID Testing**

Q20: "Thinking about coronavirus testing...do you think schools should require teachers and staff to be tested for coronavirus on a regular schedule or only when symptomatic or a positive case is confirmed at the school?"

Regular Schedule	25.51%
Symptoms/Positive Case	64.12%
Neither/No Requirements	8.56%
Unsure/Refused	1.81%

Views on teacher COVID testing generally mirror those of student COVID testing, yet there is slightly higher support for teachers to be tested on a regular schedule. Increased support for testing teachers on a regular schedule can be seen among full time virtual learners (47%), Black families (54%), and those with household incomes lower than \$46,000 (49%).

### **Test Result Data**

Q21: "Regarding the release of test result data...how often do you think schools should share coronavirus test result data with the public?"

Daily	26.20%
Weekly	46.46%

Twice a Month	4.07%
Monthly	14.26%
Other	5.72%
Unsure/Refused	3.19%

The majority of parents and guardians surveyed think schools should report their coronavirus testing data daily or weekly. As with findings on student and teacher testing, parents of full time virtual learners are more in favor of daily reporting (47%) than full time in-person families (21%).

Along socio-economic lines, Black (36%) and lower income families (35%) have a greater interest in daily test result data than white (24%) and higher income families (23%).

### **Test Result Detail**

*Q22: "When school testing data is released, what level of detail do you think should be shared?"*

Results summarized by school district	15.41%
Results summarized by individual school	43.00%
Results for each individual school broken down by students, teachers, and staff	35.44%
Other	3.90%
Unsure/Refused	2.24%

A plurality of families surveyed believe test results should be summarized by individual school, with just over a third wanting additional details such as results by students, teachers, and staff.

Consistent with other findings in this survey, Black families lean towards additional details on test results (46% broken down). Additionally, female respondents were 10 percentage points higher than men in wanting to see broken down reports.

### **Suspending In-Person Classes**

*Q23: "In your opinion, at what point should a school or school district stop holding in-person classes due to coronavirus?"*

Any time a positive case is discovered	8.36%
Positives reach 5% of the student population	24.29%
Positives reach 10% of the student population	23.58%
When public health officials or the governor say they should	25.24%
No in-person classes until there is a vaccine	7.13%

Unsure/Refused

11.41%

A majority of families surveyed believe that a school or school district should stop holding in-person classes when positives reach 10% of the student population, including over half of full time in-person families. Notably 20% of families participating in full time virtual learning believe that no in-person classes should be held until there is a coronavirus vaccine.

A majority of Black families believes schools should be closed whenever there is a positive case (18%) or when positive cases reach 5% of the student population (39%).

### **Demographics**

AGE	
18-34	11.68%
35-49	73.48%
50-64	12.69%
65+	1.82%
Refused	0.32%

COLLEGE GRADUATE	
Yes	59.52%
No	39.52%
Unsure	0.96%

GENDER	
Male	39.23%
Female	60.61%
Other	0.16%

RACE *weighted	
White	74.00%
Hispanic	4.00%
Black	15.00%
Asian American	1.50%
Native American	2.00%
Other	1.50%
Don't Know/Refused	2.00%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	
< \$46,000	19.44%
> \$46,000	76.88%
Unsure/Refused	3.68%

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	
Currently Employed	78.86%
Currently Unemployed	8.83%
Retired	4.33%

Out of Workforce	6.54%
Unsure/Refused	1.44%